

Turkey's Ideological and Identity Politics towards Iran in the Arab Uprising: The Case of Syrian Civil War

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Abstract : With the beginning of the mass movement called as the Arab Uprising, Middle Eastern politics has demonstrated an influential shift which has been threatening the existence of the ruling regimes. In this environment, in particular, regional powers have desired to control regional politics, and to expand their regional influence. Bearing that in mind, Turkey and Iran, two significant regional powers, have engaged in competition so as to affect the shifted regional geopolitics. In this context, this paper aims to investigate how regional powers, especially non-Arab ones, have viewed each other in the Arab Uprising, whereby focusing on Turkish perspectives towards Iran. In other words, it will shed light on how Turkey has conducted foreign policy towards Iran during the Arab Uprising. To analyse this, Turkey's ideological and identity politics towards Iran will be examined as one of its foreign policy approaches. The question is thus that how ideological and identity politics have determined Turkish foreign policy towards Iran in the Arab Uprising. To answer that, the Syrian civil war will be analysed as the case study in this qualitative study, hypothesising that Turkey, which has both Turkish identity and Sunni sect, has competed with Iran, which has both Farsi identity and Shia sect, over the Syrian civil war.

Keywords : Arab uprising, ideological and identity politics, Iran, Turkey, Syrian civil war

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