

Iran's Dual Political Voice—Part Two

Does Iran's governing framework and prevailing religious ideology create mixed political messages for the West? Why is the Iranian leadership fixed on the notion of nuclear development and the eventual acquiring of a nuclear weapon? Is there reason to believe that Iran will use its growing Eurasian alliances to influence geopolitical outcomes in the Middle East? Does the Bible give us a future perspective for the people of Iran?

Iran plays a strategically important role in the Persian Gulf—economically and militarily—and because of its proximity to the Gulf States, Iran naturally acts as a critical geopolitical link between Eurasia and the West, and a stepping-stone to vital sea gates, such as the Suez Canal.

Consequently, the significance of Iran's geostrategic role and commercial link to the Gulf region is not lost on the rising Eastern powers of China and India, and the geopolitical value of these factors is certainly not overlooked by Russia. Especially as Russia is currently involved in a military and political conflict with Ukraine—a conflict that has certainly demonstrated Iran's strategic significance to Eurasia.

Now to better understand the measure of Iran's current military and economic roles, and to grasp its potential as a political partner with Eurasia, we need to take into account the historical roots of Iran's ties to China, India and also to Russia.

To do this we begin with China.

Interestingly, for China there are still lingering fears of Japan even today. Just as there are currently growing fears that other nations—like the United States—might attempt to isolate

and commercially threaten China. Leading to increasing tensions in the South China Sea, and bringing about a direct confrontation that would disrupt the trade of necessary goods to a population of more than one-billion people, and perhaps leading to a prolonged and escalating military conflict in Asia.

Making it reasonable to say that the controversial Nine-Dash Line (sometimes Eleven-Dash Line) may well be viewed by China as a means to establish a space or platform for a “New Ledo Road,” a road that is marked by the military stations that have been strategically placed throughout several islands of the South China Sea. Which ensure a protected trade route to the West and the Near East, which also reveals the strategic importance of Iran to Eurasia.

For we should keep in mind that Iran's ties with China take us back to the time of the ancient Silk Road, but in more recent times we see that China and Iran have signed a 25-year cooperation agreement that includes “political, strategic and economic” components, in the context that Iran also sees China as a future ally—economically and commercially—against the United States. Noting also that China is Iran's number one oil customer and trading partner, and a supplier of Iran's military technological assistance.

On top of this, China is a key player in helping Iran develop its nuclear program, while partnering economically to protect Iran from international sanctions and shielding Iran in the United Nations Security Council.

Bringing us then to Iran's relationship with India.

Which is also an ancient State.

For many centuries trade existed between the Indus Valley and Mesopotamia through the Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea, and for some time in the modern era Iran and India did have a common border prior to the India/Pakistan partition and India's independence in 1947. Iran is also the second-largest supplier of crude oil to India, and India is one of the largest investors in Iran's oil and gas industry. Noting, for example, that there is the strategic importance of the Iran-Pakistan-India pipeline and also the developing North-South Transport Corridor that will link India with Russia. (India is the world's 5th largest economy.)

Leaving us then to address Iran's relationship with Russia.

In an incident of history, similar to that of China, we see that when the German military advanced into the then Soviet Union in 1941, cutting off many supply lines to Russia by the following year, there remained only a few routes left to supply assistance to Russia, one of which was through the country of Iran.

It was called the Persian Corridor.

This made Iran a pivotal player in the region during the war as this route to Russia extended back around the Gulf States, through the Suez Canal and into the Mediterranean Sea, which made Egypt a critical State for [Russia's continued access to Europe and the Middle East](#). (The Suez Canal was nationalized by Egypt in July of 1956.)

From this historical standpoint, we should not think it peculiar when we hear political rhetoric coming from Russia today that resembles expressions related to the events of World War II. For example, Russia's response to NATO's continued enlargement, and involvement in Ukraine—calling them “Nazis”—tells us that Russia still has a lingering fear of Western Europe. Whether or not this is a warranted view, and despite the fact that Russia invaded Crimea in 2014 and

Ukraine in 2022, we cannot help but see that NATO expansion steps on a political nerve, and the result has made Russia determined to hammer out its own “nine-dash line” through eastern Ukraine and into Crimea.

In addition, Russia has also been cultivating a new military and political “Persian Corridor” with Iran. With significant consequences for the future of Türkiye (Turkey) and its continuing role in NATO.

Consequently, we should not find it surprising that Iran is reciprocal in its relationship with Russia. Not only as a reaction to sanctions, but as a means to bolster Iran's strategic alliance with Armenia in the Caucasus, and to work with Russia in Central Asia, Iraq and Syria. Enabling then Iran to play a more active part in a presently forming Eurasian colossus, while also allowing Iran to become an important partner to a greater Eurasian political and economic structure that may at some time in the future attempt to rival the West. Resulting in Egypt possibly becoming an extension or projection of Eurasian influence, and a necessary protectorate of Iran, Russia, India and China. (Part of Iran's influence is extended into Central Asia by means of the Persian (Farsi) language, as it is also dialectically spoken in Tajikistan and Afghanistan.)

Thus, we might say from a Eurasian point of view that geopolitical East meets West, and North meets South, generally at a point where the Suez Canal touches the Mediterranean Sea. Bringing us then to think about Iran's growing role in Eurasia, and the influence of its dual religiopolitical voice in the Near and Middle East.

For we see that Iran's relationship with Eurasia took on greater significance when Iran was invited and eventually inducted into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). In September of 2021 Iran became a member at the 21st Summit held in Tajikistan, having had observer status since 2005. Noting that this membership allows Iran to

take a seat at the table with the nations of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan and India as a full member of the SCO.

Making it worthwhile to think about the impact of this organization on the world, and its continuing evolution politically and economically, as Iran is now on board. Noting that Iran's membership—and its geostrategic location in the Near East—gives the SCO membership, and its related organizations, the potential to be off the charts in terms of their respective national influences and collective power to shape and reshape international alliances in the world. With the caveat being that some of these SCO States will remain a part of the Commonwealth of Independent States—formed in 1991 after the Soviet Union's collapse—and also the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), as well as the nations that make up BRICS and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). (The CIS and SCO both have observer status in the United Nations General Assembly.)

All of which relates to the planned expansion of the emerging market economies participating in BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), and the expected addition of more than a dozen countries, including Egypt and Iran. With Iran already having made formal application to be a part of what will likely become an economic powerhouse on its own accord. Having a potential GDP 30% larger than the United States, while representing more than 50% of the global population, and having control over 60% of known global gas reserves.

Making Iran an indispensable partner to a greater Eurasia as many of these countries have already created formal free trade agreements with the Eurasian Economic Union. Many of which are in the process of moving away from the US dollar as the leading currency in the world. As already we see China's yuan replacing the US dollar as the most traded currency in Russia.

Making economic sanctions on Iran to be less effective in the future.

Is it any wonder then that Iran refocused to an Asia-Oriented view with its "Look East" foreign policy that took root in the Ahmadinejad era in Iran.

Now, some geopolitical analysts might point out—and reasonably so—the hodgepodge nature of these unions and organizations and thereby conclude that these various alliances have little impact on the current world order.

However, it should be pointed out that all this can quickly change as a result of one important factor—the participation of Iran.

The reason for this is quite simple to understand.

It is because Iran creates a fundamental political and economic connection with Russia, China and India to the Near East, and by its geopolitical position near the Gulf States it also falls within the scope of the Belt and Road Initiative (also One Belt, One Road). This means that not only will Iran become an important participant in an East-based global economy, but it will change the nature of the OBOR to reflect a more diverse and expansive dimension to the concept of "Eurasia," one that can shape itself to comfortably operate outside the political and economic influence of the West. But there is something more to think about in regard to Iran's ties with China, India and Russia from the perspective of a greater Eurasia.

 **(Continued in part three of this series.)**
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