Nasser's Ideology vs Practice: Postcolonial Critique of Egypt's Yemen Intervention

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For too long, the states of the postcolony have been neglected as objects of academic inquiry. As of late, however, the postcolonial state has received increased scholarly attention, which is not least the case since Western political and economic ideas and theorems "seem increasingly febrile and dangerously unsuitable in large parts of the world."[1] Against this backdrop, it is crucial to understand better what has happened to the ambitious but ultimately corrupted Third World project and its protagonists, who aimed at a socioeconomic, political, and cultural transformation of the postcolony.

This paper attempts to do just that by examining one of the Third World's most scintillating figures, the postcolonial state he governed and one of his most fateful foreign policy decisions, thereby exploring a little-studied phenomenon of international politics. What is meant here is the Egyptian nation-state under President Gamal Abdel Nasser and its military intervention in Yemen starting in 1962, which fuelled the North Yemen Civil War (1962-1970) between insurgents of the deposed Mutawakkilite Kingdom and the newly installed Yemen Arab Republic (YAR). Egypt,[2] at that time, the "cultural, economic and political envy of the Arab world,"[3] not only brought soldiers to the southwest of the Arabian Peninsula but also administrators, doctors, technicians, and teachers as its military intervention was accompanied by an enormous state-building effort, reminiscent of later American and Soviet undertakings in Vietnam and Afghanistan. Egypt's adventure in Yemen also resembles Vietnam and Afghanistan in the sense that the intervention force could not translate its superiority in equipment and technology into decisive victories as the Royalists successfully relied on guerrilla tactics. The deployment of up to 70,000 Egyptian soldiers quickly developed into a quagmire that swallowed up humans, material, and economic resources. It is not without reason that Nasser referred to the war as "my Vietnam."[4] This involvement in Yemen is commonly held to have contributed significantly to Egypt's devastating defeat at the hands of Israel in the 1967 Six-Day War.

Like the American or Soviet interventions in Vietnam, Afghanistan, or Iraq, the Egyptian intervention must be understood as imperial and was widely perceived as such in Yemen as the foreign troops came to be regarded as occupiers. Just as in comparable cases, civilians in Yemen suffered greatly. Aerial bombardments of the countryside inhabited by uncommitted or hostile tribes were a recurrent feature of Egyptian warfare.[5] In the process, the Egyptians did not shy away from using a variety of chemical weapons. The civil war between the Republicans trying to safeguard their newly founded republic, their Egyptian patrons and the tribal forces desiring to restore the kingdom ultimately is believed to have claimed more than 200,000 lives.[6]

Apart from the parallels to other conflicts, there are further reasons that make Egypt's military intervention an intriguing case worthy of academic attention. In contrast to the wars in the Third World led by the Soviet Union (USSR) and the United States (US), the 1960s war in Yemen remains largely underexamined and overshadowed by the Arab-Israeli wars. Moreover, it is noteworthy that while his soldiers were waging a brutal imperial war, Nasser, from 1964 to 1970, held the presidency of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). He used this prominent platform to pledge for anti-imperialist struggle everywhere and self-determination, condemning "all attempts of old and new colonialism, all the plots of military or psychological terrorism, and all the crimes of attrition that are practiced against the daily struggle of peoples and against their wealth."[7]

It is precisely this contradiction between anti-imperialism and progressive internationalism proclaimed by Nasser on the one hand and the ground reality of Egypt's imperial expedition in Yemen on the other — in short, the difference between ideology and practice — that marks the starting point of this academic undertaking. It seeks to explain the Janus-facedness of Nasser's intervention through postcolonial theory and examination of its public justifications. It endeavours to answer the question: how can we explain why Nasserist Egypt conducted a brutal and imperial intervention despite being painfully aware of its past as a subject to imperialism? An awareness due to which Cairo gravitated towards pan-Arabism, Third Worldism, and the NAM, displaying itself as anti-imperial. We will adopt the notion that, particularly in the postcolony, foreign policy is a process of nation-making and projecting its meaning into the global sphere.[8] We also stress the importance of political performativity and rhetoric as they narrate "our origin myths and desired futures."[9]

To find an answer to this puzzle, we will draw on Nasser's speeches from 1963, which constitute the primary source material for this study. These speeches from the first full year of the intervention — given to returning troops, Yemeni delegations, and the general Egyptian public — help us to approach the research question insofar as Nasser had to explain the intervention to a population that believed Yemen to be a distant land that held no value to Egypt. "In an age of uncertain legitimacy," spirited and often excessive speeches to mass audiences were the "bread and butter of Arab political discourse."[10] This was especially the case in a populist regime such as the one architected by Nasser on the banks of the Nile. The symbiosis between the state and its charismatic leader and their reciprocal identification, which made his sensitivities those of Egypt's, allows us to focus on Nasser's dialectic. Examining the Nasserist discourse and postcolonial Egypt's self-fashioning regarding one of its most crucial foreign policy decisions is relevant because Nasserism's ideological density is still disputed today.

Notwithstanding its many significant contributions to the humanities, curiously, postcolonialism largely remains confined to the imperial interactions between the West and the rest, emphasising "the protean and diverse ways in which Western dominance of the non-West was established, asserted, contested, reasserted, and continued, and the role of ideas and representations in this."[11] This means that colonial/imperial practices exerted by states of the postcolony — rarely overlooked as autonomous actors — are, at best, an afterthought of postcolonial study. This paper aims to make a small contribution to change that, exploring a little-studied and often misunderstood conflict. In the following, the terms colonialism and imperialism will rely on Howe's broad definitions, with colonialism as "systems of rule by one group over another, where the first claims the right (a 'right' usually established by conquest) to exercise exclusive sovereignty over the second and to shape its destiny," and imperialism being the underlying driver that also can entail "less obvious and direct kinds of control or domination by one people or country over others."[12] Adopting these definitions means that there is nothing distinctive about the colonialism/imperialism practised by either the West or the non-West.

Background

At the beginning of the 1960s, Yemen was divided. At that time, Aden, a historically important port city in south Yemen, was a British Crown Colony and its hinterland, a British protectorate, the Federation of South Arabia (FSA). North Yemen, with its capital Sana'a, on the other hand, was an isolated, impoverished, and conservative country ruled by Ahmad bin Yahya, who, as the Imam of the Zaydi Islam sect, was both a religious and political leader who strictly enforced Islamic law.[13] Most of the circa 4.5 million inhabitants of the Imamate (known as the Mutawakkilite Kingdom) belonged to the approximately 3500 mountain or rural tribes and subtribes, the basic social units in Yemen, of which many had deep-rooted blood feuds with each other.

In the years leading up to the civil war, North Yemen, a member of the United Nations (UN) since 1947, had an ambivalent and increasingly uneasy relationship with Nasserist Egypt. In 1958, the Imamate, together with Egypt and Syria, formed a loose confederation known as the United Arab States (UAS). For Sana'a, the union was confined to defence and foreign policy as Imam Ahmad refused an administrative union with the UAR. By cooperating with Egypt, Ahmad sought to preserve his kingdom's autonomy from the British in the South, simultaneously trying to prevent Nasser from directing his ideas of the Arab Revolution and socialism in North Yemen. But the confederation with Egypt had consequences contrary to the Imam's hopes. Nasser's revolutionary ideology calling for dethroning the traditionalist monarchies in the region spread to the Imamate through the influx of Egyptian soldiers, teachers,

doctors, and office workers who came to work there.[14] North Yemen's army officers received advanced military training in Egypt, Syria, and Iraq. Exposed to the ideas of Arab nationalism and "in awe of the great cities of Cairo, Damascus and Baghdad,"[15] they realised the backwardness of their home and became the Imam's principal opposition.

Realising the corrosive Egyptian influence on his reign, Imam Ahmad, holder of one of the most authoritarian thrones in the world, began to perceive Nasserism as anti-Islamic and criticised its namesake publicly. In December 1961, Egypt responded by announcing the end of its nominal federal union with North Yemen. Nasser unleashed Egypt's propaganda machine against "the reaction, ignorance and backward mentality of the Yemeni rulers"[16] and personally attacked the Imam via Radio Cairo's influential broadcasts transmitted throughout the whole Arab world.

On 19 September 1962, Imam Ahmad died of natural causes and was succeeded by his son Muhammad al-Badr, an Egypt-friendly progressive, who announced several reforms. However, these were not to happen as on 26 September army officers led by Abdullah al-Sallal overthrew the Imamate and proclaimed the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR). The new president al-Sallal, influenced by Nasser's book *The Philosophy of the Revolution*, had initially planned to kill the Imam. But although the radio announced al-Badr's death, he escaped to the mountainous north and rallied the loyalist tribes to retake the capital and restore the Imamate.

The birth of a revolutionary Arab republic in North Yemen and al-Badr's fierce resistance triggered a protracted civil war that was not to end until 1970. Because al-Sallal's faction in the army was weak and initially no tribes backed the YAR, Egypt decided to safeguard the republic by sending a first troop contingent in early October 1962, marking the start of Cairo's costly Yemen intervention that would last until 1967.

To halt the feared spread of Nasserism in the peninsula, the regional monarchies Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Iran, together with Israel and Great Britain, clinging to its colonial possessions in southern Yemen, directly or indirectly supported the insurgent Royalists. The Wahhabi monarchy in Riyadh, in particular, did not want to tolerate a massive military presence of the ideologically opposed Egyptians south of its border as it was perceived to be an existential threat. Hence, the Imam and his followers received the most valuable aid from Saudi Arabia, which provided financial backing, weapons, training, and safe havens.[17]

At the same time, the British sought revenge on Nasser for the 1956 Suez Crisis and feared that the YAR would become a hub for anti-British insurgents in Aden. London shared Riyadh's concern that a Nasserist North Yemen could serve as a blueprint for the people in Aden and the traditionalist and pro-Western sheikhdoms throughout the region.[18] Britain's wide-ranging and covert "dirty war"[19] against the Egyptian intervention included mine laying, arming, and directing tribesmen, sabotage, murder of political figures, and sending mercenaries to serve as pilots or instructors for the Royalists.[20]

Cairo on the Eve of Events

In September 1962, Egypt was almost completely isolated within the Arab world. The *infisal*, the unhindered secession of Syria from the UAR a year earlier caused by Egyptian arrogance, had been a serious and humiliating blow to Nasser's prestige and "Egypt's pivotal position in the Arab world."[21] After the unanticipated event, Syria became one of the main targets of Nasser's fiery rhetoric, blaming the coup d'état in Damascus "on global 'imperialism' and regional 'reaction' — naming Saudi Arabia and Jordan, at this time in close alliance, as instances of the latter."[22] Cairo feared Syria's secession as an initial spark for a nascent effort to destroy Egypt's Arab Revolution. Cairo's response was an "obstinate ideological entrenchment"[23] that allowed no compromise with 'reaction,' neither domestically nor in the inter-Arab sphere. Consequently, the antagonism between Egypt and its conservative adversaries, famously termed by Malcolm Kerr as *The Arab Cold War,*[24] was increasingly perceived as a life-or-death struggle.

In late 1961, Mohamed Heikal, Nasser's key intellectual, postulated his theory of 'state and revolution,' affirming the primacy of Cairo's revolutionary objectives at the expense of inter-Arab solidarity. Heikal famously asserted that "Egypt 'as a revolution' would not observe the same territorial boundaries as Egypt 'as a state.'"[25] A year later, with

the Egyptian intervention in Yemen well underway, Nasser struck a similar note, declaring that "if you want to defend Cairo, you cannot do it within the walls of the city."[26]

The beleaguered state of Egypt was exacerbated by a troubled economy and tectonic shifts in the power balance between Cairo's decision-makers, first and foremost between Nasser and his Defence Minister, Field Marshal Abdel Hakim Amer. The latter's heavy-handed administration in Syria had decisively contributed to the 1961 coup in Damascus. Wanting to prevent open confrontation and being aware of his long-time friend's influential patronage networks, Nasser withdrew his plans for a new Presidential Council that would approve high-level promotions in the army. Following Egypt's "greatest crisis never known,"[27] Nasser left control of the armed forces almost unrestrictedly to Amer. Therefore, there was a prevailing mood in Cairo that "the Yemeni war [...] came at the time we were feeling that we [needed] a revolution or something to raise our morale,"[28] which was how the Chef de Cabinet to the Prime Minister put it.

Cairo's exact role before and during the 1962 coup and the deliberations behind the intervention are still being disputed by historians today as the archives of the Egyptian presidency remain closed. Thus, the "timing, process, and rationale of the initial decision to dispatch troops are all rather mystifying."[29]

At one argumentative end, it is claimed that seeking a military presence in Yemen for strategic reasons, Egypt sponsored and orchestrated the coupists. At the other extreme, it is argued that Nasser had trapped himself in a path of dependency after merely supporting the coupists, making all subsequent decisions inevitable.[30] According to the official version of events, Egypt was not aware of the revolution beforehand; after the coup, both Yemeni and Egyptian leaders were unambiguous on this matter, citing intervention by invitation.

Cairo's decision-making process was complicated by an "almost total lack of knowledge"[31] about Yemen, which was viewed as backward and medieval. Since the Shafi'is in the south, who controlled the major agglomerations, mostly accepted the coup, Egypt equated this to countrywide support and expected no significant internal opposition to the YAR, not considering the Zaydi tribes in the northern mountains.[32] The Egyptians had fatefully underestimated how deeply the Imamate was intertwined with Yemen's social fabric and "how short-term calculations would lead many to stand up and fight on its behalf."[33]

Positively reinforced by the army's eagerness to intervene and Amer's and Anwar Sadat's optimism that a small number of special forces combined with airpower could deliver a quick and decisive victory,[34] Nasser sent a company of one hundred commandos to aid the Yemeni revolution. Inexplicably though, the company was placed under the "command of Yemenis, who had every incentive to embroil the Egyptians in hostilities."[35] Once Egyptians were involved in combat and suffered casualties, withdrawal or de-escalation became extremely difficult. Within weeks Cairo answered the spread of hostilities with a reinforcement of a full infantry brigade, and the "intervention soon took on a life of its own."[36] The unforeseen vigour of tribal resistance, coupled with the weakness of the young republic in Sana'a, required constant Egyptian reinforcements in order to expand Republican control to the countryside and protect the capital from being reconquered, thus triggering a spiral of escalation.

On the scale of options available in late September 1962 — ranging from indirect aid to air support without dispatching combat units to swiftly overwhelming the Royalists by sheer numbers — Nasser settled for the compromise of a "piecemeal escalation," thereby choosing the "dangerous middle road."[37] The expeditionary force was likely intended to function as a token deterrent to the regional monarchies determined to nip the Yemeni revolution in the bud, particularly Saudi Arabia.[38] If this was the plan, Nasser had seriously miscalculated. Rather than deterring his regional rivals, Egypt's intervention reinforced their fears, "drove them together, and cemented their determination to oppose him,"[39] thereby catalysing the geopolitical escalation that the show of force was meant to prevent.

The inability of Egypt's intelligence apparatus to paint an accurate picture of the realities in Yemen made matters worse and reinforced the decision-makers' tendency to resort to unwarranted optimism.[40] Nearly all the information reaching Cairo came from Republican sources, supporting the misguided belief that the whole population backed the YAR.[41] Moreover, in the first months of the intervention, Egypt's field commanders had to deal with a total absence

of topographical maps, causing severe problems. They could neither plan operations effectively nor draft detailed reports, as field units were handed out maps suitable only for aerial navigation.[42]

The fresh memory of the *infisal* played its role in the process as the failure to successfully thwart Syria's secession "stemmed not so much from a failure of will as from the lack of a long-distance capacity to project coercive power."[43] Based on the military equipment acquired in the interim, the Egyptian strategists did not want to let geographical distance impede their ability to employ military means quickly in the future. Consequently, when al-Sallal cabled Cairo requesting immediate military support in late September 1962, the experiences with Syria increased the chance that the request would find receptive ears.[44]

Ergo, the decision to intervene was taken in an "extraordinary political context."[45] Nasserist Egypt at that time found itself in the conjunction of economic regression, leadership turmoil, weakened ideological credibility, heightened inter-Arab tensions and perpetual archrivalry with London. This amalgam caused a predominant sentiment of being on the back foot and induced an existential fear for the survival of the Arab Revolution. Information contradicting the prevalent perceptions of the events in Sana'a was unlikely "to filter through the perceptual screens of the Egyptian decision-makers who perceived the Yemeni coup within the context of their own predetermined ideological framework."[46] This ideological predisposition favoured the misconception that a revolution against an absolutist, corrupt and tyrannical regime "distasteful to the modern revolutionary mind"[47] would receive universal support. Feeling that the revolutionary right was on their side, the Egyptian policymaking elite cultivated a static image of the Yemeni tribes as primitive and unable to engage effectively in modern warfare without external assistance.

Another fateful Egyptian miscalculation concerned Saudi Arabia, which, although perceived as highly hostile, counterrevolutionary, and perilous to an unprotected YAR, was not regarded as an equal geopolitical adversary. Cairo expected Riyadh to direct its political efforts towards preserving the kingdom's internal stability — which seemed precarious, especially if the Yemeni revolution would prove virulent — rather than engaging in a regional conflict with Egypt as a protagonist. But Saudi Arabia's most potent asset was never weaponry, military capability, or political legitimacy, but money. Nasser and his aides had underestimated how important this could be when coupled with the unexpected and unyielding resistance of the Royalist tribes.[48]

The preceding paragraphs help us to understand why the Egyptian intervention ultimately turned out to be a miscalculation; as Nasser later admitted, "we never thought that it would lead to what it did."[49] But beyond the rationales stated above, a plethora of further strategic benefits made intervening in Yemen attractive.

These strategic incentives, mainly related to Yemen's geographical position, afforded Egypt to be militarily and politically present in a country bordering two of its main adversaries, Saudi Arabia to the north and British possessions to the south and east. This presence would expose Saudi Arabia to the risk of military assault and fuel internal dissent. Additionally, Egypt could exert pressure on Britain's last colonial outpost in the region by connecting with Adeni nationalists on the other side of the Yemeni border.[50]

For Egypt, immense strategic value also lay in politically and militarily dominating both ends of the Red Sea, the Suez Canal in the north and the Bab-el-Mandab Strait in the south, an ambition Amer designated as vital to Egypt's national interest.[51] The decision-makers in Cairo understood that the latter chokepoint "offered a deeper strategic means of blockading oil supplies to Israel,"[52] a tactic they would apply during the 1973 Yom Kippur War.

Overall, the coup in Sana'a presented Cairo with a golden opportunity to regain the initiative that had been lost. Reversing the argument, Nasser as the torchbearer of Arab nationalism, could hardly allow abandoning the Yemeni revolution (which explicitly identified itself with his) to the Royalists and their sponsors in Riyadh, thereby risking the YAR's almost inevitable collapse. After the Syrian secession had "diminished Egypt's status and weakened the appeal of Nasser's call,"[53] coercion arose as an attractive alternative to exerting soft power. By dispatching troops to Yemen, Egypt had not only committed its military power but increasingly also its reputation as the region's revolutionary avant-garde state. Finally, it is important to remember that directly engaging in Yemen afforded Cairo several strategic advantages.

The Intervention's Imperiality

In October 1962, after Amer and Sadat had visited Yemen — the latter responsible for coordinating the political efforts in the country and the former charged with the military operations — Nasser agreed to try to decide the civil war by military means. This decision was based not least on the army's confidence that it could achieve a swift victory over what it perceived as a "handful of untrained and undisciplined tribal force."[54] However, by the time the YAR's vulnerability and the extent of Royalist control over Yemen became apparent to the Egyptians, their political and military involvement had become so substantial that policy alternatives were extremely limited. As Egypt's engagement grew without yielding tangible results, the conflict steadily developed into a quagmire. The initiative shifted away from Cairo, and its policies became largely reactive, "dependent on military prerequisites in the Yemen, and on political stimuli emanating from the international arena."[55] Against this backdrop, Egypt's approach to the war went through three stages broadly described as the politics of manoeuvre, reconciliation, and renewed confrontation.[56]

From the beginning of the intervention, it was evident that deciding significant YAR policies took place in Cairo or was performed by its stadtholders. For instance, as mentioned earlier, in September 1965, al-Sallal, who was no longer deemed useful, got exiled to Cairo. When al-Sallal was brought back to Yemen eleven months later to confront the moderate factions within the YAR critical of Egypt and its renewed course of confrontation, "Egyptian tanks lined the road from the airport to central Sana'a,"[57] indicating Cairo's fear that the still-president could be deposed. Against this leadership rivalry, Egypt accused several high-ranking Yemeni army men and politicians of high treason or sympathising with the Royalist cause, publicly executing or imprisoning them. When the YAR's enraged Prime Minister demanded a face-to-face meeting with Nasser to protest the imposition of Al-Sallal, Nasser acquiesced to the request and had the Prime Minister and an entourage of around fifty Republican leaders flown to Cairo. After the meeting, Nasser had the entire delegation arrested and sent to a military prison, where they remained until the summer of 1967.[58] "With a single act of political treachery",[59] Nasser had successfully lured al-Sallal's opposition out of the country for almost the rest of Egypt's presence in Yemen.

The Republicans further resented that each Yemeni army officer had a corresponding Egyptian one, authorised to overturn the Yemenis' decisions if they deviated from Egyptian thinking. Disregarding Arab or international opinion, Egypt constantly interfered in the affairs of an allegedly sovereign state. No allegations of imperialist plots could hide that instead of an enlightened republic, Nasser had turned North Yemen into an Egyptian "colony devoid of the financial resources and investment often associated with European imperialism, yet rife with the requisite corruption, sense of superiority, and boundless exercise of force against both allies and enemies."[60]

In this sense, Egypt at the time of the quasi-occupation in Yemen embodied Anand's conceptualisation of the postcolonial informal empire (PIE).[61] Egyptians and Yemenis were equal on paper, but the reality differed. The characteristics with which Anand defines the term — schizophrenic memory, self-denial as the oppressor, paranoia about national unity and territorial integrity — undoubtedly match Egypt's behaviour towards its puppet regime in Sana'a. While Yemenis as such were not securitised per se, their country was depicted as the ultimate battleground for the survival of Arab nationalism, and Yemen was subjected to a paternalising language of development and modernisation. More on this later.

Egypt's brutality towards the tribes "was probably the ugliest aspect of the entire war."[62] At first, the Egyptians tried to buy tribal loyalties as, at the outbreak of the hostilities, not a single tribe was on the side of the YAR. Early in the war, Egypt provided uncommitted tribes with gold, equipment, and weapons, causing a bidding war with the Royalist side and their Saudi Arabian patrons. Many tribes took money from both sides and fought for whoever offered the highest compensation at a given time, sometimes changing loyalty daily. As the Egyptians never could sufficiently gain the upper hand in Yemen's labyrinthine tribal politics, they increasingly relied on brute force. It was reported that if a few tribesmen ambushed even a single Egyptian vehicle, Egyptian planes would annihilate their villages, exercising collective guilt.[63] Repeated bombings of tribal areas not aligned with either side were seen as a method of gaining their support. The Egyptians destroyed agricultural lands and water sources of tribes suspected of supporting the Imam, and most homes were abandoned throughout territories controlled by the Royalists. By the end of Egypt's intervention, many regions were depopulated due to the destruction of villages, wells, farms, and livestock.

Although Egypt had experimented with chemical warfare in earlier stages, the growing frustration from 1966 onward led to some of the most atrocious gas bombings of the entire war. The intervention force used various chemical weapons, including phosgene, tear, and mustard gas.[64] However, this relentlessness had the opposite of the intended result, as it was difficult for the Republicans to rationalise such indiscriminate violence; many tribes supported Al-Badr primarily out of hate for the Egyptians.[65]

Egypt's presence in Yemen was thus not seen as an instrument of progressive nation-building or counterinsurgency but as a symbol of Egyptian regional hegemony. Even Yemeni nationalists characterised the Nasserist-led nationalisations as stealing from the poor. Ultimately, the YAR, "which had difficulty collecting revenues from a war-torn, territorially truncated country, was but a conduit for redistributing Yemen's wealth to Egypt."[66] When the Egyptian intervention force had left, Yemen "inherited banks with no gold reserves, a heavily damaged infrastructure, enormous debts to global 'lending' agencies, and an impending famine."[67]

Understanding Nasser's Anti-Imperialism and Pan-Arabism

Let us return to the initial question: how can we understand Egypt's imperial intervention in Yemen against the backdrop of Nasser's anti-imperialism and progressive internationalism dialectics? The most intuitive answer is to assume that Nasserist rhetoric was primarily a means to another end, namely foreign policy gains or the pursuit of Egyptian primacy. Whether intentional or not, the ambiguity of "Egypt-as-state and Egypt-as-revolutionary-vanguard served the purpose of bolstering state influence quite well."[68] This does not mean the Nasserist anti-imperial discourse was insincere; the truth probably lies somewhere in the middle. Nasserism's internationalist motives — non-Alignment, pan-Arabism, anti-imperialism, Arab Socialism, anti-Communism, and anti-Zionism — can be understood as both "desirable goals in and of themselves and as implements for the pursuit of Egyptian primacy."[69] Thus, Nasserist international principles were characterised by an ambiguity between belief and utility.

To approach the research puzzle, it is crucial to consider Nasserist understandings of Egypt's past as a subject of imperialism and the conclusions drawn from it. Fundamental to Nasserist political thought was the idea of a twin revolution. The political revolution strove for political sovereignty, targeting the British occupation and Egypt's British-backed ruling class, while the social revolution aimed for social justice by overcoming the economic system upheld by them. Nasser considered the same imperial principle at work in the rest of the Arab world, Asia, and Africa.[70] Nasserist conceptions of social justice envisaged a national development project, proposing the pursuit of social revolution through state-led capitalism and denouncing the liberal system maintained by the colonial order.

In contrast to republican Turkey, for example, which was able to build on the Ottoman Empire's past as a subaltern imperial power and therefore orientated itself towards the West, there was little likelihood or desire for blending Egyptian national identification with that of the European coloniser.[71] These perceptions informed the outward-looking orientation of Nasser's nationalism and his "subsequent efforts at cooperation in solidarity with pan-Arab and Third World counterparts."[72] The 1948 Palestine War, where Nasser was involved as a staff officer, confirmed his beliefs about the interconnectedness of Egyptian and Arab sovereignty and national progress. Instead of highlighting the Arab world's ethnic or linguistic bond, Nasser emphasised Egypt's and the Arab world's shared imperial past and their common need for liberation: "The Arab circle in my eyes had become a single entity. (…) What happened in Cairo had its counterpart in Damascus the next day, and in Beirut, in Amman, in Baghdad and elsewhere. (…) It is a single region. The same circumstances, the same factors, even the same forces, united against all of it. And it was clear that the foremost of these forces was imperialism."[73]

Nasser regarded the Arabs to be oppressed not only by the imperial powers but also by internal clients. In the case of Yemen, this was the "despotic monarchy"[74] of the Mutawakkilite Kingdom, which allegedly had conspired with colonialism/imperialism. Applying similar criteria and expectations to the Egyptian and Arab spheres of national identity, while context determined priority at any given moment, was essential to Nasser's discursive framework.[75] Egypt was the "smaller home," while the "whole Arab Nation" was the "bigger home."[76] Nasser used this blending of Egyptian and Arab identities to justify the Yemen intervention. To troops returning from Yemen, he declared: "You came out at a time when the reactionary tide, imperialism and the agents of imperialism were directing to us here in Egypt all the arms they could collect to aim at Arab nationalism, the Arab unity concept, the Arab homeland concept,

at the Arab concept of liberating the individual, at the Arab revolution concept for freedom, socialism, and unity."[77]

Nasser thought of Egypt's African circle similarly, highlighting their shared history of imperial oppression rather than ethnic or symbolic identity markers. As early as 1953, Nasser articulated the idea of an Afro-Asian bloc united by its anti-imperialism and shared history, whose cohesion and power had so far remained untapped, by that foreshadowing the 1955 Bandung Conference.[78]

The perceptions on which these conclusions were based imply a Nasserist understanding of Egyptian exceptionalism. Worlding Egypt at the intersection of three regional circles (the African, Arab, and Islamic) in which it "could play a catalytic role,"[79] Nasser imagined a "wandering role that seeks an actor to perform it", which "we, and only we, are impelled by our environment and are capable of performing."[80]

Rather than reaffirming the conventional wisdom that Nasserism utilised pan-Arabist dialectic opportunistically, we will pick up El-Fadl's convincing argument that Nasser's perceptions of the Arab world "emerged from the same anti-imperialist prism"[81] as his views of Egypt's past, conditioning a dense ideologic underpinning. Through political rhetoric and practice, Nasserism spatialised Egypt's national belonging firmly within the Arab sphere and, to a lesser extent, within the Third World, emphasising common imperatives for liberation, independence, and development.

Pan-Arabism and the Nation as Journey

A principal argument put forth here is that Nasser relied primarily on pan-Arabism connected to narrating nationhood as a journey, a persistent metaphor in postcolonial nationalisms, to vindicate his imperial intervention in Yemen. Krishna elegantly described this trope as "the oxymoronic idea of a society that is permanently in transition: between ex-colony and not yet nation." He suggests this effigy is a key tool to legitimise and propitiate the immense violence inherent in the nation-building project. This logic ensured the legitimacy of the postcolonial state "by centring its historical role in the pursuit of certain desired futures."[82]

The motive of a nation as a journey can be found in many of Nasser's speeches on Yemen. Referring to Jordanian pilots who had refused to enter combat against the YAR and deserted to Cairo, Nasser applauded them for recognising their "path of duty towards their Arab nation, and the big Arab homeland."[83] Already claiming triumph in Yemen, Nasser explained that "this victory is a link in the chain of battles which are interrelated in their succession and which, in the meantime, are connected with the stages of national struggle, following each other in succession."[84] Firmly embedding the civil war in Yemen within the theme of Arab nationhood as a journey, Nasser elaborated to his soldiers:

"The battle of Yemen represented the entire features of the Arab Nation. If the Arab Nation is seeking freedom, the battle of Yemen has been for the sake of freedom. If the Arab Nation is seeking to rid itself of exploitation, the battle of Yemen was but a desperate, infinite effort on the part of the revolutionary forces in order to rid itself of exploitation. If the Arab Nation seeks justice for the Arab citizen, the battle of Yemen sought justice; indeed it sought, above justice, the right of life in its simplest form. And, if the Arab Nation is seeking the right of self-determination away from the tyrants and those who sit on the thrones of tyranny, it is exactly for this reason that the Yemeni people have waged this battle in which you have so honourably participated."[85]

And later in the same speech: "Your battle in Yemen has enabled the entire Arab nation in a concrete way to feel that Arab nationalism is not just a slogan and that Arab unity is not just a slogan."[86]

Thus, he portrayed the Egyptian intervention in Yemen as a representative piece of the puzzle on the path towards completing the Arab Nation, and both were linked together: "by succeeding in the liberation of the Yemeni people, you would be liberating the Arab people in general."[87] Nasser connected his foregrounding of the Arab sphere vis-à-vis Yemen with the "false boundaries" of the Arab Nation, explaining that it had been "artificially partitioned according to the desires of imperialism and of the reactionary forces."[88] He claimed that when al-Sallal requested Egyptian military support to protect the YAR, "we did not for a single moment hesitate to respond because we believed that our responsibility was not confined within our artificial boundaries but extended without any limits all over the Arab nation

and within its boundaries."[89] Thus, rather than casting it as a purely foreign policy issue, Nasser spatialised Yemen in what Krishna eloquently termed "the dangerous interstice of the domestic and the foreign,"[90] a locutionary interstice in which national unity was as much at stake as international prestige. Even though Nasser described Yemen as a "remote land,"[91] it was either cast as a sister-country, another "region of the big Arab homeland,"[92] another part of the Arab Nation or all of these at the same time.

Nasser kept the entity of the Arab Nation geographically elusive, referring to a space "from the Arab Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean"[93] whose unity is presented as the irredentist telos of Arab nationalism's political agenda. This notion qualified the entire space between Nouakchott and Muscat and its inhabitants, especially Arabic speakers and Muslims, as a sphere of Egyptian influence. This narrative offered a ready-made justification for military interference, which can be regarded as "ethnic intervention."[94]

Exporting Egypt's Revolution was Nasser's means of approximating the unified Arab Nation he portrayed as inevitable. In an almost Leninist sense, Nasser narrated Egypt as the vanguard of the Arab Revolution, praising returning soldiers as the nation's vanguard on its "march on the road, to freedom, socialism and unity."[95] By going to Yemen, they had not only supported the YAR but "had [also] consolidated the revolution of July 1952."[96]

Nasser implicitly portrayed the war in Yemen as the interregnum between the imperial era, which Egypt allegedly had already successfully left behind, and the final aim: "unity of the Arab Homeland."[97] But although the postcolonial state presents national integration as the telos, the "moment of arrival"[98] as a nation is deferred endlessly.

This logic of deference reverberates partly in Nasser's speeches on Yemen. Although on the one hand, he assures that "Cairo and Yemen are Arab countries that will one day get together whether Britain wants it or not,"[99] a political union is postponed to the future; "we put off this question of unity till our forces fulfil their duty there in Yemen and when the Yemeni Army there assumes this duty, we can talk about unity."[100]

Nasser facilitated the metaphor of the Arab Nation as a journey to stifle many of the violence-bearing contradictions plaguing his Yemen adventure. Precisely because the purported unified postcolonial nation is "ever over the horizon," it can serve as the "ennobling lie on which we premise our endless and agonistic politics."[101]

Securitising Yemen and Masking Differences

To undergird the legitimacy and meaningfulness of his intervention, Nasser subjected the perilous space in-between in which Yemen was cast to a dialectic of security and a "missionary-like zeal for 'development.'"[102] Nasser related the safety of the YAR to that of Egypt and the Nasserist project: "if the Arab revolution in Yemen were beaten, the real revolution here would have been beaten,"[103] by that rationalising the intervention as a defensive war for the cause of the Arab Revolution and nationhood. Denouncing his inter-Arab rivals in Damascus, Baghdad, and Riyadh and their backers in the West, Nasser depicted Yemen as a snake's nest where his troops had to fight the "shameful alliance" of "reactionism allied with imperialism."[104] As we have seen earlier, during the intervention's decision-making process, however, Nasser did not seem to have believed in his rival's capability and willingness to contain him in Yemen. Nasser was not wrong when he reminded his soldiers that when the 1962 coup in Sana'a took place, "the battle of Arab nationalism was going through its harshest and most gruelling phase."[105]

That Nasser indirectly mentioned Yemeni self-determination (see a quote before) is particularly interesting in this context. By superimposing the concept of the Arab Nation on the conflict in Yemen, the very difference between Egyptians and Yemenis, of which both sides were more than aware, was obscured. The ill-fated union between Egypt and Syria had already made it clear that Arab sub-identities were more pronounced than Cairo portrayed them and that Egyptian hegemony beyond Egypt would not necessarily be met with approval.

Due to its isolation, the primacy of tribal and regional identities and most of the Yemeni elite's deep-seated suspicion of modernity and its perceived amorality, Yemen in the early 1960s was one of the Arab countries, if not the country least receptive to the overtures of pan-Arabism and Arab Revolution or as Nasser would put it the other way round: "an area of the world which deserved and needed it the most."[106]

Foregrounding the Arab sphere when discussing the Yemen intervention might suggest that the Egyptians did not view the relationship between the two countries as one of metropolis and periphery. But in fact, rather the opposite was the case, indicated not least by Nasser's statement that Cairo could not be defended within its city walls.[107]

The short-lived political union with Syria and the quasi-occupation of North Yemen had dramatically demonstrated that the Egyptian telos of an Arab Nation had Egyptian hegemony at its very core. Therefore, the biggest obstacle to expanding the hegemonical Nasserist project beyond the Egyptian borders was self-inflicted, namely "an Egyptian arrogance permeating all levels of the country's interactions with the rest of the Arab world."[108]

Backwardness versus Progress

Although the Egyptians liked to refer to the Yemenis as "brothers" and the YAR as a "sister-country," a clear hierarchy between Cairo and *Sana'a* and an apparent feeling of superiority prevailed. This became especially apparent when the Egyptians castigated the backwardness of Yemen, which was depicted as a country that, until the 1962 revolution, was deliberately kept underdeveloped and desperately needed "to proceed speedily from the ages of backwardness."[109] A training manual of the Egyptian armed forces is particularly informative in this regard: "The war in Yemen did not bear the character of an invasion but was meant to help a sister-Arab country. The government of Yemen at the time of the revolution as well as the Arab forces that came to defend this revolution from reactionary-imperialist infiltration stood before a dysfunctional, backward society in which fantastic tales, division and dissent proliferated. For this reason the armed battles were carried out in tandem with […] an attempt to instill in the Yemeni an awareness of the backwardness and dysfunction in which he lives."[110]

Nasser, too, used such comparisons when he spoke of "the Yemeni people who lagged behind the procession of history by more than a thousand years."[111] From the Egyptian perspective, it was therefore only logical that the Yemenis were well advised to follow their development model, and it was expected that they would unconditionally surrender to Egyptian soldiers and bureaucrats. A sentiment that Nasser summed up patronisingly: "we feel that it is our duty and responsibility mainly because we had the opportunity to proceed on the road of development."[112] Thus, while the Nasserist project sought to retaliate against the West by challenging its global supremacy, even though not as radical as the 1960s Afro-Asian movement, it naturally embraced Western political and economic ideals as prerequisites for modernity. Hence, Nasserist Egypt involuntarily proved the legacy of Western colonialism/imperialism and its continuity as "the yardstick for self-evaluation, even the necessity, for it, comes from without and not from within."[113]

Implicit in Nasser's adaptation of Western modernity was the conviction that more traditional societies, as in Yemen, "blunted historical inevitabilities."[114] It is, therefore, not surprising that the intervention in Yemen was framed as a just battle between reactionism and progress. To a Yemeni delegation, Nasser argued that "some of the people might have been misled and others might have misunderstood, due to the prevailing backwardness and existing habits," which would explain why "brothers fought against each other."[115] Hence, opposition to the YAR and Egypt's intervention was interpreted as an expression of inferiority and unmodernity. Egypt used this sense of superiority and modernity via Yemen to rationalise why it was necessary to break a principle that allegedly was "placed above every other consideration," namely "that the Arab weapon shall not shed Arab blood."[116] At the same time, Nasser applauded his soldiers for their restraint during combat,[117] a claim that, given Egypt's conduct of war, seemed like sheer mockery**.** Here, Nasserist Egypt's psychological complex of constantly needing Western validation benefited the implementation of brutal policies in Yemen, a country that functioned as an almost absolute antithesis to the Egyptian self-construction as a modern and developed postcolonial state.

Nasser's linear teleology also became apparent when he repeatedly stressed the selflessness and historical dimension of the Yemen intervention, reminding returning soldiers: "Your battle in Yemen was a unique battle in history. For the first time a complete army goes to a remote land not for invasion nor ambition nor for occupation; but for the first time an army of a small country travels thousands of miles away from its homeland to another area surrounded from all directions by the influence of imperialist powers and interests."[118]

In 1965, when Egypt's engagement in Yemen had long forfeited its political credibility and relied heavily on bribes

and coercion, Nasser felt the need to set the record straight that "principles and nothing else induced us to go to Yemen," adding that "there is no oil, no water, nothing. It used to have coffee in the old days, now it does not have any."[119] Nasser ascribed the same principledness to his soldiers, who allegedly all had volunteered to go to Yemen.[120]

Conclusion

Egypt's intervention in Yemen complicates a simplistic view of Nasser's anti-imperialism and pan-Arabism as expressions of progressive internationalism. Instead, the first military intervention by an Arab army in another Arab country brought to the fore the irresolvable contradictions of Nasserism. One of them was the ambiguous and intertwined relationship between internationalist dialectic and the quest for regional hegemony. Exporting Egypt's revolution to Yemen had "produced not liberty, prosperity, and unity but repression, expropriation, and considerable bloodshed."[121] The UAR's dissolution in 1961 had already revealed the emptiness of Nasser's progressive promise, but Yemen came to be the ultimate test. The North Yemen Civil War showed Egypt's hegemonic aspirations in the Arab world its limits and contributed significantly to the downfall of Arab nationalism.

We have seen that a complex amalgam of domestic and foreign factors influenced Egypt's decision to intervene in Yemen. Yemen in itself had little value for Egypt, and the brutal 1960s civil war can certainly also be understood as conditioned by "grudges between Egyptians and various Arabian princes."[122]

We have asked how the often-blatant contradictions between Nasserist rhetoric and Egyptian practice in Yemen can be explained. We have seen that Nasserism emerged in counterpoise to a colonial/imperial West, with its ideological inclinations denser than often argued. It is reasonable to assume that Nasser's anti-imperialism was a result of and simultaneously conditioned by a morally charged self-perception of being unable to practice colonialism/imperialism due to having been subjected to imperialism before. For Nasserists, imperialists were always the others. Non-Western imperialism is imperialism that does not know itself.

Nasser's rationalisations for military deployment arose from this ideological framework. Regarding Egypt's engagement in Yemen, Nasser relied on foregrounding the Arab sphere, pragmatically blurring differences between both countries. This pan-Arabist recourse was linked to the narration of nationhood as a journey, serving as the ultimate alibi for the violence inherent to the Yemen intervention and the nation-making process in general. Simultaneously, Yemen was framed as Egypt's backyard, lying in the perilous interstice between the domestic and the foreign.

While Nasser portrayed the domestic as a once subjugated space liberating itself from a humiliating past, the foreign was narrated as hierarchical and deeply contested. For Nasser, nothing less than the survival of the Egyptian revolution was at stake in Yemen. The international arena was perceived to be dominated by more powerful nations responsible for past and present oppression, which would, somewhat paradoxically, provide the blueprint for Egypt's national imaginary as a modern postcolonial state. However, the postcolonial adaptation of Western modernity had a backlash in few places more visible than in Yemen.

The Egyptians, unaware of their role as "surrogates of empire",[123] subjected the country to narratives of security and progress, trying to enhance the lives of those who still did not know any better. Yemen was at once a preventive war for the cause of Arab nationalism and a test laboratory for the modernisation zeal of the Egyptians that perceived themselves as superior to the Yemenis, who were perceived as inferior natives.

Egypt's quasi-occupation thus "replicated the same problems Nasserism created inside Egypt, namely a state-led form of capitalist development that relied on modernisation and a linear teleology."[124] Ironically, in the aftermath of its Yemen adventure, Egypt was engulfed by a larger imperial power, namely the leaders of the Second World.

Intended or not, all the rationalisations of the intervention we have found — anti-imperialism, pan-Arabism, nationhood as a never-ending journey, progress versus backwardness — directly or indirectly accommodated Egyptian expansionism and regional hegemony. The Egyptian self-construction as the region's anti-imperial avant-

garde state made the right to exercise hegemony beyond its borders, even under massive violence, appear logical if not even necessary. This imperialism of the postcolony that does not know itself represents a theme deserving of more academic attention as Egypt was far from being the only postcolonial state that unconsciously morphed into an heir of Western colonialism/imperialism.

Notes

[1] Pankaj Mishra, *From the Ruins of Empire: The Revolt Against the West and the Remaking of Asia*, 2013, 352.

[2] Despite Egypt being officially known as the United Arab Republic (UAR) until 1971, a result of the political union with Syria from 1958 to 1961, for reasons of clarity, we will refer to the state only as Egypt.

[3] Robert Beckhusen, 'Lessons from Egypt's Chemical War in Yemen', *War Is Boring* (blog), 16 September 2013, https://medium.com/war-is-boring/lessons-from-egypts-chemical-war-in-yemen-9d44ba9a4c8e.

[4] Nasser quoted in Anthony Nutting, *Nasser*, 1st Edition (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1972), 349.

[5] David M Witty, 'A Regular Army in Counterinsurgency Operations: Egypt in North Yemen', 2001, 422.

[6] Isa Blumi, *Destroying Yemen: What Chaos in Arabia Tells Us about the World* (University of California Press, 2018), 19.

[7] Gamal Abdel Nasser, 'The Address by President Gamal Abdel Nasser at the Closing of the 2nd Non Alignment Movement Conference in Cairo' (Cairo, 10 October 1964), nasser.bibalex.org/TextViewer.aspx?TextID=SPCH-1100-en.

[8] Reem Abou-El-Fadl, *Foreign Policy as Nation Making: Turkey and Egypt in the Cold War* (Cambridge University Press, 2018), 17.

[9] Sankaran Krishna, 'Postcolonial Perspectives', in *Postcolonialism and Its Relevance for International Relations in a Globalized World* (Routledge, 2018), 35, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315227542-2.

[10] Jesse Ferris, *Nasser's Gamble: How Intervention in Yemen Caused the Six-Day War and the Decline of Egyptian Power* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 13.

[11] Dibyesh Anand, 'China and India: Postcolonial Informal Empires in the Emerging Global Order', *Rethinking Marxism* 24, no. 1 (1 January 2012): 72, https://doi.org/10.1080/08935696.2012.635039.

[12] Stephen Howe, *Empire: A Very Short Introduction*, Very Short Introductions 76 (Oxford [etc.]: Oxford University Press, 2002), 30–31.

[13] Zaydism, Yemen's predominant denomination is a unique branch of Shi'ism that can be understood as a hybrid between Sunnism and Shi'ism.

[14] Witty, 'Regular Army', 404.

[15] Youssef Aboul-Enein, 'The Egyptian-Yemen War (1962-67): Egyptian Perspectives on Guerrilla Warfare', *Infantry Magazine*, no. No. Jan–Feb, 2004 (2004): 2.

[16] Newspaper Al-Gomhouriyya from 27 December 1961 quoted in Laura M. James, *Nasser at War: Arab Images of the Enemy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 56.

[17] Witty, 'Regular Army', 406.

[18] Mark Curtis, 'Britain's Covert War in Yemen', *Declassified Media Ltd* (blog), 5 October 2022, https://declassifieduk.org/britains-covert-war-in-yemen/.

[19] Stephen Dorril, *MI6: Fifty Years of Special Operations*, Paperback, Inside the Covert World of Her Majesty's Secret Intelligence Service (Fourth Estate, 2001), 691, http://gen.lib.rus.ec/book/index.php?md5=a55afae19a15b9fc9c139e072f44116e.

[20] Curtis, 'Britain's Covert War'.

[21] A.I. Dawisha, 'Intervention in the Yemen: An Analysis of Egyptian Perceptions and Policies', 1975, 47.

[22] James, *Nasser at War*, 53.

[23] Dawisha, 'Perceptions and Policies', 48.

[24] However, this popular perception has been convincingly deconstructed by Asher Orkaby,*Beyond the Arab Cold War: The International History of the Yemen Civil War, 1962-68* , Illustrated Edition (Cambridge ; New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).

[25] Heikal quoted in James, *Nasser at War*, 53.

[26] Nasser quoted in Dawisha, 'Perceptions and Policies', 49.

[27] James, *Nasser at War*, 51.

[28] Hamed Mahmoud quoted in James, 51.

[29] Ferris, *Nasser's Gamble*, 51.

[30] James, *Nasser at War*, 56.

[31] Dawisha, 'Perceptions and Policies', 48.

[32] James, *Nasser at War*, 66.

[33] Blumi, *Destroying Yemen*, 112.

[34] Aboul-Enein, 'Egyptian-Yemen War', 1.

[35] Ferris, *Nasser's Gamble*, 56.

[36] Ferris, 53.

[37] Ferris, 55.

[38] Aboul-Enein, 'Egyptian-Yemen War', 3.

[39] Ferris, *Nasser's Gamble*, 55.

[40] Ferris, 57.

[41] Dawisha, 'Perceptions and Policies', 61.

[42] Aboul-Enein, 'Egyptian-Yemen War', 5.

[43] Ferris, *Nasser's Gamble*, 56.

[44] Ferris, 56–57.

[45] Ferris, 60.

[46] Dawisha, 'Perceptions and Policies', 61.

[47] James, *Nasser at War*, 62.

[48] James, 67–68.

[49] Nasser quoted in Dawisha, 'Perceptions and Policies', 48.

[50] Dawisha, 50.

[51] Aboul-Enein, 'Egyptian-Yemen War', 4.

[52] Aboul-Enein, 6.

[53] Ferris, *Nasser's Gamble*, 57.

[54] Dawisha, 'Perceptions and Policies', 50.

[55] Dawisha, 50.

[56] Dawisha, 50.

[57] Orkaby, *Beyond*, 110.

[58] Ferris, *Nasser's Gamble*, 25.

[59] Orkaby, *Beyond*, 111.

[60] Asher Orkaby, 'Beyond Paradigms: An Introduction to the Yemen Civil War', in*Beyond the Arab Cold War: The International History of the Yemen Civil War, 1962-68*, ed. Asher Orkaby (Oxford University Press, 2017), 3, https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780190618445.003.0001.

[61] Anand, 'Postcolonial Informal Empires'.

[62] Witty, 'Regular Army', 422.

[63] Witty, 421–22.

[64] Orkaby, 'Beyond Paradigms', 130.

[65] Witty, 'Regular Army', 422–23.

[66] Blumi, *Destroying Yemen*, 120–21.

[67] Blumi, 121.

[68] Ferris, *Nasser's Gamble*, 11.

[69] Ferris, 11.

[70] Abou-El-Fadl, *Foreign Policy*, 109.

[71] Abou-El-Fadl, 121.

[72] Abou-El-Fadl, 109.

[73] Nasser quoted in Abou-El-Fadl, 116.

[74] Gamal Abdel Nasser, *President Gamal Abdel Nasser's Speeches and Press-Interviews: January-December 1963* (Cairo: Information Department, 1963), 201.

[75] Abou-El-Fadl, *Foreign Policy*, 118.

[76] Nasser, *Speeches*, 204.

[77] Nasser, 261.

[78] Abou-El-Fadl, *Foreign Policy*, 120–21.

[79] James, *Nasser at War*, 47.

[80] Gamal Abdel Nasser, *The Philosophy of the Revolution* (Cairo: "MONDIALE " Press, 1963), 72.

[81] Abou-El-Fadl, *Foreign Policy*, 115.

[82] Sankaran Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka, and the Question of Nationhood* , Borderlines, v. 15 (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 17.

[83] Nasser, *Speeches*, 262.

[84] Nasser, 86.

[85] Nasser, 199.

[86] Nasser, 210.

[87] Nasser, 202.

[88] Nasser, 202–4.

[89] Nasser, 201.

[90] Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities*, 17.

[91] Nasser, *Speeches*, 83.

[92] Nasser, 202.

[93] Nasser, 199.

[94] Mark Robertson, 'Twenttieth Century Conflict in the Fourteenth Century: Intervention in Yemen', *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* 13, no. 1 (1989): 95–111.

[95] Nasser, *Speeches*, 82.

[96] Nasser, 274.

[97] Nasser, 205.

[98] Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).

[99] Nasser, *Speeches*, 307.

[100] Nasser, 308.

[101] Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities*, 246.

[102] Blumi, *Destroying Yemen*, 113.

[103] Nasser, *Speeches*, 268.

[104] Nasser, 164.

[105] Nasser, 201.

[106] Nasser, 199.

[107] Nasser quoted in Dawisha, 'Perceptions and Policies', 49.

[108] Blumi, *Destroying Yemen*, 116.

[109] Nasser, *Speeches*, 197.

[110] An Egyptian training manual quoted in Ferris, *Nasser's Gamble*, 174.

[111] Nasser, *Speeches*, 306.

[112] Nasser, 197.

[113] Sankaran Krishna, 'Oppressive Pasts and Desired Futures: Re-Imagining India', *Futures*, Special Issue: The Futures of South Asia, 24, no. 9 (1 November 1992): 860, https://doi.org/10.1016/0016-3287(92)90146-7.

[114] Blumi, *Destroying Yemen*, 113–14.

[115] Nasser, *Speeches*, 196.

[116] Nasser, 84.

[117] Nasser, 85.

[118] Nasser, 83.

[119] Nasser quoted in James, *Nasser at War*, 61.

[120] Nasser, *Speeches*, 222.

[121] Ferris, *Nasser's Gamble*, 299.

[122] Blumi, *Destroying Yemen*, 19.

[123] Blumi, 112.

[124] Sara Salem, *Anticolonial Afterlives in Egypt: The Politics of Hegemony*, 2020, 87.