

The Lasting Impact of Gamal Abdel Nasser's Policies on Egyptian Society

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ABSTRACT

Gamal Abdel Nasser's ascent to power after Egypt's 1952 revolution marked a critical shift in the nation's trajectory. Leading the Free Officers Movement, Nasser sought to dismantle the British-supported monarchy and implement nationalistic reforms aimed at modernizing Egypt and unifying its people. His ambitious policies included land redistribution, nationalization of key industries, and centralization of media to promote his nationalist agenda. Nasser's rule was marked by significant achievements, including efforts to reduce inequality, assert Egyptian sovereignty, and foster a strong Arab identity. However, these reforms also introduced complex issues, including economic inefficiencies, political repression, and strained relations with marginalized communities, particularly Jews and Coptic Christians. Nasser's use of state-controlled media became a powerful tool for consolidating his rule and disseminating propaganda fuelling antisemitic sentiment and division. His economic policies, while successful in asserting control over the Suez Canal and pursuing industrial growth, ultimately created inefficiencies due to centralized planning and a lack of private enterprise, contributing to long-term economic difficulties. The legacy of Nasser's regime remains deeply complex; his nationalistic ambitions transformed Egypt's political and social landscape, leaving a dual impact of progress and unresolved challenges. The sectarian violence, economic struggles, and state-dominated media culture that persist today serve as reminders of his policies' limitations. Nasser's era offers critical lessons for developing nations on the potential pitfalls of nationalist governance, emphasizing the importance of inclusive and balanced reforms to ensure sustainable growth and social cohesion.

Introduction

Gamal Abdel Nasser, a prominent figure in contemporary Egyptian history, came to power following the 1952 revolution, which overthrew the British-supported monarchy of King Farouk. Leading the Free Officers Movement, Nasser's nationalistic regime aimed to transform Egypt through sweeping social and economic reforms. His policies improved national unity and helped modernize the country, but they also set the stage for state-controlled media, economic tension, hostile foreign relations, and inconsistent social policies. This essay examines the extent to which Nasser's nationalistic regime impacted the cultural, economic, and social landscape of Egypt and how it has paved the way for contemporary Egyptian society. By exploring both Nasser's achievements and the ongoing challenges posed by his legacy, this inquiry seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of how historical policies focused on nationalism continue to impact Egypt today. Additionally, analyzing Nasser's policies and their aftermath provides valuable lessons for other nations, particularly developing countries, in understanding the long-term implications of nationalist governance and state-led development.

In writing this essay, the methodological approach involved a detailed analysis of both primary and secondary sources to evaluate Nasser's impact on Egyptian society. Primary sources included historical accounts of individuals impacted by Nasser's policies and direct documentation of Nasser's reforms, while secondary sources comprised of scholarly articles and books providing broader contextual insights. Arab historians generally offer a more favorable assessment of Nasser's influence, emphasizing his role in modernizing Egypt and fostering national unity. In contrast, non-Arab historians focus on how Nasser's aspiration to become the leader of the Arab world negatively impacted

Egypt in the short and long term. These contrasting views underscore the complexity of Nasser's legacy and the varying perspectives on his role in shaping contemporary Egyptian society.

The Rise of Nationalism in Egypt's Pre-Nasser Era

In 1882, British forces occupied Egypt to protect their strategic interests, particularly the Suez Canal, a crucial maritime route. (University of Cambridge, n.d.) The British Empire heavily invested in infrastructure to export Egyptian cotton and other resources to Britain, which benefited primarily the British and a small group of wealthy Egyptians (Zunes & Laird, 2011). However, this left the majority of Egyptians, particularly peasants, impoverished without access to basic services (Vatikiotis, 1991, p. 8). Despite Egyptians having a local ruler, real power was held by the British Consul General, who controlled governance, foreign policy, and economic matters (Office of the Historian, n.d.). This situation fueled a rise in nationalism among Egyptians, who increasingly sought greater autonomy and independence from British control. The Wafd party, an Egyptian nationalist movement, was founded in November 1918 in order to oppose British occupation (Cleveland, 2022). Although it was not the first nationalist group in Egypt, it had a lasting impact because it mobilized broad popular support and set the stage for future political developments.

In 1922, Britain unilaterally declared Egyptian independence, ending its protectorate status (Ikeda, 2022). This decision was influenced by domestic pressures in Britain, international diplomacy, and the 1919 Egyptian Revolution, which saw widespread protests against British rule led by the Wafd party after the exile of nationalist leader Saad Zaghloul (Zunes & Laird, 2011). Although Egypt was formally independent, British influence persisted, particularly over the Suez Canal, defense, and foreign interests, which frustrated many Egyptians seeking full sovereignty (Zunes & Laird, 2011). This period of partial independence intensified nationalist sentiment, fueling a stronger push for complete self-determination and a rejection of residual British control.

In 1936, King Farouk ascended the throne but faced widespread unpopularity due to his corrupt and ineffective rule (Cavendish, 2002). His extravagant lifestyle starkly contrasted with the dire conditions of the Egyptian populace (Bowker, 2017). His failure to address poverty and unemployment, coupled with his dependence on British support, undermined his legitimacy (Cavendish, 2002). To bolster his image, King Farouk championed Arab unity and supported Palestinian Arabs against the establishment of the state of Israel. (Goldschmidt & Little, 1999).

In 1945, Egypt joined the Arab League alongside Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen, and Transjordan (later Jordan). These countries rejected the UN partition of Palestine on November 29, 1947, and Israel's declaration of independence on May 14, 1948 (Sharnoff, 2012, p.3). On May 15, 1948, the Arab League launched a coordinated military intervention to prevent Israel's establishment. However, the 1948 Arab-Israeli War exposed significant flaws in Egypt's military and political strategy. (Gerges, 2012). Egypt's defeat fueled public dissatisfaction and criticism of its government, highlighting the regime's incompetence and inability to effectively champion the Arab nationalist cause (Gerges, 2012).

In response to growing discontent, the Free Officers Movement (FOM), led by General Muhammad Naguib and Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser, was formed in 1949 (The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.). Nasser claimed that Israel's creation was "a crime against the Arab nation and voiced that Palestinian rights could only be restored by reversing the events of 1948, a euphemism for the deconstruction of the Jewish state" (Sharnoff, 2012, p.4). Although Nasser did not view Israel as an immediate threat, he argued that it was "a physical obstacle to Arab unity which separated Arabic-speaking North Africa, known as *al-Maghreb* from Arabic-speaking Middle East, known as *al-Mashriq*" (Sharnoff, 2012, p.4). In 1952, the FOM led a revolution that successfully removed King Farouk from power and marked the beginning of a new political era in Egypt. Mohamed Naguib became Egypt's first president and prime minister after spearheading the revolution until Nasser, who served as deputy prime minister and interior minister, ousted him from power. (Sharnoff, 2012, p.3).

Nasser's Influence from 1954-1970

Nasser became Prime Minister in 1954 and ruled Egypt from behind the scenes until his official swearing-in as President on June 23, 1956 (Sharnoff, 2012, p.3). Once in power, Nasser sought to establish himself as the leading voice of the Arab world (Sharnoff, 2012, p.3). In his 1954 memoir, *The Philosophy of the Revolution*, Nasser argued that Egypt's geography and historical legacy gave it a unique influence over Africa, the Muslim world, and the Arab world (Sharnoff, 2012, p.3). He also believed the Middle East was waiting for a leader to fill a crucial role: "I always imagine that in this region in which we live there is a role wandering aimlessly about in search of an actor to play it" (Sharnoff, 2012, p.3). With this vision, Nasser sought to project his leadership and Arab nationalism throughout the region and remained in power until his death in 1970.

Nasser's leadership from 1954 to 1970 marked a period of profound change in Egypt, characterized by sweeping social and economic reforms. Nasser's regime was driven by a vision of Egyptian nationalism and Arab unity, which led to state-controlled media, the redistribution of land, and the nationalization of key industries. However, Nasser's policies towards marginalized groups, especially Jews and Coptic Christians, revealed a more complex and often contradictory side of his nationalism, influenced by regional conflicts, anti-imperialist sentiment, and antisemitism. The legacy of these reforms and policies continues to shape contemporary Egyptian society, providing insights into the dynamics of governance, nationalism, religious tension, and socio-economic development in modern Egypt.

Nasser's Use of Propaganda to Foster a National Identity

Nasser's regime was dedicated to creating a unified national identity, employing media and propaganda as essential tools to achieve this goal (Global Media Registry, 2019). By making all news media state-owned, "Nasser sought to exploit the media... to convey to the public what he considered to be the proper values and ideas, thus instituting a policy of vertical media control in the name of 'national development'" (Lavie & Yefet, 2022 p.145). In 1952, Nasser's regime established the *Dar al-Tahrir* publishing house and started publishing the *Al-Akhbar* daily. (Lavie & Yefet, 2022 p.145). The following year, it banned party-affiliated newspapers and began publishing another official daily, *Al-Jumhuriyya*. (Lavie & Yefet, 2022, p.145). In 1954, Nasser suspended the Journalists' Union and even took control of magazines. (Lavie & Yefet, 2022, p.145). Nasser's regime also expanded radio infrastructure and used it to spread Nasser's ideology, especially to the illiterate and lower class. Right before his death in 1970, Nasser established the Egyptian Radio and Television Union (ERTU) to control all electronic media (Lavie & Yefet, 2022, p.145).

Nasser's propaganda campaign was part of a broader effort to consolidate power by uniting the population against common external and internal enemies, thereby diverting attention from domestic issues and bolstering his nationalist agenda (Lavie & Yefet, 2022, p.145). In order to promote Pan-Arabism (a political and cultural ideology that advocates for the unity and cooperation of Arab countries based on shared linguistic, cultural, and historical ties) (Kakati, 2019), Nasser deployed media to portray Jews as enemies of the state, linking them to Zionism and Western Imperialism. (Sharnoff, 2022, p.12) This narrative was amplified during the 1956 Suez Crisis and the 1967 Six-Day War, where media outlets disseminated conspiracy theories and inflammatory rhetoric (Fishman, 2007). "Nasser, like other Arab leaders and their government propaganda, tended to combine anti-Israel, anti-Zionist, and anti-Jewish motifs to such a degree that they overlapped" (Sarnoff, 2022, p.2). Nasser used state-run newspapers to publish articles that blamed Jews for Egypt's socioeconomic problems and challenges (Kuntzel, 2017). Radio broadcasts and television programs reinforced these messages, often featuring content that depicted Jews in a negative light (Fishman, 2007). Nasser's government constantly cited the *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*, an early 20th-century antisemitic Russian document that claimed international Jewry conspired to take over the world. (Sharnoff, 2022, p.2). Nasser's systematic use of media to promote anti-zionist ideology not only fueled antisemitic sentiments among the Egyptian public but also justified the regime's discriminatory policies against Jews.

Nasser's Lasting Impact on Egyptian Identity

Nasser's efforts to forge a unified Egyptian and Arab identity were foundational in shaping national consciousness. By promoting nationalism through his investment in state-controlled media, Nasser fostered a sense of national pride and unity that continues today. Nasser's use of media to influence Egyptian sentiment has been one of the most enduring legacies of his regime. Although state control over media has evolved since Nasser's era, the influence of state oversight continues to impact Egypt's media landscape (Global Media Registry, 2019).

After Nasser's death, Egypt oscillated between periods of relative freedom and increased control. For example, during Anwar Sadat's presidency (1970-1981), Sadat loosened the strict controls and censorship of Nasser's era (Global Media Registry, 2019). This allowed for more diverse viewpoints and a greater degree of freedom in media reporting (Global Media Registry, 2019). Additionally, Sadat promoted the development of private media outlets, including newspapers and magazines, alongside state-owned ones (Global Media Registry, 2019). Despite these changes, Sadat's regime maintained a level of control over the media, particularly in matters that could impact national security or the stability of the regime (Global Media Registry, 2019).

After Sadat's assassination in 1981, his successor, Hosni Mubarak (1981-2011), maintained many of Sadat's media reforms but also introduced stricter controls and censorship. While private media outlets continued to operate, the government reinstated more rigorous oversight and restrictions on media content, particularly regarding political dissent as seen in his attempt to pass Law No. 93 "laying down penalties for libel and publication of so-called false information and provocative material" (Global Media Registry, 2019).

This enduring influence of Nasser's state-controlled media has impacted Egyptian society in many ways. First, it has restricted diverse viewpoints leading to a homogenized state-approved narrative in public discourse. Additionally, the government has used the media to promote its own agenda and maintain political stability. Most notably, the control of media has inhibited social and political change in Egypt by limiting the spread of alternative ideas.

Nasser's Economic Policies

Nasser's economic policies were central to his vision of addressing socio-economic inequalities and modernizing Egypt. One of his landmark reforms was the 1952 Land Reform Law, which aimed to redistribute land from large estate owners to tenant farmers (Brooke & Koehler-Derrick, 2020). This policy sought to diminish the influence of the landholding elite and provide economic opportunities to the rural poor (Brooke & Koehler-Derrick, 2020). By redistributing land, the regime tried to create a more equitable agrarian system and empower small farmers (Brooke & Koehler-Derrick, 2020).

Building on this foundation, Nasser pursued an aggressive industrialization strategy. The government nationalized key industries, including textiles, banking, and transportation (Beinin, 2016). A notable example of this was the nationalization of the Suez Canal in 1956, a move that asserted Egypt's sovereignty over a critical economic asset (Beinin, 2016). Nasser's policies aimed to foster industrial growth and decrease dependence on foreign interests, allowing the state to direct resources toward national development goals (Raballand, 2015).

The Aswan High Dam, one of Nasser's most ambitious projects, played a critical role in transforming the country's agricultural and energy sectors. Completed in 1970, the dam controlled the annual flooding of the Nile, which had long been a source of agricultural unpredictability (Mohamed, 2018). By providing a reliable source of water, it irrigated farmland and significantly boosted agricultural productivity (Mohamed, 2018). Additionally, the dam generated hydroelectric power, contributing to Egypt's electricity supply and facilitating industrial growth (Mohamed, 2018).

Nasser's Lasting Impact on Egypt's Economy

Despite these advancements, Nasser's state-led industrialization and centralized economic planning led to inefficiencies, bureaucratic challenges, and a lack of innovation affecting overall economic performance (Goldberg & Bein, 1982). The centralized planning model also stifled private enterprise and hindered economic flexibility (Goldberg & Bein, 1982). Although Nasser's economic policies sought to address socioeconomic inequalities in Egypt, they proved unsustainable. At the time of Nasser's death, Egypt faced significant economic difficulties, including high inflation, a large budget deficit, low levels of foreign exchange reserves, and rising unemployment (Goldberg & Bein, 1982).

Each subsequent administration has grappled with Nasser's legacy, navigating the challenges of transitioning between liberalized policies and state control. For example, Anwar Sadat (1970-1981) instituted a series of economic policies, known as the "Infitah" aimed to liberalize the economy by encouraging private investment and reducing state control over the economy. However, this led to increased income inequality and the growth of a wealthy elite (Aulas, 1982). It also led to Egypt's dependency on foreign aid impacting Egypt's economic trajectory in subsequent decades. Mubarak continued Sadat's policies but emphasized privatization and deregulation (Soliman, 2012). This led to increased foreign investment and growth in the private sector. At the same time, however, these policies led to a rise in unemployment and a widening gap between rich and poor, contributing to the conditions that sparked the Arab Spring in 2010 (Soliman, 2012). Mohamed Morsi (2012-2013) tried to maintain state control over key sectors to address economic issues, however, he was unable to stabilize the economy or manage reforms due to social unrest (Al-Sayed, 2012). The cyclical pattern of reform and reaction has left Egypt with a complex economic landscape and ongoing challenges (Al-Sayed, 2012). Ultimately, the struggle to balance state control and market-oriented reforms has significantly shaped Egypt's economic and social trajectory (Al-Sayed, 2012).

Nasser's Treatment of Marginalized Groups

Nasser's nationalism, while aiming to unify the country, had a problematic attitude toward marginalized groups, particularly Jews and Coptic Christians. This contradiction became especially evident after the 1956 Suez Crisis, which influenced his policies and led to the discriminatory treatment of these minority communities. Despite Nasser's rhetoric of national unity, the mistreatment of these groups revealed a significant gap between his proclaimed goals of inclusivity and the reality of his policies, which targeted specific ethnic and religious minorities.

The Suez Crisis began in July 1956 when Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal, a maritime route connecting the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea (T. Editors of Encyclopaedia, 2021). This move angered Britain and France, which had previously controlled the canal, and led to a military intervention by these countries along with Israel (U.S. Department of State, n.d.). By March 1957, international pressure and the risk of a broader confrontation with the Soviet Union, who opposed the invasions, forced Britain, France, and Israel to pull out and leave the Suez Canal under Egyptian control (U.S. Department of State, n.d.). Nasser emerged as a hero in the Arab world, which intensified anti-Western and anti-imperialist sentiment within Egypt (T. Editors of Encyclopaedia, 2024).

Nasser's Treatment of Egyptian Jews and Israel

During and after the crisis, Nasser's regime intensified its control over various aspects of Egyptian society, including religious communities. Jews, often seen as having ties to Western countries and Israel became targets of state-led antisemitism (Laskier, 1995). In 1956, the Egyptian government began implementing policies that were overtly discriminatory (Laskier, 1995). Key measures included the expulsion of Jewish merchants, the seizure of Jewish-owned properties, and the closure of Jewish schools and synagogues (Laskier, 1995). During this period, the Jewish

population in Egypt dropped dramatically from about 80,000 before the crisis to fewer than 5,000 by the early 1960s (Laskier, 1995).

By 1967, the 4,000 Egyptian Jews who remained in Egypt were punished for Israel's victory in the Six-Day War against Egypt, Jordan, and Syria (Sharnoff, 2022, p. 12). Eight hundred Jews were detained on conspiracy charges and had their property seized (Sharnoff, 2022, p.12). Jewish prisoners were beaten and deprived of food and water for long periods of time (Sharnoff, 2022, p.12). Remy Pessah, an Egyptian Jew who lived through the Six-Day War describes how "Nasser had all Jewish men from eighteen to sixty-five rounded up and sent to prison camps" (Sharnoff, 2022, p.12). Egyptian Jew, Marc Khedr, who was sentenced to three years in an Egyptian prison, recalls how prisoners were forced into a courtyard and routinely chased by an Egyptian soldier with a belt" (Sharnoff, 2022, p.12). By the early 1970s, the Jewish community that once thrived in Egypt had largely disappeared (Laskier, 1995).

Nasser made no distinction between Jews and Zionists (a political and nationalist movement that claims that Jews have the right to self-determination in their ancient homeland) (Anti-Defamation League, 2016). "He spoke despairingly of the Jews, calling them 'a backward people, and so imitative they copy themselves'" (Sharnoff, 2022, p.14). Through his de facto spokesperson, Muhammad Hassanein Heikal, the editor of *Al-Ahram* newspaper, Nasser propagated antisemitic tropes from the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and *Mein Kampf*, deeply antisemitic texts that promote conspiracy theories and hateful ideologies against Jewish people, fueling prejudice and discrimination (Sharnoff, 2022, p.16). Jews in Israel were described as "weak, cowardly, and feeble, who without Western assistance, could not have defeated Egypt" in the Six-Day War (Sharnoff, 2022, p.16). Simultaneously, American Jews were portrayed "as immensely wealthy and powerful, wielding a disproportionate influence on the government and media" (Sharnoff, p 16). Nasser's demonization of Jews and Israel not only fueled antisemitic sentiments among the Egyptian public but also justified the regime's discriminatory policies against Jews, including expulsions, property seizures, and restrictions on their civil rights.

Nasser's Treatment of Coptic Christians

Under Nasser's rule, Coptic Christians (Copts) faced a different kind of discrimination compared to Jews. Before Nasser's rise to power, Copts played a significant role in Egyptian society, even holding leadership positions in the Wafd nationalist movement (Levegule, 2023, p. 17). They supported the Wafd movement because of its secular liberal agenda, which promised them equality despite their minority status (Levegule, 2023, p. 17). Following the Wafd's success in ousting the British and passing the 1923 Egyptian constitution, Copts were recognized as Egyptian citizens with equal rights (Levegule, 2023, p. 18). By 1936, it seemed as though they had achieved economic and political equality with their Muslim neighbors (Levegule, 2023, p. 18).

However, this progress ended with the overthrow of King Farouk's government and the establishment of Nasser's single-party system. Copts, lacking a leftist or secular liberal political party to advocate for their interests, found themselves with no political outlet for participation or representation (Levegule, 2023, p. 19). They had to rely on the Patriarch and church leadership for protection and representation in the Egyptian government (Levegule, 2023, p. 20).

Under Nasser's leadership, Copts faced increased surveillance and restrictions, exacerbated by broader Pan-Arab sentiments. Although Nasser claimed that "we in our republic don't even acknowledge the existence of discrimination...and we do not distribute jobs on the basis of discrimination," Copts were consistently underrepresented in governmental jobs and leadership positions compared to their Muslim counterparts (Levegule, p. 19). Since Copts were excluded from national politics, they had minimal involvement in the management of Egyptian companies. (Levegule, 2023, p. 19) They also experienced biases in basic employment and social services (The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2005). The regime's favoritism towards Muslims in key administrative and military roles marginalized the Coptic community (The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2005). Despite Nasser's rhetoric of secularism and national unity, the Copts were systematically marginalized.

Nasser's 1953 Agrarian Reform Laws further exacerbated the situation for Copts by confiscating their inherited land, which had been amassed by the church over centuries, and redistributing it solely to Muslim peasants (Levegule, 2023, p. 20). This redistribution significantly diminished Coptic wealth and undermined their societal status (Levegule, 2023, p. 20). As a result, Copts were increasingly viewed not as full Egyptian citizens but as a separate sect within society (Levegule, 2023, p. 20).

The Lasting Impact of Nasser's Treatment of Jews

Nasser's expulsion of Jews and the broader antisemitic climate he fostered led to the near-complete disappearance of a vibrant cultural and economic group that had contributed significantly to Egyptian society. Nasser's strong anti-Israel stance also set a tone of hostility and suspicion that influenced subsequent Egyptian leaders. "[S]ince Nasser's death...anti-Zionism and antisemitism have manifested themselves from "top-down" expressions of the Arab-Israeli conflict which tend to condemn Israel as an illegitimate, expansionist outpost of Western imperialism. These diatribes have become part of mainstream Egyptian social and political life" (Sharnoff, 2022, p.20). Although Sadat diverged from Nasser's stance by pursuing peace with Israel and signed the Camp David Accords in 1978 and the Egypt-Peace Treaty in 1979, his rhetoric was still antisemitic and his peace initiative was controversial domestically and across the Arab world (Sharnoff, 2022, p.20). It even led to Egypt's temporary suspension from the Arab League, political opposition, and eventually Sadat's assassination by extremists opposed to the peace process. Sadat's successor, Mubarak, "allowed the media to vilify Israel and Jews as a means to redirect public anger against nepotism, corruption, unemployment, poverty, and human rights abuses" (Sharnoff, 2022, p.21). Despite formal peace agreements currently in place, popular and political attitudes in the Arab world continue to reflect the adversarial anti-Zionist and antisemitic stance Nasser championed, affecting public discourse and policy decisions.

The Lasting Impact of Nasser's Treatment of Coptic Christians

Unlike the Jews in Egypt, the Coptic community has persisted. After Nasser's death, his successors, particularly Sadat and Mubarak, initially attempted to improve relations with the Coptic community (The Washington Institute, 2005). Sadat's era saw some positive changes, such as increased religious freedom and the appointment of Copts to various government positions but relationships deteriorated between Pope Shenouda III, head of the Coptic Orthodox Church, and President Sadat leading to hostility (The Washington Institute, 2005). Violent attacks against Copts rose proportionally to the spread of extremist culture in Egypt that began with Sadat and continued under Mubarak (Coptic Solidarity, 2017). Under Mubarak, there were instances of sectarian violence, including attacks on Coptic churches and communities (Coptic Solidarity, 2017). Nasser's mistreatment of the Coptic community has had a lasting impact in Egypt, and today, Copts continue to face challenges related to religious freedom, social integration, and sectarian violence (Coptic Solidarity, 2017).

Conclusion

Gamal Abdel Nasser's era in Egypt was transformative yet fraught with complexities. His nationalistic policies brought substantial changes, including modernization efforts, economic reforms, and a strong sense of national unity. However, these policies also created long-lasting issues, such as political repression, economic inefficiencies, and tensions with minority communities. Nasser's use of media to promote his regime, his state-led economic strategies, and his treatment of marginalized groups, including Jews and Coptic Christians, underscores the mixed legacy of his rule. While his era marked significant progress in some areas, it also left a legacy of challenges that continue to impact Egypt today.

For developing nations, Nasser's experience offers valuable insights. It shows that while bold reforms can lead to modernization and unity, too much centralization and exclusion can create division and economic issues. The continuing problems in Egypt, such as sectarian violence and economic challenges, highlight the need for balanced and inclusive leadership. Other nations can learn from Nasser's era to better handle the complexities of nationalistic policies and ensure sustainable development.

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