

Application of the Theory of Social Forces: A Case Study of Khawarij¹ during the Reign of Hazrat Ali² (AS)

By

Hamidreza Mohamadi Najafabadi & Amirreza Jafari Harandi

Islamic studies and political sciences graduate MA student, Political Science School,
Imam Sadiq (AS) University.

Abstract

Many books have been written so far about Khawarij but few have looked at them as a social force. It is attempted in this paper with a sociologic look and based on historical sociologic approach first to investigate the issue if we can consider Khawarij as a social force or not, and secondly, to know the treatment of Hazrat towards them if considering them as a social force. To respond these two questions, first it is briefly dealt with the issue of social forces and their characteristics and also the origins of the formation of Khawarij and their different views with that of the Alawite society and then, comparing the characteristics of Khawarij with those of the social forces, it is confirmed that Khawarij had been a social force. Finally, with the statement of the treatment of Imam Ali (AS) towards Khawarij in different stages of its life, it is shown that the Alawite government, as a model for Islamic government, had coped with Khawarij with tolerance, benevolence, and with no knocking-out approach.

Keywords: *Imam Ali (AS); Khawarij; Social Forces; Islamic Government; Nehru.*

1. Introduction

Although discussion of the social forces and governments' interaction with them is of subjects of new science, in various communities throughout centuries social forces existed in different ways and have different effects on the governments and they have been able to share and thereby realize their goals, more or less. The state of Amir al-Mu'minin (AS) had not been exempt from this rule.

Alawi government³ can be an appropriate model for shaping Islamic societies. In his age, there were various groups that supported Amir al-Mu'minin (AS) and some opposed him and even fought with him. Of these, Khawarij can be considered as one of them most effective of these groups on the time of the reign on Imam Ali (AS) because, in addition to these thought effects on the community, they were very influential on the destiny of the battle of Siffin⁴ and the battle of Nahrawan⁵, which are two of the three battles of Hazrat, had been to confront them.

¹The origin of Kharijism lies in the first Islamic civil war, the struggle for political supremacy over the Muslim community in the years following the death of Muhammad. After the third caliph (Uthman ibn Affan), a struggle for succession ensued between Caliph Ali and Mu'awiyah, the governor of Syria and cousin of Uthman, in league with a variety of other opponents.

²He was the son of Abu Talib a.s., son of Abdul Muttalib of the distinguished tribe of Bani Hashim. Only one step above his lineage coincided with that of the Prophet s.a. of Islam. The Prophet s.a. had embarked upon a mission which was against the trend of the times, the prevailing environment, the practice of the entire city and of his own people and tribe. He was so devoted to the Prophet s.a. It was due to the distinguished attributes and services rendered by Hazrat Ali a.s. that the Prophet s.a. had great respect for him and used to publicize his qualities both by his words and deeds. Sometimes he used to say: "Ali is from me and I am from Ali." On another occasion he said: "I am the city of knowledge and Ali a.s. is its gate."

³State of Amir al-Mu'minin (AS)

⁴Conflict between Amir al-Mu'minin (as) and Mu'awiyah at Siffin on the banks of the Euphrates river, in what is now Ar-Raqqah, Syria.

⁵Conflict between Amir al-Mu'minin (as) and Khawarij

Since the topic of political sociology is a discussion about social forces in various stages of development and their impact on political life (Bashiriyeh, 1374: 110), it seems that the investigation of the Khawarij as a social force and the collision of Imam Ali (AS) with them to find a suitable model of the relationship between the state and social forces is essential. Clarifying this issue that whether Khawarij can be deemed as a social force necessitates investigation of formation contexts of this group and also investigation of their activities.

The view of some thinkers, like Shahid Motahhari (Rh) who believes that though Khawarij had gone, the attitude of being outlaw and being like Khawarij is still there, adds to the importance of the investigation of this topic. Yet, our question in this paper is not the question of existence of non-existence of this attitude in the present era, but we want to see if we can consider the Khawarij as a social force and if so, what the roots and impacts of this social force had been and how the treatment of Imam Ali (AS) had been towards them.

2. Analytical Framework

Conceptual Autopsy

To explain Khawarij from the perspective of political sociology, it is necessary at first to be more familiar with the concept of social force.

Totally, in any society, social forces include both social classes and also groups and dignities that act as the representative of the social classes, though they are not social class themselves (Bashiriyeh, 1381: 11). Origin of social forces is different interests that often revolve around the social gaps and breaks (Bashiriyeh, 1374: 99). Lone breaks differentiate a social group from others. The formation of these gaps is not necessarily associated with the emergence of social forces. In other words, social gaps can be divided into two categories: inactive and active gaps. Most of the social gaps are inactive at the time of formation and no specific political awareness has formed about them. In fact, it can be said that they do not have emergence and reinforcement like in form of the social force.

In order for an inactive social gap to be an active one, it must go through some stages to finally one social force is formed on its basis. The first stage is self-awareness that means that the members find awareness in the first step and in the next they come to believe that there is a distinction and gap that are effective in the social equations. The second stage is when the members reached self-awareness, they are able to create a social institution and in the third stage they do social activities under a leader. The fourth and last stage is that this social institution presents a fake ideology as the reigning ideology. Here, it can be said that the social gap has changed from the inactive mode to the active and effective mode.

Sometimes social gaps are dense in a society and confirm each other and sometimes cross each other and this means that they repel each other. In this case, a group in a gap feels that they been discriminated and in another gap feel that they are better and indiscriminate that this makes these gaps cross each other and their effectiveness decreases, but when gaps are dense, they are very much likely to be activated, for example, if a particular individual or group feels discriminated against in all the gaps, then the possibility of deepening the divisions resulting in the formation of social force goes up.

Gaps are not a social reality all the time and sometimes they may result from mental imaginations for example suppose that one ethnicity have the impression that the government does not pay attention to them but the reality is that the government does not differentiate between them and other ethnic groups, in this regard, if they observe the smallest things against its own, they view it as perceptions of discrimination, and this gap can cause the formation of a social force. Social gaps can have a nature of class, religion, ethnic, age, gender, etc.

3. Theoretical Framework

This article is an attempt, using the of historical sociology approach, to study and to investigate the Khawarij. In this approach, each topic is investigated in both the longitudinal and transverse. It means that a social phenomenon is both historically (the length) and sociologically (the cross) studied. Of course, sociology has always been an activity towards historical tendencies (Scoch Pole, 1388: 7) but in historical-sociologic approach history and historical background of it is specifically considered in addition to the social conditions of a phenomenon.

Contexts of the Formation of Khawarij

Investigation of Kufa⁶ as the Birthplace of Khawarij

To clarify the fact that Khawarij were the result of what society, it is necessary to briefly investigate the city of Kufa that had been the place of their formation. The most important characteristics of people of Kufa can be found in their embrace of wilayat. The most documented narrations about Kufa is the words of Amir al-Mu'minin (AS). He said about the Kufic: "Whenever a group of Sham's legion come to you, every man of you closes the door of his house as the monster crawls to its nests and like hyena takes refuge. I swear to God, humiliated is the one whom you rise to help and those who shooting arrows to enemy by you and your help, will shot with a broken arrow and without dart. I swear to God you are many in quiet areas, but little under the banner of jihad. I am aware of what that would direct your wrong, but I do not ever correct you by destroying myself. May God despise your looks, and returns waste your property. You do not have knowledge of right the way you have knowledge about the wrong and you do not destroy the wrong the way you destroy the right!" (Sharif Al-Razi, 1386: 143).

This sermon and other sermons by Imam Ali (AS) about the Kufic demonstrate that the people of Kufa did not obey Hazrat and hesitated against the order of Jihad and they were dispersed even within themselves and they only did have the name of Islam with themselves. They did not know the right they way they should and they were such people that, according to Hazrat, had cut the rope of Islam and had not followed its rules. They were sleeping awakes, absent observers, blind observers, deaf hearers, dumb speakers, and the present bodies but the absent minds and their hearts are like those of the possessed and they lack chivalry and they are treasons (Ameli, 1387: 67-71).

In his speech, hazrat strongly criticized and blamed the people of Kufa and even cursed them. According to the words of Imam Ali (AS) in relation to the characteristics of the people of Kufa, one should not expect such a community group to form a very deep understanding of the religion as in the next sections, we will refer to Imam Ali (AS) in the Khawarij were grappling with the crisis Directorate.

Historical Contexts of the Kharij Thinking

The origins of Khawarij and Kharij thinking should be searched in the victories era and after that. Thinkers such as Shahidmotahhari (Rh) believed that the great Proghet (PBUH) stayed 13 years in Mecca and even he did not defend himself and did not give the permission of jihad to be able to train and educate a central nucleus. He Said: "the Messenger stayed 13 years in Mecca and did not let the Muslims even defend themselves because people did not still deserve this defense and jihad. If you went to war and conquest, it should be in proportion to the development of Islamic culture and Islamic bean. It means that when there is fresh conquests one side, there must be parallel to the development of culture and Islamic bean. People who become Muslim and converts and even those who are attracted to Islam should learn principles and facts and Islamic causes, shell and core of Islam, and understand it all" (Motahhari, 1373: 31).

The impact of this method of the prophet was that when the hijrah happen from Mecca to Medina, there had been a number of trained people who could introduce the real religion to other people. But what

⁶Centre of government of Hazrat Ali(AS)

happened after the great Prophet (pbuh) was that there happened many great conquests and victories without consideration of the advertisement capabilities and training abilities of the society. The result of this ignorance that happened during the time of the caliphs was the emergence of a social class, people who loved the religion and were interested in being religious but they did not have a proper and true understanding of the religion. Shahid Motahhari said about this class of society: “there was found a social class that was interested in Islam, they believed in Islam but they only knew the surface of Islam and did not know anything about the spirit of it. It was a social class that only pushed on saying prayers not on knowledge and not on the identification of targets of Islam. There came into the world of Islam a sainted oriented and puritanical Muslim class” (Motahhari, 1373: 31). This group of people had grown slowly and would bring up their head in the era of the reign of Imam Ali (AS) during the days of arbitration as a social group.

The Conflict Between Khawarij and the Alawite Government

The result of the formation of this incapable social group was that they stayed away from major issues of Islam - the Islam that Imam Ali (AS) was. The outcome of this conflict and distance was that they deviated from the religion and later stood in front of Hazrat in the uniform of the Khawarij. Perhaps the three conflicts can be noted in this regard:

Ideological Conflict

As mentioned earlier, despite the fact that the Khawarij had much interest in the surface of Islam, they did not have appropriate religious knowledge and understanding and this made them, in addition to holding a stiff upper lip and having prejudice, consider themselves as Mujtahid in religion. The danger of this was in a way that they accused others of doing haram and against the God and even they deemed killing of innocent people as necessary for themselves while they did not know anything about it.

It is narrated from someone called Abdullah bin Khabab who was one of the companions of the Prophet (PBUH) that he was faced along with his pregnant wife with a group of Khawarij. They asked his opinion about Imam Ali (AS) and he replied that Ali is his Amir al-Mu'minin and the first one who believed Rasoul Allah (PBUH). Khawarij asked him to recite a hadith from the prophet and he said one about the fitnah that happened after the death of Hazrat. After some investigations they told him: “you are pervert! You look to men’s name not their behavior! Swear to God we kill you in a way that we have not killed anybody yet. They tied him up and took him together with his wife under a palm tree. Then they took him to a river and cut his head like a sheep. Then they went to his wife. They poor woman told them: I am a woman. Don’t you fear God? They did not pity her as well and tore his stomach and killed her baby.... When they were taking Abdullah for prosecution, there fell one date from that palm tree and one of the Khawarij took it and put it in his mouth. His friends reprimanded him saying that he should not eat something that belongs to others without getting permission or paying for that. He took the date out of his mouth and threw it away!! It was also on the way that they saw a pig and one of them drew his sword and killed the pig. His friends told him this is slaughter on the earth!! They went found the owner of the pig and satisfied him for the loss (Khatami, 1380)!

Quoting this story is meant to clarify the kind of Ijtihad that Khawarij had. As we see in the story, they deem eating that date haram according to their own understanding while they consider killing the companion of Rasoul Allah and his wife and their unborn child as halal. Furthermore, this ijtihad of them made them later to consider Ali (AS) as a pagan and wanting his death.

Khawarij had a believer’s look but they did not fight in the way of the God and it should be said that they literally were out of religion. Khawarij should not be deemed as very faithful people and because they understood little, they went out of religion, but khawarij did not have complete and right faith from the very beginning.

Political Conflict

Khawarij did not obey Amir al-Mu'minin (AS) because of their defected thoughts and they had taken the reign of Amir al-Mu'minin to a crisis. This political conflict is not just related to after the formation of Khawarij inasmuch as in the battle of Siffin, when Khawarij had not been formed yet, this lack of obedience towards the orders of Amir al-Mu'minin expressed itself and it can better be said that it reached its maximum level in the battle of Siffin. In the battle of Siffin and after putting the Korans on the spears, near 20000 people from Hazrat's army came to Imam (AS) and they, while they were shaking their swords, rudely addressed hazrat without saying the title Amir al-Mu'minin that: Ali, accept the suggestion of men of Sham otherwise we kill you like we killed UthmanibnAfan (Salavati, 1365: 48).

The reason of this disobedience can be found in the fact that they had been primitives who did not have any understanding of politics and Imamatus as a meta tribal issue and they showed their tendencies in the form of the misinterpretation of the slogan 'Judgment is only for Allah' (Jafarian, 1387: 104).

This characteristic of Khawarij was true about Muawiyah as well. Khawarij considered Muawiyah as a pagan based on their ijtihad. Of course, Khawarij had shown much respect for Umar and it can be said that maybe this respect to Umar had been the reason of this political conflict.

It is quoted that when Khawarij went out of Kufa, friends and Shia of Imam Ali (AS) came to him and gave him homage. Rabi'e bin AbiShaddadKhas'ami who was with hazrat during the battles of Jamal and Siffin came to him. Hazrat said to him we will pledge allegiance Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh). Rabi'e said we do on the tradition of Abu Bakr and Umar. Ali (AS) said to him: Woe to you if Abu Bakr and Umar had not done according to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the Prophet, they are not right. Rabi'e said only allegiance is to the same condition. Imam Ali (AS) gave him a look and said: swear to God that I am seeing you that have gone out with Khawarij and you have been killed. I am seeing you while you are under the feet of horses; and this really happened (Dinvari, 1380: 181).

Umar had certain economic policies and the discriminatory behavior during his caliphate in a way that will be explained in the economic conflicts section tahtKhawarij had asked hazrat in the battle of Jamal that he treat them the way Umar did to them. It can be said that the interest of Khawarij to Umar, which was not based on religious teachings, caused their hatred to strengthen towards Ali ibnAbiTalib (AS).

Economic Conflicts

The Khawarij showed this distance from Hazrat Ali (AS) in the battle of Jamal and later led to the view that made them separated from Ali (AS). According to narrations hazrat did not allow to capture the women and children in the battle of Jamal and even some of the news accounts of the fact that hazrat only allow them to take war weapons. Khawarij who failed to understand this issue protested Hazrat and Ibn Abbas. Sofyan bin Sa'd said: Ammar told Amir al-Mu'minin (AS): what do you think about capturing women and children? He said: no way! We only fight those who are fighting with us and divided the horses and weapons that were left in the battlefield. One of his friends who was one of the reciters told: you should give us our share from their women and children and other properties. If not, how come killing them is halal while getting their things is haram? Imam said: there is no way in getting these women and children because they are in Muslim's land and indeed we have killed those who fought with us and were cruel to us but their property is their heir for those who deserve it and who are their relatives. Ammar (pbuh) said: thus we do not follow those of them who ran away and we do not kill the injured' (Mofid, 1383: 243).

Moreover, hazrat did not follow the tradition of the past caliphs in dividing things and benevolence. He practiced equality. Khawarij protested him and asked him to give them like the previous caliphs but hazrat, rejecting their request, did as the tradition of Rasoul Allah (PBUH) (Ameli, 1387: 150). Thus, it can be said that unlike their good looks, Khawarij were materialistic people as we see in the history that

what made IbnMojlam adamant in his decision of killing Imam Ali (AS) was the request of a girl whom he wanted to marry with.

It has been narrated that when Malik Ashtar in the battle of Siffin advised Khawarij and the deceived not to be deceived about the Korans on the spears, they replied him: oh Ashtar, leave us alone, we fought them for God and we stop the fight for the God as well. We do not obey you, so get away from us. Ashtar said: they have deceived you and swear to God you are trapped in it. They called you to stop the war and you easily accepted it. You fools, we thought that your prayer are because of lack of enthusiasm in this world and your abundant interest in God, but now we easily observe your run from death only for the interest in this world. Woe to you, you precious-looking people will not see esteem, get lost the way the wicked did” (Nasr bin Mozahem, 1370: 667).

Khawarij as Social Forces

Khawarij can be considered as a social force in that they have risen from social gaps. The blurred lines that existed between them and the Alawite government which were gradually fade away during various event and demonstrated itself until it demonstrated itself in Nehru in the form of a battle.

Of course it should be mentioned that these gaps had not be risen from the reality of the society but they were originated in ignorance and misunderstanding of Khawarij about religion.

What that mentioned in previous section under the titles of ideological, political, and economic conflicts are in fact gaps by which deepening Khawarij felt they are discriminated and wanted to be separated from the Alawite government. What intensified this separation and distance was that the mentioned three gaps confirmed each other or in other words, they were dense. The consequence of the density of gaps is the intensified discontent of social forces.

Khawarij considered itself both ideologically different and believed that what they understand is true not anything else and also considered themselves as politically different from the alawite government and did not want to go under the flag of Ali (AS). They also believe in their economically difference with others and asked more share from Bait Al-Mal.

The results of these gaps lead them to believe after Siffin that they are different with others and the community is not good for them in the way that they liked. Due to this, they did not enter Kufa with the army if Hazrat and about 1000 of the army separated while saying the slogan ‘The Allegiance is only for God’ and camped out of Kufa in a village called ‘Harora’ (Salawati, 1365: 99).

Their separation from the army and their collection in Harora institutionalized this social group in a way that later they were given the title Harorayah. They lived together here for a long time and this demonstrated their solidarity. With the separation of Khawarij from the army of Hazrat, the mentioned social gaps practically changed from being inactive, or in other words semi active, to active mode. Characters such as IbnAlkawa’, Abdullah ibnWahabRasbi, and Yazeed bin Hathin can be known as the leaders and heads of Khawarij.

Khawarij have the ideology of their own and they would match everything with it. Their ideology was formed in the battle of Siffin and upon seeing the Korans on spears, they cried the slogan ‘Judgment is only for Allah’ Incomplete interpretation of khawarij of this slogan changed into an ideology for them in a way that later when they deemed hazrat as a pagan, they documented from this slogan. In Nehru battle when Khawarij attacked the army of Imam Ali (AS), they said this slogan as well. In addition to superficial interpretation of this slogan, Khawarij had other ideas that demonstrated their ideology. They did not believe in Imamate and they believed enjoining the good and forbidding the evil to be one of the principles of their ideology in any condition no matter how it will affect. Of other ideas of Khawarij was the belief that everyone who does one of the great Sins is a pagan. As a result, khawarij had a fake

ideology for them instead of the great ideology of Islam that made them totally different from the society as a social force.

Regarding what has been mentioned so far, it can be said that khawarij had been a social force, a social force that was active not isolated. Some believe khawarij to be very puritan a people and hence, when comparing them with the present society, they deem some conservative and isolated people to be like khawarij while khawarej had not been isolated at all. The Supreme Leader says in this regard: I said in the previous year not to make a mistake in recognition of Khawarij. Some consider khawarij as similar to puritans; no, it is not the case. A puritan who stays in a place and prays and says prayers is not the meaning of Khawarij. Khawarej is that element that is rebellious; that creates crisis; come to the stage; has the discussion of war with Ali; fights with Ali” (Sahba Center, 1390: 95). Therefore, we should not consider khawarij as isolated people in the process of knowing them but they were a social force with facilities and ideology and they were effective and due to this, investigating the confrontation of Imam Ali (AS) with them seems necessary.

The Confrontation of Amir al-Mu'minin (AS) with the Khawarij

Since Khawarij had been a social force and their destiny brought them in front of imam Ali (AS) in war and in other words it can be said that they had been at the utmost of a social force, it is necessary to briefly deal with the treatment that Imam (AS) had with them.

Hazrat Ali (AS) tolerated khawarij as much as possible and he did not have eliminating approach towards them who had gone out of the religion.

In some cases khawarij would rise at the middle of hazrat’s speech and recited the slogan “Judgment is only for Allah” and even they insulted him. If someone from imam’s friends wanted to punish him, imam would not let him do that and reprimanded his friends from doing this. Imam (AS) respected their share from Bait al-Mal. When Imam (AS) heard that a khawarij man said “Judgment is only for Allah” he said: you have three rights on us: we don’t prohibit you from entering mosque to let you say the name of the God in it and as far as your hands are in ours, we do not deprive you from your share and third, we do not begin fighting with you (Ameli, 1387: 161).

After the exit of khawarij, Imam called Ibn Abbas, Sa’sae bin Sohan, and Ziad bin Nasr and when they came back they asked him about the man of khawarij. Sa’sae introduced Yazid bin Arhaba and Imam got on the horse and went to Harora and then went to Yazid bin Qais place and said two Rak’at of prayers and said this is the place of someone that if he became blessed here, he will be blessed in the resurrection day and then started talking with khawarij (Mahalati, 1387: 629). This behavior of Hazrat—that he personally went to Harora—was a sign of righteousness and tolerance of hazrat with Khawarij.

Hazrat even sent some agent to khawarij for negotiations and he did not enter fighting with them until the time that khawarij had not started mutiny and slaughter—as one was mentioned earlier—. In addition to killing IbnKhabab and his pregnant wife, khawarij also had killed three other women and even imam’s agent Harith bin Marrah was killed by khawarij. When the news of the death of Harith came to people, they said: Ya Amir al-Mu'minin! Why leaving them and let them be our replace in our property and houses? Take us to fight with them and when we finish with them, take us to the people of Sham (Ameli, 1378: 158).

It must be mentioned that these crimes by khawarij had been committed in a society that is a tribe kill someone from other tribe, a war would happen soon unless the killed tribe would be satisfy in any way. In such situation, Amir al-Mu'minin (AS) waited and tolerated khawarij until they also killed Imam’s agent. When it came to this, Imam got the army ready to fight with Khawarij. Ali (AS) in the war told Khawarij: “until they did corruption in the earth and killed the believers, come to them and told them to let the murderers of our brothers come to us, they responded: They’re all killers, blood and your blood we all

have legit, then the horse and his men were hard on us, God put them in shambles oppressors, when I commanded you, I immediately went to the enemy if they are more concerned about their hearts and destroy their treachery, their generation destroys, but you said..." (Ameli, 1387: 159).

Before the war, Imam said some sermons several times and sent his friend for the contention with khawarij. The results of these sermons and contentions were that about 8000 people of khawarij came to Imam and only 4000 people of them remained in front of Hazrat.

In one of the sermon, Imam Ali told khawarij: "have all of you been present in Siffin? They said: some of us were but not the rest. Imam said: so make two groups, those who were present in Siffin make a group and the rest another to let me talk separately with each group. Then he called people and said: be silent and listen to what I say, give your hearts to me. Anyone I asked for testify, talk according to his awareness. Then he said addressed a long sermon that an excerpt of it is as follows: did not you shout when they put the Korans on spears with wickedness and treachery that: these are our brothers and are from our Islam and these are facing the Koran and want peace. We think we should accept they request and save them? I told you: the surface of this is faith but at its heart is rivalry with the God. It beginning is clemency and its final is regret. So, stay in your positions and continue your way and make a stiff upper lip for fight and do not care about their screams that if they are responded, they deceive and if they free it, makes invalid and poor. What that happened is something you all now. And I saw that you gave in. swear to God if you did not give in, no law would be necessary for me and the God would not put any sin on my shoulder and swear to God if ever I did accept, still I was right and I should had been obeyed and the book of God is with me. I have not been away from it since I got close to it. We were with the Prophet (PBUH) and murder was roaming around the fathers, children, brothers, and relatives and with every catastrophe and damage nothing would ever come other than increase of faith and movement in the way of God and surrounding the order of God and patience over our injuries. But today we fight with our Islamic brothers because of the erroneous, doubt, and misinterpretation which is present in the religion. Whenever we find a way by which the God gather us again and cause our relations be alright and we become close, we like it and we avoid everything other than this" (Sharif Al-Razi, 1386: 278). Hazrat clearly addressed khawarij in this sermon as our Islamic brothers and has been after a cure for a remedy for their relation and stopping war.

It has been mentioned in another narration that after the contentions, Amir al-Mu'minin gave a flag title peace to Abu Ayyob Ansari and ordered him to announce that anyone who come under this flag, will be in peace. In this time, 8000 of them separated and came to Imam and the rest went to Nehru. Imam again wrote them and invited them to fight with Muawiyah and wrote in the beginning of a letter "auspicious is the one who Through him His people are auspicious..." hoping if they go the right path, but they did not accept (IbnShahrAshubMazandarani, 1379: vol. 3, 189).

After all these contentions and correspondence and tolerance, still imam did not want to start the war, he said his friends: "do not fight with Khawarij until they come to fight with you" (IbnAbi Al-Hadid, 1404 h. q: vol. 2, 272)

It is also been narrated that Imam took a Koran in his hand and said his friends: who is ready to take this Koran and go to this people and invite them to the book of God and the sunnah of His Prophet. For two times just a young man raised and hazrat let him and gave him the Koran and said: but be aware that you will be killed, he got the Koran and went to Khawarij and came back with his face full of arrows and it was this time that hazrat started the war (Mahalati, 1387: 140). At any case, it was not Imam who started the war.

After the war the behavior of imam with khawarij was charitable in a way that Abu Khalifah Tai says: "when we were coming back from Nehru, we saw Abu Izar Tai. He said Adi bin Hatam: Aba Tarif! Have you returned healthily and with booty or cruel and sinful and he said: we are returning with health and

booty not cruel and sinful and he said: so, as you say. Asvad bin Yazid and Asvad bin QaisMoradi, who was with Ada bin Hatam, told Abu Izar: it was a bad word you said like you think like Khawarij. Then they took him and brought him to hazrat (AS) and said: this man thinks like khawarij and said this and that to Adi. Ali (AS) said: what should we do with him? They said: kill him. Imam (AS) said: Do I kill someone who has not gone away from me? Said: put him in jail. Ali (AS) said: he has not committed a sin to let me put him in jail, free him.” (Ameli, 1387: 161).

Imam (AS) also says about Khawarij that: “Do not fight the Kharijites after me, because one who seeks right but does not find it, is not like one who seeks wrong and finds it.” (HorAmeli, 1409: vol. 15, 83). All these tolerance and patience of imam Ali (AS) towards khawarij demonstrated that hazrat would not see khawarij out of the community of Islam with all of their crimes and hoped their return to the right way of Islam, maybe the reason of this issue had been, as mentioned earlier, ignorance and enmity of khawarij. However, imam differentiated between the ignorant of the community of Islam and its enemies. In other words, Imam’s treatment with Khawarij had been so charitable and he attempted until the last moment to guide them into the right way.

5. Conclusion

Since the Khawarij rose from social divisions and self-awareness, institutionalization and ideological leader of alternatives as well as distinguish themselves from the government and Alawite communities, tried to exert its influence on it, we know them as a social force. Of course, a social force which was born upon the social gaps and misunderstandings and ignorance towards religion. This led in many ways to make them feel they are ideologically, politically, and economically distinct from the state and in front of it.

Not only was khawarij a social force, but they had been an active social force that they even stood in front of the government and rebel against it. Hence, they can be sociologically investigated for the aspect of ‘opposition.’

Having recognized khawarij as a social force, we dealt with a more important question and that was how Imam Ali (AS) dealt with them, because his confrontation with them can be a model for confronting social forces in Islamic community.

As discussed so far, hazrat tolerated khawarij who were a rebellious social force and did not fight with them until the time they did some murders and crimes. Hazrat seriously tried at the time of war to guide khawarij to the right way and make them leave the war. Amir al-Mu'minin (AS) even tolerated them after the war and pointed out about resisting killing them.

This kind of confrontation with a social force that has committed crimes and upheaval demonstrated that the confrontation of government with social forces should not be eliminating. Islamic government should always be charitable with social forces and try to guide them to the right way. Islamic government should not take eliminating measures and prohibit the life of the social force even if they know this social force is not amendable and will later fuss again, as hazrat did not permit holding someone in jail who thinks out of his way even in the circumstance of post Nehru war. Imam (AS) gave freedom to those who returned and remained from Khawarij after the battle of Nehru in a way that one of these Khawarij martyred him in praying mihrab.

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