



Political Sciences, International Relations and Regional Studies

Ahmad Mehraban Dafsari

Rank: Commendable in the Adult Section

Degree: Ph.D

Research Title: The Analysis of the Religious Radicalism in the Middle East Applying the Notion of New-Asabiyyah (A Case Study: the Salafi-Takfiri Group of ISIS).

Kind of Research Work: Doctoral Dissertation



About Researcher

Ahmad Mehraban was born in 1978 in Rasht. He received his high-school diploma in mathematics and then studied engineering at the undergraduate level. However, due to his interest in social sciences, he opted to do his M.A. in political sciences at Shahid Beheshti University. His master's thesis was focused on suicide attacks and their prevalence after the 9/11 attacks. Later on, he engaged in scientific and research activities. In 2014 he was accepted for a doctorate in political sociology at Shahid Beheshti University. During this time, he continued to study extremist and religious extremist groups and was invited to the University of Waterloo, Canada as a Senior Researcher. At Waterloo, while working on his dissertation under the supervision of Professor Lorne Dawson, he developed an epistemological framework for extracting and formulating a social theory in light of the classical and indigenous thinkers. He was granted his doctoral degree with the highest score and by dint of some small modifications, his dissertation was published in 2017 as a book entitled "ISIS and Assabiya: a Neo-Khaldunian approach to ISIS 'forming and State-building."

Abstract

As the most visible consequence of Salafism and Takfir, terrorism has become a crisis with both regional and global dimensions. Cohesion and durability of transnational terrorist groups and organizations are assumed as their most critical and controversial strong suits. In spite of racial, ethnic, and lingual divergence among its members, ISIS – and similar organizations i.e. al-Qaeda – is characterized by a deep group cohesion. Hence, this property and its role in ISIS 'state-building need a more elaborated analysis and specific modeling or even conceptualizing. Therefore, aiming at inventing such theoretical instruments, the above mentioned cohesion and durability are analyzed referring to the notion of asabiyyah postulated by Ibn Khaldun in the context of classical Islamic thought in order to achieve an appropriate and internalized model for analyzing religious extremism in general and the formation of ISIS in particular. Accordingly, the process of formation of ISIS, its unique features and the consequences of its emergence are studied in the light of transformation of the concept of asabiyyah in the level of Ummah. In the last part, introducing the concept of "new-assabiyyah" "the landscape of the Nation-State building process is speculated in the light of the emergence of new non-governmental military-political entities in this region.

