POST-SHIFFIN ISLAM: A POLITICAL HISTORY OF ISLAMIC STATEHOOD IN THE ERA OF THE COMPANIONS

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Abstract

Politics is the most significant source of division among Muslims. Starting from the dispute that occurred between Ali bin Abi Talib and Mu'awiyah, in the view of some scholars, wanted to take revenge for Uthman's death. The outbreak of the Shiffin War was a new chapter in the history of the birth of sects with their political visions. This article aims to answer the question of why the birth of the two schools gave rise to the division that continues to this day in Islam and whether it plays a role in influencing the political thinking of Muslims to this day. In this article, it is found that the existence of the Shiffin war led to the birth of sects or sects in Islam that quarreled with each other politically and theologically. The emergence of the Estrem Khawarij School then led to a moderate Murjiah school. However, in its development, both Khawarij, Shia, and Murjiah gave rise to the development of state thought in Islam, which differed from each other. The approach in this study is political history with a critical perspective, so there are different interpretations of the history of the Umati slam in the Sahabat era. The method in this study is a literature review of manuscripts in accordance with the topic of study, namely the Shiffin War.

Keywords: Shiffin War, Islamic Politics, Sect, Friends.

INTRODUCTION

The development of state political thought in Islam is a chain of Muslim thought treasures. This is Al-Mas'udi's comment, as quoted by Majid Fakhry. (Fakhry,1970:52) The relationship can be causal or even reciprocal. For example, we can see the causal relationship between political and similar thinking. Meanwhile, reciprocal relationships, for example, can be seen in political and theological thinking. (Watt, 1987: 203-209)

The development of thought in the post-Shiffin period (37/657) must also be seen as phenomenon-bound, meaning that the event was not a single phenomenon independent of others. The author sees that the state-political thinking of Muslims at that time implied the significant events of the Shiffin War that occurred before and was the link of the chain of state-political thought that had existed before.

The contribution of the groups involved, directly or indirectly, in the Shiffin War was enormous to developing such thinking. Even transparently, it can be said that these groups then roll out some state political thoughts, both apologetic and religious-political objectives. (Ma'arif, 1987: ix-xiii; Madjid, 1987: ix-xii)

This paper aims to be an initial study of the development of state political thought in Islam which we see as a *dependent variable* of it is *independent-variable*: "Shiffin War" by relying on the study of Muhammad Abu Zahrah in his book entitled: *Târikh al-Madzâhib al-Islâmiyah fi al-siyâsah wa al-'Aqâ'id* and W. Montgomery Watt in his book entitled: *Islamic Political Thought.* In this case, the author uses the method of critical historical writing, by carefully trying to develop analytical-descriptive-comparative studies. (Vredenberg, 1980: 34-39; Muhadjir, 1991: 29-48)

As a historical research work, the author reinterprets the events of the Shiffin war, along with their background and implications. The approach in this article is a critical approach to the historical data obtained by the author so that it becomes a study material that is a novelty, which, of course, includes not only the novelty of the data but also the novelty of the interpretation of historical criticism.

Based on this critical analysis, such as the statement of Mutahhari, 1986: 65-67), it is hoped that the author can free himself from conventional historical knowledge to rational and contextual historical knowledge, or from narrative history to critical history, this is because (1) Islamic history is past knowledge and is related to current and subsequent circumstances; (2) knowledge of the ideological background that underlies various aspects of the life of Muslims is obtained through research and analysis of past events; (3) the history of Islam is a matter of fact based on the knowledge of the changes in Muslim society, which is therefore quite reasonable if Islamic history is developed into a more comprehensive field, related to socio-cultural and economic, political and also socio-religious issues. (Abdurahman, 2011)

Ahmad Syafii Maarif also stated: "The process of understanding in the study of history must also be accompanied by an adequate approach and methodology, because otherwise the face of history is no longer beautiful to enjoy, it can even look fierce because it is very likely to be extorted for the benefit of a certain group. For this reason, he said, placing history as a clean, objective, and interest-free space must be passed through an approach, a scientific methodology, to account for the truth." (Karim, 2015: 7)

METHODS

This paper seeks to produce a critical historical study of the Shiffin war, both from its background, process and impact. With the main material from Islamic History books, which mainly discuss the Shiffin war.

His main books are the writings compiled by Muhammad Abu Zahrah (), W. Montgomery Watt (*Islamic Theology and Philosophy*), Ath-Thabari (*Târîkh al-Umam wa al-Muluk*), Muhammad Amhazun (*Tahqîq Mawâqif ash-Shahâbah Fî al-Fitnah*) and M.A. Shaban (*Islamic History, A.D. 600-7500 (A.H.132): A New Interpretation*).

Meanwhile, for the sake of analysis, the author includes several supporting books, mainly the writings of Nourouzzaman Shiddiqi (*Shia and Khawarij in Historical Perspective; Introduction to Muslim History*; *Shi'ah and Khawarij in the Historical Perspective* of Yogyakarta: PLP2M and *Tamaddun Muslim*), Suyuthi Pulungan (*Fiqh Siyasah Teachings, History and Thought* and *Principles of Government in the Medina Charter Reviewed from the View of the Quran*), and Munawir Sjadzali (*Islam and Governance: Teachings, History and Thought*).

Using critical-qualitative reasoning, the author describes and analyzes historical data about the Shiffin war along with its background and impact, the role of its figures, and the implications of the results of the research applied can be 'ibrah, especially for the benefit of Muslims to knit back ukhuwah that has been lost due to long conflicts related to feudal events between Muslims which are quite tiring.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Shiffin War Background

After the death of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), the Muslims asked: "Who is his successor? How good is his successor's position as leader? What authority does his successors have?" These three fundamental questions are what Muhammad Abu Zahrah and W. Montgomery Watt seem to be answering in their thesis.

Abu Zahrah argued that these questions should be seen in the context of the Muslims' differing views on *ishtikhlâf.* Because the views of Muslims on this issue are quite diverse. During the reign of Abu Bakr, the views of Muslims were still divided into two major groups, namely: those who supported the caliphate and those who opposed it. Although if we look carefully, the two groups have some differences of opinion in an effort to answer the three questions above. However, seen as a model of thought, this categorization does not mean that it is wrong. Abu Zahrah saw that in their thinking, there were actually only two ways of viewing. First: the caliphate is a problem *ijtihâdiyyah.* This view was represented by the majority of Muslims at that time, who came to know as a non-Shi'a group. Second: the caliphate is a problem *wishâyah*. This view was represented by the group of supporters of Ali bin Abi Talib, although not all of them shared the same view, which became known as the Shi'a group.

These two views, according to Muhammad Abu Zahrah, developed until the time of the caliphate of Ali bin Abi Talib before the occurrence of *Tahkîm* at the time of the Shiffin War. Furthermore, Muhammad Abu Zahrah detailed his statement into four questions: First: Can there be two caliphs? Second: Does the caliph have to be a Quraish? Third: Did the caliph commit immorality or not at all? Fourth: Should a caliph be located in the Quraysh or anywhere? (Zahrah, tth: 29-48)

These questions, in the author's opinion, are further questions related to the disagreements of Muslims in the following periods. As analyzed by W. Montgomery Watt, the caliphate is a Sunni terminology that has a political connotation. For Sunnis, the caliph is not the owner of moral authority, but a person who politically has the right to rule, or in political terms, the holder of executive power. Meanwhile, the Shi'ites prefer to use the term Imamah for the Islamic caliphate known to the Sunnis. The term has both political and theological connotations. The imam, as the leader of the state, has moral authority and political authority. (Watt, 1987: 32-36: cf. El Wa, 1983: 48-89) For this reason, the explanation of some of Muhammad Abu Zahrah's questions mentioned above, in the opinion of the author, must be related to the development of state political thought in the period after the caliphate *Al-Khulafâ' al-Rasyidûn,* especially after the assassination of Uthman, which was followed by the events of the civil war (between Muslims), (1) the Jamal war, the Shiffin War and (also) the Nahrawan war. And even more specifically after the Shiffin war. (Aizid, 2021: 236-244)

It must be admitted that since the reign of Uthman bin Affan, the cohesiveness of the Muslims has gradually cracked and the harmony of the relationship between the caliph and his people has begun to be disturbed. This, historians say, is mainly due to leadership that is considered weak, and there is even an issue of nepotism that develops in society. The chaos culminated in a rebellion that ended with the killing of Uthman bin Affan, known in Islamic history as al-Fitnah al-Kubra. Then it was continued by Ali bin Abi Talib, who turned out to be unable to reduce the turmoil, even raising a feud with 'Aisha, Zubair bin Awwam and Talhah bin Ubaidillah on the grounds

of asking for accountability for the death of Uthman bin Affan. Then there was a civil war known as the Jamal War, which was eventually won by Ali bin Abi Talib, leaving wounds due to the killing of Zubair bin Awwam and Talhah bin Ubaidillah. Meanwhile, 'Aisha, at the request of Ali ibn Abi Talib, was rescued and brought back to Medina. (Sjadzali, 1990: 32).

After the Jamal war, there was a bigger civil war, namely the Shiffin War, between Ali and his supporters against Mu'awiyah bin Abi Sufyan and his supporters which ended with the defeat of Ali's side at the negotiating table (Tahkim), which resulted in the division of the Muslims into 3 (three) camps: (1) Ali bin Abi Talib's camp; (2) Mu'awiyah bin Abi Sufyan's camp and (3) Khawarij who were not willing to support Ali bin Abi Talib or Muawiyah bin Abi Sufyan, resulting in the Nahrawan war (between Ali bin Abi Talib and Khawarij's camp) which was won by Ali bin Abi Talib's side, but led to the arrival of Ali by Abdurrahman bin Muljam (from the Khawarij group) in the fifth year of Ali bin Abi Talib's caliphate. (Ibid: 32-33)

The further development of state political thought, in fact, began with the emergence of the Umayyad Dynasty. This can be understood in the historical framework of the development of the caliphate in Islam. M.A. Shaban, for example, sees the Shiffin War with the events of *Tahkîm* became a triggering force for the emergence of (new) state politics thinking. He argued that the Shiffin War, with its Tahkîm events, was not a simple event. There is a political content that has not been properly revealed by historians, both Muslims and non-Muslims. In his opinion, the confrontation of Shiffin that appears on the surface to take place as if it were a war between Muslims, not a war desired by both sides. In it, in his opinion, there are certain parties who have interests both individually and in groups. It can be seen that the Shiffin War was an excuse to conduct negotiations designed by interested parties. In that context, several decisive figures can be seen in the event, for example: Al-Ash'ats bin Qais, a former warlord *riddah* which was fought by Abu Bakr during his caliphate which had a large group in the army of Ali bin Abi Talib.

In fact, according to M.A. Shaban's observation, he was the one who played the most role in regulating the course of the war and negotiations on the part of Ali bin Abi Talib, while Ali bin Abi Talib himself was unable to control his engineering until his troops had to give up to accept the bitter reality of "defeat at the negotiating table". In fact, according to Shaban's opinion, he (Ash'ats bin Qais) was the one who arranged everything related to the negotiations, even to the matter of the appointment of Abu Musa al-Ash'arial-Ash'ari as the representative of the Ali group at the negotiating table, because in fact Ali bin Abi Talib himself wanted Abdullah bin 'Abbas as his deputy. (Shaban, 1993: 107-112)

Shortly after seizing power, Ali dismissed most of the governors he considered corrupt, including Mu'awiyah, Uthman's cousin. Mu'awiyah refused to step down and told Ali through his representatives that he would recognize Ali as caliph in exchange for the governorship of Syria and Egypt for life. However, Ali bin Abi Talib rejected this proposal

In response, Mu'awiyah declared war on Ali on behalf of Syria, demanding retribution for Uthman's death. The governor aims to overthrow Ali and form a Syrian council to appoint the next caliph, which may be Mu'awiyah himself. Ali replied by letter that Mu'awiyah was welcome to bring his case to Ali's court, asking him to provide evidence

that would incriminate Ali in Uthman's murder. Ali also challenged Mu'awiyah to name Syrians who were eligible for the council.

Ali bin Abi Talib then summoned the elite council of Islamic rulers who urged him to fight against Mu'awiyah. The two armies met at Shiffin, west of the Euphrates, in 657 A.D. There, the two sides negotiated for weeks. In particular, Mu'awiyah repeated his proposal to recognize Ali in exchange for Syria and Egypt, which was again rejected. In turn, Ali challenged Mu'awiyah to a one-on-one duel to solve the problem and avoid bloodshed. This offer was rejected by Mu'awiyah. Negotiations stopped fruitless on July 18, 657 and both sides prepared for battle. The fighting began on Wednesday, July 26, and lasted for three or four days. On the last day, the balance had changed in Ali's favor. When Mu'awiyah was told that his army could not win, he decided to appeal to the Qur'an. Before noon, the Syrians held up a copy of the book with their spears, shouting, "Let the book of God be a judge among us." Although Ali was suspicious of this call, his troops stopped fighting. Driven by strong peace sentiment in his army and the threat of an insurgency, Ali accepted the arbitration proposal. (Buchori, 2009: 44-45; Madelung, 1997: 238, 241)

The majority of Ali's soldiers urged the reportedly neutral Abu Musa al-Ash'ari-Ash'ari as their deputy. Ali considered Abu Musa al-Ash'arinaif political, but raised him despite objections. In an agreement on August 2, 657 AD, Abu Musa al-Ash'arial-Ash'ari represented the army of Ali bin Abi Talib while the supreme general of Mu'awiyah, Amr bin al-'Ash, represented the other party. (Madelung, 1997: 241-243) Both representatives committed to adhering to the Qur'an and the Sunnah, as well as saving the Muslim community from war and division.

The two arbitrators met together, first in Dumat al-Jandal and then in Udhruh, and the process most likely lasted until mid-April 658 AD. In Dumat al-Jandal, the arbitrators reached a decision that Uthman had been unjustly murdered and that Mu'awiyan had the right to take revenge. According to scholar Wilferd Madelung, this verdict was political rather than judicial, and was a grave mistake on the part of the naïve Abu Musa al-Ash'ari. The ruling strengthened Syria's support for Mu'awiyah and weakened Ali's position.

The second meeting in Udhruh was most likely dissolved because Amr violated an earlier agreement with Abu Musa al-Ash'ari. The Kufa delegation reacted angrily to Abu Musa al-Ash'ari's concession, and the former arbitrator fled to Mecca in disgrace. On the contrary, Amr was received triumphantly by Mu'awiyah upon his return to Syria. After the settlement of the arbitration in 659 AD, the Syrians pledged allegiance to Mu'awiyah as the next caliph. Ali denounced the behavior of the two arbitrators as contrary to the Qur'an and began organizing a new expedition to Syria. (Buchori, 2009: 46-47; Madelung, 1997: 257)

If opposing beliefs about the ultimate *value* enter the political arena, they begin to fight and may be far from compromise (Robertson, 1988: 49) From this theory, it can be understood that if the opposing interests of individuals or groups are withdrawn due to politics, then disputes will come to the surface, which in turn will give birth to conflicts.

Conflict is a human behavior, which not only arises in group life often occurs, even in family life it is inevitable, one day it will arise. If the conflict can still be resolved, it means that it is still within the limits of reasonableness and that is logical. However, the problem is that if the conflict has gotten out of control and cannot be controlled, then the result will be an open dispute or war. Among them is the event experienced

by Caliph Ali bin Abu Talib, when he had just occupied the throne of the fourth caliphate. There were two open conflicts one after another, namely the Jamal War and the Shiffin War. Meanwhile, the second war that occurred was tried to find a gormulation and a solution by proposing a konkep at-Tahkîm. However, historians consider this formation to be unsuccessful, because the results of this at-Tahkîm were not unanimously accepted by the two warring groups, even giving birth to two pros and cons of society, which were at the same time the embryos of various religious sects that were born later.

Tahkim in Islamic Political Turmoil

Starting from the above, this study will use At-Thkim; A Historical Review with a descriptive-analytical reflective-historical method. (Shiddiqi, 1983: 18.) By not ignoring the sociological-political approach. With this paper attempting to answer the questions surrounding at-Tahkîm, why does at-Tahkîm occur? From which side did the idea come from? How is the process of at-Tahkîm, where their disputes located are and what is the *post-Tahkîm* impact.

Dialogue between Ali bin Abi Talib represented by Abu Musa al-Ash'arial-Ash'ari and Mu'awiyah bin Abi Sufyan represented by Amru bin 'Ash in Tahkîm.

From the negotiations, a decree was taken that Uthman bin Affan had died of persecution, and the guardian of the persecuted dead had the right to demand retribution. And Mu'awiyah is the one who has the most right to demand revenge for Uthman's death.

Then the negotiations turned to the issue of proposing the removal of Ali and Mu'awiyah from their respective positions. After that, the caliph's position was handed over to the Muslims to choose who they wanted. This idea was put forward by Abu Musa al-Ash'arial-Ash'ari and approved by Amru bin 'Ash. And the meeting continued the next day.

After Abu Musa al-Ash'arial-Ash'ari returned to his faction and presented the results of the negotiations, Abdullah bin Abbas warned him of Amru bin 'Ash's cunning, and advised him to speak first. However, Amr bin al-'Ash was not lacking in wisdom. He did not want to go forward first, on the grounds that Abu Musa al-Ash'arial-'Ash'ari was older than him, emigrated first and converted to Islam first. He wanted to honor him (Abu Musa al-Ash'arial-'Ash'ari).

So Abu Musa al-Ash'arial-Ash'ari appeared first to the Muslims, announced the results of the negotiations and stated that He had agreed to remove Ali bin Abi tahlib from his position. After that, Amr bin al-'Ash stood up and declared, bringing He agreed with Abu Musa al-Ash'arial-Ash'ari'ari's statement that Ali bin Abi Talib was dismissed, then He also announced, because Ali bin Abi Talib had been dismissed, He also stated to appoint Mu'awiyah as Caliph. (Syalabi, 1987: 304)

Historians view that the outcome of *Tahkîm* Shiffin is not the best or ideal solution for Muslims. Because, it turns out that the results are not significant enough for the interests of ishlâh, it is mainly related to the importance of repairing the Muslim brotherhood which is being damaged as a result of their internal conflicts., It is even suspected that the results of the tahkim only satisfy the Mu'awiyah and their supporters, while the Ali and its supporters have suffered a lot, and have caused division among Ali's supporters. The group loyal to the leadership of Ali bin Abi Talib was solid, and then led to the formation of a new group called the Shi'a Ali, and the

opposition group agreed to abandon Ali bin Abi Talib, because Ali bin Abi Talib was considered to have deviated from the law of Allah, because he approved of the results of Tahkîm, which they considered to be defective in faith and moral. They, later known to historians as Khawarij, Jahkah Ahlul Qurra', a term known to historians as a group of Qur'anic scholars, protested against the outcome of *Tahkîm* which was considered to be very detrimental to Ali, by proposing adagiaum: *"Lâ hukma illâ lillâh"* (there is no law except Allah's), which in the history of Islamic civilization was later known as the Khawarij Doctrine. They, who felt that they represented a group of Muslims who were consistent in upholding the law of Allah, demanded that Ali bin Abi Talib reject the results of the negotiations *(Tahkîm)*. However, Ali bin Abi Talib refused their request, which they did not know the reason for, because Ali bin Talib never gave them an explanation. (Shiddiqi, 1985: 38)

From this discussion, it can be concluded that Tahkîm which is intended as an effort for peace does not meet the qualifications as a decision made by Muslims who are at war. In fact, it has caused new divisions. Because, the results of *Tahkîm* are seen as something that benefits one party (Mu'awiyah and its supporters), and vice versa harms the other party (Ali and his supporters).

Apart from the results that have been formulated, Muslims are actually divided into 3 major groups: (1) The supporters of Mu'awiyah, which later became known as Sunni; (2) The loyal supporters of Ali bin Abi Talib, who became known as Shia; and (3) the group of opponents of Mu'awiyah and Ali, which became known as Khawarij.

This division not only creates internal conflicts that rely on political interests. However, it also rests on the interests of aqidah. So that the division between Muslims, partly as a result of the Shiffin war which ended with *Tahkîm* , is increasingly difficult to avoid.

The Tahkîm event, as explained above, can be said to be the decisive cause (trigger) for the further development of post-Islamic political thought. *Al-Khulafâ' al-Râsyidûn*. First, it can be seen from the diplomatic defeat of Ali bin Abi Talib over Mu'awiyah which then led to the group of supporters of Ali bin Abi Talib who had a political framework that led to the preservation and development of imamatic doctrine. Second, Mu'awiyah's diplomatic victory then gave rise to a thought that seemed to have the characteristics of a caliphate like the thinking of non-Shi'a people during the reign *Al-Khulafâ' al-Râsyidûn*. Thirdly, (the Tahkîm incident) gave rise to the dissatisfaction of some of Ali ibn Abi Talib from the Ahlul Qurra' group, which then continued with the emergence of the Khawarij thought group with its basic doctrine: *"La hukma illâ lillâh."* (Zahrah, 1984: 245-256)

CONCLUSION

The Shiffin War provides a precious lesson, especially for the faith of Islam. This is because it turns out that political feuds between Muslims have proven to have made the most significant contribution to the collapse of brotherhood between Muslims. Starting from the dispute that occurred between *Al-Fitnah al-Kubra*during the reign of Uthman bin Affan, which ended in the killing of Uthman bin Affan, followed by a civil war between Muslims which culminated in the outbreak of the Shiffin war is a historical event that ultimately gave birth to various firqahs, with their respective political visions.

As an implication of the war, Shi'a and Khawarij groups emerged. The two groups emerged due to the same factors: extremities and contradictions. The emergence of Khawarij played a significant role in the emergence and spread of Shia. The fight

between the two firqah gave rise to another firqah that aimed to mediate between two contradictory camps, namely, Murji'ah, a firqah who dared to come up with his vision, although in the end, it became a synthesis between two other firqahs, by giving birth to a Sunni group.

These groups not only gave birth to theological understanding but also various state political ideas in Islam, which in the end also gave rise to divisions among Muslims, who until now have been separated into three major groups: Shi'ah, Sunni, and Khawarij.

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