

Deconstructing Iranian Speech: A Strategic Culture Analysis

Prepared for a select group of U.S. government agencies
interested in developments in the Middle East

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Foreword

This report is produced by students in the Master of International Public Affairs (MIPA) program in the Robert M. La Follette School of Public Affairs at the University of Wisconsin–Madison for a select group of U.S. government agencies interested in developments in the Middle East. The students are enrolled in the Public Affairs Workshop, International Issues, the capstone course in their graduate program. The workshop provides MIPA students the opportunity to improve their analytical skills by applying them to an issue with a substantial international component and to contribute useful knowledge and recommendations to their client.

The La Follette School offers a two-year graduate program leading to a Master of Public Affairs or a Master of International Public Affairs degree. In both programs, students develop analytic tools with which to assess policy responses to issues, evaluate implications of policies for efficiency and equity, and interpret and present data relevant to policy considerations.

The workshop provides practical experience applying the tools of analysis acquired during three semesters of prior coursework to actual problems clients face in the public, non-governmental, and private sectors. Students work in teams to produce carefully crafted policy reports that meet high professional standards. The reports are research-based, analytical, evaluative, and (where relevant) prescriptive responses to real-world clients. This culminating experience is the ideal equivalent of the thesis for the La Follette School degrees in public affairs. While acquisition of a set of analytical skills is important, it is no substitute for learning by doing.

I am grateful to Wilbur R. Voigt whose generous gift to the La Follette School supports the workshop projects. With his donation, we are able to finance the production of the final reports, plus other expenses associated with the projects.

The opinions and judgments presented in the report do not represent the views, official or unofficial, of the La Follette School or of the client for which the report was prepared.

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Finally, we thank Roger for his invaluable guidance and the U.S. government for giving us the opportunity to examine such an interesting topic.

Executive Summary

The relationship between the United States and Iran has been acrimonious for more than 25 years. One way for the United States to improve this situation is to better understand the cultural elements that influence Iranian policymakers' views of the United States. This report contributes to this effort. We aim to comprehend more systematically the dynamics of cultural factors that affect Iranian foreign policy and rhetoric. To do so, we use a strategic culture framework to quantitatively assess Iranian public discourse. We code, analyze, and interpret identities, values, norms, and perceptual lenses in nearly 500 direct quotations from Iranian officials found in articles, speeches, and interviews printed over a five-year period between 1 March 2003 and 9 March 2008.

We utilized different types of analysis, each yielding key findings. Overall, we find that strategic culture matters when Iranian policymakers talk publicly about the United States.

More specifically, our descriptive analysis shows that references to Islam are decreasing over time, although pragmatic conservative policymakers evoke images of Islam or Iranian history significantly more than do hardline conservatives. Supreme Leader Sayyid Ali Khamenei makes the most references to Islam or Iranian history. Head of Iran's Supreme Council for National Security Said Jalili makes the most references to Iran's self-image, another strategic culture variable.

Our partial least square analysis confirms our expectation that Islam plays a significant role in the expression of Iranian foreign policy views. More specific is our finding that policymakers evoke Allah and Mohammad in situations where they feel threatened. Iran's national pride also significantly shapes Iranian official perceptions of the United States; however, policymakers most commonly evoke pride when alleging feelings of foreign manipulation and propaganda.

Logistic regression analysis reveals findings similar to those from the partial least square analysis. Islam and national pride have the most significant effect on Iranian public officials' views of the United States. References to ancient history show significant influence on views of the United States as aggressor and conspirator.

Given the hostile state of U.S.–Iran relations, this report has specific implications for American policymakers. First, the most salient issue in Iran today is foreign opposition to the development of nuclear technology. Our analysis suggests that gaining compliance from Iranian public officials involves making their national pride work in favor of international interests. Second, as Iranian policymakers tend to turn to the protection of God when they feel threatened, our analysis suggests that excessively harsh language will further aggravate the relationship between the two countries and undermine the ability of the United States to engage in a constructive dialogue with Iran.

Introduction

Iran and the United States have a strained and hostile relationship. Diplomatic relations have been on hold for more than 25 years. Limited interaction between the two countries, combined with acrimonious sentiments, creates a dangerous environment in which American misinterpretations of Iranian decision makers are likely, with dire consequences. Lack of direct communication compels the use of alternative methods to better understand the Iranian perspective. American policymakers can use the insights gained from these methods to approach Iran more effectively in the future.

This report evaluates how Iranian policymakers view the United States and the cultural elements that influence those perceptions. Our objective is to better understand the dynamics of the cultural factors that affect Iranian foreign policy and rhetoric. To achieve our objective, we use a strategic culture framework to quantitatively assess Iranian discourse. Specifically, we analyze and interpret nearly 500 systematically coded direct quotations in English from Iranian officials found in articles, speeches, and interviews printed between 1 March 2003 and 9 March 2008.

We used descriptive, partial least square, and logistic regression analyses to evaluate our data. Section I briefly describes the geopolitical context. Section II defines strategic culture as we use the term here. In Section III, we carefully explain our data collection and coding strategies. Section IV discusses limitations of our data and findings. Sections V and VI are the core of the report: they present our descriptive and analytical findings. Section VII concludes with a consideration of implications of our findings for American policymakers.

Context

Numerous events following the Islamic Revolution in 1979 have contributed to contentious relations between Iran and the United States. These include the 444-day American Embassy hostage crisis in Tehran from November 1979 to January 1981, U.S. support of Saddam Hussein during the Iran–Iraq War from September 1980 to August 1988, and the 1996 Iran Libya Sanctions Act, renewed in September 2006 to target only Iran.

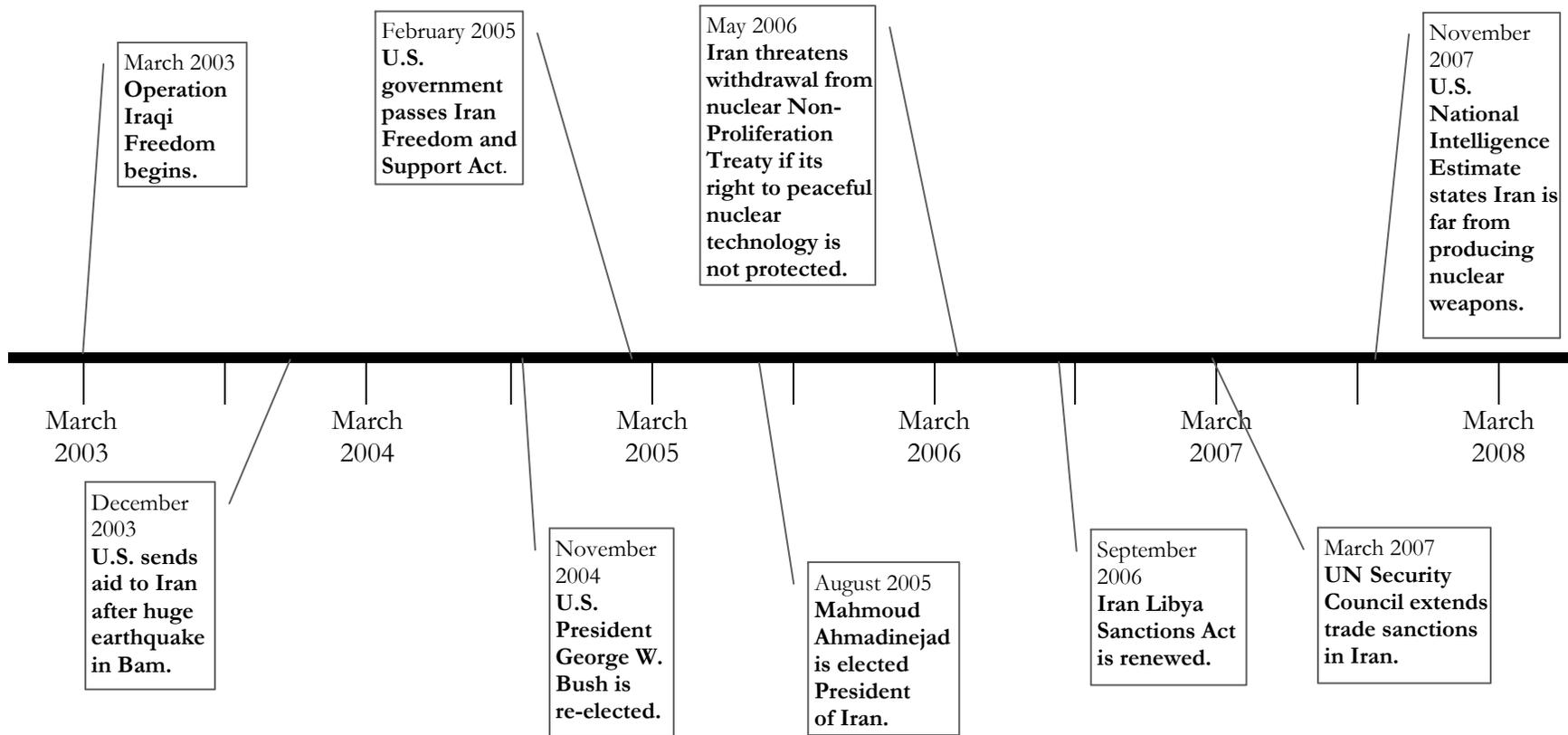
Since March 2003, the Iraq War has meant an increased U.S. military presence near Iran, which has also heightened tensions between the two countries. In January 2007, President George W. Bush announced a troop surge, committing more than 20,000 additional American troops to Iraq; however, trilateral peace talks involving the United States, Iraq, and Iran began three months later to determine a timetable for U.S. troop withdrawal from the region. The United States remains critical of Iran's involvement in international terrorism. Iran provides assistance to insurgents in Iraq, and it trains and funds Hezbollah and other organizations that support violent opposition to the Middle East peace process. The United States disapproves of Iran's poor human rights record, including the Iranian government's lack of respect for its own people by restricting democratic movements in Iran through torture, arbitrary arrests, and detentions of political critics.

According to the U.S. government, Iran seeks to become a dominant power in the Middle East by acquiring nuclear weapons through continued uranium enrichment—a matter of great concern to American policymakers. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, formerly Tehran's ultra-conservative mayor and an outspoken proponent of an Iranian nuclear program, was elected in August 2005. In May 2006, the Iranian government threatened to withdraw from the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and stop cooperating with the United Nations nuclear monitoring agency, the International Atomic Energy Agency. The United Nations Security Council extended the 2006 trade sanctions against Iran in March 2007 to prevent the government's acquisition of sensitive nuclear materials and parts. Sanctions also froze assets of Iranian individuals and companies linked to the nuclear program. Iran rejected the council's decision to impose sanctions, but, as of March 2008, it has not withdrawn from the Non-Proliferation Treaty. President Ahmadinejad has described nuclear proliferation as technology that a few countries monopolize to achieve world domination, but he has insisted Iran's nuclear program is peaceful. In November 2007, the U.S. National Intelligence Estimate stated Iran would not be technologically capable of developing a nuclear weapon until 2010.

Figure 1 summarizes these strategically significant events for the five-year period.

In short, poor diplomacy and lack of cultural understanding characterize the relationship between the United States and Iran. Conflicting ideologies and the rival nature of U.S. and Iranian associations are further exacerbated by cultural misinterpretation. Improvement of this situation is an important goal of U.S. policymakers.

Figure 1. Strategically Significant Events, 2003–2008



Strategic Culture

Strategic culture has been conceptualized in many ways. For this analysis, we combined elements of two definitions offered by prominent culturalists Jeannie L. Johnson and Colin Gray:

Strategic culture is the interaction among identity, values, norms, and perceptive lenses that members of a national community have acquired through instruction or imitation. These variables shape collective identity and relationships to other societies and determine appropriate methods for achieving security objectives.¹

The core variables of strategic culture, according to Johnson, are identity, values, norms, and perceptive lenses. *Identity* is the way a nation views itself in respect to its character, its role in regional and global interactions, and its beliefs about its eventual destiny. *Values* are the material and nonmaterial goods that a society regards more highly than others. In the case of Iran, these include its petroleum resources and the religious foundation of its government. *Norms* are modes of behavior that are accepted and expected; inherent in this variable are the concepts of right versus wrong and good versus evil. According to Johnson, some norms originate from “hardwired” beliefs held by virtually all members of society, while others are the product of political socialization. Finally, a *perceptive lens* is the set of beliefs and experiences that color a nation’s view of the world. These four core variables are shaped by many influences—including geography, history, access to technology, political experience, religious traditions, education, demographics, and common texts.² In the case of Iran, we expect the dominant influences are religious traditions and history.³

Gray emphasizes that each policymaker in a given country has a unique interpretation of the way in which common beliefs and attitudes should be expressed through strategic behavior. Gray believes that culture always has a potential influence on decision and action, but this potential is not uniformly or necessarily realized.⁴

Taking into account these expert views from the field of strategic culture, we formulated a few broad expectations before analyzing public discourse by Iranian policymakers. Specifically, we expected to find:

- strategic cultural elements across speakers and time;
- no significant difference in frequency of references to Islam among speakers, including non-religious figures;
- references to Iranian history with the United States when policymakers lash out at American foreign policies; and
- significant differences across individuals and by political party affiliation for all variables except Islam.

¹ Colin S. Gray, *Out of the Wilderness: Prime Time for Strategic Culture* (National Institute Press, 2006), 7; and Jeannie L. Johnson, *Strategic Culture: Toward a Standard Methodological Approach* (Defense Threat Reduction Agency, 2008), 11.

² Johnson, 26.

³ Johnson, 11-26.

⁴ Gray, 8.

Data and Coding

Our team of six identified, manually coded, and input into a spreadsheet application the 490 units of data analyzed in this report. A unit of data is a quote or entire speech by a select set of Iranian policymakers and other individuals with presumed influence on the policy process in Iran. We selected 14 speakers in consultation with our client, taking into account the country profile (e.g., background, people, and government) and the availability of relevant translated English-language material. As we had no prior notion about how many units of data our exercise might ultimately yield from the 14 speakers, we added an “other speakers” category to the population of study. The addition of this category was necessary to ensure a sufficiently high number of observations and the generalizability of findings. Appendix A provides the list of speakers whose quotes and entire speeches we coded.

Units of data coded for this report are quotes or entire speeches from the speakers in the defined population. This means our observations vary in length: most observations are well under 1,000 English words, but some observations number in the thousands of words. Word count of a unit of data averages 607, with a mode of 74, and a range of 8–9,940 words. We are mindful of this variation in presenting our findings.

Through dialogue with our client about the most important sources of news in Iran, our team coded units of data from full text and summaries of newspaper articles, conference proceedings, television and radio broadcasts, periodicals, and non-classified statements, speeches, and reports from three sources: World News Connection, the Islamic Republic of Iran Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Middle East Media Research Institute.⁵

⁵ World News Connection is an online news search engine that offers a comprehensive database of translated and English-language news and information. With access to thousands of non-U.S. media sources, navigating the World News Connection uncovers significant socioeconomic, political, scientific, technical, and environmental issues and events. World News Connection contains Iran-related sources including Baztab News, Iran Daily, Ettelaat International, Fars News, Iran Focus, Global Voices, Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting, Islamic Republic News Agency, Iranian Student News Agency, Mehr News, Moj News Agency, Iran News, Iran Press News, Press TV, ROOZ, Iran Press Service, and Tehran Times. The Islamic Republic of Iran Ministry of Foreign Affairs provides an array of resources (including links) that allow easy access to numerous quotes and speeches by our set of 14 Iranian policymaker or influential persons. Finally, the Middle East Media Research Institute is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that studies the Middle East through the region’s media. The institute provides translations of Arabic, Persian, and Turkish media, including speech transcripts, special reports, and analyses. More information on these sources is available at:

- World News Connection — <http://wnc.fedworld.gov/description.html>,
- Islamic Republic of Iran Ministry of Foreign Affairs — <http://www.mfa.gov.ir/index.jsp>
- Middle East Media Research Institute — <http://www.memri.org/aboutus.html>,

We last accessed all these sites on 4 April 2008. Please refer to Appendix D for a list of all newspapers, organizations, and news agencies used as data sources.

We purposively extracted relevant units of data from the three sources made available between 1 March 2003 and 9 March 2008. Specifically, we searched for quotes or speeches by the 14 Iranians in our population of interest. This yielded units of data on a wide range of socioeconomic, political, scientific, technical, and environmental issues. From these, we selected for coding only those units of data in which a speaker referenced, mentioned, or discussed the United States. We only coded direct quotes from the speakers themselves. We coded for strategic cultural variables and views of the United States, using a codebook (presented in Appendix A) we designed in consultation with our client. Most broadly, the strategic culture variables are: History, Islam, and Iran's Self-Image.

To execute the coding procedure, our team began with a line-by-line and computer-generated search for words in the codebook. Our team then input word frequency and descriptive information about the unit of data into a spreadsheet.⁶

Also, our team of coders read the units of data and coded each for the overall relevance and intensity of the broad categories of strategic culture variables: Iran's View of the United States and U.S. Policy, History, Islam, and Iran's Self-Image. For each of these variables except History, the coder recorded whether the strategic culture variable was mentioned, focused on, or was not at all present within the unit of data. For the History variable, the coder indicated whether each item included historical references to events that occurred before 1979, after 1979, or no mention of history at all. The results of this supplementary coding, which we call our subjective measures, are a check on the quality of the quantitative data reflected in the codebook. By coding for strategic culture through codebook word counts and supplementing with measures that reflect overall relevance and intensity of strategic culture variables in each quote, our team gained the greatest amount of information from the units of data we collected. Appendix A provides the entire codebook.

⁶ Descriptive information includes date, source type (e.g., press release, newspaper, TV/radio, Friday prayers), reference to a specific event related to U.S.–Iran relations, the speaker, the speaker's political party affiliation, the way in which the speaker refers to the United States (e.g., United States, America, the West), and the domestic or international target audience of the unit of data.

Caveats

We are confident of the quality of data gathering and analytical exercise we present in this report. At the same time, we acknowledge weakness in sampling as well as the usual problems of omitted variables, endogeneity, and human variability and error.

Purposive sampling. As described above, we selected articles for coding based on time period, a pre-defined list of speakers, specific sources of English-language translations, and the length of direct quote available. By selecting articles in a non-random manner, we introduced bias into the data. Purposive sampling may have excluded infrequently found code words if the words appeared in an article with a low quantity of direct quotes. In the context of this study, a non-random method of sampling was unavoidable: the potential number of articles that could be coded was unmanageable in the allotted time for coding, and certain choices in article selection were necessary to provide the most comprehensive analysis of Iranian strategic culture possible.

Omitted variables. As is often the case with econometric analysis, the possibility of omitted variable bias exists. For the present study on strategic culture in Iran, we constructed a comprehensive set of independent variables including History, Islam, and Iran's Self-Image. Under each of these variables, we created more specific variables. For example, Islam is broken down into Strict Adherence, Struggle/Sacrifice, and General Reference to Islam. Despite our best efforts to include the most important Iranian cultural elements as they relate to perspectives on the United States, we recognize the unfeasibility of including all potentially relevant variables within the time frame of our research. Nevertheless, based on our measures of overall relevance and intensity, we believe we have included the most significant variables in our codebook.

Endogeneity. For this analysis, we assume that the strategic culture variables are causally linked to the dependent variable, View of the United States and U.S. Policy. However, the potential for endogeneity exists. Instead of strategic culture elements shaping the ways in which Iranian policymakers view the United States, those views may also encourage policymakers to invoke cultural images in their public discourse. Nevertheless, we believe that the direction of causality flows most logically from the strategic culture variables to the views of the United States.

Human variability and error. As described above, we collected, evaluated, and input many observations to form one large dataset. In the data collection and coding process, the potential for human error exists in two ways. Despite the presence of a detailed codebook containing specific code words, the inclusion of "other" categories allows coders to make human judgments about additional words to include. Some coders may have included a word that others did not. We later added commonly occurring words originally classified as "other" to the word list under the broader variable categories. Second, human coders introduce the possibility of data entry errors.

Descriptive Findings

The following section summarizes the 490 observations we collected. The average quote is just more than 600 words in length. The number of observations increases with every 12-month period, from 60 in March 2003–February 2004 to a high of 182 in March 2007–March 2008. This increase in observations over time is not an artifact of our data gathering; it reflects a genuine increase in Iranian public discourse about the United States within the last couple of years.

Table 1 summarizes (roughly chronologically) the number of observations that referenced certain events involving U.S. foreign policy. The most notable finding is that Iranian policymakers discuss nuclear technology more than any other event, including the U.S.–Iraq war. Combined, Iran’s Relationship with the International Atomic Energy Agency and U.S. vs. Iranian Nuclear Power compose 28 percent of observations. Although specific events involving Iran’s nuclear power have occurred predominately in the period May 2006–March 2008, the topic of Iran’s nuclear rights has dominated Iranian rhetoric throughout the five-year period we coded.

Table 1. Observations, by Event

Events	Observations	% Total Observations*
2003 initiation of Operation Iraqi Freedom	23	5
UN sanctions (December 2006, March 2007)	12	2
2007 troop surge	2	<1
February 2007 U.S. case that Iran fuels violence in Iraq	13	3
2007 U.S.–Iran–Iraq security talks	22	4
November 2007 U.S. National Intelligence Estimate	9	2
November 2007 U.S. statement on Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps as terrorist organization, and sanctions	1	<1
State of the Union addresses	2	<1
Debate over troop reduction	5	1
Iran’s relationship with the International Atomic Energy Agency	32	7
U.S. vs. Iranian technology/nuclear power	105	21
War in Iraq	47	10
U.S.–Israeli relations	32	7
Other	185	38
Total	490	100%

*Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

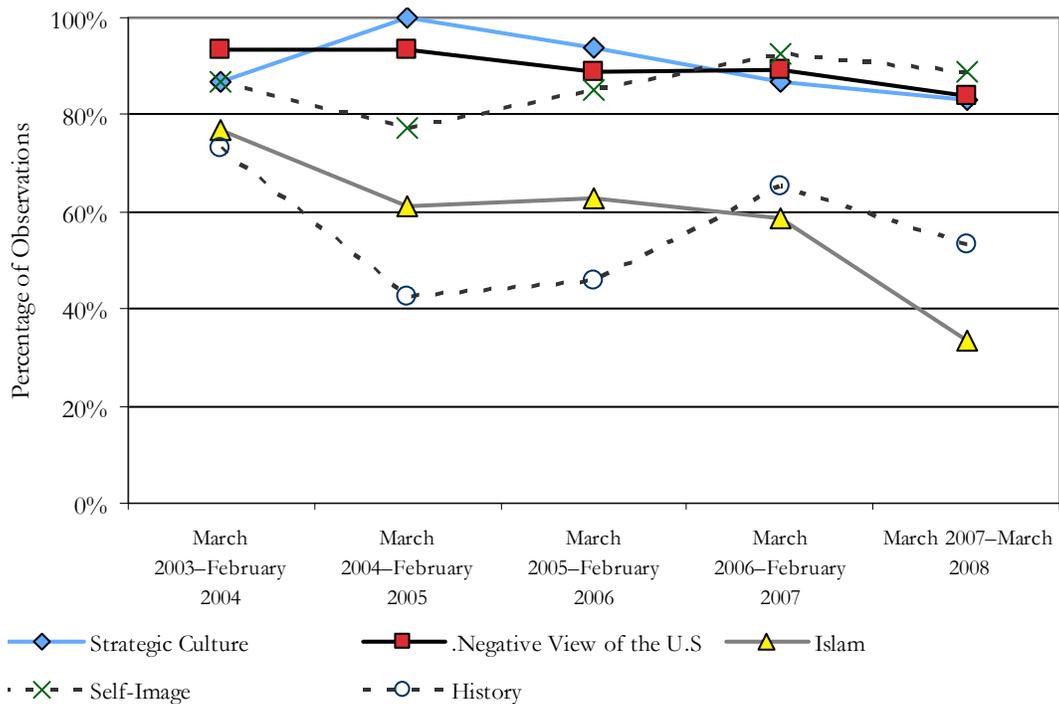
Source: Authors’ calculations.

Each quote was evaluated in two ways. First, we documented how many times each of the code words from our codebook was spoken. These data appear primarily in the analytical findings section. Second, we used a subjective coding method to reflect the overall relevance and intensity of strategic culture. We evaluated History, Islam, Iran’s Self-Image, and Iran’s View of the United States in this way, as well as the strategic culture framework in general. We coded with a 1, 2, or 0 designating whether the coder considered these variables as mentioned, focused on, or having no importance in the quote, respectively. The following results reflect this subjective coding. Although our initial coding was ordinal, we simplified our findings for presentation by creating dichotomous values for each observation; variables documented as mentioned or

focused on were given the value of 1, and variables documented as having no significance retained their initial value of 0.

Figure 2 summarizes our findings over time. Strategic Culture is highly relevant over all periods, indicating that this framework is useful in analyzing Iranian perceptions of the United States. We also see that Islam is decreasing in importance, with large drops in the first and second time periods. Finally, while Islam and History are less relevant in Iranian speech than Self-Image and Iran’s Negative View of the United States, Self-Image and History track together over time.⁷ The link between Self-Image and History is a logical association: historical achievements can often be used to reinforce a positive self-image.

Figure 2.
Relevance and Intensity of Cultural Lenses
and Views of the United States, 2003–2008



Source: Authors’ calculations.
Note: Calculations are based on authors’ subjective coding of overall quotes.
Please refer to pages 9-10 for more details.

Table 2 summarizes the data by speaker. President Ahmadinejad has the most observations, accounting for 20 percent of total observations. Although he was only elected in August 2005, he appears to dominate much of public discourse. The official next most observed is Ali Akbar-Hashemi Rafsanjani, chairman of the Expediency Council, with 12 percent of the observations.

⁷ Only Iran’s negative view of the United States as a percentage of total observations is plotted in Figure 2.

Table 2. Observations, by Speaker

Speaker	Observations	% Total Observations*
Ahmadinejad	98	20
Rafsanjani	58	12
Khamenei	50	10
Safavi	50	10
Mottaki	37	8
Khatami	33	7
Larijani	26	5
Velayati	24	5
Jalili	11	2
Kazemi-Qomi	11	2
Hashemi-Shahrudi	5	1
Jafari	5	1
Agazadeh-Khoi	1	<1
Soleimani	1	<1
Other	80	16
Total	490	100%

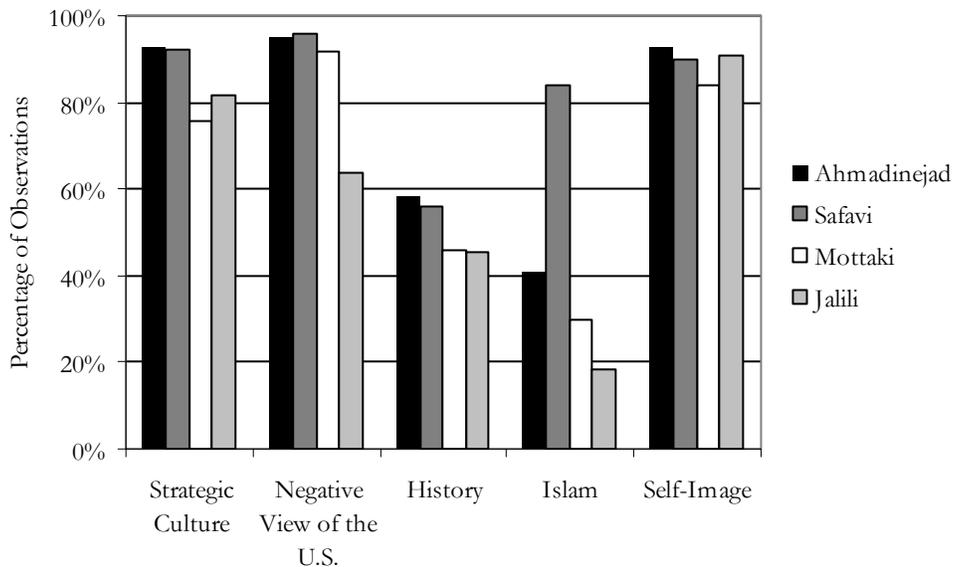
*Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: Authors' calculations.

The data can also be analyzed by type of speaker (i.e., whether one is hardline or pragmatic conservative).⁸ Hardline conservatives account for about 40 percent of observations, pragmatic conservatives for 34 percent. Although Ahmadinejad seemingly dominates public discourse, pragmatic conservatives continue to have a presence in Iranian rhetoric. Figures 3 and 4 compare these two types using the subjective coding results. On average, Islam and History are nearly 1.5 times more relevant for pragmatic conservatives than for hardline conservatives; this is counter to our expectation that there is no difference among speakers in their evocation of Islam. Indeed, given a difference between the two parties and the extent to which they reference Islam, we would expect the reverse.

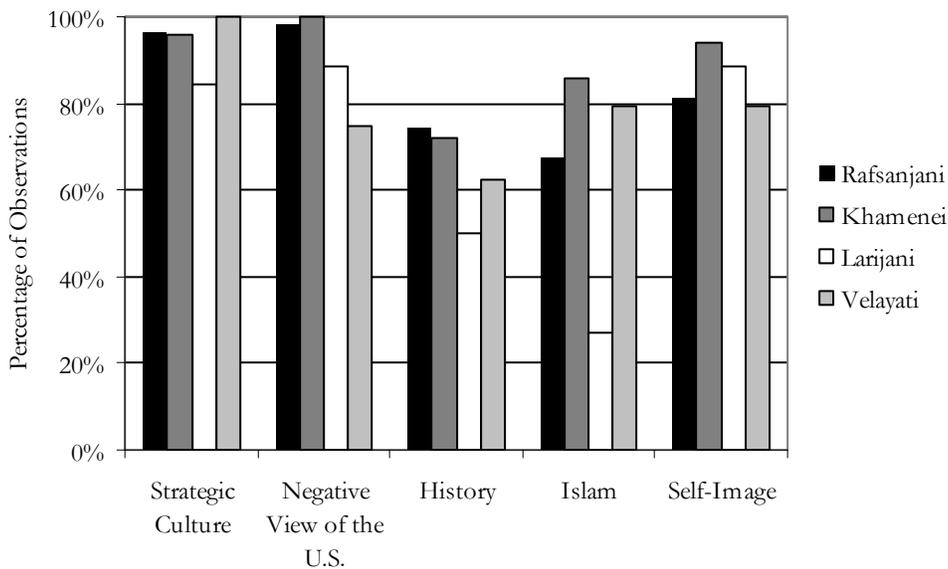
⁸ Hardline conservatives having five or more observations are Ahmadinejad, Safavi, Mottaki, and Jalili. Pragmatic conservatives having five or more observations are Khamenei, Rafsanjani, Larijani, Velayati, Hashemi-Shahrudi, and Jafari.

Figure 3.
Hardline Conservatives:
Cultural Lenses and Views of the United States



Source: Authors' calculations.
 Note: Calculations are based on authors' subjective coding of overall quotes.
 Please refer to pages 9-10 for more details.

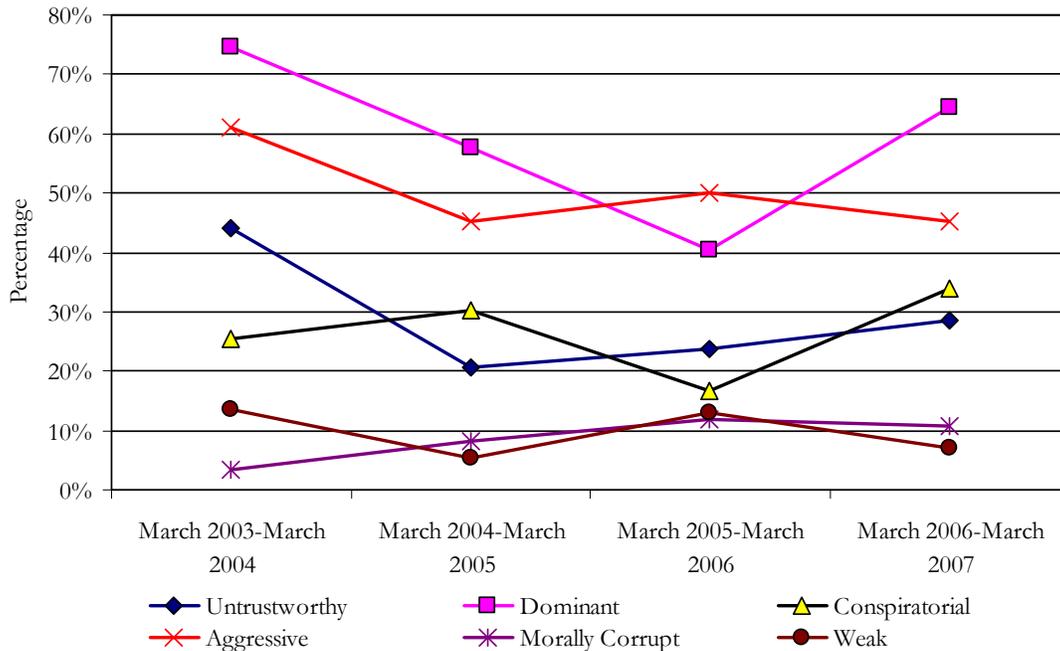
Figure 4.
Pragmatic Conservatives: Cultural Lenses
and Views of the United States



Source: Authors' calculations.
 Note: Calculations are based on authors' subjective coding of overall quotes.
 Please refer to pages 9-10 for more details.

In addition to assessing the presence of these cultural elements, we evaluated the ways in which perceptions of the United States have changed over time. We identified six views of the United States: Untrustworthy, Dominant, Conspiratorial, Aggressive, Morally Corrupt, and Weak. To create Figure 5 from our word count frequencies, we created dichotomous values for perceptions with at least one observation. For example, if a quote included one or more words that fell under Conspiracy, that observation was documented as having referenced the United States as conspiratorial. Figure 4 illustrates these results. The most notable trend is the popularity of the Domination perception, which has the most mentions and, along with Conspiracy, is on the rise. For example, in 2006 Ahmadinejad stated: “Our country will not overlook its rights, nor will it yield to world hegemonic powers, which consider themselves as owners of the whole world.”⁹ As perceptions of Domination and Conspiracy are the most threatening and hostile perceptions of the United States, their increasing presence in Iranian discourse reflects rising animosity.

Figure 5.
Percentage of Mentions of Views of the United States, 2003–2008



Source: Authors' calculations.

⁹ Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, “Iranian President Promises to Continue Path of Progress, Advancement” Islamic Republic News Agency, 1 February 2006.

Analytical Findings

In this section, we summarize and interpret our findings from partial least square analysis and logistic regression models.

Partial Least Square Analysis

One way to evaluate the relationships between strategic cultural elements and perceptions of the United States is to identify the underlying factors that help define these relationships. To do this, we use partial least square (PLS) analysis. The goal of PLS regression is to predict the dependent variables from the independent variables and describe their common structure.¹⁰ It is essentially a way of identifying latent factors in the dependent and independent variables simultaneously.¹¹

Using PLS regressions, we identify clusters of code words classified under our dependent variable categories that occur most frequently with clusters of code words classified under our independent variable categories. Common links within each cluster are then used to identify dependent and independent latent variables. Identifying these latent variables and assessing their relation to one another provides valuable insight as to the underlying dynamics between independent and dependent variables.

Table 3 summarizes our findings. Each component identifies the combination of clusters (independent and dependent) that occur most frequently together. The latent independent and dependent variables reflect the code words most highly correlated within each cluster.

Table 3.
Relationships between Cultural Lenses and Perceptive Frames

	Cultural Lens (Latent Independent Variable)	Perceptual Frame (Latent Dependent Variable)	Percentage Explained
Component 1	Faith in Islam (Religion)	Arrogant Hostile Enemy (Arrogant)	11.99
Component 2	Iran as Dignified Restorer of Peace and Stability (Pride)	Bullying Oppressor using Baseless Propaganda (Bully)	6.17
Component 3	Mohammad/Allah (Allah)	Dominating Threat (Domination)	6.08

Source: Authors' calculations.

¹⁰ See Harvi Abdi, "Partial Square Regression," in *Encyclopedia of Measurements and Statistics*, ed. Neil Salkind (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2007).

¹¹ PLS analysis assumes that linear combinations of dependent variables correspond with some latent variable, and that this latent variable can be well-explained by some latent variable in the independent variables.

Component 1 confirms our initial expectation, that there is a strong correlation between religious values and the characterization of the United States as an arrogant enemy. The Religion lens is different from the Allah lens in Component 3. Religion encompasses all aspects of the Islamic faith including martyrdom, struggle, and sacrifice. In Component 3, we see a negative correlation between the Domination frame and all variables under Islam except for Mohammad and Allah, which are both positively correlated.

Components 1 and 3 deepen our understanding of the way in which religion informs the perceptions of Iranian policymakers. Islamic values inform the perception of the United States as an “enemy.” For example, in March 2003, Supreme Leader Khomeini said: “The enemies have also realized that as long as Muslim nations believe in Islam and act upon its teachings, and as long as the Qur’anic culture prevails in Islamic societies, they will not be able to achieve their diabolical goals. This is why they have been trying to tarnish the image of Islam in the eyes of the world public.”¹² However, when this “enemy” threatens to dominate the country of Iran, policymakers turn to God and the prophet Mohammad as a source of comfort and protection. In May 2003, Rafsanjani said: “America should be sure that—if it intends to hatch and carry out any plots against Iran—the God of Islam, the God of the Koran, the God of the Ahl al-Bayt and the God of our revolution and our people—will foil these, bravely and courageously.”¹³ This belief in the protection of Allah speaks to the emphasis in Islamic culture on the dichotomy between good and evil. Kenneth Pollack, author of *The Persian Puzzle*, states:

Many scholars believe that, even in modern Iran, Zoroaster’s focus on this permanent struggle [between good and evil] remains an important element lurking beneath the surface of much religious and secular philosophy. Khomeini’s obsession with the struggle between good (epitomized by Islam and Iran) and evil (the West, the United States) is often described as a manifestation of this deep-seated Iranian trait.¹⁴

It follows that Iranian policymakers, believing that their people are good and honorable in the eyes of God, would reference this protection in the face of an “evil threat.”

Component 2 describes the cultural lens and perceptive frame that are most commonly used in the political sphere. All religious variables are negatively correlated in this component, which means that mentions of Islam are less likely to appear in

¹² Sayyid Ali Khamenei, “Leader’s Speech in Mashhad,” The Center for Preserving and Publishing the Works of Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Khamenei, 21 March 2003.

¹³ Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, “Iran: Rafsanjani Says U.S. ‘War’ Against Islam Will Not Achieve Anything,” Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran Radio 1 in Persian, 30 May 2003.

¹⁴ Zoroaster is the founder of Zoroastrianism, one of the world’s first monotheistic religions. He lived from 628 to 551 B.C. Kenneth Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle: the Conflict Between Iran and America* (New York: Random House, 2004), 6-7.

discussions about bullying and propaganda. Instead, policymakers talk most about dignity and Iran's role as a restorer of peace and stability in the Persian Gulf region. This component is about the Iranian response to perceived political coercion and manipulation. The issue being drawn out is the international opposition to nuclear proliferation in Iran. Iranian policymakers emphasize the country's dignity and peaceful intentions when discussing the "international bullying" that has kept them from developing nuclear technology. It is an issue of pride, and Iran will not stand down. In his book *Hidden Iran*, Ray Takeyh elaborates:

The rulers of Iran perceive that they are being challenged not because of their provocations and previous treaty violations, but because of superpower bullying. In a particular manner, the nuclear program and Iran's national identity have become fused in the imagination of hard-liners. To stand against America on this issue is to validate one's revolutionary ardor and sense of nationalism. Ali Hussein-Tash, deputy secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, stressed this point, saying, "A nation that does not engage in risks and difficult challenges, and a nation which does not stand up for itself, can never be a proud nation."¹⁵

This situation stirs up issues of dignity, pride, and, again, the belief of policymakers in the inherent goodness of the Iranian people.

Appendix B provides the data that informed this analysis. All of the correlations in the components described above are reflected in the results of our logistic regressions outlined in the following section.

Logistic Regression Models

The more common way to test for a relationship between the dependent variable, Iran's view of the United States, and our independent variables is logistic regression analysis. We estimated six logistic regression models. We chose simple logistic regression modeling to determine odds ratios between the strategic cultural variables. Model 1 regresses only the strategic culture variables in their broadest categories: History, Islam, and Iran's Self-Image. Models 2 through 5 disaggregate the strategic culture variables into more refined variable subcategories—for instance, Pride and Strategic Importance under Iran's Self-Image. Model 3 uses these refined subcategories and controls for Speaker effects, Model 4 controls for Event effects, and Model 5 controls for both Speaker and Event.

We identified six views of the United States as dependent variables and estimated the logistic regression models for each. The six views characterize the United States as Untrustworthy, Aggressive, Morally Corrupt, Weak, Dominant, and Conspiratorial.

¹⁵ Ray Takeyh, *Hidden Iran* (New York: Times Books, 2006), 149.

No statistically significant results were found with views of the United States as Morally Corrupt or Weak as dependent variables.¹⁶ We present results for the other four views below. Information on goodness-of-fit measures can be found in Appendix C.

Table 4 shows the results of the logistic regressions with View of the United States as Untrustworthy as the dependent variable. In Model 1, the broad strategic culture categories of Islam and Iran's Self-Image are statistically significant. For a one-unit increase in Islam, the odds of a quote referencing American untrustworthiness increases by a factor of 1.03. For Iran's Self-Image, the odds increase by a factor of 1.19. When analyzed with more refined variable categories, every Islam variable is significant, and only Pride is significant under Iran's Self-Image; however, for every model the Islam variable Struggle/Sacrifice decreases the odds of untrustworthiness being referenced. In Models 3 and 5, which control for Speaker, Safavi is statistically significant in both, and Khamenei is significant in Model 5. Inclusion of Speakers decreases the odds of Untrustworthiness references.

The results for View of the United States as Aggressive as the dependent variable are shown in Table 5. Again, Islam and Iran's Self-Image are significant in Model 1 and increase the odds of a quote referencing the United States as aggressive. Interestingly, while History is not significant in this model, when the variable is disaggregated, Ancient History is significant in Models 2 through 5. At its highest odds ratio, a one-unit increase in Ancient History increases the odds of aggressiveness being referenced by a factor of 4.33. Only the relatively non-specific variable General References to Islam is statistically significant when Islam is disaggregated into subcategories. Pride is significant when Iran's Self-Image is disaggregated. Both increase the odds of aggressiveness being referenced. In Models 3 and 5, the speaker Ali Akbar Velayati is statistically significant. Where Event is controlled for in Models 4 and 5, U.S.–Israeli Relations is significant. These Speaker and Event variables decrease the odds of Aggressive references in a quote.

¹⁶ The one exception is for Speaker Rafsanjani, significant at the 95 percentage level under Models 3 and 5 with View of the United States as Corrupt as the dependent variable.

Table 4. Logistic Regression: View of the United States as Untrustworthy

Dependent Variable: View of the United States as Untrustworthy					
Number of Observations: 490					
	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2</i>	<i>Model 3</i>	<i>Model 4</i>	<i>Model 5</i>
Strategic Culture: Aggregate Variables					
History	0.981 (-0.59)				
Islam	1.031* (2.04)				
Iran's Self-Image	1.189** (3.71)				
History Disaggregated					
Revolution		0.933 (-0.97)	0.951 (-0.67)	0.934 (-0.93)	0.952 (-0.63)
Khomeini		1.089 (1.05)	1.100 (1.22)	1.092 (1.05)	1.098 (1.14)
Iran-Iraq War		1.118 (0.80)	1.160 (1.08)	1.074 (0.49)	1.095 (0.63)
1953 Coup		1.389 (0.98)	1.296 (0.70)	1.357 (0.92)	1.294 (0.70)
Ancient History		1.889 (1.27)	1.940 (1.32)	1.960 (1.27)	2.111 (1.40)
Islam Disaggregated					
Strict Adherence		1.301* (2.30)	1.334* (2.17)	1.300* (2.35)	1.326* (2.23)
Struggle/Sacrifice		0.740* (-2.23)	0.709* (-2.32)	0.729* (-2.29)	0.670* (-2.38)
General References		1.051* (2.38)	1.075** (2.92)	1.058** (2.57)	1.086** (3.06)
Iran's Self-Image Disaggregated					
Pride		1.214** (2.67)	1.202* (2.40)	1.211** (2.57)	1.201* (2.34)
Strategic Importance		1.085 (0.80)	1.018 (0.17)	1.080 (0.74)	1.016 (0.15)
Probability > Chi ²	0.0001	0.0010	0.0008	0.0059	0.0007
% Correctly Predicted	73.67%	75.31%	74.49%	74.49%	74.49%

*** p < 0.001, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05

Table shows odds ratios with z-statistics in parentheses.

Model 3 controls for Speaker, with additional variables Ahmadinejad, Khamenei, Khatami, Larijani, Mottaki, Rafsanjani, Safavi, Velayati; Model 4 controls for Event, with additional variables Operation Iraqi Freedom, U.S.–Iran–Iraq Trilateral Talks, Iran's Relationship with the International Atomic Energy Agency, Iran's Acquisition of Nuclear Technology, U.S. Presence in Iraq, United States-Israel Relations; Model 5 controls for Speaker and Event.

Source: Authors' calculations.

Table 5. Logistic Regression: View of the United States as Aggressive

Dependent Variable: View of the United States as Aggressive					
Number of Observations: 490					
	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2</i>	<i>Model 3</i>	<i>Model 4</i>	<i>Model 5</i>
Strategic Culture: Aggregate Variables					
History	1.011 (0.31)				
Islam	1.047* (2.14)				
Iran's Self-Image	1.204** (3.30)				
History Disaggregated					
Revolution		0.976 (-0.36)	1.010 (0.14)	0.962 (-0.60)	1.000 (-0.01)
Khomeini		0.911 (-0.99)	0.926 (-0.78)	0.911 (-0.97)	0.920 (-0.80)
Iran-Iraq War		1.147 (0.98)	1.125 (0.78)	1.088 (0.58)	1.074 (0.45)
1953 Coup		1.043 (0.15)	1.039 (0.13)	1.171 (0.48)	1.151 (0.38)
Ancient History		3.834* (2.40)	3.532* (2.24)	4.330** (2.76)	4.001* (2.49)
Islam Disaggregated					
Strict Adherence		0.960 (-0.79)	0.937 (-1.33)	0.953 (-0.96)	0.932 (-1.43)
Struggle/Sacrifice		1.051 (0.44)	1.023 (0.20)	1.028 (0.25)	1.006 (0.05)
General References		1.079** (2.83)	1.069* (2.45)	1.083** (2.91)	1.077** (2.64)
Iran's Self-Image Disaggregated					
Pride		1.349*** (3.44)	1.366*** (3.42)	1.337*** (3.41)	1.358*** (3.34)
Strategic Importance		1.076 (0.61)	1.079 (0.70)	1.109 (0.80)	1.110 (0.90)
Probability > Chi ²	0.0004	0.0000	0.0001	0.0000	0.0000
% Correctly Predicted	60.82%	58.78%	63.06%	61.43%	65.31%

*** p < 0.001, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05

Table shows odds ratios with z-statistics in parentheses.

Model 3 controls for Speaker, with additional variables Ahmadinejad, Khamenei, Khatami, Larijani, Mottaki, Rafsanjani, Safavi, Velayati; Model 4 controls for Event, with additional variables Operation Iraqi Freedom, U.S.–Iran–Iraq Trilateral Talks, Iran's Relationship with the International Atomic Energy Agency, Iran's Acquisition of Nuclear Technology, U.S. Presence in Iraq, United States-Israel Relations; Model 5 controls for Speaker and Event.

Source: Authors' calculations.

Table 6 gives the results with View of the United States as Dominant as the dependent variable. None of the aggregated strategic culture variables are statistically significant in Model 1. The only significant strategic cultural variable in any model is General References to Islam. On average, for a one-unit increase in General References to Islam, the odds of United States domination being referenced in a quote increases by a factor of 1.19. The speakers Ahmadinejad and Khamenei are statistically significant for Models 3 and 5. The event U.S.–Israeli Relations is significant in Model 5. These speakers and event increase the odds of domination references.

Table 7 shows the results of the logistic regressions when View of the United States as Conspiratorial is the dependent variable. The broad categories of strategic culture variables Islam and Iran’s Self-Image are significant. For a one-unit increase in Iran’s Self-Image, the odds of a quote referencing American conspiracy increases by a factor of 1.14. Ancient History and Iranian Pride are statistically significant in opposite directions: Ancient History decreases the odds of referencing conspiracy, and Pride increases the odds. None of the Islam subcategories are statistically significant. The event Iran’s Relationship with the International Atomic Energy Agency is significant under Model 4: it has a negative impact on the odds of conspiracy being referenced. In Models 4 and 5, the event U.S.–Israeli Relations is significant and increases the odds of conspiracy references by a factor of more than 5.50.

Table 6. Logistic Regression: View of the United States as Dominant

Dependent Variable: View of the United States as Dominant					
Number of Observations: 490					
	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2</i>	<i>Model 3</i>	<i>Model 4</i>	<i>Model 5</i>
Strategic Culture: Aggregate Variables					
History	1.003 (0.06)				
Islam	1.062 (1.42)				
Iran's Self-Image	0.962 (-0.72)				
History Disaggregated					
Revolution		1.072 (0.82)	1.074 (0.85)	1.077 (0.88)	1.084 (0.94)
Khomeini		0.953 (-0.64)	0.983 (-0.24)	0.949 (-0.68)	0.980 (-0.26)
Iran-Iraq War		0.950 (-0.33)	0.836 (-1.02)	0.932 (-0.43)	0.827 (-1.02)
1953 Coup		1.046 (0.16)	1.105 (0.36)	1.090 (0.31)	1.137 (0.44)
Ancient History		0.291 (-1.72)	0.231 (-1.69)	0.282 (-1.82)	0.225 (-1.77)
Islam Disaggregated					
Strict Adherence		0.940 (-0.88)	0.887 (-1.87)	0.939 (-0.91)	0.888 (-1.86)
Struggle/Sacrifice		1.118 (0.77)	1.080 (0.54)	1.130 (0.81)	1.093 (0.61)
General References		1.204*** (3.72)	1.183** (3.12)	1.199*** (3.61)	1.176** (2.99)
Iran's Self-Image Disaggregated					
Pride		1.017 (0.21)	1.052 (0.59)	1.030 (0.34)	1.070 (0.78)
Strategic Importance		0.832 (-1.42)	0.855 (-1.17)	0.849 (-1.28)	0.864 (-1.09)
Probability > Chi ²	0.5571	0.0072	0.0002	0.0175	0.0002
% Correctly Predicted	60.41%	62.65%	67.35%	62.86%	64.69%

*** p < 0.001, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05

Table shows odds ratios with z-statistics in parentheses.

Model 3 controls for Speaker, with additional variables Ahmadinejad, Khamenei, Khatami, Larijani, Mottaki, Rafsanjani, Safavi, Velayati; Model 4 controls for Event, with additional variables Operation Iraqi Freedom, U.S.–Iran–Iraq Trilateral Talks, Iran's Relationship with the International Atomic Energy Agency, Iran's Acquisition of Nuclear Technology, U.S. Presence in Iraq, United States-Israel Relations; Model 5 controls for Speaker and Event.

Source: Authors' calculations.

Table 7. Logistic Regression: View of the United States as Conspiratorial

Dependent Variable: View of the United States as Conspiratorial					
Number of Observations: 490					
	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2</i>	<i>Model 3</i>	<i>Model 4</i>	<i>Model 5</i>
Strategic Culture: Aggregate Variables					
History	0.949 (-1.35)				
Islam	1.040** (2.35)				
Iran's Self-Image	1.141*** (2.62)				
History Disaggregated					
Revolution		1.014 (0.18)	1.003 (0.04)	0.999 (-0.02)	0.992 (-0.11)
Khomeini		0.933 (-1.02)	0.923 (-1.18)	0.926 (-1.09)	0.920 (-1.21)
Iran-Iraq War		1.016 (0.10)	0.975 (-0.16)	0.998 (-0.01)	0.972 (-0.16)
1953 Coup		1.338 (0.99)	1.434 (1.13)	1.629 (1.33)	1.708 (1.36)
Ancient History		0.185* (-2.29)	0.175* (-2.47)	0.181* (-2.44)	0.163** (-2.62)
Islam Disaggregated					
Strict Adherence		1.100 (1.59)	1.091 (1.47)	1.082 (1.55)	1.075 (1.42)
Struggle/Sacrifice		1.124 (1.04)	1.119 (1.00)	1.145 (1.16)	1.138 (1.14)
General References		1.041 (1.47)	1.037 (1.29)	1.033 (1.29)	1.029 (1.12)
Iran's Self-Image Disaggregated					
Pride		1.210* (2.24)	1.238* (2.25)	1.240** (2.82)	1.275** (2.82)
Strategic Importance		0.969 (-0.39)	0.979 (-0.25)	1.013 (0.15)	1.011 (0.12)
Probability > Chi ²	0.0016	0.0017	0.0112	0.0000	0.0002
% Correctly Predicted	72.04%	72.04%	70.82%	74.69%	73.88%

*** p < 0.001, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05

Table shows odds ratios with z-statistics in parentheses.

Model 3 controls for Speaker, with additional variables Ahmadinejad, Khamenei, Khatami, Larijani, Mottaki, Rafsanjani, Safavi, Velayati; Model 4 controls for Event, with additional variables Operation Iraqi Freedom, U.S.–Iran–Iraq Trilateral Talks, Iran's Relationship with the International Atomic Energy Agency, Iran's Acquisition of Nuclear Technology, U.S. Presence in Iraq, United States-Israel Relations; Model 5 controls for Speaker and Event.

Source: Authors' calculations.

In sum, for each dependent variable and model specification in our logistic regressions, the strategic culture elements of Islam, Pride, and Ancient History are significant.

Considering the regression results, Islam appears to be one of the most important cultural lenses through which Iranian policymakers look when forming their views of the United States. For example, in April 2003, Rafsanjani said: “Whenever it comes to our experience, we can solve whatever foreign problem is threatening us from the viewpoint of Islam.”¹⁷ Of the four dependent variables with statistically significant independent variables, the views of the United States as Untrustworthy, Aggressive, and Dominant all have some element of Islam as significant for all models. In the case of the view of the United States as Untrustworthy, all of the Islam sub-categories (including Strict Adherence, Struggle/Sacrifice, and General References) are significant. These results show the role that Islam plays in the politics of Iran. More specifically, when referencing the United States, Iranian policymakers often evoke images of Islam to state their point.

Pride also is an important element in shaping Iranian views of the United States. Like the Islam variables, Pride is statistically significant in the model specifications of three of the dependent variables. For example, in a 2007 speech, President Ahmadinejad said: “Today, all world nations are interested in the culture manifested in Iran. Our nation, which is a vanguard of peace and justice in the world, cannot be indifferent to bullying, aggressions and injustice.”¹⁸ This result is not surprising, and extensive literature details the great feelings of Iranian pride about culture and heritage. Iran views itself as a regional leader that must head the struggle against the United States within the Middle East. The only time that Pride is insignificant is in the Dominant regressions. As we found in the Partial Least Square analysis, when Iranian policymakers feel most threatened, they speak less about their self-image and more about the power of God.

Ancient History references were important predictors for all model specifications of two of the dependent variables, the United States as Aggressive and as Conspirators. For each of these cases, we speculate that Iranian policymakers’ view of the tense situation with the United States hearkens to their history as being littered with examples of aggression and conspiracy. For example, Reza Aslan reports that Iranians often refer to President George W. Bush as Yazid, the tyrannical seventh century caliph who martyred Imam Husayn.¹⁹ It is also a reflection of ancient Persia as a current source of pride for the Iranian people. Both the Aggressive and Conspiratorial variables relate to Iran’s view of the United States in regard to nuclear proliferation. The partial least square analysis also confirms that this particular point of contention between Iran and the rest of the world prompts many references to dignity and pride in ancient Persia and modern-day Iran.

¹⁷ Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, “Iran’s U.S. Policy after the Fall of Baghdad: Khamenei’s Hostility versus Rafsanjani Pragmatism,” Middle East Media Research Institute, 15 April 2003.

¹⁸ Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, “Big Powers Intend to Dominate Persian Gulf,” Islamic Republic News Agency, 11 January 2006.

¹⁹ Reza Aslan, “In the Footsteps of the Martyrs: A Religious Procession Expresses More Than Historical Frustrations,” *Slate Magazine*, 16 February 2004.

Implications for American Policymakers

Across time, speakers, and events, strategic culture is consistently significant in Iranian official public discourse. For American policymakers, this is an important general implication of our analysis. The most surprising of our specific findings is the declining importance of the Islamic lens in Iran. Islam is clearly one of the most important influences on Iranian perceptions, but change over time in its importance is also evident. A second surprising finding is the insignificance of the History lens. Ancient History is important in some cases, but those references can be mostly attributed to the Self-Image lens and Persia as a current source of pride in Iran. Further, party affiliation matters only for the History and Islam lenses; the difference between hardliners and pragmatists is negligible for all other elements of strategic culture.

How can American policymakers take advantage of the strategic culture framework in dealing with Iran? First, we note that the importance of the lenses through which Iranian policymakers view the United States and its policies changes over time; the power of each lens ebbs and flows. Despite the standard assumption that Islam informs the majority of Iranian perceptions, the Iranian self-image is emerging as a dominant lens. This lens is particularly relevant in the arena of international relations. The most salient issue in Iran today is foreign opposition to the development of nuclear technology. The United States, Israel, and other perceived enemies of Iran possess this technology; Iranian policymakers view the denial of their right to develop this technology as an affront. Our analysis suggests that gaining compliance from Iran involves harnessing their strong sense of pride and making it work in favor of international interests.

Second, Iranian policymakers turn to the protection of God when they feel threatened, which places them in the frame of good versus evil, where the United States is a corrupting force intent on defiling the purity of Iran. From this perspective, they will not be likely to concede or compromise during negotiations. Our analysis also suggests that excessively harsh language will cause further aggravation and undermine the ability of the United States to engage in a constructive dialogue.

Cultural misunderstandings will persist unless U.S. policymakers take strategic culture into account. The consequences of maintaining the status quo could be catastrophic.

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Appendix A: Coding Information

Contents:

- I. Coding Rules
- II. Overall Relevance and Intensity of Strategic Culture
- III. Complete Coding List
- IV. Coding Form

I. Coding Rules

Units of Data: Quote or entire speech by a purposively selected set of Iranian policymakers and other individuals with presumed influence on the policy process.

Article ID: Fill in the article ID description, as indicated in the complete coding list in section II.

Example Article ID: 2007-05-24-FARS

Quote ID: Indicate the quote ID with the year, month, and day of the source including the speaker ID according to the complete coding list in section II.

Example Quote ID: 2007-05-24-FARS-2

Headline: Record the headline that corresponds to each unit of data exactly how it appears.

Example Headline: Iran Intends to Create Confidence Building Atmosphere

Coder ID: Indicate the individual who coded the unit of data, according to the coder ID list in the complete coding list in section II.

Example Coder ID: TM = Tim Smith

Source ID: Fill in the source's ID number, as indicated in the complete coding list in section II.

Example Source ID: FARS = Fars News Agency

Source Type: Indicate whether the source is a press release, news article, radio/TV transcript, Friday prayers recording or other source type. Record the source type:

- 1 = Press release
- 2 = News article
- 3 = Radio/TV transcript
- 4 = Friday prayers
- 777 = Other

Event: Indicate the event:

- 1 = Initiation of Operation Iraqi Freedom
- 2 = Surge
- 3 = U.S.-Iran-Iraq security talks
- 4 = November 2007 U.S. National Intelligence Estimate
- 5 = State of the Union addresses
- 6 = Debate over troop reduction
- 7 = November 2007 U.S. statement on Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, sanctions
- 8 = UN sanctions
- 9 = U.S. case that Iran fuels violence in Iraq
- 10 = Iran's relationship with the International Atomic Energy Agency
- 11 = Iran's nuclear ambitions
- 12 = The U.S. war in Iraq
- 13 = U.S./Israel partnership
- 777 = Other

Month-Day-Year: Record the month-day-year.

Example Month-Day-Year: 03-20-08

Speaker: Give each individual personality or policymaker who speaks (speaker) a unique number, according to the complete coding list in section II.

Example Speaker: 6 = Kazemi Qomi

Party Affiliation: Fill in each speaker's party affiliation number, as indicated in the complete coding list in section II:

- 1 = Hardline Conservative
- 2 = Pragmatic Conservative
- 3 = Reformist
- 4 = Unknown

Country Reference: Report the speaker's primary country reference from the unit of data:

- 1 = Specific U.S. (United States, America)
- 2 = Non-specific U.S. (Occupier of Iraq)
- 3 = Developed/Western world, including the U.S.
- 4 = Whole world, including the U.S.

Target Audience: Indicate whether the speaker is directing the rhetoric domestically or internationally:

- 1 = Domestic
- 2 = International

Total Word Count: Report the unit of data total word count.

Example Total World Count: 55

II. Overall Relevance and Intensity of Strategic Culture

Strategic Culture: Strategic culture is the sum total of identity, values, norms, and perceptive lens that members of a national strategic community have acquired through instruction or imitation. These variables shape collective identity and relationships to other groups, and they determine appropriate ends and means for achieving security objectives.

Indicate your opinion as to the overall use of strategic culture in the unit of data. Does the unit of data reflect a strategic culture element, is there a feel of identity, values, norms, and perceptive lenses or does the quote remain absent of identity, values, norms, and perceptive lenses (meaning there is no overall strategic culture element)? Take into consideration every aspect of Iranian historical/contemporary strategic culture (the mindset): role of religion and the influence of ancient Persian and Islamic cultures, revolutionary interpretation of Shi'a Islam, the influences of Persian culture and Islamic extremism, far-reaching familiar relationships, the belief that Iran is superior to all its neighbors, the United States is not a reliable partner and goes forward without allies, Iran-Iraq war, Iran's push to become a leader (to achieve hegemony) in the region as neighbors become weak, the interest in nuclear weapons to defend and protect itself against unstable neighbors, sanctions, the U.S. is tied-up in Iraq, and Iran is free to act tough, etc.

- 1 = The unit of data **mentions** strategic cultural inputs
- 2 = The unit of data **focuses** on strategic cultural inputs
- 0 = No overall contemporary strategic culture

Iran's View of the United States and/or United States Policy: How does the unit of data reflect on the United States: positively, negatively, or balanced, or does it remain value neutral throughout (meaning there is no overall tone)? Take into consideration every aspect of the unit of data, including all actors, issues, and politics in general.

- 1 = Positive
- 2 = Negative
- 3 = Balanced
- 0 = Neutral and/or not applicable

History: Does this unit of data mention anything about history? Simply put—code history as absent or present.

- 1 = Yes, mentions history pre-1979 only
- 2 = Yes, mentions history post-1979 only
- 3 = Yes, mentions history BOTH pre-1979 and post-1979
- 0 = No mention and/or not applicable

Islam: Does the unit of data mention or focus on Islam? Coders should view the entire unit of data in order to evaluate focus. Islam may be present, yet it does not necessarily have to be the focus. Islam is said to be the focus when Islam encompasses the quote such that other elements of the quote are obscured or cannot be distinguished clearly. Code this category if the unit of data mentions anything about Islam.

- 1 = Yes, **mentions** Islam
- 2 = Yes, **focuses** on Islam
- 0 = No mention and/or not applicable

Iran's self-image: Does the unit of data reflect Iran's self-image? Coders should begin by asking the question: What details are available (pride, strength, importance, intelligence, cultural superiority, persecution, victimization) within the quote? Some quotes may use self-image (the details above) as a thematic tool designed to illustrate some moral purpose, goal, or justification—this would be coded as focus. Many quotes communicating self-image do not develop a theme or pattern and would be coded as mentions.

- 1 = Yes, **mentions** self-image
- 2 = Yes, **focuses** on self-image
- 0 = No mention and/or not applicable

III. Complete Coding List

Article ID:

Year-Month-Day-Source ID

Example: 2007-05-24-FARS

Quote ID:

Year-Month-Day-Source ID-Speaker ID

Example: 2007-05-24-FARS-2

Headline:

Example: Iran Intends to Create Confidence Building Atmosphere

Coder ID:

Example: TM = Tim Smith

Source ID:

BAZTAB = Baztab News

DAILY = Iran Daily

ETTEL = Ettelaat International

FARS = Fars News

FOCUS = Iran Focus

GLOBAL = Global Voices

IRIB = Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting

IRNA = Islamic Republic News Agency
ISNA = Iranian Student News Agency
LEADER = Ayatollah Khamenei's official web site
MEHR = Mehr News Agency
MEMRI = Middle Eastern Media Research Institute
MFA = Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOJ = Moj News Agency
NEWS = Iran News
PRES = President Ahmadinejad's official web site
PRESSNEWS = Iran Press News
PRESSTV = Press TV
ROOZ = Rooz
SERVICE = Iran Press Service
TEHRAN = Tehran Times
WNC = World News Connection
OTHER = Other

Source Type:

1 = Press Release
2 = News Article
3 = Radio/TV Transcript
4 = Friday Prayers
777 = Other

Event:

1 = Initiation of Operation Iraqi Freedom
2 = Surge
3 = U.S.-Iran-Iraq security talks
4 = November 2007 U.S. National Intelligence Estimate
5 = State of the Union addresses
6 = Debate over troop reduction
7 = November 2007 U.S. statement on Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps sanctions
8 = UN sanctions
9 = U.S. case that Iran fuels violence in Iraq
10 = Iran's relationship with the International Atomic Energy Agency
11 = Iran's nuclear ambitions
12 = The U.S. war in Iraq
13 = U.S./Israel partnership
777 = Other

Month:

2 digits
Example: January = 01

Day:

2 digits
Example: January first = 01

Year:

4 digits

Example: 2008 (MMVIII) = 2008

Speaker:

- 1 = Gholamreza Agazadeh-Khoi
- 2 = Mahmoud Ahmadinejad
- 3 = Mahmoud Hashemi Shahrudi
- 4 = Mohammad Ali Aziz Jafari
- 5 = Saeed Jalili
- 6 = Hassan Kazemi Qomi
- 7 = Ayatollah Ali Khamenei
- 8 = Seyed Mohammad Khatami
- 9 = Ali Ardashir Larijani
- 10 = Manuchehr Mottaki
- 11 = Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani (Hashemi Bahramini)
- 12 = Yahya Rahim Safavi
- 13 = Brigadier General Qassem Soleimani
- 14 = Ali Akbar Velayati
- 777 = Other

Party Affiliation:

- 1 = Hard line Conservative
- 2 = Pragmatic Conservative
- 3 = Reformist
- 4 = Unknown

Country Reference:

- 1 = Specific U.S. (United States, America)
- 2 = Non-specific U.S. (Occupier of Iraq)
- 3 = Developed/Western world, including the U.S.
- 4 = Whole world, including the U.S.

Target Audience:

- 1 = Domestic
- 2 = International

Total Word Count:

Example: 55

Strategic Culture:

- 1 = The unit of data **mentions** strategic cultural inputs
- 2 = The unit of data **focuses** on strategic cultural inputs
- 0 = No overall contemporary strategic culture

Iran's View of the United States and/or United States Policy:

- 1 = Positive

- 2 = Negative
- 3 = Balanced
- 0 = Neutral and/or not applicable

History:

- 1 = Yes, mentions history pre-1979 only
- 2 = Yes, mentions history post-1979 only
- 3 = Yes, mentions history BOTH pre-1979 and post-1979
- 0 = No mention and/or not applicable

Islam:

- 1 = Yes, **mentions** Islam
- 2 = Yes, **focuses** on Islam
- 0 = No mention and/or not applicable

Iran's Self-image:

- 1 = Yes, **mentions** self-image
- 2 = Yes, **focuses** on self-image
- 0 = No mention and/or not applicable

01-06 History:

01 Revolution

- 011 = Revolution
- 012 = 1979
- 0177 = Other

02 Khomeini

- 021 = Khomeini
- 022 = Imam/the Departed
- 023 = The Supreme Leader (with clear reference to Khomeini)
- 024 = Grand Ayatollah
- 0277 = Other

03 Iran-Iraq War

- 031 = Iran-Iraq War
- 032 = U.S. Support of Saddam Hussein/Iraq
- 033 = Iran Air Flight 655
- 034 = Iraqi Invasion
- 0377 Other

04 1953 Coup

- 041 = 1953
- 042 = Coup
- 043 = American Spies
- 044 = Mossadeq
- 045 = Clandestine
- 046 = Depose
- 047 = Overthrow
- 0477 = Other

05 Ancient History

- 051 = Karbala

- 052 = Husayn
- 053 = Yazid
- 054 = Persia
- 055 = Cyrus the Great
- 0577 = Other

06 Other

07-10 Islam:

07 Strict Adherence

- 071 = Obligation
- 072 = Commitment
- 073 = Obey the laws
- 074 = Maintain purity
- 075 = Avoid sin
- 076 = Islamic holiday
- 077 = Pious/devout
- 078 = Faith
- 0777 = Other

08 Struggle/Sacrifice

- 081 = Martyr/dom
- 082 = Struggle
- 083 = Sacrifice
- 0877 = Other

09 Reference to Islam in General

- 091 = Islam
- 092 = Mohammad
- 093 = Allah
- 094 = Koran
- 095 = Jihad
- 0977 = Other

10 Other

11-13 Iran's Self-Image:

11 Pride

- 111 = Regional leader
- 112 = Superior/ity
- 113 = Equal partner (to U.S.)
- 114 = Dignity
- 115 = Strong defensive power
- 116 = Great nation
- 117 = Unity
- 1177 = Other

12 Strategic Importance

- 121 = Oil reserves
- 122 = Restore peace and stability
- 123 = Economic prosperity
- 124 = Political stability
- 1277 = Other

13 Other

14-16 View of the United States:

14 Domination

- 141 = Domination
- 142 = Hegemony
- 143 = U.S. expansionist plan
- 144 = Arrogant
- 145 = Colonial master or neo/colonialism
- 146 = Puppeteer
- 147 = Israeli partnership/support/relations
- 148 = Occupying powers
- 149 = Imperialism
- 1410 = Oppression/oppressor
- 1411 = Enemy
- 1412 = Impose
- 1477 = Other

15 Conspiracy

- 151 = Conspiracy
- 152 = Devil plot or just plot
- 153 = Zionist
- 154 = Foreign influence
- 155 = Spies
- 156 = Covert
- 157 = Psychological warfare
- 1577 = Other

16 Other

17-21 View of the United States:

17 Untrustworthy

- 171 = Fabricate
- 172 = Liars
- 173 = False accusations
- 174 = Baseless propaganda
- 175 = Manipulating information
- 176 = Blame game
- 177 = Undermine Iranian authority
- 178 = Hypocrite/Munafeqin
- 1777 = Other

18 Aggressive

- 181 = Aggressive
- 182 = Tyrannical
- 183 = Bully
- 184 = Support for terrorists
- 185 = Interference
- 186 = Overbearing
- 187 = Threat
- 188 = Hostile

- 1877 = Other
- 19 Morally Corrupt
 - 191 = Infidels
 - 192 = Heathens
 - 193 = Blasphemy against Islam
 - 194 = Great Satan
 - 1977 = Other
- 20 Weak/Timid
 - 201 = Weak/ness
 - 202 = Helpless
 - 203 = U.S. dependence on Iran (in relation to Iraq)
 - 204 = Vulnerable
 - 2077 = Other
- 21 Other

IV. Coding Form

Our team inputted all coding results into a spreadsheet application.
This is the printed version.

Coder ID _____	
Article ID	
Quote ID	
Headline	
Source ID	
Source Type	
Month-Day-Year	
Speaker	
Party Affiliation	
Country Reference	
Target Audience	
Total Word Count	
Strategic Culture	
Iran's View of the U.S. and/or U.S. Policy	
History	
Islam	
Iran's Self-image	
History 11-177	
History 21-277	
History 31-377	
History 41-477	
History 51-577	
Islam 71-777	
Islam 81-877	
Islam 91-977	
Iran's Self-image 111-1177	
Iran's Self-image 121-1277	
View of the U.S. 141-1477	
View of the U.S. 151-1577	
View of the U.S. 171-1777	
View of the U.S. 181-1877	
View of the U.S. 191-1977	
View of the U.S. 201-2077	

Appendix B: Partial Least Square Data

<i>Dependent Variables</i>	<i>Component 1</i>	<i>Component 2</i>	<i>Component 3</i>
Domination	-0.124241326	–	-0.100762352
Arrogant	-0.136560802	0.11222478	-0.101416037
Oppression/Oppressor	-	0.132881891	-
Enemy	-0.117032852	–	-0.163114924
Zionist	–	0.13647881	–
Baseless Propaganda	–	0.118927043	-0.161579772
View of the United States as Untrustworthy Other	–	0.128185176	–
Aggressive	–	0.11863563	-0.108595578
Bully	–	0.17458627	–
Threat	-0.12570255	–	-0.238370646
View of the United States as Aggressive Other	–	0.181761734	–
View of the United States as Corrupt Other	–	0.118305728	–

<i>Independent Variables</i>	<i>Component 1</i>	<i>Component 2</i>	<i>Component 3</i>
Revolution	-0.50085605	-0.517107576	-0.125795111
Year 1979	–	–	-0.162152934
History Revolution Other	–	-0.194651418	–
Khomenei	–	–	-0.118461279
Imam/the Departed	-0.308004477	-0.209024468	–
The Supreme Leader	–	–	0.235100832
Grand Ayatollah	–	0.106631648	0.142501616
History Khomenei Other	–	–	0.12426506
Iran–Iraq War	-0.189257578	–	0.100435656
U.S. Support of Saddam Hussein/Iraq	–	0.165314664	–
Iran Air Flight 655	–	–	-0.123601819
Iraqi Invasion	–	–	-0.171682582
History Iran–Iraq War Other	–	0.118590173	-0.229030613
Year 1953	–	-0.178186284	–
American Spies	–	–	0.104657864
Mossadeq	–	–	0.223604123
Clandestine	–	0.104401973	0.168691736
History 1953 Coup Other	–	–	-0.125354609
Karbala	–	–	-0.164569806
Husayn	–	-0.148678537	–
History Ancient History Other	–	0.120706881	0.124627867

<i>Independent Variables</i>	<i>Component 1</i>	<i>Component 2</i>	<i>Component 3</i>
History Other	-0.128397593	–	0.329787439
Obligation	–	–	0.119586295
Maintain Purity	–	–	-0.181429174
Avoid Sin	–	–	-0.193196521
Islamic Holiday	–	-0.194250176	–
Pious/Devout	–	–	-0.108453064
Faith	-0.226639234	-0.119781931	-0.168251516
Islam Strict Adherence Other	–	0.164109098	0.157096684
Martyr/Martyrdom	-0.235019976	–	–
Struggle	-0.131044832	–	0.205288302
Sacrifice	-0.117277947	0.111400115	–
Islam	-0.720350978	-0.272399533	0.27738524
Mohammad	–	–	-0.234992907
Allah	-0.129056597	–	-0.407646324
Koran	-0.174253725	–	–
Islam Reference to General Islam Other	-0.155483302	0.350394289	0.121152643
Islam Other	–	–	0.375317778
Regional Leader	–	0.102890373	0.231019206
Dignity	-0.117209501	0.22535845	-0.165596045
Strong Defensive Power	–	-0.121698096	-0.129902239
Great Nation	–	-0.108468418	-0.144308809
Iran's Self Image Pride Other	–	0.116117266	–
Restore Peace and Stability	-0.13515158	0.411382444	–
Economic Prosperity	–	–	0.235853927
Political Stability	–	0.114069303	0.176428246
Iran's Self Image Other	–	0.18062819	–

Appendix C: Additional Goodness-of-Fit Measures

The following tables provide additional information on the goodness of fit of Model 5 for each dependent variable in the logistic regression. These tables reveal that for the Untrustworthy and Conspiracy variables, the data are generally skewed. In fact, the model for each of these two variables only slightly improved (approximately 2 percent) on the baseline predictions. For the Aggressive and Domination variables, the models provided an improvement of approximately 13 percent and 25 percent, respectively, in comparison to the baseline predictions.

Table 8.
Goodness of Fit:
View of the United States as Untrustworthy

Predicted	Observed		Total
	1	0	
1	24	12	36
0	113	341	454
Total	137	353	490

% Baseline Prediction 72.04%

% Correctly Predicted 74.49%

Table 9.
Goodness of Fit:
View of the United States as Aggressive

Predicted	Observed		Total
	1	0	
1	126	63	189
0	107	194	301
Total	233	257	490

% Baseline Prediction 52.45%

% Correctly Predicted 65.31%

Table 10.
Goodness of Fit:
View of the United States as Dominant

Predicted	Observed		Total
	1	0	
1	217	96	313
0	77	100	177
Total	294	196	490

% Baseline Prediction 40.00%
 % Correctly Predicted 64.69%

Table 11.
Goodness of Fit:
View of the United States as Conspiratorial

Predicted	Observed		Total
	1	0	
1	36	23	59
0	105	326	431
Total	141	349	490

% Baseline Prediction 71.22%
 % Correctly Predicted 73.88%

Appendix D: Newspapers, Organizations, and News Agencies

- World News Connection. <http://wnc.fedworld.gov/description.html>.
- Baztab News. <http://en.baztab.com/>: March 2003 – March 2008.
- Iran Daily. <http://www.iran-daily.com>: March 2003 – March 2008.
- Ettelaat International. <http://www.ettelaat.com/index2.asp?code=etb8>: March 2003 – March 2008.
- Fars News Agency. <http://www.farsnews.com/English/>: March 2003 – March 2008.
- Iran Focus. <http://www.iranfocus.com/en/>: March 2003 – March 2008.
- Global Voices. <http://www.globalvoicesonline.org/>: March 2003 – March 2008.
- Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting. <http://www.irib.ir/>: March 2003 – March 2008.
- Islamic Republic News Agency. <http://www.irna.ir/en/>: March 2003 – March 2008.
- Mehr News. <http://www.mehrnews.com/en/>: March 2003 – March 2008.
- Moj News Agency. <http://www.mojnews.com/en/default.asp>: March 2003 – March 2008.
- Iran News. <http://irannewsdaily.com/home.asp?home=true>: March 2003 – March 2008
- Iran Press News. <http://www.iranpressnews.com/english/>: March 2003 – March 2008.
- Press TV. <http://www.presstv.ir/>: March 2003 – March 2008.
- ROOZ. <http://www.roozonline.com/english/>: March 2003 – March 2008.
- Iran Press Service. <http://www.iran-press-service.com/>: March 2003 – March 2008.
- Tehran Times. <http://www.tehrantimes.com/>: March 2003 – March 2008.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
<http://www.mfa.gov.ir/cms/cms/Tehran/en/index.html>: March 2003 – March 2008. Accessed 4 April 2008.
- Middle East Media Research Institute. <http://www.memri.org/>: March 2003 – March 2008.