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## The Iranian Mojahedin

*By Ervand Abrahamian*



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The Mojahedin, a radical political group in Iran, were prominent in the movement against the Shah and played an important role in bringing the Ayatollah Khomeini to power. Yet they have borne the brunt of his reign of terror and now constitute the main opposition to his Islamic Republic. In this book a leading authority on Iranian political parties offers the first history of this little-known underground group.

Drawing on all available sources including interviews with past and present members of the Mojahedin, Ervand Abrahamian traces their organization from the 1960s to today. He investigates the social backgrounds of their leaders, the main features of their ideology, and the Marxist influences on their interpretation of Islam. He is then able to explain why they failed to gain political power despite their mass following and the fact that they were the best armed, best disciplined, and one of the largest groups opposing the Shah.

In an introductory section on contemporary Iran, Abrahamian analyzes the downfall of the Shah, discusses the resurgence of Islam in that country, contrasts the varieties of Islam on the present scene, and explains why the Islamic Republic, despite all expectations, has proved to be so durable. Clearly and concisely written, the book as a whole provides a wealth of information on contemporary Iran.

“A very fine book that deals with an important subject in a very thorough and engrossing fashion.” –Nikki R. Keddie, U.C.L.A.



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## **Editorial Review**

From Library Journal

Ayatollah Khomeini may have been the focal point of anti-Shah opposition, but the Mojahedin, a radical political group, provided the martyrs, the guns, the huge marches, and much of the written word that fanned the fires of Shiite fervor in the first three years of the Islam Republic of Iran. But the Mojahedin have now gone underground: cult-like, they stand beleaguered, and convinced that Khomeini has gone astray.

Abrahamian (history, Baruch Coll.) is an acknowledged expert on Middle Eastern affairs, and this dissection of a crucial element of contemporary Iran is essential to projecting the future of the country and the Islamic Revolution. Scholars will find the first quarter of the book repetitive; however, newcomers to the subject will find the history useful. Highly recommended for major collections and larger libraries.

- *David P. Snider, Casa Grande P.L., Ariz.*

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