

## Explaining the Soft Power of the Islamic Republic of Iran towards the Takfiri-Terrorist Movements

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### ABSTRACT

*In the present era, the victory of the Islamic revolution triggered a new wave of Islamism in the region, creating more than a hundred Islamic movements, Salafis and Takfiris in the Middle East, Asia and Africa. These groups constituted the revolution of Iran rather than an Islamic revolution, which introduced a radical Shiite revolution, a revolution that would expound the Shiite religion around the world and was an enemy of the Sunni people and with such propaganda. By provoking Sunnis, they will thwart them against the Islamic Revolution and create a single enemy against it. For this reason, many Salafist-Takfiri groups formed after the Islamic Revolution. These groups attempted to combat the expansion and influence of the Islamic revolution to other countries, because for one age, Islamic caliphate is far more important than a Shiite, and Sunni people have always had empire and caliphate throughout history. Is The spread of these groups has had implications and reflections such as Islam phobia, terrorist attacks, Shiite-Sunni opposition, and the military presence of the United States and Western countries in the region. Confronting these groups requires a great deal of expenses, and it is necessary for the Islamic Republic, with the use of soft power resources such as convergence and the approximation of religions, humanitarian actions, active diplomacy and voluntarism, to deal with many of their threats. Neutralize. The research method is descriptive-analytic and the library method is used to collect data. The research method is descriptive-analytic and the library method is used to collect data.*

**Keywords:** *soft power, takfir, terrorist, Islamic Republic of Iran*

### INTRODUCTION

Developments and changes in the region and the Middle East are visible, which has had an impact on our country. One of these developments can be the formation of takfiri-terrorist groups that penetrate the neighboring countries of Iran, such as Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan, and commit acts of sabotage and terrorism. Indeed, these groups have played an undeniable role in the continuation and intensification of the tensions and destabilization of the Middle East, and, in addition to intensifying regional rivalries and Shiite-Sunni opposition, have contributed to the continued presence of the United States in the region. Has led to narrowing the circle of Iran's operations in the region. The Islamic Republic can reduce the threats of these groups by upgrading and utilizing its soft power resources such as convergence and unity, humanitarian action, active and effective diplomacy, and voluntary diplomacy, because soft power is due to

its characteristics. Because low-cost and lucidity, sociality and power of influence and persuasion will be far more powerful than military and military power.

### Subject Background

Considering the importance of the issue of soft power, over the past decade, numerous sources have been published as articles or books in the scientific community of Iran, but there has been no research on the explanation of the soft power of the Islamic Republic of Iran towards the takfiri-terrorist movements so far. In this article, we briefly review some of the work done in this area.

Power Source Resources Iran, by Rohallamin Saeedi and Hamid Reza Moghaddam Far (1393). This paper identifies and reviews the soft power sources of the Islamic Republic of Iran and identifies and assesses the sources of soft power in three levels of culture, values and foreign poli

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Analytical model paper of soft power c. U Iran in the Muslim World, written by Seyyed Sadruddin Mousavi Jaysani (1393). The author of effective and influential soft power elements. U Iran has examined the Islamic world and emphasized that components such as lifestyle, management of global public opinion through legitimization, cultural diplomacy, scientific excellence, and the dominance of the scientific process in the Middle East region have the greatest impact on the increase and improvement of soft power Iran has had.

A book on apostasy; Takfiri-terrorist movements in the Muslim world, written by Abdolreza Alishahi and Saeed Mahmoudi (1395). This book examines the historical course of takfiri-terrorist movements, the foundational principles of Salafi-Takfiri thought, the Salafist-Takfiri consequences of the Islamic world and Salafism in Islamic countries.

Thoughts of Takfir in the context of history; Origins and ways of its cure, by Mohammad Taghi Fakhali and Mahmoud Tavakoliyan Akbari (1393). The authors, while investigating the historical origins of Takfir and its evolution, have provided solutions and suggestions for the context of its events and its roots.

Impact of takfiri movements on the image of the issuance of the Islamic Revolution and Peacemaking of the Islamic Republic of Iran, written by Ghorban Ali Ghorbanzadeh Sover and Amir Mohammad Izadi (1394). In this paper, the first section addresses the approach of the Takfiri currents to Islam and Peace. In the second part, the viewpoints of the Islamic Revolution have been investigated by the peaceful issuance of the revolution. In the final section, the impact of the takfiri movements on the image of the issuance of the Islamic Revolution and the Peacekeeping of the Islamic Republic is examined.

## CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS

### The Power

Power should be and should be the most important means to achieve the goals of the state. Power has taken on different faces in the course of its transformation, and it also includes some definitions. The ability to move individually or collectively of humans in a desirable way through persuasion, betrayal, giving away or coercion (Spykman, 1942: 11). Its ability is to induce others to surrender to their will, in any form (Ali Babaei, 2008: 420). Man's dominance on man (Aaron, 1985: 598). The ability of an individual or group to acquire or obey others (Galbraith, 1987: 256). Create the desired works and outputs (Russell, 1986: 19). Ability to practice human will on the thoughts and actions of others (Alma, 1994: 89).

More clearly, power is "the ability to repatriate threats, use opportunities and eliminate vulnerabilities to protect national security and education of national interests" (Kolahchian, 2008: 212).

In a classifier, power is divided into two types of hard and soft, all familiar with hard power. The military and economic forces may change the position of the people. Hard power is based on a carrot and a sword.

### Soft Power

Academic circles of Joseph Nye are the theorists of this theory. He is the first person to understand the soft power (Mousavi Jashni, 2014: 152). Soft power is one of the topics that have been considered by scholars in recent years. The nature of this power varies from hard power. Soft power is the ability to shape the interests of others and direct their behavior without the use of force (Nye, 2006: 11). Some also offer soft power the ability to get something through absorption instead of coercion (Naeini, 2012: 71). Therefore, soft power achieves the desired goals through absorption, not through coercion, force, and reward. This concept is against hard power, because absorption is much cheaper and more efficient than coercion.

From Joseph Nye's point of view, resources and the basis of soft power in culture, values, and ways of dealing with each country are national, regional and international (Kelly, 2002: 27). Soft power is used not only by governments, but also by all actors in world politics, such as NGOs, international institutions, and movements and supra-nationalist movements (Poursaeid, 2010: 35).

### Processor

When we talk about the Takfiri-terrorist movements, we must first have a conceptual discussion of its original origins, namely Salafi ideology, since all takfiri flows have come out of Salafi so that the recognition of takfiri flows without Self-knowledge is not possible.

The predecessor is in the literal sense of the past, the past, and everyone who is in the past, as well as everything that has passed and been abandoned for the past and the end (Amid, 1998: 798). But the term Salafi refers to a wide range of Sunni Islamic movements calling for a return to the predecessor, the leaders of the early centuries of Islam.

They see this as an Islamist way that society must return to restore the greatness of the past (Fouzi, 2010: 159). Salafism has two basic pillars: one returning to the lifestyle of Salaf and, ultimately, the Hejaz tradition, especially the tradition of the Medina from 1400 years ago, and the second, the struggle against the heresy, that is, everything that

Salafis are new and contrary to tradition. . In fact, the Salafists emphasize the return of Islamic thought to its pure principle, the adherence to the Quran and tradition, the rejection of new interpretations and the maintenance of the Islamic Ummah (Bagheri, 1393: 56).

### Takfir

The term Takfir is taken from "disbelief", which in the word means covering and reversing. In the term of jurisprudence, it can be understood as attributing disbelief to the Muslims (Ibn al-Hadid, 1999: 132). And whoever disbelieves and makes reading, it also means. Also, the infidel is said to those who conceal and cover the truth. Takfir, in its special sense, is: "The explicit relation between leaving religion and disbelief for someone." Therefore, Takfiri, a Muslim who accuses Muslims of apostasy, is also called Takfir. This concept in the political literature of the day describes the growing groups of radical Muslims and Sunni scholars who are inclined to the Salafist ideology called them "takfiri-terrorist groups" (Abdekhodaei and Tabrizi, 2015: 151).

### Terrorism

The DALUS Dictionary of Terrorism "constitutes a violent political act by individuals or organized minorities against individuals, assets and institutions that seek to achieve goals such as gaining independence from a state, overthrowing the ruling regime, and fighting against certain aspects. Political affairs of a state take place "(Ali Babaei, 2008: 189). Plato also "defines terrorism as the efforts of governmental and non-governmental elements who try to achieve their political goals using violent means" (Plato 1988: 201). Alex Schmidt, one of the most comprehensive academic definitions of terrorism, states: "Terrorism is the mode of repetitive actions in order to create anxiety, fear, and fear, for reasons of tuxedo, fundamental or political, by different groups is applied "(Schmid, 1993: 8). Terrorism usually occurs in the atmosphere in which power is distributed unfairly. In this space, one party has more political, military, economic or social power, and the other side resorting to the terror of terrorism to compensate for its weaknesses. This phenomenon is quite perceptible in authoritarian countries. In democratic countries, sometimes the focus of power in sectors or groups of society is so much that it puts up dissatisfied groups to fulfill their aspirations for assassination. Today, takfiri movements allow terrorists to kill the enemies of God (Keshavarz, 2012: 132-131). These groups have the illegitimacy of any political authority that does not follow their beliefs, and its killing is obligatory. From this point of view, the use of violence and assassination to

rule leaders who do not rule according to the true Islam is an Islamic duty (Abbaszadeh Fath-Abadi, 2009: 115-114).

### ISLAMIC REVOLUTION, A FACTOR IN THE FORMATION OF TAKFIRI-TERRORIST FLOWS

The outbreak of the Islamic Revolution and the rise of Shi'a in Iran in 1979 triggered a new wave of Islamism in the Middle East. The incident has had a major impact on the creation of more than 100 Islamic, Salafi and Takfiri movements in the Middle East, Asia, Africa, the Caucasus, the Balkans as well as Europe. These groups constituted the revolution of Iran rather than an Islamic revolution, which introduced a radical Shiite revolution, a revolution that would expound the Shiite religion around the world and was an enemy of the Sunni people and with such propaganda By provoking Sunnis, they would thwart them against the Islamic revolution and create a single enemy against it. For this reason, many Salafist-Takfiri groups formed after the Islamic Revolution.

These groups attempted to combat the expansion and influence of the Islamic revolution to other countries, because for one age, Islamic caliphate is far more important than a Shiite, and Sunni people have always had empire and caliphate throughout history. (Karimi and Gharshasbi, 2015: 112). Now an innocent Shiite has come to power, but the Sunni who is right has failed to reach the government, and for this reason began a direct struggle with the Shiites of other Islamic countries.

### TAKFIRI-TERRORIST ATTACKS AGAINST THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

The expansion of Salafist thoughts and Takfiri-terrorist groups has led to numerous reflections and implications for Islamic countries and the Islamic Republic. One of the most important consequences is the following:

#### Islamophobia

The brutal and inhumane acts of Wahhabi and Salafi-Takfiri extremist groups, along with western media propaganda, have led to the practice of these groups written in the name of Islam and Muslims. In fact, the behavior of these groups in the Islamic world and beyond is a pretext for promoting Islamophobia and anti-Semitism. Using the media and propaganda tool for Islamophobia and the fight against the spread of Islam in the world, the West seeks to more prominently demonstrate the actions of Wahhabism and the secessions of Salafi and Takfiri to make the face of Islam a bad, become inhumane. For these reasons, special images and

impressions of Islam and Muslims are promoted in which Muslims, as an exceptional group, have a sense of mind and tendency to superstition, violence, assassination and domination. (Ganbarlou, 2010: 108). These actions have pushed the wave of Islamophobia from Europe and the United States to shadow over countries such as Australia, China and India, and undermine, destroy and marginalize Islamic countries, including the Islamic Republic of Iran.

**Extension of Terrorist Attacks**

Since the end of the Second World War, nearly 100 countries have been targeted by terrorist attacks. Table 1 shows the countries that were exposed to terrorist acts during this period. Nearly two-thirds of these attacks have taken place over the past two decades, and the countries where they are occurring

are still at risk. Thirty-four countries of this table are from Islamic countries that indicate the vulnerability of Muslims to terrorist attacks (Kuhn, 2008: 185). The statistics show the increase in the number and the victims of terrorist attacks. As of 2016, more than 13,000 terrorist attacks occurred in the world, killing more than 34,000 people. Most of the victims are from the Middle East and North Africa.

Now, the Takfiri-terrorist groups are carrying out numerous terrorist acts against the citizens of the Islamic countries every day. The Islamic Republic of Iran is also one of the countries targeted by the terrorist attacks, the latest example of which is the terrorist attacks in the Islamic Consultative Assembly and Imam Khomeini, which killed and injured some of its compatriots.

**Table 1.** Countries targeted for post-World War II terrorist attacks (Source: Cohen, 2008: 186)

Countries	The Region
El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, United States	North and Central America
Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay	South America
Austria, France, Germany, Belgium, Italy, Spain, United Kingdom, Albania, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia	Europe
Armenia, Azerbaijan, Russia, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Georgia	Hartland Russia and around
Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Zionist, Palestine, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Yemen	Middle East
Bangladesh, Burma, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka	South Asian
Cambodia, China, Laos, Vietnam	East Asia
East Timor, Thandonese, Japan, Thailand, Malaysia, Philippines, South Korea	The Asia-Pacific position
Sudan, Morocco, Algeria, Angola, Burundi, Congo, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Tunisia, Mali	Africa

**Shiite-Sunni Opposition**

The growth of Salafi-Takfiri currents supported by governments such as Saudi Arabia and Qatar, in line with its strategic objectives in the region, has led to a Sunni-Shia conflict. This has been confirmed in the current crises and bloody massacres of the Shiites by the Takfiri groups in Syria and Iraq. Sensitivity to Shi'a identity and terminology is one of the most prominent points of interaction between the various Salafi-type spectra and tendencies.

With the difference that its temperate spectrum calls the Shiites "deviant and inferior Muslims" who are potentially exposed to their threats, but the extreme range of the Salafis, Shiite fearlessness is "self-made religion." They read it (Seyyednejad, 2010: 107).

In fact, Saudi and Qatari leaders believe that the coming of a Sunni regime in Syria and Iraq could limit the Shiite power of the region that is close to Iran and, as a result, the strategic weight of the region-they are against Iran, which in the Past decade has increased significantly in the region.

For the governments of Saudi Arabia and Qatar, the recent revolts offer an opportunity to remove Syria and Iraq from the queues of the allies of Iran and, in contrast, to increase their regional role in the eastern Mediterranean in order to bring about a change in balance for the benefit of Iran and to the detriment of Iran. (Hassan, 2013: 17-18). In the same vein, Saudi Arabia has tried to strengthen the material support of the Salafist-Takfirist movements, including ISIL, Nusra, and so on, which could create a religious erosion war in the region, in which case Iran It will be a leg of this war.

### Western Military Presence in the Region

The turning point for the presence of foreign forces, especially the West, in the Islamic world was after September 11th, when the incident directly linked to the Salafist events and at the head of al-Qaeda. The United States has taken advantage of the opportunity it has been making available to the region. Since then, Salafist activities in the Muslim world have been a guarantee of the presence of foreign forces in the Islamic world (Sotoudeh and Alizadeh Mousavi, 2014: 109). The presence of US forces in the region could lead to an increase in the number of military bases of the trans-regional powers in the Iranian neighborhoods, which naturally will increase Iran's security costs in the long run. On the other hand, they can use these bases and military presence to support the opponents of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Nejat, 2015: 108).

### SOFT POWER RESOURCES OF IRAN IN RELATION TO THE TAKFIRI-TERRORIST MOVEMENTS

Given the threats of takfiri groups against our beloved country, it is necessary for the Islamic Republic, in addition to using military capabilities, to use its soft power and spiritual influence to confront these groups.

### Convergence and Approximation of Religions

The Islamic Republic of Iran is a country that has relatives, ethnicities and followers of various religions. Iran is a combination of Shiites, Sunnis, Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians. It is noteworthy that the various ethnic groups of Iran and the followers of various religions have established throughout history that their identity has been formed in connection with Iran, and they identify themselves as Iranian, and this is the cause of the soft power of Iran (Fred et al., 2011: 203). The Islamic Republic has also established organizations such as the World Congress on the Approximation of Religions, the World Association of Ahlul-Bayt (a) and the Islamic Culture and Communication Organization, which has led to an approximation of religious and spiritual ties between Iran and some countries, especially in Central Eurasia and the Middle East. In contrast, Takfirist views of religious diversity are a fanatic and one-sided view, and brutal acts such as murder, extermination, exile and rape against religious and religious minorities such as Alawites, Shiites, Yazidis and the Christians are set up.

### Humanitarian Actions and Support for the Oppressed

The Islamic Republic's government has always placed humanitarian and ethical measures in its foreign policy priorities, and it has taken steps to tackle this issue by sending various donations to the oppressed and disadvantaged groups. Even occasionally, he pursued these measures by paying large amounts of money, which means that external assistance not only has no material benefits, but also heavily burdened the country. His recent example is helping Muslims in Myanmar.

The protection of the oppressed is another of the values of the Islamic Revolution which promotes its position among the oppressed and oppressed classes of the countries and attracts their attention to Iran. The Islamic Revolution began to be known as an advocate of the oppressed people and defined the spiritual support of all oppressed nations as a fundamental value for themselves. In this regard, the support of the Islamic Revolution of the oppressed world will attract their interest and enthusiasm to the Islamic Republic (Saeedi and Moghaddam-Far, 2014: 119).

In contrast, takfiri groups have committed crimes against humanity. In the identification of the crimes of these groups, the killing of military prisoners, the killing of more than a thousand civilians of slavery, murder, torture, rape, sexual slavery (Alishahi and Mahmoudi, 2016: 250), targeting Non-Arab non-Arab Muslim communities, the displacement of the Iraqi people, Syria and Afghanistan, and the creation of terror and disturbing peace and tranquility.

### Active and Effective Diplomacy

The Islamic Republic of Iran hosts cultural exhibitions and conferences, participation in international congresses and regional conventions, promotion of Iranian culture and customs in the countries of common culture, holding meetings with the presence of experts and Political authorities between countries, student exchanges and joint scientific activities, membership or participation in various organizations and institutions, the expansion of the level of bilateral or multilateral cultural, economic and political cooperation and the promotion of Iranian-Islamic art have strengthened their diplomacy. It gained a base among the various countries of the world (Mousavi Jasani, 2014: 165). But the only tool is Takfiri groups, jihad, violence and murder and killing.

### Moodulism and the Culture of Waiting

One of the components of soft power in Shi'a political culture is the hope of a brilliant and prosperous future with the ultimate victory of the righteous on the wicked and the fighters, and the belief in the existence of the Imam of time - Allah, the Excellency, Farajeh al-Sharif - and the definitive emergence of the Prophet to establish a justice system And the right to expand justice and security around the world (Malekzadeh, 2014: 123). The Shi'a religion represents a very clear and ideal outcome for the world and believes that at the end of history, with the uprising of the promised Mahdi as the last survivor of the divine leaders, all the outrageous atheistic systems were overthrown and a universal justice state with the sovereignty of the Imam Innocent will be formed. The same hope of improving the situation of the world with the emergence of the savior makes the Shiites as optimistic about the results of their efforts and struggles and prevents the occurrence of lethargy and jasmine (Saeidi and Moghddamfar, 2014: 116). In fact, the existence of the element of expectation in the Shiite culture produces tremendous power for the Shiites, and makes it possible to do everything in the belief of success and to enter into the victim's belief in the various problems of the revolution without fear and fear.

It was also made in many scenes such as the imposed war (Izadi, 2008: 126). Now, even in the third generation after the revolution, there is little fear and fear of enemies, and they feel that they are ruling their own destiny, a typical example of which is the shrine's advocates in the struggle against the takfiri-terrorist movements. In contrast, following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the formation of the current Turkish state and the dismantling of the Islamic caliphate after the First World War, many Sunni Muslims and Salafist influences somehow felt frustrated and sought an alternative to the Ottoman Empire. They made a lot of effort, because in the eyes of the Sunni, two things are very important in political power. First, the empire and authority of the caliphate, and the other, the expansion of the Islamic lands and the conquest of the liturgical countries and transformation into a monotheistic country. It does not matter whether the ruler is cruel or not, but it is important to the power of caliphate. Now, if the caliph itself is not something to do with the hands of others, it does not matter, it is important that the caliphate's authority should remain. If it is better, and if not, it does not matter; there is sufficient authority of the empire (Alishahi and Mahmoudi, 2016: 44).

### CONCLUSION

The Islamic Revolution of Iran has always been the target of threats in various areas and scenes of domestic and foreign actors due to the nature, objectives and influences of regional and trans-nationalities over more than three decades of its overwhelming life.

Due to these fundamental differences, the threats should not be overcome in the short term. Among these recent threats against the Islamic Republic of Iran are the actions of terrorist groups. In connection with the presence of Takfiri groups in the region, the Islamic Republic of Iran has tried, using its military capabilities in the region, in spite of the threats of this terrorist group. , Along with appropriate military and political measures, has also used its soft power to deal with such a group.

On the one hand, it will be able to compete with regional rivals and increase its spiritual influence in the region. One of the soft power sources of Iran in relation to takfiri groups can be traced to the approximation of religions, humanitarian measures, and the protection of the oppressed people of the world, active diplomacy and Mahdiyyism, which could stop the growth of these flows and bring humanity Safeguard the risk of the growth of these takfiri flows.

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