

Outline

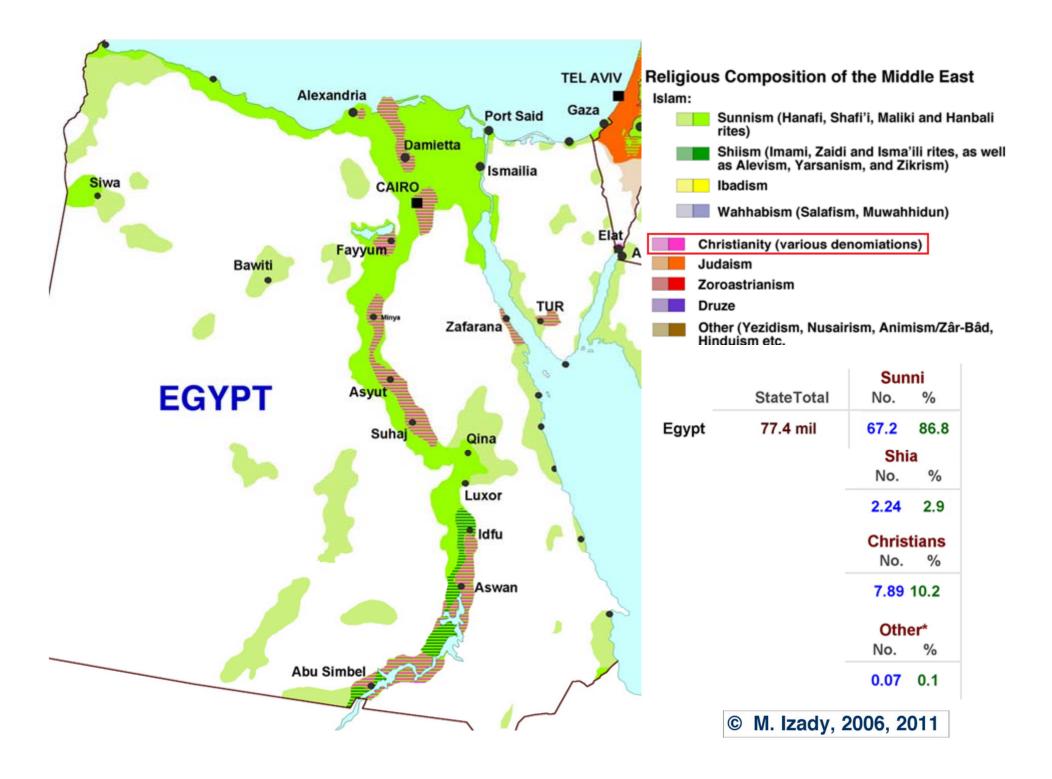
- Overview: Copts in Egypt
- Contributing factors
- □ Trends and future risks
- Theoretical implications
- Canadian policy options



Coptic Christians in Egypt

Пхс Пурирі йФ†

- Demographics
 - 5-10% of Egypt's total population
 - Largest Christian community in Middle East
 - Ethnically/linguistically identical to other Egyptians
 - Geographically dispersed, urban and rural
 - Perceived as economically privileged
 - Major diasporas in US, Canada, Australia, Kuwait, Libya, UK, France, South Africa



Coptic Christians in Egypt

Пжс Пумрт in Ф†

- History of marginalization
 - □ 19th Century until 1952
 - Influx of Western influence
 - Egyptian independence: 1936
 - Increased violence
 - □ 1952: Coup d'état
 - Decreased violence
 - Political/legal/bureaucratic discrimination
 - Church property confiscated
 - Significant Coptic emigration

Coptic Christians in Egypt

- □ Current conditions
 - Economic, political, social exclusion
 - Continued small-scale violence
 - Protests, Mubarak's resignation, 2011
 - Death of Pope Shenouda, March 2012
 - Elections, military coup



Recent Contributing Factors

- Domestic influences: Political
 - Political and bureaucratic instability
 - 'Failure of the centre' no viable political vehicle
 - Coptic withdrawal from constitution talks, April 2 2012
 - De facto dissolution of elected parliament, June 14 2012
 - SCAF Constitutional decree, June 17 2012
 - State corruption
 - Egypt rated 112th in Corruption Perception Index
 - Judicial independence looking dubious in light of latest decrees

Recent Contributing Factors

- Domestic influences: Economic
 - Worsening national poverty & joblessness
 - 2012-13 budget submitted July 4 financing gap
 - Rapid population growth; youth bulge
 - Barriers to employment/advancement
 - Institutionalized discrimination: dispersal of public funds
- Domestic influences: Social
 - 2005 media reforms
 - Rise in sensationalistic coverage of Coptic/Muslim tensions
 - Competing Coptic identities

Recent Contributing Factors

- International influences
 - Arab Spring
 - Social media
 - Schism between 'official' Church position and Coptic youth
 - International pressure
 - Canada, US, EU, UN
 - Coptic diaspora lobbies: Coptic Solidarity, Coptic Assembly
 - Historical sensitivity to perceived foreign interference
- Coptic response
 - Low-level demonstrations
 - Lack of discernible unity



Theoretical Implications

- Low probability of conflict (Duffy Toft;Gurr & Lichbach)
 - Low probability of Coptic political mobilization
 - Low probability of change in institutional discrimination
 - High probability of continuing sporadic, localised, low-level violence
- Diasporas (Cederman et al.)
 - Low probability will influence political outcomes
- Foreign Intervention (Carment & James)

Canadian Policy Options

- The state of the s
- Preventative, quiet diplomacy; special envoy
 - Goals: increase Coptic political representation, decrease military influence
- Publicize persecution of Coptic Christians
- Punitive measures (i.e. sanctions) if human rights violations escalate