

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Misperceiving Iran through a Weberian Lens and the United States' Interpretive Failure in Foreign Policy

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Received: 2025-10-06	Revised: 2025-12-28	Accepted: 2026-01-05	Initial Publish: 2026-04-24	Final Publish: 2026-05-01
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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the paragraph beginning with “The relationship between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United States constitutes one of the most enduring...”, the authors assert that conventional strategic explanations are “insufficient,” but do not explicitly state the analytical criteria by which insufficiency is judged. Please specify the evaluative standard (explanatory scope, predictive failure, policy inefficacy, etc.).

The paragraph starting “This persistent pattern of misunderstanding reflects a deeper epistemological problem.” would benefit from an explicit distinction between epistemological misperception and ontological disagreement. This will strengthen conceptual rigor.

The statement “resistance constitutes the very definition of political responsibility” is theoretically strong but conceptually dense. Consider unpacking how this principle constrains actual policy choice.

The claim that U.S. cognition is rooted in Enlightenment rationality is compelling, but the article should clarify whether this is treated as a historical inheritance or an active institutional ideology today.

In the paragraph discussing the Hostage Crisis and sanctions, please specify how this “abnormality narrative” becomes institutionalized (e.g., doctrine formation, intelligence framing, congressional rhetoric).

The sentence “The agreement thus became a case study in interpretive failure rather than strategic miscalculation” is central to the article’s contribution. Please explicitly restate how this conclusion follows from your theoretical framework.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The claim “At the core of this interpretive failure lies a clash of rationalities” introduces a central theoretical mechanism. However, the article does not yet explain how this clash is empirically identified in the data. Please indicate the observable indicators used in your textual analysis.

In the paragraph beginning “The central research question guiding this inquiry asks...”, the working hypothesis is well articulated, but the manuscript would benefit from listing two or three sub-questions that correspond to your major sections, making the design more transparent.

In “Misperception functions as a stabilizing mechanism of conflict”, the causal logic is asserted but not yet demonstrated. Consider explicitly describing the feedback loop that produces this stabilization.

When introducing Weber’s *Verstehen*, the manuscript does not clarify how interpretive reconstruction was conducted methodologically. Was it inductive coding, hermeneutic reading, or discourse analysis? This needs specification.

The distinction between instrumental and value rationality is conceptually crucial. However, the manuscript should explain how Iranian and U.S. policy texts were classified under these categories.

The sentence “The 1979 Islamic Revolution represents a paradigmatic rupture” is persuasive but broad. Please indicate the specific historical markers (constitutional change, doctrine shifts, elite discourse) used to substantiate the claim.

The paragraph beginning “The first core indicator of Iran’s post-Westphalian logic...” would benefit from at least one concrete policy example illustrating how divine legitimacy alters diplomatic behavior.

The manuscript states that Iran privileges transnational identity over territorial nationalism, yet no explicit case illustration is offered. Please provide one regional example to ground this claim.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.