

## History Extended Essay

### Arab Nationalism in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

**What was the influence of Gamal Abdel Nasser on the evolution of Arab Nationalism between the years 1952-1958?**

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Gamal Abdel Nasser at the gates of the Presidential Palace in Damascus in 1958

[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nasser\\_with\\_Baathists\\_1958\\_United\\_Arab\\_Republic.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nasser_with_Baathists_1958_United_Arab_Republic.jpg)

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## **Abstract**

Gamal Abdel Nasser is presumably the most influential leader in the Arab world in 20th century, from Ba'athists in Iraq and Syria to Colonel Qaddafi of Libya, nearly every Arab state once tasted nationalistic policies shaped from his ideas. Nevertheless, he is not very known outside the Arab world and there are very few studies based on him. Even though he has many other achievements like establishment of Non-Alignment Movement and economical development of Egypt, his main influence is on Arab nationalism.

This essay investigates the influence of Gamal Abdel Nasser on Arab nationalism between the years 1952-1958. The research question only works on the political elements of Arab nationalism for a more accurate study. For being able to observe the evaluation of Arab nationalism in the given years, a history of Arab nationalism must be given. Therefore, the first section will discuss the creation of Arab nationalism while the remaining four will work in a narrower period. Important events occurred when Nasser was the president of Egypt will be investigated and their importance for the Arab nationalism will be discussed. Moreover, the place of nationalism in the life of Arab nations will be shown throughout the essay.

In the last section, the essay will be concluded by summing up the historical elements in the essay to show that Nasserism is impartible with Arab nationalism as the more Nasser used nationalism for the benefits of Egypt, the more benefits of Egypt coincided with nationalism. However, it must also be stated that the purpose for the writing of this essay wasn't concluding it in this way but the conclusion is reached after the analysis of the resources. The sources which this essay used are all looking the given period of time in a different manner and show variety.

## **Introduction**

Nationalism is the opinion which defends that the commitment of one to his nation is far more important than his commitment to himself or international values.<sup>1</sup> The subject of this essay, Arab nationalism, is a movement which showed up in Middle East<sup>2</sup> in the early twentieth century and still continues to exist within the organization Arab League<sup>3</sup>. Today Arab nationalism lost most of its importance and is overshadowed by some other ideologies in the region. Does that mean its useless? Never. Even though they have different cultural aspects, Arab countries aren't separated by sharp lines from each other. For understanding the current situation of Middle East the first concept is Nasserism<sup>4</sup> which founded in 1950s and achieved many international successes in the search of Arab unity.

As President of Egypt from 1956 to his death, Gamal Abdel Nasser<sup>5</sup> re-shaped Arab nationalism and used it for the policies of Egypt. After the lost in Six Day War<sup>6</sup> against Israel, Nasserism went into a decline with its greater ideology, Arab nationalism. This essay investigates the influence of Nasserist policies on Arab nationalism between the years 1952-1958. First the founding of Arab Nationalism (1916-1952) and then Gamal Abdel Nasser's political decisions on Arab nationalism from Egyptian Revolution to the establishment of United Arab Republic (1952-1958) will be discussed. While investigating Arab nationalism, this essay will be based on Middle East and won't discuss North African countries, with the exception of Egypt. Moreover, internal policies of Nasser which don't have a role in nationalism will not be presented. Furthermore, Arab nationalism isn't going to be defined at the start of the investigation but this definition will be formed throughout the essay.

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<sup>1</sup> Ana Britannica, 16. Volume, "nationalism" article

<sup>2</sup>The political and geographical region composed of Egypt, Arabia, Mesopotamia, Anatolia and Iran, first introduced by British officials in Egypt.

<sup>3</sup>Political union of Arab states established in 22 March 1945. Official web site: <http://www.lasportal.org/>

<sup>4</sup>Leftist Arab nationalist political ideology based on the thinking of Gamal Abdel Nasser.

<sup>5</sup>Born as the first child of a poor postman in 1918, Nasser was one of the two leaders of the Free Officers Movement which carry out the Egyptian Revolution of 1952, and then became the president of Egypt. He is known as a military officer, politician and theoretician.

<sup>6</sup>The third war between Arab states and Israel which started in 5 June 1967 and ended with a decisive Israel victory six days later.

## **I. Arab Nationalism Between 1916-1952**

Arabs first entrance to the stage of history was with the Islamic state which Prophet Mohammed<sup>7</sup> established. Continuing their presence in Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphates, Arabs lived their golden age when Europe was going through Middle Age. As Ottoman<sup>8</sup> Sultan I. Selim conquered Egypt (1517), all the political power they hold including the Caliphate title had slipped away from their hands to the Ottomans. Until the collapse of the empire, the Ottomans had never get involved with the Arabs, so their call for Jihad<sup>9</sup> during the First World War was ignored and that was how the Arabs broke all their ties with the Turks. Mostly involved with agriculture, it is predicted that the Arabs were having a population between 35 to 40 million in 1914 in Middle-east and North Africa.<sup>10</sup>

It can be said that the most important element that kept the Arabs away from nationalism is their tribal system based on bloodline. They were used to live as free men, tied to tribes but not as citizens with responsibility tied to a state. The effects of French Revolution which created nationalism and triggered many revolutions in both European and non-European regions therefore didn't effect Arabs up to the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The first glimpses of the Arab nationalism which is the subject of this article can be seen with the "Great Arab Revolt" in 1916.<sup>11</sup> The revolt was started by The Emir of Mecca Hussein bin Ali<sup>12</sup> and was supported within Arabian Peninsula and Jordan. He was offered to rebel against The Ottomans in the change of the necessary military assistance and an Arab Kingdom that Britain would recognise internationally.<sup>13</sup> This Arabic State would include Arabia, Greater Syria<sup>14</sup> and Iraq. The

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<sup>7</sup>The prophet of Islam, founder of the Islam State and uniter of Arabia. (570-632)

<sup>8</sup> Turkish Empire ruled between 1299-1922 in Middle-East and the Balkans.

<sup>9</sup> Calling all the Muslims to the war against the non-Muslims in the name of the Caliph

<sup>10</sup> Hourani pg. 347

<sup>11</sup> Dawisha pg. 30

<sup>12</sup> Born in 1852, last Emir of Mecca tied to the Ottoman Empire, first king of the Hedjaz Kingdom guide by the British between 1916-1924.

<sup>13</sup> Cleveland pg. 176-177

<sup>14</sup>Geographical area including Syria and Lebanon

British had accepted the offer and McMahon guaranteed that “Great Britain is ready to recognise and protect the independence of any Arab living in the areas offered by Emir Hussein.”<sup>15</sup>

Historians do not believe that the revolution was really a nationalistic one. What they all agree is that the revolt had religious symbols and was introduced to the public under the pretext of protecting the Ottoman Caliph. William Cleveland defines Emir Hussein as “an ambitious dynasty founder who is willing to win a kingdom”<sup>16</sup>; where Lawrence<sup>17</sup>, the most important person the British had in the region states that: “We were able to see the necessity of a power or a race, of a new factor to balance the Turks by the means of number, efficiency and intellectual activity in East. (...) I too was in intention of creating a nation to establish a lost impact.”<sup>18</sup> Although Lawrence’s statements seems very assertive, according to Albert Hourani, the important thing here was the acceptance of a request made by a Arabic speaking nation to form a state by a great powered empire for the first time in modern history.<sup>19</sup> In this stage, we can say that Adeed Dawisha makes a more precise comment: “The Great Arab Revolt will gain a respected place as the spark of patriotism to fire the Arab nationalism, realise the Arab independence and make the Arabs want a political unity in one state, under one government. In addition to this, in reality, the reasons starting the revolt has nothing to do with nationalism.”<sup>20</sup>

In conclusion the Great Arab Revolt was neither having the intentions of establishing a new nation nor gaining total independence. Despite this, the revolt gave the Arabs a stir after their 400 years of political dependence. The effects of this stir triggered Arab nationalism and Arabs learnt how to revolt. However, the promise McMahon gave was not hold after the war and all the Arab soil except Syria went under British domination.<sup>21</sup> In Syria, an authoritarian French government was formed.

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<sup>15</sup> Cleveland pg. 178

<sup>16</sup> Cleveland pg. 180

<sup>17</sup> Recognized with intelligence policies he had conducted in Middle-east during the First World War and his role in binding Arabs with the British, born on 15<sup>th</sup> of August 1888, British soldier, archaeology expert, author.

<sup>18</sup> Hourani pg. 372

<sup>19</sup> Ibid

<sup>20</sup> Dawisha pg. 30

<sup>21</sup> Egypt was already in domination of Britain in 1882.

A leading Arab nationalist of that time, Sati al-Husri<sup>22</sup>, had defined the Arabs accordingly: “Every Arabic speaking society is an Arabic society. Anyone in any of these societies is an Arab.”<sup>23</sup> However a great amount of time had been needed for this perception to be adopted.

The Palestinian Revolt that burst in 1936 with a strike was the first revolt that put the Arab identity in center. After all the main point of the Great Arab Revolt was Islam and the Syria Revolt’s was a regional Syrian identity. The reasons for the Palestinian Revolt which was effective between 1936-1939 were; the privilege 400,000 Jewish people had against 1 million Arabs, the high taxes collected by the British and the cruelty of the landowners against the farmers.<sup>24</sup> In these three years, the revolt was effective mostly in summers and was public originated and although the active arming militias were only 5,000 men, they were consistently supported by the rural areas. Palestinian Arabs that stood against Zionist movement<sup>25</sup> and British imperialism, gained the support of the whole Arab world. After the revolt, Britain gave some concessions like “limiting the Jewish migration to 15,000 per year and allowing the mandate to claim its independence 10 years later”.<sup>26</sup>

Following this declaration of Britain, Second World War broke in. During this period, the British established a great suppression on the Arab governments to consolidate their position in the region, in fact in 1941 Iraq which was liberalized before was re-occupied and Egyptian government forced to quit by military means.<sup>27</sup>

After Britain withdrew from Palestine to solve the issue on 14 May 1948, Middle-East which had revealed with the end of the war was once again having conflicts with the Jewish-Arabic problems. On the same date, the Jewish society declared its independence as Israel.<sup>28</sup> Because of this, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon military forces moved towards the Arab majoring areas of Palestine and fought with the newly established Israel army. The Arabs failed and Israel managed to spread to a wider than the area it demanded right on earlier. Approximately 75% of Palestine went

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<sup>22</sup>Born in 1882, Syrian Arab nationalist, theoretician, Cultural direct of the Arabic Union between 1947-1965.

<sup>23</sup> Dawisha pg. 64

<sup>24</sup> Cleveland pg. 282-283

<sup>25</sup>Zionism, political movement supporting the establishment of a new country for the Jewish in Palestine.

<sup>26</sup> Cleveland pg. 288

<sup>27</sup> Dawisha pg. 106

<sup>28</sup> Hourani 418

under Jewish domination and 2/3 of the population living there left their country.<sup>29</sup> Egypt and Jordan split up the remaining of Palestine and the country of Palestinian Arabs had collapsed before it was established.

Partially gaining the right to determine their own fate after the withdrew of the European imperialism, Arabs felt the same devastation they felt after the British didn't kept their promise; when the Israel Army had defeated them even though the Israel population was not even 1/10 of the Arab population. They faced to their regional problems again instead of uniting as one. Because of this, Arab nationalism lost its value and function and the commitment and trust in this policy had shrunk.

Exactly after these events on 23<sup>rd</sup> of July 1952, a coup was done by the leadership of Gamal Abdel Nasser and Mohammed Naguib<sup>30</sup> against King Farouk<sup>31</sup> who was in the hands of the British. The British had kicked out of Egypt except the Suez Canal and Arab nationalism became a state policy. The nationalism that was not introduced to Egypt until then, made it its base.

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid

<sup>30</sup> An important political figure after King Farouk's fall in 1952, born in 1901 Egyptian soldier and statesman, President of Egypt between 1953-1954, arrested in 1954 for plotting an assassination for Nasser and kept imprisoned until 1960 in his home. Did not played a political role until his death in 1984.

<sup>31</sup> King of Egypt between 1936-1952.



## II. Arab Nationalism in Nasser Era

### a) Egyptian Revolution of 1952

*“The nature gave it (Egypt) all the advantages to made it obligatory to recreate Arab nationalism. It is located between the Asia and Africa elements and in the heart of the Arab world. It also is the most important piece of the Arab world that had influenced by the modern civilizations. Thus it is the most important cultural headquarters in the Arab world; it is wealthier than all of the other Arab states combined and has the most experience in the means of modern state structure.”<sup>32</sup>*



One of the routine demonstrations before the coup, Cairo, 1952.

[http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dosya:Demonstration\\_taking\\_place\\_at\\_Opera\\_Square\\_in\\_Cairo.jpg](http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dosya:Demonstration_taking_place_at_Opera_Square_in_Cairo.jpg)

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<sup>32</sup> Dawisha pg. 95

After the Second World War, the world was a ruined, suffered but a hopeful place. The bipolar system formed by USA<sup>33</sup> and USSR<sup>34</sup>, along with decolonization movement, ends the hegemony of UK<sup>35</sup> over the third world countries. This course of events also effected the Middle East; Iraq, Syria and many other countries in the Arabian Peninsula declared their independence with the approval of UK.. However, with its high human resources and geopolitical importance, Egypt isn't one of the regions that could be easily accept to leave he colonial empire. This forced it to search for other ways to gain independence..

Started in 1951, the guerrilla warfare against UK strengthened every day and in the spring of 1952, public order in great cities of Egypt was nearly none. Facilities identified with the British authority destroyed and demonstrations became routine. As a member of a secret organization named Free Officers Movement, Gamal Abdel Nasser and Mohammed Naguip staged a coup against King Farouk in 23 July 1952 and republic declared.<sup>36</sup> British were forced to leave Egypt and 70 years of British occupation ended, however the military based near Suez Canal<sup>37</sup> was decided to be used by British for protecting the neighbouring countries in the course of war.<sup>38</sup> 75.000 British soldiers and 500 million sterling equipment left in the region.<sup>39</sup>

Mohammed Naguip became the president of the new republic but the real authority was in the hands of Nasser. Nasser was a Egyptian nationalist rather than an Arab nationalist and a socialist at that time.<sup>40</sup> He wanted to create an independent Egypt free from British imperialism. In 1953, "Voice of Arabs" radio established which will be very beneficial in the upcoming years for Egypt to be the most effective Arab states among the masses of all Arab world.<sup>41</sup> He also made a land reform, distributed most of the fertile lands of Egypt to farmers which he nationalized from wealthy land

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<sup>33</sup> United States of America, US

<sup>34</sup>Soviet Union

<sup>35</sup> United Kingdom

<sup>36</sup> Cleveland 339-340

<sup>37</sup> Waterway which connects Meditterenean to Indian Ocean.

<sup>38</sup> Dawisha pg. 123

<sup>39</sup> Stephens, pg. 109

<sup>40</sup> Nasser, Philosophy of the Revolution pg. 77

<sup>41</sup> Dawisha pg. 131-132

owners.<sup>42</sup> The idea of Aswan Dam<sup>43</sup> also evaluated in this process, meetings arranged with UK and USA for its expenditure. Education facilities were extended in number all over the country, however it has very few references to Arab nationalism but rather signifies the role of Egypt for the world culture.<sup>44</sup> Similarly, Nasser's politics were based on internal problems until the establishment of Baghdad Pact<sup>45</sup>. USA involvement into the region and taking anti-Soviet acts is probably one of the most important reasons which highlighted Arab nationalism.

Real importance of Egyptian revolution for Arab nationalism is hidden in the given words of Sati el-Husri about Egypt, marking it as the real start of Arab nationalism with the first nationalist movement in the heart of the Arab world. Egypt rebelled against British authority and caused a revolution wave. It is the first real awakening of Arab world against imperialism. Nationalism which invented to use Arabs for British benefits now pursues them.

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<sup>42</sup> Cleveland pg. 342

<sup>43</sup> The dam built on the Nile River which fertilizes the wastelands and prevents floods, opened in 1970 with Soviet funds. It is the biggest dam in the Nile Valley.

<sup>44</sup> Op cit

<sup>45</sup> Formed in 1955, one of the military alliances against the Soviet threat, founded in Middle East.

## **b) Baghdad Pact (CENTO)**

In 1953, Secretary of State<sup>46</sup> of USA John Foster Dulles began to work on an organization against Soviet Union in Middle East. As part of his work, he negotiated with Turkey, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Syria and Egypt. Meanwhile Nasser was associating with Non- Aligned Movement<sup>47</sup>. Nasser's reaction to the defence pact that USA was trying to form in order to be protected from Soviet Union's communism was: "Soviet Union is 7500 kilometres away from us and we never had any problem with Russians, they never attacked us or stepped on our land... They never had a base here. Yet, English kept our country under occupation for seventy years."<sup>48</sup> This quote shows the socialist and nationalist way of Nasser. An Arab country was giving priority to its own interests and demands for the first time after a long period of the Western domination which makes all the necessary agreements in easy way or hard way. USA was surprised by this attitude and tried to form a pact<sup>49</sup> without Egypt.

However newly founded Egypt Republic couldn't risk being isolated in the region. In January 1954 the radio of Voice of Arabs announced: "Voice of Arabs talks for Arabs, fights for them and try to explain their unity."<sup>50</sup> As Dawisha's interpretation: "It was reminded that Egypt is at the service of Arabs, its fight is against Western imperialism and their servants in Arabic World."<sup>51</sup> Voice of Arabs was grown with serious amounts of financial aids of Egypt government and become able to broadcast to the whole Arab World. In 1960, Egypt was the sixth biggest international radio broadcaster.<sup>52</sup>

The reason to growth of Voice of Arabs was simple: "Nasser's unwillingness to take in charge of Arab nationalism existed until he realised that only way to struggle with Western powers is to take the support of whole Arab nation. Only after he decided to see Egyptian identity under the general

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<sup>46</sup>The USA administrative authority that is at an equal level with Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>47</sup>The movement which asserts that there can be third parties in the bipolar world created by the Cold War, formed by old colonies in the start of 1950s.

<sup>48</sup>Haykal, pg. 21

<sup>49</sup> Baghdad Pact, later CENTO

<sup>50</sup>Dawisha, pg. 131-132-133

<sup>51</sup> Ibid

<sup>52</sup> Ibid

Arab identity.”<sup>53</sup> And radio was the most important propaganda tool for Arabic people. He was trying to save Egypt from isolation by provoking the publics of governments that cannot stand the conditions insisted by the Western countries. Namely, the Arab nationalism was actually a way to provide Egypt stage to carry on its policies independently.

Nasser, signed plea agreements with Syria and Saudi Arabia a few days later after he learned Iraq accepted the conditions about defence line suggested by USA and in this context had a military alliance with Turkey in February 24 of 1955. When Jordan was preparing to be included to Baghdad pact because of UK’s pressure and Iraq’s promise of economic aid, Voice of Arabs charged Jordan government with Western collaboration and thousands of Jordanians walk out the streets, King Hussein had to dismiss government, declare a ten- day curfew and abandon the Baghdad Pact.<sup>54</sup> This victory gave hope to Arab nationalists and increased the prestige of Voice of Arabs.

Then, Nasser attempted to arm procurement for the army that haven’t been renewed since the revolution. He attempted to buy weapons from USA for nearly a year but didn’t succeed and as the last resort at 27 September 1955 announced that a weapon contract is signed with Czechoslovakia which is a satellite state of Soviet Union.<sup>55</sup> This was the last point that overflows the glass for Western Powers. According to Hourani, “In the perspective of US government, in the period of Cold War, declining to join in a defence alliance in Middle East is actually joining the Eastern Bloc.”<sup>56</sup> Moreover, buying weapons from the Soviet Union was clearly hostility towards the West. USA and UK decreased the credit that is promised to the initiation of Aswan Dam and Nasser declined to initiate the construction of the dam with lower credit, Egypt government had to find new financial sources.

Baghdad Pact was aiming to unite Arab countries against the USSR but it resulted in the opposite way. Egypt which tries to play an important role in the events of the region rejected Western suppression and created its own option, uniting Arabs not for the West, but for the Arabs themselves. This move was the first evidence of Arab nationalism in the state policy of Egypt.

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid

<sup>54</sup> Dawisha pg. 152-153

<sup>55</sup> Haykal, pg. 34

<sup>56</sup> Hourani , pg. 426

### c) Suez Crisis

Egypt's importance for UK is not just because it is the wealthiest Arab country, but also because of Suez Canal is in Egypt. Egyptian Government nationalized the Suez Canal for both financial income and a sanction for Western powers which draw back their aid for the construction of Aswan Dam. "This courageous move of Nasser welcomed with great enthusiasm in the Arab world. Built by Egyptians by and facilitated by a French Company, the Canal was the main vein of British Empire and a symbol of Western colonization. By nationalizing the Canal, Nasser prevents his country to be forcibly used for foreign interests."<sup>57</sup>

The nationalization was unacceptable for UK and France. Their position became worse when they could not obtained any favourable conclusion from international conferences and especially when Egypt accepted paying compensation. So they signed a secret agreement with Israel and at October 29, 1956, Israeli armed forces attacked to Sinai peninsula, afterwards UK air forces started bombing at October 31.<sup>58</sup> British and French forces seized Port Said at 4-5 October and started to march rapidly to Cairo. Egyptian army could arrest neither Israel, nor the two allies. When his friend Saleh Salem, an army major, proposed to surrender, Nasser said that if the allies aim was his person, he would willingly sacrifice himself, but since this is not, so he is going to die while fighting.<sup>59</sup> But the winds changed after UN urged an armistice, USA enhanced his constraints for a solution and USSR threatened London with a missile attack. The forces of secret agreement began to withdraw, thus Egyptian Republic survived.<sup>60</sup>

The crisis evoked almost a new world. First of all, UK lost its prestige in the region as well as in the world. Even Times newspaper could write about Anthony Eden who was one of the planners of the operation as such: "He is the last UK prime minister who supposes that UK is a superpower, and he is the first, when encountered a crisis, who understand that it is not anymore."<sup>61</sup> On the other hand,

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<sup>57</sup> Cleveland pg. 345

<sup>58</sup> Cleveland pg. 346

<sup>59</sup> Haykal pg. 98

<sup>60</sup> Op cit

<sup>61</sup> Cleveland pg. 347

the belief in Arab nationalism attained the highest level. Egypt's victory on Suez Canal which is not only an Arab interest but the world's common one because of its strategic location encouraged Arab peoples who, like Iraqis, could even not elect their own government.

In fact, Egypt would be helpless without USA and USSR: It gained no military success, yet Arab people preferred to see this not as a military failure but as a political victory. Thus, "Nasser overcame the crisis by becoming an Egyptian and Pan-Arab hero instead of being overthrown."<sup>62</sup> Moreover, for the first time an Arab country succeeded without reconciling with imperialism. Arab nationalism achieved its first concrete attainment and embraced by the other Arab countries.

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<sup>62</sup>Op cit

#### **d) United Arab Republic**

Nasser became more influential in the Arab world after the crisis; “But the champion of Arab nationalism was not anymore a desirable person among leaders of Arab countries.”<sup>63</sup> Saudi Arabia began to sever the relationship with Egypt because of its ties with the Western countries and especially because of its fear of the revolutionary movement. Jordan also was fearing of the repetition of events triggered by Egypt in the course of signing of Baghdad Pact. As for Iraq which is the sole Arab member of Baghdad Pact, and especially as for its leader Nuri al-Said<sup>64</sup>, so-called supporter of Arab nationalism, the revolutionary movement was a mortal danger. Thus, Nasser who became the indisputable leader of Arab nationalism was also became a hidden enemy of other Arab leaders.

The Ba’ath Government which came to power in Syria was a sole exception of this, but it was itself being weakened by the communist forces from below. In summer 1957, political life in Damascus completely halted and the communists get most of the administrative and military positions in government. Thereupon, the Ba’ath proposed Egypt to unify in a single government. Egypt accepted the proposal and at February 1, 1958, the two Arab countries unified under the name of United Arab Republic and under the leadership of Nasser. The Union was voted for %99.25 in Syria and % 99.8 in Egypt.

It was not Nasser who planned this, on the contrary he was believing that time is needed for such unification. Syrian Army General Afif al-Bizri told: “Nobody wanted unification... Even Nasser didn’t...”<sup>65</sup> Nasser himself has a dialogue with Syrian Foreign Minister Salah al-Din al-Bitar: “He told me that a person is frightened before jumping a swimming pool, but this fear disappears after entering the water. And I told him: My brother, which is frighten me is the probability of jumping a swimming pool without water.”<sup>66</sup> But the hero of Arab nationalism had no possibility of rejecting the proposal of unification.

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<sup>63</sup> Dawisha pg. 172

<sup>64</sup> Born in 1888, Iraqi leader known for his conservative policies. He was the prime minister of Iraq for seven terms.

<sup>65</sup> Dawisha pg. 175

<sup>66</sup> Dawisha pg. 177



The Union was not recognized by Iraq, however, all Western powers, including USA, recognized it afterwards. Iraqi prime minister Nuri al-Said invited the signatories of Baghdad Pact to an immediate reunion at June 14, but when the signatories meet in Istanbul, there was no Iraqi delegate: The coup-d'Etat in Iraq ended up with the death of both Nuri al-Said and King Faisal II and the proclamation of Iraqi Republic. The Iraqi delegation went to Damascus at June 19, after negotiating with UAR, colonel Abdel-Salam Arif, one of the leaders of the coup d'etat, declared that "Iraq will soon join to UAC"<sup>67</sup>

The foundation of UAR is a critical point to mention about the Arab nationalism, maybe nationalism generally. Arab nationalism was not under direct control of Nasser, as seen, he can make it bigger but not able to control its effects. It was an idea which swallowed any conservative system, forced all Arabs to unite and in this terms functional for political purposes up to a degree. At first, Nasser get it out from the marsh it was in for not to be isolated from the region because of USA policies. It was just 4 years for nationalism to be a de facto state policy, but later it united two states. As said before, this wasn't anyone's wish but requirement of conditions. From now on nationalism decided its own policies, the leader of him is was under its effect. " (...) But now he gravitated to the effect of masses, enthusiasm and the wind; he openly wanted the ultimate union of all Arab people."<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Dawisha pg. 190

<sup>68</sup> Dawisha pg. 183

## **Conclusion**

As one of the main movements of 20<sup>th</sup> century, nationalism dragged Arabs to a place which they could only imagine. Arab nationalism was the main factor which opened the eyes of Arab people and invited them to fight against imperialism. Nationalism aid them to be the part of the greater world as not single countries but a whole Arab nation.

If proceeded its way without Nasser's Egypt, it was a high possibility for it to show its effects years later. However, Nasser didn't just quicken it, he also changed it. Arab nationalism needed to concretize and it done that through Nasser. Gamal Abdel Nasser's influence was so much that nationalism's great power supported by Nasser resulted to die with him. Nasser was neither the founder or destroyer of Arab nationalism but he succeeded to be what's between them. Arab people trusted him and his nationalistic policies which is clearly seen from the will of unification of Syria.

This essay searched the influence of Nasser on Arab nationalism and it could be clearly stated that Nasser had a such great effect to pass unseen. He took nationalism from the hands of Western powers which used it for splitting the Ottoman Empire and forged a nation which once felt as one. He carried nationalism from the turbans of Emirs' to people's mind.

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