

IDE Discussion Papers are preliminary materials circulated to stimulate discussions and critical comments

IDE DISCUSSION PAPER No. 956

**Repression, Co-optation, and Legitimation:
Authoritarian Resilience and Youth Movement
Fragmentation in Sisi's Egypt**

Housam Darwisheh*

February 2025

Abstract

This study examines how authoritarian regimes, particularly Egypt under Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, consolidate power by fragmenting and weakening social movements, especially those led by youth. Through an extensive literature review, the study highlights the regime's reliance on repression, co-optation, and legitimation to suppress dissent and neutralize potential opposition. Targeted repression, including mass arrests and criminalizing dissent, is reinforced by selective co-optation. Selective co-optation strategically divides opposition groups and weakens their collective cohesion. The regime further strengthens its authority by promoting narratives of popular legitimacy, portraying its actions as essential for national stability and public interest. The study focuses on mechanisms used to demobilize youth-led movements. These include the state's use of government-organized initiatives, social media campaigns, and campus surveillance designed to foster loyalty and disrupt activism. By analyzing these dynamics, this study underscores the regime's ability to leverage institutional and structural tools to fragment dissent while projecting an image of inclusivity. This study contributes to the broader understanding of authoritarian governance and social movements in Egypt and the Arab world. It aims to provide insights into how regimes adapt to youth mobilization and revolutionary protests, highlighting the broader patterns of authoritarian resilience and suppression in the region.

Keywords: repression, co-optation, legitimation, youth movements, authoritarian resilience

JEL classification: D72, K16

* Research Fellow, Middle Eastern Studies Group, Area Studies Center, Institute of Developing Economies, JETRO (housam_darwisheh@ide.go.jp)

The Institute of Developing Economies (IDE) is a semigovernmental, nonpartisan, nonprofit research institute, founded in 1958. The Institute merged with the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) on July 1, 1998. The Institute conducts basic and comprehensive studies on economic and related affairs in all developing countries and regions, including Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, Oceania, and Eastern Europe.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s). Publication does not imply endorsement by the Institute of Developing Economies of any of the views expressed within.

INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPING ECONOMIES (IDE), JETRO
3-2-2, WAKABA, MIHAMA-KU, CHIBA-SHI
CHIBA 261-8545, JAPAN

©2025 by author(s)

No part of this publication may be reproduced without the prior permission of the author(s).

Repression, Co-optation, and Legitimation: Authoritarian Resilience and Youth Movement Fragmentation in Sisi's Egypt

Abstract

This study examines how authoritarian regimes, particularly Egypt under Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, consolidate power by fragmenting and weakening social movements, especially those led by youth. Through an extensive literature review, the study highlights the regime's reliance on repression, co-optation, and legitimation to suppress dissent and neutralize potential opposition. Targeted repression, including mass arrests and criminalizing dissent, is reinforced by selective co-optation. Selective co-optation strategically divides opposition groups and weakens their collective cohesion. The regime further strengthens its authority by promoting narratives of popular legitimacy, portraying its actions as essential for national stability and public interest. The study focuses on mechanisms used to demobilize youth-led movements. These include the state's use of government-organized initiatives, social media campaigns, and campus surveillance designed to foster loyalty and disrupt activism. By analyzing these dynamics, this study underscores the regime's ability to leverage institutional and structural tools to fragment dissent while projecting an image of inclusivity. This study contributes to the broader understanding of authoritarian governance and social movements in Egypt and the Arab world. It aims to provide insights into how regimes adapt to youth mobilization and revolutionary protests, highlighting the broader patterns of authoritarian resilience and suppression in the region.

Introduction

The relationship between authoritarian resilience and suppression of dissent has received extensive scholarly attention, particularly in contexts where political upheaval meets entrenched systems of control. This dynamic is especially evident in Egypt under Abdel Fattah al-Sisi (2014—present). Under his regime, the state strategies demonstrate the balance between maintaining authoritarian stability and neutralizing opposition. Following the 2011 uprising that led to the fall of Hosni Mubarak and the 2013 military removal of Mohamed Morsi, Sisi's regime has become a prominent example of how modern authoritarian regimes adapt to suppress dissent and solidify power. The regime has systematically dismantled youth-led social movements, once a significant challenge to the political order, through a multifaceted approach combining repression, co-optation, and legitimation.

This study analyzes the Sisi regime's strategies to fragment dissent and demobilize opposition. It focuses on youth movements, historically crucial in Egyptian anti-regime mobilizations. The analysis highlights a triadic control approach: repression to suppress mobilization, co-optation to divide and weaken opposition, and legitimation narratives to maintain a facade of public support. While not unique to Egypt, these strategies are deeply embedded in its authoritarian governance.

Central to this inquiry is the regime's targeted response to youth activism. This includes dissolving independent student unions, establishing state-sponsored youth organizations, and promoting policies that suppress collective action while fostering youth loyalty. Simultaneously, the regime uses national stability and security themes to justify its actions, presenting itself as the essential guardian of public order. These efforts have not only suppressed dissent but also reshaped the political environment, hindering new opposition movements.

This paper argues that the Sisi regime's strategies are a calculated and adaptive response to mass mobilization and revolutionary activism. By closely examining these mechanisms, this study aims to understand how authoritarian regimes maintain power during sociopolitical turbulence. Moreover, it situates the Egyptian experience within a broader exploration of authoritarian governance, offering insights into how regimes manage control and legitimacy in similar contexts.

By analyzing tools, ranging from repressive legal frameworks to state-controlled narratives amplified via social media, this study underscores the regime's capacity to maintain power institutionally and structurally. It highlights the persistent challenges faced by youth-led

movements in authoritarian settings and explores broader implications for social movement and authoritarian politics studies.

How Do Authoritarian Regimes Balance Legitimation, Repression, and Co-optation to Sustain Power and Maintain Stability?

Authoritarian regime stability has long been a subject of academic inquiry. Scholars seek to understand the mechanisms enabling these regimes to maintain power. While coercion and repression often characterize autocratic rule, maintaining authority requires more than force. To prevent instability, authoritarian regimes must cultivate legitimacy, manage elite relationships, and neutralize opposition. Scholars have proposed various frameworks to understand these strategies, each contributing to a nuanced view of authoritarian resilience.

Gerschewski's influential framework (2013) identifies three essential pillars for authoritarian stability. Gerschewski suggests that legitimation fosters public acceptance by portraying the regime as morally justified or performance-driven, often through economic achievements or national security. Repression suppresses dissent, ranging from overt violence to subtler tactics like surveillance. Conversely, co-optation integrates elites and strategic groups into the regime through material rewards or political privileges, reducing defection risk. These mechanisms collectively create a stable foundation for authoritarian rule.

Following Gerschewski, Wrighton (2018) examines how regimes employ both inclusion and exclusion to maintain control. Wrighton's analysis of Russia's *passportizatsiya* (mass passport distribution) in Crimea shows how authoritarian regimes balance inclusion (legitimation and co-optation) with exclusion (repression and marginalization) for stability. In Crimea, Russian passports legitimized Russia's authority, undermining Ukrainian legitimacy via propaganda. Extending benefits like pensions and healthcare to citizens fostered dependence and loyalty. Conversely, denying passports and benefits to dissidents marginalized them, a form of administrative repression consolidating control and weakening opposition. This dual strategy aligns with the observations of Brooke and Nugent (2020), who explored similar strategies employed by the Egyptian regime. Like Russia in Crimea, Sisi's regime balanced inclusion and exclusion for stability. The regime included some political actors in elections, offering limited participation to legitimize power. Simultaneously, it used political repression and violence, particularly against the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) and Islamist voters, excluding potential dissent sources.

Frantz and Taylor (2014) expand the repression-co-optation nexus, distinguishing between two forms of repression: empowerment rights violations (e.g., censorship, assembly

restrictions) affecting society, and physical integrity rights violations (e.g., torture, imprisonment) targeting individuals or elites. They argue that co-optation shifts the regime's focus toward targeted repression, facilitated by political parties and legislatures that enable the dictator to more effectively monitor and control elite opponents. Josua (2016) further categorizes co-optation as follows: (1) material, (2) institutional, (3) traditional, and (4) identity-based. This nuanced categorization allows precise analysis of co-optation across societal groups. Josua underscores co-optation's context-specific nature, especially in monarchies like Jordan, where strategies address traditional structures and identity politics. Integrating tribal elites, religious figures, and nationalists makes co-optation a dynamic, culturally tailored strategy.

Following the 2013 Egyptian coup, Van de Bildt (2015) illustrates how co-optation and repression were central to the military-backed government's strategy. The regime's nationalist discourse framed the military as the nation's guardian, appropriating the January 25 "Revolution" spirit against Mubarak and portraying the June 30 uprising against Morsi as a continuation of the struggle for freedom and justice. This narrative, supported by commemorations, media, and monuments, used national symbols to foster unity and support while concealing dissent. Repression targeted perceived threats, especially the MB, branding them terrorists. Equating dissent with terrorism justified mass arrests, trials, and media campaigns against opposition. In van de Bildt's framework, co-optation secures popular support, while repression neutralizes dissent, thereby maintaining the regime's facade of legitimacy.

Lachapelle (2022) shifts focus to repression, not co-optation, as a key legitimization mechanism. Lachapelle argues that authoritarian regimes use repression not just to eliminate threats but to gain legitimacy by securing the support of bystanders—civilians not directly targeted but perceiving repressed groups as threats. In polarized societies, repression signals the regime's commitment to protecting bystanders, cultivating support and reinforcing legitimacy. Lachapelle identifies two conditions for effective repression as legitimization: (1) polarization, where the regime consolidates support by targeting rivals, creating a zero-sum dynamic, and (2) military coups, often leaving legitimacy deficits addressable through repression, positioning the regime as protector. Lachapelle illustrates this with the 2013 Egyptian coup. Repression against the MB, including the Rabaa massacre (the 2013 violent dispersal of a pro-Morsi sit-in resulting in over 800 deaths), not only neutralized a threat but also bolstered the regime's legitimacy among secularists and liberals. This triadic model (i.e.,

regime, targets, bystanders) challenges conventional views of repression as merely threat elimination, demonstrating its role in building legitimacy in polarized contexts.

Lachapelle's perspective is complemented by Nugent's (2018) research on how repression influences political polarization in authoritarian regimes. Nugent argues that the type of repression (widespread or targeted) shapes group identification and polarization, affecting political co-operation during democratic transitions. Targeted repression intensifies in-group identity by emphasizing group differences, increasing polarization. Conversely, widespread repression creates a shared sense of victimhood among opposition groups, reducing polarization as they form a collective identity. Using social identity theory, Nugent demonstrates that targeted repression fosters group cohesion and out-group hostility. Conversely, widespread repression weakens group boundaries, promoting positive intergroup relations. Nugent applies these insights to Egypt and Tunisia, where authoritarian repression varied. In Tunisia, Ben Ali's widespread repression led to a cohesive opposition. In Egypt, Mubarak's targeted repression deepened divisions, especially between the MB and secularists.

Moreover, repression can be strategically framed to generate legitimacy. Edel and Josua (2018) employed framing theory to examine how the 2013 Egyptian and 2005 Uzbek mass killings were justified. They argue that both regimes linked opposition groups to terrorism and extremism, framing repression as necessary for national security and stability. This framing depicted their actions as defensive measures against chaos. Edel and Josua emphasize how these regimes tailored rhetoric to different audiences, invoking stability for domestic legitimacy and appealing to legality and sovereignty in their communications with the international community.

Edel and Josua's findings on framing repression as defensive resonate with al-Anani's (2019) analysis of the Egyptian MB, which examines the internal consequences of severe repression. While Edel and Josua focus on the external narratives that regimes craft to secure legitimacy, al-Anani highlights how severe repression fragmented the MB, particularly between the old and new leadership, weakening its organizational coherence and resistance capacity. Following the 2013 coup, younger MB members, who assumed more prominent roles, adopted a confrontational stance. However, older leaders advocated patience and nonviolence. These divisions fragmented the movement, significantly impairing coordinated resistance. Al-Anani demonstrates that extreme repression and internal fragmentation undermined the MB's organizational coherence and mobilization. His study highlights the complex repression-dissent nexus, emphasizing both collective and individual responses.

The literature highlights how authoritarian regimes integrate repression, co-optation, and legitimation, offering a foundation for research. For instance, how has the Sisi regime's combination of repression and co-optation fragmented collective identities within protest movements? What mechanisms does the regime use to curtail youth-led movement opportunities, and how do these strategies compare with previous Egyptian authoritarian regimes? Furthermore, how has targeted repression specifically weakened and divided youth activists?

This study focuses on Egypt, analyzing the Sisi regime's strategies to demobilize the youth and suppress mass protests. It argues that the regime uses legitimation, targeted repression, and strategic co-optation to dismantle dissent. By positioning Sisi's tactics within the broader framework of authoritarian practices, this study identifies the distinct features of his governance approach. Through a detailed analysis, this study demonstrates how these strategies consolidate authority and reshape Egypt's political landscape, reducing future mobilization potential.

Theoretical Framework: The Triadic Model of Authoritarian Resilience

Drawing on existing literature, this study examines the stability of authoritarian regimes by focusing on three interrelated pillars: legitimation, repression, and co-optation. These mechanisms operate dynamically and interdependently, enabling regimes to consolidate power and neutralize the opposition. Their strategic integration allows regimes to construct adaptable control systems that respond to changing political, social, and economic contexts. This offers a nuanced understanding of their resilience against revolutionary movements, internal challenges, and geopolitical pressures.

Legitimation serves as a cornerstone of authoritarian stability by securing public acceptance or passive compliance at a minimum. Regimes achieve this by strategically deploying progovernment mobilization and projecting their rule as morally justified or functionally necessary (Hellmeier and Weidmann 2020). Propaganda, nationalist narratives, and claims of economic progress or national security create a legitimacy facade. In polarized societies, repression can be framed as a legitimate measure to protect the state from perceived threats, fostering support by portraying the regime as a guardian of order (Lachapelle 2022). Thus, legitimation operates on multiple levels: fostering consent, shaping public perceptions, and preemptively suppressing dissent.

Repression and co-optation complement legitimation by addressing immediate and structural threats to regime stability. Repression encompasses tactics from violent crackdowns

to subtler methods like surveillance, legal restrictions, and criminalizing dissent. Excluding specific groups and exacerbating polarization can deepen societal divisions to the regime's advantage, despite backlash and instability risks. Simultaneously, it projects regime strength and reinforces its capacity to maintain order.

Co-optation integrates elites, key groups, and segments of the population into the regime's power structure. Through incentives, privileges, and alliances, regimes secure loyalty and mitigate elite defection. This strategy is often tailored to context. In monarchies or traditional societies, co-optation often involves tribal elites or religious authorities. In more institutionalized settings, it targets economic elites or technocrats (Josua 2016). By aligning diverse constituencies with its interests, co-optation bolsters the regime's durability and reduces the likelihood of a unified opposition.

The interplay of legitimation, repression, and co-optation defines authoritarian regime resilience. Inclusion, through legitimation and co-optation, builds alliances and broadens support. Exclusion, through repression and marginalization, suppresses dissent and deters challenges. Together, these strategies create a flexible framework for authoritarian governance, enabling regimes to maintain stability and adapt to internal and external pressures.

Co-optation and Repression During the Mubarak Era: An Overview

The Mubarak regime's nearly three-decade rule was due to its effective use of co-optation and repression. These strategies consolidated power and neutralized opposition, systematically weakening opposition forces while securing key group loyalty (Kramer 2006). Repression, from violence to legal constraints, created fear, deterring dissent and fragmenting challengers. Simultaneously, co-optation integrated elites and influential actors into patronage networks, fostering dependency and discouraging unified resistance. These mechanisms formed the foundation of Mubarak's authoritarian resilience.

A key aspect was selective inclusion, allowing moderate opposition limited, controlled participation. Groups like the MB contested parliamentary elections, but their influence was curtailed, projecting political openness without relinquishing power (Davidson 2000). Incorporating opposition figures into clientelism networks moderated dissent while preventing radical resistance. Material incentives and privileges co-opted elites, reinforcing loyalty and maintaining a legitimacy appearance while retaining tight control (Albrecht 2005).

Repression complemented co-optation by targeting groups that violated the regime-defined "red lines." Tactics ranged from violent crackdowns to surveillance and legal harassment. For example, the regime infiltrated opposition parties, supported rival factions to

exacerbate divisions, and suspended party activities legally (Stacher 2004). These measures ensured that opposition groups remained fragmented and incapable of mounting a cohesive challenge to Mubarak's dominance.

The MB, the most significant opposition force, was subject to partial inclusion and repression. During the 1980s, the regime tolerated the MB's independent electoral participation while banning its official party formation. This allowed the MB to enhance popularity through social services, while the regime presented itself as supporting pluralism (Albrecht and Wegner 2006). However, by the 1990s, the regime had shifted to a policy of minimal toleration, marked by arrests, electoral exclusions, and severe crackdowns. This dual approach prevented the MB from becoming a credible alternative while leveraging its limited participation for regime legitimacy.

Parliamentary elections further served as tools for managing the elites and distributed patronage. Elections under Mubarak operated as a "market," allowing elites to compete for state resources and corruption opportunities while channeling opposition into regime-controlled reforms (Blaydes 2008). Businessmen, officials, and influential figures were rewarded for loyalty, while mechanisms like intra-party rivalries and reshuffling prevented autonomous power bases (Koehler 2008) This strategy extended to grooming Gamal Mubarak for leadership, associating him with reformist policies, though these efforts failed (2010).

As Mubarak aged and Gamal's role grew, NDP internal divisions and military tensions intensified (Zahid 2010, Hanna 2009). The military, opposing dynastic succession, became increasingly alienated, weakening regime cohesion. Mubarak's detachment from grievances, coupled with declining state rents, exacerbated discontent (Ahmed Adly 2011). The regime's dismissal of protests amplified frustration, fostered opposition solidarity, and escalated mobilization, undermining co-optation and repression (Bishara 2015).

Overall, while co-optation and repression enabled Mubarak's regime to sustain stability for decades by balancing inclusion and exclusion, these strategies failed to address deeper grievances. The growing disconnect, internal divisions, and mounting discontent culminated in the January 2011 uprising, highlighting authoritarian rule's fragility when faced with sustained demands and resistance.

Co-optation and Repression in Post-Mubarak Egypt

The 2011 uprising that ousted Mubarak marked a transformative moment, presenting opportunities and challenges for the military. As the state apparatus crumbled and elite divisions emerged, the SCAF consolidated power through legitimation, repression, and co-

optation. The military positioned itself as the revolution's guardian, claiming to fulfill demands while safeguarding its interests. This dual approach illustrates authoritarian survival complexities during upheavals.

During the 2011 18-day uprising against Mubarak, protesters used a bottom-up co-optation strategy to align the military with their movement. Demonstrators used symbolic gestures, like embracing soldiers and chanting "The army and the people are one hand," to pressure the military into appearing neutral or supportive while protecting its dominance (Ketchley 2014). This solidarity narrative reflected the dynamic interplay between regimes and movements, as protesters sought to neutralize the military's role as Mubarak's enforcer.

Following Mubarak's removal, the military employed a strategy of reverse co-optation. It appropriated protest symbols to portray itself as the revolution's protector while consolidating control. Instead of a blatant dictatorship, which could have reignited mobilization, the SCAF used subtler tactics. Elections were framed as reform mechanisms but engineered to preserve military autonomy and privileges. Symbolic concessions, like democratic progress promises, were paired with systemic repression, including crackdowns and protester harassment (Langohr 2013). Simultaneously, the military controlled critical institutions: media, judiciary, and security.

Elections during the transition became tools for counterrevolutionary consolidation. They provided a facade of democratic legitimacy, diverted attention from systemic reform, and marginalized revolutionary groups. The MB, the most organized entity, dominated elections, sidelining the youth and secular activists (Pioppi 2013). Elements of the old regime (fulul) also reentered politics, aligning with new actors. These dynamics allowed the military to consolidate power while framing the process as progress.

The SCAF's co-optation of the MB exemplified its tactical balancing. With the NDP disbanded and security forces weakened, the MB became a critical partner in stabilizing the transition. Seeking legitimacy, the MB aligned with the military's roadmap, prioritizing elections over reforms. This partnership fragmented opposition, sidelining revolutionary groups critical of military dominance and facilitating military consolidation.

This dynamic set the stage for the 2013 coup. Non-Islamist parties, struggling in elections, aligned with the military to counterbalance the MB. The Tamarrod (Rebel) movement, initially depicted as grassroots, played a pivotal role mobilizing protests against Morsi. However, its operations were supported by Egypt's deep state and reinforced by foreign contributions, including billions from Saudi Arabia and the UAE, aimed at endorsing Sisi's coup (Letourneau 2019, Allinson 2019, Butter 2020). While Tamarrod began as a symbol of mobilization, its

collaboration with the military reinforced authoritarian rule, undermining its initial democratic aspirations (Holdo 2019).

In post-Mubarak Egypt, military dominance was shaped by legitimation, repression, and co-optation. Elections were framed as progress symbols but engineered to preserve military authority. By co-opting key actors, including the MB and their opponents, the military effectively fragmented opposition forces, including the MB and opponents, while repression suppressed dissent. External actors, like the UAE and Saudi Arabia, supporting the coup, added a transnational dimension, reinforcing regime consolidation.

Theoretically, Egypt's transition highlights authoritarian resilience's adaptability during upheavals. The SCAF manipulated the transition to consolidate dominance under the guise of reform. Using elections for legitimation, co-opting influential actors to divide opposition, and employing repression neutralized dissent. The military demonstrated the effectiveness of balancing inclusion and exclusion. These dynamics show how regimes can appropriate revolutionary symbols, not to dismantle power, but to strengthen it. External actor involvement underscores the interconnected nature of authoritarian resilience in the Middle East. The Egyptian experience offers a lens for understanding how regimes exploit crises, not as threats, but as opportunities to solidify authority nationally and internationally.

Legal Frameworks and Strategic Narratives: Institutionalizing Authoritarian Control in Post-Morsi Egypt

Following the 2013 military coup that ousted Mohamed Morsi, the Egyptian government moved decisively to consolidate its authority through repressive legal frameworks and expanded security measures aimed at suppressing dissent and preempting mobilization. Central to this strategy was the empowerment of the military and the implementation of anti-protest laws that criminalized demonstrations. These measures, combined with military courts prosecuting civilians, fostered fear, making activism dangerous. The regime framed these actions as necessary for stability and combating disinformation, justifying its control.

The 2013 anti-protest law, under interim president Mansour (July 2013–June 2014), severely restricted demonstrations. It required approval from multiple authorities and banned unsanctioned gatherings of ten or more, making legal protests nearly impossible (Kingsley 2013). In 2014, Sisi classified public infrastructure (e.g., power stations, universities, roads) as “military facilities,” expanding military jurisdiction and allowing civilian cases in these areas to be tried in military courts (Sa'id 2014). These frameworks institutionalized repression, curtailed free expression, and restricted assembly.

The regime also targeted civil society through restrictive laws. These laws imposed bureaucratic controls, increased surveillance, and equated dissent with terrorism. Penal Code amendments justified harsh penalties, including imprisonment and asset confiscation. Expanding military tribunals further eroded transparency. A compliant parliament ratified decrees, consolidating legislative dominance and diminishing checks on executive power (Hamzawy 2017a).

Before the 2018 presidential elections, “fake news” laws were introduced. These laws functioned as repression tools. They granted the Sisi-appointed Supreme Council for Media Regulation broad powers to define and penalize “fake news.” Bloggers and social media users with over 5,000 followers were regulated, expanding government control over alternative media. Prohibitive licensing fees excluded small outlets, framing noncompliance as subversive. By 2017, over 400 websites, including news and human rights platforms, were blocked, with penalties including fines and license revocations (Khaled 2019, AlAshry 2022). This strategy established state-aligned media dominance, amplifying regime narratives and silencing dissent.

The regime’s ability to target critics indiscriminately was facilitated by the vague definitions embedded in these laws (Christopher 2024). The case of economist Abdel Khalik Farouk, whose book *Is Egypt Really Poor?* challenged the regime’s narrative on economic challenges, underscores this. Farouk attributed Egypt’s struggles to corruption, opposing official narratives. His book was confiscated, and he and the printer were arrested for “fake news” (Ismail 2018). Similarly, during the pandemic, criticizing health policies was criminalized, enabling arrests of professionals and activists. These measures reinforced control by labeling critics as “terrorists” and delegitimizing dissent. Intelligence-linked entities co-opted media, further monopolizing public discourse (Grančayová 2021).

While legal repression provided short-term control, the regime also used depoliticization and co-optation for long-term stability. Combining repression with material incentives and institutional absorption fragmented opposition. Financial rewards and appointments secured loyalty, while activists absorbed into institutions were neutralized. Youth conferences redirected politically active individuals toward apolitical endeavors like entrepreneurship, reducing their potential for mobilization potential. Co-opted figures were portrayed as symbols of inclusivity, while dissenters were vilified, discrediting opposition (Sika 2019).

The regime’s institutionalization of strategies heavily focused on youth. Loyalist groups were cultivated on campuses to counter opposition and control activism. The regime co-opted parties and organized state-sponsored youth conferences. These events projected inclusivity while endorsing regime policies, creating a legitimacy facade. Additionally, the regime used

social media, mobilizing young supporters to defend and disseminate narratives. This digital strategy amplified messaging and bolstered its portrayal of support.

Repressing Campus Dissent: Control over Academic Institutions and Youth Activism

The Egyptian government implemented measures to consolidate control over academic institutions, recognizing their role in shaping opinion and sociopolitical mobilization. Younger Egyptians, central to the 2011 uprising, posed challenges through protests. Universities, including Cairo, Al-Azhar, and Alexandria, became opposition hubs. After Morsi's ouster, these institutions saw increased student activism, with movements like *Students Against the Coup* uniting MB supporters, other Islamists, and activists opposed to military rule. These dynamics underscored youth mobilization's importance in contesting power and highlighted universities' enduring role as contested spaces (Abdel Salam 2013, Cunningham 2013).

Student protests often escalated into violent confrontations with security forces. While initially led by Islamist students who opposed Morsi's removal, crackdowns galvanized non-Islamist students, fostering unity. During the 2013–2014 academic year, at least 16 students were killed in clashes, hundreds were arrested, and dozens were expelled from institutions such as Cairo University and Al-Azhar University. In Abu Zaabal prison, 49 detained Al-Azhar students launched an open-ended hunger strike in September 2014. This exemplified the determination of students to resist state repression even under dire conditions (Accorsi 2015, Dunne 2014).

The regime enacted security and administrative measures to suppress activism. Security measures included hiring Falcon (a private security firm), installing surveillance systems, limiting access, and conducting targeted arrests and expulsions. Outsourcing security allowed control while distancing the regime from backlash (Moussa 2023, 481). Administrative reforms empowered presidents to dismiss staff and proposed restrictions on secondary school political activities, further curbing activism (Dunne 2014).

Efforts to stifle organizing extended to union elections. After suspending elections for two years, the regime reintroduced them in 2015 under restrictions. The Ministry of Higher Education disqualified candidates with records or MB affiliations. Liberal, leftist, and independent students won a majority in 2015, defying the pro-regime Voice of Egypt Student Coalition. However, the regime responded by dissolving the General Union of Egyptian Students' executive office, citing errors, undermining election results (Hamzawy 2017b, Abdel Salam 2015).

Although universities briefly re-emerged as dissent spaces during protests against the 2016 border agreement between Egypt and Saudi Arabia (Grimm 2020), the regime's repression had largely silenced activism by 2017. A new regulation abolished the national student union, restricting activities to colleges and limiting mobilization. These measures neutralized organizations and reasserted state control over university campuses (Rabi'i 2017).

To preclude resurgence of campus activism, the regime criminalized unauthorized demonstrations and continued arresting students involved in activism. This crackdown stemmed from fears that campus protests could escalate into broader anti-regime demonstrations. The absence of significant student protests over Israel's war on Gaza, despite Egypt's proximity and historical ties to the Palestinian cause, reflects these strategies' effectiveness (Hassan 2024).

Another tactic was security infiltration. Infiltrators embedded within opposition movements generated distrust and disrupted cohesion. They incited violence during demonstrations, discredited movements, and justified repression. Activists adopted vetting mechanisms to counter these tactics, but such measures intensified paranoia and strained trust within groups. This strategy, combined with repression and co-optation, deepened divisions between Islamist and secular factions, particularly after the Raba'a massacre, fragmenting movements and eroding their effectiveness (Sika 2024).

By 2017, student activism had nearly disappeared due to the regime's efforts to eliminate opposition within universities. A report by the Justice Center for Rights and Freedoms noted the state restricted student organization rights, suspended union elections for 4 years, and established the pro-regime *Students for Egypt*. This entity participated in state events and secured union seats, consolidating state control over university activism.

The suppression of student activism in Egypt reflects the regime's broader strategy of consolidating control through repression, co-optation, and restructuring. Targeting universities, historically dissent centers, neutralized youth mobilization, eliminating a critical opposition source. These measures included psychological tactics, administrative control, and loyalist organizations to project inclusivity. Campus repression highlights how authoritarian regimes adapt to challenges, using educational institutions as battlegrounds. However, eroding independent student movements and alienating youth may have long-term implications, fostering distrust and laying groundwork for unrest.

Shaping a Loyal Generation: State-Led Identity Construction and Youth Engagement

The Sisi regime emphasizes shaping youth perspectives of the nation's youth, acknowledging their role, especially after the 2011 uprising. Viewing youth as vital for stability, the regime seeks to redirect their dissent potential. Winter and Shiloah (2019) argue this involves constructing a "new Egyptian" identity aligned with state policies. This effort distances youth from Islamist influences while embedding loyalty and cohesion. Promoting Egypt's layered heritage (Pharaonic, Coptic, Islamic, and Mediterranean), the regime aims to cultivate a generation supporting state-led "reforms." This manifests through youth conferences, educational reforms, and patriotic media campaigns, designed to foster a young elite invested in stability.

Sallam (2024) highlights the regime's *New Youth Project* (NYP) as central to cultivating a loyal class aligned with military-nationalist ideology. Through programs like the Presidential Leadership Program (PLP) and the National Training Academy (NTA), the NYP indoctrinates young participants with loyalty and reinforces military supremacy. Sallam identifies two NYP objectives: establishing a cadre of reliable individuals and providing controlled channels for youth participation to mitigate unrest. By building an ideologically aligned youth base, the regime aims to preclude mobilizations like 2011, reinforcing stability.

Similarly, Ramzy (2020) describes youth policies as instrumental in reconfiguring authoritarian governance. Programs like the PLP, NTA, and forums redirect youth energy toward state-endorsed ideals. These initiatives promote a model of "good youth" who are apolitical and loyal. Selective inclusion offers mobility to those embracing state values, while nationalist rhetoric frames youth as defenders of stability. Entities like the *Mustaqbal Watan* party and the Coordination of Youth Parties and Politicians (CPYP) exemplify this, where military, security, and private-sector actors shape programs to reinforce regime loyalty and stability.

The CPYP is a prominent example of controlled engagement. Launched in June 2018, it brings together members from parties and independent youth, ostensibly to foster participation. However, its structure mirrors Nasser's "Vanguard Organizations," creating aligned elites under control. Critics argue it legitimizes the regime, not genuine representation. Membership is often dominated by individuals affiliated with state-sanctioned parties, who are rewarded with prominent roles in the government, parliament, and the Senate under state security oversight. The CPYP projects inclusivity while reinforcing authoritarian dominance, consolidating control over political spaces under the guise of reform (Mamdouh 2021, El Assal and Marzouk 2023).

This approach mirrors other authoritarian contexts, like China, Jordan, and Morocco. Regimes there channel youth activism into state-controlled organizations to suppress dissent and consolidate power. Initiatives in these countries depoliticize youth engagement, redirecting it toward entrepreneurship and responsibility. By preemptively neutralizing opposition, these regimes strengthen authority and ensure stability (Tsimonis 2018, Kreitmeyr 2020).

El Assal and Marzouk (2023) note that Egyptian civil society organizations (CSO), initially empowering youth after 2011, have been co-opted. Legal restrictions, including the 2017 Youth Institutions Law and the 2019 NGO Law, have curtailed their independent political roles. State-driven programs promote nationalistic values and cultivate a loyal elite, aligning CSO activities with regime priorities. International donors, constrained by these restrictions, have shifted to apolitical projects, further depoliticizing civic engagement.

Despite these efforts, dissent persists in alternative spaces. Iskandar (2019) observed that many Egyptian youth express opposition digitally, using humor and satire to challenge narratives. This digital activism bypasses state-controlled discourse, creating an alternative resistance sphere.

These analyses highlight the regime's approach to shaping youth political engagement while managing dissent. Through structured engagement, co-optation, and state-sponsored youth organizations, the government seeks to shape political participation and mitigate opposition. Yet, the persistence of digital activism underscores the complexities of maintaining complete control, indicating that alternative avenues for political expression remain.

Cultivation of a Digital Presence and Youth Engagement on Social Media

Since Sisi assumed power in 2014, his administration has framed social media as a threat to national security. This narrative highlights its potential to shape public opinion, facilitate terrorism, spread propaganda, and contribute to instability (Al-Shura 2015). In August 2018, Sisi enacted Law No. 175 on cybercrime, granting authorities broad powers to block websites and monitor activity under the guise of safeguarding national security. This legislation requires data retention for 180 days and imposes penalties, including imprisonment and fines, for vaguely defined offenses like “harming national security” or “disturbing public order” (Hamzawy 2018). In a state-controlled media environment, social media is vital for exchanging ideas. However, the regime has contested this space, integrating digital platforms into its strategy.

In addition to fostering support through physical spaces, the regime has extended its influence digitally. Young supporters mobilized offline, shape pro-regime narratives online.

They actively produce and disseminate digital content that highlights state-led projects, promotes government achievements, and reinforces official positions on key national issues, including the Nile water dispute. Their discourse emphasizes loyalty, framing opposition as subversive and portraying dissent as a betrayal (Abozaid 2022). This reflects the broader phenomenon of digital authoritarianism, where regimes control public discourse and delegitimize dissent, consolidating control over physical and virtual spaces.

Dua'a Abdel Latif explores the government's "Ambassadors of New Media" initiative, co-opting influential youth and shaping opinion in line with Vision 2030.¹ The program recruits influencers to disseminate state-approved narratives, offering honorary titles and financial incentives to cultivate loyalty (Abdel Latif 2020). Similarly, Abdallah Bakr examines the regime's strategic use of influencers and YouTubers as part of its propaganda machinery. In response to social media's rise, authorities deployed "electronic brigades," fake accounts, and influencers to propagate state narratives, discredit opposition, and justify repression. Influencers such as Sharif Al Sayrafi and Mohamed Noor, who once held revolutionary or independent positions, now advocate for the regime, blending partial truths with misleading content to frame dissenters as threats to national security. Independent platforms such as Matsaddaqsh (Don't Believe)² are branded as sources of misinformation and subjected to rhetorical attacks aimed at delegitimizing their work. These influencers glorify President Sisi, portraying him as a visionary leader navigating Egypt's challenges. Simultaneously, they amplify nationalistic themes that resonate with younger audiences (Bakr 2023).

A 2023 Digital Forensic Research Lab study highlights how the Egyptian government uses coordinated social media networks. These networks reinforce state narratives, suppress dissent, and create an illusion of support.³ These strategies adapt traditional control mechanisms to the digital age. They leverage technology to monitor opposition, propagate state-aligned content, and neutralize challenges. Broad cybercrime laws institutionalize digital surveillance and penalize dissent under the guise of national security, entrenching control.

¹ Egypt's Vision 2030, launched by President Sisi in February 2016, aims to rank Egypt among the top 30 countries globally in economic size, competitiveness, human development, anti-corruption, and quality of life (<https://egyptembassy.net/news/news/president-el-sisi-unveils-egypt-vision-2030-sustainable-development-strategy/#:~:text=The%20strategy%20aims%20at%20placing,political%2C%20economic%20and%20environmental%20aspects.>).

² Matsaddaqsh is an independent media platform founded in 2018 by the late Egyptian journalist Mohamed Abu El-Gheit. Currently, it is managed by a group of young, independent Egyptian journalists.

³ "Egyptian Twitter network amplifies pro-government hashtags, attacks fact-checkers," March 23, 2023, *Digital Forensic Research Lab, Atlantic Council* (<https://dfrlab.org/2023/03/23/egyptian-twitter-network-amplifies-pro-government-hashtags-attacks-fact-checkers/>), accessed August 3, 2024.

The regime's engagement with digitally active youth challenges traditional perspectives that view youth as agents of democratization. By strategically co-opting younger demographics, the state cultivates a loyal base that not only disseminates pro-regime content but also amplifies nationalist rhetoric, framing dissenters as threats to state security. This dual strategy of repression and co-optation extends authoritarian control across both physical and digital spheres, consolidating power in a manner that appears organic and self-sustaining. The government's adept integration of digital tools underscores the evolving nature of authoritarianism, where technology does not merely serve as a tool for repression but also as a mechanism for reinforcing ideological dominance and maintaining regime stability.

Conclusion

This study examined the Sisi regime's strategic use of repression, co-optation, and legitimation to neutralize dissent and consolidate authoritarian control in Egypt. By employing these three interconnected mechanisms, the regime has managed to systematically dismantle the opposition, particularly youth-led movements, and reshape Egypt's political landscape to sustain its power. These strategies reflect the broader adaptability and resilience of authoritarian regimes when confronted with sociopolitical upheaval.

Repression remains a cornerstone of the regime's approach. It encompasses overt tactics, like arrests and crackdowns, and subtle methods, including surveillance and legal restrictions. The institutionalization of repression through laws, such as the anti-protest and cybercrime laws, demonstrates the regime's ability to suppress dissent under the guise of safeguarding national security. These measures have effectively curtailed the spaces for opposition, fostering a climate of fear and discouraging mobilization.

Simultaneously, the regime has adeptly utilized co-optation to divide opposition forces and ensure loyalty among key actors. By selectively incorporating elites, student organizations, and youth into state-sponsored initiatives, Sisi not only fragmented potential coalitions but also redirected political energy into state-aligned activities. Programs including the PLP and the CPYP illustrate how co-optation includes indoctrination, fostering a generation aligned with the regime's vision.

Legitimation has further bolstered the regime by projecting an image prioritizing national security and economic progress. State narratives, amplified through traditional and digital media, have framed opposition as traitorous while promoting the regime as the guardian of public order. This narrative manipulation has garnered passive compliance, reinforcing the perception that the regime's actions are necessary for stability.

The intersection of these strategies demonstrates the regime's adaptive capacity. By leveraging repression to suppress dissent, co-optation, and legitimation, Sisi has constructed a resilient framework. However, the erosion of independent political spaces and the alienation of politically conscious youth underscore potential long-term instability. The regime's reliance on suppression, while effective short-term, risks fostering deeper societal grievances that could re-emerge as challenges.

This study contributes to understanding of authoritarian governance by illustrating how regimes use a triadic approach. It underscores the importance of examining repression, co-optation, and legitimation as interdependent mechanisms shaping authoritarian rule. This study invites further research into these dynamics, especially comparatively, to deepen our understanding of authoritarian adaptation. Future studies can explore how these strategies interact across different sociopolitical environments, offering insights into the persistence and vulnerabilities of authoritarian governance.

References

- Abdel Latif, Dua'a. 2020. *Ambassadors of New Media Platform: Is Sisi Trying to Recruit Social Media Youth?* Doha, Qatar: Aljazeera.
- Abdel Salam, Mohamed. 2015. "Student Elections in Egypt: A Potential Step Forward." *Atlantic Council*.
- Abdel Salam, Mohammed. 2013. *Egyptian Universities between the Brotherhood and the Military*. Sada, Carnegie's Middle East Program.
- Abozaid, Ahmed M. 2022. "Digital Baltaga: How Cyber Technology Has Consolidated Authoritarianism in Egypt." *S AIS Review of International Affairs* 42 (2):5-19.
- Accorsi, Alessandro and Piazzese, Giovanni. 2015. "The Falcon has Landed: The Problematic Rise of Egyptian Private Security." *Middle East Eye*, 13 February.
- Ahmed Adly, Amr Ismail. 2011. "When Cheap is Costly: Rent Decline, Regime Survival and State Reform in Mubarak's Egypt (1990–2009)." *Middle Eastern Studies* 47 (2):295-313.
- Al-Anani, Khalil. 2019. "Rethinking the Repression-Dissent Nexus: Assessing Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood's Response to Repression Since the Coup of 2013." *Democratization* 26 (8):1329-1341.
- Al-Shura, Ahmed. 2015. "Do Social Media Platforms Pose a Threat to National Security? (هل تُشكّل مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي تهديدًا للأمن القومي؟)" *Al-Siyasa al-Duwaliya*, September 7.
- AlAshry, Miral Sabry. 2022. "A Critical Assessment of the Impact of Egyptian Laws on Information Access and Dissemination by Journalists." *Cogent Arts & Humanities* 9 (1):1-17.
- Albrecht, Holger. 2005. "How Can Opposition Support Authoritarianism? Lessons from Egypt." *Democratization* 12 (3):378-397.
- Albrecht, Holger, and Eva Wegner. 2006. "Autocrats and Islamists: Contenders and Containment in Egypt and Morocco." *Journal of North African Studies* 11 (2):123-141.
- Allinson, Jamie. 2019. "Counter-Revolution as International Phenomenon: The Case of Egypt." *Review of International Studies* 45 (2):320-344.
- Bakr, Abdallah. 2023. *Youtubers & Influencers : Sisi's Latest Propaganda Tool*. Accessed July 1, 2024.
- Bishara, Dina. 2015. "The Politics of Ignoring: Protest Dynamics in Late Mubarak Egypt." *Perspectives on Politics* 13 (4):958-975.
- Blaydes, Lisa. 2008. "Authoritarian Elections and Elite Management: Theory and Evidence from Egypt." Princeton University Conference on Dictatorships.
- Brooke, Steven, and Elizabeth R Nugent. 2020. "Exclusion and Violence after the Egyptian Coup." *Middle East Law and Governance* 12 (1):61-85.
- Butter, David. 2020. "Egypt and the Gulf: Allies and Rivals." *Chatham House, Research Paper* (April):1-25.
- Christopher, Barrie & Mahloully, Dounia 2024. "In Sisi's Egypt 'Laws Aimed at Curbing Disinformation are Instruments of Political Repression.'" *African Arguments*, March 20.
- Cunningham, Erin. 2013. "In Egypt, University Campuses Emerge as the Latest Battleground." *Washington Post*, 30 November.
- Davidson, Charles Robert. 2000. "Reform and Repression in Mubarak's Egypt." *Fletcher F. World Aff.* 24:75.
- Dunne, Michele and Bentivoglio, Katie. 2014. "Egypt's Student Protests: The Beginning or the End of Youth Dissent?" *Diwan, Carnegie Middle East Center* 22 October.
- Edel, Mirjam, and Maria Josua. 2018. "How Authoritarian Rulers Seek to Legitimize Repression: Framing Mass Killings in Egypt and Uzbekistan." *Democratization* 25 (5):882-900.

- El Assal, Ahmed, and Amr Marzouk. 2023. "Civil Society Organisations' Public Diplomacy and Youth Political Participation in Egypt." In *Public Diplomacy and Civil Society Organisations*, edited by Ibrahim Natil, 74-92. Routledge.
- Frantz, Erica, and Andrea Kendall-Taylor. 2014. "A Dictator's Toolkit: Understanding How Co-optation Affects Repression in Autocracies." *Journal of Peace Research* 51 (3):332-346.
- Gerschewski, Johannes. 2013. "The Three Pillars of Stability: Legitimation, Repression, and Co-optation in Autocratic Regimes." *Democratization* 20 (1):13-38.
- Grančayová, Michaela. 2021. "Plagues of Egypt—the COVID-19 Crisis and the Role of Securitization Dilemmas in the Authoritarian Regime Survival Strategies in Egypt and Turkey." *Czech Journal of International Affairs* 56 (1):69-97.
- Grimm, Jannis Julien. 2020. "Egypt is not for Sale! Harnessing Nationalism for Alliance Building in Egypt's Tiran and Sanafir Island Protests." In *Allying beyond Social Divides*, edited by Yasmine and Marie Duboc Berriane, 45-68. Routledge.
- Hamzawy, Amr. 2017a. "Egypt After the 2013 Military Coup: Law-making in Service of the New Authoritarianism." *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 43 (4-5):392-405.
- Hamzawy, Amr. 2017b. "Egypt Campus: The Students Versus the Regime." *Al Jazeera*.
- Hamzawy, Amr. 2018. "The Cybercrime Law: Further Tightening the Siege on Freedom of Expression in Egypt (قانون جرائم تقنية المعلومات... استكمال حصار حرية التعبير عن الرأي في مصر)." *Alquds*, December 3. Accessed November 1, 2023. <https://www.alquds.co.uk/قانون-جرائم-تقنية-المعلومات-استكمال-ح>.
- Hanna, Michael Wahid. 2009. "The Son Also Rises: Egypt's Looming Succession Struggle." *World Policy Journal* 26 (3):103-114.
- Hassan, Mahmoud 2024. "Why are Egyptian Universities Silent about the Situation in Gaza?" *Middle East Monitor*.
- Hellmeier, Sebastian, and Nils B Weidmann. 2020. "Pulling the Strings? The Strategic Use of Pro-government Mobilization in Authoritarian Regimes." *Comparative Political Studies* 53 (1):71-108.
- Holdo, Markus. 2019. "Cooptation and Non-Cooptation: Elite Strategies in Response to Social Protest." *Social Movement Studies* 18 (4):444-462.
- Iskandar, Adel. 2019. "Egyptian Youth's Digital Dissent." *Journal of Democracy* 30 (3):154-164.
- Ismail, Ahmed. 2018. "Abdel Khalik Farouk and the owner of a printing press detained for 4 days on charges of publishing false news. (حبس عبد الخالق فاروق وصاحب مطبعة بتهمة نشر (أخبار كاذبة 4 أيام)." *Youm7*, October 23. Accessed November 11, 2023. <https://www.youm7.com/story/2018/10/23/حبس-عبد-الخالق-فاروق-وصاحب-مطبعة-بتهمة-نشر-أخبار-كاذبة-4001001>.
- Josua, Maria. 2016. "Co-optation Reconsidered: Authoritarian Regime Legitimation Strategies in the Jordanian "Arab Spring"." *Middle East Law and Governance* 8 (1):32-56.
- Ketchley, Neil. 2014. "'The Army and the People are One Hand!' Fraternalization and the 25th January Egyptian Revolution." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 56 (1):155-186.
- Khaled, Fatma. 2019. "Egypt Begins Legal Crackdown on "Fake News"." *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* 38 (2):30-32.
- Kingsley, Patrick. 2013. "Egypt's interim president Adly Mansour signs 'anti-protest law'." *The Guardian*, November 24. Accessed July 2, 2023. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/24/egypt-interim-president-anti-protest-law>.
- Koehler, Kevin. 2008. "Authoritarian Elections in Egypt: Formal Institutions and Informal Mechanisms of Rule." *Democratization* 15 (5):974-990.

- Kramer, Karen. 2006. "Arab Political Pacts: An Unlikely Scenario." *Journal of Democracy* 17 (4):160-165.
- Kreitmeyr, Nadine. 2020. "Neoliberal Co-optation and Authoritarian Renewal: Social Entrepreneurship Networks in Jordan and Morocco." In *Authoritarian Neoliberalism*, edited by Cemal Burak Tansel Ian Bruff, 57-71. Routledge.
- Lachapelle, Jean. 2022. "Repression Reconsidered: Bystander Effects and Legitimation in Authoritarian Regimes." *Comparative Politics* 54 (4):695-716.
- Langohr, Vickie. 2013. "'This is Our Square': Fighting Sexual Assault at Cairo Protests." *Middle East Report* 268:18-25.
- Letourneau, Jean-Francois. 2019. "The Perils of Power: Before and After the 2013 Military Coup in Egypt." *British Journal of Middle eastern studies* 46 (1):208-213.
- Mamdouh, Rana. 2021. "The New Vanguard? A Security-Certified Youth." *MadaMasr*, March 9.
- Moussa, Engy. 2023. "Privatizing Security and Authoritarian Adaptation in the Arab Region since the 2010–2011 Uprisings." *Contemporary Security Policy* 44 (3):462-490.
- Nugent, Elizabeth R. 2018. "The Psychology of Repression and Polarization in Authoritarian Regimes." *Middle East Initiative*.
- Pioppi, Daniela. 2013. "Playing with Fire. The Muslim Brotherhood and the Egyptian Leviathan." *The International Spectator* 48 (4):51-68.
- Rabi'i, Wael 2017. " ننشر تفاصيل اللائحة الطلابية الجديدة.. حرمان المنتمين للجماعات الإرهابية من الترشح للانتخابات.. وإلغاء اتحاد طلاب مصر.. وحظر الشعارات الدينية والحزبية في الدعاية.. واشتراط وجود ممثل للطلاب ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة (We publish the details of the new student regulations: Members of terrorist groups are barred from running in elections; the Student Union of Egypt is abolished; religious and partisan slogans are prohibited in campaigns; and the presence of a representative for students with special needs is required)." *Youm7*, August 19. <https://www.youm7.com/story/2017/8/19/-ننشر-تفاصيل-اللائحة-الطلابية-الجديدة-3376049/من-الإرهابية-من-المنتمين-للجماعات-الإرهابية-من-3376049>.
- Ramzy, Farah. 2020. "The Making of Good Egyptian Youth: Youth Policy and Authoritarian Reconfiguration." *Confluences Mediterranee* (4):157-171.
- Sa'id, Mohamed Sayed. 2014. " خمس عشرة منظمة ومجموعة حقوقية مستقلة تنتقد توسيع اختصاصات القضاء العسكري " *CIHRS*, October 30.
- Sallam, Hesham. 2024. "The Autocrat-in-Training: The Sisi Regime at 10." *Journal of Democracy* 35 (1):87-101.
- Sika, Nadine. 2019. "Repression, Cooptation, and Movement Fragmentation in Authoritarian Regimes: Evidence from the Youth Movement in Egypt." *Political Studies* 67 (3):676-692.
- Sika, Nadine. 2024. "The Consequences of Trust and Repression on the Rise and Fall of Movements in Authoritarian Regimes." *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 65 (4):448-463.
- Stacher, Joshua. 2004. "Parties Over: The Demise of Egypt's Opposition Parties." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 31 (2):215-233.
- Tsimonis, Konstantinos. 2018. "'Keep the Party Assured and the Youth [Not] Satisfied': The Communist Youth League and Chinese University Students." *Modern China* 44 (2):170-207.
- Van de Bildt, Joyce. 2015. "The Quest for Legitimacy in Postrevolutionary Egypt: Propaganda and Controlling Narratives." *The Journal of the Middle East and Africa* 6 (3-4):253-274.
- Winter, Ofir, and Assaf Shiloah. 2019. "Egypt's Identity During the el-Sisi Era: Profile of the 'New Egyptian'." *Strategic Assessment* 21 (4):65-78.

- Wrighton, Sam. 2018. "Authoritarian Regime Stabilization Through Legitimation, Popular Co-optation, and Exclusion: Russian Pasportizatsiya Strategies in Crimea." *Globalizations* 15 (2):283-300.
- Zahid, Mohammed. 2010. "The Egyptian Nexus: The Rise of Gamal Mubarak, the Politics of Succession and the Challenges of the Muslim Brotherhood." *The Journal of North African Studies* 15 (2):217-230.