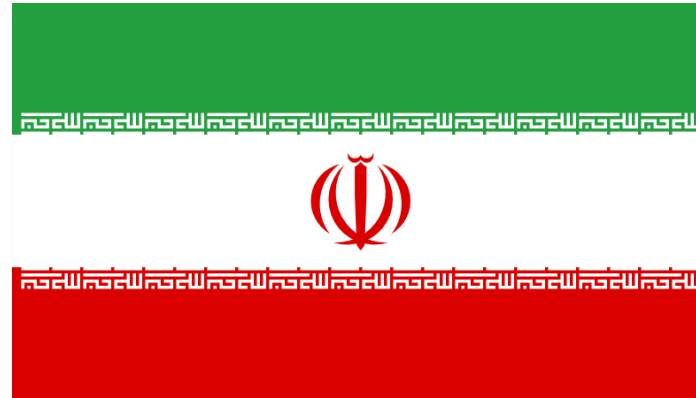




# Resources for Studying Iran



**Holly Dages**

TRADOC G-2 – Foreign Military Studies Office

22 July 2024

This briefing is UNCLASSIFIED

Approved for public release. Distribution is unlimited

\*Note that this is a study tool. Inclusion of a source does not imply USG or DOD endorsement of an entity's views



U.S. ARMY

UNCLASSIFIED



# Iran Landing Zone

## Forthcoming

Central repository of TRADOC G-2 and Army resources on Iran

<https://community.apan.org/wg/tradoc-g2/p/iranproducts>



UNCLASSIFIED

# Foreign Military Studies Office



FMSO is all about original-language sources and primary documents - FMSO's *Operational Environment Watch* journal provides translated selections and analysis from a diverse range of foreign articles and other media that our analysts believe will give military and security experts an added dimension to their critical thinking about the Operational Environment

- Find analysis of Iranian national strategy, technology and tactics

<https://fmso.tradoc.army.mil/tag/iran/>



UNCLASSIFIED

# Foreign Influence in Iran



**Military DIME (M-DIME) Research Project** – assessments of Russian and Chinese military influence in Iran

<https://fmso.tradoc.army.mil/military-dime-research-project/>



# Primary Sources



**Exercise caution when accessing foreign websites. When possible, use cached versions etc and/or a VPN or other attribution management tools**

## **Key Documents – Don't just let people *tell* you about how Iranian leaders think – see what they prioritize in some of the most important documents published by the Islamic Republic:**

- Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's "Guardianship of the Jurist (*Velayat-e Vaqih*)"—the founder of the Islamic Republic's doctrine for an Islamic government  
[https://www.iranchamber.com/history/rkhomeini/books/velayat\\_faqeeh.pdf](https://www.iranchamber.com/history/rkhomeini/books/velayat_faqeeh.pdf)
- Islamic Republic of Iran Constitution  
[https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Iran\\_1989](https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Iran_1989)
- "Leader's Speech in Meeting with Commanders of Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps," Khamenei Website, 17 September 2013,  
<https://english.khamenei.ir/news/1827/Leader-s-Speech-in-Meeting-with-Commanders-of-Islamic-Revolutionary>
  - **Why read?** This is the speech that Khamenei gave to the IRGC that would, in essence, give the Rouhani presidency the blessing to sit down with world powers and negotiate the nuclear deal that became known as the JCPOA through "heroic flexibility."
- "Leader's Friday Prayer Address," Khamenei Website, 19 June 2009,  
<https://english.khamenei.ir/news/1159/Leader-s-Friday-Prayer-Address>
  - **Why read?:** This is a historic speech where Khamenei sided with incumbent President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad after protesters took to the streets against the 2009 fraudulent election known as the Green Movement.



UNCLASSIFIED

# Documentaries & Podcasts



***Empire*** (Episodes 95 – 125, not all are Iran-focused) – by Golhanger Podcasts

<https://open.spotify.com/show/0sBh58hSTReUQiK4axYUVx>

Historian William Dalrymple and journalist Anita Anand take listeners on a journey from ancient Persia to modern Iran by interviewing prominent historians with specific area focuses. The podcast series has plenty of banter, humor, and random factoids that will keep listeners engaged.

***History of Modern Iran*** – by The Dig

<https://thedigradio.com/History%20of%20Iran/>

A four-part podcast series on modern Iranian history featuring historian Eskandar Sadeghi-Boroujerdi and journalist Golnar Nikpour starting with the 1906 Constitutional Revolution to the 2022 Women, Life, Freedom uprising.

***Iran and the West (Parts I-III)*** – by the BBC

***The Man Who Changed the World*** (Part I):

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yfkqf\\_wWEsM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yfkqf_wWEsM)

***The Pariah State*** (Part II): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-rwDqHjouUU>

***Nuclear Confrontation*** (Part III): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qxv2AO1m8co>

The best documentary series on modern Iran to date, which was launched to mark thirty years of the Islamic Republic. The BBC interviewed Shah-era officials, current Islamic Republic officials, and officials from various US administrations to explain the history of Iran from 1979 until 2009.



# Documentaries cont'd



***Decadence and Downfall In Iran: The Greatest Party In History*** – by BBC Four

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dWxwtILhfvE>

This documentary gives a closer look at Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi's ostentatious party celebrating 2,500 years of the monarchy, which prompted the 1979 revolution.

***Bitter Rivals: Iran and Saudi Arabia*** – by FRONTLINE PBS

Part I: <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/documentary/bitter-rivals-iran-and-saudi-arabia/#video-1>

Part II: <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/documentary/bitter-rivals-iran-and-saudi-arabia/#video-2>

***Inside Iran: What Happened to Iran's Women-led Uprising?*** – by VICE

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VAQRCCWsi-s>

A short documentary with a rare look at Iran post-Women, Life, Freedom uprising, the biggest internal threat to the Islamic Republic's four-decade-plus history.

***Iran*** – Anthony Bourdain: Parts Unknown

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e6nLKfy-gp0>

A more human look at Iran through the eyes of its food and culture.



# US-Iran Relations



## Books:

- Crist, David. *The Twilight War: The Secret History of America's Thirty-Year Conflict with Iran*. Penguin Publishing Group, 2013.
- Byrne, Malcolm and Mark J. Gasiorowski. *Mohammad Mosaddeq and the 1953 Coup in Iran*. Syracuse University Press, 2017.
- Parsi, Trita. *Treacherous Alliance: The Secret Dealings of Israel, Iran, and the United States*. Yale University Press, 2007.
- Pollack, Kenneth M.. *The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict Between Iran and America*. Random House, 2005.
- Solomon, Jay. *The Iran Wars: Spy Games, Bank Battles, and the Secret Deals That Reshaped the Middle East*. Random House, 2016.

## Reports and Essays:

- "Iran: Background and U.S. Policy." Congressional Research Service, 22 April 2024.





# Military & IRGC



## Books:

- Azizi, Arash. *The Shadow Commander: Soleimani, the US, and Iran's Global Ambitions*. Oneworld Publications, 2021.
- Bajoghli, Narges. *Iran Reframed: Anxieties of Power in the Islamic Republic*. Stanford University Press, 2019.
- Ostovar, Afshon. *Vanguard of the Imam: Religion, Politics, and Iran's Revolutionary Guards*. Oxford University Press, 2018.
- Razoux, Pierre. *The Iran-Iraq War*. Belknap Press, 2015.
- Tabatabai, Ariane M. *No Conquest, No Defeat: Iran's National Security Strategy*. Oxford University Press, 2020.
- Uskowi, Nader. *Temperature Rising: Iran's Revolutionary Guards and Wars in the Middle East*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2018.

## Reports and Essays:

- Arbabi, Kasra. Saeid Golkar. *The View From Tehran: Iran's Militia Doctrine*, Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, February 2021.
- "Iran Military Power: Ensuring Regime Survival and Securing Regional Dominance," Defense Intelligence Agency, 2019.
- Eisenstadt, Michael. *Iranian military developments and trends*. Chatham House, April 2023.
- Eisenstadt, Michael. *Operating in the Gray Zone: Countering Iran's Asymmetric Way of War*. Washington Institute, January 2020.



UNCLASSIFIED

# Military & IRGC



## Reports and Essays (continued):

- Golkar, Saeid. *The Islamic Republic's Art of Survival: Neutralizing Domestic and Foreign Threats*. Washington Institute, 2013.
- *Gulf security after 2020*, International Institute for Strategic Studies, December 2017.
- Maloney, Suzanne. "Iran's Order of Chaos." *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2024.
- McInnis, J. Matthew. "Iranian Concepts of Warfare: Understanding Tehran's Evolving Military Doctrines." American Enterprise Institute, February 2017.
- Nadimi, Farzin. "Iran's Evolving Approach to Asymmetric Naval Warfare Strategy and Capabilities in the Persian Gulf." Washington Institute, April 2020.
- Ostovar, Afshon. "Iran's Revolutionary Guards Will Never Stand Down." *Foreign Policy*, 18 October 2022.
- Segal, David "The Iran-Iraq War: A Military Analysis." *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1988.
- Taleblu, Behnam Ben. "Arsenal: Assessing the Islamic Republic of Iran's Ballistic Missile Program." Foundation for Defense of Democracies, February 2023.



# Nuclear program



## Books:

- Delpeche, Thérèse (editor). *Iran and the Bomb: The Abdication of International Responsibility*. Hurst, 2006.
- Patrikarakos, David. *Nuclear Iran: The Birth of an Atomic State*. I.B. Tauris, 2020.

## Reports and Essays:

- Arnold, Aaron, Matthew Bunn, Caitlin Chase, Steven E. Miller, Rolf Mowatt-Larssen, William H. Tobey. "The Iran Nuclear Archive: Impressions and Implications." Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, 2019.
- Davenport, Kelsey, "Constraining Iran's Nuclear Potential in the Absence of the JCPOA." Arms Control Association, July 2024.
- Davenport, Kelsey, Daryl G. Kimball, and Greg Thielmann. "Solving the Iranian Nuclear Puzzle: The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action," August 2015.
- "Iran's Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Capabilities - A net assessment," International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2011.
- Mills, Claire. "Research Brief: What is the status of the Iran nuclear deal?" House of Commons, April 2024.
- Samore, Gary (editor). "The Iran Nuclear Deal: A Definitive Guide." Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, November 2017.



U.S. ARMY

UNCLASSIFIED

# Iran & Asia



## Books:

- Ghattas, Kim. *Black Wave: Saudi Arabia, Iran and the Rivalry That Unravelling the Middle East*. Picador Paper, 2021.
- Vatanka, Alex. *Iran and Pakistan: Security, Diplomacy and American Influence*. I.B. Tauris, 2017.

## Reports and Essays:

- Ghez, Jeremy, Robert A. Guffey, Lydia Hansell, Theodore W. Karasik, Alireza Nader, Frederic Wehrey. "Saudi-Iranian Relations Since the Fall of Saddam Rivalry, Cooperation, and Implications for U.S. Policy," RAND, 2009.



# Iranian History

## Historical Books:

- Amanat, Abbas. *Iran: A Modern History*. Yale University Press, 2019.
- Axworthy, Michael. *A History of Iran: Empire of the Mind*. Basic Books, 2010.
- Kapuscinski, Ryszard. *Shah of Shahs*. Vintage, 1992 (reprint).
- Keddie, Nikki R.. *Modern Iran: Roots and Result of Revolution*. Yale University Press, 2006.
- Milani, Abbas. *The Shah*. St. Martin's Griffin, 2012.

## Memoirs and Novels:

- Farman Farmaian, Sattareh. *Daughter of Persia: A Women's Journey from Her Father's Harem Through the Islamic Revolution*. Crown, 2006.

Arguably, this is the best and most underrated Iran memoir, given the unique perch Farman Farmaian has as the daughter of a Qajar prince who later ends up working in Mohammad Reza Shah's government. Her insight through her connections (given her elite background) really helps readers understand why the 1979 revolution happened.

Pezeshkzad, Iraj. *My Uncle Napoleon: A Novel*. Modern Library, 2006.

The most beloved novel of the twentieth century that everyone must read at least once to understand Iranian culture.

- Satrapi, Marjane. *The Complete Persepolis: Volumes 1 and 2*. Pantheon, 2007.

A graphic novel that beautifully tells the story of the revolution until the 1990s. There's also a movie version that was Oscar-nominated.



# Iranian Youth & Society



## Books:

- Azizi, Arash. *What Iranians Want: Women, Life, Freedom*. Oneworld Publications, 2024.
- Harris, Keyvan. *A Social Revolution: Politics and the Welfare State in Iran*. University of California Press, 2017.
- Hashemi, Manata. *Coming of Age in Iran: Poverty and the Struggle for Dignity*. NYU Press, 2020.
- Mottahedeh, Roy P.. *The Mantle of the Prophet: Religion and Politics in Iran*. Oneworld Publications, 2008.
- Peterson, Scott. *Let the Swords Encircle Me: Iran—A Journey Behind the Headlines*. Simon & Schuster, 2010.
- Secour, Lara. *Children of Paradise: The Struggle for the Soul of Iran*. Riverhead Books, 2017.
- Tabaar, Mohammad Ayatollahi. *Religious Statecraft: The Politics of Islam in Iran*. Columbia University Press, 2018.

## Reports and Essays:

- Dagres, Holly, *Iranians on #SocialMedia*. Atlantic Council, 2022.
- Dagres, Holly, *Meet Iran's Gen Z: the Driving Force Behind the Protests*, Foreign Policy, 1 November 2022.



# Hostage Diplomacy



## Books and Articles:

- Bahari, Maziar. *Then They Came For Me*. Oneworld Publications, January 2013.
- Kmiotek, Celeste. “The Levinson Act means all Americans must return home—not just citizens.” Atlantic Council, August 2023.
- Limbert, John. “Why the Islamic Republic of Iran keeps taking hostages.” Atlantic Council, November 2019.
- Secor, Laura. “The Man Who Refused to Spy.” *New Yorker*, September 2020.
- Secor, Laura. “Her Husband Was a Princeton Graduate Student. Then He Was Taken Prisoner in Iran.” *New York Times*, July 2018.

## Panels and Podcasts:

- “Left behind: Legal and policy paths for Iran’s hostages” two-part panel by Atlantic Council, 2022

Probably the most informative session out there featuring the US Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs, former hostages, and the families of those taken hostage (at the time).

- *544 Days* Podcast – by Gimlet, Crooked Media and A24

*Washington Post* correspondent Jason Rezaian compelling tells the story of his 444-day ordeal in the notorious Evin Prison.



# Reliable Sources of Analysis



## Politics & Foreign Policy

AL-MONITOR

RadioFreeEurope  
RadioLiberty

CARNEGIE  
ENDOWMENT FOR  
INTERNATIONAL PEACE

IRANWIRE

Amwaj  
.media

CRITICAL THREATS

RETHINKING IRAN

IRAN  
INTERNATIONAL  
ENGLISH

STIMSON

THE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE  
for Near East Policy

Atlantic Council

## Economics & Development

The Iran Primer

OE  
Watch

## Military

Bourse  
& Bazaar  
بورس و بازار

RAND  
CORPORATION

ISW  
INSTITUTE FOR THE  
STUDY OF WAR

FDD  
FOUNDATION FOR  
DEFENSE OF DEMOCRATS

## Technology & Innovation

*These are the author's opinion the best sources of analysis on these topics. Many RFIs can be answered, or at least refined, by first checking existing literature from these sources – links on following page*





# Recommended Sources

## Operational Environment Watch Iran Landing Zone (TRADOC G-2 Portal)

<https://community.apan.org/wg/tradoc-g2/fmso/>  
<https://fmso.tradoc.army.mil/tag/iran/>

### Think tanks Covering Military/Foreign Policy

Atlantic Council – Iran Strategy Project (IranSource)  
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace - Iran  
RAND (FFRDC)<sup>[1]</sup>  
United States Institute of Peace- Iran Primer  
Congressional Research Service (All their Iran reports)  
Brookings - Iran  
RUSI - Iran

<https://jamestown.org/programs/cb/>  
<https://carnegieendowment.org/regions/iran>  
<https://www.rand.org/topics/iran.html>  
<https://iranprimer.usip.org/>  
<https://sgp.fas.org/crs/mideast/index.html>  
<https://www.brookings.edu/regions/middle-east-north-africa/iran/>  
<https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/regions-and-country-groups/iran#latest-publications>

Middle East Institute – Iran Program  
Middle East Program: Iran (CSIS)  
American Enterprise Institute – Critical Threats  
International Crisis Group - Iran  
The Iran-U.S./Israel Trigger List (ICG)  
International Institute for Strategic Studies - Iran  
Foundation for Defense of Democracies – Iran Program

<https://www.mei.edu/programs/iran-program>  
<https://www.csis.org/programs/middle-east-program/iran>  
<https://www.criticalthreats.org/locations/iran>  
<https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/gulf-and-arabian-peninsula/iran>  
<https://www.crisisgroup.org/trigger-list/iran-us-trigger-list>  
<https://www.iiss.org/en/regions/middle-east-and-north-africa/iran/>  
<https://www.fdd.org/projects/iran-program/>

### Economics & Development

Stanford Iran 2040  
Bourse & Bazaar  
Tyranny of Numbers

<https://iranian-studies.stanford.edu/iran-2040-project/home>  
<https://www.bourseandbazaar.com/>  
<https://djavadsalehi.com/>

### Media and Newsletters

The Iranist Newsletter  
IranWire  
Al-Monitor - Iran  
RFE/RL – Radio Farda  
Iran International

<https://www.theiranist.com/>  
<https://iranwire.com/en/>  
<https://www.al-monitor.com/iran>  
<https://www.rferl.org/Farda-English>  
<https://www.iranintl.com/en>

<sup>[1]</sup> Federally Funded Research and Development Centers

# China-Iran Relations

## Books:

- Ehteshami, Anoushiravan and Niv Horesh. *How China's Rise is Changing the Middle East*. Routledge, 2020.
- Esfandiary, Dina and Ariane Tabatabai. *Triple-Axis: Iran's Relations with Russia and China*. I.B. Tauris, 2021.
- Reardon-Anderson, James (editor). *The Red Star and the Crescent: China and the Middle East*. Hurst, 2018.
- Garver, John W.. *China and Iran: Ancient Partners in a Post-Imperial World*. University of Washington Press, 2006.

## Reports and Essays:

- Akbarzadeh, Shahram Dara Conduit. "Great Power-Middle Power Dynamics: The Case of China and Iran." *Journal of Contemporary China*, 13 November 2018.
- Bazoobandi, Sara. "Iran's Strategies in Response to Changes in US-China Relations." *Middle East Policy*, 14 February 2024.
- Fulton, Jonathan. "China between Iran and the Gulf Monarchies." *Middle East Policy*, 6 December 2021.
- Fulton, Jonathan. "The China–Iran Comprehensive Strategic Partnership: A Tale of two Regional Security Complexes." *Asian Affairs*, Volume 53, 2022.
- Scita, Jacopo. "Role Theory and China's Relations with Iran: All-weather Friends on Beijing's Terms." Doctoral thesis, Durham University, 2022.

# Russia-Iran Relations

## Books:

- Divsallar, Abdolrasool (editor). *Struggle for Alliance: Russia and Iran in the Era of War in Ukraine*. Bloomsbury, September 2024.
- Esfandiary, Dina and Ariane Tabatabai. *Triple-Axis: Iran's Relations with Russia and China*. I.B. Tauris, 2021.
- Grajewski, Nicole. *Russia and Iran: Partners in Defiance from Syria to Ukraine*. Hurst Publishers, September 2024.

## Reports and Essays:

- Azizi, Hamidreza. "Iran-Russia Relations in the Middle East Amid the War in Ukraine." Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, February 2023.
- Katz, Mark. "Putin, Ahmadinejad, and the Iranian Nuclear Crisis." *Middle East Policy*, Winter 2006.
- Katz, Mark. "Russia and Iran." *Middle East Policy*, Autumn 2012.
- Katz, Mark. "Russian-Iranian Relations in the Obama Era." *Middle East Policy*, Summer 2010.
- Kozhanov, Nikolay A.. "Russian-Iranian economic relations: Opportunities and challenges." *The Maghreb Review*, 2012.
- Notte, Hanna. "Russia's Invasion of Ukraine: The Iran Nuclear Price Tag." Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, February 2023.
- Parker, W. John. "Between Russia and Iran: Room to Pursue American Interests in Syria." National Defense University, January 2019.
- Therme, Clément. "Iran and Russia in the Middle East." *Middle East Journal*, Autumn 2018.