



Pan-Arabism and Identity Politics: A between case study design of Iraq 1952-1977

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Abstract

Anti-colonial movements in the MENA region led to new forms of nationalisms, such as Pan-Arabism. The emergence and rapid decline of Pan-Arabism made many people wonder if ethnic nationalism would have a place in the new globalizing world. Several people see ethnic nationalism as something that has no future, yet it is appealing to many others and used by today's populist politicians. The sentiments of nationalism and the need for identification is something that is founded deeply within human beings. It is therefore that identity politics often are successful in the short term as in the case of Pan-Arabism. Eventually, Pan-Arabism declined. In this research, I will try to answer the question on why Pan-Arabism declined and how this can contribute to a better understanding of the use of identity politics in today's society. I will research this by explaining historical events and media propaganda from a social psychological perspective. Therefore, the research will take an interdisciplinary approach combining social studies (Psychology) with humanities research (History/International Relations).

To what extent can the decline of Pan-Arabism help us explain potential flaws in the use of Identity Politics? Explaining historical events and media propaganda from a social psychological perspective.

It is often hard to see ideologies without their political context. Political ideologies create their own realities. These ideologies and ideas create a world in their own image, only to play themselves out in the end. At best they live past their prime and see the result of their vision on the world. In the end, political ideas and ideologies turn to ashes and often leave a trail of errors and devastation behind them. Pan-Arabism was in a way such an ideology which was very much alive in the Middle East from 1945 to 1970 (Ajami, 1978). The birth, quick rise, and rapid fall of Pan-Arabism can help us understand the prospects of any modern nationalism (Kramer, 1993). Pan-Arabism was intensified by the use of identity politics by ruling elites (Doran, 1999). The use of identity politics is relevant because it is still used by today's populist politicians. The case of Pan-Arabism can help us understand that (group) identities might be fluent over time and that the use of identity politics can have its flaws. I will use two case studies to show the differences in group identification of Arabs (between 1952 and 1977) in the country of Iraq (Sahib, H.A. 1954; Farah, T.E. 1978). The Iraqi people identified themselves differently after this 25-year period. To understand the differences in their perceived (group) identity, one needs to fully understand the case of Pan-Arabism and the usage of identity politics during that time.

First, I will give general definitions of Pan-Arabism, the 'Arab World', and the 'Arab people' to clarify what I mean when I use these terms. Pan-Arabism is a nationalist ideology which strives for the unification of countries of the 'Arab World' (Kramer, 1993; Sahib, H.A. 1954; Doran, 1999; Yenen, 2020). The 'Arab World' consists of countries in North-Africa and the Middle East in which Arabic is the shared language (Kramer, 1993; Sahib, H.A. 1954; Cherkaoui, 2010). The 'Arab people' are those who live in the 'Arab World' and share a

common identity, language, and ethnicity (Kramer, 1993; Doran, 1999; Ajami, 1978). I will refer to the 'Arab People' as the people who speak Arabic and define themselves as Arab in the 'Arab World' (Kramer, 1993).

Pan-Arabism is a form of ethnic nationalism which was mainly driven by anti-colonial sentiments induced by the words of American President Woodrow Wilson (Choueiri CH.15, 2005). Wilson discussed the right to self-determination in his Fourteen Points speech, which contributed to the rise of anti-colonial nationalisms (Manela, 2007). According to many scholars, Wilson only intended the right of self-determination for European 'westernized' countries, but, in practice, his views were picked up all over the world (Manela, 2007). The right of self-determination was, in Wilson's eyes, the right of a community or nation to choose its own political destiny (Manela, 2007). This was very appealing to the people of colonial countries that did not rule their own country/territory. Arab anti-colonial movements initiated Pan-Arabism as other anti-colonial movements initiated other Pan-movements. The idea was that together, the Arab people would be stronger against 'Western' imperial rulers. The case of the common enemy served the Pan-Arabic cause during the decolonization period (Ajami, 1978).

The use of Identity Politics is (almost) always used to differentiate the 'we' group from another group (Bernstein, 2005). In the case of Pan-Arabism, the Arabs wanted to distinguish and separate themselves from the 'West'. The colonial powers were their enemy and later on, Israel became the enemy which strengthened Arab group identity (Kramer, 1993). When common enemies started to disappear (or started to be too powerful to win from) the Pan-Arabic movement declined. Pan-Arabism grew quickly under the idea of a united identity among Arab speaking people. The use of identity politics still prevails, caused mainly by populist politicians. It raises the following question: *To what extent can the decline of Pan-Arabism help us explain potential flaws in the use of Identity Politics?* I will try to explain this from a social-

psychological perspective by using the concepts of othering and group identification based on the case studies in Iraq in 1952/1977 (Sahib, H.A. 1954; Farah, T.E. 1978). To answer this question one first needs to understand the history of Pan-Arabism before the Second World War.

1. Pan-Arabism before 1940 (The ‘Awakening’ of Pan-Arabism)

Arab Nationalism, also known as Pan-Arabism, did not only originate as a straightforward reaction to Western imperial rule (Kramer, 1993). Not all the Arab speaking countries experienced Western rule and some experienced it for multiple decades. This was different in the cases of Pan-Asianism and Pan-Africanism (Kramer, 1993). Pan-Asianism and Pan-Africanism originated mainly as a straightforward reaction to Western imperial rule while Pan-Arabism already originated during the time of the Ottoman Empire (Yenen, 2020). Arab Nationalism eventually thrived and separate classifications, such as Nasserism and Ba’athism, saw the light. This did not happen all at once, as there were multiple reasons for the quick birth and rise of Pan-Arabism (Kramer, 1993).

Many scholars choose different moments for the start of Pan-Arabism. There were already Pan-Arabic sentiments in the late nineteenth century, but Pan-Arabism really came alive during and right after the First World War (Doran, 1999). The ‘awakening’ of Pan-Arabism can be found in the Arab revolt (1916), in which the Arab world launched an alliance with Great Britain and France (Choueiri CH.15, 2005). The Arab revolt was led by Sharif Husayn of Mecca and immortalized by Lawrence of Arabia and his Seven Pillars of Wisdom (Doran, 1999). Most Arabs lived in the Ottoman Empire, of which they were a part for four centuries. There were no separate independent Arab states within the Ottoman Empire. The Pan-Arabs argued that if the Turks were a nation, so too were the Arabs. The Arabs chose the side of England and France during the First World War because the ‘West’ promised the Arabs more sovereignty. The betrayal by the West and the colonization of much of the Middle East united the Arabs with a

common enemy for the following decades. The Sykes-Picot agreement, ruling the British-French division of The Levant, as well as the Balfour declaration that paved the way for a Jewish state in Palestine, strengthened nationalist sentiments among many Arabs. In reaction to this, Arab officials and officers formed a strong bond of unity who thought in terms of ‘the Arab World’ and the ‘West’ (Ajami, 1978). There was a trans-state elite that understood one another and did not limit their powers to the boundaries of a single state. In the time directly after the Arab Revolt most Arabs implicitly believed in the existence of an Arab nation (Ajami, 1978). The following mandate years enforced anticolonial movements and strengthened the case for a Pan-Arabic solution. With this new political ideology, the Arab intellectuals tried to chart their own future based on self-determination and national liberation (Choueiri CH.15, 2005).

During the time after the First World War, Arab Nationalism was strengthened and the Christian minority sought equality to the Muslim majority as fellow Arabs. During the Arab Revolt (1916-1918), the Christians and Muslims failed to produce an effective modern language of politics. As had been the case in Ottoman times, most of the different ethnicities living in the Arab world classified themselves along religious lines, genealogy, or sect (Kramer, 1993). The people in the Arab World were Christian or Muslims, Shiites or Sunnis, Druzes or Maronites, and there seemed to be too many differences between them to unite them under one Arab state. Yet, one important aspect united the Arabs, namely the wish to not be ruled by the ‘West’. Simultaneously, many people also did not have the desire to be ruled by other Arabic speaking strangers in the 1920s (Kramer, 1993). Yet, Pan-Arabism gained immense popularity in the 1930s.

In the 1930s, almost the entire Arab World was under the control of foreign powers – except for Saudi-Arabia, which was founded in 1932. The Saudis escaped direct occupation and enjoyed the status of an independent state (Choueiri CH.15, 2005). During the 1930s, ideas

of Arab Nationalism spread out from Iraq and Syria into the wider Arab world. The Ba'ath ideology originated in the 1930's and was formulated by two Syrians, Salah al-Din Bitar and Michel'Aflaq. Their ideas were strongly influenced by Sati'al-Husri and al-Miqdadi. The main principle of the Ba'ath party would be unity among Arab people because the multitude of Arab states was a plot by the colonial powers to divide the Arab people (Abdi, 2008). The Arabs should therefore unite in one single state and revive Arab civilization through social and political reforms (Abdi, 2008).

The early experience of independence in Iraq inspired an entire era of Pan-Arabism. Iraq was the first Arabic country in the Middle East which became independent of 'Western' colonialism. The independence of Iraq therefore inspired other 'Arabic' countries in the region that were colonized by the 'West' (Choueiri CH.15, 2005). Pan-Arabic ideas were picked up by Egyptians and these ideas gained popularity on official levels because they became aware of the advantages of a Pan-Arabic state. The Pan-Arabic stance could help the Egyptian struggle to wrestle its independence from the British government (Choueiri CH.15, 2005). Until the 1930s, few Egyptians saw themselves as Arabs and the early Pan-Arabic ideas did not include Egypt (Kramer, 1993). When it became clear that Egypt, as the largest Arabic speaking country during this time, could play a leading role and gain independence from Great Britain with the Pan-Arabic cause, they quickly joined the cause of unification of the Arab World (Kramer, 1993).

Arab intellectuals spread a variety of ideas in numerous newspapers and magazines throughout the 1930s. These ideas regarded a Pan-Arabic state solution and classifications on which people should live in this Arabic country. Sati'al-Husri was one of the true ideologues of Arab Nationalism and he defined the Arabs as followed:

'Every person who speaks Arabic is an Arab. Everyone who is affiliated with these people is an Arab. If he does not know this or if he does not cherish his Arabism, then we must study the reasons for his position. It may be the result of ignorance? Then we must teach him the truth. It may be because he is unaware or deceived? Then we must awaken him and reassure him. It may be a result of selfishness? Then we must work to limit his selfishness' (Kramer, 1993).

According to Sati'al-Husri, the Arab language originated in the Arabian Peninsula before the rise of Islam and was therefore the essential element of an Arab national identity (Abdi, 2008). It became clear that the Arab intellectuals were determined and convinced in striving for a Pan-Arabic state. This momentum would come just shortly after the ending of the Second World War (Choueiri CH.15, 2005).

2. The (Ethnic) Identity of Pan-Arabism

To understand any form of nationalism, it is necessary to focus on the (ethnic) identity and shared history of the people of the 'nation' which define the 'we' group. In this chapter, I will give a general explanation of what (ethnic) identities are and how deeply the (psychological) need for group identities is within human beings. If we understand the (psychological) need to identify with a certain group, it will become easier to understand the transformations of nationalisms and the complexities of group dynamics.

The wave of Arab nationalism (especially under Nasser) focused on an ethnic dimension and a shared identity (Choueiri CH.15, 2005). It emerged out of a series of overlapping social, political, and cultural movements. It was a movement of separation from the 'West' and simultaneously a movement of unification within the Arab world. Arab writers often referred to Pan-Arabism as *'uruba*. This term (Arabism) meant a general commitment to a common national identity based on history, culture, and a shared language. *'Uruba*, or Arabism, could

thus be seen as more than merely a political movement. Pan-Arabism extended from this sense of Arabism, but Arabism (*'uruba*) did not always commit to the idea of Arab unity (Manduchi, 2017). Pan-Arabism was mainly a product of the twentieth century and the era of (de)colonization (Choueiri CH.15, 2005). The decolonization period in the Middle East was induced by 'Arab' propaganda focused on Identity Politics, mainly using forms of 'othering' (Kramer, 1993). Identity Politics is a political approach that prioritizes people on religious, racial, cultural, or sexual identity (Bernstein, 2005). During the decolonization period, identity politics was mainly used by ethnicities, races, and nations to seek self-determination as they did with the Pan-Arabism movement. Central in these ideas was the use of 'othering' and their own sense of group identification. 'Othering' consists of an (imaginary) knowledge about other groups, which is strongly linked to post-colonial theories. It became a well-known term after the book *Orientalism* by Edward Said (1978). 'Othering' can also be used the other way around and could in this case contribute to a sense of group identification among Arabs, as it did with Pan-Arabism. 'Othering' led to the belief that their group should have the right of self-determination (Jensen, 2011; Said, 1978).

Self-determination is important for human beings. Not having the right of self-determination leads to lesser personal control (Deci & Ryan, 2012). People need personal control to be productive and to lead a good and healthy life. A decrease in feelings of personal control can lead to a deterioration of feelings of happiness and can in the long-term cause depression (Averill, 1973; Deci & Ryan, 2012). Self-determination is essential in human nature and is therefore also taken into account by the UN charter. Even the right of state sovereignty can be traced back to the right of self-determination (Wheeler, 2000).

In the twentieth century, ethnic nationalism (such as Pan-Arabism) seemed capable of pushing much of the world into chaos and war, it is therefore needed to understand and cope with the conditions that cause such extreme group loyalty (Druckman, 1994). Central to this

focus is the role played by feelings of loyalty to groups and the conditions that arouse or reduce attachments. People create attitudes about their own and other nations which reflect the feelings that this person has toward certain objects, people and a sense of loyalty to them (Druckman, 1994). The feelings of attachment which create the 'we' feeling are key in understanding the extreme loyalty of (ethnic) nationalism which affects global politics every day (Dekker, Malova & Hoogendoorn, 2013). It is fundamental for human beings to seek meaning and purpose in life. Being part of a group creates the feeling that they belong somewhere and creates loyalty towards this group (Ferguson, 2010). The loyalty towards one's group strengthens one's identity and the feeling to belong. This makes people feel in control of themselves which raises feelings of happiness and self-control which are fundamental for a good life (Averill, 1973; Druckman, 1994; Ferguson, 2010). These feelings based on loyalty are not only based on ideological similarities. They are also based on external characteristics (Druckman, 1994).

The 'we' group can refer to the family, the peer group, the neighborhood, the generation, the nation, the culture, and other larger groups. Each different 'we' group is constructed through shared discourses and practices that mark certain boundaries and define the principles of exclusion and inclusion (Assmann, 2008). For a collective group such as the nation Iraq, one has to share and adapt the nation group's history. The history of a nation surpasses the boundaries of an individual life span, therefore this past cannot be remembered and has to be memorized (Assmann, 2008). The memorization of a nation's past is often referred to as the collective memory. The groups in the nation define themselves by agreeing upon which values they share and which stories they hold to be important. Therefore, collective memory can be seen as just a different name for ideology (Assmann, 2008).

In the case of Pan-Arabism, much of the ideology was based on the unity of ethnic Arabs and Pan-Arabism is thus often seen as a form of ethnic nationalism (Doran, 1999). It is common knowledge that people are social creatures who try to seek unity with similar (or the same)

people (Forsyth, 2019). Every human being likes those people more that are similar to them. This counts for character but also for appearances and external characteristics (Essed, 1988). In our minds, we use heuristics to diminish our cognitive workload. In these heuristics, we are likely to make racial errors and to discriminate (Essed, 1988; Richardson & Goff, 2012). *White* human beings are more likely therefore to see a *black* man as a threat instead of a *white* man, especially when they are under stress (Richardson & Goff, 2012). Scholars believe that this non-consciousness process is a universal principle (Richardson & Goff, 2012; Essed, 1988). Also, poverty-related concerns consume mental resources which itself reduce cognitive capacity (Mani et al. 2013). This reduced cognitive capacity leads to the experience of more stress and they are therefore more likely to rely on heuristics (Mani et al. 2013; Shah et al. 2012). Accordingly, it could also be applicable in the case of Pan-Arabism while many of the ‘Arab’ people experienced uncertainties and poverty during this time (Sahib, 1954). So, because of these heuristics and ‘othering’ they perceived Arabs as more trustworthy in comparison to the colonial ‘White Europeans’ (Essed,1988; Doran,1999; Ajami, 1978).

It seems that there are different levels of group loyalty which always will have an outgroup to compete with (Forsyth, 2019). This competition enforces group loyalty within the group and makes negotiations harder with other groups while the differences are getting extremer within groups during this process (Druckman, 1994; Forsyth, 2019). The psychology of these group differentiations based on ‘othering’ affect the relations between different countries and ethnicities even today (Goldgeier & Tetlock, 2001).

3. The between case study research design

This chapter explains why it is important to integrate a social psychological perspective in analyzing Pan-Arabism and how this reflects in my choice for a between case study research design. To understand Pan-Arabism or any other form of nationalism, it is necessary to understand that these ideologies are based on sentiments and emotions

(Ferguson, 2010). These ideologies are formed and spread in the minds of the population. Humans are fluid over time and experience change in character and ideas (Averill, 1973; Ferguson, 2010). As a result, nationalist movements do not consist of the unfolding of a certain nationalist ideology, which is already formulated and finished at the beginning of the movement (Sahib, H.A. 1954). Actually, it's even the opposite, a nationalist movement develops its ideology and all other features of its existence as it goes on. Therefore, all of the features of nationalist collective behavior and all the efforts and manifestations of a nationalist struggle are circumstantially and incidentally determined (Sahib, H.A. 1954).

Although the approach of this study is mostly a historical one in nature, the objective is not the presentation of a historical approach. Rather, the intention is to analyze the social-psychological processes which underpin these historical events in Iraq and the broader Middle East. The historical research will be interrelated from a socio-psychological point of view. This means that I will use current psychological knowledge to explain historical events and the influence of the media during these times. By doing so, the historical material will have more general applicability for today's society. It will become clear that nationalistic movements are not rigid and fixed, but that they are subject to change and modification under various conditions (Sahib, H.A. 1954).

The aim of this research is to understand the declination of Arab (ethnic) nationalism or Pan-Arabism by comparing two case studies. This case study will be about Pan-Arabic sentiments of Iraqi Arabs in 1952 and Pan-Arabic sentiments of Arabs in 1977 (including Iraqi Arabs). The timeframe between these two studies is 25 years. The reason being that Pan-Arabism was on the rise (almost at its peak) in 1952, and in 1977 it had fallen into something non-essential. I chose Iraq in 1952 because Ba'athism had strong support in Iraq and the rulers of Iraq were one of the three governments (with Egypt and Syria) which strived the most for Arab unification. Many of the Pan-Arabic intellectuals from outside of Iraq went to Baghdad

to discuss their ideas and to contribute to the cause of Pan-Arabism (Sahib, H.A. 1954). In this case study, it becomes clear how the ruling elite in Iraq used identity politics to strive for a United Arabic Confederation (Sahib, H.A. 1954). I chose to compare the case study of Sahib (1954) with the case study of Farah (1978) because the case study of Farah was a quarter-century later. Furthermore, both studies focused on the population and how they identified themselves during the time period when Pan-Arabism was at its peak (1950s) and when Pan-Arabism was in decline (1970s). In the case study of Farah (1978) he researched (group) identities of Arabs at the University of Kuwait. In this research 420 Arabs contributed from 13 different countries. Most of the people were from Iraq, Kuwait, Syria and Egypt. They expected therefore that the people would identify themselves as Arabs striving for a Pan-Arabic solution. Interesting was that they first identified themselves as Iraqi and Muslim and only thereafter as (ethnic) Arabs. This case study shows the decline of Pan-Arabism.

It is important to understand the urge for a Pan-Arabic solution in 1952 and to explain this from a social psychological perspective (Sahib, H.A. 1954). I will use the ‘‘Social Psychological Analysis of Arab Nationalist movement in Iraq’’ as my primary source (Sahib, H.A. 1954). I will compare the Pan-Arabic feelings in this time with the Psychological analysis of Pan-Arabic feelings in 1977 (Farah, T.E. 1978).

I compare the two cases to show that Pan-Arabism has declined, and I will seek to explain why it declined in this specific period. A rising form of ethnic nationalism almost disappeared and was formed into other forms of group identifications (Kramer, 1993). I will apply the use of identity politics during the time of Pan-Arabism and will research why Pan-Arabism was so appealing for them in 1952 and less appealing in 1977. I will try to answer these questions based on the use of identity politics looking into group identification, collective memory and ‘othering’. Focusing on the factors (mainly media propaganda) that sparked these sentiments and emotions during the times of the two case studies.

4.1 Pan-Arabism in Iraq 1940-1952, Group Identification is fluid

Important is that the following historical data should be read socio-psychologically. I do not want the data to be understood as unique events, but make a clear case that the human 'psyche' has not changed that much over time. People are still likely to make decisions based on nostalgia and other forms of induced sentiments and emotions which are often induced by propaganda from different media channels (Mattingly & Yao, 2020).

During and after the Second World War there was a lot of agitation in the social-political spheres in Iraq. One of the reasons for agitation was the problem of sectarianism. In a country with a majority of Shia's ruled by Sunni 'elite' there were often political tensions (Tibi, 1997). The Sunni nationalists even developed a general belief that Shia's are not Arabs and can therefore not be Arab nationalists. According to them, Arab nationalism can only be Sunni nationalism. Not everyone agreed with this statement on the Sunni side. Although, Pan-Arabism officially did not talk about Pan-Arabism as Sunni centered many Shia were afraid of becoming a minority in a larger Arabic Sunni state. Therefore, a lot of Shiites supported the communist party's during this time period instead of supporting nationalist movements (Sahib, H.A. 1954). This schism even went so far that the Minister of Education (Khalil Kenna) persecuted Shia officials in the Ministry of Education. This sectarian schism became a big problem for nationalist organizations and it made it impossible for them to do their work effectively (Sahib, H.A. 1954). The problem of sectarianism and the redefined definition of who Arabs are, already shows the fluency of Arabic Nationalism. In an earlier stage, Arabs were defined as all people who spoke Arab as their (first) language. Religious distinctions were not included in the early forms and ideas of a Pan-Arabic state (Kramer, 1993).

As mentioned earlier, Pan-Arabism is just as other nationalist movements something fluid and therefore there was a lot of discussion on what Pan-Arabism should be and what kind of people should be included (Sahib, H.A. 1954). As with other forms of nationalisms the in-

group and out-group change over time and these changes are induced by different (historical) factors (Ferguson, 2010; Mattingly & Yao, 2020). Posterior to the Second World War, Pan Arabist writers argued that Arabs would be stronger if they were united, although they differed significantly from each other in defining how this would happen in practice. In general, there were two main options: a homogenous Arab empire with a central government or an Arab confederation in which Arab states remained (semi-)independent (Sahib, H.A. 1954). Important for the topic of this research is the presentation of Iraqi national public opinion concerning this issue. The public opinion in Iraq swayed towards the confederation viewpoint which became the dominant form in Iraqi nationalism after the Second World War (Sahib, H.A. 1954). The confederation viewpoint focused mainly on a cultural, economic, military, and political alliance with the rest of the Arab world.

The Arab League was founded in 1945 with the idea to become an Arab confederation at some point (Sahib, H.A. 1954). The league expressed this new drive in which cooperation between the various Arab States was desirable with the idea of a Pan-Arabic state in the near future (Choueiri CH.15, 2005). The States of the Arab League promised alliance to each other but none of them would sacrifice their prerogatives of sovereignty. It was taken into the charter of the Arab league that each member state should respect the systems of government in other member states and should pledge to abstain from any action to change established systems of government (Kramer, 1993). The Arab League was founded to strive for unity (maybe even unification) and therefore this can be considered as quite paradoxical. A growing number of officials and intellectuals saw the ambiguity and turned their Arab nationalism into a rigorous doctrine. The nationalists in Iraq argued that the existing League does not represent the Arab peoples but the Arab States, which were in their eyes corrupt and did not have the confidence of the Iraqi/Arab people. They began to argue the need for revolution and their moment came when the Arab World stumbled on to Israel (Kramer, 1993; Sahib, 1954).

4.2 The driving forces behind Pan-Arabism, 1940-1952

Many nationalists were captured during the Second World War after the collapse of Rashid Ali's regime. Nationalists were eliminated from the Government during this time, but after the Second World War the nationalists were released from the internment camps (Sahib, H.A. 1954). The released nationalists had developed two kinds of organizations for the 'movement': the original primary organizations like al-Muthenna Club and the al-Jewwal Society; and secondary organizations which were smaller cliques of people talking about societal problems from a nationalistic viewpoint (Sahib, H.A. 1954; Khuzayim, 1958). During the time that nationalist movements were suppressed, it was narrowed down to these nationalist cliques in which educational problems were discussed from a nationalist point of view. These cliques that preserved the movement, its orientation and ideology during this time of suppression, took momentum when fortunate conditions came to place in Iraq shortly after the Second World War. Two main Iraqi Nationalists (Jamali & Mahmud) found out that leftist ideas were spread and propagated a lot through journals. They themselves had difficulty persuading journalists to publish articles written by nationalists, so the two men created a new magazine (Sahib, H.A. 1954). This magazine was called A'lem al-Ghed. The founders of this prominent nationalist magazine were members either of al-Muthenna Club or al-Jewwal Society (Sahib, H.A. 1954). The magazine propagated nationalism and in addition to this they waged a campaign of attacks against Jews and leftists. After the magazine's founding more nationalist media channels were founded like the newspaper called al-Yekdha (the Awakening). In 1946 there were three main media channels which agitated the nationalist movement: Liwa' al-Istiqlal, al-Yekdha and A'lem al-Ghed. Propaganda became an important means for the Pan-Arabic cause in Iraq (Sahib, H.A. 1954). The nationalistic media-induced fear for Zionist expansion and fear of the increased influence of the 'West' in the region

which fueled nationalistic sentiments in Iraq (Sahib, H.A. 1954; Kramer, 1993; Mattingly & Yao, 2020).

There was also a lot of propaganda against the nationalists. The Communist agitation was challenging and threatening the ideological bases of Nationalism. Especially at universities criticism from Communist students on Nationalist students created difficult situations for the Nationalist Movement (Sahib, H.A. 1954). The Nationalist students were thrown into great confusion by the well-rounded Marxist ideology while they themselves had no clear philosophy to draw on in the discussion (Sahib, H.A. 1954). The Nationalist students turned to their nationalist teachers to get answers for some of the questions and Communist challenges, but these teachers were no better than the students in this respect. Students and teachers felt the necessity (based on sentiment) to formulate therefore some of the basic tenets of what is now called Pan-Arabism. These meetings led to the formulation of a small pamphlet called the *al-Mithaq al Qewmi* (The Nationalist Covenant) which included nationalist beliefs about a Pan-Arabic state (Sahib, H.A. 1954). Other highly intellectual members of the *A'lem al-Ghed* group had written a small pamphlet with questions and answers to help nationalist students in their discussions with their Communist counterparts. The students during this time in Iraq got overloaded with propaganda in which Arab glory stood central. According to a pamphlet of *al-Duri* (an important nationalist intellectual of the *A'lem al-Ghed* Group), the Arab nation is and should be a great nation based on her past glories in civilization, science, war, and politics. Furthermore, *al-Duri* criticized western culture and civilization, saying that the west suffered from imbalance and from social and moral confusion which were a result of the rapid materialistic advances. *Al-Duri* also claimed that Marxism was not the solution for Arab states while their culture was already based upon socialist principles. He also said that we cannot consider nationalisms as something identical all over the world. Every form of nationalism is different according to *Al-Duri* (Sahib, H.A. 1954).

4.3 'Othering', the 'out-group' and 'scapegoats', 1940-1952

There were a lot of far-reaching regional events which had an effect upon the Arab nationalist movement in Iraq. The Syrian nationalist struggle, the Tunisian issues, the Algerian problems, the Morocco problems, the events in Egypt and obviously the Zionist movement in Palestine (Kramer, 1993). Many scholars believe that there was no event as influential on the Pan-Arabic nationalist movement as the creation of Israel and the struggle of Palestine that followed (Sahib, H.A. 1954). Pan-Arabism, which was mainly an anti-imperialist movement, became revolutionary after 1948. The Arab-Israeli war in Palestine had demonstrated that the Arabs, despite their alliance, remained politically disunited and militarily weak. The emergence of Israel gave the Arab World another common enemy which sparked nationalistic feelings (Boyd, 1959). The loss of 'Arabic' Palestine to the 'Zionist' Jews had widened the gap between the ruling elite and the nationalists. The support of 'the West' for a Jewish state led to intensified hostile attitudes towards 'Western Powers'. The Palestine question fueled the nationalist propaganda machine in Iraq, in which the al-Sefwani newspaper played the most important role in nationalist agitation against the Jews, Anglo-American bloc and even the Arab League. Zionism had introduced unrest and strife into the Arab society and at the same time built up nationalist cohesion as nothing had ever done before (Sahib, H.A. 1954).

During this time the Iraqi nationalist media always referred to America as the Zionist America and Zionism was referred to as the illegitimate daughter of Truman (Sahib, H.A. 1954). Since the ending of the Second World War, the Iraqi nationalist media was considerably concerned with the existence of a Zionist state in Palestine. The danger of Israel was so exaggerated in the media that nationalist organizations emphasized that the Zionists did not aim at the occupation of only Palestine but that they were aiming at all other Arab countries as well (Sahib, H.A. 1954). During this campaign of agitation against Zionism, nationalists propagated that 'Palestine is an inevitable part of the Arab world', 'the heart of the Arab world', 'Zionism

is an extremely aggressive political movement’ and ‘Zionism was and still is the greatest obstacle in the way of uniting the Arab countries’. These are just a few examples of what nationalist media propagated during these times in Iraq and they are all perfect examples of manipulating emotions to fuel nationalism (Sahib, H.A. 1954; Mattingly & Yao, 2020).

The period of turmoil in which propaganda led to the polarization of different political groups, after the Second World War, eventually resulted in multiple riots which shook the Iraqi Government (Sahib, H.A. 1954). The death of a Jewish member of the Arab League led to a period of turmoil in which demonstrations were held organized by the league in Baghdad. The nationalists circulated the idea that these demonstrations supporting the Jewish member of the League were inspired by Zionist organizations. Induced by the information provided by the nationalist media, students and other nationalist sympathizers attacked these demonstrations. The nationalist press went so far that even the agreement to a truce with Israel would be seen in their eyes as treason to the Arabic cause (Sahib, H.A. 1954). The Arab League, which decided over the issue of Israel, was under Anglo-American pressure which lowered the trust even further in this organization. The Iraqi government tried to divert the attention of the Iraqi public away from the plots of the ruling clique and they sought a scapegoat (Sahib, H.A. 1954). This scapegoat became a wealthy Jew from Basra who was accused of supplying arms to the Zionists. He was sentenced to death and this incident aggravated bitter feelings against Jews within the Iraqi state and beyond. The nationalist movements saw the incident as proof that all Jews were Zionists and they exploited this incident by promoting the incident in their media channels (Sahib, H.A. 1954). This incident is a clear example of increased anger and anti-foreign sentiments as a result of exposure to nationalist propaganda (Mattingly & Yao, 2020).

The nationalist media provided a lot of ‘fake news’ in which conspiracy theories became a regularity on the daily basis. An example is the attacks and bombs which were thrown at Jewish shops and synagogues because of antisemitic feelings during this time. The nationalists

claimed that these bombs were engineered and placed by Zionist organizations for the purpose of raising western public opinion against Iraq and the Arabic cause (Sahib, H.A. 1954). The result of this widespread media campaign led to the belief, among nationalists, that Jews should be expelled from Iraq and their properties should be confiscated. The alarming persecution, which was often outspoken in Iraqi media, led to a migration movement under Iraqi Jews. Between 1948 and 1951 almost 110.000 Jews left Iraq for Israel (Sahib, H.A. 1954). The hatred against the Jews induced Pan-Arabic feelings among the Iraqi population which was a result of the propagated nationalistic materials in the Iraqi media (Mattingly & Yao, 2020).

5. Pan-Arabism from 1952-1970 (the in-between period of the two case studies)

Egypt became the architect of a Pan-Arabic state in the 1950s and 1960s under the leadership of Gamal Abdel Nasser (Doran, 1999). The coup in 1952 in Egypt and the replacement of the monarchy by a republic attracted the attention of Iraqi nationalists. In the following years, Egypt had a leading role in the Pan-Arabic cause under the leadership of Nasser, which intensified Iraqi nationalists' dissatisfaction with their regime (Sahib, H.A. 1954). During this time, Arab Socialism became also popular which was not authentically Arab in inspiration (Kramer, 1993). The Ba'ath party sought a revolution in the form of extensive nationalization (Pan-Arabism) and five-year plans. The Ba'ath party became powerful mainly in Iraq and Syria and would even be in control of those countries. In 1958, the Ba'ath in Syria strived to join with Egypt of Nasser. The talks culminated in the birth of the United Arab Republic, which was at first a union of Egypt and Syria. This was the first major success of the Pan-Arab movement and a huge step for an United Arab Republic (Kramer,1993). The names Syria and Egypt disappeared and were replaced by a 'northern region' and a 'southern' region. Iraq wanted to join the union after the overthrow of its Hashemite monarchy in 1958. There were advanced talks about this plan but the tri-partite union never materialized (Ajami, 1978). Unfortunately for Pan-Arabism, it became clear that this 'union' was an uneven contest between

the Egyptians and Syrians. Some would even say that the Egyptians ran Syria like a colony. The fusion of Ba'athism and Nasserism led eventually to a struggle within the camp of Pan-Arabism (Kramer, 1993). A coup ousted in Syria in 1961 and declared the union finished.

The failure of this first 'try-out' of a Pan-Arabic state had also a huge influence on the nationalists in Iraq (Ajami, 1978). After the overthrow of General 'Abd al-Karim Qasim in 1963 by Colonel 'Abd al-Salam 'Aref there was a period of Iraqi nationalism (Abdi, 2008). The rise of Nasserism in Egypt and its expansionist tendencies put the new government under pressure. The new Iraqi leaders therefore began a shift towards a new ideology that stressed Iraqi nationalism to rival Nasserism and to assert Iraq's role in the Arab world (Abdi, 2008).

The new Iraqi government used multiple propaganda mediums. One of the upcoming mediums was television which mainly spread two ideologies in the Arab world: Nationalism and Islamism (Hai, 2012). Mass communication like TV is and was a good tool for manipulation and social control (Mattingly & Yao, 2020). Although Pan-Arabism and Islamism nourished each other ideologically in many ways they had flown to two opposing banners (Hai, 2012). Pan-Islamism is the ideational subscription to unification of Muslim people regardless of divisive antecedents like ethnicity or language. Pan-Arabism was a nationalism based on socialist principles and a shared language (Kramer, 1993). Iraqi television played a significant role in spreading ideological messages to the people after the 1958 revolution. The Iraqi government was able to reach and mobilize the masses through television (Hai, 2012).

In the Arab world, there was a propaganda war going on between Egypt and the Saudi kingdom since the 1960s. Egypt was often portrayed as an un-Islamic regime by the Saudi's and Nasser's media propaganda of Arab unity often grew hostile towards the Saudi royal family (Hai, 2012). The Saudi propaganda was focused on spreading Pan-Islamism while the Egyptian propaganda of Nasser focused on spreading Pan-Arabism. The Saudi's and other conservative

states used Islam as a legitimizing instrument for their politics. The Saudi's opened attacks on Egyptian ideas of Pan-Arabism which was according to the Saudi's secular and therefore atheistic (Hai, 2012). To counter Nasser's Pan-Arabism propaganda, Saudi Arabia invested large amounts in television programming to promote Islam in the Middle East and the Arabian Peninsula. This counter-propaganda program to promote Pan-Islamism focused mainly on three broad areas: a Holy Qu'ran broadcasting service that provided interviews and lectures, cultural programs that provided Islamic interpretations by Islamic teachers, and popular programs that fitted within the boundaries of Muslim law (Hai, 2012). These television programs functioned more as propaganda machines than as independent sources of information. So, the television served in the Arab World as an appendage to the ideological political systems of the bigger Arab countries and was therefore not autonomous (Hai, 2012).

Television was not the only medium in which Pan-Arabism and Pan-Islamism were propagated. A radio program called *'The Voice of the Arabs'* played a significant role in spreading Pan-Arabism in the Middle East under the leadership of Nasser. This program fueled an atmosphere of anti-colonialism, nationalist sentiments, and ideas of Arabic unification. The program even invited and cooperated with famous Arab musicians like Umm Kulthum who sang Arab nationalistic songs on this radio program (Diong, 2015). *'The Voice of the Arabs'* was another strategy which contributed to the appearance of limited diversity in the Arab world without troubling the dominant state narrative, thereby supporting the Pan-Arabism ideology and Nasser's desire to become the leader of the Arab people. *'The Voice of the Arabs'* was also broadcasted in Iraq and was mainly popular from 1955-1965 (Diong, 2015).

Many scholars refer to 1967 as the 'Waterloo' of Pan-Arabism (Doran, 1999; Kramer, 1993; Ajami, 1978). In the six-day war against the state of Israel, many assumed that this time it would be different. The Arabic states assumed they would have been strengthened by nearly two decades of Nasserism and Ba'athism, the militarization of politics, and the striving of a

united Arab state by Arab nationalism. The opposite was true, the Arab states got a truly devastating defeat delivered in less than a week (Kramer, 1993). The failed war against their 'archenemy' Israel was a fatal blow for Pan-Arabism under the leadership of Nasser's Egypt (Kramer, 1993).

6. Pan-Arabism 1970-1977: What changed?

After the defeat in 1967 and the death of Nasser in 1970, it seemed that the Arab states would put aside the goal of unity (Choueiri CH.15, 2005). This was dramatically illustrated by Nasser's successor, Anwar Sadat, who was able to dissolve the process of the Arab Socialist Union which was built by Nasser and his ruling party (Choueiri CH.15, 2005). The next Arab-Israeli war of 1973 would not be fought under the idea of unification but was focused on independent state interests. Egypt waged the war with Syria but it quickly broke with Syria after the war. Egypt fought strictly for the return of the Israeli-occupied Sinai. President Anwar Sadat gave, at the end of the decade, a peace treaty to 'archenemy' Israel. In this peace treaty, Israel would return the Sinai and Egypt would recognize the state of Israel (Kramer, 1993). President Anwar Sadat laid off/disregarded the ideology of Pan-Arabism and destroyed the hopes of Pan-Arabic intellectuals. He did all this with the main goal of economic development and economic liberalization. The lost war in 1967 and the death of Nasser in 1970 seemed to be the beginning of the end for Pan-Arabism (Kramer, 1993; Choueiri CH.15, 2005).

In other countries such as Syria and Iraq, the Ba'ath party became more radical and remained in place for centuries. In 1966 the Ba'ath parties of Iraq and Syria split up and became more nationally focused (Kramer, 1993; Abdi, 2008). These Ba'athist governments relied on security forces to govern their respective countries. Both countries became more obsessed with their own national problems and both the Syrian as the Iraqi government did not want to lose their power. The main factors that changed the focus towards nation-state propaganda were the

abandoning of the Pan-Arab cause by Egypt and the disastrous political choices made by Palestinian Pan-Arabs (Cherkaoui, 2010).

When the Ba'ath Party rose to power in Iraq (1968) a new version of Iraqi nationalism emerged which selected elements from ancient Mesopotamian history and incorporated them into a new Iraqi national identity (Abdi, 2008). Interestingly though, this did not happen all at once. At first, the early Ba'ath ideology regarded Pan-Arabism as the highest goal but as Nasserism began its decline the Ba'athist leaders saw an opportunity for a stronger role for Iraq in the Arab world (Abdi, 2008). The Ba'athist leaders used their state-led media to promote Iraqi nationalist ideology by using elements from its Islamic and pre-Islamic past. Especially in the 1970s the party promoted Iraq as a distinct sociopolitical entity in which Iraq's superiority entitled them to lead the Arab world. The shift towards an Iraqi nationalistic ideology gave credence to the Kurds and Shi'ites living in Iraq which empowered the position of the Ba'ath party (Abdi, 2008). In the 1980s the Ba'ath regime loosened their strict nationalist Iraqi ideology and used Islamism as a new source of legitimization (Abdi, 2008). It becomes clear that states do not hesitate to invoke the past to advance their political agenda. The Ba'ath regime clearly used the Iraqi collective memory to promote the legitimacy of the leader Saddam Hussein based on ancient Mesopotamian and Islamic history (Abdi, 2008). The state-led propaganda fueled and manipulated this sense of collective memory to solidify the position of the in-group and the government (Abdi, 2008; Mattingly & Yao, 2020).

The out-group stayed the same in Iraq but the in-group changed. It is therefore that we often say that nationalisms are fluid over time (Sahib, 1954). In these new regimes and especially in Iraq it became important that the state-led propaganda mediums protected the authoritarian leaders from any criticism. Especially in Iraq, Saddam Hussain was protected and adored by the state-led media (Cherkaoui, 2010). It did not matter for him if his power

was solidified by Pan-Arabism, Iraqi nationalism, or Pan-Islamism. This is also the reason why he changed so much between these ideologies (Abdi, 2008).

In the early 1970s, Hussain nationalized the Iraqi oil reserves. This was seen by many as a strong statement against the (old) colonial 'West' and the out-group. The authoritarian position of (de facto) state leaders like Hussain became stronger in the 1970s in the 'Arab world' (Cherkaoui, 2010). Syria, with Hafez al-Assad as the leader from their Ba'athist party, had a similar trajectory in the 1970s. After Egypt in 1973 broke with their Pan-Arabic cause the only two countries remaining to claim to strive for Arab unity were the Ba'athist parties of Iraq and Syria. In the 1970s it became clear that although they said they were striving for Arab unification the authoritarian leaders actually tried to maintain their own power positions (Cherkaoui, 2010). The nationalistic propaganda, which was so strong for the Pan-Arab cause, became more and more nation-state focused in the 1970s because of the state-led media. This meant that of the 'Arab triangle' (Egypt, Syria and Iraq), none of these states would try to (actually) pursue a Pan-Arab state from the 1970s onwards (Cherkaoui, 2010).

The television stations became a privileged instrument for the Ba'ath Party in Iraq. Under the rule of the Ba'ath Party the government shaped and directed the content to ensure that the broadcasted ideas and images did not clash with the party ideology (Hai, 2012). The media propaganda of the Ba'ath Party became the 'flawed mirror' through which the Iraqi society perceived reality. The Iraqi TV shielded the regime (especially Saddam Hussein) from any criticism and demonized other groups to make the in-group look better (Hai, 2012; Mattingly & Yao, 2020). The media became an even more coercive tool for controlling the minds of the people, no less effective than other security apparatuses controlling their daily lives (Hai, 2012).

The shift of the state-led media towards nationalistic-state propaganda could be an indicator of the change in how Iraqi people perceived themselves differently in 1977 in comparison to 1952. In 1977 the Iraqi students identified themselves first as Iraqi, second as Arabs (Farah, 1978). This was actually for all Arab students (also Syria and Egypt) who identified with their citizenship first. After almost ten years of the Ba'ath Party initiating nationalistic state propaganda, it is a logical premise that Iraqi nationalistic feelings have grown within the population (Mattingly & Yao, 2020). The strong state-led media propaganda of the Ba'ath party from 1968 onwards was a key factor in diminishing the Arab identity in Iraq (Cherkaoui, 2010; Abdi, 2008; Hai, 2012; Kramer, 1993).

Conclusion/Discussion

In this research, I focused on discovering the flaws of identity politics by researching Pan-Arabism in Iraq between 1952 and 1977. By integrating a social-psychological perspective into historic events, I initiated a different perspective on the decline of Pan-Arabism in this era. It became clear that the in- and out-groups were constantly changing and that the people in power changed the defining identities to maintain positions of power (Abdi, 2008; Mattingly & Yao, 2020). It could be argued, hence, that the flaw of identity politics lies in the fluidity of how people define themselves in certain groups (Mattingly & Yao, 2020; Assmann, 2008). This is also clear in the local loyalties among the Arabic-speaking subjects to a tribe, village, clan, town, religion, or localized ethnic minority (Karsh & Karsh, 1996). This contradicts a clear universalist identity and ideology of the Arab Nation (Karsh & Karsh, 1996).

Although this research offers a new academic multi-disciplinary perspective on the formation of identities and nationalisms in the Middle East, the research does come with certain limitations. First, this research has not taken primary sources written in Arabic into consideration. Primary sources in Arabic would have made this research stronger because my

findings are based on English-language secondary literature. Second, while I use Pan-Arabism as my case study to research the complexities of identity politics and nationalisms, I aim to generalize my findings to the present. Although many studies see overlap in the different forms of nationalisms worldwide there are also cultural differences that must be taken into account when generalizing the findings of this study. When other scholars want to use the findings of this research, about nationalism and identity politics, they need to focus on the cultural dimension before implementing the findings into another setting or region.

In this research, I tried to find the answer to my research question: *To what extent can the decline of Pan-Arabism help us explain potential flaws in the use of Identity Politics?* It has become clear that the decline of Pan-Arabism was mainly initiated by historical events and the change in using propaganda to promote an Iraqi identity instead of an Arab identity. The use of Identity Politics served the Pan-Arab cause well for as long as there was a common enemy (Israel). The population of the Arab World was sensitive to emotional nationalist propaganda as a result of limited cognitive capacity induced by poverty and stress (Mattingly & Yao, 2020; Mani et al. 2013). When the circumstances changed and it became clear that the common enemy (Israel) was too strong to win from, the leaders of different countries started to change their nationalist propaganda (Abdi, 2008). The flaws of Identity Politics are that it needs circumstantial events to support and induce the sentiments of any form of nationalism (Mattingly & Yao, 2020). Many of these circumstantial events still existed after the 1970s, but the people in power changed their top-down media approaches to maintain their power positions (Cherkaoui, 2010; Abdi, 2008). The people still got influenced by different nationalist or Pan-Islamist views to solve their daily socio-economic and political problems. It became clear that a population can be influenced by media propaganda to form group identities but it will also keep their local loyalties to ones tribe, village, clan, town, religion, or localized ethnic minority (Karsh & Karsh, 1996). While people identify with different groups, a nationalism can often

contradict another loyalty towards an ethnicity or religion and it often happens, therefore, that people feel excluded by some forms of nationalism.

Today's populist politicians use identity politics based on a common history or ethnicity and try to induce fear by creating a common enemy/threat (migrants/asylum seekers) (Béland, 2020). The case of Pan-Arabism can help us explain that populist politicians are more likely to become successful in times of poverty, crisis, or stress. Even if they become successful in the short term, they will always need a common enemy to maintain nationalist loyalties. When the common enemy falls, intergroup dynamics will change and one's local loyalties will become important again. Identity politics is therefore fragile when induced in a multicultural, multi-ethnic, or multi-religious society such as in the Middle East. Even if there is a common language, culture, and religion, inter-group differences will increase when there is no out-group to compete with (Forsyth, 2010). Therefore, the case of Pan-Arabism can help us understand that group identities are fluid over time and that the use of identity politics comes with serious flaws.

There were some additional findings in this research. Experiences and (historical) stories generate emotions. Emotions generate values, and values generate narratives of meaning. People who share similar narratives of meaning come together to form an ideology. If an ideology is effective (or affective) it will give the people a sense of self-control and a feeling of hope (Druckman, 1994). These ideologies, such as Pan-Arabism, expand and eventually define in-groups versus out-groups which often spur conflict between groups with opposing values (Druckman, 1994). Therefore, it remains questionable whether these conflicts between the in- and out-groups must exist because they maintain the meaning and purpose for people within the in-group. Is it justifiable to adjust memories and stories to give purpose and values to our lives even if this means that it could generate conflicts in the long term?

Memories do not remain original stimuli in pure and fixed forms but constitute a process of continuous reconstruction in a constantly changing present. Therefore, historiography, in spite of all claims to impartiality, will involve rhetorical use of language and, potentially, a hidden bias (Assmann, 2008). Some historiographers insist on including political, economic, and religious contexts which determine the meaning of any historical text. This is seen as the history of political thought and intellectual history which was associated with the University of Cambridge (Skinner, 1969). The main point is that we should see an ‘objectively’ written text always in the context of its era (Skinner, 1969; Assmann, 2008).

Collective memory is backed up by symbols, practices, and media that are grafted into the hearts and minds of individuals in Iraq (Assmann, 2008; Abdi, 2008). Historiography is not only what comes after politics, it has also become a tool to fuel politics (Assmann, 2008). Therefore, collective national memory is always selective. The people of the nation manipulate certain bits of the national past, elevating others, suppressing others in an entirely functional way (Assmann, 2008). A good example of this is the change of the Ba’ath party in Iraq in the 1970s (Abdi, 2008). We could therefore ask ourselves if we define our (national) identities through history or that we use history to support our preferred (national) identities, values, and ideologies.

The formats of social and political memory may be intertwined, but they have become the focus of different academic disciplines. The social psychologist tries to use a bottom-up approach in which the perceived memories of historical events by individuals are the main focus of research. The IR/political approach is focused on top-down political memory. This top-down approach focuses on ideology formation and the construction of collective identities by political actions and propaganda (Assmann, 2008). The social psychologist investigates how individual (historical) memories are established and experienced while the political scientist investigates how these memories are used for the formation of group identities and political action

(Assmann, 2008). The collective memory and the forming of group identities is therefore a constant process of transactional communication between the people and the state in which both bottom-up processes as well as top-down processes initiate defining identities (Mattingly & Yao, 2020; Ferguson, 2010; Druckman, 1994).

The problems in Iraq and the rest of the Middle East stayed after the decline of Pan-Arabism. The different ethnoreligious lines in Iraq could easily escalate into another all-out civil war (Abdi, 2008). After the British inherited Iraq more than 100 years ago the clear distinct autonomous regions still exist today. There is a Shi'ite Arab state in the South around Basra, a Sunni Arab state in the middle around Bagdad, and a Sunni Kurdish state in the north around the city of Mosul (Cherkaoui, 2010). After 100 years of developing an Iraqi national identity by various regimes like the Ba'ath party, it seemed like the Iraqi common identity was in many ways a hollow construct. When the Americans invaded Iraq in 2003 and the state apparatus which implemented this Iraqi identity disappeared, the ethnoreligious lines immediately were re-established (Abdi, 2008; Cherkaoui, 2010). This suggests that the top-down political indoctrination might not be a match for the ethnic and religious thoughts of the population which are passed down for generations. This forming of a group identity and the complexity of this within the population exemplifies why it is needed to look from both a bottom-up as well as a top-down perspective to historic events on nationalisms (Abdi, 2008). Therefore, I suggest that we should focus more on intertwining academic disciplines, as I did in this research, to get a better and more complete understanding of complex ideologies such as Pan-Arabism.

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