

Egypt in Turkish Foreign Policy: Development of Diplomatic Relations and Regional Dynamics (1950-1960)

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Abstract

This study examines Turkey-Egypt relations during the Democratic Party (DP) rule between 1950-1960 and the role of Adnan Menderes in this process. At the same time, the stance of Egyptian Prime Minister Gamal Abdel Nasser regarding relations between the two countries was taken into account. During World War II, Turkey first pursued a policy of balance by remaining neutral and then moved closer to the European powers. Egypt's foreign policy, which was shaped in line with Arab nationalism, caused diplomatic relations between the two countries to become tense from time to time. In this period, the Baghdad Pact, the Suez Crisis and the balance of power in the Middle East were the main factors determining the relations between Turkey and Egypt. In this study, the policies pursued by Adnan Menderes in Turkey-Egypt relations and the effects of these policies on the interaction between the two countries are evaluated. This study makes use of primary and secondary sources. In particular, it draws on diplomatic correspondence from the Presidential State Archives and newspapers published during the period. These sources were analyzed using qualitative research methods. Research and analytical works related to the period and topics were also utilized in this study.

Keywords: Democratic Party, Turkish foreign policy, Egypt, Adnan Menderes

Introduction

This study examines issues centered on Turkey and Egypt's security aspirations and struggles for regional influence within the framework of foreign policy during the Democratic Party era. The 1950–1960 period represents a time when Turkey's integration into the Western alliance clashed with Egypt's policies centered on national independence and Arab nationalism. The study aims to draw general conclusions by analyzing the relations between the two countries through archival documents. Taking into account the political behavior of heads of state and the political events that occurred, the structural causes underlying diplomatic crises have been examined. Turkey has emerged as a key unifying factor in European and Middle Eastern politics due to its strategic location. In this context, the Republic of Turkey succeeded in playing a central role in the politics of the Middle East region during the 1950s and 1960s, just as it had in the past. On the other hand, given its proximity to many

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neighboring countries with different regimes and ideologies, Turkey has taken certain steps to ensure the security of its geographical position and borders. Relations between Turkey and North African and Middle Eastern countries have, at times, been tense and have not always been peaceful. Consequently, there have been ups and downs in political and diplomatic relations. Since World War I and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, there has generally been a state of instability in the countries of the Middle East and North Africa (Gülbay, 2022, p. 1037).

The 27-year rule of the Republican People's Party (CHP), which assumed control of the country's administration after the Turkish War of Independence, came to an end in 1950 when the Democrat Party (DP) won the elections. With the DP's rise to power in 1950, Turkey's foreign policy began to take shape in the direction of developing closer relations with the West (Eroğlu, 2014, p. 6–7). In fact, the DP's party program, which differed from that of the CHP in almost every field, including foreign policy, began to be expressed more openly after the end of the Second World War (Keskin, 2012, p.112). Particularly after coming to power, the DP became a centrist party that, in addition to adopting a more liberal political perspective, also took into account the traditional religious values accepted by a large segment of society. During the DP rule, Turkey's relations with the United States and the process of NATO membership became the main elements shaping Turkish foreign policy. In the DP period, Turkey's relations with the Middle East were reshaped, and its ties with Egypt acquired different dynamics within the framework of the political atmosphere of the period (Albayrak, 2004, p. 30).

During the DP era, Turkey's pro-Western policies and the Arab nationalism and anti-imperialist policies developed by Egypt under the leadership of Gamal Abdel Nasser led to significant differences of opinion between the two countries. These political differences were not only period-specific but were also historical in terms of the cultural legacies inherited by the countries. Indeed, throughout the nineteenth century, until it came under British domination in 1882, Egypt had experienced political disagreements with the Ottoman sultans. After World War II, the global political landscape underwent inevitable changes. The decline of British and French power led to the emergence of the United States and the Soviet Union as the new superpowers. In response to this shift, Turkey began to pursue Western-oriented policies to counter the Soviet threat in the north. During this period, Turkey's policy of integration with the West encompassed not only security and military aspects but also economic integration. Turkey, which drew closer to countries in the Middle East and North Africa in opposition to the Soviet Union, joined regional pacts. However, it faced issues with some Arab countries due to its Western integration. Although it established friendly relations with Middle Eastern countries, the implementation of a Western-oriented policy increased its alignment with the West. After 1960, however, the West's stance on the Cyprus issue began to distance Turkey from its pro-Western policy (Khan, 2015, p. 34). In contrast, Egypt's rapprochement with the Soviet Union was based on the arms embargo of 1955. The rapprochement between Egypt and the Soviets was met with concern by Western powers. The leadership change in Egypt prior to 1955 and Nasser's stance against imperialist powers led to a new course in international relations. With Nasser's rise to power in Egypt, a new era began. Relations between Menderes's Turkey and Nasser's Egypt developed within the framework of a changing international political landscape (Steele, 1963, p. 18). Gamal Abdel Nasser had goals such as eliminating imperialism, uniting the Arab world, and leading North Africa. In pursuit of these goals, he chose to distance himself from Western nations, particularly the United Kingdom, France, and the United States. In this context, Turkey's historically friendly relations with these nations began to deteriorate over time, eventually turning into a competitive relationship (Steele, 1963, p. 19).

Egypt's rejection of the Baghdad Pact—established to protect the Middle East, of which Turkey was a member—and its desire to assume leadership of the Arab peoples affected its diplomatic relations with Turkey (Hassan, 2008, p. 923). Due to its strategic location between the energy resources of the Black Sea and the Middle East, Turkey attracted the attention of both the Eastern and Western blocs during the Cold War. In this context, it found itself caught between the rivalries of the superpowers, which also influenced its policies toward other nations. Turkey, which held a significant position within the competition between East and West, maintained a firm stance against the Soviet threat. This stance demonstrated Turkey's anti-communist position and was recognized by the Truman administration. When Turkey's application for NATO membership came up, the United States was its strongest supporter (Gunn, 2015, p. 107).

The victory of the National Struggle in Turkey and the proclamation of the Republic did not lead to a significant change in the relations between the parties. Although Egypt had gained its independence, British influence over the country remained strong enough for a period to determine its foreign policy. Despite the beginning of a rapprochement between the parties during the Lausanne Conference, the proclamation of the Republic (1923) and the abolition of the caliphate (1924) prevented the diplomatic ties between the two countries from remaining strong. Although efforts were made to revitalize Egypt–Turkey relations, these relations remained overshadowed by the strong actions of Western states, particularly Britain (Baş, 2015, p. 43). Before the Second World War, Turkey's economic and political insufficiency and the strong position of Western states in this regard played a determining role in the diplomatic approaches of the parties, as in world politics in general. In the 1950s, significant political changes took place in both countries, and strong leaderships that left their mark on the diplomatic processes of their countries emerged (Yeşilbursa, 2010, p. 68). The July 1952 Revolution created important changes in Egyptian politics and economy. Politically and economically, the revolution passed through two distinct stages. In the first decade of its existence, during the DP rule, a relatively more pragmatic and flexible discourse was developed. However, this was never sufficient to create a spirit of alliance between the two countries (Crabbs Jr., 1975, p. 386).

As Gamal Abdel Nasser began to exert influence over the Egyptian government, changes in both the country's domestic and foreign policies became inevitable. The deterioration of Egypt's relations with the West was largely due to the nationalist ideology that guided Nasser's foreign policy. Rejecting Western hegemony, Gamal Abdel Nasser distanced himself in his foreign policy from states aligned with the West. In this context, Turkish-Egyptian relations remained at a certain level during the 1950s and 1960s. Egypt's desire to assume a leadership role in North Africa and the surrounding region would lead to certain issues with Turkey. Nasser's consistent opposition to Western policies from the outset led him to grow closer to the Soviet Union (Podeh, 1996, p. 165). Consequently, Turkey has remained loyal to Western policies in this region, and this stance has influenced its NATO membership. With its accession to NATO in 1952, Turkey under the leadership of Adnan Menderes generally defined its national interests in accordance with the U.S. alliance. The economic and military needs during this period increased Turkey's dependence on the West in its foreign policy. In this context, Turkey began to play a significant role in U.S. policy toward North Africa and the Middle East (Kardaş, 2011, p. 27). On the other hand, U.S. military and economic support for Greece and Turkey led the Menderes government to strengthen its cooperation with the West and played a significant role in bilateral relations. This support prompted a shift in Russia's policy and led it to establish contact with Egypt (Gaddis, 2005, p. 31).

1. Turkey's Dance with the West and Nasser's New Order

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By 1950, Turkey had passed an important turning point in its process of democratization. The election results did not allow the founding party of the Republic, the CHP, to remain in power. The Turkish people had given the green light to the Democrats, who prioritized traditional values. This indicated a new period not³ only in Turkey's political life but also in its cultural life. Selahaddin Bey, the Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs of the new order, was visited and congratulated by Şevket Fuat Keçeci, the Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to Cairo. On this occasion, Turkey–Egypt relations were discussed, and it was declared that the relations between the two countries would continue in a friendly manner (“Keçeci”, 1950, January 28). During this period, Turkey's Ambassador to Cairo took care to establish good relations with other states, including Egypt. In order to ensure and maintain international peace, he participated in bilateral meetings as well as invitations and congratulatory visits. The Ambassador in Cairo held meetings with the representatives of Egypt, Belgium, and Iraq (“Keçeci”, 1950, July 2). In addition, all embassies in Egypt came together with the delegates of the councils within the United Nations and held a meeting regarding the relations to be established with Egypt (“Keçeci”, 1950, July 20).

While the Democrat Party pushed peripheral masses toward the center in domestic politics and achieved visible improvements in development, there was no change in the long-standing pro-Western political approach. This pro-Western approach was a state policy that could not be explained solely by the Russian influence historically perceived by the Turks as a threat. The Egyptian Prime Minister Hussein Sirri Pasha (1952) sought to form the new cabinet as pro-British. In this context, he called on all political parties in Egypt to come together to support this formation (The Egyptian Prime Minister, 1952, July 1). On the other hand, although the complex structure of Nasserism in Egypt was criticized in many respects, there were not few masses supporting his political actions. As an attempt at ideological change and transformation, Nasserism created a great wave, and it is still debated whether the new society it claimed to target could even be built at that time (Ajami, 1974, p. 42). Nevertheless, in the 1950s, two strong figures who had the support of their own peoples were in power in Turkey and Egypt. This situation meant that both countries would seek to be more active in the Middle East. In the 1950s, Turkey felt more powerful than its southern neighbors and began to play a significant role in regional alliances. A major competition for regional leadership in North Africa and the Middle East pitted Egypt against Turkey (Jung, 2005, p. 9).

In his first official speech on world politics, Foreign Minister Köprülü stated that they wished to contribute to international peace and to be active in this regard. In the continuation of his speech, Köprülü argued that the political balance in the world had changed and that it was necessary to adapt to the new order (“Fuad Köprülü's speech”, 1950, May 25). Compared to the CHP period, the foreign policy of the Democrat Party took shape along a more active and pro-Western line (Duman and Birsal, 2012, p. 306). Turkey's membership in NATO gave rise to a new foreign policy concept, which was contrary to Nasser's foreign policy approach. The incompatibility between the two countries became apparent in the early years of their rule.

The emergence of this situation was largely influenced by the new foreign policy concept that arose as a result of Turkey's NATO membership. Despite its Western-oriented foreign policy, the DP was always willing to improve relations with its border neighbors and Middle Eastern countries. During the DP rule,

while a new international system was being constructed in a bipolar world, Turkey acted by prioritizing its own security policies. Indeed, in this period, while importance was attached to international peace, NATO membership came to the forefront in foreign relations for the sake of Turkey's border security and defense (Ceylan, 2023, p. 862). NATO membership provided an important opportunity for Turkey to develop the support and alliance relations it sought from the West in its foreign policy. At the same time, signals were given that a predominantly West-oriented foreign policy would be implemented during this period. While developing close relations with the United States, Turkey also became directly involved in developments in the Middle East. In 1950, Turkey played an active role in the search for solutions for the Middle East and the countries in the region whose security was threatened by Soviet Russia. In this context, Turkey took determined steps in its foreign policy to balance anti-Western tendencies in the region and to limit the influence of the USSR. Accordingly, Turkey engaged in efforts to ensure stability in the Middle East in cooperation with Britain and the United States. However, during this process, relations with Egypt in particular occasionally became tense (Duman and Birsnel, 2012, p. 310). The ideological political practices of the USSR and the USA in Middle Eastern politics shaped the DP's party program toward the Middle East and Muslim geographies (Fırat and Kürkçüoğlu, 2002, s.618). Despite the political and social events experienced within the country between 1950 and 1960, adherence to the pacts and memberships to which Turkey was committed was maintained for the sake of stability in foreign policy (Bayraktar, 2020, p. 617).

In addition, between 1951 and 1953, exhibitions introducing Turkey were organized abroad and in the United States, American academics were appointed to Ankara and Istanbul universities, conferences were held, and Turkish–American friendship agreements were concluded in order to promote Turkey internationally. With Turkey's inclusion in the Western bloc, its foreign relations with Soviet Russia were negatively affected (Sancaktar, 2010, p. 53). The developments in Turkish foreign policy during the DP's ten-year rule between 1950 and 1960 also shaped the political life within the country. The discourse of peace in the party program and the optimistic cooperation with Western states in foreign policy were indicative of the politics of the Adnan Menderes government. In 1951, Foreign Minister Köprülü declared that they were in alliance with the British and the French and referred to the United States as a "great friend." During the Cold War period, when the DP engaged in cooperation with Middle Eastern and Balkan countries, an examination of the party statute and government program shows that greater importance was attached to relations with Western states ("Fuad Köprülü's speech", 1950, May 26). However, the Menderes government sought solution methods for the events taking place in the Middle East in line with its own understanding (Matiç, 2023, p. 30). When the foundations of the foreign policy of Adnan Menderes and the DP government are evaluated in general terms, it is seen that the primary aim was to ensure national security by taking part in cooperation and benefiting from the economic support of the West (Gaddis, 2005, p. 33).

At the same time, it aimed to repel the expansionist threat of Soviet Russia and to counter communism during the Cold War. The Menderes government did not refrain from taking an active role in regional pacts and security cooperation. Moreover, with NATO membership, positive developments occurred in Turkey's Westernization identity. While Turkish foreign policy took shape within this framework during the DP period, efforts were made to pay attention to diplomatic and economic relations with the Middle East and the countries in the region. Policy approaches aimed at increasing Turkey's influence in the region were implemented (Yiğit, 2011, p. 101–102). Although the DP, which came to power with the elections held in 1950, sought to establish close relations with Middle Eastern countries in its foreign

policy, the monarchical regimes established by colonial powers France and Britain in countries such as Morocco, Egypt, Tunisia, and Algeria hindered the development of bilateral relations. In addition, the acceleration of Arab nationalism and independence movements that emerged during this period had an impact on diplomatic relations. With the bloc formation that emerged after the Second World War, the political rivalry between Soviet Russia and the United States accelerated (Akşin, 2011, p. 5–6). In this context, the United States took action to provide assistance to Turkey and adopted measures against Soviet Russia. Due to Turkey's pro-Western policy, the United States stated that its military aid to Turkey was provided not within the framework of the Marshall Aid but under the "Turkey and Greece Aid Program." This assistance generally stemmed from the Truman Doctrine (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1950, May 26).

2. The Baghdad Pact and the Turkey–Egypt Tension

The establishment of the Baghdad Pact—a regional defense organization founded in 1955 by the United Kingdom, Iraq, Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan—is viewed from two perspectives: the Suez Crisis and U.S. initiative (Ashton, 1993, p. 123). After the Second World War, Britain began to lose its former power in the Middle East with the spread of Arab nationalism. At the same time, in response to the expansionist policy of Soviet Russia in the region, Britain sought to establish a new line of defense in the Middle East. With the support of the United States, France, and Turkey, Britain attempted to implement new strategies against Soviet expansionism in the Middle East. However, the countries of the region did not view this initiative favorably, and Egypt in particular opposed it. Britain aimed to maintain its dominance in the region by concluding bilateral agreements with states such as Egypt and Iraq. The weakening of Britain's power in the Middle East led the United States to direct its foreign policy toward the region (Yeşilbursa, 2011, p. 88). Turkey's geographical location and its relations with the Western bloc made it an important actor in the Middle East. In this respect, Turkey's political activities in the region were followed with a certain distance by states such as Egypt and Syria, where Arab nationalism was influential (Yeşilbursa, 2011, p. 89).

In 1953, U.S. President Eisenhower and Dulles, who was appointed Secretary of State, envisaged the establishment of pacts within the framework of military alliances against the Soviet Union and China. In this direction, initiatives were launched for the establishment of the Baghdad Pact in order to ensure the security of the Middle East. Officials from the U.S. Department of State and the National Security Council embarked on an exploratory tour of Middle Eastern countries, including Turkey. U.S. authorities developed a firm view in favor of establishing a defense pact against the Soviet Union in the Middle East. In 1954, an agreement for friendship and security was signed between Pakistan and the United States. Following this agreement, Turkey and Pakistan issued a joint declaration on all matters based on the Friendship Treaty signed between them in 1951. The Baghdad Pact was a security alliance established in 1955 under the leadership of Turkey and Britain. This pact, whose members included Turkey, Iraq, Pakistan, Iran, and Britain, was also supported by the United States (Serbest, 2016, p. 403). Despite the positive political approaches of Middle Eastern states toward improving relations with Western countries, Egypt reacted strongly to this pact due to its close relations with Soviet Russia and its desire to lead the Arab countries, and it regarded the pact as an imperialist initiative. As Turkey took the lead in this pact, relations between the two countries gradually became strained. Undoubtedly, the pro-Western political stance of Turkey during the Republican period and historical roles also had an effect on the emergence of this situation (Aydm, 2020, p. 140). Moreover, the sincere relations that

began with Prime Minister Menderes's speech in the Iraqi parliament in January 1955 strengthened the foundations of the pact ("Adnan Menderes' speeches", 1955, January 13). The rapprochement between Turkey and Iraq led Egypt to move closer to countries such as Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Lebanon in the Middle East.

The Baghdad Pact, signed between Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Pakistan, became more than an initiative aimed at breaking the Soviet Russian encirclement over the countries of the region. It also paved the way for Turkey to receive substantial military and economic aid from the United States. In fact, Prime Minister Menderes paid important visits to Arab states for the formation of this pact. In October 1955, in response to the regional leadership that Turkey, supported by the West, sought to establish through this alliance, Egypt demonstrated its opposition by concluding a military agreement with Syria (Serbest, 2016, p. 413). Displaying a negative attitude toward the Baghdad Pact, Egypt regarded Israel's rapprochement with the pact as a threat to itself and conveyed this concern to other Arab states. With the establishment of the Baghdad Pact in 1955, Turkey experienced problems with many Middle Eastern countries, as it did with Egypt. During the DP period, the rapprochement of Soviet Russia, particularly with Egypt and Syria, posed a threat to Turkey's border security. These countries, which received military and economic aid from the Eastern bloc, initially did not perceive the Soviets as a threat. They argued that the real threat was Western colonialism. In this context, Abdel Nasser stated that the West was playing a game over Middle Eastern territories through the Baghdad Pact and adopted a negative political stance toward Turkey. The pact also increased the tension between Iraq and Egypt, which were in competition for influence in the Arab world (Çelik, 2019, p. 482).

In the rivalry between Iraq and Egypt, Turkey's rapprochement with Iraq led Egypt to distance itself politically. Nasser's harsh stance against the pact stemmed from his view that it was established with the intention of continuing Western imperialism in the region. He argued that the Soviet threat was not effective over the Arabs and therefore that the pact was not meaningful. Pro-Western Lebanon and Jordan were unable to join the pact due to the discourse of the Egyptian government. Saudi Arabia also refrained from approaching the pact, considering that it might pose a threat to its own monarchy. Syria did not take part in the pact due to its close relations with Soviet Russia and its disagreement with Turkey over the Hatay issue. In opposition to the Baghdad Pact, a new alliance was formed in 1956 under the leadership of Egypt through a military-political agreement signed between Egypt, Syria, Yemen, and Saudi Arabia. Jordan and Lebanon, however, joined neither the Baghdad Pact nor this newly formed alliance (Kemiksiz, 2019, p. 185). The Baghdad Pact, which held an important place in the DP's foreign policy, led Arab states—especially Egypt and Syria—to establish closer ties with the Soviets, contrary to its original purpose. As a result of these developments, the Baghdad Pact further deepened the disagreements between Turkey and Egypt. The struggle for regional leadership between the two countries caused the deterioration of relations between them (Yeşilbursa, 2011, p. 92).

3. The Suez Crisis and Turkey's Attitude

The emergence of two superpowers after the Second World War affected the diplomatic relations between countries. The political silence of the United States came to an end during this period, and it initiated an active struggle against the Soviets. Although the DP government sought to establish close relations with Middle Eastern countries in its foreign policy, the prevailing conditions led it to pursue a pro-Western policy (Karakoç and Kesin, 2022, p. 60). In response to Turkey's pro-Western stance,

Egypt formed an alliance with Soviet Russia. Turkey closely followed the Suez Canal crisis. At the beginning of its relations with Egypt, Turkey adhered to the reports prepared by the Cairo Embassy and its staff concerning the history, economy, and political structure of the canal (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1950, February 14). This adherence continued during the period of crisis Doctrine ("Fuad Köprülü's speech", 1950, May 26). Egyptian Prime Minister Nasser's decision to nationalize the Suez Canal prompted Britain and France to take action. Following the tensions with Israel, Egypt's nationalist rhetoric regarding the canal ran counter to the interests of the two Western powers (Bowie, 1974, p. 43). Through the Eisenhower Doctrine, the United States sought to bring Egypt over to its side, but this effort also failed. In particular, during the Suez Crisis, the United States sought to distance Egypt from the Soviet Union by demanding that Britain, France, and Israel withdraw from the canal (Hart, 2011, p. 158).

While political tensions in the Middle East continued, Egypt sought to increase its influence in the region in 1955 by receiving arms assistance from the Soviets. Since coming to power, Nasser had undertaken significant political initiatives to make Egypt a regional center of power. Nasser's accusations that Western countries were pursuing imperialist ambitions led to a new crisis. The declaration by Egyptian leader Abdel Nasser that he had nationalized the Suez Canal resulted in military intervention by Britain, France, and Israel. Although Turkey initially adopted a pro-Western stance, it later pursued a more neutral policy (Hart, 2011, p. 160). Egypt accused Turkey of cooperating with Western imperialism, and the already strained diplomatic relations between the two countries became even more tense during this process. Although Turkey did not directly engage in military intervention during the crisis, it maintained a distant attitude toward Egypt in order to preserve its position within NATO and the Western bloc (Karakoç and Kesin, 2022, p. 61).

The latest developments in the Suez crisis caused concern for Egypt and its opponents, and in this regard Britain established contacts with many Western states. The Turkish Embassy in Ottawa, Canada, closely followed every stage of this crisis ("Adnan Menderes' speech on the Suez Canal", 1956, August 1). According to the embassy's statement, Britain neither sought the opinion of the Canadian government regarding the Suez Canal crisis nor invited it to the meetings held in London. Moreover, Sir Anthony Eden, the former British Foreign Secretary and leader of the House of Commons, undermined Egypt's territorial integrity through proposed tripartite agreement projects. In this context, the Suez crisis inevitably escalated and turned into an armed conflict ("Eden", 1956, November 1). As the crisis deepened, the Lebanese government began sending notifications to law enforcement forces in order to ensure the security of certain neighborhoods and transit points ("The United Kingdom grants autonomy", 1956, December 5). The Suez Canal crisis was not only a matter concerning Egypt and its surroundings but became an issue on the agenda of world public opinion. Some news reports were published in Sweden regarding this crisis of global concern. Among these reports, it was stated that, within the framework of the American plan concerning the Suez crisis, Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Pakistan intervened in certain decisions and made revisions, and that some decisions were taken at the conference (Finer, 1964, p. 334).

Although Turkey cooperated with the United States, it undertook the role of a bridge between Western and Eastern societies and made considerable efforts to resolve the crisis. Sweden and the Scandinavian countries stated that their decisions on this matter were in line with those of the Western states. On the other hand, Sweden evaluated the resolution of the canal crisis more from an economic perspective

rather than from a military one (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1956, November 1). Nasser's nationalization of the British and French company operating the Suez Canal led to the emergence of an international crisis (Kılıoğlu, 2021, p. 734). Egypt's decision to implement this measure prompted Britain and France to take action (Karakoç and Kesin, 2022, p. 63). At the same time, Nasser sent a telegram to Sri Lankan Prime Minister Bandaranaike, requesting negotiations through the organization of an initiative to resolve the canal crisis. In this way, Nasser sought support from Muslim countries outside the Arab World (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1956, September 14). Western countries, on the one hand, attempted to prevent the Soviets from turning the situation to their advantage and, on the other hand, made significant efforts to draw Egypt into the Western bloc. Because Egypt had the right to use its own resources under its agreement with Britain, the United States did not exert pressure on Nasser (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1956, August 21). Consequently, this situation led the USSR to provide greater support to Egypt. Meanwhile, Turkey, which sought to maintain a balance in its relations with Egypt, was compelled to fulfill the requirements of the cooperation to which it belonged during the Suez crisis (Finer, 1964, p. 340).

The Cairo Embassy reported the translation of the speech delivered by Gamal Abdel Nasser at the "Liberation Union" meeting on 21 August. In this speech, Nasser stated that communists and Zionists were attempting to occupy Egyptian territory through the canal. Emphasizing that he was struggling to maintain order within the country, Nasser also expressed that Middle Eastern and North African countries were facing the danger posed by Britain (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1956, August 22). He underlined that Turkey's stance on this issue was important, but also emphasized the possibility that Turkey itself could be occupied at any moment. He stated that the country most likely to occupy Turkey would be Russia and argued that, although it was claimed that the Muslim Brotherhood revolution had been carried out to prevent the crisis in the canal, this did not reflect the truth. In this context, Abdel Nasser criticized Turkey's pro-Western policy. He also declared that the opposition within his country resorted to various political maneuvers in order to come to power (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1953, August 28).

It became evident that the British withdrawal from the canal was conditional and would take place within the framework of certain terms. In the face of this situation, Turkey's neutrality was one of the points criticized by Egyptian Prime Minister Abdel Nasser. In his speech concerning the evacuation of the canal by the British, Nasser referred to Turkey's neutrality and made statements on this issue. He emphasized that military occupations and territorial violations could also be directed toward Turkey. Nasser further stated that, in order to seize control of the Mediterranean with the aim of dominating North Africa and Southern Europe, all states would march against Egypt (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1957, January 21). He added that, due to Turkey's strategic position, neutrality was meaningless and that Turkey itself was close to the possibility of armed conflict. Gamal Abdel Nasser also declared in his statement that the British evacuation of the canal and the seven-year guarantee did not reflect the truth (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1953, August 16). Following this statement, Anadolu Agency posed a question to Prime Minister Adnan Menderes. Menderes responded that Nasser's statement was not friendly, either for his own country or for Turkey, and that Turkey's position, in accordance with the requirements of the era, was welcomed by world public opinion. In his statement, Menderes also expressed that Russia would not attack Turkey unless there was a world war. On this basis, he described the alleged threat to Egypt as unfounded (Statements by our Prime Minister Adnan Menderes, 1954, August 24). Egyptian Prime Minister Gamal Abdel Nasser, for his part, stated that this chaotic situation

stemmed from the 400-year Turkish rule over Egypt. Arguing that an alliance between Turkey and Britain would not be possible, Nasser declared at the “Liberation Union” conference that the British would return to their former bases in the canal. It was also noted that the tension between Turkey and Egypt during the Suez Canal crisis had historical roots (Resentment toward Turkey in Egypt, 1954, August 23). Nasser’s insistence on nationalizing the Suez Canal led to military intervention by Britain, France, and Israel. As a NATO member, Turkey acted cautiously regarding the military intervention and emphasized that it should be proportionate. Before and during the crisis, Turkey and Egypt pursued distinct foreign policies from one another (Gençoğlu, 2024, p. 222). Adnan Menderes sought to meet with Gamal Abdel Nasser in Libya. However, Nasser declined to meet (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1954, April 3).

At the beginning of the Suez crisis, Britain and France formed an alliance and applied to the United Nations Security Council. During this period, Israel, which was concerned about the rise of Arab nationalism that had begun in Egypt and later spread to the Middle East and Africa, sided with France and Britain. A secret military agreement was signed between Britain, France, and Israel, declaring that they would act jointly against Egypt and any countries that would support it. In response to the de facto interventions of Britain and France, the USSR reacted harshly, aiming to maintain the balance among the countries of the region (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1950, June 5). Meanwhile, Turkey did not show willingness to intervene against Egypt and made statements emphasizing that the use of military force should be proportionate. With the onset of the attacks, U.S. President Eisenhower called on the Britain–France–Israel alliance to end the military intervention. Eisenhower also announced that economic sanctions would be imposed if the tripartite alliance did not halt the intervention. Following this call by the U.S. President and the United Nations’ demand for a ceasefire, Britain accepted the ceasefire. France accepted it on 6 November 1956 and Israel on 7 November 1956, thereby ending the military attacks. Subsequently, the military forces of the tripartite alliance withdrew from the region and handed control over to the UN forces (Bekar, 2023, p. 80).

The resolution of the Suez crisis in Egypt’s favor increased Nasser’s prestige in the Arab world. In the resolution of this international issue, Turkey displayed a moderate and friendly attitude toward Egypt. However, relations between the two countries could not be brought to the desired level. Defending the preservation of the status of the Suez Canal, Menderes stated that the canal should remain not national but international in character. He supported the nationalization of the canal within the framework of U.S. policy (“Adnan Menderes’ speech on the Suez Canal”, 1956, August 1). The effective policies pursued by the United States and the USSR during this crisis also demonstrated that Britain and France no longer had dominance over the region. Thus, during the Cold War period, the United States and the USSR became the two actors shaping world politics, and Turkey–Egypt relations were also formed within this environment (Gençoğlu, 2024, p. 223). In the Suez Canal issue, which affected Turkey–Egypt relations, Turkey’s position was not clear at the beginning, and this was misrepresented to the public. The interventions made by the United States against the military attacks influenced Turkey’s approach, leading it to adopt a stance against military intervention. The fact that the United States assumed the role of guarantor in the canal issue and Turkey’s change of stance demonstrated that this was more significant than the British–French alliance in the region. In particular, U.S. economic aid played an important role in clarifying the situation (Bekar, 2023, p. 81).

Turkey–Egypt relations continued in an unstable manner until the end of the DP government in 1960.

Although Turkey pursued a policy in favor of Egypt in the canal issue, this was not perceived as such by Nasser and his government. While Nasser gained prestige in the Arab world on this issue, the actions of Turkey under the leadership of Menderes did not evolve into an effective political stance. Turkey's commitment to the Western bloc continued (Kıllıoğlu, 2021, p. 738). Britain's aggressive stance during the Suez Crisis placed Turkey—along with the other Arab member states of the Baghdad Pact—in a difficult position. The influence of the Baghdad Pact in world politics diminished. In the subsequent period, the Pact operated beyond its founding purpose, eventually dissolving and being renamed CENTO. Israel's cooperation with Britain and France during the crisis endangered regional peace, and Israel emerged as a new threat for the Arab world and the Middle East (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1954, October 4).

Arab countries, particularly Egypt, increased their pressure on Iraq, a member of the Baghdad Pact, which in turn negatively affected Turkey–Iraq relations. Moreover, Israel's being perceived as standing on the same side as Turkey in the Canal Issue led to political actions against Turkey in the Arab Middle East. Undoubtedly, this crisis gradually increased the USSR's influence over the countries of the region (Kemiksiz, 2019, p.189). In response to this situation, U.S. President Eisenhower took new political steps to limit the USSR's influence over Middle Eastern countries and to retain the countries within the Western bloc (Kemiksiz, 2019, p. 190). In a speech delivered in Alexandria on the first anniversary of the nationalization of the Suez Canal, Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser addressed the harsh reactions coming from the Jordanian and Lebanese fronts. In his speech, he stated that in nationalizing the canal he had not only considered Egypt's interests but had acted on behalf of the entire Arab world. He criticized certain Arab dynasties that had aligned themselves with the British through the canal crisis. Nasser's criticisms were not limited to Arab dynasties. He also addressed the positions of Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon on this issue (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1957, January 26).

4. The Eisenhower Doctrine and the Turkey-Egypt Rivalry

During the Cold War, the United States began to place greater emphasis on stability and security in the Middle East and supported the alliances that were formed. The Eisenhower Doctrine emerged in the wake of the Suez Crisis. It was directed against Israel in response to the strengthening of Egypt under Gamal Abdel Nasser, which was opposing French and British cooperation. The Eisenhower Doctrine was introduced to avoid the use of force against Egypt and to provide various forms of political and economic support aimed at curbing the influence of the Soviet Union (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1956, August 31). The primary purpose of this support was not only to prevent the Soviet Union from becoming involved in the war on Egypt's behalf but also to ensure that Western interests in North Africa and the Middle East were not undermined (Hahn, 2006, p. 39). In short, the decline in regional security and Britain's prestige in the region, coupled with growing interest in the Soviet Union, led to the emergence of the Eisenhower Doctrine. After the Second World War, the world political map underwent a profound transformation with the weakening of colonial powers such as Britain and France. This situation created a power vacuum, particularly in the strategically significant Middle East and certain parts of Africa. Emerging as the victors of the Second World War, the United States and the USSR extended their political and geopolitical struggles across the globe, laying the foundations of a new bipolar world order (Çetinkaya, 2019, p. 7).

During this period, known as the Cold War, regional conflicts and alliances turned the Middle East into

a field of competition. The strategic location of the region, the presence of oil reserves, and the existing power vacuum attracted the attention of the new world order. As a result of these developments, the Middle East became one of the important regions for the United States, which played an active role in global politics. In order to ensure peace in the Middle East and to support economic development, the Eisenhower Doctrine was proclaimed, and congresses were held at certain intervals (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1957, November 27). The Eisenhower Doctrine was an important policy introduced by American statesmen ten years after the Truman Doctrine of 1947, again in response to the expansionist policies of the Soviet Union. The Eisenhower Doctrine emerged as a measure against the rise of Arab nationalism following the Suez Crisis and against Soviet expansionism in the Middle East. The declaration of the Truman Doctrine had been the first step toward containing Soviet expansionism. Eisenhower, in contrast, aimed to apply this policy specifically to the Middle East and to provide financial support. Both doctrines redefined the global responsibilities and interests of the United States and shaped the course of American foreign policy throughout the Cold War. At the same time, they influenced the foreign policies of many countries that formed alliances with the United States. As a NATO member, Turkey also pursued a pro-American foreign policy throughout the Democrat Party (DP) period (Çakmak, 2005, p. 77). Consequently, while supporting the Eisenhower Doctrine, Turkey once again found itself in opposition to Egypt. The political differences between Turkey and Egypt deepened further during this period, and relations entered a colder phase (Güzel, 2021, p. 478).

Vladimir Topentcharov, a correspondent for the newspaper *Otetchestven Front*, conducted an interview with Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser on issues including Egypt's economic situation, colonialism, Arab unity, the Eisenhower Doctrine, and the Canal question (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1958, January 13). Nasser acted with the idea of "Egyptianization" (nationalization) in both economic and political spheres. In this context, he viewed the Eisenhower Plan as a Western attempt to divide the Arab states, Arab unity, and Egypt. He opposed this doctrine and did not take part in it. Moreover, Nasser stated that he did not agree with the Western argument of a "Soviet threat," expressing that Egypt did not perceive such a threat. He also emphasized that Egypt would not come under the tutelage of a foreign power and would not accept economic assistance (Interview by correspondent Vladimir Topentcharov with Egyptian President Gamal, 1957, February 2). During the Second World War and the subsequent Cold War period, not only Turkey but also Arab states such as Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan were seeking alliances in which they could feel secure. In particular, the worsening global political conditions and the experience of economic difficulties brought about certain regional conflicts. When Turkey–Egypt relations are evaluated within this period, it is quite natural that they followed a fluctuating course. Egypt, under the leadership of Abdel Nasser, sought to assume a leadership role over the Arab states and the Middle East, which brought Egypt into confrontation with many countries, including Turkey (Çetinkaya, 2019, p. 8).

The doctrine was not merely an attempt to fill the authority vacuum left by the declining influence of Britain and France in the Middle East and among Arab countries. It also intensified the rivalry between Turkey, which was seeking security in the region under the leadership of the Western bloc, and Egypt. In order to obtain economic assistance, Prime Minister Menderes integrated the country into U.S. policies (Çoşkun, 2017, p. 30). The most concrete event demonstrating the extent of tension in Turkey's relations with Middle Eastern countries was the Syrian crisis. As an ally of the United States, Turkey was accused of aggression by Egypt, Syria, and the USSR. During this crisis, states such as Saudi Arabia and Jordan acted as mediators. President Eisenhower did not view favorably any possible Turkish

military action against Syria (Mertek, 2017, p. 219). In this crisis, Egypt sided with Syria against Turkey. The alliance between Egypt and Syria led to the foundation of the United Arab Republic in 1958. Turkey conveyed to world public opinion, through statements made by the then Foreign Minister Fatin Rüştü Zorlu, that it would welcome the establishment of such a federation and the withdrawal of the USSR from the Middle East (Küçükvatan, 2011, p. 107). Following the unification of Egypt and Syria, the embassy of the United Arab Republic in Ankara sent an official letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs requesting the recognition of its flag. In this cover letter, the official description of the flag was provided, and Turkey's recognition was requested (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1958, January 6). Regarding the establishment of the United Arab Republic, Gamal Abdel Nasser, in an interview with a correspondent of the Lebanese newspaper *Al-Kifah*, stated that this unity was important for world peace. Another question posed by the journalist concerned the possible participation of Iraq in this union. In response, Nasser expressed his hope that Iraq would join the union if it renounced its agreements with Britain. He also emphasized that the Iraqi people should take part in this union and underlined that the Baghdad Pact constituted a threat to the Iraqi people. He further stated that, as in the Israeli attack of 1956, he would intervene against the provocations of all imperialists from the Euphrates to the Nile and struggle against this system of exploitation. He emphasized that he was working for Egypt's prosperity and that the Egyptian army was always ready (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1958, January 13). Abdel Nasser did not speak only about unity but also provided insights into the future of the Middle East. At the same time, Egypt's attitude toward Turkey clearly demonstrated that the differences in political approaches between the two states in the Middle East were not resolved by the Eisenhower Doctrine. During this period, Egypt became a political, economic, and social rival to Turkey.

5. The Cyprus Question and Egypt's Attitude

Cyprus, which had remained under Ottoman rule for four centuries, was occupied by Britain during the First World War (Derman and Kurban, 2016, p. 456). Following the British occupation, significant changes occurred in the island's demographic structure as a result of Greek Cypriot migration from Greece and Egypt. Since the administration of Cyprus was in British hands, Greeks living in Egypt and Greece migrated to the island and obtained citizenship. Some Turks who remained in Cyprus, however, did not accept British rule and migrated to Anatolia. The defeat of the Ottoman Empire in the First World War mobilized Greece and the Greek Cypriots on the island, and the idea of Enosis gained further strength. After the national independence struggle in Anatolia ended in victory and the Treaty of Lausanne was signed, Cyprus came to occupy an important place in Turkish foreign policy (Çakmak, 2010, p. 206). In the Cyprus issue, the Turks on the island struggled against what they perceived as the selfishness of the Greek Cypriots. They argued that the island had long been a Turkish homeland and would remain so. In this context, the transfer of sovereignty of the island to Turkey was considered to be of great importance (A British newspaper rants, 1957, September 17). President Makarios of Cyprus met with the Secretary-General of the United Nations to discuss the issue. During this period, Greece submitted a note to Britain, France, and Russia demanding that full sovereignty over the island be granted to itself. However, Britain, primarily due to changes in its Middle East policy, opposed this demand (Makarios met with the UN Secretary-General yesterday, 1957, September 18). Having moved away from its pro-Greek policy, Britain did not accept Greece's proposal. From 1923 to the late 1950s, the Cyprus issue gradually intensified between Turkey and Greece, and during this process Egypt supported Greece. This situation negatively affected relations between Turkey and Egypt (Derman and Kurban, 2016, p. 456). The British Foreign Secretary met with the Greek and Turkish ambassadors and

stated that constitutional arrangements had been made in Cyprus for the welfare of the people (The United Kingdom grants autonomy to Cyprus, 1956, December 5). Between 1954 and 1958, Greece submitted multiple petitions to the United Nations demanding that Cyprus become an independent state. In response, Greece sought to undermine Turkey's influence over Cyprus and aligned itself closely with Egypt in Turkish-Egyptian relations (Rosenbaum, 1970, p. 611).

Turkey's participation in the Baghdad Pact, its membership in NATO, and its pro-U.S. foreign policy in line with its own interests against Soviet expansionism—as seen during the Suez Canal crisis—provoked reactions from countries in the region, particularly Egypt. During the DP government, Turkey maintained the same political stance in the Cyprus issue. The fact that Turkey and Britain were in the same bloc on the Cyprus question led Egypt, as in other matters, to adopt an anti-Turkey policy. In an interview with Greek radio, Egyptian Prime Minister Gamal Abdel Nasser expressed anti-Turkey views regarding the Cyprus issue. He emphasized that the rights of the Greek Cypriots living on the island should be taken into consideration (Rountree, 1958, December 18).

Nasser also suggested that United Nations and Bandung decisions should be implemented in resolving the issue (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1956, October 15). Initially, Turkey had considered the Cyprus issue as an internal matter of Britain and had even taken part alongside Greece in the 1934 Balkan Pact. However, during the DP period, due to attacks against the Turkish population on the island, Cyprus rose to the top of the agenda in Turkish foreign policy (Ayata and Ercan, 2008, p. 22). Differences of opinion emerged between the United States and Turkey regarding the Cyprus problem. Although Turkey supported U.S. foreign policy between 1950 and 1960, significant disagreements arose between the two sides on the Cyprus issue.

The United States, which held views different from Turkey regarding the protection of the rights of the Turkish population on the island, pursued a pro-Greek and pro-Greek Cypriot policy. During and after the Cyprus issue, Turkish-American relations were adversely affected (Çakmak, 2005, s.80). The disagreements between the United States and Turkey during the island crisis also influenced Egypt's adoption of a pro-Greek stance on the matter. The tension with Greece further demonstrated that the Balkan Pact had lost its functionality. In resolving this issue, Turkey did not receive the expected support from the United States against the Eastern Bloc, which in turn ignited the spark of future disagreements (Çoşkun, 2017, p. 27–28). While Turkey's primary counterparts in the Cyprus issue were Britain and Greece, Egypt—despite having no direct involvement in the matter—decided to support Greece. In international crises, Egypt continued to pursue an anti-Turkey policy under the claim of regional leadership (Statements by M. Cassimatis on the Cyprus issue, 1956, March 22). At the same time, Greece drew closer to Egypt, which was experiencing tense relations with Britain due to disagreements over Cyprus. Undoubtedly, Cyprus was among the most significant crises of this period (Sevinç, 2017, p. 190). It is evident that Nasser was regionally disturbed by the influence of Turkey and Britain and sought to build a new bloc consisting of Arab states and countries with Mediterranean coastlines (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1956, February 29).

Greek Prime Minister Karamanlis visited Cairo and held talks with Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser regarding the Middle East and the Cyprus issue. Through his stance on Cyprus, Nasser established close contact with Greece and pursued policies against Turkey. With the Greek-Egyptian rapprochement, discussions of a possible alliance between the two states emerged. Egypt's and Nasser's

position was interpreted as a move directed against Turkey (Interview of Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser, 1957, March 12). In contrast, supporters of the Baghdad Pact, of which Turkey was a member, adopted a stance in favor of Turkey on this issue. In particular, the Prime Minister of Pakistan made statements in support of Turkey during meetings. The fact that Middle Eastern countries sided with Turkey in this matter prompted Egypt to seek its own alliances. In this context, Egypt began to establish diplomatic relations with Greece, which was positioned against Turkey in the dispute (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1956, August 31). During the same period, the Baghdad Pact supported Pakistan on the Kashmir issue and Turkey on the Cyprus issue. Britain, on the other hand, emphasized that the Middle Eastern crisis influenced the Cyprus issue and supported the implementation of new constitutional arrangements on the island. Britain's stance aimed to maintain a balance between Turkey and Greece. British and French troops stationed in Cyprus acted with particular sensitivity in this regard (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1956, August 31).

The Turkish Ambassador to Beirut held a meeting with the President of Lebanon regarding both the Cyprus issue and the Suez Crisis. During this meeting, the Lebanese President stated that the Cyprus question was being framed by Greece as a continuation of historical grievances. He called on Arab states to support Turkey in this matter and emphasized that intervention was necessary to prevent Greek efforts to annex the island. He also argued that Egypt should adopt the same stance on this issue (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1957, January 26). Prime Minister Adnan Menderes made several statements concerning the Cyprus issue, rejecting the plans prepared by Britain. Menderes declared that Turkey opposed any plan or project that did not align with the sovereignty rights of both Turkey and the Turkish population on the island. He also defended the position of the Baghdad Pact against Britain in this matter and criticized Egypt's stance on Cyprus. Menderes's firm statements regarding Cyprus sent a clear message not only to Britain but also to Egypt and other states involved (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1956, July 4). Meanwhile, the Turkish Ambassador in Cairo met with the Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs to discuss the Cyprus issue. During the meeting, the Egyptian government stated that, as in the case of Palestine, it attached great importance to this matter. The Foreign Minister noted that the Greeks had been attempting for a year to engage Arab states in bringing the Cyprus issue to the agenda, but that Egypt had refrained from supporting such initiatives. The Egyptian government emphasized its commitment to the principle of "self-determination." However, the ambassador reported that these statements did not reflect the reality of the situation and relayed intelligence suggesting that Egypt had requested permission to land in Athens due to the limited range of aircraft it had recently acquired from Czechoslovakia. In this context, he concluded that Egypt was not acting sincerely regarding the Cyprus issue and was pursuing an anti-Turkey stance (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1956, October 16).

Conclusion

Adnan Menderes's policies between 1950 and 1960 left a complex legacy in Turkey's process of modernization and democratization. On the one hand, he is regarded as a leader who reflected the will of the people at the ballot box, took significant steps toward economic development and social welfare, and provided a degree of relaxation in religious and cultural life. On the other hand, he was criticized for the increasingly authoritarian practices toward the end of his rule, economic mismanagement, and the escalation of political tensions. Between 1950 and 1960, relations between Turkey and Egypt experienced major fluctuations due to Turkey's policy of being caught between the Western and Arab worlds. Menderes's pro-Western policies clashed with Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel Nasser's Arab

nationalism, and during this period Turkish–Egyptian relations entered a cold phase. Developments such as the Baghdad Pact, the Suez Crisis, and the Eisenhower Doctrine were key factors shaping the course of relations between the two countries. During the Menderes era, tensions generally dominated relations with Egypt, and even a form of rivalry emerged between the two states. Even before the Democrat Party (DP) and Adnan Menderes came to power, they followed a foreign policy similar to that which they had criticized the Republican People’s Party for, maintaining limited engagement with Middle Eastern and Arab countries. Menderes’s preference for a pro-Western foreign policy brought Turkey into confrontation with the Egyptian government, which was advancing toward leadership in the Middle East. Moreover, by participating in regional pacts aimed at preventing Soviet expansionism and ensuring national border security, DP-led Turkey became a Western foothold in the Middle East.

During the 1950–1960 period, the DP acted as a bridge between the Eastern and Western blocs. Although it aligned with the Western bloc, it paid attention to the principle of national independence. In this period, Turkey was compelled to take part, directly or indirectly, in several major developments. The Suez Canal Crisis of 1956 between Britain, France, Israel, and Egypt is a notable example. Despite being in the same alliance as Britain and France due to its NATO membership, Turkey did not support military action against Egyptian territory. However, this stance was misunderstood by Egypt and the Nasser government. Throughout this period, the DP maintained intensive bilateral relations in foreign policy, and Adnan Menderes acted as an active politician and statesman in Turkey’s diplomatic affairs, securing an important place in Turkish political history. His increasingly authoritarian approach in foreign policy was reflected in domestic politics as well and was gradually criticized by the opposition. This attitude ultimately contributed to the end of Menderes and the DP government. During this period, the DP demonstrated a determined political stance in the country’s foreign policy and effectively benefited from the financial support of the United States. Moreover, within the new world order that emerged during the Cold War, it secured an important military ally for the country. Against Soviet expansionism and Egypt’s growing dominance in the Middle East, Turkey relied on the political and economic power of the Western bloc, particularly that of the United States. Under the conditions of the Cold War, Adnan Menderes’s alignment of Turkey with the Western bloc in foreign policy and its membership in NATO strengthened the country’s international position. The increasing importance given to regional pacts, and Turkey’s leadership in the establishment of some of them, contributed to the maintenance of global peace. However, the one-sided foreign policy pursued by the DP and Adnan Menderes led to limited relations with neighboring Arab states and, in particular, with Egypt, with which Turkey was in intense political rivalry during this period. At a time when Arab nationalism was gaining prominence, this situation negatively affected Turkey’s influence in the Middle Eastern geography. Seeking to take advantage of this situation, Egypt consistently pursued policies against Turkey whenever possible. With Turkey’s leadership in the establishment of the Baghdad Pact, Turkish–Egyptian relations became increasingly tense, and this tension continued until the end of the DP government. Believing that the pact would weaken its leadership in the Middle East, Egypt entered into a political struggle with Turkey at the level of leadership. Adnan Menderes’s foreign visits enabled him to engage with allies without compromising the country’s independence. The years 1950–1960, an important turning point in Turkey’s political history, came to be known as the Menderes era. In the Cyprus issue that emerged between Turkey and Greece in 1955, Egypt adopted a stance against Turkey, which further strained relations between the two countries. Egypt’s position during the Suez Canal crisis and its stance on the Cyprus issue once again brought Menderes and Nasser into confrontation. In 1957, within the framework of the economic support programs initiated by U.S. President Eisenhower, Turkey and Egypt found themselves in competition with one another.

Turkish–Egyptian relations went down in history as more than a simple bilateral dispute. They became a micro-level reflection of the Cold War dynamics in the Middle East. Between 1950 and 1960, Turkey sought its security within Western-centered alliances such as NATO and the Baghdad Pact, projecting the profile of a “status quo” power in the region. In contrast, Egypt under Nasser emerged as a “revisionist” actor, aiming to dismantle the colonial order and Western influence through the principles of Pan-Arabism and “Positive Neutrality.” The clash of these two distinct visions affected not only diplomatic relations but also the historical ties between the two countries. While Egypt labeled Turkey’s policies as an extension of Western imperialism, Turkey characterized Egypt as a source that paved the way for Soviet expansionism. The Turkish foreign policy of 1950–1960 represents an important turning point due to its active yet Western-oriented character. The rise of Arab nationalism during this period compelled Turkey to pursue a more balanced policy toward the Middle East.

The Adnan Menderes era can be viewed as a period marked by profound transformations in both Turkey’s domestic political structure and its foreign policy orientations. With the Democratic Party’s rise to power during this period, state-society relations were reshaped, and the economic development model shifted toward a more liberal approach. Among the most notable foreign policy initiatives of the Menderes administration was a rapprochement with the West. The period of World War II and the subsequent Cold War era also brought about long-term economic imbalances and external debt problems. Between 1950 and 1960, Turkey’s struggle to integrate more fully into the Western bloc during the Cold War period formed the core strategic orientation of the Menderes administration’s foreign policy. During this period, Turkey’s NATO membership and the close ties it established with the United States were decisive factors in shaping the country’s security policies. In this context, Turkey was positioned as one of the West’s forward outposts in the Middle East and North Africa against the Soviet threat. This situation made it difficult for Turkey to act fully independently in foreign policy and led it to align with Western policies on certain regional issues. Turkey-Egypt relations were shaped within this context. The main trajectory of the diplomatic struggle between Menderes and Nasser during the 1950s and 1960s unfolded within the boundaries drawn by the East-West blocs that emerged during the Cold War.

Middle East policy, meanwhile, is one of the most notable aspects of the DP and Menderes era. While maintaining its alliance with the West, Turkey sought to balance its relations with countries in the region. Initiatives such as the Sadabat and Baghdad Pacts were indicative of Turkey’s desire to play an active role in the regional security architecture. However, such initiatives were viewed by some Arab countries and Egypt as an extension of the West. This situation has at times negatively affected Turkey’s image in the region. On the other hand, the Suez Crisis was a significant turning point that clearly revealed Turkey’s foreign policy preferences. Turkey’s pro-Western stance during this crisis clearly reflected the country’s strategic preferences. It led to certain tensions in relations with Egypt under the leadership of Gamal Abdel Nasser. Although the policy Turkey pursued during this period was essentially a search for a multi-dimensional balance, this proved to be largely unattainable.

In conclusion, Menderes played a significant role in both Turkish history and Turkish foreign policy. The pro-Western orientation pursued by the DP and Menderes between 1950 and 1960 was met with disapproval in Muslim and Middle Eastern countries. The clearest example of this was the nature of Turkish–Egyptian relations during the DP era. As Turkey turned its direction toward the West, it followed a largely one-sided policy and failed to give sufficient attention to its relations with Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries. Adnan Menderes’s influence and role in the foreign policy

developments of this period were considerable. Over time, however, his increasingly authoritarian stance in domestic politics led to criticism and ultimately contributed to the end of the DP government. The Adnan Menderes era marked a significant turning point in Turkey's modernization process. While the economic and political reforms implemented during this period made significant contributions to Turkey's development, the structural problems and political tensions created by these policies have had long-term consequences. Menderes's efforts toward integration with the West, on the one hand, and the dynamics of the democratization process, on the other, have brought Turkey's domestic and foreign policy dynamics to a critical turning point.

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