

## Doctrine and Thought of Khawarij and the Implication in the Present Context

**Siti Zubaidah**

*UIN Medan, Sumatra.*

**Zulkifli M.**

*IAIN Kendari, Sumatra,*

### Abstract

Khawarij is one of classical doctrines in Islam. The beginning of Khawarij was caused by the rejection of arbitration (peace) between Ali bin Abi Thalib and Muawiyah bin Abu Sofyan in a war and considering that all of the people who accepted the arbitration were infidel, so that they were obligated to kill.

In the present context, Khawarij thoughts generally arouse high enthusiasm from the followers and accentuate the cover of life aspect, mainly from the lower-middle social class. Their attitude is very antagonistic to the society. Everyone who has the different argument with them should be regarded as infidel so that they become exclusive in society. The world is only seen in the "black-white" color without seeing the socio-cultural context. Khawarij wants the Islam doctrines maximally applied. Khawarij doctrines are simple, pure and consistent.

**Keywords:** Doctrine, Khawarijas thoughts, present context.

### Introduction

Islam is a universal religion that contains basic doctrines that are applicable at all places and for all ages. Numbers of those basic doctrines that are universal, absolute, fully correct, eternal, unchanging and must not be changed. The detail concerning the aim and implementation of basic doctrines contained in the Qur'an are also being adjusted to situation and condition of certain place and age.

Basic doctrine in Islam is monotheism (Oneness of God). Islam ulema, either from the circle of *mutakallimin* or theologian, or from the circle of philosopher and sufi, want to purify the concept of Oneness of God as much as possible.

The first issue encountered by Islam people after the Prophet passed away is political issue. It is related to who will substitute Him to become Madinah head of state. None of the verses or Hadits contains any direction on that matter. The local culture has large impact to the interpretation and the implementation method of those universal principal doctrines. Subsequently, it rised three individual interpretation of the companions concerning head of state. The first opinion said that a Caliph or head of state must be a Quraisy, and later, this opinion is being adopted by Sunni class. Second opinion said that a caliph must be from the Prophet's descendant through Fatimah and Ali ibn Abi Thalib, later on, this becomes adopted by the Syi'ah. Third opinion issued by Khawarij that considers any body of the Islam people, whether he is or he is

not an Arabic, may become a caliph if he has ability for that purpose. Such political issue eventually has increased to become belief issue or theology in Islam.

After raising streams and mazhabs in Islam doctrines, in aqeedah or theology, there appear five streams, namely Khawarij, Murji'ah, Mu'tazilah, Asy'ariyah, and Maturidiyah. In jurisprudence (*fiqih*) or Islam law, there are appeared four mazhabs, namely Hanafi, Maliki, Syafi'i, and Hanbali. In politics, there are three streams: Sunni, Khawarij, and Syi'ah. In terms of mysticism, there are appeared two streams: Sunni and Syi'ah; while in philosophy there was appeared Al-Ghazali, Al-Farabi, and Ibn Rusyd streams (Reference [7]).

In Madinah, the Prophet Muhammad is not only as a God messenger but also as a head of state. After He has passes away, His position as a state leader must be substituted by other person, but His position as a Messenger is unable to be substituted. As being acknowledged in history, His first successor was Abu Bakar as the head of state, he used the title of Caliph, the Successor. After Abu Bakar has passed away, he was replaced by Umar ibn al-Khattab as the second Caliph; then continued by Usman ibn Affan, as the third caliph. In the Usman governmental, any political issues began to be raised. Any historian described Usman as a weak person and not capable to challenge ambition of his family, Bani Umayyah, to become governments officers. He assigned them to be governors in any regions subject to Islam power; the governors assigned by the Caliph Umar then dropped by Usman and replaced by his close family. This nepotism politics made rise of any unfavorable reaction for Usman position as a Caliph. There were unhappy feelings in regions; as the reaction to this situation, the rebels moved from Egypt to Madinah, that caused the murdered of Caliph Usman.

After Usman has passed away, Ali ibn Abi Thalib became the fourth caliph; but soon he obtained challenged from the leaders of Mecca who were also wanted to become a caliph, and he obtained support from Aisyah, the Prophet's wife. Second challenge came from Mua'wiyah, governor of Damascus, a nearest family member of the Caliph Usman. Mua'wiyah also did not admit Ali as the Caliph, even he accused Ali had made intervention in the murder of Caliph Usman. Finally, there was war between those two groups in Shiffin, Irak. In this event, Ali obtained victory, but on the artifice of Amr ibn Ass, the Mua'wiyah right hand, who requested for peace by up hold the Quran. The Ali group urged Ali to accept the offer, by holding arbitration (*hakam*). This event has adversed the side of Ali and given advantage to

Mua'wiyah, that initially Mua'wiyah was only has position as governor, then he became a caliph unofficially.

The condition that Ali suffered deceit of Amr by holding an arbitration even under pressure, was not approved by the major part of his soldiers. The group that was seclucioned and went out of Ali line then known as the Khawarij group, namely people who exit. Dispute settlement between Ali ibn Abi Thalib and Mu'awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan in an arbitration was considered by Khawarij as the contradiction of Islam doctrine. Khawarij, Ali, Mu'awiyah, and Abu Musa argued that Amr ibn Ass had become unbelievers, namely exit from apostate, and might be obliged to be killed; therefore they decided to kill those four leaders. In the next growth, Khawarij had become the most extreme group which fanatically seek to re-built the initial simpleness of Islam. In addition to Khawarij, there were appeared Syi'ah in the history of Islam. Syi'ah considered that a Head of State is not the right each Islam person, not even also the right each of Quraisy. They considered that Imamah, the position of head of state, is the monopoli right of Ali ibn Abi Thalib and his descendants.

Other than the two groups as above, there were also arised other group that tended to have the attitude which 'does not desire to involve' into a dislute post rebellion and murder of Usman. The attitude of this group then became the basis and embryo for the birth of Murji'ah ideology. In the atmosphere culminated in recrimination and mutually considered infidel of each other, then appeared a "neutral" group, that did not want to determine the attitude of whose wrong among those disputing parties. According to Reference [8], they had better rendered the full decision to God, and considered to better postpone the provision up to the future. Thereafter, the births of Murji'ah as counter of opinion of the previous two groups, with their opinion not to infidel either group. Murji'ah considered that, it is better to postpone (*arja'a*) the problem settlement up to the reckoning day before God.

From the political problems up to the arising of such theological problem, the author wants to reveal how is actually the background of arising of these three streams in Islam; started with the group naming, doctrine and their thought, as well as implication of their doctrines in the present context.

To further knowing about Khawarij which was arising after the murder to the third Caliph of Islam, it is necessary to first traces history of the arising of this stream.

### **Historical Analysis, Denomination and Al-Khawarij Doctrine**

Theological issue in the history of Islam was not initially born from any conceptional discourse, but began from any empirical issues, event from practical issues, expressly from political issue. This was easy to be understood, as the Arabic society at that time has known Allah (Reference [5]), even formally they were paganism or polytheism. Therefore, it was improper if the ignorance Arabic was called as the infidels, as they believe of Allah. Only they associated Him with any small Gods, it was more proper to call them as Pagans. It was quite attractive on discussion concerning why the new theologian issue was just appeared after 35 years of the Prophet Muhammad migration, or in 657 Century.

This paper studies the initial theological problem in Islam in line with the appearance of Khawarij, either concerning history, denomination and principal doctrine, or implication in the present context.

### **Concerning the Khawarij**

Majority the scholars and ulema consider that the origin of Khawarij name was from the word "*kharaja*" means "to exit", which was designated to those who "leave" or "separate themselves", "*kharaju*", first from Ali, then Mu'awiyah and Bani Umayyah (Reference [1]). Reference [9] wrote that each person who exits to challenge the right leader (*Imam*) is agreed/covenanted by pilgrim (majority of people) to be called as *kharijiyy*, either who challenged Khulafa al-Rasyidin or the leader available in each age (Reference [10]). Western writers more often called this group as "*Kharijities*", or to be translated as "seceder" (person who release himself) or "rebels, dissidents" (Reference [5]; [11]). There were also stated that the name was originated from Quran verse of Al-Nisa: 100, "Whoever exits from his house with the intention to migrate to Allah and His Massenger, then death be falls, then indeed the reward remains with Allah". It was named as Khawarij because they consider themselves as the people exit the house to devoted themselves to Allah and the Messenger of God [8]).

Reference [1] gives other names; they are *al-Hururiyah*, *al-Nawashib*, and *al-Syurah*. The first, is attributed to *Harura*, namely is a place approximately two miles from Kufah, where there occured dispute between Khawarij and Ali ibn Abi Thalib. The second, is a plural form of *Nashabiy* that means 'to challenge', namely those who are unhappy on the anger of Ali ibn Abi Thalib (Reference [13]). As for the last, *al-Syurahis* a plural form of *Syara - Yasri* (Reference [2]), 'to sell', as referred to in Quran Verse Al-Baqarah: 207, "There are human who sell themselves to obtain God's pleasure", namely those are people who are willing to sacrifice themselves for God.

### **The Appearance Background of Khawarij**

If it is studied in depth regarding cause factor of appearance of Khawarij, it is evidently has a very long "root", and not solely a problem of arbitration because the last mentioned is only anti-climax of a series of events. In other words, artbiration is the "direct cause" of the appearance of Khawarij.

As for the indirect cause, was started as of the sixth year of Utsman ibn Affan as the caliph to replace Umar ibn al-Khattab, namely from the unsatisfaction of "mainstream" or downstream of Arabic cosiety represented by Bedouin Tribes Bani Tamim (Reference [9]). This clan, also the other clan who felt unsatisfaction to the Caliph Utsman's action to assign several of his families from Bani Umayyah to occupy several important positions in his governmental. As described Reference [3] that after Utsman was being the Caliph, Ali and his followers began to less happy, moreover after it has been observed that Utsman was always taking the Umawi family, and many of his servants from this family. Such as Marwan ibn al-Hakam, his personal secretary, was a Umawi. Marwan and his clan has tear down the building built by Abu Bakar

and Umar, in eroding tribal fanaticism, as well as to disseminate a sense of unity among the Arabic people. They govern as the Umawi clan, not as an Arabic nation, and this action caused hostility which since the day of ignorance has been amazingly raging between the families of Bani Hasyim and Bani Umayyah. Finally, at the end of Utsman period there has been a clan moved underground to demand the fall of Utsman as the caliph and being replaced by the other (Reference [3]).

Utsman's deed, then caused any oppositions clans. The Caliph Utsman actually has approved the urge of leading figures at that time, including Ali who classified into a companion and the Prophet's son in law, who has authority and integrity to remedy the condition. But the opposition wanted to overturn by force, among the others by violence and rioting. The opposition's kind of attitude actually has given an adequate reason for the caliph to suppress, but he did not do that because he wanted to make better of this condition in accordance with law and order principal in government. The Utsman descretion was became the boomerang to provide the opposition to kill him, and the murder was occurred in 656 Century (Reference [6]).

Subsequently, Ali ibn Abi Thalib was inaugurated as the fourth Caliph, to replace Utsman who was passed away murdered by the rebels. The first action taken by Ali was to recover any damaged infrastructures resulted by discord and rebellion of the Ustman opposition. Notwithstanding, in the middle of carrying out of the revamping, there was appeared another new opposition from Mu'awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan and relatives, that demanded Ali to punish those who have murdered Utsman. The Caliph Ali was not being reckless in taking violence against the Ustman's murderer, as he considered the sociological-psychological factors. Contrariwise, Mu'awiyah with hard-hearted desired to take revenge, and even accused Ali who was involved in the Ustman murder (Reference [8]), and straightforward conducted insubordination to the legal government. Ali decision that has not taken action against the Ustman's murdered, evidently was not approved by numbers of figures, such as Zubair, Thalhah, and Aisyah r.a., which later briefly caused tragedy of Jamal War, and ended for Ali's victory.

As soon as the Jamal War was ended, Mu'awiyah prepared the power to conduct rebellion, where it culminated with Shiffin War. Government troops directly led by Ali, eventually must face the power of Mu'awiyah, and when the Mu'awiyah was closely lost, then it arose peace offer through arbitration. Reference [13], Ali at the beginning refused the cease fireas that was only the trick of Mu'awiyah. But as he was urged by majority of his followers, he accepted the offer, even at the end he suffered loss resulted by an illicit action of Amr ibn al-Ash (Reference [10]).

The followers, who at the beginning supported this arbitration, turned to blame their leader as they knew that Ali has failed and lost, and Ali was very angry to this clan (Reference [13]). Thereafter, Ali's troops returned to Kufah, while this clan headed to Harura and separate themselves (*khariju* – *khawarij*), and they assigned Abdullah ibn Wahab al-Rasibi as the highest leader (*imam*) (Reference [10]).

### **Denomination of Khawarij: From Political Doctrine to Theology**

Initiated with disappointment to such arbitration, the Khawarij clan was then developed to become an extreme and exclusive clan. As their legitimation basis, they created theology doctrines based on Qur'an verses as the formal guidance. At the beginning they blasphemed Mu'awiyah and Ali and those who involved in the arbitration, with the accusation as unbelievers.

Then, Khawarij doctrines were grown, not only infidelizing the people involved in the arbitration. In the field of politics, Khawarij also considered that a caliph should be obliged to be elected from among any independent Moslems. If a caliph was elected, he might not resign or arbitrage to other person. A caliph was not required only from a Quraisy tribe, even a Habsyi slave (Niger), he might be elected to be a caliph. If the election had run perfectly, a caliph became the leader or the chief of Islam people. A caliph might fully subject to the order of God. If the caliph did not comply with God's regulations, then, he might be obliged to be fired (Reference [10]). This ideology was followed by denomination '*Muhakkimah*', as the sub-section of the first Khawarij.

That kind of political view was motivated by the original living pattern of the Bedouin tribe as Nomaden descendants live freely on the desert. They used to a populist life, simple, egaliter, had simple and thought in living, hard-hearted and brave so that occasionally they behaved cruel, violent and did not afraid of death. Reference [12], the view of Khawarij clan was very utopist, where moslem society was formed by the Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him was "heavenly society", full serenity, purity and peace. So if there are regulation breaches, moreover people who conduct major sin, must be taken out from the "heavenly society" (Reference [12]).

There are opinion difference among the Khawarij clans, such as they considered that it is not required a caliph, a leader or head of state. Each moslem only has to carry out the Book of God in his own will. So beside a clan that having slogan "*la hukma illa lillah*"; there was also clan that considered to be obliged to assigned a Leader, whether he is a good person, or just a godless person, provided that he can take a fair action and to protect people. But in general they agreed that a caliph must be a believer, and the view that to carry out religion is a part of belief.

At the time of Abdul Malik ibn Marwan power, they began to mix the doctrine with theological discussion. Khawarij clan started to discuss on 'faith', that deed is a part of faith. Faith is not only the intention (*i'tiqad*) with heart, but totally with heart, oral and action. Therefore subsequently the Khawarij clan, in addition to as having been mentioned, was separated into several clans.

Concerning numbers of denomination of (sub-section) of Khawarij, there are not covenant among the scholars. According to Dr. Amir Najjar, they were separated to become fourteen (14) denominations, and the largest denomination was section Al-'Ajaridah (Reference [2]). While Reference [counted up to eighteen (18) denominations (Reference [1]; [8]; [9]).

Other than the first section of Khawarij, has been mentioned (Al-Muhakkimah), the next was the second, the section Al-

Azariqah, as the follower of Nafi' ibn Al-Azraq. They were among the others issued fatwa that all Muslims who do not follow the Khawarij ideology were included in the infidels, including those who conduct major sins (Reference [8]). Those who were idolaters are halal to be murdered; will be eternal with their children in hell (Reference [8]). Children who are outside of the Azariqah clan were also halal to be murdered (Reference [10]). It was prohibited to conduct *taqiyah*, wither in words or actions (Reference [10]). Stoning must not be applied to adulterers as such law is not existed in Qur'an (Reference [10]). Major and minor sins may be occurred to the Prophets, with reason of Quran verse Al-Fath: 1-2. The terms used by this clan was no longer infidel, but the term of idolaters with a larger sin than an infidel. They considered that only their clan was the true Islam, the other were polytheism and must be obliged to be murdered. They deemed their religion was a matter must be carried out, not to be thought (Reference [2]; [10]; [8]).

Subsequently the *third* section of Khawarij, Al-Najdat, was the follower of Najdah ibn Amir al-Hanafi from Yamamah. Among his doctrines was if someone was mistaken in having his individual interpretation, it could be forgiven. Religion is consisting of two matters, to know God and to know the Messenger, and out of those two matters, a believer is forgiven if he does not know about it. People outside of the clan were remained being tormented, but not in hell, and finally they enter into heaven. Minor sins will become a major sin if it is conducted continuously, and can be an idolater. In the field of politics, they considered that a leader is required if desired by beneficiaries, as basically, human does not require a leader to lead them. Likewise, *taqiyah* is allowed, not only in words but also in deed, even basically he remains to have a religion (Reference [7]; [8]; [10]).

The fourth, Al-Ajaridah, which was more flexible if compared to the other clan. The clan that was led by Abd al-Karim ibn Ajrad considered that to migrate is not an obligation, but it is only goodness. Properties may be used as spoils of war were only properties of the people murdered in the war. Children do not mistake, not idolaters according to those parents. It did not admit the verse of Yusuf in the Qur'an, as according to them, it is impossible that the holy book containing stories concerning romance (Reference [10]). This clan was separated again into two clans. First, those who have ideology of indeterminism followed by denomination of al-Maimuniyah and al-Hamziah. Second, those who has ideology of determinism, followed by al-Su'aibiyah and al-Hazimiyyah (Reference [8]; [10]).

Fifth section, Al-Sufriyah. This clan was led by Ziad ibn al-Asfar, which was the extremity level almost similar to the clan of al-Azariqah, only there were several different matters, such as: Sufriyah people who are not migrating are not infidels. Idolater's children must not be killed. Major sin action such as to murder and to fornicate, only get sanction in the world, not considered as infidels. While major sin to leave prayer and fasting, will get sanction in the after life realm, and they are be deemed infidels. Regions of clan that are not in the same ideology with them are included to *dar al-harb* (land of war), which must be fought; the fought is only government camp, but children and women must not be prisoners. According to them, *kufur* was divided into two, namely *kufur* of delight that

denies God's delight, and *kufur rububiyah* namely to deny God. In the matter of *taqiyah* it is only be allowed in the form of words and in the form of deed. In certain condition, a muslim woman may marry a non-muslim man (Reference [1]; [8]).

Sixth section, Al-Ibadiyah, which was led by Abdullah ibn Ibad At-Tamimy, which is 686 Century separated itself from Al-Azariqah. This clan was not as extreme as Al-Azariqah, even it was more moderate if compared to Al-Najdat. According to this clan, they may marry to any person who is not Khawarij, provided that they still inherit each other even with other stream, and they were friendlier to the surrounding. It must not to war with non-Khawarij, unless there is war declaration. To make a major sin is not be deemed to have out of Islam doctrine; they may only take horses and weapons in a war, while gold and silver must be returned to the owner (Reference [4]).

Abdullah ibn Ibad who was lived in the middle of second century of hijriyah, was able to live in peace with the local ruler, Khalifah Abd Malik ibn Marwan from the Dynasti of Bani Umayyah (Reference [3]). These Ibadiyah doctrines showed how Khawarij has evolved from hard attitude and extreme in the middle century of hijriyah, to become a moderate Khawarij in the middle of second century.

Based on the above description, in general according to Reference [3]; [12], the Khawarij doctrines are able to be characterized from the following matters: First, to aggravate self and to be obsessive in carrying out worship. There were non-stop fasting, and never slept on a mattress at night. Second, they sincerely themselves with enthusiasm in retaining their beliefs. Hard nature in religion, sincerity in belief, and extraordinarily brave in defending belief, are the characteristic of Bedouin society nature of the desert that always desolate and hard surrounding natural. Third, other natures can be connected with Bedouin Arabics nature was their capability in the art of oral literature, either in poetry or in lyrics prose. This means that they were indeed like to act straightforward, even tend to be 'vocal'. The previous natures caused them easy to be observed and predicted so that easy to be destroyed by the rulling.

### **Implication of Doctrine of Khawarij in the Present Context**

Even formally section of Khawarij and the denominations were no longer exist – only a minor part that located in Morocco, Zanzibar, Oman, and South Arabian – but their doctrines were still influence up to the date. The influence appears from their movement patterns which are tend to be extreme, radical, and puritanistic. Notwithstanding, it still required in more depth research to mention whether there is the "red line" between Khawarij and the contemporary radicalism movement, but, at least there is "similarity" in several certain aspects.

In Indonesia within several last decades, has ever been shocked by terrorism case such as Warman and friends, GPK (Security Disturbance Movement) Warsidi in Lampung, and others, which was intended to establish *Dar al-Islam*, it indicates similarity with the doctrine of Khawarij which in carrying out its action used violence. Likewise with several trends of college students in public universities that indicated symptoms to an extreme purinistic. This kind of symptom, in

one hand, if honestly assessed, the doctrines are a saver of a pure Islam idea, that requires high consistency in the implementation. But in the other hand, the more prominent to surface were doctrines that are taking exclusivity and violence, which these are indeed not in accordance with values or modern trends recently, even with basic principles of Islam doctrines.

Therefore, the author considers that it is a mistake if the appearance of puritanism ideology, that sometime tends to be radical, is deemed to be a threaten to national stability and directly to be destroyed. However, actually that is a quite large positive potential for Islam people, if they are able to utilize it to return to basic values of Islam.

## Conclusion

1. Khawarij doctrines are in general motivates a high enthusiasm in its followers.
2. It is typically prominent an aspect of life to the surface, particularly in the circle of lower social strata level.
3. The attitude was very antagonistic to wide society. All people who have different points of view are considered as infidels, so that Khawarij becomes exclusive in the middle of the society.
4. The world is only seen in "black and white" colors without considering the social-culture context.
5. Khawarij desired that Islam doctrines implemented as maximum as possible.
6. The nature of doctrines of Khawarij is simple, pure, and consistent.

Thereafter are several principals of thought around the Khawarij and the denominations, doctrines and the implications in the present context. The author wishes that this seminar provides any constructive inputs in viewing the phenomenon of Islam doctrines, which in the application are evidently very heterogen.

## Reference

- [1] Al-Ashari, Abi al-Hasan ibn Ismail, *Maqalat al-Islamiyyin wa Ihtilafa al-Mushallin*, Juz I, Kairo: Maktabah al-Nahdliyah al-Misriyah, 1369/1950.
- [2] Al-Najjar, Amir, *Al-Khawarij: 'Aqidah wa Fikiran wa Falsafah*, Kairo: Dar al-Ma'arif, 1990.
- [3] Amin, Ahmad, *Fajr al-Islam*, Kairo, 1975.
- [4] Gibb, H.A.R., *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, "Ibadiyah", Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1961.
- [5] Guillaume, Alfred, *Islam*, Auckland-New Zealand: Penguin Book, 1975.
- [6] Mahmudunnasir, Syed, *Islam: Konsepsi dan Sejarahnya*, Bandung, 1993.
- [7] Nasution, Harun, *Islam Rasional: Gagasan dan Pemikiran*, Bandung: Mizan, 1995.
- [8] Nasution, Harun, *Teologi Islam: Aliran-aliran, Sejarah, Analisa Perbandingan*, Jakarta: UI Press, 1986.
- [9] Syahristani, *Al-Milal wa al-Nihal*, I, Kairo, 1967.
- [10] Syahristani, *Muslim Sects and Division*, trans. A.K.Kazi and J.G. Hynn, London: Kegan Paul International, 1984.
- [11] von Grunebaum, G.E., *Classical Islam*, Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1970.
- [12] Watt, W. Montgomery, *Islamic Theology and Philosophy*, trans. Masdar F.Mas'udi, Jakarta:P3M, 1987.
- [13] Welhausen, Yulius, *Al-Khawarij wa al-Syi'ah*, trans. 'Abd al-Rahman Barawi, Kairo: Maktabah al-Nahdat al-Misriyah, 1968.