

Arabs, Turks and Persians

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Résumé ou extrait : "The geopolitics of the Greater Middle East have, like elsewhere, been determined greatly by realist calculations of national interest, coupled with age-old prejudices and personal relations among regional leaders. But it is the contention in this book that ideological elements have been particularly important in this region alongside these factors. Iran's regime has been the prime mover in the region since 1979, remaking the region's geopolitics by its bold assertion of a revolutionary Islamist agenda that deliberately ignored national boundaries. Everyone was put on the defensive, reacting to Iran. The Saudis promoted their own Islamism as an answer to Tehran, focused on the Salafi Sunni tradition of the Arabian Peninsula. In Turkey, the ruling military administration of the early 1980s launched the notion of a "Turkish-Islamic" synthesis, which over time would empower Turkish Islamism, itself influenced by the ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood. If Iran is the "prime mover," the response of the Sunni powers to the Iranian threat is key to the stability of the region. Ironically, they went in opposite directions. The Saudis and most Gulf Emirates had come to realize that their support of Salafism had spiraled out of control, generating forces that threatened their own internal stability. They therefore sought to move toward moderation. But Turkey went the other way: under Erdogan, its foreign policy was animated by an ideologically colored view of the region and an ambition to remake the region in its own image. Predictably, this caused a deep rift in the Sunni world that only benefited Iran." (éditeur)

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