

Nasser's Legacy, the Egyptian Arab Spring and its Aftermath

Wessel Aaltink
(s1246135)

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MA MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES
Leiden University,
Faculty of Humanities
2020

Course code: 5854VTMES
Number of EC: 20
21103 words
Supervisor: Dr. Judith A. Naeff

CONTENTS

Title page.....	1
Contents.....	2
Introduction.....	3
Chapter 1: Contextualizing the Revolutions and the Egyptian military.....	14
§1.1: Defining the revolution (1952).....	14
§1.2: The phases of the revolution (1952).....	15
§1.3: Coup-volution (1952).....	17
§1.4: Defining the revolution (2013).....	18
§1.5: The phases of the revolution (2013).....	19
§1.6: The position of the military.....	20
§1.7: Conclusion chapter 1.....	22
Chapter 2: Nasserism and the al-Sisi-vision.....	24
§2.1: Dimensions and interpretations Nasserism.....	25
§2.2: Arab nationalism and pan-Arabism Nasser.....	29
§2.3: Anti-imperialism Nasser.....	30
§2.4: Arab socialism Nasser.....	31
§2.5: Egyptian self-confidence under Nasser.....	32
§2.6: Dimensions and interpretations al-Sisi vision.....	32
§2.7: Contemporary Nasserism and al-Sisi.....	35
§2.8: Anti-imperialism, pan-Arabism and nationalism al-Sisi.....	36
§2.9: Arab socialism al-Sisi.....	38
§2.10: Egyptian self-confidence under al-Sisi.....	39
§2.11: Conclusion chapter 2.....	39
Chapter 3: Nasser, al-Sisi and the Egyptian Imagination.....	41
§3.1: Image of Nasser.....	41
§3.2: Sisi-mania and the resurfacing of Nasser.....	43
§3.3: Image of al-Sisi and Nasser's legacy.....	44
§3.4: Decreasing popularity al-Sisi.....	45
§3.5: Conclusion chapter 3.....	46
Conclusion.....	47
Images.....	50
Bibliography.....	51

INTRODUCTION

“An 18-day-old revolt led by the young people of Egypt ousted President Hosni Mubarak on Friday, shattering three decades of political stasis here and overturning the established order of the Arab world. (...) Tens of thousands who had bowed down for evening prayers leapt to their feet, bouncing and dancing in joy. “Lift your head high, you’re an Egyptian,” they cried. Revising the tense of the revolution’s rallying cry, they chanted, “The people, at last, have brought down the regime.” “We can breathe fresh air, we can feel our freedom,” said Gamal Heshamt, a former independent member of Parliament. “After 30 years of absence from the world, Egypt is back.” ”¹

The cry ‘Egypt is back’ refers to the people finally being freed from the suffering under the rule of president Hosni Mubarak. It also insinuates them having been proud and powerful before this suffering. Specifically under the rule of Gamel Abdel Nasser and his successor Anwar Sadat the Egyptians felt their country was great . In the 2013 Egyptian protests, which lead to the rule of Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, the images of these men, primarily and most importantly Nasser, resurfaced and became a popular reference point in relation to the calls of the people and the newly favored General al-Sisi. This paper shall examine, among other things, the relations between the coming to power and the rule of this old, and this new president of Egypt and determine whether a comparison between the two is warranted at all.

The above is an excerpt from a news article published in 2011 by *The New York Times* on the Egyptian revolts now commonly known as the ‘Arab Spring’, showing the public joy following the stepping down of Egypt’s thirty yearlong president Hosni Mubarak. By then, the population of Tunisia had already been shaken up by a large wave of mass demonstrations, calling for an end to the twenty-three year old autocratic regime of Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali, which succeeded in January 2011 when Ben Ali fled the country. Subsequently, autocratic regimes in the Middle East had to deal with mass protests calling for an end to authoritarianism in the region, with protest starting in Libya, Egypt, Yemen and eventually Syria as well.²

¹ David D. Kirkpatrick, “Egypt Erupts in Jubilation as Mubarak Steps Down”, *The New York Times*, February 11th, 2011, <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/12/world/middleeast/12egypt.html>

² William L. Cleveland and Martin Bunton. *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 4th ed. (Boulder: Westview Press, 2009), 522.

In Egypt, these protests started January the 25th, 2011 on the *Tahrir Square* (‘Liberation Square’) in the center of Cairo.³ This day came to be known as the ‘Day of Rage’⁴, in which people for the first time mobilized on a large scale to let their dissatisfaction with the government be clear. Their grievances included economic misery and a large income gap between rich and poor, amplified by high unemployment; the state of emergency laws (almost continuous following the Six-Day War of 1967, including imprisonment of the opposition; the suspension of constitutional rights and large legalized media censorship); police brutality (including torture and abuse) and the lack of free speech, the lack of free elections and increasing corruption.⁵ Tens of thousands of Egyptians from many different groups of society participated in the protests. It unified the leftists, youth organizations, the political opposition, human rights proponents, social media activists and Islamists behind the call for the ousting of Mubarak.⁶ After eighteen days of demonstrating they succeeded in forcing president Mubarak to resign. The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (the SCAF) thereafter took control of the state.⁷ The SCAF consisted of twenty senior generals that announced plans to hold elections, but before they happened, they experienced popular protests similar to those against Mubarak, as they were also perceived to be repressive and part of the old establishment. When the voting day was eventually coming closer, the population was increasingly polarized. The liberals (e.g. the Wafd Party, the Justice Party, the Free Egyptians, the Democratic Front Party, the Free Egypt Party and the Social Democratic party), who at one time had stood next to the Islamists during the protests, competed internally on subjects such as secularism of the civil state, equality and civil and legal rights, and externally with for instance the Islamists’ Muslim Brotherhood’s Freedom and Justice Party and the al-Nur Party.⁸ The only subject all parties seemed to be united on was that of Egypt’s ties to the United States, which entailed the idea that Egypt under Mubarak had become a American proxy instead of its former status as one of the most important Arab countries.⁹ In other words, the Egyptian political landscape was heavily fragmented on all but a few subjects, with attempts of post-Mubarak revolutionary unification, such as the Democratic Alliance

³ Cleveland and Bunton, *A History*, 525.

⁴ Danielle Bella Ellison. *Nationalism in the Arab Spring: Expression, Effects on Transitions, and Implications for the Middle East State, A Comparative Analysis of Egypt and Libya* (New Haven: Yale University, 2015), 1.

⁵ Irina Dotu, *Arab Spring 2011: Egypt* (Nicosia: Near East University, 2011), Chapter 2, §1 and §2.

⁶ Brecht de Smet, “A Dialectical Pedagogy of Revolt: Gramsci, Vygotsky, and the Egyptian Revolution”, *Studies in Critical Social Sciences*, Vol. 73 (2015): 1.

⁷ Ellison, *Nationalism*, 1.

⁸ Jeannie L. Sowers and Bruce Rutherford, “Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Egypt,” in *The Arab Spring: The Hope and Reality of the Uprisings*, 2nd edition. eds. Mark Haas and David Lesch (Boulder: Westview Press, 2017), 7-8.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 9-10.

(consisting of among others the Muslim Brotherhood, leftists, the liberal Wafd Party, and the Nasserite Karama Party) being short lived.¹⁰

After two rounds of parliamentary elections in 2011 and 2012 the Muslim Brotherhood won the elections (with 52 percent) and made their leader Mohammad Morsi president, partly due to the strong organization of the Brotherhood and lack of organization of the street-protester liberal and youth groups who weren't effective in campaigning, as well as the perceived affiliation of Morsi's opponent (Ahmed Shafiq) with the former Mubarak regime.¹¹

However, Morsi's rule did not last. Even as he tried to end the emergency law, promote independence of Unions and universities, aiming for a more transparent government, ending corruption and freeing political prisoners,¹² he did not win the essential confidence of the SCAF, and even further polarized the population by unpopular legislations aimed at expanding his power, and reducing the Parliament's functions.¹³ Furthermore, Morsi's presidency was marked by increasing food prices, increasing debt and inflation, a lack of police presence (leading to feelings of insecurity), a lack of control over Egypt's energy (electricity cuts and fuel shortages were common during his tenure), and a lack of control over the water and sanitation networks.¹⁴

This discontent of the public, combined with the feeling that the Islamists had hijacked the revolution, led to new protests. Violent clashes between the competing groups, again gathered on Tahrir-square, were commonplace once more in 2013. Young activists founded the *tammarud* (rebellion) grassroots movement, calling again for an end to the current presidency.¹⁵

On July 3rd 2013, these protests (primarily the *tammarud* campaign and the anti-Brotherhood sentiments)¹⁶ culminated with the military reacting to the civilian's expectations that the army would do its duty and prevent the country from falling into economic ruin. Headed by General Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, who was appointed by Morsi in 2012 to replace the sacked Mohamed Hussein Tantawi, the military deposed Morsi and his government,¹⁷ after

¹⁰ Neil Ketchley, *Egypt in a Time of Revolution: Contentious Politics and the Arab Spring* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 87-88.

¹¹ Sowers and Rutherford, "Revolution and Counter-Revolution", 10-11.

¹² Tarek Osman, *Egypt on the Brink: from Nasser to the Muslim Brotherhood*. Revised edition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 112-113.

¹³ Irina Tsaregorodtseva, "The Revolutionary Socialists in Post-'Arab Spring' Egypt", *Socialism and Democracy*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (2017): 137.

¹⁴ Sowers and Rutherford, "Revolution and Counter-Revolution", 11-13.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 15.

¹⁷ Zeinab Abul-Magd, "The Egyptian military in politics and the economy: Recent history and current transition status," *CMI Insight*, No. 2. (October 2013): 3-4, Chr. Michelsen Institute.

Morsi had let them know he was not willing to compromise and share power with the military. Al-Sisi then went on to consolidate the military power by appointing Adly Mansour as interim president, outlawing the Muslim Brotherhood and arresting Morsi for various crimes such as espionage, criminalizing protest and detaining various civilians (amongst which several journalists). Thus, when al-Sisi announced his bid for the presidency, nearly no one dared to run against him and he subsequently became president by winning with a stunning 96.6 percent.¹⁸

While many international media portrayed the events of July 3rd as a military coup, many Egyptians named it a revolution ('our revolution'), and al-Sisi appeared to have a large support base among the Egyptians, who heralded him as the 'new Nasser'¹⁹, or 'the new strongman in Cairo'²⁰

During the run-up towards the ousting of Morsi, the former Egyptian leader Gamel Abdel Nasser's image became popular again. People sold pictures of Nasser side-by-side to al-Sisi's, or alone,²¹ such as in the two in the image section at the end of this paper, which says 'we dream of glory for the people, and so we shall realize this dream' (image 1) and 'salutation to the great men of Egypt' (image 3). Nasser's daughter Hoda Abdel Nasser even wrote a letter to al-Sisi saying 'the whole of Egypt has your back'.²² Even before that, in the wake of the ousting of Mubarak in 2011, the Egyptian people had, ironically,²³ called for the ending of military rule at the funeral of Khalid Abdel Nasser (the son of Gamel).²⁴

Gamel Abdel Nasser (1918-1970) had been president of Egypt from 1956 to his death in 1970 after winning power following a 1952 coup now known as a revolution. Anglo-Egyptian tensions (against British colonialism), increasing nationalism, a growing gap between rich and poor (for instance due to unfair land ownership and forms of feudalism) and poverty were among the factors that contributed to the events of July 23rd, 1952. When Colonel Nasser, his 'Free Officers' (who were junior military officers) and their figurehead leader General Muhammad Naguib seized power, they removed the king (Faruq) from power, declared a republic, abolished the old institution and established changes that completely did away with

¹⁸ Sowers and Rutherford, "Revolution and Counter-Revolution", 15-18.

¹⁹ Abul-Magd, "The Egyptian military in politics", 3-4.

²⁰ Max Strasser, "Sisi and the Strong Man: Is Egypt's president-in-waiting turning back the clock -- to the Nasser era?" *Foreign Policy*, January 28, 2014, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2014/01/28/sisi-and-the-strong-man/>

²¹ Ibid.

²² Hoda Abdel Nasser, "Open letter to Lieutenant General abdel Fattah al-Sisi," *Egypt Independent*, August 13th, 2013, <https://www.egyptindependent.com/open-letter-lieutenant-general-abdel-fattah-al-sisi/>

²³ Why this was ironic shall become clear later on.

²⁴ Omar Khalifa, *Nasser in the Egyptian Imaginary* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), 1.

the old political establishment. In 1954, after already outlawing the Muslim Brotherhood, Naguib was deposed as leader following internal strife in their Revolutionary Command Council (RCC). Subsequently, Nasser himself assumed power and consolidated this by winning the elections in 1956 after having banned virtually all opposing political parties.²⁵

Nasser's tenure as president of Egypt is further marked by a series of events of international proportions that made him famous amongst not just Egyptians, but almost all Arab inhabitants of the Middle East. In 1956, after the US withdrew their promised assistance in financing the Egyptian Aswan dam, Nasser nationalized the Suez canal (previously in the hands of the British) and caused a political uproar known as the Suez crisis. Israel, Britain and France then attacked Egypt in October of 1956, defeating the Egyptian military. However, in despite of the defeat this was a major political victory for Nasser, as the attack was eventually withdrawn after U.S. pressure, and the Suez canal remained in Egyptian hands.²⁶

The Arab world was in awe of what this president had achieved: successfully standing up to western powers that for years had dominated and exploited the Middle East. He had purposely employed and bolstered feelings of pan-Arab nationalism (or pan-Arabism) in the region. This movement comprised of the sentiments in the Middle East that called for the union of all Arabs. This often implied either the need for an Islamic union, or the creation of an *umma arabiyya* (an Arab nation) based on linguistic and cultural unity.²⁷

However, pan-Arab nationalism is but one of the components that form the ideology of Nasser that is called 'Nasserism'. The nature of Nasserism is contested, with interpretations ranging from it being an ideological movement, a phenomenon of personal charismatic leadership, a modernization movement, a protest movement against Western imperialism and colonialism, or a populist movement.²⁸ The actual denomination of the nature of Nasserism employed by this paper shall be discussed later on, but for now I shall only resort to relating its basic components; anti-imperialism, pan-Arab nationalism and Arab socialism (social justice).

Nasser's legacy in Egypt is a much discussed subject, but the fact that he has never vanished from the Egyptian imagination is uncontested, as Omar Khalifa from the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service aptly puts it, 'He is a past that possesses

²⁵ Cleveland and Bunton, *A History*, 301-308.

²⁶ Cleveland and Bunton, *A History*, 310-312.

²⁷ Ragip Gökcel and Eugen Lungu, "Pan-Arabism and the 'Arab Spring'," *Romanian Military Thinking Journal* (2011): 120-124.

²⁸ Elie Podeh and Onn Winckler, "Introduction: Nasserism as a Form of Populism," in *Rethinking Nasserism: Revolution and Historical Memory in Modern Egypt*, eds. Elie Podeh and Onn Winckler (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004), 1-4.

the power of informing, inspiring, alleviating, encouraging; but also he is a contested past, one that could invoke for many Egyptians feelings of fear, defeat and despair. (...) Nasser has been an indispensable reference through which Egyptians discuss, gauge and evaluate the events unfolding before them'.²⁹ Herewith he tries to delineate the key issues concerning the position Nasser still holds in the minds of the contemporary Egyptians.

On the other hand, some scholars assert that the legacy of Nasserism has eroded after his death in 1970, and perhaps even that it has become somewhat of a distant and faded memory with hardly any grip on the national agenda. Nevertheless, Nasser and his Nasserism still exert a large influence over the Egyptian imagination and public discourses.³⁰ This can be attested to and exemplified by the aforementioned references to Nasser in the political events in Egypt of 2011-2013. Nasser declared himself the 'voice of the Arabs', and even though this seems to no longer be the case, many still look back to his tenure as president,³¹ and General al-Sisi is often portrayed as the one person Egypt is in need of; a new Nasser, or, 'Nasser's heir'.³² ³³This then begs the question whether this is just nostalgia in a sense of reminiscing Egypt's 'last golden age',³⁴ as one reporter put it, or whether there are actual similarities between the debates then and now.

Both the Arab spring (2011-2012) and its immediate aftermath (the 2013 revolution) have been thoroughly described in academic literature, and its separate components have been studied extensively as well. Notable examples include Jeannie Sowers and Bruce Rutherford, who discussed the Arab uprisings chronologically, and try to put them in the context of the politics that preceded it and formed the uprisings, such as economic restructuring and marginalization under Mubarak's rule, unemployment, urbanization, rising poverty and the spread of activist networks. They argue that revolutions such as the one in 2013 must always be contested, and considered as living phenomena whose causes and outcomes have yet to be determined.³⁵ Fawaz Gerges has also written and edited multiple works on Arab uprisings in a comparative context. In 2014 he edited "The New Middle East: Protest and Revolution in the Arab World", in which he discusses the nature, context and causes of authoritarianism,

²⁹ Khalifa, *Nasser in the Egyptian Imaginary*, 2.

³⁰ Khalifa, *Nasser in the Egyptian Imaginary*, 6.

³¹ Tarik Ahmed Elsewi, "A Revolution of the Imagination," *International Journal of Communication*, Vol. 5 (2011): 1199.

³² Fawaz A Gerges, *Making the Arab World: Nasser, Qutb, and the Clash That Shaped the Middle East*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 393.

³³ Image 2 on the title page reportedly shows a young al-Sisi saluting Nasser in 1960.

³⁴ Strasser, "Sisi and the Strong Man."

³⁵ Sowers and Rutherford, "Revolution and Counter-Revolution."

political change and the Arab spring. A comparative analysis of various uprisings in Egypt over time is given by Juan Cole, who asserts that in the context of media, mobilization and leadership the Arab spring stands out from the preceding revolts. In 2018 Gerges wrote “Making the Arab World: Nasser, Qutb, and the Clash That Shaped the Middle East”, in which he concludes that the Egyptian leadership and their historical tension vis à vis the Islamists have had an impact on society that made the Arab spring not inevitable, but equally not unexpected.³⁶ James Cook equally tries to put the events of 2011-2013 into historical perspective. In his “The Struggle for Egypt: From Nasser to Tahrir Square”, he discusses the process the Egyptian people went through to answer their existential questions such as ‘who are we?’, ‘what do we stand for?’ and ‘who are we in relation to the world’, an important subject for this paper, as it is an analysis of the ways of thinking of the Egyptian people. He asserts that their political and societal struggles consist of a process that is passed on from leader to leader over decades and also, that during the Arab spring the Egyptians gained some, not definitive answers to their questions.³⁷

The international relations and regional challenges of Egypt, their elections and military are addressed in many works as well, which are essential as they are important parts of the visions and politics of both Nasser and al-Sisi.

Giuseppe Dentice edited a work called “Egypt’s elections: no change, many challenges”, which tackles the events of 2011-2013 more specifically. Here, he himself and Tewfik Aclimandos assert that the tense relations have thawed between Egypt and its neighbors, the Gulf³⁸ and Israel³⁹ respectively. Zeinab Abul-Magd talks in the same work on the Egyptian military, and how they have accumulated wealth and power as well as scrutiny.⁴⁰ Similarly Stefano Torelli’s “The Return of Egypt. Internal challenges and Regional Game”, with contributions by among others Paolo Magri, Maria Ottaway, Andrea Teti and Cecilia

³⁶ Gerges, *Making the Arab World*.

³⁷ Steven A Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt: From Nasser to Tahrir Square* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 7.

³⁸ Giuseppe Dentice, “Egypt-Gulf Countries: “New Normal” Relations,” in *Egypt’s Elections: No Change, Many Challenges*, ed. Giuseppe Dentice (Milan: Italian Institute for International Political Studies, 2018) <https://www.ispionline.it/en/pubblicazione/egypts-election-no-change-many-challenges-19880>.

³⁹ Tewfik Aclimandos, “Israel, Gaza and Palestine: Common Interests, Different Visions,” in *Egypt’s Elections: No Change, Many Challenges*, ed. Giuseppe Dentice (Milan: Italian Institute for International Political Studies, 2018) <https://www.ispionline.it/en/pubblicazione/egypts-election-no-change-many-challenges-19880>.

⁴⁰ Zeinab Abul-Magd, “The Egyptian Military’s Economic Solution: Is It Working?”, in *Egypt’s Elections: No Change, Many Challenges*, ed. Giuseppe Dentice (Milan: Italian Institute for International Political Studies, 2018)

Zecchinelli describes Egypt's elections, their current position and their domestic and regional challenges.⁴¹

Al-Sisi's ideas regarding the identity and ideals of Egypt and its people give insight into his vision and allows it to be compared to that of Nasser. Ofir Winter and Assaf Shiloah focus on the profile of a new Egyptian, and assert that al-Sisi's Egypt consists of ambiguous ambitions, and highlights the multifaceted identity-ideals the new president has for his people.⁴² Other scholars, such as Hazem Kandil give a more extensive analysis of the current state of al-Sisi's presidency, and put the popularity of al-Sisi in perspective to the reality and, as he asserts, bad state of Egypt.⁴³

Nasser and Nasserism is equally well studied, with studies ranging from analysis of the zeitgeist of Nasser's times (e.g. Panayiotis Vatikiotis' "Nasser and his Generation", in which he for instance assumes that Nasser is both a representative of, as well as a rather unique person within his generation. He also offers useful descriptions of the essence of Nasser and his charismatic way of governance)⁴⁴ to descriptions and interpretations of the nature of Nasserism (e.g. Podeh and Winckler). Elie Podeh and Onno Winckler, who also mention Vatikiotis in the descriptions and analyses of the essence and legacy of Nasserism, try to offer a framework in which they describe it as a form of populism, by means of analyzing theories of possible definitions of Nasserism.⁴⁵ In the same work the iconology, ideology and demonology (mostly on the nature of Nasser's legacy and modern portrayal in media and literature for instance) of Nasser is described by Leonard Binder who concludes there exists a rather ambiguous portrayal of Nasser in associated iconography.⁴⁶ Omar Khalifa elaborates on the subject of Nasser in the Egyptian imaginary continuing and changing over the last decades into the present,⁴⁷ which might give us insight into the reality of the current status of Nasser's popularity.

⁴¹ Stefano Torelli, ed., *The Return of Egypt. Internal challenges and Regional Game* (Novi Ligure: Edizioni Epoké, 2015)

⁴² Ofir Winter and Assaf Shiloah, "Egypt's Identity during the el-Sisi Era: Profile of the "New Egyptian"," *Strategic Assessment*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (2019). <https://www.inss.org.il/publication/egypts-identity-el-sisi-era-profile-new-egyptian/>.

⁴³ Hazem Kandil, "Sisi's Egypt," (interview) *New Left Review*, No. 102, 5-40, November-December 2016. <https://www.scribd.com/document/339703808/Hazem-Kandil-Sisis-Egypt-NLR-102-November-December-2016,7>.

⁴⁴ Panayiotis J. Vatikiotis, *Nasser and his Generation* (London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1978)

⁴⁵ Podeh and Winckler, "Introduction."

⁴⁶ Leonard Binder, "Gamal 'Abd al-Nasser: Iconology, ideology and Demonology," in *Rethinking Nasserism: Revolution and Historical Memory in Modern Egypt*, eds. Elie Podeh and Onn Winckler (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004).

⁴⁷ Khalifa, *Nasser in the Egyptian Imaginary*.

Revolutions are addressed by scholars to great extent, and are meaningful for this paper as they offer a framework through which the events of 1952 and 2013 can be assessed and compared, for instance by means of the works of James deFronzo, John Yinger, Mark Katz and Brecht de Smet.

Writing in 2015, de Smet extends the discussions on the nature of Nasserism and the 1952 revolution by positioning the Egyptian revolution within the academic studies of social movements, studies on the nature of power, and thereby tries to describe a sort of process revolutions and intervention go through, and as important for this paper, offers an interesting description of the Nasserist ‘intervention’, as he calls it, in the context of Gramsci’s theories.⁴⁸

The nature, definition of and scales of social movements and revolutions are discussed by for instance James deFronzo, John Yinger and Mark Katz. DeFronzo speaks more generally about, and gives a useful theoretical framework on for instance the conditions of revolutions, the role of their leaders and the associated revolutionary ideologies and as such sheds light on how the Egyptian revolutions came to be.⁴⁹ Yinger and Katz give the reader a comprehensive definition of revolutions and a scale of revolutionism to test the revolutions of Nasser and al-Sisi on.⁵⁰

These works mostly describe a chronological development of ideologies and movements within Egypt from the time of Nasser to the present, or only describe both revolutions separately. However, what these omit is the actual impact that Nasser and Nasserism have on the events of recent years in a sense of continuation. Some news articles clearly mention the actual presence of Nasserism, the image of the former leader, or at the very least the rhetoric of leadership Nasser himself embodied, but this is hardly mentioned in the academic literature. Most of the modern literature on the Arab Spring and its immediate aftermath fails to mention Nasser at all, making it seem as though his legacy has vanished in present-day Egypt. If that is the case, then this begs the question why Nasser did in fact still appeal to the masses, exemplified by the protesters holding up his image, and why the literature is lacking in this context. The popular imagery of the Arab strongman and the need Egypt appears to have for having such a leader again is not addressed in modern literature as well, and thus

⁴⁸ de Smet, “A Dialectical Pedagogy”

⁴⁹ James DeFronzo. *Revolutions and Revolutionary Movements*. 5th ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2015).

⁵⁰ John Milton Yinger and Mark Norman Katz, “Revolution: Refining Its Defining,” *International Journal of Group Tensions*, Vol. 30, No. 4 (2001).

there can be identified an additional gap in the literature as to why al-Sisi appeals to the masses in a manner Nasser did.

This paper will therefore try to examine the ways in which Nasserism shaped the Arab spring discourses in Egypt in 2013, and whether the former president's rhetoric and policies are the things people actually called for during the tumultuous events of the previously mentioned public uprisings. Furthermore, I will examine and analyze the various aspects that Nasserism consists of, and try to determine whether these were revitalized in the discussions of the Arab spring, its resulting leadership changes and the Egyptian imagination. In other words, I shall try to answer the question 'what is the influence of Nasserism on the political events in Egypt in 2013 and its immediate aftermath?', or more specifically, how Nasser and Nasserism influenced the governance, popular opinion and propaganda surrounding General Abdel Fattah al-Sisi. What shall not be discussed, however, is their authoritarianism and use of repression as well as their relationships and position towards Islamism and the Muslim Brotherhood. I do not address this as these are subjects that would need an extensive research on their own, and therefore would not fit the scope of this paper.

To answer my main question, I will compare and analyze the various aspects of both Nasserism and the Arab Spring popular discourse in three chapters.

In the first chapter, I set out to find the essentialist and historical commonalities and/or differences of the 1952 and 2013 'revolutions'. John Milton Yinger, Mark Norman Katz and James DeFronzo's analyses of the concepts and phases of, and requirements for revolutions shall be used in order to determine whether the 1952 and 2013 events might even be described in that way. Additionally, Brecht de Smet's literature on revolts (which treats Gramsci as well as other academics) in the context of Egypt will also be discussed here. Also, this gives an historical context to and possible definition of the events surrounding both Nasser and al-Sisi, and the particularity of the role of the military therein.

In the second chapter, I shall draw on Podeh and Winckler⁵¹ to determine what Nasserism (the underlying ideology of 1952's uprising) actually entails, whether it be an ideological movement, a sort of phenomenon of personal charismatic leadership centered around Nasser's character himself, a modernization movement, -a protest movement against Western imperialism and colonialism (or in a modern context: influence and/or leverage), or a populist movement, and then determine whether the revolutionary movements of 2013 also fit this

⁵¹ And thus in extension, their analysis of theories of a.o. Max Weber, Karl Marx, Panayiotis J. Vatikiotis, Shimon Shamir, Torcuato Di Tella, Fouad Ajami and Nazih Ayubi

description. This chapter will also cover the tenets and dimensions of the Nasserite movements and those of al-Sisi and determine their similarities and differences, specifically concepts such as Arab-socialism, pan-Arabism and anti-imperialism by drawing for instance on Hazem Kandil's works on the military and politics of regime change and. Using Nasser's own books as well as an analysis of al-Sisi's twitter account and his own thesis, I shall attempt to provide a comprehensive comparison of both their governances.

The third chapter shall address the Egyptian imaginary, the various ways in which the Egyptians remember Nasser, and how this is mirrored in their calls for a 'new strongman' with Nasser's charisma, specifically with reference to General al-Sisi. Khalifa's delineations of the relationship between the current Egyptian imaginary and Nasser as well as Podeh and Winckler's 'Nasserism as a form of populism' and Binder's work on the iconology, ideology and demonology of Nasser will be used here. Also, works on current Egyptian propaganda, the current state of al-Sisi's popularity and the so called 'Sisi-mania' (by for instance Tarek el-Ariss) will serve to elucidate the differences between al-Sisi and Nasser in the Egypt's popular opinions. Furthermore, journalistic reports on the actuality of Nasser's image in Egypt during the uprisings will endorse and exemplify the discussions of this chapter.

Finally, in the conclusion I will give a brief summary of the previous chapters, followed by an assessment of the phenomena that affect the causal relationship and current presence of Nasser and the Nasserite ideas in the Egypt around 2013, and discuss this paper's scope in light of possible future research. Also, I will conclude that aside from the manner of coming to power and the superficial imagery employed by al-Sisi, his rule is nothing like that of Nasser, and that side-by-side, these presidents make for a bad comparison.

CHAPTER 1: Contextualizing the Revolutions and the Egyptian Military

This chapter addresses questions concerning the phenomenon of revolutions themselves. What denotes a revolution exactly and can the 1952 and 2013 events actually be described as revolutions or are they something entirely different? Also, the particularity of the role of the Egyptian army is described within this chapter, adding to the goal of giving an historical context and definition of the situation for both instances. I will conclude that the essence of their rise to power is very similar in the cases of both al-Sisi and Nasser, and that the particularity of the military, to which they both contributed, greatly affected their rules and revolutions.

§1.1: Defining the revolution (1952):

The phenomenon ‘revolution’ knows many definitions. The Chinese in the past saw it as meaning just ‘renewal’, while later it was described as solely an ‘emphatic change’, by for instance historian Crane Brinton, who also described it in more political terms as the ‘drastic, sudden substitution of one group in charge of the running of a territorial political entity by another group hitherto not running that government’, while emphasizing that a fundamental change in the socioeconomic structure of society must also occur.⁵² Others add to this different factors such as the involvement of social and political mobilization (as well as the large scale interference of the masses), and moments of popular uprising.⁵³ Furthermore, the means by which revolution occurs and the outcomes the revolution produces are also dimensions that should be considered when labeling events as ‘revolutions’.⁵⁴

Mass frustrations leading to popular uprisings of the urban and rural population, dissident elite political movements dissatisfied with the existing government, unifying motivations inspiring large sections of the population, one or more severe political crises rendering the state incapable of performing its duties and the tolerance of other countries in the world (or merely non-intervention) are the five factors Professor James DeFronzo identifies that are critical conditions for the emergence of a revolution. However, it must be noted that the relative importance of each condition might differ in separate circumstances.⁵⁵

⁵² Yinger and Katz, “Revolution,” 350-351.

⁵³ de Smet, “A Dialectical Pedagogy”, 103-105.

⁵⁴ Yinger and Katz, “Revolution,” 352.

⁵⁵ DeFronzo. *Revolutions*, 12-13.

The 1952 revolution was caused primarily by disillusionment of the Egyptians towards their government. The monarchy, as well as the political establishment had failed in the 1948 war in Palestine, which fueled the humiliation of primarily, but not limited to, the young army officers. They, led by Nasser, together with the Ikhwan Islamists, blamed the establishment and the British colonial power and subsequently vowed to take proprietorship of their country, which they subsequently did.⁵⁶ The new elite (nationalists, Islamists and leftists) spearheaded the decolonization effort as well as social justice, development and communitarianism. They replaced or overturned the ideology, symbols, institutions and power structures of the old regime and established a new revolutionary order that was also aimed at restoring the prestige of the army, which had faltered in the last years due to the failure of their 1948 campaign in Palestine.⁵⁷

Clearly, many of the conditions that indicate a revolution are met. The events of 1952 events substituted one government by another after which the socioeconomic structure of society changed drastically. In addition to this, the conditions prior to 1952, namely the mass frustrations and popular uprisings (primarily against British influence), the dissident political movements (in this case the army, leftists and Islamists), unifying inspiring motivations (taking ownership of country and ending humiliation), political crises rendering the state incapable of executing its role (such as the destruction of Egyptian police barracks by the British or the burning of Cairo's central business district during what is known as 'black Saturday')⁵⁸ and the tolerance of other countries in this event (for instance the United States' support for the Free Officers⁵⁹) all match DeFronzo's criteria for labeling this as a genuine revolution.

§1.2: The phases of the revolution (1952):

The phases of a successful revolution, as described by him and other researchers, also seem to correspond to the 1952 situation. The first phase occurs when 'the society's intellectuals, most of whom once supported the existing regime, turn against it'.⁶⁰ After World War II, the Egyptian intellectuals rediscovered the 'Urabi revolt (a nationalist anti-British anti-French

⁵⁶ Gerges, *Making the Arab World.*, 70-71.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 74-75.

⁵⁸ Cleveland and Bunton. *A History*, 303.

⁵⁹ Laila Amin Morsy, "American Support for the 1952 Egyptian Coup: Why?" *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol 31, No. 2 (1997): 309-310.

⁶⁰ DeFronzo. *Revolutions*, 20.

uprising in 1882⁶¹), and as a result of that the revolutionary idea regained vigor, with the principle of revolution becoming the primary meaning and explanation for Egypt's history. The 1919 revolution and its supposed elitist character contributed to the monarchy's loss of credibility and as such the intellectuals joined the Free Officers⁶² and thus fulfilled DeFronzo's first phase of revolutions. The second, 'the old regime tries to save itself from revolution by attempting reforms that ultimately fail to protect the old order',⁶³ can for instance be seen in the attempt of the ruling Wafd party to normalize the circumstances in Egypt by withdrawing from the Suez Canal treaty⁶⁴ as well as by abrogating the 1936 Anglo-Egyptian treaty⁶⁵, in which British military presence in Egypt was approved.⁶⁶ This backfired when the Egyptians subsequently started to attack British soldiers, which escalated into the incident known as Black Saturday.⁶⁷ The third phase, 'the revolutionary alliance that eventually takes power from the old government is soon torn by internal conflict'⁶⁸ can be observed in Nasser's power struggles both within his Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) as well as with the Ikhwan.⁶⁹ The last four phases of events during revolutions as described by DeFronzo constitute in sum the initial moderation of the post-revolutionary government (4), the subsequent failure in fulfilling expectations and the rise of more radical revolutionary elements within the new government (5), their extreme and oftentimes coercive actions (6) and ending with the pragmatic, moderate revolutionaries replacing the radicals again in the end (7).⁷⁰ Within the context of Egypt in this case, the post-revolutionary government coexisted on good terms with the Ikhwan (4), who then during a power struggle between Nasser and Naguib (on the level of democratization⁷¹) demanded among other things an Islamic constitution and democratic institutions in exchange for support (5). When Nasser declined, Ikhwan members attempted to assassinate him (6)⁷² and eventually Nasser, having

⁶¹ Juan Cole, "Egypt's Modern Revolutions and the Fall of Mubarak," in *The New Middle East: Protest and Revolution in the Arab World*, ed. Fawaz A. Gerges (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 63-66.

⁶² Giedre Sabaseviciute, "Re-creating the Past: The Manipulation of the Notion of Rupture in Egyptian Revolutions," *Institut d'histoire moderne et contemporaine* (2011), <https://journals.openedition.org/lrf/348>

⁶³ DeFronzo. *Revolutions*, 20.

⁶⁴ Cole, "Egypt's Modern Revolutions," 69.

⁶⁵ Cleveland and Bunton, *A History*, 303.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 197.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 303.

⁶⁸ DeFronzo. *Revolutions*, 20.

⁶⁹ de Smet, "A Dialectical Pedagogy", 158-160.

⁷⁰ DeFronzo. *Revolutions*, 21.

⁷¹ Gerges, *Making the Arab World*, 78-83.

⁷² de Smet, "A Dialectical Pedagogy", 158-160.

also replaced Naguib as RCC leader after differing opinions regarding the revolution's direction, assumed and consolidated his power (7) ⁷³.

§1.3: Coup-volution (1952):

Conversely, there are also researchers that do not or would not consider the events of 1952 a revolution at all. Fawaz A. Gerges for instance continually calls it only a coup and only mentions it as a revolution on one page of his book 'Making the Arab World: Nasser, Qutb, and the Clash That Shaped the Middle East'.⁷⁴ He refers to, for instance, their lack of a uniform revolutionary road map, and the lack of consistency due to internal strife within the revolutionary movement, primarily the RCC.⁷⁵ Yinger and Katz created a revolutionary scale, with one the one hand protests that primarily call for change or ousting of leaders and on the other hand the protests that seek to overthrow - that is to completely remove and change – the leadership (culture).⁷⁶ With regards to this scale, the spontaneity of the Free Officers⁷⁷ taking power in Egypt during popular protests⁷⁸ can lead to the consideration that it was a coup d'état instead of a revolution. Moreover, de Smet argues that neither the concepts of coup nor revolution fit what he calls the 'Nasserist intervention'. He asserts that the contradictory character of Nasserism and the events of 1952 point to the Gramscian concept of Caesarism. In the context of Nasser's rise and rule this concerns the ending of a protracted power struggle between the national-popular and the colonial bloc by a semi-independent 'external' force, that deflected the real revolutionary process and substituted it for Nasser's own authoritarian (although relatively progressive and qualitative) direction.⁷⁹

The events of 1952 and its immediate aftermath comprise of many of the elements often considered to define a revolution. However, I assert that it was a revolution whose ideals were realized by means of a coup. This coup might have been Caesarian in essence, movements and outcomes, but I hold a similar view to Tarek Osman, author of "Egypt on the Brink". He asserts that by the extent of the political, economic and social changes as well as the legitimization of his rule by popular mandate, Nasser turned the coup into a revolution.⁸⁰ As

⁷³ Cleveland and Bunton, *A History*, 301-308.

⁷⁴ Page 6.

⁷⁵ Gerges, *Making the Arab World*, 78-93.

⁷⁶ Yinger and Katz, "Revolution," 361-362.

⁷⁷ Brecht de Smet calls the appearance of the Free Officers on the political scene a 'deus ex machina'.

⁷⁸ de Smet, "A Dialectical Pedagogy", 158.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 169-171.

⁸⁰ Osman, *Egypt on the Brink*, 57-63.

such, I will use a term coined during the ousting of Mubarak many years later, but which I find very applicable to the events of 1952 as well, and believe better indicates the particularity of a situation that can be considered this amalgamation of both a coup and a revolution, namely, that of a ‘coup-volution’.⁸¹

§1.4: Defining the revolution (2013):

DeFronzo’s criteria for and phases of a revolution can equally be applied to the events of 2013 as well. Mass frustrations that lead to popular uprisings of the urban and rural population can in the case of the events of 2013 be observed in the massive street protests of June 30th, 2013. As described in this paper’s introduction, the fear of the disintegration of the state, increasing influence of the Ikhwan (‘Brotherhoodization’ of state institutions) and the threats to Egypt’s security led to the creation of the *tammarud* (rebellion) grassroots movement and increasingly escalating protests all around the country. Moreover, the dissatisfied dissident elite political movements are exemplified here by the unity of the political opposition facilitated only by their common mistrust of the government. Additionally, there was a mistrust of the ruling Freedom and Justice Party (strongly affiliated with the Ikhwan) against the state apparatus.⁸² The political crises, as described above, brought about the union of both Islamists, who themselves were disgruntled and disillusioned by the apparent incompetence of the Ikhwan-aligned government, and the secularists. The millions of people that were on the street, combined with Morsi’s overreliance on repression and his apparent ignorance to the veracity and actual size of the protests, meant that it was too late for the government to stop the wave of unrest and eventually their removal from power.⁸³ The last of DeFronzo’s criteria for revolutions, that of the tolerance of other countries, can be evidenced by the mild reaction of other countries. Some, such as Saudi-Arabia, Iraq, Syria, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar praised the change of leadership in Egypt and its promised transition to democracy,⁸⁴ while others, even though they were worried about the development, refrained from taking action.⁸⁵

⁸¹ Nathan W. Toronto, “Egypt’s ‘Coup-volution’,” *Middle East Insights*, No. 6 (2011): 1. National University of Singapore. <http://blog.nus.edu.sg/middleeastinstitute/2011/02/16/egypts-coup-volution/>

⁸² Sowers and Rutherford, “Revolution and Counter-Revolution”, 12-15.

⁸³ Hazem Kandil, *The Power Triangle: Military, Security and Politics in Regime Change* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 336-338.

⁸⁴ al-Jazeera, “International reactions to Morsi’s removal.” July 4, 2013.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2013/07/201373223029610370.html>

⁸⁵ Martin Beck, *The July 2013 Military Coup in Egypt: One normative clarification and some empirical issues* (Odense: Center for Mellemøstudier, 2013), 2.

§1.5: The phases of the revolution (2013):

As for the phases of revolution in the context of al-Sisi and the events of 2013, there is a difference with Nasser's situation. Al-Sisi, as head of the army that ousted Morsi, can be considered to be the foremost actor in the events of 2013. In itself, the coup d'état they committed did not immediately bring al-Sisi to power as it did with Nasser, but it made him popular to the extent that it prepared or even brought him to power.⁸⁶ Therefore I believe that the uprisings, the coup and the following election of al-Sisi to the presidency can be considered to be one continuous event, which can be defined as a 'coup-volution', the previously mentioned term coined during the similar ousting of Mubarak in 2011.⁸⁷

The protests against Morsi in 2011 were marked by violence by the liberal and secular protesters against the supporters of the sitting president. The countries' intellectuals supported this anti-Morsi violence, asserting that as Egypt was in a 'state of war', violence against the military and support of the Ikhwan was the work of 'terrorists and fascists'.⁸⁸ While in 2012 they were initially indecisive about the choice of supporting an Islamist presidential candidate or one of the old order, the intellectuals, primarily the secular ones, they soon turned against the government as a whole and called for the army to intervene.⁸⁹

The government of Morsi, being a post-revolutionary government trying to improve the situation left by Mubarak, tried to implement some reforms in order to appease the population, still in a revolutionary mood. The two main challenges for the Morsi administration, namely food and security, were not to be solved by his attempts at gaining IMF loans. Similarly, Morsi's efforts to bypass the judiciary and thereby consolidating his power has the adverse effect: uniting his opposition and increasing the scale of protests. When he announces elections, this was declared as unconstitutional and thus failed as well.⁹⁰ As such, the conditions for the second phase of revolutions are satisfied.

The next five phases of revolutions as described by DeFronzo cannot be specifically pointed out when looking at the events of 2013 and its immediate aftermath, as they mostly describe internal conflicts between more radical and moderate parts of the revolutionary

⁸⁶ Robert Springborg, "President Sisi's Delegative Authoritarianism," *IAI Working Papers* 15, Issue 26 (2015): 2 <https://www.iai.it/en/publicazioni/president-sisi-delegative-authoritarianism>

⁸⁷ Toronto, "Egypt's 'Coup-volution'," 1.

⁸⁸ Khaled Abou El-Fadl, "Failure of a Revolution: The Military, Secular Intelligentsia and Religion in Egypt's Pseudo-Secular State," in *Routledge Handbook of the Arab Spring: Rethinking Democratization*, ed. Larbi Sadiki (London: Routledge, 2014), 254.

⁸⁹ El-Fadl, "Failure," 258-261.

⁹⁰ Sowers and Rutherford, "Revolution and Counter-Revolution", 11-15.

alliance. Egyptian society was polarized at the time of al-Sisi's rise to power, as a result of, among other things, disillusionment about the results of the protests of both 2011 and 2013. For instance the April 6 Movement, an important faction in the protests of 2011, did not support the interim governments as well as al-Sisi specifically. However, their imprisonment and the military's creation of a pro-Sisi united front of state institutions helped consolidate power and thereby effectively quenched all opposition.⁹¹ Therefore, the last phases for a revolution can only be approached generally in the case of al-Sisi, and perhaps future developments will further clarify the internal fight for power within the revolutionary forces. Furthermore, the fact that al-Sisi was elected, although already having a strong power base, complicates the analysis of the sequences of events of this 'coup-volution'.

§1.6: The position of the military:

Having established the uniqueness of the events of 1952 and 2013 within the criteria and phases of revolutions and coups, namely that a 'coup-volution' best defines Nasser's and al-Sisi's rise to the Egyptian presidency, one aspect of power dynamics still has to be established: the role of the army within the Egyptian society, and the unique position they hold vis à vis both the government (and so too their possible toppling) and the people. As seen in both 1952 and 2013, the army followed the people in their struggle against the existing government and subsequently took matters into their own hands by deposing the sitting leadership. While the possibility of a national army going against the government is unheard of in most European countries, in many countries such as Egypt this is not the case.

Historically, the Egyptian army has held a position of relative independence and power within the political system as a whole. Before Nasser came to power in 1952, the constitution stated that the king was the commander-in-chief and that it was he who held power over the army, but beyond this there was little to no reference of military issues. King Farouk did not use this power to the extent possible and was therefore not able to prevent the coup-volution of 1952.⁹² During Nasser's rule, the influence of the military on many aspects of Egyptian

⁹¹ Housam Darwisheh, "Egypt Under Sisi: From An Authoritarian Dominant Party System To Strongman Politics," *JETRO-IDE ME-Review*, Vol. 6 (2019): 6-11.

https://www.ide.go.jp/English/Publish/Periodicals/Me_review/201903.html

⁹² Florence Gaub, "Civil-military relations in the MENA: between fragility and resilience," *Chaillot Papers*, No. 139 (2016): 15. European Union Institute for Security Studies. <https://www.iss.europa.eu/content/civil-military-relations-mena-between-fragility-and-resilience>

society and the political system increased.⁹³ They protected as well as participated in governing the country, and because of their belief that they were the only ones capable of running and keeping control over the bureaucratic apparatus,⁹⁴ they had as such effectively brought to an end the confrontation between the Islamists and the nationalists in Egypt, a struggle for the social space and political leadership that at that time was present all around the postcolonial Middle East. An expansive security state was created, and the new military rulers prioritized internal security and regime survival instead of institution building and the rule of law. Fawaz Gerges notes that this had far-reaching implications for Egyptian society, as the new relationship between them and the state contributed to the durability of authoritarianism and the birth of the Egyptian deep state.⁹⁵ This would be the general status-quo of the Egyptian society and their relation to the government and the military for the next decades, with the following presidents almost all hailing from the army. Sadat, Nasser's successor, tried to demilitarize the Egyptian state,⁹⁶ while at the same time the role of the military expanded 'horizontally'; into the national economy, specifically into agriculture, industry (military and civil) and infrastructure.⁹⁷ After Sadat, Mubarak increased the role of the military in both the government and the economy again,⁹⁸ but less than under Nasser, and he primarily focused on the army's growth with regards to the economic development of the country.⁹⁹ The military would hereby gain an increasingly autonomous status vis à vis the private sector in addition to the large leverage they already had in politics.¹⁰⁰ As a result of this, the army would also gain a sense of corporatism and professionalism, and in spite of the cronyism that can be associated with the political establishment and the military, the army has always had a real popularity with the population as being an institution that protects the country.¹⁰¹ This can possibly be attributed to the socialization role of the military in Egypt, as

⁹³ Robert Springborg, "The President and the Field Marshal: Civil-Military Relations in Egypt Today," *MERIP Middle East Report*, No. 147 (1987): 5. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3011943?seq=1>

⁹⁴ Imad Harb, "The Egyptian Military in Politics: Disengagement or Accommodation?" *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 57, No. 2. (2003): 273. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4329881?seq=1>.

⁹⁵ Gerges, *Making the Arab World*, 123-128.

⁹⁶ Abul-Magd, "The Egyptian military in politics", 1.

⁹⁷ Mehran Kamrava, "Military Professionalization and Civil-Military Relations in the Middle East," *Political Science Quarterly* 115, No. 1 (2000): 80. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2658034?seq=1>.

⁹⁸ Abul-Magd, "The Egyptian military in politics", 1

⁹⁹ Stephen H. Gotowicki. *The Role of the Egyptian Military in Domestic Society* (Washington: National Defense University, 1997), no page numbers, <https://community.apan.org/wg/tradoc-g2/fmso/m/fmso-monographs/240947>.

¹⁰⁰ Abul-Magd, "The Egyptian military in politics", 1-2.

¹⁰¹ Philippe Droz-Vincent. "Authoritarianism, Revolutions, Armies and Arab Regime Transitions", in *The International Spectator*, Vol. 46, Issue 2, 5-21 (2011). Retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03932729.2011.576168>, 18.

the mandatory conscription and training in the army provides a sense of citizenship, responsibility, and nationalism to young Egyptian men.¹⁰²

After the ousting of Mubarak in 2011, the army obtained the leadership of the country in the transitional period, by a mandate of the people. They increased their control over the institutions while at the same time establishing an alliance with the Ikhwan. This alliance allowed the Muslim Brothers and Morsi to win the presidency, who as a result maintained the distinct status and privileges of the army.¹⁰³

However, when anti-Morsi protests erupted in 2013, the army once again chose the side of the general population. As their ‘protector’, the army opted for deposing the president.¹⁰⁴

Under al-Sisi, the military establishment has retained its unique position, and al-Sisi has surrounded himself with former military personnel, and the Egyptian economy now consists of ‘a hybrid economy in which major state-run projects are largely controlled and coordinated by the military’, as Hazem Kandil notes.¹⁰⁵

§1.7: Conclusion chapter 1:

In all, this chapter provides an analysis of the events of 1952 and 2013 and tries to determine whether these can be described as revolutions in terms of phases and criteria, and whether both instances show similarities in this regard. To summarize, I assert that both instances meet the criteria of revolutions to a large extent, and that the term ‘coup-volution’ best describes the peculiar situation of both events, as they appear to be coups as well as revolutions. Even though the phases of revolutions show some similarities but also some differences in both instances, I think a comparison is still warranted. In both cases this shows the similarities with regards to the rise to power of both al-Sisi and Nasser. As seen in this chapter, the particular role the Egyptian military fulfills within the country facilitated, and is conditional, to the presidencies of both men to an extent not possible in most countries. Thus, the comparison between al-Sisi and Nasser can be justified for two reasons that are of interest for this chapter. The first is that both were military men coming to power in a specific type of military coup d’état: the coup-volution. Second, the expansion and cultivation of the army that was part of the governance of Nasser has contributed to the (type of) governance of al-Sisi.

¹⁰² Gotowicki, *The Role*, 3.

¹⁰³ Abul-Magd, “The Egyptian military in politics”, 2-3.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 4.

¹⁰⁵ Hazem Kandil, “Sisi’s Egypt,” 7.

The next chapter shall delve deeper into the actual political behavior of the army in general and al-Sisi and Nasser in particular.

CHAPTER 2: Nasserism and the al-Sisi-vision

The previous chapter has established that, at least in the context of the way of coming to power and the role of Nasser and al-Sisi vis à vis the state and the army warrants a comparison between the two, and shows many similarities. Consequently, this chapter shall examine both men in terms of their governance and visions, and conclude that on this front, the similarities largely stop.

The vision of Nasser that is Nasserism is outlined in his book *The Philosophy of the Revolution*, the “Charter for National Action of the United Arab Republic” (a document outlining the principles of the revolution of 1952, created for the pan-Arabist union of Egypt and Syria into a single state),¹⁰⁶ and the 1956 Constitution of Egypt. Nasser himself asserts in his ‘philosophy’, as he reluctantly calls it, that the revolution consisted of two parts. On the one hand, a political revolution, in which the Egyptian people ‘wrests the right to govern itself from the hand of tyranny’¹⁰⁷. On the other hand, he notes a social revolution, ‘involving the conflict of classes’¹⁰⁸. The social revolution sets people against each other, as it ‘shakes values and loosens principles’, while the political revolution has to unite most of the population. The contradictory factors of both revolutions create unstable circumstances within the country, which can, according to Nasser, only be kept in balance by the army.¹⁰⁹ Thus, there existed a curious duality between these social and political revolutions embedded in Nasserism; aspirations for national sovereignty and freedom from foreign influence, and a quest for national unity through social justice. However, both revolutions entailed a confrontation between Egyptians themselves, and against others: landowners, corrupt political elites and Western powers.¹¹⁰

Elements from both revolutions are visible in the principles of the 1952 revolution, which the Charter for National Action of the United Arab Republic describes as an ‘incomplete blueprint for revolutionary change’, as the ‘Egyptian people’ – which in this case can be considered to be nothing less than Nasser and his followers themselves – only had six principles. These six principles are, in more or less the same words, also present in the 1956

¹⁰⁶ Cleveland and Bunton, *A History*, 314.

¹⁰⁷ Gamal Abdel Nasser, *Egypt's Liberation: The Philosophy of the Revolution* (Washington: Public Affairs Press, 1955), 39-40.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 40.

¹⁰⁹ Nasser, *Egypt's Liberation*, 39-45.

¹¹⁰ Reem Abou El-Fadl, *Foreign Policy as Nation Making: Turkey and Egypt in the Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 111-113.

Constitution of Egypt. They include: the end of imperialism and colonialism ('and its traitorous Egyptian stooges-in the face of British occupation of the Canal Zone'), the end of feudalism, the end of the monopoly of capital and wealthy leaders ('capitalists') in governance, the establishment of social justice-in the face of exploitation and despotism, the establishment of a powerful national army, and the establishment of a true democratic system.¹¹¹

§2.1: Dimensions and interpretations Nasserism:

Baha Abu-Laban argues that these principles mentioned above and the context they appeared in (primarily the Charter for National Action) embody the new doctrine of the government, and also provided the Egyptians with a course of action and a new national identity that encompasses six general dimensions, namely revolutionism, modernism, future-orientation, self-confidence, egalitarianism and non-interventionism. Revolutionism indicates the Egyptian people's trait of always fighting for social reform and freedom from arbitrary authority, something the Charter assumes is reflected in history, and most recently in the 1952 revolution. Modernism is described in the sense of scientific progress and a positive balance between the modern and the traditional. Similarly, 'future-orientation' implies an orientation towards the future (scientific socialist planning and mobilization of resources) without destroying the historical heritage. A newfound trust in the collective abilities (in this case as a result of the revolution) indicates the self-confidence dimension of the new national character. Lastly, egalitarianism and non-interventionism imply social freedom, justice, democracy and the absence of discriminatory practices and, the idea of having a shared destiny with their African and Arab neighbors as well as having positive interactions with the world at large, such as with the United Nations.¹¹²

Professors Elie Podeh and Onn Winckler add another element to the discussion on the essence of Nasserism. They describe five different existing interpretations of the Nasserist

¹¹¹ Alan W. Horton, "The Charter for National Action of the UAR: A Résumé of the Complete Document," *Northeast Africa Series*, Vol. 9, No. 5. (1962): 3. <http://www.icwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/AWH-5.pdf>, and Kayla Sivak-Reid, "Tracing a State and its Language from Province to Republic: Translations of Modern Egypt's Constitutions," *Classics Honors Projects*, Paper 22 (2016): 43-44. http://digitalcommons.mcalester.edu/classics_honors/22

¹¹² Baha Abu-Laban, "The National Character in the Egyptian Revolution," *The Journal of Developing Areas* 1, No. 2 (1967): 184-192. www.jstor.org/stable/4189360.

movement based on various works from other scholars ¹¹³ that analyzed Nasserism and came up with different, but in my opinion not mutually exclusive concepts for describing it.

Firstly, they identify it as a possibly ideological movement. As such, Nasserism can be considered not necessarily as an ideology as we know it (like for instance liberalism or communism), but as a fusion of various ideas that together create the perception of a 'Nasserist ideology'. The principles of this ideology can, according to them, be found in Nasser's own *The Philosophy of the Revolution*, ¹¹⁴ the 1956 constitution and 1962 National Charter. In addition to this, the ideology-interpretation can be described as consisting of a particular Arab feeling with regards to (inter)national governance. ¹¹⁵ This theory might also be supported by the idea that there existed, in the late 1940s and early 1950s, an ideological vacuum created by the lack of an inclusive political vision with proper plans for Egypt's future by the monarchy and the political establishment. Thus, this void could in turn be filled by a new ideology, and it is conceivable that this could possibly be Nasserism. ¹¹⁶

The second interpretation of Nasserism describes it as being a sort of personality cult centered on Nasser himself, ¹¹⁷ namely focusing on his charisma and particularity as a leader. P.J. Vatikiotis describes this as a support for governance focused primarily on the dynamic leadership of a charismatic leader. ¹¹⁸ In this view, Nasser became an idolized leader, who was able to convince many Egyptians that they were on the brink of a historical, dramatic turning point in which he would bring them from one era into the next. ¹¹⁹ Vatikiotis calls this a 'phenomenon of personal charismatic leadership', or a 'modern pharaonism' focused around the Egyptian *rayyes*, the Chief. ¹²⁰ Podeh and Winckler mention this as well, asserting that the twentieth century as a whole saw the rise of leaders who came from a military background and fought against the upper classes ('modern caudillos') ¹²¹.

As a third interpretation of Nasserism, the modernization theory might shed light on the changes Nasser and his movement brought to Egypt and the Arab world. Doing away with the traditional Egyptian society and destroying most remnants of the colonial period, Nasser

¹¹³ Among others Walid Khalidi, Panayiotis J. Vatikiotis, Max Weber, Karl Marx, Shimon Shamir, Torcuato Di Tella, Morroe Berger and Mark Cooper.

¹¹⁴ Published in 1954.

¹¹⁵ Podeh and Winckler, "Introduction," 1-2.

¹¹⁶ Gerges, *Making the Arab World*, 71.

¹¹⁷ What they call the 'giant-leader phenomenon'

¹¹⁸ Vatikiotis, *Nasser*, 195.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 265-266.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 297.

¹²¹ Podeh and Winckler, "Introduction," 9-10.

shaped, in this interpretation, Egypt into a modern, ‘western’ nation-state.¹²² As shall be discussed later on, this could evidence the megaprojects undertaken by Nasser in Egypt.

Fourthly, looking at a wider historical context, Nasserism is seen primarily as a protest movement against imperialism and colonialism. In this view, in which Podeh and Winckler cite Shimon Shamir, Nasserism revolves first and foremost around a break with the past. Similar to the modernization theory, but in this case more focused on “a messianic response of the Arab-Islamic world to ‘the attack of the West’.”¹²³ This anti-colonialism is an important point within Nasserism, at least that of the 1950s and 1960s, as evidenced by for instance Nasser’s rhetoric in his own books.

As a final point, Nasserism might be described as being a populist movement, in a sense that it mobilized the ‘common man’ with a rhetoric that attacks the (primarily political) status quo by using charismatic figures as well as the usage of symbolism, language and imagery that is rooted in popular culture. Additionally, populism is often described as a result of the alienation of the working class due to, among other things, the massive control of the elite over the political system and the means of production, as well as the relation between the state and possible colonial powers.¹²⁴

Considering these interpretations vis à vis the reality of Nasserism, it is possible to see that there is a truth to be found in all of these. I believe that some interpretations carry more weight than others for the context of this paper. The idea that Nasserism is an ideological movement holds veracity in the sense that, among other things, it consisted of a process of production of meanings, signs and values in social life and a body of ideas characteristic of a particular social group or class. However due to the conflicting nature of the various interpretations of the concept of ideology, as for instance described by Professor Terry Eagleton, as well as Nasserist fusion of many different ideas or possibly even other ideologies, I assert that this is not the best interpretation to use in this paper.¹²⁵

Similarly, the interpretations of Nasserism as a modernization movement and as a protest movement against imperialism and colonialism allow for defining Nasserism in that way. For one, they are relatively similar and can, in my opinion, not be distinguished as separate distinguishable interpretations that perfectly describe the movement. Marxist views of Nasserism even hold that it created a regime unsuitable for modernization, thus reducing the

¹²² Podeh and Winckler, “Introduction,” 2-3

¹²³ Ibid., 3-4.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 4-9.

¹²⁵ Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction* (London: Verso, 1991), 1-31.

meaningfulness of the modernization interpretation.¹²⁶ Also, the fact that Nasserism contained many other elements, for instance, socialism,¹²⁷ shows that it was not only an anti-imperialist or anti-colonialist movement.

However, I believe that Nasserism can best be described as an amalgamation of all interpretations, as all contain some truths to them. Nonetheless, for this paper I predominantly assume that it is a populist movement with strong components of a personality cult centered on Nasser himself.¹²⁸ The alienation of the masses from the ruling elite as a result of the growing gap between rich and poor in addition to strong grievances towards the British occupation¹²⁹ and the perceived connection of ruling Wafd Party and the monarchy to it,¹³⁰ are among the conditions that are likely to result in the emergence of populism, in this case that of Nasserism. Moreover, Nasserism was nationalistic, another feature of populism.¹³¹

The interpretation of Nasserism as a personality cult centered on Nasser himself supports this populist movement-theory in that the idea of populism also presupposes the existence of a charismatic figure.¹³² Nasser himself, known as the '*habib al-malayin*', that is, the 'beloved of the masses'¹³³, has proven to be emblematic to this concept of the charismatic leader. In the same way, Nasser himself often spoke of having relied on the masses, and that his and the new *rakyat* of the Egyptians was solely based on the support from the people. Panayiotis Vatikiotis describes him aptly as being 'Robin Hood, Sindbad, Saladin, *ftewwa* and pharaoh all rolled into one'.¹³⁴ This will be further discussed at length in chapter three.

In Nasserism, all these principles, interpretations and dimensions come together, and were subsequently expressed in various policies implemented by the new president and his government. Many scholars define Nasserism and its corresponding politics in similar ways. Pan-Arabism (sometimes even pan-Africanism), Arab and Egyptian nationalism, Arab socialism and anti-imperialism/-colonialism are often described as the primary tenets of Nasserism. For reasons that shall become clear, I add 'the boosting of the Egyptian self-confidence' (similar to Abu-Laban's assertion) to these tenets.

¹²⁶ Podeh and Winckler, "Introduction," 2-4.

¹²⁷ Tsaregorodtseva, "The Revolutionary Socialists", 130.

¹²⁸ The others, however valid, do not carry much weight for this paper's subject, primarily with regards to the comparisons made between Nasser and al-Sisi from 2011 onwards.

¹²⁹ Cleveland and Bunton, *A History*, 301-305.

¹³⁰ Podeh and Winckler, "Introduction," 13.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 7.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹³⁴ Vatikiotis, *Nasser*, 265.

§2.2: Arab nationalism and pan-Arabism Nasser:

Arab nationalism and pan-Arabism are closely related concepts that relate to the interpretations of Nasserism as an ideological movement, and the dimensions of non-interventionism (primarily regarding the idea of a shared Arab destiny). Arab nationalism is a specific branch of nationalism in general. It holds that all Arab peoples are part of one community with a shared origin and heritage that binds all of them. It is disseminated by the means of the modern nation state(s); education, the media, the bureaucracy and/or mass mobilization that evokes a sense of belonging to a single community.¹³⁵ This type of nationalism assumes that Arabs played a central role in shaping the Islamic civilization, and that Islam has played a central role in shaping Arab civilization. However, this specific link to Islam vis à vis Arab nationalism is sometimes questioned by scholars.¹³⁶ Pan-Arabism extends these ideas and asserts that this religious, historical and linguistic bond the Arabs possess should be reflected in their political reality. Even though this is also debated by scholars at length, this means that the Arab people should have political unity in the form of a single autonomous Arab state, or at the least form a close political alliance with each other.¹³⁷ Under Nasser, these ideas flowered,¹³⁸ as he called for Arab unity in addition to actually trying to achieve something of the sort. He called himself a nationalist, saying that he puts his country and the 'Arab nation' it is part of first, and also asserted that 'Arab nationalism means many things. Above all it is a spiritual drive, a voluntary solidarity of the Arab peoples everywhere based on a common heritage of language, culture and history' and 'abolishing the colonial social structure'.¹³⁹ Even though Nasser even broadened this vision, noting that Egyptians are part of the Arab, Islamic as well as African 'circles',¹⁴⁰ his vision did not materialize fully and of significant duration. Stemming from anti-Israeli sentiments following the 1948 war in Palestine¹⁴¹ as well as anti-Western/anti-Imperialist feelings in the Arab

¹³⁵ Peter Wien, *Arab Nationalism: The Politics of History and Culture in the Modern Middle East* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 1-3.

¹³⁶ Michaelle L. Browsers, *Political Ideology in the Arab World: Accommodation and Transformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 1-2.

¹³⁷ Maqbool Ahmad Awan, "Gamal Abdel Nasser's Pan-Arabism and Formation of the United Arab Republic: An Appraisal," *Journal of Research Society of Pakistan*, Vol. 54, No. 1 (2017): 114-115. http://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/HistoryPStudies/PDF_Files/8_V-30-No1-Jun17.pdf.

¹³⁸ Wien, *Arab Nationalism*, 2.

¹³⁹ Gamal Abdel Nasser, "Where I Stand and Why," originally published in *Life* (July 20, 1959): 1-2. https://books.google.nl/books/about/Where_I_Stand_and_why.html?id=0iyQAAAAIAAJ&redir_esc=y.

¹⁴⁰ Nasser, *Egypt's Liberation*, 85-86.

¹⁴¹ El-Fadl, *Foreign Policy*, 115.

world,¹⁴² Nasser tried to interlink Arab and Egyptian sovereignty.¹⁴³ In 1958, out of true pan-Arab sentiment and solidarity, or out of sheer necessity, Syria (at that time in a state of political chaos) and Egypt joined to become the United Arab Republic. Internal ideological and political strife (primarily on governance issues and inter-Syrian rivalries) led to the UAR's dissolution only three years later, in 1961. Until his death nine years later Nasser would no longer foster pan-Arabist proposals for unions between countries.¹⁴⁴ The defeat in the 1967 Arab–Israeli War also contributed extensively to the diminishing of Arab nationalism and the ideology of its figurehead, Nasserism, as it shattered Arab confidence and militancy in their anti-Zionist and anti-colonialist struggle and sentiments.¹⁴⁵ Pan-Arabism was thus an essential aspect of Nasser's political vision, and was reflected in his actions and rhetoric and so too an element of Nasserism, even though it failed.

§2.3: Anti-imperialism Nasser:

Anti-imperialism also lay at the root of pan-Arabism and Arab Nationalism, and was also an important tenet of Nasserism in general. The anti-imperialism of Nasser supports the interpretation of Nasserism as a protest movement against colonialism and imperialism, and fits the dimension of non-interventionism (specifically wanting to have mutually beneficial relations with other countries). Even during Nasser's rise to power Egyptians had called for self-determinacy on their own political, social and economic trajectory.¹⁴⁶ Anti-British sentiments, and specifically anti-imperialist sentiments were part and parcel of Nasserism. Foreign influence, from among others Britain, the United States and Israel (whose very creation was deemed a threat to Egyptian and Arab sovereignty) could not be accepted, so when Britain, France and Israel invaded Egypt in 1956 to protect their interests in the region,¹⁴⁷ and were subsequently forced to withdraw by the United States and the Soviet Union, this counted as a major political (anti-imperialist) victory for Nasser(ism). Furthermore, he had cleverly created a diplomacy of balance regarding both the Soviet Union and the United States, the two major world powers at the time.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴² Awan, "Gamal Abdel Nasser," 114.

¹⁴³ El-Fadl, *Foreign Policy*, 115.

¹⁴⁴ Gerges, *Making the Arab World*, 189-192.

¹⁴⁵ Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt*, 98-99.

¹⁴⁶ Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt*, 43.

¹⁴⁷ Following the US' withdrawal of funding of the Egyptian Aswan Dam, Nasser had nationalized the Suez canal, important for (primarily European) trade.

¹⁴⁸ de Smet, "A Dialectical Pedagogy", 160-161.

While anti-imperialist on paper, for instance stating in the UAR Charter that ‘Nonalignment and positive neutrality offer the greatest hope for peace’,¹⁴⁹ some scholars argue that Nasser’s rule shows signs of imperialism itself. When Soviets warned of an imminent Israeli attack on Syria in 1967, Nasser saw this as a chance to use anti-Zionism, the ‘main common denominator of pan-Arab solidarity’, as Efraim Kersch calls it, to establish pan-Arab unification and fulfill his ‘imperial dream’ and wish for ‘self-aggrandizement’.¹⁵⁰

§2.4: Arab socialism Nasser:

The dimensions of egalitarianism, revolutionism (in the sense of fighting for social justice and freedom) and possibly also modernism come together with the interpretations of Nasserism as an ideological, modernizing and populist movement in the Nasserist tenet of Arab socialism. This is a specific branch of socialism that was called ‘Arab’ in order to show its supposed indigenous roots. Before, but specifically after the breakup of the UAR Nasserism incorporated socialism.¹⁵¹ As a political system based mainly on equality and social justice, this was expressed by Nasser in various ways. Land reforms aimed at ending feudalism (and the political influence of big landowners) started in 1952 and benefited millions of rural Egyptians.¹⁵² Moreover, the 1956 Constitution establishes this anti-feudalist stance, and it also called for social justice in many other forms, such as protection from exploitation, equality for all, freedom of speech and belief, and the right to education, housing and nourishment.¹⁵³ Women were decreed to have the same rights as men, and as a result entered the workplace and universities, which were also reformed in order to boost literacy and promote socialism.¹⁵⁴ Syria withdrew from the UAR mainly because of their elite’s opposition to these kinds of agricultural and socialist reforms, so in 1961, after Syria’s withdrawal, Nasser had a new opportunity to implement his socialism more radically. In addition to the land reforms, education reforms, health reforms and other social services reforms, Nasser privatized the economic infrastructures (for instance roads, (air-)ports, dams

¹⁴⁹ Horton, “The Charter,” 20.

¹⁵⁰ Efraim Karsh. *Islamic imperialism: a history* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 162-171.

¹⁵¹ Cleveland and Bunton, *A History*, 316.

¹⁵² Peter Mansfield, “Nasser and Nasserism,” *International Journal*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (1973): 671-672. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40201172?origin=crossref&seq=1>.

¹⁵³ Sivak-Reid, “Tracing a State,” 43-52.

¹⁵⁴ Cleveland and Bunton, *A History*, 319-320.

and multiple forms of transport), the country's industry and the banks. As such, he shaped the Egyptian cultural and social life to be more equal, more industrialized and 'more Egyptian'.¹⁵⁵

Considering the accomplishments of Nasser and Nasserism inside and outside of Egypt, I argue that while it succeeded in promoting unity and solidarity within the Arab world on multiple occasions, Nasserist policies consisted primarily of Egyptian nationalist endeavors. The success of the reforms in Egypt during Nasser's rule are therefore one of the prime reasons Nasser has remained popular in Egypt until now (as shall be discussed in chapter three).

§2.5: Egyptian self-confidence under Nasser:

Nasser's policies benefited and modernized large segments of the Egyptian population, but primarily the poor and the middle class,¹⁵⁶ and thereby fostered 'a new sense of national dignity and self-confidence (...) after centuries of humiliation', as Peter Mansfield aptly argues, that succeeded in inspiring devotion that expressed itself in the Egyptians being able to achieve bigger exertions than they could have expected, such as the building of the monumental Aswan High Dam.¹⁵⁷ Because of this, I believe that even though it was not a basic tenet of Nasserism or a policy implemented by Nasser, in a sense that it was a political or ideological goal of Nasserism, it is a direct result thereof and might be considered to be an important implicit aspect of Nasser's type of governance. One of the major sources of Nasser and Nasserism's popularity then and now stems from the fact that he restored this self-confidence, and as we shall see in the next chapter, one of the reasons people still call for a 'new Nasser'. This corresponds to Abu-Laban's Nasserist dimension of self-confidence as well as the interpretation of Nasserism as a modernization movement (as the modernizing projects were aimed at renewing Egyptian self-confidence).

§2.6: Dimensions and interpretations al-Sisi vision:

The rise and immediate 'revolutionary' politics or ideas of al-Sisi also have to be tested in light of the theories on the sorts of movements as described above. Given that the events that brought al-Sisi to power as well as his political approach are relatively recent compared to

¹⁵⁵ Mansfield, "Nasser and Nasserism," 679-688.

¹⁵⁶ Gerjes, *Making the Arab World*, 211-212.

¹⁵⁷ Mansfield, "Nasser and Nasserism," 688.

those of Nasser, there cannot be spoken of a definite kind of ‘al-Sisi-ism’ in the same vein as ‘Nasserism’. He does, however, have a following of supporters and a power-base that is based on certain views. This ‘al-Sisi vision’, as I shall call it, can also be clarified vis à vis Podesh and Winckler’s analysis of possible interpretations of Nasserism and DeFronzo’s criteria needed for calling something a revolution.

First of all, is the al-Sisi vision ideological? Similar to Nasserism, I assert that this is not the best interpretation. al-Sisi has not formed a ruling party, nor is he the head of a party.¹⁵⁸ Furthermore, his political machine was, like Nasser, filled with former military officers instead of real politicians, thereby turning politics into mere management.¹⁵⁹ Also, his own thesis, written in 2006 while in an American Army War College, provides only a meagre view of his ideas surrounding Middle Eastern democracy. Here, he primarily talks about the need for education, democracy and a free market, as well as having a moderate view in which Islam has a place within politics, while also considering non-Islamic beliefs.¹⁶⁰ An analysis of al-Sisi’s Twitter account does not demonstrate a clear ideology apart from patriotism either.¹⁶¹ As such, it is hard to consider the al-Sisi vision to be truly ideological, as it is mainly focused on problem-solving and is also contradictory in the sense that his recent repression of political pluralism is not in line with his own views regarding democracy.¹⁶²

The interpretation of the phenomenon of personal charismatic leadership with regards to al-Sisi contains some truths. As will be discussed in the third chapter of this paper, al-Sisi is the subject of new Nasser-like narratives of salvation and leadership. For instance, he is similarly called ‘*rayyes*’ and even ‘*fatih*’, conqueror.¹⁶³

The third and fourth possible interpretations would perceive the al-Sisi vision as a modernization movement or a protest movement against Western (in this case neo-) colonialism and/or imperialism. With regards to the analysis regarding Nasser as described above, these theories also do not fit within the context of al-Sisi. The fact that al-Sisi’s government is composed primarily from former military officers (up to 80 percent of his

¹⁵⁸ Kandil, “Sisi’s Egypt”, 6.

¹⁵⁹ Kandil, *The Power Triangle*, 341.

¹⁶⁰ Abdelfattah Said al-Sisi, “Democracy in the Middle East” (Thesis, Carlisle: U.S. Army War College, 2006), 11. <https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/1173610/sisi.pdf>.

¹⁶¹ Matteo Colombo, “In his Words. A Thematic Analysis of al-Sisi’s Twitter Account,” in *Egypt’s Elections: No Change, Many Challenges*, ed. Giuseppe Dentice (Milan: Italian Institute for International Political Studies, 2018), 8-10. <https://www.ispionline.it/en/pubblicazione/egypts-election-no-change-many-challenges-19880>

¹⁶² Amy Hawthorne, “A Dangerous Deterioration: Egypt Under al-Sisi: A Conversation with Dr. Ashraf El Sherif,” *Project on Middle East and Democracy* (2017): 4-5. <https://pomed.org/a-dangerous-deterioration-egypt-under-al-sisi-a-conversation-with-dr-ashraf-el-sherif/>

¹⁶³ Tarek El-Ariss, “Future Fiction: In the Shadow of Nasser,” *Ibraaz* (June 2014), 10. <http://www.ibraaz.org/essays/95>

governors, for instance¹⁶⁴) and even family members¹⁶⁵ exemplifies the erosion of democracy. In addition to this, the modernization of society and the economy is also not present in al-Sisi's Egypt, with for instance the businesses as well as the middle class people enduring negative influences of his economic policies.¹⁶⁶ Furthermore, al-Sisi's relations with old colonialist and/or imperialist powers do not show enough animosity to justify calling his rule a protest movement against Western influence. He has close relations with for instance Britain and Germany¹⁶⁷ and even says that he needs the West's, and specifically the United States support.¹⁶⁸ Also, as shall be discussed later in this chapter, al-Sisi uses foreign investments and loans to build his megaprojects, whereas Nasser did not. Thus, the modernization movement or a protest movement interpretations do not apply as well (or perhaps not at all) to the al-Sisi vision insomuch as it does with Nasserism.

The last possible interpretation, namely that of the al-Sisi vision being populist may be valid. Al-Sisi's campaign was centered around the idea of delegitimizing and overthrowing the Morsi and his supposedly 'scheming' Ikhwan allies.¹⁶⁹ He promised to overthrow the disliked status quo, and together with imagery (side by side images on posters) and language (promising to bring stability, similar to Nasser's promises of change) likening him to old leader, he gained popular support.¹⁷⁰ These are all signs that point to populism.

Given these points I draw a similar conclusion as I did regarding Nasserism; that the al-Sisi vision or movement can be considered, at least for this paper, to be primarily a populist movement with strong components of a personality cult centered on al-Sisi himself, which is why it is sometimes called 'neo-Nasserist'.¹⁷¹ I have asserted that anti-imperialism is one of the components of Nasserism, it is definitely a less important issue for al-Sisi. The only caveat to note is that Nasser's vision was more clear cut than al-Sisi's, as Nasser wrote his ideas down in his principles in among other things his *The Philosophy of the Revolution*, whereas al-Sisi hardly did and does anything similar, even improvising his speeches.¹⁷² This makes denoting the al-Sisi vision as a true and traceable movement and vision relatively harder than it is for Nasserism, and this can also be explained as al-Sisi living in a time that is less

¹⁶⁴ Barak Barfi. *Egypt's New Realism: Challenges Under Sisi* (Washington D.C: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2018), 27-30.

¹⁶⁵ Kandil, "Sisi's Egypt", 11.

¹⁶⁶ Kandil, "Sisi's Egypt", 21-24.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 26-28

¹⁶⁸ Daniel Pipes, "Responding to Cairo's New Leadership: What Egypt's President Sisi Really Thinks," *Middle East Quarterly* (Fall 2014): 3-4. <https://www.meforum.org/4802/what-egypt-president-sisi-really-thinks>.

¹⁶⁹ El-Ariss, "Future Fiction," 8-9.

¹⁷⁰ Strasser, "Sisi and the Strong Man."

¹⁷¹ Pipes, "Responding to Cairo," 4.

¹⁷² Kandil, "Sisi's Egypt", 13.

ideological than Nasser's. Similarly, the dimensions of Nasserism as described by Abu-Laban do not all apply to the al-Sisi vision. As shall be discussed in §2.9, the socialism of al-Sisi does not grant the denomination of egalitarianism in the same way as Nasserism.

Revolutionism does not apply to the al-Sisi vision as well, as it calls for stability and problem solving instead of fighting for change. However, the modernism, future orientation and self-confidence dimensions do apply to al-Sisi, as shall be discussed in §2.10.

§2.7: Contemporary Nasserism and al-Sisi:

The continuing importance of Nasser can be exemplified by the fact that Nasserism still exists today, in the form of the Dignity (*al-Karama*) Party, which calls itself a 'nationalist, progressive party with a nationalist touch, based on a programme of social justice and Arab nationalism', which was formerly part of the Arab Democratic Nasserist party.¹⁷³ Also, the *al-Wefaq* and Nasserist Popular Conference-parties existed in Egypt. Together they formed the United Nasserist Party in 2013.¹⁷⁴ The Kefaya movement that ousted Mubarak in 2011 consisted initially of predominantly Nasserists, with representation by leftist and Islamist groups, and later on represented loose coalitions between these various groups.¹⁷⁵ President al-Sisi is, however, is not affiliated with these parties, even running (successfully) against the founder of the former Arab Democratic Nasserist party, Hamdeen Sabahi, in the 2014 Egyptian elections.¹⁷⁶ Many scholars believe that there exists today a post-ideological society in which for instance broad political questions cannot be answered anymore as a result of the 'decline of cohesive agencies of political change',¹⁷⁷ as political theorist John J. Schwarzmantel notes. However, I assert that when examining al-Sisi's politics, it is possible to detect various tenets despite of this suggested lack of ideology in the contemporary society and changed world order. These tenets can then be tested to determine whether they are similar to Nasserism or not.

¹⁷³ Maha Abdelrahman, *Egypt's Long Revolution: Protest Movements and Uprisings* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 95.

¹⁷⁴ Salma Hegab, "Nasserist parties to merge," *Daily News Egypt*, January 16, 2013. <https://www.dailynewssegypt.com/2013/01/16/nasserist-parties-to-merge/>

¹⁷⁵ Abdelrahman, *Egypt's Long Revolution*, 93-94.

¹⁷⁶ Gamal Essam El-Din, "Ahram Online's guide to Egypt's 2014 presidential polls," *Ahram Online*, May 16, 2014. <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/101330/Egypt/Politics-/Ahram-Onlines-Guide-to-Egypt--Presidential-Polls.aspx>

¹⁷⁷ John J. Schwarzmantel, *Ideology and Politics* (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2008), 167.

§2.8: Anti-imperialism, pan-Arabism and nationalism al-Sisi:

Al-Sisi's governance does not appear to be anti-imperialist or –colonialist or even pan-Arabist in the same way as Nasserism. On the one hand al-Sisi can perhaps be considered to be somewhat of a pan-Arabist, saying in his previously mentioned thesis that he wants the Middle East to become a union much like the E.U., and organize themselves as such a region.¹⁷⁸ On the other hand, his 'building the new Egyptian'-campaign proposes the Egyptian identity comprises of Pharaonic, Greco-Roman, Coptic, Islamic, Arabic, Mediterranean and African components,¹⁷⁹ complicating this image of merely being Arab. Additionally, the new government promotes learning foreign, western languages.¹⁸⁰

Moreover, he has opened up to the West in general, as well as the other Arab states. Al-Sisi asserts that Egypt needs economic support from for instance the United States.¹⁸¹ He also improved relations with Russia, which some assert has not been seen to this extent since the days of Nasser,¹⁸² in which he secured Russian investments in for instance heavy industries.¹⁸³ Additionally, al-Sisi improved Egypt's relation to the Gulf States, as is exemplified by a \$20 billion stimulus package supplied to Egypt by Saudi Arabia, The Emirates and Kuwait,¹⁸⁴ or the 'Cairo Declaration', in which Saudi Arabia and Egypt pledge to improve economic and military ties.¹⁸⁵ Also, despite wanting a solution for the Palestine issue favorable for the Palestinians,¹⁸⁶ al-Sisi has better ties to Israel than most Egyptian leaders before him,¹⁸⁷ for instance Egypt now imports gas from Israel,¹⁸⁸ and therefore his foreign policy appears very inconsistent, in any case it is neither Arab-oriented nor anti-imperialistic.

This, however, is possibly due to the extent of the economic challenges al-Sisi's Egypt faces. He has tried to stabilize the economy and stimulate its growth by means of drastic economic reforms.¹⁸⁹ For this, however, he needed to find a lot of money. He increased public

¹⁷⁸ al-Sisi, "Democracy," 11.

¹⁷⁹ Winter and Shiloah, "Egypt's Identity," 66-67.

¹⁸⁰ Winter and Shiloah, "Egypt's Identity," 71.

¹⁸¹ Pipes, "Responding to Cairo," 3-4.

¹⁸² Paolo Magri, "Introduction", in *The Return of Egypt. Internal challenges and Regional Game*, ed. Stefano M. Torelli (Novi Ligure: Edizioni Epoké, 2015), 12.

¹⁸³ Kandil, *The Power Triangle*, 343.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 344.

¹⁸⁵ Dentice, "Egypt-Gulf Countries," 28.

¹⁸⁶ Aclimandos, "Israel, Gaza and Palestine," 21.

¹⁸⁷ Kandil, "Sisi's Egypt", 26-27.

¹⁸⁸ Darwish, "Egypt Under Sisi," 15.

¹⁸⁹ Adel Abdel Ghafar, "A stable Egypt for a stable region: Socio-economic challenges and prospects." (2018): 14. Directorate-General for External Policies, European Union.
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=EXPO_STU%282018%29603858.

spending, and increased public subsidies, imposed new taxes on capital gains, reduced energy subsidies and imposed a wealth tax and wage-ceilings for millionaires and top public executives.¹⁹⁰ Whereas Nasser could nationalize the assets of the Egyptian bourgeoisie and foreigners, the present Egyptian's elites' position within the global financial capitalist system made this difficult for al-Sisi. Consequently, he needed to attract more foreign investments.¹⁹¹ He secured a loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which expedited economic liberalization in Egypt,¹⁹² but it also included a condition of implementing neoliberal reforms.¹⁹³ However, government spending was not cut in the military, as large amounts of money still went to investments and trade deals abroad, such as multiple billion dollar arms deals with France,¹⁹⁴ or an \$11 billion deal with the German Siemens company.¹⁹⁵ Thus, the al-Sisi vision is neither anti-imperialist in a sense that it is diametrically opposed to for instance the West and Israel as Nasser did, nor is it pan-Arabist in the same way. Al-Sisi appears to be primarily concerned with domestic issues (instead of the Nasserist outlook of pan-Arabism and anti-imperialism), and therefore is more of a nationalist and/or patriot in that sense. He institutes populist government and his rhetoric is 'hyper-nationalistic'¹⁹⁶, as Hazem Kandil labels it, something which is also visible in his Twitter feed; 13.8 per-cent of his tweets sing the praises of the Egyptian people, and 18.4 per-cent of the tweets contain references to the government determination to merely follow the peoples' will.¹⁹⁷ 'The people' here, Anne Alexander and Mostafa Bassiouny argue, are, in al-Sisi's vision, only defined as a group with 'loyalty to and appreciation of the army's role as protector of the nation', and that even though this group reminisce Nasser's time and compare him to al-Sisi, the latter's neoliberalism is undoing most of the positive reforms (such as the redistribution of wealth) implemented by the former.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁰ Kandil, *The Power Triangle*, 342-343.

¹⁹¹ Kandil, "Sisi's Egypt", 18-19.

¹⁹² Abul-Magd, "The Egyptian Military's Economic," 5.

¹⁹³ Kandil, "Sisi's Egypt", 18.

¹⁹⁴ Abul-Magd, "The Egyptian Military's Economic," 5-7.

¹⁹⁵ Cecilia Zecchinelli, "Egypt and the Middle East. A 'New' Regional Protagonist?" in *The Return of Egypt. Internal challenges and Regional Game*, ed. Stefano M. Torelli, (Novi Ligure: Edizioni Epoké, 2015), 64.

¹⁹⁶ Kandil, *The Power Triangle*, 349.

¹⁹⁷ Colombo, "In his Words," 8-9.

¹⁹⁸ Anne Alexander and Mostafa Bassiouny, *Bread, freedom, social justice: Workers and the Egyptian Revolution*. (London: Zed Books, 2014), 320.

§2.9: Arab-socialism al-Sisi:

The next issue then concerns the question if al-Sisi is a socialist like Nasser? The uprising in 2011 called for ‘bread, freedom and social justice’,¹⁹⁹ and the al-Sisi government appears to have attempted to fulfill these requests, at least marginally. The new 2014 constitution of Egypt stipulates the people’s rights of, among other things, equality between men and women, equal opportunities, right to work and worker’s rights, health care and education.²⁰⁰ Accordingly, al-Sisi has set diversity quota for women, Christians and youths in politics. However, this was designed to boost legitimacy abroad by showing the intention of equality and democracy, but was actually mainly focused on weakening political parties.²⁰¹ Furthermore, even though the new constitution holds that citizens have the right to protest (article 73),²⁰² the labor unions, for instance, are increasingly oppressed in this context.²⁰³ Furthermore, in an effort to take economic control from oligarchs associated with the old regime, he just gave the military the control of the economy in his reforms that were supposed to be aimed at redistributing the economic growth.²⁰⁴ The previously mentioned new taxes and wage-ceilings for the rich had largely the same effect. Much to the same end, the gas, bread and medicine subsidies were also largely cut in an effort to salvage the economy.²⁰⁵ Even though al-Sisi asserts that the youth and women are an important part of Egyptian society,²⁰⁶ women’s- and youth-unemployment has only risen the last couple of years, perhaps due to the job market’s inability to cope with the large amount of new work job seekers as a result from the cuts in the public sector.²⁰⁷ Even though the new constitution as well as his thesis call for democracy, al-Sisi also made it clear that for now this is more of an illusion, or a ‘luxury’ that Egypt is not yet ready for,²⁰⁸ just as he argues that many countries in the Middle East in general are not yet capable of producing a true democratic form of government.²⁰⁹

¹⁹⁹ Andrea Teti, “What People Want: Egypt’s Domestic Challenges,” in *The Return of Egypt. Internal challenges and Regional Game*, ed. Stefano M. Torelli (Novi Ligure: Edizioni Epoké, 2015), 43.

²⁰⁰ Constitute project, “Egyptian Constitution 2014.” Translation by International IDEA, 13-15. <https://constituteproject.org/search?lang=en>.

²⁰¹ Darwish, “Egypt Under Sisi,” 14.

²⁰² Constitute project, “Egyptian Constitution 2014,” 25.

²⁰³ Marina Ottaway, “Al-Sisi’s Egypt: The State Triumphant,” in *The Return of Egypt. Internal challenges and Regional Game*, ed. Stefano M. Torelli (Novi Ligure: Edizioni Epoké, 2015), 22-24.

²⁰⁴ Kandil. *The Power Triangle*, 344-345

²⁰⁵ Abul-Magd, “The Egyptian Military’s Economic,” 5.

²⁰⁶ Colombo, “In his Words,” 9.

²⁰⁷ Ghafar, “A stable Egypt,” 18-19.

²⁰⁸ Ottaway, “Al-Sisi’s Egypt,” 17.

²⁰⁹ al-Sisi, “Democracy,” 1-2.

§2.10: Egyptian self-confidence under al-Sisi:

Finally, is there a possibility that al-Sisi is, as Nasser appeared to be, a patriot, and does he want to restore the self-confidence of the Egyptian people as well? al-Sisi's 'new Egyptian' is not revolutionary,²¹⁰ in contrast to Nasser's revolutionist dimension of the Egyptian identity.²¹¹ Al-Sisi and his presidential advisor Usama al-Sayyid al-Azhrari have said that building the (new) Egyptian identity is their top priority, and that their aim is to strengthen Egyptian self-confidence.²¹² As a means to this end, the government has started mega projects, not quite unlike those in Nasser's time. They announced the –military supervised – megaprojects; a new capital, building around 50 new cities, and perhaps most ambitiously, creating the Suez Canal zone into a trade and manufacturing hub by widening the canal, drilling a parallel one,²¹³ construct new tunnels and expand six ports. This may all be aimed at restoring the self-confidence, but it could also be intended to merely enlarge the army's economic and military power.²¹⁴ The Suez Canal project is also, and perhaps most importantly, supposed to yield revenues that in turn might benefit the IMF.²¹⁵

Whether the governance of al-Sisi has effectively led him to become as popular as Nasser, and if he has rendered himself as popular in the same way, or if there are other factors at play, will be discussed in the next chapter.

§2.11: Conclusion chapter 2:

To conclude this chapter, I argue that the governances of Nasser and al-Sisi are more different than they are similar. Nasserism is a fusion of an ideological movement, a modernizing movement, a protest movement against imperialism and colonialism, and most importantly, a personality cult and populist movement. The al-Sisi vision, on the other hand, also incorporates these traits, but to a much lesser extent. It is not as anti-imperialistic as Nasserism, as exemplified by the increasingly positive relations to and investments from former imperial and colonial powers, whereas Nasser was primarily occupied with opposing these powers. Nasser's pan-Arabism or his broader pan-Africanism is equally less present in

²¹⁰ Winter and Shiloah, "Egypt's Identity," 66.

²¹¹ Abu-Laban, "The National Character," 184-192.

²¹² Winter and Shiloah, "Egypt's Identity," 69.

²¹³ Kandil, *The Power Triangle*, 345.

²¹⁴ Transparency International, "The Officers' Republic: The Egyptian Military and Abuse of Power"(2018). <https://ti-defence.org/publications/the-officers-republic/>

²¹⁵ Barfi, *Egypt's New Realism*, 42.

al-Sisi's vision, who obscures his opinions on this matter largely by using broad and vague terms to define Egypt's identity. Likewise, the socialist aspect is different in both men's governance. Even though both incorporated a form of socialism, at least on paper, Nasser's appears to have done more to actually implement these ideas, for instance by his attempts to end feudalism. Al-Sisi, somewhat similarly, tries to end the oligarchy of the previous regime(s), but ends up elevating a new one: the military (to a larger extent than Nasser). Moreover, inequality and unemployment is only on the rise in al-Sisi's Egypt. The new president's neoliberalism is but one of the signs of difference, but, as a product of a post-ideological society, he might just be trying to salvage and restore Egypt to its former glory, as Nasser tried to do, exemplified by the megaprojects (the Nile High Dam and the new Suez canal plans, respectively) they undertook and take in an effort to boost Egyptian self-confidence. Whether this is successful for both shall be analyzed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3: Nasser, al-Sisi and the Egyptian Imagination

Nasserism and its proponents were present in the events of the Arab spring in Egypt, as exemplified by the Tammarud movement, that protested against the presidency of Morsi and played a pivotal role in uniting popular support against his government, which in turn paved the way for the military, and thus al-Sisi, to take over control of the country. Anne Alexander and Mostafa Bassiouny, in their book “Bread, freedom, social justice: Workers and the Egyptian Revolution” call this ‘the most spectacular confirmation of Nasserism’s continuing importance in Egyptian political life’.²¹⁶ However, what this does not explain are the comparisons made between Nasser and al-Sisi (as exemplified by images 1 and 3). Alexander and Bassiouny also partially tackle this ostensibly peculiar difference between the mobilization of the people as a self-organized collective force and the “idealization of a particular vision of ‘the people’ or ‘the masses’ as cover for specific practices of leadership within the state”, which, they assert, benefited both leaders.²¹⁷ Quite possibly the real comparison and wish of the people with regards to al-Sisi vis à vis Nasser lie in the specific form of leadership instead of its content. In this chapter I will analyze and compare the image Egyptians have of both Nasser and al-Sisi. After an analysis of, among other things, their popularity, it shall become clear that even though al-Sisi may use the legacy of Nasser and equate himself to the former leader, his place in the Egyptian memory is increasingly less positive than that of Nasser and the reality of the comparison in this aspect is less valid.

§3.1: Image of Nasser:

Nasser still enjoys great popularity in the Egyptian imagination. He is considered to be a charismatic leader, or an authoritarian (‘Arab’) strongman. This strongman persona includes an inspiring leader who envisions himself (which is at least partially true) to be a national unifier, someone who will pull his country out of a perceived backwardness in order to create a new nation, complete with a new form of (fictional) unity and a father figure in the form of himself. These leaders accumulate large political power and even though their reforms are oftentimes the result of authoritarian practices, they deliver a certain degree of progress to large parts of the population. This, in combination with the essence of their personality and

²¹⁶ Alexander and Bassiouny, *Bread, freedom, social justice*, 310.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 312.

charisma can elevate them to become a sort of semi-god, popular even after their rule.²¹⁸ Gamel Abdel Nasser can be considered to have been such a strongman. His charisma stemmed from multiple factors, among others his personality, rhetorical ability, appearance and his knowledge of the needs of his followers.²¹⁹ Furthermore, he displayed this aforementioned father-figure image, and had a charisma that corresponds to Max Weber's definition of charisma as 'a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from the ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, super-human or at least exceptional power or qualities',²²⁰ and his rise to power also matches the stages that are said to be conditional to the rise of such a leader: social turmoil, the emergence of an exemplary charismatic person that will (have to) improve the situation, by using simple terms, 'heroic' activity and possibly by reinforcing their tenets by reminding of a historical or mythical quality associated with their mission.²²¹ More simply put, this charismatic leadership of Nasser contained (at least for a while) a certain type of relationship between Nasser himself and his committed followers, who unconditionally believed in the validity and correctness of his actions.²²² Leonard Binder calls Nasser's influence over the Middle East in general both 'astonishing' and 'more than a little frightening', as Nasser forced both the Egyptians as well as the rest of the world to reassess Egypt because his governance created a sort of psychological force within his country that transcended normal interest-based politics. This is often considered to be an essential aspect of charismatic leadership, leading to many scholarly debates on whether it is just this charisma that constitutes the core of Nasser's type of leadership, i.e. that the type of political institutions and the content of the governance are less important than the man himself.²²³

In spite of the diminishing popularity of Nasser, after his failed pan-Arab UAR enterprise, and the Egyptian defeat in 1967, his legacy still appears to be discussed. Even though some scholars, like Leonard Binder, assert that the debate of this legacy and the possibility that Nasser's successors have wasted it,²²⁴ he still remains an icon of sorts. As a sort of saintly

²¹⁸ Pietro Marzo and Francesco Cavatorta, "The Demise of the Arab Strongman? Authoritarianism and the future of the Middle East," in *Routledge Handbook of International Relations in the Middle East*, ed. Shahram Akbarzadeh (London: Routledge, 2019), 265-269.

²¹⁹ Gabriel Ben-Dor, "Foreword," in *Rethinking Nasserism: Revolution and Historical Memory in Modern Egypt*, eds. Elie Podeh and Onn Winckler (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004), x.

²²⁰ Max Weber, *On Charisma and Institution Building*, ed. S. N. Eisenstadt (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 48.

²²¹ Podeh and Winckler, "Introduction," 9-10.

²²² Michael Brecher, *Political Leadership and Charisma: Nehru, Ben-Gurion, and Other 20th Century Political Leaders: Intellectual Odyssey I*. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 227-228.

²²³ Binder, "Gamal 'Abd al-Nasser," 48-50.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 46-47.

political leader, a sort of symbol of a new Egyptian generation, Nasser was (and is) portrayed positively during both his heyday and periods of declining popularity. When in triumph, he was represented as the embodiment of Egyptian bravery, independence, wisdom, unpretentiousness, discipline and endurance, and in defeat he was still presented as a symbol of authenticity and optimism.²²⁵ Additionally, Nasser is often present in Egyptian (fictional) media and literature, and even though he is portrayed in a more neutral way and often put into perspective,²²⁶ he is still presented as an intellectual, or even a martyr. As a martyr, his death, even though he died of a heart attack, is seen as a result of fatigue and sorrow resulting from his hard work and the failure of his pan-Arab dreams.²²⁷ Nasser himself contributed to these images of him. In 1959 he wrote the fictional novel 'Towards Freedom', in which he named the protagonist 'Muhsin', after the romantic patriotic hero in a novel by Tawfiq al-Hakim.²²⁸ In doing so, Nasser turned himself into a Muhsin-like hero, and thereby rendered himself into a sort of champion of his cause, a sort of protagonist of the fiction-like historical narrative he was shaping for Egypt himself. The Egyptian nationalization was similarly staged in such a way as to evoke a sense of patriotism and historical importance for Egyptians, as he cued his soldiers to take over the canal by saying the words 'Ferdinand de Lesseps' in his 1956 speech, reminiscing of the French architect who used Egyptian labor to build the canal. As previously mentioned, even his defeat in 1967 could not stem his popularity, as he only became associated with blameless unconditional love for Arabs in general and Egyptians specifically.²²⁹

§3.2: Sisi-mania and the resurfacing of Nasser:

Regardless of the contestation of the morality of his legacy, Nasser is still present in the Egyptian memory as a national hero or otherwise. Thus, it is not surprising that his image resurfaced during the turmoil of the Arab spring and its associated protests. In the initial protests in 2010 and 2011, Nasser's speeches and images recirculated the internet, in a savior-like fashion that for example ridiculed the Ikhwan.²³⁰ This continued in 2013, with nationalist songs from the 1960s being played and people selling headshots of Nasser.²³¹ This is also the

²²⁵ Binder, "Gamal 'Abd al-Nasser," 64-66.

²²⁶ Khalifa, *Nasser in the Egyptian Imaginary*, 5-7.

²²⁷ Khalifa, *Nasser in the Egyptian Imaginary*, 93-94.

²²⁸ The 1933 novel 'The Return of the Spirit'

²²⁹ El-Ariss, "Future Fiction," 3-6.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 2

²³¹ Strasser, "Sisi and the Strong Man."

time that an image began to surface of, although this is not verified, al-Sisi as a young boy saluting and giving flowers to Nasser, whereby a link between the two was insinuated.²³² If true, I argue that this image was meant to show, or even actually pictures, the long duration of the affinity al-Sisi holds towards Nasser, even from his upbringing. Also, pictures of Nasser and al-Sisi side by side were shown in many places during this time (2013) and underwear, cologne and video games featuring al-Sisi were manufactured. Even ringtones with him saying things like ‘We have a hope that Egypt will return to its glories’²³³ (possibly reminiscing the days of Nasser) were created in a media frenzy labeled ‘Sisi-mania’. Even some leading intellectuals addressed the subject and labelled al-Sisi as the continuation of Nasser.²³⁴

§3.3: Image of al-Sisi and Nasser’s legacy:

The interpretation of Nasserism as a phenomenon of personal charismatic leadership surrounding the *rakyat*, the Chief,²³⁵ also seems to apply to this ‘Sisi-mania’-iconography, where al-Sisi was equally branded as ‘the Chief’.²³⁶ Al-Sisi’s own media campaign coopted this hope for a new Nasser, a charismatic general uniting a country in crisis.²³⁷ This hope had already existed in the earlier protests of 2010 and 2011, and after the people had called for the initially ‘reluctant’ al-Sisi to become the new ‘liberator of Egypt’ in a Nasser-like fashion, the military campaign followed suit.²³⁸ Al-Sisi himself said in an interview that he “wish[es] (...) [he] was like Nasser. Nasser was not just a portrait on walls for Egyptians but a photo and voice carved in their hearts”.²³⁹ Moreover, al-Sisi supported this revived popularity of Nasser (in the context of their comparisons) by opening three museums in honor of the former leader in a period of just three years (2016-2019) and holding memorial ceremonies on the dates of birth and death of Nasser, all the while even being supported by Nasser’s descendants,

²³² Eman El-Shenawi, “‘Brand Sisi’ sweeps Egypt as sweet treats glorify army general,” *Al Arabiya*, September 10, 2013. <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/perspective/features/2013/09/10/Egypt-s-Top-Gun-have-the-masses-created-a-brand-Sisi-.html>

²³³ Alex McDonald, “Sisi-mania, the fad that's sweeping Egypt,” *Middle East Eye*, February 12, 2015. <https://www.middleeasteye.net/features/sisi-mania-fad-thats-sweeping-egypt>

²³⁴ Khalifa, *Nasser in the Egyptian Imaginary*, 216-217.

²³⁵ Vatikiotis, *Nasser*, 297.

²³⁶ El-Ariss, “Future Fiction,” 10.

²³⁷ Abdelrahman, *Egypt’s Long Revolution*, 136.

²³⁸ Najet Boulafdal, “Sisi-mania: de leeuw, de adelaar, de cupcakes”, *Mondiaal Nieuws*, May 21, 2014. <https://www.mo.be/analyse/sisi-mania-de-leeuw-de-adelaar-de-cupcakes>

²³⁹ Passant Darwish, “Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi gives first ever TV interview,” *Ahram Online*, May 6, 2014. <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/100549/Egypt/Politics-/AbdelFattah-ElSisi-gives-first-ever-TV-interview.aspx>

thereby legitimizing al-Sisi's role as the successor.²⁴⁰ His rhetoric and charisma is also similar to and mirrors that of Nasser, such as when he tried to reactivate Nasser's 'utopia' by defending the Suez canal against the purported intention of the Ikhwan to sell the canal to Qatar. As a true patriot, al-Sisi stepped in as a sort of national defender and hero and ousted Morsi.²⁴¹ On the other hand, this form of drawing on Nasser's legacy, among other reasons, might be an attempt by al-Sisi to justify his repression of the Ikhwan,²⁴² an aspect related to both rulers that is not addressed at length in this paper. Another reason for highlighting the 1952 Revolution and Nasser might be the new government's intent on reemphasizing the country's military tradition, with a strong military leader at its head. This image of the army as a 'pillar of the nation' is reinforced under al-Sisi by releasing populist and nationalist songs (commissioned by the military) which contain excerpts from al-Sisi's speeches as well as building monuments for the army and often referring in speeches to the similarities of the challenges the nation faced both now and in 1952.²⁴³

§3.4: Decreasing popularity al-Sisi:

Even though al-Sisi may be a strongman in a similar sense as Nasser, and even as his charisma and possibly his rhetoric are also often compared to that of Nasser,²⁴⁴ his popularity is waning.

Various surveys conducted in various Arab countries, including Egypt, between 2013 and 2014 concluded that twelve per-cent of Egyptians thought that the best government is one where a strong authority makes decisions regardless of election results. In these surveys it also becomes clear that Arabs in general often equate democracy with only socio-economic rights instead of, for instance, political ones. Additionally, they value a strong leader that deals with the country's security issues. 72 per-cent of Egyptians were positive about al-Sisi's government's performance on these security issues at that time.²⁴⁵ Al-Sisi's supporters argue

²⁴⁰ Joseph Croitoru, "Nasser is everywhere", transl. Jennifer Taylor, *Qantara.de*, March 18th, 2019. <https://en.qantara.de/content/the-personality-cult-of-egypts-former-president-nasser-is-everywhere>

²⁴¹ El-Ariss, "Future Fiction," 9.

²⁴² Strasser, "Sisi and the Strong Man."

²⁴³ Joyce van de Bildt, "The Quest for Legitimacy in Postrevolutionary Egypt: Propaganda and Controlling Narratives," *The Journal of the Middle East and Africa*, Vol. 6, Issue 3-4 (2015): 259-271. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21520844.2015.1087817>.

²⁴⁴ Barbara Kelemen, "Egyptian Leadership in Historical Perspective: Abdel Fattah El-Sisi & Gamal Abdel Nasser", *London School of Economics and Political Science*, May 8th, 2019.

<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/lseih/2019/05/08/egyptian-leadership-in-historical-perspective-abdel-fattah-el-sisi-gamal-abdel-nasser/>

²⁴⁵ Marzo and Cavatorta, "The Demise," 274-275.

that his governance has brought positive reform, and they say the economy is recovering and the country's stability has returned. All promises made by al-Sisi, they assert, are or will soon become a reality. However, his opponents contradict these theses, and in turn claim that even though he has brought change to Egypt, it is based on oppression and unsustainability, something that is supported by polls that indicated that even the army has become less popular.²⁴⁶ For example, this decreasing popularity worsened when an army-affiliated scientist claimed to be able to turn aids and hepatitis C into meatballs. Moreover, as al-Sisi's promises such as the Suez Canal expansion and economic reform did not produce positive results, the army and al-Sisi's public standing and credibility decreased even further.²⁴⁷ Also, it appears as though al-Sisi does not possess the same command of Arabic as Nasser. His speeches, that oftentimes seem rather random, are therefore less invigorating than those of the former president, and are more the subject of mockery. As Hazem Kandil aptly puts it; "Sisi's image has changed from that of a man of destiny with all the right answers, to that of a very small dyke against a potentially devastating flood that might overflow the state".²⁴⁸ In this sense, al-Sisi only barely fulfills the requirements for the denomination that was and is often applied to Nasser, that of a near super-human of exceptional qualities.

§3.5: Conclusion chapter 3:

To conclude, I assert that Nasser and al-Sisi's place within the Egyptian memory and imagination has turned out to be rather different, as is their popularity. Nasser had created for himself an image of a patriot, a sort of 'father of the nation'. In qualifying as a charismatic leader, a sort of Arab strongman, his legacy has given him an almost mythical status. He restored Egyptian self-confidence, and even in recent years he has not yet fallen off the pedestal the Egyptian people put him on. Thus, it is not surprising that during the turmoil of 2011-2013 the people were calling for a new Nasser. The initial popularity of al-Sisi, the 'Sisi-mania', I assert, is in-separately linked to the people's hopes, or possibly even expectations, of him becoming the successor to Nasser. However, even if he himself would want the people to think, as exemplified by the state's propaganda, al-Sisi does not possess the same level of charisma and standard of rhetoric as Nasser, and consequently his image as

²⁴⁶ Steven A. Cook, "Sisi Isn't Mubarak. He's Much Worse," *Foreign Policy*, December 19, 2018, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/12/19/sisi-isnt-mubarak-hes-much-worse/>

²⁴⁷ Hawthorne, "A Dangerous Deterioration," 2-3.

²⁴⁸ Kandil, "Sisi's Egypt", 13-14.

the new Nasser is diminishing. The image of the new president as the leader who will bring back the confidence Egyptians had in the 1950s and 60s has not yet, and perhaps will never, materialize. It is possible that the resurfacing of Nasser's popularity in 2013 says more about the Egyptians than about al-Sisi, as Omar Khalifa assumes,²⁴⁹ and that the adoption of the Nasser-al-Sisi comparison does not serve this government well in that sense.

²⁴⁹ Khalifa, *Nasser in the Egyptian Imaginary*, 217.

CONCLUSION

Nasser has served as a reference point for discussions about, and the assessment of the events that are unfolding before the Egyptian people. This paper has tried to determine whether this has more to do with feelings of nostalgia (in a sense of wanting a leader of a type long lost), or if there is truth in the similarities between Nasser's time and the current unfolding events. Many people use Nasser as a reference point and make historical comparisons in their discussions of the events of 1952 and 2013. Most approach these events in a context of either a continuity or a rupture, whereas this paper has sought to compare the historical conditions, ideologies and/or visions, actions, hopes and rhetoric systematically, in order to determine whether the events and hopes that brought the current president of Egypt, Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, to power actually constitute a revival and/or continuation of the politics of Gamel Abdel Nasser, or if it was just an issue of reminiscing and hoping for a revival of the 'glory' of his time, or perhaps even the cooptation and adoption of these hopes and rhetoric in order to increase legitimacy.

When looking at the events of both 1952 and 2013 in terms of defining and comparing the essence of what was actually happening, there are some similarities to note. The 1952 events largely match the most common scholarly definitions of revolutions in terms of having constituted a radical overhaul of the ruling power, as well as for instance its ideologies and structures. Furthermore, the conditions within a country from which revolutions often arise, just as the phases a successful revolution goes through, are present in 1952. Most scholars still call the events a coup, and some a revolution (possibly because it was promoted in that way), but none use more ambiguous terms to define a situation that was just that – rather ambiguous to define. Therefore, I have chosen to define it with another term I deem best; that of a coup-revolution. In the events of 2013 the same applies. Even though the phases of a revolution are not as clear cut as in 1952 (as for instance the internal tensions within the revolutionary force are not quite clear (yet) and still have to be determined), the criteria are certainly met for a revolution. But in this case, as with the previous one, I conclude that as it was both a revolution and a coup, I would similarly call this the 2013 Egyptian coup-revolution. In the first chapter I have also pointed the unique position of the army within Egyptian society. Under Nasser, the army took an increasingly large place within the social, economic and political space, something which al-Sisi benefitted from. Accordingly, I assert that this is an important factor to consider when comparing both coup-revolutions, as it contributed more in the revolutionary process for one than for the other, as Nasser was a military man and this was

possibly one of the factors the Egyptians considered when looking for a new Nasser in the form of al-Sisi. Next, I examined whether the politics and following of both presidents, Nasserism and the 'al-Sisi vision' are similar in order to determine whether they are comparable in that sense. I found that Nasserism, of all possible definitions given by scholars, is best described as an amalgamation of a few of these definitions: a populist movement and a personality cult in one. This applies to the al-Sisi vision as well. I came to this conclusion as the actual tenets of both men are not alike but, at least initially, the image they had was. Nasser was an Arab socialist, anti-imperialist and pan-Arabist who wanted to end feudalism and corruption, while al-Sisi implemented neoliberal reforms, increased the relationship with countries that can be perceived as imperialistic, is primarily nationalistic instead of being pan-Arab and reinforced a new type of feudalism and oligarchy in the form of military landowners and a military elite. Perhaps the only commonality in their ideas was the aim of restoring Egyptian self-confidence by bolstering a new national identity. However, as the third chapter shows, al-Sisi has not succeeded in that respect in the same way as Nasser. Nasser lives on in the Egyptian memory, as he forced everyone to think differently of Egypt and still enjoys enormous popularity as a result. The Sisi-mania, in which he was promoted as a new Nasser both by the people and his establishment (-propaganda), was only short-lived and his popularity is fading. Al-Sisi, even though it might be possible to define him as an Arab strongman as he initially appeared as a strong inspiring new national hero, did not invigorate the population to the same extent as Nasser, someone still considered to be an example of charismatic leadership. As such, it appears that in 2013 the people were more in search of a new Nasser in terms of leadership, and while they initially thought to have found him in al-Sisi, he is not that. Both men came to power in a similar fashion and might have appeared to be alike, but the reality of the situation is that their visions are radically different and that even though the state propaganda might attempt to portray al-Sisi as a Nasser-like leader, he is no such thing and his legacy will likely show the same.

In this paper I have tried to elucidate the events of 2013 by positioning it between the existing literature on Nasser and al-Sisi. By neither trying to see the events in 2013 as a continuous struggle within Egyptian society over decades, nor by seeing it as a complete rupture from the past, I have attempted to show how Nasserism, or perhaps more fittingly: the person Nasser, could still exert so much influence on contemporary Egyptian events. Consequently, this paper is aimed at filling the gaps within the literature on both parts of Egyptian history and attempts to answer questions surrounding the ubiquitous presence of Nasser's image in the Arab spring and its aftermath, something not really explained in the

existing literature. However, the issues in this paper might be expanded to make the subject more comprehensive by studies into the Egyptian popular media. Additionally, research into the relations of both Nasser and al-Sisi vis à vis the Islamists as well as their use of repression and authoritarianism (things not fitting the scope of this paper) might bring to light new dimensions of the comparison between both men, and might even show more similarities than discussed in this paper. Still, it remains clear that the comparison between both men makes for interesting research, and this and future research might then provide us with more insight into issues like Arab leadership, revolutions and/or coups, charisma and the imagination and memory of a nation.

IMAGES



Image 1. - Protesters showing a poster of President Gamal Abdel Nasser, 2012. Text reads “We dream of glory for the people, and so we shall realize this dream”



Image 2. – al-Sisi as a child saluting Nasser, 1960.



Image 3. Side by side images of al-Sisi (left) and Nasser (right). Text reads “Salutation to the great men of Egypt”

REFERENCES

Abdelrahman, Maha. *Egypt's Long Revolution: Protest Movements and Uprisings*. New York: Routledge, 2015.

Abu-Laban, Baha. "The National Character in the Egyptian Revolution." *The Journal of Developing Areas* 1, No. 2 (1967): 179-198. www.jstor.org/stable/4189360.

Abul-Magd, Zeinab. "The Egyptian military in politics and the economy: Recent history and current transition status." *CMI Insight*, No. 2 (October 2013) Chr. Michelsen Institute.

Abul-Magd, Zeinab. "The Egyptian Military's Economic Solution: Is It Working?" in *Egypt's Elections: No Change, Many Challenges*, ed. Giuseppe Dentice, 5-7. Milan: Italian Institute for International Political Studies, 2018.
<https://www.ispionline.it/en/pubblicazione/egypts-election-no-change-many-challenges-19880>

Aclimandos, Tewfik. "Israel, Gaza and Palestine: Common Interests, Different Visions." in *Egypt's Elections: No Change, Many Challenges*, ed. Giuseppe Dentice, 21-23. Milan: Italian Institute for International Political Studies, 2018.
<https://www.ispionline.it/en/pubblicazione/egypts-election-no-change-many-challenges-19880>

Alexander, Anne and Mostafa Bassiouny. *Bread, freedom, social justice: Workers and the Egyptian Revolution*. London: Zed Books, 2014.

al-Jazeera, "International reactions to Morsi's removal," July 4, 2013.
<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2013/07/201373223029610370.html>

Al-Sisi, Abdelfattah Said. "Democracy in the Middle East". Thesis, Carlisle: U.S. Army War College, 2006. <https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/1173610/sisi.pdf>

- Awan, Maqbool Ahmad. "Gamal Abdel Nasser's Pan-Arabism and Formation of the United Arab Republic: An Appraisal." *Journal of Research Society of Pakistan*, Vol. 54, No. 1 (2017): 107-128.
http://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/HistoryPStudies/PDF_Files/8_V-30-No1-Jun17.pdf
- Barfi, Barak. *Egypt's New Realism: Challenges Under Sisi*, Washington D.C: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2018.
- Beck, Martin. *The July 2013 Military Coup in Egypt: One normative clarification and some empirical issues*. Odense: Center for Mellemøstudier, 2013.
- Ben-Dor, Gabriel. "Foreword." in *Rethinking Nasserism: Revolution and Historical Memory in Modern Egypt*, eds. Elie Podeh and Onn Winckler, ix-xii. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004.
- Bildt, Joyce van de. "The Quest for Legitimacy in Postrevolutionary Egypt: Propaganda and Controlling Narratives." *The Journal of the Middle East and Africa*, Vol. 6, Issue 3-4 (2015). <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21520844.2015.1087817>.
- Binder, Leonard. "Gamal 'Abd al-Nasser: Iconology, ideology and Demonology." in *Rethinking Nasserism: Revolution and Historical Memory in Modern Egypt*, eds. Elie Podeh and Onn Winckler, 45-69. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004.
- Boulafdal, Najet. "Sisi-mania: de leeuw, de adelaar, de cupcakes." *Mondiaal Nieuws*. May 21, 2014. <https://www.mo.be/analyse/sisi-mania-de-leeuw-de-adelaar-de-cupcakes>
- Brecher, Michael. *Political Leadership and Charisma: Nehru, Ben-Gurion, and Other 20th Century Political Leaders: Intellectual Odyssey I*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.
- Browsers, Michaëlle L. *Political Ideology in the Arab World: Accommodation and Transformation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Chulov, Martin. "Egypt wonders if Army chief is its next Nasser", *The Hindu*, August 8th, 2013. Retrieved from <https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/world/egypt-wonders-if-army-chief-is-its-next-nasser/article5003058.ece>

Cleveland, William L., and Martin P. Bunton. *A History of the Modern Middle East*. 5th ed., Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2013.

Cole, Juan. "Egypt's Modern Revolutions and the Fall of Mubarak." in *The New Middle East: Protest and Revolution in the Arab World*, ed. Fawaz A. Gerges, 60-79. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Colombo, Matteo. "In his Words. A Thematic Analysis of al-Sisi's Twitter Account." in *Egypt's Elections: No Change, Many Challenges*, ed. Giuseppe Dentice, 8-11. Milan: Italian Institute for International Political Studies, 2018. <https://www.ispionline.it/en/pubblicazione/egypts-election-no-change-many-challenges-19880>

Cook, Steven A. "Sisi Isn't Mubarak. He's Much Worse." *Foreign Policy*, December 19, 2018, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/12/19/sisi-isnt-mubarak-hes-much-worse/>

Cook, Steven A. *The Struggle for Egypt: From Nasser to Tahrir Square*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Croitoru, Joseph. "Nasser is everywhere." transl. Jennifer Taylor, *Qantara.de*, March 18th, 2019. <https://en.qantara.de/content/the-personality-cult-of-egypts-former-president-nasser-is-everywhere>

Darwish, Passant. "Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi gives first ever TV interview." *Ahram Online*, May 6, 2014. <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/100549/Egypt/Politics-/AbdelFattah-ElSisi-gives-first-ever-TV-interview.aspx>

Darwish, Housam. "Egypt Under Sisi: From An Authoritarian Dominant Party System To Strongman Politics." *JETRO-IDE ME-Review*, Vol. 6 (2019): 1-20. https://www.ide.go.jp/English/Publish/Periodicals/Me_review/201903.html

DeFronzo, James. *Revolutions and Revolutionary Movements*. 5th ed. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2015.

Dentice, Giuseppe. "Egypt-Gulf Countries: "New Normal" Relations." in *Egypt's Elections: No Change, Many Challenges*, ed. Giuseppe Dentice, 27-29. Milan: Italian Institute for International Political Studies, 2018.
<https://www.ispionline.it/en/pubblicazione/egypts-election-no-change-many-challenges-19880>

Dotu, Irina. *Arab Spring 2011: Egypt*. Nicosia: Near East University, 2011.

Droz-Vincent, Philippe. "Authoritarianism, Revolutions, Armies and Arab Regime Transitions", in *The International Spectator*, Vol. 46, Issue 2, 5-21, 2011. Retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03932729.2011.576168>

Eagleton, Terry. *Ideology: An Introduction*. London: Verso, 1991.

Constitute project, "Egyptian Constitution 2014." Translation by International IDEA.
<https://constituteproject.org/search?lang=en>

El-Ariss, Tarek. "Future Fiction: In the Shadow of Nasser." *Ibraaz*, June 2014.
<http://www.ibraaz.org/essays/95>

El-Din, Gamal Essam. "Ahram Online's guide to Egypt's 2014 presidential polls." *Ahram Online*, May 16, 2014.
<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/101330/Egypt/Politics-/Ahram-Online-Guide-to-Egypt's--Presidential-Polls.aspx>

El-Fadl, Khaled Abou. "Failure of a Revolution: The Military, Secular Intelligentsia and Religion in Egypt's Pseudo-Secular State." in *Routledge Handbook of the Arab Spring: Rethinking Democratization*, ed. Larbi Sadiki, 253-270. London: Routledge, 2014.

El-Fadl, Reem Abou. *Foreign Policy as Nation Making: Turkey and Egypt in the Cold War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019.

Ellison, Danielle Bella. *Nationalism in the Arab Spring: Expression, Effects on Transitions, and Implications for the Middle East State, A Comparative Analysis of Egypt and Libya*. New Haven: Yale University, 2015.

Elsewi, Tarik Ahmed. "A Revolution of the Imagination." *International Journal of Communication*, Vol. 5 (2011): 1197-1206.

El-Shenawi, Eman. "'Brand Sisi' sweeps Egypt as sweet treats glorify army general." *Al Arabiya*, September 10, 2013.
<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/perspective/features/2013/09/10/Egypt-s-Top-Gun-have-the-masses-created-a-brand-Sisi-.html>

Gaub, Florence. "Civil-military relations in the MENA: between fragility and resilience." *Chaillot Papers*, No. 139 (2016) European Union Institute for Security Studies.
<https://www.iss.europa.eu/content/civil-military-relations-mena-between-fragility-and-resilience>

Gerges, Fawaz A. *Making the Arab World: Nasser, Qutb, and the Clash That Shaped the Middle East*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018.

Ghafar, Adel Abdel. "A stable Egypt for a stable region: Socio-economic challenges and prospects." (2018). Directorate-General for External Policies, European Union.
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=EXPO_STU%282018%29603858

Gökcel, Ragip and Eugen Lungu. "Pan-Arabism and the 'Arab Spring'." *Romanian Military Thinking Journal* (2011): 120-137.

- Gotowicki, Stephen H. *The Role of the Egyptian Military in Domestic Society*, Washington: National Defense University, 1997. <https://community.apan.org/wg/tradoc-g2/fmso/m/fmso-monographs/240947>
- Harb, Imad. "The Egyptian Military in Politics: Disengagement or Accommodation?" *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 57, No. 2 (2003): 269-290. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4329881?seq=1>
- Hatina, Meir. "History, Politics, and Collective Memory: The Nasserist Legacy in Mubarak's Egypt." in *Rethinking Nasserism: Revolution and Historical Memory in Modern Egypt*, eds. Elie Podeh and Onn Winckler, 100-118. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004.
- Hawthorne, Amy. "A Dangerous Deterioration: Egypt Under al-Sisi: A Conversation with Dr. Ashraf El Sherif." *Project on Middle East and Democracy* (2017). <https://pomed.org/a-dangerous-deterioration-egypt-under-al-sisi-a-conversation-with-dr-ashraf-el-sherif/>
- Hegab, Salma. "Nasserist parties to merge." *Daily News Egypt*, January 16, 2013. <https://www.dailynewssegypt.com/2013/01/16/nasserist-parties-to-merge/>
- Horton, Alan W. "The Charter for National Action of the UAR: A Résumé of the Complete Document." *Northeast Africa Series*, Vol. 9, No. 5. (1962). American Universities Field Staff, Inc. <http://www.icwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/AWH-5.pdf>
- Kamrava, Mehran. "Military Professionalization and Civil-Military Relations in the Middle East." *Political Science Quarterly* 115, no. 1 (2000): 67-92. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2658034?seq=1>
- Kandil, Hazem. "Sisi's Egypt." (interview) *New Left Review*, No. 102, 5-40, November-December 2016. <https://www.scribd.com/document/339703808/Hazem-Kandil-Sisis-Egypt-NLR-102-November-December-2016>

Kandil, Hazem. *The Power Triangle: Military, Security and Politics in Regime Change*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Karsh, Efraim. *Islamic imperialism: a history*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007.

Kelemen, Barbara. "Egyptian Leadership in Historical Perspective: Abdel Fattah El-Sisi & Gamal Abdel Nasser." *London School of Economics and Political Science*, May 8th, 2019. <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/lseih/2019/05/08/egyptian-leadership-in-historical-perspective-abdel-fattah-el-sisi-gamal-abdel-nasser/>

Ketchley, Neil. *Egypt in a Time of Revolution: Contentious Politics and the Arab Spring*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.

Khalifa, Omar. *Nasser in the Egyptian Imaginary*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016.

Kirkpatrick, David D. "Egypt Erupts in Jubilation as Mubarak Steps Down", *The New York Times*, February 11th, 2011. <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/12/world/middleeast/12egypt.html>

Magri, Paolo. "Introduction." in *The Return of Egypt. Internal challenges and Regional Game*, ed. Stefano M. Torelli, 9-14. Novi Ligure: Edizioni Epoké, 2015.

Mansfield, Peter. "Nasser and Nasserism." *International Journal*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (1973): 670-688. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40201172?origin=crossref&seq=1>.

Marzo, Pietro and Francesco Cavatorta. "The Demise of the Arab Strongman? Authoritarianism and the future of the Middle East." in *Routledge Handbook of International Relations in the Middle East*, ed. Shahram Akbarzadeh, 265-278. London: Routledge, 2019.

McDonald, Alex. "Sisi-mania, the fad that's sweeping Egypt." *Middle East Eye*, February 12, 2015. <https://www.middleeasteye.net/features/sisi-mania-fad-thats-sweeping-egypt>

- Morsy, Laila Amin. "American Support for the 1952 Egyptian Coup: Why?" *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol 31, No. 2 (1997): 307-316.
- Nasser, Gamal Abdel. *Egypt's Liberation: The Philosophy of the Revolution*. Washington: Public Affairs Press, 1955.
- Nasser, Gamal Abdel. "Where I Stand and Why." Originally published in *Life*, July 20, 1959.
https://books.google.nl/books/about/Where_I_Stand_and_why.html?id=0iyQAAAAIAAJ&redir_esc=y
- Nasser, Hoda Abdel. "Open letter to Lieutenant General Abdel Fattah al-Sisi." *Egypt Independent*, August 13th, 2013.
<https://www.egyptindependent.com/open-letter-lieutenant-general-abdel-fattah-al-sisi/>
- Osman, Tarek. *Egypt on the Brink: from Nasser to the Muslim Brotherhood*. Revised edition. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013.
- Ottaway, Marina. "Al-Sisi's Egypt: The State Triumphant." in *The Return of Egypt. Internal challenges and Regional Game*, ed. Stefano M. Torelli, 15-28. Novi Ligure: Edizioni Epoké, 2015.
- Pipes, Daniel. "Responding to Cairo's New Leadership: What Egypt's President Sisi Really Thinks." *Middle East Quarterly* (Fall 2014). <https://www.meforum.org/4802/what-egypt-president-sisi-really-thinks>
- Podeh, Elie and Onn Winckler. "Introduction: Nasserism as a Form of Populism." in *Rethinking Nasserism: Revolution and Historical Memory in Modern Egypt*, eds. Elie Podeh and Onn Winckler, 1-31. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004.
- Sabaseviciute, Giedre. "Re-creating the Past: The Manipulation of the Notion of Rupture in Egyptian Revolutions." *Institut d'histoire moderne et contemporaine* (2011).
<https://journals.openedition.org/lrf/348>

Schwarzmantel, John J. *Ideology and Politics*. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2008.

Sivak-Reid, Kayla. "Tracing a State and its Language from Province to Republic: Translations of Modern Egypt's Constitutions." *Classics Honors Projects*, Paper 22 (2016). http://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/classics_honors/22

Smet, Brecht de. "A Dialectical Pedagogy of Revolt: Gramsci, Vygotsky, and the Egyptian Revolution." *Studies in Critical Social Sciences*, Vol. 73. (2015) Brill Publishers.

Sowers, Jeannie L. and Bruce Rutherford. "Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Egypt." in *The Arab Spring: The Hope and Reality of the Uprisings*, 2nd edition. Eds. Mark Haas and David Lesch, 40-71. Boulder: Westview Press, 2017.

Springborg, Robert. "President Sisi's Delegative Authoritarianism." *IAI Working Papers 15*, Issue 26 (2015): 1-16. Istituto Affari Internazionali.
<https://www.iai.it/en/pubblicazioni/president-sisi-delegative-authoritarianism>

Springborg, Robert. "The President and the Field Marshal: Civil-Military Relations in Egypt Today." *MERIP Middle East Report*, No. 147 (1987): 5-42.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/3011943?seq=1>

Strasser, Max. "Sisi and the Strong Man: Is Egypt's president-in-waiting turning back the clock -- to the Nasser era?" *Foreign Policy*, January 28, 2014.
<https://foreignpolicy.com/2014/01/28/sisi-and-the-strong-man/>

Teti, Andrea. "What People Want: Egypt's Domestic Challenges." in *The Return of Egypt. Internal challenges and Regional Game*, ed. Stefano M. Torelli, 29-44. Novi Ligure: Edizioni Epoké, 2015.

Toronto, Nathan W. "Egypt's 'Coup-volution'." *Middle East Insights*, No. 6 (2011) National University of Singapore. <http://blog.nus.edu.sg/middleeastinstitute/2011/02/16/egypts-coup-volution/>

Transparency International. “The Officers’ Republic: The Egyptian Military and Abuse of Power” (2018). <https://ti-defence.org/publications/the-officers-republic/>

Tsaregorodtseva, Irina. “The Revolutionary Socialists in Post-‘Arab Spring’ Egypt.” *Socialism and Democracy*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (2017): 125-143.

Vatikiotis, Panayiotis J. *Nasser and his Generation*. London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1978.

Weber, Max. *On Charisma and Institution Building*, ed. S. N. Eisenstadt. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968.

Wien, Peter. *Arab Nationalism: The Politics of History and Culture in the Modern Middle East*. New York: Routledge, 2017.

Winter, Ofir and Assaf Shiloah. “Egypt’s Identity during the el-Sisi Era: Profile of the “New Egyptian.” *Strategic Assessment*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (2019): 65-78.
<https://www.inss.org.il/publication/egypts-identity-el-sisi-era-profile-new-egyptian/>

Yinger, John Milton and Mark Norman Katz. “Revolution: Refining Its Defining.”, *International Journal of Group Tensions*, Vol. 30, No. 4 (2001): 349-367.

Zecchinelli, Cecilia. “Egypt and the Middle East. A ‘New’ Regional Protagonist?” in *The Return of Egypt. Internal challenges and Regional Game*, ed. Stefano M. Torelli, 63-80. Novi Ligure: Edizioni Epoké, 2015.

Images

Amar, Hassan. (no title, ‘image 3’), Retrieved from
<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/world/egypt-wonders-if-army-chief-is-its-next-nasser/article5003058.ece>

“Protesters showing a poster of President Gamal Abdel Nasser” (‘image 1’, cropped photo), *Shutterstock*, February 2012, retrieved from <https://fanack.com/egypt/governance-and-politics-of-egypt/>

“Sisi as a child saluting Nasser, 1960” (‘image 2’), screenshot by Tarek el-Ariss. Image taken from <http://www.egyptiansnews.com/News2-8158.html>, original provenance unknown.