

Normal or Abnormal: A Case Study of Jihadi Salafism in the Middle East

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Abstract : Following the events of September 11th, one of the most important concerns of governments, politicians and researchers has been to answer the question that why does an ordinary person become fundamentalism? One of the major controversies in past researches was about as to whether a fundamentalist person is normal or abnormal. In this regard, the purpose of this research is to investigate whether a Salafi-jihadi individual is normal or abnormal. The participants included 6 Jihadi Salafism individuals who were living in the Middle East and had been purposefully selected. This research is a qualitative study which examines these people's retrospective experience of their lives. The data were collected through collaborative observation and interview. This continued till data saturation. Unlike the introduced concepts of fundamentalist personality in the previous studies such as self-fascination, aggression, paranoid personality and psychopathic, participants in this study had no abnormal symptoms of mental disorders. Hence, in the context of recognizing the fundamentalist personality, we must seek other personality and positional variables.

Keywords : abnormal, fundamentalism, normal, personality, Salafi

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