

The strategic dimensions of the Turkish-Iranian competition for Iraq after 2003 and its impact on Iraqi internal stability

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Abstract

The objective and realistic vision of the nature of the Turkish-Iranian relations with regard to the Middle East and North Africa region in general and Iraq in particular is undoubtedly based on the following : Competitiveness rather than conflict between the two countries Turkish and Iranian Iraq became, after June 2014, an arena for regional and international competition and conflict among the regional powers because of its geostrategic importance Geopolitical remains one of the most powerful elements that shape this importance, especially in the case of direct geographical proximity with all its potential impact and influence on both sides of the border at various levels of political, military, strategic, security and economic. And with the phenomenon of competition in the Turkish-Iranian relations on Iraq beyond 2003 However, there are constants between the two countries (Turkish and Iranian) and one of the most important foundations of the constants between the Iranian and Turkish sides Energy security and Turkey's view are not seen as a conduit for influence in Central and South Asia, and the constants are also coordination on security issues related to the Kurdish problem Turkish-Iranian competition and its impact on Iraq after 2003 " Boosted after the US withdrawal from Iraq in late 2011Providing Turkey and Iran with a historic opportunity to achieve their national interests and objectives by increasing the effectiveness of regional action and all political, economic, security and cultural dimensions. The imbalance of the equation of the strategic regional balance after the departure of Iraq from that equation and the emergence of a new map of regional balances, gave the two countries a great opportunity for freedom of movement and regional political action influential within the Iraqi arena.

Keywords: Turkish - Iranian Competition, Strategic Dimension, Iraq after 2003, Internal Stability

1. Introduction

If the historical rivalries between Iran and Turkey exist and continue, Iraq is the arena and the space where the two teams have been playing and implementing their plans against each other And since the difference between the Iranian project and the Turkish project, in the face of Iraq, there is a kind of unspoken understanding to maintain what is or maintain the status quo "for several reasons, the most predominant of which is the geographical location of Iraq is within the land areas close to the Middle East, the Balkans and the Caucasus Iraq and the two countries (Turkey and Iran) have a common land border extending over hundreds of kilometers, which feeds the two-way influence and influence on both sides of the border and in both directions, especially at the level of trade relations, social and cultural ties (1)

The great resemblance to the ethnic mosaic that combines the three countries (Iraq, Turkey and Iran), Arabs, Kurds and Turkmen, as well as cultural and social interaction between their peoples on both sides of the border

The Turkish people retain a special status for Mosul and are still viewed as a strategic depth that they lost after World War I. Some Turkish political and strategic analysts regard them as the "first line of defense But the vision of each side to intervene in Iraq and protect its influence varies between the two countries (2)

How so ?

1. Turkey aims at a strong Iraqi political process between the federal government in Baghdad and the Kurdistan region of Iraq is not dominated by any group alone Strong Iraq Turkey contributes to its security and regional stability by increasing trade exchange between the two countries, especially in the area of promotion To expand Iraq's oil and gas production to help meet Turkey's own potential And Turkey's goal of becoming the energy channel from the Middle East to Europe.

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Iran favors a negative neighbor with a clear sectarian political structure (2)

To ensure friendly, Shi'ite-led governments. Iran's fear of Iraq's strong pre-2003 experience

At that time he was a strong political, military and economic country (3)

Iran sees a strong Iraq as a potential obstacle in its way and its political project of supporting the Shiite armed factions in Iraq, Lebanon, Yemen, Syria and Bahrain in what is known as the state of al-Faqih, which is based on the establishment of an axis to resist and limit American and Israeli influence in the Middle East and North Africa. Because it will compete with it to increase its oil production and influence the energy market

Periphering the separation of Iraq and the absence of national unity and encroachment and reliance on sub-identities at the expense of the Iraqi national identity of the public, made Iran and Turkey deal with Iraq as a retail (not retail or as a whole) Iran deals with Shiite Islamic parties and groups, and some are affiliated to it and Turkey is dealing with some Sunnis as an extension of an empire in mind even if it is absent, or part of a larger political project (4)

The experiences of distant and close history provided that whenever Iraq is strong and united, it can translate the Iranian and Turkish projects from expansion into Iraq, and promote common interests, common goals and peaceful natural relations, especially since what connects Iran and Turkey to Iraq is a lot: religious, social, economic, cultural and historical Iran and Turkey are interested in obtaining Iraqi oil by legitimate or illegal means (5)

The hypothesis of research starts from the following 1.1

1. In the long term, the Turkish-Iranian competition will bring Ankara closer to Washington Sometimes from Israel. For example, when the United States withdrew its troops from Iraq One of its secretions was that Turkey and Iran would compete economically and politically to gain influence in Iraq After a decade of disagreements with the United States, Turkey has become even closer to the edge While The relationship between Obama and Erdogan has laid a new foundation for US-Turkish relations The two countries will be committed to common interests in the Middle East even in light of the emergence of some differences ICs in this period or those

2. In purely practical terms, northern Iraq has become part of Turkish influence in the region. that This is especially surprising considering that only a few years ago it appeared to be Turkish hostility Towards Iraqi Kurdish leaders on the verge of becoming a full invasion of the region.

By contrast, Turkish Airlines currently offers daily flights to Sulaymaniyah and Arbil, which are under the administration of the "Kurdistan Regional Government" in northern Iraq, and that Iraqi Kurds spend their holidays in Antalya - Turkish resort on the Mediterranean Sea. (6)

Mosul - the predominately Sunni province in northern Iraq - has also become more inclined Towards Ankara. Turkey currently provides safe haven to Tariq al-Hashemi, the Sunni deputy of a republican president Iraq, who arrest has become the cause of many Sunni rallies. At the same time, being revived The historical links between Mosul and Turkey, dating back to the time of the Ottoman Empire. (7)

Research methodology: It is useful to note here that the integrated approach has been adopted in the research Which is based on the combination of a number of scientific methods used in research and the most predominant comparative Analytical and deductive analysis in a regular sequence of events.(8)

1.2 The Turkish rapprochement with Kurdistan and the Turkish-Iranian competition over Iraq

The Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) has achieved a good degree of stability and security at the level of Iraq Basic. Although there are still considerable tensions between the two political factions in the "government The region, "but this government is skilled in preventing the escalation of these tensions The extension of the process of leadership transition using the formula of "managed democracy" What is important now is how the "territorial government" exploits the political space it created through deferment Presidential elections and provincial elections: Will you take the opportunity to share power between The executive and parliament, or will the powers be transferred to local governments at the level of Governess ? (9)

In terms of the application of its internal boundaries, the KRG ignored the military threats from Side of the Iraqi federal government on the disputed areas in 2012. It can be named his year as a "year of deployments" where the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) has consistently outperformed The Iraqi federal government in military confrontations along the disputed border and on In contrast, 2013 was the year of "harmony".

As the Iraqi government sees the 2018 general election looming, it has begun to strengthen the harmony between the central government and the "regional A restorative approach to the KRG. Iraqi Prime Minister has to conclude a non-aggression agreement with the Kurds. Common perception has led to the threat government" al Qaeda "growing organization Kurdistan "

As 2019 draws to a close, the federal government and the Kurds cannot waste their time in Political quarrels futile, in the light of the most important work they have to do The next stage for the Kurdistan Regional Government will be to show economic strength.

To its enclosed area over the next year, the "territorial government" is likely to issue more oil And gas independently of Baghdad's control, probably through the use of a direct pipeline To Turkey along with small quantities of exports via trucks (10).

The Iraqi federal government has stopped issuing strong threats on this issue Ankara's commitment to independent KRG oil and gas exports is on the rise Washington has advised Erbil and Ankara not to break away publicly from Baghdad on the issue of exports, but The US government will accept direct exports to the "territorial government" if Baghdad surrenders So.

In the long term, independent exports of the KRG must be guaranteed under a final arrangement on revenue sharing between Baghdad and the "territorial government".

It must be regulated such an arrangement under the law, but discussion of the law of oil and gas continued for years and will not be (11)

1.3 The Turkish-Iranian competition in Iraq and its impact on the internal stability of Iraq

"There is a place in the Middle East for one Shah or one Sultan, but not for a Shah and Sultan with a In the coming years, the dominant competition in the Middle East will not be the Arab conflict Israeli or Saudi-Iranian tensions, but renewed Turkish-Iranian competition. ".

In fact, the Turkish-Persian competition is the oldest power game in the Middle East. Between The fifteenth and twenty centuries, challenged the Ottoman sultans and Persian sheikhs – who They were the precursors of modern Turkey and Iran - - each other for regional hegemony After the fall of the Ottoman and Persian empires and the abandonment of modern Turkey by the Middle East For the West, it sees as though this competition is over. Recently, it appeared at first that Turkey's foreign policy towards the Middle East Ankara is closer to Tehran. However, after it became Ankara's rising player again in the Middle East, has actually emerged as a challenger Naturalization of the other main Middle East actor: a nuclear Iran seeking to dominate. (12)

Consequently, the Turkish-Persian competition has again become the main power game in region. To take, for example, their rival in Iraq. Although both are Turkey Iran initially opposed the Iraq war, but the fact that they supported opposing camps in successful Iraqi elections has re-ignited that competition. Today Ankara and Tehran are looking that they do not want the other to have more influence in Baghdad or on Iraqi Kurds.

More importantly, the Turkish-Persian competition reached its peak on Syria. Ankara is the main regional opposition to the suppression of the Assad regime. On the other hand does not stand Tehran is also with Assad, but is transferring money to the Baath regime so that it can pursue a policy Persecution. (13)

These are the most important - and sometimes unintended - consequences - for Turkey's transformation towards Middle east even if this shift at first appeared to create the axis of Ankara-Tehran that it has in fact been counterproductive: to provoke competition for regional hegemony and to return Reviving old memories of centuries Turkey and Iran have long warned each other.

After the campaigns of weakening against for almost two centuries, the Ottomans and the Persians settled in 1639 on A peace similar to "Cold War"; they agreed not fighting directly but have instead been engaged From that in proxy wars to undermine each other. For example, the two countries competed In order to achieve influence in Iraq during the nineteenth century. (14)

The region's oldest competition briefly receded in the mid-20th century Turkey has turned to the West, leaving a vacuum in the Middle East. It was so useful that Shah Iran at that time sympathized with the modernization mission of Turkey Ataturk

However, after the 1979 Islamic revolution, Turkish-Persian competition returned to life once Other. From Tehran's point of view, the revolution poses Iran and Turkey as two altogether contradictory models of the East Middle East: an authoritarian religious state versus a pro-Western and secular secular democracy. (15)

That the seminar was completed by the Justice and Development Party (AKP) To present Ankara as its main rival against Tehran's desire to dominate the region. Now, from Iraq to Syria, the two countries are opposing each other for leadership Regional commissions. Ankara's acceptance of the installation of radar stations on its territory as part of the defense project the failure for "NATO" has pointed to Tehran that Turkey Middle East Associated with a NATO force, may pose a greater threat to Iranian interests than just Turkey pro-Western"During the past decade, PKK attacks have been launched."

Which is the branch - - - »Party of Free Life in Kurdistan» against Turkey and attacks »the PKK Against Iran, both Ankara and Tehran to hold discussions - - - »PKK» from Free Life Party at Umniah directly.

At the moment, Iran has established peace Murat Krylan »PKK" It is reported that it saved the life of the leader of "Kurdistan Labor Party "by" taking him into custody "at a time when Turkey was bombing camps in Iraq.

Iran and Turkey are slowly showing their hands in the game of the old power in Kurdistan region In the Middle East there is a place for one Shah or one Sultan, but not for Shah and Sultan with Ankara and Tehran seem to have returned to the centuries-old competition in order to become the dominant force in the region (16)

1.4 Turkish-Iranian rivalry and its impact on Turkish-Israeli relations

When a massive earthquake stuck Turkey in 1999, it paved the way for Greece and Turkey to improve Their relations were declining This process, which was later called "diplomacy

The earthquake "has authorized a positive positive era in Turkish-Greek relations The recent earthquake in Turkey may serve a similar purpose by launching the "Zelzal diplomacy Turkish-Israeli. According to media reports, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called Netanyahu, for the first time in his Turkish counterpart,

offered his condolences for the first time in a year, and Ankara responded positively Israeli offer to help them. "

Organizations and Turks must seize this opportunity to rebuild their relationship. However, otherwise Of the former Turkish-Israeli relations established on the basis of the old warmth among the Turks The Jews should base this new relationship on strong security interests rather than just Sympathy, this will be better for both sides. (17)

Turkey and Israel will benefit from increased communication as each faces a regional landscape New and difficult, and then both countries will benefit from focusing on pressing security issues rather than Devoting precious resources to confronting each other. In other words, Turkey and Israel are allied In the past, because they needed the friendship of the other, they must now be united because they are not Need the enmity of the other (18)

Israel's current security environment is a prime example of why it is not being wished to add another State Especially a strong country such as Turkey - to its "watch list". Iran poses the most serious challenge to Israel in its march towards a nuclear weapons program.

What is more, Iran can mobilize And other extremist terrorist groups "and Islamic Jihad" Hamas "and" Hezbollah To target Israel and the peace process with the Palestinians. Israel also faces security challenges Such as the historic transformation of the Arab Spring into its neighbors. It is not only that Egypt has become Is a greater concern for Israel than in the past, but Israel must also devote itself To monitor Syria in the event of the fall of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. "

Turkey is also in a position to benefit from improved relations with Israel. Until recently Turkey's policy of "beating problems with neighbors" has yielded positive results Middle East, where Turkey's relations with Iran improved, and Ankara and Syria became close allies (19) .

And even mediated by the "PKK" as Turkey has calmed terrorist attacks Peace talks between Israel and Syria Now Turkey's problems with its neighbors are back. Ankara's opposition to the suppression of the rule Assad of the demonstrators has once again earned her the Damascus runner and put her on a collision course with Tehran which defends Assad's crackdown.

As the Turkish-Iranian rivalry that began with Tehran and Ankara's support for opposition factions in the Iraqi elections will worsen if they fall Syria is in greater chaos. There are unfortunate signs that Iran may resort to its previous policy Against Turkey. »PKK« using considering the new environment in the Middle East, as Israeli policy makers should Seek to re-create Turkish-Israeli relations to avoid further security problems Ankara would there benefit if it followed suit.

Fortunately, there is already a basis for renewed relationships. Despite the differences Between the two countries, trade is booming, rising more than 30 percent2011 There are reports of a track back diplomacy already To configure a new policy, the two countries must look to the future and the new strategic environment

Rather than the recent past, no matter how painful. Turkey and Israel are not yet ready to be friends but they do not need to be one enemy of the other, talking to each other Some will serve both well (20)

1.5 US-Turkish coordination on Iraqi oil and its impact on Turkish competition Iran

Washington fears it could cause Turkey's relationship Growing with the Kurdistan Regional Government in an open conflict between Baghdad and Erbil. However American and Turkish targets in Iraq are strikingly similar, providing fertile ground Strategic cooperation if both sides overcome their tactical differences and focus on objectives

Between them Nearly four years after the invasion of Iraq in 2003, Washington expressed its displeasure About the position of Ankara, which refuses to open a second military front across Turkish territory.

This has been rectified The rift by 2007 paved the way for two years during which the United States was encouraged Ankara to play a very productive role in uniting the Iraqi factions and building a new Turkish relationship with "Kurdistan Regional Government". But from 2008 onwards, Turkish engagement with Iraq began Deviating from the US plan, which has deepened fears in Washington.

Since then Ankara generally preferred to deal with the Kurdistan Regional Government and the Sunni Arab factions Including inciting a catastrophic collapse in its relations with Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, no Is still standing today until Abadi took over the reins of government in Iraq However, the irony in the current situation (after the fall of Mosul and the emergence of a thief) is that The objectives of Washington and Ankara in Iraq are almost identical. Both governments want to avoid any A military clash between Baghdad and the "Kurdistan Regional Government" at any price, and the two groups believe that unity Iraqi territory is a key pillar of regional stability, especially at such a time Many of the crises and tensions related to Syria and Iran (21).

The two Governments also wish to see The flow of more Iraqi oil to the north of the country far from the Iranian coast in the Persian Gulf And to the huge export ports on the Turkish coastline overlooking the Mediterranean Sea.

The two They believe that this influx may help keep oil prices low as well as facilitate The effectiveness of sanctions imposed on Iran - a view supported by the expectations of "Agency International energy "that Iraq may be able to provide 45 per cent of world oil production The new contract Similarly, efforts to transfer more Iraqi natural gas to the north may contribute Southern corridor pipeline projects that would reduce Turkish dependence And the European on Russian and Iranian gas. Washington and Ankara agree even at the official level on the mechanism favored by both sides for the export of Iraqi oil and gas: rarely to undertake "PEO"

in Baghdad is responsible for sales with cost recovery and guidance Proceeds to the KRG through the Federal Treasury. (22)

But what are the things that are still controversial?

How can the United States and Turkey?

Reconcile their policies to achieve their common goals ?

In 2009 and 2010, Maliki's bid to win a second term directed in a spacing Between US and Turkish politics. Ankara publicly opposed his re-appointment, which led to corruption Relations with him from the first day of his new term, at a time when Washington adopted a more approach and continued to cooperate with him, the US troops began to withdraw from Iraq and since Ankara's position became even darker, leading to a fierce war of words between Maliki And Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan since November 2011 (23)

Turkey believes That Washington has failed to use its influence which remains strong) and, in particular, sales to curl Maliki's takeover of power and stir up sectarian tensions

Ankara's hostility to Maliki is unnecessary and will not yield positive results. But there is more Objectivity in criticism directed by the two teams to each other (24) The Turkish solution to the ongoing Iraqi political crisis is the establishment of a strong federal state to interpret the Constitution in a way that is in favor of the Kurdistan Regional Government and other regions and gives it preference over the central government. And after its certificate in 2010 that Maliki is what it is But a puppet in the hands of Iran, Ankara conducted extensive and direct contacts with Erbil, especially when Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu visiting the Kurdistan Region and the sensitive city of Kirkuk May 2012 without reporting to Baghdad Turkey has also expanded its cooperation with Erbil in the field of energy since 2012, including a conclusion Crude oil deals produced by the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) with Turkish products such as Heating oil. Ankara's next move is likely to include direct participation in the oil sector and the surplus gas of the Kurdistan Regional Government but the Kurdish oil policy appeared to be the core of the conflict.

Iraq's oil reserves and Turkish-Iranian competition the conflict between Arabs and Kurds in Iraq is not born today. Under Saddam Hussein Ending this constant threat of national unity was one of the reasons that led the United States to the invasion of Iraq in 2003, and those Iraqis opposed to Saddam share this with Washington The goal, especially Kurds and Arab Shiites. Only full Kurdish participation in the government has emerged After the fall of Saddam, for example, Iraqi President Jalal Talabani is a Kurd But resentment still exists, as skeptics doubt Iraqi Arabs from the time they enjoy "Kurdistan Regional Government", which is similar to autonomy, while the Kurds want to get what They consider it their fair share of the national budget, which is primarily derived from oil

exports (Kurds now account for 17 per cent of the country's net oil export earnings). (25)

Iraq has large quantities of oil, with proven reserves of 143 billion barrels(Rivaling its neighbor, Iran) and the country's fields could most likely be equal to those of the kingdom Saudi Arabia reserves. However, production has been interrupted for many years because of wars And penalties. Although Baghdad now has ambitious plans to expand exports, it does Need help from international oil companies. But its compliance with commercial nationalism has the notice that revenues Oil should go to the Iraqis alone and make them exposed to the international oil companies fees Unattractive uniform. (26)

Although most Iraqi oil reserves are located in the south of the country, oil has been first discovered in Kirkuk before any other city in Iraq Kirkuk is located in the north of the country Where a large number of its population are Kurds and they are adjunct to the region "Kurdistan Regional Government Currently, Kurdistan has more than 40 billion barrels of oil, as well as reserves Great gas ".

The Iraqi constitution, drafted in 2005, laid down the principle of governance which combines the federal administration and the administration of the Kurdistan Regional Government on the so-called The "new fields", such as those in Kurdistan, continue to debate about the degree of control And gains from production sharing agreements

The Kurds prefer these Agreements, while opposed by Baghdad. This asserted in stalemate, which preceded the promulgation of a law Oil and gas regulator to implement the constitutional provisions what angered Baghdad is that the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) Equal to the production of the international oil companies without the consent of the central government the companies have only responded to these enticing items.

There is a difference of opinion Leaders of the Kurdistan Regional Government and Baghdad on the degree of foreign sovereign participation in the oil sector and gas in Iraq (27)

Conclusion

The Iranian-Turkish relations, in their political and strategic dimensions, transcend the meaning of any relations Bilateral relations between two non-Arab countries, as their own nature makes them directly affect the realities of a region Iran and Turkey are considered a cultural depth - the "strategic" of the Middle East. While theoretically possible But this consideration cannot be translated into reality on the ground Through active Arab policies extracted from the energies of Iran and Turkey, which serves Arab interests And deviate from any possible conflict of interests between it and any of Iran or Turkey.

But in cases Arab absence from presence and action, it is normal to expand the regional roles of each of Tehran

and Ankara to fill the blanks, and this expansion in turn puts the Arab countries in the focus of Iranian attention And Turkey. Based on this, the Arab countries are defined in the equation of bilateral relations

Iran and Turkey, as a thermometer for measuring their regional expansion" Iraq today for Iran is the same as Lebanon for Syria," he said in a sentence Iraq during a briefing, not for publication, was held in Washington. It usually crosses Iraqis, America's Arab allies, and many American diplomats and soldiers

The feeling that the United States has removed Iran's greatest adversary - Saddam Hussein's regime and then allowed Tehran to become the most influential external force in Iraq But is it a "game" that Iran has won and prepared for?

Any assessment of the influence of Iran and Turkey in Iraq must focus on reviewing the interests of both Iran and Iran Iran and Turkey seek to prevent Iraq from regaining its status As a source of its regional military, political and economic role Some of these goals have been achieved, at least for the current decade, by overthrowing Saddam's regime, and de-Baathification of the security services, and the rise of former armed opponents to the leadership of Iraq Post-Saddam We have reached the following conclusions:

Iraqis who relied on Iran to protect them during the last three decades of Baathist rule, who have often formed a common cause with Tehran against the Iraqi army.

This is one of the reasons Behind Iran's support for its Iraqi allies in their ongoing efforts to de-Baathify and why they prefer not to see the emergence of a new national bloc of different sects in Iraq.

Looking ahead, Iran's supporters in the Iraqi government will complicate the negotiating task On the US-Iraqi security agreement after 2011, and reduce the size and effectiveness of security assistance American Security Forces. Despite the fact that Iran's hard-line militancy is In the Corps »Al Quds Brigades« Iraq is a source of inconvenience in the relations between the two countries, but that Iranian Revolutionary Guard "responsible for operations outside Iran will retain its ability to Targeting US military, diplomats and Iraqi citizens, who could form One of the sources of deterrence against any American or Israeli military strike on Iran - a scenario Which is a nightmare for US generals and diplomats in Iraq.

In the Iraqi economy, Iran has established a trade and economic balance with mutually supportive dependencies Tehran, and to some extent protect it from the potential impact of future armed attacks or imposition sanctions. Iran can be said to have benefited from the "state ownership" approach in which it is used

Government-owned industries and religious institutions under the influence of the IRGC Iranian "(Pinyad) as tools of political power to manage the state Iran encourages the provinces of eastern Iraq to rely on

Iranian funding for fuel products Such as cooking gas, heating oil and vehicle fuel, as well as Iranian support Of the Iraqi electricity network. In the future, Iraq may import gas from Iran, while Iran may increase the export capacity of Iraqi oil through the use of its ports, which compensates about the potential bottleneck of Iraq's backward export infrastructure.

However, Iran is showing its strength in such relations as it cuts fuel supplies Electricity in winter and summer, only when the Iraqis are in dire need

It has led to fears that Iran could threaten the export capacity of Iraqi oil especially if Tehran wants to protest against the treatment of the international community or if it wants to Reducing Iraq's ability to replace Iranian production in the global market.

The fragmented and irregular nature of Iraqi politics has allowed Iran to provide funding necessary for election campaigns, media support and mediation in Iraq's political lists, and also Paramilitary support for armed groups. But Iran's support has proved to be many often counterproductive, especially to the oldest Iraqi ally of Iran - "Supreme Council

Islamic Iraqi "movement, a movement avoided by Iraqi voters for its ties with Iran, which is Now seems at odds with Tehran because of Iran's support for Maliki. As well as Iranian border raids And Tehran's support for the militias and the diversion of Iraqi rivers, all these are critical Organized by Iraqis of all ethnic and sectarian groups.

Iran may face a future Iraqi nationalism is growing as a force, while the current harvest of loyal politicians is fading To Iran.

All of this suggests that Iran - as the United States - will have to continue To compete for influence in Iraq, year after year, and hold a decade later.

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