Mireille Abd El Sayed

Professor Santo Romano

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**The Hard Life of Copts**

Since the 1970s, especially after the revolution that toppled Hosni Mubarak, the Egyptian Orthodox Christian community, known as "Copts," has been the focus of violence and prejudice. The Egyptian government hasn't done much to improve the situation and has occasionally encouraged animosity between Muslims and Christians. Establishing governmental institutions that protect all people's constitutional rights is necessary to achieve religious freedom and equality. My website's goal is to draw attention to these few events in a chronology that illustrate the many persecutions Copts have faced under each president:

* Churches frequently become targets of anti-Coptic assaults. In Egypt, building and remodelling churches is a highly political process that traditionally requires presidential consent to move further.
* The army and police routinely fail to step in to protect the population when Copts are physically attacked, allowing assaults to continue. Security forces have occasionally even used deadly force against defenceless Copts.
* Although there is a sectarian component to Muslim attacks against Copts, this is not the primary source of conflict. Copts are a focus of social strife in Egypt because of the country's antiquated laws and authoritarian structures.

**Persecution under president Sadat:**

* In November 1972, arsonists in al-Khanka, Qalyubia, set fire to the local office of the Holy Bible Society. This Coptic organization was being used illegally as a church because the president had forbidden praying the mass in public places. To prevent Christians from acting on their beliefs, he also shuttered churches. A dozen Coptic dwellings adjacent were set on fire by the attackers.

**Persecution under president Mubarak:**

* Security personnel tortured many Copts in August 1998 in the southern Egyptian village of Kosheh in the Sohag governorate while purportedly investigating the murder of two other Copts.
* Muslims from neighbouring towns and villages descended into Kosheh on January 1-2, 2000, reacting to an altercation between merchants, one a Muslim and the other a Copt. Thirty-five thousand people lived in Kosheh during the time; the bulk of them were Copts. The attackers assaulted the townspeople while breaking into Coptic houses and businesses. Before the Interior Ministry stepped in, 20 people—all Copts—were murdered. Area police conspicuously left the scene as the dispute erupted, aggravating confessional cleavages rather than mending them.
* Six Copts leaving a Christmas Eve service on January 6 in Nag Hammadi were killed, along with a Muslim off-duty police officer, by a drive-by shooting.
* A Coptic man was fatally shot by police in the Omraniya neighbourhood of Giza in November amid a confrontation over the construction of a church with a permit to serve as a community centre. Several dozen more people suffered injuries in related Coptic protests against the police.
* 2011 had hardly begun when a massive explosion rocked the Coptic Church of Saint Mark and Pope Peter in Alexandria during a midnight service. The vehicle bomb destroyed the regime's claim that it protected Christians by killing 23 parishioners and injuring many more.
* In January 2011, Copts in Upper Egypt's areas were routinely kidnapped and held captive until their families paid a ransom.
* A 600,000 L.E (about $100,000) ransom was paid by Copts in Qena in late 2011 to secure the release of two white-collar Coptic men. In the months that followed, dozens more Copts were held captive.
* Thirteen individuals lost their lives in a protest against the arson in March 2011 when a church in the Cairo district of Atfeeh, Helwan, was set on fire during Muslim-Coptic clashes.
* On July 3, vandals attacked a church in Marsa Matruh on the northwestern coast, while arsonists destroyed a church in Minya in the south. Two days later, a mob killed four Copts and destroyed twenty-four Coptic-owned houses in the village of Nag Hassan, close to Luxor.
* In one case, two Copts who had been abducted in Northern Sinai on July 5–6 were beheaded because a ransom had not been paid.

**Persecution under president Morsi:**

* On September 18, 2012, a Coptic Christian teacher went to prison for six years because he posted cartoons on Facebook that were supposedly defamatory to Islam and Mohammed and insulted Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi.
* In July 2013, Muslim Brotherhood supporters burned dozens of churches, killing at least 45 Coptic Christians.

**Persecution under president Al-Sisi:**

* Coptic Christian Mary Sameh George, 25, was murdered by a gang of Muslims connected to the Muslim Brotherhood in March 2014. They leaped on top of the car after they realized she was a Christian due to a cross hanging from her rearview mirror. They took her from the vehicle and began beating her and yanking her hair. They stabbed her in the back, sliced her neck, and battered and stripped her.
* ISIS-aligned terrorists in Libya published a video on February 15, 2015, showing the execution of 21 Coptic Christians. The victims were then honoured on the 8th Amshir of the Coptic calendar, which corresponds to February 15 in the Gregorian calendar, as martyr saints.
* In February 2016, three Christian teenagers in Minya were sentenced to five years in prison for insulting Islam.
* A mob in Minya attacked and naked-dragged a 70-year-old Christian mother on May 26 after wrongly believing her son had a sex connection with a Muslim woman.
* The Botroseya Church bombing on December 11, 2016, left 29 people dead and 47 others wounded.
* Terrorist organizations engaged in the Sinai uprising issued threats against Christians in February 2017. In separate assaults, at least seven Christians are slain in the Sinai city of El Arish. In response, many Coptic families leave the Sinai Peninsula for the Ismailia Governorate.
* Over 45 people were murdered, and over 130 were injured when two Coptic churches were bombed on April 9, 2017. During Palm Sunday processions, bombs were detonated at St. Mark's Church in Alexandria and St. George's Coptic Orthodox Church in the Tanta area.
* A Christian man was killed by Islamic State fighters on May 7, 2017, in El Arish.
* At least 28 Christian pilgrims were shot and killed on May 26, 2017, as they travelled by bus to the monastery of St. Samuel the Confessor in the Minya Governorate.
* A Coptic priest was slain in a knife assault in Cairo on October 12, 2017.
* Eleven people, including a police officer, were killed on December 29, 2017, in Saint Mena's church in Helwan by a shooter who was subsequently determined to be an Islamic terrorist.
* In Al Omraneyah, Giza, on January 1, 2018, two Coptic Christian brothers were murdered by masked gunmen for entering an alcohol store.
* A Coptic man was slain in El Arish on January 15, 2018. Bassem was stopped by two armed Muslim guys who enquired about his faith. They shot him when he replied that he was a Christian.
* On November 2, 2018, Bedouins supporting the Islamic State opened fire on a bus full of Coptic pilgrims travelling between Cairo and Minya en route to a monastery, leaving at least seven people dead and seven injured.
* Police protecting the church shot and murdered a Coptic man and his son on December 12 in Minya Governorate after creating an argument with them.
* After two Muslim adults taunted and beat up a 10-year-old Coptic youngster, prompting a reaction from Coptic adults, a Muslim mob attacked Coptic persons, houses, and property in the town of Dabbous near Samalut on October 5, 2020.
* On April 18, 2021, a Coptic man in Bir al-Abd was held captive for five months by ISIS in the Sinai Peninsula, then killed on camera.

Regardless of religious affiliation, the Egyptian state has failed to guarantee its inhabitants' physical protection and political rights. Since the 1970s, Copts have been one of the groups in Egypt that the security state's religious rhetoric has hurt the most.

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