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El-Fadl, Reem, *Foreign Policy as Nation Making: Turkey and Egypt in the Cold War*. Publisher: Cambridge University Press, 2019. 384 pages. ISBN-13: 978-1108475044.

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*Foreign Policy as Nation Making: Turkey and Egypt in the Cold War* is a trekking back in history that delves into unraveling the ways wherein similarly reductionist clichés, from ‘globalization’ to the ‘War on Terror’, have been incumbent on to ensuing multiplex regional dynamics. The book takes the conundrum of Turkey and Egypt’s unlikeness as a starting point into political imaginaries and throes of the 1950s, the decades which cemented Turkey’s enduring position in the Western bloc and Egypt’s global reputation as an Arab leader. Thus, the research project attempts to unveil a tantalizing inquiry about the leitmotifs of their wide foreign policy stances’ disparity during 1950s.

Their policy practices are often scrutinized within realist realms of international relations theory, either as responses to superpower vying in the Cold War, or as quests for regional dominance. In other words, Turkey is staged as reactive, striving to balance against hazards in the international nexus, such as the Soviet Union in the Cold War, while Egypt is portrayed as conquering, even imperialist, in its policies towards the Arab world.

To elucidate the enigma of Turkey and Egypt’s divergence, three inquiries are treated in the whole work which trisect the book into three implicit parts. First, what the leaders’ nationalist agendas were and why they differed. Second, what the nationalist frameworks can unveil about the foreign policy epochs juxtaposed in the 1950s. Third, how the leaders managed to achieve covering their agendas. This book project is a substantial contribution to the debates on world politics and international relations because it is a gestalt of an array of vistas, reflections, and studies on a critical contemporary period of the world that occurred during the Cold War in the 1950s. In addition, this study is a crossroad between the fields of international relations

theory, comparative politics, and area studies. Accordingly, it responds to the developments and unexplored vistas in all the aforementioned areas of cognizance.

The book is structured in nine chapters. In the first chapter, Abdou El-Fadl investigated comparatively the international arena during the epoch of late Ottoman dominion and imperial impingement in Turkey and Egypt. It also scrutinizes the expansion of the nationalist traditions and controversies wherein the Democrats and Free Officers would later intercede. Both chapters two and three illustrate various notions of nationalism undertaken by each leadership during their political concoction in the 1930s and 1940s, respectively. The two chapters are geared towards reconstructing each leadership's interaction with the socioeconomic, ideological, and international vogues of that era. Hence, three concurrent eras in the 1950s are investigated, according to foreign policy events wherein both Turkey and Egypt played a pertinent role.

The remaining chapters are bisected into two parts. While the even chapters cover Turkey's case, the odd ones tackle the Egyptian model. Therefore, chapters 4, 6 and 8 deal with Turkey's admission to NATO (1950-2); its mission in the Baghdad Pact (1954-6); and its role in hyping the Syrian Crisis (1957-8). Each of these periods covers an episode. For instance, the first episode regards the Democrats fix of Turkey's international alignment; the second tracks the unwinding of its activist regional policy; and the third depicts the interplay of both. On the other hand, chapters 5, 7 and 9 explore three almost similar time spans from the Egyptian perspective: the period of Anglo-Egyptian parleying and early Egyptian Pan-Arabist policy (1952-4); the campaign against the Baghdad Pact and the Czech arms transaction after the Bandung Conference (1955); and ultimately the Suez war (1956) and the Syrian Crisis (1957-8).

The book displays a revisit of Turkey's and Egypt's foreign policies in the 1950s in the light of each leadership's nation making endeavor. Thus, both countries' leaderships sought to intercede in and instrumentalize the international arena to attain their nationalist agendas at the expense of a constituency that they deemed themselves to represent. This product is a paragon of the decay of the Cold War lens in scholarly literature that has long privileged the superpowers' feud while overlooking other actors. In addition, the author succeeded in probing ways wherein inquiries on national identity and nationalist ambitions have been interrogated in international relations

theory besides developing the two salient arguments regarding foreign policy and nationalist commitment that guide the scrutiny of both Egyptian and Turkish cases.

The author tries to revisit the prevailing constructivist and poststructuralist narratives in order to avoid bringing up the concept of 'identity' as the sole factor that shapes a foreign policy. Instead, the author contends that 'identity' ought to be investigated within a fabric wherein it is often brought to bear on foreign policy making, which relies on the state's nation making. The reasoning here is twofold: one relates to conceptualization and the other to agency.

In fact, the author has employed an uncanny interdisciplinary approach that targets to be sensitive to the emphases of policy actors themselves, rather than endorsing a singular foreign policy of interest. In this respect, I do share the author's insightful, thought-provoking, and novel paradigm in scrutinizing the foreign policies of the global south because it entails new analytical instruments that match the internal constitutional processes of anti-colonialist's encyclopedia to study the other.

Here, I would like to recall Edward Said's notion regarding the traveling of the theory (1983). Said contends that when a theory travels in time and space, it might lose or gain strength. For this reason, the author highly stressed the rethinking of concepts and theoretical links that have sprung while concocting this analysis. As a concluding assumption, the author critically captures postcolonial theories of nationalism, and the views of Turkish and Egyptian leaderships' divergent alternatives in the 1950s; these may partially be considered a by-product of their differing experiences of imperial power.

### Cited work

Said, E. (1983). *The World, the Text, and the Critic*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

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