

# WHAT WILL HAPPEN ON THE POTENTIAL CHANGE OF THE IRANIAN REGIME?

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## Introduction

Iran, for the last four dozen years, has been in a struggle against the West. Constant embargoes, cover operations within the Islamic Republic, and continuous assassination of high-profile people fueled the civil unrest. Especially the recent proxy war, and sometimes confrontation, with Israel, showed the cracks in the regime. For now, it is difficult to predict if there will be an invasion in Iran, a soft regime change or transition of the fundamentalist regime to the Western economy and values, but one thing is clear: constant paranoia going on in the high echelons of Iran shows that the cultural schizophrenia in the Eastern mystic world is real. Now the Mullahs are in their darkest night, without a guide.

## Current paradigm of the Iranian War

Iran, after the regime change, was put in a shark tank. They were embargoed and closed off from the West. Because no country can develop by itself right now, but can only be given the tools of modernism, they were forced to embrace Russia, China and Pakistan for defending themselves. To counter the influence of the Eastern giants, the Anglosphere tried to bribe the officials of Iran from the start of the brokers of death case to the end of contra affair.

Now Iran had some new mechanical weapons, still did not have the

technology to topple their sworn enemy, Israel. Of course, nobody would help them, and the constant spy games inside the Iranian soil showed the Mullah intelligence that Iran is not a country that can be defended from itself. Only in a perpetual uncertainty which blocks the Iranian pathways could they have their semi-perpetual peace.

Thus, the world has seen the emergence of what is now called the “Axis of Resistance”. Started as proxy paramilitaries that were used for the Iranian way of vanguards. In the end, it is easier and a safer bet to make someone die for your cause 2000km away.

It is important to note that this piece is a neutral view of the Middle East situation. There are no winners or losers in this work. As an old Buddhist saying goes, the only perpetual is the change itself. The regime of Iran, like the regimes of other countries and the rest of the world, will change with time. History is in a very special time right now, where most of the leaders of the world that concrete themselves in time are old, and will fade away from politics soon. Their opponents, hence, raised pupils for the last few decades. In the event of a change, there is more than one opinion in virtually every place; every clique has a chance to go to the top, as history has shown us. One can't change the course of the world wholly but can only divert for their beneficial road.



## Idea of “Shia Political Network”

While called the Axis of Resistance, it can also be called a Shia political network as a response to the state of cultural schizophrenia that the Shia world is in. The Sunni world somehow tries to adapt to the new world with its democratic Islam model, while the Shia world stays closer to its traditionalist roots. Most of the Shia intellectuals, even though they are educated in the West, and could not enter Iran for many years, wants Mullah regime to be gone, but don't want to modernise in the western sense. While it sounds and feels contradictory to most political analysts and strategists of the West, it is something that one can't experience if you are not a fusion man of east and west (and for it, there is a need to be shaped by the east first). The Shia case is more special because of its spiritual tendencies among the masses. The Shia revival that is mentioned by American intellectuals, while it was correct in its core, needs to be transmigrated into the new pages. While the Western world was baffled by the rise of ISIS, and some intellectuals argued that Shia Islam was not capable of something like that, which in some sense was true, it created a far scarier monster of hegemony. Sunni terror establishments like ISIS or al-Qaeda were structured after old Muslim Khalifa sultanates. They had a traditional state structure, which the Western part of the world used to, and hence could work with that. In Shia sense, this structure shifts to

a more mystical bureaucracy, where the Western world completely forgotten, and cannot understand. Self-emerged spiritual jihad is more dangerous than the ordered one. While Shia Islam is not an individual movement in terms of bearing arms, armies with different heads, and methods, that work for the same cause, is far more dangerous than a cell terror organisation.

Right now, 4 out of 5 of the biggest armies without a state are Shia armies, and allies of the Axis of Resistance. These armies include;

- Hezbollah
- Al-Hashd ash-Sha'bi (a special case)
- Liwa Fatemiyoun/Zainabiyoun
- Houthis

The situations of these armies and why they have some more special cases are discussed in the following parts. For now, readers should familiarise themselves with the “armies” of Shia and replace the view of cell organisation like al-Qaeda or ISIS.

The Shia network is explained to prepare the reader for an alternative post-Mullah Axis of Resistance. If there is no grand ayatollah in the Shia cause, all Shia establishments will follow the last orders of the inner ayatollah. To see what could happen in the future, and how Axis of Resistance interacts with post-Mullah Iran, one must learn the members of Axis of Resistance, what they want, what their ideological endgames (besides sectarian hegemony) are, and how they in contact

with post-Mullah elements of a theoretical Iran.

## Structure of the Axis of Resistance

Numerous analyses are defining the Axis of Resistance and its relationship to the Mullahs, but less attention has been paid to the connections between these groups and the opponents of the Mullahs in Iran, both politically and spiritually.

According to the [Congress report](#), there are fundamental groups of the Axis of Resistance.



By the Axis of Resistance, Iran is influential quite number of countries. It will be discussed how the Axis of Resistance operates country by country and their current political situations. Lastly, political factions in Iran which can replace the Mullahs will be discussed. Therefore, as a footnote, the reader should see that not every member of the resistance is Shia, and there are also

Sunni groups as well, which changes the mathematical model of the poststructuralist Middle East quite significantly.

## Iraq

After the Iraqi uprising and Saddam Era, Iraq opened like Pandora's box. Almost 2/3 of the country is Shia, and excluding the Kurdish autonomous region, this percentage significantly increases. Most of the parliament members of Iraq are Shia, and one can even say the country is ruled by a Shia network, even though internationally not internationally accepted. Just in Iraq, 5 establishments of the Axis of Resistance are listed in the infographic. Currently, most of the elements of the Axis of Resistance in Iraq fused into a bigger group called "Al-Hashd ash-Sha'bi".

Kata'ib Hezbollah, Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq, Harakat Hezbollah al-Nujaba, Badr Organization and Kata'ib Sayyid ul-Shuhada are all part of the Al-Hashd ash-Sha'bi, or with the common name "Popular Mobilisation Forces" of Iraq. For general information;

- PMF is the Shia army of Iraq
- PMF is more ideological and trained better in terms of raw individual fighting
- The Iraqi army has better equipment than PMF and is more secular
- The Iraqi army includes minority elements and commanders
- PMF is almost entirely Arab, or Persian in some cases

- PMF is divided into two ideological clauses.
- 1. Najaf Seminary (Sistani Influence)
- 2. Qom Seminary (Khamenei/Larijani Influence)
- PMF was founded by al-Sistani with the help of Iran

In a nutshell, PMF is the biggest force in Iraq. While the West continue to supply weapons to the Iraqi army so that it can fight extremism and defend itself, history shows that the supplied weapons, in the end, will be borne by the most influential force in the country, and in fact, that is the PMF. The reason why the reader must pay attention to PMF is that while part of the Axis of Resistance, the ideological leadership and vanguard command force of the PMF is entirely composed of elements of Najaf Seminary, hence al-Sistani is more influential position in all of Iraq compared to the Iraqi politicians. Therefore, al-Sistani is also a higher-level Shia leader than the Khamenei in the sense of the Shia clergy.

Najaf seminary consists of a group called 'Big Four of Iraq'. These four clerics, namely, Ali al-Sistani, Bashir al-Najafi, Muhammad al-Fayadh and Muhammad Saeed al-Hakim (Died in 2021). These people are the leaders of the Najaf Seminary, hence most of the Western Shia realm, including Iraq. Most of these leaders also reject the doctrine of Velayat-e Faqih, maybe because of their ego as the current leader of the Shia is just an Ayatollah, and not a Marja. Or maybe it is because of nationalistic tension between Arab and Persian Shia,

but Shia, while in roots a Persian movement, not a nationalistically cracked one.

The main points to consider in Iraq are that the Najaf circle is more powerful than the Qom circle there. Both Najaf and Qom leadership are subject to change, and this change will probably occur in a short time. The reader shall know the heirs of these schools to make a good strategic decision.

## Syria

After the fall of Assad, Syria changed its leadership to a Sunni government. There are still parts of the Shia resistance in the coastal part of Syria, and some clashes continue, but in part, most of the elements of the Shia either went to Lebanon and Iraq, or went quiet (not to be confused with the sleeper cell idea).

These groups mainly comprised the elements of Liwa Fatemiyoun and Liwa Zainabiyoun. They are Shia Afghan and Shia Pakistani militias of the axis of resistance. Made up by numbers of tens of thousands, after the Assad, they either joined the ranks of Iran and Yemen, stayed in coastal areas, started to PMC activities in sub-Saharan and east Africa or went to Central Asia to prepare for the next steps.

Liwa Brigades are one of the mobile wild card armies of the Axis of Resistance. They have fighting and governing experience from Syria. Most members learned Persian and Arabic and see modern world compared to their home

countries. These make them quite dangerous, as the world gives a modern sword to the bandit's hand.

Right now, these armies are more loyal to the Qom seminary but also have more fundamentalist tendencies from them, and since they switch to Iraq, they may also switch their following ideology to the Najaf Seminary.

In the event of an Iranian civil war, these armies may be used by the Qom school, Persian circle, but there is a catch. Head of Qom school, Hossein Wahid Khorasani, is 104 years old. He is highly respected by these armies of eastern Shia. His son-in-law, Sadeq Larijani, is the head of Expediency Discernment Council of Iran, which can be considered as chief of staff of Khamenei. He is an avid supporter of Khamenei, but he is not a grand ayatollah, hence can't be the head of Qom school. Currently, almost all candidates for next Qom school head are Mohammad-Reza Golpayegani's students, who was supposed to be the next Supreme Leader of Iran, but Khamenei became the leader. Now there is a strange dynamic, the most ardent Khamenei supporter of Iran is the chief of staff of him, and son-in-law of the head of the Qom school, Khorasani. After Khamenei, the most probable leader would be Larijani, who the Qom School currently supports, but not for long. As in a change of the Qom school leadership to the anti-Khamenei intellectuals of Golpayegani, clashes between the Iranian leadership of the civilian and religious bureaucracy may begin. Therefore, this situation will inevitably

spread to the Najaf School and Iraq. Who the Iraqi Shia leadership took side will determine the fate of both Iran and Iraq also.

## Lebanon

The story of Lebanon is a known one. Hezbollah is currently de-facto leader of the region, specifically in the south, and in a fight with Israel. Hezbollah mainly comprises Shia Arab elements that are experienced fight in guerrilla tactics from years of confrontation with Israel. They are also the most experienced Shia fighters against a modern army and has high level of infiltration experience. Therefore, they are also loyal to Iran, but if left alone, they can attack Syria as they have beef with Syrian Sunni elements, but more importantly, with Druze population.

The situation with Druze is not known in the Western world that much, but Druze and Christians have a complicated relationship. While mainly a good one, compared to Muslims, starting from the wars of 1860, their relationship deteriorated. And currently, as Israel is actively helping and recruiting them, Middle Eastern Muslims and Christians are confronted with a new common enemy, slowly but surely. Some Western Christian groups may think that Israel's enemy is also their enemy, but Middle Eastern Christians may not be on the same page. Therefore, as the gap between the current Israeli regime and the Western world increases, the impact of Druze camping and clashes will intensify.

Hezbollah lost most of the technological military power of its establishment due to constant Israeli-American strikes. Now, they know that they can't win against technology, so there is a shift to primordial guerrilla tactics. An individual Hezbollah fighter may be act as a fedayeen for his cause, same can't be said for most modern armies. While a big clash between Hezbollah and Israel is likely to happen, this will immediately turn into an organised insurgency. As Israel tries to expand its buffer zones, it is unclear whether it can also supply it with constant manpower. No country is untouchable, and Hezbollah might use this fear factor in Israel's land. There could be a second Gaza insurgency situation for Israel in the event of detachment from the Iranian leadership of Hezbollah and an Israeli-Iranian war.

## Yemen

Yemen has a fast-changing situation. This month, the tension between the UAE and Saudi Arabia increased considerably. Also, Houthis are still in there, concreted their regime religio-legitimately. They have ballistic missiles supplied from Iran, and it seems they still don't use everything at once, but use it at the will of Iran. An unleashed Yemen may intensify civil war, very bloodily, therefore it will spill into full blown war in red sea as well. In the event of the cessation of Iranian money to the Houthis' leadership, they may try to employ piracy tactics and sea blockades to the Red Sea canals.

The West may have seen this event, and they are trying to establish some bases in Somaliland through Israel. Which is a good tactic to keep the Houthis in check, but it must also be included that this kind of event will be seen as a threat by China, as they have a heavy presence and military bases in Djibouti. Somaliland has a direct border with Djibouti and Ethiopia. In both regions, China and Iran have an alliance, and the proxies are handled by Iran.

## Palestine

Currently, there is an ongoing conflict in Gaza that seems to be never-ending without an end goal for both sides. There are some peace talks, but Hamas, which is mainly supplied and trained by Iran, will not be likely to accept the terms. One main difference in the axis of resistance between Hamas (in general, Palestinian establishments) is that Hamas is a Sunni organisation.

They have, perhaps, the most neo-modern city guerrilla warfare experience in the world. And still can inflict damage to the most technologically advanced armies of the world. They are openly supported by the current Iranian regime, and the support may be considerably increased by the PMF cells in a future Middle East conflict event. There is one more thing to be considered in Palestine.

Palestine is composed of two parts: Gaza and the West Bank. The West Bank is bureaucratically both tied to Israel and the civilian authority of Hamas. While Gaza is purely under the Hamas military wing's control. Hence, the conflict is go



on in the military wing of Hamas, not the civilian bureaucracy.

Hamas has three ideological tendencies: Modern Islamism (Turkey-backed), fundamentalist militaristic wing (openly backed by Iran), and a wild card, socialist Islamic wing, which is rooted inside the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO), hence the civilian bureaucratic side of west bank.

## **Rest of the world**

**T**here are many Shia orders that is bound to the Iranian leadership, these are residing as sleeping cells in Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and other Gulf countries. Iran also has an intellectual network over the other states. But there are also some ongoing ideological clashes within the Shia network. With the ongoing wars in middle east, struggles in Iran and the pressure from the West, it is inevitable that something big is going to happen. The real question is when, and what can come after.

Shia network is interwoven in many countries, in many forms. The Shia network is fundamentally different from the Sunni network in terms of conflict and peace politics. Luckily enough, there were many pupils of Mullah-opponent Shia resides in the West and work as advisors. Still, the Western politicians need to look beyond the pro or anti Mullah style,, because Shia is a movement that needs a powerful charismatic leader, and it does not matter if it comes from the right or left part of the political spectrum. Still, these

leaders will have the power of spiritually attached people, which may be used by the biggest armies of the world that die for a spiritual cause, not a materialistic one.

With that being said, the essay will be focusing on to the potential candidates of the post-Mullah Iran. The post-regime in here does not mean that Mullahs will be gone all over Iran. Shia need Mullahs, but they are not exactly in the highest chain of politics. Therefore, there could be other Mullah ideologies that can replace the current one as well, maybe a more fundamentalist or a more moderate one.

## **Iranian imperative against Grand Ayatollahs and the New Middle East**

**T**here are many seen and unseen oppositions to the current regime. Therefore, some of them are good candidates to replace the Mullah regime. On top of that, there are many possibilities for a paradigm change. It could be hard or soft, fast or slow. How the darkest hour of the Mullahs will end is the question that will be answered.

Early 2026 protest in Iran gathered a lot of attention trough country, some of the sources in the USA and the West say that it might be the biggest uprising of the people towards the Mullahs. While speculated as an economic crisis response to the government, it might be something different. Iran was under

heavy blockades and incredibly high inflation in the last couple of decades; it is nothing new. Once started rolling, it is hard to stop the rock. The Islamic Sisyphus of Iran try to fight its way. And they need a new kickstarter to stop the rolling. There should be a war that fuels the economy and unites the people. But the war is a two-sided coin; it never goes as expected. The Middle East is brewing and needs a new conflict. Which will propagate either towards Tehran or from Tehran.

- There are many forces in Iran that need to be kept an eye on, some of the main ones are; Mullahs
- Shah Faction
- Azeris/Turks
- Kurds
- Mojahedin-e-Khalq (MEK)

## Mullahs

The current iron fist rulers of Iran are the Mullah regime, which emerged as a counter-revolution to shah revolution. Promising a better, freer and safer rule than shah, in the last 50 years, the Mullah regime come to the same level as politburo of the Soviets. Provide safety, but at the cost of diminishing the Western democratic values of the people.

Ideologically adherents of Shia Islam, and Vilayat-e Faqih, the Mullah regime is a stronghold not for itself but for the whole Shia network. The main reason why they are still in power is a very simple thing that the old Shah couldn't see. While the peasants of kings fight in

the castle to protect the king, knights of the emperor fight in the vassals to influence of the empire. Iran, as the sole Shia empire, is not a place that can be protected from its own borders. It is ethnically fragile, in the middle of a crossroads, and has a lot of important resources that make it a good prey. So, they raised Shia militia armies in all of middle east and Southwest Asia. At the same time, they raised, but rushed, incredible intellectuals to concretise the ideas of the Islamic Republic. Still, they couldn't protect their influence when they faced the individualistic hyper consumerism that flies through wireless channels to mobile supercomputers of the common, ignorant man.

They have the support of the Islamic guards in the country, intelligence of the Quds force, and almost a million loyal, modern, and battle trained, militia Shia militia across middle east. The problem with these forces is that there is also a different school of Shia that has been explained in the previous section. The other ideological faction is, despite the Western view of quite school, more despotic and fanatical. Therefore, have its own army at the size of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), the PMF.

## Shah faction

The Shah faction is very prominent on social media. The current, proclaimed, shah is Raza Pahlavi. He is residing in Washington DC and has joined many interviews. He seems to have a lot of backup from the Western

media and some of the American politicians. Still, he himself does not possess any power like a militia or a network. His main power comes from the US; hence, he might be a henchman of the US government as an asset. This could be used very cleverly, as some people in Iran are also okay with the bringing back of the Shah, even though the current one does not have the same glory as his father. He is a joker card that Western powers held in hand in case there are no suitable candidates for the next Iranian regime. But for the attention of the reader, a weak friend for a country like Iran is much more dangerous than a strong enemy for it.

## **Azeris/Turks**

**B**etween 20%-25% of Iran comprises various Turkic ethnic groups. Most of them consist of South Azerbaijani Turks and focus on the northwestern part of Iran. They are in very close contact with Azerbaijan and have a strong, disciplined network compared to the other groups. In recent years, the separatist movement of South Azerbaijan is also increased, which can be seen on the streets or in the gatherings in stadiums of Tabriz. They also have a strong adherence to the current Turkish government and expect some help in a turning of events. They are disciplined and have a good bureaucracy that is ready to create a new state immediately, therefore, can be used as a buffer zone between Turkey-Caucasus and the Iranian highlands. There is one complication currently. Azerbaijan, hence, South Azerbaijan, have a very

strong relationship with Israel. Which creates a contrast between Turkey. While South Azerbaijan try to be in the balance of both nations and reciprocally expects the same thing from both of them, eventually they will need to choose one as a saviour in the upcoming troubled times.

## **Kurds**

**T**he third biggest ethnic group in Iran, after Iranians and Turks, is the Kurdish people. They compose between 8%-15% of Iran, mainly focused on the western borders of the country. They are also using guerrilla tactics through organisations such as KCK and PJAK to strike Iran from time to time, where there are also other organizations in different views like Komala and KDPI. There is a big tension between Mullahs and Kurds, and a fundamental division between the Kurdish people. Kurds are a tribal people of the Middle East. They don't have a strong bureaucratic establishment (besides Iraq), and they also don't have a common language between all Kurdish people. For example, Iranian Kurds mostly speak Sorani, Gorani, and other Southern Kurdish languages contrast to the Kurmanji of Turkish and Iraqi Kurds. Therefore, there are two main forces of Kurdish people in Iran, first comes from communist rooted KCK, and the second is the more conservative faction of KDPI. Mind that Southern Azerbaijani people have a very bad relationship with Kurds, especially with KDPI and Komala, since the Sulduz pogrom. KCK, PJAK, and, inherently, some aspect of Komala is on the terror watch list of Turkey. Which,

these movements of the said groups probably won't be tolerated by Turkey. Turkey may use the movement of leftist Kurdish parties as a casus belli for the attacks on SDF and other Kurdish groups in the Middle East, on the pretext that the groups will help Iranian Kurds.

## Mojahedin-e-Khalq

One of the black boxes of the Iranian political climate that the media is not, and I think purposely, broadcasting or making news about. MEK is a leftist-Islamist establishment that has a deeply rotted history with Iran. They are operating as a sleeping cell form in Iran, have an army of thousands that is trained for revenge for almost over 40 years, and are sworn enemies of the Mullahs, maybe even more hated than Israel by them. They have a strong bureaucratic establishment, have a lot of funding, and the backing of the West. Current head, Maryam Rajavi, has made the MEK from a classical leftist cell-based militia to a silent political powerhouse that prepares for the throne of Iran.

Rajavi is very active in DC and has good support from France. They also have their headquarters in Albania, which can be thought of as a small city. Quds force is especially interested in MEK and frequently raids MEK cells or assassinates their members. Furthermore, MEK is acting as an espionage tool for the West. Iranian nuclear program and its credentials are exposed by MEK agents to the West. MEK has its own bureaucratic council and promulgated themselves as the

government in exile of Iran. They have good relationships with Israel and want to abolish the nuclear programs of Iran (ever since they have exposed them), which is on par with the requests of the US from Iran. The MEK and its governmental body National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), have a high correlation, per se, a more westernised one, with the Free Syrian Army (FSA) and the Syrian National Coalition (SNC). Which also had support from west hence was ready for a sudden takeover.

## Possible scenarios

With ongoing tensions, conflicts and global dynamics, it is no surprise that something would happen to the mullah regime. While there are many possibilities spoken of, a war is necessary as a last stand for both Iran and Israel. On top of that, for the new order of the Middle East, which could be the catalyst for the whole world, a big war is necessary. This war could happen in two main ways;

- A joint invasion of Iran by the US and anti-mullah allies
- A civil war started by the separatist groups of Iran and supported logistically by the non-state actors, with the help of Western intelligence.

Either way, it would be hard to see a confrontation between Israeli and Iranian soldiers, but as discussed in this whole paper, Iran has its proxies, which will start an asymmetrical warfare



towards Israel and will try to seize power both in Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrain and Lebanon.

One of the possible scenarios for the war is shown in the bullet points. After the scenario, the endgame for the Mullahs will be discussed.

- With the forced abduction and changes in the Venezuelan government, energy and logistic support for Iran, China and Russia will start to weaken.
- The USA is trying to seize Greenland to secure other waterways, which may create a shadow fleet route between China, Russia, and Iran.
- As Russia still goes into the meatgrinder of Ukraine, the way to possibly change the tempo of their war would be increasing the theatre, hence Europe may see a small operation towards Baltics first.
- Support from Russia to Iran will decrease drastically.
  1. The Caucasus way to Iran is already blocked and sealed by the anti-Russian imperatives of Azerbaijan and Georgia.
  2. Armenia is also trying to normalise its relationship with Turkey and Azerbaijan, which shows that they will, soon, leave the alliance with Russia and will turn towards west.
- As the Syrian government cleared Aleppo from the SDF, they will move on to northern Syria.
- SDF will try to defend itself for some time and will be strategically

supported by some of its pseudo-allies until it diverts its forces to Iraq.

- After Iran civil war starts, the USA and Israel will stop supporting the SDF in Syria and will focus on Iran proper.
- The civil war will go on 2 phase;
  1. Every movement, including separatists, will work towards toppling the Mullah regime
  2. After the Mullah regime finishes, there will be a bigger struggle for the usurpation of the government
- Tensions between Azeris, Iranians and Kurds will increase, and clashes will turn towards it.
- South Azerbaijan will be created as a buffer zone with the help of Turkey and Azerbaijan.
- After South Azerbaijan is created, Turks will support Iranians against the Kurds.
- When the first phase of civil war happens, and before the creation of the South Azerbaijan buffer state, SDF will try to go to support the Kurds in Iran via northern Iraq.
- As the SDF will try to integrate with other Kurdish establishments, PMF will declare war on both northern Iraq and SDF, overall, most of the leftists' Kurdish establishments.
- Mullahs will try to seize southern Iraq (in the name of spreading of the Islamic Revolution) with the help of SDF, and the Shia power balance will turn towards the Najaf school in the long term.

- At this time, China and Russia will try to help Iran and the most probable way would be that Russia will try to do an operation towards Kazakhstan to open a corridor to Iran.

While there will be many things that ought to happen and will happen, the focus of the essay is not the speculation of how the Iranian civil war could happen, but who could come to the Iranian regime after a war. Or even for a soft power change.

The most probable candidates for the post-Mullah regime would be a moderate Islamic government, which already exists in its elements and will allow exiled parties of Iran to return to the republic, or the counter-revolution made by the MEK faction, which has a very good relationship with the West.

The reason why the Shah faction is not discussed is that they are not liked by the ethnic minorities in Iran and certainly will not be accepted by conservatives in the country. If the Shah were tried, the remaining Iran (besides ethnic minority lands) would surely fall into a second civil war between the Iranian people, which would be catastrophic and would take years. This will decrease the stability and security of the oil areas, Persian Gulf and the pathway from Indus Valley to Europe. The first buffer for the mass migration of Indian drought will be gone, and controlling the future immigration flow from Indus Valley to the West will be hard.

A moderate Islamic republic may bring stability to region and may prepare for a

further soft power change in Iran. Still, it is highly unlikely that the Mullah regime will give its power to the other factions without a hard clash. One of the examples can also see in the Islamic revolution. When Shah agreed to include Mullahs and other opposition elements of the state, the Mullahs saw this as a weakness of the Shah and claimed that Iran belonged to them, and they wouldn't stop until getting full power. This trend also followed when the new regime was formed, and when Iraq attacked Iran. The Mullah regime is resilient, idealistic and rebellious. They would rather to fight to the death instead of handing the regime. And the most probable way to change the regime is to go through a hard civil war.

In the case of a civil war, the Iranian side would need a good leader. They are not backed or have any force by anyone. Azeris got Turks, and Kurds got SDF and other guerrilla establishments. Persians, on the other hand, are divided between the supporters of the Mullahs and the supporters of the anti-Mullah forces. Shah, by himself, is not liked by minorities, and has a reputation within the ethnic anti-Mullah Persians as they see it like the Shah has abandoned them to the Mullahs and also, he is not up to his father's ideals, basically a western tool, where they are not that wrong. How can a person, who did not experience Iran in his political youth, uncorrelated with the common people's struggle, and one who lived most of his life in luxury at western world would know about Iran that changed in the last 50 years? Will the

Iranian people accept him as a leader when he is shunned by every force in the world as an incompetent leader, and he does not have any influence over even the Iranian diaspora besides social media?

But there is still a faction, which the people are afraid of, that has also bad memories, but accepts that it is a powerful force. One that has already compiled a shadow cabinet for the last 30 years, and is eagerly, at the same time patiently, waiting for their return. They are ready to seize the opportunity, but in the end, the opportunity is not taken but given to the cause.

## A shadow for kingmaker

**M**EK is a clandestine operation most people in the Western world are not aware of. They were a powerful force in the Islamic revolution; perhaps the real reason for the revolution to succeed was the MEK, and they were preparing for the counter-revolution. Mullahs see the danger of the MEK to them and tried to finish them off at the start of the political race. Executed thousands of them and banished the remaining one. Fueled by hatred and betrayal, MEK was on the side of Iraq in the Iraq-Iran War of 80s. Most of the operatives and guerilla of this Islamic-Marxist establishment continue their operations in secrecy, abroad. They now have a massive network of economy, bureaucracy, intelligence and military, where they have small cities dedicated to

themselves to train, to trade and to learn about the opportunities that are being created for them.

While they are not the ideal candidate for the upcoming 'civil war', they may be the only organisation that is ready to replace the Mullahs. No other opposing faction has the same preparedness and connections as them. The scary part is, they are still staying silent, while Maryam Rajavi travels all around the world, evolving his organization from a Marxist guerrilla to, well established military, and created a full government in exile. They could be a candidate to keep the Iranians by themselves, at least, in the civil war. Thus, the war could be between Kurds-Turks-Iranians instead of Kurds-Turks-Mullahs-Shahs-Democrats-Moderates-Fundamentalists...

This also gives a good buffer zone for the west, as when Eastern Iran falls, Pakistan and Afghanistan are ready to take over the Baluchistan part. Russia and China might increase their influence in the region in the presence of a fragmented Persian nation. The National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), which is the governmental body of the MEK, could be used by Western forces to replace the Mullahs in an upcoming civil war, to solidify Persian unity and not give influence to China and Russia.

In Iran, MEK could be an alternative solution, and maybe even a concrete one. But what will happen to the Axis of Resistance if the MEK comes to power in the state of civil war? Do they have any kind of influence over the Axis? Will they

be enemies, or partners? In the last section, it will be discussed how the Axis of Resistance will be used, and will act, in the case of a sudden power change in favor of MEK.

## **Dream of Ali Shariati in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

**A**li Shariati, an Iranian intellectual, was the modern pillar of the Islamic revolution, but the Mullahs divorced themselves from his ideas after getting the power. The black one, once again, toppled the red one in the Iranian world. The curse of God's shadow still followed Iran even after the revolution of Shariati. Since the defeat of Chaldiran, Shia Islam saw the importance of the institutionalisation of the establishment. And the Shia establishment still comes to today, thanks to Mullah's divorce. For MEK, Shariati was a hero. The red Shiism, combined with Islamic Marxism, was the sacred chemical wedding of the post-Shah Iran. Perhaps they presented it as a cure for the people. Immediately after the revolution, MEK was hit by the cold, harsh truth that shines its light on the cultural bridge countries of the world. A melting pot, a way between civilisations, needs a concrete ruler, with even deeper establishments. After the defeat of MEK against the Mullahs, they have finally understood the importance of a bureaucratic institution over a cell organization. A government cannot be cell, but can only be a whole organismus.

Therefore, Shia Islamic world may not be as simple as Red and Black turbans. It is a Persian carpet that consist different motifs and many colours. Using the ideas of Shariati for starting a revolution is smart and effective. A spark consists of a simple frequency, but after it starts burning the wood, the colour of the flames is not constant. The supply must be available to feed every spectrum of light inside the flame. One cannot undo the flame once it is set up, but can change the enlightenment it by changing the amount and variety of the wood.

Maryam Rajavi saw that the pure Red Shiism is done, and in firsthand experience experienced the defeat of it like Shah Ismail. MEK, after the transformation of Maryam, changed its course to an institution. This institution is a dangerous one, which combines red and black within itself. They have experience with cell, militia structures, which directly resemble the current cells of the Axis of Resistance, and they also have experience in building and governing an establishment. On the other hand, Mullahs are ideologs and intellectuals. They rule the axis of resistance by ideology and help them with intelligence. The dirty work and war are done by the militants of the Axis of Resistance. MEK had experienced the same struggles as them and could understand the need for an external force to help them. Like how they embraced Iraq for their ideals, groups in the Axis of Resistance are also embracing the Mullahs, not just because ideologically, as seen in the Najaf school part, but



because they are the only ones that help them through their pursuit of the ideals.

Even with the lights of these truths, can one say that MEK would be able to take the torch of the Mullahs, to lead the Axis of Resistance?

To complete the context of the colours, one must say that there is also one more movement in Iran, which is represented by Green, and has been talked about throughout the essay. The Green movement is the moderate faction of the Mullahs, but most of the leaders are either in jail, killed or exiled. Mullahs are the representation of the pitch black, and they are, and will, rule with an iron fist until the end; therefore won't tolerate any other faction, nor go without a war. The MEK is the sworn enemy of the Mullahs, but the Green movement may have some compromise and make a deal with the devil to also get rid of the ultra-traditionalist faction, which rules Iran today. From the latest Iranian protests, it has been seen that there are still millions of adherents of the Mullahs, and they need a safeguard if the Mullahs are gone. With the upcoming MEK, which will benefit from the fight between Greens and Blacks, they can assume the power after helping the Greens to rise against the Blacks to create a new fundamentalist schism. In the midst of chaos, MEK may have a comeback to unite the Persians, with their unbroken institution, and offer a new breath, maybe a reconciliation.

While the Western world currently can't have relationships with Mullahs, MEK still can make contact and have a

relationship with the Greens. Greens will be one of the key points of the communication between hardcore factions of the Axis of Resistance and the MEK.

Therefore, the focus will be given to five factions of the Axis of Resistance. As a reminder, the establishments in Bahrain have not been added as they can be ruled by the Shia Arab clans of the Gulf, and they don't need a fundamental ideology but a dialogue, which MEK, presumably, already possesses.

- Hamas
- PMF
- Liwa Fatemiyoun/Zainabiyoun
- Houthis
- Hezbollah

## Hammas

The MEK can make, and already has, relationships with the PLO, which directly opens the gates to talk with Hamas. Even though one may think that the PLO and Hamas are at odds, they have a relationship through the Alliance of Palestinian Forces (APF). PLO and MEK both started as Islamic socialist militia organisations, and they have both evolved to the well concreted establishments because of the needs of the modern world. Hamas, fundamentally a Sunni organisation, is still attached to Iran. If MEK becomes the government of Iran, they will definitely decrease the military cooperation with Hamas. In this aspect, Shia leadership on the Palestinian issue may just be handed overed Turkey, not just geopolitically but

militarily as well. In the case of MEK takeover of Iran, the Civil-Military Coordination Centre (CMCC) in the region may be really established as the opposing pressure of Iran would be gone. Thus, Turkey may also benefit from the relationship between Hamas, and consequently, NATO would have a door in Hamas with both MEK (politically) and Turkey (military). The issue with MEK is that, if the Mullahs are gone, the support of Hamas may still be supported from Pakistan and PMF, which are more aggressive than Iran. Still, a good play that includes Turkey may limit the Pakistani influence of Hamas. While MEK can't tame Hamas, they can pressure PLO, and Turkey at the same time tame Hamas.

## PMF

**M**ost independent organisation in the Axis of Resistance is the PMF. Since they are fundamentally established by the Najaf school, and follow Arabian Shiism over the Iranian one, a change of the absolute ruling of the Mullahs may also be a catalyst for the change of the operations in PMF. If the Mullahs let loose the cords of PMF, the organisation will start to move along the orders of the Najaf school instead of Iran. Therefore, one must not forget that the MEK did act like a mercenary of Saddam against their own country and at the same time against the Iraqi people. For PMF, Saddam is the epitome of enemy, and MEK, which represents the red Shia, is both ideologically and realistically a traitor for both their own people and religion. Thus, the MEK is an arch enemy for the PMF as

well, and in the case of governmental change in favor of the MEK in Iran will immediately cease the ties between the new Iranian government and the PMF. Not that the MEK is not open to a relationship with the PMF, but otherwise, the PMF in that situation will try to coerce the Iraqi government into a Shia totalitarian country, worse than Mullah Iran. And there won't be a civil war in Iraq, as most of the Iraqi Arabs are already Shia, and northern Iraq is de facto a Kurdish country. But PMF itself is a ruthless and experienced military. They won't allow any uprising of minorities, therefore won't allow Kurdish militias to pass over their lands towards Iran. Those may act like a Shia North Korea in the Middle East. They will not try to expand Shia ideology like Iran, as the Najaf school are opponents of Velayat al-Faqih and adherents of Quiet Jihad (non-militaristic in some aspect). But they have a very strong fortress mentality as well. They won't meddle with other countries' interactions, and they won't allow the meddle with theirs. PMF will be a good source to create a neo-Westphalian Middle Eastern country. Sistani (head of Najaf school, and father of PMF) is already making ideological preparations for the upcoming changes. One of the most striking ones is that he has issued many fatwas against state intervention in religion, such as saying that people should not follow religious figures who earn money from the state. Which is, in essence, to direct the people into Najaf school's imams and indoctrinate them opposed to state. PMF, and Najaf school, is loosely connected to

Iraq and usually acts on the orders of Sistani.

There is also one more thing to consider inside the PMF and Iraq. The Sadrist faction, which is quite powerful and more chauvinist than the Sistani faction, exist. Al-Sadr was the founder of the Mahdi Army of Iraq. Which was an ultra-militant Shia army that fought against ISIS. And after some time, his faction entered politics, contrary to al-Sistani, who is usually in the quiet school and repelled himself from politics. The Sadrist faction gained the highest amount of votes in the 2021 election of Iraq, which followed the resignation of al-Sadr from politics, at least in front of people, and the collapse of the Iraqi government. Al-Sadr still holds the power of many soldiers and has connections all over the government. He is not the head of Shia and religiously does not have the same amount of authority and power as Al-Sistani, but still a formidable foe for him. Therefore, he is also more brutal and nationalist, who will fight for the Iraqi cause till the end.

## **Liwa**

### **Fatemiyoun/Zainabiyoun**

**L**iwa armies are, as said before, predominantly composed of Afghan and Pakistani soldiers. They are more fundamentalist and savage than the other parts of the Axis of Resistance. They may have gone to help to save Mullahs as they are created by the Qom school. One must understand the difference between Qom and Najaf as the

difference of Soviets and China. Both schools are, in the essence, adherents of the same truth, but in practice they have different ways to convey the message. Qom school is more interwoven with reality and will try to spread and revolutionise every nation, while the Najaf school are more exclusive to the Arabic part of the Shia world, specifically Iraq and Basra. Liwa armies will only follow orders of the Qom school and may fight against MEK in Iran, while PMF won't go outside of Iraq. If Liwa armies join the ranks of IRGC, the civil war may be very brutal and took another turn as Liwa armies also possess threat to both Afghanistan and Pakistan. Their joining of the war may force these countries to open a relationship with MEK and ally towards them. This could make an unexpected turn in the Middle East as MEK would be a new channel of west to communicate with Afghanistan and Pakistan. On the other hand, if the Liwa armies go over Iran and start an insurgency directly in the Baluchistan region, this could lead to a year-long conflict between Afghanistan and Pakistan, primarily between the confrontation of the Liwa armies and Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan. Which may also lead to a conflict between the Doebendi movement and Pakistan government.

## **Houthis**

**C**ivil war in the Yemen finally became a dialectical one with the collapse of the southern front. Right now, the war is a direct Iran vs Saudi Arabia, which reflects a Shia vs Sunni war. If the MEK

comes to power, Houthis will still be dependent on the Iranian intelligence, as they don't have the means of maritime intelligence. They do possess missiles, which are supplied by Iran regularly, but if the MEK ceases the supply of weapons, they may not be able to withstand the Israeli-US pressure too much. Still, it is a good idea to use the MEK to supply some degree of land-based weapons to let Houthis fight with Saudi-based factions, as giving Yemen to Saudi control means to giving all the Red Sea and oil waterways to Saudi control. This much power shall not be given to a country that also has a significant Shia minority in the Basra border. PMF may try to seize the Basran Shia people of Saudi Arabia and may damage the oil supply of the world. Most of the oil fields in the Gulf area are found in the Shia majority lands, and PMF may be disturbed by the potential Saudi oil empire to secure both gulf and red sea roads.

The current Yemen situation is a complex one. While other Shia factions of the Axis of Resistance have the same Shia school (Twelver), Houthis are Zaydi Shia, which essentially can be seen as a different Sect. The MEK can be a better partner for Houthis than the Iranian Mullahs as they have a more relaxed and general Shia view than the Qom school. They won't try to impose the culture of Twelver Shia on the Yemeni land. Therefore, if they support Yemen with maritime intelligence and land-based weapons but not with missiles, the Yemeni threat to the Israeli area would decrease, and the pressure on the Saudi government could

be maintained. On top of that, by controlling the maritime intelligence of the Houthis, the MEK can choose which ships to be disturbed, and the West, at the same time benefit from false flag operations and intelligence. Therefore, with the help of the MEK, Houthis, and the Shia people of Yemen, a more moderate version. If the traditional Zaydi scholars may topple the Houthis in Yemen, the Yemen civil war will essentially end without Saudi Arabia and Iran increasing their sphere of influence to the Red Sea.

## Hezbollah

Hezbollah is the most established of the Axis of Resistance after Iran. It is between a proxy and a sovereign state (and this part focuses on the Lebanese Hezbollah). Hezbollah is an organisation that has a more powerful army than the Lebanese Armed Forces; they also have a banking system that works separately from the Lebanese one. Almost all of the Shias are living under Hezbollah authority, and most of the government is also composed of Hezbollah elements. Lebanon also have a long history with socialist policies and has a strong relationship with the MEK. One interesting point in Lebanon is that 1/3 is Shia, almost 1/3 is Sunni, and most of the remaining population is Christian. Hezbollah is in a crisis after the loss of Nasrallah and in constant pressure from Israel. One of the options for Israel to eliminate the threat of Hezbollah is to attack and occupy southern Lebanon, which itself has international and national consequences. Israel is already



in a dire situation militarily; the tool of Gaza is ever-increasing. Even though they inflicted chaos inside the Hezbollah, if they were to attack Lebanon, most probably all of the Hezbollah and other Sunni factions will join forces as crisis also creates leaders. Therefore, if the supplier of the Hezbollah in this war were the Sadrist movement in Iraq, they would be even more fundamentalist and dangerous. If the MEK came to power, they may allocate more moderate or Islamic Socialist leaders to Hezbollah. Inside the party, there will be a years-long power struggle, and the notion of attacking Israel will probably fade away. If Israel helps the MEK, covertly, to seize the leadership of Hezbollah, they would eliminate the northern dangers for them, and the MEK would have a firm grip on the Axis of Resistance, and the dangers of a power shift of the Axis of Resistance from Iran to Iraq would be minimised.

## **General verdict of the MEK**

**T**he MEK is a Trojan horse that is waiting to reinfiltate its long-awaited home. In a hypothetical scenario where the MEK seizes the government of Iran in the upcoming civil war, the establishment also has a chance to maintain a relationship with the Axis of Resistance compared to the Shah. Axis of Resistance is a group that won't work with the West as openly as the Shah itself. But they can still work covertly and softly with the MEK. MEK also had militia training, not fully bound to west and has

a strong mentality. These attributes make them perfect to be moulded in a strong regime that will play a balance between east and west, open Iran to the world economy again, and most importantly, will create a buffer zone that will be the first stronghold for the anticipated mass immigration from the Indus Valley.

Certain groups won't accept the MEK leadership in the Shia world, and the most prominent of them is the PMF, or in other terms, the Najaf school. Still, if the MEK comes to power and plays towards al-Sistani to win over al-Sadr, Iraq can also turn into a new neo-Westphalian Shia state, which will be a prototype for the religiously sacred states of the future. Thus, the MEK can take the leash of the Axis of Resistance, make them a more talkable and beneficial side in the Middle Eastern geopolitics, at the same time maintaining order in Iran.

The arrival of the MEK in the Iranian government will compel the ethnic Persian people to unite and at least accept a form of government. The MEK, in this aspect, is the only faction that is capable of creating a functioning government, en masse, following a takeover, which eliminates a risk of counter-revolution considerably.