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NEO-KHAWARIJ AND INCEPTION OF ISIL- Kaiful Bari¹**Abstract**

Since the Arabic word for "struggle" (jihad) does not allude to any kind of holy war or religious conflict, nothing they are doing can be considered a fight. In terms of Islamic law, jihad refers to the act of engaging in a permissible conflict under the criteria and co-regulations outlined by Islamic scholars. But anything else than jihad could be used violently and asymmetrically. Violent offenders have justified their nefarious schemes by using this phrase. Additionally, they gained recognition after 9/11 because the west associated them with jihadis. In actuality, "harb" in Arabic signifies conflict and "muqaddas" implies holy. In contrast to Christianity, which uses the word "Crusade" meaning "Holy War."

Their extremist ideologies and violence are what connect ISIL with Khawarij. Even though the Khawarij were institutionally eliminated, instances of Islamic extremism have occasionally appeared in history.

Keywords: *Islamic State, Counter terrorism, Neo-Khawarij, Middle East, Religious Extremism*

The term which has been used by western scholars and media for those Muslims who use violence in the name of religion is jihadi, and jihadi-Salafi. Al Qaeda, Boko haram and Islamic State are few examples of such organizations. However, use of the term "Jihadi-Salafi" itself is extremely problematic. Violence and terrorism have never been a part of Salafi teachings. As, Muslims who follow Salafi teaching and all those scholars who have

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studied Salafi, cannot agree on this wrong labelling. Labelling IS fighter and their other kind as Jihadi or Jihadi-Salafi is inappropriate. It already has caused unimaginable distress and pain. This is the problem of western media and writers who, when look into such sensible issues with periscope. These problems arise when people adopt a wholesale approach, without even looking into culture, comprehending language and consulting specialist.

The Arabic word Jihad means 'To strive' it does not mean any religious or holy war, from this point of view there is nothing they are doing can refer to as struggle. Jihad in Islamic legal terms mean act of fighting legitimate battle according to coregulations and conditions prescribed by jurists and Islamic law. But the use of violence insanely and asymmetrically could be anything but not jihad. This term has been used by violent perpetrators to legitimize their evil plans. And post 9/11, when western world labelled them with jihadi, they got their recognition. In fact, word for war in Arabic is "harb" and "muqaddas" means holy. Unlike Christianity which has word "Crusade" for "Holy War".

Salafi refers to those who follow early Muslims who are known as Salaf al Salih (Pious Predecessors). Those Muslims were the companions of Prophet Muhammad, those who followed them and all the scholars of first three generations of Muslims. Salafi are the follower of salaf, and salaf never supported or advocated for any kind of violence. Therefore, if today IS, Boko haram, Al Qaeda claims to be the follower of salaf, its false and misleading.

Thus, naming such evil forces as Jihadi-Salafi is wrong. This gives them sense of legitimacy and psychological approval for their atrocities as act of jihad.

Islamic scholars identify them as *Khawarij* means "Muslim Renegades", or Neo-Khawari

1. Rise of Islamic State of Syria and Levant (ISIL)

With the rise of ISIL's name signifies its developmental history. The development of this purported Caliphate was the aftereffect of the convergence of numerous remote warriors to Iraq and Syria who joined under the ideological system of Jihadi Salafism. The ISIL development started with the foundation of "*Jamaah Tauhid and Jihad*" in Iraq in 2004 drove by *Abu Mush'ab Zarqawy*. Zarqawi swore faithfulness to the pioneer of al-Qaeda, *Osama bin Laden*, making his military an official delegate of Al Qaeda in Iraq. When the United States attacked Iraq, Zarqawi's power was one of the most forceful obstruction warriors. This caused numerous Iraqi warriors to join Zarqawi's powers regardless of having distinctive belief

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system. The longing to win the war made them unite in restricting American control of the Iraqi individuals. Zarqawi's impact became more grounded among the Iraqi warriors and the quantity of his soldiers developed fundamentally. Zarqawi was executed by US Military assault in 2006, and the *Daulah Islamiyah's* administration went to *Abu Hamza al-Muhajir*. After four years, on April 19, 2010, US troops in Iraq figured out how to murder *Abu Hamza al-Muhajir*, his replacement was *Abu Bakr Al Baghdadi*. On April 9, 2013, Abu Bakr Al Baghdadi expressed that *JabhahNushra* (Triumph Front), one of the revolutionary groups in Syria was a piece of the military power of the Islamic State of Iraq. The assertion denoted the start of DAES (*Daulah alIslamiyyah fi Iraq wa al-Sham*), western media at that point advance their English name, ISIL. ISIL made the city of Raqqa as their primary fortification and directing base in Syria. Their primary methodology of ISIL separated from submitting different dread activities in Syria, is to spread partisan purposeful publicity. In their promulgation, ISIL depict their war in Syria as a Sunni progressive battle against the Bashar Al Assad's abusive Shi'ite regime. The purposeful publicity from different modern channels drew in warriors from around the globe. IS rose through power in Levant since 2011 and for nine years it has perpetrated heinous crime against humanity. Established their reign, persecuted minorities, Muslims, and all those who did not share their ideology. Abu Bakr Al Baghdadi was killed in "Operation Kayla Mueller" led by US military, on 26 October 2019 in Idlib, Syria. It has normalised violence in the name of jihad and legitimised them with their cherry picked and misinterpreted verses from Quran and ahadith.

A severed head was never brought to the Prophet Muhammad (S), not even on the Day of (the Battle of) Badr. Once a severed head was brought to first Caliph Abu Bakr, who forbade from (this action). As for the IS, they have begun severing each other's heads, after splintering and declaring each other apostates and evidence of that is present between the competing factions of ISIS and Jabhah al-Nuṣrah in Syria, an indication of their severe ignorance, desires and misguidance.

2. Takfir and origin of Khawarij

The concept of *Takfir* is to declare a believer excommunicate.

Sunna is considered as the second source of *sharia* after Quran. It refers to the collective details and narration of what prophet said, did and approved. And such compilation is called *hadith*. After the death of Prophet, it was not clear how to explain any particular speech or

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concept. So, Sunna was taken into account as the second source of sharia. And prophet said ‘... not to declare a person a disbeliever for committing a sin, and not to expel him from Islam by an action.’ He further mentioned that even calling fellow Muslim kafir or disbeliever is itself is a sin. These teaching of prophet are found in a hadith, Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim. Further Quran mentions,

“And (do) not insult those whom they invoke other than Allah, lest they insult Allah (in) enmity without knowledge. Thus, we have made fair-seeming to every community their deed. Then to their Lord (is) their return, then He will inform them about what they used to do.”

Ayah al-An ‘am 6:108

ISIL tend to choose selected verses and references, picking out if context from Quran and other sources, cherry picking verses

The meaning of term Khawarij is “excommunicated” / “those who left”. Origin of Khawarij can be traced back to the time of Caliph Ali’s reign (656-661 CE). During the battle of Siffin Ali settled the dispute, with the governor of Syria Mu’awiya and a challenger to Ali, through negotiations, Khawarij called this decision against Quran. They wanted him to be killed as they opposed arbitration as a mean to choose new ruler. Ali rejected the idea of killing the murderer of Caliph Uthman as he did not want to kill any fellow Muslim. He arbitrated the matter without any bloodshed. Khawarij disagreed on this and consequently 12000 supporters were later becoming Khawarij. The battle of *Nahrawan* was fought between caliph Ali and group of rebels called Khawarij in 658 CE. Ali was later killed by Khawarij in 661 CE. They believed in law of retaliation, sever punishment and divine judgement. And thus, they later declared takfir against fellow Muslim. An extremist group that justified killing fellow Muslims who did not share their opinions. So, they started preaching that anyone who doesn’t follow the same should be punished by death. They further propagated that this is the divine duty of each and every Muslim is above than the following orders of the rulers. And if in case the ruler is not performing divine duty himself, he ought to be dethrone and to be punished in same way. It gave members of society to carry out death sentences instead of officials.

Therefore, Khawarij did two innovations in Islam:

- I. The introduction of *takfir*.
- II. The legitimisation of extra judicial killing of fellow Muslims.

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Khawarij were the first to divide Muslim world into Dar-al-Islam (Territory of Islam) and Dar-al-Harb (Territory of war). Ibn Taymiyya (1328 CE), medieval Islamic scholar further tried to elaborate the differences between man-made and divine law. He asked for *hijrah*(Migration) for all the fellow Muslims who are living in dar-al-harb to lands governed by Shari'a. Ibn Taymiyya classified *kuffar* into three groups:

- Ahl al-Kitāb – the first who belongs to some religious groups with whom peace accord could be signed. For e.g., Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians, Sabians. more specifically, possessors of divine book. (Torah, Gospel and Avesta)
- *Murtadd*(Apostates) –those who quit religion and went on to their own infidel ways i.e., Persians, Romans and other Arab Tribes. There could be no peace agreements signed with *murtadd* neither they could enjoy any kind of security from war. Fighting with these people is an obligatory.
- Third group comprised of those who claimed themselves as Muslim but did not perform religious duties like, salah, zakat, and hajj. According to him they are the worst kind as they have rejected Islam and still claim to be Muslim and they must be fought until they return to Islam.

Thus, Ibn Taymiyya reiterate the notion of takfir by introducing two ideas,

- 1) Any failure from the obligations in Islam is an offence.
- 2) And any Muslim failed in his religious obligations is much worse than unbelievers or members of any other religion.

Thus, Ibn Taymiyya reintroduced the religious division of world by adding the concept of hijra (Migration) in it. He further argued that, if a Muslim land is not governed according to Shari'a law, it ceases to be called as Muslim land and comes under Dar-al-harb.

3. ISIL and Kharijite Ideology

The common link between ISIL and Khawarij is their extreme ideology and brutality. Even though Khawarij were destroyed institutionally, their extremist teachings of Islam have popped up in history from time to time.

ISIL's extreme ideology can be concluded by five doctrines of the movement. The first is claiming that their leader is a caliph. And Muslims throughout the world ought to obey him; secondly, declaring other Muslims who do not obey their leader as apostates; thirdly,

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persecution of those who does not want to pledge allegiance to their caliph; fourthly, insisting that every Muslim must cancel their allegiance to the leaders of their respective countries; and the fifth, advocating the partial, pragmatic and extreme concept of jihad.

These five doctrines make ISIL an ultra-violent organization that has takfiri ideology like the old Khawarij. And thus, ISIL is a Neo-Khawarij movement. ISIL violently force who they consider infidel and apostates to convert to their version of Islam. Besides their takfiri ideology makes them hate Muslims, who do not pledge their allegiance into caliph, and persecute them indiscriminately, as they are worse than infidels. Barbaric acts such as glorifying beheadings through the media. This proves that these people are not motivated by religion per se, but by wealth, leadership and fame. The religion of Islam is simply a tool towards that end.

There is no doubt about that their claim of practicing Islamic law while committing heinous crimes has reinforced the misconception about violence as an inherent part of Islam which was augmented post 9/11. And all the terror acts by ISIL in different part of the world has further spread islamophobia.

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