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THE DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC MOVEMENT AS KHARIJITES: A CRITICAL AND ANALYTICAL STUDY

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Abstract

This study aims at addressing the extent of proximity and relationship between the contemporary Islamic movements and the Kharijites. Many contemporary scholars, regardless of their motives and trends, describe modern Islamic movements as Kharijites, due to their advocacy for radical social and political reform in many of the Muslim countries. Therefore, there is a need for addressing the genuineness of this description, especially when it is generally attributed to the whole contemporary Islamic movements across the Muslim nations, as it is the case in the view of the Madkhalists. Indeed, the misplacement of this description on some Islamic movements opens the door of political oppression and leads to the justification of shedding the innocent blood and the persecution of the righteous Muslims, based on the political disagreement, as it is the case in many Arab and Muslim countries, i.e., Egypt. So, this study discusses the historical background of the contemporary Islamic movements and their relationship with the Kharijites in order to figure out the range of correspondence between the principles of Kharijites and contemporary Islamic movements. The qualitative method is being applied in the study by adopting a historical, inductive, and analytical approach. It

reveals that the contemporary Islamic movements can be loosely categorized into two major groups, one of which cannot be described as the Kharijites in all perspectives, while the other one can be described as the Kharijites due to the tight closeness between their trends and ideologies and the principles of the Kharijites. Likewise, their unjustifiable and terrorist acts against innocent people permit the ascription of the name to such groups among the contemporary Islamic movements.

Keywords: *Kharijites, Contemporary Islamic Movements, Western Hegemony, Muslim Brotherhood, Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab.*

Abstrak

KHOWARIJ SEBAGAI GERAKAN ISLAM KONTEMPORER : SEBUAH KAJIAN KRITIS DAN ANALITIK. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk membahas tentang tingkat kedekatan dan hubungan antara gerakan Islam kontemporer dan Khawarij. Banyak dari peneliti kontemporer, terlepas dari motif dan tren mereka, menggambarkan gerakan Islam modern sebagai golongan Khawarij karena pembelaan mereka untuk reformasi sosial dan politik yang radikal di banyak negara-negara Muslim. Oleh karena itu, diperlukan kajian untuk membuktikan kebenaran dari pernyataan tersebut, terutama saat hal tersebut pada umumnya dikaitkan dengan seluruh gerakan Islam kontemporer di berbagai negara Muslim seperti yang terjadi dalam pandangan Madkhalists. Bahkan, kesalahan penafsiran dari pernyataan tersebut pada beberapa gerakan Islam berpotensi membuka pintu penindasan politik dan mengarah pada pembenaran pertumpahan darah orang yang tidak bersalah serta penganiayaan terhadap Muslim yang taat berdasarkan perselisihan politik seperti yang banyak terjadi di negara-negara Arab dan Muslim, salah satunya adalah Mesir. Jadi, penelitian ini membahas tentang latar belakang sejarah gerakan Islam kontemporer dan hubungannya dengan golongan Khawarij untuk mengetahui tingkat kesesuaian antara prinsip-prinsip golongan Khawarij dan gerakan Islam kontemporer. Metode kualitatif diterapkan dalam penelitian ini dengan menggunakan pendekatan historis, induktif, dan analitis. Penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa gerakan Islam kontemporer secara garis besar dapat dikategorikan ke dalam dua kelompok. Kelompok pertama tidak dapat dikategorikan sebagai golongan Khawarij dalam semua perspektif, sedangkan kelompok kedua bisa dideskripsikan sebagai golongan Khawarij karena kedekatan yang erat antara tren dan ideologi mereka serta prinsip-prinsip yang dianut oleh golongan Khawarij. Demikian

juga tindakan mereka yang tidak dapat dibenarkan dan tindakan teror terhadap orang-orang yang tidak bersalah memungkinkan kelompok-kelompok semacam itu masuk kedalam golongan Khawarij di antara gerakan-gerakan Islam kontemporer.

Kata Kunci: *Khawarij, Gerakan Islam Kontemporer, Hegemoni Barat, Ikhwanul Muslimin, Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab.*

A. Introduction

Indeed, the trends of the early Kharijites and some of their features obviously surface and manifest in different forms in the attitudes and thoughts of some Muslims nowadays. These trends and ideologies can be easily observed amid some Islamic organisations, individuals and Islamic and *da'wah* movements. Likewise, the trends can be perceived in their slogans and logos, methods and patterns, stances and conducts, etc. The said trends and features can be especially found in the attitudes of those Islamic groups, whose major principles and theories concentrate on the issue of *takfīr* and *tabdīr* (random accusation of other Muslims with infidelity and heresy). The majority of Muslims that fall prey to this ideology can be chiefly found among the youths and elites with abortive and premature Islamic knowledge but possess a great deal of enthusiasm and passion for their religion.¹ Besides, there is a big sect in Islam known as *al-Ibāḍiyyah*,² those who are historically and ideologically considered to be the natural extension of the early Kharijites.

Actually, there is no limit to the time during which *Khawārīj* (Kharijites) can emerge. So, the possibility of their emergence

¹ Al-Ṣṣalabi, 'Ali Muhammad, *Fikr al-Khawārij wa al-Ssī'ah*, (Cairo: Dār ibn Azm, 1st edn. 2008), 64; Nāṣir 'Abd Al-Karīm, *Al-Khawārij Awwal al-Firaq fi Tārīkh al-Islāmī*, (Riyadh: Maktabah Ishbīliya, 1st edn., 1998), 52-53.

² الإباحية, (al-Ibāḍiyyah): The Ibadi movement, Ibadism also known as the Ibadis: is an Islamic school thought predominant in Oman. Some Muslims also adhere to its teachings in some parts of Muslim countries such as Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and East Africa. (See: Wikipedia, Ibadi, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ibadi>.)

at any time is indisputable and well known to Muslim scholars. Based on many authentic narrations from the Prophet (p.b.u.h) that signify no restriction of the period for their emergence, it is correct to tag and identify any individual or group of Muslims that believe in, and subscribe to the principles and ideologies of the early Kharijites as one of them by calling such ones with the name i.e., Kharijites. Thus, many contemporary scholars identify some of the contemporary radical Islamic movements as the Kharijites. 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd reported:

The Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h) said: "At the end of time there will appear a people with new teeth (i.e., young in age), with foolish minds. They will speak the best words ever uttered by mankind and they will recite the *Qur'an*, but it will not go any deeper than their collarbones. They will pass through Islam as an arrow passes through its target. Whoever meets them, let him kill them, for killing them will bring a reward from Allah in the hereafter for those who kill them."³

There is no dispute between the scholars of Islam that the people referred to in the above hadith and all other related hadith are the Kharijites. Thus, when they emerged as a sect during the caliphate of 'Ali, he and all other companions and general Muslims fought them based on the instruction of the Prophet (p.b.u.h).⁴ Al-Ājurrī asserts the unanimity of the companions as well as the earlier and later scholars of *Sunni* Muslims on the fact that the Kharijites are evil and sinners against Allah and His Prophet. So, their devoutness cannot bring them any reward since it is established on the twisting of the revelation to suit their wishes and camouflaging the believers.⁵

³ Al- Bukhārī, Muḥammad bin Ismā'īl, (1422 A.H.). *Al-Jām'u al-Ṣaḥīḥ/ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, (Dār Ṭawq al-Najāt, 1st edn., 1422 A.H), Hadith no. 6930; Al-Tirmidhī, Abu 'Īsā Muḥammad bin 'Īsā, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, (Bayrūt: Dār al-gharb al-Islāmī, 1998), Hadit no. 2188; Muslim bin Ḥajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, (Bayrūt: Dār ihyāi al-turāth al-'Arabī, n.d), Hadith no. 1068.

⁴ Muslim, *Saḥīḥ Muslim*, Hadith no. 1066.

⁵ Abu-Bakr al-Ājurrī, *Al-Sharī'ah*, ed.: 'Abdullah bin 'Umaral-Dumayji, (Riyadh,Dar al-Watan, 2nd edn, 1999), 325.

The random ascription of entire modern Islamic movements to such a sect which is historically known for atrocities and terrorism, as it is in the opinion of *al-Madākhilah* (Madkhalists)⁶ and some other scholars⁷ is questionable and needed to be addressed. Based on the perception of Madkhalists, any contemporary Islamic movement that calls for social and political reform in any of the Muslim countries is considered to be one of *al-Khawārīj*.

Actually, many books and research have been previously and currently published about the general concept of the Kharijites. However, as far as the authors are aware, no academic research has recently investigated the claim that ascribes the entire political-based contemporary Islamic movements, i.e., Muslim Brotherhood, to the Kharijites. Therefore, this research will serve as the first, or at least, one among the early research carried out in this regard. Hopefully, the findings of the research will shed light on the ambiguous revolve around the matter and correct misconceptions of the populace about the political-based contemporary Islamic movements.

B. Discussion

1. Definition of the Kharijites

Kharijites according to al-Shahrastānī, were the group of people in the camp of 'Alī during the Battle of *Ṣiffīn*, those who later

⁶ They are known with that name in reference to their leader Rabi' u al-Madkhalī. The group is believed to be a political movement which is specifically classified among the Salafists. Their basic principle is based on the rejection of sectarianism and partisanship, and any kind of opposition to the government, and public advice to the government. Violation of any of these principles is considered as rebellion against the government in their view, as they considered the government of the state as the *Jama'ah* which should not be opposed. Thus, they launch their sharp attack on the Islamic and political parties and considered them as the Kharijites and innovators, who must be unfriendly deal with, and may be killed if it is warranted. Their main objective seems to be the effort to end the division in the nation and bring the people under one authority. See: Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madkhalism>.

⁷ Al-Mayadeen Channel, Fatāwā (Verdict) of the Council of Senior Scholars of Saudi Arabia on the Muslim Brotherhood, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BE68DQOO7PI>, Accessed: 08/07/2021.

revolted against him over his acceptance of the arbitration between him and Mu'āwiyah. They ganged together in about 12,000 people in a place known as *Ḥarūrā* in *Kūfah* in Iraq under the leadership of 'Abdullah bin al-Kawā and others. Likewise, according to al-Shahrastānī, the name is designated for any Muslim or group of Muslims who rebel at any time against their legitimate rulers appointed by the consensus of the *ummah*.⁸

Ibn Ḥazm stated five major characteristics of identifying the Kharijites. He argued that those characteristics are the determinants and identifications of the sect at any period. So, according to Ibn Ḥazm whoever agrees with the Kharijites and subscribes to their opinion on the following issues can be considered as one of them:

- a. Rejection of the arbitration that occurred between 'Ali and Mu'āwiyah and considering it to be an illegitimate act. After the battle of Siffin that occurred between Caliph 'Ali and Mu'āwiyah, both parties agreed on appointing two arbitrators, each from each party, both whose judgement would be subjected to. So, some members from 'Ali's camp rejected and disagreed with the arbitration and considered it as infidelity based on their misapprehension of Qur'an 10: 40, where Allah says: "It is only Allah Who decides."
- b. The idea of considering the perpetrators of the major sins among the believers to be infidels. One of the major principles of the Kharijites that distinguishes them from other Sunni Muslims is their belief that any sinner that perpetrates major sin among the believers has become an infidel except if he/she repents.
- c. The idea of the permissiveness of rebellion against the oppressive leaders. The Kharijites believe in the permissiveness of arm-revolt against any ruler that is considered unjust in their view.

⁸ Al-Shahrastānī, Abu al-Fathi Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Karīm, *Al-Milal wa al-Nniḥal*, (Muassasah al-Ḥalabī, n.d), vol. 1, 114.

- d. The belief in the principle says that the perpetrators of the major sins among Muslims will be perpetually punished in hellfire. Based on their principle that declares a sinner as an infidel, so, any believer that dies without repenting from a major sin will be perpetually dwelled in hellfire and punished therein forever.
- e. The idea of the permissibility of Imamate from non-*Qurayshī*. In contrary to Kharijite's opinion on the permissibility of appointing Imām (Muslims' supreme leader) from non-*Qurayshī*, the consensus of the companions and their successors on the necessity of appointing Imām from Quraysh was reported. This consensus comes based on several Prophetic traditions that denote this concept.⁹

So, according to Ibn Ḥazm, the Kharijites are those groups who rejected and condemned the arbitration that occurred between 'Ali and Mu'āwiyah during the Battle of *Ṣiffin* and believed in those other four opinions mentioned above. Likewise, Ibn Ḥazm argues that any other Muslim who believes in those five aforementioned points at any period is considered to be Kharijite, even if he disagrees with them in some, or all other of their secondary ideologies.¹⁰

Kharijites according to Dr Nāṣir, are those who declare infidelity on the Muslims because of their sins, and revolt against the Muslim leaders and their unity. This identity comprises of the first sects of the Kharijites, as well as anybody or group that subscribe to their ideologies among the later Muslims, such as *Jamā'ah Takfīr wa al-Hijrah* and their likes.

2. The Principles and Specifications of the Kharijites

The features of the Kharijites have been stated in several hadiths of the Prophet (p.b.u.h), where he prophesied the emergence

⁹ Abu Zakariyya Muḥyī al-Din al-Nawawī, *Sharḥ Muslim*, 2nd ed., (Bayrut: Dār ihyāi al-turāth al-'Arabī, 1393 A.H.), (12) 200.

¹⁰ Ibn Ḥazm, 'Ali bin Muhammad, *Al-Faṣl fi al-Milal wa al-Ahawā'a wa al-Niḥal*, (Cairo: Maktabah al-Khanjī, n.d), vol: 2, 90.

of the sect, though the exact name was not mentioned by the Prophet (p.b.u.h), but it was later deduced by the Scholars from the text of the related hadiths. He (p.b.u.h) even stated some specific natural and physical indications of some of their members.¹¹ The early Kharijites had some ideological differences within themselves due to their disagreement on some fundamentals, however, there were some peculiar principles and common specifications that differentiated them from all other Muslims of their time. Below are some of these specifications which were deduced from different versions of the related hadiths:¹²

- a. Declaration of infidelity on the perpetrators of the major sins among the Muslims, and therefore, application of non-Muslims' law on them. They believed that any Muslim that perpetrates one of the major sins has become an unbeliever. The perception completely contradicts the fundamentals of Islam. There are several verses of the Qur'an and many Prophetic traditions that assert the forgiveness of Allah for all kinds of sins except *shirk* (association of a partner with Allah). More so, one of Allah's names is the Forgiver.¹³
- b. Permissibility of unconditional armed revolt against the legitimate rulers. It is permissible in their view to rebel against the rulers due to some minor issues as they did with Caliph 'Ali.
- c. Legalization of killing innocent Muslims and disloyalty to the nations. Based on their principle of declaring infidelity on the Muslims mainly because of some ideological differences, the killing of many Muslims is lawful in their view. Their cruelty towards their Muslim brothers and leniency towards non-Muslims can be perceived in our contemporary time if we observe the number of several attacks launched in various Muslim communities, of which the victims were Muslims.

¹¹ Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, Hadith no. 1066.

¹² Nāṣir *Al-Khawārij*, 31-34; Al-Ṣlabi, 'Ali Muhammad, *Fikr al-Khawārij wa al-Ssī'ah*, (Cairo: Dar ibn Azm, 1st edn, 2008), 60.

¹³ *Al-Qur'an*, al-Zumar: 53; al-Nisai: 48.

- d. Twisting of the Qur'anic verses, in which the enjoining of what is right and forbidding of what is wrong are mentioned to suit their principle that establishes the permissibility of uprising against the Muslim leaders, and fighting of their ideological opponents among Muslims. A good example of this character was their interpretation of verse 40 of surah Yusuf, which they used to support their rebellion against the righteous caliph 'Ali. Likewise, the contemporary Kharijites do justify their barbaric attacks on innocent souls.
- e. Existence of a great number of the Bedouins and early ignorant reciters of the *Qur'an* in their midst; those who used to recite the *Qur'an* often and often, but with the little or lack of understanding of the messages. Thus, there was neither any of the companions nor one among renowned scholars in their midst. Likewise, the contemporary Kharijites are full of ignorant people that lack the correct understanding of Islamic teachings.
- f. The appearance of the qualities of righteousness in them i.e., asceticism, enthusiasm, humility, devoutness, all of which were characterized by fundamentalism, radicalism, extremism, and ignorance. Their belief is a mere pronunciation of the word of *Īmān* without its establishment in their hearts and with low sense and incorrect understanding of Islam.
- g. Pride of self-knowledge and disregarding of others' knowledge. If they have referred to the elders among the companions before their decision, they would not have occurred into that great mistake and wrong perception. Likewise, the contemporary Kharijites do take their stances and verdicts from their leaders and not from the erudite Muslim scholars.
- h. Wrong application of the texts, that always resulted in the wrong deduction of the verdicts, as they firmly held to the verses of punishment in the *Qur'an* and abandoned the verses of forgiveness and mercy, and applied the verses which are meant for the disbelievers on the believers.
- i. Lack of knowledge of the Prophetic traditions, which is the key to the understanding of the *Qur'an*, thus, their inductions are always based on the literal meaning of the Qur'anic verses.

- j. High disagreement within themselves and quick transformation from one view to the other due to their little knowledge about the principles of Islam. Whenever they differ in opinion they divide into many groups and fight each other.
- k. Quick apostasy: some of them would be Muslims in the morning and turned to the disbelievers in the evening of the same day, due to their ignorance about the rules and principles of their religion.
- l. Foolishness: if the stances and decisions of the early and modern Kharijites are well observed, it will be discovered that the majority of their decisions and stances were foolishly taken without any consideration.
- m. Hasty judgement on those people who oppose their view among Muslims.
- n. Reading and suspicion of the believers' minds.
- o. Roughness and cruelty in dealing with their opponents.
- p. Fighting and killing of the Muslims and sparing non-Muslims.

3. Resurgence of the Contemporary Islamic Movements

Most of the contemporary Islamic movements are usually identified and referred to by many Muslim and non-Muslim researchers as the modern Kharijites. Any group among the contemporary Islamic movements that are calling for radical social and political reform in any of the Muslim countries is usually considered to be *al-Khāwarij* in the view of the renowned Saudi Arabian scholar Shaykh Rabī' bin Hādī al-Madkhalī and his disciples. Likewise, the current Council of Senior Scholars of Saudi Arabia¹⁴ and some other scholars, i.e., Ali Gomaa, Sa'duddin Hilālī among others categorically declared Muslim Brotherhood as the Kharijites and terrorist movements.¹⁵ The ideal instance to buttress the claim

¹⁴ Al-Mayadeen Channel, Fatāwā (Verdict) of the Council of Senior Scholars of Saudi Arabia on the Muslim Brotherhood.

¹⁵ Youtube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RFKLLa3qOTU>, Accessed:

was the stances of many scholars in the Arab world towards the Muslim Brotherhood and their likes after the downfall of the former Egyptian President, President Mohamed Morsi. However, many researchers believe that many factors have led to the resurgence of the contemporary radical Islamists, who are believed to have some characteristics of Kharijites, i.e., revolting against the government. These factors are believed to have resulted from different historical events related to the contemporary Islamic awakening movements, such as the Muhammad bin Abd Al-Wahab movement, the downfall of the Ottoman caliphate, and the occupancy of the Muslim nations by the Western power. Likewise, the impact of many renowned Muslim intellectuals and activists should not be ignored in this regard, such as Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī and his disciple Muḥammad ‘Abduh, Abu ‘Alā Mawdūdī, Sayyid Qutb and Khumayni’s revolution. Nevertheless, the whole factors can be summarized into two major factors which are the Muhammad bin Abd Al-Wahab movement and the Western colonisation of the Muslim countries.¹⁶

4. The Impact of Western Hegemony on the Resurgence of Contemporary Islamic Movements

To have a correct understanding of the circumstances revolving around the resurgence of the contemporary Islamic movements, who are known as the modern Kharijites by the others, a brief account of the historical background of the movements must be presented. Indeed, if the Islamic history is well observed from its onset, it will be realized that ever since the establishment of the first Islamic state in Madinah unto the downfall of the last Islamic empire -the Ottoman empire-, the basic structures and principles of Muslim societies and their civilizations have been constituted

10/07/2021.

¹⁶ Bagader, Abubaker A., “Contemporary Islamic Movements in the Arab world”, in *Islam, Globalization and Postmodernity*, (London: Routledge, 1994), 111-112; Lapidus Ira M, *Contemporary Islamic Movements in Historical Perspective*, (Berkeley: University of California, Institute of International Studies), 6.

by Islamic culture and its spiritualities. Historically, most Islamic societies have conventionally adhered to Islamic patterns in their political, social, and spiritual systems. Muslims were socially and politically independent, and abiding by Islamic cultures and civilizations in all of their affairs. At any period, Islam has never been mere ritualism; however, it has been a complete way of life that its teachings comprise all aspects of human needs for their physical and spiritual well-being. Previously, the Muslim scholars in any Muslim society played a vital role in the social and judicial activities by their effective contribution towards the development of the nation. In the previous time, the roles of the Muslim scholars in organizing the Islamic educational system, humanitarian activities and judicial administration strongly surfaced.¹⁷

Islamically, any territory under the leadership and sovereignty of the Islamic government is subjected to the enforcement of Islamic law under the auspices of its political leader, who is considered to be the guarantor of the *shariah* enforcement in that community. More so, such territory and its empire are considered to be the absolute custodian of Islam and its holy law. Therefore, the utmost efforts are required from the public to protect their land from alien and obtrusive factors that are incompatible with the principles of Islam.¹⁸ Thus, every Muslim is urged to modify and correct any abominable act in society according to individual status and capability.¹⁹

In the eighteenth century, the long time and well established Islamic social and political forces in the Muslim societies faded away due to the intense political competitions resulted from nationalism, egoism, and divergent political interests. Besides, the weakness

¹⁷ Mawdudi Sayyid Abul A'la, *The Islamic Law and Constitutions*, Trans. and Ed.: Khursid Ahmad, (Pakistan: Islamic Publication LTD, 1960). 65; Lapidus, *Contemporary Islamic Movements in Historical Perspective*, 8.

¹⁸ Wahbah al-Zuhayli, *Āthār al-Ḥarb fī al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, (Damashq: Dār al-Fikr, 1998), 170; Bagader, *Contemporary Islamic Movements in the Arab world*, 111-112.

¹⁹ Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, ḥadith 84.

of the main Muslim empire -the Ottoman- and its subordinates -the Safavid and the Mughal empires- and the expansion of the occupancy of European colonial powers to the Muslim territories contributed a lot to the breakdown of the long-time Islamic political system. Regarding this fact, Lapidus stated.

In the course of the late eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries, the Dutch seized control of Java, the British established their paramouncy in India, and the French colonized North and West Africa. Russia occupied much of Central Asia between 1864 and 1885. By World War 1 most of Africa was under colonial control. The Arab world and Iran fell under British and Russian tutelage. By subduing and destroying indigenous Muslim states, European intervention opened the way to the intensified internal struggle in Muslim countries over issues of authority, distribution of power, and cultural and political goals. This struggle lasts to the present day.²⁰

Unfortunately, within the period of the occupancy, the colonialists successfully invaded many Muslims intellectually, especially the elites. Consequently, these groups of influenced Muslims with the Western ideologies subscribed to a new idea, which was later known as secular/liberal Islam, or modern Islam. The notion of the new idea represents the breaking up and segregating all forms of the spiritual ties from the Muslims' social lives.²¹ As a result, contemporary Islamic revivalism and reformism emerged to restore a correct and pristine understanding of Islam and bring Muslims back to the full practice of their religion. So, one of the main reasons for the resurgence of the contemporary Islamic revivalist and reformist movements can be traced back to the Western hegemony on the Islamic civilization and the strive to abolish and uproot the Islamic system and replace it with their secular system. Since then, several movements were formed from

²⁰ Lapidus, *Contemporary Islamic Movements in Historical Perspective*, 11.

²¹ Bagader, *Contemporary Islamic Movements in the Arab world*, 112.

many parts of the Muslim world among the remnant scattered Muslim scholars in the Ottoman Empire, India, and North Africa.²²

More so, in central Asia, several attempts were made for the reawakening of religious inspiration on one side, and the political resistance to foreign imperialism on another. Naqshbandi Sufi movement became the bearer of the new religious revival and political opposition to the Russian and Chinese expansion in the region. In Caucasus, Volga and Khazan territories, local resistance was formed to stop the Russian hegemony. While the same step was taken in Turkistan against the Chinese domination, as well as Yunnan between 1856 and 1873.²³

Furthermore, across the African continent between the eighteenth to the earliest twentieth century, Islamic reawakening was distinguished with both indigenous roots and international influences. In the Westernmost region of Africa, Sokoto Caliphate led by Usman Dan Fodio between 1809-1904 in the region between the Niger and Lake Chad, as well as Senegambian reformist movements in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were said to be independent movements without any foreign influence. At the same time, similar local resistant movements were organized in the major parts of North Africa, which were believed to have a kind of international influence along with the internal efforts.

5. The Impact of Muḥammad Bin Abd Al-Wahab Da'Wah on the Resurgence of the Contemporary Islamic Movements

On the other hand, and according to many researchers, Islamic movements from its onset worked on the abolishment of magical practices, saint and shrine worship and correction of the superstitious beliefs and any kind of polytheism and paganism within the Muslim communities. These missions served as another

²² Lapidus, *Contemporary Islamic Movements in Historical Perspective*, 19.

²³ *Ibid.*, 12-13

immediate background for the evolution of the contemporary Islamic awakening movements. Some of these movements did not see anything wrong in using violent or militant actions, if necessary, just to eliminate all forms of heretical practices and restore an ideal Islamic way of worship corresponding with the teachings of the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*. These objectives were the reasons responsible for the emergence of the first modern Islamic revivalism. It evolved due to the internal issues related to the heresies in the matters connected with the principles and fundamentals of the belief and value and the prevalence of a cultic *Sufi* form of Islam. The initial aim of these movements was the internal reform of Muslim affairs. However, foreign intervention would consolidate the tendency of the revivalism and reform of the religious affairs in the Muslim societies and divert the interest of the reformist movements to the anticolonial resistance.²⁴ Lapidus argues that historically “the Muslim world reformist movements began with a program of internal religious and communal revitalization and then became the spearhead of anticolonial resistance.”²⁵

The contemporary awakening Islamic movement succeeded in accomplishing its first and earlier major goal, as stated above, in the mid-eighteenth century, when the movement of Muhammad bin ‘Abd Al-Wahab with the alliance of Saudi family prevailed in most of the Arabian countries. Likewise, many other Muslim nations from other parts of the world, i.e., India, Southeast Asia, were also influenced by the reform. The rapid and wide influence of the movement across the Muslim worlds resulted from the constant interactions and perpetual relationship between the world Muslims and the holy land which is the origin of the idea. Since the scholars, merchants, and pilgrims used to travel down to the holy land for religious and social purposes. Initially, the efforts of the movement mainly focused on the reformation of the internal affairs of the

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 12.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 13.

Muslims, especially the issues related to the *shirk* (polytheism) and *bid'ah* (heterodoxy).²⁶

The movement began to take another dimension besides its primary agenda by bursting into political agitation around the 1820s and 1830s in the hands of some disciples of Muhammad bin 'Abd Al-Wahab, who were influenced by his teachings. The new trend began from Bengal and the Northwest frontier province, where an encounter occurred between the movement and Sikh on one side, and between them and British rulers in another hand. At this point, efforts of the movement started to be directed against the colonial power.²⁷ Likewise, the impact of Muhammad bin Abd Al-Wahab *Dawah* can be perceived in the efforts of Sayyid Ahmad Barelewi (d. 1831)²⁸ who was considered to be one of the early and important Islamic thinkers, revivers, and freedom fighters in the Indian Subcontinent that initiated and led the famous *Jihad* movement in India and organised Pathan Resistance against the British power in the Northwest Frontier Provinces. He also focused on battling the Sikhs of Punjab, those whom he saw as a big threat to the survival of Islam in Punjab and North Frontier regions of India.²⁹ Barelewi main objective was said to be the strive for the establishment of an Islamic state in the Peshawar region, but his dream could not be actualized due to his martyrdom in the Balakot region in a battle against Sikhs.³⁰ Some of his reformist activities are affirmed to have been resulted in the founding of the great reformist seminary, Deoband, and some series of religious

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 12

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 12.

²⁸ History Park. Com, "Syed Ahmad Barelvi", <https://historypak.com/syed-ahmad-baralvi/>, Accessed: 30 Sept 2019.

²⁹ Ghulam Rasool Dehvi, "Syed Ahmad Rai Barelvi and the 18th Century Mujahidin Movement in the Indian Subcontinent", *First Post*, 22 May, 2016, <https://www.firstpost.com/india/syed-ahmad-rai-barelvi-and-the-18th-century-mujahidin-movement-in-the-indian-subcontinent-2790982.html>, Accessed 30 Sept, 2019; History Park, *Syed Ahmad Barelvi*.

³⁰ History Park, "Syed Ahmad Barelvi"; Roy Jackson, *Mawlana Mawdudi and Political Islam: Authority and the Islamic state*, (London: Routledge, 2011), 13.

activities lasting to the present time.³¹ According to Dehlvi, Barelewi is considered by many contemporary Indian scholars to be “the chief exponent of Wahhabism in India, an adherent and fervent advocate of puritanical fundamentalism and physical jihadism in place of spiritual *jihad* against the baser instincts and carnal desires (*jihad al-nafs*).”³²

A similar scenario also happened in Indonesia. In the early nineteenth, Indonesian scholars and pilgrims influenced by Muhammad bin ‘Abd Al-Wahab reform were able to have a profound and notable effect in Sumatra, whereby the Padri Movement had been launched to spread the pristine teachings of Islam amid the villager Muslims in Minangkabau. Thereafter, the movement reinforced the people of Aceh in their resistance against the expansion of the Dutch in Northern Sumatra.³³

6. Islamic Movements in the Ninetieth Century Upward

In the late nineteenth century, Islamic political degradation caused by the hegemony of Western power on the Muslim lands led to the prevalence and strength of the Western civilization across the Muslim states. This new development produced and generated a new and second major trend of Muslim group known as modernist Muslims, in parallel to the orthodox Muslims. The new trend was majorly characterized by the repudiation of the medieval form of Islam and the advocacy for the reconstruction of Islam based on the theory of rationality, nationalism, ethical activism, and the complete transformation of Muslim societies to modern European style. According to their perception, Muslims can only gain

³¹ Lapidus, *Contemporary Islamic Movements in Historical Perspective*, 12.

³² Dehlvi, “Syed Ahmad Rai Bareilvi and the 18th century mujahid movement in the Indian subcontinent”, *first post*.

³³ Lapidus, *Contemporary Islamic Movements in Historical Perspective*, 12.

acknowledgement and maintain their status in the contemporary world, only if the above kind of revitalization is considered.³⁴

The idea of modern Islam was spearheaded by the group of political elites and Western-educated intelligentsia during the period between the 1860s and 1870s when the suggestion of the transformation of the Ottoman Empire, which was then in a danger, to a constitutional government characterized by nationalism was moved forward by those elites. A similar call also emerged in India, when Sayyid Ahmad Khan (d. 1878) argued the need of Indian Muslims under the British rule in that period for the adaptation with the modern political and scientific culture, without abandoning loyalty to the Islamic principles.³⁵

At the same period, while Ottoman and Indian intelligentsia spearheaded the calling for the Muslim modernism in the sense stated above, Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī (d. 1897) was concerned with the international union and political unity of the Muslims who adopted the modernization of Islam, in other to confront the colonial despotism. So, Muslim modernism took another dimension in the hand of Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī and his disciple Muḥammad Abduh (d. 1905), where they both strived for the combination and balance between Muslim modernism and Islamic reformism based on the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* and far away from cultic Sufi practices. They both realized the paramount need for that kind of blend at that period, for the adaptation of Islam with the need of the modern world and the proper response to the Western political and cultural pressures.³⁶ Lapidus while describing the new trend followed by Abduh and his mentor argues that:

³⁴ Bagader, "Contemporary Islamic Movements in the Arab world" 91-95; Lapidus, *Contemporary Islamic Movements in Historical Perspective* 13-14.

³⁵ Lapidus, *Contemporary Islamic Movements in Historical Perspective* 13-14.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 15.

This blend of modernist and reformist thought inspired the Salafiya movement, which spread through Egypt, the Arab world, and North Africa, and the Muhammadiyah movement in Indonesia. Both these movements, whose influence continues to the present day, are scripturalist in orientation, devoted to the reform of as a correction to shrine and saint worship and magical religious practices, and committed to the need for adjustment to modern economic and technological conditions. Both movements are latently political in that they cultivate a consciousness of the need for autonomy from European power if the vitality of Islamic states and societies is to be restored.³⁷

After the downfall of the Ottoman Empire in the early nineteenth century and arbitrary partition of the Muslim land to the present group of Arab states which carved out of the remnant of the Ottoman Empire, by creating the artificial boundaries in the hands of the British and French power after the World War 1, the prevailing political trend was made to focus on the formation of secular and national states in the majority of these states and other Muslim territories. Since that period, the majority of the Arab and other Islamic countries have been trended towards secularism in their social and political systems.³⁸

The scenario of Turkey, for instance, Turkey which was founded in 1923 from the remnant of the Ottoman Empire, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, who launched the cultural revolution by attempting to cut the relationship of common Turkish citizens with Islam, which has been the long-time heritage of the people, and struggling to win them to the Western and secular lifestyle. To achieve the goal, his government made all efforts to abolish most of the religious institutions in the country and deactivate the others. In 1922

³⁷ *Ibid.*,

³⁸ Bagader, "Contemporary Islamic Movements in the Arab world", 91-95; Lapidus, *Contemporary Islamic Movements in Historical Perspective* 12-14.

a partial independence was won in Egypt. Consequently, a constitutional monarchy system based on liberal principles was established in place of the Islamic system. A similar scenario happened in other Arab Fertile Crescent States.³⁹

In a response to the evolution of the modern national and secular states across the Muslim worlds, the contemporary revivalist and reformist movements emerged from all around the Muslim worlds. In Turkey, Said Nursi, Naqshbandi and Tijani Sufi groups, National Salvation Party, Ulama and the traditional Sufi brotherhoods emerged as the flag bearers for the revival of Islamic activism. While in Egypt, the beginning of the contemporary Islamic awakening specifically came in the hand of *al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn* (Muslim Brotherhood), which was founded by Ḥasan al-Bannā in 1928. In Syria as well, *Sunni* opposition surfaced in Aleppo and Damascus in the 1930s in form of *al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn* to oppose the nationalism. Likewise, the *Shī'ah* scholars in Iraq formed a party to work for the establishment of the Islamic state and social justice. Similarly, in Pakistan, the pressure was great for the establishment of an Islamic state from the onset of independence in 1947. One of the most active and powerful religiopolitical movements in Pakistan was *Jama'at-i Islami*, led by Abu 'Alā Mawdūdī who strongly proclaimed the transformation of Pakistan into a Muslim state.⁴⁰

7. Classification of the Contemporary Islamic Movements

Based on the features and activities of the contemporary Islamic awakening movements that subscribe to the idea of radical change, the movements can be loosely categorized into two major groups, especially if the extent of their connection with the Kharijites' ideologies is considered. According to Nāṣir, there are some contemporary Muslims, whether individuals, groups, or movements,

³⁹ See: Lapidus, *Contemporary Islamic Movements in Historical Perspective*, 19-23.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 19-40.

who knowingly or unknowingly partially adopt some acts and features of the Kharijites in their doctrines, verdicts, methods, and orientations. Such a group of Muslims should not be identified as the Kharijites, since the requirements of considering them to be Kharijites are not fulfilled. The other set of Muslim groups is those who adopt the main approach and principles of the Kharijites in their verdicts and stances. Such groups of Muslims consider the majority of other Muslims that oppose their views to be infidels, thus, legitimizing the killing and attacking of the innocents.⁴¹ An example of these sets is *Jama'ah al-Takfir wa al-Hijrah* (Excommunication and Exodus", or "ex-communication and emigration) that always identifies itself as *Jama'ah al-Muslimin* (Muslim Group).⁴²

Ashraf⁴³ argues that the contemporary Islamic movements, especially those who were influenced by the ideas of Sayyid Qutb, may be loosely categorized into two classes. The groups who adhere to Qutb's ideas per se. Under this category, he mentioned the three major Islamic movements of today, namely *Al-Ikhwdn Al-Muslim* (Muslim Brotherhood) of Egypt, *Jama'at~e-Islami* of the Indian subcontinent. Likewise, the Palestinian Hamas may be partially included. The main objectives of these groups and their likes among other contemporary Islamic movements are to bring a complete spiritual revival (*nahḍa*) to the public under the vision of Islam for the moral reformation of the youths through various activities, resist the foreign domination, and establish an Islamic state that governs with Islamic norms.⁴⁴ According to Bagader, the mission of both movements, i.e., Muslim Brotherhood and *Jama'at~e-Islami*, is to present the potential ability of Islam as an alternative social order

⁴¹ Nāṣir 'Abd Al-Karīm, *Al-Khawārij*, 101-102.

⁴² A radical Islamic movement that emerged in Egypt in the 1960s under the leadership of Shukri Muṣṭafa. See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Takfir_wal-Hijra.

⁴³ Ashraf, Maqbool Shahzada, *Islamization of Thought and Society: A Critical of Sayyid Qutb*, (PhD Thesis: Aligarh Muslim University, 2007), 143-144, Accessed 24/06/2021, via: Shodhganga: <http://hdl.handle.net/10603/52378>.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 144.

that is required for a healthy Muslim society in all ramifications.⁴⁵ These sets of Islamic movements include many other movements that, to some degrees, adopt the teachings and inspirations of Hasan al-Banna as their starting point. Such groups can be found in Sudan, Algeria, Tunis, Egypt, and other parts of Muslim nations.⁴⁶

The other groups are those who seem to have misconceived the ideas of Sayyid Qutb to such a level portrayed him, the Muslim Brotherhood, and their likes as the primary source of the modern Islamic fundamentalist and extremist movements and their terrorist attacks around the world. In this category, Ashraf⁴⁷ mentioned some galaxy of extremist movements including the offshoots of Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Syria, and Sudan, i.e., *Munazzamah al-Tahrir al-Islami* (Islamic liberation organization); which is also known as *Jama'at Fanniyah al-Askariyya* (The Technical Military Academy), *Jama'at Al-Muslimin* which is publicly known as *Al-Takfir wa al-Hijrah*, and Al-Jihad movement. The founders and ideologues of these movements that are considered to be the offshoots of Muslim Brotherhoods were once members of the Muslim Brotherhood and were initially influenced by the teachings of Hasan al-Bana, Mawdudi, Sayyid Qutb, and their likes among the contemporary reformists. They all eventually seceded from the Muslim Brotherhood to express their views and interpret them into action.⁴⁸ Among the main points of differences between the offshoots and Muslim Brotherhood are the following:⁴⁹

- a. Consideration of the Secular governments in the Muslim nation to be the great enemy which must be militarily fought, even before the external enemy. So, the armed attack on the public interest is legalized in their view.

⁴⁵ Bagader, *Contemporary Islamic Movements in the Arab world*, 14.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁴⁷ Ashraf, *Islamization of Thought and Society*, 144.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 153-161

⁴⁹ Bagader, *Contemporary Islamic Movements in the Arab world*, 16; Ashraf, *Islamization of Thought and Society*, 153-161.

- b. Condemnation of most other erudite scholars that oppose their views.
- c. Consideration of attacking governments and public to be the great jihad of this time, and the death in that course as a martyrdom.
- d. Random *takfīr* of the public and calling for the total withdrawal from modern society.

Likewise, the Islamic Salvation Front, Al-Qaidah, Boko Haram, ISWAP, Al-Shabaab and all other contemporary Islamic militant groups that attack the public and legalize the killing of innocent people can be categorized under this group. These types of groups can be identified as the Kharijites based on the related hadith which is strictly applicable to them considering their aforementioned features. Moreover, the fourth Caliph of the Prophet (p.b.u.h) was the first legitimate Islamic authority that fought Kharijite, when they violated the conditions of peace laid down by the Caliph. He put them on three conditions for their safety, i.e., not to shed the blood, not to terrify the citizens and not to cut the road, of which violating any of them is a declaration of war against the public.⁵⁰ Therefore, the provisions related to the rules of dealing with al-bughāt (aggressors)⁵¹ can be applied in dealing with such groups if they violate any of the three conditions stated by Caliph 'Ali. Al-Qurtūbī argues that there is evidence in Qur'an 49:9 that it is obligatory to fight the rebellious faction whose aggression towards Imam or any other believers is evident.⁵² Al-Baghawī argues that the law of banditry mentioned in the Qur'an⁵³ should be applied to such groups if they harm and kill people.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Ibn Abī Shabah, Abubakr, *Muṣanaf ibn Abī Shaybah*, (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Rushd, 1409 A.H.), vol. 7, 555. Hadith no. 37896; Al-Ṣṣalābī, 'Alī Mohammad, *Al-Khawārī Nash'atuhum wa Ṣifātuhum...*, (Bayrut: Dār al-Ma'rifah), 33.

⁵¹ *Al-Qur'an*, al-Ḥujurāt: 9.

⁵² Al-Qurtūbī, Shamsuddīn, *Al-Jāmi'u li Ahkām al-Qur'an/ Tafsiir al-Qurtūbī*, (al-Qāirah: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, 2nd edn. 1964), vol. 16, 317.

⁵³ *Al-Qur'an*, al-Māidah: 33.

⁵⁴ Al-Baghawī, Muḥyī al-Sunnah, *Ma'ālim al-Tanzīl*, (Dār al-Ṭayyibah li al-Nnashr wa

C. Conclusion

No doubt about the fact that no restriction of the time for the emergence of the Kharijites as it is affirmed by the hadith. Likewise, the permissibility of waging war against them is clearly stated by the Prophet (p.b.u.h), and the unanimity of the scholars on this fact is confirmed. More so, the scholars agree on the fact that the sect is the most evil sect among the Muslims, as it is affirmed by Imam al-Ḥajūrī. So, the generalization of the name on the entire current political-based Islamic movements across the Muslim nations, as it is the opinion of the Madhikhalists and some other scholars is very dangerous and unjustifiable, especially, when the objectives of some contemporary Islamic movements i.e., the Muslim Brotherhood, *Jama'at-e-Islami* are considered. The primary objectives of these movements are to bring a complete spiritual revival (*nahḍa*) to the public under the vision of Islam for the moral reformation of the youths through various activities, resist the foreign domination of the Muslim lands and establish an Islamic state that governs with Islamic norms. All of which is to be accomplished through peaceful and democratic means. There is no correlation between these objectives and the principles of the Kharijites. These objectives are worthy of praise and deserve the combined efforts of all Muslims. However, the description of such contemporary Islamic movements with that kind of objectives as Kharijites leads the innocent and righteous people in jeopardy, and justifies political oppression of the government on the social and political activists, as it is the current situation of many Arab and Muslim nations. More so, the factors that resulted in the resurgence of these movements, as stated in the study, have no relationship with the Kharijite, but rather, for the sake of the restoration of the glory of Islam. Nevertheless, any contemporary radical Islamic movement that involves in the shedding of innocent blood, advocating terrorism in one way or the other, terrorizing the community and cutting the road can be designated as the Kharijite, and therefore, the provisions related to the sect could be applied to them.

al-Tawzī, 1997), vol. 7: 342.

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