

THE PORTRAIT OF KHARIJISM IN THE MODERN ISLAMIC MEDIA



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Introduction

Kharijites are depicted in the modern Islamic media as the extremist group who advocated for the destruction of “true” Islam. They are mentioned in newspapers, blogs, activist videos, and sermons in order to “educate” Muslims why the Kharijites are the primary reason for extremist groups such as al-Qaeda, Takfir wal-Hijra, and the Muslim Brotherhood. The media examined argue that the Kharijites are dangerous because their ideals undermine the Islamic government. The Kharijites believe that anyone could be a ruler, with the exception of women, as long as they are morally and righteously pure.

This poster is to convey how the Kharijites are mentioned in modern Islamic media and in what context they are being referenced as.

Historical Background

Khawarij in Arabic means “those who went out.” The Kharijites abandoned their leader, Rashidun Caliph Ali ibn Abu Talib, an important figure in the early Islamic community. They created havoc throughout the Muslim world during the seventh century when they killed those they deemed apostates in the name of Islam and Allah. The Kharijites changed the Islamic religion when they assassinated Ali ibn Abu Talib and inadvertently created sectarian divisions in the Muslim community.

The Kharijites movement continued after the 7th century although the extent of their influence was from 690-730 AD. They have greatly reduced in numbers yet they are occasionally referenced in connection to modern Islamic extremists in Islamic media.

Sources

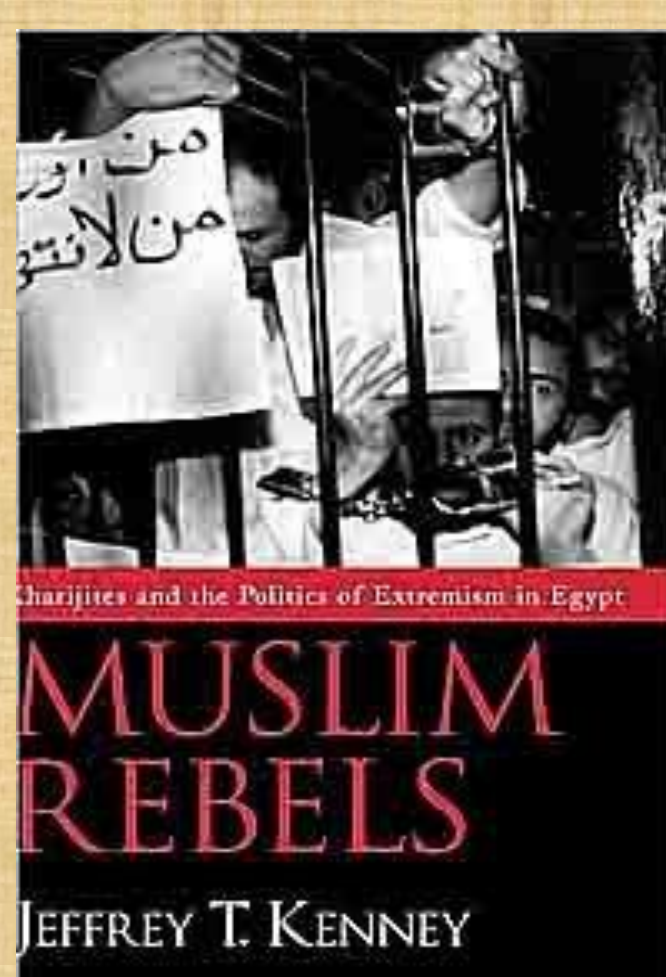
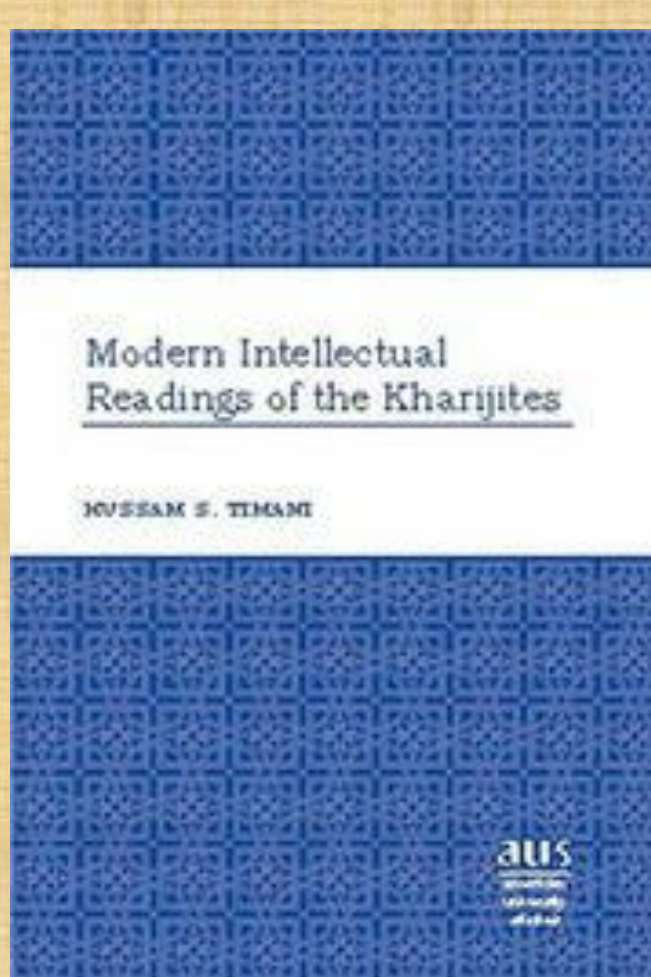
Primary

- Videos of Sermons
- Videos of Activist Groups
- Newspapers from Muslim World (Al-Arabiya & Arabic & Urdu Television Stations (in translation)
- Blog Sites (*Wonders of Pakistan*)

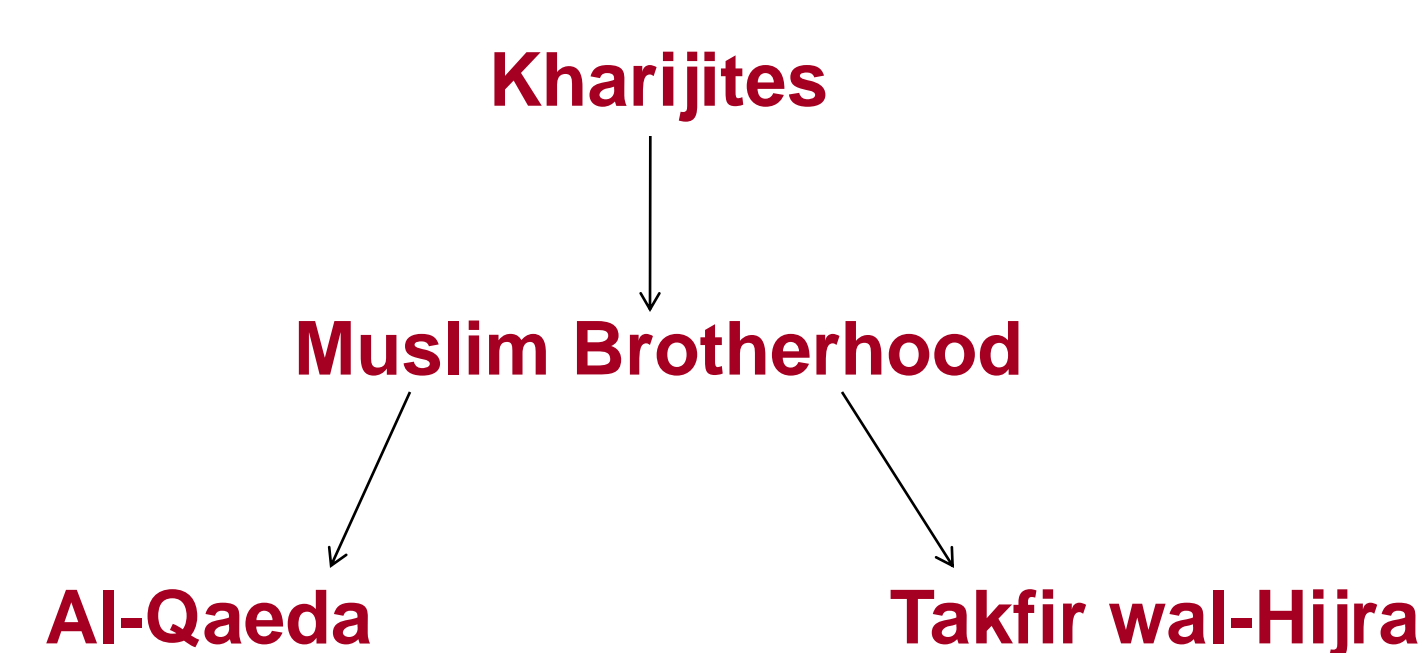
Secondary

- Jeffrey T. Kenney “Muslim rebels: Kharijites and the Politics of Extremism in Egypt” – Historical Background
- Hussam S. Timani “Modern Intellectual Readings of the Kharijites”

•These sources have been extremely beneficial in examining how influential the Kharijites are in the modern Islamic media. Blogs and videos have been the most beneficial in seeing the negative reactions toward the Kharijites. The videos have portrayed negative reactions toward the Kharijites.



Connections



•The Muslim Brotherhood has been linked to the Kharijites because both groups share similarities in their history of opposition and are considered traitors to Islam.

•The Muslim Brotherhood was founded in Egypt in 1928 by Hassan al-Banna and started off as a social organization preaching Islam. They adopted an anti-Western, violent stance in the 1950s due to an influential member, named Sayyid Qutb, who believed that the West was polluting the core of Islam.

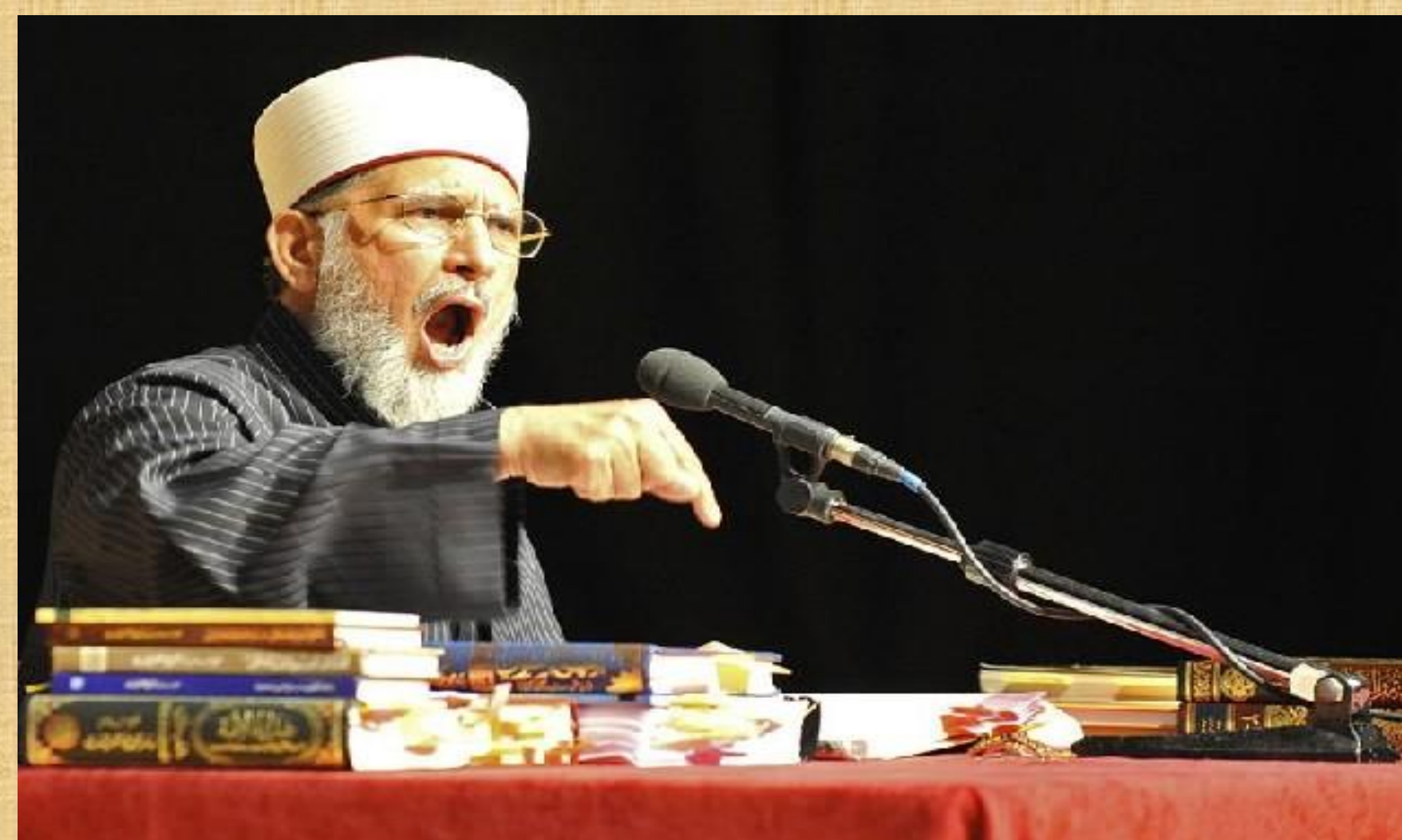
•Al-Qaeda and Takfir wal-Hijra both came from the Muslim Brotherhood and are similar to the Kharijites, because like the Kharijites, they abandoned the Muslim community to pursue extremist acts in order to establish their “Islamic” state.

•In modern times, Islamists view the Kharijite group, Takfir wal-Hijra as neo-Kharijites. They are allied to al-Qaeda and adopt non-Islamic appearances similar to the Kharijites. Like the Kharijites, the Takfir wal-Hijra shave their beards which goes against Islamic belief.

•Neo-Kharijites are fanatics who kill in the name of Islam. They kill those they believe do not adhere to their image of Islam.



This is the symbol for the Neo-Kharijites of today



Dr. Tahir ul-Qadri discussing the Kharijites and their corruptness

Results

Dr. Tahir ul-Qadri

• Dr. Tahir ul-Qadri is an influential Pakistani scholar who is the founder of Minhaj ul-Quran that promotes a non-extremist interpretation of Islam. When he declared his *Fatwa Against Terrorism*, which linked the Kharijites to al-Qaeda, he appeared on numerous media outlets such as al-Arabiya, al-Jazeera, BBC, et cetera. Dr. Tahir ul-Qadri's *Fatwa Against Terrorism* has been regarded as a way to combat terrorism.

•Media outlets such as YouTube allow viewers to watch Dr. Tahir ul-Qadri's sermons discussing his views on the Kharijites and other extremists groups such as al-Qaeda.

Pakistan

•In Pakistan, citizens believe that their country is neither Sunni or Shi'at but a Kharijite state. A minority group in Pakistan, called the Ahmedis, are persecuted and considered to be non-Muslims even though Pakistan's constitution recognizes freedom of religion and faith. Yet they are victimized by the Kharijites because they are not considered to be “true” Muslims.

•There are numerous media outlets such as blogs that are written by Muslim individuals who condemn the Kharijites of the recent problems of Pakistan.

Egypt

•In Egyptian media, the Kharijites are considered to be revolutionary. Egypt has contributed to Islamic extremism beginning in the 1950s with the Muslim Brotherhood. In his book, *Muslim Rebels: Kharijites and the Politics*, Jeffrey T. Kenney discusses how the Egyptian democracy was influenced by Kharijite ideals.

•The movement to overthrow Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has been monumental toward the future of Egypt. Egypt is in a state of transition because the country is trying to establish a new government different from the Mubarak dictatorship. Many Egyptians recognize the Kharijite ideals because the Kharijites believe that anyone, excluding women, can rule.



The Kharijites are a part of the United Arab Emirates flag. They represent the red strip.

Conclusion

The term Kharijism has changed historically to suit modern political situations. In the Muslim World, especially in Egypt and Pakistan, there have been recent changes in how Kharijism is viewed because Muslims are challenging their governments. In Egypt, its people are embracing the Kharijite ideal of challenging political authority. Pakistan is rejecting the idea of Kharijism as a direct threat to government and political authority. Neo-Kharijism is the new interpretation of what Kharijism was.

Acknowledgements

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