IMAGINING IRAN: ORIENTALISM AND SECURITY DEVELOPMENT IN AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

By

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To my son Miles Michael Whooley, all of this effort has been for you

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In light of the recent, dramatic thaw in Iranian-US relations, and with the Obama administration's ground-breaking direct communications with their counterparts in the Rouhani administration, observers are left to wonder at the path and process of strategic diplomacy, engagement, and foreign policy construction. This dissertation constructs and assembles American foreign policy through the Orientalist descriptions of key actors within the Presidential administrations of Lyndon Baines Johnson through Ronald Reagan (1965-1989).The shah of Iran, Reza Pahlavi, and Iran as a nation fit this characterization with some alacrity. The shah was the good Oriental: he modernized, he secularized, he kept his people pliable, if not free, and was in general sensitive and willing to take on the foreign policy goals of the United States. With a few exceptions, moves by the shah discussed in Chapters Three and Four reveal his attempts to leverage oil prices during the administrations of Richard Nixon and Gerald R. Ford. In Chapter Five, the shahs attempt to gain more in the way of co-production and military sales during the Carter administration is discussed. Otherwise the shah was a model Oriental; he accepted the yolk of US control with little in way of overt angst or anger. Orientals can also go bad in terms of US policy; The Iranian Revolution and the

Hostage Crisis discussed in Chapter Five revealed the potential for bad Oriental behavior. The regime of Ayatollah Ruholla Khomeini was bad in the sense that it revealed the problems of a powerful state unwilling to accept the realities of the international system, incapable in a sense of recognizing their position and rendering unto the US, especially in light of the Cold War, the necessary provisions for security.

CHAPTER 1
SECURITY NARRATIVES AND AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

Introduction

In light of the recent, dramatic thaw in Iranian-US relations on September 15, 2015, and with the Obama administration's ground-breaking direct communications with their counterparts in the Rouhani administration, observers are left to wonder at the path and process of strategic diplomacy, engagement, and foreign policy construction. This dissertation constructs and assembles American foreign policy through the Orientalist descriptions of key actors within the Presidential administrations of Lyndon Baines Johnson through Ronald Reagan (1965-1989). At once, taking pains to reveal how security, threat, alliances, and enmities are created and promulgated over the recent past while taking time to try to understand the historical reality as the actors within the narrative saw and described it.

This discussion begins and furthers the conversations within three distinct elements of the literature. First, I wish to place the conversation within the literature on and around security studies, specifically, Critical Security Studies (CSS). Notable scholars such as Ken Booth, Steve Smith, Lene Hansen, Barry Buzan, and Andrew Linklater have begun a dialogue that seeks to move beyond realism as a basis of study for security (Booth, 2005: 2). While the study of security has always been a central element of International Relations (IR), their work creates and places the topic of discussion within CSS, which focuses upon "realism as part of the problem in world politics rather than being the problem-solver" (Booth, 2005:2). Moving beyond the easy state-level constructions or black boxes, CSS takes elements of constructivism, discursive analysis, and post-modernism to approach and deconstruct security topics in

a post-9/11 world, and for our purposes historical analysis of presidential administrations (Booth, 2005: 3). The spirit of the CSS application can be found in the statement by Booth that threat and security begin "in our heads before they take place out in the world" (Booth, 2005: 3). Additionally, scholars like Lene Hansen, have already laid much of the groundwork that this study will utilize to understand the construction of American foreign policy (Hansen, 2006). The larger extent of which is discussed in my Research Design in Chapter Two.

Second, I apply historical analysis to reconstruct policy maker dialogue within the administrations I study. The use of historical analysis in IR is something of a new element, though the approach of using history, rather than reifying timeless IR theories such as realism and liberalism, is an important move that this piece employs to understand the behavior of actors within each administration (Mitchell, 1991; Smith, 2003; Vitalis, 2009). Third, this piece utilizes Edward Said's Orientalism to understand how information seen in the world is cast, narrativised, and digested within policy discourse (1979). Said argued that the view of West to East is made not objectively but through a lens of dualities, thus the East is known by the West as being its polar opposite. For our case, Iran is the object of our study and the characterization of Iran and the shah as the 'good Oriental' is one that knows their place within the international system, but is still necessarily less than a Westerner of equal status. Said helps us to understand how and in what cases the West comes to understand the East better than it understands itself, and in so doing creates limitations, real, artificial, or otherwise that construct the 'Other' as being necessarily different from the 'Self'. My contribution lies in

the application of these three separate but important lines of argumentation in the literature.

To describe how I apply Said more completely, I utilize Said's conceptualization that there are good and bad Orientals (1979). Within his argument 'good Orientals' understand the necessity of imperialism, demure to control, create the ideational space for domination, and allow for the colonizer or authority to use these individuals who understand the beneficial role of their foreign patron from those that do not. The 'good Oriental' can also become bad if and when they overstep the bounds of their freedom and attempt to assert control above their subordinate station (Said, 1979: 33).

I argue that American foreign policy seeks out 'good Orientals' to enact its strategies in foreign policy contexts and to provide a veneer of official local support for the implementation of policy. There are many notable examples of the US using a local leader to justify its role: Hosni Mubarak and, later, Abdel Fatteh el-Sisi in Egypt are appropriate examples of 'good Orientals'; they understood their role, enacted policies broadly in support of US goals as opposed to the strengthening of their populations, and in most situations demurred to the foreign policy objectives of the United States. Mohammed Morsi, the president of Egypt before el-Sisi, rocked the boat of foreign policy. He attempted to alter the constitution of Egypt in a manner more befitting the role of his governing party, the Muslim Brotherhood, and quickly found himself out of power, and currently, having been tried for treason, is facing the death penalty (Marshal, 2013).

The shah of Iran, Reza Pahlavi, and Iran as a nation fit this characterization with some alacrity. The shah was the 'good Oriental': he modernized, he secularized, he kept his people pliable, if not free, and was in general sensitive and willing to take on

the foreign policy goals of the United States. With a few exceptions, moves by the shah discussed in Chapters Four and Five reveal his attempts to leverage oil prices during the administrations of Richard Nixon and Gerald R. Ford. In Chapter Five, the shah's attempt to gain more in the way of co-production and military sales during the Carter administration is discussed. Otherwise the shah was a model Oriental; he accepted the yolk of US control with little in way of overt angst or anger. Orientals can also go 'bad' in terms of US policy; The Iranian Revolution and the Hostage Crisis discussed in Chapter Six revealed the potential for 'bad Oriental' behavior. The regime of Ayatollah Ruholla Khomeini was 'bad' in the sense that it revealed the problems of a powerful state unwilling to accept the 'realities' of the international system, incapable in a sense of recognizing their position and rendering unto the US, especially in light of the Cold War, the necessary provisions for security.

The terms 'good' and 'bad' Orientals are not meant to be used here as derogatory expressions. I do not argue that Orientals should or should not act in a certain way, nor do I believe there is something inherently about 'Orientals' that make them unstable, irrational, or incapable. I use this term specifically to characterize the role that the US sees for itself in terms of foreign policy. States serve their purpose in terms of US goals and ends or they do not. If they do not they are a threat, and if they are unwilling to play their necessary role for US purposes they are to be feared or deconstructed.

The search for a 'good Oriental' as a cornerstone of US policy is not a favorable one. It blinds the United States to the commonalities of individuals, it colors the relations between states as subordinate or dominant, and it allows for horrific actions to be taken

by the ‘good Oriental’ because the citizens of their countries are not, in a sense, ‘real people’ but Orientals. The tradeoffs in seeking the ‘good Oriental’ are broadly deleterious to a nation, like the US, that at least rhetorically supports the goals of liberty, democracy, and freedom. How can people be free in other societies if one is willing to deal with the actor’s worst in support of interests and goals, rather than respecting individuals as capable of understanding their political realities and making choices that may be counter to the whims of the US? As we will see during the Reagan administration, in Chapter Seven, this may even lead to skirting American legal practice in attempting to empower the strategically valuable ‘good Orientals’, in this case the supposed moderates in the Khomeini regime during the Iran-Contra Scandal.

I argue that Orientalism has much to offer in terms of analytical clarity for the process of understanding and deconstructing the foreign policy goals of the US. I further contend that this process is inherently negative and must be recognized lest we fall into the same ideological traps and cul-de-sacs again and again. Dominance does not include freedom in its repertoire. In the following pages we will lay out the case for using Orientalism as a discursive tool and the use of narratives in foreign policy as a way to unearth those Orientalist narratives.

Structure

The structure of each chapter is meant to follow the chronological progression of historical events, personal impressions, and narrativised policy constructions of each president from Lyndon Johnson (1963) through Ronald Reagan (1989). While each chapter identifies signature issues that each president sought to take on and each impression of the shah or of Iran as a whole each president sought to construct, every attempt is made to place the conversation in the larger arc of history. For example,

Lyndon Johnson in his construction of Iran at the beginning of his presidency is quite different toward the end of his presidency. Each president, and each administration evolves along certain lines and the persistent attempt is made to include the narratives of each presidency in chronological order as the conversation about the 'good Oriental' took place over a protracted period of time. Each chapter then is dedicated to the exclusive discussion of an individual presidency with some indication toward the end of each chapter the implications from one presidency to another.

Chapter Three is dedicated to the discussion of the Johnson presidency (1963-1969) and its construction of the 'good Oriental' and behavior and importance of the shah. While most of the material I provide is focused upon the Johnson presidency some material is also provided to discuss Johnson's role toward Iran from his time as Vice President in 1960 under President John F. Kennedy. The discussion of Johnson includes the personal attraction Johnson felt toward the shah, which placed him outside the foreign policy concerns of much of Kennedy's team, who viewed the shah with far more skepticism. Johnson represents in his early tenure as VP a willingness to embrace the shah that went beyond the official mandate of Kennedy. Chapter Two also relates the foreign policy objectives that Johnson believed that the shah and Iran were capable of. Specifically, this regarded the balance between domestic spending goals dedicated to social welfare, along with the healthy provision of military hardware. Johnson's 'balance', abandoned by later administrations, is discussed in detail.

Chapter Four describes the presidency of Richard Nixon (1969-1974) and his policy goal implementation relative to the 'good Oriental', the shah. Nixon viewed the shah as a linchpin to his preferred foreign policy calculation: a few key strong actors

could keep order in a region strategically important to the US. The Nixon Doctrine as his foreign policy orientation came to be known, relied heavily upon the shah to accept the dictates of the American foreign policy establishment as being fundamentally positive for Iran and the western world as a whole. The balance between domestic infrastructure and social welfare spending implemented under Johnson, was given far less importance by Nixon, his view that the shah was the "only thing there" reflected a tendency to leave the internal political order of important allies to their own designs, so long as they served the largest interest of US foreign policy goals.[1] The 'good Oriental' was given carte blanche within Iran so long as he accepted the mandates of the US.

Also discussed is the issue of the 'good Oriental' potentially going bad as the 1973-74 oil embargo demonstrated. The shah's interest in using the political issues of the day to benefit his country, with a 2% increase in oil royalties, was viewed as defiant move by an already pressed and 'besieged' Nixon White House, thus the discussion thereafter becomes how to manage the 'good Oriental' to keep their priorities in the service of US interests. In a sense, a new 'balance' is described from Nixon onward, how to provide the shah with enough power to carry out US goals, such as the South Asian crisis in Pakistan, while still keeping the shah as a subordinate party linked to the pursuit of US rather than domestic goals.

Chapter Five describes the orientation of the 'good Oriental' in relation to the administration of Gerald R. Ford (1974-1977). With the resignation of Richard Nixon and the pressure of formulating a foreign policy that kept the shah as a subordinate party, a

[1] OVAL April 8, 1971; White House Tapes; Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California.

few key issues are discussed herein. First, much of Ford's foreign policy reflected the position of his advisors, who were, almost to a one, holdovers from the Nixon administration. The continuity of much of Ford's actions, and his acceptance of the priorities handed down in the Nixon Doctrine reflect the foreign policy of an actor more led than leading.

Second, Ford was the first president to begin the delicate process of nuclear assistance to Iran, and the debate surrounding the role of the shah as a nuclear power characterized a significant portion of Ford's presidential discourse. The shah saw himself as a an authority capable of equality with the West in terms of nuclear power, Ford's own perceptions of what the 'good Oriental' was capable of (i.e. a lack of equality with Western allies) characterized the problems of managing a subordinate power that does not see themselves as such. Ford's attempt to maintain the shah as an ally while manifestly subordinating the goals of full nuclear equality reveals how problematic this maintenance can be. The discussion of the nuclear issue, such a hot button topic up until the present, is a key sticking point and foreign goal for Ford.

Third, the issue of co-production of military hardware characterizes how problematic the maintenance of a subordinate ally can be. By 1976 the shah desired the ability to produce the same munitions and high tech armaments available to the West within Iran. The problem of Ford's perception of what the 'good Oriental' was capable of characterizes this period as a 'difficult' one for Ford. 'Good Orientals' in this sense, can go 'bad' if they view themselves as equal. Ford's task, like Nixon's, was to provide a 'balance' that simultaneously empowered and subordinated the shah's foreign policy expectations, while not allowing for the shah and Iran to grow beyond a manageable

and subordinate position. This concept of 'balance' would also characterize the whims of future administrations as Iran shifted from a 'good' to a 'bad' Oriental, one that was unwilling to accept their status as part of their regional, geographic, and cultural makeup.

Finally, the Ford White House and the narrative toward the 'good Oriental' provide a harbinger of the difficulties of managing this foreign policy relationship revealed in the discussion in Chapter Six regarding the administration of Jimmy Carter. Increasing violence, suppression, and torture became the option deemed most effective during the Ford years, and while the shah was never a proponent of human rights, press freedoms, or political protests, the increasing use of violence to maintain internal order revealed the substantial difficulty of maintain the US-Iran alliance. The abandonment of the domestic and military balance, which was never entirely successful under Johnson's tenure, would now mark the shah as a leader was increasingly unable to guarantee that his regime would remain viable in the future.

Chapter Six discusses the final waning days of the shah's regime under the administration of Jimmy Carter (1977-1981). Carter was perhaps the most consequential actor in terms of maintaining the 'good Oriental' in terms of sacrificing his own professed human rights and democratic intentions, with the need for a willing ally in a vital strategic region. This chapter relates the final days of the shah's tenure and it describes the difficulties of navigating the foreign policy needs of the US while maintaining a rapidly disintegrating ally. Perhaps, what is most important for the larger discussion of Orientalism as a concept found within the Carter administration is how far a US actor will go in placating and maintaining an ally even if it profoundly grates

against the personal convictions of an office-holder. Carter's willingness to embrace Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini as a potential replacement for the shah reveals to us how narrow the narrative of the 'good Oriental' can become. Carter in his personal diaries and archival revelations never seriously debates taking the issues put forward by Iranian protestors and political activists seriously, instead, he argues that the position of the US is dedicated to stability, regardless of how horrific that status quo can become. Carter, perhaps more than any other actor, provides a narrative that excuses significant excess by an ally in pursuit of stability, rather than considering the alternative for democracy, political redress, or human rights. His administration shows us the lengths to which Orientalist thought structures and narratives blind foreign policy actors to possibilities and innovations. With the hostage taking on November 4, 1979, and the subsequent departure of the shah, the relationship between the United States and Iran was significantly altered for thirty-five years.

Chapter Seven describes the foreign policy and narrative construction under the administration of Ronald Reagan (1981-1989). Key to this discussion is the concept that the 'good Oriental' is retrievable even in this most dire of circumstances. Discussed herein is the intervention in Lebanon in April of 1981, a moment of significance because it reveals to what degree Orientalism convinces foreign policy actors that they understand the situation, the implications, and the history of a given place and time, better than Orientals know themselves. Reagan's decision to intervene in Lebanon marks a dark period, with significant consequences in loss of life and influence because of the Orientalist blinders that the narrative provides. Knowing the Lebanese, and indeed claiming authority over the Lebanese civil war, reveals to us how problematic

Middle East interventions can become when Orientalist thought structures are dominant.

Beyond Lebanon, two other key historical points are discussed in detail. First, the Iran-Contra affair which represents both the possibilities for future engagement and the amount of delusion the 'good Oriental' narrative can provide an American foreign policy actors are considered. Given that the Reagan White House not only landed senior administration officials in Iran, shipped weapons to Iran without the knowledge of the American people, invited senior Iranian negotiators into the US and into the White House, and negotiated a scandal that almost destroyed the political influence of Reagan himself, reveals to us just how pernicious the 'good Oriental' narrative can be.

Second, the Tanker War in late 1987 through early 1989 reveals to us how much power the 'good Oriental' can wield given the circumstances of the time. The Reagan administration had found itself another 'good Oriental' in the region, Saddam Hussein of Iraq, and the maintenance of the relationship; which included intelligence sharing, armament, and strategic coordination, shows us how constricting the narrative of Orientalism can be. Reagan's decision to accept the sinking of the *USS Stark* by the Iraqi airforce on May 16, 1987, and their subsequent demonization of the accidental destruction of the *USS Samuel B. Roberts* by the Iranians on April 14, 1988 shows us the double standard of Orientalism. Iraqi pilots targeted and destroyed the *Stark* without official sanctions or condemnation, and the accidental sinking of the *Roberts* resulted in both sanctions and a military response by the Americans. The change in 'good Orientals' was confirmed. Support for Saddam would lead future actors down the path

of supporting dictators to provide stability while ignoring their transgressions, just so long as they understood their place as ‘good Orientals’.

CHAPTER 2
RESEARCH DESIGN

To understand the construction of American Foreign Policy toward Iran one must first understand how language itself is constructed, and how the use of specific aspects of language both represent and reveal elements of power within what Said referred to as 'constellations of meaning' (1979: 45). For Michel Foucault, a notable influence on Said, language was a collected structure meaning that forms, "a regularity (an order, correlations, positions and functionings, transformations)" that creates a series of meanings and concepts (Foucault, 1974: 38). The state, then can be described as an ideological creation based on a certain accepted basis of power and ideational relations. Good, bad, threatening, or safe, are all creation which reflect the value structures of the political entity.

Critical Security Studies and a poststructural discourse ontology is deeply intertwined with the language of actors under study as being both constitutive and reified within the historical discourse of actors within each administration. Language, and internally oriented discourse toward foreign policy construction, is inherently unstable, given that the goals of the individuals included in the discussion are both seeking to execute policy as they see it, and describing and interpreting the reality they seek to achieve. To use Hansen, the guiding light of this study argues that, "the concept of 'discourse' is not equivalent to 'ideas'; discourse incorporates material as well as ideational factors" (Hansen, 2007: 15).

The relationship that I argue exists is between both the construction of foreign policy and the identity, specifically the Orientalist identity, of actors within each administration. In poststructuralism the language applied by various actors relates ideas

and identities to ‘things’ (objects, states, world leaders, foreign populations) that exist in the world. Each of these ideas is given meaning through language, which exists as a medium of thought production and is revealed or related as a narrativisation of various concepts and predispositions toward actors. In this sense, there is no objective reality being described in this context, actors are simply relating their impressions of states, their capabilities, and their strategic or inherent attributes. Language is thus both social and individual in that the creation of meaning is deliberated upon internally, but conceptualized and revealed through speech and writing.

Language then is subjectively determined through the process of conversation and iteration. Ideas, for example, in the Johnson administration were for the most part construed to be supportive of US foreign policy in terms of both the perceived capabilities of the Iranian population and the calculations by US policy makers in terms of the Cold War. Both the ideas and the identities for US stakeholders that they represented are vital to understand, but the generation of those ideas can be found in the use of language and in the production of policies and strategies within the administration. I argue that, the socially constructed nature of language and the requisite ideas that they become semantically attached to come to represent both the perceptions and prejudices of the actors involved (Hansen, 2007: 17).

All of this is broadly in line with the social constructions argument made within the Critical Security Studies literature with the notable improvement in Critical Discourse studies that positions of power and the subjectivities of language that are applied come to represent asymmetries of power within the administration (Booth, 2005; Hansen, 2007). For example, the ability of the Johnson administration to characterize Iran as a

single leader culture or as a population of sheep in want of a shepherd pertains to a construction of power that enables certain activities and disables others. It enables a foreign policy premised upon reinforcing the whims of a single leader, in this case the shah of Iran, and disables taking seriously elements within the Iranian establishment that promote or seek to dissent against the shah's regime. Power, in this sense, is defined through characterization and reified through the promotion of US policies toward Iran. This does not come from thin air, however, it lies in the Orientalist discourses as applied by Said (1979). To gain the needed vantage point on this discourse therefore, it becomes necessary to examine how existing structures of meaning are created, and then to unearth how those structures of meaning contort and contend with the pressures of international politics.

Concept Building Identity Construction, Narratives, and NeoOrientalism

This piece details the inscription of the US understanding of Iran: what Iranians as *Orientals* are capable of according to US perceptions, the goals of the Shah of Iran and now the Islamic Republic, the nature of the theocracy by Western reckoning, and the history of engagement that provides the context and trajectory for the lack of diplomatic and strategic relations between the U.S. and Iran.

One cannot engage the topic of narrativised AFP without speaking of three aspects at the outset: First, as argued above, the construction of foreign policy ideas and goals is iterative and fundamentally constructed through discourse; second, the method with the most analytical leverage for the task is Critical Discourse Analysis because it describes the underlying power that ideas envision and predispositions construct; third, this examination arguably is not a task for Saidian Orientalism - what is required is an iterative Orientalism that updates as history progresses. Why is this third

aspect necessary? Orientalism at its heart is a process that constructs Western knowledge of the East through the media, travel logs, diaries, and literature. Post-Saidian, Neo Orientalism, or any of the other variations (Franco-Orientalism, German Orientalism, etc.) uses the elements of individuated cultures to derive meaning (1979; 1997: 5-7). The British experience, the basis for Said's early work, is insufficient to construct American Orientalism (Little, 2002).

I argue that the strategic aims of foreign policy, which some have characterized as interests, are determined by the effects of ideas or ideologies that construct how actors understand their objectives (Garret and Weingast, 1991; Kingdon, 1993; Blythe, 2003; Scott, 2007). These interests often fail to be realized because of ideological barriers, or constrain ideational borders that constrain the limits of policy practice. Policy generation at an administrative level is constructed, sold, and resold through the use of language, packaging, and the narrativising of current events into a larger story about the way the world "hangs together" (Ruggie, 1998). Some discussion is therefore in order on how I view the policy generation process.

There is substantial debate on what the best behavior for the US should be based the nation's strategic interests (Morgenthau, 1954; Lake, 1987; Posen and Ross, 1987; Art, 1991; Snyder, 1991; Rosecrance, 1993; Lake, 1996; Weldes, 1996; Mastanduno, 1997; Posen, 2002; Gaddis, 2002; Gaddis, 2005; Layne, 2006; Nye, 2006). Thus, while I do not wish to overburden the conceptualization of the strategic narrative, I do wish to understand how the policy process is made meaningful and, in the process of interaction, maintained and constructed within an ideational structure like Orientalism.

Orientalism and Post Orientalism

Edward Said and his work *Orientalism* posited that a set of essentialized meanings had been established by Western academics and travelers to understand and construct not a 'true' or materially 'factual' impression of the Middle East, but instead created the idea of a feminized, irrational, and seductive land that literally by nature and perception demanded Western intervention (1979). Said's powerful narratives that were established, through a Foucaultian and Gramscian framing, were as much about power, positionality, and discourse as they were about Western- Middle Eastern relations.

What makes this particular avenue of AFP an Orientalist study is the persistent use of prescriptions and policies that reflected the role of the shah and of Iran more specifically as a place best suited for a different structure of values. In practice this means that the goals or suggestions that policymakers might make were functionally different than those that they might perceive as being appropriate for Europeans. For example, as is detailed in Ford's Chapter the use of nuclear diplomacy set a different standard for Iran than it for European allies. The Iranians, to be given nuclear fuel for their developing domestic enrichment cycle, were treated with extra safeguards, restrictions on the amount of fuel given, and most importantly limited independent access to technology that could be used for their own technological advancement. When word reached the shah and his scientists that they would be given extra or enhanced discriminatory measures beyond what European allies were to receive, they rightfully questioned why they were to be given more restrictions simply based upon their status as 'less than'.

Without Orientalism, one is left slightly puzzled as to why a noted and important ally would receive second-tier status, with Orientalism the reasons for this foreign policy

become relatively more clear. The fact that Kissinger, a noted shah proponent, considered this to be a substantial favor toward the shah, reveals that it was not only a policy based on strategic thinking, but one contorted to represent what the 'Other' was capable of. The shah was a 'good Oriental', but still an Oriental, and regarded with manifest suspicion.

AFP is the selling of an idea or a conceptualization to the polity in question. This is not done merely through static theorizing, but instead through historical and ideational development by actors within the policy making structure. This is the line of argument accepted and expounded upon by some, including Robbins et al. (1994) and Prakash (1995); Todorova (1997) and Flemming (2000) in their studies of the Orientalization of the Balkans; Cannadine (2002) who studies the use of British artifacts as a means to represent the Orient; Nishihara (2005) in the study of Japan; and finally, Marchand (2009) examining the role of German Orientalism in the social sciences. Some have taken the goal to be analyzing how the media covers the role of a given country. In this case Iran is presented as a site of constant misrepresentation by agents within the knowledge production structure (Dorman and Farhang, 1988; Downing and Mohammadi, 1995; Keddie and Richard, 2006). Still others look to the developing side of Orientalism, specifically, American Orientalism (Rotter, 2000; Little, 2002; McAlister, 2006; Jacobs, 2012).

Specifically regarding the American version of Orientalism employed by contemporary scholars, one observes a general wariness in applying Orientalism as a package of ideas, specifically because of what the original conceptualization represents: a static and essentialized worldview constraining how the West interprets and reacts to

the East (Richardson, 1990; Rotter, 2000; Jacobs, 2012). Orientalism is a lens, as Said described, or a set of assumptions about what can reasonably be 'expected' of the Oriental 'Other' (Said, 1979: 27; 1997). It is my aim not simply to apply the generalizations that Said utilizes, nor is it simply to cast his work aside as antiquated, with the *Oriental* subject unable to modify the Western object, it is rather to take the norms, ideas, and narratives that Said constructs and apply them in a simultaneously dynamic and static frame.

How Narratives are Created and Persist, and how they Constrain American Foreign Policy

My central argument is that AFP makers, in their selling and packaging of narratives to the public, will draw upon contextually-driven, post-Saidian Orientalism inadvertently because the constructions of 'Self' and 'Other' are longstanding, and the constellations of meaning are intact. Policy makers will use what they know about the 'Other' to sell their policy goals to the public. I will observe AFP actors wed to the barriers created in the past without the overt ability to advocate for the strategic narrative. Even with new administrations or new policy initiatives, I argue, I will observe the echoes of past ideological barriers and narratives in the construction of AFP. These ideological barriers will prevent the construction of novel or engagement-oriented policies that may elevate the discourse.

From previous scholars, I take as a point of departure that American Foreign Policy (AFP) is fundamentally ideational, and constructed through a dynamic process of social interaction at the domestic and international level (Hansen, 2006). This stands apart from the conception of AFP decided along rational, bureaucratic, or organization lines (Allison, 1971), and more a nod to the use of Critical Security Studies and post-

structural epistemologies scholars have promoted more recently (Ruggie, 1998; Ashley, 1987). From Jervis' *Perception and Misperception in International Politics,* which highlighted the role not only of material but ideational factors in the makeup of AFP, I construct a position more in line with the critical theorist: that the role one seeks is power based and positional rather than simply one of rational misunderstanding or miscalculation (1976). I take the view that post-structuralism and the idea of discourse and narrative is in and of itself valuable (Der Derian, 1987; Walker, 1990; Shapiro, 1990). Narrative forms of study allow for the observation of the process as it is established, evolves and eventually becomes represented as policy (Hansen, 2006; Buzan and Hansen, 2009).

Arguably, most observers understand the conceptualization of narratives as a "sequence of events tied to a plot line" (Arcetti, 2013: 2). Narratives though are at the same time deeply complex in that they "connect together past and present" (Lawler, 2002: 242). They do not simply carry with them a set of facts, rather, they are "social products produced by people within the context of a specific social, historical and cultural location" (Lawler, 2002: 242). Thus, narratives are created as social products, first by primary actors through memories, delivered as products to witnesses, and finally documented and retransmitted first through journalism then through recorded history by historians. Hayden White, for example, argues that this process exists through the practice of emplotting events into history (White, 1973: 383 Used by Arcetti 2013).

However, this is not a one-size-fits-all process of easy and original inscription. Despite the near ubiquity of stories and tales regarding concept discussion and inscription, preexisting narratives bump up against and bound the nature of available

thoughts and ideas. Four different aspects of narrative construction exist within the IR literature. First, the strategic narrative school, born out of the conceptualization of narratives as stories established "expertise and authority" (Linde, 2009: 5). The second, the historical referential school, created to understand the role of myth, metaphor, and argumentation. Third, the collective memory school, which argues for positioning of memories and charters to functionally foreclose the ideational space of actors, and act as a point of continuity for the speaker/writer and the audience (Jervis, 1976; Khong, 1992).

Finally the literary/thematic school, which argues that narratives are functionally "constellations of meaning" wed to a certain time and place, but can act as an ideological sub-stratum where the creation of ontology and epistemology is far more effective as a construct (Said, 1979; McAlister, 2002; Little, 2002). It is finally this school that I believe for my own area of interest allows for the greatest level of theoretical and practical purchase. Precisely because scholars within this tradition implicate the role of power, stories, and mythmaking simultaneously and creatively as an area of production and stabilization they hold the greatest power in helping scholars and practitioners to tangibly grasp the role of stories in the creation of foreign policy. Thus, for my analysis, NeoOrientalism is the most important tool.

Theoretical Framework

The practice of situating rather than essentalizing, and contextualizing rather than uniformly applying Said's ideas is one of the goals of this piece (McAlister, 2006; Jacobs, 2012). It is not enough to simply state that travel logs, diaries, and scholarly knowledge has created a stable Oriental "constellation of meanings" in the minds of the West, it is to examine the evolving policy discourse around these meanings and

interrogate the “individuals and groups who thought, on nearly a daily basis, about the Middle East and how it figured in the international orientation of the United States” (Little, 2002; Jacobs, 2012: 17).

More specifically, I wish to know how American policy makers, not simply one dimensional Orientalists, have produced and reproduced knowledge about the region. They have done so to justify action and inaction, and to produce consensus around the behavior of one country to another. I take for granted that part of the project is about examining not only the assumptions about the West or Western reactions to the Oriental ‘Other’ but, more appropriately, how these ideas are reflected and understood in a dynamic and ongoing process of narrativised learning and policy-oriented practice. Furthermore, the recent history of American-Middle Eastern interaction must by its nature be flavored by the long term relationships with regional actors, the use of missionary work within the region, and the creation of economically prized sectors is taken as a back drop (oil refinement and extraction most specifically), as these also play an important role (Kaplan, 1995: 5, 21; Oren, 2007; Vitalis, 2009; Crist, 2012). The narrative then is about the physical, and the interpretation of meaning that governs both the policy and the practice that these opinions, beliefs, and ideas create. Iran is a physical space, it has an ideational and physical significance in world affairs, but how the construction of AFP comes to understand that meaning is the basis for the project.

Producing Narratives: Methodological Challenges and Possibilities

In the early 1990s some took the position that critical theory was itself “mostly criticism and not much theory” (Walt, 1991). Since then, much work has been done to situate poststructuralism and security studies in such a way that it reveals as much as it criticizes (Campbell, 1998; Hansen, 2006). In line with those later attempts at concept

and content generation, I take the position that to *do* narratives correctly one must assume that the production of knowledge and the examination of this knowledge occur across a spectrum of expected policy maker utility and the establishment of expertise (Gill, 2012). In the cases of European integration (Neuman, 1999; Hansen and Waver, 2012), the War on Terror (Loader and Walker, 2007), and the continuing delineation of West- East ideational and identity boundary maintenance, the use of discourse is a vital contribution (Hansen, 2012).

Herein, the post-Orientalist narrativised line is assisted by the wave of neo-Gramscian and post structural foreign policy analysis applied by scholars in political science (Hansen, 2006; Gill, 2012). The desire among historians and political scientists alike is to establish that the causal *is* possible (Jackson, 2010), if not entirely preferable (Buzan and Hansen, 2009); and that to derive broader implications one must go beyond the role of simple narratives or past behaviors (Hansen, 2012). The project then becomes one of historical investigation of the narratives established by policy makers in reference to the Middle East, how they interpret current events, their positionality within the policy making apparatus, and then finally, how these interpretations construct the broader narrative.

Narratives in this sense occupy a dual position: they allow for an observer to interrogate meaning, while at the same time providing a critique of thought and practice that can be valuable for interrogating power and voice within the narrative. Proceeding from the path marked by Hansen (2006), the use of poststructuralism can be a valuable method for establishing the nature, role, and perspective outlined by theorists and practitioners of AFP. I do not claim an Archimedean point of observation wherein all

normative construction is pared away, nor do I think this is a reasonable possibility, given the role ideology plays in the minds of the practitioner and the observer (Bevir and Kedar, 2008). Actors in foreign policy are attempting to create and understand simultaneously, thus, the use of their discourse and the results of their practice are vital to this study (Campbell, 1998).

Methodology

To construct the foreign policy narrative of the American presidency toward Iran from 1961- 1989 the holdings at the Johnson Presidential Library, The Richard Nixon Presidential Library, The Gerald Ford Presidential Library, and the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library contain more than 100 million pages and the process of establishing and creating the proper methodological tools is important at the outset. The archivists at the National Archives established through the use of finding aids and their expert knowledge of the archival holdings the files most closely associated with Iran. These included the White House Central Files that specifically documented the administration's dealings and communications with Iran, The National Security Files associated with Iran, and finally an omnibus Country File that collected all findings relevant to each administration's contact with Iran from 1963-1988. From this finding my research collected 4,184 individual documents which pertained to dealings with Iran.

Within this collection of 4,184 there is a bit of everything: State Department Telexes that described impressions, statistics, and reporting on the current conditions of the Iranian state, mainly found within the National Security File, but sometimes sorted into specific Staffers and State Department experts who had particular dealings with Iran. For example within the Johnson administration, the personal papers of Martin Herz, Robert Komer, and Harold D. Saunders were vital in this exploration. Internal

White House documents, collected in the White House file, include memorandums that collected the administration's perceptions of Iran, directives on policy matters, and perhaps most importantly directives and agendas on personal meetings and public behavior. These 'Agendas' were important because unlike other policy related behaviors or directives, which are internally discussed with some underlying logic or interests in mind, the 'Agendas' instruct officials on what is important personally and culturally. These impressions, which the administration felt were important enough to include, indicate the overall framing or narrative that was being established about or around the figure of the Iranian.

Through this process the researcher is able to contextualize and describe the methods by which each administration understands a foreign state through narrative framing. This analysis begins with a brief description and characterization of each of the individual administration's goals in dealing with Iran, and then moves to the administration's impressions of the head of state, the shah of Iran Mohamed Reza Pahlavi, and follows through to general impressions of the Iranians.

The narrative this piece constructs is derived from using archival materials, presidential diaries, and certain key secondary sources whose access makes them important archives in and of themselves (Crist, 2012; Alvandi, 2014). The process used for retrieving archival material is based on the approaches of three key sources used as a blueprint for undertaking the research for this piece. First, Cecilia Lynch's *Beyond Appeasement* (2007) reconstructs the peace narratives at work within World War II narratives. She collects archival materials, press reports, and policy maker/organizational reflections on the peace movements during World War II. Her

analysis is critical, in that it does not take the revelations of others at face value, rather she contends that constructing the meaning behind the narratives requires multiple sources that detail the contestation of meaning present in the discourse of activists and policy makers.

Second, Lene Hansen's *Security as Practice* (2007) uses a combination of official discourse, press reports, and archival material to buttress her claims. Hansen's work focuses on the often-contested narrative surrounding the implementation of protection policies in the Balkans. She constructs the discourse at work within the Clinton administration using a post-structural analysis that relies upon the collective pooling of thought structures to create the tapestry of intertextual meaning.

Third, Matthew Jacobs *Imagining the Middle East* (2011) employs archives and discourse related through a key group of nongovernmental relations within the *Council on Foreign Relations* and a group called the Inquiry among others that sought to construct an impression of the Middle East. This work produces how the Middle East was understood using an Orientalist framework that contextualizes and reproduces feminized, weakened, and irrational framings on Middle East actors (Jacobs, 2011: 18). Jacobs uses Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1979) concepts to derive how the Middle East was understood, constructed, and plotted within the minds of foreign policy makers and governmental actors.

Finally, as noted above I use Orientalist discourse from a number of sources to construct how Orientalist thought structures are used in the application of American foreign policy. The use of a uniquely American Orientalism as being slightly different apart from British, German, and other manifestations of the concept is a key concept

here (Little, 2002; McAlister, 2006). This piece uses the term 'good Oriental' to define a subset of Orientals within the context of American foreign policy constructions, based on Said's concept the "good natives" in Said's (1979) quotation from Edward James Balfour parliamentary testimony (33), the 'good Oriental' is the agent or actor that understands their place within the structure of international politics. They benefit from the actions and support of their foreign patron; they are capable of recognizing their place as first among other Orientals but not equal to Western allies; and finally, they recognize that their international, regional, and domestic goals are tethered to the whims of their extra-territorial backer.

To construct the narrative around the 'good Oriental' I use the approaches of the above mentioned scholars. To approach the archives in each library I contacted an archivist to provide material surrounding the specific topic: Iran. Sources for this material were found in the Country Files for Iran, and the National Security Files for Iran, as well as the personal papers of key aides and staffers who worked on Near East and Middle East issues. The archivist, skilled in navigating the millions of documents in each library, worked as a liaison to find specific materials relevant to the researcher. The visits to the physical libraries were coordinated weeks in advance to provide time to retrieve the necessary documents beforehand, thus, by the time of the researcher's arrival multiple boxes and folders had already been retrieved. The archivists for each presidential library are a vital component beyond the finding aids provided by each library to orient the researcher toward material relevant to the given area of study.

After having arrived on-site the researcher photographed all relevant materials related to Iran (once again, from the Country Files, National Security Files, etc.) to

construct the narrative of American foreign policy. Archives provide a window into policy making at its source because the material under examination was never meant to be read contemporarily. The National Archives maintains a thirty year classification window that encourages policy makers and their staff to speak glibly and honestly about the nature of foreign policy relationships. This *delay* is key because one can assume that with the passage of time the portrayals provided in their constructions of foreign policy are thought to be private. Because this research is interested mainly in impressions, constructions, and representations of Iran beyond the day-to-day business of American policy objectives the researcher examined presidential toasts, personal meetings, and recorded conversations, while at the same time reviewing State Department Telexes and CIA briefings. Constructing the narrative requires a combination of these materials, because policy maker impressions may not simply be found in personal interactions, between heads of state it can also be found in informal or conversational relations between the Executive Staff. Richard Nixon for example, describes the shah in Oval Office conversations which fundamentally inform how he viewed the shah and the shah's role in constructing his "Twin Pillars" strategy. He never informs the shah of his Orientalist constructions, but they come to inform the way he viewed the shah as a 'good Oriental' worthy of patronage and support.

Archival documentation, which gives us an intimate view of policy generation at its source, the use of presidential diaries is vital as well. Two presidents have published their diaries relating to the time period in question. Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan's personal writings offer an invaluable window into their day-to-day dealings with Iran. In their own hand they make notations and descriptions about their personal impressions

of Iran, how they are constructing foreign policy toward the country, and perhaps most importantly how their personal reflections, constructions, and calculations influence how they see the country and potential for engagement or disengagement. This is especially important as Carter and Reagan witness a sea change in the relationship between the US and Iran regarding the hostage crisis and the Iran-Iraq, not to mention Iran-Contra and the Lebanon engagement.

The use of secondary source documentation of foreign policy events is also employed. David Crist, for example in his work *The Twilight War* (2012), is a naval historian whose access to foreign policy actors in Iran and in the US provides revelations found seemingly nowhere else. The attempt was made to construct the Iran-Contra Affair, for example, at Reagan's Presidential Library in Simi Valley, California. Most documentation of the Iran-Contra Affair in 1988 and 1989 are still considered classified. While the attempt was made to file Freedom of Information requests to declassify the material, Crist's access and interviews provide a window into the Iran-Contra that can arguably be found nowhere else. Thus, Crist's notable work plays an important role in detailing the events of the Reagan administration and assisted in the construction of the foreign policy narratives employed within the administration.

To construct the narratives that surround the pursuit of the 'good Oriental' I first applied secondary source materials to provide a context for the archival material (Bill, 1988; Crist, 2012; Alvandi, 2014). The use of history in constructing how the broader picture affected the language of actors was vital because the actors describing their behavior on day x of year y, knew their context, they understood, or at least had some idea, of how their actions or suggestions were represented within their personal

ambitions or the ambitions of the regime. The language of policy advisors, state department officials, or staffers, reflects how they understood their circumstances and how they characterized the 'good Oriental' as an evolving entity.

Following from the use of secondary source material this step also included the use of presidential diaries as a source for real time policy discussion and implementation. Jimmy Carter (2010) and Ronald Reagan (2007) both kept day by day diaries of their personal reflections on foreign policy matters. Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, and Gerald Ford did not keep the same personal habits and thus their memoirs, if they existed, were not as helpful in providing this same guiding context. Nixon's memoir for example, only mentions the shah once and does not include how his behavior or foreign policy importance was reflected in the larger context of his presidency (Nixon, 1990). Thus, for those available I applied the personal impressions found in the memoirs and diaries of their presidencies alongside the archival materials I culled from the archives based on year, date, and point of reference (Lynch, 2007).

Second, I culled information from each archive to those that specifically mention, characterize or discuss American foreign policy towards Iran. This is a practice that is determined by the availability of orienting materials found both within the archives themselves and within the broader historical context provided by secondary source citation and primary source personal memoirs (Lynch, 2007). I constructed a database for each president, locating in what place, time, and in what discussion (as far as the policy being argued for or against) each speech act was meant to be referring to (Hansen, 2006: 21). Because archival material in the National Archives is organized around the country, Iran, each source had to be located within the broader structure and

context of history: dates, times, and contexts were recorded as each archive was entered into the database. In this way I coordinated each speech act, reference point, or argument over policy in terms of the broader historical context at work. Because much of foreign policy chatter is political, it is meant to be influential in that the actors in question are creating and inscribing their prejudices and interests on to the foreign party in the service of a particular design or argument (Hansen, 2006: 20). Foreign policy is constructed along these lines, and meant to be interpreted as a series of conversations and reflections regarding the 'good Oriental' in service of US interests (Little, 2002). The larger constellation of foreign policy meanings and narrative structures is meant to be viewed as a whole and as reflection, if not as one might expect a partial one, of the larger policy conversation (Said, 1979). Thus, archival material was then applied to personally characterize how individuals constructed the foreign policy prescriptions or suggestions toward Iran.

Archival materials recorded upon my visitation to the presidential libraries or accessed remotely from through the internet provide the personal impressions or actors that informed their opinions at least through their inclusion in the broader discussion about Iran or about the shah. While the discourse of foreign policy actors is meant to represent a static moment in history it also reflects an ongoing dialogue that is meant to place the object of study, in this case Iran, in terms of its usefulness to American foreign policy objectives (Hansen, 2006). The impressions then are used to orient the administration toward what is best for American foreign policy as the often unsaid, but naturally assumed ultimate goal.

Conclusion

I use these three elements: archival material, presidential diaries, and secondary sources; to triangulate the construction of the foreign policy discourse within each administration. I make the case that the 'good Oriental' is a pursuit found within the relations of each presidential administration. The 'good Oriental' allows for each presidency to represent that they have the best intentions in mind, because they have an actor within the context of a foreign government parroting the language and obsequiousness that the foreign policy patron expects and in some cases demands. The 'good Oriental' can go bad, they can through their own delusions come to believe that they are an actor deserving of equal status, rather than their prescribed role as a taker rather than a maker of foreign policy. When this happens, specifically in the Ford and Carter administrations pains are taken to represent administration perspectives on the behavior of their foreign counterparts. Materials on how the Government of Iran (GOI) relates their impressions are by intention given through the impressions of the foreign policy makers relating them. Thus, the use of Iranian material is included but filtered through the arguments made for or against specific American policies.

CHAPTER 3
FOREIGN POLICY AND IDEATIONAL CONSTRUCTION WITHIN THE JOHNSON ADMINISTRATION

Introduction

A central theme in Said's *Orientalism* (1979) is the 'Self' knowing the 'Other' better than it knows itself. Other scholars who have taken up Said's mantle, and used and improved upon it to specifically orient US foreign policy with his original work, and have accomplished much in sketching out how the US falls into the well-worn paths the of former imperial governments (Little, 2002; McAlister, 2002). This chapter will examine the role of the Johnson administration with this narrative as a guiding concept, examining explicitly how policy-makers used and abused the Other vis-à-vis the Self because of ideological boundaries or barriers to ideational space. I will argue that Lyndon Johnson and leading actors, such as Armin Meyer, the Ambassador to Iran, adopted and adapted these concepts, directly affecting their ability to interact with Iran as the 'Other'. This will be dealt with within the context of the "good Oriental"; whatever the shah's intentions or political dimensions, he was still an ally that deserved condescension but not outright derision. He was the leader of a group of largely unmanageable Orientals and thus, Johnson knew him and through extension Iranians better than they knew themselves.

First, I will articulate the Johnson administration's personal connection to the shah, how this came to be and why it proved relatively problematic for the foreign policy of the United States (US) and the domestic policy of Iran. Second, I will show how these overarching narratives precluded the ability of the US to understand Iranian goals on the ground. Specifically, I will examine the disconnect between the domestic realities experienced by the majority of the population in Iran and the reports given to the United

States by the Government of Iran (GOI) through Armin Meyer. Finally, I will argue that the narrative adopted by the Johnson administration toward Iran, nominally as an ally, proved problematic when difficult decisions needed to be made, specifically regarding the role of internal Iranian domestic development concerning military spending, and the role of the GOI in suppressing popular protests. In this manner I reveal the problems of an internal administration narrative, how it creates and constrains the ability of actors within the administration to adapt to unique foreign policy situations, and perhaps most problematically, how it comes to buttress even deleterious decisions made by these very same allies.

Lyndon Baines Johnson, the Individual and President

On November 22, 1963 John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas Texas during a presidential visit. This event propelled Lyndon Johnson, already a prolific actor in the legislature, to the limelight of the presidency. Johnson had been ill at ease within the Kennedy administration. As a Texan who attended the Southwest Texas State Teachers College (attended 1927) among the Harvard elite brain trust of Kennedy crowd created an ill fit that Johnson personally found quite untenable. Personally Johnson felt isolated and back benched in terms of policy and decision making, however his sense of mission once having ascended after Kennedy's assassination was manifest in quotations such as: "I have seen as a boy and a man that when you start running from a bully he keeps you running…" (Bill, 1988: 155). A boy no more, he was not to be unduly intimidated by the actions of others.

Johnson felt he had been placed into a rare moment in history, given his place of authority and his desire to deal with maleficent actors the world over. "the American people knew what they were voting for in 1964. They knew Lyndon Johnson was not

going to pull up stakes and run" (Bill, 1988: 155). His duty, insofar as he saw it was to create and manifest both a return to the dignity of American foreign policy and project strength and resolve abroad. This was largely to be a continuation of the foreign policy initiatives of the Kennedy administration: a robust support for human rights, and a commitment to use American military forces to support allies who supported the goals and ambitions of US foreign policy makers (Bill, 1988: 154). This strength was to be measured in powerful alliances and of course the coming descent into the Vietnam war, in terms of the Middle East Johnson saw a region ripe for support, given not only the strategic importance of the area, but also in terms of the alliances that could be built given the requisite manifestation of strength and power.

In terms of what this foreign policy might look like going forward one can take Johnson's declaration after he returned from an Asian trip as Vice President in 1961, that "Either these economic and social reforms are pushed or we shall find that the our military men have built fortresses on quicksand" (Bill, 1988: 154). It is worth noting that Johnson's version as to why one should promote social and economic reform is still to be found largely in terms of territorial gains and material power. This is not odd given the tenor and premise of the Cold War, it is however working speaking of if only to remark upon the fact that this vision of economics had nothing to do with kindness or beneficence, it was a strategic move to buttress the 'real power' goals of an archly militaristic foreign policy regime.

Personally, Johnson gained much from this overseas trip in 1961, he was stunned by the support he observed in foreign capitals for the dictators empowered by US support and authority. Thus, while it can be commented that Johnson supported

democratic goals domestically, so long as they operated within the bounds of electoral politics and did not breach the established positions of American economic and military power, he in true Orientalist form found no reason to upend the role of Asian dictators. Ngo Dinh Diem of South Vietnam, Chiang Kai-Shek of Taiwan, Thanarat Sarit of Thailand, Muhammed Ayub Khan of Pakistan, and Ferdinand Marcos of the Philippines, were to him entirely within their rights to continue their reign in lieu of any type of democratic legitimacy. Said argues that this dualism is apparent and reified by placing the supposedly 'human rights' of others beyond the pale of Western meddling (1979: 123). The fact that this requires no justification is classic Orientalism, what is good for the west, in a sense, is not possible for the East.

Johnson as a foreign policy actor is largely at home within this hypocrisy, there is nothing odd or disconcerting about mentioning in one breath the glory of democracy and the right of dictators to continue their role as authoritarian rulers. The fact that almost no apparent contemplation goes into this understanding of what is possible or likely for others is an unfortunate but unsurprising aspect of Orientalist thinking and discourse. The Other, characterized by these foreign regimes, is entirely expected to be both dominated and subservient not only to the interests of their rulers, at least insofar as they support US goals, but also to the goals and whims of US foreign policy. This is the place of the Other, and more specifically given the Iranian context, this is the place of the good Oriental.

Lyndon Baines Johnson and Reza shah Pahlavi

The administration of Lyndon Baines Johnson focused a host of policy and strategic concerns on the Persian Gulf; the least of which was the composition and character of the administration's chief foreign policy backer and concern Mohamed

Reza Pahlavi, the shah of Iran. Tensions surrounded the previous administration's handling of Iran. In April of 1962, in a private meeting between John F. Kennedy and the shah, Pahlavi famously exclaimed to Kennedy and Secretary of State Dean Rusk, "We are not your stooges!"[1] What followed was a series of reforms dubbed the White Revolution, which garnered praise from Kennedy and pacified, at least somewhat, the rampant protests that had roiled Tehran in 1960-61.[2] Johnson had more on the ground experience than perhaps any other senior administration official, given his trip to Iran as Vice President under John F. Kennedy in 1961. From this brief excursion into Iran, and the official visit from the shah to the White House in 1962, the fundamental principles of the Johnson-Pahlavi dynamic became evident: Johnson had a personal relationship with the shah but not the Iranian people, and because of this, top-down management was considered to be the only alternative to engaging with the masses (Bill 1988: 154; Lerner, 2010: 371).

Despite this high level of elite convergence, Johnson was broadly dismissive of official attempts at understanding local societies and politics that "fly over in an air-conditioned plane, jump into an air-conditioned limousine, ride to an air-conditioned palace to talk to an air-conditioned prince and then fly home pretending to have the conquered the world".[3] This will prove to be a substantial limitation of Johnson's

[1] Quoted in Little, D. (1994), "A Fool's Errand: America and the Middle East, 1961–1969," in Kunz ed., *The Diplomacy of the Crucial Decade,* p. 289.
[2]Many protests broke out in May of 1961 Iran. Official statistics tell of fifty thousand teachers marching to bring attention to low wages and poor working conditions. Protests were quelled using a combination of state police, the military, and the special forces parachute battalion for more information see James A. Bill *The Eagle and the Lion* (1988).

[3] "Proposed Statement by Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson Before the House Foreign Relations Committee, June 5, 1961," Vice Presidential Security File, Vice Presidential Travel, Visit to Southeast Asia, May 9-24, 1961, Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library, Austin Texas: 7,10.

personal outlook and one that was shared by the broad majority of administration officials. This amounts to a paradox; Johnson, a figure who personally derides lack of close knowledge to a foreign population, yet makes decisions as though the Iranian people specifically were no more than an offshoot of the shah himself, is a victim of his own ideational construction. Johnson knows Iran, first from his brief visit and later because he knows the shah and of what he is and is not capable.

Johnson and his cohort had to walk a tightrope, and thus framed the issues they faced in the region through the lens of the Cold War and the role of the irrational Oriental and the pragmatic Westerner. The passages below and the composition of the Johnson administrations' dominant frames can be captured through textual artifacts as they discursively mapped the cultural terrain of Iran. Below I will show members of the administration relying upon Orientalist narratives of the 'Other'.

Lyndon Johnson respected personal power above all else, and he approved most of all the "roaring adoration of great crowds. He sought motorcades through jammed streets and the homage of important people…somehow the spirit of adventure was not in him. The sheer joy of going to foreign lands and seeing what others look like, what they do and what they say , never moved LBJ" (Sidey, 1968: 140). To this end Johnson "basked" in the monopoly of power that the shah possessed, as an "extremely attractive and important figure…" (Bill, 1988: 155). This tendency of Johnson's to seek out the limelight to his own chagrin has been well documented as a major trope of his presidency (Lerner, 2010: 369).

Beyond Johnson's personal idiosyncrasies and enjoyment of the spotlight, foreign policy actors within the Johnson administration required the muscular backing of

the shah on a host of issues. These included the war in Vietnam, the United Arab Republic governed by Gamel Abdel Nasser, the rise of the Indo-Pakistan conflict, the role of Saudi Arabian ARAMCO and its US subsidiaries, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and possible Arab ties to the Soviet Union. During these negotiations, however, the Johnson administration had to maintain, at least nominally, the supposed independence of the shah's foreign policy in acquiring arms, and territorial matters such as the disputes over Khuzistan and the disputed Kharg Island. Framing and understanding how the administration and the actors within it viewed the possibilities for the shah is evident in passages such as this:

> 1. Fathoming the shah. To understand Iran one must understand (the) shah. This is not (a) one-shot undertaking. (The) shah's personality undergoes (a) steady metamorphosis. . . . it is therefore necessary to fathom (the) present state of (the) shah's mind.
>
> 2. Becoming more like (his) father. (The) shah today is no longer (the) ward of foreigners as in 1941-45, nor (the) vacillating youth of (the) late forties. (The) Mosadeq era effected major conversion. While for decade leaning heavily on Uncle Sam's shoulder, (the) shah has increasingly become (a) self-sufficient authority. Iran has been making remarkable strides. (The) shah believes it is because he knows better than anyone else how to handle his people. Former Ambassador George Allen aptly observed, 'he is becoming more like his father.' Old Reza shah was tough, independent minded, impulsive and autocratic. But he modernized Iran of his day. (The) shah is determined to the same.[4]

This State Department correspondence characterized the shah both with prejudices of the past and with the dominant political lens of the Cold War. Highlighting Johnson's personal connection to the shah, in a Memorandum for the President dated April 15, 1965, Robert "Blowtorch Bob" Komer reminded the President that:

[4] Meyer, A. "Incoming Telegram Department of State, May 3, 1965" National Security File, papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson President, 1963-1969, Country File, Middle East Folder 4, Box 136, LBJ.

> 1. When you visited Iran in 1962 you tried to impress on the shah that good economics is good politics, and that modernizing their countries was the way for monarchs to keep their thrones. You still feel the same way.
>
> 2. Meyer should impress on the shah that you watch closely the results of his reform program, which we regard as an impressive achievement.[5]

This advice to Johnson did not fall upon deaf ears, however, Johnson was bogged down in Vietnam and viewed his interests as drawn inexorably away from the Middle East region.

Constraining this reassessment of political and strategic priorities within Johnson's administration was the withdrawal of British support and strategic capability within the Persian Gulf. Secretary of State Dean Rusk, a close Johnson ally, particularly seemed to resent the withdrawal of British forces, commenting that with the British departure from the Trucial States (Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Iran, etc.) would leave the US "to man the ramparts all alone" (Alvandi, 2014: EReader Location 746). Under Secretary of State Eugene Rostow voiced a similar concern to Rusk's:

> In the Persian Gulf you have some very strong and quite active and stable countries. . . .Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia would certainly be a nucleus, around which such security arrangements could hopefully be built . . .". (Alvandi, 2014: EReader Location 756)

To present the possibilities for the creation of a new security framework upon nations which did not see themselves as united, nor necessarily cordial, was a bold move. Beyond this, the notion that US should take an active role in picking winners and losers of the regional powers seemed to take on the model of imperial authority rather than domestic, possibly democratic self-determination.

[5] Komer, R. W. "Memorandum for the President April 5, 1965" National Security File, papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson President, 1963-1969, Country File, Middle East Folder 1, Box136, LBJ.

This is precisely the role of the 'good Oriental': to provide the means by which outside authorities can maintain order. Some have noted that this above quotation was an outrageous misstatement of US policy, however, given the trajectory of relations going forward between the US and its allies this was entirely in line with the vision of US involvement. Key among these 'good Orientals' would be the shah, the 'good Oriental' most capable of maintaining, defending, and promoting US ideals in the region. Understanding the position sought by the Johnson administration is important because it defines the expanding role of US influence and the method by which I will characterize US foreign policy goals.

The shah is Iran

The framing of the nation and its leader as a single entity constrained both U.S. foreign policy and the potential for creating change in the shah and, in a larger sense, Iran. Pahlavi was modernizing his country, creating wealth, industry, and agricultural reform under the broader guise of the White Revolution and Five Year Plan of 1962. The shah, while struggling to modernize, was also consumed with criticism at home and abroad. Upon Johnson's arrival in 1962, his Briefing Book contained an addition entitled "Special Problems" which concluded that the shah,

> (R)eads every word which is written about him in the American and British Press, and is similarly interested in transcriptions of radio and television programs mentioning Iran and his role in Iran. He has hitherto unshakeable conviction that the governments concerned are somehow responsible for such articles, and they represent official opinion, or at least play an important role in shaping official decisions.[6]

[6] "Iran Briefing Book, Special Problems Section", National Security File, Komer papers, box 430A, Vice President's Trip, 8/22/62–9/8/62 folder [3 of 4], JFKL

Adding to the shah's insecurity was a pervasive discord that punctuated Iranian society, described by Martin F. Herz, Counselor of the Embassy of Political Affairs, in this way:

> In politics, as in love and business, the climate is often most important. This involves imponderables and intangibles. How people are doing is at least as important, but how people think they are doing is often much more important—for their most profoundly held beliefs about today and tomorrow. As is well known, men live by promises and fears and expectations, and often the live and die by myths. . . . In Iran, as in other countries, the intangibles and politics are exceedingly important. They are also hard to document, and often one man's antennae vibrate differently in response to such factors as those of another equally sensitive observer.[7]

These "intangibles" have to do with Herz's sense that although the shah is making marked improvements economically, his base of power is fundamentally fragmented and far more fragile than it might seem. Herz goes on to argue, "Yet there is a strong sense of general discontent evident in Iran" (Some Intangibles in Iranian Politics, 1966). The framing he applies surrounds a proposed fissure in Iranian politics between the shah and the technocrats he employs to implement his domestic policies. This preoccupation, as well as the desire for military armaments over the need for domestic infrastructure, has created in the minds of American foreign policy actors the possibility for discord.

One signature position of the Johnson administration, which directly led to the broader discord of the Iranian public, was the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) that the US presented to the Iranian Majlis on October 13, 1964. The SOFA allows for American military advisers and personnel as well as their families to have total

[7] Herz, M. "The 'New Men' in Iran and their challenge to American Policy in Iran" National Security File, papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson President, 1963-1969, Country File, Middle East Box 137, LBJ.

diplomatic immunity in Iran. The hand-picked Pahlavi Majlis barely passed the measure 70-62, and the "reaction throughout Iran was instantaneous, and outrage was expressed by Iranian nationalists regardless of their political predilections" (Bill, 1988: 156). It was not so much the act itself, though it could be interpreted as a dangerous level of foreign carte blanche given the colonial past of British and Russian operations in Iran. The anger was focused on the fact that the SOFA was given in exchange for a $200 million loan from commercial banks in the US, for the explicit purchase of military equipment by the shah.[8] In the words of a contemporary opponent of the shah, Ayatollah Ruholla Khomeini, "Our dignity has been trampled upon; the dignity of Iran has been destroyed. They have reduced the Iranian people to a level lower than a dog" (Quoted in Ansari, 2006: 53). The Ayatollah never forgave the US or the shah for the immunity policy passed by the Majlis, blasting them both in 1964 "Are we Iranians aware of what is going in the Majlis these days? Are they aware of the fact that, unknown to them, a crime has occurred through deception? Do they know that the Majlis approved a document of enslavement for Iran?" (Bill 1988: 160).

Tensions Rise: Domestic Reform as its own Worst Enemy

According to some observers, the tension between domestic reform and military armaments was palpable in the Iranian streets from 1962-1968. Many outside Iran viewed the progress of the Iranian state and its agriculture, social welfare, infrastructure, and industrial development projects as a great success (Keddie 2003: 149). However, many within the state and closer to the impact of the proposed and enacted reforms

[8] "Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Volume XXII, Iran" Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs: November 1999. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v22/summary.

deemed the progress of the state moderate at best, directed mostly to the wealthiest, serving only to concentrate power within the hands of an autocratic, capitalist center in Tehran.

As an example, land reform, a principle piece of the shah's Five Year Plan in 1962, led to the concentration of land under fewer and fewer rural landlords with mechanized agriculture (Keddie: 2003: 153). To make matters worse, most economic and technical aid went to the larger agricultural units administered by Pahlavi allies from Tehran, leaving small and middle class laborers and farmers starved for support and government assistance. Portions of the population moved to urban slums and added to the sub-proletariat rather than remaining on the farms they had populated for centuries. Estimates of agricultural production were officially pegged at 4 percent, although some observers argue that "A more reasonable estimate is that agricultural production rose about 2-2.5 percent a year, population 3 percent, and a consumption of agricultural products rose about 12 percent." (Keddie, 2003: 155). This increase in productivity and mechanization, while modest, still led to the increase of imports from the United States and Europe, which expanded unemployment and produced "a rapid stream of rural migrants into the cities, especially Tehran—cities without the housing amenities, or even jobs to cope with them" (Keddie, 2003:155).

The Johnson administration cheered the shah's commitment to free markets, while ignoring the patronage and graft that left many in the lower and middle classes without support, and focused instead on the relatively positive numbers being generated from Tehran. Johnson noted publicly, in an official state visit by Prime Minister Hoveyda in August 1967, that "Iran stands as a living symbol of two worlds—the world of the

past…and the world of the present, with your inspiring record of social and economic progress, which is the envy of the world." He stated further that "we know the dynamism of Iran owes much to the enlightened leadership of His Majesty—a great statesmen and, we think, a very good friend. We know that the dynamism of Iran owes much to the enlightened leadership."[9] This passage from 1967 stands in stark contrast to a May 23, 1966 internal State Department classified communique by Armin Meyer, which argues that the main concern of Washington is the effect that advanced military spending may have on Iran.

The impression is that the shah will pursue spending initiatives inattentive to the domestic level to insure his country against further discord and revolution (Meyer, 1966: *Iran and US*). The issue for these foreign policy actors stemmed from the outside sourcing of military armaments, which could be achieved through appeals to the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics (USSR) by Pahlavi. Through this construction Pahlavi was unable to be dependably reigned in nor deterred:

> This brings me to my greatest concern with (the) proposed package. (The) underlying assumption appears to be that (the) USG can compel the shah to obtain only such equipment we decide he can have. This is altogether unrealistic in 1966. Time and again over the past few years months the shah has said, privately and publicly, that Iran is its own master. . . . he will in my view balk at being put in (a) strait jacket.[10]

[9] "Exchange of Toasts Between the President and Prime Minister Amir Abbas Hoveyda of Iran" National Security File, papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson President, 1963-1969, Country File, Middle East Box 137, LBJ.

[10] Meyer, A, "EXDIS for the President, May 23, 1966", National Security File, papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson President, 1963-1969, Country File, Middle East Folder 2, Box136, LBJ.

Through this framing, Iran is its own master, capable of recreating its arms initiatives independent of the whims of the US. Even if, in doing so, it would imperil the possibility for continued and lasting control of Iran by the Pahlavi government.

Throughout the 1960s the shah was in a headlong race toward greater military expansion at the expense of domestic and popular reform. Through a paired initiative of labor-saving technologies and import substitution, the GOI was on track to pursue policies almost assured to create popular discord. Retailers and bazarris were targeted for supposed price gouging while wide-spread profits were bestowed upon domestic and foreign companies.

As a case in point, tax holidays, tariff breaks, and repatriation of profits for foreign companies led to a chasm between rich and poor within Iran, and to a larger degree in the provinces, while at the same time a 120 km ring of industrial factories around Tehran created massive wealth for those closest to the Central Province. Wealth disparities only increased from 1963 through the late 1970s, with the Gross National Product per Capita of Iran increasing from $200 to $1000, leading to one of the highest growth rates among developing countries. However, because profits were centered on a wealthy few closest to Tehran, the amount of currency that trickled out to the larger population was little and irregular (Keddie, 2003: 159).

Another example concerns the provision of government credit. I noted above the use of Land Reform as a means to enrich corporate and mechanized farming over middle class and peasant-based farms. This was also true in the GOI's provision of credit to smaller enterprises. Small shopowners, bazarris, and tradesman struggled to obtain effective financing of their businesses at the commercially low rate of 12% given

to larger corporations. Instead, many small businesses obtained obscenely high rates; as high as 25-100%. While a focus on greater employment and the expansion of wealth within Iran may have led to an even distribution of funds and a more equal rate of growth for the country at large, the goals of the GOI seemed more attuned to operating from Tehran to the exclusion of the majority of the population (Keddie, 2003: 159).

The impression among many Iranians closest to Tehran and in the upper classes was that income distribution inequality was a necessary avenue along the road to development. Supply-side economics was broadly embraced by the GOI as a necessary evil, if only in the meantime, as wealthy corporations and individuals close to the regime would assuredly invest in the lower rungs of the economy for the eventual benefit of all. While the debate around supply side or demand side economics is not a goal of this paper, one might argue that a commitment to supply-side economics, coupled with official corruption that benefitted the rich and allowed for currency to leave the country or concentrate in the center rather than benefitting the population as a whole, is a dangerous practice.

Official corruption can be seen in preferential tax policy, or the particularized benefits of tariff breaks or tax holidays, but is also evident in the provision of operating licenses for companies that sought to import or export goods outside Iran. While by law a company was not required to obtain a license to sell goods in the internal markets or bazaars of Tehran or Isfahan, they were required to secure one prior to dealing with the government or to export goods outside Iran. This persistent requirement to obtain a license from the byzantine Pahlavi bureaucracy required the constant lobbying towards leading figures within the Pahlavi regime. Keddie notes that “credible stories circulate of

the highest ranking Iranian. . . who took 10 percent or more of a new company's stock gratis in return for insuring the delivery of license" (Keddie, 2003:159).

In sum, the collected policies and reforms of the Pahlavi regime during the Johnson administration gave rise to many predictable tensions contained within the product of modernization. However, taken together, the focus upon the wealthy, the level of official corruption, and the vast over-centralization of the market and industry relative to Tehran gave rise to unrest within the population. This was matched with another Pahlavi era policy: import substitution, which led to a dramatic rise in the cost of consumer, capital, and agricultural goods, also contributing to a general sense of discord among the population. To quote Nikki R. Keddie, "The regimes' race for greater size, military strength, and modernity, with its concomitants of unemployment, waste, corruption, and poverty, affected both agriculture and industry." (2003: 157).

Imagining Discord: Opposition, Protest, and the Mindset of the Johnson Administration

A Background Paper, prepared for the President ahead of the shah's visit to the US in 1965 and titled "Iranian Student Problem", dated June 5, 1964 and authored by the Johnson administration, detailed the role of domestic American protest movements and the intent to demonstrate during the shah's visit. Iranian officials, irked by the potential for discord during what was in effect a goodwill tour, expressed outrage at the apparent harboring of Iranian dissidents within American borders. While the American government did argue that they had no right to suppress the freedom of speech for Iranian groups, the Johnson administration issued threats through the Immigration and Naturalization service against the "ringleaders" of the protests, declaring that these

actors should, “cease their objectionable activities or face deportation.”[11] Meanwhile Marvin Zonis, an Iranian scholar operating within Tehran at the time of the Johnson administration, describes a “milieu of discontent and malaise permeating all Tehran, but especially the poorer sections surrounding the bazaar” (1971: 98). This is the backdrop for the assassination of Prime Minister Hassan Ali Mansur by Muhammed Bukhara’I, the twenty one year old son of an iron-worker. Another act of political violence occurred on April 10, 1965; an attempted assassination of the shah by an Imperial Guard with a submachine gun as the leader entered his palace with his bodyguards,. The State Department Telegram from that day describes it this way:

> One member of Imperial guard tried to force his way into palace. Firing sub-machine gun , killing two bodyguards before he himself was cut down . . . Tehran is quiet. And shah has kept to his normal appointments.[12]

Another telegram following the incident makes the administration’s perspective even more clear:

> Upon shah’s departure from Tehran May 2, several diplomatic colleagues observed that shah looks thinner and more drawn. This could be aftermath of recent assassination attempt. Shah reacted most courageously that first day or so but subsequently full significance has undoubtedly been causing him worry. Thus his trip abroad should be refreshing. Particularly helpful would be gesture of friendship form his trusted friends in Washington.[13]

Given the discord apparent in Iran, and the efforts of Iranian expatriates within the US, would it not simply be reasonable to attempt to redirect the ambitions of the Pahlavi regime toward a more effective means of governance? In essence, a high

[11] Tiger, “Shah of Iran Visit to Washington, June 5, 1964” National Security File, papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson President, 1963-1969, Country File, Middle East Folder 4, Box 136, LBJ.

[12] Herz, Martin F. “Incoming Telegram Department of State, April 10, 1965” National Security File, papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson President, 1963-1969, Country File, Middle East Folder 4, Box 136, LBJ.

[13] Meyer, Armin. “Incoming Telegram Department of State, May 3, 1965” National Security File, papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson President, 1963-1969, Country File, Middle East Folder 4, Box 136, LBJ.

Johnson administration actor might argue, there was the need for a recommitment to domestic spending and reform, the abandonment of the shah's proposed military escalation, and the refocusing of priorities from international to national. The instruction from the State department was to hold back heavy criticism. Not only because, as was stated above, the shah had an independent mind, but also because the Iranian is:

> Steeped in centuries of experience with Russia and British interference in Iran's foreign affairs (and some would add American interference), the Iranians are hypersensitive to anything smacking of foreigners' lecturing them on how to run their country. In any given conversation the Iranian is apt to look for a hidden motive in an American's raising a question about Iranian developments unless it is done in a spirit of unmixed praise.[14]

Thus, to court the Iranian in this framing, or to attempt precisely the reorientation described above, one must be mindful that however much they require it, the role of the U.S. statesman is not to lecture the Iranian on their need for greater expansion in industrial spending, domestic planning, or infrastructure improvement, as they are incapable of hearing this criticism and will react with offense. Not only were criticisms likely to cause conflict between the allies, but also the need for adherence to free market capitalism in the era of the Cold War was paramount. The shah was, in effect, acting as a modernizer and capitalist, if doing a poor job of balancing societal development and income inequality.

The dilemma, for foreign observers intensely interested in the modernization of Iran, who arguably understand both the external need for internal reforms in Iran and

[14] "Suggestions on Approaching Iranians and Topics of Conversation, State Department Notes on the Visit of the Shah of Iran, August 22-24, 1967", National Security File, papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson President, 1963-1969, Country File, Middle East Box 137, LBJ.

the need for sensitivity in matters of cultural delicacy, the framing of the Iranian is as one who must be approached with unforced praise:

> Iranians will be quick to resent any implication that Americans lump them in with other Moslem countries or with other "emerging" countries. They particularly do not like to be thought of in the same terms as Arabs or Turks.[15]

The Iranian, who is framed, as I have argued above, as one and a piece of the shah, cannot be thought of or referred to within the terms of a developing nation or emerging country. Through a Cold War and Orientalist framing the Johnson administration is fundamentally and ideologically stuck. Most importantly because:

> Those concerned with the Persian question have tended to believe that there is no alternative to the present autocratic rule of the shah. If the shah were removed from the scene, many believe that there would be a series of disastrous military coups or government by mob rule.[16]

This 'Persian question' hits at precisely the center of the Johnson administration's difficulty.

At once the pragmatism of Cold War politics, which requires a firm backstop against Soviet incursions into the region, and the inability and intractable nature of the sheer amount of issue areas the administration confronts in Middle East make the shah a necessity, and their single largest problem. Yet, the frame dictates that the shah's inability to govern appropriately requires the administration actor to take a strong hand or the real possibility for the country to fall is assured. The people of Iran, framed again

[15] "Visit of Amir Abbas Hoveyda, Prime Minister of Iran, December 4-5, 1968", National Security File, papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson President, 1963-1969, Country File, Middle East Box 137, LBJ.

[16] Herz, Martin, 1963, "The Persian Question", National Security File, papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson President, 1963-1969, Country File, Middle East Box 136, LBJ.

as one and a piece of the shah, cannot be counted on either because their faculties are simply not to the task of self-rule. As is described here:

> The first observation must be of the system and there one must start with His Imperial Majesty (HIM) Mohammed Reza shah Pahlavi. All the strings of power that an Iranian can grasp in two hands are in his. This is a fairly benevolent oriental despotism overlayed with Western parliamentary and judicial trappings of possibly growing effect. The shah is not a bad shepherd but his flock are sheep. Reign and rule are everywhere difficult and especially so in Iran. . .The essential problem in one sense has been the search for individuals of honesty, competence, and subordination to whom powers can be delegated without real or apparent overwhelming risk.[17]

The people, specifically the Iranians, even if in control, are not capable of self-governance either, according to the sources available to the administration. Within this Orientalist framing by the administration's foreign policy actors, Iranian citizens lack the capability, competence, and credibility to create the state of Iran in a modern, Western, or industrialized form. The ideational bounding of the Johnson administration is complete, and without credible alternatives the administration must simply hope for a mediated outcome, without the real possibility for generated change, because of the imagined limitations of the people they are attempting to understand.

The implications for this ideational construction within the Johnson administration are difficult to transcend. Ideas and possibilities are bounded first by the need for the shah. The shah is the 'good Oriental', he is required to balance against other states within the region, and solve regional and international problems for the administration. Thus, the Johnson administration needs the shah. Allowing for this necessity, the administration understands the need for a moderate approach that balances

[17] Peek, CM, 1963, "End of tour report", National Security File, papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson President, 1963-1969, Country File, Middle East Box 137, Folder 2, LBJ.

infrastructure spending with the need for military armament. However, the shah is obsessed with military preparedness, owing to his history as a soldier, a tendency which is reinforced in the extreme by the recent history of the shah's removal by Mosadeq. Without the ability to criticize the shah's administration, because of the renowned "sensitivity" of Iranians, the US administration is prevented from guiding him to the proper Western path.

Because of the framing of the shah in this ideational context, he cannot be impelled to follow a moderate path, thus the US administration may hope that instead a new leader can be found to run the country in a more systematic, moderated, or rational way. Unfortunately, because the shah is a "shepherd" with a flock of sheep, the people of Iran cannot be counted on to provide a reasonable counter-balancing either. As noted above, this is paired with the increasing "independent mindedness" of the shah, who will not be unnecessarily railroaded into proceeding along a path with which he does not agree. The administration through this framing is out of ideas about how to contain, reform, or address the problems they see as ongoing within Iran.

Regional and Global Strengths of a Close Relationship with Iran

This does not mean the shah's "Persian character" and strong sense of mission toward becoming a world power could not be employed to solve global issues.[18] The shah was an important actor in achieving US foreign policy goals, both regionally within the Middle East and globally in the broader context of the Cold War, something that of

[18] "Suggestions on Approaching Iranians and Topics of Conversation, State Department Notes on the Visit of the Shah of Iran, August 22-24, 1967", National Security File, papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson President, 1963-1969, Country File, Middle East Box 137, LBJ.

course should be entirely expected from America's desire to achieve as much as possible from the 'good Oriental'.

Regionally, the shah had as much to be worried about as the US in terms of the Arab regime, which might threaten either Israel, as in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, or intimidate other US allies in the Gulf region. Conversations between Johnson and the shah reveal a close working relationship that dealt with an array of issues. Of course, one could argue, this only served to reinforce many of the shah's claims that he required more in the way of military armaments, acting as a backstop against the Johnson administration's pressure toward limiting military supplies in lieu of greater economic and domestic development. With the proposed British withdrawal in 1970, the US was left holding up much of the regional security commitments on its own, and once again, in the context of the Cold War, the danger of Soviet intrusion into the American sphere of influence. The British by 1968 would have withdrawn from the Gulf of Aden and from the larger Middle East by 1970. The shah argued that, "Since British influence one way or another will be withdrawn, Iran remains the single constructive free world power capable of protecting commerce and peace in Gulf Area from predatory elements including communists." [19]

The shah is, as Nixon commented, positioning himself as the "only friend there". The shah is the 'good Oriental', placing himself as the US ally most capable of countering the Saudis, the Syrians, and the Iraqis in a contest for a politically and

[19] MEMO, "State Department to President Johnson", November 25, 1965. National Security File, papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson President, 1963-1969, Country File, Middle East Box 137, LBJ.

strategically important region.[20] Even at this early juncture, though the trend will continue in the Nixon and Ford administrations, the shah is poised to leverage the power of his regional effectiveness by extorting the US for an increase in military spending. He would "hate to move" in a direction that entertained offers from other parties, be they Soviet or otherwise, and he would consider it a problem if he was unable to work closely with the US military for his armament needs.[21] The shah comments that he already is checking into Europe for naval and aircraft technology, but he was committed to "buy American".[22]

This leverage is perhaps what makes a 'good Oriental' go bad. In effect the issue becomes: how does the American government balance its interests with its strategic priorities in policy goals? If America is willing to do business with leaders that subvert the will of the population the danger then becomes the reciprocal nature of this working relationship. For example, the shah proposed finding military supplies elsewhere if necessary, and this is mirrored by his willingness to raise oil prices during the Ford and Nixon administrations. Maintaining this relationship, and the realization that the "shah represents (a) vital element of our stability", is a consequence of viewing the Iranians as sheep, and makes the administration in debt to the shepherd.[23] The 'good Oriental' in this way compromises the relationship simply by its nature; the movement toward any

[20] MEMO, "State Department to President Johnson", November 25, 1965. National Security File, papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson President, 1963-1969, Country File, Middle East Box 137, LBJ.

[21] MEMO, "State Department to President Johnson", November 25, 1965. National Security File, papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson President, 1963-1969, Country File, Middle East Box 137, LBJ.

[22] MEMO, "State Department to President Johnson", November 25, 1965. National Security File, papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson President, 1963-1969, Country File, Middle East Box 137, LBJ.

[23] MEMO, "Memorandum from State Department to General Taylor", October 27, 1965. National Security File, papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson President, 1963-1969, Country File, Middle East Box 137, LBJ.

element of personal security, nationalism, or independent interest becomes a threat to the position of dominance from the administration to the shah.

Beyond the regional context, in the global sense the shah played a large role for the US as well. One example of this is detailed in a memo authored by Dean Rusk, in which he describes an initiative by the shah to bring an end to the Vietnam War. On August 18, 1967, Rusk off-handedly remarks, within the text of his briefing memo for Johnson, on the shah's upcoming arrival that:

> The shah has suggested to us that he might attempt to establish a new mechanism for arriving at a peaceful solution of the Vietnamese war. He has been thinking of bringing together a group of countries, such as Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Japan and Cambodia, which would have access to the United States the USSR and Communist China and might open doors for discussion of a possible solution. Such a group would work discreetly and not make public proposals.[24]

Discreet proposals to end the Vietnam War, even then perceived to be a problematic and difficult conflict for the Americans, is an incredible achievement. That Johnson never mentions it, and that further no records to my knowledge have related it, means that the committee was more than likely never considered beyond the shah's suggestion. The shah noted his support for US policies throughout the world in meeting with world leaders, arguing his "apparently sincere view that American boys are 'fighting gallantly' in Viet Nam."[25]

[24] MEMO, "Memorandum from Dean Rusk to President Johnson", National Security File, papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson President, 1963-1969, Country File, Middle East Box 137, LBJ.

[25] MEMO, "State Department to President Johnson", November 25, 1965. National Security File, papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson President, 1963-1969, Country File, Middle East Box 137, LBJ.

The role of the shah then is perhaps as vital as the strategic interest makes it out to be. How can one separate the role of the dominated party from their utility as a problem solving agent in the context of international politics? This is something that Said misses; the Oriental is not merely creating policy at the beck and call of the dominant authority, they are constructing policy that benefits their international standing, reflects their motivations, and secures the national program of the Oriental involved. Said mentions only how Orientals are reckoned with from the Occident, not how Orientals create their own positions.

This is why the 'good Oriental' is such a problematic and vital element for the creation of US policy. The *need* for the 'good Oriental' is a fantasy premised upon the sheep and shepherd construction we have noted within the Johnson administration. That the Iranians may have held opinions or beliefs is not considered germane to the conversation, but it creates an error in dependency and a blinder toward more inventive policy making. Consider for example if Johnson had been willing to do more than press for domestic reforms but instead advocate for democracy outright. This may have led to a less pliable, less tractable, and less malleable ally, but it would have created the possibility for long term stability in the wake of short term instability through elections or political redress. While in the context of the Cold War this may have been perceived as a broadly deleterious action; for the US to publically profess rhetoric that argues for democracy, human rights, or liberty; it creates the ability to achieve lasting alliances rather than short term, cost saving measures. The 'good Oriental' leaves the administration in question culpable for the problems of managing a foreign state without the values or legitimacy of elections.

Conclusion: From Lyndon Johnson to Richard Nixon

During the Johnson Presidency a dramatic level of engagement began and strengthened between the United States and Iran. Despite the protracted differences in governance, politics, and issues both domestic and international, the level of elite convergence between senior Johnson administration officials and Johnson himself served as a substantial bulwark to discord and distance. I have argued in this chapter that Johnson himself was ideationally bounded to an Orientalist discourse, and in the following paragraphs I will summarize and conclude his views and their effect on the relationship between the two countries.

Upon Johnson's initial foray into Iran, the President and the shah experience a substantial and lasting connection. Johnson's own personal connection to power and status, and the role of the shah as a ruler in want and need of domestic and international support contribute heavily to the reciprocity of the interactions between the two states. Johnson, contained within him a frame of a benevolent Westerner allied with a sometimes improvident but ultimately loyal subject, and the shah maintained a modicum of congeniality in a world marked of shifting alliances and problematic regional issues. Through the frame of the Cold War and NeoOrientalism we see Johnson as a figure bounded by thinking of the Other as a subject in need of training. Based on the advice that the administration was given by leading figures like Armin Meyer, Ambassador to Iran, and Martin Herz, Counselor of the Embassy of Political Affairs, and Colonel Peeke, we see that the role of the Iranian was not only Johnson's own creation but a popularly traded and reproduced stereotype.

As I argued above, the shah, for the administration and the actors within it, was Iran. Despite the protests, disorder, and apparent discontent surrounding the Iranian public, the shah was still the best and most lasting 'bet' that Johnson and his team could muster. Yet, an outside observer can see the seeds of discord already coming to fruition in Iran, the protests at the end of Kennedy administration, the tensions brewing within the Iranian public in the economic, land reform, and public spheres, and finally, the political order, which owing to the shah's increasing paranoia had little auspice for political redress. Johnson's limited ability to imagine something other than the shah marks his lack of imagination, fundamentally bounded by the role of 'Self' knowing the 'Other' better than they know themselves. Johnson knew the shah, and through him, he knew Iran. As we will see in the during the Nixon administration, while the actors change, and the political order shifts with new demands coming from the Iranians and the Americans alike, there is much in kind with the previous administration.

What constitutes the domain and structure of American Foreign policy are the narratives those internal practitioners create to understand a complex and multifaceted Iran. In light of this observation, this dissertation adopts a critical perspective in analyzing narrativised barriers and borders that shape the way actors within the policy-making structure create meaning and act within and around another country, in this case Iran. Each administration from Johnson through Reagan brought to the table different political goals, objectives, and moral convictions, but what we shall see throughout is a baseline of Orientalist thought and practice that governs, constrains, and delimits possible thinking about how the Iranian and the American can and should interact. My purpose in this piece is to critically analyze through historical narrative

various administrations' approaches to Iran, and in so doing create some modicum of clarity in the relationship between the two states going forward. What Johnson shows us here is the first of many attempts to reckon with the 'good Oriental". It would not be the last.

CHAPTER 4
FOREIGN POLICY AND IDEATIONAL CONSTRUCTION WITHIN THE NIXON ADMINISTRATION

Introduction

As stated previously in Chapter Three, the common them we will be arguing for is based upon Said's *Orientalism* (1979) in that foreign policy actors, when viewing other actors in the international system, are dramatically influenced by the 'Self' knowing the 'Other' better than they know themselves. Specifically, arguing that United States foreign policy is premised upon the goal of finding a 'good Oriental' to enact pro-US policy goals, even if those goals negatively affect the domestic and international standing of the ally in question. We will argue in this piece that the administration of Richard Millhouse Nixon, like Lyndon Johnson and other leading actors within his administration, adopted and adapted these Orientalist thought structures in viewing the administration of the shah of Iran specifically and the Iranian people more generally.

If there is a central difference between the Johnson administration and the Nixon administration it is that Johnson, for all his faults and prejudices, argued that the shah must maintain a balance between military armaments and domestic infrastructure and social service provision. This is due in part to the political structure of the Middle East and two notable developments. First, owing to the dawning political finality of the British departure on November 30, 1971, the Nixon administration would confront a territory without significant foreign contestation of US power. Second, and as a result, Nixon and his Cabinet took a somewhat different path that came to be known as the Nixon doctrine. Domestically Nixon and his Cabinet made the calculation that Iran was by 1969 modernizing without the help of the United States, the shah's matters were his own, and the policing of his population was his to manage. Nixon's role as he saw it was

merely to support the reforms the shah targeted domestically, mainly industrial and agricultural, and provide the armaments necessary to safeguard possible threats from around the region. The interest pursued by the Johnson administration toward domestic reforms was broadly abandoned by Nixon and his cohort.

The Nixon Doctrine was, as Secretary of State Henry Kissinger argued in his memoir, that:

> Under the shah's leadership, the land bridge between Asia and Europe, so often the hinge of world history, was pro-American and pro-West beyond any challenge. Alone among the countries of the region-Israel aside- Iran made friendship with the United States as a starting point of its foreign policy. That it was based on a cold-eyed assessment that a threat to Iran would most likely come from the Soviet Union, in combination with radical Arab state, is only another way of saying that the shah's views of the realities of the world paralleled our own. Iran's influence was always on our side… (Kissinger, 2011: 1262)

It was enough for Nixon merely to back the shah as the dominant and dominating power in the Middle East. Anything that could be done to assist the shah in this regard would be accomplished. Demonstrating this commitment to Iranian power, the US provided armaments best characterized by the background report for the shah's visit to the United States in October 21-22, 1969 which briefed Nixon in this way:

> Iran's importance to the U.S., especially as a significant Middle East power, has grown during the past few years. Iran's home economy is booming. The shah's constructive domestic policies in recent years have set Iran on a course of great social progress. Iran has pursued relations with its neighbors of the region in a peaceful and helpful way. Iran stands among the nations of the world as a moderate and responsible member of the United Nations community.[1]

[1] BRIEFING, Office of Policy and Plans, October 15, 1969; National Security Files; Box 920, Folder 1, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California.

As a result of this economic success, the briefing goes on further to describe how USAID, the International Development arm of the State Department, had withdrawn from Iran in 1967.[2] The Iranian economy was booming and aid was being reduced, as was the need for arms. However, this last was as determined by the shah, specifically the potential for an arms-for-oil "arms credit" sale was possibly in the works, undergoing a review by a Presidential task force headed by the Secretary of Labor George P. Schultz.[3] For Nixon, the shah represented a 'good Oriental', one that could be counted on to police and maintain stability among the others, not only domestically, as in the active suppression of his people within Iran, but also regionally, policing, as Kissinger notes, "radical Arab neighbors [Iraq]" (Kissinger, 2011 emphasis mine).

The shah took on this 'special role' with gusto, making an entreaty to the Iranian Parliament in a Joint session on October 6, 1969. Noting that with the expected withdrawal of nominal British Authority in the Trucial States, the modern day United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.), Qatar, etc., the "enormous" military expenditures were required to defend the region "with great intensity".[4] Reflecting upon the issue, the Ambassador to Iran, Douglas MacArthur II, son to the famous Admiral of the same name, noted that while it was not odd for the shah to make the claim for increased armaments for his country, it was odd that the shah admitted, "that Iran's security burden will be costly

[2] BRIEFING, Office of Policy and Plans, October 15, 1969; National Security Files; Box 920, Folder 1, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California.

[3] BRIEFING, Office of Policy and Plans, October 15, 1969; National Security Files; Box 920, Folder 1, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California.

[4] TELEGRAM; Ambassador MacArthur II to Henry Kissinger Secretary of State; October 6, 1969; folder Visit of the shah of Iran: Box 920; NSC Files: Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California.

[for] the populace…" stating further that "this revelation underlines pointed seriousness of his intent to acquire military equipment he considers necessary for Iran's military posture in [the] Gulf region" (emphasis mine).[5]

Nixon's own feelings about the shah seemed to buttress the claims for needed defense being made in Tehran. This is perhaps best captured in a rather long but meaningful quote in April of 1971. Nixon argues:

> He [the shah] runs a damn tight shop. . . . his ability to run basically, let's face it, a virtual dictatorship in a benign way because, ah, look when you talk about having a democracy of our type in that part of the world, God, it wouldn't work would it? . . . Iran's the only thing there. . . .It's one friend there. Iran is not of either world, really. If we can go with them, if we can have them strong, and they're in the center of it, and a friend of the United States , uh, I couldn't agree more, 'cause you look around there, it's Patton who said, 'Who else do we have except for Europe?. . .The southern Mediterranean is all gone. Hassan will be there, he's a nice fellow, but Morocco, Christ, they can't last. Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, uh, Algeria, Sudan, naturally, the UAR, all those little miserable countries around Jordan, and the Lebanon the rest, they're like, they'd go down like tenpins, just like that. . . . Let's look at Africa, generally. This country [referring to Iran] at least has got some degree of civilization in its history, but those Africans, you know, are only about fifty to seventy five from out of the trees, some of 'em. . .[6]

Nixon is not known in popular media for his nuance or tolerance, thus, perhaps the above passage is not entirely surprising to the reader. However, to the claim that the frames employed by foreign policy actors reflect a deep-seated Orientalist standpoint, in which the Other is better known by the Western lens than then they know themselves is entirely in keeping with the above presented argument. Nixon, from his vantage point in

[5] TELEGRAM; Ambassador MacArthur II to Henry Kissinger Secretary of State; October 6, 1969; folder Visit of the shah of Iran: Box 920; NSC Files: Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California.

[6] OVAL April 8, 1971; White House Tapes; Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California.

Washington DC, surveys the world while discussing issues of the day with his Ambassador to Iran George MacArthur II. MacArthur praises the shah, and in doing so understands what Iranians are as a people capable of with and only with the stewardship of the shah. For Nixon, MacArthur finds a welcome audience, as the world is full, by Nixon's reckoning, of distrustful and perhaps problem creating Others, yet the shah possibly represents the 'good' Oriental, capable of reigning his people, with force of course, because democracy is not possible for 'those' people. The shah is someone, in a sense, who understands his people and his predicament in the region.

The shah of Iran was not the only actor claiming to speak out or about the actions going on in Iran. The Ayatollah Ruholla Khomeini, who would later gain prominence as the religious figure most closely associated with the Iranian Revolution, argued in September of 1970 that US was making a "sad mistake" by committing themselves almost exclusively to the shah and his small coterie of high level advisors and ignoring the whims and will of Iranian public (Bill, 1988: 190). The fact that Nixon could ignore the complaints of Iranians being ostensibly crushed by the weight of the shah's development efforts represents the blinders imposed by Orientalism and the predisposition toward backing the 'good Oriental'. This tendency to look away from the protests of the populace and toward the justifications given by the status quo leader, regardless of how thin, marks the Nixon regime as a participant, if not a victim of Orientalism.

Two features emerge immediately as manifestations of Nixon's Orientalist lens. First, the shah can be stable, and possibly a partner to be trusted and cultivated as an agent of US Foreign Policy. Nixon has constructed the shah to be the one absent "those

little miserable countries" that surround him. Thus, the shah is the only *good* option in the Middle East as a potential partner, especially for his "useful, moderative role".[7] Second, democracy need not be a barrier to working with the shah, nor should one attempt to change the internal order of Iran toward issues of public redress. The Johnson approach of mediating military spending with domestic spending has thus been abandoned in favor of military-directed stability under Nixon.

This meant that for Nixon, the shah was in charge of his own affairs, in a sense, as long as he was willing to continue to play the role of the 'good Oriental', be moderate, create stability, improve progressively along capitalist lines, and, of course, arm himself to police the region. This was to include multiple measures within the Nixon Whitehouse, beyond simply keeping the shah happy.

Security transition: Losing the Balance: From Johnson to Nixon

In the Johnson White House, discussed in depth in Chapter Two, the case was often made that a balance was to be maintained to increase domestic stability by investing heavily in literacy and social reform. The Nixon White House, in contrast, negated this balance between reform and military armament, because as they argued, with the British gone from the Gulf a single entity was needed to increase stability. In keeping with Nixon's vision toward and for Iran, one of the measures taken by the Nixon White House was to broadly ignore the extravagance of the shah's domestic rule, while at the same time attempting to balance his military requests with a practical eye toward moderation rather than domination of the region. For example, on October 11, 1971 the

[7] TELEGRAM; Ambassador MacArthur II to Henry Kissinger Secretary of State; October 6, 1969; folder Visit of the shah of Iran: Box 920; NSC Files: Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California.

shah threw for himself and his royal coterie an enormous and elaborate celebration of his rule to the sum of 200 million dollars (1.1 billion in 2015 dollars adjusted for inflation). This garish display at the ancient Persian capital of Persepolis garnered much in the way of domestic criticism, most notably perhaps Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, then exiled in Iraq, but also from domestic political actors like Ayatollah Sa'idi (murdered in June of 1970), and Dr. Ali Shariati a prominent dissident figure.

An example of this abandoned balance between domestic politics and regional security can be found in the Nixon administration's response to the shah's inaugural party. This is characterized by a letter sent to the First Lady, Thelma Catherine Ryan Nixon, colloquially known to most as Pat, by the Committee for Free Iran, a US-based group that opposed the shah, which argued that:

> the Iranian people are looking toward October [the inauguration at Persepolis] with fearful trepidation because the celebration that is planned for foreign heads of state has been designed for a tragic purpose, namely that the shah hopes to persuade the Iranian people that his vicious and corrupt rule is meeting with the full approval of world powers.
>
> Inferred approval such as your attendance, will convince many Iranians that the shah is both honored and supported by famous and powerful heads of state and the world condones and patronizes his corrupt monarchy or at least is indifferent to the plight of the Iranian people.
>
> I am most sincere when I tell you that such a celebration will tragically dispel the hopes of the majority of Iranians of ever gaining their freedom.
>
> As the First lady of the United States you are a major symbol of freedom throughout the world, but to the Iranians you represent much more—you represent hope for freedom.
>
> Your conspicuous absence at the October ceremonies will be an enormous psychological boost to the flagging spirits of 28 million Iranians. It will also renew our faith in the belief that the United States is truly a

> citadel of freedom and that someday - just as in your country's early history- they may be free from tyrannical rule.[8]

The First Lady did not attend, although the Vice President Spiro Agnew along with representatives from sixty nine countries did. This reveals the tension at work in both the US domestic context and the Iranian domestic context and, perhaps most noteworthy, the abandonment of the balance between regional security and domestic reform. The attendance of Spiro Agnew to the ostentatious proceedings identifies that Nixon and his administration were entirely willing to ignore possible domestic problems in lieu of celebrating the 'good Oriental'.

Beyond extravagant parties, the shah seemed determined to clamp down on all manifestations of external and internal dissent. If land reform, industrial development, and military force was meant to allay and resolve the problems of the Iranian people, anyone not satisfied with the shah had little course for domestic political redress. Seeing as his chief foreign policy backer was untroubled by his domestic stance, the shah broadly abandoned his former position of cooperation and moderate coercion and by October of 1971 began to carry out a virtual "reign of terror" (Bill 1988: 186).

The issue of how a policy maker ignores the personal pleas of the populace is a disturbing trend in Nixon's foreign policy infrastructure. Justifying the role of the given leader and supporting the behavior of the 'good Oriental' come what may, relies upon the structuring of knowledge away from the intent of the individuals within the country being viewed and toward the leadership creating policy and pushing for domestic

[8] LETTER; Committee for a Free Iran, Hossin Habiby to Pat Nixon; October 6, 1969; folder white House Central Files CO 68 Iran: Box 6; White House Central Files: Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California.

reforms regardless of how egregious. For Nixon, even a reign of terror was not enough to disavow the actions of a given ally, what was more important was finding and maintaining stability in light of recent developments, rather than questioning overtly, in public or in private, why the protests themselves exist. Is such repression necessary in a society of represented, happy people? The answer was never questioned and the whims of the shah are never attacked or upended. For Nixon the ends truly justified the means.

The systematic and blatant use of torture, incarceration, and intimidation became common place under the shah's regime. In response to charges that his regime was supported by increasing levels of brutality, he argued, "I am not bloodthirsty. I am working for my country and the coming generations. I can't waste my time on a few young idiots. I don't believe the tortures attributed to SAVAK (the shah's domestic security service) are as common as people say, but I can't run everything" (Villiers, 1976: 259). By 1974 the shah had constructed five major prisons throughout Iran, with four new penitentiaries underway. The use of torture methods, including fingernail removal, whippings and beatings were now considered to be a common feature of the shah's prison system; leading Martin Ennals, secretary General of Amnesty International, to claim that "No Country in the world has a worse record in human rights than Iran" (Bill 1988: 187).

Perhaps this was an issue that only concerned the Iranians, as Nixon had earlier conjectured, the shah was the only one they had over there, so again, perhaps, there was no recourse beyond the continued support of the United States. This policy stance was not only troublesome for Iranians, it began to directly affect the possibilities for

diplomatic engagement within Iran. On November 30, 1971 insurgents attempted to kidnap Nixon's Ambassador to Iran George MacArthur II. While the attack on the ambassador proved unsuccessful, Lt. Col. Lewis Hawkins and Air Force Colonels Paul Shaffer and Jack Turner were assassinated on June 2, 1973, and May 21, 1975 respectively (Bill, 1988: 191).

From an early stage the Nixon administration was aware, or at least had been alerted, to the incarceration and protests swirling around the Pahlavi regime. Upon the shah's visit to the United States in 1969, a demonstration one block away from the Waldorf Astoria, where the shah was staying, demanded the release of political prisoners held without trial in Tehran. Demonstrators during this protest were clubbed to the ground and four members of the Iranian Student National Union (IRSU) New York Chapter were arrested. The IRSU released a statement appealing to the White House to defend "people's basic human rights, free speech, free political gatherings, and [the] right to receive trial by civil court…" they argued additionally that "We vigorously protest this attack against our l[e]gitmitate the peaceful demonstrations and demand the immediate release and drop of all charges against the four illegally imprisoned men." (emphasis mine)[9]

The tenure of the shah, as a close ally of the Nixon administration, was marked by the increasing violence and relative instability of a regime under siege. The creation of the shift by the shah from his posture of bending with the demands of his population in 1971 and 1972, and the increasing use of force and torture thereafter is somewhat

[9] LETTER; IRSU to President Nixon; October 6, 1969; folder White House Central Files CO 68 Iran: Box 6; WHC Files: Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California.

remarkable. Only a clue to the shah's own thinking can give us something to check the perspective of the Nixon administration. If the Iranians were supposedly willing to be led, and all they could achieve must be achieved with the martial support of a heavy hand, how was it that Nixon could justify the supposed values and goals of the United States with the support of a repressive regime?

The shah's primary modus operandi was the 'ruler's imperative'; at once his regime was meant to modernize the infrastructure of his country and promote complete loyalty to a small coterie of advisers and allies. Muhammad Reza shah demonstrated a deft manipulation of his closest political allies. Rivalry was encouraged and currying favor was the main channel by which to achieve relative political power within the regime. Actors within his regime, such as Prime Minister Hoveyda and Ardeshir Zahedi, Ambassador to the United States, were engaged in a constant political battle for influence and personal power throughout the 1970s, each individual trying to one-up the other to gain a larger audience with the shah (Bill, 1988: 195).

At the top, the shah encouraged infighting to maintain political control. Throughout the country, however, the shah used a combination of industrial advance, rapidly expanding GDP, and perhaps most efficiently and expertly, the expansion of the Iranian military to maintain control. By the mid-1970s Iran was spending more than $5 billion dollars a year ($31 billion adjusted for inflation in contemporary dollars). The shah's conception of himself as a soldier and the important manifestation of himself as not only the seminal combatant for a modern Iran, but also the impression that he was personally Iran's chief defender led him to claim, "I am the army" (Bayne, 1968: 139).

The Regional and International Calculations of the Nixon administration

Excusing Nixon's support for an individual that clothed himself in imperial garb and manifested himself as the individual best represented by the military, repression, and torture, one can conceive of the tactical challenges that Nixon believe he faced in the early days of his Presidency. In October of 1971, with the shah's inauguration effectively and expansively underway in Persepolis, two major pieces of the Middle East were solved by the role of Reza Pahlavi, oil, and military defense.

First, the hosting of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in Tehran led to a major breakthrough in petrol solidification and diplomacy; the February 14, 1971 Tehran agreement, wherein the countries producing the oil would have the deciding vote in establishing and maintaining oil prices. This agreement allowed for some modicum of control by member countries to stabilize oil prices and maintain control of oil flows throughout the region and the world, a major concern for world powers in general, and the Nixon administration in specific.

Second was the British military withdrawal from the Persian Gulf established in 1971 and the broader instability of the Greater Middle East. As stated earlier, the power vacuum created by the British departure created the opportunity for a military actor to seize some measure of influence and control. Beyond this, the South Asian Crisis, characterized the important role the shah was to play.

The South Asian Crisis was created by the elections in March of 1969 in East and West Pakistan. The military coup by General Agha Mohammed Yahya Khan in March of 1969 was to come to an end with the democratic passing of the torch to civilian leadership. The elections of the federal National Assembly were effectively captured by the Awami League's Sheikh Mujib al-Rahman when he received an

absolute majority. The defeat of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), and the ensuing contestation of the election erupted into civil war by December of 1970, when the Pakistani military intervened to maintain order and provide a "military solution" to the electoral contestation (Alvandi, 2014: Ereader Location 1311). Making matters far worse, by November 21, 1971 the conflict, which had been primarily an internal civil war to this point, became an Indo-Pakistan war when the Indian military entered the internal struggle on the side of the eastern Bengali separatists, stalwarts of the PPP.

For Nixon, Pakistan played a vital role, the Pakistanis served both as a check against a rising Indian, non-aligned but still more pro-Soviet than pro-West, and an intermediary to Communist China (Alvandi, 2014). The Indian's signed a treaty of mutual assistance and friendship with the Soviet Union in August of 1971 moving matters from regional to international significance. The Nixon administration was in a bind and thus required a political and military solution to the problem of international instability. However, domestically the role of public opinion within the US had turned against the Pakistani efforts at martial law in Bengal because of the military role the Pakistani government had taken on. The solution to the problem, as usual, was the 'good Oriental'?

Iran, a CENTO ally of Pakistan, in 1971 began to secretly funnel American-supplied arms to Pakistan. The calculation to do this relied upon arguments made by the Americans and agreed to by the shah. First, the absence of military armaments might lead the Pakistanis to seek assistance from elsewhere, nominally China. This was described within the Pahlavi regime by Foreign Minister Zahedi as a "disaster for Iran" (Tahir-Kheli, 1971: 481). Second the Iranians could provide a mediated settlement to

the Crisis. Throughout 1971 the Iranians advised the Pakistanis that it was virtual suicide to attempt to suppress 75 million Bengalis in Eastern Pakistan. The attempted trial of Majib, leader of the PPP, was denounced in both Tehran and Washington as an action in line with creating a political folk hero out of Majib, and inspiring and fueling the increasingly spiraling conflict with India.

As the mediation continued the shah, with US support, pressed Yahya Khan in mid-September of 1971 to work toward a political end. Though, as in the past the political calculation was paired with the active supply of limited military arms to the Pakistanis should out-and-out war commence in rapidly deteriorating East Pakistan. By December 4, 1971 the Nixon administration secretly, owing to the dramatic lack of public support for Pakistan among Americans and the constitutional illegality of trafficking arms to a third party without Congressional approval, provided more arms to the Pakistani war effort, in Kissinger's words "[i]f it is leaking we can have it denied. Have it done one step away"[10] Kissinger argued in support of the practice to the Chinese Ambassador to the United Nations Huang Ha upon his visit to the White House that if the shah required military hardware for regional security the "shipment of American arms to Pakistan, we are obliged to protest, but we will understand."[11] Muddying the waters even further the Nixon administration, via Henry Kissinger implied

[10] MEMO; Alexander Haig to Henry Kissinger; January 19, 1972; folder National Security Files: Box 643: Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California.

[11] MEMO; Henry Kissinger to Richard Nixon; December 10, 1971; folder National Security File; Box 643: Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California.

that the action should be kept secret from American politics entirely, making sure that, "the Democrats don't know about it and we keep our mouths shut."[12]

The 'good Oriental' was playing a substantial role for the Nixon administration. They were providing stability in the form of Iran's internal domestic politics, they were assisting regionally in providing under-the-table support for the Pakistanis by providing trafficked arms to support their war effort, and perhaps most significantly for a signature piece of Nixon's legacy they were supporting the continuing talks with Beijing through their Pakistani support. In many ways the shah was the leader Nixon needed, he was also an island of stability that Nixon could base his perceptions for his doctrine upon. The shah for his domestic faults and largesse was more than an ally he, was a shepherd for peace, and a supporter of capitalism against the Soviets could be counted upon to provide logistical and tactical support whenever and wherever the Nixon regime required at the time. In 1970 and 71 the shah proved to be the leading ally, the first among Orientals, and finally the leader of the Nixon Doctrine within the domestic, regional, international contexts. But this was not forever to be so, the shah's perception of his own regime, perhaps best captured in his lavish inaugural at Persepolis in October of 1971 was an early marker that the shah had ambitions well beyond merely supporting Nixon's vision. His actions during the oil crisis of 1973 would characterize the increasing growing pains and the conflict between being the 'good Oriental' and the "imperial ruler".

[12] BRIEFING; Henry Kissinger to Richard Nixon; December 6, 1971; White House Tapes ; OVAL; Taped conversation: 630-2: Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California.

Tension Among Un-equals: Nixon, the shah, and the Oil Embargo of 1973-1974

In the aftermath of the Arab-Israeli War in 1973 the Organization of Petroleum countries (OPEC) targeted allies of Israel for their perceived or real support of the Israeli war effort including South Africa, the Netherlands, Portugal, and the United States with a complete embargo of oil. Longstanding agreements, in some cases decades long, between OPEC and other states were completely disrupted by OPEC's cuts in oil production. The impact of the embargo which lead to high inflation and the stagnation of oil imports by the targeted countries created a broader stagnation of economic activity across the globe.

The debate within the Nixon administration on dealing with both OPEC in general and the Iranians in specific had been brewing for some time. In a memo from April 27, 1972 Peter M. Flanigan, an influential advisor, fundraiser, and investment banker to Nixon, argued that Iran was making moves to supply extra oil to the United States beyond its commitments agreed to with OPEC. This included increasing the daily delivery of oil to 8 million barrels per day (bpd) by 1976 from the 1972 4 million bpd standard, building a $100 million dollar natural liquefied gas pipeline, and the construction of a 200,000 bpd refinery in Iran. The Nixon administration was advised, by Flanigan, to refuse the shah's personal delivery of oil to the US around OPEC negotiations, which would anger the consortium and create real and lasting tension in the oil market. To quote Flanigan, "It is essential that the shah not be encouraged in his desires for access to the U.S. market for Iranian oil. . . . [and the] great difficulty that

granting access to one country would [cost] us in our relations with all other oil exporting countries."(emphasis his)[13]

The shah had long been seeking to establish a permanent petroleum-based relationship with the US to stabilize profits over long-term and lock in gains made by the Iranians with assured foreign exports. This move was not perceived to be broadly controversial, even Flanigan notes the problem was not with Iran itself, but with the perception that side contracts made with Iran might damage the possibilities for future mutually beneficial engagement the OPEC consortium. The shah in this sense was still playing the 'good Oriental', perhaps over ambitious, but still broadly in line with the foreign policy concerns of the Nixon administration. Still the first among Orientals, the shah was capricious, though at this stage not a manifest threat.

However, in the wake of the oil embargo in 1973-1974 with international oil prices spiking dramatically. The shah began a new track with the Nixon administration. He sought to leverage high oil prices internationally into gains for Iran itself with a 2% increase on the royalty increase on oil exports.[14] Feeling squeezed on the one side by high OPEC rates increasingly causing havoc within the US economy Nixon viewed the shah as fundamentally betraying the backing that the US had provided since the early days of his administration. In reaction to the shah's attempt to impose higher prices for oil, the Nixon administration threatened to reduce arms sales.

[13] MEMO; Peter Flanigan to Richard Nixon; April 27, 1972;White House Central Files: folder: CO 68 Iran, Box 37: Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California.

[14] LETTER; Henry Kissinger to the Embassy of Iran, July 15, 1974; Foreign Relations of the United States; Volume XXVII, folder Iran, 1973-1976, Box 66. Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California.

In a letter to Nixon from Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, Kissinger notes that according to clandestine reports "Iranian leaders are 'very' concerned that US might restrict arms sales to Iran; the Iranian military considers it impossible to find substitute military equipment, in terms of quantities and sophistication being purchased from the US"[15] Disciplining the Iranians in this way, at the crux of their military power and presupposed stability role in the region was a move entirely apart from the prevailing doctrine of the Nixon administration to that point. Kissinger argues further that:

> [t]he shah will not be moved by argumentation over the impact of current oil prices, including the potential impact to Western strength vis-à-vis the Communists, but he may be moved to a possible US review of the broader US-Iranian relationship in an effort to compel Iran to roll back oil prices. . . . The Iranian Government is particularly concerned about the possibility of US pressure for reduced oil prices through restrictions on arm sales. Without such sales, the shah, in the Iranian view, cannot implement his ambitious plans for military modernization.

Where has the 'good Oriental' gone? Where is the language of mutual benefit and cooperation that so profoundly defines the early years of Nixon's foreign policy? For the Iranians to be attempting such a move Nixon's regional calculus, and indeed perhaps his Doctrine, seems to be ideologically contested at this point.

In a letter dated July 15, 1974 that sought to revive the cordial and "warm" relations experienced in the recent past between the two states that "The shah has himself referred to that interdependence and specifically the vital importance to Iran of a stable Western Europe and to the inseparability of European regional security from that

[15] LETTER; Henry Kissinger to Richard Nixon; October 31, 1974; Foreign Relations of the United States: Volume XXVII, folder Iran;Iraq, 1973-1976, Box 86. Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California.

of Iran's part of the world."[16] Iran and shah most specifically, must understand that despite his precociousness and ambition he must regard the larger picture as being a piece and a part of his calculation to revise oil pricing. It is, in a sense, reasonable to take the shah to task for his lack of understanding of the larger picture, beset by his limited Oriental vision he may not understand the importance of the international repercussions of his oil interests.

This claim was not made in vain or without backing, the deficits and costs of the embargo were being felt worldwide. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) forecast that the costs of the embargo in US dollars were as follows: "France $6.5 billion, Italy $7.5 billion, Japan $7.5 billion, UK $11 billion."[17] As a result grow rates among member states were also affected with the OECD reporting that "only [a] .5 percent" average increase, with some states experiencing zero or negative rates.[18] Tying the impact of oil prices to security and global preparedness to encounter the Soviet threat, the letter argues for "strongest danger" in NATO readiness if current market prices continued to dive.

Conclusion: The Conflicted Role of the 'good Oriental'

In the same way that Nixon tied the shah to domestic, regional, and international issues during the South Asia Crisis, the shah could also be held accountable for a lack

[16] LETTER; Henry Kissinger to the Embassy of Iran, July 15, 1974; Foreign Relations of the United States; Volume XXVII, folder Iran, 1973-1976, Box 66. Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California.

[17] LETTER; Henry Kissinger to the Embassy of Iran, July 15, 1974; Foreign Relations of the United States; Volume XXVII, folder Iran, 1973-1976, Box 66. Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California.

[18] LETTER; Henry Kissinger to the Embassy of Iran, July 15, 1974; Foreign Relations of the United States; Volume XXVII, folder Iran, 1973-1976, Box 66. Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California.

of action, or at worst, a pressure to deleteriously create more problems in the global economy. The role of the 'good Oriental' is important to remember in this context. At once the shah was to repress his people at any cost using the preponderance of military arms and domestic security measures provided by the US, and he should pursue matters of regional security as a moderating and stabilizing force for US-backed foreign policy interests.

What was not expected, and is the reason for the threats of arms reductions and rebukes toward the shah, is the impulse toward self-aggrandizement beyond the narrow borders of US interests. The shah should seek growth for this economy, after all as Nixon argued, "Iran's the only thing there…" but at the same time he should understand his place and role as a subaltern in terms of international interests and security matters. For Nixon the 'good Oriental' had to be at times reigned in, lest the impulses of his regime grate too heavily upon the calculations required to pursue the true normative good of his regime, the betterment of Nixon's administration, the pursuit of international security, and American foreign policy requirements. The discourse we have constructed here represents the role the US determined for itself vis-a-vis Iran. The Nixon administration viewed the Iranians through the prism of subordination and the role of the 'good Oriental' as one that facilitated US interests as well as its own. Nixon viewed Iran as necessary for his regional and international calculations and Iran served as a vital ally in implementing US goals.

CHAPTER 5
SECURITY, FOREIGN POLICY, AND IDEATIONAL CONSTRUCTION WITHIN THE FORD ADMINISTRATION

Introduction

As we have seen in the foreign policy orientation and construction in the Johnson and Nixon presidencies, Chapters 3 and 4, the 'good Oriental' serves as a pliable intermediary for enacting policy goals. This tendency will continue in the Ford administration. For Nixon, the shah became the 'good Oriental'; as Nixon commented, the administration's "one friend there". I will argue in this piece that the administration of Gerald R. Ford, like Richard Nixon, Lyndon Johnson and other leading actors within Johnson's administration, adopted and adapted these Orientalist thought structures in how it viewed the government of the shah of Iran specifically and the Iranian people more generally.

As noted in Chapter Three, the Nixon administration was under international pressure resulting from the turbulent 1973-1974 Oil Embargo. Nixon's attempt to rebuke the shah's presumptuous price gouging was an attempt to reorient, pun intended, the shah to his proper place of subordination in the international system. The relationship between Nixon and the shah was built upon equal measures subordination and pragmatism. With Nixon's removal, the dynamic between the West and the 'good Oriental', at least in terms of the President, would fundamentally change.

With Nixon's resignation on August 9, 1974, Gerald R. Ford assumed the presidency and leadership the US. While Ford can be considered an effective break in the relationship between the shah and the US administration, much continuity remained in the form of Henry Kissinger. Ford, who Prime Minister of Iran Asadollah (1962-1964) referred to as a "real idiot', was perceived by the Iranian leadership as a figurehead who

merely parroted, rather than produced, the ideology and policy of his White House Staff (Alam, 2014: 205). Kissinger represented an essential continuity, and despite the presence of a less respected leader, he proved to be a vital holdover and keeper of the flame, surviving through the problematic legacy of the Nixon administration.

The central goal concerning Iran that Kissinger aimed to preserve, despite rising criticisms of the shah's human rights record, was continued support for the shah as a cornerstone of the Nixon Doctrine. Four issues besieged Kissinger's attempts to continue as before under the new administration: the issue of oil pricing, discussed in Chapter Three; the debate over the transfer of nuclear technology to Iran; arms sales, which continued despite the need for the shah's rebuke under Nixon; and the shah's poor record on human rights, both domestically, and in his support for the South Asia Crisis and the Pakistani response. No longer, it seemed, would the shah simply be written off as a mere despot in want of American pity, as "an object of ridicule", to cite a Newsweek article of the day, "Now, with Persia's grandeur dancing in his head, the shah set out to convert his immense oil wealth into geopolitical clout" (Periodical quoted by Alvandi, 2014).

The need to address the above concerns was tempered with the desire to continue the Nixon Doctrine, which promoted American interests in the Middle East specifically and the world generally. In a memorandum arguing for the shah's significant and important role of which the administration should be aware, Brent Scowcroft argued that "of the potentially serious risks for our relationship with Iran if we do not go ahead with" the continuation of arms sales and credits it could be a major setback for US

interests in the region.[1] In a follow-up memo, Scowcroft continues, stating that issues including US arms policies, nuclear policies, dealing with Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Iran, "can neither postpone our decisions as to how the administration will manage these issues nor handle the decisions quietly in the hope that they will slip past the public and Congress."[2] Chief among the issues that required urgent attention from the administration was the provision of nuclear fuel and technological support.

Nuclear Politics and the shah

In March of 1974, the shah of Iran, Reza Pahlavi, passionately argued that "We shall, as fast as we can, enter the age of using the atom and other sources of energy to save oil for production of chemical and petrochemical products. We shall not use oil, this noble substance, as common fuel." (Milani, 2008, quoted in Alvandi, 2014). Buoyed by healthy oil revenues in 1973 ($4.4 billion) and in 1974 ($17.8 billion), Iran was sitting on a massive amount of spendable income earmarked for the pursuit of nuclear technology. Aided by Akbar Etemad, a nuclear physicist trained in Switzerland, the shah pursued a crash program of domestic nuclear enrichment for energy production.

Despite the abundance of books detailing with the tragedy and potential threat of Iranian nuclear ambitions towards the US and its regional allies, the early manifestations of Iran's nuclear program began with the creation of the "Atoms for Peace" program, which promoted the use of civilian nuclear power as a possible alternative to the pursuit of nuclear weapons (Bernstein, 2007; Abrams et al. 2012;

[1] MEMO; Brent Scowcroft to Robert B. Oakley, August 13, 1976; National Security Files, Box 12, folder 16: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

[2] MEMO; Brent Scowcroft to Robert B. Oakley, August 14, 1976; National Security Files, Box 12, folder 16: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Kroenig, 2014). The path to nuclear power can be traced back to President Eisenhower, who in 1953 argued that the US "should devote its entire heart and mind to find the way by which the miraculous inventiveness of man shall not be dedicated to his death, but consecrated to his life."[3] The creation of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was meant to shepherd countries into the peaceful use of domestic nuclear energy.

By 1957 the shah had signed an agreement for the peaceful use of atomic energy. Under this agreement, American firms would build nuclear facilities throughout Iran, including a small research reactor in Tehran with 6 kilograms of leased uranium to use as fuel. The agreement allowed for Iran to build nuclear facilities, so long as they did not result in military applications or weapons programs.

In 1964, the trilateral agreement signed in Vienna established that Iran, the United States, and the IAEA would seek to produce and provide civilian technical assistance under IAEA safeguards. Five reactors, built by the US firm General Dynamics, went online in 1967, and a year later the shah signed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), which was ratified in the Majlis in 1970. The shah's nuclear program was an issue of moderate concern in the Ford White House, not because of its tactical or military significance, but merely as an issue of implementation oversight. In November of 1974 the shah had signed letters of intent with France and West Germany for four nuclear reactors. Delays and construction problems had prevented the swift implementation of these reactors, which was a cause of some

[3] Eisenhower, Dwight D. "Address before the General Assembly of the United Nations on Peaceful uses of Atomic Energy," *Public Paper of the President*, (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 1960, 256. Quoted in Alvandi, Roham. (2014) *Nixon, Kissinger, and the Shah:* the United State and Iran in the cold war, Oxford University Press.
2821.

concern. The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) had liaised with the French company Framatome and the Kraftwerk Union (KWU). Site surveys, at least in 1974, had not yet been completed by the Europeans, and the progress that was underway by US firms, better able perhaps to understand how to build reactors on potentially problematic, seismically active conditions, had also stalled. As a result, "The two 1,200 megawatt reactors [were] not expected to go into operation until 1980 and 1981. Because Iran lacked trained personnel, KWU will import large members of West German construction workers and will operate the two reactors for period of five years."[4]

For Ford and the members of his administration, the peaceful progress of Iran's nuclear program was not the volatile issue we see today, for two reasons. First, owing to the holdover influences of Kissinger and other senior White House staff, Iran was still to be maintained as a bulwark of US support in the region. Second, international cooperation manifested European support for American efforts. The community of nations had been more than willing to support friendly allies in the Middle East, with an eye towards domestic civilian enrichment as a mutually beneficial commercial and political goal for allied states.

The architecture for Ford's support of Iran's nuclear ambitions can be found in National Security Decision Memorandum 292 (NSDM 292), from April 22, 1975, penned by Henry Kissinger. Two key elements can be observed: first, Ford argued for the transfer of US nuclear materials to be "fabricated into fuel in Iran for use in its own reactors and for pass-through to third countries with whom (the US) had Agreements";

[4] BRIEFING, September 8, 1975; Dale Van Atta Papers, Box 6, Folder Intelligence Documents: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

second, Kissinger argued for a “fuel ceiling” which would limit the amount of materials to be transferred to Iran, reflecting the amount of capital Iran had invested in US enrichment facilities.[5]

The entitlement to enrichment facilities is important because it hints at the high level of development in this regard between the US and Iran, this type of deal did not exist outside of longstanding US alliances in Europe. Iran was not only developing its own nuclear infrastructure, it was also investing in the processing of said materials in the US. Beyond this, “Any additional entitlement could be disposed of by Iran without Iran importing material in that country through sales from the United States to appropriate third countries (Pakistan most likely) with whom the U.S. has bilateral agreements for Cooperation”; which indicates that Iran would have enough fuel for its own needs and would also serve as a trusted nuclear dispenser for allied countries in the region. Pakistan was considered by the US, at least at this time, as the more unstable of the nuclear powers in the region, and Iran was considered a more responsible entity, in essence, the ‘good Oriental’ that could be trusted to act responsibly. [6]

Perhaps the most interesting revelations NSDM 292 has to offer regards the proposal to build a “multinational plant in Iran” for the processing and reprocessing of US-supplied fuel for the purposes of dispensing said fuel throughout US allied countries

[5] MEMO, “Henry Kissinger to White House”, April 22, 1975. National Security Council Institutional Files, 1974-1977. Box, 49, folder NSDM 292- US Nuclear Cooperation - 1: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

[6] MEMO, “Henry Kissinger to White House”, April 22, 1975. National Security Council Institutional Files, 1974-1977. Box, 49, folder NSDM 292- US Nuclear Cooperation - 1: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

in the greater Middle East. An “expression of US willingness to explore cooperation in establishing such a facility at an appropriate time should Iran so desire. . .” is impressive to say the least. Iran would not only be the site of dispensation for US refined fuel, but had history taken a slightly different track, allowed the establishment of a US supported multinational nuclear production facility in Iran. [7]

A number of points must be made to place this document in context. First, the document is penned by one of the chief proponents of the ‘Pahlavi lobby’ (detailed in full below), Henry Kissinger. As has been noted here and elsewhere, Kissinger’s support for the shah as a regional stabilizer and authority in the Middle East is attained by few others inside the Ford administration. Considered by some to be a foreign policy luminary, one might be surprised to see Kissinger placing so much responsibility on his chosen ‘good Oriental’, but for the time and place this was entirely in line with Kissinger’s perspective on the shah. Second, the regional politics of the time allowed for this powerful move to supplement and foment nuclear technology; Eisenhower’s famous “Atoms for Peace” is at the heart of this proposal. Finally, the implementation of this proposed expansion of nuclear technology can be viewed as another example of the US acting where and when others could not. During the Cold War, the US sought to limit Soviet interventions by establishing key nuclear powers that could be used as a backstop against expansionary efforts by the Communists.

[7] MEMO, “Henry Kissinger to White House”, April 22, 1975. National Security Council Institutional Files, 1974-1977. Box, 49, folder NSDM 292- US Nuclear Cooperation - 1: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

One might expect the 'good Oriental' in Tehran to genuflect to the whims of its patron. The response to NSDM 292 by the shah was one of "anger". [8] The US position, most specifically the implementation of a fuel ceiling on Iranian importation of nuclear fuel, was considered totally unacceptable by the Iranians. In a meeting with Dwight J. Porter, America's representative on nuclear activities toward the Middle East, on September 22 and 23 of 1975, the President of the Iran Atomic Energy Organization, Akbar Etemad, transmitted the shah's dismay and anger at the second tier status they felt they were being given by NSDM 292. Etemad argued that "Iran's view was that, as an adherent to the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT), it would accept all of the obligations of that treaty and could not be bound by additional obligations imposed by the US or any other exporting state."[9]

For the Iranians, Porter relates, the issue had become political and highly personal. Iran had been an original signatory to the NPT in 1968, and considered any new obligations placed on its nuclear activities reflective of mistrust. Etemad stated that "The suspicion with which the US viewed Iran's long-term plans to rely increasingly on nuclear energy (23,000 MWe by 1994) was disturbing." The infuriated leader, normally a mild mannered individual, went on "Why was Iran, an NPT party of longstanding, being singled out?"[10] For the US to demand that they have the ability to determine Iran's

[8] MEMO, "Summary of Discussion between Dwight J. Porter and Mr. Akbar Etemad, President, Iran Atomic Energy Organization", September 22 and 23, 1975. National Security Council Institutional Files, 1974-1977. Box, 49, folder NSDM 292- US Nuclear Cooperation - 1: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

[9] MEMO, "Summary of Discussion between Dwight J. Porter and Mr. Akbar Etemad, President, Iran Atomic Energy Organization", September 22 and 23, 1975. National Security Council Institutional Files, 1974-1977. Box, 49, folder NSDM 292- US Nuclear Cooperation - 1: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

[10] MEMO, "Summary of Discussion between Dwight J. Porter and Mr. Akbar Etemad, President, Iran Atomic Energy Organization", September 22 and 23, 1975. National Security Council Institutional Files,

nuclear fuel needs into the foreseeable future allowed the "US government to exert both commercial and political judgments over Iran's future development—in other words, the US had the power to turn off the pipeline when it wished, for whatever reasons."[11]

The shah condemned the US during his May 1975 visit for slowing down the process of Iran's nuclear advancement, claiming that the US was a lazy, "permissive undisciplined society" that worked slowly, if at all, on major issues with notable allies (Alvandi, 2014: Ereader Location 3217).The shah had sterner words regarding NSDM 292 in a *Business Week* article published on November 13, 1975. The moves by the US to control and limit the nuclear expansion of Iran, the shah argued, were "Incompatible with our sovereignty, things that the French and Germans would never dream of doing."[12] The shah's reaction, while full of bluster and criticism, belied his powerless position. He had the ability to affect the powerful by raising or lowering his domestic oil output, but he was still forced to approach the US hat-in-hand when it came to nuclear technology.

This tendency to use issues of treaty law, enacted within the NPT, to place Iran in a subservient position reflects the concern that Iran may have been slipping out of the subordinate position the Ford administration required of the 'good Oriental'. This is not to say that reservations about Iranian nuclear production facilities and uranium

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1974-1977. Box, 49, folder NSDM 292- US Nuclear Cooperation - 1: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

[11] MEMO, "State Department to White House", November 24, 1975. National Security Council Institutional Files, 1974-1977. Box, 49, folder NSDM 292- US Nuclear Cooperation - 1: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

[12] MEMO, "Summary of Discussion between Dwight J. Porter and Mr. Akbar Etemad, President, Iran Atomic Energy Organization", September 22 and 23, 1975. National Security Council Institutional Files, 1974-1977. Box, 49, folder NSDM 292- US Nuclear Cooperation - 1: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

processing were entirely without issue within the Ford administration. A memorandum for President Ford, prepared by United States National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, proposed that Iranians only be given access to nuclear fuel on "multinational basis", with Iran only given access to US firms and nuclear technologies and without the ability to process these technologies entirely in country.[13] Like the issue of co-production I discuss below, the matter of Iranian power was to be effectively mitigated by US control of the process. This restrained, potentially, Iranian efforts to move beyond the subordinated position they now occupied.

To some, this may have been an entirely legitimate effort to restrict nuclear fuel and technology within a controllable sphere of influence of the US. For the shah and members of his government, the American restrictions on its nuclear ambitions were perceived as domineering and controlling. Viewed from a position of international equality, this effort is confusing. The US did not restrict nuclear fuel to its allies in Europe, nor did they perceive those allies to be necessarily culturally or strategically subordinate to US interests. However, Iran occupied a different position. Whereas other actors in the region, namely India and Pakistan, had never signed the NPT, Etemad argued that Iran "was being viewed with all the same suspicion."[14] As with the co-production issue, Iran chafed under the assumption that they were dealt with as subordinates rather than equals, and bad-faith actors rather than members in good

[13] LETTER, NSC Adviser Brent Scowcroft, April 19, 1976. U.S. National Security Council Institutional Files, 1974-1977. Box, 71, folder 1: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

[14] MEMO, "Summary of Discussion between Dwight J. Porter and Mr. Akbar Etemad, President, Iran Atomic Energy Organization", September 22 and 23, 1975. National Security Council Institutional Files, 1974-1977. Box, 49, folder NSDM 292- US Nuclear Cooperation - 1: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

standing with international law. From one perspective, again, this is entirely within the remit of suspicion, to another this is a reflection of the 'good Oriental'; a mantle present even among a longstanding ally. Arguably, to the Ford administration Iran was first among subordinates, but a subordinate nonetheless.

Military Co-Production with Iran and its Implications in the Ford White House

Also at issue was the increasing Iranian demand for some small measure of military production within Iran. The transfer of co-production efforts was originally established under the September 6, 1973 Co-Production Guidelines. A Presidential briefing prepared by the Joint Cooperation Commission established that "The shah expressed a strong interest in sharing in the manufacture of certain items of US military hardware in Iran…the Bell 215 utility helicopter, an air-to-ground rocket, the Bell 215 attack helicopter…" are but a few examples of this expanding effort.[15] While broad US efforts to stabilize the region reflected an interest in maintaining Iran as a close US ally, owing to the fact that Iran was "a leader in OPEC and major and reliable source of oil—current supplying about fifteen percent of US oil imports", observers, noting the recent attempts during the 1973-1974 oil embargo by the Pahlavi regime, "Iran's policy on oil prices has not always been in the US interest".[16] The report continues that Iran was

[15] BRIEFING, U.S. National Security Council Files, 1974-1977. IFU Institutional Files, NSC-U/DM 127, Box 74, folder NSC U/DM- Co-Production in Iran (3): Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

[16] BRIEFING, U.S. National Security Council Files, 1974-1977. IFU Institutional Files, NSC-U/DM 127, Box 74, folder NSC U/DM- Co-Production in Iran (3): Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

"Militarily the most powerful, politically one of the most stable, and economically the most developed in the Persian Gulf, Iran serves as a responsible regional power…"[17]

The significance of Iran was clearly a priority, and, as I have argued, entirely in line with the Nixon doctrine. However, as Iran was becoming more assertive in its role as a regional power, they, at least to the perceptions of US actors, sought to move beyond the 'good Oriental' role the shah had reliably played for Nixon. An assertive shah would view a US response that did not increase levels of "co-production issues as a very important political indicator for future US-Iranian cooperation."[18] So long as the shah maintained policies "entirely in line with our own" he would not be viewed as an upstart or a malcontent of US authority, but merely an ambitious regional power in support of established American foreign policy goals.[19]

The issue of co-production in Iran raised a number of issues for Ford. First, regional allies like Pakistan and Israel might begin to demand similar domestic production within their own country contexts, viewing the Iranian increase as an almost necessary threat against which to be balanced. Second, the administration argued, "Problems will arise as a result of co-production: strain on Iran's limited technological skill and capabilities; diversion of skilled manpower resources; criticism of the USG (US

[17] BRIEFING, U.S. National Security Council Files, 1974-1977. IFU Institutional Files, NSC-U/DM 127, Box 74, folder NSC U/DM- Co-Production in Iran (3): Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

[18] BRIEFING, U.S. National Security Council Files, 1974-1977. IFU Institutional Files, NSC-U/DM 127, Box 74, folder NSC U/DM- Co-Production in Iran (3): Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

[19] BRIEFING, U.S. National Security Council Files, 1974-1977. IFU Institutional Files, NSC-U/DM 127, Box 74, folder NSC U/DM- Co-Production in Iran (3): Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Government) or US contractors for any substantial lack of success…"[20] Third was the concern that a new threshold might bring Iran undue influence and power in the region and could threaten the stability of other actors. The shah unbound by a US-based dependence on arms imports would have the capacity to go it alone; a completely unacceptable eventuality, given the shah's role as the 'good Oriental'.

On this last point the concerns for Ford were that the Iranians may grow beyond a manageable position:

> From a Defense point of view any co-production proposal must be examined in light of complex inter-relationships involving technology, development, security, procurement, production, distribution US-force readiness, and management considerations. Moreover, this examination must be reviewed in the context of US political, economic, and strategic interest both in the country and the area. . . .[W]ithholding from in-country production sophisticated components the US does not wish to release; establishing with [the] GOI (Government of Iran) the principle of non-interference. . .adds little of direct value to US security interests in the near future.[21]

Trainable Iranians were a noted limitation, as their technical expertise, owing perhaps to education concerns or, put in terms of Orientalist thought structures, the Iranians as a people were simply incapable of mastering Western technologies. The Iranians had been producing their own armaments of an intricate and sophisticated nature under the shah since the mid-sixties. It seems odd at this juncture to believe them simply as an untrainable liability (Brzoska, 1989).

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[20] BRIEFING, U.S. National Security Council Files, 1974-1977. IFU Institutional Files, NSC-U/DM 127, Box 74, folder NSC U/DM- Co-Production in Iran (3): Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

[21] BRIEFING, U.S. National Security Council Files, 1974-1977. IFU Institutional Files, NSC-U/DM 127, Box 74, folder NSC U/DM- Co-Production in Iran (3): Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

To place the issue in context, the only other members of the international community that possessed similar co-production contracts were established US allies in Europe. France, Great Britain, and West Germany all held co-production contracts established during the post-World War II years under the US-funded Marshall Plan.[22] Bringing Iran to a similar standing as these Western nations was an issue of some concern for Ford. Europeans could be treated, and perhaps be relied upon, as US equals in the pursuit of international power. While the US viewed these partners in the Cold War as by their nature less powerful than the US in armaments and abilities, it was a stretch to consider the Iranians, and the shah in particular, as capable of understanding the implications or the calculations of Great Power politics.

The report concludes that "For the foreseeable future, Iran will remain heavily dependent on foreign imports for entire weapons systems or the essential components; however, it will likely turn to other industrialized nations if the U.S. refuses to respond favorably to its co-production requests."[23] This is considered beneficial in both the regional and international calculations for the Ford White House and kept the 'good Oriental' subordinated to "US technological primacy".[24]

[22] BRIEFING, U.S. National Security Council Files, 1974-1977. IFU Institutional Files, NSC-U/DM 127, Box 74, folder NSC U/DM- Co-Production in Iran (3): Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

[23] BRIEFING, U.S. National Security Council Files, 1974-1977. IFU Institutional Files, NSC-U/DM 127, Box 74, folder NSC U/DM- Co-Production in Iran (3): Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

[24] BRIEFING, U.S. National Security Council Files, 1974-1977. IFU Institutional Files, NSC-U/DM 127, Box 74, folder NSC U/DM- Co-Production in Iran (3): Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Issues of Friction and Diplomacy within the Ford White House

By March of 1975, the shah, and by extension Iran, committed to purchasing $15 billion in American imports, technological services, and banking services over the next five years; the largest agreement by any two countries to date (Bill, 1989: 204). This trade parity and apparent comity between the US and Iran belied a deeper disagreement over Iranian policy within the Ford White House. Kissinger, long a stalwart backer and ally of the shah, as well the Vice President John D. Rockefeller, Ambassador to Iran Richard Helms, and Senators Barry Goldwater and Jacob Javitz effectively made up the "Pahlavi lobby" among senior White House advisors (Alvandi, 2014: Ereader Location 2773). Opposition and open skepticism to the long term relationship between the two states was characterized best by National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft, Defense Secretary James Schlesinger, and his successor Donald Rumsfeld, along with Secretary of the Treasury William Simon.

Schlesinger poignantly argued in September of 1975 that "US interests and the shah's perception of his interest could easily collide, and soon." (Alvandi, 2014: Ereader Location 2792). As we can see above in the co-production arguments made by the Pentagon, real concern was growing over US technological primacy and the ability of the shah to adequately man and operate the weapons he was given. For Simon, who had been long working closely with the Saudis to pressure the shah to lower oil prices, Iran was an unstable partner moving toward regional dominance (Alvandi, 2014: Ereader Location 2793). Kissinger responded in defense of his 'good Oriental' in an Oval Office briefing to Ford that the Saudis were "the most feckless and gutless of the Arabs…" whereas the shah is "our real friend. He is the only one to stand up to the

Soviet Union. We need him for balance against India. We can't tackle him without breaking him."[25]

The most pointed criticism came from Donald Rumsfeld. Not only was Rumsfeld openly critical of the close relationship between Ford and the shah, his access to high level communications and military contracts placed him in perfect position to create discord among the longstanding allies. In a State Department cable dated November 16, 1975 it is revealed that Rumsfeld, during a visit to Iran, informed the shah that he was being charged well in excess of the cost of military armaments sold to him by General Dynamics:

> shah is reacting to $1 billion in unexpected charges. . . .shah is particularly troubled by increase in Spruance [class of Naval destroyer] costs. He states that original price quoted in December 1973. . . .shah has indicated that he may be forced to cancel purchases if the higher prices are maintained. . . .shah overriding concern is that increases which we have passed to him to date may be only the beginning. . . . [H]e sees Iran's defense planning and budgeting reduced to a shambles by unpredictable escalation.[26]

State Department cables reflect the furor in relatively muted tones. Hearing of the apparent price gouging by General Dynamics, and perhaps owing to the fact that the shah himself had been openly threatened with a reduction in military arms through his actions in raising prices during the oil embargo, the shah began to openly vacillate. In a memo penned by Brent Scowcroft he notes that while:

> The GOI has contracted to purchase approximately $10 billion in US weapons, equipment and support. . . .the Iranians from the shah on down are very concerned over various aspects of their military relationship with

[25] BRIEFING, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to Gerald Ford, August 17, 1974. National Security Archive, Box 5: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

[26] TELEX, Donald R. Rumsfeld to Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, Presidential Country Files for the Middle East and South Asia, Box 12, folder 1: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

> the U.S., particularly the greatly increased costs for weapons and equipment. . . .the shah has warned Ambassador Helms that reduced oil [price] liftings may require GOI to adjust its foreign policy from that of being a major pro-western power in the Persian Gulf to one that has a more balanced East-West orientation.[27]

Scowcroft's following points are simple: First, the shah overestimated the ability of the US government to influence American oil companies to buy the GOI's overpriced Iranian crude, and this has created an oversupply in the market; second, the increasing utility of the Saudis as a viable alternative to the shah - the Saudis were willing to sell oil at a price well below the Iranians. By Scowcroft's interpretation at least, the shah may have overplayed his hand regardless of how egregious the price increases in military technology.

The increasing anomy toward the role of the shah within the Pentagon can be further characterized by the sense that many DOD officials had in dealing with Iran regarding the "[T]he shah's interest in the removal of both the US and Soviet military presence from the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean areas". Arguably the US, according to the Pentagon, had three options: to continue the present policy, to redress the concerns and "seek an overall balance in US-Iranian relations", or to seek limited involvement with Iran in the future.[28]

Shifting Priorities and 'the good Oriental'

By the end of Ford's tenure as President in 1977, many of the cornerstones of the Nixon Doctrine appeared to be under threat. Of the most importance to US-Iran

[27]MEMORANDUM, Brent Scowcroft to Gerald Ford, Presidential Country Files for the Middle East and South Asia, Box 12, folder 1: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

[28] LETTER, James A. Schlesinger to Gerald R. Ford, Presidential Country Files for the Middle East and South Asia, Box 12, folder 1: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

relations were two key aspects: the nuclear relationship and the administration's increasingly negative opinion toward Iran, which affected the willingness of the American public to support long term arms sales.

The intense nuclear cooperation and promotion throughout much of Ford's administration had finally come to naught after an effective veto by Ford on October 28, 1976. He declared openly that not only should the US seek to cease providing spent fuel rods to Iran for processing, they should also seek to limit any transmission to Iran of technological expertise or material. Kissinger, having visited Iran in August of 1976 in a last-ditch attempt to settle the deal, had failed to save a nuclear agreement.

Within Iran, the shah increasingly resorted to harsh and egregious methods to maintain control, including torture, imprisonment without cause, and crackdowns on public dissent. There was somewhat of an attempt by the shah to relinquish some modicum of power in the final days of the Ford administration. The shah began to recognize the domestic guerillas were increasingly willing to sacrifice themselves to bring down his regime. Following this realization, the shah moved to take control of the criticism of his regime and pass it on to the United States. "In recent months the shah has permitted unusually severe criticisms of the United States in Iranian media. He has lent his own name to sweeping charges against the U.S., raising public questions about the bases of the alliance and U.S. reliability."[29] While this may have amplified an already negative opinion of the United States within Iran, it did little to assuage public anger toward the harsh repression of the shah's regime.

[29] U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, "Iranian Outlook." May 4, 1976, report no. 411. Quoted in Bill, James A. (1989) *The eagle and the lion: The tragedy of American-Iranian relations*. Yale University Press.

US anger at the Ford administration's position towards Iran was no less extreme. Characterizing the mood within the administration, Kissinger argued to Ford that there was a "vicious campaign" going on internally. "It couldn't be a worse time. Treasury and Defense are going after the shah. Simon is going around saying that the shah is dangerous and shouldn't have exotic weapons."[30] Outside the administration the tone was no better. Senator Hubert Humphrey, chair of the Foreign Assistance Subcommittee of the Foreign Relations Committee, characterized the arms sales under Nixon and Ford as being "totally out of control" and that a future relationship between the two governments would more than likely be dramatically altered under a Democratic Presidency. Humphrey, in a report which was made public, argued that Nixon and Ford, in selling arms to Iran had "ignored the substantial far-reaching foreign policy implications which result from our deep involvement in sales, training and logistical supply programs with Iran" (Humphrey, 1976 Quoted in Alvandi, 2014).

Conclusion: When 'Good Orientals' Go Bad

The 'good Oriental' was beginning to falter as the linchpin of US foreign policy in the Middle East. Gone were the days of the Johnson administration's balanced approach to domestic reform paired with military sales. The abandonment of the balance taken by Nixon administration had created a Pahlavi regime armed to the teeth but rotten to the core. Attempts by the Ford administration to moderate the Iranian position through a resistance to full co-production initiatives and soft pedaling the nuclear program had not stabilized the shah's regime nor protected him from the

[30] MEMORANDUM, Henry Kissinger to Gerald R. Ford, August 8, 1976, National Security File, Trip and Breifing Books and Cable HAK, Box 40, Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Quoted in Alvandi, Roham. "Nixon, Kissinger, and the Shah: The Origins of Iranian Primacy in the Persian Gulf*." *Diplomatic History* 36.2 (2012): 337-372.

impressions of his people as a supporter of a harsh and repressive order. The shah had outlived his usefulness; he was no longer willing to play the subordinate position in domestic politics, as revealed by his attempts to denigrate the US domestically to save his political livelihood.

What was to come next would define much of the modern relationship between the United States and Iran. The Islamic Revolution, led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and others built in the wake of the departing Ford administration. The dissidents would only gain in power and ultimately seize control under Jimmy Carter. While the easy characterization of the political order under Carter and later Reagan might be a regime out of control and vastly apart from American interests and designs, the following chapters tell a far more complicated story. The Carter administration played a far larger role, with a host of new 'good Orientals' the US attempted to influence and control in constructing a new, if more tempestuous, Middle East order. Ronald Reagan's Iranian foreign policy is even more complex and defies the easy characterization of two governments, the US and Iran, entirely apart. Considerable business was transacted between Reagan and Khomeini, indeed, far more than is routinely recognized.

CHAPTER 6
SECURITY, FOREIGN POLICY, AND IDEATIONAL CONSTRUCTION WITHIN THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION

Introduction

As stated previously in Chapters Two, Three, and Four, the common theme I will be arguing is based upon Said's *Orientalism* (1978) and the adaptation of this policy to the conception of what the Oriental is capable. For Nixon, the shah became the 'good Oriental'; as Nixon commented, the "only one we have over there", and the same policy, with some small modifications in personal style, can be said of Gerald Ford. I will argue in this piece that the administration of Jimmy Carter preceded along much the same path. Carter and several key members of his Administration including Chief of Staff Hamilton Jordan, United States Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, Secretary of State Cy Vance, Ambassador to Iran William Sullivan, General Dutch Huyser, and others adopted and adapted these Orientalist thought structures in viewing the administration of the shah of Iran specifically and the Iranian people more generally.

Many of the same issues that greeted Ford upon his ascension to the White House greeted Carter upon his inauguration and throughout his campaign. The three problems that tormented Ford were the issues of military armaments, Iran's domestic nuclear enrichment, but the most pressing, and what will be dealt with in the most detail here, the overall stability of the Pahlavi regime. Carter added a fourth aspect to this milieu of foreign policy issues; human rights. Carter has received simultaneously both accolades and condemnation for his human rights advocacy with the shah (Keddie 2003). This is because the shah broadly resisted the attempt by Carter to re-stabilize the Pahlavi Regime. These issues will be included in my discussion of the final days of the Pahlavi Regime, and we will see how these issues played into the foreign policy

outlook of Carter and his team. We will see a surprising amount of continuity with previous administrations and some points of departure that Carter and his team was forced to take on by issues both domestic and international.

It should be noted that while my examinations of other Presidents utilized almost exclusively documents from each President's personal libraries, Carter's administration is marked by the inclusion of many of his personal diary entries. Jimmy Carter rigorously documented his day-to-day struggles with foreign policy issues. While voice recordings could be depended upon within the Nixon Administration, after the Watergate scandal the policy of recording telephone calls and personal meetings came to an end. To gain the vantage point needed to examine foreign policy as it was constructed internally within the White House, Carter's personal diaries are invaluable.

The first issue that Carter notes in his diaries regarding American Foreign Policy toward Iran occurs on July 30, 1977. After having received an angry letter from the shah, something that would have been all too familiar to Gerald Ford, over a delay in approval of Airborne Warning and Control Systems (AWACs) by Congress, the shah threatened to cancel all further fighter jet purchases from the United States. Carter writes, "I don't care if he buys them or not" (Carter, 2010: 75). And thus, we see a new upset in the relationship between the shah and the US administration. For Johnson, perhaps more than Nixon and Ford, the balance between military and domestic spending for Iran was to be prized, protected, and maintained. By 1977, however, the pipeline seemed to be closing off. Carter was a President who was seemingly unwilling to be blackmailed and leveraged by the shah, in essence the subordinate who was clearly rising above his station.

This did not mean that Carter sought a complete departure from the previous administrations in dealing with the Middle East. Carter kept fairly cordial relations with the previous president and his foreign policy advisory team. Signature issues like the Panama Canal Treaty, a policy that would have allowed for the people of Panama to nationalize the Canal Zone and remove it from US control, was an issue area the Ford administration participated in as well. In a meeting with Henry Kissinger on August 15, 1977, Carter relates that he had "an enjoyable lunch with Henry Kissinger and talked about the Panama Canal, mostly about the Middle East…" an area where Kissinger clearly considered himself an expert. Knowing how thoroughly Kissinger respected the shah as a protective figure for US interests in the region, one is left a little curious about how much the Carter administration would deviate from the preexisting strategies of Nixon and Ford.

This continuity between Carter and his presidential forebears can be found in the visit by the shah and his wife Farah on November 15, 1977. Presaging the conflict that was to come during the 1979 Islamic Revolution, a "serious clash" between protesters against and for the Shah ensued around the White House (Carter, 2010: 135). To disperse the crowd the police fired tear gas canisters, the effect of which Carter described as "*really* rough" (Carter, 2010: 135, emphasis his). He goes on to describe that "Most of the Press, the shah, the two wives, and all the visitors had to break out handkerchiefs to control the tears" (Carter, 2010: 135). In a later meeting between the two leaders, the shah again mentioned the tensions between Arab nations and Iran, explaining to Carter that the "Baaths, the militants, still want to evolve an Arab empire and threaten him and Israel" (Carter, 2010: 135, emphasis his).

At dinner later that evening Empress Farah and the shah were finally put at ease with Carter's State dinner and surrounding accoutrement. The shah and Empress Farah presented an elaborate tapestry to Carter of George Washington and the presidential seal, which included "160 tiny little knots per square centimeter…it's a really great gift to commemorate our bicentennial" (Carter, 2010: 135).Carter notes that the shah was incredibly proud of the innovations his regime had accomplished, arguing that "in my opinion, (he) has done an exceptional job. Now, though, he's strong enough to do some overt things on the human rights issue" (Carter, 2010: 136, emphasis mine).

The talks between Carter and the shah reveal the differences and similarities between the Carter White House and its previous occupants. The following day Carter held a meeting with the shah that would have been entirely routine during the Ford or Nixon administrations, wherein they discussed "the sale of nuclear reactors to Iran", two of which had already been purchased from the Germans and two others from France (Carter, 2010: 136). Unlike Nixon or Ford, Carter sequestered the shah in his private office for another meeting where they talked "about the human rights issue. He was quite embarrassed but shared (his) concerns" (Carter, 2010: 136, emphasis mine). Carter notes afterward, in his contemporary reflections which dot the book like penitent confessions, "*Unfortunately, his (the shah's) secret police, SAVAK, had recently fired into a crowd of demonstrators, killing a large number. It seems in retrospect, that this was the beginning of his downfall"* (Carter, 2010: 135, italics his, emphasis mine).

On December 31, 1977 Jimmy Carter and his wife Rosalynn visited Tehran and enjoyed a "delightful" banquet at the shah's invitation (Carter, 2010: 156). There was also time to "discuss the Middle East and nuclear power affairs…" with the shah and a

venue for wining and dining with King Hussein of Jordan. Carter famously delivered a toast at the royal banquet, far removed from the street protests and discord below, that "*Iran, because of the great leadership of the shah, is an island of stability in one of the more troubled areas of the world"* (Carter, 2010: 156, emphasis his). Carter relates in his contemporary reflections that "*Understandably, this was derided when the shah was overthrown thirteen months later"* (Carter, 2010: 156, emphasis his). The shah was still, it seemed, the 'good Oriental", to be maintained and supported regardless of his human rights transgressions. The strategic utility of the shah's rule was still more important than any seeming human rights issues that the shah may have.

In 1977 and 1978 the shah engaged in a number of polies that can be held responsible for the growing unrest within his country: the personal and governmental extravagance of the Pahlavi Regime, the failure to moderate and cultivate a loyal base within the Shi'a religious establishment, and repressive policies directed toward the Mojahedin guerilla forces, the Feda'iyan, and the Communist Tudeh Party, as well as other leftist groups. As noted in Chapter Three, during the extravagance of the twenty five hundred year anniversary celebration at Persepolis in October 1971, an extravagant party where leaders from all over the world were entertained, massive amounts of capital ($17 million) were devoted to promoting the concept of the Pahlavi dynasty as timeless.

Many professionals and intellectuals, taking the lead from Carter's stated interest in expanding the realm of human rights within Iran, sought to drive a wedge between manifest American support and the apparent abuses of the Pahlavi regime (Keddie, 2006: 215). Activities, protests, and publications were circulated in secret in an attempt

to embarrass the shah internationally and promote more moderate governance domestically. Groups like Amnesty International and the International Commission of Jurists brought international condemnation of the shah's harsh policies and security strategies, which included incarceration without trial, rape, and torture (Keddie, 2006: 218-220).

This was paired with intense domestic pressure for reform and relief on an increasingly shrinking and contested working and middle class. While the shah's industrial policies created the space for factory jobs and industrial labor, the mid-level bazarri classes were overtly attacked for their alliance with the religious clergy. As most bazaars were located near or around the mosque, and most income from these businesses was broadly untaxable, the shah saw the impact of the bazaar class as fundamentally deleterious to his interests (Keddie, 2006: 230-235). By 1978, a general worker's strike had paralyzed all industrial cities and ports within Iran as workers and bazaaris collectively protested the shah's increasing penetration into the economy. As the foremost historian on Iran, Nikki R. Keddie, argues, "overcentralization in Tehran and a few large cities, too many automobiles and luxury imports, too much dependence on foreigners, and above all the growing income-distribution disparity—were fed by the government's own policies (Keddie, 2006: 161).

Two groups which characterized the most dynamic and violent aspects of this new activism were the Mojahedin and the Feda'iyan. Different demographic backgrounds explain the split in the overarching policies and strategies of each group. The Mojahedin were drawn mainly from the bazaar and ulama classes, and their issues with the shah grew from his persecution of their parent's income base being threatened

by bazaar closures and demolitions (Keddie, 2006: 221). The Feda'iyan were drawn mainly from the middle class workers who were disadvantaged by the importation of foreign goods. Thus, there tended to be a religious character to most of the policies and reforms envisioned by the Mojahedin and socialist and leftwing political reforms suggested by the Fed'iyan. Large demonstrations, acts of terrorism, and worker's strikes were the primary tactics shared by both groups.

While at the banquet Carter could keep himself above the fray now engulfing Iran in terms of student, religious, and Communist protests (Keddie, 2006: 215). The issues surrounding the shah's tenuous hold on power finally hit home. Carter relates on October 14, 1978 that his son James Earl 'Chip' Carter "was attacked yesterday on a Texas college campus by Iranian students…The Iranian students are getting out of hand in some cases. They are helping the shah more than they hurt him" (Carter, 2010: 252). In his contemporary reflections Carter relates that "*opposition to the shah was growing rapidly among young militants…a small minority (of anti-shah) protestors were very vocal and took advantage of our legal freedoms to demonstrate sometimes violently*" (Carter, 2010: 252, italics his, emphasis mine).

Taking advantage of the liberal nature of the United States to protest a government actively supported financially, technologically, and militarily by the United States is something to be venerated within the U.S. context, not derided, and yet when it seemed to affect Carter personally he seems to discard the human rights concepts he supposedly held so dear. This an interesting ideological turn for the President venerated by some as the one who first brings the human rights discourse into Iranian foreign policy and paints Carter with the same Orientalist brush as the rest of his presidential

forerunners. Carter, thus, is not so different from those he followed in their view toward Iran, the shah still maintained the "island of stability" and was due the protection of the United States notwithstanding his domestic abuses (Carter, 2010: 152). He was the 'good Oriental' that understood his country and understood his people, even for Carter beyond reproach.

Had Carter not been aware of the substantial problems facing the shah's rule within Iran, one might be willing to give him the benefit of the doubt as he constructed his foreign policy obligations and goals. However, if Carter was well aware of the issues within the shah's context than there should have been no substantial shock or dilemma in Carter's approach. On October 25, 1978, the CIA briefed the President on the economic and political peril of the Pahlavi regime. "He (the shah) has alienated powerful groups: the right-wing religious leaders, who don't want any changes; the radical left, some of whom are communists; and the new middle class in Iran, who are wealthy but have no voice in the government" (Carter, 2010: 255, emphasis mine). Carter would later claim that he did not understand the tectonic forces ripping the Iranian political firmament apart. When he was charged by the press and the American public of "losing Iran", his own diary entries bely the truth of his personal knowledge of the shah's peril;[1] in a diary entry on October 26, Carter notes that "Iran is running into serious trouble because of strikes preventing oil to foreign markets…", noting darkly that, "The shah will have to take action soon." (Carter, 2010: 255).

[1] LETTER; Hamilton Jordan to President Jimmy Carter, November 18, 1979; Office of the Chief of Staff, Hamilton Jordan's Confidential Files, Iran 11/79, Box 34b; Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum, Atlanta, GA.

One entry that particularly characterizes Carter's outlook on the Middle East and foreigners in general can be found in an entry relating a meeting between King Hassan of Morocco and Carter on November 14 of 1978. King Hassan was being given a White House tour by Carter when they stopped by his mother's room on the second floor of the White House. Lillian Gordy Carter, who had recently been to Morocco, said

> she smelled all twenty-one types of perfume in the dressing room where she stayed. . . .He (King Hassan) offered to give her some more perfume, and she said no. Mother laughed and said, "You damn foreigners are all alike." He laughed also, put his arms around Mother, and gave her a kiss. I doubt the king's been called a "damn foreigner" before, and I don't know anyone else who could get away with it.

Accepting that this is mean to be a charming interlude of old American genteel behavior versus the broader world of foreign policy and international society, one might forgive Carter's mother her comments and simply brush them off as nothing more than a bizarre interaction between two very different people. If one looks at this as a larger indicator of dominate and subordinate status one can find much to comment upon.

First, Carter's mother could of course make the comment and 'get away with it'; it would have been deeply uncouth for the King, despite his status and royal standing, to represent that gravitas within the Carter White House. He is an Oriental, after all, and must put up with whatever happens regardless of the incredulity of Carter's mother's response. Second, if one views this in terms of Carter's larger vision of the Middle East and North Africa we can see a subtle line of disrespect running counter to any allies other than those he holds most dear, specifically Israel and Iran. Would the same forbearance have been granted in those cases? History is left with the counterfactual, but it is an interesting question to be pondered.

Finally, how Carter dealt with this indulgence and how the King responded to this lack of respect is as a whole highly illuminating. King Hassan is a guest, and essentially a vassal of the United States, hence any humiliation or embarrassment suffered must be dealt with in time. To use Carter's words, "Morocco is still in many instances waiting to be tapped. And its phosphate reserves, its oil reserves, oil shale and uranium reserves, and the great agricultural capability of his country and the human resources are now being developed in a very constructive way…"[2] Morocco is a place other than the United States with a 'good Oriental' or its own. But it is still a place in want of being 'tapped'; it is still a place to be taken advantage of and used to the express will of the leading state, the United States of America.

By November 20, 1978 it seemed that the shah's regime was quickly unravelling. This is still one year away from the November 4, 1979 hostage taking that would fundamentally change the relationship between the United States and Iran. "We are concerned about the shah's courage and forcefulness, and he seems excessively isolated" (Carter, 2010: 258). On November 21 Carter relates that "His ambassador told me there was no concept the shah had given the Iranian people of what he could accomplish. He had no PR program, no advisors to prepare such an effort, and no political structure to succeed if and when elections were held" (Carter, 2010: 261).

If the Iranian populace were simply better informed of all the shah could do, if the shah, in a sense, was marketed better to the Iranian people, they would have to understand that he had what was best in hand for his people. It was not really for them

[2] Carter, J. (1981). *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Jimmy Carter, 1980-1981*. Best Books on.

to judge the shah, it was not for them to contest the shah's reign, it was merely for 'those people' to succumb to and support the power that was placed over them in a productive, pro-United States fashion.

This is the central issue at the heart of Orientalism, that the Western leader knows the Iranians, and their situation, better than they know it themselves. Said relates this concept using the words of Edward James Balfour in his testimony to parliament on June 13, 1910, on the question of British domination of Egypt:

> the agitator [who] wishes to raise difficulties' than the good native who overlooks the 'difficulties' of foreign domination. And so having settled the ethical problems, Balfour turns at last to the practical ones. 'If it is our business to govern, with or without the real and genuine memory of all the loss of which he relieved the population. . . .and no vivid imagination all the benefits which we have given to them; if that is our duty, how is it to be performed? (Balfour, 1910, Cited in Said, 2003 [1978]: 33)

Carter is knowingly or unknowingly falling into the same ideological trap that Balfour fell into. This Orientalist ideological trap leaves no possibility for legitimate opposition to the designs of the controlling foreign power. For Carter this was dealt with through an intermediary, the shah, but the intent and design of the foreign occupation was no less deleterious to the population of Iran. As Carter notes himself, SAVAK had already fired into a crowd of demonstrators, killing 'quite a large number'. Even in Carter's contemporary reflections on the shah's regime in 1978, he notes

> We were in an increasing quandary with respect to the shah. He had been a dependable ally of the six presidents, and the revolutionary forces were completely unpredictable. Instead of reaching out to his people and strengthening his control of the governmental agencies, he was becoming more isolated, oppressive and ineffective. After much thought and discussion, I decided to give him as much support as possible without directly interfering in the internal affairs of Iran. (Carter, 2010: 261, emphasis his)

Whether Carter understood it or not his actions were directly interfering in the internal affairs of Iran. His policies of unilateral and unwavering support were straightforwardly leading to the regime's carte blanche when it came to internal security matters, and there was no separation between the two; protestors in the United States that attacked his son Chip in Texas, or protestors who had taken to the streets to oppose the shah's rule.

Stability Above All

Despite the best intentions and human rights blandishments the Carter administration was simply not capable of escaping the ideological confines that Orientalism provided. On December 2, 1978 he watched with shock and consternation as the rising power of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini began "calling for massive bloodshed" in Iran (Carter, 2010: 261). Crowds gathered for the holy days that began that Sunday and massive protests against the shah's rule commenced. Despite a vicious crackdown by the shah's security forces, the population appeared, even at this early time, to be in a significant state of political and religious turmoil (Keddie, 2006: 217).

By February 4, 1979 the time for human rights blandishments seemed to be at an end; if they were ever to be taken seriously as a cornerstone of American Foreign Policy in the first place. General Dutch Huyser related privately to President Jimmy Carter the substantial differences between his position concerning Iran with Ambassador Sullivan. General Huyser indicated that "he and Sullivan read the same dispatches, but Sullivan thought we ought to permit Khomeini to take over, that it would lead to democracy" (Carter, 2010: 288). Huyser disagreed; he believe that Iran would turn to communism, an odd thought given the recent invasion of Iran by the Russians from August 25

through September 17 of 1941. Why would one imagine that the Iranians would give over their domestic rule to Soviet authorities in 1979? Sullivan for Carter had "almost been disloyal" and Carter had sought to have him removed if he continued to support Khomeini's attempt to take power (Carter, 2010: 281).

Carter felt an incessant tension between his dictates surrounding foreign policy and his intermediaries in the State Department. In his contemporary reflections Carter notes that "*It was a rare occasion when I received an innovative and helpful suggestion from the State Department when I was President. The driving forces that shaped our foreign policy originated mostly in the White House and occasionally from the Department of Defense"* (Carter, 2010: 281). Cy Vance was at the center of the controversy; he had often advocated restraint and diplomacy over manifest support of the shah and continued military authority. On February 6, 1979, Carter met with "Cy's people, I laid down the law down to them as strong as I could…if I had another outbreak of misinformation, distortions, and self-serving newspaper leaks…I was going to direct Cy to discharge the leaders who were responsible" (Carter, 2010: 281).

While Carter's own State Department was the target of apparent widespread suspicion and concern, this did not apparently extend to the previous administration. In a meeting with Henry Kissinger on February the 7th 1979, Carter relates the following passage:

> I met with Henry Kissinger privately, and we had a good discussion. . . . On Iran he said the shah feels betrayed. He has some serious thoughts about Ambassador Sullivan. He said we only have two options: either a military coup or another Libya or Algeria. He said in a time of revolution, force was absolutely necessary; compromise was permissible only before or after a crisis.

We do not know how completely Carter absorbed the words of Kissinger, nor can we know whether the lack of compromise with the shah's domestic foes was a direct off-shoot of manifest and unequivocal United States support for Iranian goals. We can however conjecture that a meeting Carter described, in retrospect, as a 'good' one can only come after having received advice he had at least been willing to listen to, if not wholeheartedly support. On February 10-12 Carter notes with some approval that Khomeini has moved from France to his new base of operations in the Iranian city of Qom, and that General Philip C. Gast maintained security for the United States embassy in Tehran (Carter, 2010: 290-1). That Carter was already concerned with security possibilities nine months in advance of the hostage crisis should give pause to anyone who conjectures that Carter 'simply did not know' how bad things had gotten in Iran.

On February 14, 1979, as tensions continued to mount in Tehran and Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini was clearly gaining strength, Carter responded to a reporter, "difficult situation with our Iranian embassy. . ." and "sent some forces for its protection. Two marines were slightly wounded" (Carter, 2010: 291). In light of the willingness to accept help from Khomeini, one might view somewhat askance the Carter Administration's goals in the region and in Iran more generally. Here taking Carter's own words are an instructive example of how he viewed American Foreign Policy strategy and options.

In a discussion with Mexican President Jose Lopez Portrillo, meeting on the same day as the above diary entry, Portrillo argued that the United States had created a deleterious and aggressive sphere within Central America. He advised that from the

viewpoint of a developing nation it made more sense to follow the path of Cuba or for Central America more broadly to have become a federation as Mexico had done. In his words, "the free world had neglected its area of influence, whereas Soviet Countries have taken care of them" (Carter, 2010: 293). In response Carter argued that, "the United States had a clear but complicated policy. Stability was important to us; instability was important to the Communist nations…The U.S. was the strongest nation, and we enhanced strength by close ties to allies, which were being made even more secure" (Carter, 2010: 292). This is perhaps the most illustrative statement of U.S. foreign policy to date: The US has allies, we are made stronger by those alliances, and if those allies prove to be largely deleterious to the lives of the people they rule, as many Central American governments reportedly were, we will continue to support those alliances because stability for the United States is more important, even given the potentially damaging ramifications of those policies, than the potential for instability.

Given the Carter administration's stance on Iran, the above statement should come as no surprise. This is the policy of the United States in black and white, stability over instability, the status quo over change, and finally, the allies one has are the allies one maintains in the pursuit of that stability. This leaves the United States somewhat blind to the possibilities of change within its midst, and it also leaves the US vulnerable to allegations that it will promote the interests of dictators over the freedoms of its people.

Fittingly, Carter finishes the above passage with an almost non sequitur given the established policy above. Carter argues to Portrillo that, "In Latin America we are treating nations for the first time as individuals ad as equals, working for peace, human

rights, democracy" (Carter, 2010: 293). Citing the Panama Canal Treaty, which as stated before called for the repatriation of the Canal Zone to the people of Panama, notably created by the United States when it was cleaved off of Costa Rica during the administration of Theodore Roosevelt, Carter was intimating that the U.S. was acting responsibly and kindly toward the people of Latin America. Perhaps only the US could, with a straight face, call this an act of charity, and as President Manuel Noriega would find out later, this charity was only skin deep.

On February 27, 1979 the revolutionary government of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini sent a representative to the United States embassy to "pledge increased friendship and cooperation, and to make sure that we were supporting a stable government in Iran. "We gave him that assurance" (Carter, 2010: 296). Carter's contemporary reflections paint the situation in this way:

> My decision at the time was to recognize the revolutionary government as legitimate and to exchange diplomatic emissaries. There were more than eight thousand American citizens living and working in Iran, and, as would soon become known throughout the world we had a complement of diplomats and staff in our Tehran embassy. I have always believed that the ayatollah intended to honor these mutual commitments and was taken by surprise when, nine months later, young militants acted independently by seizing the American embassy and holding hostages. (Carter, 2010: 296, italics his)

Was this an attempt by Carter to motivate and appreciate the whims of the Iranian people? Was it an attempt to diffuse a potentially problematic revolutionary situation in Iran? Or was this still playing for stability, looking for another 'good Oriental' to shoulder the burden of managing the Iranian people in lieu of a popular referendum, political redress, or potential democratic elections? At the time Khomeini was hardly the only candidate for political office, nor was he the standard bearer for the revolution as a whole (Keddie, 2006: 226). It would seem that Khomeini could provide a transition to

single party rule for the Iranian population, leaving no room for a potential schism toward communism. In light of the Cold War this is perhaps the most charitable reading of Carter's pro-Khomeini leanings. This move to recognize the possibility of a revolutionary character with stable leadership rather than one that more unpredictable, such as the student protestors, or leftist leadership (Keddie, 2006: 235).

The stability above all characteristic of United States Foreign Policy is then one that gives way both to religious and autocratic impulses well before it allows for the possibility of true revolutionary intent. The problems with this policy seem to have been made evident nine months later, which Carter acknowledges in his contemporary reflections, in the form of a revolution spearheaded by true radicals, bent upon the elimination of all foreign influence.

By March 14 events appeared to be overtaking the Carter Administration's ability to handle them. The shah's continuing battle with lymphatic cancer had taken a dramatic turn for the worse and it was no longer tenable for the shah to remain in Iran while his medical state continued to deteriorate. Carter's support for the shah could not overcome the image of an unpopular leader fleeing power for the warm embrace of a well-worn ally. Carter advised State Secretary Cyrus Vance that he was not to give approval for the shah to depart for the US. Carter indicated, through Vance, that while the U.S. was not an option there were possibilities in Latin America, Israel, or Canada (Carter, 2010: 305).

The shah had sought refuge first in Egypt and then in Morocco, where on March 15 King Hassan had declared his residency untenable, leaving the shah somewhat in a lurch and compelling his flight. The shah found temporary sanctuary in the Bahamas on

March 30. Even former President Gerald Ford called to personally counsel Carter on allowing the shah to immigrate to the United States for medical care, on April 11, 1979. Carter responded that “this was a problem, with potential kidnapping of American diplomats and Iranians, and also because we wanted to [control] of our satellite observation sites in northern Iran” (Carter, 2010: 305). By October 20 of 1979, President Carter advised National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski to admit the shah for medical treatment in New York, though not before getting ‘permission’ from Prime Minister Mehdi Barzargan and Foreign Minister Ebrahim Yazdi that the American embassy could be effectively protected from hostile activities and as long as the shah restricted himself from making any political statements in public (Carter, 2010: 364, 367).

At the same time Carter’s success in negotiating the Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty (formalized in the Camp David Accords signed March 26, 1979) had formally vetted his foreign policy credentials for outside observers. Carter may have felt at odds or increasingly alienated from his own foreign policy team within the State Department, in the form of tensions with Cyrus Vance, his Secretary of State. Henry Kissinger, however, a figure that held substantial prominence in the Nixon and Ford Administrations, as was noted in Chapters Three and Four, phoned Carter to congratulate him on his recent successes, noting, as described by Carter, “I was working him out of his career of criticizing the government because I was not leaving him much to criticize” (Carter, 2010: 335).

As Nixon and Ford had before him, Carter had to deal with a substantial increase in oil prices. From December of 1978 to June of 1979 oil prices had risen by 60% which

led to a subsequent drop in GDP growth by 2.5% and cost an estimated eight hundred thousand jobs (Carter, 2010: 336). Carter reflected contemporarily that while he strongly condemned the move by OPEC there was little he could actually do to increase supplies. The ability of Western nations to aggressively assert authority over foreign nations was limited by the overt dependence of most industrialized on the import of foreign oil reserves (Carter, 2010: 336). The significant impact that oil reductions would have on the economy of the United States were nothing compared to the psychological effects to come as the Iranian Revolution rolled inexorably toward the U.S.

The Hostage Taking and its Aftermath

Perhaps the most consequential political and domestic movement for relations between the United States and Iran came on November 4, 1979 with the taking of United States diplomatic staff as hostages in the United States embassy. Carter:

> spent hours on the phone talking to political leaders around the nation, but early in the morning was quite disturbed to learn that [Iranian] students with the [subsequent] encouragement of Khomeini had taken over our embassy and captured fifty or sixty people. Without the protection provided by the host government, it's almost impossible to do anything if one's people are taken. (Carter, 2010: 367)

Later entries reveal Carter's utter revulsion toward a 'good Oriental' gone bad. On November 5, 1979 Carter pens "The students are still holding our people with the public approval of that idiot Khomeini" (Carter, 2010: 368). Public approval is finally drawn into the lens of Carter but note, only in a deleterious way. These people, as if written by Balfour himself, were ungrateful in the extreme; they had taken hostages in clear defiance of international and customary law, they had moved against the United States in a completely unprovoked fashion.

Consider the blinders of Orientalism in full effect. When Jimmy Carter, Rosalyn Carter, the shah Reza Pahlavi and Empress Farah had inhaled tear gas during the November 15, 1977 visit to the United States; when Chip Carter had been assaulted on October 14, 1978; when Khomeini himself had secured the US embassy against protest and assault on February 14, 1979 the message of substantial international and domestic unrest was unclear to Carter. Khomeini offered support for Carter on February 27, 1979, offering stable governance because that is what the United States desired more than anything. More than popular rule, more than popular support, more in fact than the popular force of governance which may lead to something better than stability, popular opposition, political redress, and yes, if necessary popular revolution. If the shah played the role of the 'good Oriental' except when negotiating for higher oil revenues, Khomeini played the role of the 'good Oriental' until it no longer benefited him to do so. Until, having reached his zenith of power, it allowed him to take the very reigns once held by US interests.

By November 6, 1979, attempts by the United States to pressure Prime Minister Bazargan and Foreign Minister Yazdi government into the release of hostages resulted in their resignation. "Khomeini would not permit the action and continued to encourage the students to keep the hostages" (Carter, 2010: 368). Carter was obsessed with the issue, as one might expect, "I spent most of the day every spare moment, trying to decide what to do about Iran" (Carter, 2010: 368); arguing further that, "It's almost impossible to deal with a crazy man, except that he does have religious beliefs and the world of Islam will be damaged if a fanatic like him should commit murder in the name of religion against sixty innocent people" (Carter, 2010: 305).

The issue of Khomeini's sanity can be disputed somewhat. The growth of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini from exiled religious leader to political powerhouse within Iranian domestic politics can be charted through manipulation of revolutionary politics and power-mongering (Keddie, 2006: 241). His rule was marked by the broad abandonment of most of the 'campaign promises' made in the promotion of the revolution. The initial pitch by Khomeini in 1978 and 1979 included a package of social reforms and freedoms considered to be broadly out of keeping with the shah's policies. Liberal and leftwing component groups within the opposition believed Khomeini and other clerics within his ranks would not rule directly. Khomeini's chief governing work *Velayat-e faqih* or "guardianship of the jurisprudent" was kept out of domestic Iranian circulation (Keddie, 2006: 240). This allowed for Khomeini to rely mainly upon populist calls for opposition, leaving the particulars of how governance would be instantiated once the revolution had come. Perhaps, it could be argued, had those reforms been offered and domestic governance been liberalized under the Bazargan government Khomeini himself would not have been so successful at duping the Iranian population into carrying out his consolidation of power.

As for the hostage taking on November 4, 1979, the view of most Iranians on the street was that the United States was coordinating policy with the shah, his intelligence apparatus and his domestic security force (SAVAK) through the American embassy. Khomeini was by no means an innocent; his dramatic moves to consolidate power between 1979 and 1983 marked his reign as religious shah, imposing clerical authority effectively in lieu of imperial authority. The Bazargan government had no real power when it came to street level enforcement (Fisk, 2005: 111). Had the Carter

administration been capable of recognizing that the people of Iran were capable of wielding as much power as an individual within Iran, perhaps, once again, the tide of the revolution could have been turned toward a different outcome.

Carter had little recourse. If Khomeini was unwilling to release hostages of his own accord than all that Carter could do was attempt to negotiate through intermediaries and impose economic pain on the new revolutionary government. In this regard the Carter Administration appealed to the Syrians, the Turks, the Pakistanis, the Libyans, the Algerians, even the Palestinian Liberation Organization, and secretly the Cubans, in hopes of gaining the release of the hostages (Carter, 2010: 371). Finally Carter even appealed to the Pope to plead the American case to Khomeini.

Khomeini allowed the Swiss and Algerian delegations to meet with the kidnapped embassy staff, and on November 16 sixteen American hostages were released, but more trouble was brewing throughout the region. On November 21, fifteen hundred Shiites attacked and occupied the Grand Mosque in Mecca, burning and looting the holy site (Carter, 2010: 371). Khomeini fueled the conflict and excused the mob by arguing publically that “it is not inconceivable that the United States and Zionists are to blame for the occupation of the mosque in Mecca” (Carter, 2010: 371).

Carter’s response was meditative and controlled. He threatened economic sanctions and a full military response “in direct retaliatory action” if the hostages were harmed or tried by Iranian authorities (Carter, 2010: 372). On November 23, 1979, Cy Vance was dispatched to inform U.S. allies that there recent intransigence to back the United States in its attempts to pressure the Khomeini regime economically would be dealt with summarily; “Japan, France, Germany, and Great Britain” were informed that

commerce with the United States might be put at risk if they did not coordinate with economic sanctions (Carter, 2010: 372).

At the same time Carter and Kissinger had finally reached a point of departure, though apparently not permanently. Kissinger, who as previously noted had little to criticize with the Carter Administration, now had a potent point of contention. Carter relates, “Kissinger, who has made a personal crusade of getting the shah to the U.S., is trying to force us to ask the shah to leave. We all agreed that Kissinger is responsible and must be dealt with in some way” (Carter, 2010: 372). Reflecting on the impact of Kissinger’s notable defection later, Carter admitted that while they disagreed with Kissinger’s public pressure to release the shah, the administration as a whole, “respected his knowledge of international affairs, his experience, and his sound judgment…Henry gave me very helpful support during some of the most crucial times, and I continue to value his wisdom and advice” (Carter, 2010: 372-3).

The rifts between the State Department and the White House also began to show in light of the hostage crisis. On November 27, 1979, in response to the release of hostages, and in an attempt to galvanize global opinion against the Khomeini regime, Carter ordered the release of hostage testimony that indicated brutal treatment of American hostages under Iranian authority in the embassy. The release through White House Press Secretary Jody Powell revealed that the hostages “had been threatened with loaded guns, been kept bound, not let to speak a single word, not let go outside, bathe or change clothes” (Carter, 2010: 373). This stood in stark contrast to an ABC

news report on November 11, 1979 that painted the hostage taking as a far more cordial and pacific affair wherein hostages were treated with respect and nonviolence.[3]

Upon reading the Associated Press ticker, Cy Vance threatened to resign, claiming that Carter was willing to "put our nation's honor above the hostages' release" (Carter, 2010: 373). Carter does go on to note that "(t)his was in effect true, but what I said was there were some things we could do in order to get the hostages released" (Carter, 2010: 373). Reflecting upon the incident later, and the various demands made by Iran: nominally that the shah be turned over to face trial in Iran, that reparations be paid to the Iranian people for damages to their property and persons, and that the United States should make a public apology for their activities within Iran and their support of the shah; Carter argues that he would have never given in to any of the demands the Iranians made (Carter, 2010: 373).

In the subsequent days and months to follow there was substantial discord and negotiation around the return of the American embassy staff held hostage by student protestors. All the while Carter was attempting to walk a fine line. First, Carter attempted to preserve lines of communication, which could be used to promote the release of the hostages held in Iran. This process was spearheaded by Cy Vance and others within the Department. Second, secret dispatches were made to anti-Khomeini Iranians within Iran in an attempt to unseat the Khomeini regime. In order not to dramatically affect the hostage negotiations this was undertaken largely covertly; Carter neither consulted Congress nor made his moves public to the press (Carter, 2010: 381). Third, Carter

[3] "Iran Hostage Crisis, *ABC News*, November 11, 1979. Available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A8bC1DEYbI4]; Accessed: June 3, 2015.

prepared a public case to the UN on December 24, 1979 which called for sanctions to be brought against the nation of Iran unless the hostages were released. The vote in the UN on December 31, 1979, condemning the hostage taking, passed with eleven affirmative, no negative, and four abstentions (Carter, 2010: 383).

Making matters even more for difficult for Carter's foreign policy picture, at the same time 215 flights and 8,000-10,000 Soviet troops began spilling across the border of Afghanistan (Carter, 2010: 382). Carter, using the Hotline, delivered a strongly worded warning to Leonid Breshnev on December 28, 1979 that "the invasion of Afghanistan would seriously and adversely affect the relationship between our two countries" (Carter, 2010: 382). Carter, on January 3, 1980, called the invasion of Afghanistan the "most serious international development that's occurred since I've been president…" noting further that "unless the Soviets recognize it has been counterproductive for them, we will face additional invasion or subversion in the future" (Carter, 2010: 388). In a contemporary reflection Carter relates that:

> The Iranian hostage issue was to cause me more personal anguish and concern, but the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan was a threat to the security of the United States. If they consolidated their hold and moved into adjacent countries I would have been forced into military action against them. (Carter, 2010: 388, italics his)

The Soviet invasion and the hostage crisis occurring simultaneously put Carter in an exceptional bind. Immediately Carter cancelled a grain shipment of 8 million tons to the Soviet Union in response to the invasion which received only a muted response from the Soviets (Carter, 2010: 388). The perceived weakness of Americans being held hostage while the Soviets manifested strength through invasion would prove to be not only disastrous for Carter personally, but politically as well, as the polling for his ongoing

presidential election suffered substantially as both issues impacted the public perception of a weakened and impotent American state (Carter, 2010: 388).

On January 4 Carter addressed the nation, explaining his position on the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and outlining the limited retaliatory action the United States would be taking in the form of economic sanctions and a reduction in grain sales, as described above, to the Soviet Union. Behind the scenes Carter initiated the secret program that would become more familiar and public during the Reagan administration: the secret sales of arms to Pakistani and Afghani rebels. The arms package would include weapons most effective in the mountainous terrain of Afghanistan against Soviet tanks and armored personnel carriers. The operation was a highly secretive one and included weapons manufactured within the Soviet Union and procured from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan for maximum plausible deniability for Carter (Carter, 2010: 388).

Meanwhile in Tehran, Kurt Waldheim served as chief negotiator for the release of American hostages, which Carter described as a complete failure. On January 6, 1979 Carter relates that not only was Waldheim unsuccessful at securing the hostages release, he felt that his life was in personal danger on three separate occasions (Cater, 2010: 389). The situation was dire, as Waldheim described it, “there is no government there, Khomeini is unapproachable, the Revolutionary Council is ineffective and timid and Ayatollah [Mohammed] Beheshti [supreme court chief justice] is the strongest man on the council” (Carter, 2010: 389).

If matters could not be made worse for Carter, the increase in OPEC prices had resulted in a 3 percent cut in GNP and added 5.5% to the inflation rate (Carter, 2010:

389). Auto sales and home prices were also down, though business and consumer investments seemed to remain steady. This economic 'stagflation', as this effect came to be known, would mark Carter as weak on both foreign economic and military affairs. His reputation as a statesmen and domestic authority was badly tarnished by his inability to wield, publicly at least, international pressure to yield substantial foreign policy results.

In response to his waning authority, Carter's State of Union speech on January 23, 1980 envisioned a bolder and more comprehensive military approach to the Gulf region. He argued to the nation that:

> The 1980s have been born in turmoil, strife, and change. . . .The region which is now threatened by Soviet troops in Afghanistan is of great strategic importance: it contains more than two-thirds of the world's exportable oil. . . .The Soviet Union is now attempting to consolidate a strategic position; therefore, that poses a grave threat to the free movement of Middle East oil. (Carter, 2010: 394)

What became known as the Carter Doctrine regarded any "foreign attempt to take over control of the Persian Gulf would be a direct threat to the vital interests of the United States and would be met by armed military force" provided the Soviet's due notice that any further aggressive action would be met with a response (Carter, 2010: 394). The Carter Doctrine, when combined with Carter's refusal to allow the United States to participate in the Olympic Games of 1980, provided some saving of political and international face for the administration given the dire straits of most of their foreign policy commitment.

By March 13 Carter's worries were far from over. His inability to control the Soviet expansion into Afghanistan and the continuing back and forth with Khomeini over hostages, even with his stated Doctrine of defense, had led even close allies to remark

upon the impression of American weakness. In a meeting with Bavarian president Franz Josef Strauss, Carter was told that the French were expressing openly their worries over US inaction, commenting that an unnamed French official had argued that the Soviet invasion was an expression of military and ideological weakness, not strength. Strauss countered to Carter "How many expression of weakness will be necessary before Soviet troops are in Paris?" (Carter, 2010: 410)

While the Shah continued to suffer, not comfortably ensconced under General Torillos personal protection in Panama, plans were being hatched within the Carter White House for a military extraction of US hostages. Carter had already begun the process of expelling Iranian diplomats and pushed his allies to break off diplomatic ties with Iran as well. The rescue operation would include using Desert One, a remote location in the Iranian desert as a staging site. Six helicopters would be required to extract all fifty-two American hostages and C-130 cargo planes would also be needed to supply Army Ranger operatives and provide some means of escape if things went truly poorly.

Notably even during the planning of a rescue Carter maintained an outlook on Iran that seems almost anachronistic by today's standards. In a letter on March 25 to Bani Sadr, the Iranian Prime Minister Carter laid out the United States' demands: "release of American hostages…normal relations with Iran when the Iranian government desires this; recognizing the fact of the revolution; and an opportunity for Iran to air its grievances, either in the UN, the International Court of Justice or through the world press" (Carter, 2010: 412). This may strike the contemporary reader as odd. Most contend that the break with Iran began immediately with the hostage taking and the

continuing impasse between Iran and the United States resulted directly from this initial act of betrayal and kidnapping. This seems to be, at least as the presidents, both Carter and later Ronald Reagan, describe it. They both saw a retrieval of the relationship that existed in the recent past, not a permanent termination of diplomatic ties. While the "proposal" as Carter termed it was abandoned on April 7, it was notable that even at this stage peace between the two countries was at least desired if not achieved.

On April 24, 1979 the Army Ranger strike force known as Delta was a complete calamity. One of the six helicopters needed for extraction developed hydraulic problems and was immediately inoperative. As the operation required six helicopters to extract all hostages the plan was aborted and the C-130s with all personnel were withdrawn. IN the process of this withdrawl one of the helicopters struck a C-130 and the resulting explosion killed personnel. By 5:45 pm EST all forces were removed from Iranian territory and no further incidents resulted. Carter notes that at no time were Americans directly involved with Iranian Revolutionary Guard or standard army forces, no fighting occurred. Although the "mishaps" as Carter describes them were entirely accidental this proved to be the breaking point for Carter and his Secretary of State CY Vance, who resigned on April 27, 1979 (Carter, 2010: 423).

By September of 1979 the tempo of cross border attacks between Iran and Iraq had quickened in pace and intensity. While low level fighting had been going on since Saddam Hussein took office in mid-1979, on September 23 aerial attacks by the Iranians on Baghdad, and numerous assaults on oil refineries which led to the cessation of oil shipments from both countries, these new attacks led to a reduction of 3million

barrels per day in the world oil supply effectively doubling world oil prices (Carter 2010: 467,473).

Campaigning against Ronald Reagan had also begun in earnest. Ronald Reagan, the Republican candidate for president slammed Carter on his apparent weakness and advocated for gunboat diplomacy to shore up flagging world confidence in US authority. Carter's work was more behind the scenes but perhaps just as effective. On September 30 he "forced Oman not to let Iraq launch an attack from their territory, (and) forced Saudi Arabia to assume a neutral position" which at least limited the scope of a broader conflagration as nations may have felt encouraged to take sides or expand the conflict (Carter, 2010: 469, emphasis mine). Reagan evinced throughout the campaign what Carter described as an "Aw shucks", "I'm a grandfather", "I would never get this nation into a war" demeanor in the presidential debate on October 28. While Reagan was still polling "slightly" higher than Carter, at least at this stage, he had started 8 percentage points and polling moving toward Election Day seemed to bear out some small modicum of Carter's success. By November 4 the fix was in, Carter had lost and Ronald Reagan would be the next President of the United States.

It has been conjectured, and it certainly seems reasonable to assume given that the hostages were released on the day of Reagan's inauguration, that Reagan himself or at least his team may have something to do with the hostage crisis being prolonged through the election (Sick, 1991). The Majlis in Iran voted multiple times on whether to accept Carter's proposal and release the hostages, and Khomeini himself called upon students still occupying the embassy to release the fifty-two Americans to the army and support the Iranian war effort by enlisting themselves. Either way, the hostage crisis,

even if not manipulated for political gain proved another disastrous problem for Carter, his inability to retrieve them or negotiate their release was and is considered to be a black mark on his presidency.

Conclusion: The 'Good Oriental' goes Bad

Carter's role in Iran and the administration of Ronald Reagan contained a surprising number of similarities as will be related in Chapter Six. Both presidents took Iran to be an ally-in-waiting; both assumed that relations would return to some predetermined normal state in the near future; both allowed for the expansion of Iranian power; and perhaps most importantly both presidents needed the Iranians to balance power in the Gulf and resist Soviet aggression if necessary. While many paint Carter as being obsessed with rights and making the case strongly and frequently to the shah, there is only record of one meeting where the issue was ever broached, and minor blandishments aside, there is no indication that Carter was taken seriously as a critic. That students and left-wing activists pressed for a greater expansion of those rights in the public sphere is notable, but one can see throughout the Chapter herein that Carter was more than willing to empower, support, and maintain the 'good Oriental' that he had in the shah. As Carter argued to President Portrillo of Mexico in February of 1979, the United States favored stability and supported its allies (Carter, 2010). This was, even if it violated closely held religious or moral obligations to the contrary, the guiding light of US foreign policy. It is not odd then that a return to normalcy was highly desirable to both Carter and Reagan; they were simply in search of new 'good Oriental' to take the stage and provide for American interests, whatever they may be at the time. The 'good Oriental' is a trope that apparently cannot be escaped (Said, 1979).

Middle East foreign policy is merely one component of the larger project of American Foreign policy. An important one, as the region supplies energy resources, and contains many US ideological and strategic elements within it. Time and again, the US seeks the willing 'good Oriental' to provide stability, sometimes without support, sometimes without good standing among their own people, but always in service to the greater goals of the United States. Khomeini represents the 'good Oriental' gone bad. Carter attempted to fashion his new 'ally', even taking the Ayatollah's offer of military assistance and security for the American embassy on February 14, 1979. This is indeed the peril of accepting a new ally with a limited ability to control the outcome, as the Iranian Revolution, the hostage crisis beginning November 4, 1979, and the resulting discord between the two nations reveals. The 'good Oriental', and not the people of the target nation, will be propped up and maintained, despite the negative consequences that may occur.

What constitutes the domain and structure of American Foreign policy are the narratives those internal practitioners create to understand a complex and multifaceted Iran. In light of this observation, this dissertation adopts a critical perspective in analyzing narrativised barriers and borders that shape the way actors within the policy-making structure create meaning and act within and around another country, in this case Iran. Each administration from Johnson through Reagan brought to the table different political goals, objectives, and moral convictions, but what we shall see throughout is a baseline of Orientalist thought and practice that governs, constrains, and limits possible thinking about how the Iranian and the American can and should interact. My purpose in this piece is to critically analyze through historical narrative various

administrations' approaches to Iran, and in so doing create some modicum of clarity in the relationship between the two states going forward.

CHAPTER 7
FOREIGN POLICY AND IDEATIONAL CONSTRUCTION WITHIN THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION

Introduction

As stated in previous in Chapters the central argument I am pursuing is based upon Said's *Orientalism* (1979) and the adaptation of this policy to the conception of what the Oriental is capable of. Ronald Regan is perhaps the most misunderstood chapter of US-Iranian relations. Most scholars imagine an immediate break from the Carter era with the taking of fifty-two American diplomats for 444 days from November 4, 1979 to mere minutes before Reagan's inauguration on January 20, 1981 (Carter, 2010). This belies the stubborn truth of Reagan-era archival material and personal journals which document a conversation at a high level with Iranian leaders like Foreign Minister Ali Larijani and Majlis Speaker Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani to secure the release of American hostages albeit through proxies and their American counterparts. Continued relationships at a high level and a relatively open pipeline of communications tell a far more complicated story of American-Iranian relations, which allowed for communication between senior officials. Reagan was at first glance the swaggering cowboy of American lore, but he is also a figure that allowed for secrecy, strategy, and manipulation that used the Iranians much as past US policy makers would have.

The major difference of course was that whereas before messages would be sent through official channels, state visits, or by ambassadors based in Tehran. Messages now were passed between the two nations by the Swiss Embassy in Geneva

and the Japanese Embassy.[1] As late as the Lebanese Hostage crisis in 1987-1988 high level communications were conducted with regularity between the two parties and while official communications were masked through this rouse coordination between the two nations continued.

This new chapter for US-Iranian relations also allows us to observe a new departure point for American foreign policy and the 'good Oriental'. Finding the 'good Oriental' for Reagan proved to be a poignant and important goal for his regime. What Reagan reveals to us is how far a US policy maker may go in the search for a 'good Oriental' to rely upon to carry out American goals and interests. Ronald Reagan's persistent interest in identifying the next foreign policy ally that could serve US interests would lead his administration to its lowest points in the Iran-Contra Scandal.

Notice throughout this chapter a desire on the part of Reagan and his colleagues to resurrect the subordinate relationship so valued by Johnson, Nixon, Ford, and Carter. This is done not merely as a grounding point for American interests in the Middle East but as an almost compulsive tendency to think of the next great leader, or the next great foreign policy breakthrough as just over the horizon. This persistent tendency to find an individual that will take on and manifest American foreign policy goals is the problem. This allows for policy makers not to take seriously the problems or interests of the populace but rather to seek out the corruptible individuals at the top that will make US goals realizable. This allows for policy makers to ignore the populace, to disregard the issues that produce discord, and manifest over the long term the very factors that will

[1] MEMO; Charles H. Fairbanks Jr to Don Fortier, August 30, 1984; Fortier, Donald R., Box 3, folder 1: Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, Simi Valley, CA.

bring down the regime in power that the US supports. US policy despite its rhetorical largesse, all too often focuses upon the short term possibilities for capturing strategic ends.

Ending the Hostage Crisis

The end of the hostage crisis, for example, itself is misunderstood and tends to misrepresent Carter at least in terms of leadership as weak and Reagan as strong. For instance, most of the negotiations were undertaken and negotiated by Carter before the hostages were released. On January 16, 1981 before Reagan had even named a Secretary of State or begun the majority of his transition team planning, Carter negotiated the transfer of $8.1 billion in gold reserves to the Bank of England, the Iranians for their part would refund all but $3 billion of the currency transfer. Beyond this direct payment for the hostage release, $4.8 billion held by US, United Kingdom, and European banks since the beginning of the Iranian Revolution in 1979, upon which $130 million dollars in profit was derived alone by US institutions, was repatriated to Iran. Carter also organized transportation by the Algerians for the hostages on January 17. By January 19, 1981 letters of adherence had been signed by the Iranians and the planes had landed in Tehran. Medical examinations were provided to the hostages, and the bank transfers (finally totaling $7 billion) were processed and on January 20, 1981 the hostages were officially returned to American control (Carter, 2012: 510).

Strategic Concerns and Context

In 1981 noted scholar of Reagan-era foreign policy Christopher van Hollen, described Reagan's Gulf strategy in four discrete categories: Middle East oil supplies,

the expansion of the Soviets, military strategy, and regional strategic concerns.[2] Aligning with his description Charles H. Fairbanks, Jr. argues in a memo dated August 30 of 1984 that the "future of Iran is vitally important to us, but we almost have no ability to influence the evolution of events there."[3] It was common knowledge, for example, that arms transfers on both sides of the Iran-Iraq War (1980-88) continued through third party actors and friendly countries in the West and Japan. This was not the 'by any means necessary' foreign policy one might expect of later regime change-based designs we might read contemporarily. Fairbanks Jr. argues that all future communications between the two parties should seek to draw out the Iranians through regional proxies (the Saudis) and international allies in the West, and the Japanese to support "any development that reduces Iran's isolation and advances prospects for negotiation".[4]

Casper A. Weinberger the Secretary of Defense during the Reagan Administration laid out the recent history of the region as the administration saw it, and the potential future of military and diplomatic engagements. He describes two periods: the first, 1971-1979, and the second, 1979 to present (1987). From 1971 to 1979 the cornerstone of Gulf policy was the Nixon Doctrine in which the twin pillars of Saudi Arabia and Iran maintained stability and regional order. He includes the past three Presidencies as essentially speaking with one voice on Gulf Policy. The Carter Doctrine,

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[2] Christopher van Hollen, "Don't Engulf the Gulf" *Foreign Affairs* Summer 1981. Accessed May 5, 2015, Available at: https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/persian-gulf/1981-06-01/dont-engulf-gulf

[3] MEMO; Charles H. Fairbanks Jr to Don Fortier, August 30, 1984; Fortier, Donald R., Box 3, folder 1: Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, Simi Valley, CA.

[4] MEMO; Charles H. Fairbanks Jr to Don Fortier, August 30, 1984; Fortier, Donald R., Box 3, folder 1: Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, Simi Valley, CA.

a small change in US policy that resulted in the expansion of US forces with the withdrawal of the British east of the Suez Canal in 1971:

> signaled an increased U.S. resolve to defend Western interests in the Gulf, even unilaterally if necessary. We established the Joint Task force (which later became the U.S. Central Command or CENTCOM) and continued our military assistance program with Saudi Arabia and other friendly Arab Gulf States.[5]

On his second point, Weinberger goes on to note two major differences which now characterized the Reagan Administration's contemporary foreign policy (1979-1987). "First, the fall of the shah's government and its replacement by a radical, revolutionary Islamic regime threatened to destabilize the Gulf. Second, was the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan."[6] Finally, and perhaps what proved most difficult to the Reagan Administration was the "seemingly endless Iran-Iraq war." This in the broader context of the Cold War which marked the Reagan Administration as notably apart from prior political and strategic concerns, a point repeatedly made by Weinberger. [7]

The major concern was that Iran, no longer contained, or was at least openly conversing with a 'good Oriental', the shah by July 27, 1980 was dead and the Khomeini government at least in terms of mutual cooperation was largely preoccupied by the Iran-Iraq war. Within Iran there was no 'good Oriental', in Iraq, however Reagan had found a brutal and efficient dictator in Saddam Hussein. Throughout the course of the Iran-Iraq war, which began under Jimmy Carter but found full fruition during

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[5] REPORT; Casper A. Weinberger, 1987; Saunders, Richard, Box 1, folder 1: Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, Simi Valley, CA.

[6] REPORT; Casper A. Weinberger, 1987; Saunders, Richard, Box 1, folder 1: Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, Simi Valley, CA.

[7] REPORT; Casper A. Weinberger, 1987; Saunders, Richard, Box 1, folder 1: Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, Simi Valley, CA.

Reagan's term, the Reagan administration was quickly and continuously compelled to provide assistance. Reagan fueled the Iraqi war-effort militarily, but also used the intelligence gathering capabilities of the CIA and Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) at his disposal to assist the Iraqis with early warnings and finding targets for Iraqi artillery and airstrikes.

The Iranian Army, once powerful under the shah had been aggressively gutted under the Khomeini regime, which included some of the men most loyal to the shah and to a secular Iran more generally. The upper tier of the officer corps within the army and air force had been completely eliminated. Even a CIA warning that Iran would be attacked was dismissed by Iranian officials as propaganda (Crist, 2012: 75). This was not simple paranoia by the regime but a response to increasing tension between the conventional army officer corps and the Khomeini regime. A CIA report from July 6, 1981 reveals that on June 28, a bomb constructed by army officers exploded in the Islamic Republican Party, they note further that these attacks are planned to continue as "several more are under construction."[8]

On September 22, 1980 Saddam's army attempted to repeat the Israeli successes of 1967. Striking quickly with ground forces including nine Iraqi divisions paired with airstrikes on Iranian airfields meant to wipe out the Iranian air force. The initial attack was demonstrably a failure, only three Iranian planes were destroyed on the ground. Pilots trained by American instructors and supplied with American munitions proved highly successful in dogfights over Iran. The Iraqi army moved at a pace

[8] MEMO; Situation Room Note, July 6, 1981; Box 1, folder 1 Iran (12/01/1980- 03/05/1984): Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, Simi Valley, CA.

governed straight from Baghdad, oftentimes directly interfering with orders bypassing the chain of command and penetrating all the way down to the tank brigades individually. Deployments were erratic, the pace was painfully slow, and as night fell on the campaign units moved slowly, timidly, and fearing a reprisal from Saddam they dug in (Crist, 2012: 88).

This small interlude broadly characterized the fighting for the following eight years. Lives were lost, equipment was destroyed, and the Iraqi Army was outflanked, but well-supplied by the United States. While the United States was credited, at least by the Iranians, as masterminding the attack there is some evidence to suggest that the US was caught largely unaware by Saddam's belligerence. According to Gary Sick, who handled Persian Gulf Affairs under Zbiginiew Brzezinski during the Carter years, 'The U.S. government was taken by surprise when the attack occurred in the magnitude that it did" (Crist, 2012: 89, emphasis his). Support for the US' new 'good Oriental', even caught unawares, was not in doubt, however. Iraq, regardless of how brutal, was now the central foreign policy agent for the US.

The issue of supplies was a constant problem for the Iranians. As direct military sales were forbidden by the White House and would have aroused an intense public opinion reaction within the US. Iran ordered nearly $2 billion in new weapons and spare parts from arms dealers around the world. Clandestine arms sales to the Iranians were legion, with several European and Asian countries, as well as Israel handily profiting from bootlegged supplies. Figures indicate that Spain alone between 1983-1985 sold $280 million "worth of spare artillery tubes, ammunition, and small arms exports" to Iran (Crist, 2012: 101).

To prevent Iran from taking on weapons in a legitimate way from nations allied with the United States the US State Department placed Iran on the list of states that actively sponsored terrorism. Richard Fairbanks, Ambassador at Large in the Reagan Administration, began Operation Staunch which pressured European and Asian leaders to prevent the sale of military technologies to Iran. This was couched as a way to prevent further hostilities and bring Iran around to a ceasefire.

Backdoor intelligence flowed from the US intelligence establishment into Iraq from third party countries. Reagan may not have *openly* viewed Saddam as a 'good Oriental' but he was at least willing to fight the enemy he knew, Iran. Reagan signed a secret presidential finding in 1981 and again in 1982 that allowed the CIA to pass intelligence, satellite images, and operational details on to the Iraqis using countries like Jordan and South Korea as intermediaries. Operational details on the American made F-14 and F-4 fighter planes, sold to the Iranians during the years of military support prior to 1979, were turned over to the Iraqis to assist them in preventing Iran from gaining territory around Basra and Southern Iraq (Crist, 2012: 104).

The need for third parties to keep the impartiality of American efforts to support Iraq was vital in maintaining at least a partial if unconvincing level of detachment. With the normalization of relations between the US Iraq in 1984, the CIA opened a field office that allowed for the direct importation of intelligence documents to the Iraqi military. At least on paper Iraqis only met with CIA officers in person fourteen times. This somewhat understates the fluidity of intelligence transmission as a "much more continuous and ongoing relationship" (Crist, 2012: 104). The passing of intelligence documents in this way became effectively streamlined, Crist cites for example

> Classified data obtained from Saudi and ELF-One AWACS on Iranian aircraft operations and passed the latest imagery of Iranian units directly to Baghdad where the station chief was authorized to show a slightly altered version to the Iraqis. The Iraqi generals were free to study the imagery, taking notes and keeping drawing provided by CIA analysts. (Crist, 2012: 105)

Impartiality aside, a direct pipeline of information on the ongoing activities of one's adversary can and was viewed by the Iranians as the United States directly interceding on behalf of the Iraqi war effort. It paid to be a 'good Oriental."

Back in Tehran the cost of war was mounting and Reagan viewed a potential opening as a way to gain traction and return Iran to its subordinate status. After six years of rule and four and a half years of war the Iranian population had been battered and bloodied. Almost 270,000 Iranians were dead, 650,000 were wounded or missing in action. Five million people were unemployed from a population of forty-two million, food shortages were rampant, and more than half the population was under sixteen years of age. There were two and half million small arms in the hands of individual citizens outside the Armed Forces and the Revolutionary Guard Corps. A Strategic Report prepared by the State Department described the mood within the country as unstable. "(W)idespread oppression, political execution, systematic torture, and ill-treatment of prisoners and (the) populace" was a constant thrum within Iran.[9] Even the clergy were "keeping distant from the mosques and Khomeini. [10]

"The armed forces, police, Gendarmie, and even some of the Revolution Guards and the majority of the moderate clergy, are unhappy with the present regime", the

[9]REPORT; Strategic Report: Iran, 1985; Box 6, folder 1 Iran, Donald Fortier: Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, Simi Valley, CA.

[10]REPORT; Strategic Report: Iran, 1985; Box 6, folder 1 Iran, Donald Fortier: Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, Simi Valley, CA.

report went on to argue[11] Five blocs characterized the power nodes within Iranian politics outside of Khomeini's ruling coalition with various levels of influence and effectiveness: Moderate forces, mostly surrounding former Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan; the Mujagedin-e-Khalq made up of former opposition figures were largely marginalized and displaced; the Marxist Fedayeen-e-Khalq were largely underground and perceived widely to be directed by the Soviet Union; the Tudeh Party, while officially outlawed by the Khomeini regime, retained some amount of political control; and finally the Iranian armed forces, attacked and dealt with by suspicion through Khomeini's tight cadre of bureaucrats and advisors but still a potent force and battle tested.[12]

Opposition groups existed outside Iran as well and were highlighted by the Reagan administration as possibly effective at producing regime change: Dr. Ali Amini, former Prime Minister under the shah, Dr. Shahpour Bakttiar, Mohsesen Pezeshkpour, Admiral Ahmed Madani, Reza Pahlavi (the shah's son), and former Army and Air Force officers in exile were all potential new sources of influence. The authors of the Strategic Report argue that because outside opposition groups are scattered and lack unity, the United States should choose a "competent leader" and "all groups will follow."[13] The gathering of intelligence and armaments was vital to creating and exploiting the possibilities for regime change in Iran. The Report finishes by arguing that:

[11] REPORT; Strategic Report: Iran, 1985; Box 6, folder 1 Iran, Donald Fortier: Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, Simi Valley, CA.

[12] REPORT; Strategic Report: Iran, 1985; Box 6, folder 1 Iran, Donald Fortier: Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, Simi Valley, CA.

[13] REPORT; Strategic Report: Iran, 1985; Box 6, folder 1 Iran, Donald Fortier: Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, Simi Valley, CA.

> The failure of the United States to take up the options available to it will lead to the certainty that the Soviet Union will use its extensive influence inside Iran to shape events to its own purpose.[14]

This a highly instructive Report if one keeps in mind the lens of Orientalism. First, it is arguably true that the dissident and opposition forces were scattered and uncoordinated. However, it is interesting that actors within Reagan's team believe that all parties will follow lockstep behind any United States backed initiative. Second, it is curious there is little mention of what the population may think or want beyond a few opposition leaders and various parties. The tendency is still to view Iran as a state made up of natives waiting to be led. What the Report reveals is still the same character within past administrations, the need for a 'good Oriental' to take the lead. This was, of course one used by the United States, or as document by the Report with a tone of potential peril, one that could be used by the Soviet Union to galvanize support. The tone of the documents provided, the effects of the Iran-Iraq war, and the tenor of popular suffering are all background music for a US effort to gain the upper hand in Iran.

This owed to the fact that it was broadly conjectured, as has been argued in previous Chapters within this piece, that Iran had "A single-leader political culture" meaning that Iran and the Iranians within it were largely sheep in want of a shepherd. [15] The Report argues that, "Historically, the key prerequisite for the achievement of political stability in Iran is the emergence of a single recognized political leader. The

[14] REPORT; Strategic Report: Iran, 1985; Box 6, folder 1 Iran, Donald Fortier: Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, Simi Valley, CA.

[15] Peek, CM, 1963, "End of tour report", National Security File, papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson President, 1963-1969, Country File, Middle East Box 137, Folder 2, LBJ.

Revolution has not reversed this apparent political imperative".[16] Thus, it was not only unnecessary to think about what the people of Iran may want, nor was it reasonable to attempt to coordinate with the population and attempt to wrest power through popular uprising and political redress, they were Orientals and only capable of being led not leading. The Reagan administration knew the Iranians better than they knew themselves, and knew more than anything that Iran was in significant want of a 'good Oriental'.

The effort to subvert Iran was not merely rhetorical and the support for regime change was not only to be provided by dissident parties. US support would come in the form of four interlocking prescriptions for further action:

1. Recognition of moderate pro-Western government, should one emerge in Iran.
2. Shipment of arms and other technology to reconstruct Iran's military and economic base.
3. Offer to mediate peace with Iraq (especially by Saudi Arabia Kuwait, UAE, Jordan).
4. Formulation of Persian Gulf "security system" considering military and economic issues.[17]

This would also include the organization of radical Shiite groups outside Iran to form a "government in exile" that would "conduct (a) terrorist campaign" against Iranian "interest(s) in other countries (especially with Libyan and Syrian support)".[18]

[16] REPORT; US Policy Toward Iran, 1985; Box 6, folder 1 Iran, Donald Fortier: Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, Simi Valley, CA.

[17] REPORT; US Policy Toward Iran, 1985; Box 6, folder 1 Iran, Donald Fortier: Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, Simi Valley, CA.

[18] REPORT; Strategic Report: Iran, 1985; Box 6, folder 1 Iran, Donald Fortier: Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, Simi Valley, CA.

This focus on terrorism or the promotion of it to destabilize Iran, is not beyond the bounds of American foreign policy. As mentioned in Chapter Five the use of asymmetric warfare to achieve American foreign policy goals was ongoing in the Afghani resistance to the Soviet invasion on December 31, 1979. Beyond Afghanistan, terrorism was being actively employed by the Iranians in Lebanon in the form of the Hezbollah organization. Lebanon, a notoriously fractured country with a colonial-era constitution that factionalized the political system along ethnic lines, played a definitive role in reflecting US-Iranian relations in the form of terrorism.

Intervention in Lebanon

While it did not receive much attention from the Carter White House, the confessional nature of Lebanese politics finally erupted into civil war in April of 1976. By the time of Reagan's tenure an estimated one hundred thousand people had already perished in the six year civil war (Crist, 2012: 107). The country was effectively split into warring territories: West Beirut and Southern Lebanon were controlled by the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), and Sunnis in the pro-Shia Amal Party; East Beirut was governed by Maronite Christians and the Druze; north and west Lebanon were occupied by the Syrian military; and another competing group of Christians and Druze controlled the hills surrounding Beirut.

After an incident involving Israel and the PLO in July 1981 that left hundreds dead, the Reagan administration decided that they would dispatch Philip Habib to attempt to negotiate a cease fire. While progress was made between the Israelis and PLO the Reagan administration was now effectively by deed invested in the Lebanese civil war (Crist, 2012: 108). After another particularly brutal episode between the Phalange party, which was Christian by sect, and the PLO resulting in the deaths of

eight hundred and two Palestinian refugees and soldiers on September 29, 1982, Reagan felt forced to act (Crist, 2012: 108). Reagan dispatched US marines along with French, British, and Italian peacekeepers to contribute, in the words of State Department official Jonathan Howe:

> to support the government of Lebanon and the Lebanese armed forces by their presence. That presence provides the Lebanese government clear evidence of international concern for Lebanon and an element of needed stability and confidence which reinforces its of pursuit of national recognition. (Cited in Crist, 2012: 114)

To most Lebanese onlookers US marines and their foreign national counterparts were a partisan element in an ongoing civil war.

The 'presence' that the force created was dramatic. Fortifications, entrenchments, and building occupations were standard procedure in defending a position against potential attack, so a light footprint would have been considered problematic but necessary. Furthermore, while the attempt was made by US forces to not actively take sides in the conflict as one CIA officer argued "We went out of our way to distinguish between the government of Lebanon and the Christians/Phalange, but it was a distinction without a difference certainly as far as the Muslims were concerned" (Cited in Crist, 2012: 115). Walid Jumblatt, a Druze oppositional figure commented, "The mere fact that they are providing the Lebanese factional army with logistical support, expertise, and training is enough to consider them enemies" (Cited in Crist, 2012: 115). Reagan seemed somewhat oblivious to the explosive mix the marines were creating, commenting "Tell the marines that the entire nation is proud of you and the outstanding job you are doing against difficult odds" (Cited in Geraghty, 2009: 65). Yet again, US policy was premised upon two central concepts, one, that the US knew the

people better than they knew themselves and two, that the 'good Orientals' found in the Christian Phalange were the ones to be trusted and promoted.

The Iranians had a long presence in Iran and the Shiite communities between the two countries had always been close (Fisk, 2007: 161). Imams, trained in Iran, would preach in Shiite-heavy southern Lebanon, and students would research the Shia Imam Ali, in Iran. Iran, with its Islamic Revolution and effective independence from colonial control was a guiding light to Lebanese Shia often given short shrift by the central government in Beirut. As the Lebanese civil war deepened and became more protracted the Revolutionary Guard Corps filtered into southern Beirut, providing social welfare and military training (Crist, 2012: 125). Using a pipeline from Syria, Iranian planes landed in Damascus deposited arms and the Quds Force (an elite subset of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard), which were trucked overland into southern Lebanon (Crist, 2012: 126). By 1984 intelligence estimates put the Iranian Revolutionary Guard in Lebanon at around eight hundred. They conducted boot camps, provided logistical and intelligence support, which allowed for the group Hezbollah to split from the larger Shia organization Amal (Crist, 2012: 126).

On April 17, 1983 a green Mercedes van loaded with explosives slammed into the American Embassy killing eleven Lebanese bodyguards and US Army Special Forces Sargent First Class Terry Gilden, as well as sixty three civilians, including seventeen American embassy workers and CIA employees. This should have shattered Reagan's perception that somehow the marines and other American personnel would be considered a neutral force in Lebanese politics. Yet the perception that he knew the

Orientals better than they knew themselves served as a powerful ideological backstop to reason or strategic sense.

For the Iranians the issue had always been of international significance. America's role in Iraq had worked to the detriment of the Iranian war effort against Iraq, it was to be expected that the Iranians could and would play some role in supporting Shia groups, expanding the Revolution, and if necessary act against American targets in the Middle East. Ali Akbar Mohtashemi Iranian Ambassador to Lebanon argued to his Hezbollah representatives during a meeting in Damascus "you should certainly concentrate your operations as much as possible on the U.S. forces, Phalange, or the Lebanese army. The Iranian Ambassador to Lebanon suggested, "You should undertake an operation against the U.S. Marines" (Crist, 2012: 133).

On October 23, 1983 at five in the morning a yellow Mercedes stake-bed truck loaded with at least two thousand pounds of explosives and compressed gas wound its way toward the Marine Barracks installation in downtown Beirut. Three hundred and fifty Marines slept within. At 6:22 a.m. the sounds of a revving engine could be heard and the truck flew past the small guard outposts surrounding the Barracks. The truck barreled into the atrium of the building and came to a halt; then a massive explosion erupted inside the building. Two hundred and forty one American servicemen were killed during the attack, as well as fifty-eight French paratroopers (Crist, 2012: 135). Reagan received the news with the expected shock one might imagine. His initial response was to target those responsible. Communications intercepted by the National Security Agency (NSA) confirmed the attack to be almost certainly of Iranian backing if not Iranian operatives themselves (Crist, 2012: 139).

The split within the Reagan White House fell along two lines of contention, on the one hand Secretary of State George P. Schultz argued that the United States should show resolve and stay in Lebanon despite the threat to U.S forces; arguing that, “To withdraw now would undermine our entirely policy…It would be disastrous for American prestige” (Crist, 2012: 140). On the other hand Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger argued that any actions in response should be undertaken with precision and contemplation, and that furthermore with the Lebanese political and domestic situation rapidly deteriorating new troops should not be put in harm’s way unless some guarantee of their effectiveness was expected. Weinberger argued, “It is easy to kill people, and that might make some people feel good, but military force must have a purpose, to achieve some end” (Crist, 2012: 141). Reagan’s public statement linked the Barracks bombing with the attack on the American Embassy on April 17, 1983, resolving that “Those who directed this atrocity must be dealt justice, and they will be” (Crist, 2012:141). However, Reagan ultimately did nothing, at least in immediate response to the attack on the Marine Barracks.

By February 26, 1984 Reagan had finally had enough of the Lebanese affair. The withdrawal of all US service members with two hundred and sixty-nine dead had failed to achieve any foreseeable results. This included reducing tensions within Lebanon. As an attack on September 20, 1984 on the newly refurbished American embassy annex by the now common suicide car bombing that killed 24 people, demonstrated. When asked about the incident on the campaign trail Reagan off-handedly blamed the Carter administration for the “the near destruction of our intelligence capability” (Crist, 2012: 151). Reagan later viewed satellite images revealing that the bomber had rehearsed

repeatedly the route taken to the embassy, with “tire tracks (that) a driver had repeatedly taken. . . at high speed” (Crist, 2012: 152).

The Iran-Contra Scandal

What dominated much of Reagan’s thinking regarding Lebanon over the next two years was the taking of American hostages by Hezbollah during January of 1985. That diplomatic and media officials, as well as US citizens were taken by Hezbollah to be either exchanged for Israeli held Hezbollah fighters, or to be used as leverage in future interactions with the Americans, was entirely egregious to Reagan. Over the course of 1985 seven American hostages were abducted and their release because a paramount concern for Reagan personally (Reagan, 2007: Ereader Location 6430).

What is perhaps most surprising about the actions in Lebanon, the terrorism; the repeated assaults on US service personnel, intelligence officials, and embassy staff; and the fueling of the Lebanese civil war, which the US attempted to mediate and moderate; was the dramatic lack of response by the Reagan administration. Very little was done, officially at least to respond to the Iranian threats and antagonisms. This defies the perception of Reagan as a swaggering foreign policy hawk; the historical record simply does not back up this impression.

What followed after the Lebanon affair is perhaps the most dramatic example of how hard a policy maker will work to secure a new ‘good Oriental’. While Saddam continued to be the Reagan administration’s go-to ally in the region, the need to secure Western interests against possible Soviet incursions was still the paramount concern. The Reagan administration needed to hedge against the possibility of Soviet expansion and the sense that this possible outcome was just over the horizon was difficult to pass up. Indeed, the possibility of resuming the time-tested relationship with an Iranian ‘good

Oriental', to lead the Iranian people and provide for US interests, was incredibly desirable.

Since at least January 31, 1981 the real possibility existed that while the US engaged in Operation Staunch to eliminate weapons transfers to Iran, the weapon's pipeline continued to flow. The Israelis and European and Asian nations were actively arming the Iranian regime. In a State department memo on this date US diplomats in Tel Aviv were informed that the US would "appreciate Israel's refraining from shipping military equipment to Iran…We continue to be opposed to and do not condone military help to either party" in the course of the Iran-Iraq war.[19]

On the Iranian side, munitions were in constant short supply after five years of intensive warfare with Iraq and by 1985 the need for some level of rapprochement with the Iranian regime or dissidents within the regime was required to expand American influence, the possibility of making use of the Israeli pipeline was a possible solution that Reagan entertained. As noted above, there was a general interest within some quarters of the US foreign policy establishment in the nurturing of Iranian dissidents to possibly overthrow the Khomeini regime and reestablish a pro-Western government within Iran. Reports available to the White House portrayed Iran as in a state of near collapse with the possibility of Soviet interest in the outcome of any governmental change a dangerous reality to conceive of.

Contemplating Israel supplying weapons to the Iranians in a contemporary sense seems almost unimaginable. The tenor and tone of Israeli-Iranian relations within the

[19] MEMO; State Department Telex to Tel Aviv, January 31, 1981; Lilac, Robert. RAC Box 2, folder 1: Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, Simi Valley, CA.

current Netanyahu administration or in previous years under President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad or President Hassan Rouhani is far from cordial and often leads to manifest threats of Israeli airstrikes. However, in the summer of 1985 the Israeli calculation was that Saddam Hussein was a far greater threat than that posed by Iran. Saddam's support for Palestinian rights, his bellicosity throughout the region, and his interest in Pan-Arabism as an expansionist goal, made him a far more frightening potential foe than Ayatollah Khomeini.

On July 20, 1985 the possibility of transferring one hundred TOW missiles to the Iranians in exchange for the release of US hostages held by Hezbollah in Lebanon, became a reality. "An Israeli chartered 707 aircraft landed in Tehran with a pallet load of ninety-six U.S.-made TOW missiles" (Crist, 2012: 181). While no hostages were returned in Lebanon, a second batch of four hundred and eight TOW missiles was greenlit for export on September 15, 1985 (Crist, 2012, 181).

With the second batch of TOW missiles Ayatollah Khomeini finally became aware of the presence of US munitions (Crist, 2012: 183). The supposed moderates that existed never materialized and Khomeini was all too willing to receive any support in the painful war effort against Iraq. Reagan, seemingly unaware that his intention in securing the release of hostages and fueling Iranian moderates was actively being exploited by Khomeini's own regime, then approved the transfer of eighty Hawk anti-aircraft missiles through the Israeli pipeline.

Reagan argues in his diary on January 7, 1986 that the US was currently engaged in a:

> highly secret convoluted process that sees Israel freeing some 20 Hizballahs who aren't really guilty of any blood letting. At the same time

> they sell Iran some :Tow" anti-tank weapons. We in turn sell Israel replacements & the Hisballah free our 5 hostages. Iran also pledges there will be no more kidnappings. We sit quietly & never reveal how we got them back. (Reagan, 1997: Ereader Location: 8156, emphasis his)

Perhaps Reagan was engaging in magical thinking, perhaps he reconciled that the armaments being transferred illegally were defensive in nature and thus would not dramatically affect the war effort between Iran and Iraq, or perhaps the notion of US hostages held for four hundred and forty days in Iran so plagued recent memory that anything, including trading with the enemy should be considered to secure their release. Either way, the case can be made that Reagan himself was deeply deluded by reports that Iranian moderates were to make use of the weapons rather than hardliners within Khomeini's regime he relied on the good faith established through these transfers to preserve the status quo in future dealings with Iran.

In a secret Presidential finding of covert action signed on January 17, 1986 Ronald Reagan approved the use of the CIA to act directly in the transfer of arms to Iranian moderates. Reagan states flatly that his actions should not be revealed to Congress or to the American people citing the National Security Act of 1947. Finding Pursuant to Section 662 of the Foreign Assistance act of 1961 he makes three points:

> (1) establishing a more moderate government in Iran, (2) obtaining from them significant intelligence not otherwise obtainable, to determine the current Iranian Government's intentions with respect to its neighbors and with respect to terrorist acts, and (3) furthering the release of the American hostages held in Beirut and preventing additional terrorist acts by these groups.[20]

[20] Ronald Reagan, "Texts of Order by Reagan and Memo", *The New York Times*, January 10, 1987. Available at : [http://www.nytimes.com/1987/01/10/world/texts-of-order-by-reagan-and-memo.html] Accessed: June 6, 2015.

This Finding approved the transfer of arms directly from the US via the CIA to the Israelis and then on to the Iranians. Reagan writes in his diary regarding the approval of the finding that the "Only thing was waiting N.S.C. wanting decisions on our effort to get our 5 hostages out of Lebanon. Involves selling TOW missiles to Iran. I gave a go ahead" (Reagan, 1997: Ereader Location: 8209, emphasis his). Reagan's manifest approval and go ahead now placed the CIA in the arms trade with Iran.

When no hostages manifested Reagan approved another shipment that allowed for the possibility of a withdrawal of the expected armaments if and when the hostages were not released. No hostages were released during the May 27, 1986 shipment, and thus the plane turned around. This was not precisely true, the plane did in fact land and National Security Advisor Bud McFarlane, CIA agent George Cave, National Security Council Staff member Oliver North, and Howard Teicher disembarked. A frantic meeting ensued wherein no hostages were released. The results of the meeting are not as important as what the meeting itself signified, the first high level interaction between US officials and their Iranian counterparts, since before the November 4, 1979 hostage crisis.

Another such meeting by senior officials within the Iran arms shipping team was held on August 25, 1986 in Brussels, Belgium. The meeting included Ali Hashemi Bahramani, a nephew of Hashemi Rafsanjani. Bahramani, a decidedly pro-Western element that frequented Europe, and promised a better working relationship with the West. Reagan's diary entry of the same day belies the importance of this high interaction "rode; cleared trail; telephone party fundraiser in Las Vegas" (Reagan, 1997: Ereader Location: 9256). Subsequently Bahramani met in Washington DC with Oliver

North's team in the Old Executive Building of the White House (Crist, 2012: 195). The meeting required the coordination of the FBI and the CIA in allowing the Iranians to enter the country.

What followed were two days of intense discussion regarding the release of the hostages currently help in Lebanon and other regional issues. Bahramani offered a "captured Soviet-built T-72 tank" and the offer of first commercial relations with the Iranians, and within six months full diplomatic relations (Crist, 2012: 196). The level of coordination and cordiality within this new joint committee was startling, including: the provision of an American military installation within Iran to coordinate the flow of weapons to the Afghan mujahedeen fighting the soviets, the provision of high quantities of American military equipment (howitzer ammunition and Hawkeye missile parts), a visit to the White House and the Oval Office, which ultimately resulted in the release of a hostage (Crist, 2012: 197).

By November 7, a "wild story" began to circulate based in Beirut from the Lebanese magazine *al-Shiraa* that the Reagan administration had "bought" a hostage, David Jacobsen a hospital administrator and US citizen working for the American University of Beirut, using the transfer of arms (Reagan, 1997: Ereader Location: 9582). Reagan demurred from the press, claiming that "we can't answer any Q's on this subject because to do so will endanger the lives of those we are trying to help" (Reagan, 1997: Ereader Location: 9582). On November 12, 1986 Reagan finally briefed select members of the Congressional leadership on the "whole load on hostages & Iran & explaining why we couldn't go public with some of the info—it would actually endanger some lives, including the hostages" (Reagan, 1997: Ereader Location: 9621).

On November 13, 1986 Reagan denied the entire affair to the American public from the Oval Office.

The entire episode was eventually revealed to Americans on December of 1986 in the Iran-Contra Scandal. The connection to the Contras in Nicaragua came from the repeated overcharging by the Americans to the Iranians. A TOW missile for example cost the Defense Department $3,500 and was sold to the Iranians at $10,000. The money from the sales of these munitions eventually ran into the millions of dollars. That money was then used to sponsor and support US-backed rebels in Nicaragua. Congressional testimony from the time reveals the depth of high-level coordination with supposed state-sponsors of terrorism (a violation of Operation Staunch), backing domestic unrest in foreign countries, and lying overtly to the American public (Crist, 2012:204). Reagan acknowledges as much in his diary commenting that "our Col. North (NSC) gave the money to the "Contras." This was a violation of the law against giving the Contra money without approval from Congress. North didn't tell me about this" (Reagan, 1997: Ereader Location: 9682).

By January of 1987 the Reagan administration began to clean house and disavowed all knowledge of Oliver North and his team. While Reagan's own diaries bely his deep involvement, they also reveal his somewhat myopic and deluded sense that the hostage release was just around the corner. The scandal, throughout much of 1987 and the Tower commission report that would result from the Congressional Hearings, would eventually produce the firing of Oliver North. The 'good Oriental' if they were found, could unlock the possibilities of deeper engagement and create the openings for longer standing political engagement. In the wake of the Iran Contra Scandal all

discussion of this possibility was terminated and the level of coordination once so close was rendered moot.

The Tanker War

In the midst of the Iran-Contra Scandal at home the singularly most important act of recent Iranian history was about to take place on May 16, 1987, the attack on the *USS Stark* by the Iraqi air force. The attack on the *Stark*, by the Iraqis, and later a sea mine incident involving the *USS Samuel B. Roberts* on April 14, 1988 within the Persian Gulf would change the tenor and tone of US relations with Iran.

Much like the Iran-Iraq war, Saddam Hussein fired the first shots in what was to become known as the tanker war. Each side, Iranian and Iraqi, declared War Exclusion Zones ranging from twelve to sixty nautical miles off their respective coasts. Because geographically Iran had a much longer sea border, the safety of its 'neutral' shipping concerns was put entirely at risk by the Iraqi air force. Targets off of Kharg Island and Bushehr in particular were frequently attacked by the Iraqis though they fell within the exclusion zones. Over the course of the tanker war Iraq attacked over five hundred ships. The Iraqis not only attacked Iranian ships, as the above mentioned *USS Stark* indicates, but also sank Saudi and Kuwaiti vessels as well.

Iraq was far more secure in its oil exports as the majority of Iraqi crude flowed through pipelines into Turkey and ultimately Europe and the United States. If Iran lacked Iraqi targets then they instead would focus upon those that proselytized Iraq: Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. While, Iraq may have begun the war, the targeting of US allies like Saudi Arabia and Kuwait led to UN Resolutions 552, which called upon states to respect neutral flags and avoid the targeting of civilian vessels.

The US argued in a State Department Telex forwarded to the Iranians through the Turkish Embassy in August of 1987 that the Iranian's proposal "that the United States postpone its escort of vessels and withdraw warship(s) from the Persian Gulf mistakes the results of current tensions with the cause."[21] The communication goes on to argue that "The increased strength of the U.S. Naval presence with the Gulf is a direct result of Iran's efforts to intimidate non-belligerent governments with which the U.S. has close and friendly relations…"[22]

It was in the process of escorting a Kuwaiti frigate within the contested sea lanes of the Persian Gulf that the *USS Stark* was targeted and hit by two Exocet missiles, supposedly by mistake, by an Iraqi Mirage fighter jet. Thirty-seven sailors lost their lives in the engagement. While no responsibility for the attack was never taken, and the role of the Iraqis in the incident was called an accident, the Ambassador of Iraq paid $27 million to the families of the sailors that were lost. However, in light of the ship's damage, it was eventually towed back to port in Bahrain, and then was towed to Florida for reconditioning and repair; as a result of this attack the Reagan administration approved an expansion of naval escorts in the Gulf. This was taken on, Reagan argued, in light of recent belligerence by other states that "naval vessels to (were) to open fire (on) any craft positioning itself as a possible attacker" (Reagan, 1997: Ereader Location: 10696). A level of seriousness had been reached and Reagan was primed to react to any nation that harmed a US warship, even if they were operating in a known war zone,

[21] MEMO; Reply to Iranian Message Via Kandemir, August 1987; Burns, William J files. Box 3, folder 1 (Exchanges with Iran (4)): Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, Simi Valley, CA.

[22] MEMO; Reply to Iranian Message Via Kandemir, August 1987; Burns, William J files. Box 3, folder 1 (Exchanges with Iran (4)): Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, Simi Valley, CA.

and even if they were not seen as neutral actors, but in support of a particular side's war effort.

One might argue that the US was merely defending its interest. A massive amount of the world's oil supply flowed through the Persian Gulf, and it was entirely in keeping with the Carter Doctrine for the US to employ its warships to defend vital US strategic resources. In another light this is a classic example of the 'good Oriental', Saddam Hussein being given a pass that any other nation would have been roundly condemned for. Yes, it was an accident, and of course within a war theater casualties can be expected, but the muted response from the Reagan administration belied the rare position that Iraq occupied within its regional calculations.

On April 14, 1988 the *USS Samuel B. Roberts* moved south toward the Straits of Hormuz having recently escorted two reflagged oil freighters the *Gas King* and the *Rover* to the ports of Kuwait. New orders had been furnished by the Joint Chiefs chairman William J. Crowe, any US warship was freed to push against, or come close to the Iranian exclusion zone as necessary to protect neutral shipping from the possibility of Iranian attack (Crist, 2012: 323). The *Roberts* was executing this new more aggressive stance when it blundered into a mine field within the Iranian exclusion zone about sixty miles southeast of Iranian territory. The mine that exploded on the rear section of the *Roberts'* hull as it was attempting to extricate itself backing slowly out of danger, was viewed as an act of belligerence by the Iranians. Fourteen sailors were injured in the blast and were medevacked to Bahrain and then Germany for treatment.

The cold war that had long brewed between the US and Iran was now officially transitioning into manifest bellicosity. Reagan records the incident on April 14, 1988 in

his diary, on April 15, 1988 he comments that “We are going to blow up two & possibly three oil platforms—3 of our ships are doing the job. Also one Iranian Naval vessel. In each case we will give time for their people to get off. We seek no killing—just the destruction of the targets” (Reagan, 1997: Ereader Location: 12800, emphasis his). Reagan did not seek Congressional approval for these strikes, although the US was not at war with Iran, although he did notify Congress that he was going to make the strikes. On April 18, 1988 two of the Iranian platforms had been destroyed, Reagan simply comments “I did it” (Reagan, 1997: 12809).

From this point on Iran is referred to as a belligerent nation. Regardless of the fact that Iraq started the Iran-Iraq war, regardless of the fact the Iraq killed twenty-seven US sailors aboard the *USS Stark* on May 17, 1987, the accidental strike of a mine by the *USS Samuel B. Roberts* on April 14, 1988 was considered to be a singularly belligerent action. The following attacks on Iranian installations, the economic embargo of Iranian goods, oil, and services, and the passage of UN Resolution 598 approving a complete embargo of Iran, was the result.

Conclusion: The ‘Good Oriental’ as a belligerent nation

The Reagan administration paints perhaps the most complex picture of the US-Iran relationship. From the beginning with the release of US hostages from Iranian hands, to Lebanon, to the Contra Affair, Reagan dealt with both the highs and lows of US foreign policy. What is most curious about his administration is the impulse to continuously look for, despite no indication from the Iranian leadership, a new ‘good Oriental’ to take over Iran and guide the Iranians back into the embrace of the United States. Reagan’s assumptions, first, that the Iranians must be led, that they had a “single-leader culture”, which required strong leadership marked his goals as being

founded upon finding the next ‘good Oriental’, rather than engaging with Iran as an entity with a rational point of view, even if that point of view was not decidedly pro-West or pro-US.

Second, that through the coordination of events and the intervention of the US that states, like Lebanon for example, could be rebuilt, stabilized or remade, in a neutral fashion marks him as a figure that understands the Oriental, better than they understand themselves. Reagan knew best, and if he could merely insert US authority, those who viewed the US would view it is a governmental entity able and willing to enforce stability. His disastrous intervention in Lebanon and his miscalculation that the US would not be viewed as a neutral actor, but rather, one that was actively taking sides, paints his administration as not simply deluded, but bounded by Orientalist ideational barriers.

Third, in terms of the Contra Affair a more interesting element of Reagan’s character is important. The Contra Affair represents the willingness of the US to engage in magical thinking about the possibilities for reversing the deleterious trends in US-Iran relations with the importation of arms to illusory moderates with the Government of Iran. The meeting in Iran between Oliver North’s team on the ground in Iran in 1986 represents the most direct contact between the two governments since the Iranian Revolution and the Hostage Crisis of 1979. The subsequent meetings between Hashemi Bahramani, the revelation of the potential closeness in Iranian relations, the sharing of intelligence, and the dispersal of arms, also characterize the desire for finding the ‘good Oriental’. That Reagan felt he was simply securing the release of American hostages in Lebanon does not take away from the fact that powerful individuals,

potential ‘good Orientals’, rather than the people of Iran were the desired target of American interest, not the hearts and minds of the people themselves, over which the US felt it had limited influence.

Finally, the Tanker war represents the tendency to back the ‘good Oriental’ one knows over the claims of the Iranians marks Reagan as an individual willing to excuse allies, like Saddam Hussein, regardless of how reprehensible their actions may be. The fact that the *USS Stark* could be destroyed with nary a move against Iraq, and a simple mine incident with the *USS Samuel B. Roberts* in Iranian territorial waters could be viewed as potential belligerence requiring punishment is somewhat baffling. Saddam represented the ‘good Oriental’ and the US was interested in stability and protection of allies rather than the support of reasonable self-defense.

Orientalism is a lens that allows the viewer to understand the viewee better than they understand themselves. What it does is obscure reality, allows for great violence to be done in its name, and allows for the continuing ignorance of the population and the relative unequivocal support of one’s allies. Orientalism is a lens that allows the researcher to contextualize the actions of the state actor, to understand how decisions can be obscured through perceptions, and finally how behavior can be justified above and beyond closely held moral or political contentions and concerns.

CHAPTER 8
CONCLUSION: THE 'GOOD ORIENTAL' AND AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS IRAN

Introduction

At the outset of this study, I sought to explore the ways in which the constructions of American foreign policy constrain the ways in which American policy makers interact with the Middle East and most specifically the country of Iran. Using Saidian foreign policy narratives I have chosen policy makers that exist around a unique transition point in Middle Eastern history: presidents Lyndon Johnson through Ronald Reagan. The Orientalist thought structures employed by individuals within these administrations constructed the 'good Oriental' to promote their regional interests, and to ensure American national security toward Iran.

I have applied a methodology adapting Edward Said's Orientalism in combination with the conceptualization of the 'good Oriental' as a common theme through five presidential administrations. Methodologically, I have applied Said and several secondary sources (Bill, 1988; Crist, 2012; Alvandi, 2014), presidential memoirs (Reagan, 2007; Carter, 2010), and archival sources to create narratives that I believe constrain and construct American foreign policy toward Iran (Lynch, 2006; Hansen, 2007). The intent of my work is to show how Orientalist foreign policy blinders and thought structures can affect how individuals construct foreign policy and how those constructions can in turn create problematic foreign policy situations. In the following paragraphs I will describe how each chapter contributed to my argument and how my work as a whole contributes to our understanding of how American foreign policy is produced.

In Chapter Three I began by describing the Johnson administration's relationship with Iran: How Johnson's goals for Iran included a package of domestic and military reforms that worked to ensure the stability of the state and how those goals came to dominate the presidential discourse. For Johnson, Muhammed Reza shah Pahlavi proved to be a key ally in creating an American sphere of influence in the Middle East. While Johnson was motivated by a tendency toward domestic reform, his desire to create the space for democratic engagement within Iran was nonexistent; Iran was to be maintained as a power not for the realization of freedom or democracy for the Iranian people but as a security apparatus for the policing of the Middle East.

Through this analysis I demonstrated that Johnson understood the Iranian public through the prism of the shah, or as one foreign policy actor noted, sheep (the Iranians) in want of a shepherd (the shah). Johnson's reasons for doing this had to do with the shah's ability to represent US interests regionally as well as globally. In all ways Johnson viewed the shah as a vital ally and his stability was considered Johnson's foremost priority. Several other documents support Johnson's intent for Iran. The Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) in 1964, which gave US personnel within Iran nominal immunity, placed little faith in the local populace to enforce its own laws upon Americans. This is not uncommon for modern presidents, but insofar as it reflected Johnson's doubt in the Iranian public it stands out as a notable provision.

I also noted how Johnson's policies of domestic reform were twisted by the shah to cement his own power structure. The shah's Five Year Plan, in 1962, removed land from individuals and concentrated authority in an ever smaller cadre of rural landlords, causing the Iranian sub-proletariat to crowd into urban slums, which resulted in a spike

of unemployment, landlessness, destitution, and corruption among local officials. This 'reform' resulted in assassination attempts, discord, and political protest that created many of the persistent problems that would haunt the shah until his removal from power.

All of this reform and continued support for the shah revolved around what was known in the regime as the Persian question; there was no viable alternative in Iran to the shah. Any move toward his abdication or democratic intent would have resulted, at least in the Orientalist lens of the Johnson administration, to mob rule and potential instability, instability being the worst crime an Oriental society could commit. The Johnson administration *needed* the shah, and based upon this premise anything that was required to fulfill this agenda would and should be done; including, if necessary, the imposition of violence, incarceration, or torture.

Also in Chapter Three I detailed the shah's strong sense of mission; the shah's desire to transform Iran into a regional, and perhaps, global power. This ambition to place Iran among the dominant powers in global politics pushed the shah to build, with Johnson's backing, a massive military infrastructure that could manifest the foreign policy goals of his own regime and the goals of American foreign policy in kind. This, for the Johnson administration, became an even more necessary perquisite for the shah given the upcoming withdrawal of British territorial authority in 1971. The piece additionally described how this military largesse with which the US endowed Iran led to the 'good Oriental' insisting on ever greater positions of independence and leverage.

The shah acting as the key and vital support in Johnson's plans for the Middle East also allowed for the shah to gain an edge in bargaining and negotiations with the

Americans. The power of the 'good Oriental' cuts both ways, vesting an agent, rather than the populace, with excess amounts of power regionally, and militarily allows for that authority to be turned against the state if and when the Oriental is unwilling to play ball. This is part and parcel of the criticism levelled against Said's original imagining of Orientalism (Rotter, 2000), in that the Oriental is always constructed from West to East, leaving out the agency of the Oriental as actor. Agency can be regained and the power of a uniquely endowed Oriental regime can manifest its power against its Occidental patron. The 'good Oriental' in this case can indeed go bad. Throughout Chapter Two I explored how an Oriental is dealt with in American foreign policy and the implications for dealing with an individual as the single representative of their people.

Chapter Four related the Nixon administration's abandonment of the domestic and military reforms packaged together, resulting in all of the manifest martial support with none of the requisite demands for an internal provision of resources. Nixon thought of Iran as the only friend in the region, as the only Oriental capable of taking on the responsibilities of regional leadership. In his words, without Iran the rest of those "little miserable countries" would "go down like tenpins".[1] The shah was prized for his moderate role in global, regional, and internal Iranian relations. In Nixon's view, the shah was the only party capable of dealing with other Orientals. He was the first among Orientals, in a sense, the 'good Oriental', so long as the shah was willing to take direction, provide stability, and work toward the betterment of US interests.

[1] OVAL April 8, 1971; White House Tapes; Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California.

As noted in Chapters Three and Four, with the British departure from the Gulf the Nixon administration was compelled to ignore the material extravagance of the shah's rule, including the elaborate celebration at Persepolis on October 11 of 1971, and the increasing brutality of the shah's personal security regime. The first is an example of the shah's willingness to enrich himself at the expense of the population, the second is indicative of the shah's unwillingness to brook any modicum of opposition to his regime. Nixon was on board for either extreme, he merely required obedience; Pahlavi's internal matters were his own concern.

This was true even if the protests against the shah occurred within the territorial confines of the US. This was characterized by the aggressive methods by which Nixon suppressed the Iranian Student National Union (IRSU) protests against the shah; the incarceration of four demonstrators. The demands of IRSU were modest appeals for human rights, public speech, and assembly, rights broadly afforded to Americans, for Iranians in Iran. Nixon dealt with the protestors less harshly than the shah, which is notable one might suppose, although taking one's cues from a dictator might not behoove a democratic society.

Chapter Four also detailed the notable slip away, as a 'good Oriental' was primed to go bad. The slippage is interpreted by Nixon and his foreign policy staff in the shah's attempt to revise oil prices, seeking a 2% royalty increase in the midst of the Oil Embargo imposed by OPEC in 1973 and 1974. The shah misunderstood his place in the international system as a subordinate actor of the US, and in so doing produced the backlash of arms restrictions proposed by the Nixon administration in 1974. Kissinger, nominally the most pro-shah element in the administration, was even compelled to

argue that the shah would not be able to implement his oil policy and his military expansion if the US was unwilling to sell arms in retribution. This is the first major slide in US authority over Iran, but owing to the overthrow of Pahlavi, it would not be the last. What is notable here is the outrage within the administration at what could be considered a modest increase in oil sales. It could be argued that Nixon was already in enough pain with the bite of oil sanctions inflating global currencies and slowing growth, and the idea that the shah would attempt to profit from this situation was simply beyond the remit of what Nixon would expect.

In these first two chapters this piece has drawn the thread of Said's Orientalism in the quest for US power and dominance. The search for the 'good Oriental' was a cornerstone of the Nixon Doctrine and the idea that the 'good Oriental' would seek its own self-interest at the expense of US international goals. Nixon's experience with Pahlavi and his coterie was more often than not a pleasant one; his goals for the region and for the globe were broadly in line with the shah's goals. What was unexpected was that the shah may ever have goals of his own counter to the overarching intent of US foreign policy.

In Chapter Five I then traced the line of the 'good Oriental' into the Ford administration. In the wake of Watergate and Richard Nixon's departure from office, Ford took the helm of the White House and continued much of the same foreign policy outlook toward Iran as his predecessor. For Ford, the issues he engaged revolved around nuclear policy and co-production of arms within Iran. Both issues cast the 'good Oriental' as grasping for more power from the administration.

This piece described the outrage expressed by the shah in respect to the limiting of nuclear fuel proposed under NSDM 292. In many ways, Kissinger's proposal was dramatic in its acceptance of Iran as a nuclear power that was capable of not only reprocessing nuclear fuel from the US, but also acting as a third party agent in the dispensation of nuclear materials to other countries that had bilaterally agreed to US strictures. The potential for a multinational production facility that may have been constructed in Iran was also remarkable. The shah and his coterie of advisors, including Akbar Etemad, reacted not with gratitude for the blessings of their kind-hearted patron but with outrage that they were being treated as an irrational and problematic state like Pakistan or India. For the shah, an original signatory to the Non Proliferation Treaty of 1968, this treatment at the hands of his longstanding ally could only be treated as a rebuke. This was emphasized by the fact that other notable US allies, France and West Germany, were allowed access to US nuclear fuel without the same additional strictures. What the shah did not understand was that he was not equal culturally or strategically in the eyes of US interests. Orientalist thought structures precluded equal treatment and even the 'good Oriental', Iran, was treated with suspicion.

As was also described in Chapter Five, nuclear policy fell along similar lines as military co-production. The intent of the US was to prop up the shah militarily in only so far as he could be kept in line with US interests. The balancing act was, in essence, to keep the shah at a low simmer, still dependent upon the US for arms and supplies while not imposing such strict limits that the shah might stray to the Soviet Union or China for military supplies. Once again, as with nuclear production, the shah and Iran were not treated equally; they were kept, or the attempt was made to keep, them in a subordinate

position premised upon securing the shah to US interests and preventing him from straying beyond the borders of American foreign policy goals.

The abandonment by Nixon of Johnson's relatively balanced approach to supporting Iran and the increasingly egregious methods the shah was employing to maintain control over Iran proved too much to justify to the American people. In a sense, the 'linchpin' of the Nixon Doctrine, Iran, was failing to provide the needed subservient role as an American vassal state. The deepening crisis that was overtaking the shah domestically would spell the end of the cordial relationship of the US and Iran.

I then described the Carter administration in Chapter Six. Carter, who is often held up as the president most willing to address the shah's position on human rights, only held one meeting with the shah that explicitly addressed the subject. While Jimmy Carter, Rosalyn Carter, the shah Reza Pahlavi and Empress Farah inhaled tear gas during his November 15, 1977 visit to the United States; or when Chip Carter had been assaulted on October 14, 1978; or when Khomeini himself had secured the US embassy against protest and assault on February 14, 1979 the message of substantial international and domestic unrest was unclear to Carter. When Khomeini offered support for Carter on February 27, 1979, offering stable governance because that is what the United States desired more than anything, perhaps; more than popular rule, more than popular support, more in fact than the popular force of governance which may lead to something better than stability, popular opposition, political redress, and yes, if necessary popular revolution. If the shah played the role of the 'good Oriental' except when negotiating for higher oil revenues, Khomeini played the role of the 'good

Oriental' until it no longer benefited him to do so. Until, having reached his zenith of power, it allowed him to take the very reigns once held by US interests.

Jimmy Carter was as vulnerable to Orientalist thought structures as any of his forebears. Rather than perceive the protests of the Iranians in the US or in Iran as harbingers of increasing dissatisfaction with Pahlavi's regime, Carter doubled down on support for the shah throughout his tenure. Then, as if learning nothing from the failure to adequately appreciate the level of discord at work within and without Iran, Carter found a new potential 'good Oriental' in the form of Khomeini. One wonders if Carter or anyone viewing the demands for political redress ever paused to reflect upon whether or not the opposition to the shah or the Ayatollah was legitimate. The blinders of Orientalism, and the predilection for finding a new 'good Oriental' failing the presence of the former office holder seemed to blind Carter to the potential for seeing other possible avenues for innovative policy making that better reflected the long term interests of both the US and Iran. Rather than seeking a replacement, would it not it be wiser to elevate the Iranian populace?

With the hostage taking on November 4, 1979, the potential for creative alternatives to the shah was precluded by the emotional response to Americans held within the US embassy. Carter now became obsessed with returning the hostages to American soil and doubled down on his Carter Doctrine which sought to secure the Persian Gulf as a site of vital national security interest. This is not to excuse the hostage taking, nor is it to alleviate Khomeini from the responsibility of administering his new government in a way consistent with international law. It does mean that one should take a critical look at US reactions to international incidents with an eye toward clear

thinking of what is possible among equal individuals, rather than viewing what is possible for *those* people, or put more succinctly those Orientals. This is the failure of Carter. Despite his human rights talk he was still a prisoner of perceiving the 'Other' as incapable of self-rule. As Johnson's administration argued, Iranians were sheep in want of a shepherd; as Nixon and Ford argued, the Iranians existed as ignorant citizens beholden to a strong leader, capable of manifesting reforms in line with US interests; for Reagan, as I have shown, a similar method of thinking is adopted, to the peril of the regime.

With Carter's successful negotiations manifesting in the release of the American hostages on January 20, 1980, his role in the US-Iran saga came to an end. Reagan was besieged by a new Iranian government pointedly at odds with the US on issues of foreign and domestic policy. What marks Reagan as fundamentally following the through line of Orientalist thought is the determination of his administration in finding a new 'good Oriental' in which to place their faith. This mania to find a new subservient actor to US interests almost spelled the end of Reagan's administration in the Iran-Contra Affair.

Reagan can be viewed as blinded by Orientalist thought structures first in Lebanon. In negotiating the end of the Lebanese civil war, which had been under way since April of 1976, Reagan found disparate factions battling each other for control in the northern Levant. For the five years before the US intervention attempted to neutrally administrate upon a series of striated alliances and positions. While the Reagan administration took pains to not favor any particular faction, this was simply impossible. Support of the national government in Beirut was perceived to be one of several options

for political power. The consequence of thinking that US forces, governed by a US administration, could know the people of Lebanon better than they knew themselves resulted in the deaths of several hundred US marines and government officials. Reagan's hubris is the mark of the Occidental; he did not need to justify his aims, and those aims were without question the rights of the international dominant agent toward the subordinate one.

By early February of 1984 Reagan had completely withdrawn US forces from Lebanon. This notable withdrawal without a military response of any kind can be viewed as curious if one thinks of Ronald Reagan as an uncompromising military hawk. However, viewed pragmatically, Reagan seemed willing to cut his losses, abdicate his international role and step away from a conflict he clearly did not understand.

What followed was the Iran-Contra Affair. As was detailed in Chapter Six, the Iran-Contra Affair or Scandal can be viewed as the lengths a leader will go in self-delusion to find a 'good Oriental' willing to establish positive relations with the US. Reagan's détente, which included the first on-the-ground meeting of US and Iranian officials since the hostage taking, was a saga that involved numerous weapons shipments between first the Israelis and then the CIA to secure five US hostages held in Lebanon. Oliver North and his team even went so far as to welcome Bahramani, a nephew of Hashemi Rafsanjani, to the White House and gave him a full tour.

Reagan's engagement in magical thinking exemplified in the idea that the 'good Oriental' existed just over the horizon was so delusional that it strains credulity to read. The weapons were fueling no moderate goals in the Khomeini regime. There was no expectation, after four weapons shipments, that any US hostages, save one, would be

released. Worse, Reagan risked his entire political career, kept the negotiations secret from Congress until well into the process, and allowed for key actors within his administration to skirt national and international law. The pursuit of the 'good Oriental' is a devilish process: it requires ignorance of the population, it requires the willful denial of information other than that that serves the predisposition of the foreign policy actor, and perhaps most problematically it requires the concealment of one's true intentions from the popular gaze.

Keeping the situation during the Iran-Contra Scandal quiet required Reagan to openly opine in his diary that the next shipment was always going to be the one that made him look like he was a skilled diplomat and politician. The inability to perceive clearly the will of the Iranian leadership to obscure and deride the process for their own gains is not an offshoot of their policies; it is entirely in line with every element of their espoused foreign policy. They sought to embarrass and oppose US interests, the policy of a nation recently playing host to a dictator for twenty five years that routinely tortured and brutalized his population.

The final section of Chapter Six relates the belligerent nation status that the reader will be all too familiar with concerning Iran and the US. The sinking of the *USS Samuel B. Roberts* on April 14, 1988 by an Iranian sea mine in Iranian territorial waters spelled the end of whatever possible détente could have existed between the two countries. Afterward, Reagan took a far harsher stance on Iran and called for the destruction of Iranian oil platforms and naval ships on a controlled and limited basis. Reagan's pursuit of the 'good Oriental' had taken some notable twists and turns, finally culminating in the threat-based perception of Iran commonly held today.

The Pursuit of the 'good Oriental'

American foreign policy seeks a counterpart that will pursue its whims and interests regardless of their domestic trials and tribulations. From Johnson to Reagan we can see the process unfold from a 'good Oriental' that serves as a subordinate under Johnson, to one that slips toward independence under Nixon and Ford, to one that loses his role under Carter, to the search for a new actor that will support the US interests in an unwavering fashion.

I use Orientalist discourse from a number of sources to construct how Orientalist thought structures are used in the application of American foreign policy. The use of a uniquely American Orientalism as being slightly different apart from British, German, and other manifestations of the concept is a key idea here (Little, 2002; McAlister, 2006). This piece uses the term 'good Oriental' to define a subset of Orientals within the context of American foreign policy constructions, based on Said's concept, of the "good natives". In Said's (1979) quotation from Edward James Balfour parliamentary testimony (33), the 'good Oriental' of 'good native' is the agent or actor that understands their place within the structure of international politics as subordinate and at the same time beneficial to their personal interests. They benefit from the actions and support of their foreign patron; they are capable of recognizing their place as first among other Orientals but not equal to Western allies; and finally, they recognize that their international, regional, and domestic goals are tethered to the whims of their extra-territorial backer.

To unearth these foreign policy narratives I used a database of 4,184 archival documents, which included: State Department Telexes that described impressions, statistics, and reporting on the current conditions of the Iranian state, mainly found within the National Security File, but sometimes sorted into specific Staffers and State

Department experts who had particular dealings with Iran. For example, within the Johnson administration, the personal papers of Martin Herz, Robert Komer, and Harold D. Saunders were vital in this exploration. Internal White House documents, collected in the White House file, include memorandums that collected the administration's perceptions of Iran, directives on policy matters, and perhaps most importantly directives and agendas on personal meetings and public behavior. These 'Agendas' were important because unlike other policy related behaviors or directives, which are internally discussed with some underlying logic or interests in mind, the 'Agendas' instruct officials on what is important personally and culturally. These impressions, which the administration felt were important enough to include, indicate the overall framing or narrative that was being established about or around the figure of the Iranian.

Herein, the 'good Oriental' narrativised line is assisted by the wave of neo-Gramscian and post structural foreign policy analysis applied by scholars in political science (Hansen, 2006; Gill, 2012). The desire among historians and political scientists alike is to establish that the causal *is* possible (Jackson, 2010), if not entirely preferable (Buzan and Hansen, 2009); and that to derive broader implications one must go beyond the role of simple narratives or past behaviors (Hansen, 2012). The project then becomes one of historical investigation of the narratives established by policy makers in reference to the Middle East, how they interpret current events, their positionality within the policy making apparatus, and then finally, how these interpretations construct the broader narrative.

The utility of Orientalism as a lens allows us to understand how decisions are made by high level policy makers with access to far greater levels of information than

the laymen. American foreign policy makers, specifically those housed in the Executive branch, are the sources for the information this piece has related. The internal discourse, justifications, characterizations, predispositions, and prejudices that characterize the thought structures and constructions of policy makers within these five presidencies have a central tendency, or through line. They all view the Iranians as subordinates in need of direction and they view the US as an actor that, at least in terms of Cold War politics, is required to take an aggressive and assertive role in managing the affairs of foreign nations.

In my work I have used three elements: archival material, presidential diaries, and secondary sources to triangulate the construction of the foreign policy discourse within each administration. I make the case that the 'good Oriental' is a pursuit found within the relations of each presidential administration. The 'good Oriental' allows for each presidency to represent that they have the best intentions in mind, because they have an actor within the context of a foreign government parroting the language and obsequiousness that the foreign policy patron expects and in some cases, demands. The 'good Oriental' can go bad. They can go through their own delusions, come to believe that they are an actor deserving of equal status, rather than their prescribed role as a taker rather than a maker of foreign policy. When this happens, specifically in the Ford and Carter administrations, pains are taken to represent administration perspectives on the behavior of their foreign counterparts. Materials on how the Government of Iran (GOI) relates their impressions are by intention given through the impressions of the foreign policy makers relating them. Thus, the use of Iranian material

is included but filtered through the arguments made for or against specific American policies.

What constitutes the domain and structure of American Foreign policy are the narratives those internal practitioners create to understand a complex and multifaceted Iran. In light of this observation, this dissertation adopts a critical perspective in analyzing narrativised barriers and borders that shape the way actors within the policy-making structure create meaning and act within and around another country, in this case Iran. Each administration from Johnson through Reagan brought to the table different political goals, objectives, and moral convictions, but what we shall see throughout is a baseline of Orientalist thought and practice that governs, constrains, and delimits possible thinking about how the Iranian, and the American, can and should interact. My purpose in this piece is to critically analyze through historical narrative various administrations' approaches to Iran, and in so doing create some modicum of clarity in the relationship between the two states going forward.

Beyond the somewhat facile notion that Orientalism can us assist in understanding how foreign policy is created in practice, the theoretical implications of the application of this idea is important in its own right. While some have argued that Edward Said's constructions within Orientalism take away agency from the Oriental actor one can see in the above analysis of the shah, that an understanding of Orientalism predisposes that each Occidental actor perceives the capabilities and limitations of the Oriental, but this does not mean that the Oriental actor lacks justifiable agency. The shah at most times in his tenure sought to breach the boundaries that Occidental actors placed upon him. From this vantage point I argue that Hansen (2006)

and other CSS theorists encourage us to perceive the way in which language constructs and understands the actions of others, which when combined with Orientalism's construction of subordinate meanings the theoretical importance of this study becomes clear. More specifically the construction of language within each administration demonstrates the importance of analyzing and deconstructing the meanings assigned to the shah as of signature importance.

How does this play out practically in my analysis? Each president attempted to hem the shah into the role that an Occidental leader believed the 'good Oriental' was capable of. Subverting and overcoming this narrow construction allows for the Oriental actor to achieve agency and contend with the constructions placed upon them. From the shah's meeting with John F. Kennedy where he notably declared that "We are not your Stooges!", to the resistance toward Johnson on the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) which would have given Americans carte blanche without legal restriction in Iran; or the 'gouging' that Nixon and Ford reacted so antagonistically to.[2] The shah proved himself to be not simply a one-dimensional 'good Oriental' but an actor more than willing to contend with a global power for parity, if not equality in his country's abilities.

In the post-shah context we can see even more resistance to Occidental constructions of the Oriental. From the moment that Carter put Khomeini in charge of embassy security, or in his attempts to release the American hostages held in Iran from November 4, 1979 to January 20, 1981, The Occidental actor was forced to deal with a

[2] Quoted in Little, D. (1994), "A Fool's Errand: America and the Middle East, 1961–1969," in Kunz ed., *The Diplomacy of the Crucial Decade,* p. 289.

consistently challenging Oriental actor. Carter effectively bends to the whims of his supposed inferior in negotiations, with an effective ransom payment. By Reagan's era we see how far an administration will go, even putting their own political survival in jeopardy to gain the assistance of a new 'good Oriental' during the Iran-Contra Affair.

Using both CSS and critical discourse analysis to view the actions by foreign policy leaders and the constructions they invent and perpetuate as being both power based and ultimately unable to articulate the world in an accurate and beneficial manner (Hanson 2006). For American foreign policy scholars this is a potent warning, understanding in this sense what the 'good Oriental' is capable of ignores the notion that exogenous actors can both have agency and understand their role clearly and accurately, especially if this role is one that does not serve the interests of Americans or of the West. Orientalism provides the assurance to the Occidental policy maker that they know the Other better than they know themselves, and more forcefully stated an overreliance on these constructions, what Said called a 'constellation of meanings', creates foreign policy blinders that contour and hem-in the possibilities for creative policy making and innovation. These blinders create limitations, they construct destructive policy making, and allow for ideas to move forward that patronize and treat even the 'good Oriental' as a subaltern actor rather than an equal or sensible ally.

APPENDIX
ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS

Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library

Herz, Martin F."The 'New Men' in Iran and their challenge to American Policy in Iran" National Security File, papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson President, 1963-1969, Country File, Middle East Box 137, LBJ.

Herz, Martin F. "Incoming Telegram Department of State, April 10, 1965" National Security File, papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson President, 1963-1969, Country File, Middle East Folder 4, Box 136, LBJ.

Herz, Martin F. 1963, "The Persian Question", National Security File, papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson President, 1963-1969, Country File, Middle East Box 136, LBJ.

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