SUCCESES AND FAILURES OF THE PAN-ARAB MOVEMENT

Ogulcan Sert

KKR574

International Relations 1945 to Present

Lecturer

Walsch Christopher

Budapest 2016
Abbreviations

Op. cit: In the work cited
Introduction

Pan-Arabism is an ideology, which consists of Arab nationalism and anti-imperialism. In this article, failures and successes of the Pan-Arabism will be discussed, but before that, history of Pan-Arabism will be examined.

History of Pan-Arabism

Pan-Arabism does not mean that single Arab state should be exist, it has different meaning and in this way Pan-Arabism differs with other “Pan” ideologies.

“It is important to stress the unevenness of this process, with some parts of the Arab world coming earlier to Arabism-the term given to the early twentieth-century precursor of fully developed Arab nationalism-and others much later, with competing or complementary senses of identity stronger in some regions than in others.”

As it can be seen that, founders of Pan-Arabism had an opportunity to establish single Arab state, but they decided not to impose it because of the fear of failure from this process. It could be an example that, after World War I Syrian and Iraqi congress convened in Damascus for establishing three separate, independent Arab States; one state in Syria, other one is in Iraq, the last one is in Arabian Peninsula. On the history, Ottoman Empire tried to use “Pan-Islamism” to get more time before divided because Ottomans had Muslim majority and they had lots of Arabic states. But Pan-Islamism did not work because Arabs wanted national independence not Islamic countries where contains Turks and other ethnic groups. On those times, Arab nationalism –especially at Gulf-Arab countries (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Empire) - can be seen as a weapon which was used by Britain against Ottoman Empire on World War I. Other type of Pan-Arabism as movement is Radical Islamism. Radical Islamism had shown itself firstly at 1930s in Egypt as name of Muslim Brotherhood. Parts of Muslim Brotherhood can be seen at Palestine on the first Intifada event as a name of Hamas. Hamas tried to Unify Arabs via Sunni Islam but they failed. Muslim Brotherhood movement became illegal around three weeks ago.

After Six Days War (5 June 1967-11 June 1967) Pan-Arabism ideology took a major blow, because after this war Israel got lots of lands from Arab countries (Golan Heights from Syria, West Bank from Palestine) and motivation of Pan-Arabism actually based on Anti-Zionism and Anti-Israeli movement. After this blow, countries started to make an independent

---

2 Op. cit., Pages: 1365-1366
policies; some of them turned to Islamism, others tried protecting secular construction. If successes of Pan-Arabism are told, there are only two things for some Arab countries: Secularism and Patriotism. Patriotism also provides anti-imperialism. Of course those things are not valid for whole Arab countries because of the lifestyle and leaderships.

While Pan-Arab movement is examined, there is no way to skip Ba’ath Party and Ba’athism because it has really big importance for Pan-Arab movement.

**Ba’ath Party and Ba’athism**

Ba’ath means renaissance and resurrection in Arabic. But Ba’ath as a name of party is used for Ḥizbul-Baat al-Aradi al-Iṣhtiraki (Arab Socialist Resurrection Party)’s abridgement. Ba’ath Party was established in 1940 in Damascus by one Greek-Orthodox (Michel Aflaq), one Sunni Muslim (Salah al-Din al-Bitar). While Ba’ath established Syria was colony of France this party involves Arab Nationalism. In 1947 Ba’ath made the first congress with Zaki al-Arsuzi, who was Alawite from Turkey Iskenderun. Ideology of Ba’ath is based on nationalism, socialism and secularism.

Ba’athism differs from other Pan-Arabic movement because it calls for unification of Arab Countries into a single state. Its motto, "Unity, Liberty, Socialism", refers to Arab unity, and freedom from non-Arab control and interference. For unification, Ba’ath party from Syria and Gamal Abdel Nasser from Egypt went together and established one of the first larger pan-Arab state, which is called United Arab Republic (al-Jumhūrīyah al-‘Arabīyah al-Muttaḥidah), on February 1, 1958 this state was unitary socialist state and the president was Gamal Abdul Nasser. This state did not live long because of Syrian coup d’état on September 28, 1961. After this coup d’état unity has divided.

**Analyses for Pan-Arabism for current times: Will Pan-Arabism be reestablished or not?**

After Arab Spring this question was discussed by lots of people, they claim that Arab Spring is kind of awakening for Arab countries and people from those countries but it just causes new chaos, problems and wars. Those chaos can be seen at Yemen, Lebanon and Syria.

There are some undeniable truths that causes of the failure of pan-Arabic movement. The first cause is Gulf-Arab countries, especially Saudi Arabia, acts for imperialist countries as crutch in Middle East lands. During the Cold War, America gave lots of “aids” to Saudis and other Gulf-Arab countries for influencing them in capitalist way and having word on Middle East. While America gets into trouble in Middle East or while they want to some chaos in Middle
East, they always use their “weapons”. Example can be given from present time, Saudis kill Yemenis for having some chaos and serving imperialists. They kill civilians (Houthis) and provoke to Shia’s by executing Shia leaders, close example is Nimr Bāqr an-Nimr, to make war with Shia countries (Iran, Syria, Lebanon). Gulf-Arab countries claim that Lebanon Hezbollah is terrorist group and the leader of Sayyed Hasan Nasrallah is like Osama Bin Laden but they are completely wrong. Hezbollah and Sayyed just try to keep peace and protect Lebanon from imperialists. Even Christians (Who are 40.5% population of Lebanon) support Hezbollah although Hezbollah is Shia party. After this information, new argument comes to mind; even other religion group supports Shia Muslims but Gulf-Arabs (Majority is Sunni Islam) how can Pan-Arabism or Pan-Islamism be exist? In this respect there is no possibility to take Pan-Islamism for getting Arabs together.

Another example for Pan-Arab movement could be this one: there is a war in Syria and in Syria there are lots of radical Islamic terrorist groups. These groups serve to United States of America, United Kingdom and other imperialists. Sunni Radical Wahhabi groups makes lots of massacres to Shia’s, they do not care if they are civils, women or children. They attack to innocent people as sanguinarily and they claim that they are Arab and Muslim. There are no differences between Free Syrian Army and Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant all of them are terrorists.

Palestine is another instance for proving there will be no Pan-Arabism again. In Palestine, lots of groups fights against Zionism and imperialism. But they also fight with each other. Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and Governance of Palestine never agrees each other. Palestinian National Liberation Movement and Hamas have problems with each other. All of those organizations just look for interest of Palestine but they never strike a balance. It also proves that Pan-Arabism is completely failed.

**Conclusion**

Pan-Arabism movement have had lots of problems some problems still exist. There is no possibility to save the day, there is no hope for getting together and resisting against imperialism. Pan-Arabism could not be welcomed from all Arab countries. It happened sometimes because of Sunni-Shia description, sometimes because of imperialism approach. If Pan-Arabism would exist in some day or other, it is only possible that if all Arabs stand for anti-Imperialism anti-Zionism and anti-denominationalism.
REFERENCES