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## **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAITH AND POLITICS IN THE FIRST PERIOD IN SALIM IBN ZEKWAN'S WORK "AS-SIRA"**

In the book "as-Sira", Salim ibn Zekwan has presented the essential codes of the Kharijites/Ibadi thought and the relationship between faith and politics in the early period. In "as – Sira" he reflected the specific examples of the Kharijites/Ibadi thought in faith and action context by using explanation of events of the time of Hazrat Osman and Hazrat Ali. Also, Salim has become one of the important figures of this thought by evaluating political events in the context of faith. Religion is one of the most effective values in the life of an individual and society. It is a motivation that influences, directs and gives enthusiasm and spirit to the individual and society. Therefore, religion does not serve any political, legal, individual and social purpose. Also, it cannot be sacrificed to a false belief or thought and fanaticism. When religious texts are taken out of their context, they can be misunderstood. One of the problematic reasons for religious fanaticism is the commentaries that contradict the purpose when they assign a meaning to divine orders and apply them to daily life. It causes chaos and discomfort trying to force your own political and intellectual views as absolute truths and imposing them on others. As a result of that people are directed to the wrong direction and purpose, they are divided, grouped, separated and become enemies to one another. Thus, religion, which its real purpose is making people live in unity, equality and sense of brotherhood, appears as a problem and chaos by being got off its point. Especially, it turns into means of violence, oppression and chaos in the hands of some malicious people. The Holy Quran has established the faith as high and sacred value principles. It invites people to believe in these values independently and gives people the freedom to accept or reject the values of Islamic faith. It does not accept any pressure or direction on this subject. Allah has not given a right to anyone or organization to make pressure or coercion in worships. The Quran has ordered Prophet Muhammad to preach revelation and not to put pressure upon this issue.

**Key words:** faith, politics, Salim ibn Zekwan, spiritual values.

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## **ВІДНОШЕННЯ МІЖ ВІРОЮ ТА ПОЛІТИКОЮ В ПЕРШІЙ ПЕРІОД У ТВІРІ САЛІМА ІБН ЗЕКВАНА «АС-СІРА»**

У книзі «ас-Сіра» Салім ібн Зекван представив основні коди думки хариджитів/ібадітів і зв'язок між вірою та політикою в ранній період. У «ас – Сіра» він відобразив конкретні приклади думки хариджитів/ібадітів у контексті віри та дії, використовуючи пояснення подій часів Хазрат Османа та Хазрат Алі. Крім того, Салім став однією з важливих фігур цієї думки, оцінюючи політичні події в контексті віри. Релігія є однією з найдієвіших цінностей у житті особистості та суспільства. Це мотивація, яка впливає, спрямовує та додає ентузіазму та духу особистості та суспільству. Тому релігія не служить жодній політичній, юридичній, індивідуальній чи соціальній меті. Крім того, його не можна приносити в жертву хибним переконанням чи думкам і фанатизму. Коли релігійні тексти вириваються з контексту, вони можуть бути неправильно зрозумілі. Однією з проблемних причин релігійного фанатизму є коментарі, які суперечать меті, коли вони надають значення божественним наказам і застосовують їх у повсякденному житті. Це викликає хаос і дискомфорт, намагаючись нав'язати свої власні політичні та інтелектуальні погляди як абсолютну істину та нав'язати їх іншим. Внаслідок цього людей спрямовують не в той бік і ціль, вони роз'єднуються, групуються, роз'єднуються і стають ворогами один одному. Таким чином, релігія, справжньою метою якої є змусити людей жити в єдності, рівності та почутті братерства, постає проблемою та хаосом, коли її збивають із цілі. Зокрема, воно перетворюється на засіб

насильства, гноблення та хаосу в руках деяких зловмисників. Священний Коран встановив віру як принцип високої та священної цінності. Він заохочує людей самостійно вірити в ці цінності та дає людям свободу приймати або відкидати цінності ісламської віри. Він не сприймає жодного тиску чи вказівок щодо цього питання. Аллах не дав права нікому чи організації чинити тиск чи примушування в поклонінні. Коран наказує пророку Мухаммаду проповідувати одкровення і не тиснути на це питання.

**Ключові слова:** віра, політика, Салім ібн Зекван, духовні цінності.

**Introduction to the problem.** Salim ibn Zekwan is one of the significant figures of Ibadī / Kharijite thought. Salim who lived in the first century of the Islamic calendar, wrote his work “as – Sira” within the framework of Kharijite / Ibadī thought. The work covers important religious and political events of early Islamic history. In his work “as – Sira”, Salim depicts subjects like The Quran, prophets, Prophet Muhammad’s prophecy, belief structure of the period, first four caliphs, Kharijites, Majus, Sabaiyya and Fitna.

#### **The degree of research of the problem**

There is no accurate information about when, where he was born and when he died. It is believed that he lived in 1st century BH / 7th century AD and died the end of this century. He takes an important place among Muslim scholars in the early period. After studying “as – Sira” it is suggested that he lived in 1st century BH / 7th century AD and passed away the end of this century (Salim b. Zekvan, 2016, p. 15-16).

Some information in the historical resources is not accurate. In the book “History of Sistan” by Farrukhi Sistani it is written that there was a young man in the city of Bust which was occupied by Arabs and he was known later (Salim b. Zekvan, 2016, p. 15). Ibadī scholar Shammakhi (928/1522) wrote that he corresponded with Jabir ibn Zeyd (93/712) who is prominent representative of Ibadism and he lived with Abu Ubeyda Muslim ibn Abi Karima (145/762-763) in the same period (Əbül Abbas Şəmməxi, 2009, p. 235).

It is not possible for Salim ibn Zekwan to correspond with Jabir ibn Zeyd and also be a contemporary of Abu Ubeyda who died about fifty years later from Jabir. Therefore, only one of the information written by Shammakhi is correct (Sönmez Kutlu, 1996, p. 467).

A Libyan Ibadī researcher Amr Khalifa an-Nami suggests in an article which he wrote about some unknown Ibadī manuscripts in North Africa that there is a letter from Jabir ibn Zeyd to Salim in a collection of treatises which belong to Jabir ibn Zeyd (Sönmez Kutlu, 1996, p. 15–17). According to some researchers who are interested in this subject

they believed that Salim was a contemporary of Jabir. Based on this information, it has been revealed that Salim lived in the first century of the Islamic calendar. The absence of events after 70/689 in Salim’s work about Kharijite, and also there is only information about first formation period of Murjiah sect, and it shows that Salim lived with Jabir ibn Zeyd in the same period, and also the work was written in the early years of 70/689 (Sönmez Kutlu, 1996, p. 467–469).

It is said that Salim lived between in 717-719/99-101 and was born in Tawam region of Oman. The most known characteristic of Salim is his being in the group of six people who went to Omar ibn Abdulaziz. Being in a group of six people who went to Omar ibn Abdulaziz and his work “as – Sira” shows that Salim was an important scientific and intellectual figure in Ibadī sect (Orhan Ateş, 1999, p. 99).

Patricia Crone and Fritz Zimmerman who published “Sira” have said that corresponding with Jabir ibn Zeyd (93/712) makes us think he lived outside of Basra, but it is not clear in which period and place he lived (Zimmermann, 2011, p. 12–16).

#### **The purpose and objectives of the article**

Salim’s book “as-Sira” is an important and original work related to early Islamic theology, the history of Islamic sects and the history of Islam. We have set the task of considering the main ideas related to the provisions on faith and politics in the specified work of the author.

#### **Research methods.**

In the first chapter of “as – Sira”, Salim described the reasons of the descent of Quran and its characteristics, topics covered by tawhid and its meaning, the importance of taqwa and jihad. The continuation of this part he depicted messengers, their duties, the position and duty of the Prophet Muhammad in this context, religious sects like Ahli – Kitab, the Majoos and the polytheists that located in the Arabian Peninsula. Also, he gave information about four caliphs. The periods of Hazrat Osman and Hazrat Ali are explained in detail. The emergence of Kharijite, the battles of Jamal and Siffin and arbitration case are

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specifically discussed. Later, he depicts Kharijite firqas like Azariqa and Najdat. The book presents the first information about early Kharijite firqas from an original source. In the final part of his work Salim, criticizes Murji'ah, mentions Sabaiyya who he calls Sabbaba and talks about the Fitna group which he calls Fatana and thought, belief of this group (Sönmez Kutlu, 1996, p. 100–114). The analysis of the text of the work was carried out.

Introduction of the scientific work within the academic community coincides with an early period. With the emergence of “as – Sira”, some ideas and points of views about History of Sects have been discussed and some of them compelled to change. Also, “as – Sira” has a distinction of being the first source which gives information about Kharijite. The work also presents the events and development of early Islamic history with Ibadi/Kharijite perspective.

#### **Main content**

#### **The concept of faith and politics in Salim ibn Zekwan's book “as – Sira”.**

Salim ibn Zekwan also evaluates the first four caliphs in his work. Salim talks about a positive and satisfactory period for people without touching Hazrat Abu Bakr's and Hazrat Omar's election process, political and legal decisions. Salim saw the elections and caliphates of Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Omar as a legal and correct decision. After Prophet Muhammad's death sahabas chose Hazrat Abu Bakr who was the closest to Allah for religion, state and society. He stated that the election of Hazrat Abu Bakr, his administration and decisions were legal and correct. Also, he was the old friend and companion of Allah's messenger, and he had established a fair administration (Salim b. Zekwan, 2016, p. 56).

Salim stated that the election of Hazrat Omar was carried out through consultation, in accordance with Allah's book, messenger's way and Abu Bakr's path. Salim noted that during Hazrat Omar's reign, new legal events such as inheritance laws which were not mentioned in the Quran or sunnah, Hazrat Omar expressed his view on these subjects. He wrote that Hazrat Omar followed the way which Muslims adopted and applied. Hazrat Omar adopted the leadership style of Prophet Muhammad and Hazrat Abu Bakr in terms of management and implementation, and therefore, the believers were satisfied with him (Salim b. Zekwan, 2016, p. 56-58).

Salim links the management, legal, religious and social issues with ayahs in Hazrat Omar's period [3, An – Nisa 4/59]. He reports that the first two caliphs followed the Quran, behaved in a same way of the Allah's messenger, ensured justice and exhibited a leadership style that Muslims approved of.

Salim, evaluated events of Hazrat Osman's and Hazrat Ali's periods in the context of Kharijite / Ibadi perspective. He has explained political and legal decisions of this period by using ayahs and he has chosen a conservative and rigid style. He has evaluated the period in terms of political background, action / faith context and the concept of takfir. He has claimed that Hazrat Osman was elected as a caliph with advice and consent of the Muslims, followed the Allah's book and the sunnah of the Prophet, later he was attracted to the world and introduced innovations by changing the sunnah. Salim criticized Hazrat Osman's decisions which were against the Quran, sunnah and justice in the context of ayahs.

He also noted that Muslims obeyed Hazrat Osman because he promised he would follow Hazrat Ali, Allah's book, also followed the paths of Prophet Muhammad and two caliphs who came after him. Salim stated that by appointing someone other than Allah as a judge in a matter where Allah had already passed a judgment, Hazrat Ali had deviated from the path of Muslims and therefore invalidated Allah's ruling (Salim b. Zekwan, 2016, p. 58–65).

Salim, criticized and condemned Azariqa and Najdat firqas of Kharijite. He also evaluated Murjiah firqa in his work, and accused Murjiah of insulting and immorality due to their belief in the idea of irjaa (Salim b. Zekwan, 2016, p. 81–88). He accused them of choosing their opinions as a religion, criticizing it for their own interest. The Murjiah defended the idea of leaving the judgments of Hazrat Osman and Hazrat Ali to Allah's judgment.

Salim, criticized the view of the Murjiah's that a person who did not witness or see a topic had made a judgment for someone, which was actually made a judgment for themselves. Salim, also criticized the Murjiah's thought that Hazrat Osman, Hazrat Ali and great sinners cannot be deemed as infidels in this context (Salim b. Zekwan, 2016, p. 83-88).

**The events of the periods of Hazrat Osman, which Salim ibn Zekwan associated with faith.**

Hazrat Osman gave state property to his relatives in an unjust way. He gave one – fifth of the territory of Ifriqa to Marvana; the income of Bahrain to Haris ibn Hakim; the income of the Kaleb tribe to Valid ibn Uqbah. He ordered the governor of Makkah, Haris ibn Nofal to give three hundred thousand dirhams to his uncle Hakim. Hazrat Osman disregarded the judgment of Allah and ruled based on something other than the Quran by making such decisions [3, al – Maida 5/44].

Hazrat Osman acquired public property and had houses built in it and shared them with his children and family [3, al – Hashr 59/7].

Valid ibn Uqba killed one of the righteous persons among the Muslims of Kufa. Although Valid's punishment was death penalty, Osman opposed his execution. However, Allah says, “A life for a life” [3, al – Maida 5/45].

Although Valid ibn Uqba drank alcohol, Osman did not punish him because of their friendship.

Hazrat Osman allocated areas that were irrigated by rainwater belonging to the Bedouins for himself. He declared it as the property of his family and the people around him [3, al – Maida 5/47].

He kept the Badouins away from jihad in order to avoid them sharing the spoils of war [3, al – Fath 48/16].

The Messenger of Allah, Abu Bakr, Omar had called the Badouins to join jihad with the Muslims. Osman opposed the sunnah of Prophet Muhammad in this topic [3, Nisa 415].

Osman fired the jurists who were friends of Allah's Messenger and appointed his incompetent relatives to the positions [3, Sad 38/26]. The believers warned Osman about this issue and advised him sincerely. However, he insulted, humiliated and unjustly exiled them [3, Baqara 84-86].

Osman learned about the people who were against him, found them through spies and deprived them of wealth. He used to beat them, give them severe punishments [3, Nisa 4/29-30].

Osman borrowed money from Abdullah ibn al – Arkam the officer of Beytulmal. Despite of the fact that Arkam has warned him, he did not give it back and fired him.

Osman gave the property of Abu Musa al – Ashari which he brought from Iraq to his daughters and family, because of that Abu Musa wept.

Hazrat Osman wrote to Muawiya that people of Medina had fallen into disbelief and disobedience because of rebellion happened in Medina.

When Osman was asked whether he or someone else wrote the letter to the governor of Egypt, he said that he did not know any information about it. Even he was innocent in this situation, he had to find the perpetrator.

Despite being asked to resign because of his unjust decisions, Osman did not accept it.

A Muslim called Dinar ibn Iyaz was killed, although his killer's punishment was demanded from Osman, he opposed it. People who demanded revenge of Dinar ibn Iyaz killed the person who committed it and people who supported the crime. The judgment of the people of Qibla and the people whose blood is halal was applied to those who were killed (Salim b. Zekvan, 2016, p. 63–65).

#### **The events of the periods of Hazrat Ali, which Salim ibn Zekwan associated with faith.**

Talha and Zubeyr had rivalled Osman during his caliphate and opposed him and demanded his blood. When Osman was killed, they also opposed Hazrat Ali because of his blood. Therefore, Ali's resistance and ruling against them were right.

In the Battle of Siffin, Hazrat Ali rejected Allah's judgment on a matter [3, al – Mumin 40/20] and turned away from it because he considered Allah's judgment ineffective [3, al – Maida 5/50].

Ali agreed to his enemies' judgment instead of Allah's judgment and allowed them to judge [3, al – Aman 6/114]. Instead of seeking Allah's guidance, people were appointed as judges who were not just in Allah's religion (Salim b. Zekvan, 2016, p. 67).

#### **Salim ibn Zekwan's reasons for relating the political actions of the Kharijite to matters of faith.**

In Salim's work “as – Sira”, he describes evaluations of the period of Hazrat Ali and Hazrat Osman, faith and political thoughts of Kharijite / Ibadis. Political events are related to faith. Just like in any government, positive and negative political, legal and religious decisions were made during the periods of Hazrat Osman and Hazrat Ali. The decisions made by these two caliphs were sometimes right and sometimes wrong and unjust. These are natural and human characteristic. The Quran has imposed responsibility and duties on people therefore, they feel responsibility. Each person has right and beautiful behaviors as well as they have sins, mistakes stemming from their weaknesses. Only Allah is perfect and impeccable. Therefore, the events that happened during the period of these

two caliphs are human factor. It is necessary to evaluate and see the events in this context. It is best to present and evaluate the events of this period without attributing them to any ideology, religion, tribe or person. Relation of the political and legal events to faith and manipulation has reached its peak with the Kharijite in Islamic thought history. This kind of thought reflects the thoughts and characteristic features of the Kharijite. Kharijite's perspective is completely political.

### Conclusion

One of the most important features of Salim's "as – Sira" is his critical and takfiri thoughts about Hazrat Osman and Hazrat Ali. Salim, analyzed the political, religious, legal and social events that happened in the period of these two caliphs through the Ibadi / Kharijite perspective and related these events to faith. Salim excommunicated Hazrat Ali and Hazrat Osman for different reasons. The reason of excommunicating Hazrat Osman was his political, legal and religious decisions that contradicted the Quran and sunnah. Hazrat Osman acted against the Quran, sunnah and decisions of two previous caliphs in his second caliphate period. He was murdered by the Muslims because he went against the Quran and sunnah and his behaviors allowed takfir.

In Salim's opinion, the reason of Hazrat Ali's excommunication is his acceptance of the Tahkim incident. According to their thoughts, not only Hazrat Ali, but also everyone who accepts Tahkim is disbelievers.

The idea of linking political judgments to the Quran emerged after the Battle of Siffin which happened in the period of Hazrat Osman and reached

its peak afterward. This kind of thought, affected Muslim society deeply, therefore religious ideas were on the table. Background of these religious ideas was faith.

Salim, by evaluating political events within the framework of faith, became one of the representatives of the politicization of faith. This perspective caused differences in belief, thought, and political formation within Muslim society during a certain period. Faith / religion form the power of influence and the core of the most important values of Islamic society. The influence of religion has been tried to be legalized because of disagreements that emerged during this period. This situation is the form of thought and belief of Kharijites. The presence of religion on the background of developing events is seen as a natural, human defense reflex. Hazrat Ali and Hazrat Osman are also human beings. It is natural for them to have rights and mistakes as they are being tried and have the sense of responsibility. Political, religious, legal and social decisions that they accepted may be correct or wrong. Therefore, it is normal to be criticized. However, it is wrong to relate these criticisms to faith, to use it in the belief / faith context and to excommunicate. Showing religion as the legal background for political, juridical and social disagreements and misunderstanding is contrary to the existential purpose of religion. Religion has been sent to ensure safety, to protect freedom of belief and thought. Religion is the whole of divine principles that left to human's will. These kind of evaluations damage religion, its values and the faith in them.

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