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While there have been major changes in Iranian foreign policy since 1979, there have also been important continuities. This article argues that the Islamist regime's foreign policy objectives are, in order of priority, regime survival, national security and revolutionary Islam.

Radicalism or realpolitik?

THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE ISLAMIC
REPUBLIC OF IRAN

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*"A simple but false idea will always have greater weight in the world
than a true but complex idea."* ALEXIS DE TOCQUEVILLE

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SINCE THE 1979 Iranian revolution which culminated in the overthrow of the Shah's conservative, pro-Western monarchy and the emergence of a revolutionary, theocratic regime, many Middle East analysts have been consistently proven wrong in their attempts to predict the course of Iran's Islamic revolution and to determine the motivations behind Islamist Iran's foreign policy. For more than three decades now, there has been a great deal of debate among scholars concerning Iran's foreign policy goals and priorities. Recent examples include Iran's alleged role in fuelling insurgencies in neighbouring countries and the nature of Tehran's nuclear program.

Many observers argue that Iran's primary foreign policy objective, in accordance with the late Ayatollah Ruhollah

Khomeini's universalist, Islamist ideology, remains the export of the Iranian revolution.¹ Others believe that the ayatollahs are nothing more than "turbaned shahs" who have grandiose ambitions of using Islam as a front to realize Iranian expansionist aims and to facilitate their quest for regional hegemony.² However, careful analysis of Iran's conduct in international affairs would reveal that the truth lies somewhere in between these two extreme interpretations of religious millenarianism and Iranian nationalism or imperialism.

The purpose of this article is to provide an analytical framework for understanding the forces that have molded and influenced the foreign policy of revolutionary Iran since 1979. It will attempt to shed light on Tehran's foreign policy priorities and objectives. Furthermore, it will identify major milestones and use historical examples to demonstrate key continuities in Iranian foreign policy in the imperial and revolutionary periods. Finally, the article is intended to shed light on the main currents and directions in the Islamic Republic's foreign policy.

The Foreign Policy of Imperial Iran

In order to put into perspective the foreign policy orientation of revolutionary Iran, it is necessary to take a brief look at the country's international relations under the Shah. In general, the Shah's major objectives were to protect his throne and the country from internal and external threats. This entailed an expansion of Iran's security and military forces, a massive arms build-up, and a strong US commitment to counter any external threat that could not be handled by Iran alone. By the late 1960s and early 1970s, with the achievement of a

certain degree of domestic stability and security, Tehran then actively pursued a policy of projecting its power on both the regional and international stages. Furthermore, the 1971 British withdrawal from east of the Suez and the 1973 oil boom accentuated this trend. Domestically, the imperial regime propagated a conservative, elitist ideology to convince the public that Iran's security and development were inextricably linked with the preservation of the monarchy: the Shah's regime was not only a bulwark against instability, radicalism and communism, but also a guarantor of Iranian independence. On the whole, what distinguished the Shah's foreign policy was its heavy reliance on the US and its chauvinistic ideology.³

The Foreign Policy of Revolutionary Iran

With the emergence of the Islamic Republic in 1979, the new revolutionary regime assumed an increasingly hostile stance towards the US and the USSR. In addition, it severed ties with Israel, partly as an expression of solidarity with the Palestinian cause but also due to Israel's covert military, political and economic links with the Shah's regime.⁴ This shift towards neutrality and non-alignment reflected the revolutionary slogan *Nah sharghi, nah gharbi, faghat Jomhuriye Eslami* (neither eastern nor western, only the Islamic Republic).

Ostensibly, Khomeini's foreign policy posture was a radical departure from that of the Shah. However, the historical record demonstrates that they differed in only two fundamental ways. Firstly, while the imperial regime depended heavily on the goodwill of the US, the revolutionary government rejected dependency on either one of the superpowers, especially on Washing-

ton. Secondly, the Shah had relied on a nationalist ideology to justify his conduct of foreign relations to the Iranian people and highlight Iran's prominent position in regional and world affairs and in sharp contrast, Khomeini and his followers adopted a unique doctrine that emphasized the need for Muslim solidarity and the mobilization of the oppressed masses (*mostazafin*) to dismantle the unjust regional and international systems that were in place.⁵

According to this worldview, Islamist Iran was in a unique position to assume a leadership position to change the status quo by exporting its revolution and backing liberation movements; it was Iran's duty to struggle against imperialism on a global level, supporting the oppressed masses of the earth in their efforts to throw off the yoke of the oppressors (*mostakberin*), especially in the Muslim world. Hence, the clerical regime believed that its foreign policy should reject dependency on the superpowers, and should challenge their power and influence on the regional and international stage. This also entailed confronting their proxies, such as Israel, in the Middle East.⁶

Despite the undeniable impact of Khomeini's authority and ideology on Iranian foreign policy, even after his death in 1989, it should be underscored that the particular origins and character of the 1979 revolution produced a foreign policy that was marked by two intrinsically different forces. The Islamic Republic is purportedly committed to a universal mission to export the revolution and liberate mankind, yet the revolution occurred within a specific national context, not in the midst of a regional or international crisis.⁷ The ideolo-

gy of the revolution contained both indigenous and internationalist ideas that are often incompatible: on one hand, an Islamic universalist ideology recognizing no boundaries, and on the other, Iranian nationalism influenced by Twelver (*Asna Ashari*) Shiism. These two contending ele-

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ments presented a major dilemma to Iranian policy-makers. Like other revolutions that occurred within a national and international context, the foreign policy of revolutionary Iran can be viewed as a product of a dialectic between Iran's strong affinity with the Arabs and Turks due to the Islamic faith, versus Iranian nationalism which differentiates it from its Muslim neighbours.⁸ Indeed, the importance of Islamic universalism in Iranian foreign policy formulation and implementation has often been misunderstood or exaggerated. Even Iranian policy-makers have at times admitted that their rejection of both east and west only partially reflects the impact of revolutionary Islam. They concede that Iran's non-aligned stance also derives from its own bitter historical experiences with the hegemonic policies of the great powers.⁹

Iranian Foreign Policy Priorities

While many analysts argue over whether nationalism or Islamism is the primary factor shaping Iran's international relations, others contend that Tehran's foreign policy

is driven by domestic political imperatives.¹⁰ Although this definitely holds true to an important extent, it is an oversimplification, and only presents part of the overall picture. As far as the main objectives of the Islamic Republic's foreign policy are concerned, three motives can be identified, which are, in order of priority, regime survival, national security and Islamism.¹¹

With regard to the first, the clerical regime is willing to go to great lengths to ensure its own survival, using repression and brute force, as it has consistently demonstrated over the past three decades, most recently subsequent to the disputed presidential elections in June 2009. Moreover, it has repeatedly used foreign policy crises to rally support among the Iranian people and prop up its position. It exploited the 444-day US hostage crisis (1979–1980), the eight-year war with Iraq (1980–1988) and the Salman Rushdie affair (1989) to tighten its hold on power and perpetuate its rule.¹² More recently, since 2003, the clerical regime has tried to manipulate the nuclear issue in order to gain the backing of people at home and beyond its borders in the Islamic world in a bid to bolster its power and influence.

The second most important objective of Iranian foreign policy has been national security and defence. Regardless of its internationalist and pan-Islamic rhetoric, Tehran has consistently proven its ability to compromise its revolutionary goals and ambitions if the existence of the Iranian state is threatened. An early example was the Israeli arms deliveries to Iran after the Iraqi invasion in 1980. Tehran, having been caught off guard and in a desperate position, started to purchase spare parts for its US-made warplanes from the "Zionist

entity", since its own stocks were badly depleted. Furthermore, with the revelations of the Iran-Contra affair in late 1986, it became apparent that Israeli intermediaries had played a key role in arranging talks between US and Iranian officials, facilitating the shipment of US-made arms to Iran in order to help secure the release of American hostages in Lebanon.¹³

Perhaps the most fascinating example of Tehran's ability to compromise its revolutionary Islamist values has been the alliance with Damascus over the past three

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decades. In key respects, both the nature and longevity of the Syrian-Iranian alliance have baffled observers. Pointing to major differences in their respective ideologies, as well as their political structures, many analysts have expressed surprise as to how revolutionary, Islamist Iran could ally itself with a secular, pan-Arab, Baathist regime that brutally crushed an Islamist uprising led by the Syrian Muslim Brethren (*Ikhwan al-Muslimin*) within its borders in the 1980s. Nevertheless, despite their ostensible differences, the relations between the two states do reflect a fundamental convergence of interests.¹⁴

During the Iran-Iraq conflict, Syria exerted economic pressure on Iraq by shutting down the flow of Iraqi oil through the IPC (trans-Syrian) pipeline to the ports of Banias and Tripoli in the eastern Mediterranean. Damascus also gave support to sev-

eral Iraqi opposition groups and provided Iran with Soviet-made arms. Furthermore, the clerical regime sought to preserve its alliance with Syria in order to prevent the formation of a hostile Arab coalition. Although this objective was of great ideological value to Islamist Iran, it was of even greater political significance. Iranian policy-makers were deeply concerned about the prospect of regional isolation and confrontation with a united Arab front. Therefore, the maintenance of the partnership was a major goal of Iranian diplomacy. This remains the case today as both Tehran and Damascus attempt to thwart US moves to isolate them.¹⁵

Overall, the Syrian-Iranian partnership is one of many examples over the past thirty years in which Tehran has not allowed ideological discrepancies to prevent cooperation for pragmatic purposes. Whenever possible, the Islamist regime has tried to maintain its ideological commitments while pursuing its national interest. However, when there were situations in which the two did not go hand-in-hand, it relegated ideology to a secondary position in order to uphold the interests of the Iranian state. For example, during the early 1980s, Tehran actually provided support to Christian and animist rebels in southern Sudan against President Jaafar Nimeiry (1969–1985), whose regime backed Saddam Hussein in the Iran-Iraq conflict.¹⁶ Later, subsequent to the outbreak of the Nagorno-Karabakh war (1988–1994) between Armenia and Azerbaijan, to the surprise of many, the Islamic Republic backed Christian Armenia against Muslim Azerbaijan, in large part to contain the rise of Azeri nationalism and its potential spillover into Iran.¹⁷

Iran's conduct in its foreign relations has become more confrontational and uncompromising with Ahmadinejad.

In more recent years, as Iran's relations with the West have become increasingly strained, it has cultivated close, multifaceted ties with Russia and China. Here again, a state that claims to be the standard bearer and leader of Islamic and revolutionary movements in the world has been reluctant to maintain a consistent position in this regard, particularly if it could be detrimental to Russian-Iranian or Sino-Iranian relations. During the two Chechen wars (1994–1996 and 1999–2000), Tehran refrained from providing any support to its co-religionists in Chechnya for fear of harming its vital relationship with Moscow. In a similar vein, the Islamic Republic has been conspicuously silent on the issue of Chinese repression of the Muslim Uighur population in the Xinjiang province since the 1990s.¹⁸

In many respects, revolutionary Iran has pursued policies that are similar to tradi-

tional Iranian foreign policy. Today, Tehran is striving to achieve the two major objectives characteristic of traditional Iranian foreign policy. The first goal is the quest for Iranian supremacy in the Persian Gulf. In other words, Iran wants to be the primary regional player in Gulf affairs. The logic is that Iran is the oldest state in the Gulf region, has the largest population and has the most at stake in terms of ensuring the security of the waterway. Iran's quest to become the dominant power in the Persian Gulf region in modern times began during the reign of Nader Shah (1736–1747) and was continued by his successor Karim Khan Zand (1749–1779) and other rulers who followed. In recent years, various Iranian officials have continued to express this aim. For example, former speaker of parliament and President, Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, who now heads the Expediency Council, advocated the expansion of Iran's "security umbrella" (*chatr-e amniyyat*) throughout the Gulf region. From an historical perspective, there are remarkable parallels between his conception of Persian Gulf security and that of the Shah, who used the term "security perimeter" (*harim-e amniyyat*) in the same context. Tehran maintains that Gulf security arrangements should involve all the littoral states, and should exclude outside powers.¹⁹

Historically, Iran has resented the presence of major foreign powers in the Gulf region, viewing it as a threat and obstacle to its quest for primacy in the area. In the early 17th century, Iran, with British assistance, expelled the Portuguese from the Persian Gulf, thus ending Portugal's century-long domination (1515–1622) of the waterway. However, much to the chagrin of the Iranians, the Portuguese were then

supplanted by the Dutch briefly (until 1766), and then the British, who withdrew only in 1971. Only then was the Shah able to establish a *Pax Iranica* in the Gulf region with the backing of Washington, until his overthrow in 1979. In the post-Cold War era, subsequent to Saddam Hussein's ill-fated attempts between 1980 and 1991 to create a *Pax Iraqica*, Tehran is deeply troubled by the large-scale deployment of US military forces in the Gulf and the numerous military cooperation agreements Washington has concluded with the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) states. Iran has in the past appealed to the Arab sheikhdoms to establish a new collective security framework that would include Iran and concomitantly exclude foreign powers. These requests have fallen on deaf ears because the GCC states distrust the clerical regime and its intentions; they view Iran as an unpredictable giant, and see the American military presence as a safeguard for their security.²⁰

The second feature of traditional Iranian foreign policy has been to maintain a non-aligned position, by balancing relations with the great powers through various means. During the Qajar dynasty in the 19th century, when a weak and vulnerable Iran at the time had become the focus of Anglo-Russian rivalry in the region, the government attempted either to play off the two powers against one another or to seek the assistance of a third power in order to bolster its military capabilities and diplomatic position. With regard to the first strategy, the policy entailed granting equal (political and economic) concessions to both parties, and at the same time preserving Iranian independence. The architect of this policy, known as "positive equilibrium"

(*movazen-e mosbat*), was Mirza Taghi Khan, better known as Amir Kabir, who served as prime minister to Nasr ed-Din Shah from 1848 to 1851. After his assassination his successors tried to emulate his approach, but failed to safeguard Iranian independence. By the end of the century, the country had been divided into spheres of influence by the British Empire and Czarist Russia. During the premiership of Mohammad Mossadeq (1951–1953), a new approach was adopted based on his theory of "negative equilibrium" (*movazen-e manfi*). According to Mossadeq, both superpowers would tolerate a decrease in their influence and involvement in Iran as long as the influence of their rival was also reduced proportionally.²¹

As mentioned above, another method that Iranian policy-makers have adopted in the past to avoid being dependent on or subservient on one or two major foreign powers has been to cultivate close links with a third power. An early example of this was the alliance with Napoleonic France in the early 19th century during the reign of the Qajar king Fath Ali Shah in order to secure French military assistance and to thwart Russian expansion southward towards Iran. Similarly, during the 1930s the Shah's father, Reza Khan, established ties with Nazi Germany in order to prop up his position and stand up to Anglo-Soviet pressure.²²

In the same vein, while the clerical regime has been unremittingly hostile towards the US since 1979, its relations with the USSR were also problematic for the most part. It was only during the two years prior to the dissolution of the USSR that relations thawed, due to the pragmatic policies of Soviet Premier Mikhail Gor-

bachev and the ascension of Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani to the office of President, which also coincided with Khomeini's death. Relations with the Russian Federation grew rapidly during the 1990s, with cooperation extending into different areas such as a political, economic and defence matters. Tehran and Moscow cooperated in the Caucasus, Central Asia and Afghanistan, and concluded agreements for the construction of the Bushehr nuclear reactor and for Russian arms exports to the Islamic Republic.²³ However, the normalization of ties with the West – both the US and Europe – remained elusive in spite of the cautious overtures of Rafsanjani.²⁴ It was not until the election of reformist President Mohammad Khatami in 1997 that noticeable progress was made in mending fences with key Western European states such as Italy, France, Germany and Britain, and tentative steps were taken, albeit limited, to reach some sort of *modus vivendi* with the US. However, by the beginning of Khatami's second term in 2001 it gradually became apparent that a genuine reconciliation with Washington, and full normalization with Europe, was not on the cards. This was in part due to the opposition of hardline elements within the Iranian government to any rapprochement with the US and its European allies, and the election of the neoconservative administration of George W. Bush, which tended to have a very rigid, ideological outlook.²⁵ His famous reference in his January 2002 State of the Union speech to Iran as being part of an "axis of evil" was in many ways analogous to Khomeini's Manichean view of the world with the US being considered "the Great Satan". Relations steadily deteriorated in 2002 and 2003 with the eruption of

the dispute over the nature of Iran's nuclear programme, the Iraq war, and the election of hardline President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in 2005.²⁶

In recent years, Iran has tried to deepen its relations with Russia to the degree possible, but at the same time it has tried to cultivate new ties and expand its links with other key actors on the international stage. While many focus on Tehran's friendship with states such as North Korea, Cuba and Venezuela, the Iranian government has also drawn closer to newly emerging pow-

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ers such as China, India and Brazil in order to avoid international isolation and to establish profitable economic links. These countries also view Iran as an attractive partner for a number of important reasons. First, they consider Iran to be an important independent political actor in the Middle Eastern and Asian context. Second, to varying degrees, they share Iran's concerns regarding US hegemony and unilateralism in world affairs. Third, and most important, as Iran possesses about 10% of the world's proven oil reserves as well as 15 percent of the world's natural gas reserves, they look at Iran as a major source of energy supplies to fuel their economic growth.²⁷

Overall, the record over the past three decades clearly demonstrates that if the Iranian regime feels secure in terms of ensuring its own survival and Iran's security, it will try to export its revolution if the opportunity arises or if the situation neces-

sitates such a course of action.²⁸ For example, in line with its revolutionary ideology, since the 1980s Tehran has consistently supported Islamist movements in the Levant, such as Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in the Palestinian Territories. However, even here, backing these movements has taken on a national security dimension for Iran in recent years. In view of the recent controversy over Iran's nuclear programme and the war of words between Tel Aviv and Tehran, the clerical regime con-

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siders support for Hezbollah and Hamas as having a deterrent value. In other words, potential rocket attacks from southern Lebanon and Gaza against Israel serve as a tripwire for Israeli aerial strikes against the Islamic Republic.²⁹

With regard to support for Islamist groups closer to its borders, such as the Iraqi Sadrists and perhaps even the Afghan Taliban to some extent, this has been motivated by a number of factors. While Iran's policy towards its two neighbours can be considered to be opportunistic, it has been driven by a number of key considerations – both offensive and defensive in nature. Tehran has tried to lend support to Iraqi Shia political parties and insurgents in order to ensure that a government hostile to Iran does not come to power in Baghdad and, concomitantly, to tie down the US, thereby preventing it from using Iraq as a springboard for an attack on Iran.³⁰ Simi-

larly, in Afghanistan, Iran has provided substantial amounts of aid to the Karzai government, however, in concurrence, it may have given limited support to Taliban insurgents in order to leverage its position vis-a-vis the US and its allies.³¹ From Tehran's viewpoint, if Washington expects its cooperation in Iraq and Afghanistan, the US will have to modify its position and make certain concessions to the Islamic Republic, such as dismantling the Iranian opposition MKO (Mujahedin Khalq Organization) presence in Iraq and reaching a compromise on the nuclear issue. Otherwise, Tehran will continue to play a double game in order to achieve its objectives. It should be added though, that since 2003, there have been numerous reports that Washington has also been providing support to Iranian Kurdish and Baluchi separatists in the western and eastern border regions of the country respectively, to wage a violent campaign against the Iranian state.³² In essence, there has been a US-Iranian proxy war going on in the region for a number of years now.

Iranian Foreign Policy under Ahmadinejad

Since the rise to power of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as President in 2005, Iran's conduct in its foreign relations has become more confrontational and uncompromising. His diplomatic style and outlandish statements regarding the Holocaust, Israel and other issues have caused unease even among the country's ruling circles, let alone Iran's allies and the international community. His belligerent stance has not only burned any remaining bridges with the West, but has also prompted Russia and China to distance themselves and decrease their support for Iran, most

notably on the nuclear issue. Since 2006, Moscow and Beijing have supported the adoption of four UN Security Council resolutions imposing sanctions on Iran, albeit watered down from the original versions desired by Washington and its allies.³³ Although Ahmadinejad does not have much support domestically due to the failure of his economic policies and the blatant manner in which he stole the 2009 presidential elections, he enjoys widespread popularity in the Arab and Muslim world.³⁴ In general, Iran has made significant inroads in the Arab-Islamic world in recent years as Ahmadinejad has been able to tap into the immense frustration and anger felt on Middle Eastern streets towards the US and its allies, due to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the absence of a resolution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. A Pew Research poll conducted in 2007 found that 55% of Palestinians were sympathetic towards Iran. Even in moderate Arab states such as Jordan, Egypt and Morocco, support for Iran stood at 46%, 40% and 42% respectively.³⁵ Furthermore, subsequent to the outbreak of the 2006 Lebanon war, the popularity of the pro-Iranian Hezbollah movement and its leader, Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, soared in the Arab world. It is noteworthy that 89% of Sunni Lebanese and 80% of Christian Lebanese backed the Shia Islamist movement. Nasrallah became the most popular Arab political figure in the region.³⁶ Tehran and its allies were able to gain important political capital after Israel's failure to deliver a knockout blow to Hezbollah.

Although many argue that Iran has become a regional superpower, possessing greater power and influence than any other country in the Middle East, this is a some-

what simplistic view. In reality, a number of developments in recent years have magnified Iranian power. The preoccupation of the US with Iraq and Afghanistan, Israel's setback in the 2006 Lebanon conflict, the ascendance of Hezbollah and Hamas, the relative rise in oil prices, and Iran's posturing on the nuclear issue, all combined, have enhanced Iran's position and status. However, this does not necessarily mean Tehran is on the offensive and will succeed.³⁷ Moreover, the US-Iran rivalry in the Middle East is not necessarily a zero-sum game. The gain of one will not automatically translate in a loss for the other.

In reality, Tehran also feels insecure and besieged due to the brewing domestic political and economic crises and the pressure being brought to bear from the outside by Washington and its allies, most notably the various sanctions and the ongoing insurgencies on the periphery of the Iranian state. It should be pointed out that it is in this context that Ahmadinejad is trying to exploit the nuclear issue in order to position himself in a win-win situation. He has consistently stated that Iran will not cease uranium enrichment permanently and will push ahead to produce nuclear energy for domestic use. In fact, many Iranians support the government's stance on the nuclear issue and believe it is their right to have an independent civilian nuclear programme. In spite of Tehran's consistent denials that its nuclear program has a military dimension, Washington and its allies are deeply concerned about the situation. While the 2007 US National Intelligence Estimate concluded that Iran had halted its covert military programme in 2003, there are suspicions that it may have revived at least certain parts of the project recently. At

present, the clerical regime believes that if it calibrates its moves carefully it may benefit either way. It also believes that if there is a military strike by the US or Israel on its nuclear facilities, the people will rally around the government and its popularity will be bolstered. On the other hand, if uranium enrichment continues – even at low levels – the regime could then claim that by not compromising or selling out the rights and sovereignty of the Iranian nation, it has gained a major victory.³⁸

Undoubtedly, Iran today is at a critical juncture in view of the domestic, regional and international situation. The revolutionary regime is embattled on many fronts, being challenged by forces from both within and outside Iran's borders. As in the past, the regime's first and foremost priority remains survival. It will demonstrate its willingness to engage in negotiations resulting perhaps in some short-term concessions and tactical cooperation with the major powers. However, in the long-term, it is improbable that Tehran will discard its ideological baggage – particularly its anti-Americanism – and embark on a radically different direction in its foreign policy. Although time may not be on the side of the clerical regime, in view of Washington's missteps in recent years with regard to Afghanistan, Iraq and the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Islamic Republic may be hedging that regional developments will work in its favour, providing it with greater room for manoeuvre and enhancing the prospects of its survival.

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1 This particular viewpoint has been expressed by prominent Middle East scholars such as Marvin Zonis (University of Chicago) and Fouad Ajami (Johns Hopkins University/School of Advanced International Studies).

- 2 A view shared by Mansour Farhang (Bennington College, Vermont) who coined the term "messianic nationalism" to describe revolutionary Iran's foreign policy, and also former CIA agent and author Robert Baer.
- 3 See Precht, Henry: "Ayatollah Realpolitik", in *Foreign Policy*, nr. 70, Spring 1988, pp. 109-128.
- 4 See Halliday, Fred: "Iranian Foreign Policy since 1979: Internationalism and Nationalism in the Islamic Revolution", in *Shi'ism and Social Protest*. ed. Juan R. I. Cole and Nikki R. Keddie. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1986, p. 91.
- 5 Precht, p. III.
- 6 According to Khomeini, "Islam is a sacred trust from God to ourselves, and the Iranian nation must grow in power and resolution until it has vouchsafed Islam to the entire world." See Ramazani, R.K.: "Khumayni's Islam in Iran's Foreign Policy", in *Islam in Foreign Policy*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1983, pp. 18-20, and Savory, Roger: "The Added Touch: Ithna Ashari Shi'ism as a Factor in the Foreign Policy of Iran", in *International Journal*, vol. 41, nr. 2, pp. 409-410.
- 7 Halliday, pp. 94-95.
- 8 Darius, Robert G.: "Khomeini's Policy Toward the Mideast", in *Gulf Security into the 1980s: Perceptual and Strategic Dimensions*. ed. Robert G. Darius, John W. Amos II and Ralph H. Magnus. Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1984, p. 38.
- 9 Ramazani, pp. 21-22.
- 10 According to former US national security advisor under the Carter administration and Iran scholar, Gary Sick, "Iranian foreign policy is produced and conditioned by the hard imperatives of domestic politics in Tehran." see Sick, Gary: "Iran's Quest for Superpower Status", in *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 65, nr. 5, p. 698.
- 11 Cottam, Richard: "Iran – Motives Behind its Foreign Policy", in *Survival*, vol. 28, nr. 6, p. 484.
- 12 According to Behzad Nabavi, who served as one of the chief Iranian negotiators during the hostage crisis (and then went on to become minister of heavy industries and a member of parliament), the hostage crisis was similar to an orange. Once it had served its purpose, it had to be discarded like a "squeezed-dry" orange. Ramazani, p. 12.
- 13 For detailed accounts of Iranian-Israeli dealings, see Parsi, Trita: *Treacherous Alliance: The Secret Dealings of Israel, Iran and the United States*. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2008, and Segev, Samuel: *The Iranian Triangle: The Untold Story of Israel's Role in the Iran-Contra Affair*. New York: Free Press, 1988.
- 14 For some short and insightful analyses on the Syrian-Iranian relationship in the 1980s, see Hunter, Shireen T.: "Syrian-Iranian Relations: An Alliance of Convenience or More?", in *Middle East Insight*, June/July 1985, pp. 30-34, and Hirschfeld, Yair: "The Odd Couple: Ba'athist Syria and Khomeini's Iran", in *Syria Under Assad*. ed. Moshe Ma'oz and Avner Yaniv. London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1986.
- 15 For a detailed account of the history of the Tehran-Damascus nexus, see Goodarzi, Jubin M.: *Syria and Iran: Diplo-*

- matic *Alliance and Power Politics in the Middle East*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2009.
- 16 Precht, p. 121.
- 17 See Tarock, Adam: *Iran's Foreign Policy Since 1990: Pragmatism Supersedes Islamic Ideology*. Commack, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1999, pp. 132-139.
- 18 Maloney, Suzanne: *Iran's Long Reach: Iran as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2008, pp. 28 and 36.
- 19 Ramazani, R.K.: "Shi'ism in the Persian Gulf", in *Shi'ism and Social Protest*. ed. Juan R. I. Cole and Nikki R. Keddie. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1986, p. 35 and *Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East*. Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988, p. 29. See also Takeyh, Ray: *Hidden Iran: Paradox and Power in the Islamic Republic*. New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2006, pp. 63-70.
- 20 Mattair, Thomas R.: *Iran – Global Security Watch*. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Security International, 2008, pp. 44-45. For more information on the history of the Persian Gulf and foreign involvement in waterway, see Potter, Lawrence G. (ed.): *The Persian Gulf in History*. Houndmills, England: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, and Fuller, Graham E.: *The Center of the Universe: The Geopolitics of Iran*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1991, pp. 58-84.
- 21 Hunter, Shireen T.: *Iran and the World: Continuity in a Revolutionary Decade*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990, pp. 22-24.
- 22 Ibid., pp. 24-26. For a detailed and insightful account of relations with France during the Napoleonic era, see Amini, Iraj: *Napoleon and Persia: Franco-Persian Relations Under the First Empire*. Washington, D.C.: Mage Publishers, 1999.
- 23 Tarock, pp. 61-70.
- 24 See Halliday, Fred: "An Elusive Normalization: Western Europe and the Iranian Revolution", in *Middle East Journal*, vol. 48, nr. 2, pp. 309-326.
- 25 See Tarock, pp. 33-55 and pp. 85-100, and Takeyh, pp. 110-116.
- 26 For a unique and illuminating perspective on US-Iranian relations during the second Bush administration see Adib-Moghaddam, Arshin: *Iran in World Politics: The Question of the Islamic Republic*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008, pp. 123-154.
- 27 Ahouie, Mahdi: "Iran's Geostrategy in an Evolving Regional and Global Context", in *Geopolitics: Schools of Thought, Method of Analysis and Case Studies*. ed. Gyula Csurgai. Geneva: International Centre for Geopolitical Studies, 2009, pp. 113-115.
- 28 Cottam, pp. 484-485 and 493.
- 29 Goodarzi, p. xiv.
- 30 Since 2003, Iran has provided hundreds of millions of dollars in aid to facilitate reconstruction efforts in Iraq. Furthermore, by 2006, bilateral trade between the two countries was valued at \$2 billion. See Goodarzi, p. 293, Maloney, p. 43, and also Zweiri, Mahjoob: "Arab-Iranian Relations: New Realities?", in *Iran's Foreign Policy: From Khatami to Ahmadinejad*. ed. Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Mahjoob Zweiri. Reading, England: Ithaca Press, 2008, p. 118.
- 31 During the Tokyo Conference in January 2002, Tehran pledged \$530 million to finance reconstruction projects in Afghanistan, and in 2006, at another international donor conference it committed an additional \$100 million towards this end. See Takeyh, p. 123 and Maloney, p. 40. Since the ouster of the Taliban regime, Iran has contributed approximately \$1 billion in aid to Afghanistan, and trade between the two countries is valued at almost \$600 million. Kursawe, Janet: "Iran's Influence in Afghanistan," in *The Afghanistan Challenge: Hard Realities and Strategic Choices*. ed. Hans-Georg Ehrhart and Charles C. Pentland. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009, p. 134. With regard to alleged Iranian support for the Taliban, see Mattair, pp. 119-120 and Kursawe, pp. 136-137.
- 32 See Goodarzi, p. 294 and Kursawe, pp. 137-138. According to a report broadcast by the American Broadcasting Corporation on ABC News on April 3, 2007, Washington and Islamabad were aiding the Sunni Baluchi militant group Jundollah (the army of God) wage its armed campaign in Iran and providing it with bases in Afghanistan. See Mattair, p. 101.
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