

Strategy, Security, Influence:
Content Analysis of the Anti-Semitic Rhetoric of Iran's Supreme Leader

A Working Paper

by

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Abstract

Entitled “Security, Strategy, Influence: A Content Analysis of the Anti-Semitic Rhetoric of Iran’s Supreme Leader,” this study examined the influence properties of state-sponsored anti-Semitic messaging. The thesis was that the Iranian regime, as represented by the Supreme Leader, employed anti-Semitic narrative for the purpose of strategic influence. Using a multipart definition of anti-Semitic narrative and strategic influence, content analysis was performed on twelve speeches by Supreme Leader Sayyid Ali Khamenei broadcast on state television and radio between 2006 and 2007. The results of the content analysis supported the thesis. All of the sample speeches and the majority of the control speeches fulfilled the criteria for anti-Semitic narrative and strategic influence. The findings, while not unequivocal, point to the need for additional, robust inquiry into the role of anti-Semitism in Iranian mass communications and security strategy.

Chapter I introduced the subject, explored alternative interpretations of Iranian rhetoric, and presented the thesis of the study. Chapter II reviewed literature on the role of influence in national strategy and the nature of anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist discourse in the contemporary Middle East. The history of Jews in ancient Persia and modern Iran was also considered. Chapter III discussed the research design, including data choice and method of analysis. Chapter IV presented the results of the structured content analysis as well as ancillary findings. Chapter V concluded with a summation of findings, discussion of problems and questions encountered during research, and recommendations for US policy.

Chapter I: Introduction

The war in the world today is between the media. The progress of international policies and the actions of various establishments and fronts is through propaganda, news creation, meaning creation, and the formulation of right and wrong, truth and lies. This is how it is taking place: propaganda before, during, and after every military or economic move...we have to equip ourselves against them. Our media must be ready to thwart the actions of the enemy inside the country and the attacks of the enemy in the general climate.

— *Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, 2004*¹

On October 26, 2005, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad convened an international conference titled “A World without Zionism” and declared that Israel should be “wiped off the map.” A reporter from the *New York Times* broke the story after learning of the president’s remarks on an Iranian-state television website. Speaking to reporters later during the conference, the Iranian leader vowed to “eliminate this disgraceful stain from the Islamic world.”²

Further examination of regime discourse reveals a pattern of anti-Zionist³ and anti-Semitic⁴ communications that far predates the Ahmadinejad presidency. In his seminal text, *Trusteeship of the Jurisconsult: Islamic Governance*, the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ruhollah Musavi Khomeini, identified Jews as historic and

¹ Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, excerpt from a speech to Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting officials aired on Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran Radio 1 (December 1, 2004).

² Safe Haeri, “Iran on Course for Showdown,” *Asia Times* (October 28, 2005).

³“Anti-Zionist/ism” refers to: *language, ideas, or themes in opposition to Zionism*. The first Zionist Congress at Basel in 1897 defined Zionism as a movement that “strives to create for the Jewish people a home in Palestine secured by public law.” *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “Zionism” (undated). Accessed July 28, 2011 at: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/657475/Zionism>.

⁴“Anti-Semitic/ism” refers to: *language, ideas, or themes justifying persecution of Jews as individuals or communities*. While this definition may be simple, it reflects popular understanding of the term, based on usage in US political discourse. See literature review for additional discussion.

contemporary enemies of Islam.⁵ “The Islamic movement was afflicted by Jews from its very beginnings, when they began their hostile activity by distorting the reputation of Islam and by defaming and maligning it. This has continued to the present day,” wrote Khomeini in the book’s forward. While followers insisted his rhetoric was anti-Zionist, as opposed to anti-Semitic, the Ayatollah often used terms such as “Jew,” “Zionist,” and “Israel” interchangeably. In his book, *Confronting Israel*, Khomeini made no distinction between Jews and Israelis.⁶

The present Supreme Leader, Sayyid Ali Khamenei, has adopted a similar narrative, most notably in his embracement of Holocaust denial, in which the “Holocaust myth” is part of a greater “Zionist conspiracy” bent on world domination. Khamenei proffered the argument in a speech in April 2001. “There are documents showing close collaboration of the Zionists with Nazi Germany, and exaggerated numbers relating to the Jewish Holocaust were fabricated to solicit the sympathy of world public opinion, lay the ground for the occupation of Palestine, and to justify the atrocities of the Zionists.”⁷

Zionist conspiracy discourse is not new to the region. Nazi Germany propagated a similar narrative in the print and radio influence campaigns targeting populations in Middle East and the Maghreb beginning in the mid-1930s and lasting to the end of World War II. Historian Jeffrey Herf points to examples of modern Holocaust denial and of anti-Zionism during the early 1940s. According to this narrative, the Holocaust is a myth

⁵ Richard S. Levy, *Anti-Semitism: A Historical Encyclopedia of Prejudice and Persecution* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2005), 397. In notable incongruity, Khomeini also reiterated the traditional Muslim legal position that as *dhimmis*, Jews are entitled to protection if they pay *jizya* (poll tax) and accept Islamic suzerainty.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 397. *Tujah Isr’il* was published in Arabic in 1977.

⁷ Babak Ganji, *Iran & Israel: Asymmetric Warfare and Regional Strategy*, Conflict Studies Research Center (Watchfield: Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, 2006).

used by Zionists and their sympathizers to justify the creation of a Jewish state.⁸ For instance, when evidence of Nazi atrocities drew international attention during a conference of American Jews in Philadelphia in 1943, Nazi Arab propagandists sought to discredit the evidence as “Jews’ cursed lies” and Jews’ attempt “to gain the sympathy of the world through their tears.” The Jews, according to the Nazi Arabic broadcasts, knew they would not “be able to take Palestine” unless they “made the world believe they are worthy of sympathy.”⁹

Today, influential scholars and politicians warn of the rise of a “new anti-Semitism” in the Middle East—a form of hostility toward Jews in which the Jewish state (rather than the individual) is the focus. Robert Wistrich of Hebrew University calls Arab and Muslim anti-Zionist and anti-Israel propaganda the *locus classicus* of this “new anti-Semitism.”¹⁰ With its systematic “delegitimation,” defamation, and demonization of Israel and increasing reliance on classic anti-Semitic themes, Wistrich argues that contemporary Arab/Muslim anti-Zionism constitutes the “most dangerous and effective form of anti-Semitism in our time.”¹¹ The President of the Anti-Defamation League, a prominent Jewish-American advocacy group, echoes this conclusion: “anti-Zionism is anti-Semitism, period.”¹²

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Jeffrey Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 14, 177.

¹⁰ Robert S. Wistrich, “Muslim Anti-Semitism: A Clear in Present Danger,” *The American Jewish Committee* (2002). Accessed June 3, 2011 at:

www.ajc.org/site/apps/nlnet/content3.aspx?c=ijITI2PHKoG&b=846637&ct=6069033

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Abraham Foxman, “New Excuses, Old Hatred: Worldwide Anti-Semitism in Wake of 9/11” (speech delivered to the Anti-Defamation League’s National Executive Committee, February 8, 2002).

Problem: Interpreting the Discourse

Given this understanding of contemporary anti-Semitism, one can understand how Iranian President Ahmadinejad's denial of the Holocaust might support the impression of Iran as a hostile state. The belligerent language of Iran's leadership translates to the belligerent intentions of the state, with the United States and Israel as the target. This logic, when taken to the extreme, casts the Iranian government as a modern-day Third Reich, bent on the extermination of Jews.

Yet in reality, Iran's relationship to Israel, Zionism, and Iran's native Jewish population is far more complex. Iran hosts the largest Jewish population in the Middle East outside of Israel. Organized Zionism in Iran dates back to the early twentieth century. Iran is one of the only Muslim countries in the world to afford constitutional protections to its Jewry.¹³

Much like Iran itself, the nature of Ahmadinejad's holocaust denial is subject to multiple interpretations. According to Babak Ganji, an Iran scholar at the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, Holocaust denial is both institutionalized and defensive; it is part of a larger regime strategy for preventing erosion of Iranian influence in the region. While it was always present in society, holocaust denial was only recently made official policy under the Ahmadinejad administration. According to Ganji, the policy is aimed at radicalizing the region in order to prevent Israel-Arab rapprochement and the resultant isolation of Iran.¹⁴

¹³ The history of this exceptional and complex relationship will be examined in the following chapter.

¹⁴ Babak Ganji, *Iran & Israel: Asymmetric Warfare and Regional Strategy*, Conflict Studies Research Center (Watchfield: Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, 2006).

Yet others reject Ganji's assertion regarding the strategic role of Holocaust denial in regime policy. Mehdi Khalaji, an Iran scholar at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, contends that such historical revisionism is a matter of personal belief. According to Khalaji, Ahmadinejad is a member of a "secret society" which considers the killing of Jews a necessary precursor to the return of the Hidden Imam.¹⁵ Khalaji suggests that Ahmadinejad's actions, including his holocaust denial, are motivated by a religious ideology that rewards the incitement of violence against Jews and the Jewish state of Israel.

Others aver that Holocaust denial is simply a political stance; it is not part of any official government policy or strategy.¹⁶ Maziar Bahari, an Iranian born journalist and human rights advocate, draws this conclusion from his experience interacting with state officials when he was commissioned to produce a documentary about the Holocaust for IRIB. According to Bahari, most politicians in Iran—reformists and conservatives alike—tend to share Ahmadinejad's view that the Holocaust is used by Israel to justify its oppression of Palestinians; they are inclined to sympathize with Holocaust revisionists for this reason. Still, such sympathies are not intractable, says Bahari. Iranian politicians have demonstrated a propensity to change positions according to the prevailing political winds: "Holocaust-denial in Iran is, mostly, a political stance, rather than an ideological belief or racial prejudice."¹⁷

¹⁵ Mehdi Khalaji, *Apocalyptic Politics: On the Rationality of Iranian Policy*, Policy Focus #79 (Washington, DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2008), vii, 44.

¹⁶ "Holocaust denial or revisionism is not part of any official policy of IRI, but it happens regularly without raising eyebrows." Maziar Bahari, email sent to Gary Sick via G2K list serve (August 24, 2011). A similar observation was posited by Iran expert and University of Hawaii professor Farida Farhi in an interview with the author in July 2011.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

Statement of Purpose

While the paradigm offered by anti-Semitism—that the regime is solely motivated by an intractable hatred of Jews—is certainly one method for interpreting Iranian rhetoric, additional explanations should be examined to ensure US national security strategy is based on a complete, global understanding of Iranian behavior and the geostrategic operating environment in the Middle East. This paper will begin to develop such a paradigm. This new paradigm would enable US policymakers to interpret Iran’s inflammatory rhetoric as part a larger pattern of behavior that is guided by the regime’s own security concerns and capabilities.

Specifically, this paper will examine one alternative, or additional, explanation. It will argue that the Iranian regime, as represented by the Supreme Leader, has used anti-Zionist and anti-Semitic mass communications for the purpose of strategic influence. Strategic influence is defined in a broad sense and is applicable to both internal and external regime security concerns. This study defines “strategic influence” as: *affecting or attempting to affect the political behavior of an adversary through systematic transmission of ideas and opinions to a target audience, foreign or domestic.*¹⁸

The following sections will provide greater context for this argument by discussing regime threat perception and security capabilities as well as the role of broadcasting in the Islamic Republic.

¹⁸ Rand analysts Kim Cragin and Scott Gerwehr use the term strategic influence to identify the “entire spectrum of influence campaigns, from highly coercive or enticing efforts (e.g., force or bribes) through to public diplomacy. In general, the purpose of these campaigns is to affect the beliefs, opinions, attitudes, and actions of potential adversaries.” Kim Cragin and Scott Gerwehr, *Dissuading Terror: Strategic Influence and the Struggle against Terrorism*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2005).

Regime Threat Perception and Security Capabilities

The Iranian government views the US presence in the region and the US relationship with the populations and governments of the greater Persian Gulf as an existential threat. In a journal article titled, “U.S. Strategy of Entangling Iran in Peripheral Conflict,” Ebrahim Mottaghi, Director of the Political Science Study Group at Tehran University, articulates this view. Mottaghi argues that the US is engaged in “low intensity war on Iran . . . in the periphery,” where the objective is to “slash the power of revolutionary Shiites in the Middle East and institute an effective collaboration with the conservative Sunni groups and traditional-autocratic regimes.”¹⁹ According to this logic, Iran’s security interests require either the US strategy to fail—where the US is able to ally itself with Sunni groups and Arab governments, but the alliance does little to dampen the salience of Iran’s Islamic revolutionary ideology—or the US to fail to realize its strategy—where the US proves unable to win the allegiance of Sunni groups and Arab governments, and Iranian power remains intact.²⁰

Tehran similarly sees Israel, with its weapons systems, nuclear arms and tradition of offensive operations, as a serious threat to the nation’s sovereignty and the survival of the regime. Some US and Israeli politicians have publicly called for aerial operations against known and suspected reprocessing sites. A successful attack would be a blow to

¹⁹ Ebrahim Mottaghi, “The U.S. Strategy of Entangling Iran in Peripheral Conflict,” *Iranian Journal of International Affairs* 20:2: (Spring 2008), 67-86. Accessed September 9, 2011 at: www.irdiplomacy.ir/.

²⁰ Babak Ganji, *Main Currents of Iranian Strategy since 9/11*, Conflict Studies Research Center (Watchfield: Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, 2006), 3-4. Ganji says that this threat perception is not new. Between 1991 and 1997, the main goal of Iranian strategy was to bring about the withdrawal of US military forces from the Persian Gulf through asymmetric strategies such as terrorism and funding opponents of the Middle East peace process. Informing Iranian opposition to the Oslo 1 peace process was the emerging de facto relations between Israel and conservative Arab states. Such an alliance would have made it easier for Israel to generate diplomatic support for pressuring Iran on its nuclear program.

the credibility of Iran's nuclear deterrent and national prestige.²¹ Iranian officials also fear Israel's relations with Iraqi Kurds; specifically, they have worried that Israel could use Iraqi Kurdistan as a platform for attacking Iran or conducting covert operations inside Iran.²²

Regime threat perception also has a domestic component. The government issues continuous warnings of "subversive influences" operating inside the country. In addition to "foreign agents" bent on overthrowing the Islamic government, Iran considers indigenous political opposition such as the Green Movement as well as armed dissident groups such as the Iraq-based Mujahedin e Khalq (MEK) a threat to regime security. A Baloch terrorist group calling itself Jondollah has mounted a number of attacks on Iranian security forces in the province of Balochistan.²³

Conventional Power

In the face of these external and internal threats, Tehran's financial investment in "hard power" is relatively modest. Its conventional armed forces are the largest in the region, but are still considered ineffective against modern well-trained militaries such as that of the US.²⁴ While its force is sufficient to defend or deter conventional threats from neighbors such as post-war Afghanistan, post-war Iraq, Turkmenistan, and Azerbaijan, it

²¹ Babak Ganji, *Iran & Israel: Asymmetric Warfare and Regional Strategy*, Conflict Studies Research Center (Watchfield: Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, 2006). According to Ganji, there is a close connection between the nuclear program and Iran's search for escalation dominance in asymmetric conflicts.

²² Ibid.

²³ There have been recent claims that Israel was aiding these anti-Iran Sunni groups to operate in Iran. "Iran," *Jane's Military and Security Assessments* (February 29,-2012). Accessed April 30, 2012 at: <http://jmsa.janes.com.ezproxy6.ndu.edu/JDIC/JMSA/printFriendlyCountryProfile.do?docPubAbbrev=GULFS&&country=Iran>

²⁴ Ibid.

lacks the logistical ability to project power beyond Iran's immediate neighbors. The military is considered ill-equipped to engage in conflict with its better-armed and trained neighbors such as Turkey and Pakistan.²⁵ For a summary estimate of the Iranian weapons arsenal and defense budget, see Figure 1.²⁶

²⁵ Kenneth Katzman, "Iran: U.S. Concerns and Policy Responses" Congressional Research Service RL32048 (US Government: August 2007).

²⁶ Ibid.

Military Personnel	Tanks	Surface-Air Missiles	Combat Aircraft	Ships	Defense Budget (billions U.S \$)
545,000 (regular military and Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). IRGC is about one-third of total force.	1,693 (incl. 480 T-72)	150 I-Hawk plus some Stinger	280 (incl. 25 MiG-29 and 30 Su-24)	200 (incl. 10 Chinese-made Hudong, 40 Boghammer, 3 frigates) Also has 3 Kilo subs	6.6
Number of "Qods Forces" of IRGC			Approximately 3,000 total in the Qods Force, which promotes Iran's regional and global objectives through advisory support to pro-Iranian factions in Lebanon, Iraq, Persian Gulf states, Afghanistan, and Central Asia. Also operates worldwide intelligence network to give Iran possible terrorist option and to assist in procurement of WMD-related technology.		
Ship-launched cruise missiles			Iran is able to arm its patrol boats with Chinese-made C-802 cruise missiles. Iran also has Chinese-supplied HY-2 Seerseekers emplaced along Iran's coast. Both systems could be used to try to block the Strait of Hormuz, to attack Persian Gulf state oil export terminals, or to threaten shipping through that waterway. ^a		
Midget Subs			Iran is said to possess several midget submarines, possibly purchased assembled or in kit form from North Korea. Iran could try to use these vessels in any conflict, although some experts believe that U.S. naval forces could detect and counter this equipment, particularly the larger vessels, without substantial difficulty.		
Anti-aircraft missile systems			Russia has sold and now delivered to Iran (January 2007) 30 anti-aircraft missile systems (Tor M1), worth over \$1 billion. A press report in late September 2006 said that Ukraine has agreed to sell Iran the Kolchuga radar system that can improve Iran's detection of combat aircraft.		

Figure 1. Iranian Conventional Military Capabilities

In 2006, Iranian military expenditure was 2.5 percent of the national GDP, compared to Saudi Arabia's 10 percent and Israel's 7.3 percent.²⁷ Its arsenal includes a large stock of medium and long-range missiles capable of hitting Israel and US bases in the region. Moreover, US officials say Iran may be capable of producing an intercontinental ballistic missile. An intercontinental missile, especially one fashioned with a nuclear warhead, could reach the US homeland.²⁸ The perceived threat of a nuclear-armed Iran has grown alongside the continued progress of Iran's so-called "peaceful" nuclear energy program. While actively pursuing nuclear enrichment, Tehran continues to assert that it is interested only in generating nuclear power for electricity and other peaceful purposes.²⁹

Still, IAEA inspectors have not, to the satisfaction of the US, established that Iran does not possess weapons grade nuclear material and is not in the process of producing it; beyond all else, this security concern colors the public diplomacy and foreign policy of the United States, Israel, and many European allies vis-à-vis Iran.³⁰ Some Iran experts suggest that the opacity of the Iran nuclear program is intentional; the uncertainty regarding the progress of uranium enrichment and weapon delivery system may serve as a deterrent against major conventional military powers such as the United States.³¹

²⁷ CIA World Factbook (2006). Accessed October 1, 2011.

²⁸ "Iran," *Jane's Military and Security Assessments* (February 29, 2012). Accessed April 30, 2012.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ "Analysis: Tehran Fosters Ambiguity About Nuclear Enrichment Capability" Open Source Center (US Government: April 12 2007)

Irregular/Unconventional Warfare Capabilities

Iran has acquired a structure and doctrine for unconventional warfare that partly compensates for its conventional weakness.³² One aspect of this strategy involves the Strait of Hormuz. Former US Central Command (CENTCOM) commander, General John Abizaid said in March 2006 that the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) basing and force structure is designed to give Iran a capability to “internationalize” a crisis in the Strait of Hormuz. In his confirmation hearings on January 30, 2007, CENTCOM commander Admiral William Fallon confirmed Abizaid’s assessment: “Based on my read of their military hardware acquisitions and development of tactics...[the Iranians] are posturing themselves with the capability to attempt to deny us the ability to operate in [the Strait of Hormuz].”³³

Another component of Iran’s unconventional power involves its support and cultivation of militant proxy groups operating in other countries, particularly through the IRGC. Indeed, IRGC is credited with helping conceive and train the Lebanon-based militant group Hezbollah in 1982.³⁴ US government officials maintain that Iran continues to provide financial support and weapons to Hezbollah fighters, including Fajr and Khabar rockets. In 2007, Iran was fingered by Israel for supplying over 10,000

³² Khamenei confirmed Iran’s strategy of irregular warfare in response to a conventional military attack in a speech in 2006. “Americans should know that if they assault the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Islamic Republic of Iran will harm their interests anywhere in the world that is possible.” Excerpt of speech by Supreme Leader on Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran Radio (April 26, 2006).

³³ Ann Scott Tyson and Glenn Kessler, “Centcom Pick Warns of Iran Influence in Gulf Region” *Washington Post* (January 31, 2007).

³⁴ Some scholars argue that this support is institutionalized by law. Abbas Samii argues that the constitution mandates Iran’s involvement with the Lebanese Shi’a. Article 3 asserts that the government is duty-bound to provide “unsparing support to the dispossessed of the world.” Article 154 states that the government “supports the just struggles of the oppressed against the oppressors in every corner of the globe.” See: Abbas Samii, “A Stable Structure on Shifting Sands: Assessing the Hezbollah-Iran-Syria Relationship,” *Middle East Journal* 62. 1 (Winter 2008), 32-53.

Katyusha rockets fired at Israel during the 2006 Israel-Lebanon war.³⁵ Members of Iran's clerical and political establishment routinely voice support for Hezbollah leaders and encourage the Iranian public to do the same.³⁶

The kinetic components of Iranian security strategy are well documented. The non-kinetic dimension, while less examined, is equally important. The US Air Force defines "kinetic" capabilities as actions focused on destroying enemy forces using physical effects. Non-kinetic actions, in contrast, are logical, electromagnetic, or behavioral. While non-kinetic actions may include a physical component, the effects they impose are mainly indirect—functional, systemic, psychological, or behavioral.³⁷ An example of non-kinetic action is influence operations, in this case, attempting to influence public opinion through media broadcasting. The following section will consider the role of mass communications in Iranian strategy.

Broadcast Media as Regime Strategy

In the days before his death in 1989, Khomeini directed that the Constitution be amended to place the state-monopoly television and radio broadcaster in the Office of the Supreme Leader.³⁸ The amendment was one of three provisions aimed at consolidating power and creating a more unified, dynamic state.³⁹ The change indicated the strategic

³⁵ "Israel's Peres Says Iran Arming Hizbollah." *Reuters* (February 4, 2002). *See also*: Kenneth Katzman, "Iran: U.S. Concerns and Policy Responses," Congressional Research Service (US Government: August 2007).

³⁶ For example, see "Aoun: Iran Supports Lebanese State's Policies," *Al-Manar TV* (October 16, 2008).

³⁷ "Effects-Based Considerations for Planning," *Air Force Doctrine: Document 2* (US Air Force: April 3, 2007), 87.

³⁸ Domestically, Iran's state-run radio and television organization (IRIB) is called "Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran," or simply "Voice and Vision" (*seda va sima*).

³⁹ Golam Khiabany, "Iranian Media: The Paradox of Modernity," *Social Semiotics* 17:4 (December 2007), 479.

importance the Supreme Leader assigned to broadcasting. It anticipated the emergence of public opinion as a critical battle space in the regime's struggle for internal security and regional leadership.

Khomeini demonstrated appreciation for the power of mass communication well before the constitutional changes of 1989. In the years before the ouster of the Shah, Khomeini cultivated support from exile in Najaf and France by disseminating mass-produced cassette recordings of his sermons.⁴⁰ This early form of strategic communication sowed the field for Khomeini's celebrated homecoming and ascendance to power in 1979-80.

More than two decades after his death, the information battleground the Supreme Leader anticipated has come to fruition. In the last decade especially, the region has undergone an "information revolution." Thanks in part to the import of cheap satellite and cellular products from Asia, as well as the proliferation of the Internet and social networking technology, the almost instantaneous transfer of information has become the norm.⁴¹ More than ever, these communications technologies serve as a forum for social discourse and a means for shaping and reflecting public opinion in the Middle East.

Iran has been at the forefront of this information revolution. The country was among the first to connect to the World Wide Web in 1993.⁴² In 2007, officials announced a five-year plan to modernize Iran's high-speed communications grid,

⁴⁰ Ali M. Ansari, *Modern Iran Since 1921: The Pahlavis and After* (London: Pearson Education, 2003), 199-200.

⁴¹ For example, see Jonas Gahr Store, "West's Takeaway From Tahrir Square," *New York Times* (February 15, 2011).

⁴² Golam Khiabany, "Iranian Media: The Paradox of Modernity," 479.

extending digital television, and Internet to all 30 provinces.⁴³ Iran is host to one of the most active, Internet-savvy populations in the region, and, as its quick reaction to the 2009 protests to the presidential election demonstrated, an ability to reverse-engineer the revolution to track demonstrators and protesters.⁴⁴

The Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB)—also known as Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic—is the state monopoly television and radio broadcast service. IRIB replaced the former state broadcast service, National Iranian Radio and Television (NIRT), after the Islamic Revolution in 1979.⁴⁵

The Iranian government invests significantly in IRIB. In 2011, the budget for IRIB reached \$1.12 billion, an all-time high as a percentage of GDP.⁴⁶ Government investment in information and communications technology is also substantial and is trending upward.⁴⁷ Between 2000 and 2006, for example, telecommunications expenditure increased almost five-fold, from \$1.5 billion to \$5.3 billion USD.⁴⁸

⁴³ S. Barraclough, “Satellite Television in Iran: Prohibition, Imitation and Reform,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, 37: 3, 25-48.

⁴⁴ See for example: Yigal Schleifer “Why Iran's Twitter Revolution is Unique,” *Christian Science Monitor* (June 6, 2009). Accessed on March 31, 2012 at: <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2009/0619/p06s08-wome.html>

⁴⁵ “Transmitters and the broadcasting of radio and television programs around the country remain within the exclusive competence of that organization in accordance with Statute of the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting.” The report goes on to explain that the monopoly is necessary due to “cultural and security considerations.” See: “Foreign Trade Regime of the I. R. of Iran,” *Iran Trade Law* (2010), 78. Accessed March 15, 2012 at: <http://www.irantradelaw.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/Irans-Foreign-Trade-Regime-Report.pdf>

⁴⁶ Nationmaster Database. Accessed July 21, 2011 at: www.nationmaster.com/time.php?stat=med_inf_and_com_tec_exp_cur_us&country=ir

⁴⁷ “Information and communications technology” includes communications services, computer hardware, software and support, and wired and wireless equipment.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

Relationship to Domestic Intelligence & Security Apparatus

Iran maintains an extensive network of internal security and intelligence services. All security organizations, without exception, report to the Supreme National Security Council, the highest body in the political chain of command.⁴⁹ The SNSC reports to the Supreme Leader.⁵⁰ The Ministry of Intelligence and Security, the Basij Resistance Force, the intelligence unit of the IRGC and the law enforcement forces within the Ministry of Interior (largely responsible for police and border control) comprise the core of the domestic security apparatus.⁵¹

The IRGC is the most powerful of these agencies, with influence over several other security organizations and direct control of the Basij.⁵² The IRGC conducts many of its ideological activities through the IRIB. There appears to be a revolving door between the two organizations. IRIB has almost exclusively been led or staffed by

⁴⁹ Anthony Cordesman, "Iran's Revolutionary Guard," *CSIS* (June 2006); Accessed March 20, 2012 at http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/070816_cordesman_report.pdf

⁵⁰ According to RAND, the SNSC and the SNSC chairman "wield little authority over matters of defense." Instead, it is the Supreme Leader "who wields constitutional authority as commander-in-chief and, perhaps more importantly, exercises vast influence through his mediating role, personal relationships with top commanders, and the presence of his clerical representatives throughout the security institutions." When it comes to national security decision-making, individuals matter more than institutions. The Supreme Leader has special representatives in the SNSC (Rowhani and Larijani) and special advisers, such as former Foreign Minister Akbar Velayati and former IRGC commander in chief Rahim Safavi, on his Strategic Council for Foreign Relations. All of these former officials and others are likely to be consulted by him when they do not participate in important sessions of the SNSC." See: Frederic Wehrey, Jerrold Green, Brian Nichiporuk, Alireza Nader, Lydia Hansell, Rasool Nafisi, and S. R. Bohandy, "Rise of the Pasdaran: Assessing the Domestic Roles of Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps," (Washington, D.C.: National Defense Research Institute, RAND: 2008), 34.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* Public information on all Iranian security and intelligence forces is extremely limited and subject to political manipulation.

⁵² *Ibid.*

former IRGC officers. Such is the case with the present IRIB Director and his predecessor, Ali Larijani (1994-2004).⁵³

Indeed, some argue that the state broadcaster works hand in hand with the intelligence and security agencies. “IRIB is not a simple broadcasting service. It is an integral part of the Iranian intelligence and security services, engaged in unprecedented domestic repression,” wrote Iran expert and Nobel Peace Prize winner Shirin Ebadi and Hadi Ghaemi in the *Wall Street Journal*. “IRIB's camera crew and staff act as interrogators, going inside prisons to obtain coerced confessions from prisoners of conscience, hand in hand with interrogators and torturers from the Iranian intelligence services.”⁵⁴

Maziar Bahari, an Iranian-Canadian journalist who spent three months in prison after the Iranian election in 2009, made similar observations. “Three teams of reporters came into the prison, Press TV, IRIB’s Persian service, and Fars news Agency,” Bahari recounted of his taped interview *cum* interrogation in prison. Press interviews serve as an interrogation mechanism, helping the security services build its case against the prisoner through biased questions and highly edited interview clips. “The interrogator would hand [IRIB reporters] a piece of paper and would say: make sure you ask this question, too,”

⁵³ Frederic Wehrey, Jerrold Green, Brian Nichiporuk, Alireza Nader, Lydia Hansell, Rasool Nafisi, and S. R. Bohandy, “Rise of the Pasdaran, Assessing the Domestic Roles of Iran’s Revolutionary Guard Corps,” (Washington, D.C.: National Defense Research Institute, RAND: 2008), 61.

⁵⁴ Shirin Ebadi and Hadi Ghaemi call IRIB “a hub for broadcasting a range of libelous programs and spreading hate speech” against civil-society activists, religious minorities such as Bahais and Shia Sufis, dissident clerics, and others who challenge the government’s policies.” Shirin Ebadi and Hadi Ghaemi, “Broadcasting Tehran’s Repression,” *Wall Street Journal* (December 8, 2011). Accessed January 2012 at http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204903804577079970310000322.html?mod=googlenews_wsjs;

Bahari said.⁵⁵

IRIB Operating Environment & Organizational Mission

IRIB describes the media environment in Iran as a “battlefield” where an “intensifying media war” is raging, and where “supranational waves and messages have trespassed the geographical and cultural borders.” Iran confronts a “domineering empire of Western Media,” bent on “cultural conversion.” IRIB’s mission is to counter this threat by strengthening “cultural solidarity” and “national identity” in Iran.⁵⁶

Indeed, IRIB is forced to compete for viewership with foreign channels such as BBC Persian and Voice of America, as well as expatriate stations from Diaspora populations in the United States. The regime has taken steps to limit domestic consumption of foreign broadcasting. Iranian law prohibits TV satellite ownership (though the practice remains widespread, especially in major cities). The state routinely warns citizens of the incendiary effects of foreign television, deeming it a threat to personal identity, religious morals, and Iranian culture. For example, an investigative series about Western fashion aired on Iran’s twenty-four hour news channel IRIN blamed foreign media for “transmitting corrupting influences.” Entitled “Loss of Identity among the Youth,” the program featured what appeared to be unscripted interchanges between an IRIB reporter and pedestrians on the street.⁵⁷ Interview responses were presented as

⁵⁵ “Iranian State TV Acts as an Arm of the Intelligence Apparatus,” *International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran* (August 11, 2010). Accessed March 20, 2012 at:

<http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2010/08/iranian-state-tv-acts-as-an-arm-of-the-intelligence-apparatus/>

⁵⁶ S. Barraclough. “Satellite Television in Iran: Prohibition, Imitation and Reform.” *Middle Eastern Studies*, 37: 3, 25-48.

⁵⁷ “Iranian TV Campaign against Modern Fashion,” *IRINN TV* (September 1, 2008). Accessible at: <http://www.memritv.org/clip/en/1919.htm>

evidence of a larger, enemy offensive against Iranian culture through foreign broadcasting. A voiceover described the situation in ominous terms:

The enemies of the culture, history, and faith of the Iranian people began this cultural attack many years ago. We, the Iranians, are missing the opportunity to fight this, and to inform the general public and our youth of this. Perhaps it is already too late, but preserving and protecting our culture and faith is our duty as Iranian Muslims.⁵⁸

IRIB Command Structure

Voice and Vision is the umbrella organization for both radio and television services. It is headed by a single executive, the IRIB Director. While Article 175 of the constitution says that the director shall report to the IRIB Supervisory Board (which consists of two representatives from each branch), he takes his orders from the Supreme Leader. The Supreme Leader supervises the Director, and the Supreme Leader wields the power to appoint and fire him. Article 110 places the IRIB Director within the Office of the Supreme Leader.⁵⁹

The present IRIB Director, Ezzatollah Zarghami, was appointed by Khomeini to serve a five-year term in 2004 and then again in 2009.⁶⁰ Nine deputy directors serve under Zarghami (see Figure 2).⁶¹ The Political Affairs Deputy controls the IRIB newsroom, the Central News Bureau. The Central News Bureau produces and broadcasts news and political commentaries across both radio and TV networks. The Political

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ “Structure of Iran's State-Run TV IRIB” Open Source Center Media Aid (December 16, 2009). Accessed on March 2, 2012 at: www.fas.org/irp/dni/osc/iran-tv.pdf

⁶⁰ Ibid., 60; See also “Statute of the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting” accessible at: http://www.iranhrdc.org/english/human-rights-documents/iranian-codes/3356-the-article-of-association-statute-of-irib.html#.T6f_52A3Ihw

⁶¹ www.jomhoriyat.com (May 18, 2009).

Affairs Deputy and The Deputy for Radio, TV, and External Services share responsibility for all broadcasting content. The Development and Technology Deputy provides and maintains hardware, while the Training and Research Deputy oversees IRIB's research center and college radio and television services. The office of the Deputy for Majlis and Provinces is responsible for coverage of the Majlis and local content, as well as for producing an annual showcase of IRIB audio and video products.⁶² The International Relations Deputy maintains IRIB's ties with international radio and television networks and foreign government services and also represents the organization in the Asia-Pacific Broadcasters' Union (ABU).⁶³

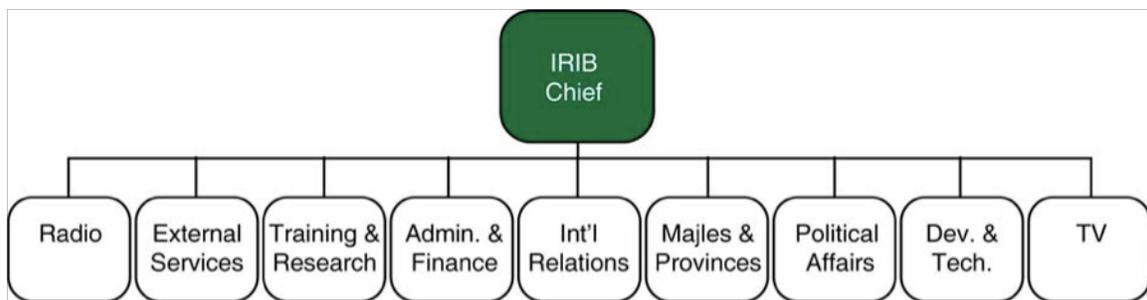


Figure 2 *Organizational Structure of the IRIB*

Television: Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Television is arguably the most powerful communications medium in Iran. It reaches virtually all parts of the country, spanning urban hubs, rural communities, and the country's numerous linguistic and ethnic populations.⁶⁴ (See Figure 3)

⁶² "Structure of Iran's State-Run TV IRIB" Open Source Center Media Aid (US Government: December 16, 2009).

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ The regime considers foreign broadcasts into Iran as a hostile act; Tehran routinely jams signals and has outlawed satellite dish ownership.

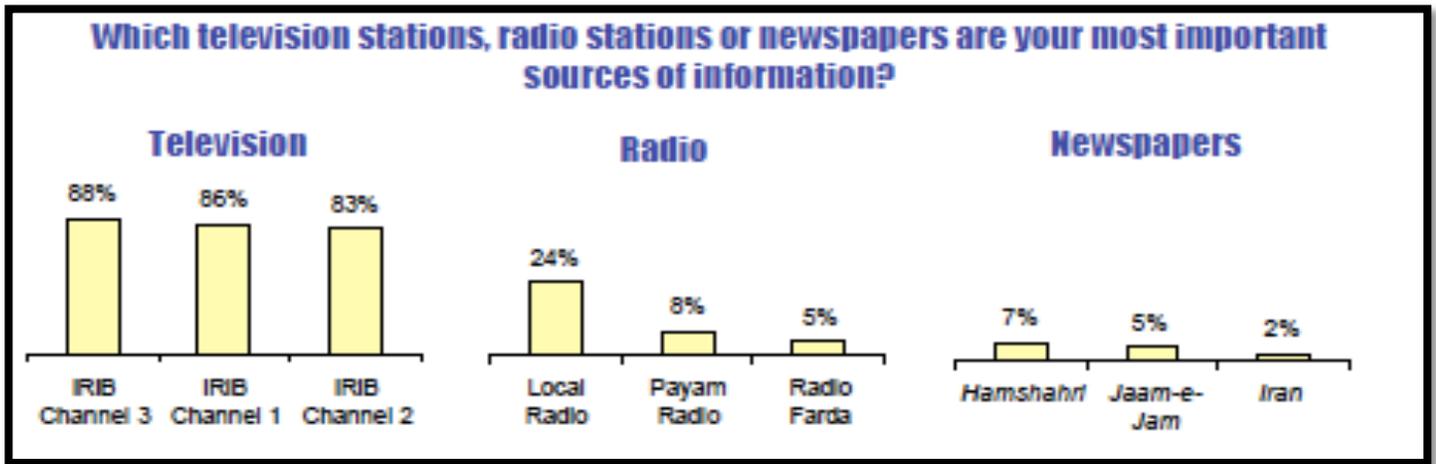


Figure 3⁶⁵ *Survey of Iranian Public Opinion 2005*

Over 90 percent of Iranians identify television as their primary source of news and information.⁶⁶

Iran's domestic television service, *Vision of the Islamic Republic*, consists of six national channels and thirty provincial channels. (See Figure 4)⁶⁷

⁶⁵ "Local Radio" refers to all IRIB radio services. *Audience Analysis and Market Profile*, FBIS Media Survey Report 2944/06, Open Source Center, (United States Government, May 2005).

⁶⁶ *Audience Analysis and Market Profile*, FBIS Media Survey Report 2944/06, Open Source Center, (United States Government, May 2005). Although IRIB enjoys a legal a monopoly on the market, foreign broadcasts can be received by satellite dish. Satellite dish ownership is widespread. The state must compete for viewers with foreign broadcasters such as BBC Persian, Voice of America, as well as a number of expatriate stations.

⁶⁷ "Slashing Red Tape on the Silver Screen" *PBS Frontline* (2009). Accessed April 11, 2011 at: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/tehranbureau/2009/10/slashing-red-tape-on-the-silver-screen.html>; *Structure of Iran's State-Run TV IRIB*, Open Source Center, United States Government (December 16, 2009).

Domestic Broadcasting	International Broadcasting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Channel 1 "National Network" — Channel 2 "Culture Network" — Channel 3 "Youth Network" — Channel 4 "Knowledge Network" — Channel 5 "Tehran Network" — Channel 6 "News Network" (IRIN) — 30 local channels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Al Alam is an Arabic-language channel launched in 2003 with a style of presentation similar to that of major pan-Arab satellite news channels such as Al-Jazeera. — Jam-e-Jam (1, 2 and 3) was launched in 1997 and describes itself as broadcasting to expatriates, Persian speakers, and those interested in the culture and civilization of Iran. Jam-e Jam features a mix of general programming, some with English subtitles. — Press TV is a 24-hour English-language news channel launched in 2007. — Sahar is a multilingual channel launched in 1990. — Qods TV

Figure 4 *Vision of the Islamic Republic*

Iran also maintains a sizeable foreign service. IRIB started beaming television to foreign audiences in 1997 with two stations. Its portfolio has since grown to six: Jam e Jam Network (which includes three channels), Sahar TV, Al Kawthar, Al Alam, Qods TV, and Press TV.⁶⁸ It broadcasts abroad in Chinese, Dari, English Armenian, Azeri, Bosnian, Japanese, Arabic, Hindi, Indonesian, Italian, Bengla, Hausa, Hebrew, Urdu, French, German, Turkish, Kiswahili, Pashtu, and Russian.⁶⁹ It publishes its reports in

⁶⁸ "Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting," accessible online at: <http://live.irib.ir>

⁶⁹ Ibid.

Farsi in print and multimedia format on IRIB websites. Most of its Farsi websites have English versions. It also streams live television and radio broadcasts on the Internet.⁷⁰

The international service enjoys a sizable audience in the Middle East and Maghreb. Iran's international broadcasts appear to target both Sunni and Shiite populations in neighboring states such as Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, and Bahrain. International broadcasts also serve populations in South America and Asia.⁷¹

In 2003, the Iranian government began to show a renewed interest in the quality and reach of its foreign broadcasting. After the US invasion of Iraq, Iranian leaders feared Iraq would become a base for US regional dominance. They considered any prospective changes to the Iraqi energy policy (under the influence of the US) a threat to Iran's power within the alliance of Oil and Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). For this reason, Tehran moved quickly to fill the information vacuum left in the wake of the fall of the Baathist government with an aim toward influencing the policy environment in its favor. Signaling an acute awareness of the power of information in shaping the post-conflict environment, Iran established a terrestrial television news and entertainment service targeting the Iraqi population.⁷²

⁷⁰ S. Barraclough, "Satellite Television in Iran: Prohibition, Imitation and Reform," *Middle Eastern Studies*, 37: 3, 25-48. See also: "Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting," accessible online at: <http://live.irib.ir>

⁷¹ *Audience Analysis and Market Profile*, FBIS Media Survey Report 2944/06, Open Source Center, (United States Government, May 2005).

⁷² By "terrestrial," I mean broadcast by land-based transmitter (as opposed to satellite). It should be noted that Iran is not alone in its investment in foreign broadcasting. Countries such as Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates have also built up their foreign and domestic media arsenals in the last decade. Indeed, government-financed broadcasters such as Al-Arabiyya and Al-Jazeera have come to dominate the media market in the Middle East. See: "Slashing Red Tape on the Silver Screen," *PBS Frontline* (2009); accessed March 1, 2012 at: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/>.

Radio: Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran

State radio is referred to generally inside Iran as “Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran” (VIRI). There are eight national domestic radio channels and a number of provincial stations. Most domestic channels broadcast twenty-four hours a day on both FM and MW frequencies. Many also offer live Internet streaming through the IRIB website.⁷³ Archived audio and podcasts are also available for some channels.⁷⁴

“Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran World Service” is Iran’s international radio service. It broadcasts in over 30 languages through a variety of mediums including satellite, Internet, and short and medium wave radio. Some stations are also available to a domestic audience, through the FM network.⁷⁵ The IRIB radio website has dedicated pages in the following languages: Albanian, Arabic, Armenian, Assyrian, Azeri, Bengali, Bosnian, Chinese, Dari, English, French, Georgian, German, Hausa, Hebrew, Hindi, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Kazakh, Kurdish, Pashto, Russian, Spanish, Swahili, Tajik, Taleshi (spoken in parts of Azerbaijan and northern Iran), Turkish, Urdu and Uzbek.⁷⁶

(See Figure 5)

⁷³ Live radio streaming can be accessed at <http://live.irib.ir/>.

⁷⁴ “Media Environment Guide: Iran” *BBC Monitoring*: United Kingdom (Jul 2011) 18-20.

⁷⁵ Ibid. In June 2011, IRIB in Ardabil Province launched Aran Radio, an "international" service broadcasting four hours daily to the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Caucasus region.

⁷⁶ Ibid. See also, “Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran World Service” online, accessible at <http://worldservice.irib.ir>.

Domestic Radio Broadcasting ⁷⁷	International Radio Broadcasting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Radio Iran, formerly known as Radio Sarasari (“Nationwide”), is Iran’s flagship radio station. — Radio Farhang (“Culture”) includes live broadcasts from the Majlis. — Radio Koran broadcasts Koranic recitations and interpretations. — Radio Ma’aref (“Islamic Knowledge”) broadcasts prayers and programs on religion and ethics from Qom. According to BBC, it works closely with radio Neda-ye Islam (“Call to Islam”), an English-language international broadcast.⁷⁸ — Radio Javan (“Youth”) — Radio Varzesh (“Sports”) — Radio Payam (“Message”) broadcasts news, music and local traffic information. — Radio Salamat (“Health”) broadcasts on FM in Tehran from 0600-2400. — Radio Goftogu (“Dialogue”) broadcasts on FM in Tehran from 1800 to 2400. It gained a reputation for broadcasting interviews with pro-reform politicians and other government critics. — Radio Tejarat (“Commerce”) broadcasts news and discussion by experts on the economy, financial markets, and government policy. It was replaced by Radio Eqtesad (“Economy”) in 2011. — Radio Nava broadcasts religious music on FM frequencies overnight.⁷⁹ — Local Radio: There are 29 local stations nationwide, producing programs in Farsi and some local languages and dialects, including Azeri, Kurdish and Gilaki. These stations usually broadcast between 0230 and 1630 GMT and broadcast content from the national network (Radio Iran) at night. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> —The Arabic Service broadcasts 24 hours a day on satellite, MW, SW and FM (which targets southeast Iraq, Tehran and Qom). It broadcasts a daily program, “Voice of Palestine: Voice of the Palestinian Islamic Revolution,” directed at populations in Syria, Lebanon and Palestine. —The Turkmen service broadcasts from Golestan Province. —The Uzbek, Tajik and Dari services broadcast from Mashhad. —The English service broadcasts to the US, Canada and Europe and includes a daily program, “Voice of Justice,” dedicated to coverage of the "US administration's interventionist policies."

Figure 5 *Voice of the Islamic Republic*

⁷⁷ “Media Environment Guide: Iran,” *BBC Monitoring*, United Kingdom (July 2011) 18-20.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 20. Radio Neda-ye Islam (“Call of Islam”) is a substation of Radio Ma’aref that broadcasts in English via satellite and internet.

⁷⁹ Additional stations were launched outside the time period for this study (2006-2007), including: Radio Namayesh, launched in March 2011, and Radio Iran Seda (“Iran Voice”), an Internet-only station launched in January 2008.

Chapter II: Literature Review

Win the mind, win the day.

—*Motto of the 9th Psychological Operations Battalion, 1968*

The names which construct social reality as much as they express it are the crucial stakes of political struggle.

—*Pierre Bourdieu, 1985*

What is “strategic” influence? How does it differ or correspond with strategic communication and other techniques employed by governments and non-state actors? To begin, I will review scholarly work on strategic influence for the purpose of crafting a working definition for this study. Next, I will consider literature on the nature of political discourse in the Middle East and propose a working definition of anti-Semitic narrative. Finally, I will discuss the history of Iranian Jewry in modern and ancient times.

Key Theories of Influence

The instruction of influence in statecraft dates back to ancient times, from Sun Tzu in China in the 5th century B.C. to Kautilya’s *Arthashastra* in India. Similar principles were taught in the Persian Empire from the 3rd to 7th century A.D.⁸⁰ In his seminal treatise of the subject, *Art of War*, Sun Tzu emphasizes the non-kinetic side of warfare. He urges the military strategist to “know thy enemy” and utilize tactics such as deception and intelligence collection to beat the enemy off the battlefield.

A prominent contemporary theorist on the art of influence is Joseph Nye. The former Assistant Secretary of Defense and present Dean of Harvard’s Kennedy School

⁸⁰ Richard H. Shultz and Roy Godson, *Dezinformatsia: Active Measures in Soviet Strategy* (Washington: Pergamon Brassey 1984), 13.

coined the term “soft power” as the “ability to achieve desired outcomes in international affairs through attraction rather than coercion.”⁸¹ In today’s paradigm, writes Nye, “information about what is occurring becomes a central commodity of international relations, just as the threat and use of military force was seen as the central power resource in an international system overshadowed by the potential clash of superpowers.”⁸² Rupert Smith agrees. In *The Utility of Force*, the retired British Army General and former Deputy Commander of the Supreme Allied Forces argues that information, rather than firepower, is the “currency” of modern warfare.⁸³

For Lieutenant Commander S.A. Tatham of the Royal Navy, the collection and transmission of information constitutes an operational art—what he calls “strategic communication.” Tatham defines strategic communication as “a systematic series of sustained and coherent activities, conducted across strategic, operational and tactical levels, that enables understanding of target audiences, identifies effective conduits, and develops and promotes ideas and opinions through those conduits to promote and sustain particular types of behavior.”⁸⁴

U.S. Naval War College Professor Carnes Lord takes exception with the term. In *Losing Hearts and Minds? Public Diplomacy and Strategic Influence in the Age of*

⁸¹ Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), 153-71.

⁸² Joseph S. Nye and William Owens, “America’s Information Edge” *Foreign Affairs* 75 (March/April, 1996), 24.

⁸³ Steve Tatham, *Losing Arab Hearts and Minds: The Coalition, Al-Jazeera and Muslim Public Opinion* (London: Hurst & Co., 2006), 173-204.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 174.

Terror, Lord argues that “psychological-political warfare” is a more accurate reflection of its historical roots in military psychological operations and covert political warfare.⁸⁵

The United States Joint Chief of Staff’s publication *Joint Doctrine for Psychological Operations* defines psychological operations (PSYOPs) as: “planned operations to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals . . . to induce or reinforce foreign attitudes and behavior favorable to the originator’s objectives.”⁸⁶

In *Dissuading Terror: Strategic Influence and the Struggle Against Terrorism* RAND Corporation analysts Kim Cragin and Scott Gerwehr argue that many of the aspects of PSYOPs that render it so valuable in kinetic engagement can be applied in influence operations in times peace and crisis.⁸⁷ In constructing their definition of a strategic influence campaign, Cragin and Gerwehr attempt to unite military operations and traditionally civilian-led, non-kinetic forms of statecraft under the umbrella of grand strategy. A strategic influence campaign is, ostensibly, PSYOPs conducted at the strategic and political level.⁸⁸

All four terms—“soft power,” “strategic communication,” “psychological-political warfare,” and “strategic influence campaign”—share an emphasis on the transmission of ideas and opinions for the purpose of changing the behavior of an

⁸⁵ Carnes Lord, *Losing Hearts and Minds? Public Diplomacy and Strategic Influence in the Age of Terror*, (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2006), 16-17.

⁸⁶ *Doctrine for Joint Psychological Operations* (Washington, D.C.: Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-53, 1996).

⁸⁷ Kim Cragin and Scott Gerwehr, *Dissuading Terror: Strategic Influence and the Struggle Against Terrorism* (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 2005), 75.

⁸⁸ Kim Cragin and Scott Gerwehr, *Dissuading Terror: Strategic Influence and the Struggle Against Terrorism*, 14.

adversary or receiver. This is the core of the definition of strategic influence employed in this paper.

Nature of the Discourse

What are the major characteristics and themes of political discourse in the Middle East? Is there a distinction between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism? Scholars disagree on what qualifies as anti-Semitism as distinct from discourse against the State of Israel and Zionism in general. The second part of my literature review considers this debate as well as select scholarship on the nature of such discourse in the Middle East.

Several experts point to *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* as central to the growth of anti-Semitism in the Middle East. Created in Czarist Russia in the late nineteenth century, *Protocols* is a work of black propaganda brought from Europe to Arabic speaking Christian communities in Syria and Egypt in the 1920s.⁸⁹ Posing as a record of a meeting of senior leaders of the Jewry, the work details over twenty founding principles—or protocols—of the Zionist campaign to take over the world.

Historian Marvin Perry and Frederick M. Schweitzer, in *Anti-Semitism: Myth and Hate from Antiquity to the Present*, credit *Protocols* for establishing the myth of the “Jewish international conspiracy.” In the opinion of the two Manhattan College professors, the narrative proliferated in the years between the World War I and II, when *Protocols* ranked among the most widely circulated books across the globe.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ Levy, *Antisemitism: A Historical Encyclopedia of Prejudice and Persecution*, 30-32.

⁹⁰ Marvin Perry and Frederick M. Schweitzer, *Anti-Semitism: Myth and Hate from Antiquity to the Present* (Gordonsville, VA: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

But Juha Raikka argues that not until the creation of Israel in 1948 and a series of Israeli victories over Middle Eastern powers did *Protocols* and the myth of the Jewish global conspiracy gain currency.⁹¹ Marouf Hasian similarly links the proliferation of anti-Semitism in the region to the creation of the Jewish State. He theorizes that, at the time, anti-Semitic narrative appealed to nationalist Arab leaders as a way of rationalizing their military losses and assuaging the growing discontent among their people.⁹²

Matthew Gray argues that conspiracy theories are central contributors to the political equation of the Middle East.⁹³ The salience of conspiracy theories in both popular and state discourse derives from a wide, complex set of sources; the phenomenon has real and important impacts.⁹⁴ In *Psychology of Intelligence Analysis*, former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) analyst Richards Heuer suggests the power of the narrative derives from its function in society: “Conspiracy theories are invoked to explain large effects for which there do not otherwise appear to be correspondingly large causes.”⁹⁵ Heuer identifies two characteristics of human cognition that, taken together, account for the prevalence of conspiracy theories: the tendency to reason according to similarity of cause and effect, and a bias toward inferring centralized direction.⁹⁶

⁹¹ Juha Rääkkä, "On Political Conspiracy Theories." *Journal of Political Philosophy* 17, no. 2 (June 2009): 185-201.

⁹² Marouf Hasian, "Understanding the Power of Conspiratorial Rhetoric: A Case Study of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion." *Communication Studies* 48, no. 3 (October 1, 1997): 195-214, accessed March 1, 2011, www.proquest.com.ezproxy6.ndu.edu.

⁹³ Matthew Gray, "Explaining Conspiracy Theories in Modern Arab Middle Eastern Political Discourse: Some Problems and Limitations of the Literature." *Critique: Critical Middle Eastern Studies* 17, no. 2 (Summer 2008): 155-174.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 157.

⁹⁵ Richards Heur Jr., "Psychology of Intelligence Analysis." *Center for the Study of Intelligence* (Virginia: Central Intelligence Agency, 1999).

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 9.

In *The Hidden Hand: Middle East Fears of Conspiracy*, Daniel Pipes examines the nexus between anti-Semitism and “conspiracism” in the Middle East.⁹⁷ He provides an overview of the historical genesis of conspiracy theories, which he says is mostly in the West and largely targets Jews.⁹⁸ Yet some scholars question Pipes’ reliance on reductionism and assertion in making his arguments. Indeed, in *Conspiracy Theories: Causes and Cures*, Harvard Law Professors Cass Sunstein and Adrian Vermeule challenge Pipes’ analysis, saying it “offers little in the way of explanation as to other possible sources of conspiracism, such as social dislocation, the impacts of individualism, political economy factors, or conspiracism as a form of popular deconstructivist historiography.”⁹⁹

In “The Collective Jew: Israel and the New Anti-Semitism,” Brian Klug challenges the validity of the “new anti-Semitism” thesis as well as the conflation of anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism in popular discourse. Klug argues that contemporary Western discourse fails to make the distinction between the individual Jew, in the old or classical version of anti-Semitism, and the state of Israel, in the new or modern variety.¹⁰⁰ In today’s discourse, Israel is instead considered “the collective Jew.”¹⁰¹

How did the state treat its native Jewish community in ancient times and in the early twentieth century? Did conditions change under the Islamic Republic? This

⁹⁷ Daniel Pipes, *The Hidden Hand: Middle East Fears of Conspiracy*. London: Macmillan Press, 1996.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 54.

⁹⁹ Cass R. Sunstein and Adrian Vermeule, “Conspiracy Theories: Causes and Cures” Harvard Public Law Working Paper No. 08-03; U of Chicago, Public Law Working Paper No. 199; U of Chicago Law & Economics, Olin Working Paper No. 387 (January 15, 2008): 202-227.

¹⁰⁰ Brian Klug, “The Collective Jew: Israel and the new anti-Semitism.” *Patterns of Prejudice*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (June 2003).

¹⁰¹ Paul R., Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz Jehuda, *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 332.

section will review literature on the treatment of Jews under ancient and modern Persian regimes.

History of Iranian Jewry

Iran's Jewish community is one of the oldest and largest outside of Israel. Iranian Jews, numbering 26,000 to 40,000 today, are almost exclusively of eastern heritage (Sephardic).¹⁰² Historical documents refer to Jewish presence in the region as far back as 721 BCE, when King Sargon II of Assyria settled the Jews in Western and Central Iran. In 539 BCE, the Persian emperor Cyrus the Great freed more than 40,000 Jews from captivity in Babylon, enabled their return to Palestine, and financed the rebuilding of their temple in Jerusalem.¹⁰³ But not all returned to the Holy Land. Many chose to remain in Persia, primarily in Isfahan, then called Yahudiyeh or Dar al-Yahud (or Dar al Medes), meaning, "Land of the Jews."¹⁰⁴

In the Achaemenid, Seleucid, and Parthian periods, the pervading Zoroastrian theology tolerated the Jewish faith. In fact, Judaism won many converts (for example, the rulers of Adiabene, a vassal kingdom of the Parthians in northern Mesopotamia, converted to Judaism in the 1st century CE). Under the Sasanians, there was periodic persecution of non-Zoroastrian minorities, including Jews.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Reeva Simon, Michael Laskier and Sara Reguer eds. *Jews of the Middle East and North Africa in Modern Times* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2003), 367.

¹⁰³ Iran Chamber Society, "History of Iran: Cyrus The Great." Accessed March 1, 2012 at: http://www.iranchamber.com/history/cyrus/cyrus_decree_jews.php.

¹⁰⁴ Reeva Simon, Michael Laskier and Sara Reguer eds. *Jews of the Middle East and North Africa in Modern Times*, 368.

¹⁰⁵ In the time of Peroz (459-84) for example, the sons of Jewish martyrs at Isfahan were supposedly given as slaves to a fire temple, and perhaps they eventually became Zoroastrians.

The Arab conquest of Persia and toppling of the Sassanid Empire in 644 A.D. by the Rashidan Army initiated a process of voluntary and forced conversion of most Zoroastrian Persians to Islam.¹⁰⁶ Jews, like Christians, were classified as “people of the book” and not forced to convert. Still, sporadic violence and discrimination against Jews occurred.

The ascension of Shah Abbas to the throne in 1588 and the beginning of the Qajar period brought a new level of discrimination against Iranian Jewry.¹⁰⁷ Yeshiva University professor Daniel Tsadik examines the religious, social, and political status of Jews in nineteenth-century Iran in his book, *Between Foreigners and Shi'is*. The historian calls the Qajar dynasty “one of the darkest periods of the history of the Jews of Iran.” Jews were forced to convert to Islam *en masse*. Anti-Jewish practices ranged from prohibiting Jews in certain business sectors and government jobs to horrific persecution, including murder and torture.¹⁰⁸

In 1830, a blood libel (the accusation that Jews used the blood of a Muslim child in the making of matzo for use during Passover) in the northwestern city of Tabriz resulted in the death of approximately seven thousand Jews and the total depopulation of Jews from the city. In 1839, an accusation that Jews had deliberately insulted Muslims ignited a wave of violence in the eastern city of Mashhad. Spurred by a *fatwa* issued by a local Imam ordering the death of all Jews in Mashhad, mobs destroyed a synagogue,

¹⁰⁶ The Rashidun Caliphate Army or Rashidun army was the primary military body of the Rashidun Caliphate's armed forces during the Muslim conquests of the 7th century.

¹⁰⁷ Daniel Tsadik, “Between Foreigners and Shi'is: Nineteenth-Century Iran and its Jewish Minority,” *Stanford Studies in Jewish History and Culture* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), 17–21.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*; Some scholars credit the concept of *najis*, (“ritual uncleanness” or “ritual impurity) associated with Twelver Islam for serving as the theoretical backbone for much of the discrimination during this time.

attacked and looted Jewish houses, and murdered thirty-six Jewish residents. Survivors were forced to convert to Islam or flee the city.¹⁰⁹

In 1865, Nasir al-Din Shah called for equal treatment of Iranian Jews. In a letter to the prime minister, he insisted his Jewish subjects be treated with “justice and kindness.” Yet the anti-Jewish pogroms persisted, exposing the hollowness of the Shah’s decree and the limit of imperial power outside the capitol.¹¹⁰ Later, in response to diplomatic pressure from Britain and its Jewish community, measures were taken to ameliorate the plight of local Jewish communities (from 1874 to 1883). In Isfahan province, for example, Nasir al-Din Shah’s son, Zill al-Sultan, threatened to punish any Muslim who harmed a Jew.¹¹¹ Still, persecution and forced conversion of Jews persisted.¹¹²

The persecution of Jews was neither uniform nor consistent under the Qajar dynasty. It varied from city to city in accordance with attitudes of local rulers.¹¹³ Tsadik suggests that persecution of Jews in some villages came in tandem with the growing economic power and social influence of local Shiite clergy, particularly in areas with large Jewish populations.¹¹⁴ In 1892, for example, one especially influential cleric in Hamadan directed followers to attack Hamadani Jews on the eve of Yom Kippur, leaving

¹⁰⁹ Haideh Sahim in “Iran and Afghanistan” in *Jews of the Middle East and North Africa in Modern Times*, 369.

¹¹⁰ Daniel Tsadik, “Between Foreigners and Shi’is: Nineteenth-Century Iran and its Jewish Minority,” 115–116.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Daniel Tsadik, “Between Foreigners and Shi’is: Nineteenth-Century Iran and its Jewish Minority,” 127.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Daniel Tsadik, “Between Foreigners and Shi’is: Nineteenth-Century Iran and its Jewish Minority,” 176. Tsadik notes that the shite clergy “gradually became more assertive and more involved in religious, political, and socio-economic matters.”

thirty-four people dead. He imposed nineteen discriminatory rules on the Jews, most significantly, the wearing of a red patch in public.¹¹⁵

According to Tsadik, the weakness of the Qajar state, in part, enabled localized discrimination: “The central state’s loose grip on the country helped to increase the socio-political and economic power of some provincial governors, landlords, merchants, *lutis* (roughs) and *ulama*. The Jews and other minority groups were at the mercy of the whim of these local elites; if they saw it as in their interests (political, social, or economic) to persecute and mistreat them, they did so.”¹¹⁶ Indeed, Tsadik suggests that the behavior was aimed at challenging the legitimacy of Qajar rule. They denounced government efforts to improve the lot of the Jewish minority as “the work of foreign imperialist forces, ignorant of local culture and Islamic values.”¹¹⁷

George Nathaniel Curzon, a British Member of Parliament who traveled through Iran in the late nineteenth century, lends support to Tsadik’s portrayal. Curzon notes the disparate conditions of Iranian Jewry:

In Isfahan, where there are said to be 3,700, and where they occupy a relatively better status than elsewhere in Persia, they are not permitted to wear the *kolah* or Persian head-dress, to have shops in the bazaar, to build the walls of their houses as high as a Moslem neighbour's, or to ride in the streets. In Teheran and Kashan they are also to be found in large numbers and enjoying a fair position. In Shiraz they are very badly off. At Bushire they are prosperous and free from persecution. As soon, however, as any outburst of bigotry takes place in Persia and elsewhere the Jews are apt to be the first victims.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵ Tsadik, 137–145 and 160–174. Another example is Aqa Najafi in Isfahan.

¹¹⁶ Tsadik, 127.

¹¹⁷ Tsadik, 190.

¹¹⁸ George Nathaniel Curzon, *Persia and the Persian Question* (London: Longmans, Green & Co:1892), 510-511.

The future British Foreign Minister notes that Jews occupied only menial positions in industry and trade. Curzon concludes that economic limitations, coupled with “disabilities of dress and habits,” rendered Iranian-Jews “social pariahs from their fellow creatures.”

Iranian Jewry in the Twentieth Century

Haideh Sahim, instructor of Persian and Persian Literature at Hofstra University, chronicles the history of the Jews in Iran and Afghanistan in *Jews of the Middle East and North Africa in Modern Time*. According to Sahim, life changed for the better in the early years of Pahlavi rule. Taking cues from the Constitutional Revolution in 1906 and the equalitarian theory that inspired it, Reza Shah (1925-41) initiated a process of modernization and secularization that helped to reduce the level of overt discrimination Jews encountered. Policies such as integration of Muslims and non-Muslims in schools, enforced western-style dress, and compulsory military service fostered greater integration of minority communities in social life and commerce and reduce anti-minority sentiment.¹¹⁹ The reforms introduced minority representation in the Majlis (one seat for Jews) and official protection for minorities. Yet, the process was not smooth; sporadic attacks on Jews continued to occur. The first Jewish representative in the Majlis, Azizollah Simani, resigned amid a barrage of harassment and threats and was replaced by an influential Muslim cleric in parliament.¹²⁰

While Reza Shah was not particularly concerned about the plight of Jews in

¹¹⁹ Haideh Sahim in “Iran and Afghanistan” in *Jews of the Middle East and North Africa in Modern Times*, 374.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*; The second Jewish representative was elected in 1909 and served several terms.

Europe in the early twentieth century, he was not numb to the atrocities taking place in Europe and the Soviet Union, says Orly R. Rahimiyan, a researcher at Ben Gurion University in “Judeo-Persian communities in the Pahlavi Era.” In 1941, the Iranian government was one of the few to open its borders to refugees fleeing Europe. It offered refuge to a group of Polish Jews, including 871 children, and allowed the Iranian Jewish community to set up temporary housing in Tehran. After the formation of Israel in 1949, Iran was the only majority Muslim nation that did not expel its Jewish population.¹²¹

In 1948, Iran voted against independence for Israel at the UN. Yet in the years that followed, the two countries enjoyed a close, if secretive, diplomatic relationship. The conditions for Iranian Jews continued to improve. Approximately fifty percent of Jewish children of elementary school age in Iran attended Hebrew schools and received lessons in Hebrew.¹²² Still, some Iranian Jews did seize the opportunity to make a new home in Israel.

Haggai Ram, professor of Middle East Studies at Ben-Gurion University and author of *Iranophobia: Logic of an Israeli Obsession*, attributes the emigration of Iranian Jews to financial enticements proffered by Israel. Named “Operation Cyrus,” the campaign of diplomatic outreach and financial incentives brought between 22,000 and 30,000 Iranian Jews to Israel between 1949 and 1964.¹²³

Despite the exodus, approximately 62,000 Jews lived in Iran in 1970, making it the largest Jewish population in Asia and North Africa.¹²⁴ It was also the wealthiest.

Most Iranian Jews were middle class and educated. Two of the eighteen members of the

¹²¹ Orly R. Rahimiyan, “Judeo-Persian communities in the Pahlavi Era,” *Encyclopedia Iranica* (2010).

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Haggai Ram, “Between Homeland and Exile: Iranian Jewry in Zionist/Israeli Political Thought,” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 35:1 (April, 2008),1-20.

¹²⁴ Statistical Center of Iran 1980, 78.

Royal Academy of Sciences, eighty of 4,000 university lecturers, and 600 of 10,000 physicians in Iran were Jews.¹²⁵

The majority of the Iranian Jewish community was wary of the Islamic Revolution, despite assurances that their rights would be protected under the new regime. Life had been good under the Pahlavi. The Shah's secularist policies had reduced the power of the clergy and obviated the salience of discriminatory concepts such as *najlis* in society. For much of the community, the Pahlavi era was the "first and only time the government took seriously its responsibility of protecting its people."

In Iran and Afghanistan, Sahim attempts to explain this preference, arguing that the primary desire of Iranian Jewry was equal treatment. "The contentment of the Jews with the Pahlavi rulers is little understood by many non-Jews in Iran, particularly the left and the liberals. It should be noted the expectation of this suppressed society in search of revival was not democracy in the form of political freedom but equality in social rights, a relative freedom in economic activities, and above all an end to oppression and imposed limitations."¹²⁶

Yet other scholars aver that some Iranian Jews played an active supporting role, attracted to the socialist and democratic components early multi-party revolutionary movement. Ultimately, the main Jewish organization in Tehran elected to participate in the formation of the new regime. In 1978, the Jewish community deployed a representative to participate in the drafting of the constitution of the Islamic Republic.¹²⁷

¹²⁵ Haideh Sahim, in "Iran and Afghanistan" in *Jews of the Middle East and North Africa in Modern Times*, 374.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 375.

¹²⁷ A Jewish representative sat on the committee tasked with drafting the new constitution in 1978. From the first draft of the document to its final version, the Constitution of the Islamic Republic preserved Jews' place as a minority group in Iran and afforded it a seat in the Majlis and protection under law.

But Haggai Ram counters that the Islamist currents of the revolutionary movement and the anti-Jewish rhetoric of its leaders concerned the Jewish community from the start. The Tehran-based group took steps to preserve its infrastructure in the advent of a hostile Khomeini regime and established a parallel organization that publically supported the revolution and encouraged members to participate in the demonstrations.¹²⁸ The Jewish organization raised its concerns with Khomeini advisors such as Sadeq Qotbzadeh, Bani Sadr, and Mehdi Askari. For the most part, their assurances worked to allay the community's fears about treatment of Iranian Jewry under the Khomeini government.¹²⁹

Israel was not as easily convinced. As the revolutionary fervor in Iran mounted in 1978-79, Israeli leaders faced increasing domestic pressure to devise a plan to "rescue" the Jews of Iran. In January 1979, on the eve of Khomeini's triumphant return to Iran, two Israeli state officials were dispatched to Iran to induce the Jews to leave for Israel.¹³⁰ While the Jewish community in Tehran received the envoys with open arms, it flatly rejected the proposed emigration.¹³¹

Despite their collective rejection of the invitation from Israel, some Jews did choose to leave Iran, either immediately before or in the years following the Islamic Revolution. Some went to Israel, but most immigrated to the United States and other

¹²⁸ Haggai Ram, "Caught between Orientalism and Aryanism, Exile and Homeland," *Hagar 8:1* (Summer 2008), 83; See also: H. Ram, "Neither East nor West, neither redemption nor destruction: Zionism and the Jews of Iran" *Teorya o-bikoret* 26 (2005), 149-74.

¹²⁹ Ram, "Caught between Orientalism and Aryanism, Exile and Homeland," 97.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ *Ibid.* See also: H. Ram, "Neither East nor West, neither redemption nor destruction: Zionism and the Jews of Iran" *Teorya o-bikoret* 26 (2005), 149-74.

countries. Those who chose to remain in Iran sought to distinguish themselves from “Zionism” and the “Zionist network” of Israel and the United States.¹³²

While Khomeini’s early preaching made no distinctions between Israel, world Jewry, and Jews as a religious minority, he later made efforts to distinguish between Zionists/Israel and Jews in his revolutionary invective. “Jews are different from Zionists,” Khomeini said in November 1979. “If the Muslims overcome the Zionists, they will leave the Jews alone.”¹³³ The shift in rhetoric may have been the result of the outreach of Iranian Jewish community or concern about potential backlash to Iran’s Jewish minority by Khomeini’s lieutenants. Eliz Sanasarian, however, in her book *Religious Minorities in Iran*, credits the Islamic principal of *dhimma* as the ultimate determinant of regime rhetoric and policy. According to Sanasarian, it was the Koran, rather than any political calculation or moral sympathy, which prevented the Islamic Republic’s founders from persecuting Jews more severely. “In other words, Islam was the shield that was safeguarding the Jews against the fundamentalist impulse.”¹³⁴

Zionism in Iran

While love for “Eretz Israel” (Land of Israel) always existed in Iran, European-brand Zionism was a foreign concept. Zionism existed only in a religious sense. According to Rachel Simon, “two major components of Zionism had long been carried out in the region [Middle East and North Africa] without the mantle of Zionism and with

¹³² Orly R. Rahimiyan, “Judeo-Persian communities in the Pahlavi Era,” *Encyclopedia Iranica* (2008).

¹³³ He goes on to say: “They are a nation like other nations; their life continues on and they cannot be rejected by Muslims.” The Supreme Leader may be using “nation” in the religious sense akin to the Nation of Islam, the idea of a greater Jewish community such as there is the greater Muslim community/Islamic caliphate.

¹³⁴ Sanasarian, *Religious Minorities in Iran*, 110-11.

no nationalist connotations—the study of Hebrew and the concept of *aliyah* (Jewish emigration to the Land of Israel).”¹³⁵ It was this brand of Zionism that first emerged in an organizational form in Tehran in 1912, with the establishment of the Iranian Jewish Youth Cultural Society.¹³⁶

In 1917, Britain’s Lord Balfour offered the Balfour declaration, which recognized the right of the Jewish people to a homeland in Palestine, partly to woo European (especially German and Austrian) Jews to support the Allied cause in World War I. The Jewish community in Iran, which viewed the declaration as the start of freedom from exile, founded the Zionist Organization of Iran less than a year later. Its first action was to correspond with Zionist organizations in Russia and England, requesting aid, books, and newspapers. Being in touch with Jews throughout Iran and in Palestine and Europe had positive results. The community learned how to organize and began educational activities. About ten plays were produced, and hundreds of lectures on Jewish history and culture were sponsored.

Although Reza Shah prohibited all organized political or party activities connected to foreign organizations, he did not strictly enforce the ban on Zionism. As World War II progressed, the Zionist leadership in Palestine began an outreach campaign to spread political Zionism to Jewish communities of the Middle East, including in Iran. Beginning in 1943 and lasting through the end of the war, about 150 emissaries traveled

¹³⁵ Rachel Simon , “Zionism” in *Jews of the Middle East and North Africa in Modern Times*, 166.

¹³⁶ Haideh Sahim in “Iran and Afghanistan” in *Jews of the Middle East and North Africa in Modern Times*, 376.

on behalf of the Jewish Agency of Palestine to countries in the region, primarily Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, and Turkey.¹³⁷

When the Shah returned to power in 1953, he banned all political groups including the Zionists. The only group permitted to remain active was the Muslim clergy. Sahim credits the Muslim clergy, the only group permitted to remain politically active under the Shah, for “the new anti-Semitism” which emerged and resulted in the first major emigration of Iranian Jews in the 1950s.¹³⁸ While estimates vary, approximately 30,000 Iranian Jews immigrated to Israel.

Anti-Zionism was a central tenant of revolutionary thinking and a routine feature of protest slogans during and after the revolution.¹³⁹ In the early 1980s, a popular myth that the Prophet was poisoned by his Jewish wife was memorialized in the entrance exam for Iran’s Teachers’ Training College. In a multiple-choice question, students were asked to identify the instigator of the martyrdom of the Prophet Mohammad. The “correct” answer was “a Jewess.”¹⁴⁰

Under the present regime, Zionism is singularly a political concept. In both political discourse and state produced media, it is used as a synonym for Israel; the phrase “Zionist network” in turn, is used in reference to the United States (the “great Satan”) and its ally Israel. State persecution of Jews and other minority groups, as well as foreigners and political dissenters, often occurs under the veil of anti-Zionism. The charge of aiding Israel or supporting the Zionist agenda is punishable by death. Even the practice of

¹³⁷ Rachel Simon in “Zionism” in *Jews of the Middle East and North Africa in Modern Times* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003),172; In Farsi: ایران صهیونیستی سازمان (Tashkilat-e siunit-e Iran)

¹³⁸ Haideh Sahim, “Iran and Afghanistan,” in *Jews of the Middle East and North Africa in Modern Times*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 385.

¹³⁹ Sanasarian, *Religious Minorities in Iran*, 110.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 48.

religious principles associated with Zionism is forbidden. In May 1989, for example, a Jewish businessman Ruhollah Kakhodah-Zadeh was imprisoned and executed for helping Iranian-Jews immigrate to Israel (*aliyah*).¹⁴¹ More recently, on the eve of Passover in 1999, thirteen Jews from Shiraz and Isfahan were arrested on charges of spying for the Zionists.¹⁴² A Jew who applies for a passport to travel outside of Iran must file with a special bureau and is immediately placed under surveillance. Those known to have visited Israel in the past are barred from leaving Iran. The regime seldom allows all the members of one family to travel abroad simultaneously.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ U.S. Department of State, *International Religious Freedom Report 2001*, Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (Washington, DC: October 26, 2001).

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ A measure likely aimed at preventing the resulting dissolution of the Jewish community. See also: “Victory of Reformists in Iran Does not Mean Increased Aliyah” *Jewish Global Agenda* 1: 8, (February 24, 2000); accessed in January 2012 at: <http://web.archive.org/web/20080616211058/http://www.jafi.org.il/agenda/english/index8.asp#2>

Chapter III: Research Design

The research design serves as a blueprint of the research process, including the data and resources employed and the method of analysis. This section will detail the logic behind the author's choice of data and scope of analysis. Further, it will describe the method of analysis and address limitations of the data.

Data Choice and Scope

As a source of data, any type of television and radio content might offer insight into regime policy. Still, a sports talk show, for example, offers few clues to the identity and intent of the sender. Not unlike the children's game of telephone, many individuals are involved in production process, and the original message is liable to become modified or altered along the way. For this reason, I chose to narrow my focus to a specific kind of IRIB content: speeches delivered by the Supreme Leader.

The advantage of limiting my analysis to public speeches by the Supreme Leader is two fold. First, a political speech, by its nature, entails a "sender" and "receiver." The sender, Iranian Supreme Leader, Khamenei, is a constant. One can safely assume that the speech either was written by or received prior approval by the Supreme Leader. The second advantage is that the receiver can be more easily identified based on the immediate audience to which the remarks were delivered as well as information relating to the historical context.

Through a process of systematic random sampling, I identified two sample data sets.¹⁴⁴ Document review of speeches by the Supreme leader broadcast between 2005 and 2008 was performed. This timeframe featured the largest consecutive collection of English transcripts. A few test searches revealed what appears to be a sizable volume of secondary source documentation on web-based library indices and newspaper archives.¹⁴⁵

The word “Zion” and its derivatives are commonly used by Iranian government officials in reference to the state of Israel, Zionism as a political movement, and also in abstraction, as the enemy/ies of Iran.¹⁴⁶ It is relatively distinct (thus easier to identify and less likely to be missed or misinterpreted by translators) in both spoken and written Farsi. It is also germane to the particular focus of the study. An initial search identified eighty-three speeches with the key word “Zion” or its derivatives between 2005 and 2008.¹⁴⁷ The highest number of speeches occurred during the years 2006 and 2007, specifically during the month of August and July, respectively.

From this pool, I established two sample sets. Each set contained English transcriptions of the public remarks of Ayatollah Khamenei communicated en masse through radio or television. Each speech has at least one use of the word Zion or its derivatives. Set A06 consists of three speeches from August 2006. Set J07 consists of three speeches in July 2007. (See Annex)

¹⁴⁴ Howard Balian, *How to Design, Analyze and Write Doctorial or Master's Research* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1988), 168.

¹⁴⁵ <http://khamenei.ir/>

¹⁴⁶ The study uses Rachel Simon's definition of political Zionism. According to Simon, “political Zionism blends traditional religious ‘love of Zion’ with modern nationalism. It grew out of the centuries-old yearning of Diaspora Jews to return to Zion (i.e., Eretz Yisrael, the Land of Israel), but it started in a social environment in which nationalism was a major political force.” See: Reeva Simon, Michael Laskier and Sara Reguer (eds.), *Jews of the Middle East and North Africa in Modern Times* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 165.

¹⁴⁷ Derivatives include: بین الملل صهیونیسم “international Zionism,” “Zionist regime,” and “regime that occupies Qods”, صهیونیسم (Zionism/ist),.

Content analysis was also performed on a control sample. The control sample consists of six randomly selected speeches from an unspecialized pool of data consisting of all English transcripts available of speeches between 2006 and 2007. Set C06 consists of three speeches from 2006. Set C07 consists of three speeches from 2007. (See Annex)

Method of Analysis

Content analysis is a set of procedures for collecting and organizing information in a standardized format that allows analysts to make inferences about the characteristics and meaning of written and other recorded material. Simple formats can be developed for summarizing information or counting the frequency of statements. More complex formats can be created for analyzing trends or detecting subtle differences in the intensity of statements.¹⁴⁸ To test my hypothesis, I examined each speech for two conditions: strategic influence and anti-Semitic language. I also noted reference to Zionism, word frequency, and repetition, imagery and themes.

Determining Strategic Influence

Once again, this study defines “strategic influence” as “affecting or attempting to affect the political behavior of an adversary through systematic transmission of information to a target audience.” To simplify my analysis, I deconstructed the definition into three constituent clauses. Each clause is posited as a polar interrogative.¹⁴⁹ For a

¹⁴⁸ U.S. Government Accountability Office (1989), 6.

¹⁴⁹ Annabel Evans and Bryan J. Rooney. *Methods in Psychological Research* (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2008), 20-25.

speech to qualify as strategic influence, all three variables must be present and all questions must be answered in the affirmative.¹⁵⁰

1. *Affecting or attempting to affect the political behavior of an adversary*

“Strategic influence” is first and foremost concerned with the intent of the influencer.¹⁵¹ I will answer “yes,” “no,” or “unknown” to the following questions: Is there a political objective? Is there an adversary?

2. *Systematic transmission of information*

“Strategic influence” involves systematic transmission of information over time, or, in other words, narrative. I will answer “yes,” “no,” or “unknown” to the following question: Is there a narrative relayed over time?

3. *To a target audience*

To qualify as strategic influence, the transmission of information must be targeted. I will identify the target audience by looking at the context and media segmentation. For each speech, I will answer “yes,” “no,” or “unknown” to the following question: is there a target audience?

To establish the date, time, and manner of broadcast, I deferred to the translator notes on the speech transcript. I used newspaper articles and government documents to establish political context. Specifically, I searched for information regarding the domestic and international events in the proceeding days, weeks, and months, up to twelve months from the date of the speech. I also took note of the audience addressed at

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Clausewitz identifies three levels of war (from lowest to highest): tactical, theater/operational, and grand strategic. The strategic level of statecraft is political. See: Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Ed. and trans. by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976).

the time of delivery as well as the medium through which it was dispersed en masse. Audience segmentation for each medium (radio or television) was also considered.

Determining Anti-Semitic Narrative

Content analysis was used to determine whether or not the specialized/preselected sample set included anti-Semitic language. In light of its historic significance and influence in contemporary anti-Semitic discourse, the themes and language employed in *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* served to help the analyst identify anti-Semitic discourse, with or without explicit reference to Jew(s) as individuals or communities. The themes in *Protocols* were also widely employed in Nazi broadcasts to Arab and Persian populations in the mid-twentieth century. The Iranian government oversaw at least two mass printings of *Protocols* in the 1990s.¹⁵² The *Protocols* is the subject of a number of IRIB programs, talk shows, and documentaries today.¹⁵³ It is also an obvious, almost unequivocal example of anti-Semitism.¹⁵⁴

Content analysis will be used to determine whether or not the language may be characterized as anti-Semitic, where “anti-Semitic” is defined as: *any of the language, ideas and/or themes articulated in Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion, as*

¹⁵² Recent documentation shows over 160 new Zionist conspiracy publications put forth by the Iranian government between 2006 and 2008. “Antizionist publications,” *Scribd*. Accessed on March 1, 2012 at: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/47654714/Anti-Semitic-books-in-Tehran-Book-Fair-2010-xlsx>

¹⁵³ For example: “The Secret of Armageddon” was aired as a series of episodes between May and June 2008 in a format similar to the History Channel. The IRIB program describes the genesis of the “international Zionist conspiracy” from its origins in the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. See: “The Secret of Armageddon” *IRINN TV* (May-June 2008). Accessible at: www.media.memritv.org/WMV-E/1802.wmv.

¹⁵⁴ According to Iran expert Judith Yaphe of National Defense University, use of such themes in state broadcasting “would clearly be meant to stimulate and exaggerate anti-Semitism and anti-Israel sentiments.” See Soli Sahvar’s discussion of the role of *Protocols* in the early years of the Islamic Republic. Soli Shavar, “The Islamic Regime in Iran and its Attitude towards the Jews: the Religious and Political Dimensions,” *Immigration and Minorities* 27:1 (2009), 82-117.

*reminiscent of historic justifications for persecution of Jews as individuals and communities.*¹⁵⁵

According to *Protocols*, the Zionist objective is to control the world. The means for achieving this goal include money, media, politics, religious persecution/victimhood, and covert operations. Each of the twenty-four “protocols” identified by the narrative falls roughly under the following five operational strategies:

- A. Influence public opinion (through media)¹⁵⁶
- B. Undermine other faith/religions (through materialism or capitalism)¹⁵⁷
- C. Generate acquiescence of governments (through co-option or conspiracy)¹⁵⁸
- D. Deter individual and collective resistance (through proliferation of vice, globalization, liberalization of culture, erosion of identity)¹⁵⁹
- E. Undermine nationalism (by encouraging competition/animosity among peoples and emphasizing differences between religions and sects)¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁵ Kim Cragin and Scott Gerwehr, “Dissuading Terror: Strategic Influence and the Struggle against Terrorism,” Rand Corporation (2005).

¹⁵⁶ For example, Protocol 2: “Through the Press we have gained the power to influence while remaining ourselves in the shade; thanks to the Press we have got the gold in our hands, notwithstanding that we have had to gather it out of oceans of blood and tears.”

¹⁵⁷ For example, Protocol 4: “...it is indispensable for us to undermine all faith, to tear out of the minds of the GOYIM the very principle of the Godhead, and the spirit, and to put in its place arithmetical calculations and material needs. In order to give the goyim no time to think and take note, their minds must be diverted towards industry and trade. Thus, all the nations will be swallowed up in the pursuit of gain and in the race for it will not take note of their common foe.”

¹⁵⁸ For example, Protocol 5 reads in part: “the nations cannot come to even an inconsiderable private agreement without our secretly having a hand in it...”

¹⁵⁹ Protocol 13: “In order that the masses themselves may not guess what we are about we further distract them with amusements, games, pastimes, passions, people’s palaces...these interests will finally distract their minds from questions in which we should find ourselves compelled to oppose them.” Also Protocol 16: “We shall emasculate the first stage of collectivism— the universities by re-educating them in a new direction.”

¹⁶⁰ For example, Protocol 8: “Now a days, if any States raise a protest against us, it is only pro forma at our discretion and by our direction, for their anti-Semitism is indispensable to us for the management of our lesser brethren.”

Calculating Results

Each speech was treated as an individual influence campaign. The extent to which the campaign satisfied the requisites of “strategic influence” and “anti-Semitic language” was tracked using a simple data sheet (see *Annex*). Findings were recorded for each speech and cumulatively, based on four polar interrogatives (see previous discussion):

1. Is there a political or security objective?
2. Is there an adversary or antagonist?
3. Is there anti-Semitic narrative?
4. Is there a target audience?

Limitations of the Data

The author recognizes that this data choice is imperfect; a translated transcription of a speech is not a primary document. A disadvantage of limiting my analysis to speeches with a common variable (reference to Zionist or Israel) by a single Iranian leader has to do with the generalizability. It could be argued that this data sample is too narrow or specialized, and, as such, may not be an accurate representation of the totality of IRIB content or even the majority of the speeches by the Supreme Leader. To address this problem I have selected at random three speeches for each of the two years sampled (not filtered for key words).

Finally, it is reasonable to question the extent to which a speech is indicative of the beliefs of an individual or government. A public speech is a form of rhetoric.¹⁶¹ Stylized and highly edited, a speech may reveal little about the true beliefs of its sender. Yet, one can argue that this point is inconsequential to the objective of the study. The objective is not to reveal the beliefs of the sender (i.e. whether Khamenei is actually anti-Semitic or anti-Zionist), but rather, to determine whether the anti-Semitic narrative of the Supreme Leader in mass media might be understood as strategic influence.

¹⁶¹ The word rhetoric stems from the root *retor*, the Greek term for *orator*. In ancient Greece, *rhetor* was a citizen who regularly addressed juries and political assemblies. See Jeffrey Walker, *Rhetoric and Poetics in Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Chapter IV: Findings

The quantitative component of my analysis found that all sixteen of the speeches in the set met all four of the polar interrogatives. This would suggest that my hypothesis that Iran's regime employs anti-Zionism for strategic influence has been proved. However, the analysis of the control group was less conclusive, as four of the six members also met all four of the interrogatives; the two that did not both lacked an adversary and an anti-Semitic narrative. This could mean either of two outcomes is correct. It could confirm the hypothesis that strategic influence pervades all Iranian communications. On the other hand, it could negate the deduction of strategy, because if most regime communication shares these characteristics, then they may be the continuation of habit or inertia rather than a purposive act. One thing is clear: more data with a broader longitudinal scope would clarify these questions.

The content analysis proved more rewarding. It produced a number of insights which may serve as a foundation for future examination of anti-Semitic discourse in Middle East politics.

I begin the chapter by presenting the results of my structured analysis, based on my definitions of strategic influence and anti-Semitic narrative. Two sample sets and two control sets are analyzed. The data is presented chronologically; each section begins with a summary of political and security context of the time period examined. Each sample set, which consists of speeches delivered within the same thirty day period with at least one reference to Zionism, precedes a control set consisting of three random speeches in the same year. The method of mass communication varied between television (Network

1) and radio (Radio 1). A detailed description of the media outlets sampled, including reach and audience segmentation is located in the Annex. I conclude the chapter by examining the role of anti-Semitism in the discourse through a number of narrative themes.

Sample Set #1 (A06)

Speeches from August 2006 containing at least one reference to Zionism

08.08				A06
	YES	NO	Unknown	
Is there a political objective?	✓			
Is there an adversary?	✓			
Is there an anti-Semitic narrative?	✓			
Is there a target audience?	✓			
08.21				hA A06
Is there a political objective?	✓			
Is there an adversary?	✓			
Is there an anti-Semitic narrative?	✓			
Is there a target audience?	✓			

08.22				A06
	YES	NO	Unknown	
Is there a political objective?	✓			
Is there an adversary?	✓			
Is there an anti-Semitic narrative?	✓			
Is there a target audience?	✓			

Domestic and Foreign Affairs Context

In 2006, the Iranian economy grew at a modest 5.4 percent. Imports boomed, reinforced by the overseas purchase of over half of the country’s gasoline requirements.¹⁶² The inflation rate reached eighteen percent. Approximately fifteen percent of the labor pool was unemployed.¹⁶³ In May, Azeri protests erupted over a

¹⁶² "Iran: Year In Review 2006," *Encyclopedia Britannica* Online (2012). Accessed on March 24, 2012 at: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1243511/Iran-Year-In-Review-2006>.

¹⁶³ Experts suspect this number to be artificially low.

newspaper cartoon depicting the Azeri people as cockroaches and referencing their inability to speak Farsi.¹⁶⁴

The year 2006 was a lively time in international affairs. In January, Iran broke the IAEA seals at its Natanz nuclear research facility, signaling its intent to restart its uranium enrichment program. Iranian media reported the successful enrichment of uranium at Natanz in April.¹⁶⁵ In June, China, Russia, and the United States joined three EU countries in Vienna on a proposal to Iran offering comprehensive negotiations in exchange for suspension of nuclear enrichment.¹⁶⁶ The same month, US intelligence officials warned that Iran would have an operational nuclear weapon (including delivery system) in five to ten years.¹⁶⁷ The month of July featured international crises over a North Korean long-range missile test and the passage of a UN Security Council resolution which gave Iran until the end of August to suspend nuclear enrichment.¹⁶⁸

The period also featured ongoing conflict between Palestinian Hamas and Israel and Israel and Lebanese Hezbollah. Following a Hamas electoral victory in January, Israel and Egypt imposed an economic blockade of the Gaza Strip.¹⁶⁹ In June, the fragile ceasefire between Israel and Hamas was broken when a bomb killed several Hamas

¹⁶⁴ “Iran Azeris protest over cartoon,” *BBC News*, (May 28, 2006). Accessed February 12, 2012 at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/5024550.stm.

Ahmadinejad blamed the 2006 Azeri unrest on foreign powers, calling it a “foreign plot” by Iran’s “desperate enemies” who were trying to instigate unrest in order to disrupt Iran’s stability; See “Iran: regionalism, ethnicity and democracy,” *Open Democracy* (June 28, 2006). Accessed February 12, 2012 at: http://www.opendemocracy.net/democracy-irandemocracy/regionalism_3695.jsp.

¹⁶⁵ Siavosh Ghazi, “UN inspectors in Iran ahead of ElBaradei nuclear talks” *Lebanon Wire* (April 8, 2006).

¹⁶⁶ Council of the European Union, “Report 90569.” Accessed March 2, 2012 at: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/reports/90569.pdf

¹⁶⁷ “Middle East,” *BBC News*. Accessed March 2, 2012 at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/5039956.stm

¹⁶⁸ Warren Hoge, “U.N. Gives Iran Deadline to End Nuclear Work” *New York Times* (August 1, 2006).

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.* See: http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/gaza_strip/index.html.

members and retaliatory rockets were fired at Israel from the border of Gaza.¹⁷⁰ In July, Hezbollah militants crossed the Lebanon-Israel border and attacked an Israeli army patrol, killing three soldiers and kidnapping two others. The incident spurred massive retaliation by Israeli troops, invasion of Lebanon, and the start of a month long conflict which would official end on August 14th through a UN brokered ceasefire.¹⁷¹

Analysis

A06 0808
08 Aug 2006
17 Mordad 1385

The first speech occurred on 8 August/17 Mordad, which is officially “Correspondents’ Day” (Roos-e Khabarnegar) in Iran. The speech was posited as commemorating the anniversary of the birth of Ali, considered by Shiite Muslims to be the first imam appointed by the Prophet Mohammed and the first rightful caliph.¹⁷²

The speech had a clear political objective: to justify Iran’s foreign policy decision on the nuclear issue. The Supreme Leader sought to justify Iran’s nuclear aspirations and assuage any fears of competition or domination by emphasizing the common faith that the country of the region shared. A major focus was the need for unity among Muslims. He uses the aphorism of health and disease: “discord is like a fatal poison for the world of Islam. He to casts Iran as “pious,” “struggling,” and on the side of “justice.”

¹⁷⁰ “Iran Bomb within the next two years,” *BBC News* (June 2, 2006). Accessed March 2, 2011 at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/5039956.stm; On August 5th, the Supreme Leader made opening remarks at a two day conference to mark the centennial anniversary of the Constitutional Movement (1905-1911), 170.

¹⁷¹ Chris Lawrence and Jim Clancy, “Lebanon truce holds despite clashes” *Associated Press/CNN* (15 April 2006). Accessed March 25, 2012 at: <http://www.cnn.com/2006/WORLD/meast/08/14/mideast.main/>

¹⁷² “Zionists and Malicious European Superpowers Seek to Root Out Islam from the Region” *ISNA* (August 8, 2006); accessed March 10, 2012 at: <http://www.isna.ir/Main/NewsView.aspx?ID=News-767092&Lang=P>

There was also a clear antagonist/protagonist relationship, with the “Zionists” and “great powers” versus the “Mujahid.” “We cannot rely on big powers,” says Khamenei, clearly referring to the United Nations and its failure to stop the war in Lebanon. Instead, the Islamic world must defend itself and safeguard its own existence.

Anti-Semitic narrative was employed. Zionists were “savage” and “enemies of Islam.” He used caricatures of “cannibal” and a “wolf,” classic anti-Semitic Jewish tropes associated with greed (“covetous”) and extraordinary power (“invincible”). Finally, the target audience was clear in both the immediate context and in the medium that the message was disseminated. The Supreme Leader was speaking directly to governments and populations of other Muslim states; the audience included representatives from Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and Syria.¹⁷³ The recorded speech was broadcast on national radio and therefore catered to a narrow/smaller audience consisting of largely older and less educated populations of conservative Khamenei supporters.¹⁷⁴

A06 0821
21 Aug 2006
30 Mordad 1385

The second speech was delivered on August 21, 2006 at a two-day Conference on National and Islamic Solidarity for Future of Palestine. The date marked the anniversary of the 1969 burning of the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the third holiest site in Sunni Islam and located in the Old City of Jerusalem.¹⁷⁵ Members of the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) pledged to commemorate the event annually as part of a resolution

¹⁷³ “The Burning of Al Aqsa” Time Magazine (29 Aug 1969) Accessible at:
<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,901289,00.html#ixzz1tVImaegb>

¹⁷⁴ “OIC Overview and Analysis” FIM Civil Society; accessed March 20, 2012 at:
http://www.fimcivilsociety.org/f/library/OIC_Overview_and_Analysis.pdf

¹⁷⁵ “On the occasion of the heinous arson of the blessed Al-Aqsa mosque” OSC Press Release; accessed March 25, 2012 at: <http://www.oic-oci.org/oicold/press/english/2006/august%202006/aqsa.htm>

calling for a halt to fighting between Israel and Hezbollah at a special meeting of foreign ministers of the OIC in 19-21 June.¹⁷⁶ During the OIC summit earlier in June, Iran, a founding member, and a top financial contributor, pledged an additional \$1 million on top of its annual contribution of 5.5 percent to the OIC budget.¹⁷⁷

The date commemorated the Feast of Mab'ath, the day when Allah gave Mohammad his prophetic assignment. The day also saw the commencement of a two-day exercise by Iranian armed forces in Sistan and Baluchestan Province. Called, “Zarbat-e Zolfaqar,” the exercise was hailed in the national press as the “biggest military exercise in the history of the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran.”¹⁷⁸ On August 22, Iran was slated to deliver a response to the EU3 nuclear proposal.¹⁷⁹

The immediate audience included officials from member states of the Organization for Islamic Countries, representatives from Hezbollah and Hamas, as well as the Palestinian Authority. The probable target audience was leadership of the region’s Muslim countries as well as Islamic and Iranian intellectuals. The mode of broadcast, radio, suggests that the address also targeted a limited domestic national audience.

There was a clear political objective. The Supreme Leader, in his speech to Muslim nations, sought to take ownership of the victory of Hezbollah and assert Iran’s

¹⁷⁶ “Final Communiqué of the Thirty Third Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers” (United Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan, June 18-21, 2006). Accessed March 25, 2012 at:

<http://www.un.int/wcm/webdav/site/palestine/shared/documents/The%20Thirty-Third%20Session%20of%20The%20Islamic%20Conference%20of%20Foreign%20Ministers.htm>

¹⁷⁷ “OIC Overview and Analysis” FIM Civil Society; accessed March 20, 2012 at:

http://www.fimcivilsociety.org/f/library/OIC_Overview_and_Analysis.pdf

¹⁷⁸ Open Source Center, IAP20060819950015, as broadcast on *Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran Radio I* (August 19, 2006).

¹⁷⁹ “Annan appeals to Iran to reply positively to UN-backed offer on nuclear issue,” *UN News Centre* (August 20, 2006); accessed March 25, 2012 at:

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=19575&Cr=Iran&Cr1=&Kw1=Iran&Kw2=&Kw3=#>
See also: UNSC resolution 1696 (31 July 2006).

place as leader of the Muslim world.¹⁸⁰ He also sought to allay fears of Arab governments about Iran's nuclear program. "The arrogant powers headed by the United States are apprehensive of the progress of Islamic countries...they know with regard to the issue of nuclear energy that the Islamic Republic of Iran is not seeking nuclear weapons," said Khomeini, whose words were later included in a press release on the Supreme Leader's website. "They are exerting the utmost pressure in order to hinder the scientific and technological progress of an Islamic country."¹⁸¹

The "Zionist regime" was the primary adversary, with Israel and Zionist referred to more than ten times. The United States and Israel were described as "enemies of Islam." The Supreme Leader used both anti-Zionist and anti-Semitic narrative. In an example of the latter, the speech was rife with language reminiscent of Protocols (theme "E"). He spoke of "enemies plots" designed to sow the "seeds of discord," with repeated reference to the Zionist plan to foment internal disunity among Muslims countries. Another narrative theme was related to the enemy efforts to control Muslims through psychological warfare.

A06 0822
22 Aug 2006
31 Mordad 1385

On August 22, the Supreme Leader delivered a speech to state officials and envoys of Islamic states to commemorate the Prophet Mohammad's night trip to Jerusalem and ascent to heaven (Lailat al-Miraj). True to its promise, Iran released a written response to the EU+3 proposal, in which it agreed to resume formal nuclear talks

¹⁸⁰ "Iran Nuclear Proposals" Arms Control Association; accessed March 20, 2012 at: http://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/Iran_Nuclear_Proposals

¹⁸¹ "Participants in the 19th International Conference on Islamic Unity Meet the Leader," (August 21, 2006); accessed April 1, 2012 at: http://english.khamenei.ir//index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=420&Itemid=30

but did not consent to suspending uranium enrichment.¹⁸² The target audience is representatives of Arab states and Iranian officials.

The evil of politics was a strong narrative undercurrent. On August 13, Interior Minister Hojatoleslam Mostafa Purmohammadi announced that the November elections for the Assembly of Experts, municipal councils, and parliamentary by-elections in Ahvaz, Bam, and Tehran would be delayed by a month.¹⁸³ The new elections were slated for December 15.¹⁸⁴

In this context, the political objective appears to be to downplay the importance of the elections and the political process inside Iran, while asserting Iran's rightful place as the "just" and "pious" leader of the Muslim world through its strong support of Hezbollah and historic (and likely ongoing) military support and training of the Lebanese, Arab Shia group. The immediate audience is officials from a number of OIC governments, many of them Sunni and/or Arab (as suggested by his ongoing appeal for Muslim unity and to resist sectarian infighting).

While there was reference to Israel as the "Zionist enemy," the central adversary was the United States ("global arrogance"). Khamenei uses "Zionist regime" in the context of his description of recent events between Lebanon and Israel ("victory of our brothers in Lebanon in the fight against the Zionist regime"). The remarks feature language and themes used in the Protocols, such as "treacherous" "mass propaganda" and

¹⁸² "Iran Nuclear Proposals" *Arms Control Association* (undated); accessed March 10, 2012 at: http://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/Iran_Nuclear_Proposals

¹⁸³ On August 5, the Guardian Council approved the holding of simultaneous elections, clearing the way for implementation of a July 26 Majlis decision for elections on November 17; See "Iran Report" *Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty* 9:30 (August 14, 2006); accessed March 20, 2012 at: <http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1342601.html>

¹⁸⁴ The main reason for the delay, according to Purmohammadi, was "the heavy workload associated with preparations for holding the elections simultaneously." See "Iran Report" *Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty* 9:30 (August 14, 2006).

“immorality” and “sowing discord.”¹⁸⁵ However, the descriptive is not explicitly equated to or associated with Zionists. Rather, the language is used to describe the United States as the originator of Zionism and the tyrant of the world.¹⁸⁶

Control (C06)

Randomly selected speeches from 2006

04.26				C06
	YES	NO	Unknown	
Is there a political objective?	✓			
Is there an adversary?	✓			
Is there an anti-Semitic narrative?	✓ -			
Is there a target audience?	✓			
06.19				C06
Is there a political objective?	✓			
Is there an adversary?	✓			
Is there an anti-Semitic narrative?	✓ -			
Is there a target audience?	✓			

08.31				
	YES	NO	Unknown	C06
Is there a political objective?	✓			
Is there an adversary?	✓			
Is there an anti-Semitic narrative?	✓			
Is there a target audience?	✓			

Key: - contains no anti-Zionist language

¹⁸⁵ For example: “enemy treachery” and “plans to sow discord” are used as a disease that has infected the body of the Muslim world.

¹⁸⁶ “The big tyrant is the United States of America today. It created Zionism. America approves Zionism.”

C06 0426
26 April 2006
6 Ordibehesht 1385

The first speech in the set was a transcript of remarks delivered to workers in Tehran and disseminated on radio at 1116 GMT. The political objective of the speech was to galvanize support for government economic policies and gloss over any grievances of Iranian labor. The adversary was the United States and President George W. Bush. There was no reference to Zionism or Israel. Classical anti-Semitic themes colored the Supreme Leader's characterization of a US State Department effort to support civil society groups inside Iran. "They have allocated a budget aimed at generating conflicts among various segments of society - between students, workers, government organs, employees and various other segments," Khomeini said. The Supreme Leader described the effort as part of a hostile campaign to "generate discord aimed at preventing the country from moving along its chosen path."

C06 0619
19 June 2006
29 Khordad 1385

The speech was delivered in Tehran on June 19, 2006 and aired on Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran Radio 1 at 1905 GMT. The immediate audience was central government officials; the speech appears to be part of a larger program of speeches by government leaders (Khamenei referenced the earlier remarks of President Ahmadinejad, for example).

It was delivered amidst ongoing domestic and international criticism of the Iranian government for its refusal to assuage international concerns regarding its nuclear

program. Tehran had recently rejected a proposal by Russia to reprocess nuclear material.¹⁸⁷ In June, China, Russia, and the United States joined the EU-3 in offering a proposal for comprehensive negotiations with Iran (P5+1 proposal).¹⁸⁸

The political objective, given this context, is most likely to defend central government policies. Key economic issues are identified and Iran's policies defended regarding youth unemployment, educational and research deficiencies that have created massive "brain drain," failure to comply with demands of the international community regarding its nuclear program, and the resultant economic sanctions on its oil industry.

There is a clear adversary—identified as "America" and "global arrogance," presumably referring the international organizations such as United Nations and the G8.

There is no reference to Israel or Zionism, and thus the speech cannot be considered "anti-Zionist." Classical anti-Semitic themes are present, however. The Ayatollah underlines the danger of "hidden hands" seeking to disrupt political tranquility and celebrates Iran's history of thwarting "premeditated plots" to overthrow the regime. There is repeated reference to US attempts to "topple us softly" by sowing disunity between social strata as well as "cultural invasion" (the use of mass media to proliferate vice and erode cultural identity; see Protocols D).

¹⁸⁷ "Paul Kerr, IAEA Unlikely to Refer Iran to Security Council," *Arms Control Today* (November 2005) [http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2005_11/NOV-Iran EU3 pushing incentives plan for Iran](http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2005_11/NOV-Iran%20EU3%20pushing%20incentives%20plan%20for%20Iran)

¹⁸⁸ See for example: Ali Larjani, "Iran 'serious' about nuclear talks," *CNN World* (July 6, 2006); accessed March 20, 2012 at: http://articles.cnn.com/2006-07-06/world/iran.talks_1_nuclear-negotiator-nuclear-talks-ali-larjani?_s=PM:WORLD

C06 0831
31 Aug 2006
9 Sharivar 1385

The final speech in this set occurred on 9 Sharivar (31 August). In the previous days, the Iranian President reiterated to foreign press that Iran was ready for talks on its peaceful nuclear program “under any circumstances” and challenged President Bush to a televised debate.¹⁸⁹ The day marks the deadline for Iran to stop uranium enrichment or face UN sanctions. Inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) reported finding traces of highly enriched uranium at Iran's Natanz facility that day.¹⁹⁰

The Supreme Leader addressed the Assembly of Experts in Tehran. The subject was the role of the Assembly of Experts and elections; media, developments with Hamas (electoral victory) and Hezbollah (Israel-Lebanon war) were also discussed.

Among the political objectives of the speech was to credit the “amazing incident in Lebanon” as a victory for the Ummah (the Muslim community) and the Islamic Republic as its inspiration. The remarks also sought to neutralize or preempt social unrest relating to upcoming elections for the Assembly of Experts and the Majlis, which were pushed back a month to mid-December.¹⁹¹ He describes elections as “damaging the social climate” and likens political agitators to “sick people” who are “coughing” and “spreading flu.”¹⁹²

¹⁸⁹ “President: Iran ready for talks on its peaceful nuclear program” *IRNA* (29 August 2006); accessed March 20, 2012 at: <http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/news/iran/2006/iran-060829-irna02.htm>.

¹⁹⁰ “IAEA: Iran Violating Security Council Order” *Voice of America* (August 31, 2006).

¹⁹¹ The last third of the speech is concerned “damage that is done at the time of the election season.”

¹⁹² This was likely partly a response to/defense of the suspicious death of a political dissident while in custody in Evin Prison in mid August. The victim’s parents refused to obey a government order not to hold

The adversary was “foreign media” (see also “propaganda from abroad” and “trying to mislead”). He condemns those who “assassinate political, religious and revolutionary characters...clerics...even respectable figures at theological seminaries.”

The discrete target audience was government officials and the assembly of experts. The recording was broadcast on Tehran Radio 1 at 1704 GMT, suggesting a narrow audience of older Iranian and national and provincial government officials.¹⁹³ The remarks feature anti-Semitic themes, such as psychological warfare through mass media, but the narrative is not explicitly linked to Israel, Jews, Zionists or Zionism.

a memorial for their son and the incident was reported in the print media. See “Iran Report” *Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty* 9:30 (August 14, 2006).

¹⁹³ OSC metadata and translators comments; *See also* :“ Iran: Khamene'i Says HAMAS, Hizballah 'Victories' Helped Tehran,” *Open Source Center* IAP20060901950028 US Government (August 31, 2006).

Sample Set #2 (J07)

Speeches from July 2007 containing at least one reference to Zionism

07.04				J07
	YES	NO	Unknown	
Is there a political objective?	✓			
Is there an adversary?	✓			
Is there an anti-Semitic narrative?	✓			
Is there a target audience?	✓			
07.05				J07
Is there a political objective?	✓			
Is there an adversary?	✓			
Is there an anti-Semitic narrative?	✓			
Is there a target audience?	✓			

07.28				
	YES	NO	Unknown	J07
Is there a political objective?	✓			
Is there an adversary?	✓			
Is there an anti-Semitic narrative?	✓			
Is there a target audience?	✓			

Domestic and Foreign Affairs Context

Government spending rose by twenty percent in 2007 at 2,313 trillion rials. Inflation averaged sixteen percent with a high of 17.6 percent.¹⁹⁴ In February, Iran’s Intelligence Minister announced the arrest of one hundred “foreign spies” working for the United States and Israel to collect military and political information in the boarder areas of Iran, as well as the apprehension of a number of Iranian nationals charged with taking part in espionage training abroad. In May, the government announced the dismantlement

¹⁹⁴ “Iran,” Oxford Economic Forecasting; *Oxford Economic Country Briefings* (August 30, 2007); accessed March 20, 2012 at: <http://ezproxy6.ndu.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/198678899?accountid=12686>.

of several spy networks with links to U.S. agents in Iraq operating in western, southwestern, and central Iran. Tehran said the spy networks were working with Iraqi groups to expanding their activities to five provinces in western and southwestern Iran and in the Iranian capital.¹⁹⁵

In May, three US citizens in Iran, Parnaz Azima, a journalist who was working for the U.S. government-funded Radio Farda and scholars Kian Tajbakhsh and Haleh Esfandiari, were detained by Iranian officials on charges of espionage. The national 24-hour news channel, IRINN, broadcast the “confessions” of Tajbakhsh and Esfandari in a two-part program entitled, “In the Name of Democracy,” on July 18 and 19.¹⁹⁶

Public demonstrations, including the lighting of gas stations on fire in several cities, coincided with an announcement of the immediate implementation of a national gas-rationing plan on state television. On June 27, an internet report indicated that Iran's Supreme National Security Council had ordered the media to abstain from reporting on damage, fires, and casualties that may have resulted from the protests over the rationing plan.¹⁹⁷

In August, amidst mounting criticism of his economic policies, Iran's President announced the dismissal of the Oil Minister, Seyed Kazem Vaziri Hamaneh, Alireza Tahmasbi, the Minister of Industries and Mines, and Mohammad Sheibani, the Governor

¹⁹⁵ A likely reference to the Mujahedeen Al-Khalq.

¹⁹⁶ “Persons connected to Esfandiari and Tajbakhsh arrested: Intelligence Minister,” Mehr News Agency (26 July 2007); accessed March 20, 2012 at <http://www.payvand.com/news/07/jul/1301.html>.

¹⁹⁷ Golnaz Esfandiari, “Iran: Officials reportedly Ban Negative Gas Rationing Stories,” *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* (July 2, 2007); accessed March 20, 2012 at: <http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1347592.html>.

of the Central Bank of Iran.¹⁹⁸

The year 2007/1386 saw continuation of the stalemate between the US, UN and Iran on its nuclear program. In December 2006, Iran dismissed the passage of UNSC Resolution 1737 imposing sanctions on sales relating Iran's nuclear energy and ballistic missile program.¹⁹⁹ In March 2007, the UNSC escalated the financial pressure, approving a resolution that broadened the scope of the sanctions on Iran for its continuing failure to halt uranium enrichment. Iranian officials call the new measures "unnecessary and unjustified."²⁰⁰

On January 11, weeks before the annual commemoration of the Holocaust, Iran's envoy to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva sent a letter questioning the Nazi genocide of six million Jews.²⁰¹ On March 23, IRGC navy personnel seized fifteen members of the British Royal Navy in waters off the Iran-Iraq coast. The sailors were released on April 4th.²⁰² In May, U.S. Ambassador to Baghdad Ryan Crocker and Iran's ambassador, Hassan Kazemi Qomi, met in the office of Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki to discuss security issues in Iraq.²⁰³

¹⁹⁸ Kimia Sanati, "Iran: Dismissal of Minister Leaves Oil Industry Vulnerable," Global Information Network: ProQuest Research Library (August 30, 2007); accessed March 26, 2012 at:

<<http://ezproxy6.ndu.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/457571744?accountid=12686>>.

¹⁹⁹ "Iran nuclear timeline" RFE/RL (December 23, 2007). UNSC Res. 1737 directs all states to prevent the supply or sale to Iran of any materials that could assist its nuclear or ballistic-missile programs and imposes an asset freeze on key companies and individuals named by the UN as contributors to Iran's nuclear and missile programs.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Later that month, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution which condemned "without reservation any denial of the Holocaust." See: UN General Assembly GA/10569, Department of Public Information, News and Media Division, New York, Sixty-first General Assembly, Plenary, 85th Meeting (AM) "General Assembly adopts resolution condemning denial of holocaust"; accessed March 20, 2012 at: www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/ga10569.doc.

²⁰² "Seizure unjustified, Iran warned: BBC News (25 March 2007); accessed April 15, 2012 at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/uk_news/6493391.stm

²⁰³ Bush administration contacts with Iran: direct and indirect" Middle East Forum (November 10, 2008); accessed March 20, 2012 at: <http://www.meforum.org/2011/bush-administration-contacts-with-iran>.

The month of July began amid accusations by a US military spokesman in Iraq that the IRGC had aided in the planning and execution of an attack in Karbala in January that killed five US soldiers. The US also charged that fighters in Iraq were using Iranian weaponry.²⁰⁴ On July 2, IRIB launched Press TV, a new, 24-hour English language news channel mandated “to break the global media stranglehold of Western outlets.”²⁰⁵ On July 11, the National Iranian Oil Company filed a request with Japanese government to make future monetary payments for Iranian crude oil in Japanese yen rather than US dollars.²⁰⁶ Earlier in the year, Tehran announced it had begun pulling its foreign currency accounts from European banks to protect its assets from sanctions.²⁰⁷

Analysis

J0704
04 July 2007²⁰⁸
13 Tir 1386

The first speech in this sample was delivered by the Supreme Leader on 4 July 2007 (13 Tir 1386) to a group of women at a ceremony celebrating the anniversary of the birthday of Prophet Mohammad's daughter, Fatimah al-Zahra, in Tehran. A recorded version of his remarks was broadcast on Tehran Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran Network 1. A transcript of his remarks (apparently unedited) was also published on the Internet.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ “Iran launches English TV news station” *Jerusalem Post* (June 27, 2007); see also Nazila Fathi, “Iran expands role in media, via satellite and in English” *New York Times* (July 2, 2007).

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/07/03/world/asia/03iht-web0703iran.6459744.html> See also: Farangis Najibullah, “Tehran's New International TV Station Faces Hurdles” *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* (June 27, 2007).

²⁰⁶ “Iran asks Japanese oil wholesalers to pay in yen, not dollars,” *Kyodo News Service* (July 14, 2007).

²⁰⁷ “Iran cuts dollar-based transactions to “minimum” AFP (November 14, 2006); accessed April 30, 2012 at: www.khaleejtimes.ae; see also: “Iran withdrawing assets from Europe bank” Reuters (June 10, 2008).

²⁰⁸ “Leader Attends Ceremony Marking the Auspicious Birth Anniversary of Her Holiness Fatimah” (July 5, 2007) Center for Preserving and Publishing the Works of Sayyid Ali Khamenei; accessed November 10, 2011 at: http://english.khamenei.ir/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=53&Itemid=2;

The political objective appears to be to justify the human rights of Iranian women. The adversary is the “West, ” described as “elite”, an “certain international body,” “bullies of the world,” and “enemies of the Iranian nation.” The United States is the greatest foe. “Today,” said Khamenei, “America is the symbol of cruelty against mankind.”

Anti-Zionist and anti-Semitic themes were employed. Khamenei likens the US (“idolaters”) and Israel and its supporters (“Zionist network”) to a colonial force, seeking to oppress and subdue its subjects: “The idolaters and corrupt Zionist network is the symbol of moral corruption, destruction of mankind, misguidedness and wretchedness.” The Supreme Leader acknowledges that not all women are housewives; Iranian women have risen to high levels in industry and science.

The speech was broadcast during primetime morning television. This suggests a larger penetration than other broadcasts and radio, with a likely viewership of thirty percent of the population.²⁰⁹ In addition to the female academics in the audience, the speech targets the general Iranian population (female and male) at maximum penetration.

²⁰⁹ Primetime television is from 1930 to 2230 (1500 to 1800 GMT). Popular soaps operas are usually at 1930, 2030 and 2200 (1500, 1600 and 1730 GMT), while the main news bulletin is at 2100 (1630 GMT); Saeed Barzin, “Iranian TV and its religious nationalist mission: A programming profile of Iran's Network One” *BBC Monitoring* (May 2008). According to Barzin, Network 1 is acutely aware of its female viewership, allocating blocks of time in the morning and afternoon to serve this domestic constituency.

J07 0705
05 July 2007
14 Tir 1386

The next speech in this set was delivered the following day, on July 5, again, to celebrate the birthday anniversary of Fatimah al-Zahra. The remarks were directed to a gathering of poets and eulogists in Tehran. A recorded version was broadcast on *Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran Radio 1*.

The immediate target audience was poets, clergy and eulogists; the broadcast targeted national radio listeners during primetime (approximately twelve percent of the population, roughly evenly divided between youth/young adults (15-28) and older generations.²¹⁰

The speech named several antagonists: “fat cats of the Islamic world,” “elite,” and “plotters.” It came on the heels of street protests of economic conditions relating to subsidiaries and oil rationing, as well as an unfruitful visit of Russian officials to the nuclear power plant at Busheyr regarding Iranian desires to restart construction.

The Supreme Leader used language reminiscent of classical anti-Semitic tropes of godlessness and blood lust. For example, he charged the enemy of “plotting to sink their claws into the hearts of this people and gouge out their commitment to monotheism.” He also warned of an enemy offensive against Muslim collectivism. Like the “Zionists” of *Protocols*, Khamenei’s “Zionists” see the rise of a common identity or sense of community among peoples as a threat to its regional dominance. “Doing anything which

²¹⁰ See Annex for more detail.

might undermine [Muslim] unity, will serve the interests of America and Zionists.”²¹¹

J07 0728

28 July 2007

6 Mordad 1386

Khamenei addressed a public gathering of thousands in Tehran to commemorate the anniversary of the birth of first Imam Ali. A recorded version of his remarks was broadcast on *Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran Radio 1* during the morning/early afternoon, suggesting a target audience largely comprised of female homemakers. The discrete political objective appears to be to galvanize nationalism and religious sentiment. The United States and Israel are the clear adversaries. Anti-Zionist language is employed, as evidence by sentences such as: The main enemies of the Iranian nation -- which are the Zionist network and the Zionist regime and the American regime.”²¹² Classical anti-Semitic tropes are also used, such as the narrative of the enemy using the financial system and propaganda to dominate the world.²¹³

²¹¹ J07 0705

²¹² J07-0728

²¹³ For example, Khamenei asserts that “hypocritical powers” are using “financial and physical force” and “extravagant propaganda” to dominate the “world.”

Control (C07)

Randomly selected speeches from 2007

06.13				C07
	YES	NO	Unknown	
Is there a political objective?	✓			
Is there an adversary?		✓		
Is there an anti-Semitic narrative?		✓ -		
Is there a target audience?	✓			
10.09				C07
Is there a political objective?	✓			
Is there an adversary?		✓		
Is there an anti-Semitic narrative?		✓ -		
Is there a target audience?	✓			

07.17				
	YES	NO	Unknown	C07
Is there a political objective?	✓			
Is there an adversary?	✓			
Is there an anti-Semitic narrative?	✓ -			
Is there a target audience?	✓			

Key: - contains no anti-Zionist language

C07 0613
13 June 2007
23 Khordad 1836

Delivered on June 13, 2007, the third speech was addressed to Iranian cinematographers and government officials at a conference organized by the Ministry of Guidance. The speech was broadcast on Tehran Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran Network 1 at 1808 GMT. It was delivered in the wake of the 2007 Cannes Film Festival, where Iranian-born Marjane Satrapi had won the Special Jury Prize for the animated film

Persepolis.²¹⁴ The film had roused intense government ire; Iran's ambassador to the UN admonished France for allowing Cannes to promote what it considered to be a misrepresentation of the Islamic Revolution.²¹⁵ In March, Iranian authorities expressed similar outrage regarding the Greco-Persian war film *300*, which they deemed "American psychological warfare against Iran."

The objective of the speech was to respond to criticism within Iran's film industry about the censorious practices of the Ministry of Guidance and address the general sense of insecurity voiced by members of the artistic community.²¹⁶ The speech's target audience was Iranian cinematographers. There was no clear adversary, nor was anti-Zionist language employed. No anti-Semitic language or tropes were used.

C07 1009
9 October 2007
17 Mehr 1386

The next speech in the control set was delivered on October 9, 2007 to a gathering of students and faculty at Tehran University. A recorded version of the speech was broadcast on Tehran Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran Network 1 at 1819 GMT. The immediate audience was university students. The target national audience appears to be women, as it was broadcast during the timeslot of popular soap operas favored by women and unemployed youth.²¹⁷ The Supreme Leader's objective appears to be to justify censorship within the academy. It was primarily concerned with differentiating between expectable and unacceptable revolutionary speech (the student movement played

²¹⁴ "Persepolis Honored at the 2007 Cannes Film Fest" Aceshowbiz.com (May 28, 2007); accessed April 20, 2012 at: www.aceshowbiz.com/news/view/00009241.html.

²¹⁵ "Iran irate over Cannes prize contender" AFP (May 23, 2007). For more recent reporting see: Clarisse Fabre, "Banned Iranian films smuggled out in time for Cannes," *Le Monde* (May 9 2011). Assessed April 2012 at <http://www.worldcrunch.com/banned-iranian-films-smuggled-out-time-cannes/3045>

²¹⁶ Director Ebrahim Hatamikia apparently voiced this sentiment in a speech earlier that day.

²¹⁷ See Annex for details.

a major role in the revolution of 1979). There was no clear adversary; nor did the speech employ language that could be interpreted as anti-Semitic or anti-Zionist.

C07 0717
17 July 2007
26 Tir 1386

The Supreme Leader addressed a group of researchers at the Royan Institute at University Jihad in Tehran on July 17. The remarks were broadcast on Tehran Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran Network 1 during primetime. The immediate target audience was scientists at Royan Institute. The target broadcast audience was Iranian people nationwide, as suggested by the time of broadcast. Science was the principal focus of the speech. The Ayatollah used the word science or its variants more than forty-eight times.²¹⁸ The political objective of the speech was to defend and encourage progress on Iranian nuclear program. A clear adversary was also present: America, “backward world powers,” and the “elite.”²¹⁹ This is likely a reference to major military and economic powers in the West, the United States in particular.

The speech does not employ anti-Zionist language or narrative. However, the narrative employs classical anti-Semitic themes of world domination and subjugation.²²⁰ Khamenei describes the unequal relationship between the developed and undeveloped world and nuclear and non-nuclear powers: “They plunder wealth, they suck resources and they maintain control over political, economic and social areas of life in other

²¹⁸ The word for science is Farsi is *ulum*; variations include: *ulum* (sciences) and *daaneshmand* (scientist). Yavar Dehghani, *Persian-English English Persian Learners Dictionary* (Bethesda MD: IBEX Publishers, 2008).

²¹⁹ “And by saying ‘enemy,’ we do not mean just America. Well, when we speak, our obvious enemy is America and global arrogance. No, there is every sort of enemy.”

²²⁰ These are also classic anti-American, anti-British, anti-colonial themes.

countries. In return, they either give nothing or give something insignificant and at times harmful to the bargaining country.”²²¹

In this narrative, the enemy uses “science” to oppress and murder entire populations and to extend control of other countries through its politicians, who are nothing more than scientifically engineered/altered drones: “science is a means of bullying, a means of exploitation, science as a means of genocide. The product of science is the atom bomb. The product of science is artificial narcotic substances. The product of science in many countries is the coming to power of politicians who lack all human emotions.”²²²

Findings

Content analysis produced two key findings. Number one, anti-Semitic narrative is a regular feature of the speeches. It occurs more often than not, both with and without reference to Zionism.²²³ Number two, there are indications that the narrative is intended to serve the regime’s domestic and foreign security objectives. The following section will discuss each finding in turn.

Anti-Semitic themes are a regular feature of the political discourse of the Supreme Leader. All of the six sample speeches (A06 and J07) contained anti-Semitic narrative. Of the six randomly selected speeches in the control group, four register anti-Semitic narrative. All of the speeches (both control and sample) which contained

²²¹ J07 0717

²²² J07 0717

²²³ This finding is based on a strict interpretation of “anti-semitic narrative” as defined in this study. Using another definition, one might argue that the language is not necessarily intentionally anti-Semitic; it may simply be used to malign Israel, Zionism, the United States and/or colonialism.

reference to Israel and/or Zionism also contained anti-Semitic narrative. Two speeches from the control group (C06 0831 and C07 0717) employed anti-Semitic narrative but made no reference to Israel or Zionism. Two others (C07-0613 and CO7-1009) had neither anti-Semitic (or anti-Zionist) narrative nor a discrete antagonist. Anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism appear to function as independent, but not mutually exclusive, variables. There are speeches that have anti-Semitic narrative, but lack explicit reference to Zionism or Israel. There is no instance, however, where anti-Zionist language is used and anti-Semitic narrative is not.

Second, anti-Semitic narrative had both internal and external security applications. Indeed, at first glance the use of anti-Semitic narrative appears indiscriminate. The narrative appears in both the control and sample sets. If anti-Semitism is the norm in regime discourse, could it still serve a security purpose? My analysis suggests that it can.

The major use of the narrative appears inward looking, focused on regime legitimacy and self-preservation. A common characteristic of anti-Semitic narrative is the idea of an omnipotent group controlling the fate of other groups and the decisions of sovereign regimes like a puppeteer. This theme is artfully blended with the revolutionary ideals of resistance and self-determination and the Islamic precept of jihad, or struggle. Several speeches return to the narrative of the Zionist assault on Islam, reminiscent of mythology of the infidel Jew. For example, Protocol 4: "...it is indispensable for us to undermine all faith, to tear out of the minds of the GOYIM the very principle of the

Godhead”²²⁴ In this narrative context, the regime’s refusal to cooperate with weapons inspectors or accept the EU3 compromise becomes a courageous, saint-like act. “The powers that dominate the world today are cruel and oppressive,” Khamenei remarked in a speech on July 28, 2007. “Iran's resistance is the symbol of Imam Ali's quest for justice.”²²⁵

Here, anti-Semitism is useful not only for conjuring the image of an outside threat to the homeland, but also for individualizing the threat for the Iranian people by rendering it an assault on individual faith. On July 28, 2007, the Supreme Leader warns of a conspiracy of foreign powers:

...plotting to sink their claws into the hearts of this people and gouge out their commitment to monotheism, their heartfelt support for the idea of Velayat, their love for Prophet's household, their commitment to the Koran, their zeal and passion for religious fundamentals, their belief in the need to fight tyrants and their belief in the shame of submitting to the viciousness and evil of tyranny.²²⁶

According to the Supreme Leader, the objective of the Zionist network is to foment unrest and instability in Iran. Thus, “political tranquility” depends on state action to stop “premeditated plots” of “hidden hands” bent on “sowing discord” by creating “ethnic differences,” “religious difference,” and “division among various groups” in Iran.²²⁷ The regime is justified in clamping down on political unrest, muzzling frank ideological debate, and discouraging individual expression (which goes against national unity). Competitive elections such as the ballot for the Supreme Council thus becomes

²²⁴ Protocol 4

²²⁵ J07 0728

²²⁶ J07 0705

²²⁷ C06 0619

“damaging to the social climate.” Political dissidents (“disruptive individuals”) become “sick people, coughing and spreading flu.”²²⁸

The Supreme Leader attempts to validate the *jurisconsult* system of governance, in part by, comparing it to the regime of Reza Shah Pahlavi. The Shah was renown for corruption and supplication to the United States. In Protocols, as in other anti-Semitic works, a covert, international network of Jews control the actions of sovereign governments.²²⁹ Khamenei says that the US and Israel (the “Zionists” and the “Zionist Network”) “control political, economic and social areas of life in other countries.”

He seeks to legitimize the status quo by citing the alternative: the “political reform” of the Shah under the Zionists: “Any American style reforms would lead to what Reza Shah did . . . Any Reza-Khan style and American-style reforms, which are based on Western culture, are corruption rather than reforms.”²³⁰ Indeed, political reform is a slippery slope toward “cultural invasion,” according to Khamenei. “There are more conspiracies coming and we need to immunize ourselves.”²³¹

The comparison also appeals to his audiences’ pride: “They took away this country's property, they took away the oil, hindered our progress, they imposed their treacherous and oppressive plans on our nation. And the managers of the country—that is Mohammad Reza Shah and his aides— served them.”²³² The narrative may be aimed at inspiring nationalism, and perhaps even support for the regime as the lesser of two evils.

²²⁸ A06 0821

²²⁹ For example, Protocol 5 reads in part: “the nations cannot come to even an inconsiderable private agreement without our secretly having a hand in it...”

²³⁰ C06 0619

²³¹ C06 0619

²³² A06 0822

Anti-Semitic narrative is also applied in service of Iran's foreign security objectives. This external security dimension is illustrated in a speech to leaders of Muslim nations on August 21, 2006. The Supreme Leader employs the Jewish conspiracy narrative (specifically that there a conspiracy of great powers seeking to control and oppress non-Jewish populations by spreading propaganda) to justify the Iranian nuclear program.²³³

You can see that the enemies of the Muslim world have been putting so much pressure on Iran's nuclear issue. They know that we do not seek to make a nuclear bomb. What they are worried about is the scientific and technological progress in an Islamic country.

According to this narrative, Iran's nuclear program is not a threat to other Muslim nations in the region. Rather, Iran's non-compliance to international standards and refusal to acquiesce to the demands of the UNSC should be understood as an act of resistance to a common enemy, in defense of the right of all Muslim countries to scientific research.²³⁴

Anti-Semitic themes also color his appeals for Muslim unity. Iran's spiritual leader portrays "Zionists" as the foe of all Muslim countries, regardless of sect. "Savage" and "treacherous," the collective enemy seeks to divide Muslims and undercut their collective power.²³⁵ "The enemies are sowing the seeds of discord among the Muslim *ummah*. Immoral politicians, wrong prejudices, blindness to the lofty horizons of the

²³³ Khomeini reiterates this narrative in slightly different terms in a speech to a domestic audience. On July 17, 2007, he tells university students: "if you are in pursuit of a science, which brings dissatisfaction and displeasure to the enemy of the revolution's aspirations, your work can be considered as jihad." See CO7 0717.

²³⁴ The context suggests that the argument is consistent with the strategic security objectives of the Iranian regime. Whether the strategic narrative proved effective, however, is beyond the scope of this study.

²³⁵ A06 0821; The Supreme Leader offered a similar argument to a domestic (Shiite) audience a few weeks earlier: "You should know that the difference between Shiites and Sunnis is a tool in the hands of the enemies to use against the Islamic *ummah*. They will use this tool however they want. They put Palestinian Sunnis under pressure one day and start a campaign among you and remind you that you are Shiites, just to stop you from helping them." See: A06 0808.

Muslim world and narrow-mindedness, are the growing grounds for those prejudices.”²³⁶

In a notable demonstration of strategic thinking, the Supreme Leader argues that Muslim leaders should focus their efforts on uniting warring factions in Palestine and Lebanon rather than fighting the Zionists directly. Clashes between Palestinian groups and the internal conflict in Lebanon benefit the Zionists because it prevents “Islamic unity” and the power of collective action.²³⁷ The Zionist objective, says Khamenei, is to “make Islamic nations believe that they are not capable of doing anything and cannot confront them.”²³⁸

²³⁶ A06 0821.

²³⁷ The Supreme Leader reiterates this message the next day, noting that the “enemies of Islam are using every stratagem to create discord and schism among the followers of different Islamic sects and pit the Islamic groups against each other.” See A06 0822.

²³⁸ A similar principle is articulated in Protocol 5, which describes a world where the Jews are so omnipotent that “nations cannot come to even an inconsiderable private agreement without our secretly having a hand in it...”

Chapter V: Conclusion

On this day, and all days, we must do more than remember. We must resolve that “never again” is more than an empty slogan. As individuals, we must guard against indifference in our hearts and recognize ourselves in our fellow human beings. As societies, we must stand against ignorance and anti-Semitism, including those who try to deny the Holocaust.

— *President Barak Obama, 2012*²³⁹

This chapter will present a summation of the study’s findings on the strategic influence attributes of Iranian-state sponsored anti-Semitic broadcasting, identify problems and follow-on questions, and offer suggestions for future research. It will conclude with recommendations for US policymakers.

Summary

Strategic influence is as an alternative paradigm for interpreting Iran’s anti-Zionist and anti-Semitic rhetoric. The Iranian regime, as represented by the Supreme Leader, employs anti-Semitic narrative to bolster and validate its security strategy. The results of this study, while not unequivocal, support the thesis. Ten out of twelve speeches analyzed registered positively for possessing anti-Semitic narrative, a political and security objective, a clear antagonist, and a target audience. Content analysis also suggests that anti-Semitic themes were employed to serve internal as well as external security objectives.

²³⁹ Statement of US President Barak Obama commemorating Holocaust Remembrance Day (April 19, 2012)

Limitations of the Study

No study is free of problems, whether it is in the research design or in the analytical process. In this study, the main problem related to accessibility of data. Ascertaining the intent and target audience requires, among other things, robust understanding of the context. The closed nature of Iranian society under the current regime was a limiting factor in the gathering of secondary information. While a broad picture of the domestic and international context was possible to ascertain, specific details, such as the precise location of a speech upon delivery or the composition of the immediate audience, were harder to come by. This issue may have to do with the nature of the data, which derived from open source material from newspapers, peer-reviewed journals and books, internet archives, and unclassified government reports and surveys.

Future research designs could include several modifications. Additional speeches should be analyzed, including a greater number of speeches directed to a foreign audience and broadcast on IRIB's international service. The data sets in general could be increased. A broad sample of mass communications content would generate greater support for the thesis regarding the systematic nature of the narrative. These data could include multiple types of broadcast content, such as talk shows, news, interviews, soap operas, and documentaries. Finally, additional data occurring over a longer period of time could lend greater support to observations about strategic intent and use of specific narrative themes.

Finally, I would be remiss not to mention the problem of political sensitivity. Anti-Semitism is a common theme in the national security and foreign policy discourse on Iran on Capitol Hill. In the last decade (2000 through 2010) alone, Congress

introduced sixty-six bills and resolutions on Iran that also referenced Jews or Jewry.²⁴⁰

The same period saw fifty bills and resolutions referencing Iran and anti-Semitism. For the time period analyzed in this study (between 2006 and 2007, the 109th and 110th Congress, respectively), the Congressional record reflects twenty-one unique pieces of legislation containing direct reference to Iran and anti-Semitism.²⁴¹

It should come as no surprise that especially within academic and government circles in the United States, the topic of Iran carries emotional baggage, which is, arguably, antithetical to frank discussion of the country as it concerns US national security interests and strategy. There is a stigma associated with questioning any premises underlying the popular conception of the Iranian regime (or individuals therein) as anti-Semitic and a national security threat.²⁴² Extremist rhetoric dominates the debate in Congress. In the House of Representatives in particular, the Iranian regime is portrayed as irrational, impenetrable, and the embodiment of radical, anti-Semitic Islam.

²⁴⁰ “Bill Text Search Results,” THOMAS, Library of Congress on May 3 2012; For example: H.Res.116, H Con. Res. 29, H. Con. Res. 109, H. Con. Res. 307, H. Con. Res. 104, H. Con. Res. 104, S. 2947, H.R. 5006, H. Res. 840, S. Con. Res. 39, H. Con. Res. 41, H. Con. Res. 39, H. Con. Res. 128, S. Res. 337; H. Con. Res. 378, H. Res. 614, H. Res. 336, S. Res. 436, H. Res. 694, H. Con. Res. 21

²⁴¹ “Bill Text Search Results,” THOMAS, Library of Congress on May 3 2012; Based on THOMAS bill text search using the search term *“Iran+anti-Semitism”* for all bills and resolutions introduced in the 110 and 109th Congress. For example: H.Res. 611, H.Res 1091, H. Res 240, H. Res. 1310, and H. J. Res 84.

²⁴² In suggesting that US policy toward Israel, including US policy towards Iran, should be recalibrated to better reflect the national interest, Harvard’s Stephen Walt and University of Chicago’s John Mearsheimer were attacked as anti-Semitic. Stephen Walt and John J. Mearsheimer, “The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy,” *KSG Faculty Research Working Paper Series* RWP06-011, (March 2006). See for example: Julian Borger, “US professors accused of being liars and bigots over essay on pro-Israeli lobby,” *The Guardian* (March 30, 2006).

Questions for Future Research

The analysis generated specific questions concerning the effects of anti-Semitic narrative. Unfortunately, many of these questions could not be answered due to the limited availability of information on domestic events in Iran. Such questions include: How did the Supreme Leader's anti-Semitic narrative impact, both directly or indirectly, the conditions of Iranian Jewry? Is there a correlation between the intensity of regime anti-semitic rhetoric and the level of public satisfaction with regime policies?

The study also inspired a number of questions relating to regime legitimacy and mass communications as a method of influence. For instance: What is the relationship between legitimacy and mass communications within a non-democratic state? What role does mass communication play in the security perceptions and decision-making process of political elites? To what extent have advancements in, and the democratization of, information communication platforms helped to instigate, escalate, and resolve competition among state and non-state actors in regions characterized by insecurity, such as the Middle East?

Policy Recommendations

Anti-Semitic narrative lends ferocity and continuity to regime rhetoric. It appears to serve as part of a larger strategy for regime security and self-preservation. This inward-looking strategy also translates well into external security strategy. The narrative appeals to Muslim and non-Muslim populations and ethnic minorities in the Middle East as a way of explaining world events. Anti-Semitic framing may even be used to make Iran's aspirations for regional leadership based on shared Muslim identity more palatable

and legitimate. The narrative is also directed at regional government leaders and people to justify Iranian foreign policy.

Fortunately, there are several steps the United States could take to neutralize this particularly nefarious facet of Iranian influence strategy. Part of the appeal of anti-Semitic narrative is based on the perceived inequality or injustice of the international system. A central refrain of the Supreme Leader, as well as of many Iranian officials, concerns the unjustness of the international system. This refrain portrays the United Nations and major “world powers” as hypocritical, self-interested and unreliable. The US could neutralize this narrative by taking meaningful, highly publicized steps to apply equal standards to all nations. For instance, the US could actively encourage full integration of both Iran and Israel into the international system. The US should demand that Israel, Pakistan and India join the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and submit to IAEA inspections. The US could both sign and implement the NPT’s Additional Protocols and encourage Israel and Iran to do the same.

The best antidote for misinformation and black propaganda is the truth. The United States and its allies could embark on a coordinated “truth campaign” in Persian and Arabic across the Middle East and North Africa. The “godlessness” frame could be discredited. Voice of America and BBC could work together to broadcast entertaining and informative television documentaries about the shared history of Islam and Judaism. Steps could be taken to debunk the myth of world Jewry and the Zionist movement as monolithic. For example, one information campaign could focus on Israel and spotlight the complex character of the Israeli political system and multiple factions of government.

Another campaign could highlight the disparate beliefs and lifestyles of Jews across the world.

Offensive action could be examined in light of Iran's increasingly aggressive strategy to control the populations' access to outside information. In addition to blocking satellite broadcasts and prohibiting satellite ownership, the regime has blocked social networking websites and reduced Internet speed to a crawl, making it almost impossible to download streaming content such as YouTube. There are several ways to counter this strategy. For example, as IRIB is largely broadcast through foreign satellites, the US could pressure satellite providers not to carry IRIB programming. The US could investigate possible incapacitation of Iran's domestically engineered satellite.

In an alternative tact, the US could take steps to foster the dissemination of satellite phones and other consumer communications technology inside Iran. To do this, the US Treasury Department could revise its definition of "dual use" technology, which currently restricts the flow of personal computers and other communications technology. Additionally, the US could adopt policies that encourage robust, regular scientific exchange between Iranian and US universities. Real, enduring relationships between scholars will help to undercut the conspiracy narrative of "world powers" bent on keeping Iran ignorant and submissive through the restriction of scientific learning.

These policies, sustained over time, might undercut much of the utility and strategic rationale behind Iran's anti-Semitic influence strategy. At the very least, such polemic would grow more nuanced and discreet, as Iran becomes more entwined in the international system (and therefore more sensitive to international opinion) and Iranian public opinion grows less tolerant of and susceptible to anti-Semitic messaging.

Final Thoughts

As the results of this study show, the conflation of the Iranian regime and anti-Semitic rhetoric is not unwarranted. The Supreme Leader appears to employ anti-Semitic narrative often, and widely, for a number of political and security objectives. While more study is needed to conclude that anti-Semitism is part of a larger regime influence strategy through IRIB broadcasting, this analysis shows that anti-Semitic narrative is embedded in the public discourse of the regime's most powerful player, and the narrative may be employed for strategic ends. It would be in the US interest, both from a strategic security and a moral standpoint, to investigate and counter any such instances of state-sponsored, mass propagation of anti-Semitism.

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Annex

Medium Summary: Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran Network 1

The IRIB flagship, Network 1 has a major role in the Iranian media environment. Network 1 claims to reach over 90 per cent of the population. It posits itself as the official medium of the Islamic Republic of Iran, with programs that serve all Iranians, regardless of ethnicity, age, language, or sex.²⁴³ As stated in its charter and practiced in its daily programming, the channel works to rationalize and defend the political structure of the Islamic Republic to its domestic audience.²⁴⁴ Its official mandate is to "present political issues and problems, to answer them, as required and expediently, and to create the necessary climate for serving the objectives of the state against foreign psychological warfare and propaganda."²⁴⁵ BBC analyst Saeed Barzin deems Network 1 "the most articulate and institutional effort by the Iranian state to speak to its people."²⁴⁶

The channel's loyalty rests solely with the Supreme Leader, which has been the case for decades, despite changes in political leadership and power centers over the years, and even a change in the person of the Supreme Leader.²⁴⁷

²⁴³ Saeed Barzin, "Iranian TV and its religious nationalist mission: A programming profile of Iran's Network One" BBC Monitoring (May 2008), 44.

²⁴⁴ According to its charter, "planning, production, financing and broadcast of programs are made according to policies that promote and strengthen the values of Islam, national unity and common understanding, as well as trust between the state and the people."

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 44.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.* "This role has a tremendous significance in Iran, where there is a historical absence of civil institutions, such as independent media, political parties and trade unions, which could facilitate interaction between the state and the people."

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.* "The Supreme Leader appoints the head of the state broadcaster, and over the past three decades the state broadcaster has shown steadfast devotion to the leader. This is even more significant given that relations between IRIB (particularly Network 1) and other senior leaders, including presidents past and present, have not always been comfortable."

The network's central task appears to be publicizing the activities of the Supreme Leader and promulgating his vision through his statements and speeches.²⁴⁸ Coverage of the Supreme Leader far outweighs coverage of any other person or event. Bulletins begin with news about the Supreme Leader. His speeches are broadcast in full during evening primetime. It is not unusual for Network One to broadcast several hours of his speeches every week.²⁴⁹

With close ties to the Ayatollah, the armed forces, particularly the IRGC, the paramilitary Basij force, the Judiciary, and the Construction Jihad enjoy access to the Network. The military airs a weekly 15-minute program on Wednesday celebrating the achievements of the armed forces, particularly during the Iran-Iraq war. The Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps and other branches of the military are featured. The military also produces dozens of short films and messages that are broadcast repeatedly as fillers in between programs.²⁵⁰

A 2005 telephone survey sponsored by the US government found that Iranians watched an average of just over four hours of television a day. Network 1 was the second most popular channel, with 86.1 per cent of respondents over the age of 15 tuning in at least once a week.²⁵¹

²⁴⁸ According to Barzin, this contributes to the highly scripted nature of the news broadcasts and likely self-censorship by reporters and producers.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., 45. The same dynamic existed between the network and the previous Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

²⁵⁰ Ibid., 47. For instance, the program "Seekers of Light" addresses the Iran-Iraq war (1980-88). Veterans reminisce, and speak in praise of martyrdom for Islam and the homeland.

²⁵¹ The U.S. Department of State prohibits American researchers from conducting studies inside Iran due to security concerns. The survey results are based on interviews with 2,000 households in Iran over the phone from a headquarters based in Turkey. It is important to note that this methodology poses the risk of respondent bias. However, largely similar findings were produced by a survey conducted by Iran's own IRIB Research Centre in Fall 2007. See *OSC Media Survey Report Iran 2944:06* (April-May 2005), 25.

Medium Summary: Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran Radio 1

In 2005, eighty-one percent of Iranians reported owning a radio, with 30 percent having listened to radio “yesterday.”²⁵² Based on this figure and the 2006 population, IRIB radio reach, collectively, is approximately twenty-one million. According to the survey, listenership is nearly equally divided among age groups.

The survey indicates that radio is a secondary source of information for most Iranians. Trust in radio as a source of information was slightly higher among older Iranians. Twelve percent of respondents over 65 identified radio as a primary source of information (compared with 3 percent of the total population).²⁵³ Upwards of 1 million people age 60 and older count state radio as a primary source of news; roughly the same number rely on television a primary source of information.²⁵⁴

²⁵² According to the World Development Indicators (WDI) database, the population of Iran in 2006 was 70 million, based on 2006 census data. Accessed March 25 2012 at: http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?q=population+2006+iran&d=WDI&f=Indicator_Code:SP.POP.TOTL;Country_Code:IRN;Time_Code:YR2006&c=2,4,5&s=Country_Name:asc,Year:desc&v=1

²⁵³ “Local radio” is used in the survey as a catch all term for all state-run radio stations in Iran. I refer to it here simply as “radio.” See *OSC Media Survey Report Iran 2944:06* (April-May 2005), 22.

²⁵⁴ This figure is calculated based on 2006 census data from the United Nations; in 2006, approximately 9 million Iranians were over the age of sixty (6 percent male, 7 percent female). This figure is a rough estimate because of the discrepancy between the definition of “older” Iranians by the World Bank and the OSC Media Survey (60+ and 65+ respectively).

Data Summary: Sample Set #1 and #2

SAMPLE SET #1
A06
AUGUST 2006
MORDAD - SHAHRIVAR 1385

A060808

08 Aug 2006
17 Mordad 1385

*Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran
Radio 1*

Speech commemorating the anniversary of the birth of Imam Ali, the first Shiite Imam.

A060821

21 Aug 2006²⁵⁶
30 Mordad 1385

*Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran
Radio 1*

Speech before a meeting of intellectuals and representatives from Islamic countries participating in the 19th International Conference on Islamic Solidarity in Tehran.

A060822

22 August 2006²⁵⁷
31 Mordad 1385

*Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran
Radio 1*

Speech to state officials and envoys of the Islamic states on the anniversary of the appointment of Muhammad as Prophet.

SAMPLE SET #2
J07
JULY 2007
TIR - MORDAD 1386

J0704

04 July 2007²⁵⁵
(13 Tir 1386)

*Tehran Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran
Network 1*

Speech to a group of women on the anniversary of the birthday of Prophet Muhammad's daughter at the Husseiniyeh of Imam Khomeini.

J0705

05 July 2007
14 Tir 1386

*Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran
Radio 1*

Speech to eulogists in Tehran.

J0728

28 July 2007²⁵⁸
6 Mordad 1386

*Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran
Radio 1*

Speech to a gathering of thousands of people to mark the anniversary of the birth of first Imam Ali in Tehran.

²⁵⁵ "Leader Attends Ceremony Marking the Auspicious Birth Anniversary of Her Holiness Fatimah" Center for Preserving and Publishing the Works of Sayyid Ali Khamenei (May 7, 2006); accessed November 16, 2011 at:

http://english.khamenei.ir//index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=53&Itemid=2

²⁵⁶ "Participants in the 19th International Conference on Islamic Unity Meet the Leader" Center for Preserving and Publishing the Works of Sayyid Ali Khamenei (August 21, 2006); accessed March 1, 2012 at: http://english.khamenei.ir//index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=420&Itemid=30

²⁵⁷ "Leader Receives Officials of the Islamic Republic on the Feast of Mab'ath" Center for Preserving and Publishing the Works of Sayyid Ali Khamenei (August 22, 2006); accessed November 16, 2011 at: http://english.khamenei.ir//index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=419&Itemid=2

²⁵⁸ "Thousands of the Iranian Citizens Call on the Leader" Center for Preserving and Publishing the Works of Sayyid Ali Khamenei (July 28, 2007); accessed November 16, 2011 at: http://english.khamenei.ir//index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=49&Itemid=2

Data Summary: Control Set #1 and #2

CONTROL SET #1 C06 2006 / 1385
C06 0426 26 April 2006 6 Ordibehesht 1385
<i>Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran Radio 1</i>
Speech to workers, recorded.
C06 0619 19 June 2006 29 Khordad 1385
<i>Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran Radio 1</i>
Speech to state officials in Tehran.
C06 0831 31 Aug 2006 09 Sharivar 1385
<i>Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran Radio 1</i>
Address to the Assembly of Experts in Tehran.

CONTROL SET #2 C07 2007 / 1386
C07 0613 13 June 2007 23 Khordad 1836
<i>Tehran Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran Network 1</i>
Address to Iranian cinematographers.
C07 1009 9 October 2007 17 Mehr 1836
<i>Tehran Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran Network 1</i>
Speech to a gathering of students at Tehran University.
C07 0717 17 July 2007 26 Tir 1386
<i>Tehran Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran Network 1</i>
Speech to researchers at the Royan Institute in Tehran.

Sample Worksheet

CONTENT ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

Set Identifier:

Doc Identifier:

Western Date:

Iranian Date:

Domestic and international political context (month, days):

Immediate Audience:

Broadcast target Audience:

Themes:

Key words or imagery:

RESULTS

DOC NAME				SET NAME
	YES	NO	Unknown	
Is there a political objective?				
Is there an adversary?				
Is there a Zionist/antisemitic narrative ?				
Is there a target audience?				