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# Made in West

A Study of the West's Role in the Iranian Revolution 1979

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# Abstract

Did the West – USA, UK, France and West-Germany – overthrow the Shah of Iran year 1979? Many Iranians believe so. Therefore the purpose of this thesis is to examine the role of the West in the Iranian revolution. The question which will be answered is: *what are the motives that talk for respectively against the statement that the West overthrew the Shah of Iran?*

The method used is motive analyzes which analyzes the motives for and against the statement above. Neorealism, which claims that states are the main actors in international relations and for them the survival is everything, is used as a theory.

The motives which have been analyzed in favor of the statement is that the Shah controlled the Persian Gulf oil, flirted with the Soviet Union, industrialized Iran and increased Iran's influence in the world, something which scared the West.

The motives against the statement are that the Shah was a friend of the West, stopped the influence of the Soviet Union in the Middle East, was important for Israel's security and that instability in Iran would increase the oil prices.

The conclusion is that the Shah was a threat against the security of West and therefore the West overthrew him in order to decrease Iran's power.

*Key words:* Iranian Revolution, Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, National Security, Neorealism, Motive analyzes

*To my beloved mother who taught me about love  
To my beloved father who taught me about strength*

*To all those women and men who have suffered and  
died for the cause of freedom, whose places never will  
be replaced*

*To my people, both inside and outside of my beloved  
Iran, who still today have not lost their hopes and  
fight for freedom even though executions and torture  
pursue them*

# Preface

Today, more than 28 years has past since the overthrowing of the last Shah of Iran, and creation of a ruthless regime called the Islamic republic (of Iran) took place. A regime that is responsible for the death of more than several hundred thousands of the Iranian people.

The takeover of the power in Iran by the mullahs was a catastrophe for Iran and the rest of the world. Since day one, the Islamic regime in Iran has suppressed the Iranian people and supported islamic terrorism against democracy and freedom. Today they are trying to attain nuclear-weapons in order to spread their inhuman values to the rest of the world. Khomeini said several times that the Islamic revolution and its value must be spread to other countries, if so with violence.

The reason for the collapse of the 2500 year old Iranian monarchy is today believed by many to be very simple; that the Shah of Iran was a dictator overthrown by his own people. Personally, I do not believe this statement is correct. I believe that the Shah of Iran was overthrown by the West – mainly by the USA and United Kingdom – because he was a man with great visions for Iran and achieved a lot of his dreams for Iran. Iran was getting strong during the Shah's leadership and this scared the West.

As an Iranian student, living in exile far away from my beloved motherland, I feel it is my duty to once and for all show the world, especially the academic one, that the West overthrew my Shah and destroyed Iran.

When I decided to write about this heartbreaking subject I also accepted to go through a lot of physical and mental pain. Physically because it was a lot to read, reflect over and analyze. Mentally because I was aware of the fact that writing this thesis would make me angry and upset. How could I not get angry when I was writing about what happened to my country? But I am truly happy because I could write this thesis, as it is something I wanted to do since childhood and which is something I had done an enormous research in.

I want to use this opportunity to thank my family, especially my mother and father. Without their support this thesis would never be completed. I also want to thank my tutor Dr Martin Hall who gave me many good advices and who have taught me many things in International Relations. Finally, I also want to thank my friends who mentally supported me and kept me going on with my writing.

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*Malmö 2007*

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# 1 Introduction

The Islamic republic of Iran's controversial nuclear program and uranium enrichment have made all the spotlights turning their angle towards the cat formed 1 648 000 km<sup>2</sup> large country in the Middle East, Iran. Researchers, journalists and politicians from all over the world try to understand the Islamic regime, their behavior and its relation to the West, especially the USA. In order to do that these people go back to the history and examine the reasons of the Iranian revolution, which took place in 1979. In their attempt to understand this revolution, which is the foundation of the Islamic republic, they often neglect the international political reasons that played an important role.

Almost all reasons of this revolution are examined, although one can discuss if the results are correct or not. But no serious attempts, especially in the academic world, have been done to examine and analyze the last reason I mentioned in the previous paragraph. Months before the Iranian revolution many Iranians started to talk about that the West, with US and UK as main countries, is overthrowing the Shah of Iran because he had become too "cocky". Even today similar statements can be heard. My aim is therefore to examine this statement more deeply and with a scientifically approach.

The result of this thesis will not only clarify and create better understanding of the Iranian revolution, but will also illuminate an important perspective of the Iran-West relations, which today is very topical. It will also contribute to a better understanding of the security issues in the Middle East, especially during the Cold War.

It is my honor to be one of the first ones that examine and analyze this matter more deeply and scientifically.

## 1.1 Purpose, Question at Issue and Limitations

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the West's role in the Iranian revolution 1979. I will not examine other reasons, which are claimed to have caused the revolution because of limited space. Therefore, in respect to the purpose of this thesis, my concrete question will be: *what are the motives that talk for respectively against the statement that the West overthrew the Shah of Iran?* This thesis, which is a case study, will have an explaining ambition.

In order to answer this question I will use *motive analyzes* as method and *Neorealism* as my theory. Both method and theory will be discussed in separate chapters and will constitute another limitation of my thesis.

## 1.2 Hypothesis

I believe that the Iranian revolution was created by the West because they saw Iran as a threat against their security during the reign of the Shah. The overthrowing of the Shah would destabilize and weaken Iran.

## 1.3 Definitions

To better understand the thesis some notion must be defined. When it says something about the “Shah” or “Shah of Iran” in this thesis, it is referred to Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, who was the Emperor of Iran from 1941-1979. Shah is the Persian word for King. It is also important to know for this thesis that the Shah of Iran took the important decisions in foreign policy based on information from among others the foreign ministry, SAVAK<sup>1</sup> and the military.

Another important notion in my thesis is the “West”. The word West does have many definitions but in this particular case I use the term to talk about USA, UK, France and West Germany. This definition can be questioned but I will clarify here that this notion is used on only these four countries because when asking someone from the Middle East about the West, these countries are mostly mentioned. With the name of these countries I do not mean the people, but the governments and those who make the international political decisions for these countries. The West will because of their similarities in their security matters be seen as one nation in this thesis.

A third important notion, which should be defined, is “revolution”. I define revolution as a change of the form of government.

## 1.4 Disposition

The second chapter in this thesis is the theoretical part called *Theory: Neorealism*. In the third chapter the notion national security is defined. The fourth chapter is *Method: Motive Analyzes*, where the method used in this thesis will be presented. Chapter five and six are the chapters I use to analyze the question at issue. Chapter seven is Conclusion and in chapter eight suggestions for further research in this matter will be given. After this chapter my sources will be presented and then finally a map over Iran can be seen in *Appendix A*.

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<sup>1</sup> SAVAK was the Iranian intelligence agency during the reign of the Shah.



## 2 Theory: Neorealism

The realism theory in international relations is one of the most used theories by the researchers and consists of different schools, precisely like other theories. In this thesis the neorealism school is used because it accepts *cooperation* between countries, in opposite to the classical realism. Neorealists believe that states will cooperate if the cooperation's profit will relatively gain their own state and increase their own security (Lamy 2001:186). Also the states, who according to the neorealists are the main actors in international relations, will through a cost-benefit analyzes decide whether the cooperation is favorable or not. Since I am studying the role of the West in the revolution, this theory gives me the opportunity to include cooperation between USA, UK, France and West-Germany. The reason I include cooperation between these states is because of their interests and security matters were almost the same during the Cold War. Conflicts with communism and the need for oil are two major examples.

The neorealism was developed by *Kenneth Waltz* year 1979 in his publication *Theory of International Politics*, and like other realists, they claim that the international system is *anarchic*. It means that the states in this system are sovereign, which in turn means that there is no world government which can decide for these countries and therefore the international relations is anarchical (Weber 2005:14f).

In this anarchy each state is responsible for its own *survival*, and for survival *security* is needed. The ultimate goal for a state, whatever ideology or belief, is to survive. Therefore states attempts to increase their security towards each other but unfortunately when a state increases its own security other countries' security will decrease. This forces other countries to increase their own security and the states will get into an evil endless spiral called *security dilemma* (Baylis 2001:257f). In this spiral there is a constant suspicion, fear and insecurity between the states. How security is defined will be discussed and operationalized in chapter three. The states also try to keep a *balance of power* between other countries in order to increase their own security. Security can only be achieved through *self-help* according to this theory (Dunne et al 2001:153).

Thus, fear for other states is the dynamic of international relations. This fear results in, among other things, armaments, alliances and cooperation's. This is how for example NATO is explained. The institution was created by the West bloc, in response to the increase of Soviet Union's power in the world.

The neorealists believe, in opposite to the classical realism, that this anarchy is the cause of conflict and wars between states, and not the nature of man which the classical realists believe is almost evil (Weber 2005:16). Implicitly this means that the governments' behavior is dependent on this system and political ideology or belief will not change this behavior.

As mentioned above the states are the main actors according this theory and these states are rational in the choice of their behavior. But of course, misjudgments and miscalculations might happen (Baylis 2001:257). The neorealists also believe that states inevitably will work towards developing a strong and *offensive military* in order to protect their selves and increase their power (ibid.). Realists, including the neorealists, also believe that *bipolarity*, like during the Cold War when two superpowers stood against each other, is much better than a multipolar system, because it is stable (Bengtsson et al 2001:24).

## 2.1 Critics against Neorealism

The neorealism is criticized by many. For example, the neoliberals believe that the neorealists do not take enterprises and international institutions into consideration, and nor do they have any respect for the interdependence between states or values such as democracy which can influence foreign policy. Another example of critique against the neorealists comes from marxists who believe that class conflicts are the root of international conflicts, the conflict is between the proletariats and capitalists.

Therefore, I am well aware of that the neorealists cannot explain everything in international relations. But the fact that this theory is powerful to describe and explain the role of states, their struggle for existence, and their effort to increase their national security, made me choose this theory as an instrument for my motive analyzes.

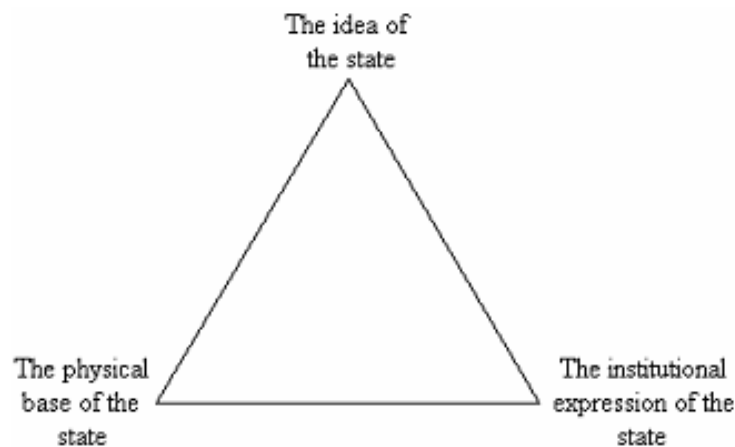
### 3 Operatinonalization of the Notion “National Security”

Since I am using neorealism, where the sates are the main actors, the notion *national security* and its definition will be vital for my thesis. As soon the notion security is mentioned we mainly think about the military power. Of course, this is not wrong. A strong *military force* provides security to the state. Therefore, as the neorealists claims, all states will try to create a strong military force.

To understand national security one must not only think about the military. We must also ask ourselves: what does a state want to secure and protect? Answer to this question will be the definition of national security and a useful instrument in my motive analyze.

According to *Professor Barry Buzan* the national security consists of three parts: “the idea of the state”, “the institutional expression of the state” and “the physical base of the state” (1991:65). These parts are strongly linked to each other, but can be discussed, to a limit, separately from each other (see Figure 3.1). The connection between these elements can be seen like this: the physical bases, which for example are the population of the state, need an institution to govern and control it. In turn the institution must have some legitimacy among the people and this legitimacy is based on an idea which is held great by most of the people in that country. (Buzan 1991:66)

*Figure 3.1: The three elements important for a state to protect (Buzan 1991:65)*



### 3.1 The Idea of the State

The *idea of the state* is the central notion in this security concept, because it is the idea which *legitimizes* the institution of the state and the physical base (Buzan 1991:69f). It is the idea which persuades the inhabitants of a territory to “subordinate them selves to the state’s authority” and accept the behaviors of their government (Buzan 1991:83). If the idea is not accepted by the people the institutions of the state, which govern the state will get into trouble. A state with a strong idea, held great by its people, can live in the anarchy without further complications, even if its institutions can be weak (Buzan 1991:82). It is important to know that an idea is the idea of the state when it is greatly accepted by the most of the states’ people.

The idea can be everything from religions such as Islam to *organizing ideologies* like liberalism-capitalism, communism and so on. In West, especially in the USA, liberalism and capitalism are part of the idea of the state. In Soviet Union socialism, at least in the beginning, was held great. This organizing ideologies were, in USA’s case still is, deep-rooted in these countries and therefore changes in their ideas would create fundamental complications for the states (cf. Buzan 1991:79). The Soviet Union collapsed when the people of the union no longer could identify themselves with their institutions, which in turn were legitimized by the socialism.

Organizing ideologies can be weakened and undermined if they come in contact with other ideas, get suppressed by force or the institutions which supports them get attacked (Buzan 1991:81).

### 3.2 The Institutions of the State

The *institutions of the state govern* the state. It consists of the legislative, executive and juridical organ, governmental departments and offices, laws, procedures etcetera (cf. Buzan 1991:82f). It is the institutions of the state that control the physical base of the state. As mentioned above, an institution which is not based on an idea held greatly by the people of the country will be undermined and destroyed. Therefore the institutions are dependent on the idea of the state. It is also important to know that the idea of the state can be undermined if the institutions, which support and protect them, get attacked.

The organizing ideologies are useless if the institutions do not carry it out and implement it (Buzan 1991:86). This statement means that the idea of the state and the institutions of the state tend to stand and collapse together (ibid.). The idea of the state is immaterial and has no physical existence, but the institutions of the state have. Therefore the institutions of the states are more easily threatened (ibid.).

### 3.3 The Physical Base of the State

The *physical base of the state* is the third element in Buzan's definition of national security. This element consists of population, territory, natural resources and the wealth created by the human being within the borders of the state (Buzan 1991:90). The physical base, in opposite to the idea and the institution of the state, is more threatened because of risks for seizure and direct damage (Buzan 1991:91). According to Buzan, the physical base is the foundation of a state. There can not be a state without for example territory or population, so therefore the protection of it is very important and of vital values (Buzan 1991:95). But of course sometimes the physical base is sacrificed, to a reasonable extent, in order to protect the other two elements in the security concept (ibid.).

Unfortunately Buzan do not discuss the components in the physical base, except for territory and population, more deeply. It is my opinion that *natural resources* is of great importance for a state. In my thesis I am studying the Iranian revolution which took place year 1979, during the Cold War. At that time, during the 1970s, the *oil* was vital for the industrialized countries, especially in the West. The oil was not only needed for producing products in factories, but the military force needed oil for their tanks, ships, aviations etcetera in order to protect the state.

I believe that economics and the market is an important element of the national security. The economics is almost the foundation of everything. Economical growth creates economical power which in turn can be transferred into military and political power (cf. Bengtsson et al 2001:25).

To gain economical growth, companies, which pay huge taxes to the state, must sell their *products*. If the product is exposed for competition – in international relations by foreign companies – the price of the product will fall and the domestic companies which sell it will have a decline in their profits and therefore pay less tax to their countries. The companies will also maybe be forced to fire some of their workers, which in turn no longer can pay as much taxes as before. This would in turn lead to economical difficulties in the state and make it more difficult for a state to invest on their security. Hence, it is important to protect the products of the state.

## 4 Method: Motive Analyzes

In order to answer the question at issue, a motive analyzes is used. I will study what motives argue that the West overthrew the Shah and what motives argue the opposite. Then in the conclusion I will discuss what direction the motives show (cf. Esaiasson et al 2005:327).

This type of analyzes may be seen as vague because the politicians most of the time do not say the real motives in public. However, the fact is that this type of analyzes also have its strong sides. The strong side of this type of analyzes is namely that it also take non-public-mentioned motives in consideration. *Professor Peter Esaiasson, Professor Mikael Gilljam, Dr Henrik Oscarsson and Dr Lena Wängnerud* write in their Swedish book *Metodpraktiken* that (2005:326):

There is no need to restrict the search after motive indicators to an examination of the action at issue or to direct motive statements. [...] One possibility is to use common statements that are not directly linked to the action, which are going to be explained. Foreign policy doctrines about what a state tries to achieve in the international field is an example of a useful common statement.<sup>2</sup>

That is why I have decided to build my motives based on the neorealism. Before starting to analyze it is important to decide how the motives are chosen. In this thesis I have limited myself to use the neorealist theory and especially national security matters. This limitation explains my choice of motives. Therefore, I will for example not look after “personal problems”, “ideological problems” etcetera.

In this thesis I will examine if the Shah was any threat to the West’s “idea”, “institutions”, “physical base” and, influence and power in the world which is connected to the realpolitics. I will also examine if the overthrow of the Shah was any threat against the West and Israel, with whom USA have good relations with, and in this way see if the West would loose politically and by security means if the Shah was overthrown.

The motives I have chosen are based on literature studies I have done for many years in this subject. I have read more than thirty books and a lot more articles with direct connections to this subject, and these writings were written both by supporters of the Shah as well as those against the Shah. I have also read many books with indirect connection to this revolution.

These motives are also used by many of the Shah’s supporters respectively his enemies. Because of my political activity in the Iranian politics I have been in direct contact with many different personalities from different political groups and

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<sup>2</sup> Translated from Swedish by the author of this thesis.

ideologies, that is the monarchist, republicans, right-winged Iranians, communist, islamists and marxist-islamists. I have also discussed this issue with many non-Iranians.

In this thesis I have also used two conversations which I had with two Iranians. I call this “conversation” and not interview because I was in constant contact with these two persons during the research process and used them in some especial places in order to clarify some events. I am very grateful for the help of these two people.

## 4.1 Material Discussion

In the second, third and fourth chapter I have used books written by scholars in political science. In the rest of my thesis, the analyze part, I have used both primary and secondary sources, which some of them are also scholars in political science. Most of these sources have been totally critical against the Shah, and one of those important sources in this thesis is the book of *Fred Halliday*, Professor in International Relations at London School of Economics and Political Science, with the original name *Iran: Dictatorship and Development*<sup>3</sup>. Thus, my intention was to mainly use critical sources in order to avoid critics about that I have taken side for the Shah of Iran.

As mentioned above, I have also had long conversations with two people. One of them is *Dr Masoud Khoshnood*, former Assistant Professor in Political Science at Teheran University and former journalist and political editor in the well-known newspaper *Youths of Rastakhiz*. The second person I had a conversation with was a former distinguished *SAVAK agent* who wants to be absolutely anonymous. His last position in SAVAK was section director for a section that worked with foreign matters. This person also holds a PhD in political science. In this thesis the name “Kargosha” is used for him.

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<sup>3</sup> The Swedish version of this book, with the title *Iran*, is used.

# 5 Motives for the Statement that the West Overthrew the Shah of Iran

In this chapter four reasons for why it was in the interest of the West to overthrow the Shah will be analyzed. These reasons cover the threat against the idea of the West, the physical bases of the West and West's political influence in the world.

## 5.1 Threat against the Idea of the West

Before deeply analyzing this motive I have to make clear what the idea of West at that time, during the 1970s, was. As mentioned before the idea of West was and still is based on the organizing ideology, liberalism, which also includes capitalism and democracy.

The root of liberalism in the West goes further back than the French revolution 1789-1799. It was inspired by the Age of Enlightenment and the Natural Law theory about right to life, freedom, property and resistance against oppression. With these ideas the idea of democracy, with roots in the antique Greece, got stronger and finally Adam Smith grounded the economical liberalism which emphasized on market economy and the principle of demand and supply. This, in turn, is the ground of the capitalistic system we could see in the West during the 1970s and which we still can see today.

As discussed in chapter three, the idea of the state can be threaten by another idea. When an organizing ideology in a state comes in contact with another organizing ideology, it will be weekend and undermined. In turn, the institutions of the state which govern the physical base of the state will collapse. During the Cold War two ideologies stood against each other, the liberalism and the socialism. The first one was hold greatly in the West, and the other mainly in the Soviet Union.

The war between these ideologies resulted in separation of countries, such as Korea, Vietnam and Germany. During the war, the Soviet Union tried to spread the socialism to other countries in the world. At the same time the West tried to stop them and spread capitalism instead. The confrontation of these ideologies created changes in many countries' form of government through civil wars, revolutions, coup d'états etcetera, supported by the one or the other bloc.

Thus, the antagonism between these two ideologies played an important role in the international relations and it was clear for West that to survive in the anarchical world, the other ideology had to be destroyed. In this war, Iran was of great importance because of its geopolitical situation and natural resources.



Therefore both of the blocs tried to be friends with Iran in order to weaken the other part.

This fact was explicit for Iran and the Shah and his government used it for the advantage of Iran, in order to make Iran stronger. As the neorealist theory says, because of the anarchical world system, each state must through self-help, increase its security and chance of survival.

### 5.1.1 Preventing a Soviet Collapse

Year 1941, during the Second World War, the allied occupied Iran and forced Reza Shah Pahlavi I to step down as the Shah of Iran and the Soviet Union tried to separate the Iranian provinces Azerbaijan and Kurdistan in order to create communist satellite republics near Iran and in Middle East.

These problems were however solved with the help of Americans during the new young Shah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, who took over after his father. The Americans helped Iran because they wanted to have a friendly relation with the country in order to stop Soviet influence in the Middle East.

At the same time the Soviet Union did not want to loose Iran to the West and therefore they tried different methods to control Iran. One was trough supporting the Iranian Communist Party – Hezb-e Tudeh-e Iran – who year 1949 tried to assassinate the Shah when he was visiting Tehran University. Another example, which can be read more deeply in the book *Inside the KGB – Myth and Reality* written by the former KGB officer situated in Iran, *Vladimir Kuzichkin*, was that the Soviet Union itself directly tried to kill the Shah in February 1962 inside Iran (1990:215ff). But after these unsuccessful attempts, the Soviet Union started to approach Iran friendly with the purpose to increase their influence in the region.

Iran was now in a situation where both West and Soviet Union tried to be “friends” with her and therefore could take advantage of this. The Shah believed that the USA was not to trust, and the trust in USA would be very dangerous if any war took place (Halliday 1980:261). This, he had emphasized on several times in public and based it on how USA had stopped supporting Diem, the leader of South Vietnam, and Batista in Cuba, how they did not support Pakistan in their war against India even though Pakistan was member of CENTO and how they did not help Israel with war-materials during the Yom Kippur war 1973 (ibid.). Therefore, it was in Iran’s interest, in order to protect its state of idea, institutions and physical base and increase its security, to have a good relation with Soviet. Of course, because of historical reasons, the Soviet was not to trust either so the relation with the West was also very important. Kuzichkin writes in his book (1990:239):

In foreign policy [the Shah] had come to show considerable independence, having begun to play with Soviet Union and other socialist countries while following a policy of balance between East and West. The Shah was thus milking two cows.

The Iranian-Soviet relation was mostly based on an economical basis. The Russians helped Iran for example to build a steelworks in Esfahan, something

which the West did not want to help Iran with (Khoshnood, Masoud 2007). In return Iran sold gas to Soviet Union, which was important for their industries, and in turn their economics. One example of the close cooperation between these two countries is the five year trade agreement signed year 1976 for a value of 3 000 million dollar (Halliday 1980:269). Year 1973, 15 percent of the Iranian export went to the Soviet Union which was one of Iran's greatest commerce partners (Halliday 1980:268).

However, there was also political cooperation's between Iran and Soviet. For example, year 1962 the Shah of Iran promised the Russians that he would not allow USA to install rocket bases in Iran against Soviet Union (ibid.). Another example is when Soviet Union closed the Tudeh party's radio in Bulgaria year 1976 (Halliday 1980:270). Iran did also buy weapons and military equipments from Soviet Union (cf. Kuzichkin 1990:205).

Thus, the Soviet Union's existence was of great importance for Iran. As long as there was a *balance of power* between the West and Soviet Union, Iran could rapidly develop and become a state with great influence in the world politics. In respect to this fact Iran was against a possible collapse of Soviet Union and tried to hold this balance in live, through different cooperation's with Soviet Union and other socialist countries. The oil policy could also play an interesting role and be a useful tool. But of course Iran was not that strong to directly contribute to the consolidation of Soviet Union's existence alone.

However the Shah was a solid wall against at least one of the important Western plans which would weaken the Soviet Union thoroughly and finally contribute to its collapse. This plan is often known as the *Arc of Crisis*, *Arc of Islam* or the *Green Belt policy*. The Green Belt policy meant to surround the Soviet Union's southern boarders with Islam, which the green colour represented. Islam would be a good instrument to use against the communist atheists. This policy in turn would result in that the Islamic countries around Soviet Union would help their Muslim brothers and mobilize them against the atheists who ruled the state.<sup>4</sup> (cf. Dreyfuss 2005:244-269)

Thus, the West tried to undermine the communist ideology and encourage the Muslims to work against the institutions and the physical bases of the Soviet Union, through another idea; *Islam*.

But this Green Belt policy had not been successful with the Shah in power. The Shah was Muslim, but a very modern and political secular one who fought against the Islamic clerics in Iran for many years and tried to undermine their power in the country and region. Therefore the Shah would not let Islam, especially a fundamentalist one, play a huge role in Iran or in the Middle East.

The Shah of Iran would not stop this policy only in order to help Soviet

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<sup>4</sup> One of those who insisted that USA should use the "Islamic Card" against Soviet Union, was Zbigniew Brzezinski, Jimmy Carter's national security adviser (cf. Dreyfuss 2005:251 & Dreyfuss 1980:5ff).

Union, which its existence was vital for Iran and its development. But also to secure Iran's idea of state, which was mostly built on Iranian nationalism and monarchy, which in turn was based on the Iranian history and culture before the Muslims invaded Iran year 630 A.D.

The Soviet Union's occupation of Afghanistan was like a "Vietnam-war" for them. The West, especially the Americans, knew that if the Soviet Union occupied Afghanistan and if they were trapped there they would suffer a lot and get very weak. At the same time the mobilization of the Muslims would be much easier. Therefore, the Americans provoked the Soviet Union to invade Afghanistan (Dreyfuss 2005:256 & 265).

"SAVAK did send several reports to the CIA for alarming them that Soviet Union intended occupying Afghanistan", said Dr Kargosha. He had been sent on mission to Afghanistan twice the years 1976 and 1977 and wrote two complete reports for SAVAK where he wrote that the Soviet Union was preparing an occupation of Afghanistan. "But the CIA, which is world's largest intelligence agency, told us that we were wrong. What does it mean? I believe that CIA and the Americans did not want us to be sure that Soviet was invading Afghanistan, because we had stopped the Russians through our contacts with them and the Afghans", he continued. (cf. Sullivan 1981:99)

Dr Kargosha, believes that the Soviet Union would never occupy Afghanistan if the Shah still had the power in Iran. One reason, he believes, is that the Soviet Union knew that their relations with Iran would be in danger because Iran would feel threatened if the Soviet Union came closer. This, in turn, would make Iran become more West friendly and Soviet Union would lose their good relation with Iran, which had taken a lot of time to build up.

A second reason is mentioned by *Richard Nixon* who wrote that the Soviet Union might never "dare" to invade Afghanistan if the Shah still was in power, because of the "impressive Iranian army" and Iran's relation to USA (1980:79).

Thus, the Shah of Iran was a huge obstacle for the West to weaken the Soviet Union in order to destroy it, and would work against the Green Belt policy which the occupation of Afghanistan was a part of.

### 5.1.2 Iran Approaching the Socialist States

One of the countries Iran started to approach during the Shah was China. Year 1971 the diplomatic relations between China and Iran was established and China started to praise the politics of the Shah of Iran (Halliday 1980:271).

Other socialist state which Iran had good relations with was for example Rumania and Czechoslovakia. Rumania helped Iran with producing tractors and some other industrial products, and the Czechs helped Iran to produce different kinds of weapons and ammunitions (Khoshnood, Masoud 2007 & cf. Sullivan 1981:81).

Of course, these relations were purposed to hold a balance between the capitalistic states and the socialist states, in the Iranian foreign policy (cf. Parsons 1984:20f). In this way, Iran would not be so much dependent on the two blocs and

therefore could play with both of them. For example, every time the Americans did not want to sell weapons to Iran, Iran could threaten them and buy almost the same weapons from the East-bloc if the threats did not work. In an exclusive interview with US News & World Report from March 22, 1976, the Shah of Iran said to the West:

If you remain our friends, obviously you will enjoy all the power and prestige of my country. But if you try to take an unfriendly attitude toward my country, we can hurt you as badly if not more so than you can hurt us. Not just through oil – we can create trouble for you in the region. If you force us to change our friendly attitude, the repercussions will be immeasurable.

## 5.2 Threat against the Physical Base of the West

In the operationalization of the notion national security it was mentioned that one important component for a state to protect is its physical base, which besides the state's territory and population, consist of among other things the natural resources. One of the world's most important natural resources was and today still is the oil.

The history of oil goes back to several hundreds years ago when it was for example used to built roads and buildings, and for heating and lighting. But during the second half of the 1800s, with the development of the industrial revolution, the oil became a more important natural resource, because a better and cleaner energy was needed. With the start of the First World War 1914 and because of the increase in use of cars, the demand of oil rose.

Oil was the fuel that drifted the cars, airplanes, ships, trucks, tanks etcetera during the First and Second World War, and the 1970s. Thus, the oil was and still is important for the states in order to could increase their security towards other states. Therefore, the control of the oil was vital for the industrial countries, especially the superpowers. A huge amount of the West's oil at that time came from the Middle East, through the Persian Gulf and consequently Iran saw an opportunity, which was used to increase its own *survival* chances in the anarchical world.

This opportunity contributed to the development, industrialization and modernization of Iran, which also in turn was a threat against the West's physical base, only this time a threat against their products.

### 5.2.1 The Oil

As told above, the oil played a major role in the West's industries, which in turn was important for both the economics and for the military. Without energy industries will shut down and the world will turn to the dark ages. At that time the most important energy was the oil.

Year 1978 more than 80 percent of the American oil come from OPEC, this

for OPEC was only 1/5 of their oil (Nixon 1980:70). Thus, the USA was more depended on OPEC, than OPEC on USA. During the 1970s more than 75 percent of the European oil went through the Persian Gulf (de Marenches 1988:122). This gave OPEC an enormous power towards the West and the oil politics could be used as an important tool in the lawlessness international relations.

The OPEC was grounded year 1960 by five countries: Iran, Iraq, Saudi-Arabia, Kuwait and Venezuela. Later other countries joined this organization which its first General Secretary was the Iranian *Fuad Ruhani*. The initiative takers of this organization were Iran and Venezuela (cf. Roberson 2003). However, the Shah was the initiative taker for the quadrupling of the oil prices year 1973 and had a leading and dominating role in it (cf. e.g. Parsons 1984:20, Shawcross 1989:39, 171 & 179, Sullivan 1981:117 & Khoshnood, Masoud 2007).

In September 1973 a barrel of oil cost \$ 3.00, but was in October increased to \$ 5.12. In December the same year the real shock come when the price was increased to \$ 11.65 and this should be compared with the price three years earlier, year 1970, which was \$ 1.80. (Nixon 1980:75) This almost quadruplet increase in the oil price resulted in disturbance in the oil supply which exposed the West for an economical shock, called *OPEC I* or *Energy Crisis of 73*.

OPEC I created a macroeconomic shock which its result was stagflation together with increasing unemployment. Table 5.1 shows the inflation rate in USA, UK, France and West-Germany, from year 1973 until 1975. West-Germany was the only country which could hold their inflation almost constant, but the three other countries were badly hurt, especially UK.

*Table 5.1: Inflation rates in USA, UK, France and West-Germany in percentage from 1973 until 1975 (Krugman et al 2003:578)*

Country	1973	1974	1975
United States	6.2	11.1	9.1
United Kingdom	9.2	16.0	24.2
France	7.3	13.7	11.8
West-Germany	6.9	7.0	6.0

But the economical crisis, which of course made the inhabitants of these countries to question their governmental institutions, was nothing compared to the political reality which West had to face. This power of OPEC gave strength to its members and they could ask whatever demands they wanted of the West, and the West could not do anything about it, at least in the short run (Nixon 1980:75). If the oil had been cut off for the West-Europe and Japan, their economics had been destroyed badly, almost like a nuclear attack (ibid.). After this successful increase in the oil prices, several organizations such as OPEC were created by countries with other resources like copper and iron ore. The developing countries did also start to demand a new economical world order. (Lundestad 1997:277)

This energy crisis did hit the West so badly that its politicians publicly attacked the Shah of Iran, which they thought was responsible for the crisis (cf. Sullivan 1981:115f). The American *William E. Simon*, Secretary of the Treasury, did go as far as to say that ‘the Shah is nut’ (Time July 29, 1974). In September 9, 1975 the U.S. president *Gerald Ford* send a letter to the Shah and complained about the rise in the oil price. He writes in the letter that he is ‘concerned that such action could raise serious questions among the American public regarding the close cooperation we seek and are actively developing with your country in several fields of our bilateral relationships’ (Alam 1991:438). The Iranian officials regarded this letter as an ultimatum to Iran from USA, and similar letters were also sent to the Shah from UK (Kargosha 2007 & Khoshnood, Masoud 2007).

Thus, the oil prices which the Shah had taken initiative for, created a lot of anger in the West and jeopardized the physical base of the West and in turn its security. As Richard Nixon wrote in his book, both military and economical power was based on the oil (1980:67). This oil was mostly controlled by Iran during the leadership of Shah, through Iran’s huge influence on OPEC and many Arabic countries which will be discussed in part 5.3. Iran was also at that time the second largest oil exporter after Saudi Arabia (Time November 4, 1974). This control over oil did Shah famous as the “Emperor of the Oil”.

## 5.2.2 Industrialization of Iran

At the same time OPEC I created energy and economical crisis in West, it was positive for the OPEC member states in both political and economical terms. Politically, they had shown strength and economically their oil revenue, and therefore their GDP, increased radically. Year 1976/77 the Iranian growth in GDP was 16 percent, which year 1976 was slightly more than 5 percent in France and 6.2 percent in USA (The Europe Year Book 1977 1977:744, 615 & 1671). The rise in revenue also helped Iran to pay their foreign debts, so that Iran year 1975 did not have any foreign debts (Globalis.se:Total utlandsskuld).

These increase in the Iranian GDP helped Iran to invest more in the industrial sector. Year 1967 the first Iranian-produced car was sold in the Iranian market. This car was Peykan, which the British had helped Iran to built and produce. Later other cars such as Fiat – with the help of the Italians -, Jian and Renault – with the help of the French – and Cadillac and Chevrolet – with the help of Americans – were also built in Iran. As mentioned earlier, Iran also started to build tractors with the help of Romania, weapons with the help of the Czechs and got its steelworks with the help of the Russians. With the help from British, Iran started year 1976 to build artillery factory and a factory for producing the military helicopter Bell AH-1J Cobra (Halliday 1980:100). It was vital for Iran to produce their own weapon and get the “know-how” in industrial matter, in order to decrease its dependence of the West and others.

Another important Iranian industry was the petrochemical industry. Because of the great access Iran had to the oil and the very good industry which was built by the Japanese, Iran was one of the world leading countries in this business

(Sullivan 1981:68).

Thus, Iran was industrializing very rapidly and at the same time it had access to great natural resources such as oil and gas. A country with access to natural resources and industries and “know-how” has a huge possibility to become a great power, in political, economical and military means. This industrialization would be a threat against the West in realpolitical means, but also against its physical base. As argued in chapter three, physical base also consist of the *products of a state*. If a state does not sell its products, its GDP will decrease or not increase as fast as wanted and needed.

The rapid industrialization of Iran would be a threat to the West’s physical base, because the West’s products had to compete with the Iranian products. As the last American ambassador to Iran, *William Sullivan* wrote in his book *Mission to Iran*, the Iranian products at that time could not compete with the products of West (1981:68). This is very true, but in a short-term perspective. No country has become good in something just over one day, and Japan is one example. In a long-term perspective the Iranian products could expose the West’s products for competition and in turn decrease the prices and finally damage the economics of the West. Not least because investing in educations was one of Iran’s priorities, which gave Iran the “know-how” it needed for developing.

Tens of thousands Iranians were sent to the West to educate themselves among others with the help of Shah’s own foundation, the *Pahlavi Foundation*. This foundation had for example year 1977 given 12 000 students loan to study abroad and they just needed to pay back 25 percent of it (Shawcross 1989:285). More than 20 000 Iranian students were studying in UK (cf. Shawcross 1989:224). In Iran the students received scholarships up to around \$ 100 a month, during the 1970s, which they did not need to pay back if they worked inside Iran after their educations, in accordance with the law (Khoshnood, Masoud 2007). This law, in an indirect way, guaranteed the students jobs after their studies. During the 1970s there was a lack of manpower, especially experts, in Iran.

### 5.3 Increased Iranian Influence in the World

During the Cold War Iran played an important role in the world politics because of its natural resources like oil and gas, and its geopolitical situation, bordering Soviet Union and Caspian Sea from the north, Iraq and Turkey from west, Persian Gulf from south, Pakistan and Afghanistan from east and being the only non-Arabic country together with Israel and Turkey in the Middle East (see Appendix A for a map).

Until now it has been explained how Iran was playing with the West and Soviet Union, how it approached other socialist countries and how it exposed the West to an extraordinary shock when it came to the oil policy. It has been explained how these occurrences were a threat against the security of West, in terms of idea and physical base. But this threat went further than just these two.

Iran was during the Shah also becoming a direct threat to the influence of

West in the Middle East in short-term and the world in the long-term. This, in turn, would threaten the idea and physical base of the West even more. It must be mentioned that Iran was never a direct threat against the institutions of the West at that time. However, this component was under threat when the other two components were threatened.

Iran had at that time one of the world's strongest military forces and the most dominant and superior armed forces in the Middle East. The Imperial Iranian Air Forces was among the fifth strongest in the world (Nahavandi 2005:99). This domination was both military and economically. Saudi Arabia was much wealthier than Iran but did not have the same military power as Iran due to, among other things, that Saudi Arabia had fewer inhabitants. Turkey and Egypt had almost the same number of inhabitants as Iran, but economically they were very weak compared to Iran. (Halliday 1980:256)

As mentioned in part 5.2.1 most of the West's oil passed through the Persian Gulf before arriving West-Europe or USA. Nixon wrote that "the oil is the blood for the modern industry, Persian Gulf is the heart and the waterways around the Gulf are the arteries, which this blood flows through"<sup>5</sup> (1980:69). The blood, the heart and the artery had during the 1970s been under the control of Iran because of its superior military and economical power in the region. By control, it means that Iran made sure that the area was stable so that ships could go through without any problems, and she could easily create troubles in the area if she wanted. This made Iran famous as the "Gendarme of the Gulf" (cf. de Marenches 1988:122).

The most important place in the Persian Gulf is the *Strait of Hormoz* (see Appendix A for map) which is the "gate" of this Gulf. This Strait could easily be closed because the water in that area was and still is not so deep and therefore if some ships were sank there no other ships could go in or out of the Gulf (Khoshnood, Masoud 2007). The sinking of ships in that area would be like a "thrombus" in the "heart arteries" which would stop the flow of the "blood" from and to the body and result in a "myocardial infarction" or simply known as a "heartattack". This heartattack would kill, or paralyze, the West because of its huge dependence on the Persian Gulf oil (cf. Nixon 1980:67).

In order to protect this important waterway Iran invested huge amounts on the Imperial Iranian Navy and on building navel bases in the east of the Strait, for example in Chah Bahar (cf. Nixon 1980:78). This made the West dependent on Iran and they were especially frightened that Soviet Union would close this Strait (cf. Nixon 1980:77). But this dependence could be reduced a lot if Soviet Union had been destroyed; something Iran during the Shah tried to stop and therefore threatened both the physical base and the idea of the West and their influence in the region and the world.

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<sup>5</sup> Translated from Swedish by the author of this thesis.



### 5.3.1 Iran's Involvements in the World

In order to secure its own safety, Iran had to increase its involvement in the region and the world. One reason was to hold back the socialism which was a threat to the idea of Iran and the balance between the West and the East block. Another was to have full control over its physical base such as for example the oil in the Persian Gulf. A third reason was to find market for its products. A fourth reason, which had with the Middle East to do, was that instability in the region could spread to Iran. A fifth reason was to find allies and a sixth reason was to stop potential powers in the Middle East with respect to the *security dilemma*.

These reasons did make Iran to fill the power vacuum which was made when the British left the region year 1971. Year 1970 the Shah solved the problem concerning the island Bahrain. This island belonged once to Iran, but with the help of the British, they demanded to become a sovereign state. Iran gave up this island because of the pressure of the British and the Arab countries and here we can see an example of how a state sacrifices a small part of its territory – physical base – in order to protect the other components in a national security concept. According to Dr Masoud Khoshnood the problem with Bahrain could damage Iran politically and economically if Iran had hold on to Bahrain. If Iran wanted to hold on to Bahrain it had to send its armed forces there and that would cause armed conflicts, which would damage Iran a lot, as the problem in Northern-Ireland did hurt UK (Khoshnood, Masoud 2007).

Of course, Iran did not give up this island easily and as both compensation and strategically interests, Iran invaded three smaller islands year 1971 which some Arab sheikhs owned. These three islands were Greater Tonb, Lesser Tonb and Abu Musa (see Appendix A for map). It was outside these islands the ships in the Persian Gulf passed and still do, and therefore every move in the Gulf could easily be controlled.

Year 1975, through the Algeria agreement, Iran solved its boarder conflicts with Iraq. Before that, from 1972 to 1975, in order to pressure Iraq and hold it weak, Iran supported the Barzani Kurds in the northern part of Iraq with weapons. Even sometimes Iranian commando soldiers went into Iraq with Kurdish clothes and participated in the battle between the Iraqi Kurds and the Iraqi governmental forces (Halliday 1980:280). Year 1969 Iran also supported a coup in Iraq which was planned to be implemented with the help of some Iraqi Generals, such as General Hassan al-Ravi, who later escaped to Iran because the coup did not success (Kargosha 2007).

The problems with Bahrain and Iraq were issues which directly threatened Iran. But apart from these two countries Iran did intervene in many other countries, sometimes through direct military intervention, and other times through military and economical aid. From year 1962 until 1970 a civil war was ongoing in North-Yemen between the republicans and the monarchist. Iran got involved in this by supporting the monarchists and contributed them with weapons and offered them with secret trainings (Halliday 1980:278). A year after this civil war was finished, year 1971, another conflict was going on in Oman in the province of Dhofar. This conflict was between the monarchists and the marxists who was

supported by the socialist South-Yemen, China and the Soviet Union. Though, the support from China ended when they established diplomatic relations with Iran (Halliday 1980:271).

However, in this conflict Iran did a military intervention on request of the Sultan of Oman between the years 1973 and 1976 and several thousands Iranian soldiers fought against the marxist guerrilla in Oman (Halliday 1980:279). After this conflict was finished, Iran still had soldiers in Oman, not least on Oman's side of the Strait of Hormoz and near the borders to South-Yemen (ibid.).

Iran has a long border to Pakistan, which was in conflict with India at that time. For Iran, it was important that the balance of power between these two countries existed and therefore were against the weakening of Pakistan. Hence, in year 1973 Iran contributed Pakistan with help to stop the rebels in the Baluchestan part of Pakistan, trough sending 30 armed helicopters for assisting the Pakistani army (Halliday 1980:279f).

But it was not only in the region Iran was involved. Year 1972 Iran did sent several Phantom jets to South-Vietnam and in 1977 Iran sent help to Mobutu in Zaire (Halliday 1980:280.). Even jets were sent to Morocco, Jordanian and Egypt, and year 1977 Iran supported Somalia against Ethiopia by supplying them with weapons (ibid.)

Besides these military supports Iran did also use its economical power to increase its influence world wide. In 1973 it supported anti-communist officers in Afghanistan in order to have closer economical contact and decrease the Soviet influence in that country (Halliday 1980:285). Iran also used its economical power to influence the Pakistani economics, and connected an economical band with South-Korea, India, Taiwan, Bangladesh and Indonesia (ibid.). Iran also had a near economical and military cooperation with South-Africa; Iran bought uranium from them and had access to the navy base on the island of Mauritius (ibid.).

Year 1974 Iran used \$ 7000 million to give "grants, loans and deposits against future purchases from a dozen countries, including Britain and France" (Time November 4, 1974 & cf. Radji 1983:21). Even Sweden borrowed money from Iran. Year 1974 the central bank of Sweden – Riksbanken – borrowed \$ 200 million from Iran (Andersson 1987). Allowances were also given to many Arab countries such as Syria and Egypt (Shawcross 1989:178).

The increase of the influence of Iran in the world, especially in the Middle East, was by some Arabic states called expansionistic (Halliday 1980:275). What is explicit is that Iran, during the reign of the Shah, had ambitions to become one of the top strongest military, economically and politically power, in order to increase its security and secure its survival in the anarchical world. Achieving this goal threatened the security of the West, not least because of the security dilemma. If Iran had become a great power the security of West would automatically decrease.

# 6 Motives against the Statement that the West Overthrew the Shah of Iran

In this chapter four reasons for why it was not in the interest of the West to overthrow the Shah will be analyzed. These reasons cover the protection of West's idea, physical base and the security of Israel.

## 6.1 Friend of the West and Stability in the Region

The Shah is still today known by many people as a “friend” of the West, especially USA. Iran, during the time of the Shah's reign, was known as one of the two pillars in the Middle East which did “hold up” the region. The other pillar was Saudi Arabia which compared to Iran had no strong army.

When the British left the region year 1971, Iran filled the power vacuum which was created and secured the stability of Persian Gulf and protected the Strait of Hormoz who was essential for the West. The Iran of the Shah prevented the spread of socialism in the region and guaranteed the security of the Gulf. When the Arabs introduced an oil embargo against USA, Netherlands and Israel year 1973, Iran continued to provide them with oil (cf. Carter 1982:435).

Iran did also let the American CIA work in Iran in order to monitor the Soviet Union and the SAVAK of Iran had a near cooperation with both CIA and the British MI6 (Kargosha 2007). Then why overthrow a friend and weaken an ally such as Iran?

Jimmy Carter visited Iran December 31, 1977 in order to celebrate the Christian New Year with the Shah and during the dinner he stood up, rose his glass and toasted for the Shah, and said (Shawcross 1989:130):

[Iran] because of the great leadership of the Shah, is an island of stability in one of the more troubled areas of the world. This is a great tribute to you, Your Majesty, and to your leadership and to respect and the admiration and the love which your people give to you. There is no leader with whom I have a deeper sense of personal friendship and gratitude.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> According to the last American ambassador in Iran, William Sullivan, the Shah of Iran disliked Jimmy Carter's public and regular support to him, because it made him to appear as a “puppet of the United States in such manner as to undermine the credibility of his independence” (1981:204).

## 6.2 Raise in the Price of Oil

The Iranian revolution 1979 resulted to an increase in the oil prices. This time the new shock got the name OPEC II and the price of oil rose from \$ 13 per barrel in 1978 to almost \$ 32 year 1980, and a new stagflation and unemployment took over the West (Krugman et al 2003:581). But this oil shock was not as bad as OPEC I. The Professors of economics Krugman and Obstfeld wrote that the effects of OPEC II “were neither as uniform nor as dramatic as those of the first oil shock” (ibid.). However, this oil shock did damage the West a lot.

It would not be hard to understand that instability in Iran would raise the oil prices. Then why overthrow a friend whose overthrowing would damage the economics of the West and make the people of West angry at their institutions?

## 6.3 Soviet Influence in the Middle East

Both economic and military power was at that time dependent on the oil and most of the West’s oil came from the Persian Gulf. This fact made the Middle East an important region for the West and therefore its protection from Soviet influence was of vital value for their security and survival. If the Soviet Union could control the oil-rich countries in the region or close the Strait of Hormoz the West would fall on their knees.

In this competition, between the West and the Soviet Union, Iran played a major role. Iran was afraid that Soviet Union would invade the country or try to build its own satellite states in the region by separating some of the Iranian provinces, such as Azarbaijan and Kurdistan, as they tried to do in the 1940s. Soviet Union tried also to kill the Shah several times and supported the communists in Iran such as the Tudeh Party. As a result of this fear, Iran wanted to hold back the Soviet Union from the region. This, in turn, made Iran an important state for the West. As mentioned earlier, when the Americans come to Iran, they supported the Shah to get rid of the Soviet Union’s occupation of northern Iran after the Second World War. Then why overthrow the Shah and destabilize Iran which was against the communist influence in the Middle East and the communism ideology which threatened the idea of the West and Iran?

## 6.4 Security of Israel

Since the establishment of the State of Israel May 14, 1948 the Arab states have tried to destroy it several times. Immediately, after the declaration of independence, five Arab countries – Iraq, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Transjordan – with the military and economical support of Saudi Arabia attacked Israel. Other

wars between Israel and the Arabs were fought the years 1967 – the Six Day War – and 1973 – the Yom Kippur War.

In contrast to the Arabs, Iran did de facto recognize Israel as an independent state year 1950. It is also worth knowing that Iran had a historical good relation to Israel and tens of thousands Iranian-Jews lived in Iran.

Iran's political stand in the Israel-Palestine conflict was explicit; the Two-State-Solution was supported. Iran demanded the withdrawal of Israel from occupied land it had taken in the Six Day War and at the same time the Shah argued for both Israel's and Palestine's right to existence (Shawcross 1989:171). During the 1973 war, Iran also continued to supply Israel with oil.

Iran did also provide Israel with weapons it could not buy because of the weapon embargo against Israel (Halliday 1980:287). The Shah did also support the Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's trip to Israel on November 19, 1977 for the first Israeli-Arabic summit, which would help Israel out from containment in the Middle East (cf. Carter 1982:296, 435). Why then overthrow the Shah and weaken Iran who supported Israel?

## 7 Conclusion

Since the fall of the Shah of Iran year 1979 the question about how this happened arose and still today, with regard to the enrichment of uranium by the Islamic republic of Iran, is discussed. Since then many book and articles have been written about this revolution. Most of these authors, whom also are very critical against the Shah, believe that the revolution took place because of the fact that Shah was a dictator, Iran had economical problems and the traditionalists could not accept and tolerate the modernizing process which the Shah led. One can argue for and against these reasons, but one thing is obvious and that is the West's role in this revolution has been neglected. With the West, I refer to USA, UK, France and West-Germany, because the security issues of these countries were connected a lot to each other during the Cold War.

In this thesis I have examined the motives that the West could have in order to overthrow the Shah. I have also examined motives that argue against that the West wanted to overthrow the Shah. My concrete question was: *what are the motives that talk for respectively against the statement that the West overthrew the Shah of Iran?*

In order to answer this question I have used motive analyzes as my method. In this method the researchers examine the motives for and against the action at issue and finally "weight" them in order to show which direction these motives point. In this method the motives can be based on theories, such as the neorealism which I have used. In neorealism the states are the main actors in the world politics and they compete against each other in an anarchical world system in order to increase their own security. Security is an important notion in this theory. Because of the anarchy the states fear each other and therefore try to increase their security towards other states, among other things, through military armament.

In order to understand what security is I have asked myself what a state wants to secure and protect. There are three components a state mostly protects: the idea of the state, the institutions of the state and the physical base of the state. The idea legitimizes the existence of institutions, which administrate the physical base. Idea is the most central component and can be undermined if another idea comes in contact with it and challenges it. If the idea gets weakened, the institutions will fall and in turn the physical base will be without any administrator and can easily be captured. It is also important to know that if an idea is not supported by institutions it will also be weakened. If one of these components is threatened then the other two components will be threatened as well.

In this thesis it is important to know that the Shah of Iran took all the important decisions in foreign policy.

## 7.1 The Idea and the Physical Base of the West

In order to see if the Shah of Iran was a threat against the West's security, it is important to know the West. Then we can understand whether the West wanted to overthrow the Shah or not.

The idea of West is liberalism and capitalism and was challenged by the socialism, which mainly the Soviet Union represented. Therefore, the West needed to destroy or weaken this ideology in order to survive in the anarchical world. The Physical Base of the West was the oil. Both USA and West-Europe were dependent on the oil which came from the Persian Gulf during the 1970s. 80 percent of the American and 75 percent of Europe's oil came from the Gulf. This oil was not only important for the West's industries, but also for the military which needed to be strong against the Soviet Union. Even the products made by the West were part of their physical base.

## 7.2 Arguments against that the West Overthrew the Shah Do Not Hold

In chapter six, four arguments against the statement that the Shah was overthrown by the West was presented. The first was that the Shah was a friend of West and secured the oil shipping in the Persian Gulf. But this statement is not right. Of course, the Shah would not allow the destruction of West, because the balance of power between the West and the Soviet Union was important for Iran. But at the same time the Shah also was an obstacle against the destruction of the Soviet Union which threatened the West. He also took initiative to the quadruple rise of the oil prices which damaged the West, both economically and politically. I do not believe that one can talk about "friendship" when it comes to international relations, because every state has to secure its own survival and security on the first hand, through self-help.

A second argument was that a destabilization in Iran would increase the oil prices, not least because Iran was the second largest oil producer in the world. As seen the oil prices year 1979 rose, although not as much as 1973, and damaged the West. This is a fact which is hard to come around but it is important to know that overthrowing of the Shah would be positive for the West in the long-term. Why? Because Khomeini's talk about exporting the Islamic revolution to other Arabic states scared the Arabs, something which the West was aware of, and this in turn led to a split within OPEC (cf. Lundestad 1996:277). The exportation of the Islamic revolution to other countries also led to the Iran-Iraq-War, which damaged both Iran and Iraq in terms of economics, politics and military power.

A third argument used in order to show that the Shah was not overthrown by the West, is that the Shah was against the increasing influence of Soviet Union in the Middle East. But this can be argued against by claiming that the Soviet Union

could be weakened through the Green Belt policy which the Shah was a barrier against. The fact that the Shah had built up a good relation between Iran and Soviet Union, in order to keep a balance of power between the West and the Soviet Union in the world should not be forgotten. Of course, the Shah wanted to decrease the Soviet Union's influence in the world, but at the same time he also wanted to decrease the influence of the West and in turn increase Iran's.

A fourth, and last, argument is that the Shah provided Israel with oil, gave it weapons and supported Anwar Sadat from Egypt to go to Israel and make peace with them. The Shah was important for the security of Israel. But this argument is not right either. Of course, the Shah did believe that Israel should exist but in order to keep a balance between the Arabs and Israelis. This in turn would increase Iran's security. It is also important to remember that the Shah during the 1970s started to build good relations with the Arabs, through solving its problem with Iraq, supporting the Sultan in Oman, helping the monarchists in Yemen etcetera and also decreased the cooperation between SAVAK and MOSSAD (Dreyfuss 1980:18f).

One thing that many people do not think about is that Khomeini's statement about exporting the Islamic revolution to Arab countries created conflicts between Iran and the Arabs, which would in turn increase Israel's security because of the security dilemma (cf. Ben-Menashe 1992:42).

### 7.3 The West Overthrew the Shah of Iran

Iran, during the reign of the Shah, was becoming a strong country, with a huge political and economical influence, especially in the Middle East and it also had one of the world's strongest armed forces. In order to secure its survival more and become almost totally independent, Iran needed to increase its power. This increase was among others military, and Iran invested very much on it. But this security policy was also based on a balance between the West and the Soviet Union.

Iran did not trust in the USA which was the strongest country in the West and neither did Iran have any trust in the Soviet Union. Therefore a balance of power between these would increase Iran's security. If these two threatened each other, Iran could almost be safe, especially when both of them had interest in Iran and tried to keep a good relation with the state. The competition between these blocs helped Iran to develop.

Hence, in order to keep this balance which was essential for the survival and development of Iran, Iran was against the destruction of both the Soviet Union and the West. The West, whose liberalism and capitalism was threatened by the socialism, wanted to destroy the Soviet Union and they had several plans for it, not to mention the Green Belt policy. But in order to execute this policy the Shah had to be removed and replaced by islamists. The Shah had also stopped the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan, something which the West tried to provoke Soviet Union to carry out.



The Shah of Iran was not only a threat against the idea of the West, but also against their physical base as well. As mentioned, the oil was very important for the survival of the West and was by Nixon compared with blood. This blood was to a huge extent controlled by the Shah who was the initiative taker of OPEC and dominant force for the increase of the oil prices year 1973, which damaged the West politically and economically.

At the same time as OPEC I did hurt the West, the oil revenue for the members of OPEC increased dramatically. This increase in the Iranian GDP resulted in that Iran could invest more on the industrialization of the country, which led to the fact that Iran could produce cars, tractors, petrochemicals, weapons and so on. This industrialization would in the future expose the products of the West for competition, which in turn had damaged the economics in the West, something which military and political power are dependent on. Thus, Iran was a threat against the physical base of West in the long-term too.

Iran was during the Shah also a superior country in the Middle East with increasing influence in Asia, Europe, America and Africa. Iran did several times military intervene in the region and helped several countries in Africa and Asia both economically and by providing them weapons. This increase in the Iranian influence frightened the West.

Therefore, the West decided to overthrow the Shah and weaken Iran. A destabilization in Iran would stop the economical growth of Iran. At the same time, the overthrowing of the Shah would beat a path for the Green Belt policy and contribute to the fall of the Soviet Union, the West worst enemy during the Cold War.

## 8 After Word: Proposal for Further Research

Writing this thesis was one of the most precious things I have done in my life for my country and for the sake of truth. Unfortunately, because of limited space, there were many things which I had to exclude from this research. Of course, I hope from the bottom of my heart, that I can continue with the research about the Iranian revolution in the future and I also hope at the same time that other students, especially the Iranians, do the same.

In this thesis I have analyzed the Iranian revolution out of an international relational perspective. I have reached the conclusion that the West – USA, UK, France and West-Germany – indeed wanted to overthrow the Shah of Iran because they saw Iran as a threat against their own security and influence in the world at that time. But to strengthen the statement about that West overthrew the Shah it is also needed to explain how they did such a thing.

*Robert Dreyfuss*, a distinguished American journalist, has written in an extraordinary book called *Hostage to Khomeini* (1980. New York: New Benjamin Franklin House) how the West supported the islamists in Iran, spread false rumours about the Shah through BBC, how committees in order to plan the overthrowing of the Shah was set up etcetera. About BBC, *Sir Anthony Parsons*, the last British ambassador of Iran during the Shah, writes in his book *The Pride & the Fall: Iran 1974-1979* that there “was evidence that the BBC broadcasts were actually stimulating demonstrations and riots” (1984:73. London:Butler & Tanner Ltd). Regarding the committees, *Alexander de Marenche’s* book, *The Evile Empire – The Third World War Now* (1988. London:Sidwick & Jackson) is useful. Alexander de Marenche was a former Director-General of France’s external intelligence agency,

There is also important to examine the role of the oil companies in the revolution. When OPEC was established and when the Shah started to take control over the oil in the Persian Gulf the *7-sisters’* – at that time the world’s seven largest oil companies – domination on the oil market decreased appreciable. In this matter one can use organization theory, which is about how companies need to control their surroundings and how they do political lobby. For facts, the American journalist *William Shawcross’s* book, *The Shah’s Last Ride – the Story of the Exile, Misadventures and Death of the Empror* (1989. London: Chatto & Windus Ltd) is a good book to start with.

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# Appendix A: Map of Iran

