

Boko Haram: New Brand of Khawarij and Its Manifestation in NigeriaMuhammad Maga Sule^{1*}, Abubakar Shettima², Kasim Alkali³¹Nasarawa State Ministry of Education, Nasarawa State, Nigeria²Kashim Ibrahim College of Education, Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria³Nigerian Arabic Language Village, Ngala, Borno State, Nigeria***Corresponding author**

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Article History

Received: 11.01.2018

Accepted: 28.01.2018

Published: 20.02.2018

DOI:

10.21276/sjhss.2018.3.2.2



Abstract: In spite of the twenty-first century being an era of information and communication which make accessing authentic texts easier, it is very unfortunate that there still exist many misconceptions regarding Islam. One of such misconception is the issue of terrorism. Naturally, any misconception has roots somewhere and when it comes to modern day terrorism linked with Islam, it is an ideological group historically known as Kharijites who caused serious confusion among Muslims and between Non-Muslims. This paper examines the creeds and principles of the early Khawarij, how they influenced modern day extremist groups like the *Boko Haram* in Nigeria and why they have deviated from traditional mainstream Islam. Islam is a religion ordained by Allah which has been erroneously aligned with terrorism and numerous conflicts around the globe since the September 11, 2001 attacks in the USA. While Islam does not encourage these actions, there exists movements within the Muslim community which use forcefulness as a means of political expression similar to the early extremist Khawarij sect who abused the concept of takfir. The new brand of Khawarij and their likes the *Boko Haram* in Nigeria seem to have adopted the main tenets of the Khawarij creed and as a result, carrying out acts of violence under the guise of Islamic jihad. The paper suggests that there is the need for further study on the ideological roots of these groups, their actions, and how society proffer solutions to combat their ideas before they degenerate into terrorist actions.

Keywords: Boko Haram, New Brand of Khawarij, Dangers and Ideology of Khawarij.

INTRODUCTION

Most of the Muslims are frustrated and continuously concerned by the growing number of barbaric killings of innocent civilians in the name of Islamic Jihad by some splinter groups associating themselves with Islam. The entire world is hearing and watching all kinds of perpetrated evil done by people who claim to be Muslim faithful. This growing phenomenon is distracting the entire world from the real issues and the many serious matters that need to be resolved whether locally or internationally. It is indeed a *Fitnah!* Muslims, scholars and students, rulers and citizens, academics, professionals, farmers, laborers, parents and children have no choice but to disassociate themselves completely from, in a loud and clear voice from the ideologies of hate, division and terrorism and the people who use them in the name of Islam. Why do we believe ISIL, *Boko Haram*, Al-Qaeda, lone wolves and the likes to be the modern day Khawarij?

From the understanding and *Aqedah* of *Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama'a* an Islamic government which is led by Khawarij is a false state not to be followed. If the underpinning dogmas and practice of an Islamic government is based upon the dogmas and practice of

the Khawarij such a government is not to be given allegiance and its residents should resist or flee or remain in their households [1].

The Northern Nigeria in particular had witnessed a religious conflict in 1980s known as Maitatsine crisis, which caused havoc in major cities of Northern Nigeria. Muhammad Marwa was an Islamic scholar who migrated from the town of Marwa in Northern Cameroun to the city of Kano in 1945. While in Kano he became, an Islamic zealot concerned with the purification of Islam. He believed that Islam had been corrupted by modernization (Westernization) and the formation of the modern state. His constant preaching became very abusive and provocative, especially against established institutions like the emirate and the political class to the extent that the then Emir of Kano, Alhaji Sanusi Lamido, expelled him from Kano. Marwa found his way back to Kano in 1966, presumably after the death of Alhaji Sanusi. Between 1972 and 1979 Marwa was detained in prison several times for his provocative preaching and acts of lawlessness against the state [2].

There is a growing suspicion among Nigerians regardless of their faiths about the real identity and motive of *Boko Haram* group. Most Muslims see it as an extension of Maitatsine sect which was established in 1945 to transport turmoil to Islam as it was confirmed that Maitatsine was not a Muslim until his death, while a reasonable number of Christians see it as an attempt to Islamize Nigerians while some are indifferent [3]. *Boko Haram* is an extension of the Khawarij sect like Maitatsine of 1980 believes that northern politics has been seized by a group of corrupt, false Muslims. It wants to wage a war against them, and the Federal Republic of Nigeria generally, to create a “pure” Islamic state ruled by Sharia Laws [4].

History/Conceptualisation of Khawarij

Kharijism is the sect that the khawarij belong to. The word ‘Khawarij’ is the plural word of “khariji” and it comes from the Arabic root word ‘Kharaja’ which means ‘to leave’ or ‘to exit’ [5]. In Islamic terminology, khawarij refers to the seceders, those Muslims who leave mainstream Islam, declare other Muslims as apostates and rebel against the rulers [6]. Imam Al Nawawi mentioned in *Rawdat Ut Talibeen* that “The Kharijites are a group of heretics who believe that a person who commits a major sin is an unbeliever and will thus be punished in Hellfire for all eternity...” [7].

The first of them, Dhul Khuwaisarah Al Tamimi, dared to call the Prophet ﷺ just because he did not agree with how some wealth was being distributed. This feeling of self-righteousness was shared by the other chiefs of Najd such as Dhul Khuwaisarah’s people who later rebelled against Abu Bakr’s caliphate under the leaderships of Sajaah and Musailama [7]. This mentality of rebellion picked up pace again during the caliphate of ‘Uthman, led by a man by the name of Ibn Saba. His effort resulted in the assassination of Caliph ‘Uthman, May Allah be pleased with him. Ibn Saba and his followers joined the army of Ali, may Allah be pleased with him and caused further bloodshed. After Ibn Saba’s plot was discovered, he fled from Iraq and started preaching the divinity of Ali, a belief that was accepted by the Shia [7]. Over time, the khawarij divided into subsects each having their own sets of beliefs, some more extreme than others such as the Azraqis, Ibadis, and Sufiris [7].

Al-Khawarij is plural for “Kharij”, meaning one who rebels against the acknowledged Muslim ruler whom Islam obliges every Muslim to obey and not rebel against. This definition of Al- Khawarij, which is taken from Islamic terminology, has become a trademark for the twelve thousand Muslims who rebelled against Caliph Ali bin Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, and this includes all the groups that followed their way of understanding the religion. These groups have since been known as “Al-Khawarij”

even though they carried different names. Among those groups are Al- Muh’akkimah, Ash- Sharat, Al- ‘Haroriyyah, An- Nawa-sib, and Al- Mariqhah [8].

Khawarij/Kharijites (secessionists) were a group that chose to break away from the Ummah and rebel against the Caliph Ali Ibn Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with him) in the year 657 CE after they opposed his decision to accept arbitration with Mu’awiyah Ibn Abi Sufyan over the Caliphate. They repeated their famous statement “La hukma illa lillah” which means “there is no rule but for Allah [9]. Basically, they are the first group in the history of Islam who made Takfir, the first to break away from the Ummah through rebellion and assassination of rulers and the first to justify killing Muslims and innocent people [9]. They had no regard for sanctity of life. Prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) prophesied about their advent and warned his companions from such dangerous perversion of Islam and its teachings.

The Boko Haram: Origin and Ideology

According to Shuaibu *et al.*, [10], *Jama’ah al-Ahlu al-Sunnah Li al-Da’wah wa al-Jihad*, known as *Boko Haram* emerged around 2001 as a peaceful local Islamic movement. The word ‘*Boko Haram*’ in Hausa means Western education is forbidden. *Boko Haram* was created in 2002 by Mohammad Yusuf [11], a radical Islamist cleric, in Maiduguri, Borno state, in North Eastern Nigeria. He set up a religious complex, called *Markaz*, following his expulsion from two mosques in Maiduguri by Muslim clerics for propagating his radical views. The complex included a mosque and an Islamic school. Many poor Muslim families in Nigeria and neighbouring countries sent their children to the school to get a proper education. The centre had ulterior political goals to create an Islamic state and impose Sharia Laws, and it soon became a recruiting ground for future jihadist to fight the state [12].

The group was initially operating under the name *Shabaab* Muslim Youth Organization under the leadership of Mallam Lawal. When Lawal travelled to continue his education in Madina Saudi Arabia, Yusuf became the leader of the movement. In addition, Yusuf’s Leadership opened the group to the popularity and political influence [12]. Subsequently, the sect had been conducting its activities peacefully for seven years of the existence of the exemption of Kanamma skirmishes in 2004 [13].

Jama’ah al-Ahlu al-Sunnah Li al-Da’wah wa al-Jihad, popularly called *Boko Haram* (BH) or *Yusufiyya*, this group was until 2004 (when it clashed with police in Kanamma village of Yobe State) unknown in the zone. It is perhaps the latest arrival on the religious landscape of the northeast, but certainly

the most adventurous. Based in Borno (Maiduguri), but also prominent in Bauchi and Yobe states (through records of conflicts attributed to them), the group is vocal in questioning a secular Nigerian state in favour of full sharia implementation, against secular education and government work. Other beliefs practiced by the group according to Ibrahim [14] include (i) anyone who votes in a democratic election is an unbeliever, and (ii) people who consume products such as food seasonings like Maggi, dairy products like Peak milk, and toothpaste such as Maclean are unbelievers. Based on these beliefs, it is safe to link *Boko Haram* with the Egyptian group Khawarij that also goes by the name *Jama'atut Takfir wal Hijrah* founded in 1964 by Shukri Mustafa while in prison [14]. Specifically, with respect to Western education, *Boko Haram* finds it unlawful that secular subjects like Geography are included in the curriculum of (secular) schools where students are taught that the solar system consists of nine planets as opposed to the seven heavens and earth described in the Qur'an. Such interpretation of the Qur'an has been described as misconception [15].

Initially, *Boko Haram* claimed to be a Salafist local movement in Borno State of North Eastern Nigeria before it was turned into insurgent group in 2009. Moreover, after the dynamic change of its activities in 2009, *Boko Haram* becomes capable of carrying out major attacks including suicide and denoting bombs [13]. The group misinterpreted some parts of Islamic teaching in which they consider interaction with Western society as a sin. The group is against the activities of orthodox Islamic scholars [16].

There are many Muslims who are troubled by *Boko Haram* and their vicious rhetoric and vicious actions. But this is not the first time that a rebel group of Muslims have emerged with extremist tendencies. And as the saying goes, those who do not heed history are doomed to repeat it. According Mike [17], *Boko Haram* was founded as an indigenous Khawarij group, turning itself into a Khawarij Jihadist group in 2009. It proposes that interaction with the Western World is forbidden, and also supports opposition to the Muslim establishment and the government of Nigeria. Members of the group do not interact with the local Muslim population and have carried out assassinations of anyone who criticizes it, including Muslim clerics.

According to Muhammad [18], *Boko Haram* established its Khawarij territories because of its extremist views and its Khawarij characteristics that fits the description the Prophet of the religion they claim to propagate gave 1,400 years ago in his many of his sayings which can be found in Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim – two of the major authentic Hadith books in Islamic jurisprudence.

One of their characteristics is that they rebel against a true Islamic leader and kill believing folks (*Boko Haram* kill local Muslims just like ISIS declares Muslims who don't swear allegiance to them as infidels and '*Kufars*' whose bloods should be shed); they also shed unlawful blood by killing themselves with the name of suicide bombing [18]. According Prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as documented in the books of hadiths, they go out of the religion the way arrow leaves a bow and never return (hence the name 'Khawarij', people who go out of Islam as a result of extremism). And most of their members are young, ignorant and impressionable who are trapped by the bewitching finesse of their acts of worship and dedication towards Islam. But the Prophet warned against being deceived by their slickness as found in Sahih Muslim: Book 5, numbers 2323 & 2332.

Shaykh Abdul-Azeez Aali Shaikh (may Allah preserve him) said, *Boko Haram* is a misguided group and are from the Khawarij. Their actions are evil and harmful for Islam and the Muslims. Their actions are destructive. Abducting girls is from the actions of a misguided group.

Boko Haram are claiming a call to *Jihad*, then it is nothing but ignorance and enmity against Islam and the Muslims. *Boko Haram* are not upon correctness and guidance because Islam opposes abduction/kidnapping, unlawful killing, and transgression. Marrying off kidnapped/abducted females is Haram and it is not permissible to give them in marriage.

Methods of Identifying Khawarij

Whenever you witness incessant rebellion against the Muslim leaders or pronouncement of sinful Muslims as unbelievers even though their sins are less than *Shirk* (the sin of setting partner with Allah in His worship, His activities, His names, and attributes), or you heard some Muslims supporting the views held by Khawarij, or you see some people in the community advocating that other people's blood will be shed in the name of performing *Jihad* (Holy War), then these are some methods to identify the Khawarij [19].

The Khawarij are definitely known for their pronouncement of innocent Muslims as infidels based on manifest sins (i.e. major sins). They are also identified with rebellion to Muslim leaders and their followers. Therefore, anybody that behaves like them or follow their path is also given the name of Khawarij [19].

Characteristics of the Khawarij

The following are few of the characteristics of the earlier Khawarij, including those who lived at the time of the Companions of the Prophet, as well as those at the time of the Ummayyad and Abbasid Caliphates and all other ages, including the present. Compare the

characteristics of the earlier Khawarij with those of the Khawarij succeeding them, including those who call themselves “*Al Qaeda*”, *Boko Haram* and “ISIS” or the “Islamic State in Iraq and Syria” or “Daesh,” and the likes of them who have manipulated and twisted the teachings of Islam, the proper Islamic concept of Jihad, and the noble act of Promoting Virtue and Preventing Vice (*Al-Amr bi Al-Ma'ruf wa Al-Nahi 'an Al-Munkar*) to carry out their own twisted purposes and evil desires.

Due to the extreme, and overzealous practices of the Khawarij are what drove them into constant conflict and bloodshed. They would kill anyone who did not believe in their extremist ideology. According to Aaron [20] the following some of the many features of the Kharawij:

1. They would pray so much that their foreheads would become calloused and their hands rough
2. They would be malnourished from fasting so much
3. They considered anyone who had committed a major sin (i.e. drinking alcohol, fornication, backbiting) to be a disbeliever, and that they should be killed
4. They believed only they were on the correct path and everyone else was a disbeliever and had to be killed
5. They questioned the religious scholarship of notables like Ibn Abbas, Ibn Masud, Aishah—and even The Prophet himself
6. They were narrow-minded and short-sighted
7. They lacked any sort of religious knowledge or scholarship
8. They acted without knowledge or insight into the consequences of their actions
9. They saw the need to openly fight whoever they considered to be an unjust ruler.

According to Abdurrahman [21], attributes and characteristics of Khawarij:

1. They are young in age.
2. They have foolish minds i.e. intellects.
3. They speak with the best speech among the creation.
4. Their *Iman* does not pass their throats.
5. They pass through the religion just as an arrow passes through its bow.
6. They have a weakness when it comes to understanding the Quran.
7. They are excessive in performing the acts of worship.
8. They are the worst of creation.
9. They shave their heads.
10. They kill the people of faith and leave the people of disbelief.
11. They become deeply absorbed in the religion.
12. They call the people to Allah, while they know not.
13. They will set out (to fight) against the best group amongst the people.

14. Abdullah Ibn Umar (may be pleased with him) held them to be the worst of creation. He said: “They took the *Ayat* that were concerning the disbelievers and applied them to the believers.”
15. Their prayer does not pass their throats.
16. They shed unlawful blood.
17. They are the first ones to separate from the unified body of Muslims and declared anyone who committed sins to be a disbeliever.
18. They beautify their speech.
19. The *Dajjal* (False Messiah) will appear from amidst them.
20. They are from those in whose hearts is a deviation.
21. They declare a Muslim to be a disbeliever due to any sin.
22. They did not interpret the Quran according to the *Sahabahs* (Companions).
23. Initially they did not have any issues regarding the attributes of Allah, however they later denied them and misinterpreted them according to the philosophy.
24. They used their intellect in unseen matters also.
25. They don't categorize the mistakes into major and minor sins unlike the Prophet's (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) teachings

In short, most of the Khawarij belief stemmed from an overzealous sense of righteousness. Their intention was noble: they were concerned for the purity of the religion. However, their extremist tendencies were incompatible with the realities of life and showed a disregard for the maxim of Islam that calls for mercy and peace first and foremost.

Traits and Beliefs of the Khawarij

The Khawarij are well known for declaring Muslims who disagree with them as disbelievers due to major sins. They claim that sins take the Muslims out of Islam and land them in hellfire forever [22]. Based on this logic, they said that Ali committed *kufur* because he did not judge by the book of Allah but instead used arbitrators in the dispute with Mu'awiyah. This conviction that Ali was in opposition to their beliefs and thus an unjust ruler who committed *Kufr* led them to assassinate him [5].

The Khawarij felt that rebelling against rulers and overthrowing them was a religious duty since they considered these rulers as unjust and going against their ideology [5]. The killing of the two righteous caliphs was the direct consequence of the Khawarij outwardly criticizing and publishing their faults, which created resentment in the hearts of the people [5]. This behavior among the Khawarij continued against the Muslim authorities resulting in the massacre of men, women and children during both the Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties [23].

The distinctive characteristic of the Khawarij was their splitting from the Muslims which consisted of the Sahaba and Tabi'un at that time. In their zeal to practice their deviated version of the religion, they did not pray with Muslims in the masjid because they believed that the imam and his followers are disbelievers [5]. Not only did they separate from the Muslims, but they also treated them badly. They were known to plunder, pillage and take slaves and concubines from the Muslims they attacked. According to them, the Muslims were disbelievers and lived in 'Dar al Harb' i.e. land where there is no truce with the Muslim land or the place they gathered [5]. A good example of this was when six thousand Khawarij broke off Ali's army after the battle of Siffin and encamped in Haroora, a town near Kufa, Iraq. There, they chose Shuaib ibn Rib'ee al Tamimi as leader for battle [23]. Although they were defeated, this example gives us a brief look at their way of thinking: this group, with no Sahabah on their side were ready to fight and kill some of the best people of this Ummah.

The Khawarij were known to be extremely devoted to the religion: they wanted to adhere to its principles, practice the verdicts and stay far from the prohibitions [5]. One Hadith states that the Khawarij would be so pious that even the Sahabah would consider their prayer and Qur'an recitation inferior to the Khawarij (Al-Bukhari, 6931). In another narration, fasting also is mentioned (Al-Bukhari, 6933). They are very serious regarding prayers and they are known for their long prostrations, and the mark of prostration on their forehead. Moreover, they had black marks under their eyes due to excessive crying (from piety) [6]. We have a good insight from the words of Abdullah Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, after he visited them for the purpose of negotiation:

"When I entered their camp, I found a people whose devotion in prayer the like of which I had never seen. Their foreheads were scarred from continuous and prolonged prostrations, and their palms were calloused like the knees of camels. Their clothes were washed and their faces lined from staying awake all night" [23].

Due to these signs of faithfulness, many among the Muslims and non-Muslims conclude that they must be representing true Islam, when in fact, they deviated from it. Because of their lack of knowledge in Islam, the Khawarij follow their desire in understanding the Quran, interpreting it the way they want to. This course of theirs is only natural seeing that they left the Jama'ah which comprised of the scholars among the Sahabah at that time [23]. Thus, they had to rely on their own opinions and idea of justice, which led them astray although they had a strong sense of virtue. In the same Hadith quoted above, the meaning of "they will recite the Qur'an, the teachings of which will not go beyond their throats" is that they will recite it and yet

will not understand the correct meanings. One example of their deviation is their misunderstanding of the verse:

And whosoever does not rule by what Allah has revealed then they are disbelievers (Quran 5:44).

Therefore, the correct understanding of this verse, as explained by Ibn Abbas is that whoever rejects what Allah has revealed is a disbeliever whereas someone who believes in it but does not rule by it is a sinner [24]. The Khawarij understood this verse to mean that all sinners are disbelievers. This shows us that one should not be fooled into believing groups that claim they are the saved sect despite their eloquence and devotion.

New Brand of Khawarij

According to Hamid [9], modern day Khawarij are doing the following things: (1) They break the laws of the countries where they live or visit and they rebel and fight against legitimate governments, which are chosen by the people. (2) They kill innocent Muslim and non-Muslim people since according to them "goals justify the means". (3) They consider many Muslims disbelievers because they are sinners and they call people who have faith in Allah disbelievers or Kuffar ignoring the fact that they are themselves committing the worse sins on earth. They have no regard for sanctity of life, places of worship, graves, homes, hospitals, and schools. They betray their countries or obtain visas to enter countries but break the conditions of those visas, which are in the eyes of Allah and Islam covenants of peace. The Khawarij have the habit of unprecedented disrespect for Sunni Scholars and cast aspersion on them. They also incite people to disregard the scholars and abuse them.

Currently, it could be observed that a number of groups in predominantly Muslim countries that arose calling to topple governments and set up states where they would rule by the book of Allah. These groups exist in different parts of the Muslim world such as the Al Shabab in Somalia, Jamat al Takfeer wal Hijra from Egypt, Al Qaeda from various countries and most recently, Boko Haram in Nigeria and ISIS in Iraq and Syria. Their ideology has no doubt influenced many people, who may have other beliefs and yet they caught the disease of the khawarij in regards to criticizing the Muslim rulers.

All these groups, in fact, conforms to the creed and practices of the khawarij mentioned earlier. If one looks at the news these days, it is very clear. One example of a leading personality with such traits is Abu Hamza Al Misri, someone influenced by the Qutbi ideology who took asylum in the UK in the 1990s and openly preached jihad against governments. He was mistaken to be Salafi but in fact, he attacks Salafism and particularly the rulers of Saudi Arabia, especially

after the Iraq war. His ideas have unfortunately become very popular among Muslims who are quick to adopt these khawarij principles [5]. Even worse than this nowadays is the group called *Boko Haram* and *Al Qaeda*, out of which came ISIS which is even more extreme. It is clear that the disease of Kharijism spread to many parts of the world which *Boko Haram* is the experience in Nigeria.

Dangers of the Khawarij's Ideology: The Nigeria's Experience

The most dangerous sect in Islam are the Kharijites (*al-khawārij*). They have existed since the very early period of Islam and they will continue to cause strife in the Muslim nation until the end of time when they will join forces with the False Messiah (*al-dajjāl*). We must be aware of their ideology and characteristics in order to protect ourselves from unwittingly supporting their destructive behavior [25]. The ideology of Kharijites and their likes is based upon the following evil tenets:

- Declaring Muslims to be unbelievers.
- Rejecting lawful obedience to the rulers.
- Justifying violence against Muslims and innocent people.

Any group that has left the Muslims, rebelling against them – this is the result of disassociating oneself from the scholars. Salih al-Fauzan said, Khawarij broke away from the scholars, broke away from the Muslim leaders, and the disbelievers and hypocrites put these ideologies into their heads. So, they have become outcasts in Muslim societies.

Those that today left the Muslims and established their territories are Khawārij, no doubt. This act of theirs is the act of the Khawārij. Rather, they are even more violent and extreme than the (original) Khawārij. The (past) Khawārij did not use to destroy buildings and residents. The Khawārij used to show up face-to-face on the battlefield. They used to fight on the battlefield despite what they were upon of ignorance. But they did not use to collapse buildings on everyone inside them – women, children, the innocent, those at peace with Muslims, people with whom Muslims have a treaty, and other people guaranteed safety. The Khawārij used not to do this. This is worse and more violent than the actions of the (original) Khawārij [26].

The Kharijites believe their opinions regarding leadership, government, politics, and the *Shari'ah* are the only valid opinions in Islam and whoever disagrees with them becomes an unbeliever. However, the truth is that much of these matters are left open to interpretation and consultation among the Muslims (i.e. *Ijtihad*).

In fact, the Prophet commanded us to distinguish between the rule of Allah and the rule of

people and not to claim our opinions are the rulings of Allah.

Buraidah reported that: When the Messenger of Allah, peace, and blessings be upon him, would appoint a commander over the army, he would personally enjoin him to fear Allah and to be good with the Muslims who were with him. The Prophet would say:

When you besiege the people of a fortress and they appeal to you for protection in the name of Allah and His Prophet, do not give them protection in the name of Allah and His Prophet, but rather give them protection in the name of you and your companions. Verily, for you to violate the protection of yourself and your companions is a lesser sin than to violate the protection of Allah and His Messenger. When you besiege the people of a fortress and they appeal for you to bring them out according to the rule of Allah, do not bring them out according to the rule of Allah but rather bring them out according to your ruling. Verily, you do not know if you will judge with the ruling of Allah concerning them or not. (Sahih Muslim: 1731)

Thus, Muslims must distinguish between the rule of Allah and the rule of people. Yet the Kharijites like the *Boko Haram* in Nigeria, who make no such distinction, charged other Muslims with unbelief who disagree with their views. In fact, the Kharijites do not simply declare Muslims to be unbelievers in a theoretical way, but rather they called for violent rebellion against entire Muslim societies.

Regarding our leaders, the correct Islamic belief is that we must obey them in all lawful matters. We should only disobey them if they command us to commit sins and we may not call for a violent overthrow of their government as long as they allow the prayer.

CONCLUSION

The paper extensively dwelled on the foundation of alien ideology that splintered from the authentic teachings and doctrine of Islam revealed and practiced by Prophet Muhammad (peace and benediction of Allah be upon him). The uprising of *Boko Haram* and their activities aligned with the Khawarij instead of their claim being *Ahlu al-Sunnah*. This is because there are avalanche of verses in the Glorious Qur'an and hadiths which provided detailed steps and directions of Holy War (Jihad) and how to live under government that is formed based on the *Shari'ah*. The rampaging and atrocious attacks on religious sites, villages and innocent human beings regardless of their religion and animals has further exposed the Khawarij ideology of the *Boko Haram* which was not manifested in early activities where they guised by naming their worshiping places after prominent *Ahlu al-Sunnah* scholars like Imam Malik and the Shehul Islam Ibn Taimiyyah in Borno State. It

could be deduced from the discussion above that most of the anti-Islamic ideologies thrive in the fertile land of illiteracy, where majority of the Muslims are illiterates or are innovators. This usually give the Khawarij a chasm to explore and penetrate to spread the venom of their ideology on the ignorant and gullible Muslims who erroneously believed they are carrying deeds in accordance with the teachings and practices of Islam. Therefore, exposing the ideologies of deviant sects in Islam has been mandatory for each and every Muslim in order to be on the safer side in this World and hereafter.

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