



A Mediterranean Duel:

Erdogan, Sisi and the Fate of Egyptian-Turkish Relations

TURKEY PROGRAMME

Nicholas DANFORTH

Non-Resident Senior Research Fellow



January 2021
Policy Paper #53/2021

A Mediterranean Duel: Erdogan, Sisi and the Fate of Egyptian-Turkish Relations

Copyright © 2021 | All Rights Reserved
HELLENIC FOUNDATION FOR EUROPEAN & FOREIGN POLICY (ELIAMEP)
49 Vasilissis Sofias Ave., 10676, Athens, Greece
Tel.: +30 210 7257 110 | Fax: +30 210 7257 114 | www.eliamep.gr | eliamep@eliamep.gr

ELIAMEP offers a forum for debate on international and European issues. Its non-partisan character supports the right to free and well-documented discourse. ELIAMEP publications aim to contribute to scholarly knowledge and to provide policy relevant analyses. As such, they solely represent the views of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the Foundation.

Nicholas DANFORTH
Non-Resident Senior Research Fellow

Summary

- Egyptian-Turkish tensions emerged from the ideological conflict between Erdogan and Sisi but have now become enmeshed in broader regional dynamics.
- Libya remains a flashpoint even as both countries have sought to avoid direct military confrontation.
- Current efforts at rapprochement might lower the temperature of Egyptian-Turkish relations but are unlikely to overcome the deeper sources of disagreement.
- The complexity of Turkey and Egypt's intertwined history defies contemporary efforts to politicize it.

Introduction

“The depth of the differences between Egypt and Turkey will make real rapprochement difficult so long as both Erdogan and Sisi remain in power.”

The ongoing tensions between Egypt and Turkey offer a revealing illustration of how the principles and pathologies of Turkish foreign policy under President Recep Tayyip Erdogan are playing out across the region. The gradual personalization of policymaking within Erdogan’s palace is perhaps most clearly seen in the confrontational attitude Ankara has taken toward Cairo since Abdel Fattah el-Sisi came to power in a military coup in July 2013. Repeatedly denouncing Sisi as a dictator and putschist, Erdogan has thrown his support behind Egypt’s ousted and now persecuted Muslim Brotherhood. Whatever combination of psychological sympathy, Islamist ideology and selective democratic values this policy represents, it has succeeded in not only alienating Sisi’s government, but also consolidating an anti-Turkish coalition of states in the Eastern Mediterranean. After observers began to entertain the possibility of a direct clash between Egyptian and Turkish forces in Libya last summer, Ankara now appears eager to mend ties. But the depth of the differences between the two countries will make real rapprochement difficult so long as both Erdogan and Sisi remain in power.

“Erdogan has ever more forcefully cast Turkey in opposition to the regional status quo, both by presenting himself as a champion of the region’s downtrodden and repeatedly flirting with irredentism in his own rhetoric.”

More broadly, Egyptian-Turkish tensions also reflect the new contours and fault lines of the Middle East that have emerged in the wake of the Arab Spring. Turkey’s estrangement from its NATO allies has coincided with a newfound alignment between status quo powers in the region, including Egypt, Israel, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). These countries – brought together by their opposition to Iranian influence and Muslim Brotherhood-aligned actors alike – all enjoy close relations with Washington, even as they have maintained, or sought to develop, pragmatic ties with states such as Russia and Syria. Moreover, they continue to see Turkey as a threat, even as they have more recently sought to reconcile with Turkey’s regional partner, Qatar. Erdogan, in turn, has ever more forcefully cast Turkey in opposition to the regional status quo, both by presenting himself as a champion of the region’s downtrodden and repeatedly flirting with irredentism in his own rhetoric. By throwing his support behind non-state Islamist actors such as Hayat Tahrir al-Sham and Hamas, as well deploying Turkey’s military across its borders, Erdogan has generated considerable alarm. So long as Egyptian-Turkish relations remain enmeshed in this dynamic, bilateral tensions will endure.

A Hard History to Untangle

President Erdogan, his regional rivals and many of the commentators who cover them all share an enthusiasm for interpreting current geopolitics through the lens of history. As such, a brief discussion of Turkey and Egypt’s entangled past seems obligatory, if only to show what a confusing and contradictory backdrop it proves for understanding their relationship today.

The Ottoman Empire acquired the territory of Egypt in 1517 when Sultan Selim I defeated Mamluk forces outside of Cairo at the Battle of Ridaniya. The events surrounding this conquest were recently dramatized in an Arabic-language television series called *Kingdoms of Fire*, financed by Saudi Arabia and the UAE. [Most coverage of the series](#), in Turkey, the Arab world, and the Western press, seemed content to treat the conflict as a stand-in for contemporary events. Only a handful of observers pointed out what imperfect historical proxies the Mamluks were: Egypt’s Mamluk rulers were Turkish-speaking soldiers in many ways more culturally similar to the Ottomans than to the population they ruled over.

Subsequent history proved no less complicated. Muhammad Ali, regularly described as the founder of modern Egypt, was an Ottoman official of Albanian and/or Circassian descent born in the now-Greek city of Kavala. As Ottoman governor of Egypt, he sent his forces to help the Sultan suppress a Wahhabi uprising in the Arabian Peninsula and, less successfully, a revolution in the Peloponnese that ended with Greek independence. Immediately afterward, he invaded the Ottoman Empire, likely in the hope of capturing Istanbul and making himself Sultan. He failed, also due to Western intervention in favor of the Ottoman dynasty, and his descendants ruled Egypt until 1952.

“...a brief discussion of Turkey and Egypt’s entangled past seems obligatory, if only to show what a confusing and contradictory backdrop it proves for understanding their relationship today.”

After the fall of the Ottoman Empire, this shared history continued to complicate ties, although not in the way that is often remembered. At a state reception in 1932, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk famously began an argument with an Egyptian diplomat who refused to remove his fez in compliance with Turkey’s 1925 hat law. The argument escalated, and Atatürk violently knocked the offending fez off his head. The Hat Incident, as it was subsequently called, is often related as an anecdote about Atatürk’s revolutionary Westernizing zeal, as well as the deep alienation it created between republican Turkey and the Arab world. And yet, [as explored by historian Amit Bein](#), the incident actually arose from an ongoing dispute over Turkey’s contested claim to Ottoman property that remained in Egypt. It was, in other words, a result of Atatürk’s efforts to quite literally secure the Ottomans’ inheritance for Turkey.

For much of the 20th century, Egyptian-Turkish relations were defined by the Cold War. Through the early 1950s, [Turkish public opinion largely sympathized](#) with Egypt’s anti-colonial struggle. Anti-British sentiment ran high in Turkey, and some Turkish commentators initially saw Gamal Abdel Nasser’s ambitions as parallel to Atatürk’s. Yet as Nasser’s struggle against the British brought him into the Soviet orbit, he quickly fell afoul of Turkish interests. As a result, Ankara backed Washington in its efforts to contain the spread of Nasserism across the region. Turkish commentators, in turn, suddenly began to see Egypt not as a victim of British imperialism but rather as an agent of Soviet imperialism, and they deployed a wide range of often-racist invective against Egyptians in response. Only after the Camp David Accords, when Turkey and Egypt belatedly found themselves on the same side of the Cold War, did relations improve.

Enter Erdogan

The early years of the Justice and Development Party’s rule in Turkey offered little indication of the ideological conflict that would subsequently set Ankara and Cairo at odds with each other. At a time when Erdogan and his wife were happily vacationing with the family of Bashar al-Assad, maintaining good relations with Egypt’s secular nationalist authoritarian regime posed little problem. For its part, Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood was initially less enamored with Erdogan than it later became. In 2007, for example [Mohammed Morsi, then a member of the Brotherhood’s ‘Guidance Bureau,’ criticized the AKP](#) for accepting the “Western notion of secularism,” rather than embracing the Brotherhood’s “ultimate goal of establishing an Islamic State.” Morsi [continued](#), “We cannot compare between two successful cases of two totally different movements that do not agree in their fundamentals, goals, ends, or even their tactics and tools.”

Before the Arab Spring, Turkey’s increased activism in the Middle East, whatever its ideological underpinnings, was largely pragmatic in application. Ankara worked to improve trade ties and bilateral relations with existing governments in the region regardless of their political orientation. Indeed, this approach proved so successful that

when the Arab spring protests initially broke out, Turkish policymakers were slow to embrace them. Ankara initially opposed NATO intervention against Muammar Gaddafi in Libya and encouraged Assad to remain in power by compromising with protestors and enacting reforms.

However the fall of the Mubarak regime in January 2011 helped fuel more grandiose dreams among the AKP's leaders. Erdogan and his Foreign Minister, Ahmet Davutoglu, came to embrace a more transformational vision, where the emergence of popular, Islamist-oriented regimes around the region would help them achieve the leadership role they had always aspired to. At a time when, despite mounting fears about Erdogan's authoritarianism, Turkish democracy still appeared vastly superior to the authoritarian regimes of the Arab world, many Western observers were also hopeful that Turkey could help guide and inspire the region's transformation.

Against this backdrop, Erdogan made a much-anticipated visit to Cairo in September 2011, part of a North African Arab spring tour that also included Tunisia and Libya. Erdogan [proclaimed his support](#) for Egypt's revolution, announcing that it was time for Muslim people, not just Europeans and Americans, to finally live in dignity. "The world is changing to a system where the will of the people will rule," he announced, "As a Turk, I didn't want to be watching this situation from afar as if I was watching a football game." Davutoglu, travelling with Erdogan, [called](#) for Turkey and Egypt to form an "axis of democracy" while [predicting](#) that Turkish investment in Egypt would rise from 1.5 to 5 billion dollars in the coming years. For optimistic Turkish leaders, it appeared to be a unique moment where faith and finance could go hand in hand as democracy advanced their foreign policy agenda.

"For optimistic Turkish leaders, the Egyptian revolution appeared to be a unique moment where faith and finance could go hand in hand as democracy advanced their foreign policy agenda."

Western reaction was more reserved, but by no means critical. Some observers worried when Erdogan [denounced Israel](#) as "the West's spoiled child" during his visit and seemed to encourage Egypt to take a more anti-Israeli stance. Many others, though, were heartened when Erdogan [explained](#) that "the Turkish state is in its core a state of freedoms and secularism," and encouraged his Egyptian listeners to adopt a similar model. The state could be secular, Erdogan assured them, even while they as individuals remained pious.

Morsi's election in 2012 only deepened the Turkish government's commitment to the Egyptian revolutions and their expectations for it. On a subsequent visit, Erdogan [revealed his hopes](#) for an Egyptian-Turkish alliance and [described](#) the two countries as constituting "one hand." In this spirit, Erdogan [offered](#) Egypt 2 billion dollars in loans. The two countries also [carried out](#) a week-long joint naval drill in the Mediterranean called "Sea of Friendship" and discussed plans to institute visa free travel for their citizens.

Enter Sisi

In 2013, though, Erdogan could do little but watch when this budding partnership was dashed –along with the Egyptians' dream of democratic dignity. Worse, the coup that toppled Morsi inflamed many of Erdogan's own fears and seemed to confirm his suspicions about his own political enemies. Since coming to power, Erdogan had feared – [not without reason](#) – that Turkey secular military would seek to remove him from power, possibly in coordination with popular protests. The Egyptian protests in the summer of 2013 that provided the pretext for Sisi to seize power occurred at the same time as large-scale protests against Erdogan in Istanbul's Gezi Park. While foreign criticism of

Erdogan's authoritarianism had been mounting in previous years, the Gezi protests also marked the moment that once sympathetic Western opinion definitively turned against Erdogan. For Erdogan, the conspiratorial dots were all connected when the Obama administration pointedly refused to call Morsi's ouster a coup, thereby confirming, in his eyes, how Washington would have responded to his overthrow. Subsequently, Erdogan and his allies have [consistently described](#) the Gezi Park protests as a Western or Zionist directed coup attempt and a prelude to the more violent attempt of July 2016.

The [violent crackdown](#) which followed Sisi's coup, particularly the killing of a thousand or more pro-Morsi protestors at Rabaa Square, only hardened Erdogan's hostility to the new regime in Cairo. Erdogan not only took to regularly describing Sisi as a tyrant but also [adopted](#) the Brotherhood's four fingered Rabia sign as his own (while [adding](#) a Turkish nationalist twist). More concretely, he [offered refuge](#) to tens of thousands of Egyptians fleeing Sisi's crackdown, allowing Brotherhood members to [carry on](#) their political organizing and broadcasting in Turkey.

This may have stayed a purely bilateral dispute if a number of subsequent developments had not drawn it into a broader set of regional dynamics. Sisi's war against the Muslim Brotherhood quickly won him the backing of Israel, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, with the two Gulf states providing him crucial financial support as he consolidated power. At the same time, these countries were also drawing closer together in response to their concern over Iran's role in the region. As Assad gained ground in Syria and Iranian-backed militias helped push back ISIS in Iraq, they perceived the Iranian threat to be growing. President Trump's withdrawal from the Iran deal, combined with his explicit support for Arab-Israeli normalization, created an additional incentive for them to develop closer ties. The result was that Turkey quickly found itself confronting not merely a single hostile regime in Cairo but an entire interconnected network of hostile governments stretching from the Mediterranean to the Gulf.

Libya and the Eastern Mediterranean

Alongside these dynamics in the Middle East, the Egyptian-Turkish rivalry also became enmeshed in a series of developments in the Eastern Mediterranean which culminated in the two countries' 2020 showdown in Libya.

Beginning in 2009, a [succession of substantial natural gas finds](#) occurred in the southeast corner of the Mediterranean that would fundamentally reshape relations between Egypt, Israel, Cyprus and Greece. In 2009 and 2010, the Tamar and Leviathan fields were discovered in Israeli waters, followed by the discovery of the Aphrodite field off Cyprus in 2011 and the giant Zohr field north of Egypt in 2015. To facilitate jointly exploiting the region's hydrocarbon resources, Israel and Cyprus formally delimited their Exclusive Economic Zones in 2010 and subsequently began looking for ways to cooperatively export their discoveries to Europe. At the same time, the Aphrodite field also created additional tension between Turkey and the Republic of Cyprus, as Ankara objected to Nicosia's right to unilaterally exploit its maritime resources. In 2016, this issue, combined with domestic political developments on the island, prompted another effort at negotiations between the Greek and Turkish communities. However, by 2017, it was clear the talks [would not be able to overcome](#) longstanding differences. In the strained climate that resulted from this failure, Ankara began sending naval vessels to waters off the south and east coast of Cyprus to [forcibly prevent](#) drilling activity.

During much of this period, Israel had been in discussions with Ankara over [the](#)

"The violent crackdown which followed Sisi's coup, particularly the killing of a thousand or more pro-Morsi protestors at Rabaa Square, only hardened Erdogan's hostility to the new regime in Cairo."

[possibility](#) of developing a pipeline that would enable it to transport its natural gas to European markets via Turkey. Yet relations [remained strained](#) on account of Ankara's support for Hamas and its pro-Palestinian activities in East Jerusalem, culminating in both sides withdrawing their ambassadors in May 2018 following the killing of Palestinian protestors in Gaza. In this context, Israel abandoned the Turkish route, citing price disputes, and instead redoubled its commitment to the partnership that became the Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum. Based in Cairo, supported by Washington and pointedly excluding Turkey, the Forum ultimately brought together Cyprus, Egypt, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, and the Palestinian Authority in an effort to jointly exploit and export the region's gas finds. (The US, France and the UAE have also joined as observers) While some forum members envisioned a [deep-sea pipeline](#) eventually taking Eastern Mediterranean gas to Europe via Cyprus and Crete, technical challenges and low energy prices have left this a long-term goal at best.

"The immediate result of Ankara's [Libya] intervention was to push back Haftar's forces on the ground while simultaneously solidifying the nascent alliance of anti-Turkish actors in the region."

These developments would subsequently intersect with the civil war that was [developing](#) amidst the chaos of post-Qaddafi Libya. In 2014, Egypt joined Russia and the UAE in throwing its support behind Field Marshall Khalifa Haftar and his forces based out of the Eastern city of Tobruk. [Egypt saw Haftar](#) as the best hope for stabilizing the country under the control of a friendly regime, thereby sidelining Islamist actors, preventing security threats from terrorists or militias and helping ensure Cairo a share of the profits from Libya's energy sector. While Turkey was less involved in Libya at the time, Ankara had cultivated ties with the elected and more Islamist-oriented government in Tripoli, with whom they hoped to continue the profitable economic relationship they had enjoyed with Qaddafi. In 2015, a failed UN effort at mediation consolidated the contours of the current conflict, leaving the internationally recognized Government of National Accord in control in Tripoli opposed by Haftar's Libyan National Army and the country's House of Representatives operating in absentia from Tobruk.

While many experts continued to doubt Haftar's ability to unite the country through force of arms, his battlefield gains nourished hopes among his backers that he could [ultimately root out](#) the array of Islamist actors that had proliferated in post-revolution Libya. As a result, the civil war escalated in the spring of 2019, as Haftar launched Operation Flood of Dignity, a campaign to seize Tripoli and consolidate his position as the country's new leader. With the backing of Russian mercenaries, as well as Russian and Emirati air support, Haftar's forces made slow but consistent progress over the course of the summer.

At this point, Ankara saw an opportunity to transform a number of regional dynamics in its favor through a direct military intervention in Libya. In fall 2019, Ankara sent advisors, special forces and a contingent of Turkish drones to aid the besieged Government of National Accord in Tripoli. As the price for this support, Ankara also pressured the GNA to sign a maritime delimitation agreement that claimed for Turkey a dramatically expanded Exclusive Economic Zone at the expense of Greece and in violation of the UN Law of the Sea. From Ankara's perspective, this move fit with [a new strategic doctrine](#) of using hard power to secure consideration of Turkish interests in the face of hostile designs by its rivals. Thus Ankara would not only deprive Egypt and the UAE of a proxy victory in Libya but also thwart efforts to exclude Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots from participation in the region's new natural gas architecture.

The immediate result of Ankara's intervention was to push back Haftar's forces on the ground while simultaneously solidifying the nascent alliance of anti-Turkish actors in the region. Indeed, by the summer of 2020, Turkey appeared to have taken the offensive in both its proxy war in Libya and in its maritime dispute with Greece. In June, as Turkish

backed militias allied with the GNA continued to push east toward the oil-rich region around Sirte, [Sisi declared](#) that an attack on the city would be a “red line” for Cairo and lead to the direct intervention of Egyptian forces.

Restraint and Rapprochement?

It soon became clear that neither Turkey nor Egypt were eager to escalate. Turkey had succeeded in saving the GNA and did not see further gains as justifying the risk of a more direct conflict with Egypt. Turkey’s Libya intervention has consistently proven less popular than the country’s other military operations, and Erdogan may have worried about the political fallout of a sustained conflict there. Moreover, Ankara soon shifted its focus to its maritime dispute with Greece and may have already been preparing for its role in the coming conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Similarly, the Egyptian regime [had concerns](#) about how its military could fare in an expeditionary operation in Libya, and also may have feared the political consequences of an unsuccessful operation. Cairo subsequently seems to have concluded that the best way to counter Turkey’s influence in Libya would be to take the lead in [negotiating a settlement](#) between the conflict’s two sides. As Cairo sought to wean the GNA of its dependence on Ankara, it also took a firm stand against the Libyan-Turkish maritime deal; in August of 2020, at the height of Greek-Turkish tensions, Cairo signed its own partial maritime delimitation agreement with Athens to contravene Turkey’s maximalist claims.

Against this backdrop, the news in October 2020 that Turkish and Egyptian intelligence delegations had held meetings set off a flurry of speculation about the possibility of a rapprochement between the two countries. The Turkish government appeared particularly eager to promote this speculation. Erdogan himself announced the intelligence contacts, while Presidential advisor Ibrahim Kalin [declared](#) that, despite Sisi’s brutal and repressive policies, “[i]f Egypt reveals a willingness to act with a positive agenda on regional issues, Turkey would not leave it unanswered.” As pro-Turkish outlets [optimistically pointed out](#), “despite political tensions,” Egypt continued to import roughly 3 billion dollars in goods from Turkey.

And yet to date there has been little evidence that a major breakthrough is on the horizon. In early 2021, Turkey’s Foreign Minister [reiterated again that](#) “Turkey is also ready to take positive steps towards Egypt if Cairo is also committed to mending ties.” Turkish officials have [alluded to](#) a “road map,” as well as “mutual positive steps” and “mutual gestures,” but offered little tangible evidence of what these consist of. Cairo, for its part, has suggested it remains skeptical about Turkish outreach barring more evidence of Turkey’s commitment. Specifically, Turkey’s support for the Muslim Brotherhood is a key sticking point for the Sisi regime.

It remains to be seen what concessions Erdogan would offer on this personally and ideologically sensitive point. Over the years, Ankara has periodically stated that it is open to rapprochement with Egypt, but made it clear it expected Sisi to offer the concessions. As early as 2015, an expert at a pro-government think tank [told the paper Daily Sabah](#) that normalization was possible, but “depends on Egypt’s fulfillment of the Turkish government’s conditions.” With Egypt, as with many of its other bilateral relationships, Ankara appears eager to rebuild strained ties, but hesitant to break with the policies that initially strained them.

“...any form of rapprochement, either under Erdogan or a future Turkish government, will prove all the more complicated to the degree that the regional fault lines separating the two countries deepen.”

Conclusion

Erdogan and Sisi may both, for their own reasons, be happy to reach a *modus vivendi* that lowers the temperature of Egyptian-Turkish relations. But given the depth of their differences, that is perhaps the most that could be expected while the two men remain in power. Of course, each would undoubtedly prefer the other lose power first. Were Sisi's regime to fall and somehow be replaced by a new, Brotherhood aligned government, Erdogan's stubbornness could provide an unexpected geopolitical payoff. Meanwhile, members of Turkey's main secular opposition party have suggested that, were they to come to power, they would seek to restore relations with countries like Egypt that they believe Erdogan has needlessly alienated in pursuit of his Islamist agenda. And yet any form of rapprochement, either under Erdogan or a future Turkish government, will prove all the more complicated to the degree that the regional fault lines separating the two countries deepen. As Egypt's interlocking diplomatic, military and economic partnerships with Turkey's rivals become more consolidated, the clash of interests between the two countries will take on a life of its own, and potentially outlive the ideological conflict that spawned it.

References:

- Al-Anani, Khalil "Understanding Egypt's Strategy in Libya", Arab Center Washington DC, Jul. 8, 2020. http://arabcenterdc.org/policy_analyses/understanding-egypts-strategy-in-libya/ (accessed Jan. 24, 2020).
- Arango, Tim "Turkey and Egypt Seek Alliance Amid Region's Upheaval", New York Times, Oct. 18, 2012. <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/19/world/middleeast/turkey-and-egypt-look-to-team-up-amid-tumult.html> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).
- Armstrong, William "Analysis: Turkey's foreign policy takes hawkish turn over 'Blue Homeland', BBC Monitoring, Jul. 6, 2020. <https://monitoring.bbc.co.uk/product/c201vkcr> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).
- Aydoğan, Merve "Experts: Normalization of relations between Turkey, Egypt possible if conditions fulfilled", Daily Sabah, Dec. 19, 2015. <https://www.dailysabah.com/diplomacy/2015/12/19/experts-normalization-of-relations-between-turkey-egypt-possible-if-conditions-fulfilled> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).
- Ayyash, Abdelrahman "The Turkish Future of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood", The Century Foundation, Aug. 17, 2020. <https://tcf.org/content/report/turkish-future-egypts-muslim-brotherhood/?session=1&session=1&agreed=1> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).
- Bein, Amit (2017) *Kemalist Turkey and the Middle East: International relations in the Interwar Period*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cagaptay, Soner "Erdogan's Failure on the Nile", The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, May 28, 2019. <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/erdogans-failure-nile> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).
- Danforth, Nicholas "Arabs Through Turkish Eyes", Ottoman History Podcast, Dec. 26, 2013. <https://soundcloud.com/ottoman-history-podcast/arabs-through-turkish-eyes-1> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

Demirtaş, Serkan “France’s Macron sends letter to improve ties with Turkey”, *Hürriyet Daily News*, Jan. 15, 2021. <https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/frances-macron-sends-letter-to-improve-ties-with-turkey-161663> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

Dombey, Daniel and Reed, John “Turkey says Israel behind Egypt coup”, *Financial Times*, Aug. 20, 2013. <https://www.ft.com/content/e6a72cfa-09a7-11e3-ad07-00144feabdc0> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

Dosya, Özel “15 Temmuz'un komuta merkeziydi; işte 4 bin 658 sayfalık Akıncı Üssü iddianamesinin tam metni”, *T24*, Apr. 3, 2017. <https://t24.com.tr/haber/15-temmuzun-komuta-merkeziydi-iste-4-bin-658-sayfalik-akinci-ussu-iddianamesinin-tam-metni,397202> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

Efron, Shira “The Future of Israeli-Turkish Relations”, Rand Corporation, 2018. https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR2400/RR2445/RAND_RR2445.pdf (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

Fitzgerald, Mary “General Haftar’s ant-Islamist campaign divides Libyans”, *BBC*, Jun. 7, 2014. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-27715992> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

Gomaa, Ahmed “Turkey draws road map with Egypt, but will Cairo follow it?”, *Al-Monitor*, Jan. 6, 2021. <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2021/01/turkey-egypt-relations-roadmap-eastmed-gas-libya-tensions.html> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

Gül Aydoğan Ağlarıcı, Merve “Turkey, Azerbaijan share special relations: official”, *Anadolu Agency*, Oct. 14, 2020. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/turkey/turkey-azerbaijan-share-special-relations-official/2005452> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

Hale, William (1993) *Turkish Politics and the Military*, Abingdon: Routledge.

Keddie, Patrick “How Turkey became a hub for Arab Spring exiles”, *Aljazeera*, Dec. 22, 2020. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/12/22/how-turkey-became-a-hub-for-arab-spring-exiles> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

Kirkpatrick, David D. “Premier of Turkey Takes Role in Region”, *The New York Times*, Sep. 12, 2011. <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/13/world/middleeast/13egypt.html> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

Magdy, Samy and Wilks, Andrew “Egyptian president says Libyan city Sirte a ‘red line’”, *AP*, Jun. 20, 2020. <https://apnews.com/article/849b1049742450459e04b4806f52a072> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

Magdy, Sam “UN says Libyan rivals have restarted military talks in Egypt”, *The Washington Post*, Sep. 28, 2020. https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/un-says-libyan-rivals-have-restarted-military-talks-in-egypt/2020/09/28/b83a795a-01af-11eb-b92e-029676f9ebec_story.html (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

Mitchell, Gabriel “The Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum: Cooperation in the Shadow of Competition”, *The Israeli Institute for Regional Foreign Policies*, Sep. 2020. <https://mitvim.org.il/wp-content/uploads/Gabriel-Mitchell-The-Eastern-Mediterranean-Gas-Forum-September-2020.pdf> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

Qureshi, Aurangzeb “Turkey-Israel deal set to start a Middle East gas bonanza”, *Middle East Eye*, Sep. 8, 2016. <https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/turkey-israel-deal-set-start-middle-east-gas-bonanza> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

Reuters Staff “Egypt and Turkey hold joint naval exercise”, Reuters, Oct. 8 2012.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-egypt-turkey-army/egypt-and-turkey-hold-joint-naval-exercise-idUKBRE8970V120121008> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

Reuters Staff “Turkish blockade of ship off Cyprus is out of Eni’s control: CEO” Reuters, Feb. 16, 2018.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-cyprus-natgas-turkey-eni/turkish-blockade-of-ship-off-cyprus-is-out-of-enis-control-ceo-idUSKCN1G01K0> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

Reuters Staff “Explainer: Untangling the conflict in Libya”, Reuters, Jun. 9, 2020.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security-explainer/explainer-untangling-the-conflict-in-libya-idUSKBN23G28Z> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

Samir, Salwa “Why this TV series causes high drama between Cairo, Ankara”, *Al-Monitor*, Nov. 27,

2019. <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2019/11/kingdoms-of-fire-creates-tensions-egypt-turkey.html> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

Smith, Helena “Cyprus reunification talks collapse amid angry scenes”, *The Guardian*, Jul. 7, 2017.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jul/07/cyprus-reunification-talks-collapse-amid-angry-scenes> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

Tol, Gönül “Erdogan’s Arab Spring Tour”, Middle East Institute, Sep. 21, 2011.

<https://www.mei.edu/publications/erdogans-arab-spring-tour> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

Zion, Ilan Ben and Yackley, Ayla Jean “Israel, Greece and Cyprus set to seal €6bn gas pipeline deal”,

Financial Times, Jan. 1, 2020. <https://www.ft.com/content/c58970d2-2c82-11ea-bc77-65e4aa615551> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

“All According to Plan: The Rab’a Massacre and Mass Killings of Protesters in Egypt”, Human Rights

Watch, Aug. 12, 2014. <https://www.hrw.org/report/2014/08/12/all-according-plan/raba-massacre-and-mass-killings-protesters-egypt#> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

“Egypt’s Military Limitations: Cairo’s Options to Defend Eastern Libya”, Egypt Defense Review, Middle East Program, Foreign Policy Research Institute, Jul. 13, 2020.

<https://www.fpri.org/article/2020/07/egypts-military-limitations-cairos-options-to-defend-eastern-libya/> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

“İşte Erdoğan’ın yaptığı Rabia’nın anlamı - Rabia ne demek, izle”, Türkiye, Jan. 21, 2018.

<https://www.turkiyegazetesi.com.tr/gundem/142657.aspx> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

“Is Turkey-Egypt rapprochement in the eastern Mediterranean possible?”, TRT World, Oct. 14, 2020.

<https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/is-turkey-egypt-rapprochement-in-the-eastern-mediterranean-possible-40578> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).

“Rabia sign now a global sign of saying no to injustice: PM Erdogan”, Anadolu Agency, Nov. 3, 2013.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/archive/rabia-sign-now-a-global-sign-of-saying-no-to-injustice-pm-erdogan/206982> (accessed Jan. 24, 2021).