

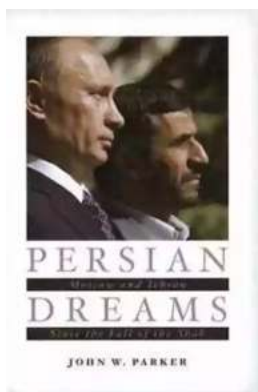
Moscow And Tehran Since The Fall Of The Shah

Since the fall of the Shah in 1979, the relationship between Moscow and Tehran has undergone significant changes. This article explores the dynamics between the two capitals, the impact of historical events, and the current state of their collaboration.

The Historical Background

Iran and Russia, formerly known as the Soviet Union, have shared a longstanding relationship that dates back centuries. This relationship has been characterized by periods of cooperation, rivalry, and mutual interests.

During the reign of the Shah, Iran leaned toward closer ties with the West, which strained its relations with the Soviet Union. The Shah's regime was seen as pro-Western and a staunch ally of the United States. This prompted the Soviet Union to support various opposition groups within Iran.



Persian Dreams: Moscow and Tehran Since the Fall of the Shah

by John W. Parker (Kindle Edition)

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However, the situation changed dramatically after the 1979 Islamic Revolution, which saw the toppling of the Shah and the rise of Ayatollah Khomeini's regime. The revolution resulted in an ideological shift within Iran and a reevaluation of its foreign policy.

The Post-Revolutionary Era

After the revolution, Iran looked towards Moscow for support and cooperation. The Soviet Union, interested in gaining influence in the region, recognized the new regime and provided economic and military assistance. This marked a significant shift in their relationship as Iran sought to diversify its alliances beyond the West.

Throughout the 1980s, Iran and the Soviet Union engaged in numerous military and economic collaborations. Iran purchased arms and military equipment from Russia while the Soviet Union assisted Iran's nuclear program, which was still in its infancy.

However, this newfound partnership was not without its challenges. The Iran-Iraq war, which lasted from 1980 to 1988, played a crucial role in shaping the dynamics between Tehran and Moscow. While both countries supported Iran, the Soviet Union also maintained diplomatic ties with Iraq, resulting in a delicate balancing act.

The Fall of the Soviet Union

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 ushered in a new phase in the Moscow-Tehran relationship. The newly independent states that emerged from the former Soviet Union, such as Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan, became part of Russia's sphere of influence.

This territorial shift prompted Iran to adopt a cautious approach towards Moscow. Tehran viewed the expansion of Russian influence on its borders with skepticism, particularly in Azerbaijan, where a majority of the population is of Iranian descent. The two countries found themselves competing for influence in the Caucasus and Central Asia region.

The Contemporary Partnership

Since the 1990s, Moscow and Tehran have continued their economic and strategic engagement, albeit with changing dynamics. Both countries have faced international isolation and sanctions in recent years, leading them to seek common ground.

Russia has remained a key player in the negotiations surrounding Iran's nuclear program. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), also known as the Iran nuclear deal, was concluded in 2015 with the involvement of Russia as one of the negotiating parties. This diplomatic achievement signaled a growing convergence of interests between Moscow and Tehran.

Economically, Russia has become a vital trade partner for Iran. As Iran faced stringent international sanctions, Moscow stepped in to fill the void, expanding bilateral trade and investment ties.

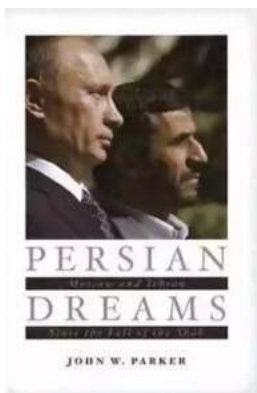
Moreover, both countries have shared strategic goals in the region, particularly in addressing the threat of terrorism and stabilizing the Middle East. Their joint military operations in Syria have showcased their willingness to collaborate on issues of mutual concern.

The Way Forward

The relationship between Moscow and Tehran has evolved significantly since the fall of the Shah. From a history marred by rivalry to a more collaborative partnership, the two capitals have found common ground on numerous fronts.

However, challenges persist, particularly with regards to differing priorities and geopolitical influences in the region. The Middle East remains a volatile and complex region, and the future of Moscow and Tehran's partnership will depend on their ability to navigate these uncertainties.

, the fall of the Shah in Iran brought about significant changes in the Moscow-Tehran relationship. Both capitals have moved past historical tensions and found areas of cooperation, be it economic, political, or strategic. As the region continues to evolve, the fate of their collaboration will be crucial in shaping the geopolitical landscape of the Middle East.



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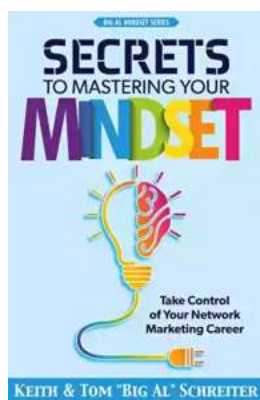
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Moscow's ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran underwent dramatic fluctuations following Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's triumphant return to Tehran in 1979. After a prolonged implosion, they fitfully expanded, shaped not only by the rush of

current events but by centuries of ingrained practices and prejudices. By summer 2006, as Iran forged ahead with its nuclear program and Shia-based forces flexed their muscles across the Middle East, Russian-Iranian relations again appeared to be on the threshold of an entirely new dynamic.

Drawing on firsthand interviews as well as primary and secondary sources, John Parker delineates Moscow's motives and approaches to dealing with the resurgent Tehran, weaving into the public record the recollections and analyses of Russian politicians, diplomats, and experts who dealt directly with Iran both under the Pahlavi monarchy and after the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Parker also emphasizes other touchstones of relations between the two countries, including their complex dealings in 1992 immediately after the Soviet Union's collapse and when they backed opposing sides in the civil war in Tajikistan yet nourished mutual interests on other issues. The depth of his analysis sheds light on the more recent repercussions of the September 11 terrorist attacks for Afghanistan and Iraq, for the Middle East as a whole, and for Iran's accelerating nuclear program.



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