

# The Geopolitics of Energy & Terrorism

## Part 4

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## **Introduction**

*The following chapters are independent essays that were written between July 2015 and February 2016. They appear in random order, and therefore they do not have to be read in the order they appear.*

*The issue in all the essays is the connection between the energy policies of various countries, their foreign policies, and the wars that break out at various parts of the globe, since all three are closely related. I describe many economic interests and many alliances in my essays. But alliances change and so do economic interest. Therefore what is more important for the reader is to have an idea of the global resources i.e. oil and natural gas in my essays, because global resources change at a much lower pace than economic interests and economic alliances.*

*The alliances and conflicts I describe in my essays might not exist in the near future, but if you have an idea of the global resources you will be able to see the alliances and the economic interests that will exist in the future.*

*I.A.*

*18.2.2016*

## **The Assassination of the Saudi King in 1975**

The Saudi King Faisal bin Abdulaziz Al Saud (King Faisal) was murdered on March 1975 by his nephew Prince Faisal bin Musaid bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. There are various explanations about why the Prince murdered the King. According to one of them the Prince revenged the assassination of his brother Prince Khalid bin Musaid al Saud. Prince was shot by the Saudi police during demonstrations in the 60s, when many Saudis were demonstration against the Saudi King's decision to allow the use of tv in Saudi Arabia. The assassin of King Faisal was sentenced to death and publicly beheaded.

Picture 1 King Faisal (1964-1975)



The assassinated King Faisal had become King in 1964 by forcing his elder brother King Saud bin Abdulaziz Al Saud (King Saud) to resign. After his dethronement King Saud was exiled, and he went to Egypt, where he stood by the side of the socialist Egyptian dictator Gamal Nasser, who was fighting Saudi Arabia. For Gamal Nasser and Saudi Arabia see “The Intra-Arab War for Oil 1950-1970”.

<https://iakal.wordpress.com/2015/06/09/the-intra-arab-oil-war-1950-1970/>

After a while King Saud went to Greece where he died from natural causes in 1969. This was not the only time that members of the Saud family had collaborated with the Egyptian dictator against Saudi Arabia. In 1958 the “Free Princes Movement” was established by Talal bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and other members of the royal family. They were inspired by the Free Officer Movement, which was the organization established by socialist officers of the Egyptian army in the 50s, with Gamal Nasser in charge, who later overturn the pro-Western King and aligned Egypt with the Soviet Union. The members of the Saud family who established the Free Prince Movement lived in Egypt for a while, until they were offered prestigious positions in Saudi Arabia and decided to return.

The Saud family has thousands of members. The founder of the third Saudi State, Abdulaziz ibn Abdul Rahman ibn Faisal ibn Turki ibn Abdullah ibn Muhammad Al Saud, had approximately 50 sons and 100 daughters. Each son has many wives and kids himself. Most Princes have some form of power i.e. in business, in religion, in the army, in the Saudi bureaucracy etc. There is a constant power struggle in Saudi Arabia, and the King very often

has to create new roles to keep happy members of the Saudi family who are popular and could create problems.

## Αρθρα

“1975: Saudi's King Faisal assassinated”

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/march/25/newsid\\_4233000/4233595.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/march/25/newsid_4233000/4233595.stm)

“Free Princes Movement”

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free\\_Princes\\_Movement](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_Princes_Movement)

“A history of treason - King Faisal bin Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman Al Saud”, May 2014

18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> Paragraphs

*The struggle with King Saud continued in the background during this time. Taking advantage of the king's absence from the country for medical reasons in early 1963, Faisal began amassing more power for himself. He removed many of Saud's loyalists from their posts and appointed like-minded princes in key military and security positions, such as his brother Prince Abdullah, to whom he gave command of the National Guard in 1962. Upon King Saud's return, Prince Faisal demanded that he be made regent and that King Saud be reduced to a purely ceremonial role. In this, he had the crucial backing of the ulema, including a fatwa (edict) issued by the grand mufti of Saudi Arabia, a relative of Prince Faisal on his mother's side, calling on King Saud to accede to his brother's demands. In other words, Prince Faisal was backed by the religious establishment, which is headed by the Al Shaykh the descendants of Muhammad bin Abd al Wahab. In*

*addition, Prince Faisal sought authority through significant Sudairi backing which he cemented by his marriage to a Sudairi.*

*King Saud refused, however, and made a last-ditch attempt to retake executive powers, leading Prince Faisal to order the National Guard to surround King Saud's palace. His loyalists outnumbered and outgunned, King Saud relented, and on 4 March 1964, Prince Faisal was appointed regent. A meeting of the elders of the royal family and the ulema was convened later that year, and a second fatwa was decreed by the grand mufti, calling on King Saud to abdicate the throne in favor of his brother. The royal family supported the fatwa and immediately informed King Saud of their decision. King Saud, by now shorn of all his powers, agreed, and Prince Faisal was proclaimed king on 2 November 1964. Shortly thereafter, Saud bin Abdulaziz went into exile in Greece.*

### **37<sup>th</sup>, 38<sup>th</sup> Paragraphs**

*One theory for the murder was avenging the death of Prince Khalid bin Musa'id, the brother of Prince Faisal. King Faisal instituted modern and secular reforms that led to the installation of television, which provoked violent protest, one which was led by Prince Khalid, who during the course of an attack on a television station was shot dead by a policeman.*

*Prince Faisal, who was captured directly after the attack, was officially declared insane. But following the trial, a panel of Saudi medical experts decided that Faisal was sane when he gunned the king down. The nation's high religious court convicted him of regicide and sentenced him to execution. Despite Faisal's dying request that the life of his assassin be spared, he was beheaded in the public square in Riyadh. The public execution took place on 18 June 1975 at 4:30 pm—three hours before sundown—before a throng of thousands at the Al Hukm Palace (Palace of Justice).*

<http://islamtimes.org/en/doc/article/385050/>

### **“Faisal of Saudi Arabia :Struggle with King Saud”**

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*Faisal began amassing more power for himself. He removed many of Saud's loyalists from their posts and appointed like-minded princes in key military and security positions,[28][29] such as his brother Prince Abdullah, to whom he gave command of the National Guard in 1962. Upon King Saud's return, Prince Faisal demanded that he be made regent and that King Saud be reduced to a purely ceremonial role. In this, he had the crucial backing of the ulema (elite Islamic scholars), including a fatwa (edict) issued by the grand mufti of Saudi Arabia, a relative of Prince Faisal on his mother's side, calling on King Saud to accede to his brother's demands.[30] In other words, Prince Faisal was backed by the religious establishment, which is headed by the Al-Shaykh, the descendants of Muhammad bin Abd al Wahab. In addition, Prince Faisal sought authority through significant Sudairi backing which he cemented by his marriage to a Sudairi.*

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[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Faisal\\_of\\_Saudi\\_Arabia#Struggle\\_with\\_King\\_Saud](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Faisal_of_Saudi_Arabia#Struggle_with_King_Saud)

## The So-Called Wars of Religion

Very often you hear people talking about wars of religion, for both the wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> and the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. I would like to give some examples about why it is very wrong to describe these wars as wars of religion. At the following map I have marked with red the West Central Asia, a region predominantly Muslim, which came under Russian control in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and remained under Russian control until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. East Central Asia, also a region with Muslim majority, today called the Xin Jiang Province of China, came under Chinese control and remains under Chinese control to this very day. The Turkish nationalists call Xin Jiang “East Turkestan” and consider it as a region that should be under Turkish influence, as the rest of Central Asia should be according to them.

Map 1



At the map you can also see with green another predominantly Muslim region, which was controlled by the Ottomans until the First World War 1914-1918, when it came under British and French control, after the Ottoman defeat.

What we observe during the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century wars is that the Russian Christians supported the Muslims to drive away from the Middle East the English and French Christians. We also observe the English and the French Christians, and also the American Christians, supporting the Muslims of Pakistan and Afghanistan in order to drive away from Central Asia the Russian Christians. In all that we cannot see wars of religion. We can only see wars between the West and the Soviet Union. But if we do not look at the big picture, and we focus on regional wars, we might think that this is about wars of religion.

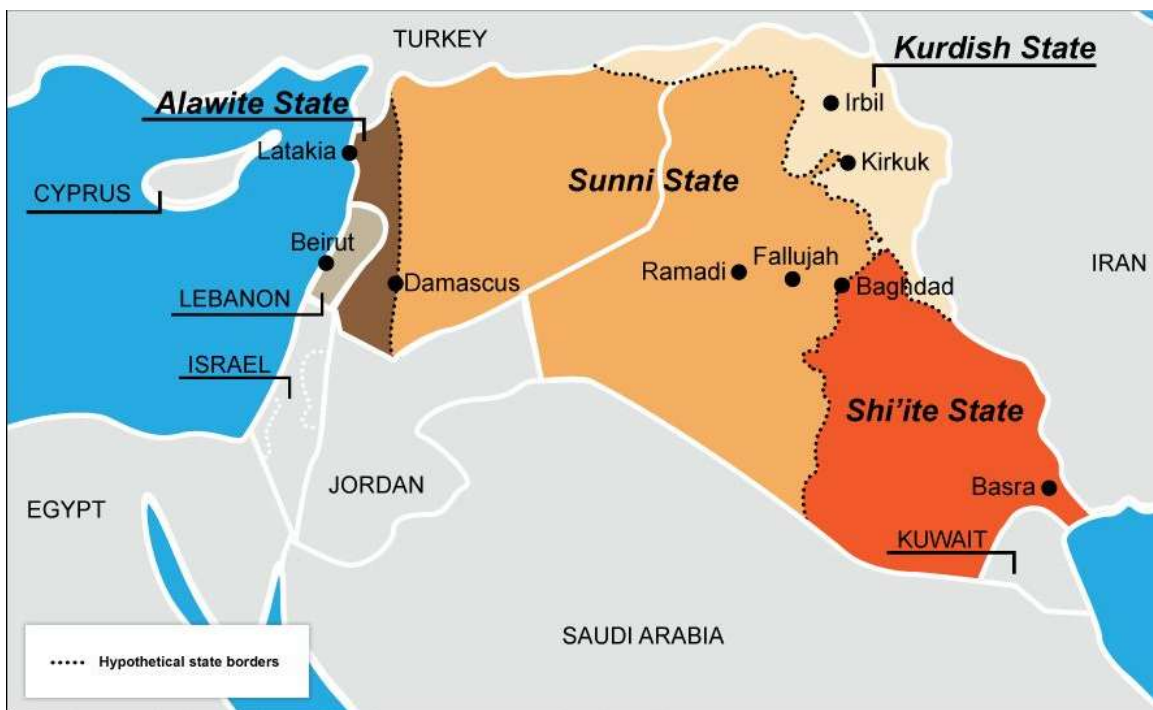
Today we might once more think that we are dealing with wars of religion, but that's not true either. For instance Russia, France, England and Germany might have started aligning against Turkey, which is the greatest military power of the Muslim world, but the United States, a Christian country, is a Turkish ally.

It is true that the Americans and the Turks have many problems in Syria and Iraq. In Syria the Americans support the Kurds of Syria and the Turks the Sunni Arabs of Syria. In Iraq the Americans support the Shiite Arabs and the Kurds, while the Turks support the Sunni Arabs of Iraq i.e. the people of

Saddam Hussein. But the Americans and the Turks remain united against Russia.

At the following map you can see the Sunni, Shiite (Shia), Alawite and Kurdish parts of Syria and Iraq.

Map 2 Alawites, Sunnis, Shiite (Shia) and Kurds of Syria and Iraq



Some analysts predict that the Americans might have to cooperate with Russia in the future, because all of the US allies in Europe are already doing it to some extent. This might happen in the future, but that's not what we see for now. Note that the cooperation between Russia, France, Germany and England is not a true alliance. They are just cooperating against Turkey and ISIS even though they have many differences among them.

For all of us who live in Europe, especially the ones living near Turkey, today's wars might again seem like wars of religion. But also note that the European left is aligned with the Islamists today. See Jeremy Corbyn in England (Labour Party), Pablo Iglesias in Spain (Podemos), Alexis Tsipras in Greece (SYRIZA) and many others. After the collapse of the Soviet Union most of the leftists turned to the Islamists. Actually the Islamists pay better than the Soviets used to.

Note that Islamic countries i.e. countries where the Koran is the law, fall into two categories i.e. the Islamic Monarchies and the Islamic Republics. Islamic Monarchies are countries where the Koran is the law and they have kings (monarchs) as their leaders. Islamic Republics are the equivalent of the communist countries in the Muslim World. Communist countries are called Democratic Republics or People's Republics, and the equivalent in the Muslim world is the so called "Islamic Republic". Communism almost bans religion and communism is normally not very welcome in the Muslim World.

People's Republics and Islamic Republics have almost the same economic models, but the Koran is the law of the Islamic Republic, while religion is almost non-existent in the People's Republics, where the law is the General Secretary of the Communist Party. Saudi Arabia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait etc are Islamic Monarchies, and Iran, Pakistan and Sudan are Islamic Republics. Note that Turkey is in the process of becoming an

Islamic Republic. The Turkish Islamists came to power in 2003, and they are gradually moving Turkey from a secular state to an Islamic Republic.

Today the communist leaders are cooperating very well with Islamists leaders. I have mentioned before that a Greek Member of Parliament, Kostas Zouraris, an ex-member of the Greek Communist Party, and currently a member of the governing coalition, clearly supported the Jihadists who carried out the terrorist attacks in Paris (November 2015). Kostas Zouraris called the Jihadists fighters of freedom and dignity who fight against the French colonialists. All European communists would agree with him, even though they would not openly admit it.

Before the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, communists would normally support socialist terrorists who were trained by Muammar Gaddafi in Libya, Hafez Assad in Syria, Saddam Hussein in Iraq, Yasser Arafat in West Bank and Gaza, Fidel Castro in Cuba etc. But now European communists also support terrorists who are trained by Islamic countries. It does not even have to be Islamic Republics, it might as well be Islamic monarchies. For example Qatar, an Islamic Monarchy with great influence on European left, is a famous supporter of Islamist terrorists.

The thing is that communists and Islamists see us in exactly the same way. They believe that our countries are not really countries but a sum of corporations, and that we are so corrupted and greedy that we would even be willing to sell our own mothers for money. Nothing from what I say seems to be a war of religion. The main element is always the economic and the cultural.

## Serbia Between Russia and Turkey

Until 1991, Serbia, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, Montenegro, and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, were united under one country i.e. Yugoslavia.

Map

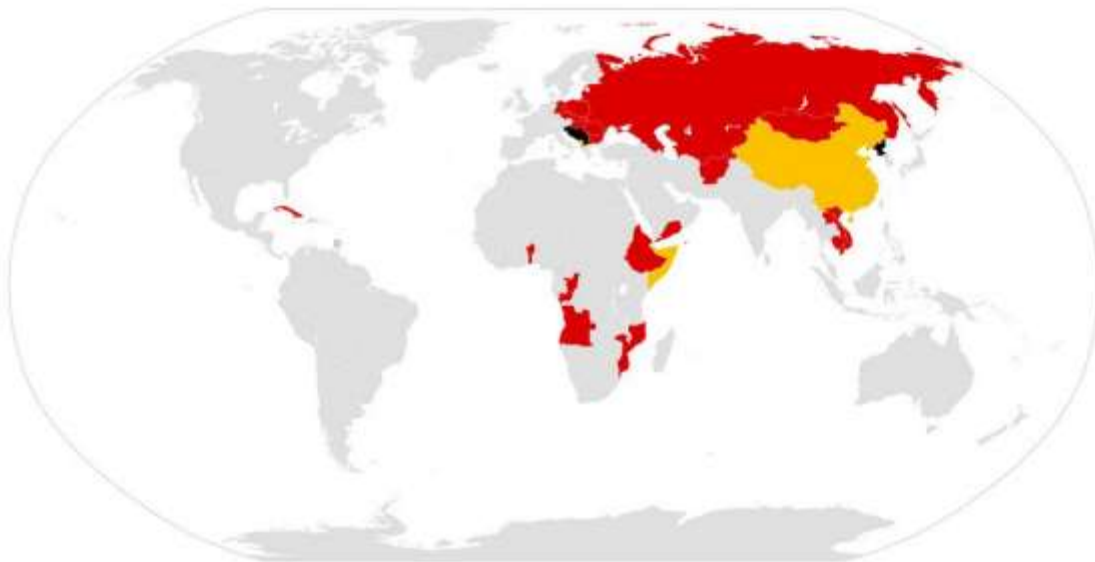


Serbia, Slovenia and Croatia are quite stable countries because their populations are relatively homogeneous. The Serbs are Christians Orthodox, and the Croats and Slovenes are Christian Catholics. In Montenegro and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Christians are the majority of the populations, but there is also a high percentage of Muslims. In Bosnia Muslims are the majority of the population but there is also a high percentage of Christians.

General Josip Broz Tito ruled all these countries under a regime of communist dictatorship, which did not allow religion and ethnicity to play a

role. Under Tito, Yugoslavia was a communist country which did not align itself with the Soviet Union or China, as most communist countries did. Yugoslavia and North Korea were the two communist countries which were not aligned with the Soviet Union or China, which were the main communist powers. At the following map you can see the communist world in 1980. With red color you can see the communist countries which were aligned with Russia, and with yellow the communist countries aligned with China. Yugoslavia and North Korea appear in black as non-aligned.

Map 2



[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/54/Sino-Soviet\\_split\\_1980.svg/2000px-Sino-Soviet\\_split\\_1980.svg.png](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/54/Sino-Soviet_split_1980.svg/2000px-Sino-Soviet_split_1980.svg.png)

Serbia is a close Russian ally, but she is also interested to join the European Union in order to receive economic aid, and currently there is a lot of tension between the EU and Russia. Serbia had heavily invested diplomatically and financially on the South Stream Pipeline project, which was promoted by



Russia, and which would transfer Russian natural gas to Bulgaria through the Black Sea. From Bulgaria the gas would go to both Southern and Northern Europe, and Serbia would be the main transit point of the northern route.

Map 3



In December 2014 Russia cancelled the South Stream Pipeline, and the Serbs were infuriated with the Russians, as you can read at the following Financial Times article titled “Anger and dismay as Russia scraps \$50bn gas plan”, December 2014.

10<sup>th</sup> Paragraph

*Aleksandar Vučić, Serbia’s prime minister, told the country’s RTS channel that the decision was bad news for Belgrade and said he would urgently seek to speak with Mr Putin. “Serbia has been investing in this project for seven years, but now it has to pay the price of a clash between the great [powers],” he said.*

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/1a5954f0-7a41-11e4-a8e1-00144feabdc0.html>

After the cancellation of the South Stream pipeline, Serbia's interest for joining the European Union increased, and Serbia became more interested in participating in the pipeline promoted by the European Union, Turkey and the United States, which will bring natural gas from the Caspian Sea to Europe, in order to provide an alternative to Russia's Gazprom. At the following article from RT (Russia Today), which is a state owned Russian news network, titled "Serbia to join US-backed gas project, seeks diversification from Russia – PM", May 2015, you can read that the Serbian Prime Minister said that Serbia is ready to participate in the Southern Energy Corridor which is promoted by the EU, the US and Turkey.

"Serbia to join US-backed gas project, seeks diversification from Russia – PM", May 2015

<http://www.rt.com/business/262697-serbia-us-pipeline-eu/>

At the following Foreign Affairs article, titled "Playing the Field in Serbia: Aleksandar Vucic's Dance between Russia and the West", September 2015, you can read that while Greece, Slovenia, Hungary and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia have moved closer to Russia, Serbia, a traditional Russian ally, is willing to move closer to the West.

As you can see at the following map, Greece and Yugoslavia used to form a wall between East and West, and they are of crucial importance for any project which wants to bring the energy resources of the Caspian Sea and the Middle East to Europe. With the break up of Yugoslavia, and the creation of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) and Kosovo, this

wall was broken. But the geostrategic importance of Greece and Serbia are much greater than the ones of FYROM and Kosovo. Actually Serbia does not recognize Kosovo as an independent state, and Kosovo is supported by Turkey and Albania.

Map 4



According to the Foreign Affairs article that I mentioned above, the United States were delighted by the willingness of the Serbs to move closer to the West. The article also mentions the visit of the Serbian Prime Minister to United States in the summer of 2015, which was the first one in 16 years i.e. after the NATO bombing of Serbia during the Kosovo crisis in 1999. However the Foreign Affairs also mentions that words are easy and that the West will have to wait and see whether Serbia really wants to move closer to the West and away from Russia.

“Playing the Field in Serbia: Aleksandar Vucic’s Dance between Russia and the West”, September 2015.

[https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/serbia/2015-09-11/playing-field-serbia?cid=nlc-fatoday-20150911&sp\\_mid=49526885&sp\\_rid=aWFrb3ZvczEwMDBAeWFob28uZ3IS1](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/serbia/2015-09-11/playing-field-serbia?cid=nlc-fatoday-20150911&sp_mid=49526885&sp_rid=aWFrb3ZvczEwMDBAeWFob28uZ3IS1)

If Serbia wants to participate in the energy projects which are promoted by the European Union, she will have to improve her relations with Turkey and Albania. As you can read at the following announcement from the site of the Serbia Trade Ministry, Serbia was interested to normalize her diplomatic and economic relations with Turkey as early as 2014.

“We should improve the economic relations between Serbia and Turkey”, June 2014

<http://mtt.gov.rs/en/releases-and-announcements/we-should-improve-the-economic-relations-between-serbia-and-turkey/>

At the following Deutsche Welle article, titled “Serbian, Albanian premiers pledge to strengthen ties”, May 2015, you can read that the Prime Ministers of Serbia and Albania committed to improve relations between their countries.

“Serbian, Albanian premiers pledge to strengthen ties”, του Μαΐου 2015

<http://www.dw.com/en/serbian-albanian-premiers-pledge-to-strengthen-ties/a-18479795>

Serbia’s diplomatic maneuvers have repercussions on Serbia’s immigration policy too. It is not a secret that ISIS is playing an important role in

transferring Muslim immigrants to Europe, as you can read at the following BBC article.

“Islamic State militants 'smuggled to Europe”, May 2015

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-32770390>

By helping the illegal Muslim immigrants to go to Germany, Serbia is improving her ties with Turkey and Albania. Moreover the larger number of Muslims in Germany will lead to a rise of Islamism, which will eliminate the great advantage enjoyed by the Russo-German pipeline networks, which is their greater security. At the following article from RT (Russia Today), you can read that radical Islamists recruit young Muslims from Germany's refugee camps. RT is not the most objective news agency in the world, but what it says is true, and I mention RT because I want to show how Russia is feeling about the rise of Islamism in Germany. And keep in mind that many of these people come from Libya, Syria and Iraq, which are traditional Russian allies, but the Russian knows that the rise of Islamism in Germany will undermine their energy policy.

“Radical Islamists recruit male youths in refugee camps in Germany”, September 2015

<http://www.rt.com/news/315058-islamists-recruit-refugee-camps/>

Serbia is now having problems with Hungary, where Victor Orbán closed the borders with Serbia, in order to block the illegal Muslim immigrants from reaching Germany. Actually Germany and Austria also closed their borders. Victor Orbán is an ultra nationalist politician, and he is a Russian puppet. Victor Orbán is a semi-dictator leader similar to Russia's Putin and Turkey's Erdoğan. At the following RT article you can read that Hungary

imports from Russia 70% of her gas and 80% of her oil, and that the West is heavily criticizing Victor Orban for his support to Russia.

“Hungarian rhapsody: Will Putin’s visit to Viktor Orban give Russia a way into Europe”?, February 2015

<http://www.rt.com/news/232631-putin-hungary-turkish-stream/>

At the following Politico article, titled “Wait, the Serbs are now the good guys?”, September 2014, you can read that the ultra nationalist Serbian Prime Minister Alexander Vucic was a pleasant surprise because he showed a lot of compassion towards the illegal Muslim immigrants, and he made their passage to Germany easier. The article also mentions that Vucic did not make provisions for keeping some of these refugees in Serbia, but he heavily criticized the Hungarian Prime Minister, when he closed Hungary’s borders. The ultra nationalist Serbian Prime Minister Alexander Vucic said that the stance of the ultra nationalist Prime Minister of Hungary was “anti-European”.

“Wait, the Serbs are now the good guys?”, του Σεπτεμβρίου 2014

<http://www.politico.eu/article/serbia-croatia-hungary-orban-migrants-schengen-crisis/>

You can also read the following article.

“Chaos at Hungary-Serbia Border as Migrants Clash With Police”, September 2015

<http://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/chaos-hungary-serbia-border-migrants-clash-police-n428921>

Map 5



# The Economic & Military Power of Germany and Japan

At the following table from the Global Fire Power you can see the ranking of 126 countries according to their military power. I have only included the first 15, but you can see the rest of them in the article.

Picutre 1

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1		<a href="#">United States of America</a>	PwrIndx: 0.1661
2		<a href="#">Russia</a>	PwrIndx: 0.1865
3		<a href="#">China</a>	PwrIndx: 0.2315
4		<a href="#">India</a>	PwrIndx: 0.2695
5		<a href="#">United Kingdom</a>	PwrIndx: 0.2743
6		<a href="#">France</a>	PwrIndx: 0.3065
7		<a href="#">South Korea</a>	PwrIndx: 0.3098
8		<a href="#">Germany</a>	PwrIndx: 0.3505
9		<a href="#">Japan</a>	PwrIndx: 0.3838
10		<a href="#">Turkey</a>	PwrIndx: 0.4335
11		<a href="#">Israel</a>	PwrIndx: 0.4974
12		<a href="#">Indonesia</a>	PwrIndx: 0.5231
13		<a href="#">Australia</a>	PwrIndx: 0.5281
14		<a href="#">Canada</a>	PwrIndx: 0.5625
15		<a href="#">Taiwan</a>	PwrIndx: 0.5671

<http://www.globalfirepower.com/countries-listing.asp>



As you can read at the following article from Business Insider, titled “The 35 Most Powerful Militaries In The World”, July 2014, Global Fire Power is using over 50 factors in order to do this ranking every year. You can see that Germany has the 8<sup>th</sup> strongest army, lagging France and Russia, and Japan has the 9<sup>th</sup> strongest army in the world. However Japan has the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest economy in the world, and Germany has the 4<sup>th</sup> largest. Normally economic and military power go hand in hand. At the Business Insider article you can read that neither Germany nor Japan possess nuclear warheads. For Germany and Japan it has been a geopolitical choice to disconnect their military potency from their economic one. Actually this was initially enforced upon them, after the end of World War 2, and gradually it became their own choice.

The Germans decided to constraint their military power in order to stop being a threat for the French and the Russians. These three countries are sitting on the flat geographic corridor that runs from France to Russia, avoiding the Alps and the Carpathian Mountains. There are not many physical barriers in this geographic corridor. Napoleon used this corridor in 1812 to lead the French army to Russia, and Hitler used this corridor to lead the German army to Russia in 1941. Therefore France is afraid of Germany, Russia is afraid of Germany, and Germany is afraid of both. See map 2.

Picture 2



The Germans and the Japanese are very disciplined people and very talented in creating industrial miracles. Both of them experienced extreme industrialization in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and both of them were very poor in raw materials. They both had to struggle with the traditional powers for the control of the resources they needed for their industrial machines.

There was a lot of tension between Germany and France for the rich in coal and iron fields of Alsace and Lorraine, and of the Ruhr valley and the region of Saar, all regions between France and Germany. With the Franco-German war of 1871 the Germans took control of these regions, and the French took them back after the First World War in 1918, but Adolf Hitler took them back again during the Second World War, when he invaded Germany in 1940. After the end of the Second World War, actually in 1951, the

European Coal and Steel Community was created. The ECSC created a common market for coal and steel, in order to prevent Germany and France from going to another war.

However a few decades ago, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Germans were trying to build a navy which would allow them to challenge the French and the English for the resources of Africa. The Germans had also agreed with the Ottomans to construct the Baghdad Railway which would connect Berlin to the Persian Gulf, providing the Germans with access to the oil of the Persian Gulf. For some people the Baghdad Railway was the main cause of the First World War.

Besides it is not a coincidence that before invading Poland in September 1939, which was the beginning of World War 2, Adolf Hitler agreed with the Russian communists that they would provide the Nazis with oil, iron and grains (Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939), in return for Germany manufactured goods. The pact was signed in August 1939, and once Hitler had secured his eastern borders and his supplies in raw materials, he invaded Poland on September 1<sup>st</sup> 1939.

In the meantime Japan was facing a similar to Germany's situation in the Pacific Ocean. Japan was the rising industrial power, and she had to compete with the Americans and the Europeans who controlled the resources of the Pacific and the Indian Oceans. There was therefore tension between Japan and the US, and that was a major problem for the Japanese, because the Americans were their major supplier in oil. In 1931 the Japanese invaded China through the Korean peninsula and annexed the rich in resources

Manchuria, which further increased tensions with the Americans, who were Chinese allies. But that was not enough for the Japanese, who also invaded the French Indochina, which today is Vietnam and Laos (see yellow circle at the following map).

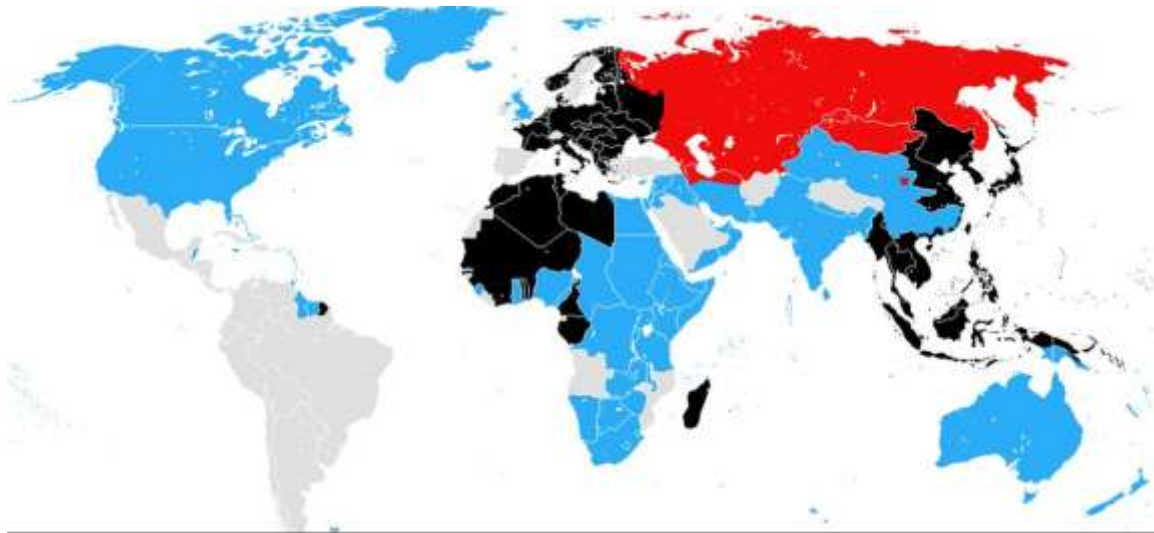
Map 3



The United States imposed Japan an embargo on the sale of oil, and the Japanese believing that a war with the US was inevitable, decided to attack Pearl Harbor, in order to destroy the American navy of the Pacific Ocean. Then the Japanese annexed Philippines, which at the time was American territory, and they invaded Indonesia, which was controlled by the Netherlands. Today Indonesia is the 30<sup>th</sup> richest country in the world in terms of oil reserves, but at the time the Indonesia was even richer, because at the time many of today's known oil fields had not been discovered yet. Japan almost managed to invade Australia.

At the following map of Wikipedia you can see that by 1942 the Germans and the Japanese were very close of taking control of the oil of the Middle East and the Caspian Sea, which would seal their victory in Europe, Asia and Africa. But this never happened as the British defeated the Nazis at El Alamein in 1942, and the Russians defeated the Nazis at Stalingrad in 1943.

Map 4



[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline\\_of\\_World\\_War\\_II\\_\(1942\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_World_War_II_(1942))

At the end of WW2 both Germany and Japan were completely destroyed. Germany was destroyed by the Americans and the Russians, and Japan was destroyed by the Americans. In Japan, where the Japanese would not surrender, and it was estimated that hundreds of thousands of American soldiers would have to die before Japan surrendered, the Americans dropped an atomic bomb. Japan did not surrender, and the Americans dropped a second atomic bomb, which led to Japan's unconditional surrender.

The two allies, Germany and Japan, never forgot what happened in WW2, and they prefer to constraint their military potency. Germany wants that for

not being a threat to France and Russia, and Japan for not being a threat to America. However for the US today it is better if Japan becomes stronger, because together they are trying to prevent China from converting the South China Sea to a Chinese lake, by militarizing the islets which are located in the exclusive economic zone of the other countries. Moreover Japan and China have differences over the Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea, and Japan and Russia have differences over the Kuril Islands in the Sea of Okhotsk. But if Japan becomes too strong China and Russia will not be very happy.

For Germany things are a bit more complicated even though Germany is a NATO member. The thing is that Germany has very close cooperation with Russia. Germany is the number one importer of Russian oil and natural gas, and Russia is a major importer of German manufactured goods. It seems that it is France which has the stronger motives to align her foreign policy with the US. A stronger Germany would make France feeling uncomfortable. England would not feel very comfortable either, because England feels that the European Union threatens the City of London as the major European financial market.

For the Global Fire Power article see

“The complete Global Firepower list puts the military powers of the world into full perspective”, August 2015

<http://www.globalfirepower.com/countries-listing.asp>

For the Business Insider article see “The 35 Most Powerful Militaries In The World”, July 2014

<http://www.businessinsider.com/35-most-powerful-militaries-in-the-world-2014-7>

## **The Alliance Between Iran and Al-Qaeda**

A very interesting article by Foreign Affairs, about the limited alliance between Iran and Al Qaeda, titled “Al Qaeda in Iran: Why Tehran is Accommodating the Terrorist Group”, January 2012. Al Qaeda is a Saudi terrorist organization, which was created by Osama bin Laden in 1988, and it is very hostile towards the US and the Saudi leadership. It is the organization responsible for the 9/11 terrorist attack (Twin Towers).

It can be assumed that Osama bin Laden was funded by business centers which wanted a closer cooperation between Saudi Arabia and China, and which believed that the US military presence in Saudi Arabia was a big constraint towards this end. And it is true that the Saudi-American relations allowed the Iranians to have a closer cooperation with China. One of the main requests of Osama bin Laden was for the US military to leave Saudi Arabia. And indeed, immediately after the 9/11 attack, the US military bases were transferred from Saudi Arabia to Qatar, which was more than happy to host them, as a shield against the Saudis and the Iranians. However Saudi Arabia paid a very high price for that, because the Americans reduced their backing for the Saudis in many aspects of their foreign policy.

Moreover we can assume that Osama bin Laden was funded by Saudis who wanted to prevent the flow of the Kazakh oil and Turkmen natural gas to India and the Indian Ocean. From 1996 Afghanistan was the base of Osama bin Laden.

Map 1





The Foreign Affairs article mentions that Iran and Al Qaeda are opponents, and this has been more than obvious in Iraq, but they have a common hatred for the US. I must add that the TAPI pipeline (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India), promoted by the US and India, hurts both the Iranian and Arab interests. The article refers to Al Qaeda's bases in Iran, and says that the Iranians do not allow members of Al Qaeda to move freely within Iran. However, according to Foreign Affairs, it is much harder for the US to attack Al Qaeda's bases in Iran, compared to the ones in Iraq, Pakistan or Yemen.

In the 10<sup>th</sup> paragraph the article says that the Iran-Al Qaeda limited alliance seems odd, but it can be explained by their common hatred for the US, the Saudi leadership and Israel. Moreover the Al Qaeda presence in Iran is a guarantee for the Iranians that Al Qaeda will not carry out any attacks within Iran. For Al Qaeda the Iranian bases are its safest bases, since it is very

difficult for the US to attack them. The article says that if the US-Iranian relations further deteriorate, the Iran-Al Qaeda ones will become even better. However the article was written in 2012, and the relations between Iran and the US significantly improved, and therefore it can be assumed that the ones between Iran and Al Qaeda became more difficult.

For the Foreign Affairs article see

“Al Qaeda in Iran: Why Tehran is Accommodating the Terrorist Group”,  
του Ιανουαρίου 2012

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/iran/2012-01-29/al-qaeda-iran>

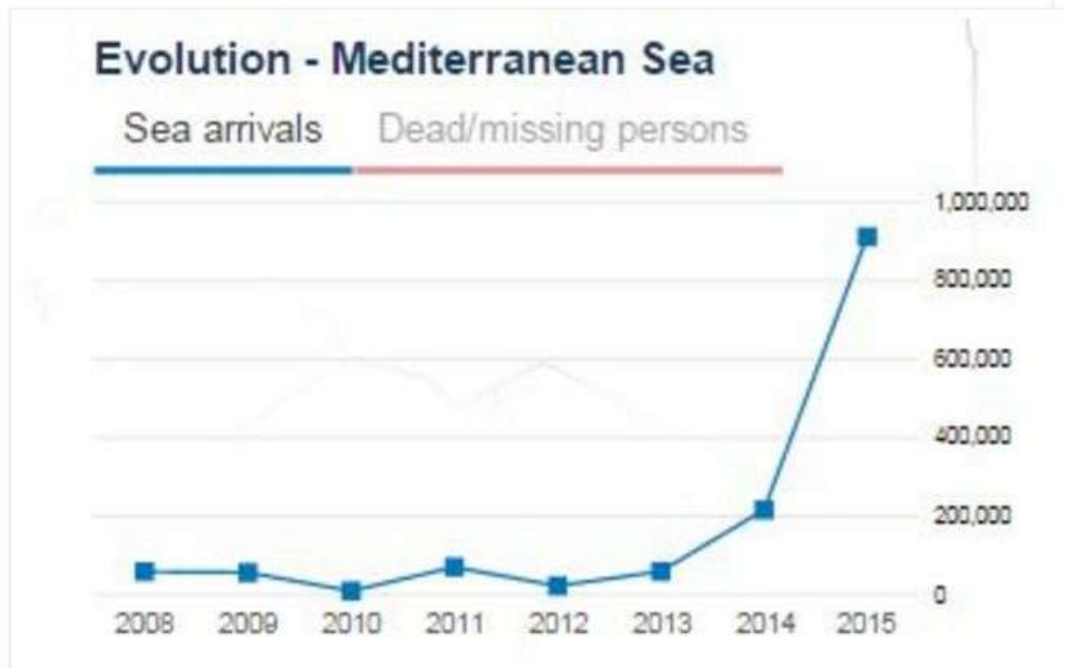
## **The Strategy of the Italian Prime Minister**

I have said many times that Matteo Renzi, the Italian Prime Minister, was the first one to use immigrants against Germany. However the 200 thousand refugees that Matteo Renzi sent to Germany when he became Prime Minister in February 2014 proved to be peanuts compared to the 1 million immigrants that the Greek communists and the Turkish Islamists sent to Germany in 2015, after Alexis Tsipras became Prime Minister of Greece in January 2015. See “Germany’s Defeat by the Turkish Islamists and the Greek Communists”.

<https://iakal.wordpress.com/2015/12/08/germanys-defeat-by-the-turkish-islamists-and-the-greek-communists/>

At the following table from the United Nations you can see the immigrant flows to Europe.

Map 1 Refugee Influx



<http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/regional.php>

Now Matteo Renzi is the only one to block the agreement between Merkel and Edrojan, according to which Turkey will receive 3 billion euros of EU funds, plus some other “gifts”, in order to control the immigrant flows to Europe. The Greek Prime Minister does not object to Turkey getting the money, first because he does not want to hurt the alliance between the Greek Communists and the Turkish Islamists, and second because it would be like admitting that the Greek communists are using the immigrants against Germany. The truth is that everybody knows they are doing it, and the European People’s Party has blamed the Italian and Greek socialists for the immigrant crisis. See Politico below.

However the objections of Matteo Renzi is a great gift for the Greek communists, because they do not have to hurt their alliance with the Turks, and the Turks will keep sending immigrants to Greece and Germany. That’s

why Renzi is so popular with the Greek journalists who come mainly from the left.

The Italians are very disappointed that the South Stream Pipeline was cancelled, because ENI was a partner, and they are also very disappointed with the agreement of the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline, in which ENI was not given any shares. The Russians hold 50% of the shares in Nord Stream 2 and they gave 10% each to the German companies E.ON. and BASF-Wintershall, the Austrian OMV, the French ENGIE, and the Anglo-Dutch Royal Dutch Shell. ENI did not get any shares, and the Italian public is ENI's largest shareholder.

Map 1 South Stream and North Stream



The Italians are blocking Nord Stream 2 in order to put pressure on the Russians (see Financial Times), and they block the EU economic sanctions against Russia (see Reuters) in order to lure the Russians to give them a share in Nord Stream 2 (see American Interest). At the same time they send refugees to Germany, in order to convince the Germans to give them more money and stop asking for reform and transparency in their public sector.

## **Articles**

“EU-Turkey migrant plan blocked by Italy: officials”, January 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-eu-italy-turkey-immigration-idUSKCN0US2AR20160114>

“Italy Wants in on Russian Pipeline”, January 2016

<http://www.the-american-interest.com/2016/01/11/italy-wants-in-on-russian-pipeline/>

“Center-right blames left for EU migration woes”, October 2015

<http://www.politico.eu/article/center-right-blames-left-for-eu-migration-refugees-epp-congres/>

“Italy’s Renzi joins opposition to Nord Stream 2 pipeline deal”, December 2015

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/cebd679c-a281-11e5-8d70-42b68cfae6e4.html#axzz3ww21RVV3>

“Italy PM Renzi says Russian sanctions to be reviewed in coming months”,

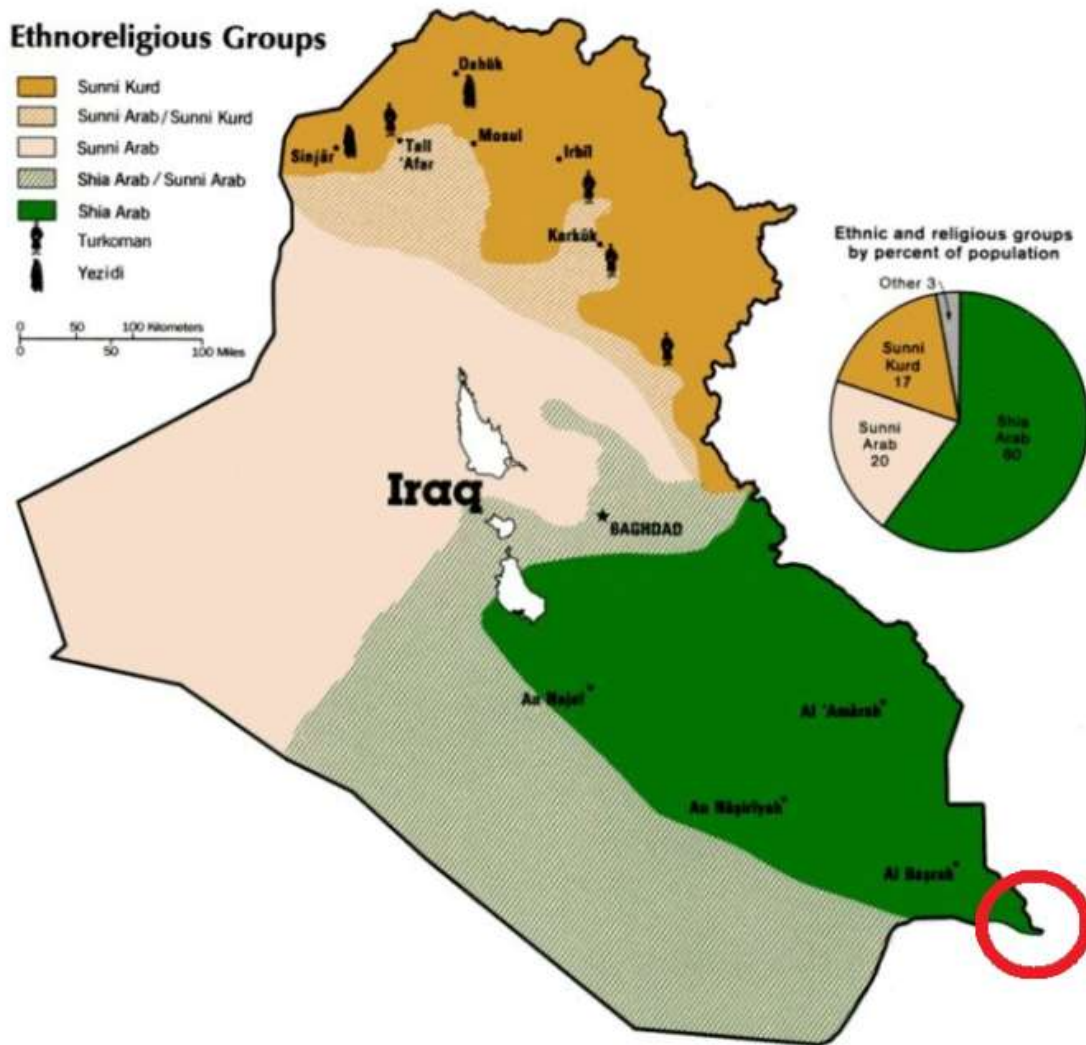
December 2015

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-eu-sanctions-italy-idUSKBN0TZ0UQ20151216>

# Why ISIS Prefers Turkey and not Saudi Arabia

At the following map you can see the Sunni Arab (pink), the Shia Arab (green) and the Sunni Kurd (brown) parts of Iraq. Shia (Shiite) Arabs constitute the majority of Iraq. The red circle on the map is the only point of Iraq that reaches the Persian Gulf, as you can see at the following maps.

Map 1 Demographics of Iraq





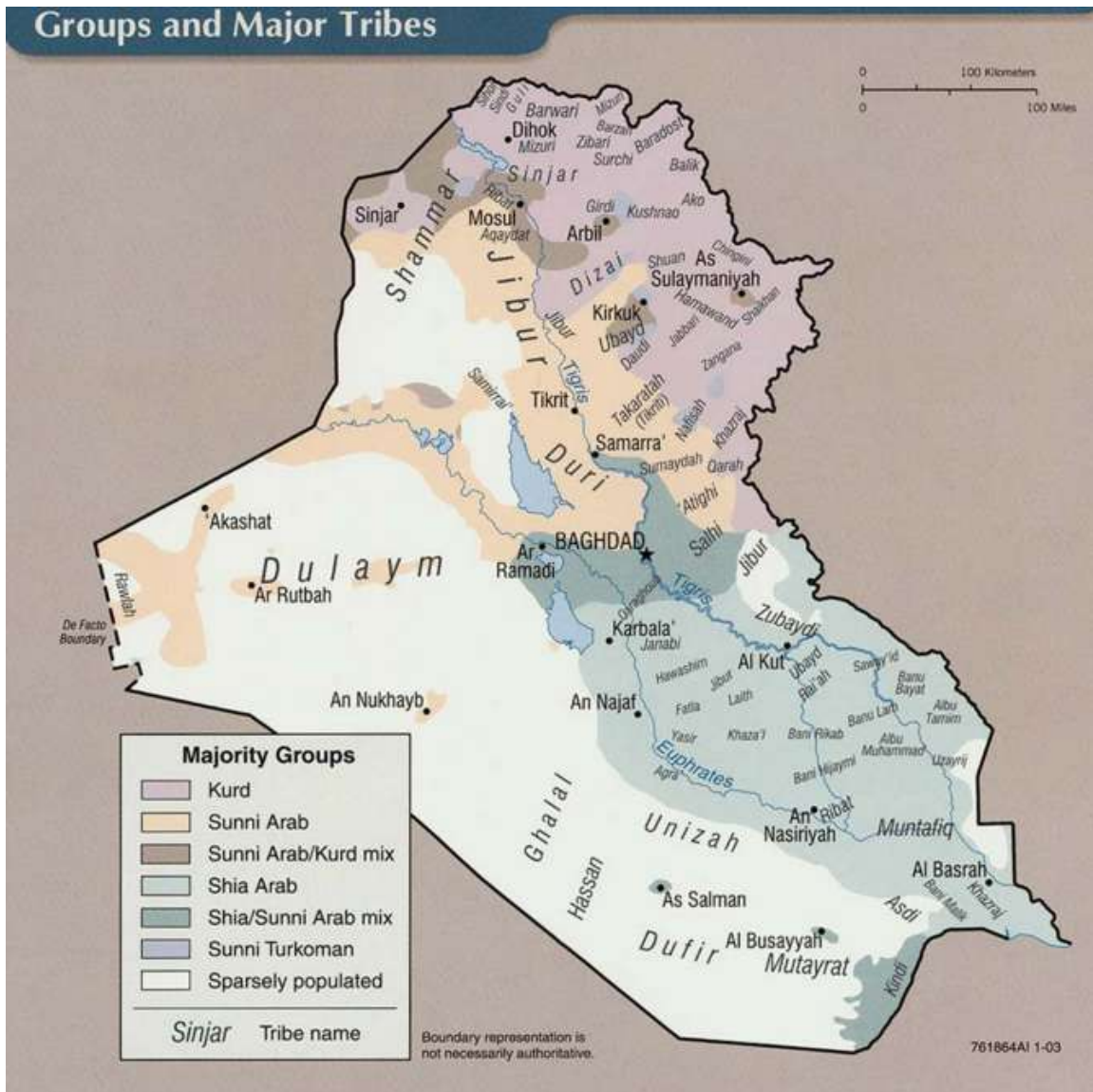
<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/iraq/images/iraq-ethnic-map.gif>

Map 2



The following Wikipedia map is a more accurate map, because it also shows the Iraqi deserts. With intense gray you can see the Arab Shiite part (South Iraq), with somon you can see the Arab Sunni part (Western Iraq), with purple the Kurdish part, and with light gray the Iraqi deserts. The largest parts of the countries of North Africa and the Middle East are deserts and they are under populated.

Map 3



[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/2a/Iraq\\_ethno\\_2003.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/2a/Iraq_ethno_2003.jpg)

The following map shows Mesopotamia, the fertile region between the Tiger and Euphrates rivers. This region was the metropolis for the civilization of the Middle East, and actually more than that, and this happened due to these rivers and the connection with the Persian Gulf. Babylon was located near what today is Baghdad.

Map 4

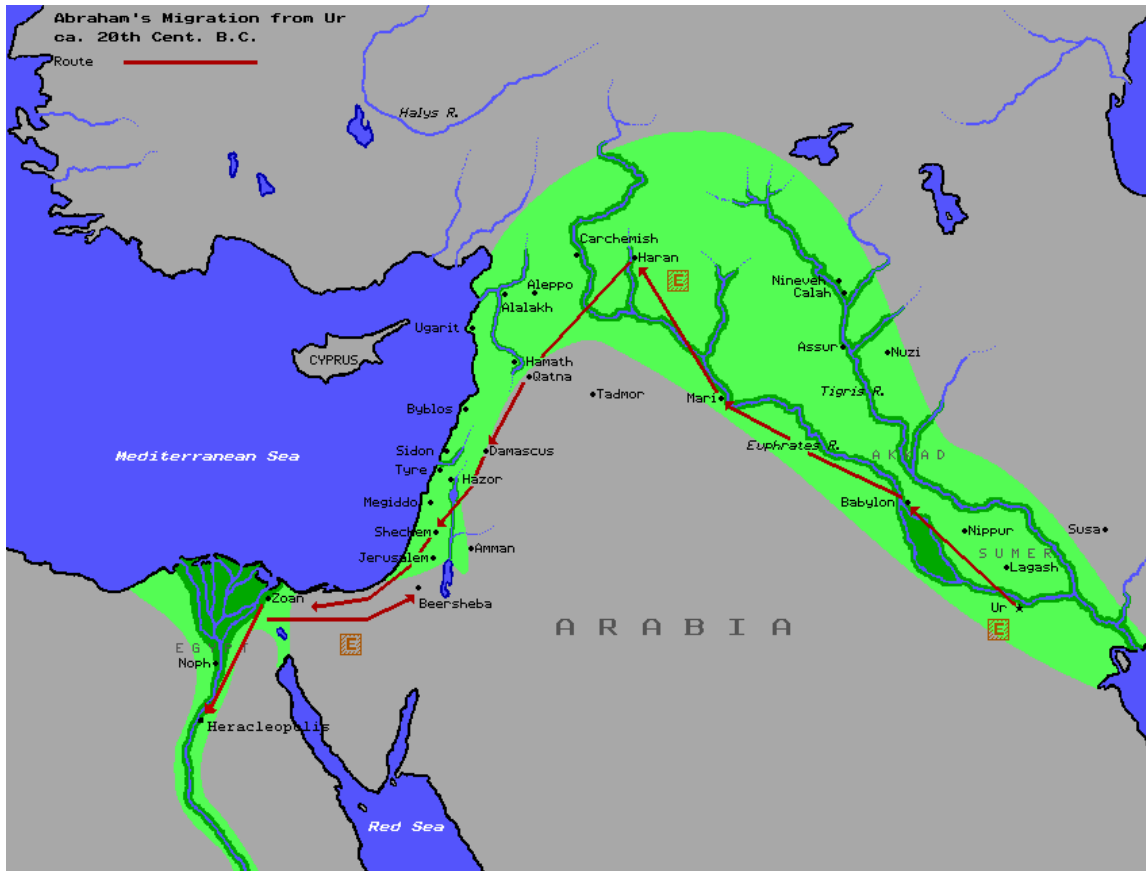


[http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inat/images/iraqart/map\\_people.gif](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inat/images/iraqart/map_people.gif)

Mesopotamia (Tiger and Euphrates Rivers), together with Egypt (Nile River), were the important regions when people were killing each other for water instead for oil, even though people are still killing each other for water. Turkey, Syria and Iraq had many disputes for the waters of Tiger and Euphrates even before the Arab Spring, because Turkey wants to use these waters for hydroelectric production. See for example “Ataturk Dam: Political Controversy”.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atat%C3%BCrk\\_Dam#Political\\_controversy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atat%C3%BCrk_Dam#Political_controversy)

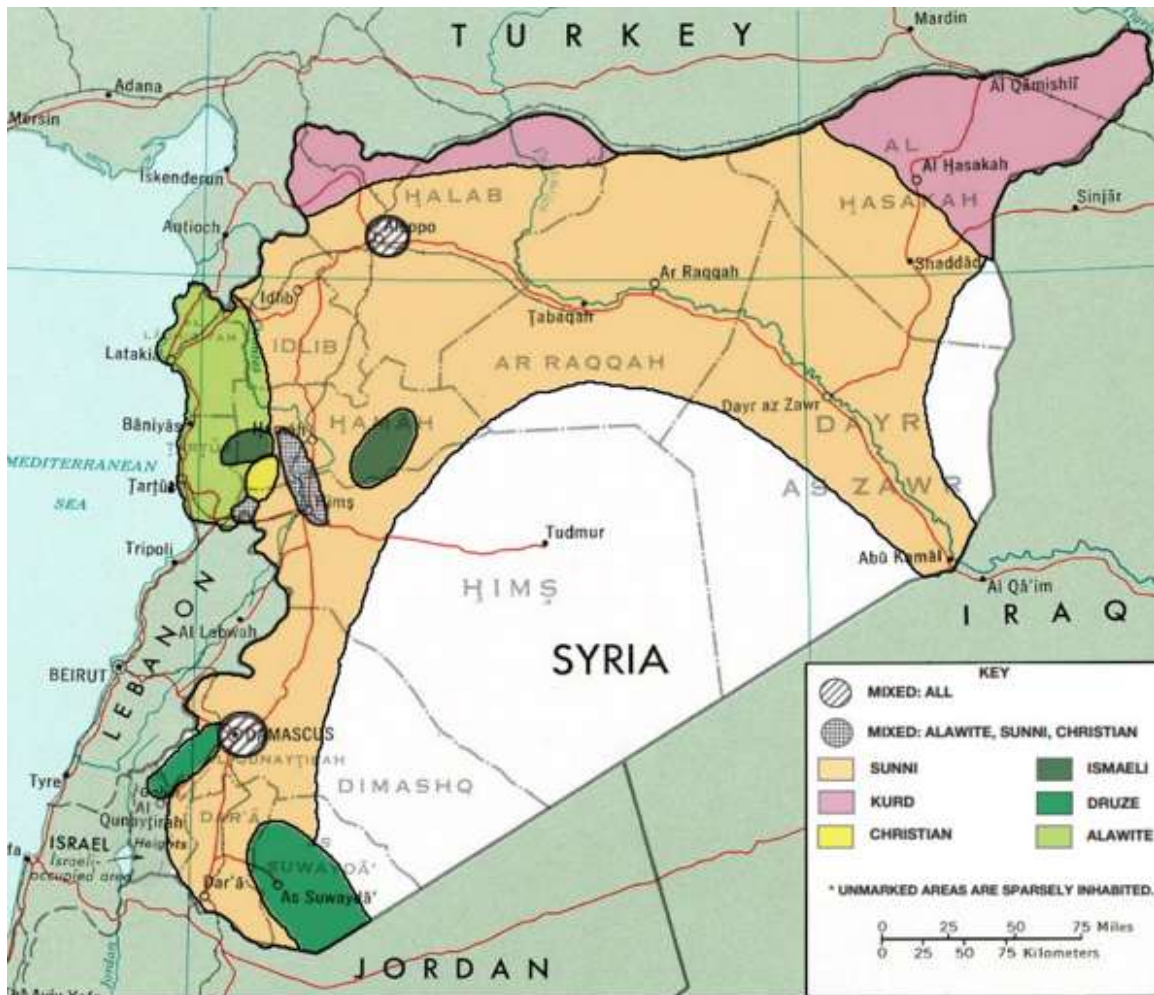
Map 5 Egypt and Mesopotamia (Nile, Tiger and Euphrates)



<http://xenohistorian.faithweb.com/worldhis/map06.gif>

The following Wikipedia map shows the Sunni part of Syria (somon), the Alawite part of Syria (light green), the Kurdish part with pink, and the Syrian Desert with white.

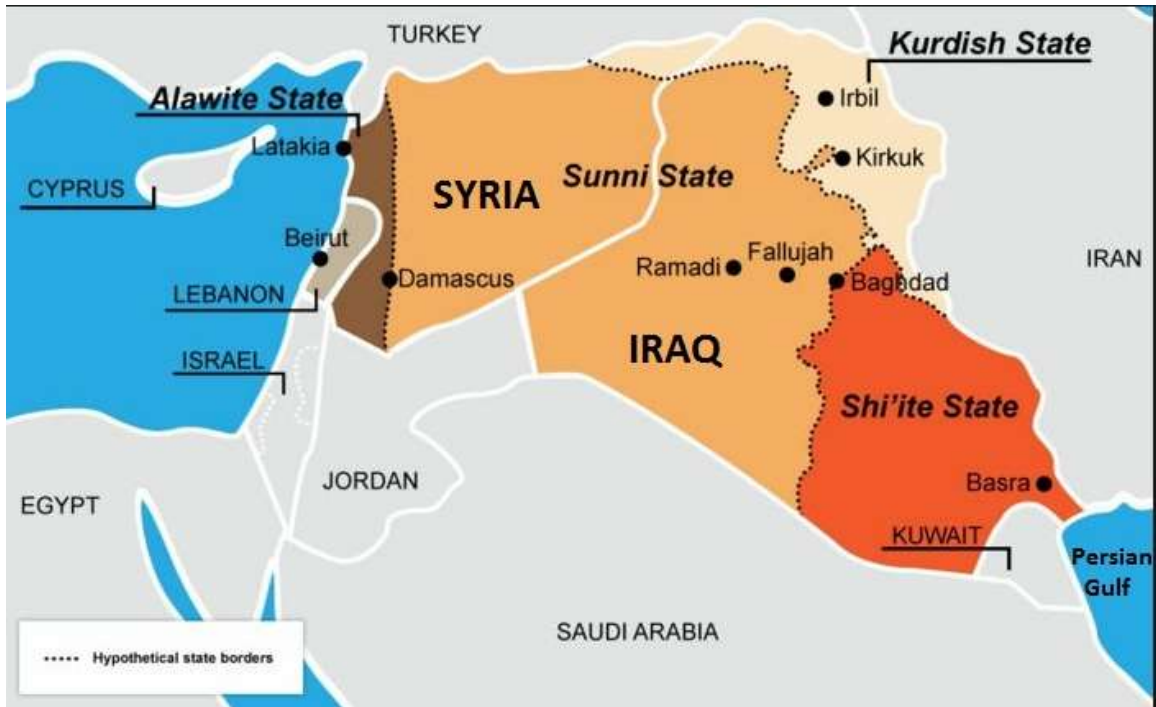
Map 5



[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/cf/Syria\\_Ethno-religious\\_composition..jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/cf/Syria_Ethno-religious_composition..jpg)

The following map is an approximation about how an Alawite (dark brown) a Sunni (light brown), a Shia (orange) and a Kurdish (beige) state could look like if at some point the war in Syria and Iraq ends, taking into account the demographics of Syria and Iraq. Of course this is only an approximation but reality should not look very different.

Map 6 Potential Alawite, Sunni, Shiite and Kurdish States in Syria and Iraq



[http://cdn2.vox-cdn.com/assets/4396135/sunni-shia-kurd\\_state\\_crop.jpg](http://cdn2.vox-cdn.com/assets/4396135/sunni-shia-kurd_state_crop.jpg)

When we talk about ISIS we mainly talk about the Sunni Islamists of Syria and Iraq, which are basically the parts of Syria and Iraq appearing with light brown on the above map. That's why ISIS is so different from the terrorist organizations we knew until now. ISIS in Syria and Iraq looks like a regular army that has specific territorial claims, and it does not look like traditional terrorist organizations that worked for various socialist or Islamic governments.

That makes ISIS different from traditional terrorist organizations, but also different from some of ISIS subsidiaries in other countries, where local ISIS departments do not have territorial but only economic claims, and they have a traditional hit and run approach, rather than a regular army approach, which is the case for ISIS in Syria and Iraq. ISIS in Syria and Iraq even

owns oilfields, and that makes ISIS the richest terrorist organization in history. Therefore we should not see ISIS as one thing, but more of an Islamic alliance or let's say an Islamic NATO. In the same way that NATO members can cooperate when they have common interests, various ISIS branches can cooperate when they have common interests.

I must also say that in Syria and Iraq there are also Sunni socialists who prefer a socialist than an Islamic state, but the main power today in the Sunni parts of Syria and Iraq are the Sunni Islamists. See also “The So-Called Wars of Religion”.

<https://iakal.wordpress.com/2016/01/31/the-so-called-wars-of-religion/>

I always say that even though we always talk about Turkey's support to ISIS, we should not be misled to see Turkey and ISIS as the same thing, because they are very different things. Not even ISIS is one thing as I said. The Turkish Islamists, the Syrian Islamists and the Iraqi Islamists, are three different things. They just happen to have some common interests, and that's why the Turks are supporting the Sunni Islamists of Syria and Iraq. But that does not make them one thing. They do not even have exactly the same interests. They just have some common interests, at least for now.

On map 6 you can see why ISIS of Syria and Iraq i.e. the Sunni Islamists of Syria and Iraq, prefer to work with Turkey rather than with Saudi Arabia. ISIS has oil, and it might have more oil in the future. Where can ISIS export this oil from? I guess it has to be Turkey. ISIS faces the Shiite Iraqis at the south, who are also oil exporters, and who are fighting the Sunni Iraqis i.e.

the ex-people of Saddam Hussein. See “Saddam Hussein: The Father of ISIS in Iraq”.

<https://iakal.wordpress.com/2016/01/08/saddam-hussein-the-father-of-is-is-in-iraq/>

Saudi Arabia is for ISIS another barrier. Saudi Arabia is also an oil exporter, and the Saudis had very bad relations with Saddam Hussein and his people, even though they were helping them against the common foe i.e. Iran. Remember that ISIS openly asked for the overturn of the Saudi King. See International Business Times “ISIS Vows War Against Saudi Arabia: Islamic State Group Threatens Arab Monarchy After Announcement Of Anti-Terror Coalition”, December 2015

<http://www.ibtimes.com/isis-vows-war-against-saudi-arabia-is-lamic-state-group-threatens-arab-monarchy-after-2232602>

In Syria ISIS faces the Russians and the Iranians behind the Assad regime, and ISIS knows that the Russians will not be willing to leave Syria, unless of course Assad asks them to. But if Assad asks them to go he would fall because the Iranians would not be able to save him from the Turks and the Arabs of the Gulf. Unless of course the American-Iranian relations improve so much, that the Americans replace the Russian protection to Assad. The following Foreign Policy article accuses Obama for betraying the Syrian rebels in order to help Assad, and the following Financial Times article says that Putin asked Assad to consider stepping down.

“Obama’s Disastrous Betrayal of the Syrian Rebels”, February 2016



<http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/02/05/obamas-disastrous-betrayal-of-the-syrian-rebels/>

“Vladimir Putin asked Bashar al-Assad to step down”, January 2016

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/735b4746-c01f-11e5-9fdb-87b8d15baec2.html>

But it is not so easy to make the Russians leave Syria, and even if they were replaced by the Iranians things would become worse for ISIS, because ISIS would face the Iranians, which is actually ISIS number one enemy together with the Shiites of Iraq. Even if Turkey was to control the Syrian coast lines she would not be pleased to see ISIS of Syria and Iraq exporting oil from Syria, which is very close to the Turkish port of Ceyhan, a major oil exporting point for Turkey. Therefore it seems that ISIS needs to export oil through Turkey, and that's why you hear Putin and the Israeli Defense Minister accusing Turkey of financing ISIS by buying its oil. You never hear anyone accusing Saudi Arabia of buying ISIS oil. What would Saudi Arabia do with ISIS oil? Saudi Arabia is extremely rich in oil.

Also note that Turkey is much stronger in military terms than Saudi Arabia, and that is also very useful for the Syrian and Iraqi Sunni Islamists.

## The Map of the Baghdad Pact

Below you can see a very good map of the Baghdad Pact (CENTO). The Baghdad Pact was an alliance created by the British in 1955, together with Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Pakistan. It was meant to form a wall between the oil of the Persian Gulf and the Soviet Union.

Baghdad Pact (CENTO)

<http://brilliantmaps.com/cento/>



*Map of the Central Treaty Organization's (CENTO) member states*

<http://brilliantmaps.com/cento/>

However in 1958 the socialists managed to overturn the Iraqi King, who was also a British ally, they established a socialist dictatorship, and they became Soviet allies. However the Baghdad Pact survived the loss of Iraq, because

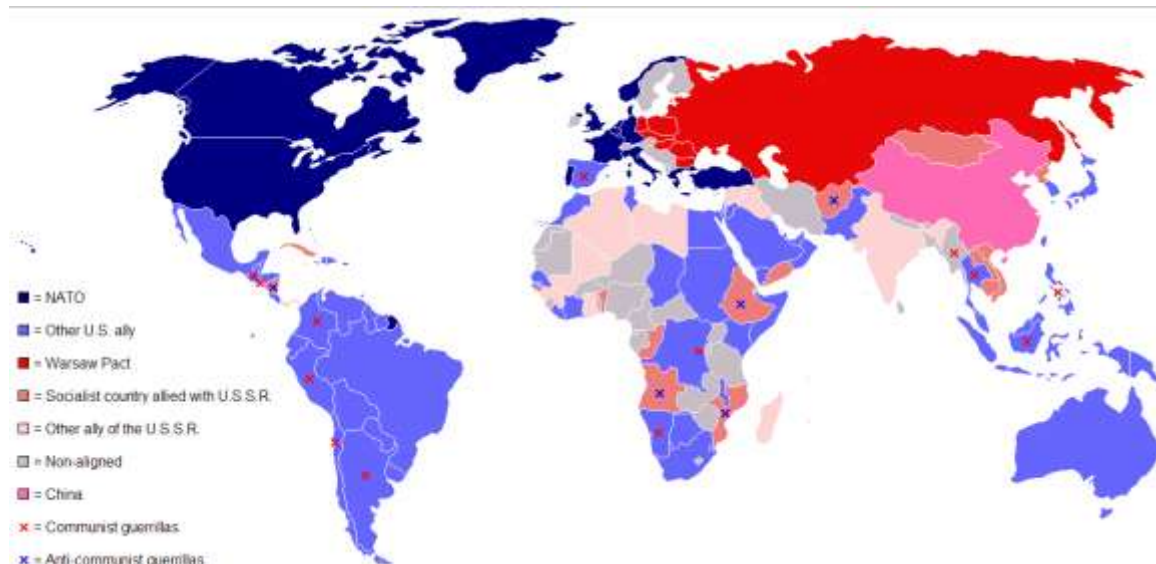
Iran and Turkey are neighboring countries, and therefore the “wall” between the oil of the Persian Gulf and the Soviet Union was not broken.

The alliance was terminated in 1979, when the Iranian Islamists took control of Iran, overturning the Iranian King, who was also a close American ally. The Iranians, like the Iraqis, nationalized the Western oil companies. At the time, the Russians, contrary to what is happening today, were not selling oil to NATO countries, and therefore their relations with the socialist dictators of the Middle East and Northern Africa were very easy.

## The Map of the Cold War Alliances

The following map shows the cold war alliances in 1980. The communist countries appear in what I think is called indian red. The most important communist countries, allied with the Soviets and not with the Chinese, were Cuba and Nicaragua in Central Asia, Angola and Mozambique in South Africa, Ethiopia in West Africa, Afghanistan in Central Asia, Mongolia in East Asia, and Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia in South Asia.

Map 1



[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/8/87/New\\_Cold\\_War\\_Map\\_1980.png](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/8/87/New_Cold_War_Map_1980.png)

The Arab socialist countries of North Africa and the Middle East i.e. Algeria, Libya, Iraq and Syria, were Soviet allies but they needed Arab nationalism, and therefore they did not use the internationalist socialist model of the Soviets, which only pays attention to the social origin i.e. working class, and ignores any national or religious characteristics. The

Arab socialist dictators wanted to invest in Arab nationalism because they were facing relatively homogenous Arab Muslim populations. The Soviets on the contrary were facing very diverse ethnic and religious populations in their colonies in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and they had to use only social origin i.e. the working class, in order to homogenize and unite the populations of their colonies. Now that the Russians have lost their colonies in Eastern Europe and Central Asia they are using a nationalist socialist model, and they are using Christianity and Panslavism in order to promote their energy policy.

During most of the cold war relations between the Soviets and the Arab socialist dictators were easy, because for most of this period the Soviets were not selling oil and natural gas to Europe. Algeria and Libya were selling their oil and gas to Europe. Now that Russia counts on Europe for her oil and gas exports, her relations with Algeria and Libya are not as easy anymore. That problem never existed with Syria, because Syria is poor in oil and gas, and she has been the most reliable Russian ally in the Middle East.

However the map has a weakness. It does not discriminate the US allies in capitalists, islamists and national socialists ones. The Americans can cooperate smoothly with capitalist countries like Australia, or at least with social democratic countries like the ones of Northern Europe. Unfortunately in many countries after the WWII the Americans did not always have the option to work with capitalists. There were countries where the only political forces were the islamists and the socialists, like it was the case in the Middle East, and there were countries where the only political forces were national socialists and communists.

In the Middle East the Americans had to cooperate with the Islamists, because the socialists were Russian allies. In countries where the only political forces were national socialists and communists, the Americans had to cooperate with the national socialists because the communists were Russian allies. Argentina for example was a pro-Nazi country, and she remained neutral until two months before the end of the war, when she declared war on Germany. However many Nazis found refuge in Argentina after the end of the war. But after the war the Americans had to cooperate with the Argentinean national socialists.

But was Argentina and Australia the same kind of ally for the US? Of course they weren't. America's alliances with capitalists are smooth alliances. America's alliances with national socialists and islamists are problematic alliances. Neither the national socialists and the Islamists nor the Americans enjoy working together. Their cooperation is like a bad marriage which however can sometimes last for long periods, as it was the case with the Americans and the Saudis. The Americans and the Saudis managed to cooperate for the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. But you have seen the recent problems between the Saudis and the Americans, and between the Argentineans and the Americans.

For the national socialists there is one more thing that must be said. When Hitler broke the Nazi-Communist alliance of 1939 and attacked Russia in 1941, the Communists felt betrayed and they were infuriated. From 1941 to 1943 the Germans were heading towards the oil of Baku, and they were killing and starving the Russians. When the Germans started losing the war,

the Russians marched to Berlin in 1945, destroying, killing and raping everything they were finding in their way. Therefore after the end of WWII there was a paradox. The Communists and the Nazis, even though they have so much in common, they hated each other much more than they hated the Americans.

Therefore the national socialists around the globe, who had worked with the German Nazis, they could not cooperate with the Soviets, and their only option was the Americans. However as time was passing by the Communists and the Nationalists started forgetting their hatred. Today even the national socialists are leaning towards Russia. Russia welcomes both communists and nationalists. Actually in the 21<sup>st</sup> century the Russians are no longer communists but rather nationalists, as I already said.

What is important to remember is that when the Cold War is examined the American allies must be divided to capitalists, national socialists and islamists. Australia, Argentina and Saudi Arabia were American allies in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but their alliances with the Americans were very different. The alliance with Saudi Arabia and Argentina with the US was a marriage of convenience, and you can see that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Argentina is moving towards Russia and Saudi Arabia is moving towards China. But capitalist Australia is still an American ally, and for as long as Australia will be a capitalist country she will always be an American ally. And keep in mind that China is Australia's largest trading partner.

## Russia's Oil Revenues

Russia's Oil Revenues were at the level of 50-100 billion dollars per year in the 1990s (picture 1), when oil prices were moving between 20\$-40\$ a barrel (picture 2), and jumped to a level between 250-400 billion dollars per year in the 2000s (picture 1), when the price of oil reached 140\$+ per barrel (picture 2).

It is true that the price of oil is not the only factor determining oil revenues, but it is a critical one. The rise in oil prices and the rise in revenues was one of the main reasons of Putin's success. Putin came to power in 1999.

Diagram 1 Russia's Oil Revenues (Forbes)

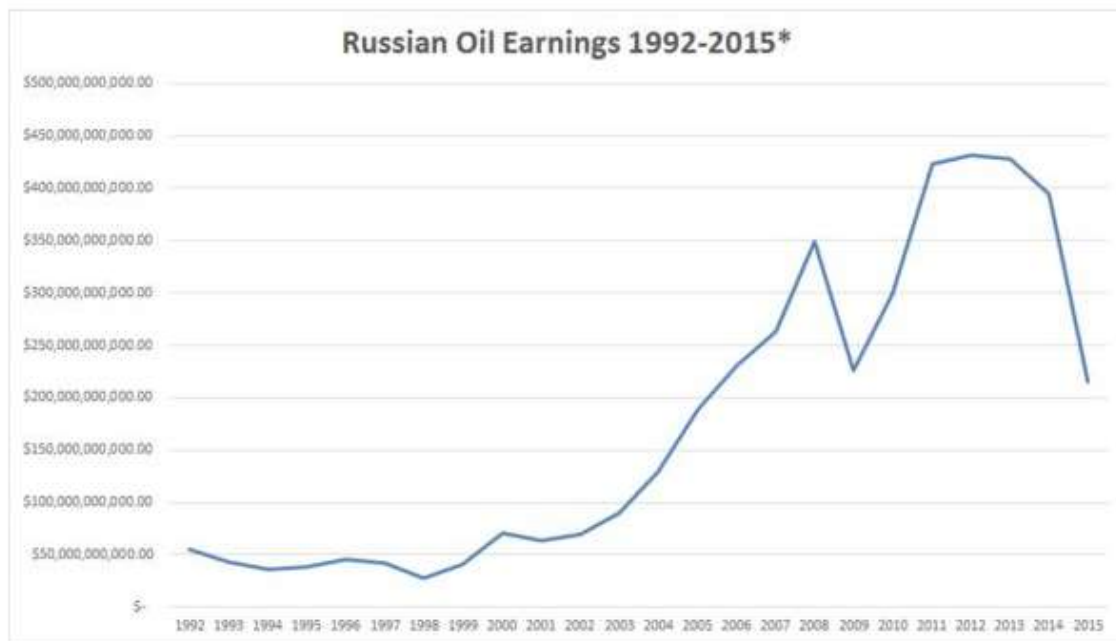


Diagram 2 Oil Prices (Macrotrends)





“Russia's Oil Revenue: Shrinking Fast”, April 2015

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/markadomanis/2015/04/06/russias-oil-revenue-shrinking-fast/>

“Crude Oil Price History Chart”

<http://www.macrotrends.net/1369/crude-oil-price-history-chart>

## **A Comparison Between Cold War 1 and Cold War 2**

Many analysts call the present situation in Ukraine and the Middle East “Cold War 2”. Obviously Cold War 1 was the war between USA and the Soviet Union after the end of World War 2 (1945). It is true that the Cold War 1 never took the form of a direct military confrontation between the US and the Soviet Union, but nevertheless it was a war between the two parties.

I posted yesterday a map of the Baghdad Pact (1955), which was an anti-Soviet alliance between the United Kingdom, Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Pakistan, in order to form a “wall” between the Soviet Union and the oil of the Persian Gulf. You can see the map of the Baghdad Pact below. NATO’s main concern was that the Soviets, who were very rich in oil, would take control of the Persian Gulf, on which the West was dependent for oil.

Map 1 The Baghdad Pact 1955



*Map of the Central Treaty Organization's (CENTO) member states*

<http://brilliantmaps.com/cento/>

Today the situation is very different but also very similar to what was happening in the Middle East during Cold War 1. Today it is the Russians who are trying to build a “wall” between Europe and the Persian Gulf, in order to prevent the Turkish-Arab pipelines (Qatar-Turkey) from sending the region’s oil and gas to Europe. If the oil and natural gas of the Middle East reaches Europe the state owned Russian giants Gazprom and Rosneft will be hurt. Today Russia counts on Europe for most of her oil and gas exports.

During most of the Cold War 1 the Soviets were not selling oil and gas to NATO members, while today the Russians are exporting most of their oil and gas to NATO members i.e. Germany, Italy, Turkey etc. The “wall” that the Russians are trying to build between Europe and the Persian Gulf is obviously the wall of “Iran-Iraq-Syria”.

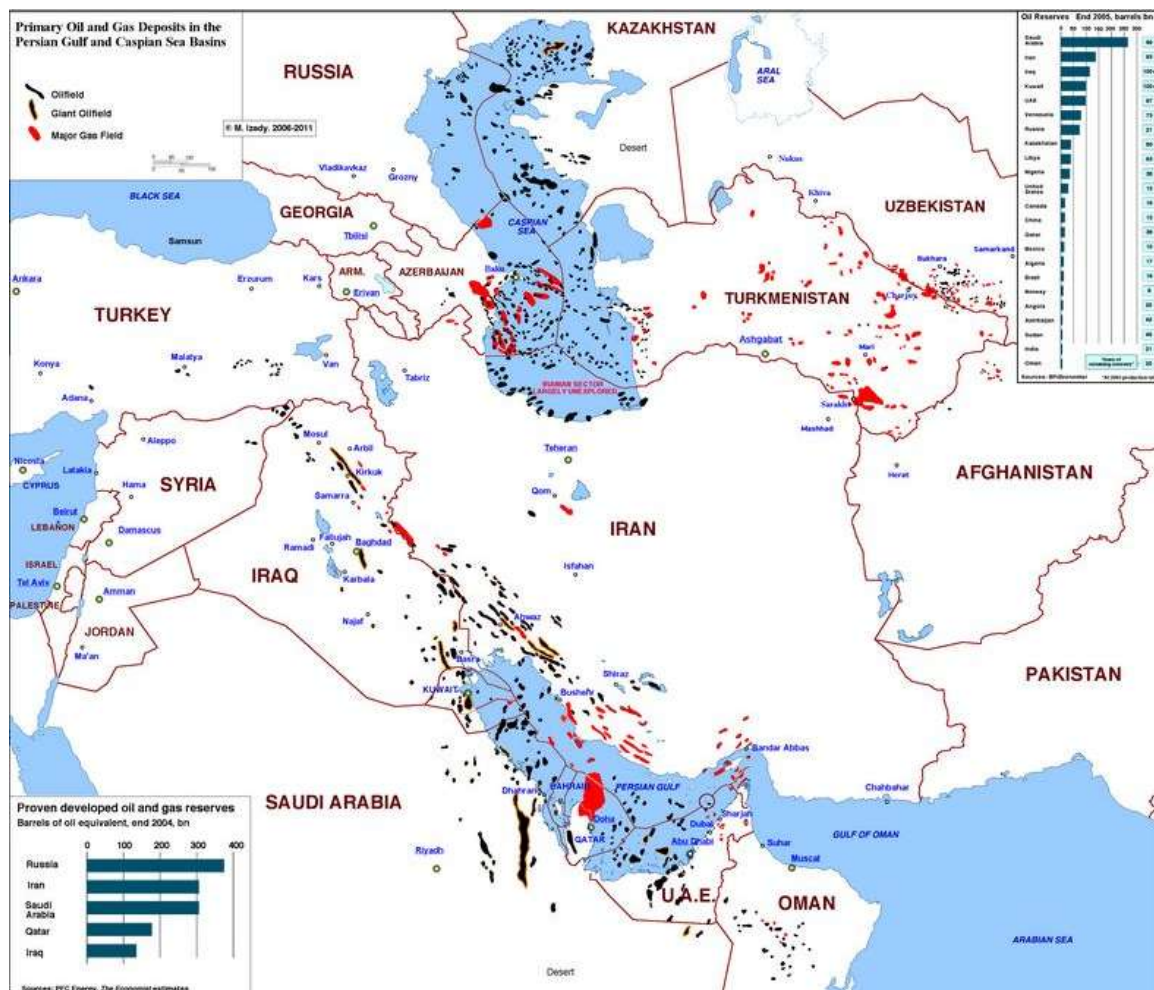
Today there is one more complication, because Iran wants to use what is a “wall” for Russia i.e. Iran-Iraq-Syria, in order to send its oil and gas to the Mediterranean Sea and Europe. That would allow Iran to avoid the excessive discounts that the Turks are demanding from the Iranians in order to send their oil and gas to Europe. Russia would not be willing to allow Iran to reach the Mediterranean Sea, unless Gazprom managed such a pipeline (Iran-Iraq-Syria). Therefore Russia might have to build a second wall in the Mediterranean Sea in order not to only stop the Turks and the Arabs, but to stop the Iranians too. Russia has already done that with her increased military presence in Syria, and with her enhanced alliance with Hezbollah in Lebanon.

The Cold War 2 in the Middle East is very similar to what was happening in the Middle East during Cold War 1. Except that almost everything is reversed.

Map 2 Map of the Middle East



Map 3 Oil Fields (black) and Natural Gas Fields of the Middle East



See also “Who is Responsible for the War”

<https://iakal.wordpress.com/2015/08/21/who-is-responsible-for-the-war-and-the-immigrants/>

and “The Map of the Baghdad Pact”

<https://iakal.wordpress.com/2015/11/03/the-map-of-the-baghdad-pact-cento/>

## The Natural Gas Production of Iran and Qatar

An interesting article from Natural Gas Europe. See “Iran, Qatar in competition over world’s biggest gas field”, December 2015.

Map 1 Qatar and Iran



Even though Qatar and Iran produce annually almost the same amounts of natural gas, i.e. Qatar 177 and Iran 172 billion cubic meters, tiny Qatar exports annually 123.5 bcm, while Iran exports only 9.6 bcm. Iran, a much larger country than Qatar, consumes most of its production.

Table 1 Qatari and Iranian Production and Exports

	Export		Production		Gas reserve	
	LNG BCM/y	Pipeline BCM/y	BCM/y	Share of world's total	TCM	Share of world's total
Iran	0	9.6	172.6	5%	34.0	18.2%
Qatar	103.4	20.1	177.2	5.1%	24.5	13.1%

*\*Iran and Qatar gas reserves, productions, and exports – Source: BP year 2014*

<http://www.naturalgaseurope.com/iran-qatar-in-competition-over-worlds-biggest-gas-field-27264>

Almost all of Qatar's natural gas reserves are located at the South Pars/North Field, the larger gas field in the world, which lies at the Persian Gulf between Iran and Qatar. South Pars/North Fields also holds approximately 2/3 of the Iranian reserves.

From the table you can also see that Qatar exports most of its gas (103.4 bcm) in liquid form (LNG), and only 20.1 bcm with pipelines. Iran does not export any LNG, and only exports a small amount of gas through pipeline networks, mainly to Turkey (9.6 bcm).

Qatar holds 24.5 and Iran 34 billion cubic meters of natural gas reserves. Iran holds 18.2% of the global gas reserves, while Qatar holds 13.1%. I must also mention that both Qatar and Iran also export oil.

Qatar has a small population of less than 300 thousands people. There is also another 2 million foreigners working at Qatar. Iran on the other hand has a large population of 77 million people.

I hope that from all the above you can understand why Qatar has so much liquidity, and it is so efficient in buying jihadists at the battlefields, socialists at the European and American parliaments, and journalists in the European and American media. Many people don't understand why a small country like Qatar is more efficient in buying political, media and business influence in the West, when compared to much stronger countries like Turkey and Iran for example. The answer is what I just said. Qatar has a much smaller army than Turkey and Iran, but it has a lot of cash it does not know what to do.

For the article see:

“Iran, Qatar in competition over world's biggest gas field”, December 2015

<http://www.naturalgaseurope.com/iran-qatar-in-competition-over-worlds-biggest-gas-field-27264>



## **Does Obama Support the Arab Spring in Saudi Arabia?**

As you can read at the following Reuters article, Obama said that the greatest threat for Saudi Arabia is not an Iranian invasion, but rather the Saudi youth, which has been alienated from the Saudi political system (6<sup>th</sup> paragraph). That's the arguments used against the Saudis by the Turks, the Iranians, the Russians, the Qataris etc, and the only way to interpret it is that the Americans are tired of the Royal family of Saudi Arabia. At least the Democrats who have been in power for the last years.

Image 1



The Republicans are normally more aggressive towards the Iranians. But it was a Republican President, i.e. George Bush, who decided to attack Iraq in 2003, overturning the ruling Sunni minority of Saddam Hussein, opening the

doors of Iraq to Iran. That was the worst thing that could happen to Saudi Arabia. Therefore it does not seem that the Republicans care too much about Saudi Arabia either.

And of course it is not a coincidence that Al Qaeda attacked the Twin Towers in 2001, in 2002 the American military bases were transferred from Saudi Arabia to Qatar, and in 2003 the Americans attacked Iraq and Saddam Hussein. These facts are very important for both the Democrats and the Republicans.

Reuters mention that the Saudi reserves in foreign currency amounted to 800 billion dollars in 2014, and therefore Saudi Arabia is for now immune from the Arab Spring, but these reserves are depleted at a fast pace, due to increased expenditures domestically, in order to buy peace, and due to increased military expenditures as a result of the wars with Iran in Syria, Iran and Yemen.

If we take into account that the Saudis' advantage against the Iranians is their liquidity, and that the Iranian advantage over the Saudis is their better army, the Americans did not help the Saudis by reaching an agreement with Iran over the Iranian nuclear program, which in turn unfreeze 100 billion dollars of Iranian assets in the United States. Plus of course the increased oil revenues that will follow for Iran. These Iranian assets have been frozen since 1979 when the Iranian Islamists came to power and nationalized the Western oil companies.

Image 2



I am not saying that the Americans will help the Turks, the Qataris, the Russians and the Iranians to promote the Arab Spring in Saudi Arabia. But if the Turks, the Iranians and the Russians know that the Saudis no longer have the protection of the United States they will be more aggressive. The Turks who are not oil exporters can ask the Saudis for larger discounts in oil prices, or for investments, in order to protect them from the Russians and the Iranians. The Russians might ask the Saudis to cut their oil production in order to protect them from the Iranians etc.

Note that in 1979, when the United States lost Iran as an ally, after it had already lost Iraq, the Carter Doctrine was brought forward. According to the Carter Doctrine of 1980 the United States would use military force if their interests in the Persian Gulf were threatened. That meant the Americans were not willing to allow what happened to Iran and Iraq to happen in Saudi Arabia too. Therefore I cannot say that the Americans support the Arab Spring in Saudi Arabia, but the question is how interested they are to prevent

it from happening? Today the Americans treat Saudi Arabia as an ordinary ally, being almost neutral in the Iranian-Saudi rivalry.

“Saudi Arabia faces many threats, and Iran isn’t at the top of the list”, May 2015

6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> Paragraphs

*In an interview with the New York Times in early April, Obama warned that U.S. allies like Saudi Arabia should be more worried about internal threats. These states have “populations that, in some cases, are alienated, youth that are underemployed, an ideology that is destructive and nihilistic, and in some cases, just a belief that there are no legitimate political outlets for grievances,” Obama said, adding: “I think the biggest threats that they face may not be coming from Iran invading. It’s going to be from dissatisfaction inside their own countries.”*

*Obama’s comments angered the Arab monarchs, including the leaders of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, who decided to send lower-level officials to the Camp David summit. But Obama was trying to initiate a difficult conversation with U.S. allies — a discussion that got drowned out by a focus on who did and didn’t make it to the summit.*

9<sup>th</sup> Paragraph

*While Saudi officials insist that their substantial foreign reserves allow them to withstand a long period of low oil prices — and potential regional turmoil — the reserves dropped by \$36 billion in March and April alone. (Saudi reserves peaked at around \$800 billion in mid 2014; some economists forecast that they could drop to \$500 billion in the next two years.) When King Salman ascended to the throne after his brother’s death in January, he granted salary bonuses to all public employees and members of the military. Those bonuses most likely came out of the foreign reserves, since the kingdom was already projecting a 2015 budget deficit of \$40 billion — the first in seven years. The Saudi-led war against Houthi rebels in Yemen is also draining the kingdom’s coffers, and the war will become more costly as it drags on.*

<http://blogs.reuters.com/great-debate/2015/05/28/why-the-biggest-threat-to-saudi-arabia-isnt-iran/>

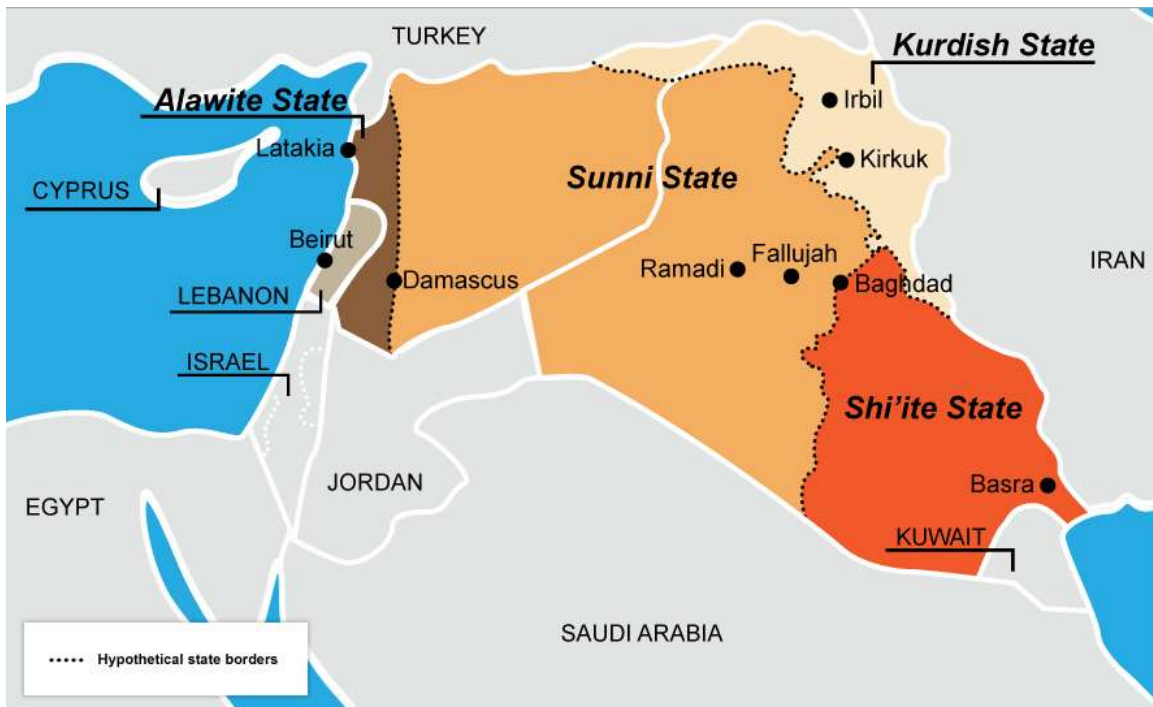
“Here's what's in Iran's \$100 billion in assets that will become unfrozen by the nuclear deal”, July 2015

<http://www.businessinsider.com/whats-in-irans-100-billion-in-frozen-assets-2015-7>

## The Creation of Syria and Iraq

A very nice map of Syria and Iraq, which shows with dark brown the Muslim Alawite part at the Syrian coasts, with brown the Sunni Muslim parts of Syria and Iraq, with orange the Shiite Muslim part of Iraq, and with pink the Kurdish (Sunni) Muslim part of Syria and Iraq.

Map 1 Iraq and Syria



[http://cdn2.vox-cdn.com/assets/4396135/sunni-shia-kurd\\_state\\_crop.jpg](http://cdn2.vox-cdn.com/assets/4396135/sunni-shia-kurd_state_crop.jpg)

Syria and Iraq did not exist as states until the First World War 1914-1918. These pieces of land were parts of various empires until then, with the Ottoman Empire being the last one. During the First World War (1914-1918), the English and the French helped the local Arab populations to

revolt against the Ottomans, because they wanted to prevent the Germans from reaching the Persian Gulf through the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Ottoman Empire which were German allies.

Map 2 German, Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires





When the English, the French and the Arabs did actually win the war and the Ottomans left the Middle East, it was time to decide how the new lands would be distributed to the Arab allies of the English and the French. The English and the French agreed that what became Iraq and Palestine (Jordan+Israel) would be under English influence, and what became Syria and Lebanon would be under French influence.

For the English the Iraqi oil was very important because the oil of Saudi Arabia was not discovered until 1938. The English could also export this oil through Palestine (Jordan+Israel) to the Mediterranean Sea. Moreover the corridor formed by Israel+Jordan+Iraq would offer the English an alternative route to India, which was their most important colony.

When the pro-Soviet socialist dictators rose to power in Syria and Iraq, they used a socialist model and diminished the role of religion in order to homogenize their populations. They also used Arab nationalism to achieve



this same goal, since most of their citizens were Arabs, with the exception of the Kurds of course. What is strange is that in both Syria and Iraq the socialist dictators who managed to rise to power belonged to the minorities of these countries. In Syria the father of Bashar al Assad, Hafez Assad, was an Alawite, while Sunni Muslims were the majority of the Syrian population. In Iraq Saddam Hussein was a Sunni Muslim, while Shiite Muslims were the majority of the Iraqi population. Alawites are an offshoot of Shiite Islam.

In 2009 Bashar al Assad refused to allow the Qatar-Turkey pipeline to pass through Syria i.e. the Sunni Pipeline, while he agreed to let the Iran-Iraq-Syria pipeline to pass through Syria i.e. the Shiite Pipeline. The Iran-Syria pipeline would be constructed by Gazprom. As a result the Turks and the Arabs of the Persian Gulf supported the Sunni Muslims of Syria and Iraq, who revolted against the Alawites in Syria and against the Shiites in Iraq. That's the reason ISIS is the first terrorist organization which wants to establish its own state i.e. the Sunni parts of Syria and Iraq. If that does indeed happen, an Alawite state will have to be created at the Mediterranean coasts of Syria, a Shiite state in Iraq, and a Kurdish state in Iraq and Syria.

Map 3 Sunni (red) VS Shiite (green) Pipelines



## From Dagestan to Syria

At the following Business Insider article, titled “ISIS has claimed responsibility for an attack on Russian military barracks”, September 2015, you can read that ISIS made its first appearance in Dagestan in June 2015, but did not pull any terrorist attacks until September 2<sup>nd</sup> 2015, when it claimed responsibility for the attack to a Russian military barrack. Many Russian soldiers were wounded and dead from this attack. Dagestan and Chechnya are two of the most problematic regions of Russia, because almost all of their populations are Sunni Muslims.

Map 1



[http://www.almanartv.com.lb/english/edimg/2013/Europe/Russia/Russia\\_Dagestan.jpg](http://www.almanartv.com.lb/english/edimg/2013/Europe/Russia/Russia_Dagestan.jpg)

In September 2015 we learned about the deal for Nord Stream 2, between Gazprom and BASF (Germany), E.ON (Germany), ENGIE-ex GDF Suez (France), OMV (Austria), and Shell (England-Netherlands). This deal will increase the amount of Russian gas which can be transferred to Europe through Germany from 55 to 110 billion cubic meters per year. In September 2015 we learned that Turkey is freezing negotiations with Russia about the Turk Stream Pipeline, which would transfer Russian gas to Europe through Turkey. In September we learned that ISIS carried out its first attack in Dagestan, and it is widely believed that Turkey has significant influence over ISIS. In September 2015 we learned that the Russians significantly increase their military presence to Syria, in order to further support the Syrian dictator Bashar al Assad, who is one of Turkey's main opponents, since in 2009 he blocked the Qatar-Turkey natural gas pipeline, in order to protect the Russian economic interests in Europe.

From Dagestan to Syria, and from Nord Stream 2 to Turk Stream, we are witnessing the same energy war between Turkey and Russia. The two great opponents of the Balkans, of the Black Sea, and of Central Asia. The Ottoman Empire and the Russian Empire. The other two players of this story, the German Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, after their defeat in WW2, they prefer not to exercise their military influence, and they suffice themselves to their economic influence, scared of what might happen if they stretch their military muscles.

For more details about the energy war between Russia and Turkey see "Russia VS Turkey: The Geopolitics of the South & the Turk Stream Pipelines".

For the Business Insider article see

“ISIS has claimed responsibility for an attack on Russian military barracks”,

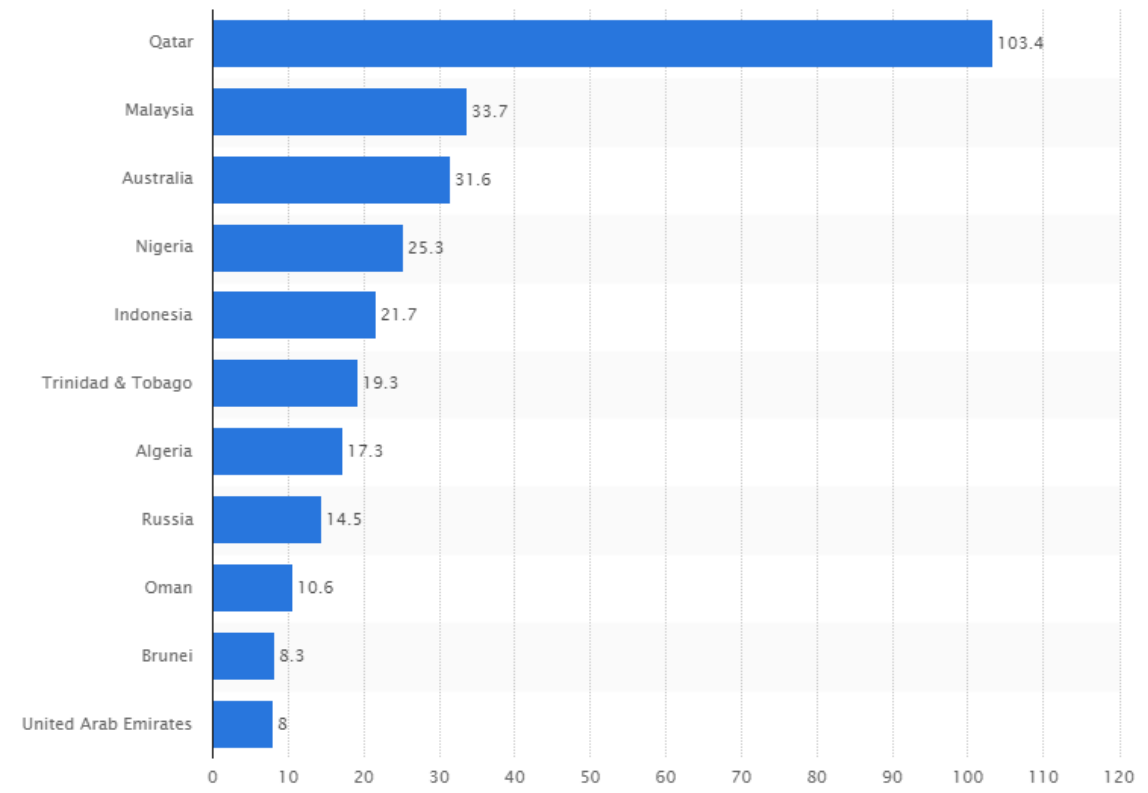
του Σεπτεμβρίου 2015

<http://www.businessinsider.com/is-is-attacked-russian-military-barracks-2015-9>

## Top LNG Exporters

After the nuclear accident of Fukushima in 2011, Japan became the largest liquefied natural gas importer in the world. Japan consumes almost 90 out of the 240 million tons of the world LNG production. See “The great LNG race: who will be the winner?”, October 2015. The top 5 largest LNG exporters are Qatar, Malaysia, Australia, Nigeria and Indonesia. See “Major exporting countries of LNG in 2014”.

Table 1

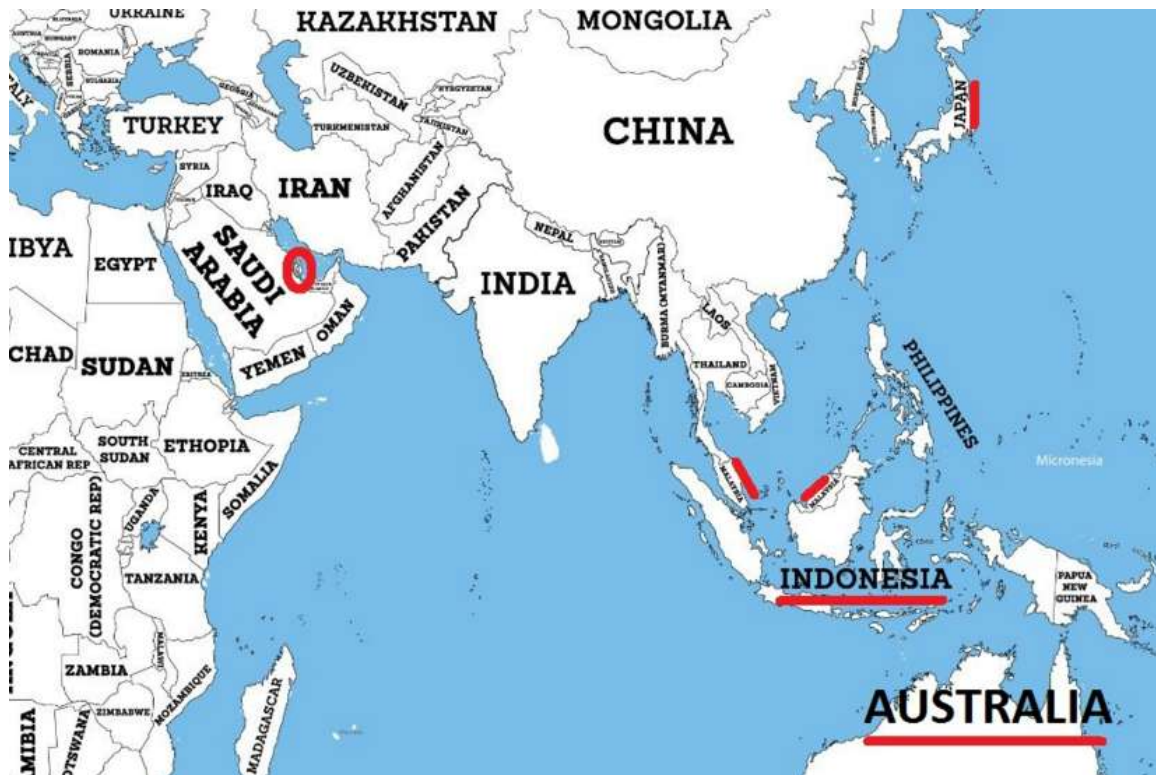


<http://www.statista.com/statistics/274528/major-exporting-countries-of-lng/>

Very soon Australia is expected to become the largest LNG exporter in the world. I must also say that the list of the largest exporters is different than the list with the largest producers, because oil and gas can be also consumed domestically instead of being exported i.e. US.

At the following map you can see that Qatar, Indonesia, Malaysia and Australia are in the same neighborhood, and they compete in the LNG market. South Korea and Taiwan are also major LNG importers, because like Japan they do not have access to natural gas pipelines.

Map of Qatar, Australia, Indonesia and Malaysia



Qatar, Indonesia, Nigeria and Malaysia are all Muslim countries, and they are fighting each other about their exports. That's why there is so much

terrorism in Malaysia, Indonesia and Nigeria. Indonesia is actually the largest Muslim country in the world, with 250 million inhabitants. Moreover Indonesia and Malaysia are neighboring countries and they also have disputes about their borders and their exclusive economic zones (EEZ).

Indonesia and Philippines were the main reason the Japanese attacked the Americans at the Pearl Harbor in December 1941. The Japanese invaded the French Indochina in September 1940, and the relations between Japan and the United States further deteriorated. The French Indochina is today's Vietnam, Cambodia and LAOS, and at the time was a French colony. But France was invaded by the Nazis in May 1940, and the Japanese grabbed the chance to invade the French Indochina three months later.

Map of French Indochina





<http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/indochina.gif>

The United States adopted various actions against Japan, and in August 1941 the Americans banned oil exports to Japan. The United States were the main oil supplier of the Japanese, and the Japanese decided to invade Indonesia, which was one of the richest countries in oil reserves. At the time Indonesia was even more important than she is today, because many of today's oil fields had not been discovered yet. At the time Indonesia was a Dutch colony, but the Netherlands had also been invaded by the Nazis in May 1940, and could not protect its colony. Before invading Indonesia in March 1942, the Japanese destroyed in December 1941 the American Navy of the Pacific Ocean at Pearl Harbor. The reason was that the Japanese were sure that the Americans would retaliate if Japan invaded Indonesia and the Philippines.

I must also say that the Australians have a great advantage, and that is the very small Muslim population of Australia. That makes it very difficult for the Muslim countries that export natural gas to use Islamist terrorist networks in Australia. Australia is also very tough against illegal immigrants.

## Articles

“Major exporting countries of LNG in 2014 (in billion cubic meters)”

<http://www.statista.com/statistics/274528/major-exporting-countries-of-lng/>

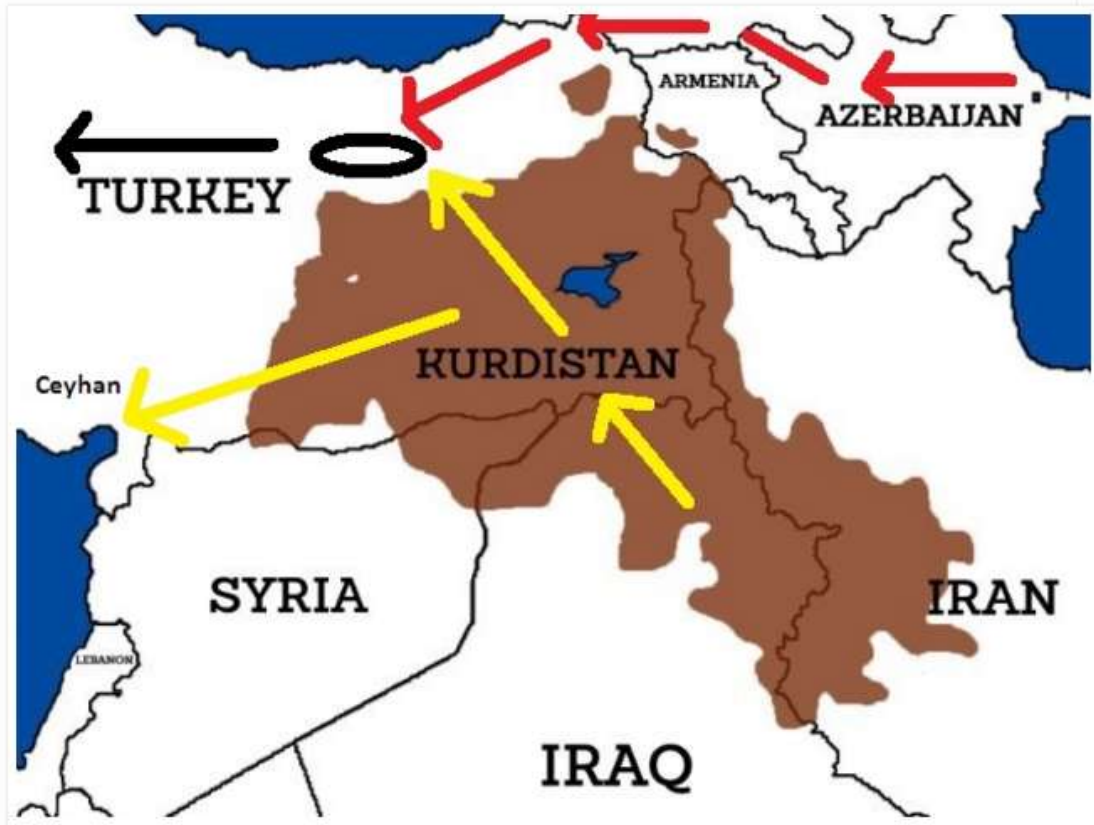
“THE GREAT LNG RACE: WHO WILL BE THE WINNER?”, October 2015

<http://www.naturalgaseurope.com/the-great-lng-race-who-will-be-the-winner-25976>

## The Ankara Terrorist Attack (February 2016)

Turkey's President, Tayyip Erdogan, says he is sure that it was the Kurds of Syria i.e. the PYD and YPG, who organized the terrorist attack in Ankara. Note that the YPG is the military wing of the PYD party. Erdogan is expecting Turkey's allies, especially the US, to recognize PYD and YPG as terrorist organization.

Map 1 Kurdistan (Brown Area)



On the other hand the Americans are saying that they are not sure about who is responsible for the Ankara terrorist attack. The Americans should be right,

because the Kurds of Syria are supported by the US, and do not have a motive to carry out attacks in Turkey, because that would make it much harder for the Americans to send them weapons. On the other hand, the Kurds of Turkey (PKK), who are supported by Russia, and who have been designated as terrorists by the United States, have a motive to carry out attacks in Turkey. After all they are already at war with the Turkish government at Eastern Turkey (Kurdistan of Turkey). What complicates the situation is that the Kurds of Syria and Turkey, who do not have oil and gas, are cooperating against Turkey, while the Kurds of Iraq (KRG) need Turkey to export their oil and natural gas.

To prove his allegations, Erdogan is saying that a Syrian Kurd, the 20 year old Salih Neccar, a member of YPG, took part in the Ankara terrorist attack. But given that the Kurds of Syria and the Kurds of Turkey are connected, the presence of a Syrian Kurd does not prove that the attack was not carried out by the PKK.

I am not sure about what is happening, but I am sure that if the Kurds of Syria carry out terrorist attacks in Turkey, they will make it much harder for the United States to go against their ally Turkey, in order to supply them with weapons and money to fight ISIS in Syria. Therefore it seems more plausible that the terrorist attack has been organized by the Kurds of Turkey. However what further complicates the issue is that there might be some circles within the Kurds of Syria who want the Kurds of Syria closer to Russia and away from the United States. These circles would not hesitate to carry out attacks in Turkey, in order to make it harder for the US help the Syrian Kurds, opening the road to Russia. Therefore anything goes.

## Articles

“US has not yet assigned blame for Turkey attack, White House says”,  
February 2016

[http://www.todayszaman.com/latest-news\\_us-has-not-yet-assigned-blame-for-turkey-attack-white-house-says\\_412712.html](http://www.todayszaman.com/latest-news_us-has-not-yet-assigned-blame-for-turkey-attack-white-house-says_412712.html)

“Erdoğan says no doubt YPG behind Ankara attack, urges allies to label  
PYD as terrorist group”, February 2016

[http://www.todayszaman.com/anasayfa\\_erdogan-says-no-doubt-ypg-behind-ankara-attack-urges-allies-to-label-pyd-as-terrorist-group\\_412763.html](http://www.todayszaman.com/anasayfa_erdogan-says-no-doubt-ypg-behind-ankara-attack-urges-allies-to-label-pyd-as-terrorist-group_412763.html)

## The United States Has Spent 35 Billion \$ in Afghanistan

The last 15 years the United States spent more than 35 billion dollars supporting the Afghan army against the Taliban, but the results have not been very satisfying. See Washington Post article “Stretched by its fight against Taliban, Afghan army raises recruitment age”, February 2015. The Americans were hoping that the Afghan army could “clean” Afghanistan from the Taliban, in order for the TAPI (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India) Pipeline to go ahead.

Map 1



The TAPI, if ever constructed, will supply India with natural gas, and that’s a very good thing because India is an American ally against China, and the TAPI pipeline will reduce India’s dependence on Iran, which is a Chinese ally. The proposed pipelines are TAPI, the Iran-Pakistan-India one, and the

Iran-Oman-India. The last one has for India the additional advantage of bypassing Pakistan which is India's greatest rival.

I have said many times how much TAPI pipeline hurts the Arabic and Iranian interests, and that's why the Arabs support the Taliban and want chaos in Afghanistan. And that's exactly what the Iranians want to, and that's why they also support their old foe the Taliban in Afghanistan. See Wall Street Journal "Iran Backs Taliban With Cash and Arms", June 2015.

Moreover, Afghanistan has traditionally been a springboard for terrorism i.e. Al-Qaeda etc. Remember that Osama bin Laden was living in Sudan until 1996, and when George Bush threatened to bomb Sudan, and the Sudanese were forced to ask Osama bin Laden to leave, Osama bin Laden transferred his base to Afghanistan. See the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraphs of the following Guardian article "Osama: the Sudan years", October 2001.

The amount spent by United States on the Afghan army, and the unsatisfactory results, proves the limitations of the aerial and naval superiority, when this superiority is not accompanied by "boots" on the ground. See also what happened in Iraq. It was very easy for the Americans to overturn Saddam Hussein, the Sunni socialist dictator, and bring to power the Shiite majority of Iraq, but to this very day the Americans have not managed to stabilize Iraq, because the Turks and the Arabs of the Gulf are supporting the Sunni Arabs of Iraq i.e. the ex people of Saddam Hussein.

And note that in Iraq the United States has strong allies, since the Arab Shiite (Shia) majority of Iraq is an American ally, and also the Kurds of Iraq

are American allies. Even Iran is a US ally in Iraq. And still the United States cannot stabilize the country due to the fighting of the Sunni Arab minority which is supported by the Arabs of the Gulf and Turkey.

Imagine how much tougher things are in Afghanistan for the Americans, since they have almost no allies there. In Afghanistan the Americans have both the Arabs and the Iranians against them, and Russia, India and China, countries that would have a motive to support the US against the Islamic militants of Afghanistan, they are afraid to do so, because there might be retaliations in their countries i.e. terrorist attacks, since all of them have very large Muslim populations. There are 177 Muslims living in India, 23 million living in Russia, and 20 million living in Russia.

Map 2

### Two Proposed Pipelines in South Asia



[http://newsblaze.com/pix/2011/0202/pix/TAPI and IPI Pipelines.gif](http://newsblaze.com/pix/2011/0202/pix/TAPI_and_IPI_Pipelines.gif)



## Articles

“Stretched by its fight against Taliban, Afghan army raises recruitment age”,  
February 2015

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/stretched-by-its-fight-against-taliban-afghan-army-raises-recruitment-age/2016/02/04/916e87fc-cb46-11e5-b9ab-26591104bb19\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/stretched-by-its-fight-against-taliban-afghan-army-raises-recruitment-age/2016/02/04/916e87fc-cb46-11e5-b9ab-26591104bb19_story.html)

“Osama: the Sudan years”, October 2001

1<sup>st</sup> , 2<sup>nd</sup> Paragraphs

*Bin Laden spent five years in the Sudan before being expelled in 1996. The authorities claim he was busy building roads and farming. But what was he really up to?*

*"Osama who?" says the information minister, when he is asked about the man who spent five years running half of Sudan's industries, and perhaps even a global terrorist network, from an office just round the corner. "Oh... that Osama."*

*President Bush's "with us or against us" speech made plain the consequences of not siding against Bin Laden, and Sudan has had further to scramble on-side than almost any other country. It is still on America's hitlist of states that sponsor terrorism - and Bin Laden's handprints are all over the place. There is his bullet-scarred house in a Khartoum suburb, his plane sitting at the airport, the companies he owned, the bank accounts...*

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2001/oct/17/afghanistan.terrorism3>

“Iran Backs Taliban With Cash and Arms”, June 2015

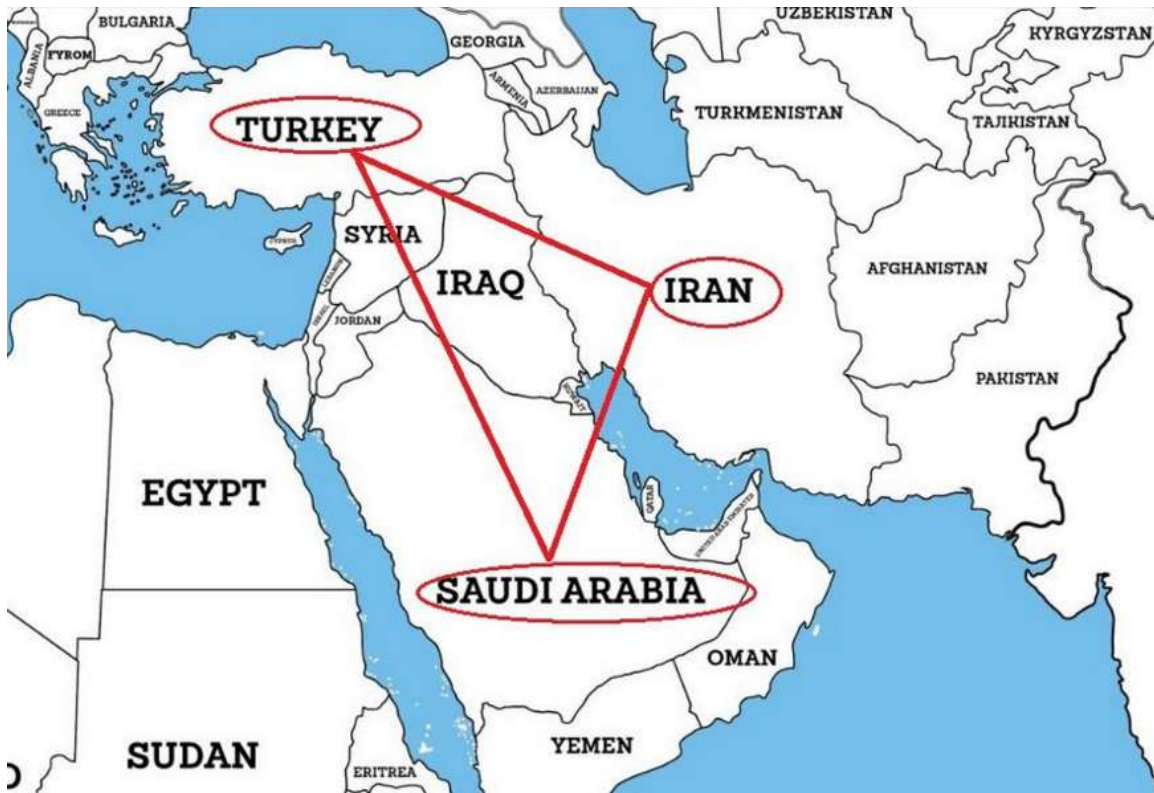
<http://www.wsj.com/articles/iran-backs-taliban-with-cash-and-arms-1434065528>

## **Saudi Arabia Faces the Arab Spring**

Turkey says that she cannot support Saudi Arabia on the issue of the death of the Shiite cleric (see following Reuters article). Therefore I will assume that Turkey cannot support Saudi Arabia in her confrontation with Iran either. Does that mean that there is an agreement between Turkey and Iran to push for a sectarian war within Saudi Arabia?

Note that in December 2015 Saudi Arabia announced an anti-terror coalition which will include many Arab and non-Arab Muslim countries. See BBC article below. The truth is that this coalition will target Iran first of all, and ISIS too, where the Turkish-Saudi interests diverge. When I say ISIS I mean the Sunni Islamist militants who are supported by Turkey. You can call them ISIS or anything else that you like.

Map 1



Turkey and Qatar have been invited by Saudi Arabia, first because the primary target of this coalition is Iran, and second because Saudi Arabia had to invite Turkey too, otherwise it would be like publicly connecting Turkey to ISIS. Turkey could not exclude her participation either, because it would be like admitting her support to ISIS. And also Turkey wants to work with the Saudis against the Iranians in some places.

The coalition is mainly promoted with petrodollars from Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates, and it is a threat to Iran, but it is also a threat for Turkey's ambition to lead the Sunni world. Besides targeting Iran, the coalition promoted by the Saudis will also attack the Sunni Islamists supported by Turkey, when the Turkish-Saudi interests diverge. It is not a coincidence that after the Saudis announced their anti-terror coalition ISIS

declared war against Saudi Arabia. See the article of International Business Times below.

Turkey and Iran might be killing each other in Syria and Iraq, but they can always cooperate against the Saudi King in Saudi Arabia. The Turks can use their connections to help the Sunni Saudis revolt, and the Iranians can do the same with the Shiite Saudis. Note that Shiites constitute 10-20% of the Saudi population. This would happen while the Saudis have to make dramatic cuts to social spending due to low oil prices, which is going to discomfort the Saudi citizens who are not used to this kind of cuts. See the CNBC article below. That makes Saudi Arabia more vulnerable to an Iranian-Turkish cooperation within Saudi Arabia.

If that's indeed the case it is easy to understand why some analysts talk about the worst period for Saudi Arabia since the crisis in the Saudi-American relations after the 9/11 attacks at the Twin Towers. Note that 15 out of the 19 terrorists that took part in the 9/11 attacks were Saudis. See the Independent article below. The 9/11 attacks in 2001 forced the Americans to move their military bases from Saudi Arabia to Qatar in 2002, and it definitely played a role in the decision to attack Saddam Hussein and Iraq in 2003. The attack in Iraq in 2003 was a total disaster for Saudi Arabia and a blessing for Iran.

I am not saying that the United States attacked Saddam Hussein in 2003 in order to revenge Saudi Arabia. I am saying that if the Saudis hadn't turned to China, and if the Saudis hadn't carried out all this attacks against the Americans, in order to force them to remove their military bases, the

Americans would have thought twice about it. Of course for the United States to remove Saddam Husein was a blessing, because it strengthened their ally the Kurds, who were suppressed by Saddam, and who are also very rich in oil and natural gas. And also because Saddam Hussein was an international terrorist who funded every socialist terrorist organization on the planet. Moreover by toppling Saddam Hussein, the Shiite majority of Iraq that was suppressed by Saddam came to power and became an American ally.

But even though the Americans had all this benefit from overturning Saddam Hussein, they would have thought twice before doing it, if their relations with the Saudis had not been so damaged. The proof is that the Americans did not overturn Saddam Hussein in 1991, after the first Gulf War, when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait. The Americans defeated Saddam Hussein, they reached Baghdad, but they did not overturn him. The reason was that if Saddam was overturned, the Shiite majority would rise to power, and the doors of Iraq would be widely opened to Iran. Saddam Hussein was a Sunni Arab socialist, who did not have good relations with the Sunni Arab Islamists of the Persian Gulf, but he had even worse relations with the Shiite Persian Islamists of Iran. Saddam Hussein fought one of the bloodiest wars of the Middle East against Iran in the 80's (1980-1988).

Therefore if the Saudis face a Turkish-Iranian coalition domestically, at a time of reduced social spending, without having the US support, then there is the chance that the Saudis will face the Arab Spring. Note that the Saudis were among the aggressors in some of the Arab Spring wars i.e. Syria, Iraq, Libya, and among the defenders in some others i.e. Egypt, Bahrain, Yemen. I am not saying that the Saudis will face the Arab Spring domestically, and I

am not in a position to predict if this will happen. But since 2011, when the Arab Spring broke out, many analysts are talking about whether the Saudis will eventually face the Arab Spring. I guess that this question is more intense now.

Map 2



## Articles

“Turkey says cannot support Saudi execution of Shiite cleric”, January 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-saudi-iran-turkey-idUSKBN0UI1TD20160104>

“ISIS Vows War Against Saudi Arabia: Islamic State Group Threatens Arab Monarchy After Announcement Of Anti-Terror Coalition”, December 2015

<http://www.ibtimes.com/isis-vows-war-against-saudi-arabia-islamic-state-group-threatens-arab-monarchy-after-2232602>

“Saudis announce Islamic anti-terrorism coalition”, December 2015

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-35099318>

“Saudis unveil radical austerity program”, December 2015

<http://www.cnbc.com/2015/12/29/saudis-unveil-radical-austerity-programme.html>

“Saudi Arabia insists it had nothing to do with 9/11 attacks”, July 2015

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/saudi-arabia-insists-it-had-nothing-to-do-with-911-attacks-and-demands-to-be-dropped-from-relatives-10430795.html>

## The European Division Over Nord Stream 2

As you can read at the following article from the Russian state-owned news agency RT (Russia Today), the Russians accuse nine countries of the European Union for trying to “bury” Nord Stream 2. The Russians are saying that Bulgaria might also help these nine countries. That’s 10 countries in total, which according to the Russians are trying to burry Nord Stream 2. Nord Stream 2 will carry another 55 billion cubic meters of Russian gas to Germany through the Baltic Sea, doubling the volume of the Russian gas that travels each year to Europe through the Baltic Sea.





The big advantage of the German-Russian pipelines is their increased security and safety, something which the Turks and the Greek communists of SYRIZA are trying to “cure”, by sending hundreds of thousand of illegal Muslim immigrants to Germany. A rise in radical Islamism will sooner or later reduce the safety of the Russo-German pipelines. Of course that’s not the only reason the Greek communists are working with the Turkish Islamists in order to send hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants to Northern Europe but also to Greece, causing the immense immigrant crisis that is tearing the European Union apart. The Greek communists also want to put pressure on Northern Europeans in order to block the reform and transparency that the Northern European are demanding, and which make the corrupt Greek political elite sick. In addition, these poor Muslims will soon be voters of the Greek left parties. Finally, Qatar, and the Arabs in general, are paying very generously European politicians who promote illegal Muslim immigration to Europe, since in the long term it means increased influence for them.

As you can see at the following map, the 10 countries accused by the Russians for trying to bury Nord Stream 2 are countries hurt by Nord Stream 2, and they fall into 3 main categories.



The first category includes the countries that are earning significant commissions and discounts from the current Russian pipelines, which run through Ukraine and Belarus, before reaching Germany, Italy and France. This category includes Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania. It also includes Ukraine and Belarus of course, but these two countries are not members of the European Union.

The second category includes the countries that fear that Nord Stream 2 will make it harder for the Turk Stream (Russia-Turkey-Europe) and Southern Energy Corridor (Caspian Sea + Middle East – Turkey – Europe) to be constructed, and they fear that they will lose the commissions and discounts they will gain from these pipelines in the future. This category includes Greece and Bulgaria. It also includes the so Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro. But these countries are not members of the EU.

The third category includes the countries that fear that the German-Russian pipelines will sooner or later lead to an alliance like the one between the nazis and the communists in 1939 (Molotov-Riebertrop Pact). In 1939 the German nazis and the Russian communists agreed that the communists would send the nazis oil from Russia, and in exchange the nazis would send the communists manufactured goods from Germany. This alliance was broken by the nazis two years later, in 1941, because the oil sent to Germany by Stalin was not enough to feed the German army. Therefore Hitler decided to take control of the oil of Baku and invaded Russia. But he failed.

Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia and Poland are afraid that the breaking of NATO and the European Union will lead to a German-Russian alliance, and they will be crashed by the Germans and the Russians, in the same way they were crashed in the Second World War, in order for the Russians and the Germans to form a common frontier in order to fight the Westerners. On the contrary, the Germans, who have to pay billions to sustain the socialist economies of the European South, believe that the cheap Russian gas is of vital importance in order to keep the German economy competitive and the German products cheap in international markets.

Actually things became a bit complicated because the Russians gave a 10% share in Nord Stream to the British Royal Dutch Shell, and another 10% to the French state owned ENGIE, making the English and the French seeing Nord Stream 2 in a positive way. I am not saying that there will be a Third World War, but it was geopolitical mess like the one we see today that led to the first two world wars.

For the RT (Russia Today) article see:

“Nine EU countries want to bury Nord Stream-2”, December 2015

1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Paragraph

*A group of Eastern European countries has sent a letter to the European Commission calling to block the Nord Stream-2 gas pipeline from Russia to Germany bypassing Ukraine. They say it goes against the EU’s energy diversification and security policies.*

*The countries against Gazprom’s deal with Berlin are headed by Slovakia and Poland who are believed to have initiated the campaign. They are supported by the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Greece. Bulgaria was planning to sign the document, but walked away, according to the FT. The EU has confirmed receiving the letter.*

*Greek Energy Minister Panos Skourletis said Athens did not sign a petition to block Nord Stream-2. He confirmed this to Russian Energy Minister Aleksandr Novak during a meeting on Wednesday according to the Ministry.*

<https://www.rt.com/business/324224-nord-stream2-europe-gazprom/>

“EU leaders to clash over Nord Stream 2 at summit”, December 2015

3<sup>rd</sup> Paragraphs

*The countries whose energy ministers signed a letter to the Commission in which they oppose Nord Stream 2 are Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Romania. Greece has also reportedly joined the initiative.*

<http://www.euractiv.com/sections/energy/eu-leaders-clash-over-nord-stream-2-summit-320114>

## **Can China Afford to Finish the War in the Middle East?**

On January 20 2016 the Chinese President visited Saudi Arabia, where agreements worth billions of dollars were signed between the two countries. The Chinese President also expressed his support to the Yemen government, effectively supporting Saudi Arabia over Iran in the Yemen war. Egypt was the next stop, where the Egyptians and the Chinese not only signed agreements worth billions of dollars, but the Chinese President also expressed his support to another Iranian rival i.e. the Egyptian President al-Sisi. After the two visits in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, which did not please the Iranians, the Chinese President traveled to Iran, China's traditional ally in the Middle East, where the Chinese and the Iranians announced that bilateral trade will reach 600 billion dollars in the next 10 years.

China is probably the ideal country to mediate for a Saudi-Iranian truce, and that was clear from the three trips of the Chinese President last week. For the Saudis and the Iranians, Russia is a competitor in the oil and gas markets, while the United States not only is demonized in the Muslim world, but it has also dramatically decreased its imports from the Persian Gulf. On the contrary the Chinese are the big customer of the Persian Gulf, and both the Saudis and the Iranians are looking at them in order to boost their exports.

After all, both the Arabs and the Iranians could use Pakistan to send their oil and gas to China. If the Chinese can buy reasonable amounts from both, in order to keep both of them happy, a main cause of terrorism would

disappear. There is still the issue of the TAPI pipeline (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India) promoted by India and Turkmenistan, and supported by the US, which is attacked by both the Arabs and the Iranians. And there are many other issues. But if the Chinese manage to buy a lot in order to keep happy both the Arabs of the Gulf and the Iranians, but also the Turkmen and the Kazakhs, and at the same time they include Turkey, Pakistan and Afghanistan in the New Silk Roads, which means billions of dollars in investments, a peace could be reached.

Map 1



The problem is that peace would cost the Chinese trillions of dollars in oil and gas imports, but also in infrastructure, in order to keep all the Muslim World happy. And the Chinese economy is already a bubble. But if you want peace you got to pay for it. . At the end of the day whether you will have peace or not depends on whether you can afford it, because peace does not come cheap.

The truth is that peace does not only depend on how China will spend her money. It also depends on the European Union, Japan, and all the main importers of raw materials. They would all have to base their purchases on how to keep all the countries exporting raw materials happy, and not on where they can find the best prices. But China is counting on the Middle East countries more, in the same way the Europeans are counting on Russia, and the Americans are counting on Canada, Mexico and Latin America. Therefore for the Middle East wars maybe China can play a greater role.

### **Articles**

“China, Iran Agree to Expand Trade to \$600 Billion in a Decade”, January 2016

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-01-23/china-iran-agree-to-expand-trade-to-600-billion-in-a-decade>

“Saudi Aramco – Sinopec – CNPC”

<https://iakal.wordpress.com/2016/01/21/saudi-aramco-sinopec-cnpc-january-2016/>

“China's Xi visits Egypt, offers financial, political support”, January 2016

[http://www.reuters.com/article/us-egypt-china-idUSKCN0UZ05I?feedType=RSS&utm\\_source=The+Daily+News+Brief&utm\\_campaign=0943f132ea-](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-egypt-china-idUSKCN0UZ05I?feedType=RSS&utm_source=The+Daily+News+Brief&utm_campaign=0943f132ea-)

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