

The Social Construction of Thugs (arazel va obash) Conceptual Challenges of ‘Societal Security Promotion Plan (SSPP)’ From the Perspective of Cultural Criminology

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The Iranian police implements “Societal Security Promotion Plan (SSPP)” to control those called “Thugs”. In this article we argue that the “plan” lacks a well-defined theoretical basis and faces with serious conceptual challenges. Contrary to the convention that the concept of harassment is clear, this paper uses cultural criminology as a theoretical framework to show that firstly, the term “thugs” is a police – constructed term rather a legal defined one. Secondly, this concept has completely sub-cultural aspects ignoring any policy to control harassment. Thirdly, criminal justice officials, stigmatizing the “Thugs” give them a special identification that results ultimately in creation and reinforcement of violence culture. With regard to these three insights, any plan to control the harassment problem requires adoptive responses to this issue rather than punitive and repressive responses.

Key words: *Societal Security Promotion Plan (SSPP), Crime control policy, Culture of violence, “Thugs”, Cultural criminology.*

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