

Towards the East: Iran's Foreign Policy in Ahmadinejad Era—Based on James Rosenau's Continuity Theory

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The article seeks to examine the East Look Policy (ELP) in Iran's Foreign Policy (IFP) (2005-2013). We believe that states, due to different factors, may adopt different policies in their FP. So, the main research question is: Why did Iranian state adopt ELP in its FP in duration of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad era? With regard to the question, our hypothesis is "there are some factors in Iran's internal environment that we called them micro-level factors and some variable in external environment that we called them macro-level variables in formation of ELP in IFP". To prove this hypothesis, we use James Rosenau's foreign policy theory that has been stood on two micro- and macro-level analysis to examination of FP of any state. Regarding Rosenau's theory, there are four factors on micro-level include: individual of policy-maker, his/her role in political system, social values, and governmental structure. In addition, in macro-level, there are some variables, such as the logic of anarchy, the action of other states (especially US), and nuclear sanctions imposed by the US and Western nations.

Keywords: James Rosenau's continuity theory, the East Look Policy, Foreign Policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

Introduction

There have been used several theories to analyze the foreign policy (FP) of the Islamic Republic of Iran. This process is done by some analysts to test the theory of international relations based on the study of the Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign policy and its aim over Iran's foreign policy analysis is examining the explanatory power of the theories of international relations and foreign policy. Of course, sometimes, on the contrary, there have been used different theories as a theoretical and conceptual framework in order to analyze and explain the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Dehghani Firouz, 2011).

Foreign policy analysts, basically, have subjected the impact of two environments (local and international) on the formation and direction of the foreign policy. Some of them which analyze the foreign policy of states with regard to the local factors and variables are using micro-level variables and others, such as Kenneth Waltz, which focused on the impact of the international system on the foreign policy of states, rely on macro-level analysis. Otherwise, there are suggested intermediate ways by some scholars and researchers. In other words, some researchers have refused from the reductionism of two above-mentioned analysis levels and emphasize

simultaneously on the mutual effectiveness of variables of two levels of analysis.

“Neo-classical realism” and “James Rosenau’s continuum theory” are including theories that emphasize on the continuity between micro- and macro- level variables in studying the foreign policy of states. These two theories stress on mutual and bilinear effectiveness and continuity of micro- and macro- level variables. In other words, the foreign policy of states in these two theories is the product of mutual interaction and consistency part of micro- and macro- level variables. It seems that these two approaches are very capable of explicating and analyzing East Look Policy (ELP) of the Islamic Republic of Iran under President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. So, among these two theories, the James Rosenau’s continuity theory has been selected as the analytical framework.

The foreign policy of states in general and foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran during the presidency of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in the proper sense is consisted from a variety of different approaches and positions. One of the approaches and strategies adopted by the government of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was East Look Approach. This approach itself is effected from a variety of factors that can be studied at both micro- and macro- levels. Basically, there are involved different variables and factors in each of the two levels in shaping and orientation of the foreign policy of any country. In the other words, adopting an approach to foreign policy of states not only does not occur in a vacuum but it shapes in the context that already exists and gets policy-makers of each country to the conclusion that although the existing approach is not the best approach, it is the most appropriate among various alternatives ahead. So, to review the foreign policy of states—and, in this study, foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran during the presidency of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad—at first, we must be equipped with a coherent and appropriate theoretical framework. Any theory or theoretical framework in one way or another will examine the corner of the dimensions of foreign policy. So, the foreign policy of states never can be fully and comprehensively explained by a theoretical approach. In this study, although the continuity approach of James Rosenau is considered as one of the most appropriate and most consistent approaches, it should be noted that this approach is not able to review all aspects of the foreign policy of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. The theoretical framework will be presented and reviewed in the following of study (James Rosenau’s continuum theory, then the East Look Approach in the foreign policy of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad will be evaluated. At the end, it will be examined the possibility of applying James Rosenau’s continuity theory to the analysis and interpretation of Ahmadinejad’s “East Look” Approach in Iran’s foreign policy.

Theoretical Framework

To study East Look Approach in President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad’s foreign policy, at first, you must have a coherent theoretical framework that has the ability to explain and illustrate this approach. It seems that James Rosenau’s continuum theory that is the result of combining two micro- and macro- levels has enough power to analyze the subject of this study. The main point of Rosenau’s continuity, as noted, is based on the integration variables of micro- and macro- levels of analysis in the formation and direction of foreign policy. In other words, from the perspective of Rosenau’s pattern, foreign policy is not the product of internal variables rather it is emergent of mutual interaction and consistency level variables related to this two levels of analysis. So, at first, we will analyze two levels of micro and macro in studying of the foreign policy, and then will be analyzed the combination of these two levels of analysis that appears in Rosenau’s pattern.

Micro-level of Analysis

At this level of analysis, it will be investigated the affecting variables and internal factors on the formation and orientation of foreign policy. The theory of "classical realism" is one of the approaches that are purely within the micro-level of analysis. Basically, this level of analysis emphasizes on the determination of internal environment to the international environment in the shaping of foreign policy. In this regard, adopting of different positions by states in the international environment can be assessed. The analysis of foreign policy from the perspective of micro-analysis is based on the theory of decision-making. In fact, at this level of analysis, the most important theories are decision-making theories that, with regard to the three levels of decision-making, they are divided into three categories:

A. The level of decision-making individuals: This level of decision-making appears in three models:

1. "Rational model" which based on it will emphasize on the absolute or limited rationality of actors that are involved in the process of decision-making. Also, in this model, it is assumed that actors by the calculation of profit and loss and a good understanding of the different alternatives available in the area of foreign policy can reach to the best decision (absolute rationality) or accessible decisions (limited rationality) (Snyder, Burke, & Spain, 1963, as cited in Mirhosseini & Rasouli Sani Abadi, 2015; compare with Dougherty & Faltzgraf, 1997).

2. "Pattern cognitive" will concentrate on the "role of beliefs", "abilities", "creativity", "perceptions", and "misconceptions" by decision-makers from environment in the decision-making process and psychological approaches in the analysis of the foreign policy of states (Aron, 1966; Hoffman, 1965). Jervis (2006) and Shapiro (1973) used this level in their analysis (as cited in Mirhosseini & Rasouli Sani Abadi, 2015).

3. "Mixed pattern" which is a determiner choose under the influence of available possibilities and, moreover, to adopt a specific strategy will consider all aspects, at the same time, focus his attention on some of the issues and aspects of foreign policy. Hence, this pattern usually tries somehow to reduce deficiencies in intellectual and cognitive patterns to a minimum (Ghavvam, 2003).

B. Level of decision-making groups: At this level, the emphasis is on the role of decision-making groups in foreign policy decision-making process as well as failure and success factors in the group's decisions in the decision-making process. Janis (1972) was including those who studied on this level of analysis (as cited in Mirhosseini & Rasouli Sani Abadi, 2015).

C. The bureaucratic apparatus level: This level emphasis is on the role of bureaucracies in foreign policy decisions, especially in the implementation of them, In addition, on the procedural and practical available restrictions in the decision-making bureaucratic organizations. Allison and Halperin (1972) were including those who have been working on this level of analysis (as cited in Mirhosseini & Rasouli Sani Abadi, 2015).

Macro-level of Analysis

This level of analysis is against the micro-level of analysis. In the other words, what distinguishes this level from the micro-level of analysis is its emphasis on the role of determinants of international environment on the foreign policy of states. Researchers and scholars who are placed in this level of analysis basically focus on abstract and general concepts and assumptions. One of the theories that focus on the macro-level of analysis is the doctrine of "new realism". Neo-realism is a theory of international policy which has been confronted with excessive reductionism because only explains international results of actions and interactions of states (Dehghani Firouzabadi, 2011).

States are as a black box that internal factors, both individual and social, and foreign policy they do not play engraving effect on behavior. Neo-realism does not analyze and explain the behavior of states individually, but refer it to the foreign policy theory (Waltz, 1979; 1992, as cited in Dehghani Firouzabadi, 2011). Neo-realism develops the concept of the systemic structure through which we can understand how to affect the system structure and its diversity, interactive units, and its results. The international structure has emerged from states' interactions and then puts pressure on them to perform specific actions, as long as it leads towards the others. In other words, this is the structure that will form political relations of constituent units and puts pressure on it. The main theorist of neo-realism, Waltz, considers the theory necessary; for understanding events and international behaviors, because otherwise different behaviors will rise sporadically and provides little information about the realities (Ghavvam, 2003).

The analysis level of the international system is the most high-level of foreign policy analysis that studies the relationship of states with each other in bilateral and multilateral, regional, and global aspects. Macro-level analysis pays more attention to the results of policy instead of policy-making process. What is important here is the place of the states in the international system (Ghavvam, 2012). So, it can be seen the theories of macro-level of analysis that basically consists of realists and its derived schools, have been confronted with a kind of reductionism and objectivism to the international structure and system. This has caused to consider functional similarity in this level of analysis for states and to be ignored the dynamics and internal variables of states. Theorists of macro-level of analysis have considered the foreign policy of states as a mirror for the international system and believe that what is shown is only the reflection of the international system. Something that has been neglected by the theorists is the decision-making process that takes place within states. In other words, policy-making and decision-making process has no place in their assumptions and only emphasize to the results of the policy.

Continuity of Two Levels of Analysis

As it was mentioned earlier, the theoretical framework of this study is the James Rosenau's continuity theory that its basis is on the continuity of micro- and macro- levels of analysis. From the perspective of this theory, collection of domestic and international factors and variables play roles at the same time at segregation of foreign policy of states based on the priorities of the policy-makers. In other words, the foreign policy of states is the resultant of engagement and continuity of surface variables. But it must be considered that these variables themselves are the mediator variables and not independent variable. In other words, there are local and international factors, while affecting these variables, in later stages, will lead to the impact of the mediator variables on the foreign policy of states.

From the perspective of Rosenau's continuity theory, four factors are playing a role at the micro-level for formation and steering of the states' foreign policy: "Person" (the character of decision-maker), "Role" (a role that decision-maker plays), "Governmental structure", and "Social themes".

Variable of "Person" includes the personal characteristics of decision-makers. Features of decision-makers are divided to two types of inherent and adventitious. The inherent characteristics are factors, such as courage, self-confidence ... and adventitious characteristics are factors, such as political socialization, attitudes and values, etc. The "Role" variable includes the role that decision-maker is playing in the arena of foreign policy decision-making. This variable means government officials, regardless of their personal characteristics, react to a subject according on their position in the government. The position of the person in the government structure and

tasks, responsibilities, and loyalties that is expected of him on the basis of this position, will affect his vision of the world and on his vision of the world and his decision in the foreign policy arena (Mahmoudoghli, 2014). Variable of "Governmental structures" refers to characteristics of effective institutions and organizations in the decision-making of foreign policy. According to this variable, the nature of the political system and governmental structures has a significant impact in the process of formation and orientation of the foreign policy of states. Type of organization and creation of a political system can somewhat determine the foreign policy of a country. This character sometimes leads to the ability of policy-makers and sometimes leads to the limitation of their power in decision-making. "Social themes" variable refers to those non-governmental aspects of society that impact on the behavior of the foreign policy. In this context, it can be referred to the main value orientations of a society that are involved in the foreign policy of a country involved in the foreign policy ideals content of a country (Mirhosseini & Rasouli Sani Abadi, 2015).

Along with the variables at the micro-level, Rosenau presents macro-level of analysis variable or "international system". Environmental variables or international are as: events, environmental and international limits, and abilities that occur outside of government and extend or limit options of foreign policy of states and foreign policy-makers (Rosenau, 1971). The importance and influence of environmental elements and variables on the formation and direction of foreign policy is to the extent that structuralists consider it as the only decisive factor in shaping and directing of the foreign policy. Although this view is exaggerated, there is a hint of truth in it.

East Look Approach

The word of "East" is a direction of the four geographical directions, but in political literature, it involves separate and specific meanings. In a way, East is versus West in a comparative sense, so that it reflects speaking of Eastern and Western civilization. In this definition, basically, the idea is that East and Eastern in order to avoid the destruction and deterioration of culture and civilization had to move forward. So, Eastern culture has been invaded by Western culture. This definition of "East" involves the Islamic states and Middle East. East versus West represents the ideological perspective of the Cold War, this means that East and the East bloc are known as socialist camp and West and West blocks are known as Capitalism camp. This case that involves ideological conflict of two camps is concerned, on the one hand, the former Soviet Union and its allies and, on the other hand, the United States of America and its allies. At the moment, the definition of the East, according to the hierarchical order of the world, has lost its importance, because practically with the collapse of the socialist camp and the inefficiency of the socialist states of Eastern Europe, the "East" has largely lost its place and importance.

The "East Look" and Eastern states approach is one of the principles and objectives of the foreign policy of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. This approach and strategy of course, is not heterogenesis but has been demonstrated in a particular context. The "East" from perspective of the Iranian authorities, in the period under review, as the Eastern field of culture and civilization was interpreted with regional and neighborhood perspective. This view is pragmatic and reason-based that has the components of convergence and even has the possibility to outbreak in the framework of "alliances and coalition" and with the certain definition of identity, location, and geography of the East can guarantee strengthen of the national security of the country (Adami, 2010).

East Look Approach in foreign policy of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is not novel, but its history back to 1960s. At the time, Iran's withdrawal from dependence on the United States of America and taking the role of a regional power in the Middle East have motivated Iran to turn to the East (Saghafi-Ameri & Ahadi, 2009). So, it

is observed that the “East Look” Approach basically is identified with the West toward the balance of power. During the presidency of Hashemi Rafsanjani, also this approach was followed as “strategic alliance” approach (Adami, 2010).

During the presidency of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, also, due to the Iranian frustration of the West and prevailing atmosphere of distrust of the West, particularly over the nuclear issue, the attention of Iranians and foreign policy decision-makers was noticed from the West to the “East”. The cause of highlighting and exacerbating of this approach in the presidency of Ahmadinejad lies in the same bed. For example, Mr. President (2005), at the 15 meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Council of Ministers emphasized:

Islamic Republic of Iran, has belief in regional priority in international relations and belief in the necessity to balance its foreign relations which would requires the Reinforcement of the “East Look” approach, is ready to cooperate sincerely with other states in the region (Saghafi-Ameri & Ahadi, 2009, p. 80).

In the field of extensive and useful economic cooperation and establishment of peace and regional security (Saghafi-Ameri & Ahadi, 2009), Ahmadinejad in the “East Look” Approach has stressed on the importance of cooperation with the three states of Russia, China, and India, especially the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) (Adami, 2010). It seems that the mentioned importance and prominence is due to the capacities of these states. On the one hand, China and Russia are two of the five permanent members of the Security Council that the Islamic Republic of Iran could use this capacity to prevent anti-Iranian resolutions in the Security Council about nuclear program. On the other hand, negative propaganda of the United States against the Islamic Republic of Iran’s nuclear program provided context of this approach. Basically, the United States was proposed that it is hostile to Iran more as the concern of the international community and called for anti-Iranian consensus. Thus, Ahmadinejad sought to counteract the United States’ efforts by establishing relationships with Eastern states and organizations. Another reason for the motivation of Iran to the East was the rise of the East as a new power of producing wealth and resources in the new world order. Prior to this, economic resources and producing of wealth and power was in the hands of the West and the Europeans, but in the recent decades, East and Eastern states were able to reach to a level of development and allocated to themselves contribution in production of wealth and power in international markets. Twenty-year outlook document requirements alongside the continuation of the West’s hostile toward Iran provided the basis of Ahmadinejad’s attitude to the East in the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Adami, 2010).

Overall, it seems in this period of the Islamic Republic of Iran’s foreign policy, “East Look” Approach should be considered as an alternative in the foreign policy of Iran that was used for interaction with the West and also was used to create a counterweight against the hostile actions of Western states. The policy-makers of the Islamic Republic of Iran have found that the behavior of the West with Iran not only has not changed, but despite a lot of confidence—building of Iran towards the West in the constructivist and reformist governments the hostile behavior of West toward Iran has intensified to the extent that G. W. Bush (the former president of the USA) called Iran as one of the axis of evil in the world. Attention to Caucasus and Central Asian states (Сергеевич, 2013) and the tendency of Iran to Belarus (Бугдан, 2012) also is interpreted in the context of “East Look” attitude.

Look East Approach and Continuum Theory of James Rosenau

As previously was noted, in studying of the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran bases on James

Rosenau's continuity theory, the emphasis is on mutual consistency of micro- and macro- level variables in the formation and direction of foreign policy (Rosenau, 1996). Thus, this study, with regard to the selected theory, has avoided of the reductionism in micro- and macro- levels of analysis. According to Rosenau's continuum theory, it should be possible to apply and examined effects of each of the micro- and macro- levels of analysis variables on the formation and direction of the foreign policy of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Overall, it seems James Rosenau's continuity theory has the capability and ability to explicate the foreign policy of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Level variables that are used by Rosenau in its studying of foreign policy perfectly express the shape and direction of foreign policy of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Individual Variable

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has a unique character that forms the basis of his attitude to government and politics. Including his personality is considering idealism based on Islamic-Shiite ideology. In his view, the national government is defined within the framework of Islamic-Shiite ideology and worldview and not only does not have secular customary nature, but also its nature is quite religious and Islamic. This view has moral view to the government and state and its aim is to establish a religious society based on Islamic timeless and placeless principles and values. The identity of the Islamic Republic of Iran is a result of the Islamic identity element, Islamic Revolution and Iran. These elements have greater importance and priority than to be Iranian in development of the Islamic Republic of Iran's identity. During presidency of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Iran's national interests and goals were determined by the Islamic—revolutionary nature and identity of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In other words, the national interests and objectives were defined based on the values, ideals and Islamic principles and the Islamic Revolution (Ayvazi, 2008).

The notion of government by Ahmadinejad had a significant impact on his foreign policy. From the perspective of his acceptable discourse in his foreign policy (equitable fundamentalism), the base and foundation of the established order in the international arena is based on an incorrect and unfair baseline. So, existing order must give way to a new system that is based on the Islamic-Shiite principles that are fair and desirable. Another aspect of this speech is challenging the Western liberal democracy system, because the foundation of this order is based on the principles of Western liberal democracy that is inhuman, cruelty and arrogance, and this justifies creation of fronts against the West. In addition, as mentioned in political literature to meaning of "East", in a sense, "East" can be considered as the cultural and civilization system of Islamic states, thus, the tendency to "East" is considered to be a tendency to Islamic principles. Attention to the north neighbors and central Asian states (Корнилови & Матвеев, 2013) is the obvious sign of this claim. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's high confident also is clearly evident in his direction toward his foreign policy, because he, based on this confidence in foreign policy, gets to the conclusion that he has the ability to replace the emerging East rather than the West in his foreign policy. Thus, it becomes obvious that as Rosenau says, his personality and psychological-moral characteristics are effective in the decision-making process.

Role Variable

Variable of role means that what role does the decision-maker in foreign policy arena play in country and state and what effect has this role on its foreign policy. The important point that should be considered is mutual interacting of the role and the individual variable. In the other words, individual characteristics of decision-maker have a considerable impact on the role that he plays and, on the other hand, the role and powers of decision-maker largely leads to the revelation of intentions and personal idiosyncrasies of the decision-maker. Mahmoud

Ahmadinejad, as the president of the Islamic republic of Iran (with mentioned personality characteristics), was responsible for implementing the policies in general and foreign policy in the narrow sense. He saw himself and his country at the position and role that represents the harbinger of justice and peace in the world based on Islamic-Shiite patterns. This leads the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the direction that rebel against the unjust established order and designs its desired order. The destruction of the established order and creation of the desired order of the Islamic Republic of Iran's policy-makers was not possible alone by Iran in this period, so, it was felt to undermine the hegemony of the West and it is required a balance of power against the West (Sanei, 2009). According on these considerations, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to undermine the hegemony of the West felt need to balance of power and, in this context, "East" and "Eastern states" were suitable choice. Thus, for the implementing of Rosenau's continuum theory, it must be said that in addition to personality and individual characteristics of Ahmadinejad, his formal and legal role and position have been effective in his ELP policy.

Governmental Structures

Governmental structures also, in its turn, have a great impact on the country's foreign policy. The nature of the Islamic Republic of Iran and its structures and institutions are based on Islamic-Shiite principles. This is reflected in all elements and components of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's attitude of the government and foreign policy was shaped according this manner. Paramount institutions and structures in the Islamic Republic of Iran are the Supreme Leader (Shabani, 2007). Frequent support of the Iranian leader of Ahmadinejad's foreign policy, especially in the area of combating with the United States and Israel is obvious evident of positive effect of structures and governmental institutions on the foreign policy of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Ayatollah Khamenei has stated on numerous occasions that his view is closer to foreign policy behavior of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. For example, he stated: "The nation elected who wanted (Ahmadinejad) and his views on foreign and domestic policy is closer to my view" (Khamenei, 2009). In other words, structures and institutions of the Islamic Republic of Iran were caused the expansion of power and ability of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in foreign policy. This means that the anti-West characteristic of the Islamic Republic of Iran is reflected in its all institutions and structures and thus Look East Approach alongside with anti-West view of Ahmadinejad was supported by this institutions and structures. Thus, once again, it appears how to use governmental structures variable desired by Rosenau in the foreign policy.

Social Themes

This variable also from two directions has been affected on Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's foreign policy. The first dimension that shows its influence is role of these themes in shaping of the personality characteristics of decision-makers. The second aspect that is obvious aspect of effectiveness emphasize on this point that whether the foreign policy adopted by President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has been matched to ideology, culture and value symbols of the Islamic Republic of Iran or not? The first effects can be seen clearly in the personality characteristic of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Values respected by the Iranian society are Islamic-Shiite principles that this matter there was clearly, at East in appearance, in the foreign policy of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. This situation led minds to the direction that the foreign policy of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has been fully in line with the expected values and principles of Iranian community. Anti-West idea and "East Look" Approach in the foreign policy of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad had full consistency with the values and respected symbols of the Iranian community. In addition, cultural and sometimes religious commonalities with some Eastern societies also can be put under social variable, another factor that was not

ineffective at Ahmadinejad's tendency to the East. On the other variables involved in social values combined population of Iran. Iran is diverse demographic mix. The combination of Iran's population is another involved variable in the social values. The combination of Iran's population is pluralistic. On the one hand, there are racial differences in Iran's population range and, on the other hand, language gaps. In addition, you can also point out to the religious divisions. Also, there are religious gaps between Muslims and non-Muslims, and the gap between various Islamic sects, including Sunni and Shi'a, as well as the gap between the Shi'a in the range of Iran's population, so that some cities and neighborhoods in the 19th century were divided on the basis of these differences. This social structure is exactly like a colorful mosaic or complex diorama (Bill & Leiden, 1974).

Although the Iranian nation has ethnic conjunctions and similarities, religious, cultural, and historical commonalities, this matter is some kind of unity in diversity (Dehghani Firoozabadi, 2010). Although demographic composition of the Islamic Republic of Iran is a diverse mix, it should be considered that majority of 98 percent of the Iranian people are Shiite Muslims and this majority pursue their demands with more power in the foreign policy. On the other hand, democratic nature of the Islamic Republic of Iran has permitted participation of religious and linguistic minorities in the political, economic, and social activities and in accordance with the equality principle has not discriminate between minorities. In this regard, minorities see their interests in the continuity and stability of the Islamic Republic of Iran and support the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran. For example, Molavi Abdul Hamid (2015) expresses in one of his speeches:

I believe that Sunnis of Iran are the best opportunity for the Shiite brothers and the Islamic Republic of Iran. As I know Shiite brothers an opportunity for the Sunni community also I know Sunni community of Iran as an opportunity for Shiite brothers and the Islamic Republic of Iran and there is Islamic and homegrown brotherhood between all of us, if there were not our Shiite brothers and vice versa with whom we want to have brotherhood?

So, it is obvious that this diversity and complexity had not direct and positive impact on the foreign policy of the government of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. It should be noted that diversity and different demographical structures across the Iranian borders also have not been deterrent and moderator factors in the foreign policy of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. So, this variable of Rosenau's continuity theory also has a significant position in the "East Look" foreign policy of Ahmadinejad.

International System Variable

The impact of international system on foreign policy of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is largely distinct and obvious. Activities and actions of Western states and the United States of America lead the Islamic Republic of Iran's officials to conclude that confidence in the West and having extensive relations with them not only does not meet the national interests of Iran, but also will cause irreparable damage to national interests. According to Ahmadinejad and his government, extensive efforts by the Islamic Republic of Iran during the reconstruction and reform periods based on detente and relations with the West have resulted completely reverse. Amongst actions of the West and the United States against Iran could be on issues, such as putting Iran on the list of evil, rejecting Iran's proposal in May 2003 by America (Kamrava, 2008), accusing Iran to achieve nuclear weapons of mass destruction (Mansouri Moghaddam & Ismaili, 2011), inclusion of Iran in the list of Devilish states despite condemning the September 11 attacks and tacit cooperation with America in some context by Iran (Angldahl, 2007), etc. These considerations and the resulting distrust of the West eventually forced Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to put the "East Look" Approach as an alternative choice of "West Look" to its foreign policy. These

considerations suggest that, as Rosenau has predicted, the international system position is impressive in analyzing the foreign policy of states (in this study "East Look" Policy of Ahmadinejad).

Conclusion

In this study, we tried to analyze the "East Look" Approach in Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's foreign policy based on James Rosenau's continuity theory. Therefore, the continuity of micro- and macro- level variables in foreign policy of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and his "East Look" Approach was examined. Accordingly, the status and application of James Rosenau's a set of desired variables in his continuity theory including internal variables, such as personality and individual characteristics, role, governmental structures, and social themes, alongside with the international system variable, namely actions of other actors in the international environment, was defined in the foreign policy of Ahmadinejad. This set of variables according to what Rosenau has predicted led the policy of Iran during Ahmadinejad's presidency to the direction that reliance and trust to the West does not meet the national interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran. So, "East and Eastern states Look" Approach was put on the Islamic Republic's foreign policy-maker's agenda that was headed by Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Selection of "East Look" Approach in his foreign policy is assessable from two aspects: On the one hand, Ahmadinejad to thwart the attempts of the West and America in order to make international consensus against the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially in the nuclear case, tried to use the capacity of East and Eastern states, especially Russia and China, two permanent members of the Security Council.

On the other hand, the rise of the East in recent decades, as a source of power and wealth, has been provided the context of supplying part of the needs of the Islamic Republic of Iran. So, the "East Look" Approach based on these factors will be assessed in the foreign policy of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Overall, it appears that the most influential variables of Rosenau on the shaping and orientation of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's foreign policy are: "international system", "personal characteristics and the character of the decision-maker", "role", and "social themes and governmental structures". So, by contemplation on the factors affecting foreign policy of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, it clears that almost all considered variables by Rosenau, more or less, and therefore his entire continuity theory, to a considerable extent is applicable and relevant.

In general, it seems that James Rosenau's continuity theory has capability to explain properly the "East Look" foreign policy approach of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad because it explains exactly involved factors and phenomena in the formation of foreign policy of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad but the only confusing point regarding to this compliance back to the Islamic ideology of the Islamic Revolution of Iran which apparently James Rosenau's continuity theory has not covered it. But with a little care in the micro-level analysis variables, and by examining the "social themes" variable, this problem will be fixed because one of the most important factors involved in this level back to the "political culture" and respected values of Iranian community.

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