

American University in Cairo

AUC Knowledge Fountain

Theses and Dissertations

6-1-2017

The other Copts: Between sectarianism, nationalism and catholic Coptic activism in Minya.

Ana Carol Torres Gutiérrez

Follow this and additional works at: <https://fount.aucegypt.edu/etds>

Recommended Citation

APA Citation

Torres Gutiérrez, A. (2017). *The other Copts: Between sectarianism, nationalism and catholic Coptic activism in Minya*. [Master's thesis, the American University in Cairo]. AUC Knowledge Fountain.

<https://fount.aucegypt.edu/etds/676>

MLA Citation

Torres Gutiérrez, Ana Carol. *The other Copts: Between sectarianism, nationalism and catholic Coptic activism in Minya*. 2017. American University in Cairo, Master's thesis. *AUC Knowledge Fountain*.

<https://fount.aucegypt.edu/etds/676>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by AUC Knowledge Fountain. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of AUC Knowledge Fountain. For more information, please contact mark.muehlhaeusler@aucegypt.edu.

The American University in Cairo
School of Global Affairs and Public Policy (GAPP)

The Other Copts:

Between Sectarianism, Nationalism
and Catholic Coptic Activism in Minya

A Thesis submitted to the Middle East Studies Center
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts (M.A.) in Middle East Studies

By Ana Carol Torres Gutiérrez

Under the supervision of Dr. Sandrine Gamblin

Spring 2017

The American University in Cairo
School of Global Affairs and Public Policy
"The Other Copts: Between Sectarianism, Nationalism and Catholic Coptic
Activism in Minya"

A thesis submitted by Ana Carol Torres Gutiérrez
to the Middle East Studies Centre

Spring 2017

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Middle
East Studies has been approved by:

Dr. Sandrine Gamblin

Thesis Adviser _____

Affiliation _____

Dr. Reem Saad

Thesis Second Reader _____

Affiliation _____

Dr. Adam Duker

Thesis Third Reader _____

Affiliation _____

Dr. Robert Mason

Department Chair _____

Date: _____

Nabil Fahmy, Ambassador

Dean of GAPP _____

Date: _____

Abstract

The Other Copts: Between Sectarianism, Nationalism and Catholic Coptic Activism in Minya

Ana Carol Torres Gutiérrez

Under the supervision of Dr. Sandrine Gamblin

The partnership between the Coptic Orthodox Church and the Egyptian State has been a political technique that has left little space for religious diversity and has overshadowed other Egyptian minorities. Eschewing this dichotomous illusion and blowing the dust off of Missionary Studies that has left Catholic Copts in the past, this ethnographic study gives an account of the life of a Catholic Coptic NGO, the *Jesuit Brothers Association for Development (JBAD)*, within the context of the uncontested capital of sectarian violence in Egypt: Minya. Using participant observation, focus groups, and interviews, this study intends to shed a light on the ways through which sectarian boundaries and identity politics have affected Catholic Copts engaging in activism in the post-2011 era. Particularly, this study explores how three sectarian lines are negotiated in the everyday life of this Catholic Coptic NGO. It explores the convenience and sponsorship that being part of a transnational Catholic Church gives Catholic Coptic institutions such as the JBAD yet its ritualistic remoteness from other types of Catholicism; the negotiation of its common roots with the Coptic Orthodox vis-à-vis their perplexity of their historic rivalry; and the ways in which Catholic Copts relate with the Muslim majority and the Egyptian State that vacillate between spiritual service and sectarian violence. This thesis questions how still today Catholic Copts are perceived as a foreign or fabricated minority while they are actually industrious and even nationalist citizens. Although this research subscribes to the literature that addresses the transitions from Mission to NGO's that took place at the end of WWII, in the particular case of Catholic Copts, it proposes a change of scholar discourse from Missionary Studies into those of nationalism and citizenship.

*To all those who have been persecuted or martyred for the sake of their
faith. . .*

*In particular to the post-revolutionary Egyptian context, from Maspero to
bloody Palm Sunday 2017, I dedicate this study to all those (Coptic or not)
victims of sectarian violence.*

Acknowledgements

In a quote that is generally attributed to Voltaire, the French Enlightenment writer is said to have advocated for appreciation as "*it makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well.*" While my name is inscribed on the cover of this thesis, the completion of this project has only been possible by taking out the best out those who have been generous and patient enough to accompany me in this odyssey.

From the outset, I would like to thank my committee, whose scholarly guidance has shed light to my writing. Despite time constraints that academic life poses to your agendas, I am eternally grateful that you three believed in my project when it was still but a humble proposal. By the same token, I am grateful for your well-intended disposition and commitment until its conclusion.

I would like to give my upmost thanks to my advisor Dr. Sandrine Gamblin. As my teacher during core courses, as my director at the Middle East Studies Center (when I was a fellow), witnessing my project from its conception until its end, you have been much more than an adviser. Despite other challenges we faced on the way, I believe it is additionally frustrating to work with an utterly stubborn personality such as mine (I prefer euphemisms such as "persevere" or "determined" but I have been told that I may come across as "stubborn"). Accentuated by the struggle and despair to make sense of my research, it was always a blessing to find someone that was willing to share with me her time, her advice, and most importantly, who did so in a cheerful manner. Merci khaalas!

Dr. Reem Saad, from the first day I showed up in your office to the feedback I received to my final draft, I was always able to learn from you in areas where I am particularly ignorant. I needed to venture in fields such as Rural

Studies or Ethnography because it was necessary to situate my research, but I am very thankful for your light in areas that were completely outside my academic comfort zone. Moreover, I am particularly thankful for your loyalty to my committee during all these years, despite all the changes that it underwent.

Dr. Adam Duker, although you walked in this path with me for a considerably shorter time than the rest of my committee, I value your help in the quality of your time to my project. I thank you for believing in me and my project despite the randomness and urgency under which we became acquainted. Your disposition, enthusiasm, your encouragement, your very punctual academic tools and insights were much more than I could have ever expected when I wrote that first email to you in the winter of 2016. Again, thank you!

Radwa Wassim and Hany Luke, you both consistently go beyond the call of duty to ensure that AUC's Middle East Studies students thrive both personally and professionally. I will never forget the support I received from you both while I was a student, a fellow and a thesis writer at MESC.

This project could not have happened without the generous support of the American University in Cairo. I cannot imagine my life now without having come to Egypt and this was only possible through the International Graduate Fellowship I was awarded by AUC. I want to extend my sincere gratitude to Sawsan Maradini who was supportive both the times I was shortlisted for this fellowship, but most importantly, who was supportive both the times I was miraculously awarded extensions of this fellowship. There is neither currency nor digit that can rationalize the impact that this fellowship has had in my life but I hope that the effort I invested in this thesis serves as a pledge of my commitment to pay this investment forward.

To my sister Maggie Jones and her husband Greg Jones, your financial support was the only way I was able to finish this project once my field constraints pushed me to exhaust AUC's generosity. Your biggest contribution to this project, however, was when you joined me in my delusion and came to visit

me in Egypt. Despite considering myself as an independent person, after almost four years without seeing any of my family, sharing this adventure with me was exactly the emotional impulse I needed to finish this project. Egypt had never felt so much like home until my family was with me. God bless you!

For security and ethical reasons, I am not allowed to disclose the real names of my interlocutors. Those who have made a difference in my journey through Christian Egypt and Egyptian civil society, however, know who they are and I have tried to thank you all in person. Furthermore, scripture says,

“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’ (Matthew 25:40).

Maybe my thesis is but a widow's mite to your everyday fight for social justice, but to all those who shared their time, their patience, a piece of aish (bread), a bed for me to spend the night; to all those who opened their offices, their homes, their churches and most importantly, their hearts to host me during my fieldwork, I know in my heart that the King will pay you back in abundance. Rabena yekhaleku!

I particularly thank the Coptic Jesuit priest that envisioned my project and hoped to see more works regarding Catholic contributions to Egyptian society in Anthropology. Not only did you encourage me to pursue this project, but actually deployed resources and offered me support inside your community to make it happen. Like my father, the image of your fight against your tired feet represents what real superheroes look like. We did not get to say good-bye before you left to your next mission, but I pray that God our Lord guard you wherever you are.

I would like to thank my colleagues from work, Shady Amin and Amira El Kady for all their patience and support while I was drafting this text. I was only able to juggle work and writing my thesis with the atmosphere of patience and solidarity you fostered day-by-day in the office. Not only did you both teach me vocabulary or how to deal with the dramas of Egyptian civil society, but you

voluntarily walked this path with me in the most respectful and supportive way possible. God bless you!

Although it might not be evident from the outset their impact to my thesis, I would like to thank Maestro's Nayer Nagui's Cairo Celebration Choir (CCC) for making me part of such a beautiful family. The choir provided me with an oasis where my mind and soul found solace, peace and inspiration to carry on with this project. CCC is one of the best examples I have of how Egyptians can work together to create things that are larger than life. Thank you for allowing me the privilege of being part of that, even though I am just a pilgrim.

I do not know what I did to deserve a guardian angel like Nahla Atef but I am forever in debt for having you in my life. Your translations in this thesis; the many language tools that you armed me with; the many times you made me stronger on that miraculous "*Kanaba de los Lamentos*" ("The Weeping Couch", as we called that living room where she would always hear out my dramas), are things that an ordinary reader to this thesis will not see. However, this text has your print all over it. Most importantly, you showed me that family is not about blood, nor culture, nor religion, nor nationality. I apologize for not being able to put into words how much you have been a blessing in my life since the first day you walked in it, but then again, we are connected so well that I am sure you know it. Wherever you go, I hope that God puts a lot of Nahlas in your path.

Jesus David Torres, my beloved brother, I am so sorry I have only been able to be an online sister for you these last four years. Despite that, you have been there on the call to help me out with transcriptions or just with your witty sense of humor. I love you.

Sin duda alguna, mi más grande inspiración para este proyecto son los dos guerreros más insaciables que conozco: mis padres. Todos los sacrificios

que han hecho por mis hermanos y por mí han sido un testimonio vivo del poder del amor y la determinación humana. Son mis héroes y ¡los amo!¹

Papá, aunque sé que hasta ahora es difícil para ti entender que me fuera a Egipto, también sé que todas tus objeciones realmente sólo eran tu esfuerzo por protegerme. Sé que no fue fácil pero espero que estés orgulloso de mí.²

Mom, eres mi eterna cómplice y mi mejor amiga. El regalo más grande que me diste no fue la vida, sino la libertad de vivirla plenamente. Sé que ha sido doloroso estar lejos, pero ¿sabes? las alas que me diste me han llevado a lugares con los que nunca hubiese podido soñar. Al mismo tiempo, aunque decidí volar lejos, nunca has estado demasiado lejos para cuidarme. Espero que por medio de mis acciones pueda atestiguar a todos los que me rodean la maravillosa madre y mujer que eres. Gracias por todo lo que me has dado; gracias por siempre estar a mi lado.³

Finally, I would like to thank all other people in Egypt (Egyptian or not) who have in one way or another made my stay here a life changing experience. I

¹ As neither of my parents is fluent in English, an acknowledgment in this language for them would make no sense. I have provided, however, an English translation below for those who are curious:

"Without a doubt, my greatest inspiration for this project has been the two most insatiable warriors I know: my parents. All the sacrifices they have made for my siblings and me are a living testimony of the power of love and human determination. They are my heroes and I love them!"

² Trans.: *"Dad, even though I am aware that it has been hard for you to accept that I come to Egypt, I also know that all your objections were really just your effort to protect me. I know it was not easy but I hope you are proud of me."*

³ Trans.: *"Mom, you are my eternal accomplice and my best friend. The greatest gift you gave me was not life, but the freedom to live it to its fullest. I know it has been painful to be away, but do you know? The wings you gave me have led me to places I could never have dreamed of. At the same time, although I decided to fly away, you have never been too far away to take care of me. I hope that through my actions I can attest to all those around me the wonderful mother and woman that you are. Thank you for everything you have given me; thank you for always being by my side."*

still remember how Matthew 2:13 would spark a particular flame in me when I would hear during mass "*get up . . . escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you*" (of course, the Bible refers to the Holy Family running away from Herod's Massacre of the Innocents, but those were words my heart has craving to hear anywhere). Quite honestly, I am still not sure why I needed with such craze to come to this land of civilization, hospitality, patriarchs and prophets, but through this humble project, I thank Egypt and its people for everything that it has given me.

List of acronyms

The following table describes the meaning of various abbreviations and acronyms used throughout the thesis:

ACA	American Coptic Association
AUC	The American University in Cairo
AUEED	Association of Upper Egypt for Education and Development
CDC	Coptic Discovery Community
CEOSS	Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
FBO	Faith-based NGO
GC	(Jesuit) General Congregation
IJMES	International Journal of Middle East Studies
JBAD	Jesuits' and Brothers' Association for Development
MECC	Middle Eastern Council of Churches
MSA	Modern Standard Arabic
NECC	Near Eastern Council of Churches
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PDA	Prophet Daniel's Assembly
SCAF	Supreme Council of Armed Forces
WCC	World Council of Churches

Note on Translation and Transliteration

In an attempt to usher my reader (particularly those fluent in Arabic) into each scene and source in a manner that reflects as genuinely as possible the languages of my interlocutors, while still making the analysis accessible to readers who are not fluent in Arabic, I have taken the license to keep several concepts in their original language.

In this endeavor, when providing translations of written quotes, I have also provided the original Arabic textual quotes in footnotes.

Interviews were held in Arabic, English, French or Italian (or a combination of these, particularly with clergy) and all translation occurred simultaneously (either through my own field notes or aided by my interlocutor). In consequence, only the English transcription will appear in this thesis for interviews that were translated in this manner.

However, the vast majority of cases where transliteration will occur are during scenes where I engaged in participant observation or informal interviews due to the spontaneous nature of these methods. English transcriptions of these interactions have been provided while keeping transliterations of key Arabic concepts. In these cases, any errors in translation are my own.

Although diacritical marks have been removed for simplicity, all formal Arabic transliterations in this text follow the style of the International Journal of Middle East Studies (IJMES), except for names of persons or places. In this case, transliteration follows the conventions of the place or person named.

A second exception was applied for sounds that differ in Colloquial Egyptian Arabic from their pronunciation in Modern Standard Arabic. For short vowel sounds, American English vowels were used as equivalences (e.g. "el" instead of "al" for the definite article "the"). Consonant sounds that would be transliterated as "j" (ج) and "dh" (ظ) under IJMES standards have been replaced for "g" and "z".

Table of Contents

1. Introduction: The Association of God or Dissociation of God?	1
2. Research context and framework	8
2.1 Justification.....	8
2.2 Catholic Copts in Scholarship.....	9
2.2.1 The Coptic Catholic exodus from Missionary History	9
2.2.2 Post-January Revolution Missiology?	16
2.2.3 Anglocentrism in Missiology	19
2.2.4 Orthodox-centrism: the monopoly of the political Copt	20
2.3 Theoretical Framework and New Transitions	22
2.3.1 Sectarianism and Nationalism	22
2.3.2 Activism, voluntarism, and citizenship	25
2.4 Methodology	28
3. Sons of a transnational church: Coptic Catholics and their international affinity	33
3.1 The peasant and the priest: The Egyptian Society of Jesus	34
3.2 Catholicism: A passport to development	41
3.3 A Church of many nations	53

4.	The Nation of St. Mark: Coptic identity Politics	59
4.1	Fixation on Ottoman administration: contracting the millet partnership.....	61
4.2	Resuscitating a nation	65
4.3	The Coptic kafr: (De)constructing "Copticness"	70
4.3.1	Copticness and ethnicity	73
4.3.2	Copticness and the land.....	79
4.3.3	Copticness and Church hierarchy	83
4.3.4	The boundaries of Copticness.....	92
4.4	The other side of Coptic Identity Politics.....	94
5.	“Numin bikanisa wahda” (We believe in one Church): the dispute for "Copticness".	99
5.1	Wounds inside the Church.....	100
5.2	Coptic sectarianism: Catholic-Orthodox othering.....	103
5.3	The other Copts.....	113
6.	"Egypt is Islamic"?	124
6.1	The crusade for Muslim beneficiaries: sectarian dynamics between missionaries and Islam.....	128
6.1.1	Post-modern Catholic transitions: Social justice and Jesuit Humanism	136
6.1.2	“Their souls for a piece of bread”: Social cohesion as a tool for development.....	139
6.2	The Catholic casualties of Raba El Adaweya	145
6.3	Other micro locations of Catholic Coptic Agency.....	152

7.	Coptic means "Egyptian": Conclusions and closing remarks ...	155
7.1	Re-negotiating the millet pact	156
7.2	Copticness, identity politics and "ecumenism of the blood"	159
7.3	Catholic Coptic activism, agency and citizenship by praxis	163
7.4	The Egyptian Question	166
8.	Sources.....	168
8.1	Books, articles and dissertations	168
8.2	Reference, Dictionaries and Encyclopedias	186
8.3	Scripture, Codes, Encyclicals and Legal sources	187
8.4	Periodicals, reports and others	187
8.5	Sources in other languages (Arabic, French and Italian)...	191

I. Introduction: The Association of God or Dissociation of God?

When the French campaign came to Egypt (1799-1801), the Catholic missions started to be more active and entered Egypt among many foreigners. They never left after the French did; still, they were privileged by the protection of France. When Mohamed Ali Pasha started to rule Egypt (1805-1847), he used them in many interests. The Latin missions of Franciscans, Frères and Jesuits continued but never succeed.

The efforts of both the Catholic missions and the Governor led to the conversion of Master Ghali, his son Bacillus and his brother, Francis, to Catholicism along with their families and supporters. Thus, they proved themselves in the country and they are what are known as Coptic Catholics that submit to the Pope of Rome. In the 19th of June 1899, the first Coptic Catholic Pope was Anba Cyril Macarius. He tried to attract the Copts to his church but couldn't achieve it. At the end he realized that it was a mistake leaving his original Orthodox doctrine and announced that in front of many people.⁴

This journey starts with a story of failure. Perhaps failure is not the ultimate mind-set when one wishes to commence a project, yet it is the perfect

⁴ Antony, Antonious, Fr. Wataniyya, el Kinisa el Qiptiyya wa Tarikhha (Citizenship, The Coptic Church and its History). Cairo: Shirkat Etaba'a El Masriyya: 2004. Translation by: Nahla Atef Khalili from the original Arabic:

"و لما جاءت الحملة الفرنسية إلى مصر (١٧٩٨-١٨٠١م) نشطت الرسائل الكاثوليكية و دخلت بدخول كثير من الفرنج و لم يتركوها بعد خروج الفرنسيين بل لبثوا يتمتعون بحماية فرنسا و لما تولى محمد على باشا مصر (١٨٠٥-١٨٤٧م) إستخدم من هؤلاء كثيرين في مصالح عديدة تتابعت الإرساليات اللتينية من فرنسيسكان و فرير و جزويت لبث المذهب الروماني و لكنهم لم ينجحوا. [sic]

و تمحضت مساعي كل من الكاثوليك والوالي على إعتناق المعلم غالي و ابنه باسيلوس و أخيه فرنسيس للمذهب الكاثوليكي مع عائلاتهم و أنصارهم و هكذا وضع الكاثوليك أقدامهم في مصر فوجد ما يعرف بالاقنيط الكاثوليك التابعون لبابا روما و كان أول بابا كاثوليك قبطي هو الأنبا كيرلس مقار الذي رسم في ١٩ يونيو سنة ١٨٩٩ فحاول أن يستميل الأقباط إلى كنيسته فلم ينجح، و أخيرا أدرك أنه أخطأ في ترك عقيدة أبائه الأرثوذكسية و جاهر بذلك أمام الكثيرين"

center of inquiry and study as it poses issues of perplexity between goals, risks, illusion and disappointment.

Before setting out to meet with the community that is focus of this study and riding the train from Cairo to the South of the country, a simple glance at the neighborhood in front of the station - the neighborhood of Daher- arouses controversy when opposed to this quote. Peeking at the life of all the missionary schools that are still running there today arouses curiosity and doubt that will haunt me to my destination 250 km later.

One cannot help but wonder what this Coptic Orthodox monk means by “*never succeed*”. Does he mean that Catholic missionaries “*never succeeded*” in converting the Muslim majority in the country? That they “*never succeeded*” in bringing the See of Alexandria in communion with the See of Rome and having a single Pope for all Christianity? As evident as that may be today, the survival of Catholic institutions in Egypt suggests that there must be shades of gray in between. What was it of the children that were born out of the putative sinful marriage between Rome and Egypt? Was this a fatal and conclusive story that ended two centuries ago? Are there alternative narratives to this one of failure? If there are, who is telling them or why are they not being told? If the missionaries did indeed fail, why have they not left?

Five hours and many more questions later, these worries are superseded by the need to get down off the train before it continues its path to Aswan. Ten minutes later, the swaying and bouncing of the taxi over the rocky, unpaved street announces that we have arrived to our destination and all this contemplation shall be adjourned.

Just like its function in society, The *Jesuits' and Brothers' Association for Development (JBAD)* is situated in the boundaries of moderate Minya and the home of some of the most influential Islamist groups. Yet visitors should not be fooled by the cross on the top of the main building, or by the word “Jesuit” on its sign. Although the 1880’s building was disguised so it would not look like a

church and the spire looks surprisingly like a minaret of a mosque, the complex which includes a school, a monastery, a cultural center, a development center and the offices of the association, are not a place to pray, but a social center.

Arriving at 4 am from the train station, as I did the first day to my subject of study, might seem rude and inconvenient anywhere except here. Whether it is the youth preparing to leave for a conference or the scouts making a fire, the “*Madrasat El Aba'a*” (“*School of the Fathers*”; the common name for the complete Jesuit circuit that includes the Association), as I learned from day one, is an ever-active social and cultural center that does not seem to sleep.

Between health, arts and culture, education programs, and private developmental initiatives, the JBAD has been working on the ground for more than half a century to empower the poor and underprivileged in rural and urban areas around it. It also takes interest in qualifying its staff and beneficiaries so that they may spread the benefits to the communities around.

It seems at this moment as though the historical heirs of the institution that came to Egypt to either try to convert Muslims, join Orient with the See of Rome, (or whatever other intentions the original missionaries had), have developed into a more modern and industrious institution. It is now an NGO that serves Minyians regardless of their religious inclination. Thus, it acts, through its different limbs, as a bridge for interreligious cooperation while serving social development at the same time.

This initial encounter with the JBAD hints that perhaps there are variants to fatalist narratives such as those that authors like Abouna⁵ Antonious Anthony offer (in the opening quote) regarding the outcome of Catholic missions in Egypt.

⁵ "Abouna" is the Arabic version of the title “*father*”; when referring to priests. As it has been the main appellative that I have used to address most of my informants during my research, and as it is more coherent and it harmonizes best with my experience in the field, I will preserve the Arabic version through the text to refer to those priests of an Oriental background or those who have worked in the Middle East. Western priests, however, will conserve the traditional “Fr.” as a title thought this text.

More importantly, the writing itself of the Catholic Coptic Church as a project that is dependent on missionary work and his snub to their history and present reveal the need for updated studies regarding Catholic Copts..

Consequently, this thesis will claim that modern Coptic studies that portray Catholic Copts as a fabricated minority and do not complicate the term "Copt" through internal sectarian lines are liable for portraying Catholic Copts in a manner that is inconsistent with post-revolutionary Egypt. This will be further supported by exploring the identity politics of the Coptic Orthodox Church that has complicated the notion of citizenship and representation of Egyptian minorities excluded from the historical Church-State partnership. The negotiations that take place in the JBAD across sectarian lines will reveal that Catholic Copts need not of supra-structures to excise their citizenship, but rather exercise it by praxis, through activism.

The first chapter will serve to lay out a historical, theoretical and methodological background surrounding this study. Scattered through different cities and villages - mainly in Upper Egypt- and with a relatively modest diaspora⁶, the apparent social political invisibility and even scholar snub of Catholic Copts can initially be understood by their numeric paucity.⁷ In this line, with an uninterrupted Catholic presence that can be traced back to the Council of

⁶ Their diaspora includes the churches of: St. Mary Coptic Catholic Church (Los Angeles, CA), Resurrection Coptic Catholic Chapel (Brooklyn, NY), Coptic Catholic Community of Nashville (Nashville, TN), Coptic Catholic Community of Boston (Boston, MA) See Roberson, Ronald (2013). "The Coptic Catholic Church. CNEWA, Available at: <http://www.cnewa.org/default.aspx?ID=63&pagetypeID=9&sitecode=hq&pageno=1>

⁷ According to the Catholic Coptic Patriarchies in both Cairo and Minya, their population reaches 200,000 followers, less than 1% of the country's population. Additionally, Egypt hosts 6 other Catholic patriarchs of the 24 Eastern Rites, namely, Armenian Catholic, Chaldean Catholic , Greek-Melkite Catholic , Maronite Catholic , Roman Catholic, Syrian Catholic (Annuario Pontificio, 2014).

Chalcedon (451 a.C.),⁸ and three hundred years after the consolidation of Catholic groups in Egypt into a national rite, I seek to narrate in the first section how modern Catholic Copts have been presented in scholarship as a mere accident of missionary work. After analyzing relevant related literature, I will explain the methodological circumstances of this research.

Chapter Three will begin the discussion by exploring the less restricted sectarian line defining Coptic Catholics; its relation and separation from the larger Roman Catholic Church. After exploring the philosophy and methodology that led to the founding of this Jesuit organization in Minya, this section will explore the ways in which Catholicism, as a transnational church, influences Coptic Catholic activism. There are particular circumstances and traits, however, which draw a line separate from the transnational Catholic Church. The ritualistic remoteness from other types of Catholicism and the pride that this produces in JBAD beneficiaries is an outcome of one of the strategies deployed by Rome since Vatican Council II that allows the Catholic Coptic rite to be unique and independent from the larger Catholic Church.

Paul Sedra has identified two strands of thought within Coptic society, the “*national unity strand*” and the “*persecution strand*” (Sedra 1999: 219). The latter will be addressed in the Chapter 6 when addressing the situation of all Egyptian Christians before the Muslim-oriented Egyptian state. The former, positions “*Copts as so fully and harmoniously integrated into Egyptian society as to be indistinguishable from Muslims*” (Sedra 1999: 221).

In this discourse, Copts and Muslims have been historically united, particularly against foreign (i.e. Western) invaders such as the Byzantine Empire, the Crusaders, the French, the British and the Israelis. However, the political partnership between the Coptic Orthodox Church and the Egyptian State has

⁸ Subscribing to the Coptic Catholic narrative that recognizes Chalcedonian Melikites as proof of un-interrupted Catholic presence in Egypt since Mark the Apostle (q.v. Chapter 2.1.2)

been a political technique that has left little space for religious diversity and has overshadowed other Egyptian minorities. Either through its millet-style partnership or under the banner of the so-called "national unity", the Egyptian state has had an important role in defining modern Coptic identity by recognizing the Coptic Orthodox Church as the central authority to minister all Egyptian Christians - both inside and outside the community.

Most importantly, the Coptic Orthodox Church has been accountable for preserving sectarian lines and constructing Coptic identity. Threatened by the notion of democracy, where Egyptian nationalism failed to unite Egyptians, Pope Shenouda's nationalist model Coptic nationalism succeeded in monopolizing the delimiting of Coptic identity and by extension, the voice of Egyptian minorities.

The political pact between the Egyptian State and the Coptic Orthodox Church has a major flaw: it promotes national unity while assuming church unity...something that is still a far cry from being a reality. Although, there are several developments that are worth considering regarding Church (dis)unity, Chapter Five recalls the many ecumenical efforts that have been carried out in the last century. These larger conversations, blurred between dialogue and division, undoubtedly inform interactions among Orthodox and Catholics on the ground but in the form of identity politics rather than theological dialogue. Whereas these divisions were constructed in a superimposed manner, and, they are cognitive constructions that have barely any objective markers, they have been useful tools to promote and maintain boundaries between local groups.

Boundaries play a determining role in the sustainability of politics of belonging to this community. The same chapter explores how these divisions operate on the ground. Outside the JBAD, being a "Copt" is constructed, defined and contested along sectarian lines and boundaries. Ironically, the nearly identical way in which both Catholic and Orthodox Copts approach their heritage further stresses the weakness of Coptiness as an ethnic category. The term in social anthropology refers to groups considering themselves culturally as well as

racially distinctive (Smith: 57). Yet, Catholic Copts claim the same exact cultural heritage making these claims void.

Finally, Chapter 6 explores the third most radical sectarian line that Catholic Copts engaging in activism face. This section explores the ways in which Catholic Copts relate with the Muslim majority and the Egyptian State. In this area, the signature humanist approach of the Jesuits and the particular configuration of the Egyptian body of law regulating civil society and personal status have made of the JBAD a highly secular atmosphere. In a broader manner, this section argues that legal frames for social society activities such as the Egyptian push us to reconsider dual classifications of religious and non-religious activism.

By searching for forms of social participation such as their NGO's, schools, hospitals and social development programs particularly throughout the country -or as is the focus of this study- Minya, this last chapter shows how Catholic Copts contribute to social development not only to Catholics, but to Egyptian society indiscriminately and as a whole. Nevertheless, instances of sectarian violence that directly affected the JBAD in during the 2013 show expose how brittle and vulnerable this system can be.

While describing the activities of the Coptic branch of the Jesuit Brothers Association and its derived associations and development programs, I will attempt to give a fair hearing to how this Catholic Coptic community has responded to Coptic Catholic Patriarch Ibrahim Isaac Sedrak's exhortation to work across sectarian lines to restore lost confidence among the Egyptians and *"not having to wait for a disaster before coming together"* (Martone 2013).

2. Research context and framework

2.1 Justification

Six years before completing this study (and two years before the gestation of this project), the chant "*EsShaab, yurid, isqat enNizam!*" ("*the people want the fall of the regime!*") roared through the valley of the Nile. With the fall of the regime, the model of the "civil state" (*dawla madaniyyah*) occupied a central place in the public debate over the character of Egypt following the Revolution of 2011. The demand to establish a civil state was ostensibly shared by almost all the political currents in Egypt but it soon became clear that they were far from a consensus (Lavie 2016: 23-25).

In aftermath of the 2011 and 2013 uprisings, this study ambitiously hopes to shed light to the collateral victims of the flaws of the legacy that was adopted by the new regime regarding sectarian relationships. From the nucleus of the JBAD in Minya, this study seeks to question how the archaic discourse of a "Coptic Question" (cf. an "Egyptian Question" in Chapter 7.4) has been among the many factors that have been counter-productive to the establishment of a democratic civil state. The favoring of internal nationalisms and identity politics by both the Coptic Orthodox Church and the State has left little space for other Egyptian minorities to materialize in politics as in academia.

2.2 Catholic Copts in Scholarship

The state of the art regarding Catholic Copts in and of itself is quite silent, even inside its own Arabophone theological circle. Therefore, this study requires a complex variety of themes that are deeply interwoven in interdisciplinary lines such as those of Anthropology, Missiology, Ecumenical Studies and Church History.

Despite the paucity of specialized scholarship on the subject, this study is a reaction to four main trends that I have identified regarding literature that either addresses Catholic Copts or fails to acknowledge their existence. Namely: the reductionist representation of Catholic Copts as a foreign product that is incumbent to historic Missiology only, their absence in modern Missiology, and the scholar disdain of Catholic Copts prompted by Anglocentrism and Coptic Orthodox-centricism.

2.2.1 The Coptic Catholic exodus from Missionary History

The power relationships expressed through sectarian lines that will be studied in this thesis are not only entrenched in the everyday lives of stakeholders at the JBAD, but are also manifested in the way Catholic Copts and their history have been portrayed in academia. This section will explore how Western and Arabophone Coptic Orthodox literature have imposed a narrative on Catholic Coptic history that Coptic Catholic scholarship resents as reductionist and misleading (Awad, 2005:2).

Dominant narratives in both Western (Meinardus 2010, Walkin 1962) and Arab-speaking literature (like the opening quote of this thesis) claim that Catholicism is available in Egypt only since the French occupation (Antony, 2004) and announce their flight after the overthrow of King Farouk.⁹ Studies that are more comprehensive

⁹ Ironically, Egypt's Queen Nazli favoritism of Christianity added to the reasons that cost her son the throne. The "Queen Mother", who used to have Ramses Street named after

will trace Catholic presence in Egypt to 1219 when, in the midst of the Fifth Crusade, St. Francis of Assisi crossed enemy lines to gain an audience with al-Kamel, hoping to bring about peace by converting the sultan to Christianity (Masters 2001:102).¹⁰

Yet Catholic Coptic scholarship deems these narrative as deceitful (Awad, 2005:2) as they portray Catholic presence as something foreign, constructed and imported. Catholic Coptic narratives such as that of Awad (2005) argue that situating Catholicism in Egypt until such late stages “*attempts to diminish the value of the Catholic Church*”, teaching Egyptian Christians to look at the Catholic Church “*in a negative way*” and not allowing “*the historical truth to rise above the situation*” (Awad, 2005:4).

Historical accounts that place the appearance of Catholicism in Egypt until the 13th or even 19th century recount a Chalcedon¹¹ where the See of Alexandria now

her, was great-granddaughter of the Catholic French-born Joseph Anthelme Seve (1788-1860) a.k.a. Soliman Fransawi Pasha who converted to Islam in the 19th century. See “Nazli FOuad, Former Queen” Daytona Beach Morning Journal, 22 June 1978. In 1950, against the palace’s wishes, she consented the marriage of her daughter Fatihya to a Copt. She also converted to Christianity, as did her daughter, and renamed herself Mary Elisabeth. The conversion did not sit well with the Egyptian palace or public. See “King Farouk Opposes Wedding of Princess” Canberra Times, Monday, 15 May 1950

¹⁰ From the time of the Crusades in the thirteenth century, Franciscans had guarded sacred sites in the Holy Land and also conducted missionary activities. In 1219, St. Francis of Assisi himself wanted to visit at least a part of the Province of the Holy Land. On his way, his encounter in Damietta with the Sultan of Egypt, Malik al-Kamel - nephew of Saladin the Great- is well documented (Tolan, 2009). It is recorded that St. Francis of Assisi signed an understanding with the Sultan through which many privileges in the sultanate were given to the Roman Catholic priests. Those privileges would be honored and renewed routinely by the Ayyubid successors, the Mamluks and the Ottomans (Armanios 2011:82).

¹¹ The First Council of Nicaea (a. D. 325) , declared that Jesus Christ is God (that is to say, "consubstantial" with the Father); the First Council of Ephesus (a. D. 431) that Jesus, though divine as well as human, is only one being, or person (hypostasis). Twenty years after Ephesus, the Council of Chalcedon declared that Jesus is one person in two complete natures, one human and one divine. Those who opposed Chalcedon likened its doctrine to the Nestorian heresy (condemned at the Council of Ephesus) that Christ was two distinct beings, one divine (the Logos) and one human (Jesus) (Ehler and Morrall, 1967:27).

In Chalcedon, the emperor deposed Dioscorus, Patriarch of Alexandria in 444 AD, for supporting Eutyches (who defended the formula of one nature –monophysis- against the formula of dyophysis- two natures).

Oriental Orthodox Churches,¹² were labeled as Monophysite heretic (Meinardus 2010:74) and resulted in the schism between the Coptic Church and the rest of Christendom. What these accounts frequently tend to blur out is that not everyone in Egypt rejected Chalcedon (Awad, 2005: 17).

Catholic Coptic authors such as Awad (2005), on the other hand, will be keen to elaborate on the results of Chalcedon (however bloody)¹³ to claim lineage. They will emphasize how the Church of Alexandria was divided into two (and not one) branches (Awad, 2005:10). The larger part was Monophysite (later Jacobites-after Jacob Baradaeus, and later Coptic Orthodox Church) and the other part was Chalcedonian Catholic. It was linked to the Apostolic See, accepted the decisions of the Council and the authority of the emperor so their members were referred to as the “king’s Men” or Melkites.¹⁴

¹² Despite the potentially confusing nomenclature (the word "Oriental" being synonymous with "Eastern"), Oriental Orthodox churches are distinct from those that are collectively referred to as the Eastern Orthodox Church (who didn't separate until the 1054 schism). The Oriental Orthodox communion comprises six churches: the Coptic, Ethiopian, Eritrean, Syriac, Armenian Apostolic and Malankara churches. These churches are in communion with one another and are hierarchically independent.

¹³ Proterius (who had been designated by the Chalcedonians to substitute Dioscorus) held a synod in Alexandria to reconcile with the Monophysites, but without positive results. After Dioscorus, the Monophysites in Alexandria ignited the flames of revolt and killed Proterius during prayers in 457 (Meinardus 2010:76). They chose as their bishop the monk Timothy Aelurus and the new emperor, Leo (457-474), accepted him desiring peace and calm.

¹⁴ The generally-provincial Christians who opposed the decrees rejecting Chalcedon were pejoratively referred to by those city-dwelling Christians loyal to the Emperor as “King’s men,” malko” in Syriac. “Imperislist” could be a more modern translation. It was from this term that the Chalcedonian Christians of Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem became known as “Melkites”. When the Church of Antioch restored full communion with Rome in 1729, it retained the name “Melkite,” whereas those Antiochean Orthodox Christians who did not embrace the communion dropped the term.

In Arabic, the official language of the church, it is called ar-Rūm al-Kathūlīk (الروم الكاثوليك). The Arabic word "Rūm" means Greek from the Greek word "Romioi" by which the Byzantine Greeks identified themselves, deriving from the name of their land which they called Romania (meaning "the land of the Romans", Greek: Ρωμανία). The name literally means "Roman Catholic", but this refers to the Byzantine Greek heritage associated with the city of "New Rome" (Latin: Nova Roma Greek: Νέα Ρώμη), i.e. Constantinople. See *Thomas Noble and Julia Smith. The Cambridge History of Christianity, 3: Early Medieval Christianities, c. 600 - c. 1100. Cambridge University Press, 2008.*

Thus, the See of Alexandria became two rival patriarchies: Jacobite Copts were said to count for about 6 million compared with 200,000 Melkites at beginning of the 7th century (Awad, 2005:17). However reduced in number, virtually invisible and even persecuted,¹⁵ the Catholic Coptic narrative emphasizes that even despite the Chalcedonian rupture, Egypt has had an uninterrupted communion with the See of Peter. It appeals that Catholicism is present in Egypt from the inception of Christianity by the staff of St. Mark (when all Christians lived in communion with each other) until today, particularly through its Melikite/ Greek Catholic population.

Catholic Coptic narratives like those of Awad 2005 will also highlight that efforts to strengthen the already existing Catholic community in Egypt should be linked to attempts for reunion took place since the thirteenth century.¹⁶ With the Protestant Reformation threatening the "true faith" on the European continent (Fortescue, 2001:40), Rome began to expand efforts to convince the hierarchies of the Eastern Orthodox Churches to enter into communion with the Vatican. Since the reconciliatory efforts of the Catholic See to unite the so-called "schismatics" had not been efficient (Alberigo, 1989: 12), Rome promoted "Uniatism,"¹⁷ or the establishment of separate Eastern Churches united with Rome (Alberigo, 1989: 10).

¹⁵ Regarding the effect of the Arab conquest of Egypt a celebrated account depicts the Miapysites receiving the Muslims as liberators, as rescuers from the Byzantine yoke (Müller,1981:330). From this standing, the Arab-Islamic conquest sided with the Miapysite majority (Awad, 2005:17) until the 17th century where economic convenience pushed the Ottoman regime to allow foreign support and that would later lead to their classification in the millet system (Masters 2001: 107-111).

¹⁶ The Second Council of Lyons in 1274 (Fairweather and Hardy, 1962: 129). and the Council of Ferrara-Florence in 1438-1439 are normally cited as effort where East, West and Orient formally met to discuss their differences in the hope of finding reconciliation. This last one was actually able to produce a decree to reunite the Coptic Church with the other churches.

A formal union between the Catholic and Coptic Orthodox churches took place under the octagonal dome of Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence on 4 February 1442. The Coptic Orthodox delegation signed the "*Cantate Domino*", a document for the formal union with the Catholic Church and the bishop of Rome. The act was rejected in Egypt, however, particularly among the monks, who wielded tremendous power and influence among the Coptic Orthodox people (Armanios 2011:90).

¹⁷ After yielding to the idea that their evangelical efforts among Muslims would be inefficient if it would compromise their life or security (Heyberger 1989:37), Roman Catholic clerics began to pour into the Near East. They began to proselytize in the 17th century, sometimes with the support of Catholic governments, yet not among Muslims, but rather

In Egypt, Catholic pastoral activity commenced in earnest with the foundation of a Capuchin mission in Cairo in 1630 by Franciscans of the Holy Land, who visited Egypt several times a year. They opened centers in Upper Egypt, Nubia and Ethiopia (based in Akhmim) and the Reformed Franciscans would follow in 1687 with the purpose was to penetrate the Coptic desert monasteries (Meinardus 2010: 123). In 1675, priests of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) seconded the Franciscans and established a house in Cairo (Campbell 2013: 113).

A century after systematic missionary activity had been directed towards the Copts, the first native leadership was established. In 1741 the Coptic bishop of Jerusalem (1725-66), Anba¹⁸ Athanasius, pledged fidelity to the bishop of Rome and abjured the “heresies” of the Coptic Orthodox Church (Estefanous 2001:44). Thereupon, Pope Benedict XIV appointed him the first apostolic vicar for the small community of Coptic Catholics, which at that time numbered no more than 2,000. Anastasius continued in Jerusalem, however, he appointed a priest named Yustus Maraglic as vicar in Egypt (Estefanous 2001:49).

Although, as the quote at the very beginning of this study claims (q.v. Chapter 1), Anba Athanasius did indeed eventually return to the Coptic Orthodox Church, this was not the abortive beginning nor the end of the Catholic Coptic as the author claimed. The communities that had converted did not instantly disappear. A line of Catholic Apostolic Vicars continued after him somewhat longer than 75 years until it was then elevated to be a patriarchate in 1824. The community remained small and poor in both Upper Egypt and a minority included families of peasant origin in Cairo’s Faggala quarter. (Estefanous 2001:58).

I would now like to take a pause from this narrative and stress the following: recapitulating from the last paragraph, the first Coptic Catholic leadership and community was established in 1741. This means that, from a Catholic Coptic

among the already Christian Orthodox. Hence, the majority of Orthodox and Eastern independent churches characterize the result of this intrusion with the derogatory of “Uniate” churches; Catholic Copts included.

¹⁸ As priests are traditionally referred to as "Abouna", Coptic bishops are usually addressed with the title "Anba" (also meaning “Father”) or the appellative "Syedna" (roughly translated as "our lord" or "master").

perspective, the establishment of their own rite is the culmination and achievement of eighteen centuries of Catholic history in Egypt. However, many authors, particularly Coptic Orthodox clergy writing in Arabic (Antonious 2004) or Westernized (Armanios 2011, Estefanous 2001) scholars from a Coptic Orthodox origin, will depict the origin of the Coptic Catholic Church as a sinful French intrusion, a modernizing caprice of Mohamed Ali to sympathize with his European comrades and a craze of a number of Coptic xenophiles.

Some narratives begin the story of Catholic Copts directly with Mohammad Ali's endeavor to force the Coptic Orthodox Church into a union with Rome, as the Franks (*al-Afrang*) would find this a good deed and a favor him (Antony 2004: 240). When informed about this initiative, Muallim Ghali, General Steward of Egypt, pointed out to Mohammad Ali that there was no way the Coptic patriarch would accept such compulsion towards Rome. Instead, he suggested to set up a separate Coptic Catholic hierarchy which would, by its prominence, influence all the Copts towards Rome. He and his family would converted to Catholicism in January 1822 to make the Khedive appear successful in the eyes of his French allies (Elyas, 2012:12).

Meinardus writes (as though religions were born in some kind of spontaneous generation) that this family “*formed the beginning of the Coptic Catholic Church*” (Meinardus 2006: 84). I want to believe that it is a symptom of the *post-mortem* printing of his book, but somehow, with this inaugurative phrase the German Coptologist, pastor and AUC professor forgot all the efforts of the Franciscans in Upper Egypt before that had been evangelizing in Egypt since 1630. He forgot Anba Athanasius had already founded the Coptic Catholic church in 1741 and he forcedly disappeared the communities that had followed him. Somehow, when turning to page 84 he, like many other authors that crown Muallim Ghali as the founder of Catholic Copts, Meinardus forgot the own story he had written on page 83 about that the founding of the Catholic Coptic Church.

Despite the tragic ending to his life and service,¹⁹ the scandalous story of the Khadive's devote steward was not the end (nor the beginning, for that matter) of the Coptic Catholic Church and the Church outlived this incident.

It is needless to say that Coptic Catholic scholarship (mainly clergymen, which, at least from my sample, are the only community members somehow acquainted with their history) resents these depictions and claim that it does “*not allow for the chance of the historical truth to rise above the situation*” (Awad 2005:22). The literature on the matter will denounce that depositing their foundation on the figure of Muallim Ghali represents their faith as an interventionist project, a fabrication to curry favor to foreign powers that was so corrupt in its nature that it was destined to failure and even death from its origins (Antony, 2004: 239). Thus, they uphold that pushing their establishment eight decades in history deprives them from personal agency and diminishes the intensions of native converts (Estefanous 2001: iv).

In any regard, it is not in the interest of this study to reinforce debates of indigeneity as, bluntly speaking, all major religious discourses that persist in Egypt (i.e Islam and Christianity) are imports to Egypt. Its aim is rather to contest the assumption that Catholicism in Egypt is only a foreign reality to keep Catholic Copts attached to Missionary History. With a Church that has more than 200,000 followers, in 7 epicharchies, schools and even engages in social development and activism (Annuario 2014), the goal of this study is to overcome the historic pretext that scholarship in the field has deployed to avoid Catholic Copts from entering other more updated and vibrant fields such as Sociology, Anthropology or even Politics.

¹⁹ Either because of false accusations or because of Ghali's truthful report on the financial state of Egypt, Mohammad Ali issued an order for his assassination. On July 1 of that same year, Mohammad Ali's oldest son- Ibrahim Pasha - executed Muallim Ghali in Zifta (Goldschmidt, 2000: 308), together with the arrest of his brother Francis and his personal treasurer Mu'allim Sim'an. The treasurer, Sim'an, was also beaten to death (p. 309).

2.2.2 Post-January Revolution Missiology?

The bulk of literature dealing with Catholicism in Egypt springs from the different missionary projects that aimed the Middle East. Among studies on Christian Missions in the Middle East, Eleanor H. Tejirian and Reeva Spector Simon provide a comprehensive history of missions in the region that includes Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox activities and addresses relations between Eastern and Western churches. “*Conflict, Conquest, and Conversion: Two Thousand Years of Christian Missions in the Middle East*” (2012) embarks on the elephantine task of narrating Christianity’s odyssey in the Middle East from Jesus’s Great Commission up to the present day. Although the book considers the impact of missions upon religious conversion and upon social and political transformations in the Middle East, it’s most noticeable donation to the field is the well documented historical context and use of secondary sources.

Yet to the particular interest of this study Otto Meinardus’s post-mortem “*Christians in Egypt*” (Meinardus 2005) is one of the rare pieces that directly, however briefly, explains the arrival of Catholicism to Egypt and through its missionary work, how it lead to the sinful birth of a new minority through mission and politics: Catholic Copts (Meinardus 2005: 84). The final part of his trilogy on Egyptian Christians (following “*Two Thousand Years of Coptic Christianity*” [1999] and *Coptic Saints and Pilgrimages* [2002]) surveys the history of Catholic Egypt.

Works as those of Tejirian and Reeva and Meinadurs are all valuable contributions to the field, however, in their drive for covering large historic periods for very diverse groups of Christians, they have produced historic surveys or catalogs that do little to deconstruct the different Christian realities in the Middle East. As Tejirian and Simon (2012) explain by themselves is that the aspiration of their survey is “*to provide a benchmark narrative that tells the story of Christian missions to the Middle East from the beginning of Christianity to the present*” (Tejirian and Simon 2012: x–xi). Indeed, the authors manage to provide an overarching historical and religious context of the region, yet only by understating the structures from above and ignoring the agency of native converts.

Meinadrus (2006) on his side, recognizes the role the Roman Catholic Church has held in Egypt, describing it as a "*modest and spiritually orientated institution*" but his account also ignores the efforts of the locals (Meinadrus 2006:132). Thus this historical format presents an image of Catholic Copts as an institutional and historical entity that does not fit into the modern reality of this group. In contrast, although this thesis is centered on a single Eastern Christian group (i.e. Catholic Copts), it aims to enter into the everyday life of one of these communities to present a more intimate image that complicates their portrayal and allows inquiring that goes beyond historical description.

Roland Loffler hints the necessity of projects in the line I propose when in his essay on a German orphanage in Jerusalem, Loffler reflects:

"I would like to see mission history integrated into the newly developed discipline of Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte (Modern Church History), which tries to combine methods and theories of theology as well as of social and cultural history in order to interpret the making of religion in modernity" (Loffler 2010: 153).

In this regard, by integrating a series of social-anthropological methodologies (q.v. Chapter 2.4 Methodology) with Mission History, I adhere to Loffler's longing for the transformation of Missionary Studies and seek to contest the way in which the embryonic literature that deals with Catholic Copts have treated this group as a sole product of missionary and colonial products that is outdated. By describing aspects of the life in the post- January Revolution environment of an Egyptian faith-based NGO that (although founded by a missionary order) has little attachment to foreign missionary groups, I hope to go beyond the "*and they lived happily ever after*" (or as Fr. Antonious's quote on the introduction reads "*they never succeeded*") and portray some of the negotiations and challenges of this group vis-a-vis the Modern Egyptian State and society in general.

At the root of the family tree of this thesis, the closest scholar relatives to my project (and resonating with Loffler's longing for an updating of Modern Church History) are those that deal with the post-World War II period, when local Christians

gradually gained control of mission institutions. Mainline churches decreased their mission budgets and turned toward more “secular” pursuits, while FBOs emerged to oversee socio-economic development programs. At the same time, the establishment of the state of Israel spurred missionary activity by newer evangelical churches, which remain active in the region today (Tejirian and Simon 2012).

Recently, as a follow-up of the study of missionary activities in the nineteenth century, welfare and relief activities proved a fertile field for such research. Partly, this interest originates in the transformation of missionary institutes into welfare organizations influenced by changing political circumstances and theological motivations. Crawling away from History and Missionary Studies and into the realm of Modern Church History and Anthropology, studies like Nefissa Naguib and Inger Marie Okkenhaug “*Interpreting Welfare and Relief in the Middle East*” (2009) bring together a number of case studies that address a wide range of different contexts from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. The cases range from emergency relief during the First World War to long-term humanitarian assistance in Gaza; from completely western- and missionary-sponsored maternity care to locally organized Islamic *zakat*, from Yemen to Armenia, to Egypt, Gaza, Palestine and Jordan.

In the same line as Naguib and Okkenhaug, writing in “*Faith of Our Fathers: Missionaries and NGOs, The Transition*,” Eleanor H. Tejirian documents the transition from religious to secular, or non-governmental organizations (NGOs), in providing social services in the Middle East. In the same manner as the Egyptian legal corpus has framed the activities of the JBAD to be in line with those of other Egyptian NGOs, her essay also draws clear parallels between early religious efforts and their later secular counterparts but in different settings.

The role of religion in FBOs is of particular interest of this thesis as the JBAD is exposed to a challenging sectarian configuration where religious disputes may even lead to sectarian violence (q.v. “Chapter 6 Egypt is Islamic”?). In this regard, in all the mentioned essays religion plays a role, not solely due to their foundational motives but because many of the activists and their donors were driven by strong religious motivations. However, while above mentioned studies address the role of religion in the construction of welfare and relief activities, none of them tackle religion as a challenge or a sectarian burden. In contrast, the present study aims to give an

account on how religious identity can be an advantage but also a liability in a Coptic scenario.

2.2.3 Anglocentrism in Missiology

Assuming that one accepts to continue studying Catholic Copts within the frame of Missionary History, a newcomer to the field will find her/himself with an additional challenge: the literature regarding missionary history in Egypt is dominated by texts that focus or only offer an Anglocentric (Protestant) perspective.

More than Catholic missions, a complete sub-genre of Anglo-American missions has been widely documented (Tejirian and Simon, Meinardus 2005, Sedra 2006, Barrett 2012, to name a few) that can initially be explained due to their longer and more recent connection to power and colonialism compared to that of the French. The several Protestant missionary movements from the late eighteenth century until the eve of World War I were prompted by religious revivals on both sides of the Atlantic. Protestant missionary societies set out to convert Jews and Muslims and revitalize Christianity in the Middle East that had lost traction from Catholic missions (Doğan 2014). A series of mid-nineteenth-century Ottoman reforms opened the way for the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), the British Church Missionary Society (CMS), and other Protestant mission boards to expand their evangelistic and educational activities in Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Egypt, Anatolia, and across the Persian frontier.

Of course, these missions did not arrive to a vacuum. Backed by their national governments, French Catholic and Russian Orthodox missionaries continued as rivals to Protestants in the region. They capitalized on ties with Middle Eastern Catholic and Orthodox churches to build their own networks of schools. Tejirian and Simon in particular explain the connection between missionary impact and power. As the French presence in North Africa facilitated the entrance of Catholic priests and nuns, British ascendancy in the Gulf did the same for CMS and American reformed church missions (Tejirian and Simon 23-38).

Protestant missions also arrived with competing educational offers that fomented nationalist movements and instilled western ideas into their students. Texts such as Paul Sedra's *From Mission to Modernity: Evangelicals, Reformers and Education in Nineteenth-Century Egypt* (2011) present how the activities of nineteenth-century Anglican missionaries served as means of reformation and “*cultural conversion*” which presented Copts with educational opportunities beyond the Orthodox or Catholic ones (Sedra 2011:11).

As a final observation, beyond the impact of colonial power in the production of mission-related knowledge, the recurrence of studies focused on Protestant missions in Egypt- is also understandable due to a more practical factor: the lingua franca of most Catholic missions until the last century has been French. Therefore, the few historical accounts on Catholic missionary work and Coptic Catholic developments have been documented by predominantly Italian speaking (Colombo 1953) and francophone clergy (Ayzout 1992, Macaire 1894, Muysers 1951 to mention a few).

In this regard, this project is a small contribution to English-speaking literature addressing not only Catholic Copts but also Catholic missions in Egypt in general.

2.2.4 Orthodox-centrism: the monopoly of the political Copt

Literature regarding Copts is clear in stressing that they are not an ordinary minority. Assimilationist practices to co-opt and survive with the Muslim majority and even clientelism (Barker, 2006) have been some of the tools that have allowed the Orthodox Coptic Church in particular, to become a dual contractor that overshadows other minorities (even those that were also part of the original dhimmi contract, i.e. Jews, see Ayad 2012).

Conflicts of modernity in Egypt, manifested through its conflict with nationalism (Jankowski 1990; Tadros, 2013), and the process of nation building are challenges that are frequently discussed when addressing minorities in Egypt (*Faraha*, 2012; Tadros, 2009). Nonetheless, the bulk of pieces that preaches on the

matter turn down the lights when arriving to the borders of additional religious groups beyond the traditional Egyptian dichotomy (e.i. Muslim + Coptic Orthodox).

Though clear that the modern Coptic Orthodox Church has become an institution whose affairs are administered in a strictly hierarchical fashion, and bears a strong resemblance to the Egyptian state (Sedra 2014), all in all, the way in which Copts are discussed, both scholar work and the media, seems stuck in the nineteenth century in that it still relies on the conventional wisdoms of the millet paradigm. As I will elaborate in Chapter 7 ("Coptic Means Egyptian"), this particular way of theorizing impedes any meaningful conversation about citizenship in the political arena.

However, this is not only a political or demographic reality. Scholarship in the field has also played a significant role in closing the *milla* (q.v. *Chapter 4.1*) more strongly. Since the early 60s Wakin (1963) had criticized Coptic scholarship as "*self-centered and chauvinistic*" (Wakin 1963:6) and, though it's not the objective of this study to second such descriptions, it does seek to point out that the recent influx in interdisciplinary scholarship on Coptic affairs has not created an academia that complicates the concept beyond economic or intra-communal lines (Iskander 2013, Sedra 1999 and 2014, Tadros S. 2010, Tadros M. 2009). Ethnographic studies by Ghada Botros or Anthony Shenouda; research on Coptic relations with the Egyptian state in the early twentieth century by Vivian Ibrahim, Elizabeth Iskander, Paul Sedra, Samuel Tadros; Marize Tadros and historical accounts as that of Febe Anthanasious are part of the school of diasporic (some second generation) Copts who have created a literature that portrays the so-called "Coptic question" as one that includes Orthodox Copts only.

As understandable as it is that they concentrate on what seems to be the dominant political and numerical question, their backing by non-Coptic Western scholarship (Walkin, Meinardus) have reaffirmed the modern exclusivity of term "Copt" to the Coptic Orthodox Church and dismissed other actors as irrelevant. Only recently, as a reflection of the questions that the uprisings of this decade awoke, have alternative research projects by both recognized scholars (Sharkey 2008 and

2013) and students²⁰ started to complicate the question to include Non-Orthodox actors. This thesis situates itself in the genre that problematizes Egypt beyond binaries.

2.3 Theoretical Framework and New Transitions

2.3.1 Sectarianism and Nationalism

Waves of anti-Coptic violence, hate crimes and sectarian clashes during the past half century (strengthened by Sadat's promotion of Islam in public life, the rise of Islamist militancy in Egypt since the 1970s, Morsi's twelve-month tenure and even the 2013 coup) have cornered Copts in the intersection of religious discourse and authoritarian control. Remembering the army's massacre of civilians at Maspero in October 2011; the siege on St. Mark's Cathedral in April 2013 near the end of Mohamed Morsi's presidency; the looting and arson of churches and Christian properties after General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi took power in the summer of 2013; and, more recently, the terrorist attack on the Coptic Orthodox Cathedral in El Abaseya in December 2016 and bloody Palm Sunday 2017 does not make it hard to see why literature addressing Copts is eager to highlight Egyptian sectarianism and insist that Copts remain one of Egyptian society's most vulnerable and persecuted communities (Tadros, 2013).

For the purposes of this study, I will adhere to Gareth Higgins and John Brewer's (2003) discussion of the meaning of sectarianism, referring to it as *"the determination of actions, attitudes and practices about religious difference, which results in them invoked as the boundary marker to represent social stratification and conflict"* (Brewer: 109). Thus, sectarianism will not be limited to addressing sectarian strife, but rather a whole cluster of ideas, beliefs, myths and demonology about religious difference which are used to make religion a social marker. This study

²⁰ For instance: Dowell, Anne (2014). "The church in the square: negotiations of religion and revolution at an evangelical church in Cairo" or Hazel Haddon, Hazel (2012). "Gender and Identity in Contemporary Coptic Society", both available at <http://dar.aucegypt.edu/>

understands sectarianism as more than a set of prejudiced attitudes but also behaviors, policies and types of treatment that are informed by religious difference.

This study will also approach sectarianism or *ta'ifiyya* as a neologism that was born in the age of nationalism or *wataniyya* to signify the antithesis of nation; predicated on and constructed against a territorially bounded liberal nation-state (Gyanendra 1992). In other words, it considers how the territorialization and pluralization of religion placed religion, in Benedict Anderson's phrase, "*in a competitive, comparative field*" to nationalism (Anderson 1991: 17).

For this study, in addition to Anderson's (1983) explanation to how nationalism led to the creation of nations, or "*imagined communities*" (See Chapter 4.4.2), Anthony Smith's (1986) understanding of nationalism will be adopted to contrast it with sectarianism. Smith refers to nationalism as a modern (developed in the end of the 18th century) ideological movement based on common myths and memories among people to attain solidarity and define themselves as a nation (Smith: 13). He asserts that nationalism is a modern ideology which is created by conversion of ethnic or religious loyalties to national ones (Smith: 15).

Not surprisingly, the nationalist discourse supported by Copts has led to a paradox of Egyptian national unity where Copts claim to be persecuted but not necessarily marginalized. While lethal attacks on Egyptian Christians from the northern Sinai to Upper Egypt have besieged churches and slain Coptic clergy and laypersons, moments of inter-communal harmony are romanticized to claim that Copts are essential to the fabric of the Egyptian nation and construct Copts and Muslims in Egypt as, although different, mainly the same as each other (Paulsen: 45).

Works addressing on the so-called "Coptic Question" based on both of these paradigms – e.i sectarianism/ Coptic persecution (Walkin 2001, Tadros 2013) and nationalism/ national unity discourse (Iskander 2014)- are in no short supply. However, while several studies have claimed to provide innovative ways to grasp the area's complex politics by dismissing the monolithic portrayal of Copts,²¹ I argue that

²¹ Ibrahim (2013) proposes an alternative interpretation of Coptic agency; Sedra (1999) proposes a focus on class and Paulsen (2012) analyses formations of sameness and

without considering internal sectarian lines within the different Christian sects in Egypt, such attempts to deconstruct the shortfalls of Egyptian citizenship (what I will refer to as the “Egyptian question”) are blind and inefficient.

Neither of these two narratives is completely useful for the standing point of the study I propose as they fail to address the elephant in the room: that there are more religious discourses in Egypt beyond those controlled by el Azhar or the See in Abassiyya. They are founded on the dichotomous myth in which all Egyptians who are not Muslim claim *ipso facto* loyalty to the Coptic Orthodox Church. Nevertheless, Orthodox Copts are not the only persecuted minority in Egypt and failing to include other Egyptians that do not claim loyalty to the tenants preached any of these two religious entities, such as Bahaiis, Shias, atheists, (even) non-observant Orthodox Copts or –as in the case of this study- Catholics, makes the idea of national unity based on a dual sectarian division a surreal claim.

Asef Bayat (2013) has hinted towards the position where I situate my study when mentioning that Coptic *immigration* “has cemented a strong identity politics among the vocal Coptic community in exile and to a lesser degree among Copts living in Egypt” (Bayat: 158). At a basic level, this study adheres to the mantra “*all politics is identity politics*” as the term refers to any politics that seeks to represent and/or advance the claims of a particular social group (Parker 2005: 54). However, this study will pay particular attention to the way dominant groups may use identity politics as means of limiting the representation of others subordinate groups. It will look at identity politics as the “*premise that all members of the group have more in common than the members have with anyone outside the group; that they are oppressed in the same way, and therefore, that they all belong on the same road to justice*” (Anner 1996: 24). For the purposes of this study, Orthodox Copts will not be framed as a dominant minority. However, this thesis will present a critique to how Coptic identity politics, through the embracing of Coptic nationalism and even clientelism with the Egyptian State, has in fact hampered the notion of Egyptian

difference Orthodox Christian practices in Egypt take shape under the influence of hegemonic narratives of sameness and difference.

citizenship, served to write out other religious minorities in Egypt and even challenged the sense of community inside the JBAD.

As a caveat, the intention of this study is not to deny the persecution of Copts nor undermine the afflictions of those who claim loyalty to the Coptic Orthodox Church. Nancy Fraser warned back in 1998 that “identity politics”, can be used largely as a derogatory term for categories such as feminism, anti-racism and anti-heterosexism; the implication being that they are flimsy, superficial and, to use Judith Butler’s memorable phrase, “*merely cultural*” categories (Butler 1997:26). Neither is it to promote the naturalization of dominant politics (in the case of Egypt, Islam oriented) as universal. The goal of this study is to rather to deconstruct a category (See Chapter 4.4 Constructing Copticness) that has been kidnapped by identity politics to render, in a way that is more faithful to everyday life, the reality of the JBAD in Minya and, simultaneously, highlight and counter academic snub towards Catholic Copts.

2.3.2 Activism, voluntarism, and citizenship

Caught between authoritarian regimes, militant Islam and Coptic identity politics, one would be tempted to depict other (non-Coptic Orthodox) Egyptian minorities through the lens of victimhood and marginalization. In a quest for alternative formulations which highlight the many shifting ways in which one of these minorities experiences, negotiates, and contests hegemonic systems of power, this study will pay special attention to bottom-top dynamics which have drawn sectarian lines among the different actors at the JBAD in their day-to-day lives. It is through a myriad of daily struggles by variegated actors that I aim to deconstruct Copticness using a range of illustrative cases to argue for alternative, context-specific conceptualizations of Coptic agency and politics.

In this chain of thought, the setting of the community on which this thesis focuses is based in a grassroots institution that under Egyptian Law, is considered a non-for profit organization. Chapter 6 will engage with the particular question of whether or not the JBAD can be classified as a faith-based organization (FBO) or a NGO when considering the threat that any insinuations of proselytism among its

Muslim beneficiaries could represent to its staff and the organization itself. However, as the activities of the JBAD are far encompassing and I counted with the advantage that my informants were eager to open and expose to me activities outside the walls of the JBDA, this study will look at different forms of participation and adopt a broad understanding of what activism means.

In the volunteerism literature, activism is argued to be a form of volunteering (Wilson, 2000; Musick & Wilson, 2008). Musick and Wilson (2008) suggest that activism differs from volunteering by collective action for a collective good; activists therefore work collectively for change. Research further supports the conventional wisdom that activists are oriented towards politics and social change whereas volunteers are oriented towards providing services. That is to say, volunteers distance themselves from the political connotations of activism (e.g., Eliasoph, 1988; Wuthnow, 1991).

Certainly, the line between activism and volunteerism is blurred: activists often do volunteer work and volunteers become activists. Therefore, in unison John Wilson (2000) who argues that volunteerism and activism are the same activity, no distinction will be made between informants who engage in any of the two - whether in an individual or collective action- as long as they are oriented towards in local conditions—the local conditions as the collective good.

Rather, it is in the interest of this study to understand how volunteers, staff and beneficiaries at the JBAD negotiate sectarian boundaries in relation to these activities. How are Coptic actors (Orthodox and Catholic) framing their claims for copticness; or Muslim participants avoid such claims and how do they articulate their religious identity when involved in “altruistic” (Giugni and Passy, 2001) or “moral” activism (Reynaud, 1980) is of greater inherent interest to this study.

This focus does not imply, however, that the activism and volunteerism that takes place at the JBAD does not have a political connotation. The fact that Catholic Copts have been marginalized from academia (q.v. section 2.3.1) and politics (q.v. section 2.1.1) does not mean that they have been marginalized from their membership, interaction and contribution to the nation-state that they belong to. The cases that will be presented in this study bear witness of the existence of alternative

sites of struggle that affect how Catholic Coptic subjectivities enact the conception of the political.

In order to make sense of the implications of such developments for citizenship in Egypt, especially considering the political convulsions and challenges facing the country since 2011, we require new approaches to old categories. Debates about whether citizenship is status or practice have moved this concept in the direction of socio-cultural reconceptualization and turned citizenship into a civic-cultural phenomenon (Paine, 2006; Putnam, 2002; Lie, 2009). This thesis will thus adhere to the trend that has sought for a new vocabulary of citizenship that goes beyond the traditional sites of citizenship contestation such as voting and military obligation (Jacobson, 1996; Torpey, 2000; Benhabib, 2004). Instead, this thesis sides with studies that emphasize citizenship in terms of practice and typically focus on integration, cohesion, multiculturalism, nationalism and transnationalism (Body-Gendrot and Martiniello, 2000; Ferrera, 2003; Penninx, 2004).

In particular to the efforts of JBAD staff and beneficiaries, Tully (2008)'s rendering of praxis-based citizenship will serve to understand how citizenship can be fundamentally defined by praxis or engagement in local and diverse forms of civic practices, rather than by a legal status tied to the nation-state. In Tully's terms, all activists at the JBAD become citizens in regard to the agent's active and on-going engagement with other people; by developing their own civic practices and civic skills (Tully 2008:29).

While the Egyptian State has granted a quasi- monopolistic representation of minority rights to the Coptic Orthodox Church and Coptic nationalism has excluded Catholic Copts from this political equation (q.v. Chapter 4), this thesis will argue that citizenship for Catholic Copts should be understood in relation to their engagement in local and diverse forms of civic practices. In other words, citizenship for Catholic Copts is a subjectivity that enacts the political by transforming themselves and others and by articulating, materializing and expanding social rights.

2.4 Methodology

In anthropology, Roger Sanjek reminds us that the term “ethnography” has two meanings: ethnography understood as product and ethnography as a process, as a method (Sanjek 2010: 244). As a product, it most often means ethnographic monograph taking the form of ethnographic documents or articles (Bălan 2011:67). For the interest of this study, however, I borrow entry point to ethnography from Davies (1999) saying ethnography is a “*research process based on fieldwork using a variety of (mainly qualitative) research techniques but including engagement in the lives of those being studied over an extended period of time*” (Davies 1999: 4-5).

In this regard, I sometimes believe that I did not choose the subject of this study as much as it chose me. The networks inside different Christian communities in Egypt that I began engaging with since the summer of 2013 simply drove me to the subject, as it was my subjects themselves who suggested, provided sources and provided their support to facilitate my fieldwork. According to Metcalf (2005) the anthropologist engaged in ethnographic field research must keep in mind three main requirements: to integrate into society studied for a long time, to become proficient enough in the local language (as to have a direct dialogue with the members of the studied society) and to engage in participant observation (Metcalf 2005: 9-11). All of these three conditions were in some extent supported by my informants.

Wolcott (1995) defines fieldwork as a form of inquiry that requires a researcher to be immersed personally in the ongoing social activities of some individual or group carrying out the research. I was enthusiastically offered assistance and even accommodation in monasteries/ church houses in the Patriarchates of Sohag, Luxor and Minya for this purpose. Particularly in Minya, I began participating and observing their activities during the winter of 2015 until February 2016 when my main interlocutor was reassigned to a different country. Before these dates (and due to its proximity with Cairo, where I had been based for three years) I had made intermittent visits to Minya.

In the gaps between my trips, I accessed academic and archival material in Cairo (particularly in Franciscan and Combonian headquarters). I was additionally

provided extensive access and assistance in the Catholic Coptic Seminary in Maadi, Cairo to analyze secondary data.

I performed several interviews to priests, social leaders, NGO workers, missionaries, parishioners, people benefited by these programs and their families. As the JBAD is such an active organization (with at least 21 on-going programs at the time I researched and participants are quite diverse), I employed focal groups for understanding their interactions according to the activity that they would benefit from and their leaders.

I also conducted individual interviews with eleven priests (two Coptic Orthodox, four Roman Catholic, one Greek Catholic and four Coptic Catholic), the Catholic Coptic patriarch of the time (*Sayedna*²² Ibrahim Isaac Sidrak), eight nuns (four Roman Catholic, four Coptic Catholic), eleven lay leaders in the Association and even two Egyptian Evangelical pastors to contrast views. I conducted interviews and focus groups with seventeen youth (between 16 to 25 years old), twenty two adults (above that age) and seven parents or tutors (when addressing underage beneficiaries or beneficiaries with mental disabilities). These beneficiaries were all regular attendees and most were referred to me by leaders of the Association.

Semi-structured interviews were chosen for both practical and theoretical reasons. Considering some people had a time limit for the interview, each conversation had to be approached differently. In order to maintain rapport, the questions were changed to suit each interview as the situation and individual dictated, allowing to maintain a natural atmosphere of conversation compared to a rigid set of questions. It is important to point out that in order to maintain the privacy and confidentiality of my interlocutors all names used are pseudonyms.

Despite the above mentioned methods, the ethnographic method that proved itself most revealing was participant observation. This method was chosen because it emphasizes observations of natural behavior and it captures social life as the participants experienced it (Richardson 2000:253). This method also allowed a richer, more intimate view of the social world than could have been achieved using structured methods (Schutt 2006: 320). Due to this last point and the variety of

²² Arabic: "His holiness"

participants, I additionally engaged in participant observation in classes, ceremonies, trips, festivals, family gathering and general activities.

While my fieldwork had a very particular territorial delimitation and the focus of my study was based on the JBAD, the conclusions that I arrive to would in no way be complete without considering my complete experience with various religious institutions around the country during my fieldwork as well as those that led to it. This research was informed by several Youth Missions and trips to Catholic villages near Beni Suef, Sohag, Aswan and villages surrounding the JBAD in which I participated during the summers and Holy Week breaks of 2014 and 2015. It was further enriched with observations I gathered from volunteer work with the Missionaries of Charity (the congregation for nuns founded by Mother Theresa) in Shoubra and Makkattam (respectively); a year of studies in the Cairo-based branch of the Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies (PISAI- Combonian Mission); participating in several Coptic Orthodox youth groups that meet in St Mark's church in Heliopolis and Friday meetings with Evangelical Egyptians in Kasr Doubara during the summer of 2015; a year of participation in AUC's Coptic Orthodox clubs such as the resurrected CDC (Coptic Discovery Club) and regular attendance to Sunday masses with Catholic Coptic communities in Cairo even once fieldwork at the JBAD was no longer an option. Without such exposure, this project would have never been conceived and its results would be near-sighted and out of context. Most importantly, without such exposure, I would have never met the Jesuit priest who, optimistic about the role of Catholicism in the Egyptian development scene, not only encouraged me to pursue this study, but also offered me access and support inside their community.

Furthermore, my professional experience as a project designer and fundraising manager in a grassroots NGO in Cairo during the year and a half while I drafted this study (after my opportunity to perform fieldwork in Minya was over) has given me a privileged insight to the opinions some of the employees at the JBAD had shared with me, and whose professional challenges are now my own.

Although at the beginning of my collective process I obtained a Baccalaureate in Modern Standard Arabic, Islamology and Interreligious Dialogues from the PISAI-Combonian Mission in Cairo, my initial challenge in interviews regarded language

skills. Interviews with clergymen (and women) were all in a blend of Arabic, and facilitated by their command of English, French or Italian (in which my levels of proficiency also vary). Interviews with community leaders were held in Arabic with the assistance of my intermediary to translate when needed. As for the rest of my interviews and participant observation, I relied in a first instance on my own Arabic skills. However, due the fact that most of my interviewees were mostly from a rural, working class from Upper Egypt (and their pronunciation and slang varies notably from the Modern Standard Arabic I had been studying three years behind), my research was ultimately possible due to the translation and patience of my main intermediary and other bilingual staff.

Beyond language and the lack of availability of my main interlocutor (in the final stages of my fieldwork), being a foreigner and being a female one was a far cry from being a liability. The community is very friendly and hospitable towards foreigners and being female facilitated receiving offers from my subjects to even be hosted and sleep in their homes. In several instance, I had participants offering me lifts and meals, receiving follow-up calls from participants to make sure I made it home safely and even offering me to share a bedroom with their children when I was not sure where I'd spend the night. . . something I believe that may have been harder to achieve if I had been a male researcher. Even within clergymen that live only among men (particularly the Jesuits is a male-only order) rapport was easy as priests are trained to serve communities regardless of their gender.

Finally, a disclosure should be made regarding my status as an outsider: although I do not fit in the strict sense of and “insider” (Kanuha, 2000) as I do not share a common *“language and experiential base with the study participants”* (Asselin, 2003), I do share a partial common identity with some of my subjects as I confess myself as a practicing Roman Catholic. Asselin (2003) has suggested that it is best for the insider researcher to gather data with her or his *“eyes open”* but assuming that she or he knows nothing about the phenomenon being studied. As I had never been exposed to any Eastern Catholic rites (or any type of Orthodoxy, for that matter) before leaving my homeland (in 2013), I did not have to fake or assume that I “knew nothing” about the phenomenon being studied. Even with a strong Catholic education (which I assumed I had), the Coptic rite can seem too foreign to people from other Catholic rites so I genuinely had to learn to be Coptic from scratch.

Perhaps my conundrum will be fully understood in Chapter 3.3 ("A Church of Many Nations") when a Roman Catholic seminarian that studied Arabic with me in Cairo voiced out the main ritualistic and legal differences between the Coptic and Roman Catholic rites.

Nevertheless, presenting this membership as a transnational co-religionist certainly provided me with a certain amount of legitimacy, not to mention more rapid and more complete acceptance and openness to access data and participate intimately in the community. Ethnographers know that achieving emic validity does not mean so-called objectivity in positivist paradigms of the so-called objective neutral investigator, but rather accepting and analyzing our own human subjectivity in this process (Whitehead 2005: 7). Under this logic, while all ethnographic research is indeed a constructivist product of the inter-subjectivity between the researcher and the researched, I strived to adopt a reflexive approach to allow the multiple narratives that are bound to arise from the inquiry speak for themselves and avoid imposing a larger, single narrative on them.

3. Sons of a transnational church: Coptic Catholics and their international affinity

The strident *zaghrota* (ululation) announced the arrival of the bride and groom. The brothers of *el arousa* (the bride) searched for a table for Abouna (the priest) to sign the engagement contract and officiate the ceremony. Crowded in the living room of the apartment of a Coptic Catholic family in the capital city of Minya, aunts and cousins of the couple pushed through chairs and sofas to get the closest they could get to them and take pictures of this scene. My attention here like in that wedding, however, was consecrated to different pictures. As this Catholic Coptic family was sending off their eldest daughter to married life, three frames hung proudly in the middle of the living room, decorating and framing the center of this family's life.

The grammar of these three images was explained to me the next morning by Mr. Emad,²³ my host and father of the bride (who I had met during the literacy program of the JBAD and insisted I attend her wedding). The semiotics of the picture in the center, an icon of Mary Girgis (Saint George), will be understood in chapters 4 and 5 where I explain the importance of Coptic heritage and identity to Catholic Copts and their ties and contention with the Coptic Orthodox Church.

In this chapter, I intend to justify the apparition and relevance of the frames that were on both sides: the 266th Pope of the Roman Catholic Church, His Holiness Pope Francis I and His Grace Anba Ibrahim Sidrak (current Catholic Coptic Patriarch of Alexandria).

²³ Since rules for the ethical reporting of human research data prohibit researchers from revealing “confidential, personally identifiable information concerning their patients, . . . research participants, or other recipients of their services” (APA Publication Manual [PM]; 6th ed., p. 16; APA Ethics Code, Standard 4.07), I have re-baptized my interlocutors to prevent them from being identifiable and to protect participants’ confidentiality. As in other qualitative research, I have opted for pseudonyms as it helps portray their story by maintaining a human element.

First, I will explain the presence of the Jesuit NGO in Minya (where I met Mr. Emad) that is both influenced by a Jesuit-Roman Catholic thinking and local initiative. In this context, Mr. Emad, along with several other community workers, will voice the pluses and minuses that being affiliated to a transnational Church has brought Catholic Coptic Minyians in terms of development.

While being part of a larger Catholic church has advantages for Catholic Coptic activism, the last section of this chapter will complicate the ambivalence of Eastern Catholicism. Despite being in full communion with the whole Catholic Church in terms of dogma, the Catholic Coptic Church is a unique entity that retains their distinctive liturgical rites, laws, customs and traditional devotions. The inculturationalist approach that was assumed by Rome during the last half of the 20th century was a top-bottom approach that aimed to be closer to their flock. At the same time, this has created native institutions with its very own leaders, highlighting the participation of local agency.

3.1 The peasant and the priest: The Egyptian Society of Jesus

In 1991, Timothy Mitchell and Richard Critchfield embarked in blame game about bogus realism and plagiarism to define what they considered "the real" Egyptian peasant.²⁴ Regardless of the outcomes of this duel, what was undeniable in this quarrel was the print and impact that the writings of one man had left on

²⁴ Besides other accusations, Mitchell's "The Invention and Reinvention of the Egyptian Peasant" criticized certain popular studies of the Egyptian peasant for their recurrent bogus realism (Mitchell 1990: 129). This so-called realism was the product of an uncritical repetition of stereotypes from one study to the next, where the apparent veracity of the peasant image in one work is the result of its resemblance to all the others. Despite the claims of photographic realism of studies as those of Critchfield, he argued that this "real peasant" was something constructed out of earlier representations, plagiarized from earlier writings, in particular from the previous popular study in a similar genre: "The Egyptian Peasant" by Henry Ayrout (Mitchell 1990: 130). See Timothy Mitchell (1991). A Reply to Richard Critchfield, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 23, p 279-280; Critchfield, R. (1991). A Response to "The Invention and Reinvention of the Egyptian Peasant", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 23(2), 277-279. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/164259>.

Egyptian Rural studies (among other fields) decades behind. That man was Abouna Henry Ayrout.

Originally published as "*Moeurs et Coutumes des Fellahs*", Abouna Henry Habib Ayrout prepared his dissertation on the "*Customs and Habits of the Peasant*" to acquire his PhD degree from the University of Lyon, France, in 1938 (Habib 1938; ii) and then published it to the public in a book called "*The Peasant*". Ayrout's study is a mix of human geography, anthropology and social psychology that described the peasantry in terms of their manners and customs, psychology and social relations in the home and community as well as their relationship with the geography and social-political history of Egypt. He focused on the detailed description of all the aspects of life of the Egyptian peasant, mentioning his economic, political, and social life.

Father Ayrout's book was accepted at once, not only in France, but also in Egypt as a standard work on the *fellahīn* (peasants, sing. *fellah*). It was among the first attempts of full-length study of the life of the *fellah* in all its main aspects (El Shakry 2007: 128) yet, it should be situated within its historical moment. Following the 1919 revolution, the period was characterized by a great flourishing of new Egyptian literary genre. Taha Hussein, Ahmad Sawqi and Abbas Al Aqqad shaped prose and poetry moved by the years filled with political upheavals. The years after 1929 in worldwide economic depression also affected Egypt's economy and inflation exacerbated an already difficult time for the urban and the rural poor (El Shakry, 2007: 130).

The book started by tackling the political environment of Egypt and its direct and indirect impact on the poor peasant (Habib 1938; 1-7). He then went forward on picturing the daily life of the peasant, answering basic questions regarding his everyday life and environment. It went through several revisions by the author before being translated and published in English in 1963, particularly for the purpose of indicating the influence of the Nasser agrarian reform of 1952 (which he was hopeful about) (Habib 1978;v), but the portrait of 1938 still stood.

Since his first edition, he developed through his ethnographic observation a description of the *mentalité* of the peasantry that was changeless. Ayrout's fallah was passive and fatalist and has "*become like the Nile, indifferent rather than idle*"

(Habib 1978: 143). Whatever rhymes he elaborated, Ayrout produced a *fellah* that was static, resigned and submissive defined by his proximity to nature; a *fallah* that though capable of repetition, memorization and reproduction, lacked of personality and initiative (Habib 1978: 139). He produced a predictable natural kind (Putnam 1975) whose behavior was governed by a collective psychology and a lack of individuality.

He featured the village as a homogeneous interdependent community composed by the same types of people, the same customs, traditions, modes of life, standards of living and physical structure as "*Nothing is more like one Egyptian village than another Egyptian village*" (Habib 1978: 89). The *fallah*, thus, was not an occupational concept but a rather unifying one that reflected social values and worldviews shared by those in a rural community, even those who were not directly involved in the agricultural economy.

This assumption of a collective unconscious psychology that unified the Egyptian village would become a hallmark of writings on the peasantry. Ayrout's methodology acquired continuous relevance and hence, monopoly in the minds of Western Orientalists by its ahistorical method of explanation, in which the condition of rural Egypt is attributed not to political and economic forces of the day but to a timeless peasant mentality (Mitchell 1990: 131).

Although such an approach inhibited historical investigation into the social political and economic conditions of the peasantry (El Shakry, 2007: 130), this, of course, was not Ayrout's legacy alone. Classic works such as Edward Lane's (1836) "*Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*" and Blackman's manuscripts (1916-1924)²⁵ and her later "*The Fellahin of Upper Egypt*" had long been in circulation.

Furthermore, in the missionary field, the Eurocentric view of what "backwardness" meant had also been a popular theme. Cultural imperialism had been deployed to justify more "enlightened" or "civilized" attitudes and justify

²⁵ Blackman, Winifred Susan. (1916) "The Magical and Ceremonial Uses of Fire", (1918) "The Rosary in Magic and Religion", (1918) "Traces in Couvade" and (1924) "Some beliefs among the Egyptian peasants with regard to 'afarit' ("*demons*").

missionary campaigns (Israeli, 1995:208). The 19th century contest to reform Coptic Christianity by Protestant and Catholic missionaries was also filled with this politics to label the Copt, particularly the fellah Copt, as backward since both of them were drawing from the same pool of misinformation that Europeans had accumulated over centuries (Sharkey 2011:31).

In the particular case of the Jesuits, although the strategy of “accommodation” and efforts to naturalize Catholicism by using local concepts (Whitehead, 2014: 447) has been a trademark of Jesuit missions, this has not exempted them from insinuating European claims of superiority. For instance, the Jesuits in late Ming China rendered the image of a land tyrannized by eunuchs in order to bolster European self-perception as a civilized and superior race (Harris 1966).

Nonetheless, Ayrout orientalist tones can seem somewhat surprising, as he was not a foreign missionary. Born an Egyptian of Syrian origin, and fluent both in French and Arabic, he was the second son of a wealthy family (El Shakry, 2007: 130). He got his education at the Holy Family School (Collège de La Sainte Famille) in Cairo, which explains to some degree his decision to join the Jesuits. It is noteworthy that the main source of data for the book was gathered directly from the community of peasant in contact with Fr. Ayrout (El Shakry, 2007: 131) and that he shared a native language with these communities. Still, his writings also speak of his Western education both in Cairo and after departing to France in the mid 1930's.

For his celebrated essay, *Père Ayrout* is remembered as a Jesuit sociologist; for his contribution in designing modern day Heliopolis,²⁶ as an architect; but his most important legacies, at least for the purposes of this study, are as educator and activist. Not only did “*The Peasant*” become a benchmark for ethnographic work regarding *fellahīn*, but the book introduced an applicable paradigm for development. Upon his return to Egypt in 1940, he established the first of his associations, the Catholic Association for Schools of Egypt, now known as Association of Upper Egypt for Education and Development (AUEED, the “Gamaïyyat as-Said”) (AUEED 2006).

²⁶ After being educated in Paris as an engineer-architect, he participated in the planning and construction of Heliopolis along with his two brothers, Charles and Max, who were also contracted for multiple projects. Their father, Habib Ayrout, was also a Lebanese-Egyptian architect practicing in Egypt. See Mitchell, Timothy. *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity*, University of California Press (2002), p. 332.

The Association of Upper Egypt for Education and Development (AUEED) is considered the application to the methodology that he set in his book for aiming to provide a better life for the poor people of Upper Egypt. Ayrout was assisted by several wealthy Egyptian families to support the AUEED as it provided its free education before the government applied this program on the national level (Goldschmidt, 2001).

Abouna Ayrout was considered a charismatic figure with a high drive for development (Sharkey 2013: 193). He advocated for land reform in Egypt, he participated in many scientific committees, non-governmental organizations, and he also held the post of vice-president of Caritas Egypt (Sharkey 2013: 194). Yet, although The AUEED is has been one of the biggest Catholic associations in Egypt since its inception, it was not enough of a contribution for him.

In 1966 in the capital city of Minya, Father Ayrout started a club to serve the inhabitants of the neighborhood. It was then named "*Graduates of the Union of the Jesuits and Brothers*". As the priest that was my initial and main contact with the association would narrate, it is through organizing cultural, social and scientific activities and events and helping poor students that they learned the needs of their community. The establishment was registered that same year as a non-profit NGO before the Ministry of Social Solidarity with the name "*The Jesuits' and Brothers' Association for Development*" (JBAD) and it would find shelter in the facilities that the Jesuits had in Minya since the end of the 19th century.

Once registered, a more specific mission was developed for the Minya-based association on which this study focuses. Through this mission, the JBAD was to assume its developmental responsibility for improving the lives of marginalized and poor communities and enable them to build their capacities. At the same time, the JBAD would work to promote values such as justice, love, accepting the other and intellectual enlightenment through awareness programs and cultural events.

As Milad, a member of the board and high range administrative worker would comment on their last bi-annual report, just from 2014 to 2016 the association reached more than 3,000 direct beneficiaries with 190 employees, countless volunteers, through 19 programs and 12 independent projects in 3 centers in Minya and lately, Aswan. This industrious and vibrant society has a very versatile scope

that ranges from cultural development, leadership training, educational and health services. After half a century of operating, the JBAD boasts of being the grandmother of a large extended family, of whose many of its members became leaders and professionals in their communities.

Whereas the JBAD continued on its own and outlived Father Ayrout, he would dedicate the rest his life to promoting education in Egypt.²⁷ He became rector from 1962 until his death of his own nest as a priest and activist: the Jesuit College in Faggala. Across from the busy train station on Ramses St. in Cairo, this *Collège de la Sainte Famille* (School of the Holy Family) had once been ordered in 1879 by Pope Leo III as a seminary to help prepare students become Catholic priests²⁸ that would then spread throughout Egypt (Khouzam 1937:8). Its standing as a quality institution would be testified by alumni such as Dr. Nagy Habib, Sayedna Maximos V Hakim and former UN Secretary General, Boutros Ghali, among others (Oficial Site: 2015).

Besides Ayrout, it is noteworthy to say that many Jesuits, particularly Coptic Jesuits, have played an important role in promoting development in Egypt. The Roman Catholic foundation of Caritas-International was established by the Jesuits in 1950 and made major contributions to the medico-social centers in Egypt, giving special attention to those suffering from Hansen's disease, and working within the Department of Leprosy (Campbell, 2013:147). The Jesuits have also been recognized for their unique endeavor for opening cultural spaces. From Alexandria to Luxor, each of the centers established in Egypt by the congregation has facilitated, in

²⁷ The reputation of the Jesuits as high quality educators, nonetheless, was not limited to Egypt. Since its foundation in 1540, the Society of Jesus quickly established itself as one of the most dynamic, influential orders within early-modern Catholicism that went from a modest association of students to a worldwide power (Campbell, 2013:17). The incredible global success of the Order as a teaching body must be attributed to the superiority of their methods such as the pedagogical directions and exercises of St. Ignatius²⁷, the great scholastic ordinances of Aquaviva, and the testimony of contemporaries, to understand the genius of Loyola as an educator (Campbell, 2013:22).

²⁸ Not only had the Jesuits been founded to draw Protestants back to Roman Catholicism, but the order had also been founded to help revive Catholic missions and form Melkite, Coptic, Armenian, and Chaldean "Uniate" churches in the Middle East and the founding of this school was part of such an agenda (Bicentenary, 2014).

different degrees, activities fostering cinema, photography, animation, literature and, to a lesser extent, dance.

In this regard, the order has been a strong advocate for theatre. Not only did theatre instruct and develop students' skills, but it reached out to the public. Thus theatre serves both a didactic purpose as well as a public relations opportunity by offering a local community a form of free entertainment. As I will elaborate in Chapter Six, theatre had become a cherished tool of social critique and education at the JBAD until they had to be paused due to sectarian attacks.

Due to the high educational and adaptational requirements for Jesuits to become priests, their thinking has been classified during several times of history as theological free and academically oriented. There have been times when the relationship between Jesuits and the Holy See has been tense due to questioning of official Church teaching and papal directives, such as those on abortion, birth control, homosexuality, and liberation theology (Campbell, 2013:3).

This last one found its way to Egypt particularly during the uprisings of 2011 and 2013. Abouna William Sidhom,²⁹ Coptic Jesuit and director of the Nahda Center in Fagalla, is the first Egyptian priest to translate and write intensely about Latin America's theology of liberation in Arabic.³⁰ The 1960s-70s Latin American movement was initiated by Catholic activists that pushed the church not just to care for the poor, but to liberate them from political and economic structures that held them in place. In his Egyptian edition, he has surrounded himself with Muslim and Christian activists that were at the forefront of the Egyptian revolution, that spread much of the early artistic graffiti in and around Tahrir, and that were vocal and even martyred in Maspero.

Like elsewhere in the world, the spokesperson for the Catholic Church in Egypt Abouna Rafiq Greiche expressed that the Egyptian church hierarchy distances

²⁹ As mentioned earlier, all the names in this thesis have been changed in order to protect interlocutors. Comments from interviews I held with with public figures such as Abouna William and Abouna Rafiq, among others, are the exception to this due to the public nature of their statements (similar positions have been disseminated in his books, public Facebook posts and media coverage has already made their positions public).

³⁰ Abouna William has written fourteen books, five on the subject.

itself from liberation theology because of Latin American associations with communism and violence. Nevertheless, Abouna William upholds that “*there is no faith without justice*”.

Egypt has changed enormously in the last eighty years since Ayrout’s study on Egyptian peasantry. Electrification, radio, television, smart phones and social media have brought the larger world into Egyptian homes. Government schools have increased educational horizons for children. Opportunities to work in other areas of the Arab world have been extended to peasants as well as to young artisans from the towns. Urbanization has brought many families to live in the belts of substandard housing around the major cities. But the conservative and traditional world of unremitting labor that characterizes the lives of the Egyptian peasants, or *fellahīn* as well as the institutions he conceived for them also survive and continue their dialogue as new actors arrive.

The term “Jesuit” from the outset could speak of a foreign institution alien to Egypt. Nonetheless, contributions of Jesuit Copts such as Abouna William or Abouna Henry are yet another example on how the Jesuit scheme can have fruits in all races and all nations, including Copts.

3.2 Catholicism: A passport to development

In the Middle East, Christians are better off than the Muslim majority...or so several sources in my research claimed. This is due to the natural selection-like process (i.e. the survival of the fittest) triggered by the imposition of the poll tax on non-Muslims or *jizya* upon the Islamic Conquest of the then Coptic Christian Egypt in 640 (Salah 2013: 11). The tax, which remained until 1855, led to the conversion of poor Copts to Islam to avoid paying the tax and to the shrinking of Copts to a better off (Meinardus 1970: 21), sort-to-say, elitist minority. The Copts, in particular, benefited the most from missionary education (Sedra 2011:7), have strong diasporic support (as they are most likely to get selected in visa lottery claiming religious persecution) (Salama 1996). The Church also motivates its believers to pay non-obligatory *oshour* (10% tithing of their salaries) as well as *bokour* (which is donating

one's full first salary to the Church) to support their community and thus, they constitute a privileged and stable elite in Egypt (Salah, 2013: 18). The idea that Christians in Egypt constitute a privileged elite is argued in studies like those of Salah (2013), in the media (El Borqoqi 2015) and it was the opinion of Ahmed - a 29-year old Muslim activist who I interviewed in Cairo with 7 years of experience in projects related to vocational training and economic empowerment - that explained the lack of Christian beneficiaries in the projects he participates in as, "*why would we help Christians if they are all rich?*", right?

Minya, the "Bride of Upper Egypt", under that surrealistic logic (where financial capacity is attached to one's religious affiliation) should be one of the most advanced governorates in Egypt as, after Assiut, it shelters the largest Christian population in the country (Hopkins and Saad, 2004: 12). It is called the "bride", in part, because it is rich in natural resources that include about 6.5 percent of all of the country's arable land (Mina, 2013). It is ranked as the top wheat producer and a major producer of sugar cane, cotton, and onions in Egypt (Egypt Network 2015). It enjoys a privileged location being a mid-point between the capital and the rest of Upper Egypt and it also feeds a couple hundred villages that surround it.

It is famous for its vivid green fields and Cairenes (surrounded by traffic and pollution) would romanticize its rustic way of life full of fresh air and clean water. Queen Nefertiti's statute in the city's entrance (the new one)³¹ stands august as the only female symbol of any governorate in Egypt. Yet this statute is a far cry from symbolizing the well-being of its daughters. Minya has been one of the poorest areas in the country over the last three decades (ironically finding the highest poverty rates

³¹ The original 3,300-year-old Queen Nefertiti was discovered in Amarna, Minya in 1912. The local government installed in July of 2015 a statue in her honor but it instantly went viral on social media, with hundreds of Egyptians mocking the as "extremely ugly" and comparing to Frankenstein. It was removed due to local pressure and a new, higher-quality bust was installed in the same location in on January 6, 2016. See "*6 months after 'Frankenstein' Nefertiti removal, new bust of pharaonic queen installed*" *Ahram Online*, Wednesday 6 Jan 2016. <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/180289/Egypt/Politics/-months-after-Frankenstein-Nefertiti-removal,-new-.aspx>

in Assiut 69%),³² and due to the quality (or lack of it) of life Minya offers to most of her inhabitants, she may seem to be more of an old maid or a spinster than a “bride”.

The idealized image of Minya became politically fashionable under the socialist government of Gamal Abdel Nasser. The *fellah* became an iconic figure during his 1952 land reforms that gave poor tenant farmers rights to the land they worked in perpetuity and 50 per cent of seats in parliament were reserved for those from worker and fellah backgrounds (Mina, 2013). But after decades of Cairo-centric, neoliberal cronyism, rural poverty, already severe in Minya, would see the undeniable effects of State neglect.

Prior to the advent of political-economic restructuring in the 1980s, the Middle East was largely dominated either by pro-Western rentier states (Arab oil states, Iran) or, in the case of Nasser, nationalist populist states. These authoritarian states had pursued a state-led economic development strategy as oil and other rents allowed states the possibility of offering social provisions. Ideologically driven populist states – Egypt included- dispensed significant economic and social welfare in education, health care, employment, housing and so on (Abdelrahman, 2013: 569). Yet the oppressive nature of both types of states restricted political participation and the development of civil society organizations.

The arrival of liberalization and marketization in the Middle East during the 1980s brought about important socioeconomic changes. The free market economy made consumer commodities available and enriched society’s upper strata, while it has also increased income disparity. State provisions were undermined and poor people had to look for solutions off their own bat for survival (Abdelrahman, 2013: 570). Meanwhile, the globalized notions of human rights and political participation placed economic rights and citizen participation on the political agenda, opening up a new crusade under the flag of development.

³² The highest poverty rates in Upper Egypt are found in Assyut 69%, Sohag 59% Aswan 54%, Qena, 51%, and Minya 50% (according to statistics from Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS). See Mohamed Adel, “Assyut, Sohag, Qena, Aswan and Minya are the poorest governorates of the country “Al Wafed newspaper on 21st June 2013.

In this context, the spread of NGOs gained momentum during the 1980s and especially in the 1990s. The growth of this type of activism coincided with the relative decline in traditional, class-based movement, such as peasant organizations and cooperative movements, but not faith-based community services. Like elsewhere, the general phenomenon that developed at the end of WWII where missionary institutions turned into NGO's (Jawad 2009) reverberated in Egypt.

Coptic Jesuit initiatives for development were no exception to the transition from mission into an NGO under Egyptian Law and nation-wide Jesuit organizations underwent major administrative changes. Since the 60s, both the AUEED and JBAD administrations shifted to staff other than clergymen, the scope of services of the AUEED started to widen and new internal bylaws were set. In 1971, the AUEED changed the name of the Association from "*The Catholic Association for Schools in Egypt*" to be "*The Christian Association for Schools and Social Promotion*", and then in 1990 to be "*The Association of Upper Egypt for Education and Development*" (AUEED) so as to reflect the field and stakeholders of the activities of the Association (AUEED Official Site, 2015). The Nahda Center in Fagalla (central Cairo) soon saw its organization translated into a managerial system when World Bank funds were injected in the 90's to this Jesuit culture center and Nahda activities, as well as the networks with the other Jesuits' NGOs in Alexandria and Minya, grew and became more influential.

As mentioned in the previous section, the JBAD in Minya was registered almost from its inception before the Ministry of Solidarity in the late 60s. In other words, though it was conceived by a Jesuit, incubated by a group of Jesuits and its facilities (that include the School of the Jesuit Fathers, "*Madasat El Aba'a El Yesuueen*") clearly state their ties to the order; it is subject to the same legal provisions as any other secular NGO in Egypt. It remains independent from the congregation in an administrative level, its official payroll does not include clergy and only a handful of its employees and beneficiaries are actually Catholic.

Despite its secular character at a legal and administrative level, the patronage of the Jesuits is a trademark that, in practice, represents several advantages for the work of the JBAD. The Jesuits own its buildings and the JBAD, as an NGO, only uses the space. The Jesuits' donations were the main stable fund

that the association relied on since its foundation, and the instances in which affiliation to the congregation represent a meaningful credential do not stop there.

In order to understand the range of benefits that its affiliation to the Jesuits and its identity as a Catholic-founded NGO brings to the JBAD, I recall the concept of social capital and one of its offshoots: religious capital. Robert Putnam explains that social capital comprises *“features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit”* (Putnam: 2000, 65–66). Pierre Bourdieu had clarified earlier the concept of social capital and contrasted it with other two forms of capital: economic capital (which is convertible into money) and culture capital (as in cultural habits, personal dispositions, and credentials) (1986: 47).

For Bourdieu, social capital is an aggregate of the actual or potential resources linked to possession of a durable network or to membership in a group that provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity (1986: 51). While none of the major works of Bourdieu tackle the subject of religion or its interaction with the concept of social capital, Christopher Candland (2000: 356, 370), remolded the concept of social capital and considers faith to be also one of its forms as the basis of binding people together for developmental projects. This particular dimension, an adaptation of the theory of social capital, is loosely dubbed as *“religious capital”* (Iannaccone 1990; Bremmer 2006; Tomalin 2007: 14).

Among those proposing the theory of religious capital is Laurence Iannaccone (1990, p. 299) who writes that religious practices can also be viewed as productive service. Essentially, the religious dimension of the theory of social capital consists of three spheres (Bremmer, 2006). The outermost sphere of faith capital is defined by aspects of spirituality in a given community (elaborated on in Chapter 6, when addressing the humanistic approach of Jesuits that allows the participation of Muslims in their services). The second sphere of faith capital is constituted by participation in religious services and affinity to religion by the members of a community (q.v. Chapter 5, when addressing the Coptic elements of Catholic Coptic spirituality), and the first sphere of faith capital is defined by the power (formal and informal) vested upon religious organizations (in this case the Church) through its distinctive status, visibility, and embeddedness in cultural practices in a given setting.

Urban (2003) has neologized this last sphere as “sacred capital” (2003:363). He describes it as the role and power vested upon the church and its priests to impose a specifically religious habitus upon the laity. Development practitioners invoke this first sphere of faith capital to give legitimacy to their initiatives and creating demand to an array of social goods through the power vested upon religious leaders due their scholarship, affiliation, and general recognition (2003:364). In Egypt, international and national Christian NGOs including CRS, Caritas, the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS), Gamaiat Al Said, besides the organization on which this study focuses, have a unique sacred capital vis-à-vis other secular or Muslim Egyptian NGOs. Christian, and particularly Catholic institutions have a privileged position before a rich (meaning both ample and wealthy) pool of international Christian donors which, in return, are translated in other types of capital.

Besides the teachings in the Gospels that are common to all Christianity, the central social teachings of Catholicism are to be found in Pope Leo II’s 1891 *Rerum Novarum* (Latin for “of revolutionary change”). Among other sources, these social teachings of the Church impose a religious habitus upon their flock that legitimatizes the collective backing of institutions worldwide such as the JBAD and promotes donations.³³

To wit, the JBAD owes about 70% of its funding to foreign donors (the other 10% is local contribution and 20% is self-funding). While other traits of the JBAD come under consideration during the fundraising process (such as technical capacity, previous projects and experience), the fact that many of these donors consider the JBAD trustable for funding due to its Catholic background speaks of the relevance of the sacred capital of the JBAD at a transnational level. Abouna Hany,

³³ While it is ironic that Catholics as whole give the least amount of their incomes than any other Christian denomination, what they lack in individually they make up for in numbers (Molony, 2006: 148). With over 1 billion worldwide souls that it claims, it makes up the largest civil society organization in the world with outsize influence across international borders (Molony, 2006: 149). Catholics do not officially tithe but besides donations, the Church has stable financial sources such as real estate and capital investments, church museums, schools and hospitals. Though many are actually money-losing propositions, the profits turn by the remunerative ones are largely reinvested. The Vatican itself gets most of its money from admission fees to museums, from the Peter Pence charity and from the Vatican Bank.

my initial contact with the JBAD, reassured to me that “*no project has ever failed due to lack of funding, only due to lack of dedication*”. Still foreign funding, particularly from Catholic donors who sympathize with the causes and the trademark of the Jesuits, is an important part of their success.

Catholic sacred capital, however, can be a double-edged sword that comes with its downsides for Catholic NGOs in Egypt. The first of the two that were pointed out by Marina and Michael (two consultants in the fundraising department at the JBAD) are related precisely to the drive of donors (Catholic or not) and the paradigm of development.

Development has been a complex and contested term that has no single agreed meaning. It is used by its advocates to denote desirable societal change or progress (Cohen 2001). It implies a value judgement, a standard against which things can be compared and rated (Gardner and Lewis 1996). Drawing on a Foucauldian concept of power, the 1990s saw the emergence of a "post-development" critique which suggested that development in any form was not a solution to problems of global poverty and inequality, but rather a highly restrictive and controlling discourse that simply "*served to extend the power of richer countries over poorer ones*" (Cooke and Kothari 2001).

The judgmental and controlling drive that can move donors to promote development in the Global South has been widely criticized for failing to contextualize poverty and for ignoring its structural causes (Arnold 1988: 71). While sacred capital capitalizes on emotional responses and solidarity to attract funds, when these responses are centered on ideas of pity, charity and even sectarianism³⁴ rather than a concern with justice, they are translated in donations and projects that are out of context.

³⁴ In the case of Catholic Copts, this sensationalism has been accentuated in the past among Catholic donors in the struggle against heresy. A whimsical pamphlet³⁴ found in the library of Coptic seminary in Maadi exemplifies how already missionaries at the beginning of the last century would sensationalize sectarian division to appeal to foreign benefactors for Catholic Copts. Language of “*Schismatic priests*” (to refer to American protestant sects such as the Methodists and Evangelicals) who “*swarm in Egypt*” as “*they prey off the Copts*” (Arnold 1988: 13) exploited images of both poverty and vulnerability of Catholic Copts to Protestant proselytism or Orthodox backwardness in order to touch Catholic donors.

The post-modern delusion and disappointment that has left development "like a ruin in the intellectual landscape" (Sachs 1992: 1) was echoed by Marina, who would complain:

"Okay, while the country was drowning in chaos [referring to the 2011 and 2013 uprisings], the NGO industry in Egypt lived like no other. Tourism died. All other industries died but NGO's saw money coming in like rivers! But now that all that has died out we can see that many of the things that were funded meant nothing to the people".

Michael equally disenchanted explained:

"I have been in the Association [JBAD] for the last fifteen years and my parents helped before me too. Many people already know how it works and they will go program to another program shopping for benefits, from one organization to another. The projects are good but many of them are not studied well and even if they do, donors have a different agenda to the real needs of the people. Our biggest competition for funds is with Israeli NGOs but Minya is one of the most funded cities in all the Middle East...Can you believe it that 30 years later, all that money and nothing has changed? Many projects are not what the people need but what the donor wants to believe they need."

It would be easy to point out that a significant blame for the failure to achieve societal change can be laid at the doors of NGOs since they have sought short-term financial advantage over building a longer-term constituency of support for development (Edwards 1999). However, Marina and Michael's complaints suggest that the issue of unrealistic and inefficient development lies in disparity in matters of power as donors, Catholic donors included, assume a monopoly of decision-making and establishing developmental priorities.

The second disadvantage of receiving foreign, Catholic funding is particular to the administrative structure in which the Catholic Church deals with its autonomous churches. In an attempt to understand the potential as well as the complexity of the Catholic Church's roles, Hehir (1987) distinguishes two levels of activity involving the "center" (Rome as embodied in the Pope and the Vatican Secretariat of State) and the "periphery" (the local Church) (Hehir, 1987: 109). This analysis enables us to understand how the Vatican formulates and projects an international policy on major

Middle East questions of its interest such as Jerusalem and the Arab-Israeli conflict, the situation of Catholics as a minority in Muslim-majority lands and, more recently, the encroachment of ISIS. It also explains why only the center has the capacity to attract attention for its positions. Conversely, the relationship of the periphery to the center involves the activities of the Arab Christian Communities in the Middle East as a source of pastoral concern, of information and perspective which influence the specific positions of the Vatican takes on the Middle East (Hehir, 1987: 111).

The Holy See, which established its Secretariat of State in 1487, is the world's oldest diplomatic entity, but it is something of an anomaly (Hehir, 1987: 110). The Vatican plays an important role in global diplomacy but Hehir is careful to point out the mistake in focusing only on the diplomacy of the Holy See in the classical model of church-state relations. Since the Second Vatican Council, he states, primary emphasis has been placed on the Church's role in society as an advocate of social change, human rights and human dignity (Hehir, 1987: 109).

The Church can serve as a catalyzer to canalize international funding to coreligionists, but on the other side, it can also place limits on the periphery according to its interests and values. As Michael recalled, in middle of the 90s the Gamaiat Al Said (AUEED) witnessed a strong crisis after voices began protesting against its president - Amin Fahim - had been so for thirty-five years and was of dictatorial management. While the war raged inside the Association through papers containing accusations between the two parties, the Ministry of Social Affairs and even the Vatican had to interfere in the crisis (Sulayman 2006).

As one of the biggest educational benefactors of the country (with thirty six schools serving eleven thousand students, in addition to many development projects) periled, the leadership of the Egyptian Catholic Church advised Fahim to resign but he did not respond (Helmy 1999). This, as well as the many complaints sent by members of the society to the Vatican and financing organizations asking for his dismissal, made him an undesirable person inside the Vatican. Some members of the society accused the Vatican and the Egyptian Catholic Church of passiveness concerning the misappropriations taking place in the society. As employees presented collective resignations, those members affirmed that this attitude would

lead to the collapse of the society unless all misappropriations were dealt with (Sulayman 2006).

While the Vatican refused any liability as it was not running the society, in reality it proved to have a strong influence inside the society because most of the foreign organizations that finance the Society- 90% of the society's income- were Catholic. Fahim tried to increase the foreign finances for the society but he was not able to do so because the Vatican refused to support his request after his way of managing the society.

These previous examples of Catholic engagement are significant for development scholarship and practice as they illustrate the importance of a particular social identity in shaping development engagement. This is not to suggest that faith identities necessarily provide a more coherent way of engaging, but it points to the macro and transnational layer of identities. They point out the significance of particular subjectivities in shaping engagement in development in ways that potentially offer large solidaristic connections and relationships.

Nash argues that solidarity requires both *“a shared sense of values and relevant facts and dispositions to act in certain ways”*, as well as *“social relationships across difference, the shared appreciation of material risks and benefits that are unevenly distributed and yet experienced as of common concern to the group”* (Nash 2008, 176). This conception of solidarity can be particularly seen in faith-based public action, which, framed by an idea of a global faith community, sets it apart from more secular approaches.

Although the task is more complicated, after analyzing the engagement of the Church as an institution, until this point, we will categorize the JBAD as faith-based organization. We will distinguish it from secular organizations and from organizations of different faith traditions not solely due to their foundational motives, but because many of their donors are driven to some extent by strong religious solidarity.

Not only is this label an asset among coreligionist institutions in an international level, but being a Christian association has two additional advantages in a domestic level.

The first advantage can be at times a liability. George, an account at the Association grieved in one of our meetings how he could not get a license for a new doctor for one of the programs:

“Since his [of the new doctor] boss [one of the priests’ names appeared in the names of the board] is a Christian, they [employees of the Ministry of Health] reject the application. We are never going to get a new doctor like that!”

He complained that religious persecution by some of the employees of the Ministry of Social Affairs has not changed as *“the laws are limiting us more but they [employees of the Ministry of Social Affairs] still live under the mentality of law 32³⁵ and want to supervise everything...these are other times, or they should be”*. Despite his distress, the 38-year-old employee found optimism: *“The Ministry of Social Affairs counts every piaster coming from abroad but at least we can still work.”*

Amnesty International has labelled the actions of the reform to the corpus regulating NGO’s of the current administration in Egypt as a *“crackdown on civil society”* recommending that it should end *“investigations into the legitimate, peaceful activities of human rights organizations and the harassment of human rights defenders”* (Amnesty 2014, 2016). When the Egyptian government began posting warnings for NGOs on newspapers, it issued urgent action alerts regarding Egypt’s draft NGO law that imposed a deadline for NGOs to register with the government as per the 2002 law’s stipulations. They, among many other civil society organizations, were very vocal in upholding the right to freedom of association.

As many NGOs in Egypt were registered as civil corporations companies, law firms or other legal entities which are supervised by less intrusive government laws before the Ministry of Investment, human rights organizations interpreted this as yet another wave of state attacks on civil society. Past government crackdowns of the current administration have included smear campaigns against NGO groups and activists, armed raids of NGO offices, the seizure of private information and property, the harassment and arrest of NGO employees and office closure (Mada Masr 2014).

³⁵ Nasser’s Civic Association Code (law 32/1964) gave governments wide discretionary powers over NGO’s (Agati, 2007).

Foreign funding, if not approved by the Ministry, is considered "*an intervention in internal affairs*" (Amnesty 2014), yet Christian NGO's can be assisted by the church not only regarding the pool of donors that will sympathize with them but also for practical issues such as bank transfers. While the umbilical cord that transmits funds to secular NGO's is tightening, the JBAD, as other Christian FBOs in Egypt, can actually carry out their projects with fewer administrative impediments (other than occasional sectarianism).

Finally, being Catholic offers flexibility in the identity of the community and a promise of protection by a major transnational church to which they belong. As we dipped chunks of baladi bread into fresh white fettah cheese, Mr. Emad- the father of the bride I presented in the opening of this chapter- talked to me during breakfast the morning after the wedding about the benefits that the Jesuits had brought to him and his family. The icons, hanging in the middle of the well-furnished living room he was able to provide to his family as product of his work in Saudi Arabia until the 90s, offer a certain amount of hope and pride to him that no couch or chair could add.

Of course, Mr. Emad does not care if the Council of Chalcedon or the Nestorian heresy (cf. Chapter 2.1). He does not care if Muallim Ghali or the Uniate project, but he cares that today he is Catholic and there is a church- lead by Pope Francis in connection to him through the Coptic Catholic Church - behind him. He cares that the Jesuits –his agents to the Catholic word- are in his community contributing to social welfare by direct provision of services like the water pipes they managed to fix in his district. He cares that they assist the needy, like when he was abroad and they educated all his nine children for almost nothing.

Furthermore, whether Egyptian or foreign, these Jesuits also set a standard to other churches and institutions, to do the same:

"Humar (donkeys)....zibala (garbage)....Coptic Orthodox and Catholic priests would do nothing for the community before the Jesuits arrived. Their long black gowns and long beards would slow them down. Then the Jesuits came and opened their schools and would actually do stuff for the community. Bousy ya Coco ["listen, oh (Egyptian pet name for Carol)], now the Copts learned and everyone is doing something for the community".

While some Christians in Egypt -like Naguib Sawiris- are billionaires, the need of a complete army of Christian FBOs is a symptom that wealth is in small pockets of Egypt's upper class and a Copt diaspora. What Ahmed (the activist) at the beginning of this section) ignored is that most of Egypt's Copts live in poverty, sometimes dire poverty. His Cairo based subjectivity ignores that most of the Coptic population, like Mr. Emad's family is rural (Baer, 2013). At the same time he also ignores that Christians in Egypt are also trash collectors like those of Medinat El Zabaleen (Trash City) and Manshiet Nasr, showing the huge economic gap among Copts.

Despite this gap, Catholicism has provided Catholic Copts like Mr. Emad a religious capital that knows not of clientelism or politicizes religious differences. This capital allows Catholic Copts such as Mr. Emad to have access to both spirituality and a network of people that he deems think progressively. It allows Catholic Copts and their institutions to have access to all these prerogatives while still being a Copt; which, as I will explain in Chapter 5, is equally central to their subjectivity.

3.3 A Church of many nations

"I need chocolate", he would say in a resigned tone. I would joke calling him *"Abouna Matteo"* but he would sigh and reply with an *"inshaAllah"* ("God willing"). *"Cheese, milk, anything!"* would beg this 28 year-old seminarian on his thirtieth day of Coptic fasting (out of 55) in the Lent of 2015. The once athletic, joyful and whimsical Italian classmate of mine in Dar Comboni³⁶, was - according to the other Coptic Franciscans that were hosting him during his stay in Egypt to study Arabic- a

³⁶ Dar Comboni is an institute that is run by the Combonian mission that, in cooperation with the Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies, train Catholic missionary personnel assigned to the Middle East and equip them with the necessary tools to work in such environment. Their two-year baccalaureate program includes an intensive course in Standard Arabic Language; an introduction to Islamic culture to foster mutual understanding between Christians and Muslims, and Inter-religious Dialogue. The Institute was initially opened in Lebanon but due to the escalation of the civil war, it was transferred to the Sakakini and then to Zamalek (both in Cairo), where the community of Comboni Missionaries and the Institute reside at present.

walking example of how different Coptic and Latin Catholics, even if they claim the same faith, can be.

“It’s not that fasting is not hard for the other seminarians but they grew up with it...they just laugh when I tell them I dream about eating meat...and we still need fifteen more days!”.

Although he would be consecrated within the Latin rite when returning to Italy, his stays at the seminaries in Jerusalem the last four years and now Cairo showed him that Catholicism was more diverse than what he had at home.

Fasting was not the only practice of Catholic Copts that was unconventional for Matteo, who is Roman Catholic, when he first arrived to the Franciscan seminary in Giza:

“The fact that the priest faces the altar at the beginning feels quite Pre-Vatican II”³⁷ and “I have to admit I was a little horrified when I first saw a priest slit his finger bathe in consecrated wine into a toddler’s mouth³⁸ during communion.³⁹ I now understand and see some kind of solidarity in welcoming infants who have been baptized at the Lord’s Table, but I still believe children should understand what they are receiving”.

³⁷ *Versus populum* (Latin for "towards the people") is the liturgical orientation in which the priest celebrates Mass facing the people. The opposite orientation, whereby the priest faces in the same direction as the people, is often called *ad orientem* ("towards the east" as the rising sun is linked to the idea of God's universality), even if the priest is not in fact facing the east. Although Vatican Council II inaugurated a liturgical reform (for example Latin was changed for the vernacular to celebrate Mass), it said nothing about the direction of the celebrant during Mass. The *versus populum* orientation belongs to the Novus Ordo Mass of Pope Paul VI that was adopted after the Council (1964). This uniformity has led to the widespread misunderstanding that the celebration of Mass "facing the people" is required.

³⁸ Paedocommunion is standard in the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Eastern Catholic Churches. Fr. Robert Taft, S.J. explains in "Liturgy in the Life of the Church": "*The practice [of communing infants] began to be called into question in the 12th century not because of any argument about the need to have attained the "age of reason" (aetus discretionis) to communicate. Rather, the fear of profanation of the Host if the child could not swallow it led to giving the Precious Blood only*".

³⁹ Holy Communion or Eucharist is a rite considered by most Christian churches instituted in the New Testament by Jesus Christ during his Last Supper. Giving his disciples bread and wine during the Passover meal, Jesus commanded his followers to "*do this in memory of me*" while referring to the bread as "*my body*" and the wine as "*my blood*" (1 Corinthians 11:23-24). Through the Eucharistic celebration Christians remember Christ's sacrifice of himself on the cross.

In other occasions, Matteo would tell me- smiling as though he remembered a cherished sister who is missed or departed- how after finishing law school in a small town near Milan he broke his fiancée's heart when he announced to her that the Lord had "called him to serve him":

"She is a pious girl. Of course, she was sad at first but she respected that I had a bigger mission. She wished for me the best and she has a very cute baby girl now".

With this anecdote in mind, it would be predictable that he would not be as receptive to difference among Catholic Copts when it came to the matter of priest celibacy. Despite the mass of sexual perpetrations of Catholic priests in the West, the resignation and understanding of priests as holy quasi-eunuchs inside the Church is still the norm since the eleventh century when celibacy was instituted for Latin Catholic priests.⁴⁰ When I told Matteo about Facebook messages a seminarian from Minya sent telling me saying "ibtisamik helw" ("you're smile is nice/ pretty) or another from Cairo that would always call me "amar" ("moon"; a flirtatious adjective in Arabic to call a girl "pretty") or "asl" ("honey"), the distance between Rome and Egypt became larger as it was related to basic rules defining Matteo's life:

"Roman Catholic priests are actually the only Catholic priests that don't get married. In most Eastern Catholic Churches a large percentage of priests and deacons are also celibate and monks cannot get married but if a seminarian wants to get married, many will do it if they take a wife before they get ordained. Religious life is not easy and the Gospel says that 'No servant can serve two masters'. I find it hard to understand how they think they can manage a distraction such as marriage or even filtration. Seminary life is not easy without devotion. Maybe those are not really serious about their service to God".

Fasting, allowing children to take communion, allowing priests to get married, might seem as mere ritualistic differences but this is precisely the added value of Uniatism or Eastern Catholicism. The Catholic Church or Roman Catholic Church is

⁴⁰ In 1139, Pope Innocent II declared all priestly marriages annulled and declared clerical celibacy the rule for all Roman Catholic priests from that day forward (Second Lateran Council, canons 6 and 7).

still the largest Christian church today and it is made up of 24 autonomous (*sui iuris*) churches,⁴¹ which reflect historical and cultural diversity rather than differences in belief. The largest group is the Latin Church⁴² besides the Eastern Catholic Rites. Here, the term "Rite" (often upper-case) refers to juridical status, not to liturgy.⁴³ All of these churches come under the jurisdiction of the Pope through the Congregation for the Oriental Churches created in 1862 as part of the Propaganda Fide (which oversaw the church's missionary activity) (Yurkus, 2005).

The most obvious distinctions between Western and Eastern Catholics, as Abouna Matteo pointed out, are external. Each Church uses a distinct ritual for Mass and sacraments. For example, most Eastern rites remain standing for most of the celebration and do not kneel for the consecration; they give peace in an affectionate closed handed position and then kiss one's own palms closed to another (Latins only offer a handshake to strangers); and they use the sign of the cross much more frequently than Latins during mass. All of these difference can make Eastern rites seem closer to their Orthodox counter-parts than to Rome, but none of these differences, however, constitute a separation of faith or of communion with the See of Peter.

In contrast with partial communion (for instance, with Protestants, where some elements of Christian faith are held in common), the Eastern Catholic churches are in full communion with the whole Catholic Church. While they accept the canonical authority of the See of Rome, they retain their distinctive liturgical rites,

⁴¹ According to the new Eastern Code, the Eastern Catholic churches fall into four categories: (1) Patriarchal (the Chaldean, Armenian, Coptic, Syrian, Maronite, and Melkite churches), (2) Major Archepiscopal (Ukrainian, Syro-Malabar, Romanian and Syro-Malankara churches), (3) Metropolitan *sui iuris* (the Ethiopian, American Ruthenian, Hungarian, Eritrean and Slovak churches), and (4) other churches *sui iuris* (Bulgarian, Greek, Italo-Albanian, Russian, Belarusian, and Albanian churches, as well as the Ruthenian eparchy of Mukačevo and apostolic exarchate in Prague, and the three Greek Catholic jurisdictions in former Yugoslavia).

⁴² There is a Roman Rite within the Latin Church. The Roman Rite has two forms - ordinary and extraordinary. There are other rites within the Latin Church (Ambrosian, Carmelite, Mozarabic). "*Eastern rite church*". *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. (2015) Web. 18 Dec. 2015 <http://www.britannica.com/topic/Eastern-rite-church>

⁴³ There are five distinct Eastern rite liturgical traditions—the Byzantine, the Alexandrian, the Antiochene, the Chaldean, and the Armenian—each (except the last) with two or more branches.

laws, customs and traditional devotions and have their own theological emphases but not in the level of dogma.

One of the greatest insights of the Second Vatican Council (1962–65), was that pluralism was desirable, if not necessary.⁴⁴ It recognized that the communication of the message of the Gospel must always be particularized into local contexts, cultures, and languages (Robinson, 1991: 191). In other words, the liturgy must not be foreign, but intimately proximate. Liturgical enculturation, thus, became a way of adapting the liturgy for a particular culture in such a way that the liturgy itself might be said to be a cultural event.

This process of enculturation allows very diverse individuals such as Matteo – this Italian seminarian of the Latin rite- and Mr. Emad (father of the bride at the beginning of this chapter)- a farmer, observant of the Coptic rite- to come together under the same faith without compromising core ritualistic practices and even some core religious tenants (such as clerical celibacy, to Matteo's shock).

However, the fact that the Catholic Coptic Church of Alexandria is in full communion with Rome, it is not a license to undermine its uniqueness. Rome itself has been outspoken in defending their right and obligation to "*preserve their legitimate liturgical rite*" (*Orientalium*, 9)⁴⁵ and has formally legislated this right in the 1990 Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches⁴⁶ calling for them to restore their traditions.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ The Second Vatican Council's *Lumen Gentium* explains how the diversity Eastern Catholic churches "*of local churches with one common aspiration is splendid evidence of the catholicity of the undivided Church*" (*Lumen gentium*, 23).

⁴⁵ *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, the Decree on the Eastern Catholic Churches, was promulgated at the Second Vatican Council by Pope Paul VI on November 21, 1964. This decree instructs Eastern Catholics stating that that "it is the mind of the Catholic Church that each individual Church or Rite should retain its traditions whole and entire and likewise that it should adapt its way of life to the different needs of time and place" (n. 2), and that they should all "preserve their legitimate liturgical rite and their established way of life, and ... these may not be altered except to obtain for themselves an organic improvement" (n. 6; cf. n. 22).

⁴⁶ The Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches (Latin: *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium* or CCEO) is the title of the 1990 codification of the common portions of the Canon Law for the 23 of the 24 sui iuris Churches. While the Latin Church is

Eastern Catholic Churches have then slowly begun to reduce Latinizations and practice their Eastern Tradition and this has made some impact on the Alexandrian rite⁴⁸. Some of the Latinizations of 1898 have been reversed: icon screens have been restored, the Divine Liturgy has been renewed and the administration of sacraments according to Coptic rites has been revived. Nevertheless, there is still a scholarly and political assumption that Catholic Copts should be identified as part of the broader Catholic denomination rather than as Copts (Shatzmiller 2005: 12),

While ecumenical negotiations have taken place between professional theologians, the inculturationalist approach to bring churches closer to Rome has proven itself more effective as it takes place at a cultural level. The last picture on Mr. Emad's wall, of el Anba Ibrahim Sidrak, is a trophy of this approach as it contributes to dispelling the notion that local inhabitants are mere receptors of Western missionary activities (Makdisi 2007: 197) and highlights native agency. The frame is a trophy of a translational system that can produce native institutions and its very own leaders that are close to their people without compromising their roots.

guided by its own particular Canons, the 23 Eastern Catholic Churches have been invited to codify their own particular laws and submit them to the pope so that there may be a full, complete Code of all religious law within Catholicism.

Pope John Paul II promulgated CCEO on October 18, 1990, by the document *Sacri Canones*. The Code came into force of law on October 1, 1991 See Roberson, 1999.

⁴⁷ Unions with Rome have resulted in an inevitable process of latinization or the adoption of certain practices and attitudes proper to the Latin Church. The degree of how this adoption has endangered contact with their spiritual roots has depended on the individual circumstances of the groups. Priest praying for the souls in Purgatory, the congregation kneeling during consecration, spoken (as opposed to sung) Divine Liturgy without the use of incense, are some examples of Latin practices that would be alien to Eastern Catholics. Pope John Paul II in his 1995 apostolic letter, "Orientale Lumen" reinforced the need to counter latinizations.

⁴⁸ The Alexandrian Rite is the liturgical rite used by the Coptic, Eritrean, and Ethiopian Catholic Tewahedo Churches as well as by those corresponding Orthodox Churches. The Alexandrian Rite is sub-grouped into two rites: the Coptic Rite and the Ge'ez Rite. The main liturgy used by the Coptic Churches is known as the Liturgy of Saint Basil (Estefanous, 2001: chapter 3)

4. The Nation of St. Mark:⁴⁹ Coptic identity Politics

It was October 3, 1956. Two days before the UN Security Council's debate on Egypt's nationalization of the Suez Canal and the crisis was approaching a climax. The Coptic Orthodox Church held an inter-faith unity rally at its headquarters with leaders representing all Christian denominations found in Egypt and Muslim dignitaries in order to emphasize that the entire Egyptian nation stood behind Nasser (Wakin: 51).

Despite overshadowing Suez in the private worries of the minorities, no one would dare to fall out of script and speak about other pressing issues such as religious persecution. The sole speaker who dared to address such issue was a Coptic Jesuit priest - well-known in his time- whose gullible honesty made him sound like what Wakin (1963) described as *"some poor player who had forgotten his lines"*:

"Now that the foreigners are gone, we are like a family. I watched Egyptian pilots taking ships through the Suez Canal and I was proud. Now that our foreign guests are gone, we can look at our internal problems. If we look into the minds of Christians, we see that there is a feeling of disquiet and so we must work for peace of mind. Christians must remain Christians, Moslems must remain Moslems, and they must all be linked in order to keep the landscape beautiful as a landscape containing a variety of flowers" (Wakin: 52).

By underlining the anxiety of Christian communities, this Catholic Copt had violated the rule of public silence both accepted by Orthodox Copts and imposed upon them by the Nasser regime. While the need to address sectarianism was

⁴⁹ Though his original name was John, St. Mark is known with the titles of "the Evangelist", "the Apostle", "the Witness" or "the Martyr". He is the traditionally ascribed author of the Gospel of Mark (the second book in the New Testament) as he witnessed Jesus's preaching in Palestine as well as his passion. He was originally a Libyan Jew, he became Peter's interpreter and, founded the church of Africa, particularly that of Alexandria. Senior, Donald P. (1998), "Mark", in Ferguson, Everett, Encyclopedia of Early Christianity (2nd ed.), New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., p. 720

evident for this Coptic Catholic priest, his Orthodox counterparts in that courtyard had conveniently accepted not to acknowledge it.

The attitude of the Orthodox priests in this anecdote epitomizes the strategy of the Coptic Orthodox Church has adopted repeatedly throughout modern history, particularly since Ottoman ruling. Be it the 1919 campaign from independence, the 1952 July Revolution, the 1973 October War, Tahrir and the explosion of the Arab Spring, or the 2013 coup, the Coptic Orthodox Church is aware that the optimum bargaining time for the Copts is a national crisis (Wakin: 53). It is at these times when the regime needs the open support of all Egyptians and the appearance of happy minorities is important for propaganda positions abroad (Wakin: 55).

Coptic leaders, embracing caution, have felt that professing an almost blind loyalty and cooperation with the state has avoided trouble or at least postponed it. The Muslim regime, in return, has confirmed in its attitude that Orthodox Copts as a group can be manipulated (Wakin: 54). This ability to negotiate, institutionalized in what scholarship has depicted around the figure of the Ottoman *milla* (Rowe 2014, Iskandar 2012, Sedra 2014), has blurred what it means to be an Egyptian minority until today.

This chapter will thus concentrate on the status and power relationships derived from religious identity in Egypt, particularly Coptic identity. After exploring the historical conditions under which this partnership was contracted with the Egyptian State, this chapter will address the strategy deployed by the shepherded by Coptic reformers such as Pope Shenouda to secure the pact from within: Coptic nationalism and reform.

Despite its claims of sameness, equality important to the Coptic Orthodox Church is the constructions of otherness in order for it to defend and promote its Christian identity vis-à-vis the Muslim majority and Non-Orthodox Egyptian Christians. Considering the deployment by the Orthodox Church of the national unity narrative at key moments to shut down debate about contentious issues, this chapter will then examine, historically and ethnographically, whether or not it is suitable to continue framing Coptic identity in ethno-religious terms, particularly in the environment surrounding the JBAD.

Finally, as Catholic Copts are not part of the same “imagined community” (Anderson 1991) of what has been constructed by mainstream discourses to mean “Copt”, this chapter will contest how the arithmetic concept of *“wahda”* (unity) based on two players (Sedra 2014: 2) has complicated the classification of Egyptian minorities.

The rejection of the Coptic Orthodox Church to be labelled as a minority has casted out groups such as Catholic Copts to continue to constitute what Bengio and Ben Dor (1999)'s define as a *“diffuse minority”*. Just like the Coptic Jesuit during the Suez crisis, the existence of other minorities and even other Copts nowadays, is an imprudent reminder that exposes the delicate sectarian formula on which Egypt is constructed today.

4.1 Fixation on Ottoman administration: contracting the millet partnership.

Understanding the pantomimic unity of Christians in Egypt under the single banner of the Coptic Orthodox Church with the modern Egyptian State today takes us back to Egypt's Ottoman history, the transition from a multicultural empire to becoming a modern nation-state and the presidencies that have followed such period.

The almost century and a half when the Mohamed Ali dynasty ruled Egypt awakes a sense of nostalgia for all types of Christians in Egypt alike (Hulsman: 21). Coptic citizens and other Egyptians were treated equally and had the same rights and duties, they were allowed to assume natural roles in society, they held appropriate positions, they were exempted from paying tribute, and were no longer regarded as non-Muslims living in a Muslim land (Martin: 37). In the Christian Egyptian imaginary, it was in this time that the members of the Christian elite enjoyed great freedom in economic and educational endeavors.

Since the Arab conquest of Egypt, Islamic law had delineated minority status of the Peoples of the Book as *dhimmia* who received protected status and were allowed to regulate their own affairs. This concept was later transformed into the *millet* system of the Ottoman Empire that brought minority subjects into its administrative structures. Muslim and Non-Muslim minority groups were included in this system: the Kharijites, the Shi'a, non-Arab converts to Islam, clients of Muslim tribes who were not accorded the financial or cultural advantages that benefited the earliest Arab converts and, as it is relevant to the present study, all the different types of Christians in the Empire (Martin: 41). This administrative assumption – which was the cornerstone of the millet system - that personal practice, law and faith blend together in Christianity as in the religion of the Empire (i.e Islam) would later become a heavy Islamic influence in the public (political) life of Coptic Christianity (q.v. Chapter 4.4).

The year 1952 would represent a watershed between two eras in the Coptic history, dividing the prerogatives they had enjoyed in Ottoman Egypt and their negotiations with presidencies to come: Abdel Nasser, Sadat, Mubarak, Morsi and now, Sisi. The country restructured into the new regime and faced major junctures - including the events motivating the modern exodus of Egyptian Jews that began in the late 1950s (Carasso:12). As the country reconfigured itself, the historic foundations of peaceful coexistence that had been in place since the beginning of the nineteenth century began to crumble. Soon enough, the Coptic elite lost momentum and they perceived church reform efforts as insufficient to meet the challenges of the modern era (Hulsman: 36).

Although Copts favored the idea of defining Egypt under the paradigm of national unity (where Muslims and Christians constituted one nation), the appearance of the notion of citizenship in the modern Egyptian State was a source of uncertainty for Copts. By placing the Coptic Orthodox Church in the same position as any other Egyptian, the notion of citizenship threatened the privileged control, security and stability that the millet system had afforded the Patriarch (Seikaly: 71).

Further threaten by Abdel Nasser's intense Arab nationalism and a tide of Islamism beginning in 1979 (Carter: 95),⁵⁰ the church was bound to secure a position as a powerful institution in the new nation of Egypt. The answer that was deployed by the Coptic Orthodox Church to cope with these threats has been coined by different scholars with reference to the Ottoman concept of "*milla*" as a common denominator.

When comparing the Egyptian model to the Lebanese, Paul Rowe (2014) highlights that historically, Egyptian Christians have been described as "*passive and cooperative*" (Rowe: 85). Unlike the Christian sects of Lebanon who do not accept any national identity that is not connected to Christian domination, he asserts that Copts have accepted their place within a secular Egypt, in what he refers to as a "*neomillet system*" (Rowe: 87).

Iskandar (2012) also neologizes this strategy as a "quasi millet" by mentioning that the Coptic Orthodox Church embraced the national unity discourse in the face of sectarian tensions. This quasi-millet approach gave church leadership power over internal affairs in return for loyalty to the state.

Paul Sedra (2014) also traces what he labels a "*millet partnership*" back to the tacit pact developed between Kyrillos VI and Nasser that would become a model for future relationships with Egypt's new leaders. As part of this strategy, he would cooperate with the regime, present the concerns of the community directly to the President, and promote loyalty to the regime among the Copts. In return, the president would furnish the Patriarch with government concessions, accommodations and resources which would then be distributed among dioceses (Sedra: 1-4). With Nasser's elimination of political parties and the political marginalization of the Muslim Brotherhood, Copts retreated from political life. Since then, the church has emerged as the undisputed voice representing all the Copts while other voices outside this equation were inhibited.

⁵⁰ This opposition is understandable under the transubstantiation of the "national unity" discourse from the agenda of the Sadat regime as well. In an attempt to introduce a constitutional amendment that would have allowed him to stand for re-election as President more than twice, the bundling of this amendment to the insertion of Islamic principles into the Constitution as a source of law was viewed by Copts as a step towards a more radically Islamic Egypt (Iskander:15).

The President vested on the Patriarch the responsibility of administrating the Coptic *awqaafs* (endowments), appointed him as a spokesperson for Egyptian Christianity and finished off any opportunities for dissent by dissolving the *maglis el mili* (Wakin:151). Kirolos would join hands with Nasser in laying the cornerstone of the Cathedral of Saint Mark and proudly echo Nasser's declaration, "*Christians and Muslims have always lived as brothers*" (Meinardus 1970: 49).

Like any system that is dependent on personal pacts, the glory of this model was challenged once the original contractors (Nasser and Pope Kyrillos VI) were replaced. Whereas Pope Kyrillos was a devote advocate of the national unity discourse, Pope Shenouda was prone to criticize the regime since early in his early leadership. The election of Bishop Shenouda as the 117th Patriarch of the Coptic Orthodox Church in October 1971 would mark a temporary rupture of the "millet partnership" as Shenouda refused to pledge his loyalty to the regime (Sedra: 15).⁵¹

Notwithstanding Shenouda's house arrest, the patriarch was allowed to reconsider his approach to leadership of the Coptic community. A month after Pope Shenouda's banishment, Sadat was assassinated by Islamic extremists and the Patriarch looked back to the millet partnership that his predecessor had developed with Nasser (Sedra 1999:221). Pope Shenuouda would convert from a Coptic activist to a political patriarch that supported national unity and renewed (though not necessarily improved) the partnership with the state.

As Sedra (2014) points out, the Patriarch's iron grip over church affairs denied Coptic laymen a role in both communal and national affairs and prevented the Coptic middle class from reforming their church in accordance with their shifting needs (Sedra 2014: 239). This persisting model, as I will argue at the end of this chapter, has not only traded the agitation for rights of middle-class Coptic Orthodox laity for the success in business of Coptic elites and the consolidation of the Coptic Pope as head as the only legitimate voice of Egyptian Christianity, but has become a further obstacle for secular leadership. It has additionally challenged the notion of

⁵¹ Ten years into his papacy, the Pope fell out of Sadat's favor and was accused by the president of plotting a Coptic secession from Egyptian rule, with Assuit as the capital of a Coptic state (Karas: 23). In September 1981, Sadat rescinded the presidential decree recognizing him as Pope of Alexandria, banishing him to exile to the western desert monastery of Saint Bishoy (Karas: 28).

citizenship that the country has hopelessly tried to achieve since the end of the British occupation and the creation of the modern state.

4.2 Resuscitating a nation

"Blessed is Egypt, my people"

[Isaiah 19:25, NRSV].

Egypt is one of the best regarded lands throughout the Bible. It is said that God made it as paradise, *"like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt"* (Genesis 13:10). It was blessed by welcoming many fathers of the Old Testament such as Abraham and Sara (Genesis 12:10), Jacob and his family (Genesis 39:50) and prophets like Jeremiah (Jeremiah 43:1-13). Egypt is mentioned in the Bible approximately 600 times, second only to Jerusalem.⁵² The Holy Family found refuge throughout Egypt (Matthew 2:12-23) and even Jesus himself chose Egypt – despite being punished by plagues prior to the Exodus (Ex. 1:13-14; Ex. 3:7; Ex. 20:2) - to be the spiritual equivalent of Golgotha during the first Passover (*"... Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified"* Revelation 11:8).

As if the moving of el Mokkatam and the Mariane apparitions weren't sufficient proof to Egyptian Christians of God's special favor towards them (q.v. Chapter 6), the apparition of a washed up Bible in the banks of the Nile below the Virgin Mary Church in the Southern Cairene neighborhood Maadi at the end of the 70s was interpreted by the community as a divine dedication to their people. Opened to chapter 19 of the book of Isaiah, verse 25 miraculously delivered God's message to the dwellers of the Nile: *"blessed be Egypt, my people."*

Beyond this apparent divine favoritism for *"Um El Dunia"* ("Mother of the World", a nickname that Egyptians use to claim pride over their historical heritage), Egyptian Christianity can also claim earthly weight throughout Church History.

⁵² Egypt: 595 times, Egyptian(s): 120 times. See Assmann, Jan (2009). "Moses the Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt". Oxford Bible Commentary, Harvard University Press.

According to tradition, Christianity was introduced to Egypt by the staff of Saint Mark the Evangelist in Alexandria around 42 AD, shortly after the ascension of Christ (Armanious: 22). From Alexandria, Christianity spread throughout Egypt within half a century to rural areas, and by the beginning of the 3rd century AD, the Church of Alexandria was recognized as one of Christendom's five Apostolic Sees, second in honor only to the Church of Rome (Meinardus: 9).

Egypt contributed immensely to Christian tradition. The Catechetical School of Alexandria (founded around 190), was the oldest catechetical school in the world and became an important institution of religious and scientific learning (Dunn: 26). Here, students were taught by scholars such as Athenagoras, Clement, and Origen (the father of theology). However, the scope of this school was not limited to theological subjects; science, mathematics and humanities were also taught there. The invention of instruments such pipe organs are attributed to this school⁵³ and 15 centuries before Braille, wood-carving techniques were in use there by blind scholars to read and write (Gabra: 28-33).

Another major contribution donated by Egypt to Christianity was monasticism. Early Christian monasticism drew its inspiration from the examples of the Prophet Elijah and John the Baptist, and above all, from Jesus himself his in solitary struggle with Satan in the desert in preparation for his public ministry (Matthew 4:1-11). St. Paul and St. Anthony the Great (251-356) were the first well-known Christians to withdraw to the isolation of Egyptian desert and pursue ascetic lives (Dunn: 7).

While this heritage is common to Christianity as a whole, the 381 Second Ecumenical Council (that decided to designate Constantinople as second in primacy after Rome, instead of Alexandria) was the first major collision that would isolate Egyptian Christianity from the rest of the *ecumene* (Schalf 1995: i). By the end of the

⁵³ The very first pipe organ was built in Alexandria (Egypt), when Ctesibius of Alexandria, a musician and engineer, build the first known hydraulis in 200 BC. Ironically, as the pipe organ became very popular throughout Europe, it was considered an extremely rare instrument in Egypt. Pipe organs did not return to Egypt until the 19th century in Catholic venues such as the Jesuit College or the Basilica of Our Lady of Heliopolis.

See Metwaly, Ati "Celebrating the centenary of the Basilica of Heliopolis and the restoration of its rare pipe organ". El Ahram, 11 Jan 2011. Available at: <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/5/33/3607/Arts--Culture/Music/Celebrating-the-centenary-of-the-Basilica-of-Helio.aspx>

fourth century, Egyptian Christians, extended mainly throughout Upper Egypt, had developed their own religious and cultural style creating a distinctive national community (Tellyrides 2009: 18). Thereafter, this community would define itself and underscore cultural differences between Egyptian and Greek Christian communities (Tellyrides 2009: 19).

The emergence of a Coptic national consciousness can be tracked down to the times of Dioscorus (Patriarch of Alexandria in 444 AD) that lead to Alexandria's divorce from the Byzantine church in Chalcedon (Atiya 1968: 56-58). Besides claiming a momentous heritage, the most important institution that became key to Coptic nationalism is that of the patriarch. From the times of Discorius, the loyalty of the Egyptian people was gradually transferred to the Coptic Patriarch making all the attempts of Byzantine reconciliation void (Iskander: 17). This monopoly of representation would be instrumental to the Coptic revivalist and nationalist movement of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Isolated from Christendom since the fifth century and sieged by Islam in the seventh, the national church of Egypt did not face major challenges to its authority until contrasted to Western modernity through colonist efforts (Masters:112). Then, land-owning Copts became exposed to new religious ideas and to new models of Christian practice, hierarchy and priesthood of missionaries who were allowed by the Khedive to open churches and schools (Hamilton: 91). This first lay reform was a series of changes lead by 19th century aristocratic Copts who presented their local institution as stagnant in the face of modernity. The complaints of the elite that the Coptic clergy was “backward” and the later formation of the *majlis al-milli* put on the Coptic religious establishment to reform (O’Mahony: 44).

As well as supervising the financial affairs of the community, there was an emphasis on educational reform and improving the educational level and overall quality of the Coptic priesthood. As mentioned earlier, Patriarch Kyrillos IV (papacy 1854-1861) – known as “*Abu al-islah*” (“*Father of Reform*”) - was key in the clerical front of reform and began training programs for priests and deacons (Meinardus 1970, 38).

The activism of elite Copts in the nineteenth century set the stage for the rise of "Coptism" in the twentieth. It was a moment of rediscovering a glorious past and

the quest to revive it. Through the Sunday School Movement, Coptic youth became increasingly aware of their religion's foundation, their church's roots, and their community's heritage (Assad: 118).

It was a first-year student at the newly inaugurated theological seminary, Habib Girgis (1876-1951), who noticed that teachers of both government and Coptic Schools no longer had sufficient Christian religious education and Coptic students were even pressured to participate in Islamic religious education (Huslman: 92). Threatened by the lack of religious education for Copts, Habib sought education reforms for both religious leaders in seminaries and Christian education in all public and private schools. The first Sunday Schools were founded in 1898, and in 1918 its first organizational structure was established by forming the "General Committee for the Sunday Schools" (Dunn: 2014).

The Sunday School Movement paved the way for an influx of a new group of middle class, educated Copts who taught in Sunday schools before choosing to enter the monasteries. Among these young Copts was a Sohagy called Nazyr Gayyid, who stood out by his radical views and spoke of the need to rally the Coptic community (Hanna 1996). After being appointed as Bishop of Education in 1962, Nazyr, or - as he would be known from there on- Shenouda, would mobilize the community by delivering lectures in the Cathedral each Friday on matters central to the daily lives of Copts. (Heikal 1983, 160).

The election of Pope Shenouda III brought the reform movement to the frontline of the Coptic Orthodox Church with the particular vision of the new leader (Huslman: 11). Shenouda's vision - for which he would be known as the "*father of Coptic nationalism*" (Iskander: 20) - was to provide Coptic Orthodox Christians in Egypt with an alternative social universe in which they could live their lives with dignity, self-esteem, and a sense of achievement. It predicated on the notion that the church should be an all-encompassing reality for Coptic Orthodox Christians. It would become a spiritual nation within the nation where one's identity can be fully invested in cradle-to-grave programs of churchly socialization (Jacobsen: 54).

The revival process involved restoring the authority of the church hierarchy and re-centering communal life on the church. Control of monasteries was centralized and numbers of bishops and priests were increased. The lay community

was also brought into the institutionalization process through an expansion in the number of lay khudam (servers), who were to assist in every aspect of church life (Huslman: 30). In terms of its institutional spread and ability to provide services for those in need, the Coptic Orthodox Church became unique. In fact, it is arguably the strongest and best financed nongovernmental organization in the country (Rowe: 96). Christian citizens in the effective service of the church are generally not enticed nor motivated to create rival organisations, and thus, according to this design, the Coptic Orthodox Church would operate as the single most important representative of Coptic interests (Huslman: 37).

The generation of reformers that enacted his project, they took a neo-traditionalist approach to create a common Coptic identity, based on the proud re-appropriation of glorious Coptic past (El Khawaga: 290). The pope also aimed to strengthen the family as the foundation of Coptic Christian identity and to make the Coptic Orthodox Church a place where every Copt could find meaning.

At the same time, the monastic order became key to the direction of the larger church (Huslman: 69). Monks are singularly loyal to the Coptic Orthodox Church and form the foundation of the church hierarchy. Thus, Coptic popes and church leaders traditionally come from the monasteries and have sponsored a relatively passive revivalist spirit among their disciples lives which is apolitical (Dunn: 4).

Although there is little evidence to support political motivation (Huslman: 62), it was clear that such activities had political ramifications. This renewal and its insistence on the unity of the Copts within the framework of Mother Church was fostered by efforts to undermine the Nasser regime's broader political activities and Arab nationalism (Rowe: 98). Commitment to church activism meant acceptance of individual non-involvement or "withdrawal" from political life (El Khawaga: 294). Initially, this withdrawal was sponsored by the church itself to strengthen its hold on the community and later enabled the church to provide a strong institutional response to Islamization and provided Copts with a mechanism to resist state actions.

Whereas the lay reformers had focused on modernizing and rationalizing the community and the church as part of a project to build a modern Egypt, the new

middle class monastic reformers were concerned with effecting a spiritual revival in a church that was threatened by resurgent and sometimes hostile Islamist politics and the presence of other Christian denominations. Shielding itself from these hazards, this revival would aim to define a Coptic identity which looked inward, focused on family, church and community (Huslman: 71).

From the outside, the Egyptian state endorsed a neo-millet partnership with the church by recognizing the patriarch as the official representative and voice of the Coptic community (Shatzmiller 2005: 17). From the inside, the Pope secured the loyalty of his community by fostering an ethno-religious identity that provided social services as well as religious ministry.

4.3 The Coptic kafr: (De)constructing "Coptiness"

During the Holy Week of 2015, I was adopted by a Christian family from the JBAD to spend Easter and Sham El Neseem⁵⁴ with their relatives in the rural outskirts of Edfu. Ibrahim, a mid-aged office worker at the JBAD and his wife – Vivian - had stopped paying regular visits to their relatives 600 km down the Nile during the holidays and, unaware of their family situation, I was glad to tag along for their reunion.

Before settling in Minya, and long before his cousin from his father's side succumbed to his constant marriage proposals, Ibrahim had emigrated to the capital to look for the opportunities that his village could not provide for him. Single and bored with his nine-to-five routine, he would volunteer in different church-lead community services in his spare time until he found a convent in the Southern-

⁵⁴ Although this name is a rough Arabization of the pharaonic holiday of creation (Shemu), Sham el-Nessim, or "Smelling/Taking In of the Zephyrs," is an Egyptian national holiday marking the beginning of spring. It always falls on the day after the Coptic Orthodox Easter. Despite begin a Christian-related date, the holiday is celebrated by all Egyptians regardless of religion. See *"Egyptians celebrate ancient festival of Sham El-Nessim"* *Ahram Online, MENA, 21 Apr 2014. Available at: <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/99540/Egypt/Politics-/Egyptians-celebrate-ancient-festival-of-Sham-EINes.aspx>*

Cairene suburb of Maadi that presented him with more than a chance to volunteer. Helping at a home for senior Copts that was run by Spanish nuns made him learn Spanish⁵⁵ and exposed him to an alternative kind of Christianity (i.e. Roman Catholic) to the Coptic Orthodox tradition through which he had been raised. While his wife, kids, and all his relatives back in the village of Edfu lived what they consider an "orthodox" Coptic Orthodox life, Ibrahim went on and converted to Catholicism.

After a loud argument he had with his cousin's⁵⁶ wife, Ibrahim warned me that being raised in a devote Coptic Orthodox rural family, his conversion was only understandable with the flexibility that not living in his hometown gave him. His departure from what in his eyes was an "old-fashioned" Church that demanded long fasts, inhumanly long masses⁵⁷ and corrupt leadership, was a subject that he preferred to leave untouched until it was inevitable. His wife respected his decision as long as he allowed her to raise their children as Orthodox and he would not abandon his duties as a husband. But visiting his extended family was a reminder of the clash his decision had presented in his extended family.

The complete family lived in a building where each floor had an apartment, and each of the three married brothers had kept a floor. Everyone rested and showered in their corresponding apartment, yet, due to the festivities and presence of guests, all meals and gatherings were held in the ground floor where grandpa Abanoub lived. Since *teta*⁵⁸ Mariam had passed away the Christmas before, in a win-win agreement, Wageh (Ibrahim's brother-in-law and cousin) and his wife, Salma, had moved downstairs to keep him company and prevent Salma from waddling up and down the stairs.

Some hours after we arrived from the train station, shouts erupted in the ground-floor's kitchen. The eight-month pregnant daughter-in law (who was also fasting some days during her pregnancy) had gotten upset about Ibrahim's cooking

⁵⁵ which explains how easily we established rapport (me, being a native Spanish speaker).

⁵⁶ who was also his brother-in-law, as Ibrahim married his parental cousin.

⁵⁷ Unlike Catholic masses that normally range between 45 to 90 min. services, he would complain that Coptic masses range between 90 to 270 min., in average.

⁵⁸ Endearing nickname for grandmas.

of chicken in her kitchen during the last week of their 55-days vegan fast. Although it could have easily been attributed to the tiredness her full-blown pregnancy or her unwillingness to clean the kitchen again, her complaint broke the ice and unleashed a series of reproaches and recriminations from other members of the extended family:

*"It's like he doesn't care about his family anymore",
"What kind of example is he going to give his children?" "He is
not fasting? He doesn't go to our church anymore?"*

More than a theological or a spiritual threat, the unease among his family members circled around his function in society, particularly inside a family. The church, as perfected in Shenouda's nationalistic model, is more than a center of worship but a center of social design and management, and, while the *Mary Girgis* (St. George) tattoo on his right biceps and both cross tatoos on his wrist and below his thumb said otherwise, the wife of his wife's brother insisted: "*he is no longer a Copt*".

In a conciliatory gesture, Wageh rubbed her shoulder and said with a mischievous smile "*enough, you kafr!*".⁵⁹ The fact that Wageh used a derogatory term that is traditionally deployed to describe an unbeliever or an apostate from Islam, shows in a sarcastic way – as Ibrahim later explained to me- the level of his departure from faith in the eyes of his Orthodox relatives.

As a caveat, I must point out that Ibrahim's case is special in that he openly converted to Latin Catholicism and not Coptic Catholicism. Had he continued as an observant Catholic Copt, he would still follow the 40 day vegan diet that the Coptic Catholic Church encourages her children to follow (in contrast to the 55 vegan diet of the Coptic Orthodox Church) and not the 2-day fasting (on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday) and abstention from red meat on Fridays during Lent that the Latin

⁵⁹ I decided not translate this word as it is nearly impossible to find an English equivalent that reflects all the meanings that it is charged with. The word *kafr* is the active participle of the root K-F-R which means "to cover". In pre-Islamic Arabic, it described farmers burying seeds in the ground, covering them with soil while planting. In Islamic parlance, a *kafr* is a person who rejects Islam, i.e. "*hides or covers the truth*" and it is usually translated into English as "infidel" or "unbeliever"(Adams 2009: 32).

Church prescribes. Although still Coptic by birth and by culture, his ritual practices, nonetheless, allows us to analyze how "Copticness" can be defined and constructed in different levels.

Ibrahim's case could equally reflect a soft version of the accusations that converts to virtually any creed or denomination would have to endure in a conservative family. It could seem irrelevant, for instance, compared to the ramifications that Copts converting to Islam would face and meaningless in front of the lives of Muslims who I came across during my fieldwork who were forced to run away from their lives to avoid State and family persecution for converting to Christianity. Nonetheless, I bring Ibrahim's case to the table to illustrate how when the ethnic-religious boundaries of Pope Shenouda's nationalist model are blurred and contested, the meaning of "Copticness" or knowing who is a "Copt" is nuisance. In other words, despite being ethnically a Copt, Salma's cry placed Ibrahim's identity on trial: Was he not really a "Copt" anymore? Is Coptic identity something that can be lost in the first place? What and who is a Copt? Who determines it?

As most literature addressing Copts that I've encountered during my research eventually states (Iskander 2012, Sedra 2014, Wakin 2001, Watson 2000), I will now yield to the practice of exposing the etymology of the word, without implying that this gives is an *ipso facto* explanation of its meaning. The word "Copt" (Arabic: *qibt*) comes from the Greek *Aigyptios* ultimately related to Caphtor, a locality mentioned in the Old Testament that refers to what is now known as Egypt (Watson 2000: 7). From this, we could be tempted to say that "Copt" means "Egyptian". We could elaborate and say that every Egyptian is a Copt and every Copt is Egyptian; none of which are true. Knowing who is a Copt requires much more than an etymological analysis.

4.3.1 Copticness and ethnicity

After the initial Arab invasion of Egypt in 639 D.C., Egypt was gradually transformed from a majority Christian to a majority Muslim country (Meinardus: 14). Initially, as local converts to Islam were seen as inferior to Arab Muslims, the *mawla*

system was introduced so non-Arab Muslims could be "adopted" by an Arab tribe (Iskander: 22; Cragg 90). In this way, non-Arab converts were integrated into Arab culture and adopted such an ethnicity (Cragg: 92). Additionally, those who converted or who conducted business with the Arab rulers began to learn Arabic. By the eighth century Arabic became the official language of Egypt (Tagher: 85), and - although it is not agreed how long this displacement took- it is generally believed that Coptic was gradually replaced around the ninth century (Meinardus: 14; Wakin: 63). As a result of these intertwined processes of Islamization and Arabization, those who converted to Islam came to identify themselves with an Arab and Muslim identity, whereas those who remained Christian continued to identify themselves as Coptic (Wakin: 64).

This narrative that portrays modern Copticness as an ethnic residue that survived the Arab conquest is one of the attempts to attach categories of ethnicity or racial heritage to Copts in the many debates of the last century concerning modern Egyptian identity. Pharaonism/Egyptianism, Mediterraneanism, Easternism, Pan-Arabism and Pan-Islamism were also part of the theories that informed debates concerning where Egyptians belonged ethnically and culturally in the first half of the twentieth century (Macari 2007: 14).

Prompted by archaeological breakthroughs of the early twentieth century – such as the 1922 discovery of Tutankhamen’s tomb - Pharaonism or Egyptianism developed in the 1920’s and 1930’s (Macari: 15). It related national identity primarily to Egypt's ancient civilization and was one of the key movements highlighting Egyptian national identity at the beginning of the last century. Both Muslims and Christians were among the proponents and supporters of this ideology arguing that Egyptians were a distinct nationality, and that religion and language were insufficient indicators of unity between Egypt and other Arab-Islamic states (Carter: 98). It was primarily popular among Copts who considered it a means to pre-empt allegiances to Islam and Arab culture that could potentially exclude Copts from the public sphere (Carter: 99). Many Muslims, however, did not embrace Pharaonism as unequivocally as the Copts did, as they were hesitant to reconstruct a pre-Islamic Egypt that would rival modern, Islamic Egypt (Carter: 100). Contemporary to this movement, the Coptic politician and founder of Coptic Museum Marcus Simaika Pasha went as far as extending the meaning of Copts to all Egyptians. He described that some were

"Muslim Copts" and others "Christian Copts" but all Egyptians were descendants of Ancient Egyptians (Hasan, 2003: 41, 42).

In another attempt to situate Egypt's cultural legacy, Taha Hussein was a prominent supporter of Mediterraneanism that insinuated merging Egyptian heritage with European heritage through the Mediterranean region (Carter: 102). Its Egyptian edition explained that Pharaonic knowledge had passed through the Greeks to modern Europe, thus Westernized Egyptians would be reclaiming their original destiny rather than adopting something foreign (Egger: 137). The Coptic Arab-socialist and journalist Salama Musa also believed that Egyptians, Western Europeans and Mediterranean peoples belonged to the same "racial stock," legitimizing the connection between Egypt and the dominant West (Egger: 138). The ideology ultimately lacked appeal outside of elite circles as it was seen as potentially Eurocentric and implicative of European superiority (Egger: 139).

After World War I, another transnational challenge to Pharaonism emerged out of a desire to maintain a feeling of cohesion and cooperation with other lands once belonging to the Ottoman Empire. "Easternism" claimed that solidarity among Eastern lands was rooted in the shared experience of oppression under Western imperialism, and cooperation between these lands could result in their recovery of control over Eastern resources (Gershoni: 258). Unlike most of the other identity movements, its objectives varied enough to be attractive to secularists, modernists, and Islamic traditionalists alike. However, this same lack of consensus and ambiguities on the definition of the "East", and its potential interpretation to mean "the Islamic world", "the Middle East", or even the entire regions of Africa and Asia (Egger: 123) caused this proposal to eventually lose momentum (Gershoni: 257).

These debates coincided with the period of the aftermath of the British Occupation (1882-1922), which is often looked on nostalgically by Copts as a time of Coptic prosperity, expanded political representation and inter-communal cooperation (Egger: 12). The nationalist period is remembered as a time of public displays of solidarity between Copts and Muslims, with Muslims attending Easter services while Copts participated in *Eid al-Fitr* celebrations ("Festival of Breaking of the Fast"/ end of Ramadan) (Carter 58). This period witnessed unprecedented cooperation between Christian clergy and Muslim sheiks in opposition to the British and a

conspicuous Coptic presence in nationalist movements, evidently to counter the British strategy of “divide and conquer” that many Egyptians anticipated (Chitham: 103). The British occupation had constituted a setback to national autonomy that, in some instances, it inspired cooperation and mutual sentiments between Copts and Muslims (Henderson: 157).

However, the aftermath of the 1952 revolution would prove itself less inclusive as all three ideologies – Pharaonism, Mediterraneanism and Easternism- lost prestige in favor of Pan-Arabism and Islamism. Supporters of Pan-Arabism fell into two categories: those who characterized Egypt as “Arab” by citing linguistic and religious commonalities, and the secular theorists that defined Arab identity along the lines of common history and language (Carter: 104). Most Egyptians, however, found it difficult to separate Islam from Pan-Arabism, especially because of the Muslim reverence of Arabic as the original language of the Quran and Sunna (Chejne: 16). This became evident in the exclusion of Copts from the Dar al-‘Ulum (the training institute required for language instructors) and from teaching the subject in Egyptian schools (Carter: 105).

By the 1950’s Pan-Arabism and Nasserism had overshadowed the viability of Egyptianism and Mediterraneanism. Although Pan-Arabism would dominate Egypt during Nasser’s presidency, influential Islamist segments were always dissatisfied with the ideology (Said: 335). Islamism - the principle that Islam should be the primary guide of social, political and personal life - gained momentum in Egypt with the establishment of the Muslim Brotherhood by Hassan al-Banna in 1928. Al-Banna formed the Brotherhood in response to the perceived ills of “Westernization” in Egypt, which included increasing materialism, neglect of Islamic principles and general moral decline (Said: 336-7).

Parallel to the Muslim reaction against perceived foreign cultural threats to religious identities, the Copts did likewise through the previously explained revivalist reforms to stress religious identity as opposed to a civil, Egyptian identity. Both the Islamic overtones to Nasser’s Arab nationalism and increasing Islamism led Copts to turn to internal communal survival mechanisms and divorce their religious realm from the Muslim environment, where they had once hoped to participate at all levels of society (Reid: 291; Makari: 61). Copts reacted to this shift by taking refuge in an

offshoot of Pharaonism in which Copts claimed ethnic pedigree being the "purer" descendants of the ancient Egyptians (Khawaga: 2).

The concept of "ethnicity" is often associated with differentiated, even discriminated, "sub-national units" and minorities in relation to the majority (Shatzmiller 2005: 7). Complaints such as that religious discrimination prevents Copts from obtaining promotion to top-level positions in the civil service, the army and in universities (Meindarus 2010: 45) and laws on conversion and building places of worship that treat citizens differently on the basis of religion could support this parameter to determine whether or not "Copts" constitute an ethnic category (Iskander:19).

Nevertheless, following Thomas Hyland Eriksen definition of ethnicity that *"refers to groups considering themselves culturally as well as racially distinctive"*, Smith (2002) argues that Copticness cannot be defined through terms of ethnicity as they can claim neither of those distinctions from other Egyptians (Smith: 57).

Regarding cultural distinctions, Copts have often adopted Muslim cultural practices. Examples of this include legal institutions such as polygamy and establishing clauses found in Islamic contracts (such as conditions stipulated by the bride prohibiting the husband from taking a second wife) - even though such contracts contradict the Christian precept of marriage as an unbreakable sacrament (Smith: 65). Cultural practices include female genital mutilation, male circumcision and exclusion of menstruating women from major rituals (Wakin: 49). Such fusions reflect a great deal of interaction among communities even if the blending of arrangements that apparently seemed quite acceptable, are contrary to Coptic doctrine (Smith: 60).

Although Smith does not elaborate on what he considers to be "race", Eriksen himself stresses the dubious descriptive value of the concept through which he defines ethnicity. Whereas it was for some time common to divide humanity into four main races, modern genetics tends not to speak of races due to interbreeding between human populations and the inefficiency of hereditary physical traits to follow clear boundaries (Eriksen: 5). The great variations within a "racial" group renders a discussion of fixed boundaries between races senseless, but the concept can nevertheless be important in the extent that it informs people's actions (Eriksen: 7).

In other words, there is a general consensus in anthropology that race exists as a cultural construct, whether it has a "biological" reality or not "(Eriksen: 6). In any event, race may assume sociological importance even if it has no "objective" existence (Eriksen 7). While Copts may claim to be the original core of the Egyptian nation and the descendants of the Egyptians of the Pharaonic era, it is arguable that a majority of Egyptian Muslims are themselves racial descendants from Coptic blood who only converted to Islam. This renders the argument that Copts are always more closely related to ancient Egyptians flawed and historically inaccurate (McCallum, 2010: 74).

Finally, beyond the lack of cultural distinction that Smith explains, Eriksen's rendition of the concept of "race" as ambiguous can be understood at its fullest when one considers that not all "Copts" have been ethnically Egyptian. It is misleading to deploy the term "Coptic" as an ethnic category if one overlooks and denies sixteen centuries of its transnational, non-ethnic connotation. Although it declared itself independent from its Egyptian heritage in 1959⁶⁰ and it no longer accepts the term "Coptic" to describe itself, not six decades have passed since the now Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo⁶¹ Church was still officially known as "Coptic". The Ethiopian Church was administratively part of the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria from the first half of the 4th century until 1959, yet the centuries of administrative influence do not compensate to build assumptions and argue a common descent among Egyptian Copts and Ethiopian Copts (Farang: 96). It is

⁶⁰ Egypt's rulers have vested interest in keeping Ethiopia in the Coptic ecclesiastical fold in order to leverage political pressure on Ethiopia. With the 1942 liberation of Ethiopia from the Italian occupation and the spirit of independence that swept Africa in the 1950s, Ethiopia sought a higher degree of ecclesiastical independence. After of the enthronement of Pope Kyrillos VI in 1959 the two came to an agreement by which the Metropolitan- Basilios of Addis Ababa- was elevated to Patriarch-Catholicus and the Pope of Alexandria remained "the supreme spiritual head of the Church of Ethiopia" (Meinardus 199:134).

In 1971 the Ethiopians pushed for complete independence and on May 9, Patriarch Theophilos was enthroned in Addis Ababa (Farang: 95).

⁶¹ *Tewahedo* is a Ge'ez word meaning "being made one". This word refers to the Oriental Orthodox, Non-Chalcedonian, Miaphysitic belief in the one perfectly unified Nature of Christ; i.e., a complete union of the Divine and Human Natures into one nature is self-evident in order to accomplish the divine salvation of humankind (Farang: 96), as opposed to the "two Natures of Christ" belief commonly held by the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches (q.v. Chapter 2.3.1). As explained before, this resulted in the first major split in the Church (Council of Chalcedon in 451).

impossible to uphold that Copticness in this case is an ethnicity as members of an ethnic group are ascribed to racial categories that correlate with biological traits (e.g. phenotype) which they cannot escape entirely.

In this manner, the adoption of common cultural practices and the ambiguity of the concept race, in Eriken's terms, shows how the Copts do not easily fall into this definition of an *"ethnic group"* because *"other than religion, they are neither culturally nor racially distinctive from Muslims"* (Smith: 59).

4.3.2 Copticness and the land

The etymology of the word and its history may create the impression that "Copticness" is firmly rooted and can be define in terms of the Egyptian space. For Copts, Egypt is the soil that holds the footprints of the Holy Family; the ground that absorbed the blood of the early martyrs; and where the Virgin Mary has regularly made her appearance over the past decades (Walkin 2001: 19). Whilst Copts are largely concentrated geographically in Upper Egypt (particularly in Assiut, Minya, and Sohag) and in certain suburbs of Cairo, there is no isolated region of the country in which they form a vast majority to claim territorial attachment (Meinardus 2010, 29). Rather, they are scattered throughout the country.

That national loyalty linked to a territorially bounded state can coexist with retention of religious identities, or even more, that religious identities themselves can constitute a source of nationalist sentiment challenge basic assumptions underlying the arguments of Benedict Anderson in his 1983 book, *"Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism"*. Here, Anderson examined how nationalism led to the creation of nations, or as the title puts it, "imagined communities". In his nomenclature, an "imagined community" does not mean that a national community is fake, but rather refers to Anderson's belief that any community so large that its members do not know each another on a face-to-face basis must be imagined to some degree (Anderson: 22).

While the term *"imagined community"* is helpful in describing the Post-Shenouda Coptic community in that it created imagined bonds among people

claiming a common identity, Anderson's understanding of "nation" is not. His assumption that the secular nation is "*part of the universal history of the modern world*" (Anderson: 11) is challenged by Partha Chatterjee (1996) arguing that this is a Eurocentric reading of nationalism that extends the European experience to the non-European world, which, unlike Europe, was colonized (Chatterjee: 216). For him, anticolonial nationalism had two domains: the material or Western, which was rejected, and the spiritual, by which one sought to retain the essence of indigenous spiritual culture (Chatterjee: 217). Chatterjee uses the term "spiritual," rather than "religious" to argue that such nationalisms seek to create a modern national culture that is not Western" (Chatterjee: 217).

Considering this possibility of a "spiritual nationalism", where Egyptian nationalism failed to unite Egyptians, Coptic nationalism succeeded. The Coptic revival managed to develop its own nationalism centered on the Church (Van Doorn-Harder: 23). What started out as a theological-nationalist separation in Chalcedon, settled in the Ottoman *milla* and then revived as a national church, cemented into a religious community during the revival of the 19th and 20th centuries. In Chatterjee's terms, these individuals can view themselves as a party or nation that Pope Shenouda III popularized as "*EsShaab El Qipty*" ("*the Coptic people*") (El Manawi: 192).

Smith further supports this challenge to Benedict Anderson's theory of secular nationalism when he maintains that modern communications technology has turned loyalty away from secular nationalism and back to religious identity. Following Copts who emigrated because of fear of recent persecution or for better economic opportunities (especially after President Nasser's nationalization decrees) (Meinardus: 124), the Coptic Church takes pride in the rapid expansion of Coptic dioceses overseas (Gabra 2014: 137-139). Outside of the traditional Coptic areas in Egypt, Sudan and Libya, the largest Coptic diaspora populations are in the United States, Canada and Australia, followed by smaller communities throughout Europe and Gulf States (Elsässer: 77). As this study is being written, Coptic Orthodox Church boasts of having churches in 79 countries around the world in six continents (Girgis 2016).

The expansion of overseas dioceses clearly reflects the desire of the church to minister to its flock abroad to consolidate of church authority, but this was spurred in recent history by activist tendencies of some diasporic Copts who interfered with the intentions of church leadership. Using new modes of communication, the Copts abroad keep alive the memory of a long-lost momentum and of past and current violence, documenting in detail every incident of what they deem anti-Coptic behaviour. Through social media, websites and pamphlets, some have taken on a specific role in defend the Coptic community back in Egypt (Iskander: 110).

The influence of diasporic Copts in Muslim-Christian relations through lobbying has been a particular matter of concern since the 1970's. Although Coptic diaspora are not a monolithic block, they have attracted attention back home for embracing a discourse of persecution, discrimination and human rights (Iskander: 111), in opposition to the national unity discourse that Copts in Egypt have embraced under the control of the church (Huslman: 27). This was particularly alarming when independent Coptic publicists demanded representations to the US Congress to politicize the so-called "Coptic question" by labelling it as persecuted minority in an Islamic state (Henderson: 157).

In 1981, when President Sadat visited the United States for peace talks with Israel, he was surprised by protests from Copts affiliated with the American Coptic Association (ACA). Along with the Canadian Coptic Association, the ACA took out a full-page advertisement in the Washington Post accusing the President of lacking *"courage in handling the systematic assaults launched by Muslim fanatics against the Christians of Egypt"* (Haddad: 217). While the ACA was not speaking for all Copts, not even all diasporic Copts,⁶² their political voice could not be ignored. When Sadat returned to Egypt, he accused the Pope – whose relationship with Sadat was already uneasy - of inciting the Coptic community to mobilize against Sadat and

⁶² Two days prior to the ACA advertisement, twenty-six Coptic churches in the United States and Canada took out their own full-page advertisement saying that the clergy and congregations of the Coptic Christian Orthodox Church 'welcome President Sadat to the United States of America and pray ... for the success of his peace mission for the Middle East'. See *"Welcome President Sadat to the United States of America"*, *New York Times*, 3 August 1981.

utilize their political allies in the United States. This intervention and criticism of the Egyptian government ultimately lead to Shenouda's banishment (Haddad: 209).

After his house arrest and exile, Shenouda would claim that Copts are thoroughly integrated within the Egyptian state. He defended that the *"Copts are no minority. They do not qualify for the definition of minority. They are not the blacks of the USA nor the Muslims of Germany. They are part of the texture of society, part of the history of Egypt"* (Smith: 68).

Shenouda specifically rebuked overseas Copts for blaming the Egyptian government for terrorism and for publishing harmful materials without consulting the church declaring that those who publish such blasphemous material against the Egyptian state *"can no longer be identified as Egyptian"* (El Banna: 41). Elite Copts, such as geologist Rushdie Said, also accused the extremism of diasporic Copts as *"harmful to the Copts in Egypt, because it makes the people of Egypt think of us as disloyal"* (Salama 1996). Their sensationalism enabled them to secure the attention of the international community for the diaspora activists without reflecting the reality in Egypt, and since they are not under church supervision, they do not suffer the consequences of their remarks. Furthermore, they cannot accurately describe that alleged plight given that diaspora Copts often left Egypt due to bitter encounters with discrimination (Sedra 1999: 229).

From examples like these we can understand why more often than not the concept of *long distance nationalism* has a negative connotation. Long-distance nationalism, according to Anderson, is as a set of identity claims and practices that connect people living in various geographical locations to a specific territory that they see as their ancestral home (Anderson 1998: 70). The drawback of diasporas is that they are considered marginal groups who do not give up easily on matters that are related to homelands and conflicts and they are usually reluctant to make concessions for peace (Basser: 6).

Schiller argues that long-distance nationalism does not necessarily refer to malignant activities (Schiller, 2004: 570). To that end, a great source of pride of the Coptic Orthodox Church is the active mission that it has developed in Africa, setting up churches from Sudan to South Africa. According to Karim - the leader of the missionary youth to South America of St. Mark's Coptic Orthodox Church in the

northern-Cairene neighbourhood of Heliopolis- the first Coptic Churches were established in South America since 1991 and regular missions to Bolivia are scheduled by both US-based Copts and Copts from St. Mark's Church in Heliopolis to provide social and medical services. Copts in the West have also become influential in promoting the cultural and academic life of the Copts and have played a growing role in financing the church in Egypt (Bishara: 23).

Anderson's view on long distance nationalism shows how the "Copticness" of immigrants is remorseless and unaccountable as it is not attached to a territorial space (Anderson, 1998:74). These developments illustrate the transnational nature of "Copticness" where national territorial borders no longer delimit membership in the nation.

4.3.3 Copticness and Church hierarchy

The number of Christians in Egypt has remained a matter of significant controversy. Nobody knows exactly how many there are: while official Egyptian-government statistics place their proportion at 6 per cent in order to confirm that they are a relatively marginal minority (Johnstone: 13), and some church sources defend that they comprise from 15 to 20 per cent of the population (Noumnom 2012), the figure accepted by scholars in the field oscillates between 10 to 12 per cent of the Egyptian population (Meinardus 2010: Sedra 2014). Despite this uncertainty, such estimations make them the largest Christian minority in the Middle East by sheer numbers (Rowe: 79). Orthodox Copts are the largest minority in the country and the region, yet the superlative "largest" implies that they are not the only one.

Again, without accurate numbers,⁶³ there is an acceptance among scholars that approximately 90 percent of Egypt's Christians consider themselves devotees of

⁶³Religious statistics are notoriously difficult to compile anywhere in the world. Despite the political challenges mentioned earlier, their collection can be complicated by loose cultural affiliation; a sense of 'belonging' to a religion, personal identification as religious vis-à-vis institutional records; and different perceptions between believing in the core tenets of a particular religion or levels of religious practice (whether self-reported or

the Coptic Orthodox Church (Meinardus 2010: 113). Because Orthodox Copts form the vast numeric and political majority of the Christian population of Egypt, the Coptic Orthodox Church has assumed the role of a national Egyptian church, shadowing out other denominations (Van Doorn-Harder: 23; Smith: 33). The kaleidoscope of Christian denominations in Egypt includes Eastern Orthodox Churches,⁶⁴ Latin and Eastern Catholic Churches, several Protestant denominations and even Non-Trinitarian groups (namely, Later Day Saints and Jehova Witnesses) (Meinardus 2010). While most of these began as local branches for immigrants and expats in Egypt, which do not normally use the term "Coptic" to describe their church, in this section, I will focus on those two who have done so in the past or still do. This exploration is particularly relevant as it reflects the power relations between the Egyptian State, the Coptic Orthodox Church and Catholic Copts in securing a monopoly of meaning for the former.

Either through its millet-partnership or under the banner of the so-called "national unity", the Egyptian state has had an important role in defining modern Coptic identity by recognizing the Coptic Orthodox Church as the central authority to minister all Egyptian Christians - both inside and outside the community. Indeed, while in times of stress patriarchs as Shenouda have been accused of "beard-kissing and forgetting",⁶⁵ the Egyptian state has also caved in to protecting the monopoly of

observed). See Gorman, Michael (2003). *The Enduring Library: Technology, Tradition, and the Quest for Balance*, American Library Association.

⁶⁴ The Eastern Orthodox communion is organized into several regional Churches unified in theology and worship: including the fifteen autocephalous Churches of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, Georgia, Cyprus, Bulgaria, Serbia, Russia, Greece, Poland, Romania, Albania, Czech and Slovakia, America and a number of autonomous Churches. See "Eastern Orthodoxy" *Encyclopaedia of World Religions, Concord Pub.*, 25 October 2006.

⁶⁵ Though the Egyptian pope seemed too innovative to some, he also seemed too conservative to others and many disliked his mild response to allegations of forced conversions of Christian girls and sectarian violence. So was he blamed by the Muslim analyst Ahmad al-Aswani. See al-Aswani, Ahmad (June 7, 2008). "It's 'Open Season' on Egypt's Copts," MEMRI Special Dispatch, Available at: http://www.aafaq.org/masahas.aspx?id_mas=1905

After his house arrest, he rarely challenged the government, preferring to work behind the scenes, and he upset Muslims and Copts by endorsing Mubarak's candidacy for re-election as president in 2005. See Joffe, Lawrence (18 March, 2012) "Pope Shenouda III

Christian representation of the Coptic Orthodox Church when aligned to national policy.

Since the early years of the Nasser era, it became clear to both Catholic and Protestant missionaries that their foreignness was a liability as anti-missionary nationalism gained a significant boost in the region. In 1953, two Lebanese Muslims - Mustafa Khalidi and Omar Farukh - seeded a postcolonial Arabic genre of Muslim anti-missionary treatises that portrayed Christian missionaries as cultural subversives and political infiltrators (Sharkey 2013:204). Just five years after the emergence of Israel, one year after the Free Officers coup, and at the dawn of pan-Arab nationalism, resentment against Western intervention in the Middle East was intense. Their book, titled *"Evangelism and imperialism in the Arab world"*, became a touchstone for Islamists who argued that Christians in Arabic societies should know their subordinated status (Scudder: 8). According to Khalidi and Farrukh, these *"latter-day Crusaders"* were the most powerful and dangerous agents of Western imperialism, and mission institutions (schools, hospitals, bookstores, etc.) should be seen as nothing but tools for Western intervention (Khalidi and Farrukh: 39).

Sharkey (2013) suggests that perhaps the Egyptian government was responding to Khalidi and Farrukh's call when it announced Law 583 on December 4, 1955 that in Article 1 provided that a private school in Egypt must:

"teach the subject of religion to its Egyptian pupils, each in accordance with his own religion and following the syllabus set by the Ministry, and it is not permitted for the school to teach its pupils any religion other than their own or to have them participate in the religious exercises of a religion other than their own, even [if] this is approved by the pupil's guardian" (Quoted from Tignor: 114).

Catering to a predominantly Muslim student body, particularly Protestant missionary schools were pushed to reconsider the basis of their work. E.M. Bailey, head of the American mission wrote in May 1956 to the minister of education explaining that it was out of the scope of the American mission (as a Christian

obituary" *The Guardian*. Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/mar/18/pope-shenouda-the-third>

organization) to teach Islam in its schools. He asked that the government continue the earlier policy of allowing Muslim parents to assume responsibility for their children's religious education or they would be forced to cut enrolments and only allow Christians in their schools (Sharkey 2013: 198). The Ministry of Education replied that it would not allow foreign schools to discriminate against students on account of their creed (Sharkey 2013: 199). In other words, this meant that the government would not allow them to deny enrolment to Muslims. Unable to meet the minimum in all its schools, the American mission would decide to comply to Law 583 but they would still close two of their schools in Port Suez and Ismailiyya (Tignor:114).

The processes of nationalization that prompted the Suez Crisis had far-reaching consequences for Christian missions and churches as well. The initial nationalization of many British, French, and Jewish assets into "Egyptianized" ones (*massarat*) prompted the exodus of Jews (again), Greeks, Italians, and members of other *jattayat* (expatriate communities) who did not claim Egyptian nationality (Tignor: 116). After Britain, France, and Israel launched their Tripartite Aggression in late October 1956, the ground shifted even more. Many Catholic schools were associated by the Egyptian government with France as they either had French teachers or taught in French (Sharkey 2013: 201). Thus, all Catholic schools that did not operate under Vatican auspices were nationalized, Britons were deported, their bank accounts frozen and the few remaining British missionaries had to turn to the Americans for loans so that they could buy airplane tickets and leave (Sharkey 2013: 203).

Whereas some scholars believe that converts should be identified as part of the broader Catholic or Protestant denomination rather than as Copts (Shatzmiller 2007: 12), further State reforms pressured Egyptian Protestants to take a stance. Targeting foreign schools, the Egyptian government announced another law— Law 160 of 1953 —that stipulated that the directors of all schools in Egypt had to be Egyptians. Although it was not actually implemented until 1962 (Tignor: 120), the American mission transferred all of its remaining schools to the authority of the Evangelical Church of Egypt. Partly for the sake of political expediency, Protestant missionaries began to give full credit to Egyptian Evangelicals (Sharkey 2013: 206) writing themselves out of the record to some degree. It is in this post-Suez period

where the historic role of foreign missionaries (both Protestant and Catholic) became harder to trace.

As missionaries stepped out from the spotlight, the Evangelical Church of Egypt and other independent Protestant churches in the Middle East assumed an increasingly prominent role. This would translate in the ability of local converts to make decisions themselves while easing the Evangelical Church's relations with the government.

Accommodating to the mood of the time, Evangelical leaders christened this church as the "*Coptic Evangelical Church in the Nile Valley*". Their insertion of the adjective "Coptic" was a plea for indigenusness and an attempt to distance themselves from the foreign mission that had fostered it (Sharkey 2008: 204). Henceforth, the Evangelicals became the only Protestant community in Egypt to include the word "Coptic" in their church (Sharkey 2013: 81). Nonetheless, in practice, this adjective was counter-productive to this Church as it implied a closer identification with Coptic Orthodoxy, which they were not looking for (Husman: 108). In an attempt to distance itself from the Coptic Orthodox, in 2004 the church re-christened itself as the "Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Egypt" (Sharkey 2013: 82).

In just 53 years, the term "Copt" for Evangelicals went from being a statement of indigenusness to an unwelcomed association to an institution that they considered mislead. In contrast, Catholic Copts had claimed the title of "Copts" since the institution of this church in 1741 (q.v. Chapter 2.3.1) and continue to do so today.

Besides this State-sponsored exclusivity, the Coptic Orthodox Church has been the obvious and most important definer of what "Copticness" does and does not entail. Despite the deployment of the national unity narrative at key moments to shut down debate about contentious issues, framing Coptic identity in ethno-religious terms has become increasingly dominant with the Coptic community. Orthodox Copts consider themselves to be the inheritors of ancient Egyptian civilization (Rowe: 96). Copts have also defined their community in exclusive terms, drawing on a narrative of the miracle of the survival of the Coptic Church and distancing themselves from the Muslim environment through specific traditions, rituals, and

liturgies (Botros 2006: 195). In this process, they have also distanced themselves from non-Orthodox Christians.

Copts define themselves insisting that their Christianity is the true Christianity and retain pride in their distinctiveness vis-a-vis other Christians. They trace their Christianity back to St. Mark through an unbroken chain of 118 Patriarchs (Joffe 2012) clinging to what they consider as “original Christianity” (Meinardus 2010: 28). The fact that Egypt was a major centre for the development of early Christianity, the influential writings of the Desert Fathers, a large mythology of miracles and apparitions, numerous Egyptian saints and distinctive art, provide Copts with a rich heritage (q.v. Chapter 4.2) that builds a sense belonging to a blessed and ancient community that has been pivotal to the development and spread of the Christian faith.

According to Edward Wakin, Copts disliked being labelled "Christians" on their identity cards because it lumped them together with other Christians and blurred their identity (Walkin: 52). This separation was also perceived in the agitated warning of a Coptic Catholic nun that explained to me during a bus ride:

"The Orthodox are so proud of being Copts that if they have to imagine their daughters married outside their people, they prefer to marry them to Muslims than people of our Church [Coptic Catholics] ... even if their husbands can divorce them [their daughters] and then leave them, even if they are not allowed to teach their children how to pray to the Virgin or believe in Christ!"

Even though there are no distinct ethnic traits to separate Catholics and Protestant Egyptians from other co-nationals, Mariam, a green-eyed, tan-skinned Catholic volunteer in her early twenties would make fun of how – despite the commonness of her phenotype in Minya- she would still over-hear the wife of her doorman call her and her friends from church foreigners:

"All my family is from Minya and I never left the country. I do not look different from people here but Hoda [the doorman's wife, who happens to be Muslim], because she knows we go to a different church than tant Mervat ["aunt Mervat", another

neighbor of the same building who is Orthodox] she laughs and tells her sister we are "khawaga".⁶⁶

Mariam emphasized, however, that the comment is probably also prompted by the financial status of her family rather than her actual religious affiliation:

"One time we [Mariam and her family] were in a resort in Hurghada [a beach in the Red Sea] and a random lady selling baskets also called my family like that [khawaga/foreigners]; maybe it was that she was angry because she wanted us to buy something from her".

These discourses of Christian authenticity tied with Copticness and Egyptian indigeneity seem to reach both urban and even diasporic Copts. Such was echoed in a session of the "Coptic Discovery Community" (CDC) at the American University in Cairo while I was preparing this study. Andrew, an American student whose Coptic mother had married an a non-religious American, had seized the opportunity to obtain his master's degree at AUC, rediscover his Coptic heritage and resuscitate a Coptic student group along the way. Unlike the Prophet Daniel's Assembly (PDA) - an unofficial student group at AUC representing the church and which admission is purely Coptic Orthodox - CDC intended *"to cater to insiders and outsiders"* affirmed Andrew, *"teaching Coptic language, organizing trips and conferences to spread awareness on Coptic identity"*. Nonetheless, when asked about non-Orthodox Copts (Catholic and Protestant) in one of his presentations on Coptic Diaspora, Andrew was unreserved in saying that:

"I don't know them but I can say that those are not real Copts. They are just people that like to make friends with

⁶⁶ The official word for foreigner in Arabic is *"ajnabi"* (Egyptian: "agnabi") but the colloquial "khawaga" carries distinct connotations, at times even pejorative ones. It is originally a Persian origin that meant "master" (as in master of slaves), thus, there is a distinct amount of respect and envy mixed in it.

As the columnist Salama Ahmed points out, Egyptians' relationship with foreigners is a complicated affair. Being both rich and clueless, both a sense of superiority and inferiority are paradoxically expressed -often at the same time- in what he coins "the khawaga complex". See El Amrani, Issandr (March 30, 2011). "The khawaga's lament" Egypt Independent. Available at: <http://www.egyptindependent.com/opinion/khawaga%E2%80%99s-lament>

foreigners and agree to what they say so they can get jobs or get better treatment in their schools; they are not really related to this presentation."

As innocent and inconsequential as Andrew's response could have been, the dangers underlying ideas of indigeneity and distinction made among Egyptian citizens on the basis of religious belonging were dramatically manifested during a period of heightened tension in Egypt. With the precedent of the "Camilia Shehata Zakher Affair,"⁶⁷ and the capture of the "Coptic Arms Ship" on September 2010,⁶⁸ the second highest-ranking official in the Coptic Orthodox Church, Anba Bishoy, stated in an interview with the newspaper Masr Elyoum that "*Muslims are only guests*" of the Copts who are the original inhabitants of Egypt (Hulsman 2010). Besides claiming that Quranic verses disputing the divine nature of Jesus Christ were inserted by one of the Prophet's successors after his death (Cesari 2014: 90), his assertion provoked a heated exchange across different media channels and even demonstrations. The Pope's apology came a day after Al-Azhar criticized the bishop for provoking sectarian tension and, in his attempt to mediate the situation, he countered by saying that in fact Copts are the guests of Muslims because Egypt is a Muslim majority country (Cesari 2014: 92).

Statements such as those of Anba Bishoy and Andrew are ironic when considering that all surviving (mainstream) religious discourses in Egypt are imports; be it be Islam or any type of Christianity. The early Church that established in Egypt was part of what is now known as the Greek Orthodox Church (Armanios 2011: 26). Egyptian names do not begin to appear in the lists of bishops of the Church in Egypt

⁶⁷ The "Camilia Shehata Zakher Affair" was a public scandal that took place in July 2010 when Coptic activists speculated that the wife of a prominent bishop had been kidnapped. Upon her appearance, Islamists alleged that Camilia, on disappearance, converted to Islam and that, upon reappearance, she was forced back to Christianity. See Cesari, Jocelyne (2014). *The Awakening of Muslim Democracy: Religion, Modernity, and the State*, Cambridge University Press, p. 74-78.

⁶⁸ On August 16, 2010, the Egyptian media reported the capture of a ship loaded with explosives that arrived to Egypt from Israel and was owned by the Coptic Church raising suspicion on them. *Reported by Al-Shurouq (Egypt), August 16, 2010; Al-Misriyyoun (Egypt), August 17, 2010. See Cesari 2014: 80.*

until the late second century because many Egyptians considered the early church establishment as foreign, as part of the Byzantine Empire (Tellyrides: 14). Thus, the acceptance of church authority was a gradual process and the merging of Egyptian and Hellenic culture through the Christian faith also took at least a couple more centuries to consolidate into a national church (Tagher: 1). In spite of that, Anba Bishoy's imprudent blunder illustrated quite dramatically how the sentiment of authenticity and indigeneity remains among Coptic Orthodox Christians and that other communities in Egypt- Catholic, Protestant or even Muslim - cannot claim.

Given that they claim to be indigenous Egyptians, one would be tempted to say that membership to their community is automatically inherited by birth. Their names (despite several exceptions of neutral names that can be either Muslims or Christian), their label on their national ID cards and their tattoos on their wrists (mostly applied from an early age) are birthmarks that make it seem as though one is born into the church, more than it is a religion one adopts by choice. Both sanctioned by the state⁶⁹ and the community, Coptiness would seem to be constructed by kinship, blood, and communal practices as much as (if not more than) it is a matter of doctrine.

Nonetheless, in the villages surrounding the JBAD - as elsewhere in Egypt where different denominations of Christians interact as a result of missionary work -

⁶⁹ Though religion is no longer written on Egyptian passports, including that trait on Egyptian identification cards has triggered controversy since the 90s. Among the Egyptians who did not identify themselves as Muslim, Christian, or Jewish on government identity documents, the most affected were Bahá'ís. Unless they lied about their religion, which conflicted with Bahá'í religious principle, they were unable to obtain the necessary government documents beginning with birth certificates, identification cards, passports, death, marriage or divorce certificates, or passports, and were therefore unable to be employed, educated, treated in hospitals, vote, among other rights to which properly identified citizens are entitled to.

As of August, 2009, the situation was pacified yet not resolved. Identification documents may now list a dash in place of one of the three recognized religions (Islam, Christianity, and Judaism). The first identification cards were issued to two Bahá'ís under the new policy on August 8, 2009 allowing them to exercise legal personality, yet this blank entry on the cards of all Egyptians continues to carry privacy issues to disclosing one's faith. See *Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (2006-12-16)*. "Government Must Find Solution for Baha'i Egyptians". Available at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20070209221817/http://www.eipr.org/en/press/06/1612.htm> and *Human Rights Watch (November 11, 2007)* "Prohibited Identities: State Interference with Religious Freedom," Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2007/11/11/prohibited-identities/state-interference-religious-freedom>

the Greek meaning of the word "Copt" has been transformed for practical terms in everyday parlance not to mean Egyptian, nor Christian; but "Orthodox". "The wedding was *a'and (at the prescence/the place of) el Catholik*"; "El igtima'a (the meeting/lecture/Bible study session) will take place *a'and el Brotestaant*"; "The prayer was *a'and el Aqbat (at the prescence of/with the Copts)*". However, it is important to clarify that staff, beneficiaries and neighbors were only open to make distinctions when talking about locations, not people. As Justina, an Orthodox assistant teacher of the vocational training program for youth with mental disabilities, proudly remarked in one of our conversations, *"we are all one church, under Christ Our Lord, we don't make those differentiations here [at the JBAD] of who is Catholic or Orthodox"*.

The next chapter (5.2) will explore the ceremonial or community environments where Catholic Copts are eager to label themselves as Copts as well. Yet beyond the borders of their community, among the three main denominations of Christians in Minya, *"qibty"* (Coptic) has been reconstructed to refer to those which profess their loyalty to the Coptic Orthodox Church only. In Anderson (1998)'s terms, the "Coptic imagined community" is not centered on ethnic traits nor a territorial attachment (that would be common to any other Christian Egyptians), but this "Copticness" is defined to the degree that one is affiliated to the church itself and its representation by clerical hierarchy. El-Khawaga describes this as a *"retotalization of meaning"* (El Khawaga: 182), through which adherence to a church becomes a complete source of identity. In other words, the monopoly of the Coptic Orthodox Church over Coptic identity has created a vacuum where only Coptic Orthodox Copts are "Copts" and Catholic Copts are not.

4.3.4 The boundaries of Copticness

While boundaries play a determining role in the sustainability of politics of belonging of a community (Barth: 17), these boundaries are also constructed and deconstructed by discourses of belonging that are not necessarily fixed. Thus, it is not possible to define Copticness by exclusion as the boundaries that separate what is Coptic and what is not are not as evident as they would seem to be. Conversion

and nominal adscription are the two most evident phenomena in my fieldwork that exposed how ambivalent and ambiguous overlapping interpretations of elements of ethnicity, national identity, loyalty and religion contest such boundaries.

While conversions in and out of the Coptic Orthodox Church are not unheard of, the most noticeable conversions seem to be related to questions of marriage and divorce as they affect more than one party. Coptiness must be adopted by those marrying a Copt as the Church does not admit mixed marriages (Meinardus 2010: 58, cf. Chapter 5.1.1), while renouncing to such identity has been resorted to by those who wish to divorce from a Coptic marriage (Khalil 2011). Since Pope Shenouda III's assumption of the papacy in the early 1970's, the grounds for Coptic divorce have tightened.⁷⁰ As there is no civil marriage in Egypt and the government recognizes the authority of religious institutions to regulate matters of personal status, conversions out of the Coptic Orthodox Church to Islam and other denominations are the solution to those wishing to escape an irremediable marriage and remarry (Khalil 2011).

Whereas a conversion to Islam mostly ceases self-identification as a Copt (Khalil 2011), Copts who convert to other branches of Christianity tend to retain an ambiguous allegiance to their original identity. Despite his family's objections and his own heavy critiques of clergy, Ibrahim (my Catholic convert host who I introduced at the beginning of this chapter), continued to sympathized with his Coptic roots by singing *taranim* (Coptic hymns) to his toddler, Nader; by naming his daughter after a Coptic saint he venerated (St. Marina the Monk/ of Alexandria) and occasionally

⁷⁰ Not so long ago, the Coptic Church had a more relaxed stance regarding divorce. The 1938 personal status code bylaws provided nine grounds for divorce and remarriage, including: adultery; absence of a spouse for five years without any news of him or her, or if the wife went missing; if one spouse was a threat to the other; mental illness, infection with contagious diseases, impotence of the husband; imprisonment for seven years, taking religious vows; and in the event either member of the couple decided to renounce Christianity.

In June 2008, the 1938 Personal Status Regulations for the Coptic Orthodox Church in Egypt were amended to limit the grounds for divorce only to adultery and change of religion. This revision followed a ruling of the State Council requiring Pope Shenouda III to grant a divorced Orthodox Copt a license to remarry. The amendments ended a long-standing conflict between the Egyptian national courts and the Coptic Orthodox Church regarding the effects of judicial divorce: prior to the revision, thousands of couples divorced before the courts were considered by the Church to be still married. See *Rowberry, Ryan and Khalil, John (2010)*.

attending both Orthodox and Catholic liturgies upon his wife's request or for particular celebrations that presented an opportunity to socialize.

Unlike Ibrahim's "Coptiness" that was challenged for stepping outside the Church, his wife's youngest brother (and brother-in-law), Ayad could go by not fasting, staying home to chat on Facebook while the family celebrated the Easter liturgy. He could get away with not joining family prayers as long as his loyalty to the hierarchy and leadership of the church was not contested. Despite Ayad's general apathy to the Church, his adscriptive nominalism, was still convenient at times. As the 23 year-old explained, keeping such linkage particularly opened the pool of bachelorettes from him to choose when he graduated from the Faculty of Agriculture and wanted to marry or find jobs. In this sense, the community as a whole is the bearer of the faith, and not everyone is expected to evidence the same level of spiritual devotion. Religiously non-practicing members of the community are thus still seen (and they typically see themselves), as full members of the community as long as they still confess a nominal loyalty to church hierarchy.

Either of these cases illustrates that "Coptiness" is an elastic and constructed term that circles under loyalty to the hierarchy and leadership of the church itself and this identity is later channeled into a communal consciousness.

At the same time, it cannot simply be assumed that relations of inclusion and exclusion are a one-way construction that is shaped only by the majority or the dominant group seeking to enclose an "other" within a certain category. While the meaning of "Copt" has been (re)constructed, appropriated and negotiated, Copts that do not profess this loyalty to the Coptic Orthodox Church (i.e. Catholic Copts) have also struggled to distinguish their church from their foreign missionary heritage to claim a shared heritage as Copts.

4.4 The other side of Coptic Identity Politics

In the 90s, with a resurgent Islamism visible in public spaces and concern about Islamist violence, the question of Coptic status within Egyptian society was again a contentious topic. A proposed conference to be held in Cairo in 1994 entitled

“The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Minorities and People of the Arab World and the Middle East” received a strong public reaction for including the Copts on the agenda. A number of key figures, including Pope Shenouda III, condemned the designation of Copts as a minority. In a press release he wrote:

"We do not accept being distinguished from other Egyptians. We do not accept the word 'minority' in the meaning of claiming political rights or foreign help. We are Egyptians, part of Egypt, of the same nation" (Meinardus 2004, 85; see also Makari 2007).

Arguing that religious affiliation was not a relevant way to divide the nation, he pointed out that the term minority in Arabic (*aqalliyya*) can be interpreted to imply lesser status rather than numerically smaller, and therefore imply a particular power relationship rather than demographic reality (*Sedra 1999: 221*). In this discourse, Orthodox Copts and Muslims have been historically united, particularly against foreign (i.e. Western) invaders such as the Byzantine Empire, the Crusaders, the French, the British and the Israelis. This strand has been fed by ideologies such as Political Pharaonism (or Egyptianism) that, as mentioned earlier, tried to rally all segments of Egyptian society, Muslims and Copts, to the ideal of an independent, more or less secular nation state Egypt.

To assume that Copts are a minority, therefore, as was the case for Shenouda, represented a threat not only to an official national unity narrative, but to core pillars defining Copticness. Coptic identity, from this perspective, claims that sameness and difference are simultaneous constructions and closely interconnected with the development of a modern Egyptian national state. By claiming sameness, the Coptic Orthodox Church is contesting the constructions of otherness. Yet the difference in faith is equally important for the Coptic Orthodox Church in order for it to defend and promote its Christian identity vis-à-vis the Muslim majority and Non-Orthodox Egyptian Christians.

For Catholic Copts such as Angie, a youth missionary and student at the JBAD, this juggling of sameness and otherness leads her privilege her civil identification over a religious one without being mutually exclusive. While a group of children who were waiting for their parents to pick them up repeated (in an abusive

manner) on their cellphones "Boshra El Kheir"⁷¹ at the front stairs of the JBAD, we discussed what being Egyptian meant to her:

"I am a Copt. Christianity is my faith. But Coptic means 'Egyptian', not Orthodox. Overall, I am Egyptian like any other Muslim, Orthodox or Protestant".

Additionally when questioned whether or not they consider themselves a minority, all Catholic Coptic participants during my fieldwork would not hesitate to point out both their numerical and political disadvantages:

"it is not like I will ever get to be president of Egypt...even if I tried, it is not like Egyptians would trust a woman or a Catholic but that doesn't mean I can't have a good life".

Baher (another youth missionary who we will return to in the next chapter), that was overhearing our conversation and was staggered by Angie's comment jumped in the conversation:

"I cannot separate being a Copt or being Catholic or being Egyptian. I do not need to explain to the Copts [Orthodox] that I am also a Copt. I am a Copt because we have a rich history and culture that is tied to Egypt, not because I follow Pope Tadros or fast nine hours before communion.⁷² Of course, there are many people that will label you like something weird because of all the rivalry between denominations but there are also people who understand that we are sister churches. Anyway, if you will not become president ya sity (lit. "mylady", used to show both respect and humor simultaneously) [He looks at Angie in a playful way] it is because you cannot even finish school!" [Angie rolls her eyes].

⁷¹ Lit. "Good tidings", this song was particularly moving for some Egyptians not only for its catchy beat and mentioning of many Egyptian cities but because it was released during the spring of 2014, in the dawn of the presidential election that took Gral. Abel Fatah El Sisi to office.

⁷² Since Orthodox Copts need to fast nine hours before taking communion, services including communion are mostly held in the early morning (to count the hours as people sleep). Catholics only fast one hour before communion and thus, services with communion are held at any time during the day.

In this line, Catholic Copts must negotiate Copticness and Egyptianess that is questioned despite their strong adherence to a heritage which knows not of denominational borders but is ultimately Coptic and Egyptian.

Ultimately, the negotiation of identity that was described in this chapter is translated into political and social ramifications (as elaborated in the next chapter. Unlike Catholic Copts, the question for Orthodox Copts is not so much that of identity but of the status and power relationships derived from their identity. As articulated by Ortner (2006), Orthodox Copts as a majority within a minority "*have their own politics*" (2006, 46). To the inside, this politics was institutionalized as Coptic reform and Coptic nationalism. To the outside, this was systematized as the millet partnership. In any event, the identity politics of the Copts which called them into a simultaneous process of insistence and resistance to other national groups has complicated the classification of Egyptian minorities.

Van Doorn-Harder rejects that the Coptic revival has created a separation among Copts and other Egyptians. She argues just the opposite. Utilizing Anthony D. Smith's theory of "ethnic survival potential," outlined in *National Identity* (1991), she maintains that the Church's revival has brought about various projects that strengthened inter-communal relations between the Copts and Muslims (Van Doorn-Harder: 128). Still, Gamal, a Muslim teacher for the Liberal Studies Program at the JBAD,⁷³ pointed out that Copts' strong attachment to the church, he believes "*hurts the concept of citizenship and even promotes antagonism towards Non-Copts.*"

Historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. would agree with Gamal when discussing identity politics in his book "*The Disuniting of America*" (1991). In his view, basing politics on group marginalization fractures the civil polity, and therefore works against creating real opportunities for ending marginalization (Schlesinger: 51). The rejection of the Coptic Orthodox Church to be labelled as a minority has therefore left players outside this equation. It has outcasted groups such as Catholic Copts, to continue to

⁷³ Despite running a primary and preparatory school founded in 1889, the JBA is aware that education does not end at school and a program of Liberal Studies is offered for alumni and university students. Organized in different fields that range between civil and social issues and leadership trainings, these workshops are organized to allow future generations to stay updated, as well as having access to their library.

constitute what Bengio and Ben Dor (1999)'s define as a "*diffuse minority*", who have no strong regional base or access to the centers of power (Bengio: 28).

In the discourse concerning the social and political marginalization of the Egyptian Christians, there is a widespread assumption that a secular, liberal Egyptian state is the only type of state that will respect Coptic interests and promote democracy and equality. However, the dominant Coptic Orthodox Church has continued to exhibit traditional attitudes towards pivotal issues such as personal status law and State-Church relations, suggesting that the type of secularism supported by Copts is complex and distinctive from secularism in a Western context.

Most importantly, this bid for equality is also different to the Western democratic value in that it assumes a de facto uncontested privilege alliance with the state vis-à-vis other minorities, rather than promoting secular citizenship as a collective entitlement. While the advent of the notion of citizenship threatened the control, security and stability that the millet system had afforded the Patriarch, the apparent unity of Christians in Egypt under the banner of the Coptic Orthodox Church has managed to perpetuate the ambiguous political situation of non-Orthodox minorities in Egypt.

Just as the insolent Coptic Jesuit priest in Wakin's anecdote (refer to the opening quote of this chapter), the imprudent existence of non-Coptic Orthodox minorities in Egypt is still (half a century after the Suez crisis) an uncomfortable reminder of the vacuums constructing Egyptian identity based on a dichotomy and the denial ambivalent subscription to a minority status. This reminder is uncomfortable not only because Orthodox Copts are not the only kind of Copts, but because this strategy of rejecting the label of minority simultaneously rejects the implication that religious affiliation affects the relationship between citizens. Such fallacy keeps on inhibiting and denying other alternatives for more inclusive citizenship.

5. “Numin bikanisa wahda” (We believe in one Church): the dispute for "Copticness".

A normal workday at the JBA starts with mass in a small room at the rooftop of the headquarters' building. Yes, we must remove our shoes as we anticipate the liturgy and step on a holly place as would be expected in Oriental rites and churches. Yes, the Byzantine style Prosfora bread is set on the table as it is natural for Oriental churches⁷⁴. Yes, the walls of this room are decorated with traditional Coptic icons, written (as they are considered to be a visual gospel) in their backgrounds of gold and portraying images such as *Mar Girgis* (Saint George, just like in Mr. Emad's living room q.v. Chapter 3) and the Virgin Mary. As the clock reaches 8 am, employees – both Catholic and Orthodox - begin to claim an individual cushioned square to sit on over the carpet of this rooftop chapel.

Yet this is not an ordinary Catholic Coptic mass. There is no iconostas hiding the mystery of consecration. The blue-eyed Dutch priest, who was ordained in Maadi more than 20 years ago and is more Egyptian now than foul and tameya,⁷⁵ starts the ceremony in flawless Arabic; no, not in the Latin rite (as it would be logical since the father is European) but in the Coptic rite.

The majority of the attendees are much more than that, despite being women. These are not the shy Coptic ladies from the villages around that veil their heads while listening to the liturgy and their boldness does not stop in their naked hair. Unlike pretty much any of their Oriental (whether Orthodox or Catholic) gender-

⁷⁴ The Eastern tradition likens yeast in bread to the soul in the body. The soul gives life, and therefore the "living bread" of the Eucharist must have yeast.

The West uses unleavened bread because that is what Jesus used in the Last Supper. There was no leavened bread around at the time of the Last Supper/Passover, plus, the fact that all leavened bread would have been destroyed, locked away, or given to Gentiles the day before Passover, as per Jewish religious practice.

Roman-rite Catholics are not permitted to use leavened bread (Code of Canon Law 926) as the Church desires uniformity to show that the sacrifice of the Mass is the same sacrifice everywhere. Eastern-rite churches in communion with Rome are allowed to retain their own tradition of using leavened bread as the Council of Florence approved the use of either kind of bread in 1439 for Catholics of Eastern background. See *Runciman, 1955* (Chapter 2 bibliography).

⁷⁵ Beans and Egyptian falafel, which are staple foods of Egyptian breakfasts.

peers, these women participate actively in the organization of the mass to the point of even reading liturgy or leading hymns (a role reserved to male deacons, *par excellence*).

Reading the astonishment in my face, my informant explains to me that the private and very cozy nature of this mass (which is only for JBAD staff) allows bending the orthodoxy of liturgical rituals to some degree. Nonetheless, the naturalization and routine of this practice is the beginning of a much larger image. At the peak of the celebration, the breaking of the bread among a larger number of Orthodox attendees compared to the couple of Catholic parishioners, along with their Catholic hosts and employers, is an everyday practice that forgets the historical wounds and rivalry between these two sisterly churches.

Outside from this rooftop chapel, this chapter will exemplify how sectarian lines between Christians, particularly Catholic and Orthodox, are both practiced, contradicted and denied in the community surround the JBAD. It also aims to highlight how despite the completely unsymmetrical power relationships that these two minorities have vis-avis the state (q.v. Chapter 4.1), the almost identical cultural identity that all Copts (Catholic and Orthodox) share hints that these two communities are much closer than they are willing to accept.

Of course, not all of their 190 employees and volunteers of the JBAD wake up early for this event. Yet what matter is that every day, between those four walls and before any other order of the day, the practice of praying together, sharing the bread together, and remembering one God before resorting to difference, creates a micro-society in the JBAD that makes sense of the oath they repeat every mass: “Numin bikanisa wahida”, “we believe in one Church”.

5.1 Wounds inside the Church

Not 30 km down South of the JBAD, an Egyptian Evangelical couple in the village of Atlidam experienced more than they had ever expected during the last weekend of January 2016. Their promise to be together *"until death do part"* them was a short-lived one once a gas leakage killed them both on their wedding night

while sleeping in their new home. As their local pastor was on vacation, the distressed wedding guests (now funeral guests) moved to the neighboring Coptic Orthodox Church. The church opened its doors to receive the large crowd of desolated mourners; however, they were further vexed by the reaction of the local Orthodox priests who refused to pray over the deceased bodies.

Despite the fact that the international press was notoriously silent on the matter,⁷⁶ Egyptians through social and national traditional media⁷⁷ attacked the Coptic Orthodox Church accusing it of sectarianism and hatred for other Christians. A local mosque even offered the funeral to be moved to their venue⁷⁸ ignoring that the Coptic Orthodox Church –like any religious institution- has internal rules and traditions.

Such was the pressure that even the Pope (through the official spokesman of the Coptic Orthodox Church) and the local bishops released a statement the day after on their website explaining that that decision was beyond the internal rules of Church and insisting was disrespectful the own will of the deceased (The Coptic News 2016). The Church argued that while the doctrine of the Church does not allow them to pray for non-Orthodox who are dead, the request of the mourning families was opposite to their own tenants as Protestants do not believe in the rituals of the Church. The raising of incense, their rejection of the priesthood and the fact that Protestants do not believe in the usefulness of prayer for the dead in the first place were an apparent contradiction. Furthermore, the statement stressed that introducing a deceased person against his/her will in a church that he/she had

⁷⁶ I was not able to find reliable sources in English covering this tragedy.

⁷⁷ See Aalam, Sarah. "Alttayifat al'iinjiyya: rafad "alUrthodks" alssalat alaa mutain bil Minya karithat 'iinsaniyya" ("Anglican Communion: the rejection of Orthodox prayer for our deceased in Minya is a humanitarian disaster") El Youm Es Sabaa (January 28, 2016), Available at: <http://www.youm7.com/2559087>; or Aadel, Michael.(Jan. 26, 2016) " Alkanisat al'Urthudhuksiat bel Minya tarfud alssalat alaa jththamayn arousein Brotestant" ("Orthodox Church to in Minya refuses to pray on the bodies two Protestant newlyweds"),Al Bawabh News. Available at: <http://www.albawabhnews.com/1738465>

⁷⁸ Khalil, Emad (Jan, 27, 2016) Kinisa Urthoduksiyya bel Minya tarfud asSala alaa mutawaffin "Brotestant" ("Orthodox church in Minya reject prayers for the deceased «Protestant») El Masry El youm. Available at: <http://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/882085>

openly rejected during life was unacceptable. The statement added that the prayers could have also been held in the Church of the bride's hometown village in Samalout (50 km from the incident) as it is traditional to pray for every person in the church that they normally attended and which is of the same denomination as the couple. Nonetheless, the Church offered her sincere condolences to the family of the dead couple and continued to offer to receive them in the hall of the Church (Coptic News, 2016).

Neseem, an Evangelical English teacher at the JBAD, was the first of my contacts to share the news on Facebook complaining:

"They just ignore the feelings of those who are suffering with the excuse of their rite? Where is the Christian love you teach people? God have mercy on our sister and brother and shame on you!"

While the solidarity of other Protestant contacts was understandable, my later survey on Catholic reactions to the event presented an opportunity to bring out their own claims. Ibrahim (my Catholic convert host during Easter) insisted that the Orthodox Church in the village where they married should have held their funeral:

"In reality, funerals are not for the dead, they are for the living family members who are suffering. Even an "Abana Elazzi" ("The Lord's Prayer") would have helped... We all pray it in common in all denominations –Orthodox, Catholics, Protestants too! It is in the Bible! If they really wanted to help, they would have made it possible...They just really didn't want to help because they are closed-minded".

The incident further reveals that Justina's comment about inter-Christian sectarianism (q.v. Chapter 4.4.3) was either contextualized for the JBAD or a symptom of denial. If sectarian clashes between Muslims and Christians are sensationalized, sectarian issues among Egyptian Christians are contingent to both relations of power based on denomination and also on the historic and theological wounds that linger.

Although this is an individual incident, it can be further understood by recalling that the relations between the Coptic Orthodox Church and different Protestant groups in Egypt have by no means been fully amicable. Since 1854, the American Presbyterian church sent their first missionaries to Egypt but their educational activities and open proselytism soon developed into rivalry with Christian denominations that (Sharkey 2013: 12). The pope of the time, Pope Demetrius II (1862-1870), focused his efforts on soliciting support from Egyptian authorities to expel the foreign missionaries and called for the public burning of books distributed by these Presbyterian missionaries (Atiya: 51). Two centuries later, in the late 90s, Pope Shenouda III also campaigned heavily against Protestant and non-Trinitarian groups. Conferences on Coptic Orthodox apologetics, increasing the availability of revised books in Coptic Orthodox Churches, strengthening pastoral care in slums, spreading warnings on deceiving attitudes of proselytizers, advising the Orthodox against joining activities in joint cooperation with Protestants and Catholics (since these were used for proselytism), prohibiting Protestant choirs in Orthodox churches, and withdrawing from participating in Sat 7 satellite station, were some of the measures that the Pope deployed to protect his flock from Protestants (Husulman: 81-83).

In this sense, the Coptic Orthodox Church rejected a unity based on sympathy arguing that *"God is not only love but the truth"* (Secretariat 2011). These efforts to segregate the flock from the *"wolves"* (Sharkey 2013: 57) resulted in preventing dialogue between Orthodox and other Christian denominations in Egypt.

5.2 Coptic sectarianism: Catholic-Orthodox othering.

The political pact that was described in the previous chapter (q.v. Chapter 4.2) has a major flaw: it promotes national unity while assuming church unity...something that is still very far from being a reality. Indubitably, the most effective and intense ecumenical dialogue that Orthodox Copts have held is with the Roman Catholic

Church⁷⁹ due to the high similarities, believes and common ancestry that they share.⁸⁰ Nevertheless, these differences are negotiated differently on the ground particularly with Catholic Copts. This section will explore how both Orthodox and Catholic Copts interacting with the JBAD negotiate sectarian differences in their everyday lives.

In addition to theological arguments,⁸¹ the impasse in the road to full communion between Catholics and Oriental Orthodox has been accentuated in Egypt (as in other countries where Eastern Catholic/ Uniate Churches were established) by the rivalry generated by missionary work (Rowe 2014: 12). As my main informant proudly affirmed, several positive outcomes of the race and the influence prompted by both Catholic and Protestant missionary work reached the church from its cores. The Coptic Orthodox Sunday School Movement and the development of its own entrepreneurial interest in providing basic social services the community (such as clinics and social centers) were positive outcomes in the Orthodox Church. In the particular case of the JBAD, even a welfare center for the disabled in the village of Deir Barsha was established with the exact model of the school for youth with disabilities of the JBAD and they even received technical support from the JBAD.

⁷⁹ By the end of 20th century, the 5th century Chalcedonian schism (q.v. Chapter 2.3.1) was not seen with the same importance. As a result of five Pro Oriente meetings held in Vienna between theologians of the Catholic Church and those of the Oriental Orthodox Churches, both churches arrived to an agreement on the 12th of February 1988, expressing a common formula regarding the nature of Christ concluding the theological clash that separated Alexandria from the the rest of Christendom in Chalcedon (Radano: 305).

⁸⁰ Both have valid 7 sacraments, valid Apostolic Succession, valid Holy Orders, both revere and pray to the Virgin Mary as *Theotokos* (Mother of God), they pray to the saints, they pray for the faithful departed, both believe in the Real Presence of Christ's Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity in the Eucharist and both call their lead Patriarch by the title of "Pope," (Greek "*pappas*", meaning "daddy"), in addition to sharing four centuries and a half of common history See *Meyendorff, cf. Chapter 3.3 A Church of Many Nations*.

⁸¹ Pope Shenouda III in particular, emphasized that Christian unity must be founded upon a unity of faith and not upon a unity of jurisdiction (Husulman 2012). Despite the Christological success of the Pro Oriente talks between the See of Alexandria and the See of Rome, no agreement has been reached on theological aspects such as the purgatory, the immaculate conception of the Holy Virgin, the salvation of non-believers and the precedence of the Holy Spirit See *Attia: 229*.

Howbeit the positive effects of this competition to benefit the community, macro conversations of political and theological division undoubtedly inform interactions among Orthodox and Catholics on the ground but in the form of sectarian politics rather than theological discussions. Baher (a 23 year old volunteer at the JBAD) and several priests were the few interviewees that could tell me with confidence what the actual theological differences that separated Catholic and Orthodox Copts were:

"I come from an Orthodox family but I always studied in a Catholic school. When I was 13, I decided that I wanted to be Catholic. My family insisted that I become a deacon to stay close to the Orthodox but since then, I tried to attend Catholic masses as much as possible... the churches are very similar in rituals and we believe very similar things but I liked that Catholic priests are more open and flexible in their thinking and will encourage youth to think and participate. There are just little differences in how they perceive the hierarchy between the Son and the Holy Spirit, the dates and length of some feasts and rituals, and of course, the Popes...but those things do not affect my relationship with God and other Christians".

Beyond Baher's mentioning of the *filioque* controversy (e.i. *"the hierarchy between the Son and the Holy Spirit"*),⁸² participants in my interviews could only point out practices that would foster the maintenance of boundaries rather than actual theological justifications that keep such boundaries. The two most frequent instances where participants expressed resentment of continuing boundaries was regarding closed communion and intermarriage.

⁸² In Pneumatology- i.e. the study of the Holy Spirit – this refers to theological disagreement has to do with the Latin compound word *filioque* ("and the Son") which was added to the Nicene Creed by Spanish Catholic bishops around the end of the sixth century. With this addition, the creed says that the Spirit "proceeds from the Father and the Son." Without the addition, it says the Spirit proceeds from the Father.

Eastern Orthodox have traditionally challenged this, either saying that the doctrine is inaccurate or, for those who believe that it is accurate, that the pope had no authority to insert this word into the creed.

Many today, both Orthodox and Catholics, believe this controversy was a tempest in a teapot. The doctrine that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son as well as the Father is intimated in Scripture and present in the earliest Church Fathers. See Runciman, 1955

Even though this particular character will be more useful in the next chapter (to explain relationships between Catholic Copts and Muslims), I will briefly introduce him in this section as he was one of the earliest interviewees that exposed to me how these boundaries are preserved. Nabil is a social entrepreneur and farmer that was very close to the JBAD. As his personal initiative had received support from the Jesuits, my informant had arranged that I spend some time in his desert-reclaiming project that was supported to promote peaceful sectarian relationships in the villages surrounding that farm.

Munching on an improvised welcome lunch of some *aish baladi* (traditional Egyptian bread), and fresh tomatoes and onions that had been picked from the farm, we broke the ice by speaking about the background of their project. We spoke about what it meant to be a Christian in Egypt and Nabil was bold to sustain that *"there is nothing that differentiates Christians in Egypt as we are all are one under Christ our Lord"*. When our host finished eating, he got up to fetch some tea for his guests and trusting my apparent lack of attention and the distance between the table and the fire, he asked my informant in an inquisitive tone *"Is she Orthodox? Why do you bring and Orthodox to our fields?"*

From Nabil's tone, it seemed that the answer would be a decisive factor of my treatment as a guest and researcher, yet my biggest concern was with the contradiction between both his attitudes in the same meeting. As days passed and rapport improved, I summoned the boldness to confront both positions, to which he replied with a mixture of shame and humor:

"Don't get me wrong, I respect my Orthodox brothers. We get along well and share everything...well, except communion. I have invited many priests to come and visit our farm and in my home in my village, especially the priest of my village. But I warned abouna [the priest] that if I came to visit him to his church, he has to give me communion or all this friendship is just empty words".

The Catholic, as the Orthodox Churches, practice closed communion holding that reception of Holy Communion is reserved for those who are baptized. Unlike the Coptic Orthodox church (Attia: 32), the Catholic Church has made an exemption only

for Eastern Orthodox Christians (who are not in full communion with the Catholic Church⁸³) and allows them to receive Communion from Catholic ministers, if they request it of their own accord and are properly disposed (Code of Canon Law, Canon 844). However, to Nabil's regret, the lack of reciprocity has pushed several local Catholic priests to deny Orthodox to take Communion as well.

The lack of reciprocity and ritual exclusion was echoed several other times and was even articulated with irony through games. "*Ana Omry*" ("*Never have I ever*" or a.k.a. "*Ten Fingers*") is known in the West for being a verbal drinking game. Among beneficiaries and volunteers of the JBAD it is an innocent time killer.

As its Western version, the game is started with the players getting into a circle displaying all their ten fingers. Then, the first player says a simple statement starting with "*Never have I ever...*". Anyone who at some point in their life has done the action that the first player says lowers one of their fingers; the last person to lower a finger (or the one with the most fingers up) wins. Needless to say that the penalty is not to drink but is limited to lowering a finger until the person runs out of fingers and is eliminated from the game. The more conservative Egyptian version (at least the ones played among my sample) will not include sexual references or hard confessions:

Fady: "Never have I ever...flown in a plane". (Nancy and Kyrollos lower a finger).

Nancy: "Never have I ever... shaven my face". (Fady, Kyrollos, and Mina lower a finger. Christine and Abeer smile).

Nevertheless, that does not imply that the game is devoid from bringing out personal tensions among the players. Hanging out in the basketball court of the

⁸³ The Catechism of the Catholic Church, citing the Second Vatican Council and Pope Paul VI, states: "Full communion involves completeness of "those bonds of communion – faith, sacraments and pastoral governance – that permit the Faithful to receive the life of grace within the Church." See Catechism of the Catholic Church – English translation (U.S.A., 2nd edition) 1997, United States Catholic Conference, Inc., Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

JBAD, as the circle became smaller and fingers lowered, the group of volunteers began to make more personal statements:

*Christine (who had seen Kyrollos smoking before):
"Never have I ever... smoked. (Kyrollos has only one finger left)*

Mina and Abeer had been eliminated, only Christine, Nancy, Kyrollos and Fady survive. Fady, who is still in high school, gets upset and responds with a direct attack to Christine (who is a pharmacist).

Fady: Never have I ever studied Pharmacology.

[Christine whines in anger and lowers her finger].

Kyrollos who, unlike the other contestants, is Coptic Catholic, strikes with a sectarian hit:

"Never have I ever... taken Orthodox communion".

The contestants shouted and whined while Kyrollos celebrated and bragged about his petty victory but the party went on to discuss his win. *"That was a low strike, ya [oh] Kyrollos"*, Fady complains, *"We don't talk like that"*. The group has good rapport as they have known each other since their school days in the school of the JBAD. Nevertheless, while this denial seems irrelevant to his Orthodox friends, Kyrollos treats the matter with a mix of irony and resentment when questioned about his ludic choice: *"It's not a big deal...it's just that we say we are not divided but we are also not together"*.

These boundaries are not only internalized by youth but even supported by a number of religious authorities. Organized by a group of Catholic Coptic youth that collaborated with the Jesuits in Minya (among other Catholic congregations in the country), a summer missionary camp to Sohag was organized to evangelize children in rural Catholic villages along the East bank of the Nile. After a long day of games, singing, praying, conferences and giving out snacks to the children that gathered at the local church, the youth missionaries returned to their rooms, rested from the melting heat and prepared for dinner.

As a caveat, I must admit that my particular shock to evening activities in the missions was informed by both my experience in Mexico and the USA. In other mission I had attended, Catholic missionary work is traditionally seen as a spiritual experience through giving – not an opportunity to go husband-hunting. Additionally, my expectations as a researcher were informed by the highly conservative Egyptian atmosphere where secluded co-ed interaction is frowned upon and hard to arrange.⁸⁴

Although the Catholic Church does not have an official dress code for lay missionaries, countless church sources stress the need for modesty⁸⁵ as "*purity requires modesty*" (CCC, 2522). The Catechism of the Catholic Church stresses that modesty and common sense be used regarding clothing (CCC, 2521), and together

⁸⁴ For instance, couples wishing to share a hotel bedroom are required to present a marriage certificate, physical demonstrations of affection in public beyond hand-holding are broadly considered unacceptable (including hugging and kissing) and in rural environments (as was the case of Edfu), even displaying terms of endearment (such as "*Habiby*", "*my love*") among spouses in front of relatives seemed scandalous for Ibrahim's wife who interrupted him saying "*Stop! They are going to think I am not respectable!*"

⁸⁵ A particular emphasis is placed on the human body in Christianity as the Bible says that all humans were created in God's image (Genesis 1:26-27) and that human bodies are holy as they "*are the temple of God*" (Corinthians 3:16, 17). Although according to the Bible, God made humans as sexual beings (Genesis 1:27; Matthew 19:4-6), the enjoyment of human sexuality is reserved only for marriage (I Corinthians 7:1-5; Hebrews 13:4). Thus, there are two aspects to Christian modesty. The first is to avoid being an occasion of sin. This is an all-encompassing mandate that extends to sight ("*everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart*" Matthew 5:27-28), thoughts and desires ("*You shall not covet your neighbor's wife*" Exodus 20:17). The second, is to be instilled with the spirit of modesty inspired by a deep love for the virtue of chastity.

As a reaction to post-Christian fashion where, according to the Church, indecent and improper dress had become the norm, on August 23, 1928 Pope Pius XI's ordered for a "*Crusade Against Immodest Fashions*". It was from Pope Pius XI's universal standard that an American priest, Fr. Bernard A. Kunkel, developed "The Marylike Standards For Modesty In Dress." Fr. Kunkel's idea was to use Mary as the model of modesty and the Pope's standard as a concrete guide. Thus with his "Marylike Standards," women could be sure of pleasing God in their manner of dress.

Although this standard was not enforced on Catholic Copts, particularly girls are strongly encouraged to dress in a manner that is not scandalous in vis-à-vis their Muslim environment and the "Marylike Standards" have also echoed in Egypt See *El-Shenawi, Eman* (May 31, 2012). "*Coptic bishop advises women in Egypt to dress modestly like 'Muslims and St. Mary'*", *Al Arabiya*. Available at: <https://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/05/31/217718.html>

with Pope's Francis's⁸⁶ exhortation to *"be missionaries of the Gospel not only in word, but also with our own lives"* (CELAM 2007), one would assume that modest and simple dressing as well as chaste gender relations would be highly encouraged (if not already implied) among youth missionaries.

After a long first day of being chased by children that called me *"abla, abla!"* (*"ma'am! ma'am!"*), trying to keep up with choreographies for hymns and model for the children to imitate, being locked up in a room with 20 children that hyper on *karasy muzikiyya* (musical chairs) began to break them, and dealing with the melting summer weather of Upper Egypt, I arrived to my bedroom to find my sleeping mat occupied. As the girls in my room spread their makeup tools and slit blow-dryers and ironers through their hair, Angie jumps in front of me with a pair of summer dresses (none of them long enough to cover her knees) *"which one do you think is prettier: the black and white one or the blue one?"*. Sara, who intended to stay up all night talking with one of the boys she had a crush on, jumps on the bunk-bed I had occupied (in revenge for my mat) and asks me *"Carol, you know how to make nice braids, can you do something nice for my hair?"*

Though understandable that is that girls will want to look their best to what, according to the program on the cardboard in the dining room, was just *" 8 pm: dinner; 9 pm: prayer"* and then *"10 pm: sleep"*, my cross-examination with the main nun that was responsible for that mission, Sister Mariam, justified their behavior:

"Missions are not only a good place to find God through service but it is also a good opportunity for girls to find a husband that will allow them to fully practice their religion and for young men to find a wife that they share common values. The parents of these girls trust us a lot and let them travel with us because they know there are safe limits, but how else are they going to find a husband?"

The three nuns that were responsible for the mission lectured the youth missionaries before they retrieved to their cell to sleep: *"Just don't dance, play loud music or make loud noises. Respect the people of the village as they all wake up early to work the fields"*.

⁸⁶ When he was still Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio, Pope Francis was one of the primary authors, in 2007, of an important document from the Fifth General Conference of the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean, called the Aparecida document.

For the rest of the night, young men and women socialized on the rooftop of the church's office and dormitories. Eventually, the roosters in the village announced it was time for the farmers to wake up and for them to return to their corresponding rooms and sleep for a couple of hours. This system was apparently so useful that its results included three engagements while I drafted this text.

I recall this scene to illustrate how traditional Christian values such as the promotion of modest dress codes and interaction of co-ed couples were actually overlooked for the sake of protecting sectarian boundaries and protecting another practice that is frowned upon by Catholic Copts: rebaptism in mixed marriages. As mentioned earlier, the Holy Synod of the Coptic Orthodox Church decided that the baptism of Catholic Church cannot be accepted until it agrees to Orthodox tenants.

In a 1977 letter to Catholic Coptic Patriarch Stephanous Sidarous I, Cardinal Willebrands (President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity from 1969 to 1989) spoke clearly and frankly about the practice of rebaptizing Catholics who pass to the Orthodox Church through marriage. The Vatican argued that by this custom, the Orthodox Church puts in doubt the very existence of the Catholic Church and many Catholics find in this behaviour an obstacle to their participation in the ecumenical movement (Attia: 248). As being an Orthodox Coptic means accepting the whole package, even Christians of other, non-Orthodox denominations wishing to marry a Copt must accept rebaptism. Consequently, to the degree that the Orthodox Coptic Church strengthens its identity by rebaptizing Catholics, voices such as Sister Mariam are more often heard that disapprove of marriages between Orthodox and Catholics or even Protestants.

Unlike with Muslims where only females can be openly targeted for legal (yet socially frowned upon) mixed marriages,⁸⁷ these boundaries between Orthodox and

⁸⁷ Most religious scholars agree that Islam permits Muslim men to marry "women of the book" (Christians or Jews) as stated in Surah al-Maidah 5:5. Others rely on 2:221 to justify that both Muslim men and women should not marry mushrikeen (unbelievers), and verses 5:73 and 9:30 to justify that Christians and Jews (9:30) are unbelievers. Though there is an apparent consensus that Muslim women are only allowed to marry Muslim men, as a response to the increasing number of Muslims in Western countries (particularly single, educated and economically independent women), recent movements (like those of "Ibn Rushdie") and sheikhs (such as Sheikh Toufik Kacimi) have advocated against this prohibition. See *Abbass, Rudabah (31 December, 2012). "Halal' interfaith unions rise*

Catholics (as well as Protestants) which Sister Mariam seeks to protect are not contingent to gender. 37 year-old Michael complained about how such boundaries destroyed what he considered his only opportunity to find happiness:

"My brother passed away two years ago. He climbed the window to repair the AC and landed on his head from a second floor. It took me long time to recover...my mother was going crazy... she would stop, look at the wall and ask me if I could see the angels in the room but there was nothing...I really had to be strong but with the help of friends from work the pain was less strong. One in particular was very caring. After a year, I asked her father to marry her but her father did not allow it because I am Catholic. They made her quit her job in the office and married her to a man from her church. I never forgot her; she was why I was happy again. Now she has two children from him and I am still alone".

Perhaps due to his tragic background, Michael was the only participant that was vocal and explicit from the start in pointing out how sectarian boundaries among Christians in his environment affected him in several areas of his life:

"Before the Revolution [2011], I worked in an Orthodox company. We were two Christians in the accounting department but the Orthodox one was obviously sitting on the director's lap [was his favourite]. They fired me because of him and no other Christians would hire me because they spread the word in their church. It took me two years to find a job until I came here [to the Association]. The Orthodox complain that they are discriminated by Muslims but they also discriminate against us. It's an unwritten custom that they don't want to talk about".

These drastic differences from Justina's absolute denial of sectarian tensions, Ibrahim's eclectic Coptism (cf. Chapter 4), Nabil's and Kyrollos's internalized resignation, to Michael's explicit resentment are all faces of how sectarian boundaries between Catholic and Orthodox Copts in Minya are defined differently by external and internal members. Cohen explains that for many communities, the assumptions and stakes of such definitions can be strikingly different internally and externally (Cohen: 35). For Ibrahim it is his ability to be a role-model father and husband, for Nabil and Kyrollos it means being able to participate in different

among UK women" Al Jazeera, Available at: <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2012/12/2012122795639455824.html>; or "Her Right to Marry" Ibn Rushd Media. Accessed June 10, 2016 : <http://ibnrushdmedia.com/projects/>

developmental activities while nurturing a friendship that dates to their early childhood, and for Michael it meant the opportunity to fulfil his affective and labor needs.

One finds that stable, persisting, and often vitally important social relations (such as family) are maintained across such boundaries, and are frequently based precisely on the dichotomized statuses of "other" and "proper". Perhaps, as Barth explains, the "flow of personnel" across communal boundaries through conversion and inter-marriage between Coptic Catholicism and Orthodoxy are a less thorny communal issue now than in medieval (Ayouby) Egypt (Barth:89), yet their negotiation and flow in no way has hindered the salience of those identity lines.

5.3 The other Copts

Ramadan is a very important time in the year for Egyptians. For Muslims it is a sacred month when people fast, practice charity through grocery packages, donations or even *Mawait El Rahman*⁸⁸; some try to memorize the Quran and make a general effort to be extra pious believers. For Non-Muslims in Egypt, it is a time for better television, leaving work and school early, and empty streets during sunset. For Christians throughout the country, it is a unique opportunity to increase church activities through conferences, missions and trips.

Among a number of conferences that I was invited to during the Ramadan during my fieldwork, a youth group of Catholic Coptic students from the Jesuit school invited me to a special missionary conference that would target three villages a few kilometers south from the JBAD. My group was assigned to the village of El Fo'ara where we organized hymns, lectures and games for the Coptic Catholic children and teens of each village. The elementary school group of children was particularly numerous, and, since we were only four missionaries assigned to each village, the help from the local groups of catechists was highly appreciated.

⁸⁸ Singular: "*Meidat el Rahman*" ("*Table of the merciful*") are charitable tables set up during the month of Ramadan that provide an open invitation to *iftar*, or breakfast, particularly to the needy.

"Make a line!", "Sit down!", "Youssef, if you don't behave, I'm telling your mother and she'll hit you with her shebsheb (sandals)!" [claps with each count as the children imitate her] "One, two, three! shhhh!" [Silence]. These nine young ladies and gentlemen could manage to control the almost 70 children that came from the villages around the church to participate in our conference/ camp. They shouted, yet still joked with the children. They played, yet did not smile. They were even uniformed, but were all dressed in black. They had been regular volunteers at the church as catechists so they had a close relationship with all the children in the group. They had been regular until a tragedy hit the village.

Some months before, a group of 12 catechists from that same church had travelled south of the country with their priest on a service mission. On their way back, they planned to visit the monasteries near the Red Sea. As they enjoyed some spare extra hours, they also decided to make a stop in a beach in Ras Gharib to swim and ride a boat. Abouna, who was tired, decided to stay offshore... a decision that he would later regret.

"Returning with the 12 bodies of the catechists who drowned in that trip was only the beginning of his suffering". The priest who was sent by the Patriarchate to replace the surviving priest explained to me as we waited in his office for the van to take us back to the camp after a day of service:

"Of course, it was not the fault of the priest [that they drowned and died] but everyone was in such pain that they could only blame him for returning alive without their daughters, sons, sisters, brothers and fiancées. After the funeral, people stopped coming to church protesting for the priest to resign or be removed. They accused him as if he were responsible for their deaths and made him wish he had not survived. The pressure was so high that he had to be evacuated from the village, and then my family and I were relocated here to try and repair the situation. It has been very hard to make them participate. People are still very hurt and angry and focus their anger on the priest".

I recall this unfortunate scene to illustrate how delicate and peripheral the role of the local Coptic Catholic priest may be to group identity. Even without institutional affiliation, according to what the newly installed priest narrated, the Catholic Coptic community of El Foa'ra still managed to exercise religious practices such as funerary prayers and Sunday Schooling in the months of the highest tension, until the

previous priest was removed. Despite being primary educators for their community, this example dramatically exposed how, in comparison to their Orthodox counterparts, Coptic Catholic leadership in the village is by no means the resource through which group cohesion is secured.

As argued earlier, the revival of the Coptic Orthodox Church would aim to define a Coptic identity that looked inward, focused on family, church and community (q.v. Chapter 4.2). Thus, Copticness is not simply a religious identity as the Church sought to define itself culturally as well as religiously. However, in the particular case of Catholic Copts, it would be numerically unsustainable to follow the same model and look inward in a country where Catholic Copts represent less than 1% of the population (q.v. Chapter 2.1).

Catholic Copticness therefore has been neither attached to leadership nor a closed sense of community. It is rather expressed with different degrees of attachment to a common Coptic heritage that overlaps with that of the Orthodox and at the same time stays ideologically independent from it.

That same Ramadan, I was invited to accompany the same group of Catholic Coptic youth missionaries to pilgrimage visits to the Red Sea monasteries of St. Anthony and St. Paul. I was also invited the week after that to a different trip near Sohag that included the Red and White Monasteries, the Grotto of Pope Shenouda and the Russian-like Church of St. Karkas, but with a Coptic Orthodox youth group I had met at the JBAD. Although both trips were organized by different churches and had no mingling of participants from other churches, the similarities in the way both Orthodox and Catholic Copts relate to Coptic heritage in these trips was notable.

Fady (one of the Orthodox participants of the game described in the previous section) had been the one who invited me to the trip with the Orthodox church that he attends, yet his elder (and more patient) sister, Nervine, took upon herself the mission of guiding their foreign female guest. The arrangement was ideal because Nervine's age is similar to mine (Fady is about 6 years younger than us) and the similarities in age and gender allowed us to keep a pace that was comfortable for both. The youth scattered from our bus to arches and icons that could potentially make Facebook-worthy pictures. As we approached the dusty walls of red, fourth-century brick walls which give the monastery its name (the Red Monastery), Fady

takes out his selfie stick, programs his cellphone on automatic mode and shouts "Group picture!" (an action that he would repeat vastly during the trip). The group breaks apart and we walk inside the church. We arrive to a handrail that separates visitors in the main hall from the altar that is being restored by an international team financed by USAID (or so says the banner hung next to the altar). A Coptic monk guarding the altar welcomes us and, as we huddle in front of the only fan inside the monastery, we listen to his explanation of the meaning of the frescoes:

"This monastery was at the heart of a large monastic community in the fifth century and it combines the artistic genius of ancient pharaonic architecture and Coptic art. It has been destroyed and rebuilt 4 times but about 80% the surface of this altar is still covered with original frescoes. Now, the American Research Center has helped to show them in their full glory... like for example, over here on this icon of the Holy Eucharist [he points at the icon] or the icon over there of the Cross... Anyway, have any of your parents gone to the Holy Land? The chapel was modelled on the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and Pope Shenouda said that coming here is like going to Jerusalem... so, in a sense, you are now moqadiseen⁸⁹."

After a few other group pictures, we put our shoes back on and took the bus again until arrived to the base of a mountain. At the top of this mountain, you find what seems like a church facade superposed onto the frame of the cave. Inside, our party scattered again. Some did so to take pictures on the detailed icons of the Apostles and St. George carved artistically on the white marble of the cave; others would take the time to light a candle, offer it with their intentions and pray in the corners of the cave. As we approached the priest responsible for the church, pilgrims

⁸⁹ "Muqadis (m.) / muqadasa (f.)" is a title given to people that perform pilgrimage to the Holy Land, in a similar way like Muslims that go on pilgrimage to Mecca are called hagg (m.)/ hagg (f.). In response to Israel's occupation, the Camp David Accords, the 1979 treaty and the failure of Israeli courts to return the Deir El-Sultan monastery to the Coptic Church, pilgrimage to the Holy Land has been banned for Copts below 45 years old (as an act of mercy to elders; although people over this age need to be in possession of a recommendation letter from any church in Egypt to perform pilgrimage). Shenouda's successor, Pope Tawadros II, has maintained the ban his precursor imposed. See *Hasan: 109*; and *Aziz, Ramy (Nov. 29, 2015). "Opinion: Pope Tawadaros's visit to Jerusalem", The Jerusalem Post. Available at: <http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Pope-Tawadaross-visit-to-Jerusalem-436595>*

lined up to kiss his manual cross and hand as a form of expressing respect and also as a blessing.

Uninhibited by the bus driver (who was Christian and therefore, most likely not fasting), we gushed bottles of water sitting in the first line of the bus while Nervine prepared me for our next stop:

"The White Monastery was founded by St Shenouda. Because of his popularity and his great love for his religion, Shenouda was chosen to represent the Coptic Church to defeat the heresy of Nestorius... This was a very important monastery but it unfortunately died slowly because of the Arab invasion. The Muslims asked for heavy taxes but this was one of the few monasteries that survived".

All these exemplify how these sort of pilgrimage trips reinforce core values and principles of Copticness such as asceticism, Coptic nationalism and resistance to external oppressors through story telling. The tales narrated by Nervine and the monk echo Maurice Halbwach's *"On collective memory"* (1992) which rationalizes how the Coptic collective memory is inscribed in the geography by remembering sacred locations. The holy places are not only the destination of touristic or pilgrimage visits, but are instrumental in the retelling of stories about the saints and martyrs that inform group consciousness.

Even despite the apparent superficiality of a handful of youth in our party who seemed to take this trip as an excuse to take pictures only, all participants respected basic etiquette and devotion in sanctuaries (taking off one's shoes, touching images and relics of saints and martyrs to "take a blessing", kissing priests' hands) and some even seemed surprised to learn new stories of miracles, sanctity and survival. Thus, trips like those described above serve as micro-sites where collective memory can be shared, passed on, and constructed. A great deal of literature has dealt with how heritage such as monasteries or specific churches known for their relics and shrines emphasize the sense of belonging of Orthodox Copts through collective memory,⁹⁰ yet this literature has ignored how this same collective memory is experienced by other non-Orthodox groups that also claim such heritage; the others who also claim the title of "Copts".

⁹⁰ For instance, See Ramzy (2014), Botros (2005), Davis (2008) Naguib (1994).

"Abouna Fanous? Like a Ramadan lamp? A Ramadan lamp priest?" as I hoped for an explanation of this saint's name I joked ironically with Kyrollos (the Catholic participant of "Ana Omry" in the previous section) who had invited me to join the trip. The group of Catholic Coptic youth missionaries that had also invited me to visit the monasteries of St. Paul and St. Anthony walked from the bus towards the chapel and mausoleum that was being constructed at the entrance of the Monastery of St. Paul for the priest (Abouna Fanous) who had died less than a year before. Kyrollos explained to me the name of this new saint as we took off our shoes to enter a holy place:

"Abouna Fanous was a very humble man and he didn't mind washing the toilets of the monastery. One day, during mass, a woman that had seen him washing the toilets refused to take Communion from him because she said his hands were dirty. Then, during that mass, as he was consecrating the bread, light started to come out of his hands. After that, his hands would light up so he would have to cover his hands with a pair of black socks and even like that, people could still see how the socks would shine. For that moment on, he performed many miracles".

Touching the marble tomb of Anba Fanous and then making a sign of the cross from head to chest *"to take a blessing"*, Kyrollos guided the group to the next building across the main road.

As soon as we arrive to the bottom of the stairs of the chamber where the tomb of St. Paul is, Angie (a girl from our group) jumps in excitement but immediately hushes herself. She had just noticed a Coptic priest inside telling the story of St. Paul the Anchorite to a group of nuns in blue habits sitting on the carpet floor of the chamber:

"He is considered the first Christian hermit and the father of monasticism... St. Anthony the Great was told in a dream about the existence of St. Paul and his solitary life so he set out to find him... They met when St. Paul was 113 years old in this cave..."

As soon as the priest ended his account, Angie and the other girls went to greet the group of the Egyptian Sisters of the Heart of Jesus that were coincidentally visiting the monastery as well: *"How are you, Sister Therese? Is the Lebanese nun still around? Oh, she went back home?"*

I mention this encounter because the same sense of reverence that was displayed towards Catholic Coptic nuns was kept immediately after with Coptic Orthodox priests despite denominational borders. After greeting the Catholic Coptic nuns, the group went to a chamber upstairs where Ramez – another young man from our group- volunteered to play the *daff* (Coptic cymbals) standing next to the priest and a banner with the lyrics to a *mudih* or eulogy for St. Paul. After intoning this praise in the particular nasal tone of Coptic hymns, the crowd inside the chapel lined up to kiss the hand of the Coptic Orthodox priest and exit; a practice which most of my Catholic companions did not hesitate to carry out.

The youth wondered out of the 5th century oasis-like structure and raced to the gift shop to get souvenirs for family and friends back home. Holy ointment droppers with the picture of St. Paul for one pound for random friends, key chains and fantasy jewelry for closer friends; but the most important request for friends and family back home had been fulfilled earlier that day. After climbing the 2 km-hike to the cave, we took off our shoes and squeezed ourselves inside the tiny cave where St Anthony (the Father of Asceticism) is said to have spent the last four decades of his life. After almost falling down the small and completely dark set of stairs, the group of other four youth that fit inside the cave only with me stopped at the candle lit altar in the middle of the cave. Ducking behind this altar, my companions crawled towards a single candle that was standing on the rock in the narrowest corner of the cave. They dropped pieces of paper they had brought from friends and family back home with intentions or petitions to ask for the saint's intercession.

In addition to the liturgical and ritual practices that I described at the beginning of this chapter, the identical ritual practices towards sites of their shared heritage in pilgrimage trips shows that Coptic heritage is deeply embraced by Catholic Copts, ultimately defining their "Copticness". Recalling Urban's (2003:363) offshoot of Bourdieu's work on the study of religion (q.v. Chapter 3.2), this shared heritage of Catholic Copts would constitute the second sphere of "faith capital" which in Urban's terms "*is constituted by participation in religious services and affinity to religion by the members of a community*" (Urban: 368). Religious capital is also described as the attachment to a particular religious culture regardless of the degree of mastery over its doctrine, history, and rituals.

Aside from cultural practices such as the exclusion of menstruating females from major religious rituals (in the case of Copts, prohibition to take communion), veiling inside churches, and male and female circumcision and genital mutilation – (that are common to Egyptians in the villages surrounding Minya despite religion and are frequently confused for religious practices) this nearly identical way in which both Catholic and Orthodox Copts approach their heritage further stresses the weakness of Coptiness as an ethnic category (c.f. Chapter 4.3.1). The term in social anthropology refers to groups considering themselves culturally as well as racially distinctive (Smith: 57). Yet, this shared religious capital between Catholic and Orthodox Copts further stresses that it is not a term applicable to Copts as they are not ethnically distinctive today. Though Orthodox Copts may claim cultural difference with Egyptian Muslims by religion (Shatzmiller 2005: 19), another Egyptian group (Catholic Copts) claims the same exact cultural heritage making these claims void.

This parallelism between Catholic and Orthodox Copts is amplified when considering that there are six more types of Catholics (with official representation and churches) in Egypt. Greek Melkite Catholics, Maronite Catholics, Syrian Catholics, Chalcedonian Catholics, Armenian Catholics, but the Roman (Latin) rite is evidently the one that has excreted the most weight on the Catholic Coptic rite (Meinardus 2006: 86).

Back in Cairo, it is not difficult to find Egyptian Catholics who have no objection in detaching from their Coptic heritage and adhering to a Latin one. Without minimizing the complexities behind processes of conversion, Armanious (2011) suggests that some Copts in nineteenth century Egypt opened themselves through conversion to Catholicism to an important network that included European and Near Eastern Catholics that allowed them to receive benefits such as advanced education and trade connections (2011: 122). Bruce Masters (2011) also shows that eighteenth century conversions to Catholicism were facilitated by the influence of European merchants and French consuls (Masters 2001: 69). Educated and upwardly mobile Christians had become disillusioned with traditional Orthodox hierarchies so they were more easily identified with the Catholic Church (2011: 123).

Ironically, while in the West Catholicism has been identified as a reactionary and backward force (Douthat 2016), the benefits of associating with a foreign,

progressive and liberal church (at least more liberal than the local options) are still valid in contemporary Egypt. This is particularly perceivable back in Cairo in the co-cathedral of Notre-Dame of Heliopolis (El Basilique), for instance, where better off Latin Egyptian Catholics who studied in *Le Collège du Sacre Coure* and speak French *zay les oiseaux* ("like birds") will gather on Sundays to listen to the preaching of *Sayedna Adel* (the current Latin bishop) and then socialize in the Patronage (the club of the Patriarchate). This was even true in Minya for Baher, (the volunteer who I had introduced earlier) who, although he was loyal to his affiliation as a Copt, he explained his conversion to Catholicism as he was attracted to what he called "*the openness of the Church*".

Nevertheless, back in Minya, the attachment to their Coptic heritage (rather than a Latin one) is more common among Catholic Copts. When asked about the Arabic version of the Latin Mass, a Jesuit priest at the JBAD nationalistically protested:

"Foreigners in Egypt celebrate in their languages. You can go to areas of Cairo with many foreigners like Maadi or Zamalek and find that they celebrate their liturgy speaking English, French, Italian, Spanish, Korean, Sudanese and Tagalog. I understand they need to worship in a language they understand but I completely oppose to the celebration of the Latin rite in Arabic. Why? We already have a rite that is ours! We have a Coptic rite, like the Mass of St. Basil, which is the same as that of our Orthodox brothers but shorter. We have a rite that was made Catholic for Egyptians. What is the need of a Latin Arabic rite in Egypt when we are Copts?"

Abouna's nationalistic sentiment is understandable when we recall several challenges that appeared historically between Latin missionaries and Copts that converted to Catholicism. Since the 19th century, the aim of both Protestants and Catholic missionaries became to reform Coptic Christianity as they were both drawing from the same pool of misinformation that Europeans had accumulated over centuries (Sharkey 2013: 30). Circumcision and female seclusion were regarded as proof of Coptic backwardness which created cultural gaps between missionaries and converts (Sharkey 2011: 31). As for early converts, Catholic Copts had to worship in the Franciscan churches until the creation of the patriarchate in 1824, and most of them were uncomfortable in this foreign environment. Armanious (2011) points out how Coptic Catholicism appealed to these groups of converts by maintaining familiar

religious practices (Armanios: 120). Alistair Hamilton further suggests that for the Copts converting to Catholicism "*abandoning a millennium of traditions was simply too much to bear*" (Hamilton: 56). That Catholicism could offer a selective appropriation of foreign ideas while keeping ritual elements of the Coptic religious establishment was the merit that Coptic Catholicism –as a Uniate church- could claim.

On the other hand, attachment to Coptic identity is complicated by the fact that Coptiness has been constructed without Catholic Copts. Although they feel a strong sense of community and belonging based on a common religious background and even count with an incipient diaspora,⁹¹ Catholic Copts are not part of the same "*imagined community*" (Anderson: 22) that has been defined by mainstream discourses as "*Coptic*". Coptic Catholic Nationalism is not exactly a choice to which they have entry to leading to the creation of an independent imagined community that is ambivalent in its identification with Coptic and Catholic heritage.

Ultimately, the trips narrated in this section have also illustrated Van Doorn-Harde and Vogt's assertion that the collective memory and history of the Coptic community is tied both to their religious practice and to the territory of Egypt (Van Doorn-Harde 1997: 127). Looking back at the monk's praise of a Coptic-pharaonic past or his elevation of the monastery to a level of holiness resembling the Holy Land speaks of the great and a great sense of pride, belonging and the coherence between being Christian and being Egyptian. The trips have illustrated how the national, the religious and personal identity are constructed and intertwined, and how pilgrimages provide a mode for simultaneously practicing being Coptic and practicing being Egyptian. The practice of pilgrimages and storytelling consequently places Coptic Christianity in a privileged position within the national territory. Pilgrimages recreate and reconstruct the national, Egyptian geography as Christian. Structural signs, such as buildings and tombs, and natural signs, such as trees,

⁹¹ Their diaspora includes the churches of: St. Mary Coptic Catholic Church (Los Angeles, CA), Resurrection Coptic Catholic Chapel (Brooklyn, NY), Coptic Catholic Community of Nashville (Nashville, TN), Coptic Catholic Community of Boston (Boston, MA) See Roberson, Ronald (2013). "*The Coptic Catholic Church*. CNEWA, Available at: <http://www.cnewa.org/default.aspx?ID=63&pagetypeID=9&sitecode=hq&pageno=1>

rocks, cave and mountains are not only physical but also have been ascribed sacred meaning.

As a result, to remember sainthood and martyrdom is not only to identify as Christians but also to identify as Egyptians. This is relevant to Catholic Copts in particular, and all Egyptians in general as Coptiness can be constructed irrespective of which church one takes communion in or the church which they support financially. Regardless of the rite, at the end of the day, there are more encompassing categories than denomination to classify Egyptians such as class.

6. "Egypt is Islamic"?

Early in 2015 and a few weeks after leaving the JBA to concentrate on editing this study in Cairo, I received a phone call from Ibrahim (my Catholic convert host who I introduced in the last chapter) who was in town and wanted to catch up and meet in the Church of St. Mark early that Friday. This cathedral of el Morcosiyya in the central neighbourhood of El Azbakiyya had been replaced in 1971 by the cathedral in Abbasiyya as the patriarchal see for the Coptic Orthodox Church (Kamal 2002:16) but it still continues to draw large crowds for other reasons which I was soon to learn.

He also warned me in his phone call that he had not travelled alone. Ibrahim's companions were three members of a Muslim family which had been beneficiaries of the Literacy Program at the JBAD. Mr. Hassan and his wife, Hoda had travelled from Minya with their daughter, Basma, who had been trained as an adult literacy teacher and had recently gotten engaged to one of her cousins. As Ibrahim explained to me, her engagement was endangered by the appearance of a man who claimed to love Basmah and in his fits of jealousy, he would beat and cut her. As Mrs. Hoda explained to me (her eyes on the ground), he would also threaten her family members, lock her in rooms so her family could not help her, provoke seizures, move her body and modulate her voice in ways that were unrecognizable by her family. The family had sought the help of sheikhs and imams but in their desperate attempt to get rid of this so-called *jinn* (demon), they resorted to the well-reputed help of Abouna Makary Younan and troubled by his friends' affliction, Ibrahim accepted to escort them.

As in a normal Orthodox service, all males sat right to the altar and women on the left while Abouna would saunter through the aisles. From my location in the female section it was hard to discern the healings and exorcisms on the males' wing that the celebratory *zhaghareet* (ululations) would announce. Yet the grimaces, contortions and screams of patients in the female section (most of them who were sat near the aisle so the priest could see them easily) were soon addressed. Hoda and her daughter hurried but failed to reach a seat inside the church so they decided to go to the church's External Affairs Office and seek a private meeting with Abouna

hoping for his mercy and favour as they had travelled from outside of town. I decided to stay inside the church and continue witnessing the scene.

After sprinkling Holy Water on crowds of women who'd reach out their hands, Abouna Makary and the cameraman from El Karama TV who was following him around the church stopped at a veiled woman who was shouting, growling and whipping. *"What is wrong with her?"* Abouna Makary would ask as the woman elevated the volume of her growls. *"Shhhh, listen, this body will be freed in the name of Jesus Christ! Christ orders you to leave her! Amen!"* The priest spat on the lady's face: *"Christ orders you, leave her body, by the order of Christ, get out of her!"* He shook his wooden cross bathed Holy Water, raised his voice and then spat on her face again. *"Satan loses, in the name of Jesus Christ! Khalas! ("enough!") Stand up! Satan left you!"* The lady gave a loud shout and another lady accompanying her embraced her. More *zaghareet* filled the main hall again and Abouna kept on cutting through the crowds of Christian and Muslim women that had come to the Morcosiyya searching for healing.

Among the all the displays of Muslim-Christian cooperation I saw during my fieldwork, I believe this exemplified best the degree to which Egyptian Muslim may access Christian services even when they push the limits of spirituality and creed. Back in the JBAD, my host, Abouna Hany, seemed moved by the surprise that seeing such a large Muslim crowd in a Coptic exorcism session caused in me: *"Egyptian Islam is like no other in that it shares a deep connection with and common life with Christianity. Saudis, Moroccans, no Muslims understand Christians as Egyptian Muslims"*, he told me in a reassuring tone.

Abouna was also proud to point out that the spirituality of many Egyptian miracles is so "powerful" that it knows not of sectarian boundaries. While the veneration of the uncorrupted saints' bodies is *"a miracle that only Christians understand"*, Abouna claims that the love of the Virgin Mary is common for Egyptians-both Christian and Muslim alike⁹². According to Christian tradition, the

⁹² Mary is revered by both Muslims and Christians. For Christians, Mary is the Mother of God and, she was, and remains, totally united to the plan of redemption. Likewise, Muslims revere her, but not as the Mother of God. Mary is mentioned more than any other woman in the Koran, and she is one of a handful of people who have a chapter named after

Holy Family escaped from the prosecution of Herod to murder infant Jesus in Jerusalem (Mat 2:13-14) nearly twenty centuries ago and fled into Egypt during the Massacre of the Innocents where the Virgin is reputed to have rested several days under a large sycamore tree that stands a few miles from the neighbourhood of Zeitoun, in Cairo (Nickell: 185). Despite the urban sprawl, the tree, abouna explains, is considered sacred, and, adding to non-conventional Christian healing methods sought by Muslims "*many Egyptian women, Muslim and Christian, who are unable to bear children make pilgrimage to it and place offerings on the branches, hoping to become fertile*".

The recollection, however, that brings a bigger smile to abouna's tanned face relates to events he used watch on TV when we was a child:

"St. Mary herself blessed Egypt with daily appearances in her church in Zeitoun to express her love to the country. The first apparition of the Virgin of Zeitoun happened precisely to a Muslim mechanic who worked across the street from the church. He thought he saw a woman attempting suicide and then they called the police. The police couldn't find any explanation for the phenomenon so the Egyptian government accepted the apparitions as true...even President Nasser said so".

Scholars such as Dr. Cynthia Nelson suggested that the so-called apparitions of the Lady of Zeitoun must be considered in context. The appearances came at a period of crisis in Egyptian history and, according to this view, served as a beacon of peace and unity to Egyptians of every creed.⁹³ Indeed, in the minds of Egyptians like Abouna Hany, the apparition is connected to the Six-Day War of June, 1967, in which Egypt suffered a military defeat that left the country in despair. The influx of Russians with SAM missiles; the death of Nasser in September 1970; the

them (Surat Maryam, 19). She is held in esteem as an example of submission to Allah and as one who accepts truth, who has faith, is purified, is chosen, and who fasts. Muslims also derive certain prayer postures, such as prostration, from Mary. Unlike several Protestant sects, Muslims still believe in the virginal birth of Jesus and that Mary was immaculately conceived. See Esposito, John (2002: 31-33).

⁹³ Cynthia Nelson, professor of anthropology at The American University in Cairo and the founding director of the Institute of Gender and Women's Studies, visited the church site on several occasions between April 15 and June 1, 1968., Dr. Nelson documents seeing nothing other than a few "intermittent flashes of light". See Nelson, Cynthia (1973).

emergence of Sadat and abortive coups; Black September and student riots; the Tripoli pact and the prospects of a new state with Libya; the renaissance of sectarian rifts between Copts and Muslims and the ever-present threat of another outbreak of the Middle East war; all had Egyptians waiting for a collective symbol to restore faith and perhaps even to lead the Egyptians to victory over the modern-day Herods. Abouna points out that Mary's coming also coincided with the return of veiling, the sprouting of beards, and the other signs of the Islamist renaissance. Thus, she helped to cement the advent of spiritual over secularist politics.

Despite spiritual or sectarian politics, these examples (Christian exorcisms and the apparition of the Virgin of Zeitoun) demonstrate that it is particularly the flexibility of spiritual capital that has been key to the survival of Christian charity and activism in a Muslim-majority environment. To close our analysis of Catholic Coptic activism through the lens of religious capital (the kick-off of Bourdieu's social capital theory first presented in Chapter 3.2), the third and outermost sphere of religious capital is precisely defined by aspects of spirituality in a given community (Carkoglu, 2008:113). Wortham (2007:449) notes that while "*spirituality is an aspect of the 'good life', the accumulation of spiritual capital can impact the 'good life' and the 'good society'.*" Thus, this aim for a social good is the sphere where Catholic institutions have been allowed to operate through raising the normative consciousness among its various actors for the success of its developmental goals.

In consequence, in this chapter, I seek to explore the ways in which Catholic missionary activity and its modern (Catholic Coptic) heirs have interacted and even affected Egyptian Islam in Minya and viceversa. The transition from Catholic missionary work to Catholic Coptic-led activism means that Catholic-sponsored services regardless of sectarian lines have successfully interacted with Minyan Islam for a couple of centuries. Nevertheless, the operation of the JBAD today puts in question whether or not the JBAD can be classified as an FBO.

Ultimately, this chapter intends to highlight that the delivery of Catholic charity/developmental services has not come without its trials. Muslims in Minya began reading the works of political Islamists such as Ibn Taymiyyah, Abu al-'Ala al-Mawdudi, Sayyed Qutb, Sayyedd Sabiq, among others, since in the mid-1970s which lead to the eventual spring of al-Gamaa al-Islamiyya (Malthaner 2010: 64).

Since then, Minya has been known to have stronghold Islamic militants (Abdo 2000: Chapter 5/ no page number). Over the last four decades the governorate had been part of a corridor extending south to Assyut for militant activities and gave birth to some of the most notable militant leaders⁹⁴.

The strong presence of militant Islamic groups have made of this governorate –which shelters the second largest Christian population in the country (Mohamoud 2013)- a brooder of sectarian clashes and violence. This targeting of Christians as “*enemies of Islam*”(Gaffney 1997: 276) was particularly costly for the JBAD during the 2013 coup. As Islamist and terrorist know not of internal Christian separations, regardless of whether they stood by the 2013 Coup or not, the monopoly of representation that the Coptic Orthodox patriarch has held on to meant that all Christians, even those benefiting a mainly Muslim pool of beneficiaries, had to pay for supporting the 2013 coup.

6.1 The crusade for Muslim beneficiaries: sectarian dynamics between missionaries and Islam.

When one walks into the building of the headquarters of the JBAD, one can't help but notice the particularly wide bathrooms, dining room, lounge, elevator, and the fact that each cubicle is somehow improvised by wood. The headquarters of the

⁹⁴ A handful of key Muslim extremists, among them the second-in-command of the Gama'a al-Islamiyya, operated from Minya. Khalid Islambouli, the lead gunman in Sadat's assassination, came from Milawi, a town in Minya province.

Also of major influence on the group in Minya was Sheikh Ahmad Ismail, whose sermons give some indication about the direction of al-Gamaa al-Islamiyya's militant fervor during its formative years. The Sheikh emphasized norms of moral conduct, condemned foreign cultural influences, and castigated the ruler who refused to obey God's commandments (Gaffney 1997:271-280).

Citing Sayyed Qutb, Sheikh Ahmad argued that Muslim society was in an age of *jahiliyya* (ignorance), implying that president Sadat was an unbeliever (*kafr*) (Gaffney 1997: 280). He also adopted from the writings of Ibn Tamiyyah, who argued that under certain conditions every individual has the right to intervene to apply hisba without the authorization of the state, transforming Islam into an activist "programme of changing evil by force" (Ibid: 194).

JBAD were not meant to be offices but are a recycled space from a previous program.

Inspired by other programs that catered to the villages around, social workers at the JBAD saw the need for an initiative that would help children and adults with disabilities, and, with some foreign funding and a lot of local work, the four-story building in front of the old monastery was adapted to receive 20 young men and 20 young women over the age of 18 that did not know how to read nor write. The two year stay-in program was designed to empower physically handicapped young adults. The fact that the beneficiaries are absent and in their place there is a cluster of desks, copy machines and stacks of paper, is ironically a sign of success. In 2009, particularly due to the availability of immunities for younger generations and the satisfaction of their population, the program reached an end and then shifted to other community needs of the community.

Along with this project and the Heba Project⁹⁵, one of the projects that has benefitted both urban and rural Minyians the most is the Literacy Program. More than ten years ago, the JBAD started preparing adult volunteers and teachers from governmental schools to participate as agents of education and change in their villages. Although men are not excluded (in the trainings I attended there were 2 men and 32 women), one of the additional goals of the program is to empower local women and improving their skills for enabling them to participate effectively in societal development.

The gender gap in beneficiaries is of no surprise here but rather how sectarian lines are negotiated. Considering that Minya has the second largest Christian community of any of Egypt's governorates (at 35 percent of Minya's 4 million people: Mohamoud 2013); that Minya was the epicenter of an Islamic militant

⁹⁵ Heba, whose family considered the fact that she was born without a limb as a gift, was their first beneficiary and thus, the symbolism behind naming the project after her. The Heba program is one of the Association's most successful, recent programs offering day classes for mentally handicapped, unemployed young adults. Its main goal is to empower the handicapped by developing their capabilities and skills to become economically active and participate effectively in the development of their society. With seven groups of eight students, the program was open to young adults from neighboring villages, regardless of their religious orientation nor gender. It focused on skills that ranged from wood-work and carpentry to computer literacy.

insurgency against the rule of Hosni Mubarak in the 1980s and 1990s (Gaffney 1997: 272); and that it remains a stronghold of Islamists (including the extremist Gamaa Islamiyya group, Afify 2016); one would be tempted to imagine that a training held with the Jesuits would cater to a largely Christian audience. A simple glance at the 17 veiled and 11 face-veiled (munaqqabat) trainees out of the 32 female participants suggest that sectarian dynamics at JBAD are not politicized when it comes to beneficiaries. Only four participants were Christian and the pattern repeated constantly in all its activities.

Minya governorate often hits the headlines as a hotspot of sectarian violence with news of burning churches,⁹⁶ ransacked and torched of Christian homes and public humiliations of Christians,⁹⁷ but arguably, the most controversial issue that affects Muslim—Christian communal tensions in Minya is conversion. Egyptians who wish to convert to Islam can file a paper to reflect the change of religion in their legal and personal documents, such as the compulsory ID card. There is no such process available for Muslims who wish to convert to another faith (el-Tahawy 2015).

Apostasy from Islam is not officially typified as a crime in Egypt, but both legal and cultural pressures have prevented any facilitation of this process (el-Tahawy 2015). Throughout the country, rumours of conversion to and from Islam are particularly volatile when tangled with a sexual component such as courting⁹⁸,

⁹⁶ Based on public reports, the Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy published an interactive map monitoring sectarian violence across the country following the bloody dispersal of the protest camps. The map recorded 88 cases of attacks on churches during the month of August 2013 alone while real-time statistics are updated on their map. Minya and Assiut are the sites of the majority of these sectarian attacks, followed by Suez, North Sinai, Sohag, Cairo and Giza. Available at "Sectarian Attack in Egypt" <http://eshhad.timep.org/>

⁹⁷ Among the most controversial, in May 2016, a 70-year-old Christian woman was stripped publicly by a mob from Karm village in Minya. The violence erupted after a rumor circulated of a romance between her son, a Christian man, and a Muslim woman. Her son fled the village after received a number of threats and the following day, 300 armed men attacked the homes of seven Coptic families and stripped, dragged and beat his mother, according statements of the local archbishopric clerics. See AlAhram May 2016

⁹⁸ In their analysis of incidents of sectarian strife in Egypt, political critic Ibrahim Eissa and Marize Tadros (2013) note that most of the incidents are caused by interreligious romances or something to do with relations between the opposite sexes. Legally, a Muslim man can marry a Christian woman but a Muslim woman cannot marry a Christian man.

marriage or divorce.⁹⁹ In the recent past, there have been two high-profile cases of Muslim converts, Mohamed al-Hegazy and Maher al-Gowhary, who have attempted to challenge the courts in order to obtain the right to be issued with ID cards reflecting the change of their religion from Islam to Christianity (el-Tahawy 2015). Both cases were unsuccessful and, as the case of Abdu- a young Muslim convert to Catholicism that I met when he had run away from Alexandria to hide in a village in Minya- both plaintiffs had to go into hiding after receiving deaths threats for leaving Islam.

Although proselytism is not explicitly illegal in Egypt (el-Tahawy 2015), given these restrictions to conversion, it is not hard to understand why institutions of Catholic missionary heritage could seem dubious in nature. Indeed, Catholic endeavours to displace Islam and settle in Egypt go back to the thirteenth century when St. Francis stopped on his way to the Holy Land in Egypt.¹⁰⁰ Despite the fact that their intention to displace Islam was unfruitful, the Franciscans managed to establish a Uniate/ Eastern Catholic church (q.v. Chapter 2.1.2) and the first Catholic schools were set up by Franciscan monks in the 1730s in Cairo (Meinardus 2010: 117).

In contrast, a second generation of Catholic missionary schools that were founded in the second half of, and particularly towards the end of, the nineteenth century, had less proselytizing-oriented models. As part of Mohamed Ali's modernizing project, Azhar's kuttabs (small schools where children learned the

There are no social prohibitions for Muslims to marry Christian women in particular since the latter convert to Islam upon marriage. However, these women's families normally reject such marriages and believe they bring dishonour upon them and upon the wider Christian community. What causes sectarian strife is often when Christian women disappear and their families discover that they have converted and married Muslim men, but they have no way of finding out whether they did so voluntarily or under pressure. See Tadros 2013.

⁹⁹ Q.v. Chapter 4.4.3, note 74 regarding the Shahata Affair and Wafa Costantine.

¹⁰⁰ In 1219, an encounter between St. Francis of Assisi and Sultan Al-Kamil in Egypt in Damietta is well documented. In the midst of the Fifth Crusade, St. Francis crossed into the Muslim camp with his companion, Brother Illuminato, in the hopes of converting the ruler of Egypt to Christianity. St. Francis did not succeed, but he was deeply affected by the encounter, so much so that his later teachings called for Christians to live harmoniously with Muslims. See Moses, Paul (2009). *The Saint and the Sultan: The Crusades, Islam, and Francis of Assisi's Mission of Peace*.

Quran and Arabic) gradually went out of fashion and were replaced by a range of public schools, including private Catholic schools for the elite. Religious orders such as the Jesuits, Lazarists, and Franciscans ran schools according to European models in the major Egyptian cities as well as in Upper Egypt (Boulous 2016: 30). Catholic schools generally had a very good reputation until an outburst of anti-missionary sentiment and activism occurred in the late 1920s and early 1930s and again during the Suez Crisis in the 1950s (Boulous 2016: 42).

Most scholars acknowledge that Christian missionaries were not usually a tool of the political powers—often they opposed colonial authorities and defended the rights of converts even against imperial interests— yet they still see a close relation between mission and empire or colonial power (Boulous 2016, Sedra 1999, Sharkey 2013). An influential position was developed by the anthropologists Jean and John Comaroff, who argue, (using anthropological and historical analysis of the early missionary work among the Tswana in Botswana), that mission was a form of cultural imperialism manifested in what they call a “*colonisation of consciousness*” (Comaroff and Comaroff 2000: 506). Paul Sedra's *From Mission to Modernity: Evangelicals, Reformers and Education in Nineteenth-Century Egypt* (2011) continues on the same line by arguing that missionaries served as means of reformation and “*cultural conversion*” (Sedra 2011:11). They consider the missionary institutions, medical work, churches, schools, and the like, to have been agencies that deeply affected and transformed the daily life, family system, economic ethos, morality, and world view of native people who came into contact with them without needing to convert to Christianity (Comaroff and Comaroff 2000: 507).

However, the notion of "cultural imperialism" is problematic as an analytical concept for understanding cultural encounters or interactions within a missionary context (Boulous 2016: 45). Ryan Dunch, for instance, detects two chief defects in the concept of "cultural imperialism": it is inseparable from essentializing discourses of national or cultural authenticity, and it reduces complex interactions to a dichotomy between actor and acted upon, "leaving too little place for the agency of the latter" (Dunch 2002: 303).

This was the case of Egyptian nationalists in the 1930s and 1950s and Islamic movements of the 1970s who campaigned indiscriminately and considered all

institutions with some kind of missionary heritage under a single label of an imperial project (Sharkey 2013). Not only were missionary schools forced to abandon an essential religious objective (teaching Christian faith to all the students) but major newspapers would campaign against missionaries, and, in the aftermath of the Suez Crisis, British and French citizens were expelled and their companies as well as their schools were nationalised by the Egyptian government (Boulous 2016:44).

In addition to the political circumstances and developments during the first decade of Egypt's formal independence and the Suez Crisis, the broadness and fierceness anti-missionary activism was particularly fuelled by a number of incidents involving Protestant missionaries that caused public outrage and had received wide publicity at the time. In 1928, Samuel M. Zwemer (a well-known American missionary and a committed evangelist among Muslims), caused an uproar in El Azhar University for distributing controversial Christian texts within the courtyard of the millennial institution (Boulous 2016:46). Yet a second case that involved a fifteen-year-old Muslim orphan girl at the Swedish Salaam School (a nondenominational Protestant missionary school in Port Said) stood in the centre of public attention and fanned the flames of anti-missionary activism.

On June 11, 1933, a scandal broke out when Turkiyya Hassan denounced that her teacher had tried to convert her to Christianity by force after receiving a beating of by her Swiss teacher for not following classroom protocol and standing up to receive an elder (Baron 2014:9). Hassan soon became a cause célèbre to rally popular anti-missionary sentiment in the still-budding Muslim Brotherhood (Sharkey 2013:89).

Although it was a case-based argument that did not concern the different missionary projects in Egypt, the “orphan scandal” came to represent the frontline in the war between Islamist groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood and all missionaries (Baron: 85). That missionaries had won few converts (both Muslim and Orthodox) was immaterial to Egyptian observers. Suspicion of missionary schools, hospitals, and homes increased, and a vehement anti-missionary movement swept the country (Boulous 2016:47). Turkiyya was the incarnated proof that Christian missionaries had not come to Egypt to convert and provide social services for children, but to threaten Muslims and Islam. Hassan al-Banna, founder of the Muslim

Brotherhood, criticized the duplicitous nature of Christian service, warning that “*under the guise of practicing medicine, teaching embroidery, and sheltering boys and girls,*” missionaries were seeking to pull Muslims from their faith (Baron 2014:119).

Despite the rarity of their conversions, Hasan al-Banna and his comrades considered Christian missionaries a serious threat since they attracted both Christians and Muslims (Boulous 2016:48). However, this opposition did not prevent them from learning from the enemy, as long as the model institutions and methods were suitable for their own purposes (Sharkey 2013:90). The Brotherhood had been established with pronounced Sufi elements and, hence drew from a longstanding Islamic welfare tradition. Yet, it also aimed to tackle missionary endeavours not by means of violence, but rather by emulating the methods of missionaries to spread their ideology. Competing with their welfare and educational services (religious instructions, activities within the mosque, welfare work traveling to towns and villages to spread the call or *da’wa*), the Brotherhood launched their own efforts to save Muslim children and provide for the orphaned, abandoned, the weak and the poor (Baron 2014: 87).

Missionaries also faced opposition from the Coptic Orthodox clergy who competed with their own provision of services (Boulous 2016: 56). In contrast, today, not 50 km South from the JBAD, in the city of Mallawi, the Coptic Orthodox Deir Barsha has been directly feeding from trainings and technical assistance from the Heba project of the Jesuits. Abouna Hany is proud to point out that the competition for souls triggered by missionaries was beneficial in that it forced Muslims and Orthodox Copts to cater to the most vulnerable, and decades afterwards, this is translated in inter-sectarian cooperation.

The orphan scandal ultimately spurred the Egyptian state in the 1930s to take greater control of education, health, and social services that ultimately led to “*the creation of a welfare state*” (Sharkey 2013: 129). On the other hand, in battling for Egypt's children, Beth Baron In The Orphan Scandal claims that Christian missionaries indirectly contributed to the rise of Islamic groups in Egypt as a reactionary force to missionary work and the success of what became “*the most influential Islamist organisation In Egypt*” (Baron 2014:59).

In the aftermath of this imbroglio, quietly, most Protestant missionaries were beginning to move toward an understanding of mission that utterly rejected proselytizing and emphasized social service (or what some called a "gospel of love") as a mode of Christian witness (Sharkey 2013: 127). However, for Protestant missions, the Egyptian nationalists were attacking what was the core interest of their work, namely, the teaching and spreading of Christian religion in schools and other welfare institutions (Boulous 2016:60). Today, proselytism is an un-abandoned, however unmanageable, aspiration for many Egyptian Protestants. Protestants have four TV channels in Egypt (Ruane 2014) and in their insistence to preach, they occasionally continue to draw unrequited attention which affects all Christians in Egyptians in Egypt.¹⁰¹

Conversely, Catholic missions have tried to distance themselves from such scandals¹⁰² and have had a more discrete approach which is informed by an older tradition and history in Egypt (including more successful ecumenical efforts with the Coptic Orthodox Church), its own theological developments in addition to the

¹⁰¹ In Ramadan 2015, three Evangelical Egyptians were arrested for handing out bags of dried dates for people to break their fast with copies of the Sermon on the Mount, a statement about God's love and His omniscient nature and the name of an Arabic-language website about Jesus and the Christian faith. The outreach offended a Muslim who forcibly detained one of the three Christians and took him to a police station. In Egypt there is no such crime as evangelism and, although Article 98F of the Penal Code prohibits acts that show disdain or contempt for "any of the heavenly religions or the sects", it was not a blasphemy case either. All three were released on a 10,000 Egyptian pound bond after three days of arrest. Despite being an illegal arrest and the outrage it sparked among Christians in the media, in an interview I managed to arrange with the best friend of one of the detainees, he explained to me that their intentions might not have been as passive as they are willing to accept publicly. As he explained *"the annunciation of the 'Good News' [The Gospel] is a duty that all Christians have. Even if they [Muslims] won't listen, we must continue to make an effort...He [one of the detainees] was only being a 'good Christian'"*.

¹⁰² Sharkey (2013) narrates how, though the Suez Crisis would momentarily bring Catholic and Protestant Missions together to protect themselves from their common xenophobic enemy, the Catholic Church has traditionally kept a low profile to provide social services and has preferred to distance itself from the different Protestant churches in Egypt. For instance, after the Orphan Scandal, as the (Protestant) Inter-Mission Council prepared its statement on religious liberty to advocate against new legislation requiring missionaries to include religion for their Muslim students in their curricula, the Dioceses of Alexandria refused sign on to the effort as they felt that those events *"do not concern them"* (Sharkey 2013:147).

receptive attitudes of Muslim beneficiaries, which we will address in the following sections.

6.1.1 Post-modern Catholic transitions: Social justice and Jesuit Humanism

By an agreement made between the Jesuits and the Ottoman Empire some two hundred years ago, the Roman Catholic Church does not seek to evangelize the Muslim population, but confines her efforts in evangelization to work among Christians (Sharkey 2015: 34). Additionally, the Catholic Church assured the Coptic Orthodox that it would carry out its pastoral activities within the framework of already existing structures and institutions, and that she does not consider them as objects of mission.¹⁰³ Considering the appearance of new educational offers (international and language schools) and increased state involvement in service provision since the nationalist movement of the 50s, a question I frequently came across during my research from people who were surprised by the mere existence of Catholic missionary institutions in modern day Egypt was: if they are not here to convert, what are missionaries and their institutions still doing in Egypt?

The answer to this question is much more complicated than statistics on conversions as it assumes that missions operate within the framework of direct material trade. It also assumes that missionary or religious NGOs are a remnant of western colonial and imperial efforts whose primary goals is economic and political exploitation through manipulating attempts of conversion of faith. Closer attention to the developments in both Catholic theology and Jesuit theology that emerged during the second half last century allows us to understand one of the pillars under which institutions such as the JBAD operate: social justice activism as a form of religious experience.

¹⁰³ Due to the expansion of the Catholic Church at the expense of the Orthodox, the Coptic Orthodox Church formulated a suggestion during the Pro Oriente talks which stated that the Catholic Church carry out its pastoral activities within the framework of already existing structures and institutions, and that any changes be determined uniquely by the needs of its own faithful (Attia: 173).

The first phase of this story has to do with changes in Catholicism. One of the religious responses to the new forms of poverty caused by the transformation from agrarian society to industrial capitalism, and intensified under the change from industrialization to globalization, was a phenomenon that observers call “*engaged religion*” (Neusner 2003: 44). Inside the Church, this is translated in the form of social Catholicism and its official contemporary inauguration is usually marked with Leo XIII’s letter *Rerum novarum*, “*On the Condition of the Working Classes*” (Molony 2006:36). It was also the beginning of a new openness of the papacy to the modern world as the predominantly reactionary Catholic Church was taking the side of the working classes.

After World War II came the Second Vatican Council (1962-5). Vatican II, renewed the Catholic Church, bring it “up to date” with the modern world and changing Catholicism’s attitude toward itself and other religions (Hehir 1987: 12). This called for a more comprehensive understanding of “mission”. Until then, the term “mission” referred to “the missions” or “missionary work”, which meant bringing Christianity to where it was not; that is, converting people to Christianity (Hehir 1987: 19). The concept of mission for the salvation of souls shifted to the vocation of the betterment of people’s temporal lives irrespective of location or creed. Congregations such as the Jesuits used the term in a new way, to refer to all their different work or ministries in one comprehensive concept, “*the mission of the Society*” or “*Jesuit mission*” (Bisson 2011).

The aftermath of Vatican II was an exciting time for Catholicism: liberation theology in Latin America was being articulated in systematic ways, and Catholic leaders throughout the Third World were expressing concern for social justice in more and more acute ways. The transitions of Vatican II had inevitable impact in the Society of Jesus as well. In 1975, the 32nd General Congregation (GC) was called to evaluate and renew the Society’s overall commitments in light of the unfolding effects of Vatican II (Bisson 2011). Although, over the centuries, the Jesuits have been known for their work in missions, education and in the humanities and sciences,¹⁰⁴ the GC 32 made a decision that the promotion of justice would no longer

¹⁰⁴ They are known as an active religious order, and their spirituality is geared to action and to engagement in “the world”. They have a well-articulated, flexible hierarchical

be one ministry among others, but a dimension of the entirety of Jesuit mission, transforming themselves into a religious corporate agent of social justice, or at least trying to.¹⁰⁵ In the Egyptian Jesuit front, this resonated with personalities such as Henri Boulad, an Egyptian Jesuit, who, through his literature, is an advocate form “Christian humanism” to counter sectarian differentiation.¹⁰⁶

The new religious identity and agency constructed in GC 32 did not depend on a dialectical relationship with a religious “other”, whether that other is the secular or another religion. Identity and agency seem to come from within, to be proactive instead of reactive. The post- GC 32 “Servants of Christ’s Mission” is concerned about, mission, is not construed as a response to the absence of God and as the filling of an empty space with what was not there before (IJC 1977). Instead, mission is construed as a response to the presence of God already there, as a discovery (Bisson 2011). The ubiquity of the presence and activity of God changes the nature and role of religious boundaries and therefore the behaviour and exercise of identity.

“*Servants of Christ’s Mission*” brought social justice and the secular into the primary religious level of interaction with God, but this time through experience instead of through explanation or proselytism as media of significant, even transformative religious experience (IJC 1977). GC 32’s translation of social justice from a secular or derivatively religious level to a primary religious level and its construal of social justice advocacy as religious experience effectively dissolve the

structure organized in communities whose work and life depend on familiar and frank communication between superior and subject and within the communities. Their personal and corporate spiritual practices use imagination and reflection to cultivate self-awareness and disinterested service oriented toward whatever might be the greater common good, or at least that is the intention. These practices are rooted in two founding documents, The Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola, and the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus, both composed by Ignatius of Loyola, whose distinguishing feature is the cultivation of self-awareness and self-appropriation through careful attention to the quality of one’s involvement in one’s own religious experience and practice (Bisson 2011).

¹⁰⁵ “Jesuits Today”, 32nd General Congregation of the Society of Jesus, Decree 2, n. 9. GC 34’s “Servants of Christ’s Mission” twenty years later called it an “integrating principle”.

¹⁰⁶ Fr. Henri Boulad has published nearly 30 books in French and Arabic, mostly on the subject of Christian spirituality and theology, several of which have been translated in up to 15 languages. References to his publications are available at: <http://www.henriboulad.com/index.htm>

boundary that separated the religious from the secular throughout the period of modernity, and indeed helped define the modern period (Bisson 2011). It put together terms that in the modern context of religion belonged to two different worlds of discourse: faith belonged to the religious world, and justice belongs to the political and secular world. It turned modern Western understandings of religion inside out, made social justice religious and religious faith social, and yielded the “traditional” heavily policed (on both sides) boundary between religious and secular that had defined religious identity since the Enlightenment irrelevant.

This strongly suggests that a distinctively post-modern form and practice of religion was emerging. In a context such as Egypt, nevertheless, where sectarian boundaries are still legally and socially secured, this further raises a conundrum: without this boundary, how have religious identities remained distinctive and strong? And how are actors external to the Church’s understanding interacting with these boundaries?

6.1.2 “Their souls for a piece of bread”: Social cohesion as a tool for development

The legacy of Jesuit Humanism in Minya speaks for itself: the promotion of social justice in direct ministry with the poor has been integrated into social centers as the JBAD and several of the more than hundred schools founded by the The Association of Upper Egypt for Education and Development (AUEED) that have provided free-of-tuition education long before the government (q.v. Chapter 3.1). In the same site where all the activities JBAD take place, there is a primary and preparatory school that was founded in 1889. The 800-pupil school is one of the best reputed in the district even though it primarily serves the poorer children of the area. The population of this school (which also feeds a lot of the programs of the JBAD) is, as a general average provided by my informant, 60% Muslim and 40% Christian, out of which only 20 % of the 40% are Catholic.

Without implying that all Catholic Coptic beneficiaries at the JBAD are necessarily informed by the attitudes of the Church and the Jesuits towards social

justice as a religious experience (most of my Catholic interviewees simply adopted the vision of the congregation by influence of community leaders), the fact that the JBAD welcomes and serves a predominantly Non-Catholic audience without social or religious distinctions means that the input of external (non-Catholic) actors is equally crucial for the success of their activities.

Here, it is important to recall another development brought by Vatican II: that religious activity that would characterize new missions would be within the boundaries of dialogue (q.v. Chapter 3.3). Dialogue here presupposes that both sides will be transformed somehow by the exchange. While there is no reciprocity (as far as my informants claimed) in Muslims organizations in Egypt targeting or accepting Christians in their social work, the proliferation of Muslim charity work during the second half of the 20th Century is symptomatic of the effect that Catholic missions had at a corporate level in Islam.

In return, the internal ecumenical and interreligious composition of Jesuit NGO's is a further expression of this partnering and dialogue that can be explained through the lens of social cohesion. I borrow Marc et al. (2013)'s approach to social cohesion who described it as *"a convergence across groups in society that provides a framework within which groups can, at a minimum coexist peacefully"* (Marc et al. 2013: 2). The main proposition that: *"when groups see their interests as converging with those of others, they become more connected to other groups and ultimately have more incentive to collaborate"*(Marc et al. 2013:3). Convergence thus serves as an essential element for collective action and JBAD volunteers such as Basma, (a Muslim girl in her early 20s who I introduced at the beginning of this chapter) explaining their participation with the JBAD as a tool of common survival echo Marc:

"Coming to the Association is not against my religion. Islam also encourages Muslims to help the poor and less fortunate in society and pay 'zakah'. The projects benefit many different people and their goal is only to improve the lives of those around us. We even have a project providing WASH [water, sanitation and hygiene] services among Nubians that was so important for them that they asked us [Jesuits] to come back and open 'Nasr El Nuba' Office in Aswan. My grandmother brought my mother, my mother brought me. It became a safety net, a family to help us in our common need. Muslims and Christians...we all have common needs."

Without regard to “common needs”, the fact that Muslims engage in common action with Jesuits is not tantamount to deeper motives for cooperation beyond an immediate gratification. Chan, J et al. (2006) argue that social cohesion requires only people’s participation, cooperation and mutual help. As such, *“it does not presuppose values like tolerance or respect for diversity, or vice versa”* (2006: 284). This kind of understanding of social cohesion when using proxies such as participation without looking at power relations says nothing of the quality of social relations existing between those co-operating and therefore says nothing about whether a society is cohesive or not. Hossam, a Muslim teacher that was responsible for a cartoon workshop, counters such understanding of social cohesion in the context of the JBAD:

“Islam tells us that out of Ahl El Kitab [people of the Book], the closest to us are Christians. And yes, it tells that that 'to you be your religion, and to me be mine' but our relationship is much closer. They share our work, our sadness and our celebrations. In Ramdan we break the fast with them; in Christmas we greet them. We are like brothers.”

However, walking away from religion, Hossam finds that art is a more neutral tool to bring people together:

“Conflicts are definitely present, but they mostly occur in the villages. Art always brings people together. Our children and youth are here to participate in activities together and enjoy them together, not to promote differences.”

In the same line, Shady, the director of the contemporary dance workshop at the JBAD, prefers to concentrate on art as a bonding and revolutionary tool among JBAD beneficiaries:

“The community of Upper Egypt is known to be very conservative and polarized so for some people it is unimaginable how popular our classes are but it is possible to change the way people think through art.”

The news that reaches us from Minya governorate points to a completely different set of dynamics from what we see in Shady’s classroom. Compared to the Cairo-based, western-educated girls at AUC’s folkloric dance troupe (at least those who I got to see rehearse) that wear baggy clothes in their rehearsals, are shy at approximating male dance partners and scandalize at the thought of not covering

their rears with a sweater tied around their hips during rehearsals, the contemporary dance troupe at the JBAD may seem open-minded or even radical considering the liberty and devotion for art that is lived in this social bubble. The eight person troupe (5 males and 3 females between 14 and 20 years old of different religious backgrounds) engage professionally in their rehearsals and even tours around the country. Shady elaborates on how this came to be:

“Cultural life in Minya is much more dynamic than those outside the governorate think. People are interested in artistic activities, they participate, they talk about it. It is a very receptive community. At the beginning, some people looked at dance with scepticism. There are people who make fun of art, those who consider it a waste of time, those who feel that since it does not bring in financial rewards it is useless, and those who find some sort of immorality in it, a vice. But there are also those who value and enjoy the practice. Also, the Jesuits, have been historically one of the most renowned cultural players in the region so people that know who we are, trust us”.

Besides using culture as a soft power and common social challenges to construe a collective identity, another factor that has been key to the JBAD's ability to adapt and survive has been their staff. The Jesuits have become known globally for work in social justice in what they call “social centres” -offices or organizations that work in social justice through analysis, activism, education and other means (Bisson 2011). As in the other Jesuit social centers,¹⁰⁷ the JBAD is staffed by a variety of like-minded individuals of various faith traditions who think in terms of culture and development and not sectarianism. Since the 1960s, clergy have stepped aside from the administration and operation of day-to-day activities of Egyptian Jesuit NGOs such as the AUEED and the JBAD, allowing the scope and reach of their services to widen.

Although the executive director and most managerial positions are held by Christians of different denominations, the overwhelming majority of staff are Muslim. Several Christian staff members pointed out that the JBAD would not be the same without its Muslim beneficiaries, staff and volunteers. Not only because most of

¹⁰⁷ Today there are about 125, with particular concentrations in South Asia and Latin America; See Bisson 2011.

project beneficiaries are Muslim, but because many trainers and instructors, especially those coming from bigger cities such as Cairo or Alexandria, are uniquely qualified for many of the services provided by the JBAD.

From an outsider's perspective, the participation of a largely Muslim workforce would give the impression that they act as local allies, intermediaries or even watch dogs for the Muslim majority. However, particularly staff members are eager to blur the boundaries of religious identity. Characters such as Ahmed "*El Mesihy*" (Ahmed "The Christian")¹⁰⁸ insist:

"Differences in religion don't exist among us. Keeping unity between us is essential and one of the best ways to confront sectarianism is helping one another. We work in a lot of villages and poor neighbourhoods and we are always very sensitive to avoid discussion of religion. When we know religion might come up, like when we work on reproductive health promotion, we use Muslim workers if the target audience is largely Muslim, but we mostly concentrate in subjects that are not controversial like education or the alleviation of poverty so there is not much room for religious debate".

Along the same line, Dina, a Catholic Coptic social worker agrees that there is no place for religion in developmental services:

"Christians are glad to receive our help and most Muslim beneficiaries cannot even differentiate between different kinds of Christian denominations so the provision of services is where we become the most equal. Christians in the Middle East do not, and perhaps should not, press this matter. ..for the sake of living in harmony with the religious majority and the authorities."

By avoiding religious and even political debates, Catholic institutions such as the JBAD have striven to survive. Disassociating the promotion of justice from the promotion of faith has not only been a top-to-bottom attitude from social Catholic thinking but it is also supported from the ground as a survival mechanism.

Thus, the JBAD does not have very distinctive characteristics with respect to their goals, values, organizational characteristics, audience and activities, compared

¹⁰⁸ For protection of my informants, it is important to remind my reader that I have used a pseudonym for this subject's name that respects my informant's identity while still keeping the same spirit of the nickname the community has given him.(Q.v. Chapter 2.4 Methodology).

to secular NGOs. The blurring of lines, the overlapping of identities between institutionally separate actors, the dissolving of distinctions between the categories of religious and non-religious and the effort of Christian actors to avoid explicit religious connections (and avoid barriers to cooperation), suggest that the dichotomy between secular and faith-based organizations is inefficient to describe the dynamics in which religious identities are negotiated or eschewed inside the JBAD. Indeed, the literature on religious insists that there are no clear theoretical guidelines for distinguishing between these two types of NGOs (Musick & Wilson, 2003).

More than a determining or classifying aspect of the JBAD, faith, in this context, should be seen as a social phenomenon that can generate a sensibility (no matter what sources each particular religion has) for social justice (Bisson 2011). In a context such as Egypt where social actors maybe be staunch in a category politically or culturally without being necessarily observant, the role of faith here should be valuated through its ability to mobilize community for common action. Combining secular community solutions yet keeping their faith-based identity, the JBAD has the ability to develop deeper relationships with communities, as Abouna Hany would argue:

"No other organizations are more firmly rooted or have better networks in poor communities than the religious ones. We have an intimate relationship with our parishioners and even those stakeholders who do not share our religious views accept us with respect as we have a common ground.

Perhaps there were some hostile gestures towards our work at the beginning but after three generations, we are well-positioned in the area. Still, services connected directly to churches or those arriving to new communities tend to hear radical preaches blaming humble women and men for seeking our help and telling them that we would want to convert them to Christianity. This is not just an absurd thought but also impossible because Muslims are not allowed to convert by law and there are also the dangers faced by all aid workers, whether or not they are Christian."

While secular organizations are erroneously considered as "neutral" as they are themselves are guided by values and ideologies (Musick & Wilson, 2003), this ability of FBOs to foster deep connections in communities comes with a price. Despite the cessation of proselytization in favor of corporeal works of mercy, and the secularization of missionary societies and movements into development agencies

which downplay their religious origins, conspiracy theories where the delivery of community services is conditioned to conversion are not absent. However, as Abouna elaborates:

"Some people shape their relationship with the JBAD through secular ideas and practices of solidarity and justice, others are rooted in religiosity that coincidentally is linked to Catholic social teaching but none of them are here to convert nor are we here to ask them for that. People are here because they seek help. They are in need but that doesn't mean that they are willing to sell their souls for a piece of bread."

6.2 The Catholic casualties of Raba El Adaweya

The morning of August 14, 2013, while the world had its eyes in Northern Cairo, violence also flooded the streets of Minya's capital. Driving around the corniche to downtown Minya, one can't help but notice the multiple monuments to sectarian violence that still, four years after, stand as witnesses and reminders of that day. As in other Christian properties and religious institutions in the governorates of Minya, Asyut, Fayum, Giza, Suez, Sohag, Beni Suef, and North Sinai, following the violent dispersal of the Muslim Brotherhood sit-ins in Cairo on August 14, crowds of men attacked at least 60 churches including churches like those of Mar Mina el Aswad ("St. Mina the Black" which is now honors its name due to its ashes), orphanages, social centers, and Christians shops and homes throughout the country.

By the same token, on that same morning, the headquarters of the JBAD were attacked by a gang of unknown perpetrators in a sectarian assault. Around 11:00 am, as they attacked other Christian businesses on the way, they began to attack the Centre from the side of the monastery and threw stones and Molotov cocktails at the door. When the attackers failed to enter the complex, they left and returned a couple of hours later to continue the attack from another flank. They jumped over the tall fence that protects the circuit carrying weapons and shot the lock from the inside to allow the others to enter.

From this front, one of the best-equipped theatres in Upper Egypt (that had been built over 20 years ago with the help of Dutch funding), was exposed to the attackers. The theatre played a crucial community role on a national and local level. It searched to alter the education pattern using the arts generally, and specifically theatre, as an educative process. Ironically to its fate, the most recent project that was to take place in this theatre, "Contact", intended to use interactive theatre to discuss issues related to sectarian tension and gender discrimination. It was supposed to be implemented in villages that face these kinds of problems and to involve 25 young people in each village. By playing, recreating and being confronted with their own attitude towards these issues, theatre would become a tool for social critique and reformation. Simultaneously, one the goals of this theatre was the intention to change the image of the arts in the area, where there was a negative image of the arts as *haram* (sinful). This project would reach a diversity of audiences and elevate the reputation for art in the community. Nonetheless, projects like this burned to ashes that day while the attackers forced their way into the complex.

About 400 people entered the complex that day stealing equipment like computers and cameras and then burned down the building which included the theatre and a care center for disabled children. They guarded the fire that consumed the assessts with their weapons so no one could extinguish it. Although there is always a police man outside the church (whether for protection or surveillance), the security forces were conveniently absent that morning and even their phone lines were unavailable. Even if the police also claimed to have come under attack in the violence of August 14, residents suggested the police had been complicit, at least through a failure to respond.

Nonetheless, the lack of their support has not prevented the community to arrive to their own conclusions. The nature of the attackers is something that is now clear to the victims both by their physical traits but also by their modus operandi. At the time of the attack, two disabled people were studying in one of the buildings. The attackers asked them to leave, but destroyed their wheelchairs. Though otherwise unharmed, the disabled pair was forced to vacate the premises using only their crutches.

These sectarian attacks against the organization were harder to comprehend, at first, when one considers that two thirds of students in the school are Muslim and the benefits that the association provides for its community indiscriminately. Yet the rage and anger in the attackers' faces, *"as if they wanted revenge"*, Abouna tells me, was a first symptom that the attackers were collected from outside the community. The fact that the accomplices carried off with thousands of dollars' worth in computer, video and audio equipment, as well as air-conditioning units, before setting the church on fire and did not kill anyone, according to my informant, shows that their sole interest was material destruction and looting. Thus, the so-called Islamists worked in coordination with dozens of "thugs" who arrived in pickup trucks and didn't look like Islamists themselves but merely paid perpetrators from neighboring communities.

Whether the lack of response from the security forces was a political strategy to show the brutality of Islamist groups and lend legitimacy to the military-backed government's claims that it was fighting a war against terrorism, or mere incompetence of local authorities, the attacks per se are something that seemed unthinkable and still today shock members of the Association. Accustomed to growing tensions between Christians and Muslims in the region, the destruction of a community resource which served everyone in the area irrespective of religion is still inconceivable in the community of the JBAD.

Indeed, feelings are hurt and the situation has become very polarized. As my informant explains, Muslims and Christians who know each other are friends. But among strangers, there is no brotherly feeling. Nonetheless, as a phoenix, the JBAD is determined raise from its ashes and continue with its mission. Muslim-Christian relations in the neighborhood do not appear to have dissolved due to this polarization. On the contrary, even a local man from a Muslim organization offered the Centre EGP 10,000 from his own pocket in order to help them to rebuild and the Centre seems to enjoy a degree of continued support.

While listening to this account by my informant, sorrow flooding his eyes, I can't help but remember his completely opposite attitude towards sectarian violence outside of this context. When I first met my informant (while I was cleaning a table after breakfast in a youth service in a village near Sohag the summer of 2014), as a

souvenir of his proposal to study the JBAD, he handed me a memorial bookmark with the picture of Fr. Franz van der Lugt. "*Pater Franz*", as the community he served called him, had been shot twice in the head just four months before by an extremist in Homs, Syria, but Abouna was confident to reassure that "*Thanks to God, we [Egyptians] are not like them [Syrians]*". The dissonance between his pride of the success of peaceful cohabitation between religious groups in Minya (in contrast to Syria) the day I met him and the shy tears that filled his perplexed eyes when narrating the 2013 attack to the NGO he called home, are a secondary effect of the larger survival strategy deployed by the Coptic Orthodox Church and, by extension, which other Egyptian Christians adhere to.

Denial is not just a river but also a co-existence and survival tool in Egypt. Mark Twain's pun aside, the subject is uncomfortable and it creates a variety of reactions. To some Muslim social workers I spoke outside the community, like Mohamed, a 26 year-old lawyer from el Qalubiyya, the victims of sectarian violence are not Christians themselves but Egypt as a whole:

"Those are exaggerations, we have Christian neighbors in my city and everything is peaceful. They are things in Western media that want to show that Egypt is a mess."

Comments from outsiders from the JBAD like Mohamed are not surprising when considering that the historical narrative of the Coptic Church itself is known to be "*selective, interpretative, and pertains to the needs of the present*" (Haddad 2013: 209). On one hand, the Coptic Church sees itself as a historically persecuted church. It conjures stories which emphasize Coptic solidarity and survival to reinforce the importance of loyalty within the community and to the Church because it is this that has enabled the community to survive (Walkin 2001:31). Despite Byzantine persecution¹⁰⁹, despite the schism with the wider Church and, more recently, despite

¹⁰⁹ For Copts, the most significant period of early persecution was under Roman authority and took place around 284 during the rule of Diocletian. This period is known to Copts as the 'age of the martyrs' and Copts start their calendar (which is based on the ancient Egyptian solar calendar) from the day Diocletian came to power -29 August 284 A.C. This period also marks the beginning of the emergence of an Egyptian church as distinct from the official Byzantine church (Watson. 2000: 24-33).

its being subjugated since the Muslim conquest of Egypt, Coptic collective memory is inscribed in the geography (Halbwach 1992) of the Nile and it is revived and celebrated in pilgrimages to sacred locations and the retelling of stories about saints and martyrs.

To tell minority experiences through the stories about saints and martyrs is not unique to Orthodox Copts but rather part of the collective Coptic consciousness of which Catholic Copts also partake. Jackson emphasizes that storytelling is not only a product of a narrative activity but a social process and that embedded to it is an aspect of agency (Jackson 2002, 18). In that sense, a Coptic Catholic nun's account of the martyrization of St. Mina –whose head was cut off after confessing his faith and his body remained unharmed in the fire for three days and three nights-, Abouna Hany's pain for Pater Franz's slaughter in Syria, the honouring of Jesuit martyrs in Maspero that Jesuits in Cairo would share with me and the solidarity for the brutal slaying of 21 Copts in Libya by the ISIL in February 2015 that members at the JBAD would display in conversations and Facebook posts; are also a source of agency for Catholic Copts.

Stories about saints and martyrs are both an articulation of what it means to be a minority in Egyptian society today and at the same time a negotiation of this reality. Martyrdom constructs individual suffering as universal, as the struggle against inhuman violence and hence against inhumanity, rather than the struggle against a specific historical sovereign. With that, saint and martyr stories offer Copts –Orthodox or not (Q.v. Chapter 5.2) - a role as acting subjects. Not resisting to violence may seem like an expression of passivity and acceptance of being acted upon. But the Christians conception of martyrdom rather transforms passivity into honourable action, offering all Copts a way out of their marginal position as a minority.

On the other hand, the Orthodox Church has assumed a role as a meaningful political actor. Not so paradoxically, Pope Shenouda's renewal movement allowed the church to replace the state before Egyptian Christians, arguing that the church had the right to provide social services to Copts in the place of the state. In other words, the church was asserting its right to take over presumably state functions *"in*

return for recognition of the Church as spokesman for the community” (Shatzmiller 2005: 57), Orthodox or not.

Even though this tactical alliance infuriated many Copts, particularly Coptic diaspora who had given voice to an Islamophobic rhetoric (Sedra 1999), church dominance was accepted as the price for protection from Muslim-incited violence that Christians have faced since the Sadat regime and for the articulation of community grievances (Iskander 2012: 27). The entrance of the church into such a relationship with the regime has led to a number of concessions on issues that had been deemed prejudicial: difficulties in gaining permission to build new churches have been alleviated,¹¹⁰ and monies taken in the absorption of Coptic endowments by the state in the mid-1950s have been returned to the church (Tadros 2013:67).

In spite of that, the graces of this pact are not common to all of those exposed to sectarian violence. Outside the Coptic Orthodox Church, there are no strong rivals to Christian leadership so the Church is essentially the sole political voice of Egyptian Christianity (Rowe 2007: 337). But the Church speaks for herself (Shatzmiller 2005: 56), and for those Egyptian Christians outside of the millet pact who are not protected nor represented by the Coptic Orthodox Church, incidents of violence lessened but did not cease.

On October 9, 2011, peaceful protestors, many of whom were Copts, gathered at the site of previous sit-ins at Cairo’s Maspero television building to demonstrate against attacks on churches. Before the march reached the building,

¹¹⁰ More than 160 years ago, the Ottoman Caliphate ordered that anyone who wanted to build a Christian church get the approval of the country’s ruler; then a sultan, now a president. At the time, it represented progress since for centuries building a church—not permitted under Islamic Sharia—was a rare occurrence.

Later administrative regulations had placed even more church building restrictions including to gaining the approval of local Muslims and to make sure the proposed church was at least 100 m from the nearest mosque. Much of the frustration at these decisions stems from a sense of discrimination because mosques do not require construction permits and there are actually incentives that encourage the building of new mosques (Rowe 2007: 339). In fact, church construction is one of the key issues that have incited violence against Copts in recent years (Tadros 2013).

As this thesis is being drafted, a landmark law aiming to relieve the nearly insurmountable requirements to build and restore churches is being negotiated. However, it is being met with resistance and has been sharply attacked –by both the ultraconservative Salafist Nour Party and Coptic MPs- as “*a political farce*” and an imposition on Christians. See El Din 2016.

the army used violence against the protestors, killing 27 of them including Muslims and even a couple of Cairo-based Coptic Jesuits (Youssef 2013: 61). Within the long genealogy of sectarianism and church burning in Egypt, Coptic scholars such as Paul Sedra argue that the Maspero protests and massacre served as a moment in rupture in the relationship between the Coptic Orthodox Church hierarchy and the Egyptian state (Sedra 2012).

Nevertheless, it would be difficult to believe that no one was brought to account three years ago when the Egyptian military ran over more Copts in Maspero (Sedra 2012), without understanding the complicated marriage between this couple. The ultra-nationalist discourses that appear from time to time in local media make it is easy to understand how the Egyptian State has gotten away with a long-standing policy of refusing the acknowledgment of sectarian divisions within Egyptian society. The Egyptian government has repeatedly and forcefully denied the existence of sectarianism on Egyptian soil for decades with the convenient support of the Coptic Orthodox Church (Sedra 2014).

Once the Brotherhood was gone and Sisi elected, the Coptic community returned to its pre-Maspero loyalty and rallied behind the president, and adopted the nationalist discourse of an existential struggle for the survival of the state and national institutions (Sedra 2016). It is evident from the indiscriminate backlash against all Christians that having the Coptic Orthodox Pope next to the then General Abdel Fatah El Sisi when the former President Morsi was deposed would have indiscriminate results for Egyptian Christians, represented by the pope or not. Without political representation and separated from the dominating church, in the end, Catholic victims of sectarianism find the need to search for alternative forms of participation and avoid confrontations when possible. As the Catholic Pope Francis had laid out, if ecumenism is a far-standing dream, “ecumenism of the blood” is imposed on all denominations as Christians are attacked “because they wear a cross or have a Bible, and before killing them they don't ask if they're Anglicans, Lutherans, Catholics or Orthodox” (Economist 2015). Like all those outside the equation, Catholic Copts must bear the consequences of the Church and hope for the support of the local community.

6.3 Other micro locations of Catholic Coptic Agency

Due to its historic connection to colonial or foreign authorities, Catholic activism is typically embedded in the minds of non-Catholic Egyptians I came across during my research outside the JBAD in the concept of imperialism or foreign intervention. Indeed, missionary societies generally tried to maintain good relations with foreign as well as with Egyptian authorities to represent their interests and the Egyptian government wished to deal with them through a recognised and accepted channel (Boulous 2016: 274).

Nevertheless, three centuries after the founding of a local, autonomous Catholic Coptic church and seven decades after the Montreux Convention Regarding the Abolition of the Capitulations in Egypt,¹¹¹ Catholic activism in Egypt is far from being a solely religious project, let alone a foreign one. The case of Nabil, a Catholic Coptic social entrepreneur illustrates that institutional support is not a *conditio sine qua non* Catholic Copts approach activism and social justice.

Without regard to the moral and technical support provided by the Jesuits, the most outstanding individual project that I came across in the Minya was the quest started by this Catholic Coptic agronomist. The "Farm of *Kind Hearts*" ("*El Qulub el Tayyiba*") was a dream prompted by a sense of forgiveness, the need to promote development and also provide work opportunities. Since there is a power differential in most communities as a consequence of the Copts being a sizeable minority, Nabil is no stranger to how non-religious small scale disputes turn into sectarian incidents of violence:

"They are caused by the silliest reasons. I have lost family for conflicts that started over buffalo or land. We all have economic problems and in some cases, there have been Muslims who have tried to defend us, but the problem extends quickly to the community and then the mob is not only against

¹¹¹ The Montreux Convention Regarding the Abolition of the Capitulations in Egypt was an international convention concluded on May 8, 1937. It led to the abolishing of the extraterritorial legal system for foreigners in Egypt known as capitulations. The agreement provided for the total abolition of capitulations and the placing of foreigners in Egypt under the Egyptian legal system. See Labib (2004).

the person involved in the dispute, but against all the Christians in that village".

Alarmed by the great deal of sectarian antagonism beneath the surface and the spontaneity and unpredictability of such incidents, for the last eight years, Nabil has transformed the spiritual desert of the pain of losing three of his siblings (out of ten) to sectarian violence, and the physical desert (situated some 40 km in the outskirts of the capital of the governorate) into a fertile land for interreligious cooperation and development. With the cooperation of other Muslim friends, the farm is now an NGO that seeks for environmental, social and economic transformation:

"We wanted to create employment opportunities for the youth of our villages so we first had to reclaim and cultivate new pieces of desert land. Once these opportunities are created, it is easier to implement activities that improve the quality of life of those who work on the farms and villages of the reclaimed areas. We want to provide complete opportunities that go beyond peaceful cohabitation but actually foster actual peaceful coexistence.

Also, since the farm is relatively secluded, we want the farm to be a place for spiritual and social transformation. We accommodated the first floor of our house to serve as a retreat center for people with social problems. For example the Good Shepherd Sisters that support single mothers or girls that are being preserved from interreligious marriages have come to us and our doors are open to those who need refuge. We have a lot of dreams but unfortunately, we also have a lot of funding problems like to get tractors or compost. But we can't wait for the government or the Church to change that. The important thing is that we are working hard to transform our villages. If we can't change the way our own village works, we can't expect the country to change".

Located in the periphery of the millet pact and even dissociated from the protective umbrella of the Catholic Church, private initiative such as Nabil's evidence that in the absence of other mediating institutions, Catholic Copts themselves also make use of religious spheres to exercise agency as an alternative to the absence or the failure instruments of civic representation. The nature of this resistance involves the creation of fields of representation and defence rather than direct involvement in any type of politics.

These underdogs of service delivery expose an alternative narrative to the contradictions of the love-hate relationship between the supposed representatives of

Egyptian minorities. They also expose that the vision of a dual community division is incompatible with Egypt. In a country with such a diversity of cultures and creeds, labelling the central cultural division as being between Orthodox Coptic and Sunni Muslim is to create an artificial cultural binary that is then exploited for the sake of violence and intimidation. While the thugs scrawled *“Egypt is Islamic”* on the gate of the JBAD the afternoon of August 14, 2013, and the ruins of a burnt orphanage some meters away replied *“May God forgive you despite what you have done”*, more relevant conversations as those of the divisions of class or the actual exercise of full citizenship and representation for all Egyptians are left out of the conversation.

7. Coptic means "Egyptian": Conclusions and closing remarks

The evening of January 6, 2016, the Coptic tattoo on my wrist and holding foreign passport accidentally afforded me admission to witness a historic moment for the Coptic Orthodox Church. As petals of the daisies that people had removed from the decorations still rained from the second floor of the Cathedral of St. Mark in el Abasiyya, for the first time in the history of the Egyptian Republic, the president addressed the Coptic community during Christmas mass:

"Egypt for years taught civilization to the whole world. I want to tell you that the world is now waiting from Egypt in these circumstances...It is important that the whole world watches us: the Egyptians. You noticed that I am not using another word other than 'Egyptians'. It could not be anything else. We are the Egyptians!"

Nobody ask: what type of Egyptian are you? Listen, we are saying things. We are writing to the world a meaning and we are opening a window of real hope and light to the people.

I am saying that Egypt taught to the world over years civilization and humanity. Today we are present to confirm that we are able to teach humanity and teach civilization once again. For this reason, we cannot say but: 'we are Egyptians!' We must be only Egyptians. Yes! Egyptians!"

Half a decade after the ousting of Mubarak, the pronouncement of these ultra-nationalist exhortations by the country's president would give the impression that the ideal for national unity pledged in Tahrir is eminently materializing. Indeed, during those 18 days, the images of demonstrators with placards showing the cross within the crescent, or images of Christians keeping guard at the square while Muslims were praying that were broadcasted in media from all over the world managed to romanticize a concept of a united Egyptian nation (Tadros 2012).

Still, this illusion did not have a ripple effect; not only because the Supreme Council of Armed Forces (SCAF) that took over forged an informal alliance with the Muslim Brotherhood, which in return came to represent the political settlement of organizing power in the post-Mubarak phase (Tadros 2012); or because it was

cemented on the idea of a common oppressor (Iskander 2013: 46). Instead, this mirage of a united nation has prevented meaningful negotiations about citizenship, belonging and national identity, and thus, contributed to the failure of reshuffling the configuration of power in the country.

As argued by (Marc et al. 2013), the illusion of social cohesion, in the Egyptian case, in the form of national unity, can serve to conceal highly unequal power relations. The fact that the president chose to make this vow at the headquarters of its single historically strategic partner, rather than addressing a general call for all Egyptian minorities, suggest that little has changed in the Ottoman mindset to deal with Egyptian minorities, one of who this thesis has tried to shed a light on.

Consequently, due to the over-simplistic, selective and unrealistic nature of the account of national unity, studying the ways in which Catholic Copts at the JBAD negotiate religious identity has required the analysis of power structures at different levels. The relationship between the Coptic Orthodox and the State, ecumenical relationships between the Coptic Orthodox and Catholic Churches and, finally, the individual effort to exercise agency of Catholic Copts at the JBAD cannot be understood without considering the complex contestations and negotiations of citizenship, ecumenism, religious identity and national unity of the time, as detailed in the following sections.

7.1 Re-negotiating the millet pact

Despite claims of national unity, the January 25th revolution was prone to at least cause cracks in a partnership that can be traced to Ottoman times. Followed by the “brotherhoodization” of the state apparatus, the demise of Egypt’s elected Islamist government in July 2013 did not deliver a hopeful beginning for interfaith relations (HRW 2013). The army was responsible for what has been the single deadliest incident of sectarian violence against Christians in contemporary Egyptian history (Youssef 2013: 62). The use of army vehicles to run over peaceful protestors during the Maspero Massacre and the SCAF's snub to hold the perpetrators

accountable were clear political signals of a high level of tolerance towards religious-based discrimination and injustice (Sedra 2012).

Additionally, social cohesion had been eroding in Egypt between Muslims and Christians in many communities for several decades, and there had been incidents involving collective violence against the minorities living in the community. The collapse of the heavy handed state from regulating social affairs in Egypt led to increased agency and mobilization of citizens on a national scale. And while the revolution did not create sectarianism, it brought to the surface the cumulative outcome of tensions that have been simmering for years.

The reaction to this transformative period evidenced that the personal political commitment of the president and the Pope is no longer enough to sustain an entente of the kind that existed in the 1950s. Such crises forced the new leadership of the Orthodox Church to renegotiate its way between loyalty to the state, represented by SCAF after the revolution and Abdel Fattah el-Sisi's office since he was elected president in May 2014 (Sedra 2016), and an increasing number of perceivable voices.

There are now many players visible on both sides with diverse and revolutionary agendas beyond the will of the Pope and the President. Even inside the Orthodox Church, Pope Shouda came across as highly unpopular at times for supporting Mubarak Junior, directing Coptic youth not to join the 25 uprisings and defending the church's draconian rules in personal status matters (Tadros 2013:14). Some Copts now openly decry the pope's authority to speak on behalf of all the Copts and are using their own power bases to mediate requests that radically challenge the way in which the Egyptian state chooses to handle the so-called "Coptic question" in Egypt (Smith 2013). There is also dissidence within the ranks of the ecclesiastical order, so it has become very difficult to guarantee that the pope's will is obeyed systematically across all bishoprics and parishes, in addition to a significant rise in participation in parliamentary elections of Coptic candidates since the 1995 (Tadros 2013:15).

However, as particularly during the rule of the Muslim Brotherhood, Egypt has dwelt under a cloud of insecurity and uncertainty, most Copts did not pay attention to the events occurring on the national stage and simply implemented the patriarch

directives to vote for the ruling party's candidates (Lukasik 2016). The January 25th revolution exacerbated and brought to light these two trends in the Coptic as well as in the whole Egyptian society: While a minority of Copts fiercely criticized Pope Shenouda's unconditional support for the regime and became involved in the revolutionary struggle, most of them remained behind the Church's walls that allegedly protected them against the Islamist threat. This trade of acceptance of individual non-involvement or "withdrawal" from political life for church activism and protection has allowed Pope Tawadros to revive the strong alliance with President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi (Sedra 2014) that their predecessors had kept jealously.

The expression of opposition and self-criticism inside the Church reflects that the Revolution did indeed manage to contest the Nasserite model of silencing all expression of sectarian specificities and to consider the Coptic patriarch as the sole political representative of the Copts. Yet, however cracked, the alliance between the Church and the regime did not break let alone substituted for a more comprehensive model. Though Patriarch Tawadros has sometimes adopted a critical stance towards the government formed after the fall of Mubarak, he nevertheless did not seem to initiate a radical change in the Church attitude and institutional structure (Makar 2016). Until the publishing of this study, the new Patriarch has followed the same political orientation of his predecessor (Sedra 2016), although with a more accentuated aperture to ecumenical exchanges (Makar 2016).

The problem with this re-installed millet partnership is that it creates a vacuum of representation not only for Orthodox Copts, but for all Egyptian minorities. From the outset, the Coptic Orthodox Church is not a democratic or, for that matter, a properly political institution and cannot legitimately represent the interests of all Copts in Egypt. From the inside, it has marginalized lay leadership since the abolition of the *maglis el mili* by drawing these energies into church activism (Sedra 2012). This monopoly of representation by the Coptic pontiff also excludes those Copts for whom faith is not central to their identity or even Coptic women who, though essential for the life of the community, are systematically excluded from the church's precincts of power.

Most importantly for the community which this thesis has studied, the re-installment of this partnership leaves little room for representation of Non-Coptic

Orthodox minorities. The support of the coup by Coptic Orthodox Patriarch Tawadros not only brought repercussions for the community he represents but brought destruction and violence to Catholic communities such as the JBAD in retaliation for the army's massacre in Raba el Adawya. While my main informant went all around Europe during 2016 searching for international donors who would help rebuild the four-story building that included a theater and a rehabilitation center, the highly bureaucratic process to obtain re-building permits is a symptom of the asymmetry in power relationships.

In return, minimal investments such as sending lower-ranking government officials to present state Christmas greetings (in the Catholic case, meaning December 24th) in the Roman Catholic Basilique of Our Lady of Heliopolis are supposed to show all the different Catholic communities their consideration in the nation's project. If anything, the contrast shows that the Sisi administration is not willing to give up its shares from partnering with what is by far the largest religious minority in Egypt and the region. It shows that in Egypt under Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi, "national unity" does not mean pluralism, but rather a sectarian logic of governance that prevails from Ottoman times where not every Egyptian is represented but every Egyptian is accountable.

7.2 Copticness, identity politics and "ecumenism of the blood"

In addition to the abovementioned reasons, at the core of the assumption that the Pope represents all Christians in Egypt lies a fallacy that makes the millet partnership utterly flawed: this concept of national unity based on the figure of the Coptic pope assumes church unity...something that has been inexistent for more than a millennium and a half.

In order to provide a strong institutional response to Islamization and be able to secure the loyalty of the community to the regime, the Coptic Orthodox Church progressively retreated on the communal level. This created a solid community positioned and integrated into all social classes and groups in Egypt (Bishara 2012:33). Copts are the owners of a quarter of the total national wealth, with their

valuable investments in transportation, industry, banks and agriculture (Bishara 2012:34). Four Copts are among the world's richest tycoons¹¹², and, though highly frustrating for the Coptic community, the percentage of representation in the fields of judiciary, media, diplomatic missions, the army and police are somewhere around 2% (Bishara 2012:34).

Previously identified as an entrenched Egyptian community, Copts have propelled themselves beyond the banks of the Nile through two main phenomena: migration and mission. In migration, the Coptic Church creates identity through physical presence (church buildings), recasting the narrative (African originality), employing a rubric of sovereignty (agency rather than passivity) and engaging others ecumenically (gaining Orthodox legitimacy) (Elsässer: 79). Coptic nationalism is also spreading to Latin America and South Africa through missionary work (Ogren 2014).

As a result of this corporative and transnational identity, and in combination with centuries of Church history, any potential marginalization of the Copts within national unity is contested and rejected. Hence, as articulated by Sherry Ortner (2006) with regard to the politics of dominated groups: "They have their own politics" (2006, 46). In the case of Coptic identity politics, they are "called into being" not only "by the situation of domination itself" (Ortner 2006, 50), but also by being understood as a simultaneous process of insistence and resistance to state actions and outsiders.

This politics has enabled the church to secure a central role in the construction of Copticness . Historically, some currents have emphasized Copticness as a racial or religious category that separates Copts from other Egyptian citizens (Khawaga: 2). Others deny that religious affiliation has any meaning in the public space, and prefer to describe it as a confessional identity that is (or should be) restricted to the private sphere (q.v. 4.4.1). This study has argued for yet another

¹¹² According to the Forbes website, Egyptian business tycoon Nassef Sawiris is the wealthiest person in Egypt, ranking 421 among the world's richest with \$4.2 billion. Six Egyptians were in the list of the wealthiest people globally; Sawiris' older brother Naguib Sawiris ranked second in Egypt with \$3 billion. Onsi Sawiris, the father of Nassef and Naguib, and the youngest brother Samih Sawiris are also among Egypt's billionaires. Their individual profiles are available at <https://www.forbes.com/forbes/welcome/?toURL=https://www.forbes.com/profile/naguib-sawiris/&refURL=https://www.google.com.eg/&referrer=https://www.google.com.eg/>

complication of this category, one alone the lines of denominational divisions in Christianity. While inside the JBAD, Coptic community and identity are experienced, performed and continually negotiated at multiple levels, "Copt" is a meaningless category without acknowledging that not all Copts are Orthodox.

Despite the lack of representation at a political level, the religious identity of Catholic Copts is not a separate Copticness. Since the founding of the Coptic Church of Alexandria by the staff of St. Mark in 50 A.D, writers, exegetes and philosophers, such as Clement of Alexandria and Origen, or her great patriarchs, ascetics, martyrs and saints of the Church, such as Athanasius, Cyril, Antonious or Abanoub, have been referred to as "Copt" to mean a theological and spiritual tradition. In the Catholic Coptic sense "Copt" refers to all those who are affiliated to the spiritual, liturgical and theological Alexandrian Christian Tradition.

However, the conservation by Catholic Copts of this common heritage has been commonly disregarded rendering a minority that is fabricated or foreign. This can be easily attributed to the tensions that rose with the Coptic Orthodox Church as the Uniate project and the later missionary project established a more widespread Catholic presence in Egypt that would hunt of its faithful. Yet, this does not excuse the way academia has concentrated in the narrative Muallm Ghali as the founder of the Catholic Coptic Church and that Catholicism entered Egypt as a result of his effort. In the same line, the fact that academia has left the members of this church as an accident of a missionary or colonial project is a far cry to a description of their reality. If mentioned at all, Catholic Copts are presented as residual Christians from foreign projects that are not a force relevant enough to deserve in-depth research. Not only are such narratives over-simplified, but they also tell little about the complexities of life and the varied relationships of Catholic Copts in today's Egypt.

Despite the schism, the proneness to enculturation of the Uniate project has actually yielded mature fruits in Egypt. Unatism has offered Egyptians the culturally-sensitive opportunity to be both Copt and Catholic. It has fostered an identity that is close to the Copts by allowing them to follow their own doctrines and performed their own ceremonies, but still acknowledge the authority of the Pope of Rome. The existence of such a vibrant institution as the JBAD, the production of Coptic Jesuit literature, theatre and cinema and even the Egyptian absorption of Liberation

Theology by activist from el Nahda Association during Tahrir, are proof that evangelism can indeed fulfill "the promise of native agency" (Makdisi 2007: 197).

In recognition of this agency, Vatican Second has entrusted Catholic Eastern Churches- among them Catholic Copts- the "special duty of fostering the unity of all Christians, in particular of Eastern Christians" (*Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, n. 24), especially with the Orthodox Coptic Church. Being their closest relative, today there are less obstacles that separate Catholics from Orthodox. The Coptic Orthodox Church is no longer presumed to be Monophysite heretic and the developments of the Pro Oriente give the impression that the Church is walking towards healing their millenary rifts (q.v. Chapter 5.1.1). Although minor theological differences as the filioque clause or the concept of purgatory may seem easy to reconcile, the political nature of thorny issues such as papal supremacy make church unity seem like a far-fetched dream.

There are good news for studies to come in ecumenology. Just 48 hours after this thesis was defended -taking advantage of Pope Francis's historic and hectic visit to Egypt - the Coptic Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church signed a declaration to recognize the baptisms conducted by each other (Vatican Radio 2017). Whether or not and how it will contribute to the reconfiguration of sectarian lines will be an interesting subject in studies to come. However, where ecumenism has and will continue to fail, sectarian violence has managed to push Christians together. In a notable interview with *La Stampa*, Pope Francis has coined this phenomenon as "ecumenism of the blood ":

"In some countries they kill Christians because they wear a cross or have a Bible, and before killing them they don't ask 'Are you Lutheran, or Orthodox, or Evangelical or Baptist or Methodist?' The blood is mixed.

They are Christians. And that blood (of martyrdom) unites. Today, dear brothers and sisters, we are living an 'ecumenism of blood'. This must encourage us to do what we are doing today: to pray, to dialogue together, to shorten the distance between us, to strengthen our bonds of brotherhood. If the enemy unites us in death, who are we to divide ourselves in life?" (Wooden 2015).

Indeed, where the water of baptism continues to separate Christians, the blood of martyrdom unites them.

7.3 Catholic Coptic activism, agency and citizenship by praxis

Albeit the power struggles and sectarian divisions that have written Catholic Copts out of post- revolutionary literature, this study sought to analyze how those forgotten by the millet pact or those whose voices are not politically represented have found alternative sources of participation and activism.

Perhaps in countries of a non-democratic tradition such as Egypt (Masoud 2014) does Tully (2008)'s rendering of citizenship takes a full meaning. Fundamentally defined by praxis or engagement in local and diverse forms of civic practices, rather than by a legal status tied to the nation-state, becoming a citizen in Tully's terms entails moral and political questions and practice contingent on the particular context in which a person resides (Tully 2008: 57). Praxis-based citizenship is constructed out of an agent's active and on-going engagement with other people; developing their own civic practices according to different social contexts and interactions (Tully, 2008).

Although the dominant idea is that of modern liberal citizenship is that of a universal and institutionalized form of citizenship based on constitutional law within the nation-state- a passive and narrow connotation as merely a legal status, Tully argues that civic activities of citizens are primary (Tully 2008: 62). That is, people do not become citizens by virtue of a status defined by rights and guaranteed by the institutions of the modern state and international law, but only by virtue of actual participation in citizenship practices where they acquire the linguistic and non-linguistic abilities, modes of conduct and interaction in relationships with others, forms of awareness of self and other, and the use of civic equipment that are constitutive of citizenship (Tully: 29).

Despite the hopes that accompanied the January 25 Revolution in this regard, and the disillusionment behind it, transcendental developments regarding citizenship simply are not happening in post-revolutionary Egypt (Sedra 2016). What makes this all the more remarkable is that, at nearly every previous revolutionary juncture in Egypt's modern history – 1882, 1919, and 1952 –there was a serious and sustained engagement with the issue of citizenship (Masoud 2014). Indeed, one might have thought that, not least given its Christian minority, Egypt would have been the Arab uprising context most likely to confront the question of citizenship. Nevertheless, by contributing to social development, not only of Catholics but of Egyptian society indiscriminately, through their NGO's, schools, hospitals and social development programs particularly in cities such as Minya, Cairo, Alexandria or Assiut, Coptic Jesuits exercise praxis-based citizenship that the revolution failed to deliver.

Without being involved in collective demand-making or mainstream politics, Catholics in Egypt- Coptic and not- are one of the longest surviving actors in Egyptian civil society. In trying to compensate for the partial retreat and shortcomings of the state this format has been efficient in mobilizing at the grassroots for social development to their size, commitment to the Egyptian society's most vulnerable and marginalized communities, and un-partisan nature. Despite the appearance of new service providers, the reputation that accompanies Catholic institutions to serve development since the times of Mohamed Ali has allowed that 0.6% of the schoolchildren in Egypt are educated by Catholics today (Media Kitab 2011).

Of course, this reputation is not absolute and suspicion of proselytism has not been absent. Yet the fact that community services are an integral part of the role of churches in Egypt and that the Catholic church itself has changed its outlook from mission to dialogue since Vatican II, indicate that it is willing to assume a more porous and progressive role. Instead, Catholic institutions as the JBAD have set religion aside and took on a more civil face as non-governmental organizations.

This does not mean that Catholic Coptic actors dissociate completely from their religious identity. On the contrary, post Vatican II social Catholicism developed a comprehensive understanding of mission, a global sense of priorities, and a religiously comprehensive or global sense of social justice (Bisson 2011) that is

compatible with secular involvement that proclaims its visibility to the Muslim masses. Through religious engagement, which suggests a process of mutuality, one not only seeks to change the world in a disinterested fashion, one allows oneself to be changed in the process. In this manner, religiously motivated social justice activism leads to a form of engaged religion, a new form of religion that has emerged in the context of globalization.

In Sisi's Egypt, the challenges for the JBAD seem to place it next to any other Egyptians NGO as a crackdown on civil society has taken form. Prior to and since the 2011 Revolution, civil society in Egypt has been governed highly restrictive laws¹¹³, but still hosted relatively large and vibrant civil society sector. Since the 2011 Revolution, the Ministry of Social Solidarity has been given enormous discretionary powers in a way that civil society organizations are increasingly forced to operate in a climate of fear, limitation, and uncertainty. Although the NGOs that have been targeted include mainly pro-democracy and human rights organizations and Catholic activism has traditionally stayed away from this thorny field, this uncertainty has caused many donors to holding their funds waiting to see what will happen in the future.

Aside from this challenge, the JBAD promises to continue serving Minyas as it has done for three generations. This study has been but a morsel of a much larger image of the different Catholic Coptic realities and the JBAD are not the only Catholic Coptic actors in the field and I envision future research on the activities of the Office for Social Development or other purely Catholic Coptic religion-based activism.

¹¹³ Including the Law on Associations and Community Foundations (Law 84 of 2002) and the Implementing Regulation for Law 84 of 2002 (Ministry of Social Affairs [Now Ministry of Social Solidarity and Justice] Decree 178 of 2002), which gave it and other governmental agency enormous discretionary powers See Civic Freedom Monitor: Egypt, Available at: <http://www.icnl.org/research/monitor/egypt.html>

7.4 The Egyptian Question

A year later after el Sisi became the first Egyptian president to attend the Coptic Christmas mass, his second speech on at the altar of St. Mark's Cathedral was much more apologetic. Three weeks before the tragic attack upon the Botroseyya Church in Abbasiyya that took the lives of two dozen Coptic Christians, mere steps away from Cairo's Coptic Cathedral and Papal Headquarters overshadowed the excitement for the president's visit. The Egyptian President seized the opportunity to apologize for the churches that were torched during clashes between supporters of ousted President Mohamed Morsi and security forces following the dispersal of two pro-Morsi camps in August 2013; he promised that the churches (though not private properties) would be fully restored during 2017 and revealed his intentions to build the largest church in Egypt next to the largest mosque in Egypt in his new capital. To prove such commitment, the church of St. Paul was repaired before the holiday as a token of this promise.

While one would be tempted to applaud this reparatory vow, this populist promise of is in fact a vow to erect more monuments to sectarianism. The more glaring problem in the wake of the Botrosiyya Church attack is that insisting in structuring political representation in this way – through sectarian institutions- invariably intensifies sectarian political divides in contemporary Egypt. How could the affirmation of the unified Egyptian nation be the antidote to the sectarian “sickness” when sectarianism is nothing other than a face of nationalism? Both were historically produced from the same matrix of meaning relying on the logic of identity where religion became an identity marker for the state, while identity worked as the structuring principle governing the modes of participation in, or subjection to, the sanctified nation-state. As revolutionary discourses and practices have not yet created a coherent system of meaning that would replace the old one, governed by the very logic of identity, in a country that played an integral role in the global spread of Christianity and Islam, religion has served to fragment a society that is already sharply split between rulers and ruled.

Consequential to the fallacy of identity politics is the existence of a so-called "Coptic question" (Youssef 2013, Walkin 2001, Tadros 2013, Iskander 2014) as

conflicts of citizenship and relations of power between Egyptians on the basis of religion are not exclusive to Orthodox Copts. Although the percentage of different religious groups in Egypt has been hotly contested (Tadros 2013), it is roughly accepted to include 85-90% Sunni Muslim, about 10% Christian Coptic Orthodox, less than 1% other Christian denominations - mainly Protestant and Catholic, less than 200,000 Bahais, about 200 Jews and unquantifiable amount of atheist and other consciences that not sanctioned by the Egyptian state (Hulsman 2012). Thus, the different realities of those characters whom I have presented at the JBAD in Minya are a small sample that reflect that under the logic of religious identity and citizenship there are more questions: a "Bahai question", a "Shi'ia question", several "Protestant (Evangelical, Presbyterian, Anglican) questions", and of course, a "Catholic question".

Ultimately, this study has aimed to contest in a broader manner the way Egyptian religious minorities are studied in the Post-Tahrir era. Even if the Revolution failed to move beyond binary sectarian labels academia should be reflexive enough to explore underlying issues. In the particular case of Catholic Copts, this means recognition of their agency by emancipating their study from Missionary Studies into more relevant studies of citizenship, nationalism and identity. As for other Egyptian religious minorities, deeper analysis of power relations should rephrase the concept of "Coptic Question" into a sincere question of pluralism or "Egyptian question".

Unlike Sisi's exhortation in his first Christmas speech, it is necessary for scholarship to ask "what type of Egyptian are you?"; not to promote sectarianism, but to address asymmetries in power relations and representation that until now revolutions, activists and scholars have failed to balance.

8. Sources

8.1 Books, articles and dissertations

- Abdelrahman, M. (2013), In Praise of Organization: Egypt between Activism and Revolution. *Development and Change*, 44: 569–585.
- Abdo, Geneive (2000) *No God but God: Egypt and the Triumph of Islam*. Oxford University.
- Affaya, Mohammed Nouredine (2011). "The 'Arab Spring': Breaking the Chains of Authoritarianism and Postponed Democracy." *Contemporary Arab Affairs* 4, no.4: 463-83.
- Alberigo, G. (1989) *The Unity of Christians: 550 Years after the Council of Ferrara–Florence. Tensions, Disappointments and Perspectives*.
- Anderson, B. (1998). "Long Distance Nationalism." In B. Anderson (Ed.), *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World* (pp. 58-74). London: Verso.
- Anderson, Benedict R. O'G. (1983). "Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism". London: Verso.
- Anner, J. (ed.) (1996). *Beyond identity politics: Emerging social justice movements in communities of color*. Boston, MA: South End Press.
- Anthony Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), pp. 13-16
- Armanios, Febe (2011). *Coptic Christianity in Ottoman Egypt*, Oxford University Press.
- Arnold, S. *Constrained crusaders? British charities and development education* (1988). *Development Policy Review* 6: 183 – 209.
- Assad, Maurice. (1972) 'The Coptic Church and social change in Egypt', *International Review of Mission*, April, 117-129.
- Assmann, Jan (2009). "Moses the Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt". Oxford Bible Commentary. Harvard University Press.
- Atiya, A.S. (1968). "A History of Eastern Christianity", London: Meuthen and Co.
- Attia, Maged (2001). "The Coptic Orthodox Church and the Ecumenical Movement", Bishopric of Youth Affairs, Egypt.

- Auxentios, M. The Tragedy of Our Uniate Brothers. *Orthodox Tradition*, Vol. III, No. 1: 35-47.
- Ayad, Mariam (2012) *Coptic culture: Past, Present and Future*. The Coptic Orthodox Church Centre.
- Baillie Smith, M, Laurie, N, Hopkins, P and Olson, E. International volunteering, faith and subjectivity: negotiating cosmopolitanism, citizenship and development. Working papers from "Youth transitions, international volunteering and religious transformations: the experiences of young evangelical Christians in Latin America" (2011).
- Bălan, Sergiu (Dec 2011) Ethnographic method in anthropological research. *Cogito* (2066-7094), Vol. 3 Issue 4, p 61-69.
- Barker, Derek Brian (2006) *Clientelism and the Copts: An Examination of the Relationship between the Egyptian Church and the State*, University of Windsor.
- Baron, Beth (2014). *The Orphan Scandal: Christian Missionaries and the Rise of the Muslim Brotherhood*, Stanford, Stanford University Press.
- Barrett, J. (2012). *International politics, American protestant missions and the Middle East*. Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1283085141?accountid=8423>
- Bart, F. (1996) "Ethnic Group Boundaries: The Social Organization of Cultural Difference", Norway: Scandinavian University Books.
- Barzilai, Gad (2003). *Communities and Law: Politics and Cultures of Legal Identities*. University of Michigan Press.
- Basser, Baher (2010). "Stateless Diasporas and their Long Distance Nationalist Activism in Host Countries: The Cases of Tamils from Sri Lanka and Kurds from Turkey". Fifth Pan-European Conference in Porto, Portugal.
- Baude, Benjamin, *Minorities*. Encyclopedia of the Modern Middle East and North Africa Ed. Philip Mattar. Vol. 3. 2nd ed. New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2004.
- Bayat, A. (2013). *Life As Politics*. Redwood City: Stanford University Press. Retrieved from <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/aucegypt/detail.action?docID=1175179>
- Bedsted, I. Saidi Absurdities. In Hopkins N. (Ed.), *Upper Egypt: Life along the Nile* (2003). Moesgard Museum: 157-164.
- Bengio, Ofra and Ben-Dor, Gabriel *Minorities* (1999). "Minorities and the State in the Arab World". Lynne Rienner Publishers.

- Bicentenary of the Restoration of the Jesuits (2014) *History Ireland*, 22(5), 8–8.
Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23850507>
- Bishara, Azmi (2011) "Can We Speak of a "Coptic Question" in Egypt?" Doha Institute.
- Bishara, Azmi (2012) *Is there a Coptic issue in Egypt?*, Arab Scientific Publishers.
- Botros, G. (2006). "Religious Identity as a Historical Narrative: Coptic Orthodox Immigrant Churches and the Representation of History". *Journal of Historical Sociology*, Vol. 19. No. 2. p. 194—2111.
- Botros, Ghada (2005). "Competing for the Future: Adaptation and the Accommodation of Difference in Coptic Immigrant Churches." Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto.
- Boulos, Samir (2016) *European Evangelicals in Egypt (1900-1956)*. Brill Academic Pub.
- Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J.G. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of Education* (pp. 241–258). New York: Greenwood Press.
- Bremmer, J. *The social and religious capital of the early Christians* (2006). *Hephaistos*, 24, 269–278.
- Brinkerhoff, Jennifer M. "Diaspora Philanthropy in an At-Risk Society: The Case of Coptic Orphans in Egypt." *George Washington University, Quarterly* September 2008 vol. 37 no. 3 411-433
- Britton & H. Blee (Eds.), *Global citizenship education: Philosophy, theory and pedagogy*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Butler, Alfred (2008) *The Arab Conquest of Egypt and the Last Thirty years of Roman Dominion*, Read Books.
- C.D.G. Müller (1981) *History of Oriental National Churches*, Göttingen.
- Campbell, Thomas J. (2013) *The Jesuits, 1534-1921 A History of the Society of Jesus from Its Foundation to the Present Time*.
- Candland, C. Faith as social capital: Religion and community development in Southern Asia (2000). *Policy Sciences*, 33(3–4), 355–374.
- Carasso, Lucienne (2014). "Growing Up Jewish in Alexandria: The Story of a Sephardic Family's Exodus from Egypt". New York
- Carkoglu A. (2008). Social vs. spiritual capital in explaining philanthropic giving in a Muslim setting: The case of Turkey. In Day Abby (Ed.), *Religion and the individual: Belief practice identity* (pp. 111–123).

- Carter, B.L. (1986). "The Copts in Egyptian politics". London; Dover, N.H.: Croom Helm.
- Carter, B.L. The Copts in Egyptian politics. London; Dover, N.H. : Croom Helm, 1986.
- Cesari, Jocelyne (2014). "The Awakening of Muslim Democracy: Religion, Modernity, and the State", Cambridge University Press, p. 74-78.
- Chan, J.; To, H-P.; and Chan, E. (2006) Reconsidering Social Cohesion: developing a definition and an analytical framework for empirical research, *Social Indicators Research* 75: 273–302
- Charles, R. H. The Chronicle of John, Bishop of Nikiu: Translated from Zotenberg's Ethiopic Text, 1916. Evolution Publishing, 2007.
- Chatterjee, Partha (1996). "Whose Imagined Community?" in "Mapping the Nation", ed. Gopal Balakrishnan. London: Verso.
- Chejne, Anwar G. (1957) "Egyptian Attitudes toward Pan-Arabism." *Middle East Journal* 11.3: 16.
- Chick, K. (2012, March 20). Egypt's Coptic pope: How he negotiated waves of sectarianism. *Christian Science Monitor*.
- Chitham, E.J. (1986). "The Coptic Community in Egypt: Spatial and Social Change". Durham: University of Durham, Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies.
- Chugg, Andrew (2004). "The Lost Tomb of Alexander The Great", *Periplus*.
- Clark, Janine A.. *Islam, Charity, and Activism: Middle-Class Networks and Social Welfare in Egypt, Jordan, and Yemen*. Bloomington, IN, USA: Indiana University Press, 2003. ProQuest ebrary.
- Cohen, Anthony (2000). "Signifying identities: Anthropological perspectives on boundaries and contested values". New York: Routledge.
- Cohen, S. *States of Denial: Knowing About Atrocities and Suffering* (2001). Cambridge: Polity
- Comaroff, Jean and Comaroff, John (2000) "Of Revelation and Revolution", *Journal of the International African Institute* Vol. 70, No. 3 (2000), pp. 501-519.
- Cragg, K. (1992). "The Arab Christian: A History in the Middle East". London: Mowbray.
- Critchfield, R. (1991). A Response to "The Invention and Reinvention of the Egyptian Peasant". *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 23(2), 77–279. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/164259>.

- Cushner, N.(2006). Art, Architecture, and Theater. In *Why Have You Come Here?: The Jesuits and the First Evangelization of Native America*. Oxford University Press. Retrieved 13 Oct. 2015, from <http://www.oxfordscholarship.com.library.aucegypt.edu:2048/view/10.1093/0195307569.001.0001/acprof-9780195307566-chapter-8>.
- Davies, C.A. (1999). *Reflexive Ethnography: A Guide to Research Selves and Others*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Davis, Stephen (2008). *Coptic Christology in Practice. Incarnation and Divine Participation in Late Antique and Medieval Egypt*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Davis, Stephen J. *The early Coptic Papacy: the Egyptian Church and its leadership in late antiquity*. Cairo, Egypt; New York, NY: American University in Cairo Press, 2002.
- Davison, Roderic H. "The Millets as Agents of Change in the Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Empire," in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society*, ed. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (Teaneck: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1982).
- Dunn, Marilyn. 2000. "The emergence of monasticism: From the desert fathers to the early Middle Ages." Oxford, UK; Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers.
- Dunn, Michael (2014). "Coptic Church's Synod Recognizes Two Modern Saints". Middle East Journal, Editors Blog.
- Dvornik, "The Ecumenical Councils" (1961) Hawthorn Books, p. 80.
- Edwards, M. *Future Positive* (1999) London: Earthscan.
- Egger, Vernon (1986). "A Fabian in Egypt: Salamah Musa and the Rise of the Professional Classes in Egypt, 1909-1939". Lanham: University Press of America.
- Ehler, Sidney Zdeneck; Morrall, John B (1967). *Church and State Through the Centuries: A Collection of Historic Documents with Commentaries*.
- El Banna, Rajab. (1998) "El Aqbat fi misr we ak mahjar" ("The Copts in Egypt and Abroad), Dar El Maarif.
- El Nour, SSmall farmers and the revolution in Egypt The forgotten actors. (2015). *Contemporary Arab Affairs*,8(2), 198.
- El Shakry, Omnia. *The Great Social Laboratory by Omnia El Shakry. The Great Social Laboratory. Subjects of Knowledge in Colonial and Postcolonial Egypt* (2007) Stanford University Press.

- Eliasoph N. *Avoiding politics: How Americans produce apathy in everyday life*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press; 1998.
- El-Khawaga, Dina. "The Political Dynamics of the Copts: Giving the Community and Active Role," in *Christian Communities in the Arab Middle East*. Edited by Andrea Pacini. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998.
- El-Manawi. A. (2005). "El Kenissa um al-Watan?" (trans. "Is the Church the mother of the homeland?"). Cairo: Atlas.
- Elsässer, Sebastian "Press Liberalization, the New Media, and the 'Coptic Question': Muslim–Coptic Relations in Egypt in a Changing Media Landscape". *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 46, Iss. 1, 2010.
- Elsässer, Sebastian (2014). "The Coptic Question in the Mubarak Era" Oxford University Press.
- Elyas, Patrick Victor. *No Longer Dhimmis: How European Intervention in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries Empowered Copts in Egypt* (2012).
- Erian, Nabila Meleika (1986). "Coptic Music: An Egyptian Tradition." Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland.
- Erickson, Edward J. (2009). *A military history of the Ottomans: from Osman to Atatürk*. ABC-CLIO.
- Eriksen, Thomas Hylland (2002). "Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives", Pluto Press: London.
- Esposito, John. (2002) *What Everyone Needs to Know About Islam*. New York: University Press.
- Fahey, Michael A.. *Orthodox and Catholic Sister Churches: East Is West and West Is East*. Milwaukee, WI, USA: Marquette University Press, 1996. ProQuest ebrary. Web. 18 December 2015.
- Fairweather, Eugene R., and Edward R. Hardy. *The Voice of the Church: the Ecumenical Council*. Greenwich, Conn.: Seabury Press, 1962.
- Farag, Lois M. (2014). "The Coptic Christian Heritage: History, Faith and Culture". Routledge.
- Faraha, Cynthia. "The 'mediation' of Muslim–Christian relations in Egypt: the strategies and discourses of the official Egyptian press during Mubarak's presidency", January 2012, *Journal of Islam and Muslim-Christian Relations*
- Fortescue, Adrian, Smith, George D., ed. *The Uniate Eastern Churches: the Byzantine rite in Italy, Sicily, Syria and Egypt* (2001). Gorgias Press.

- Frazer, Charles. *Catholics and sultans: the Church and the Ottoman Empire 1453-1923*. (1983) Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- Gabra, Gawdat (2014). "Coptic Civilization: Two Thousand Years of Christianity in Egypt" The American University in Cairo Press.
- Gabra, Gawdat, Hany N. Takla (2008) "Saint Mark Foundation., and Saint Shenouda", The Archimandrite Coptic Society.
- Gabra, Gawdat. *The A to Z of the Coptic Church* (2009) Scarecrow Press.
- Gabriel Baer, Arab Population (January 1, 2013) International Library of Sociology.
- Gaffney P. D. (1997), "Fundamentalist preaching and Islamic militancy in Upper Egypt", in Appleby (Ed.), *Spokesmen for the despised: Fundamentalist leaders of the Middle East* (pp. 257–293), Chicago-London, The University of Chicago Press.
- Gershoni, Israel and Jankowski, James (1987). *Egypt, Islam, and the Arabs: the search for Egyptian nationhood, 1900-1930*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Giugni, M., Passy, F. (Eds.), 2001. *Political Altruism ? Solidarity Movement in International Perspective*.
- Goldschmidt, Arthur. *Biographical Dictionary of Modern Egypt* (2000). Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Gorman, Michael (2003) "The Enduring Library: Technology, Tradition, and the Quest for Balance", American Library Association.
- Graf, G. *Catalogue of Arab Christian manuscripts conserved in Cairo* (1944) *Studie Testi*.
- Graham, Mark "How Islam Created the Modern World" Amana Publications (2006).
- Guirguis, Magdi. "The Copts and the Egyptian revolution." *Social Research* 79, no.2 (2012),511-532. – Retrived from: <http://pomeps.org/category/academic-works/arabuprisings/#sthash.9m8vtd0q.dpuf>
- Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992).
- Habib Ayrout, Henry. *Moeurs et coutumes desfellahs* (Collection d'etudes, de documents et de temoignages pour servir a l'histoire de notre temps) (Paris, 1938; reprint ed. New York, 1978).
- Haddad, Yvonne and Donovan, Joshua (2013). "Good Copt, Bad Copt: Competing Narratives on Coptic Identity in Egypt and the United States". *Studies in World Christianity* 19.3: 208–232.

- Halbwachs, Maurice (1952). "On collective memory", Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1992 translated from: *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France; originally published in F. Alcan (1925) "Les Travaux de L'Année Sociologique", Paris.
- Hamilton, Alastair (2006). *The Copts and the West, 1439–1822: The European Discovery of the Egyptian Church*. Oxford–Warburg Studies. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Hans-Lukas Kieser (2010) *Nearest East: American Millennialism and Mission to the Middle East*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Harris, George L. "The Mission of Matteo Ricci, S.J.: A Case Study of an Effort at Guided Culture Change in China in The Sixteenth Century", in *Monumenta Serica*, Vol. XXV, 1966.
- Hasan, S. (2003) *Christians Versus Muslims in Modern Egypt*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hasan, S. *Christians versus Muslims in Modern Egypt. The Century-Long Struggle for Coptic Equality*. (2003).
- Hatem, Mervat. "Gender and Revolution in Egypt." *Middle East Report* 261 (2011): 36-41. - See more at: <http://pomeps.org/category/academic-works/arabuprisings/#sthash.9m8vtd0q.dpuf>
- Hays, Danica and Singh, Anneliese. *Qualitative Inquiry in Clinical and Educational Settings* (2011) Guilford Press.
- Heather J. Sharkey (2013). *American Evangelicals in Egypt: Missionary Encounters in an Age of Empire*. Princeton University Press. p. 194.
- Hehir, Bryan. *The Catholic Church and the Middle East: Policy and Diplomacy* (1987) Syracuse University Press.
- Heikal, M. (1983) "Autumn of Fury: The assassination of Sadat" New York, Random House.
- Heleen Murre-van den Berg *New Faith in Ancient Lands: Western Missions in the Middle East in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries*. *Studies in Christian Missions* 32, Leiden: Brill, 2006.
- Henderson, Randall P. (2005) "The Egyptian Coptic Christians: The Conflict between Identity and Equality." *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 16.2: 155 –166.
- Heyberger, Bernard. *Christians of the Near East in Times of the Reform* (1989).

- Higgins, Gareth I. and John D. Brewer. 2002. "The Roots of Sectarianism in Northern Ireland. Queen's University Belfast
- Hofmann, G. *Epistolae pontificiae ad Concilium Florentinum spectantes* (trans.), vol. 1, pars 2, Rome 1953 (= CFI Ser. A), n. 176, 68-79.
- Hoover, Jacqueline (2013) *Sectarian Conflict in Egypt: Coptic Media, Identity and Representation, Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations*, 24:2, 263-265.
- Hopkins, Nicholas and Saad, Reem. *Upper Egypt: Identity and Change* (2004) American University in Cairo Press.
- Hulsman, Cornelis. "AWR Editorial: Intolerant Climate in Egypt and Media Manipulations Result in Row Around Bishop Bīshūy," *Arab-West Report*, Week 43, Art 32, October 25, 2010.
- Hulsman, Cornelius (2012) *Discrepancies Between Coptic Statistics in the Egyptian Census and Estimates Provided by the Coptic Orthodox Church*, *ArabWest Report*.
- Hulsman, Cornelius (2012). "Ecumenical relations of the Coptic Orthodox Church as mentioned in the decisions of the Holy Synod of the Coptic Orthodox Church". *Arab West Report*, week 12.
- Hulsman, Cornelius. "Renewal in the Coptic Orthodox Church: Notes of the Ph.D. Thesis of Revd. Dr. Wolfram Reiss," Cairo, *Arab- West Report*, 2002, Week 46.
- Iannaccone, Laurence R. *Religious practice: A human capital approach*. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* (1990) 29(3), 297–314.
- Israeli, R.. (1995). *The Cross Battles the Crescent, One Century of Missionary Work among Chinese Muslims (1850-1950)*. *Modern Asian Studies*, 29(1), 203–221. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/312916>
- J Butler, 'Merely Cultural', *Social Text* 52/53, 1997, pp265-277
- Jackson, M (2002). *The politics of storytelling: violence, transgression and intersubjectivity*, Copenhagen: University of Copenhagen and Museum Tusulanum Press.
- Jacobsen, Douglas (2011). "The World's Christians, Who They Are, Where They Are and How They Got There". Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Jankowski, James. "Egypt and Early Arab Nationalism" in Rashid Khalidi, ed. *The Origins of Arab Nationalism*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1990.
- Johnstone, Patrick; Miller, Duane Alexander (2015). "Believers in Christ from a Muslim Background: A Global Census". *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion*. 11: 14.

- Joseph, John (2000). *The modern Assyrians of the Middle East: encounters with Western Christian missions, archaeologists, and colonial powers*. Leiden ; Boston, MA : Brill, 2000
- Kail, Ellis. *The Vatican, Islam and the Middle East* (1987). Syracuse university Press,
- Kamil, Jill. *Christianity in the land of the pharaohs: The Coptic Orthodox Church..* New York: Routledge, 2002.
- Kaminsky, Friedrich and LÖFFLER, Roland (2010). *The Social Dimension of Christian Missions in the Middle East: Historical Studies of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, Missions*. Geschichtliches Archiv, Studien der Berliner Gesellschaft für Missions geschichte, 16. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag.
- Karas, Shawky. (1985) "The Copts Since the Arab Invasion: strangers in their land" (Jersey City, American Coptic Association).
- Kawa Printing Office (1929) "The Catholic Mission in Egypt", Cairo.
- Kelada, W.S. (1987) 'Christian-Muslim relations in Egypt', in: K.C. ELLIS (Ed.), *The Vatican, Islam, and the Middle East* , Syracuse, NY, Syracuse University Press: 243-26.
- Khouzam, Mark. *Missions in Egypt of the Catholic Copts* (1937) Patriarchate of Alexandria.
- Kilrollos, Samir. "Boutros El Gawli - The 109th Pope" in "The Coptic Orthodox Book of Saints" (2013).
- Kothari, U and Wilkinson, R. *Colonial Imaginaries and Postcolonial Transformations: exiles, bases, beaches* (2010). *Third World Quarterly* 31: 1395 – 1412.
- Koutsou, Eleni. *Annotated Critical Edition of John Eugenikos' Antirrhetic of the Decree of the Council of Ferrara-Florence*. Nicosia 2006.
- Laskier, Michael M. (1995) *Egyptian Jewry under the Nasser Regime, 1956-70*. *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 31: No. 3.
- Lavie, Limor (2016). *The Idea of the Civil State in Egypt: Its Evolution and Political Impact following the 2011 Revolution*. *The Middle East Journal*, Volume 71, Number 1, Winter 2016, pp. 23-44(22)
- Lawrence, Joffe. *Pope Shenouda III obituary: Egyptian spiritual leader of the Coptic Orthodox Church for more than 40 years*. *The Guardian*, 18 March 2012. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/mar/18/pope-shenouda-the-third>

Longva, Anh Nga and Sofie Roald, Anne. *Religious Minorities in the Middle East: Domination, Self-Empowerment, Accommodation* (2012) *Social, Economic and Political Studies of the Middle East and Asia* Volume: 108.

Iskander, Elizabeth (2012). *Sectarian Conflict in Egypt*. Florence, GB: Routledge.

Lukasik , Candace. (2016) *Conquest of Paradise: Secular Binds and Coptic Political Mobilization*. *Middle East Critique* Vol. 25 , Iss. 2,2016.

Lyman, J. Rebecca (2010). "The Invention of 'Heresy' and 'Schism'", *The Cambridge History of Christianity*.

Makari. P. (2002) *Conflict and Cooperation: Christian---Muslim Relations in Contemporary Egypt*. New York: Syracuse University Press.

Makdisi, Ussama. *Artillery of Heaven: American Missionaries and the Failed Conversion of the Middle East* (2007) Cornell University Press.

Malthaner, Stefan (2010) *Mobilizing the Faithful: Militant Islamist Groups and their Constituencies*. Campus.

Martin, Richard C. (2005) 'From Dhimmis to Minorities: Shifting Constructions of the non-Muslim Other from the Early to Modern Islam', in Shatzmiller, Maya.

Martone, J. (2013). *Patriarch: Work across sectarian lines*. *National Catholic Reporter*, 49(12), 23

Mary Laven. *Jesuits and Eunuchs: Representing Masculinity in Late Ming China* (2012) *History and Anthropology*, 23:2, 199-214.

Masoud, Tarek (2014) *Egyptian Democracy: Smothered in the Cradle, or Stillborn?*, *Brown Journal of World Affairs*; Spring/Summer 2014 • volume xx, issue i1

Masters, Bruce (2001). *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism*. Cambridge University Press.

Mattison, B. M. *Rural Social Centers in Egypt*. (1951) *Middle East Journal*, 5(4), 461–480. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4322329>

McCallum. F. (2003). *Muslim- Christian relations in Egypt: Challenges for the twenty-first century*. in O'Mahony. A.

Mediators of Religious Memory." *Numen*, Vol. 41: 223-254.

Meinardus, Otto (1992) "Monks and Monasteries of the Egyptian Deserts". Cairo: American University in Cairo Press.

Meinardus, Otto (1999). "Two Thousand Years of Coptic Christianity". Cairo: AUP.

Meinardus, Otto (2006) "Christians in Egypt", Cairo: American University in Cairo Press.

- Meinardus, Otto (2010) *Christians in Egypt: Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant Communities Past and Present*, American University in Cairo Press.
- Metcalf, P. (2005) *Anthropology. The Basics*, London/New York, Routledge.
- Meyendorff, John. *Imperial Unity and Christian Division: The Church, 450-680 A.D.* Crestwood, NY: St. Valdimir's Seminary Press, 1992.
- Michalopoulos, Dimitris, "The First Council of Nicaea: The end of a conflict or beginning of a struggle?" *Uluslarasi Iznik Semposyumu, Iznik (Turkey)*, 2005, p. 47–56.
- Mitchell, Timothy. *The Invention and Reinvention of the Egyptian Peasant* (May, 1990) *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 2.
- Mitchell, Timothy. *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (2002) University of California Press.
- Mohamoud YA, Cuadros DF, Abu-Raddad LJ. Characterizing the Copts in Egypt: Demographic, socioeconomic and health indicators, *QScience Connect* 2013:22 <http://dx.doi.org/10.5339/connect.2013.22>
- Molony, John "Christian social thought; A: Catholic social teaching". In Gilley, Sheridan; Stanley, Brian. *World Christianities c.1815–c.1914*. (2006). *Cambridge History of Christianity*. Vol.8. Cambridge University.
- Monitor's Editorial, B. (2013, September 17). How Egypt's Coptic Christians can keep the Arab Spring fresh. *Christian Science Monitor*.
- Moses, Paul (2009). *The Saint and the Sultan: The Crusades, Islam, and Francis of Assisi's Mission of Peace*.
- Moshe Ma'oz, "Middle Eastern Minorities: Between Integration and Conflict," *Policy Papers* 50 (1999).
- Moubarac, Yoakin. *The Lebanese Experience and Muslim Christian Relations* (1987) Syracuse University Press.
- Murphy, Robert Thomas. *The minorities of Egypt : a study of their characteristics, their role and their rights in modern times*. Harvard University, 1958.
- Murre-van den Berg, H. (2009). Interpreting Welfare and Relief in the Middle East. *Church History & Religious Culture*, 89(1-3).
- Musick MA, Wilson J. *Volunteers: A social profile*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press; 2008.
- Myrdal, Gunnar, What is Development, *Journal of Economic Issues*, Volume viii, no. 4, December 1974, p 729-736.

- Naguib, Saphinaz-Amal (1994). "The Martyr as Witness and Copto-Arabic Hagiographies as
- Nakhla, Kamal (2002) History of the Patriarchs. Dair al-Surian Vols. 5,6.
- Nash, K. Global citizenship as show business: the cultural politics of Make Poverty History (2008). Media, culture and society 30: 167 – 181.
- Nelson, Cynthia (1973). "The Virgin of Zeitoun". Worldview Magazine, Volume 16, No. 11.
- Nickell, Joe (1993) Looking for a Miracle. Prometheus Books Paris, pp. 271–286 (Bibliothèque des sciences humaines).
- O' Gara, Margret (2014) "No Turning Back: The Future of Ecumenism" Liturgical Press.
- O'Mahony, A. (2002) "The Politics of Religious Renewal: Coptic Christianity in Egypt' in Eastern Christianity, ed. O'Mahony. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Ogren, D. (2014). The Coptic Church in South Africa: The meeting of mission and migration. *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies*, 70(1), 7 pages. doi:10.4102/hts.v70i1.20614
- Ortner, Sherry (2006). "Anthropology and Social Theory: Culture, Power and the Acting Subject. Durham, NC: Duke University Press
- Ortner, S. B. 2006. Anthropology and social theory: culture, power, and the acting subject, Durham, NC: Duke University Press
- Paulsen, Lise (2012) Coptic Christian practices: formations of sameness and difference. *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations* Volume 23, 2012 - Issue 1
- Peet, Richard & Hartwick, Elaine (2009) Theories of Development: Contentions, Arguments, Alternatives. Guilford Press.
- Portes, A. The two meanings of social capital (2000). *Sociological Forum*, 15(1), 1–12
- Putnam, H (1975) Mind, Language and Reality. Philosophical Papers, Volume 2, Cambridge University Press.
- Putnam, R. D. (2000) Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community. Simon and Schuster.
- Radano, John A. (2012). "Celebrating a Century of Ecumenism: Exploring the Achievements of International Dialogue". Eerdmans Publishing Co.
- Ramzy, Carolyn (2014). "The Politics of (dis)engagement: Coptic Christian Revival and the Performative Politics of Song", University of Toronto.
- Reynaud, E., 1980. Le militantisme moral. In: Mendras, H. (Ed.), La sagesse et le désordre : France 1980. Gallimard,

- Richard D. Parker, Five Theses on Identity Politics, 29 Harv. J.L. & Pub. Pol'y 53 (2005).
- Richardson, L. (2000) "Evaluating ethnography," in *Qualitative Inquiry*, 6(2):253-255.
- Robbins, Thomas and Lucas, Phillip (2007) "From 'Cutls' to New Religious Movements: Coherence, Definition and Conceptual Framing in the Study of New Religious Movements" in *The Sage Handbook of the Sociology of Religion*. Beckford, James and Demerath, N.J. (eds.) Sage Publications: 212-16.
- Roberson, Ronald. *The Eastern Christian Churches: A Brief Survey* (1999). Instituto Pontificio Orientale.
- Robinson, Neal "Massignon, Vatican II and Islam as an Abrahamic religion". (December 1991). *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* (2): 182–205.
- Rowberry, Ryan and Khalil, John (2010). "A Brief History of Coptic Personal Status Law" *Berkeley J. Middle E. & Islamic L.* 81, Available at: <http://scholarship.law.berkeley.edu/jmeil/vol3/iss1/2>
- Rowe, Paul; Dyck, John and Zimmermann, Jens eds. (2014). *Christians and the Middle East Conflict*, London: Routledge.
- Runciman, Steven. *The Eastern Schism: A Study of the Papacy and the Eastern Churches during the XIth and XIIth Centuries*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955.
- Ryan, Dunch (Oct., 2002). *Beyond Cultural Imperialism: Cultural Theory, Christian Missions, and Global Modernity*, *History and Theory*. Vol. 41, No. 3 pp. 301-325.
- Saad, Michael Saad. "The Contemporary Life of the Coptic Orthodox Church in the United States". *Studies in World Christianity*. Volume 16, Page 207-225, December 2010.
- Said Aly, Abd al-Moneim, and Manfred W. Wenner (1982). "Modern Islamic Reform Movements: The Muslim Brotherhood in Contemporary Egypt." *Middle East Journal* 36.3: 336-361.
- Said, Edward (1979) *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Salah, Mohamed (2013) *On the Road to Heaven: Historical Origins of the Religious Economic Gap in Egypt* (PDF Download Available). Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/267861264_On_the_Road_to_Heaven_Historical_Origins_of_the_Religious_Economic_Gap_in_Egypt
- Salama, P. (2012). "Of all nations: Exploring intercultural marriages in the Coptic orthodox church of the GTA." *ProQuest Dissertations and Theses*, 223. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1400015363?accountid=8423>.

- Salama, U. (1996). "After they requested American and Canadian intervention in the affairs of Egypt: the lies of diaspora Copts", *Rose al-Youssef*, 2 September.
- Samaan, Makraam and Sukkary, Sohair (1978) "The Copts and Muslims of Egypt", in: S. JOSEPH and B. Pillsbury (Eds), *Muslim-Christian Conflicts: economic, political, and social origins* (Boulder, CO, Westview Press).
- Sanjek, R. (2010) *Etnography*, in *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology*, Edited by A. Barnard and J. Spencer, Second Edition, London, Routledge.
- Schaff, P. (1995). "Nicene and Post-Nicene fathers: The Apostolic fathers: The Seven Ecumenical Councils." Edinburgh: T&T Clark.
- Schlesinger, Arthur Jr. (1991). "The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multicultural Society", Whittle Books.
- Schutt, Russell K. 2006. *Investigating the Social World. The Process and Practice of Research*, 5th Edition, Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Scott, Joan. *The Politics of the Veil* (2007) Princeton University Press.
- Scudder, Lewis R. (1998). *The Arabian Mission's Story: In Search of Abraham's Other Son* Historical Series of the Reformed Church of America, No. 30.
- Sedra, Paul (1999): *Class cleavages and ethnic conflict: Coptic Christian communities in modern Egyptian politics*, *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations*, 10:2, 219-235
- Sedra, Paul (1999): *Class cleavages and ethnic conflict: Coptic Christian communities in modern Egyptian politics*, *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations*, 10:2, 219-235
- Sedra, Paul (2011) *From Mission to Modernity: Evangelicals, Reformers and Education in Nineteenth Century Egypt*. London, I.B. Tauris.
- Sedra, Paul (2014). *Copts and the Millet Partnership: The Intra-Communal Dynamics Behind Egyptian Sectarianism*. *Journal of Law and Religion*, 29: 491-509.
- Seikaly, Samir. (1970) "Coptic communal reform: 1860-1914", *Middle Eastern Studies*, January, 247-270
- Selim, Samah. *The New Pharaonism: Nationalist Thought and the Egyptian Village Novel, 1967-1977*. *The Arab Studies Journal*, Vol. 8/9, No. 2/1 (Fall 2000/Spring 2001).
- Sharkey, Heather J. *American Evangelicals in Egypt: Missionary Encounters in an Age of Empire: Missionary Encounters in an Age of Empire* (2013). Princeton University Press.

- Sharkey, Heather J. (2004). "Arabic Antimissionary Treatises: Muslim Responses to Christian Evangelism in the Modern Middle East", *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, Vol. 28, No. 3.
- Sharkey, Heather J. (2008). "American Evangelicals in Egypt: Missionary Encounters in an Age of Empire". New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Sharkey, Heather J. (2013) "American Evangelicals in Egypt: Missionary Encounters in an Age of Empire". Princeton, NJ, USA: Princeton University Press.
- Shatzmiller, Maritza. (Ed.). (2005). *Nationalism and Minority Identities in Islamic Societies*. McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Shenoda, Anthony (2010) *Cultivating Mystery: Miracles and a Coptic Moral Imaginary*. Ph.D. dissertation, Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Harvard University.
- Slim Hugo. *Development in Practice*, Vol. 5, No. 2. (May, 1995), p 143-148.
- Smith, Charles D. (2002) " The Egyptian Copts: Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Definition of Identity for a Religious Minority". Chapter 3 in Shatzmiller, Maya.
- Smith, J. (2013) *Coptic Papacy and Power in a Changing Post-Mubarak Egypt*, Ohio State University.
- Sorek, Susan. *The Emperors' Needles, Egyptian Obelisks and Rome* (2010). Liverpool University Press.
- Tadros, M. (2013). *Decentralisation and Social Cohesion in Religiously Heterogeneous Societies in Transition: A Case Study from Egypt* Grey Literature SDC-IDS
- Tadros, Mariz. (2009). *Vicissitudes in the Entente between the Coptic Orthodox Church and the State in Egypt (1952–2007)*". *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 41.
- Tadros, S., & Herbert and Jane Dwight (2013). *Motherland lost: The Egyptian and Coptic quest for modernity*, Working Group on Islamism and the International Order.
- Taft, Robert (1999) "Liturgy in the Life of the Church".
- Tagher, J. (1998) "Christians in Muslim Egypt: A Historical Study of the Relations Between Copts and Muslims from 640-1922", Altenberge: Oros Verlag.
- Tejirian, Eleanor H. and Spector Simon, Reeva (2002). *Altruism and Imperialism: Western Cultural and Religious Missions in the Middle East*. New York: Occasional Papers Series, Columbia University Middle East Institute.

- Tejirian, Eleanor H. and Spector Simon, Reeva (2012). *Conflict, Conquest, and Conversion: Two Thousand Years of Christian Missions in the Middle East*. New York, Columbia University Press, 2012.
- Tellyrides, M. (2009) *Batriayarkiyat Iskinderiya abr al-Qaroon*. Trans. M. Monir, Cairo: Holy Archangels Greek Orthodox Church in Cairo Publishing.
- Thomas Noble and Julia Smith. *The Cambridge History of Christianity, 3: Early Medieval Christianities, c. 600 - c. 1100*. Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Tignor, R. (1998). *Capitalism and Nationalism at the End of Empire: State and Business in Decolonizing Egypt, Nigeria, and Kenya, 1945-1963*. Princeton University Press. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt13x1cn5>
- Timothy Mitchell (1991). A Reply to Richard Critchfield. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 23, 279-280.
- Tolan, John V.. *Saint Francis and the Sultan: The Curious History of a Christian-Muslim Encounter*. Oxford, GBR: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Tomalin, E. Religion and development: Literature review. *Religion and Development*, working paper 4 (2007). International Development Department, University of Birmingham.
- Tripathy, J and Mohapatra, D. "Does Development Exist Outside Representation". *Journal of Developing Societies* 27:2 (2011): 93-118.
- Tully, J. (2008). Two meanings of global citizenship: Modern and diverse. In M. A. Peters, A.
- Urban, Hugh B. *Sacred capital: Pierre Bourdieu and the study of religion*. *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* (2003). 15(4), 354–389.
- Van der Vliet, J. (2009). The Copts: 'Modern Sons of the Pharaohs?'. *Church History & Religious Culture*, 89 (1-3).
- Van Doorn-Harder. N. and Volt, K. (1992). "Between the Desert and the City: The Coptic Orthodox Church Today", Oslo: The institute for Research in Comparative Culture.
- Van Doorn-Harder, Nelly. "Finding a Platform: Studying the Copts in the 19th and 20th Centuries" *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (Aug 2010) 42#3 pp 479–482. *Historiography*.
- Van Doorn-Harder, Pieterella (2005). "Copts: Fully Egyptian, but for a Tattoo?" Chapter 2 in Shitzmiller, Maya.

- Wakin, Edward (1963 and 2001). *A Lonely Minority: The Modern Story of Egypt's Copts*. New York: Morrow.
- Wamboldt, Alexander. "The Forbidden Pilgrimage: Pope Shenouda III's Ban on Coptic Travel to Israel, and its Religious, Political, and Cultural Interpretations and Implications for the Coptic Orthodox Church". *Arab West Report*, August 16, 2009: Number 16.
- Watson, John H (2000 and 2002). *Among the Copts*. Sussex Academic Press.
- Watterson, Barbara (1988) *Coptic Egypt*. Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press.
- Werthmuller, Kurt J. "Coptic Identity and Ayyubid Politics in Egypt 1218–1250". American University in Cairo Press. 2009.
- Whitehead, M. (2014). From Expulsion to Restoration: The Jesuits in Crisis, 1759–1814. *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, 103(412), 447–461. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24347842>
- Whitehead, Tony (2005). *Basic Classical Ethnographic Research Methods*, University of Maryland.
- Wilson J. Volunteering. *Annual Review of Sociology*. 2000;26:215–240.
- Winifred S. Blackman, 'Some Beliefs among the Egyptian Peasants with Regard to "Afarit"', *Folklore*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (30 June 1924).
- Winkelman, F (1993) "Egypt and Byzantium before the Arab conquest".
- Wirth, L: "The Problem of Minority Groups", in Ralph Linton (ed.), *The Science of Man in the World Crisis*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1945.
- Wortham Robert A. (2007). Spiritual capital and the good life. *Sociological Spectrum*, 27(4), 439–452
- Wuthnow, R. (1991) *Acts of Compassion: Caring for Others and Helping Ourselves*. Princeton University
- Yetkiner, C. (2010). *American missionaries, Armenian community, and the making of Protestantism in the Ottoman Empire, 1820--1860*. Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/305193372?accountid=8423>
- Yurkus. Kevin (2005). *The Other Catholics: A Short Guide to the Eastern Catholic Churches*, Crisis.

Zachs, Fruma (2005). From the Mission to the Missionary: The Bliss Family and the Syrian Protestant College (1866-1920). *Die Welt des Islams, New Series*, Vol. 45, Issue 2 (2005), pp. 255-291

Zidan, Youssef (2009) *El Azazeel*, Atlantic Books.

8.2 Reference, Dictionaries and Encyclopedias

Atiya, Aziz (1991) "Ghali, Muallim." *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, Macmillan Publishing, New York.

"Community Council, Coptic" (1991)

"Eastern Orthodoxy" (2006). *Encyclopedia of World Religions*, Concord Publishers: p 25.

Adams, Charles; Kevin Reinhart. "Kufr". (2009). *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Islamic World*. Ed. Esposito, John. Retrieved 4 December 2015. Available at: <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195305135.001.0001/acref-9780195305135-e-0467>

Encyclopædia Britannica Online (2015) "Eastern rites" Web. 18 Dec. 2015 <<http://www.britannica.com/topic/Eastern-rite-church>>

Meyendorff, John (2014). "Eastern Orthodoxy". *Britannica Online*. Available at: <http://www.britannica.com/topic/Eastern-Orthodoxy#toc59581>

Oxford English Dictionary (3rd ed, 2005). Oxford University Press.

Richardson, L. jr. (1992) 'Milliarium Aureum', *A New Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome*.

Roberson, Ronald (2013). "The Coptic Catholic Church. CNEWA, Available at: <http://www.cnewa.org/default.aspx?ID=63&pagetypeID=9&sitecode=hq&pageno=1>

Schiller, Nina-Glick. (2004) "Long Distance Nationalism", *Encyclopedia of Diasporas*, eds. Carol R. Ember, Melvin Ember, Ian A. Skoggard. Springer Publishing.

Senior, Donald P. (1998), "Mark", in Ferguson, Everett, *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity* (2nd ed.), New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., p. 720

8.3 Scripture, Codes, Encyclicals and Legal sources

APA Ethics Code, APA Publication Manual (2009, 6th ed) American Psychological Association.

APA Publication Manual (2009, 6th ed) American Psychological Association.

Catechism of the Catholic Church – English translation (U.S.A., 2nd edition) 1997, United States Catholic Conference, Inc., Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

Code of Canon Law

Coptic Synexarium

Ecclesiam suam, (1965-08-06).

Rerum Novarum, (1891-05-15). Orientalium Ecclesiarum, Lumen gentium (1964) Unitatis redintegratio" (1964-11-21) and Nostra aetate"(1965-10-28). All available at Vatican.va. Retrieved on November 08, 2015.

The Holy Bible, NRSV 2006, Ignatius Press.

Documents of the 31st and 32nd General Congregations of the Society of Jesus; An English Translation of the Official Latin Texts of the General Congregations and of the Accompanying Papal Documents; Saint Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1977.

Documents of the Thirty-fourth General Congregation of the Society of Jesus; The Decrees of General Congregation Thirty-four, the Fifteenth of the Restored Society and the Accompanying Papal and Jesuit Documents; Saint Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources (IJS), 1995

"Jesuits Today", 32nd General Congregation of the Society of Jesus, Decree 2, n. 9. GC 34's "Servants of Christ's Mission" twenty years later called it an "integrating principle".

"General Board of Egypt catholic schools : Training Center for Arabic, English and French speaking" Media Kitab (2011) Available at: <http://mediakitab.com/en/organisations/le-centre-de-formation-du-secretariat-general-des-ecoles-catholiques-degypte-arabophones-et-bilingues-anglophones-et-francophones/>

8.4 Periodicals, reports and others

"Christians and churches in Egypt: Aggression from all sides", Mada Masr, December 14, 2016. Retrieved from: <http://www.madamasr.com/en/2016/08/09/feature/politics/why-do-sectarian-tensions-run-high-in-minya/>

"Coptic Orthodox Church confirms mob attack on Christians in Upper Egyptian village" Ahram Online, Thursday 26 May 2016 Available at: <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/217668/Egypt/Politics-/Coptic-Orthodox-Church-confirms-mob-attack-on-Chri.aspx>

"Egyptians celebrate ancient festival of Sham El-Nessim" Ahram Online, MENA, 21 Apr 2014. Available at: <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/99540/Egypt/Politics-/Egyptians-celebrate-ancient-festival-of-Sham-EINes.aspx>

- "Her Right to Marry" Ibn Rushd Media. Accessed June 10, 2016: <http://ibnrushdmedia.com/projects/>
- "IOR releases Annual Report 2014" (PDF). www.ior.va.
- "Joint Declaration of Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill" (12 February, 2016) Radio Vaticana Available at: <http://www.news.va/en/news/joint-declaration-of-pope-francis-and-patriarch-ki>
- "Pope in Egypt: Catholics and Copts recognize shared baptism". Vatican Radio, 28th April 2017. Available at: http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2017/04/28/pope_in_egypt_catholics_and_copts_recognise_shared_baptism/1308869
- "Two strong-willed reformers in the Coptic Orthodox Church; H.H. Pope Shenouda III and Father Matta El-Meskeen," in Christianity Today, December 2001 and RNSAW, 2001, week 51, art.13 - See more at: <http://www.arabwestreport.info/en/year-2002/week-46/23-renewal-coptic-orthodox-church-notes-phd-thesis-revd-dr-wolfram-reiss#sthash.MCkEpDjk.dpuf>
- "Welcome President Sadat to the United States of America", New York Times, 3 August 1981.
- "6 months after 'Frankenstein' Nefertiti removal, new bust of pharaonic queen installed" Ahram Online, Wednesday 6 Jan 2016. <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/180289/Egypt/Politics/-months-after-Frankenstein-Nefertiti-removal,-new-.aspx>
- "Author of Azazel faces charges of insulting religion", Egypt Independent. 02/15/2013 available at <http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/author-azazel-faces-charges-insulting-religion>
- "Egypt: Mass Attacks on Churches; Christians Say Pleas for Protection Fell on Deaf Ears," Human Rights Watch, August 22, 2013, www.hrw.org/news/2013/08/21/egypt-mass-attacks-churches.
- "King Farouk Opposes Wedding of Princess" Canberra Times, Monday, 15 May 1950
- "Nazli FOuad, Former Queen" Daytona Beach Morning Journal, 22 June 1978.
- "Pope Francis and the Copts: Blood and ecumenism", The Economist (Feb 17th 2015). Available at <http://www.economist.com/blogs/erasmus/2015/02/pope-francis-and-copts>
- "The Association of Upper Egypt for Education and Development" AUEED Official Site, Available at <http://www.upperegypt.org/>
- "The Catholic Mission in Egypt" (1929) Kawa Printing Cairo.
- Abbass, Rudabah (31 December, 2012). "'Halal' interfaith unions rise among UK women" Al Jazeera, Available at: <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2012/12/2012122795639455824.html>
- Al-Aswani, Ahmad (June 7, 2008). "It's 'Open Season' on Egypt's Copts," MEMRI Special Dispatch, Available at: http://www.aafaq.org/masahas.aspx?id_mas=1905
- Amnesty International "Egyptian NGOs at risk as deadline looms" Urgent Action No. UA 216/14 27 August 2014
- Annuario Pontificio (2014) Available at: <http://www.firstthings.com/article/2016/01/a-crisis-of-conservative-catholicism>
- Atef Helmy (1999) "Fighting on foreign funds in the election of the Association for Upper Egypt". week 51. Arab West Report, available at: <http://www.arabwestreport.info/en/year-1999/week-51/11-fighting-foreign-funds-money-election-association-upper-egypt>
- Aziz, Ramy (Nov. 29, 2015). "Opinion: Pope Tawadaros's visit to Jerusalem", The Jerusalem Post. Available at: <http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Pope-Tawadaross-visit-to-Jerusalem-436595>

- BBC Latin America (February 13, 2016) "Unity call as Pope Francis holds historic talks with Russian Orthodox Patriarch" Available at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-35565085>
- Bisson SJ, Peter (2011). Social Justice Activism as Religious Experience. The Transformation of the Jesuits, Available at: <http://web.295.ca/gondolkodo/talalkozo/irasok/BissonEN04.html>.
- Catholic Church (2012). Anuario Pontificio. Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- CDF "Responses to some Questions Regarding Certain Aspects of the Doctrine on the Church" (June 29, 2007) Full text available at: http://review_humanitas.sgeuc.cl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1714%3Aresponse-to-some-questions-regarding-certain-aspects-of-the-doctrine-on-the-church-june-29-2007&catid=225%3Adocuments-from-congregation-for-the-doctrine-of-th&Itemid=67
- Douthat, Ross (2016). "A Crisis of Conservative Catholicism- The 2015 Erasmus Lecture".
- Egypt Network for Integrated Development (2015). A Profile of Poverty Across Egypt and Recommendations. Available at: http://enid.org.eg/Uploads/PDF/PB15_povertyprofile_egypt.pdf
- Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (2006-12-16). "Government Must Find Solution for Baha'i Egyptians". Available at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20070209221817/http://www.eipr.org/en/press/06/1612.htm>
- El Amrani, Issandr (March 30, 2011). "The khawaga's lament" Egypt Independent. Available at: <http://www.egyptindependent.com/opinion/khawaga%E2%80%99s-lament>
- El Tahawy. Mona (January 2015) "Egypt's War on Atheism," The New York Times http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/28/opinion/mona-eltahawy-egypts-war-on-atheism.html?_r=0
- El-Din, Gamal Essam (30 Aug 2016)"Egypt parliament approves new church building law". EL Ahram. Retrieved from: <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/242042/Egypt/Politics-/Egypt-parliament-approves-new-church-building-law.aspx>
- El-Shenawi, Eman (May 31, 2012). "Coptic bishop advises women in Egypt to dress modestly like 'Muslims and St. Mary", Al Arabiya. Available at: <https://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/05/31/217718.html>
- Heba Afify, "Why do sectarian tensions run high in Minya?" Mada Masr, August 9, 2016 <http://www.madamasr.com/en/2016/12/14/feature/politics/christians-and-churches-in-egypt-aggression-from-all-sides/>
- Human Rights Watch (November 11, 2007) "Prohibited Identities: State Interference with Religious Freedom," Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2007/11/11/prohibited-identities/state-interference-religious-freedom>
- Joffe, Lawrence (18 March, 2012) "Pope Shenouda III obituary" The Guardian. Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/mar/18/pope-shenouda-the-third>
- Kenny, Peter (May 10, 2016). "Pope Francis tells another pope, Tawadros II: 'we have a common witness'", Ecumenical News. Available at: <http://www.ecumenicalnews.com/article/pope-francis-tells-another-pope-tawadros-ii-we-have-a-common-witness/44181.htm>
- Khalil, Emad (September 18, 2011) "120 Coptic Christians leave Orthodox Church over divorce, remarriage laws". Egypt Independent. Available at: <http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/120-coptic-christians-leave-orthodox-church-over-divorce-remarriage-laws>

- Labib Rizk, Yunan . "The way to Montreux" Al-Ahram Weekly, Issue No. 676 (5 - 11 February 2004) Available at: <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2004/676/chrncls.htm>
- Latin American Episcopal Conference CELAM (2007) "Aparecida Document", Full English translation available at: <http://www.celam.org/aparecida/Ingles.pdf>
- Mada Masr, Amnesty issues action alert on NGO bill Thursday, August 28, 2014 - 19:48: <http://www.madamasr.com/news/amnesty-issues-action-alert-ngo-bill>
- Makar, Yohannes (December 2016). How Egypt's Copts Fell Out of Love with President Sisi. Foreign Policy. Available at: <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/12/09/how-egypts-copts-fell-out-of-love-with-president-sisi/>
- Marc, A.; Willman, A.; Aslam, G.; Rebosio, M.; and Balasuriya, K. (2013) Societal Dynamics and Fragility: Engaging Societies in Responding to Fragile Situations. Washington, DC: World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/12222>
- Metwaly, Ati "Celebrating the centenary of the Basilica of Heliopolis and the restoration of its rare pipe organ". El Ahram, 11 Jan 2011. Available at: <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/5/33/3607/Arts--Culture/Music/Celebrating-the-centenary-of-the-Basilica-of-Helio.aspx>
- Milena, Faustova (16 March 2013) "Orthodox flock of Rome: hopes are high for the new pope" The Voice of Russia, Available at: http://sputniknews.com/voiceofrussia/2013_03_16/Orthodox-flock-of-Rome-hopes-are-high-for-the-new-Pope/
- Mohamed Adel, "Assyut, Sohag, Qena, Aswan and Minya are the poorest governorates of the country "Al Wafed newspaper on 21st June 2013.
- Mustafa Sulayman (2006). "Amid the silence of the Catholic Church, resignations and condemnation in the Association of Upper Egypt for Development", week 52. Arab West Report, available at: <http://www.arabwestreport.info/en/year-2006/week-52/46-amid-silence-catholic-church-resignations-and-condemnations-association-upper>
- Neusner, Jacob (2003). God's Rule: The Politics of World Religions; Washington: Georgetown University Press.
- Noumnum, Helmi (October 4, 2012). "Lack of Statistics on Religion Can't Be Good For Egypt". Al Monitor. Available at: <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/politics/2012/10/the-curious-absence-of-religious-statistics-in-egypt.html#ixzz4GUTyxxBu>
- Pullella, Philip (Feb. 13, 2016) "After 1,000-year split, pope and Russian patriarch embrace in Cuba" Reuters. Available at: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-pope-orthodox-cuba-arrival-idUSKCN0VL26B>
- Ruane, Remy (June 30, 2014). "Egyptian bishops seek Western aid to launch a Catholic television channel", The Catholic Register. Available at: <http://www.catholicregister.org/home/international/item/18428-egyptian-bishops-seek-western-aid-to-launch-a-catholic-television-channel>
- Sedra, Paul (Dec 12, 2016). How Not to Understand Egypt's Sectarianism" Jadaliyya,
- Sedra, Paul (March 2012). The Church, Maspero and the Future of the Coptic Community. Jadaliyya,.
- Warner, Christopher (May 13, 2013) "Mark and Peter: Coptic Pope Tawadros II visits Pope Francis", Catholic World Report. Available at: http://www.catholicworldreport.com/Blog/2253/mark_and_peter_coptic_pope_tawadros_ii_visits_pope_francis.aspx
- Wooden, Cindy (25 May 2015). "The devil knows Christians are one, says Pope Francis". The Catholic Herald. Retrieved 27 September 2015.

Youssef, Joseph (2013). From the Blood of St. Mina to the Martyrs of Maspero: Commemoration, Identity, and Social Memory in the Coptic Orthodox Church. *Journal of the Canadian Society for Coptic Studies*: January 2013, Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 61-73.

8.5 Sources in other languages (Arabic, French and Italian)

- The Coptic News (Jan, 28, 2016). "Almajlis al'iikliriki alMinya wa'Abu Qurqas,asdr bayanaan bishan rafad alkanist alqabtiat salat aljinizat alaa juthman zawjayn protestant" (The Seminary Council of Minya and Abu Qurqas issued a statement on the refusal of the Coptic Church to hold a funerary prayer over the body of a Protestant couple") Available at: http://thecopticnews.blogspot.com.eg/2016/01/blog-post_71.html
- Adel, Michael (Jan. 26, 2016) " Alkanisat al'Urthudhuksiat bel Minya tarfud alssalat alaa jththamayn arousein Brotestant" ("Orthodox Church to in Minya refuses to pray on the bodies two Protestant newlyweds"),Al Bawabh News. Available at: <http://www.albawabhnews.com/1738465>
- Aalam, Sarah. "Alttayifat al'iinjiiyya: rafad "alUrthodks" alssalat alaa mutain bil Minya karithat 'iinsaniyya" ("Anglican Communion: the rejection of Orthodox prayer for our deceased in Minya is a humanitarian disaster") El Youm Es Sabaa (January 28, 2016), Available at: <http://www.youm7.com/2559087>
- Anba Estefanous. Tarikh El Kanisa El qibtiiyya El Katholikiyya [History of the Coptic Catholic Church] (2001) Coptic Catholic Patrichy of Cairo.
- Antony, Antonious, Fr. Wataniyya, el Kinisa el Qiptiyya wa Tarikhha (Citizenship, The Coptic Church and its History). Cairo: Shirkat Etaba'a El Masriyya: 2004
- Aridjis, Homero. La Santa muerte: sexteto del amor, las mujeres, los perros y la muerte [The Holy Death: the sextet of love, women, dogs and death] (2003). Alfaguara.
- Awad, Ayman. History of The Catholic Church in Egypt: From the Council of Chalcedon until the Present (2005) Coptic Catholic Seminary Depository.
- Ayzout, H., S.J. (1992) Les Catholiques en Egypte.
- Collège de la Saint Famillie (Official site) "Un collège Jesuit" Retrieved from <http://www.jesuitescsf.com/page.aspx?P=26> on December 12, 2015.
- Colombo, Angelo (1953) Le Origini della gerarchia della chiesa copta cattolica nel secolo XVIII, Rome Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum.
- El Borqoqi, Mohamed. Taqrir alamy: elmisihyun yisaytirun ala aktar min 55% min thurat el alam [Global report: Christians control over 55% of the world's wealth] January 15,2015 Masr Alarabia. Available at <http://www.masralarabia.com/-٤٦٥٦٨٣-صحافة-أجنبية/>
تقرير-عالمي-المسيحيون-يسيطرون-على-أكثر-من-٥٥-من-ثروات-العالم
- Girgis, Gamal "Greater participation of Egyptian communities abroad in Coptic churches to celebrate Mass of the Feast of the Resurrection... Bishops in Diaspora read congratulations of President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi for the Copts in Diaspora" May 01 2016. Available at: <http://www.youm7.com/story/2016/5/1/-الكنايس-بالخارج-المصرية-للجاليات-المصرية-بالخارج-الكنايس-٢٦٩٨٧٥٨/#القبطية->
- Khalil, Emad (Jan, 27, 2016) Kinisa Urthoduksiyya bel Minya tarfud asSala alaa mutawaffin "Brotestant" ("Orthodox church in Minya reject prayers for the deceased

- «Protestant») El Masry El youm. Available at:
<http://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/882085>
- Khalidi, Mustafa and Farrukh, Umar (1957). "al-Tabshir wa'l-isti'mar fi al-bilad al-'arabiyya" ("Evangelism and Imperialism in the Arab World"), 2d ed.: Beirut.
- Macaire, Georges (1894). Histoire de l'Eglise l'Alexandrie depuis Saint Marc jusqu'a nos jours, Cairo Imprimerie Generale.
- Mina, Mustafa. "Al-Minya is One of the Three Poorest Governorates Despite its Rich Resources" (in Arabic), 20 February 2013.
- Muysers, Jacob (1951) La Religieuse parmi les coptes L'Indispensable et l'ideal, Cairo Foyer Catholique Egyptien.
- Sawiris Ibn Muqaffa, trans. Khater, Antoine. Tarikh El Kanisa [History of the Church] part 10 - CYRIL III — CYRIL V (A. D. 1235-1894) (1970) Volume III.
- Sikritāriah al-Majma' al-Muqadas (the Secretariat of the Holy Synod of the Coptic Orthodox Church) (2011) "Al-Qarārāt Al-Majma'iyah fi 'Ahd Sahib al-Qadasah al-Baba Shenouda al-Thalith"("Council decisions in the era of H.H. Pope Shenouda, 1971-2011") Al-Markaz al-Thaqafī al-Qibta (Coptic Orthodox Cultural Center), Third edition.