



## Passive defense and national security in Islamic discourse

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**Abstract:** Balancing is countries' strategy against competitors' power and threats in their operational environment. Formerly, the balancing strategy of countries was straightforward and done according to military means. Today, with the changes in the nature of power, along with military tools, economic, political, and cultural tools have also become available. The change in the nature of power has led to the emergence of soft power alongside hard power, and the surrounding threats of actors have also changed from hard threats to mixed ones. The main question is, what is the strategy of actors in facing the soft and negative threats of rivals in Islamic discourse?

In response to the question, the hypothesis is proposed that passive defense is one of the countries' tools of soft and positive balancing strategy in facing the competitors' soft and negative power and threats. The findings of this research, which was carried out with a descriptive-analytical method, indicate that the actors in the new situation face emerging threats that are very different from the traditional threats. Therefore, passive defense is one of the means of facing these threats, which has long been the concern of actors and has been given much attention in Islamic traditions and the statements of the supreme leader of the revolution, based on Islam's approach to defending against the threats of enemies.

**Keywords:** Islam, security, threat, passive defense, power.

## Introduction

**Problem Statement:** From the beginning of entering the world, mankind has faced the mystery of security. Environmental threats were considered the most important risk to the most vital human value: his life, and many of those threats come from natural forces. Therefore, security is also considered a mystery of human life. security, like other social values and concepts, depends on existing conditions and realities, and due to the deep forces' performance and their impact on the social environment, it is considered a dynamic concept. In the first era of human life, the realities were simple as well the security, the concept that contained a limited scope and actors, and specific visible risks (Qasemi, 1386:12). But with the changes that took place in the field of science and technology, the concept of security also changed. In this way, security, which was the main mystery of mankind from the very beginning, was transformed due to the operation of deep forces, its form and content, and the ways to achieve it. The present article assumes that countries take action to make a balance against the power of competitors and the threats in their operating environment, and due to the changes and developments in the field of science and technology, the concept of power and the nature of threats have also changed. now we have this question; what are the ways to ensure security? In other words, what strategies do countries have to face new security threats in their operational environment? In response to the main research question; This hypothesis is proposed; Considering the developments in the field of science and technology, the changing power and threats to national security have a special complexity according to the dimensions of power. With the introduction of the soft and cultural dimension of power alongside the hardware and military dimension of power, it is no longer possible to witness a simple and purely military balancing strategy as in the past, but parallel to the evolution in the concept of power and security, the strategy of balancing countries against power and The threats of competitors are different and have a special complexity. Basically, in the contemporary world, countries face four types of balance strategies in front of the threats and power of competitors; hard and positive, hard and negative; Soft and positive, and soft and negative balance. Since most of the threats are cultural and soft in the current decade, the

government's strategy is also a soft balance in facing these threats. Passive defense is one of the soft balancing tools of countries against the soft threats of competitors.

**research method;** The current research was conducted with a positivist approach and a descriptive-analytical method. This research tries to explain the strategies of actors in the face of soft threats from competitors. To achieve this purpose, the theoretical foundations of the research were presented in a realism paradigm, and then the problem of threats in the current world was explained. Finally, the strategy for facing threats is expressed by focusing on the Islamic approach to facing these threats.

**research background;** Many articles and books have been written in the field of passive defense, the most important of which are mentioned below. The important point and innovation of this research is that it has examined passive defense in the field of national security from the perspective of Islamic discourse and reached the result that passive defense coincides with Islamic discourse. Passive defense is also one of the tools of countries' soft and positive balancing strategy in dealing with competitors' soft and negative threats.

- Heshmati (1395) in the article <defense and security in Iranian-Islamic cities, from the point of view of passive defense>, has considered the expansion of cities as a result of wars.

- Karami (1398) in a research has studied the manifestations of passive defense in the defensive strategies of the Holy Quran.

- Mohammadnejad et al.(1398) in a research entitled "Reviewing How to Divinely Preserve the Qur'an Based on the Passive Defense Strategy", emphasize the role of passive defense in preserving the Quran.

- Khazaei (1395) in his article on passive defense from the point of view of the Supreme Leader, discusses his points of view regarding passive defense and measures and strategies to deal with threats.

## 1. Theoretical foundations of research

### 1.1 Realist paradigm

Among the paradigms of international relations, the paradigm that deals more with issues of peace and war and includes security issues is the realist paradigm, the assumptions of this paradigm are discussed

below. The main axes of realism can be summarized in statism, survival, and self-help (Ghavam, 1371: 358).

**Statism:** From the realists' point of view, governments are the main actors in international politics and sovereignty is their distinguishing feature from other actors (Baylis and Smith, 2013: 340).

**The principle of survival:** The second assumption and principle of realists is survival. From the point of view of realists, survival is considered a precondition for achieving all national goals (Ghavam, 1371: 359).

**The principle of self-help:** based on this principle, one cannot rely on the guarantee of another government for one's survival. The structure of the international political system does not allow friendship and trust. Based on this principle, coexistence is achieved by maintaining the balance of power. So, on this basis, the fourth principle can be added to the other three principles and it is the balance of power.

**Balance of power:** Since the scene of international relations is anarchic and power and the principle of self-help are considered the most important variables, therefore the goal of all units is to achieve power, maintain, and increase it. Since the power of each actor is a threat to the goals of others, there is only one solution, and that is to prevent others from gaining power and superiority or to increase our power so that we do not lose power in the competition. The result of such a perception is nothing but the balance of forces (Qasemi, 1384: 50).

## 1.2. The concept of security

For a long time, the Peloponnesian War, the Thirty Years' War, and the First World War have been regarded as a factor that has led to the formation of our theoretical approaches to international relations. So it is not surprising that security is the highest concept of international relations. In international relations, there is no other concept that has the metaphysical influence or scientific power of the concept of security (Tayeb, 1380:p.177). The concept of security has different meanings depending on people's ideas, culture, and perception of reality. In this regard, two types of conceptual implications for security can be proposed. First, it is an objective indication that indicates the

absence of danger against the vital values of the unit in question. Here the presence or absence of danger is in question. The second is the mental implication, which indicates the presence or absence of fear of attacking basic values. In fact, in this situation, there may be no danger against the values in reality, but such a danger is imagined in the minds of the actors, or on the contrary, there is a danger, but it won't be imagined (Qasemi, 1386: 13). Therefore, some people believe in the expansion of the concept of security in different sectors and different levels and do not consider only territorial and military defense as the concept of security. Increasing the role of concepts such as culture and civilization informs about the view of security as a social concept (Krause, 1999). This concept is meaningful in the context of an interaction and mental action and reaction. This is why the outcome of the community's consensus on the issue of security is important. In addition, this is contrary to the minimal and purely negative security desired by offensive realists, in which only hard power and military force are considered (Kegley, 2007: 46).

### **1.3. Soft security**

Soft power means the ability to influence and affect thoughts, ideas, and minds to impose will and desires by attracting the opinion and convincing the target such as a nation and government without using force and physical pressure. Nye defines soft power as the cultural, value, and legitimate foreign policy power that provides a country with the ability to attract and reach the hearts and minds of governments and nations (Nye, 2006: 3). Hard power has a solid nature, but soft power is a gelatinous image of power, the tendency of hard power is towards stability, but soft power is towards transformation, hard power is based on the material capital of the actor and soft power is based on the social capital of the actor (Izadi, 1387: 29). Considering the distinct nature of hard power from soft power, a series of distinctions between soft security and hard security can be listed as follows: non-violent versus violent; non-physical versus physical; Civilian versus military; influencing will rather than action; feeling safe at different times regardless of being safe or not; using intangible resources instead of tangible resources; Indirect and cyber encounter with the subject instead of direct encounter; Emphasis on deception instead of fear; Preference for acceptance instead of

imposition; Being abstract to being concrete; Being ethical and duty-oriented rather than result-oriented; The effect on perception and mind and visualization instead of the capability of objective behavior and material estimation; symbolic rather than real; Being subjective rather than being objective; The priority of the cultural aspect over the economic aspect (Gharayag Zandi, 1388: 85).

#### **1.4. The concept of balance**

The concept of balance of power is considered one of the oldest and most fundamental concepts in international relations (Paul, 2004: 29). David Hume states the balance of power is a scientific law about its fundamental importance in international politics. Snyder considers the balance of power as a fundamental theoretical concept in international relations. Morgenthau calls the balance of power as the iron law of politics, and Henry Kissinger assumes the balance of power as an art beyond science. Therefore, from the point of view of all political thinkers, the concept of balance of power plays an important role in maintaining peace and security among governments. Countries, especially small and weak powers, are often unable to provide their security individually, they depend on others. In this way, small governments try to maintain the balance of power against competitors or existing threats by forming alliances with powerful governments (Goldstein, 2005: 77). Small and large countries exert the same balance of power against perceived threats. The concept of the ideal balance of power refers to the distribution of power in such a way that no country or institution alone can dominate other countries or institutions. The great powers adopted the balance strategy as their highest priority in the field of security because of the success of the balance strategy in guaranteeing the maintenance of peace, as a precondition for maintaining the state system (Odgard, 2007: 25). In 1987, Stephen Walt proposed the balance of threat theory as a major refinement of the traditional balance of power theory and Waltz's classical approach. Waltz first focused on balance and follow-up and then offered a new description of the theory by focusing not exclusively on the strength of units such as military and offensive capabilities, but also by focusing on threats (Walt, 1990: 25). Fritz and Sweeney, using Walt's similar balance of power theory, found that great powers bear the cost of

balancing policies only when they face clear external threats (Fritz and Sweeney, 2004: 303). By comparing the theory of the balance of power with the theory of the balance of threats, Yateo made powerful predictions through the analysis of American interventions in the Persian Gulf. He found evidence that the balance of threat theory is more applicable than the balance of power theory, and even identified three variables that improved the balance of threat theory:

**First;** Establish an external balance against a threat. This is more likely to occur when the balancer believes that the threatening actor cannot be attracted through a variety of incentives, rather than hard methods such as balances.

**Second;** Balancing against threats. This is more likely to happen when the government is facing a regional military threat abroad, rather than a political and ideological threat.

**Third;** Global pressures do not play an important role. Governments act to balance against threats at the regional level even when this balancing is against the balance of power at the global level (Yetiv, 2006: 101-102). In the threat balance theory, we define balance as a government strategy to deal with perceived external threats by military or non-military methods (Crawford, 2008: 3). These methods are internal or external and their purpose is to reduce threats and maintain security (He, 2012: 161). Therefore, balance takes four different types:

- 1- soft (civilian) and domestic (positive);
- 2- soft (civilian) and external (negative);
- 3- hard (military) and domestic (positive);
- 4- hard (military) and external (negative); (Bock and Henneberg, 2013:p.10).

## 2. Passive defense

From the Persian lexical point of view, the word defense(Padoffend)consists of two components "Pad" and "offend". In Persian culture and literature, "Pad" is a prefix that means "against", "opposite, following" and the word "offend" means "war, conflict, fight and enmity" (Dehkhoda,1351: 48). The distinction between active and passive defense should be considered human factors, which means that active defense is a tool that requires system management and



human use and includes war tools, organization, training, and management of forces. Therefore in the absence of human presence, those tools will automatically be invalid. while passive defense is an architectural facility in the field of war engineering, in such a way that without tools and capabilities, it increases the combat and defense force. In other words, passive defense means "unarmed defense against threats" (Movahedinia, 2016: 24). The passive defense has been expressed in different ways, which are mostly common in the "protection of civilians". Passive defense means defense without the use of military equipment, and in the field of crisis management caused by war, it plays a fundamental role in facilitating the management and stability of infrastructures, which can increase the defense power of the system during a crisis; on the other hand, the consequences of a crisis reduce and provide the possibility of rebuilding the damaged areas with the lowest cost (Collection of Authors, 2012: 39). passive defense is a set of non-armed measures that reduce the vulnerability of manpower, buildings and facilities, equipment, and arteries of the country against hostile and destructive operations of the enemy (Passive defense of the country, 1386: 45).

### **2.1. Basic principles of passive defense**

The principles of passive defense are a set of basic and infrastructure measures that, if applied, can be used to achieve the goals of passive defense, such as reducing damages and injuries, reducing the capability and ability of target identification systems, and enemy offensive weapons` accuracy, and imposed more cost on him (Eskandari, 1389: 34). A set of these principles are:

1- Hiding or concealment; 2- camouflage; 3- Fortifications; 4- cover; 5- Creating safe structures; 6- retrofitting facilities; 7- Scattering; 8- division; 9- Establishing a warning system; 10- Education; 12- obstacles; 13- Shelter; 14- trench; 15- Deception; 16- observance of blackout at night; 17- Internal measures; 18- Damage control; 19- Evacuation of families; 20- Protection; 21- Safety; 22- damage assessment; 23- positioning; 24- Defense against special attacks; 25- Defense against new bombs (Asarian, 1387: 110).



## 2.2. The importance of passive defense

The experiences and evidence recorded in the past wars of human history and the current century are well-argued and undeniable examples that reveal and prove the vital importance of passive defense. Passive defense is considered important for the following reasons:

- The use of passive defense measures will ensure the survival of the human force.
- Passive defense reduces the vulnerability, damage, and injuries of facilities, manpower, and vital, sensitive, and important military and civilian centers of the country against the threats and operations of the enemy.
- Passive defense deprives the enemy of freedom and initiative.
- Passive defense saves the cost of weapons and manpower.
- Passive defense causes deception imposes more costs on the enemy and strengthens deterrence.
- Passive defense increases the resistance threshold of the people and internal forces against the enemy's attack.
- Passive defense preserves morale, national unity, and the country's national capital.
- Passive defense preserves the territorial integrity, national security, and independence of the country (Nabati, 1386: 112).

## 3. Islam and passive defense

One of the Islamic sources of passive defense is the Quran. By referring to the Qur'an, we can understand the issue of defense against enemies and repelling their attacks. A clear example is verse 71 of Surah Al-Nisa: "O you who have believed, take your precaution and [either] go forth in companies or go forth all together". By studying the battles at the beginning of Islam, it can be seen that the Prophet achieved many successes by using strategic tactics of passive defense. In general, in the Holy Quran, Islamic values related to passive defense can be found in the following cases:

- 1- The necessity and importance of jihad against the enemies of Islam
- 2- The need to have all kinds of preparations to defend oneself and the Islamic land
- 3- Satanism, its meaning, dimensions, and examples
- 4- The characteristics of demons, their ways and methods of

influence 5- The need for defense and repelling the tyrants 6- The necessity of unity of leadership in Jihad with the infidels 7- The meaning of sedition and the necessity of confronting it 8- Jihad in all scenes 9- Preparedness to stand in the face of hardships 10- The importance of government and its role in running a country and fighting against enemies 11- The necessity of keeping the secrets of Muslims 12- The necessity of consultation 13- The blessing of security 14- Being steadfast in the faith, patience, and perseverance in the way of God 15- Faith and persistence, two factors of Salvation and two necessary causes in every work 16- The importance of peace and reconciliation between believers 17- The duty of defending the whole of Islam to the best of everyone's ability Person 18- The need to be careful in the news and news source for Muslims to prevent any kind of problems and troubles 19- The need to do justice and confront the enemies 20- Not to underestimate the enemies 21- The blessings of faith and piety 22- Divine help in confronting the believers with the unbelievers 23- Prayer and its dimensions and its role in life, protecting oneself and the land, and fighting and defending against the enemy (Rafiei, 1400: 170-169).

In the course of the battle, there was no opportunity to deal with all aspects, strengths, weaknesses, plans, and to draw comprehensive strategies, but in normal circumstances, these issues should be dealt with patiently and away from grudges, and use all savings, talents, and experiences (Imam Khomeini, 1367). Passive defense is like the immunity of the human body. It protects us from the inside. It means that even if the enemy makes an attack and takes pains and strikes, it has no effect (Supreme Leader, 2013). God says in verse 60 of Surah Anfal: Prepare whatever you can to frighten the enemy of God and your enemy. Also, be prepared to deal with an enemy that you are not aware of whom God is aware of. Whatever you spend in the way of God will be returned to you and you will never be wronged. The Quran is full of clear examples in the field of using passive defense methods to stay safe from dangers and threats. Sometimes, during the Prophet's campaigns, he ordered the commander of operations to open the order of the mission and follow its provisions after 48 hours of marching and moving away from Medina (Waqidi, 1369: 9).

#### **4. Passive defense and soft war**

Today, soft war is the most effective, efficient, least expensive, most dangerous, and most complex type of threat against the values and national security of countries, especially Islamic countries. Soft power in the form of soft threats is considered a useful tool in the hands of great powers against their enemies so that ignoring soft power in the form of threats by these powers weakens hard power and its Strategy. (Farhadi and Moradian, 1387: 40). Soft threat arises when a nation or country feels that its culture, institutions, and policies are changing and transforming due to the use of soft power by its enemies. These threats often occur in cultural, political, security, and social dimensions (Naeni, 1388: 121). Countries should balance the soft threats of their competitors as well as their hard threats. Passive defense is one of the tools of governments' balancing strategy against the soft threats of competitors. passive defense against soft threats and enemy identification and offensive measures to reduce the vulnerability of critical and sensitive infrastructures in the cultural and advertising sector, national stability and vulnerability reduction, strengthening the cultural structure, managing the defense crisis of cultural and psychological operations, national culture-building about passive defense and organization of scattered cultural-propaganda capabilities of the country in line with defense goals (to implement psychological warfare against the enemy). The passive defense priorities against competitors' threats are; Creating security and maintaining human resources, maintaining system administration centers, maintaining command, maintaining educational centers, maintaining universities, and maintaining work centers and social activities of people. The passive defense should be present step by step and everywhere along with active defense, that is, war with weapons and military equipment and tactics (Firouzabadi, 2014: 214). Therefore, in soft war, passive defense prevents the cultural and political dominance of enemies in a country through the creation of mechanisms to deal with the cultural and civilizational threats of foreigners.

### **5. Passive defense and national security**

National security has many components and the most important of them are military, economic, political, cultural, and social security. Whenever danger threatens any of the mentioned components,

national security is threatened, because general security is inseparable (Tahami, 1376: 44). From the point of view of most experts, national security is a condition in which the national interests and internal values of the nation are kept away from internal and external dangers and threats. According to others, the ability of society to maintain and pursue national interests and take advantage of internal values away from internal and external threats is called "national security" (Mojtahedzadeh, 1381: 78). In general, national security can be considered as a state in which a nation is free from the threat and fear of losing all or part of its land, population, economic well-being, and also free from losing its government system, national identity, language, religion and Cultural values (Zarghani and Mousavi, 1392: 13). National security can be protected by offensive and defensive approaches. Defense in general is repelling, neutralizing, and reducing the offensive or aggressive effect of the enemy and preventing the enemy from achieving its goals, which consists of two parts, active and passive defense. In other words, the defense of the country is to preserve people's lives and guarantee individual safety and protection of territorial integrity and national sovereignty at all times against any conditions and situations and any aggression (Nabati, 1386: 7). Passive defense refers to all actions and measures that reduce vulnerability and increase national stability against military aggression without the use of weapons. Active and passive defense complement each other, although passive defense can be planned and implemented separately, but using active defense alongside passive defense is necessary and unavoidable (Tabatabaie, 1381: 13).

**Diagram of passive defense functions**



active defense is a confrontation with the enemy and the use of appropriate and available weapons to repel and neutralize the offensive actions of the enemy, and passive defense refers to a set of actions that do not require the use of special weapons and can prevent financial and equipment damage to vital military and civilian facilities and human casualties or reduce the amount of these damages and casualties to the minimum possible. The functions of passive defense are: reducing vulnerability and increasing stability without the use of weapons, crisis management, which includes how to manage the country's incidents caused by military threats, and how to organize, administer, employ, and provide the vital and basic needs of the people in war conditions (Jalali, 1387:p.224). The vital importance of defense is not only in the hardware field of battle but by using it in different fields such as soft power that may reduce damages in the mind field by emphasizing components such as maintaining the spirit of fighting the enemy, cohesion, and national unity, etc. strengthen these components can improve national security. The characteristics of passive defense are appropriate location, choosing the optimal scale, parallelization of actions, dispersion on the site, information protection, public coverage, the ability to repair and return to service, use of indigenous technology, the possibility of interacting with active defense, reducing dependence on Infrastructure and multi-purpose projects. Establishing passive defense knowledge in the form of awareness, culturalization, prediction, prevention, vulnerability reduction, stability, and deterrence can be effective in realizing this vital principle. Behaviors such as site operations, information operations, media operations, psychological defense operations, and electronic and biological operations can also cover soft threats (Jalali, 2017: p.225). In this regard, strategic-level plans of soft power should be made in such a way that vital and sensitive centers are not hit, and if they are attacked, the least damage and casualties are inflicted on them (Ramazani, 2017:p. 2).

Brasher et al. (2020) examined a form of passive defense called RAMCAP used after the 9/11 Attack. From their point of view, this method can provide managers with the necessary basis for recognizing bottlenecks and threats against the organization. RAMCAP examines seven critical steps: critical asset review and description, threat

description, threat and incident analysis, vulnerability analysis, threat assessment, risk assessment, and risk management. Finally, they have concluded that to find vulnerabilities, employees can be encouraged to enumerate these vulnerabilities.

### **Conclusion**

Due to the developments that have taken place in science and technology, power has changed and security is multifaceted accordingly. Currently, security threats are diverse and not as simple and easily identifiable as in the past, but new threats are complex. In recent years, soft security has been proposed alongside hard security, and other countries cannot achieve security in the international arena with a hard and negative balancing strategy, as in the past. Still, in addition to hard balancing, they must consider the strength of competitors and existing threats and turn to soft balancing against soft threats. passive defense is one of the tools of the soft and positive balancing strategy of countries in dealing with the soft and negative threats of competitors, which has long been a concern of countries. Islamic countries have also paid attention to this issue since the beginning of Islam. also, according to the words of the supreme leader; Islam relies on the thought and defense system. Defense against threats is considered necessary for human social life, therefore, security is the primary and essential need of human life, and in the Qur'an, this blessing is mentioned as God's blessing and peace. One of Ayatollah Khamenei's recommendations is that passive defense should rise like a flame. An important step to achieve this goal is the formation of the foundations of passive defense in the country to reduce damage and maintain the system.



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