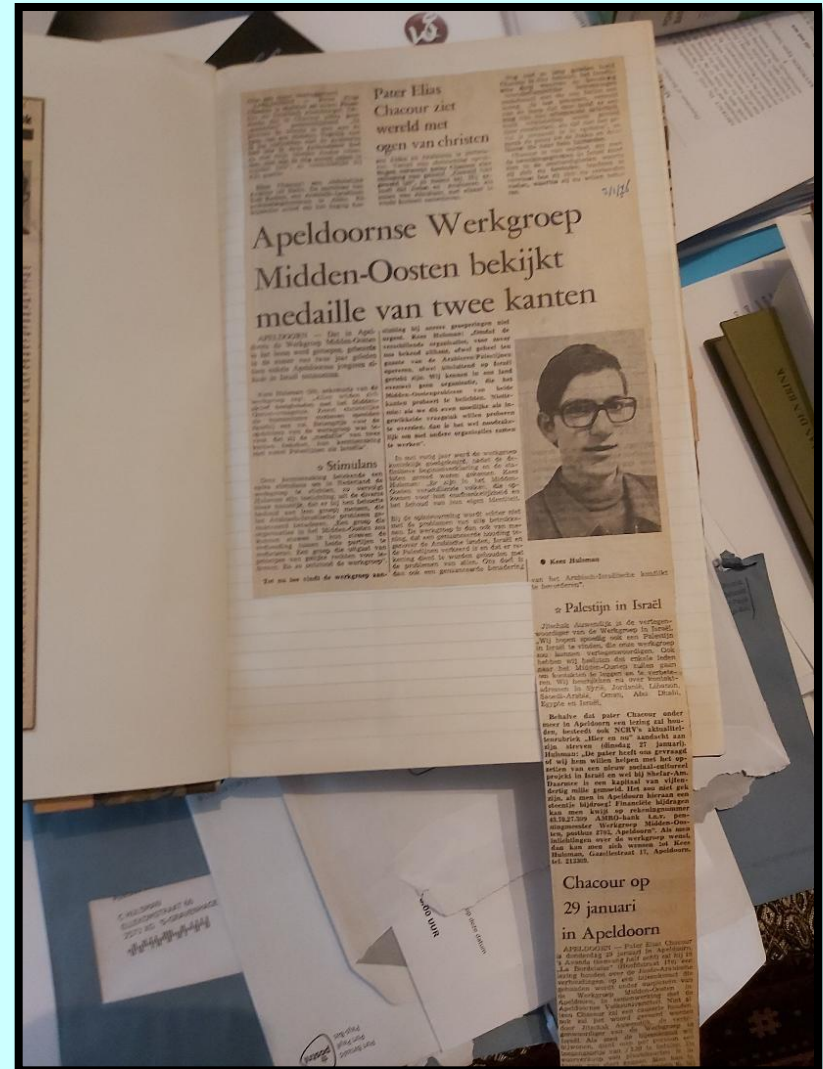


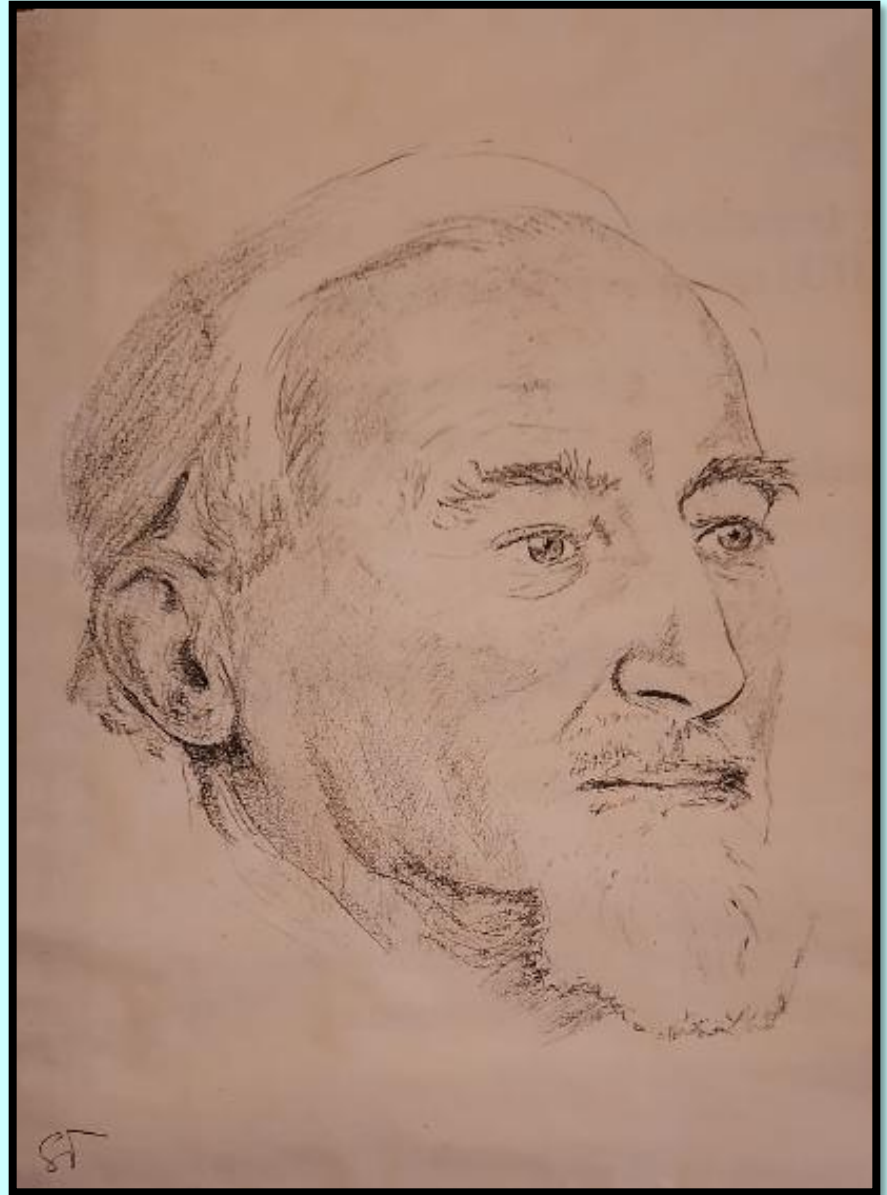


# Arab West Report/ Dialogue Across Borders

# The beginning: Werkgroep Midden-Oosten 1976



# Daniel van der Meulen (1894–1989)



# Dialogue Across Borders

- Electronic library on Muslim–Christian relations since 1997
  - 50,000 articles and reports
- Media critique
- Investigative reporting of hundreds of tensions
  - Pattern analysis
- Seeking peaceful solutions

*Founded by: Sawsan Gabra, Egyptian/Coptic Orthodox  
Cornelis Hulsman, involved in dialogue for 50 years*

# Breaking Toxic Populist Stereotypes

## Intercultural and Interreligious Encounters with Students in Egypt

### Assumptions

- Students raised with cultural / familial convictions
- Personal objectives (seeking safety in own group, power, bridgebuilding, etc.)

### Experiences

- Immersion in different cultures
- Encountering people of different beliefs, values, and morals
- Understanding politics impact on institutions or people's convictions



### Changes

- Raising questions about what we know empirically and what is beyond the realm of empirical knowledge
- Finding a balance between unfettered, critical thinking and blind acceptance of truth as taught by institutions (religious, political, etc.).
- Resulting in absolutist faith in previously-held convictions fading

### Significance

- Diversity is key to understanding humanity
- Resist unthinking acceptance of ideology inculcated by institutions.
- Also do not act out of fear and anger.

### Perspectives

- Teach comparative religious/cultural perspectives
- Increase access to different perspectives on key issues
- Network with people of different and even opposing views in order to to understand differences and achieve inter-cultural understanding.

Question to students:  
How would you most accurately  
define “a minority”?

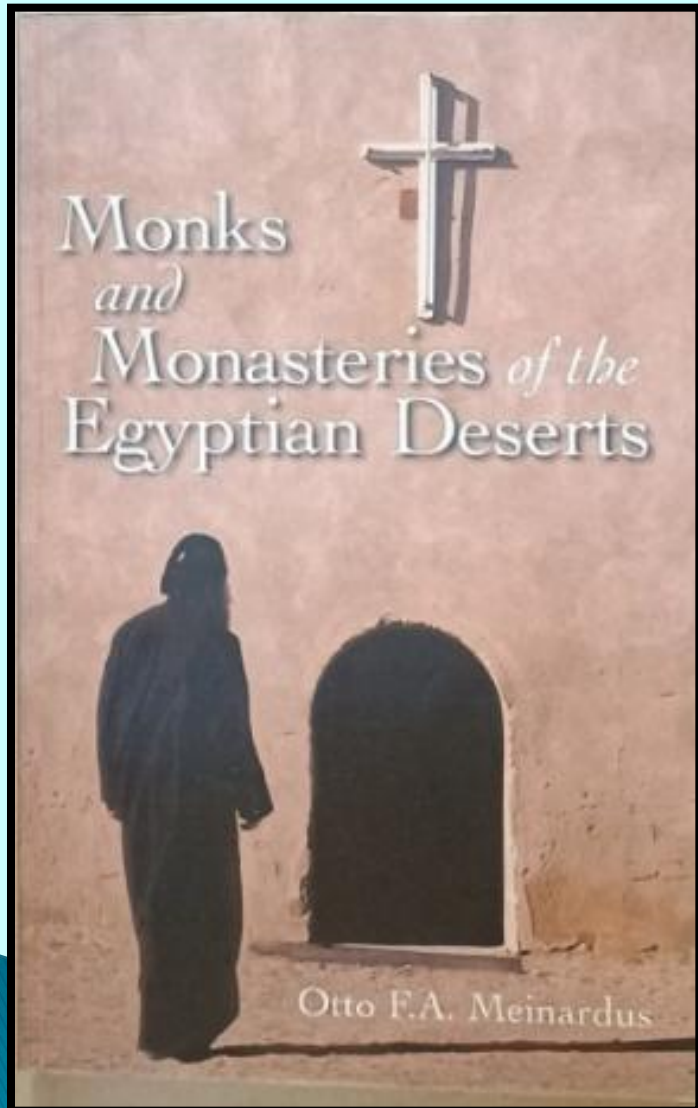




Father Basilios al-Maqari:

*\*\* God is love and  
He loves all  
humanity.*

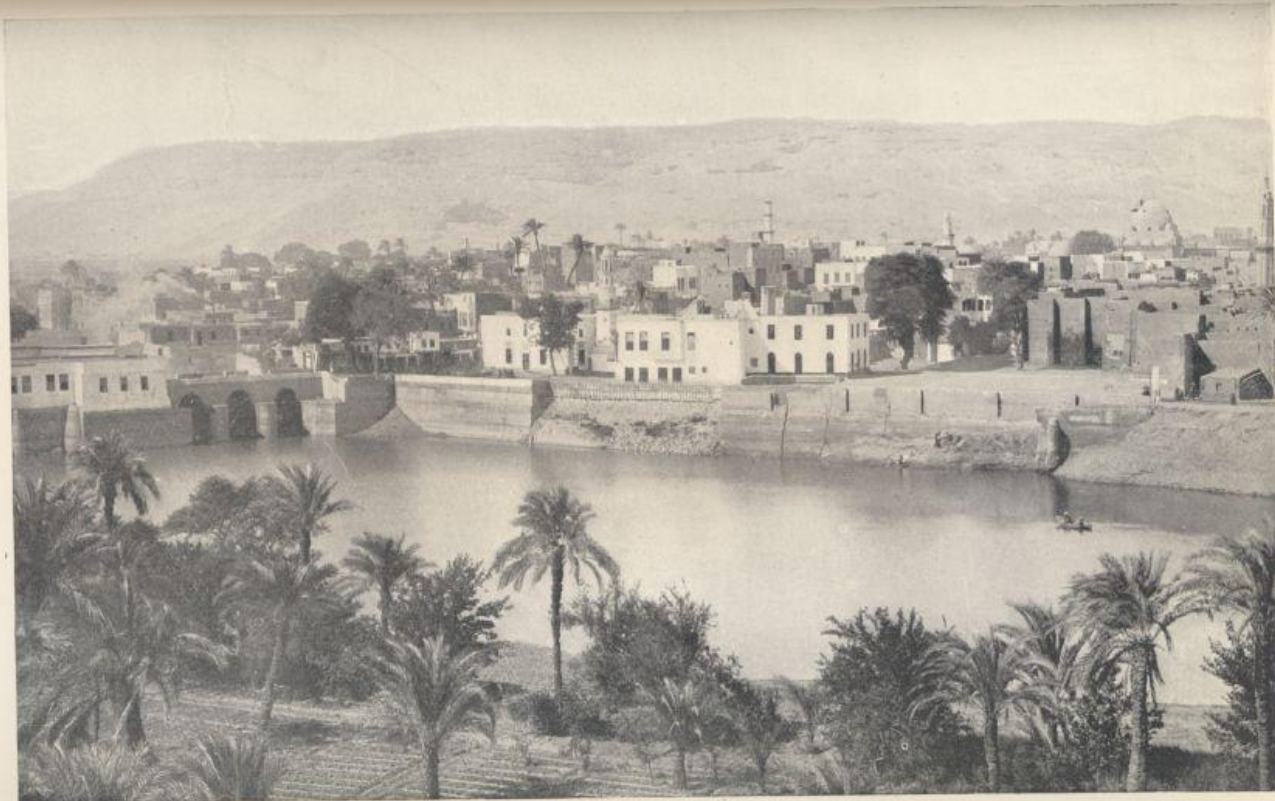
*\*\* Western scholars  
focus too much on  
written sources.*



Otto and his  
son Ronald  
Meinardus

# Coptic Congress (Assiut 1911)

## \*\*Akhnous Fanous



*Photo. Dittich, Cairo.*

### THE GREAT COPTIC CENTRE IN EGYPT—ASSIOUT.

Here the wealthy Christian families have built themselves palaces and made gardens by the river side. The domes of the Coptic Cathedral and the minarets of the Mosques may be seen in the distance.

The challenge of survival for six million Christians

# A Lonely Minority

THE MODERN STORY OF EGYPT'S COPTS



EDWARD WAKIN

# *Michael Saad describes Shawky Karas as “An Icon of Human Rights Activism: Mathematician, educator, historian, author”*



Michael Saad  
2003, Watani International

**Dr. Shawky Karas (1928-2003)**

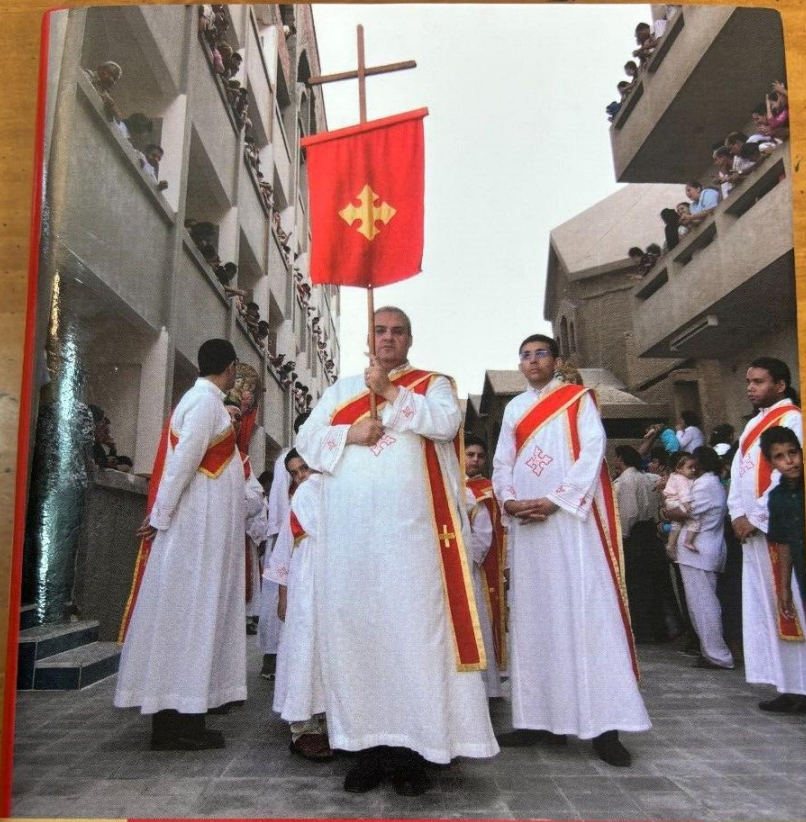
**Dr. Shawky Faltaos Karas**



**Born: 6 October 1928 in Akhmim, Egypt.  
BS Mathematics, 1949, Cairo University.  
PhD Mathematics (Statistics and Measurements),  
1964, Columbia University, NY.  
Professor at Southern Connecticut State University,  
New Haven, Connecticut since 1967.**

# Pope Shenouda (1923–2012)

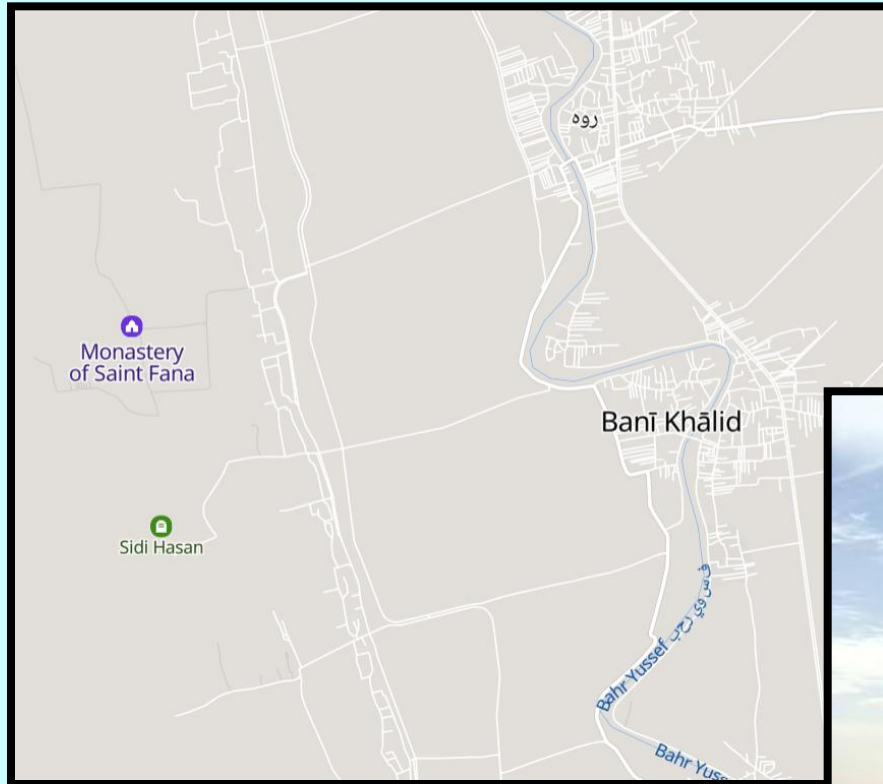




The Coptic Question  
*in the Mubarak Era*

SEBASTIAN ELSÄSSER

# Monastery of Abu Fana



# Conversions in Egypt sensitive in any direction. Resistance among both Muslims and Christians.

Wafa Costantine and  
Camelia Shehata



- ▶ Over 100 demonstrations by Salafis claiming church forced her to remain Christian
- ▶ Camelia and her husband feared to appear in public
- ▶ Marital problems: Camelia left her husband for 4 days; Christians claimed she had been forced to convert to Islam

# Dr. Tarek Mansour



# Third Fjellhaug Symposium



Fjellhaug  
international  
University College

**Third Fjellhaug Symposium**

**17-18 September 2025 in Oslo,  
Norway**



International Institute  
for Religious Freedom

on  
**Religious persecution and theological/missiological education**

organized by Fjellhaug International University College  
in cooperation with the International Institute for Religious Freedom

# Center for Arab–West Understanding, Egypt



- Registration as NGO under Egyptian law in 2008
- Organization through which to run civil society projects
  - Training programs
  - Lectures
  - Cultural programs
  - Student programs
- ZIVIK peacemaking project

Imam and Pastor at a  
peace building  
conference



Visit us at

[www.dialogueacrossborders.com](http://www.dialogueacrossborders.com)

and sign up for our free  
newsletter.