TRACING THE ROOTS OF RADICALISM AND TERRORISM: MUHAMMAD IBN ALAWI AL-MALIKI’S THOUGHT RELATED TO EXTREMISM DISCOURSE

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Abstract: The increasing phenomenon of radicalism and terrorism has caused social discontent and conflict. This issue has become a deep concern for scholars, including Muslim intellectuals. This research aims to analyze the perspective of a Muslim scholar who is also a globally recognized descendant of the Prophet, Sayyid Muhammad ibn Alawi al-Maliki, concerning religious extremism and radicalism. This study fills the lack of scholarly perspective on the issue coming from the prophet’s descendant. Throughout the analysis, this study employs a literature review approach by critically reading the main work of al-Maliki and the supporting sources to find out his style of thinking. This research found that al-Maliki’s arguments emphasize extremism in religion as the roots of radical ideology. Moreover, he argued that the concept of takfīr is one of the ideological roots of terrorism.

[Meningkatnya fenomena radikalisme dan terorisme telah menimbulkan ketidakpuasan dan konflik sosial. Masalah ini mendapat perhatian mendalam dari para ulama dan cendekiawan Muslim. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis perspektif seorang cendekiawan Muslim, yang juga merupakan keturunan Nabi Sayyid Muhammad ibn Alawi al-Maliki yang diakui secara global, tentang ekstremisme dan radikalisme agama. Kajian ini mengisi kekurangan perspektif keilmuan terhadap persoalan yang berasal dari keturunan nabi. Sepanjang analisis, studi ini menggunakan pendekatan tinjauan pustaka dengan membaca secara kritis karya utama al-Maliki dan sumber-sumber pendukung untuk mengetahui pola berpikirnya. Penelitian ini ingin menjelaskan bagaimana argumentasi al-]
Maliki terkait dengan ekstremisme agama yang tumbuh menjadi akar ideologi radikal. Menurut al-Maliki, konsep takfir merupakan salah satu akar mendasar dari ideologi terorisme.

**Keywords:** Muhammad ibn Alawi Al-Maliki, extremism, radicalism, and terrorism.

**Introduction**

In the last two decades, scientists observed an increasing indication of radical and terror action by extreme groups in various parts of the world. These actions are certainly contrary to the principles of any religious teachings.\(^1\) This radical movement has affected Muslim countries, European and Western countries where most of the population is non-Muslim.\(^2\) A research by John Turner projected a fivefold increase in attacks carried out by ISIS against the French people.\(^3\) Another study conducted by Byman showed that nearly 40,000 people joined the ISIS movement, of which 6,000 people came from Western Europe, such as France, Germany, Belgium, and the UK.\(^4\) The Radical movement has even reached East African countries. According to Isaac Ikfr, the act of extremism has also been triggered by growing political repression

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1. Giovanna Zamboni et al., “Individualism, Conservatism, and Radicalism as Criteria for Processing Political Beliefs: A Parametric FMRI Study,” *Social Neuroscience* 4, no. 5 (2009): 367–383; Kamaruzaman Yusoff, “Islamic Radicalism in Malaysia: An Overview,” *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 5 (2010): 2326–2331; Doğan Gürpinar, “Turkish Radicalism and Its Images of the Ottoman Ancien Régime (1923–38),” *Middle Eastern Studies* 51, no. 3 (2015): 395–415.
2. Scott H. Decker and David C. Pyrooz, “Activism and Radicalism in Prison: Measurement and Correlates in a Large Sample of Inmates in Texas,” *Justice Quarterly* 36, no. 5 (2019): 787–815, https://doi.org/10.1080/07418825.2018.1462396; David M. George, “John Baxter Langley: Radicalism, Espionage and the Confederate Navy in Mid-Victorian Britain,” *Journal for Maritime Research* 19, no. 2 (2017): 121–142; Gerald Gems, “The German Turners and the Taming of Radicalism in Chicago [I],” *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 26, no. 13 (2009): 1926–1945.
3. John Turner, “Manufacturing the Jihad in Europe: The Islamic State’s Strategy,” *International Spectator* 55, no. 1 (2020): 112–125, https://doi.org/10.1080/03932729.2020.1712136.
4. D Byman, *What Happens When ISIS Goes Underground?* (Washington DC: Brookings, 2018).
and an enormous inequality in the economic and social sectors. The government, religious leaders, and intellectuals have attempted to develop intellectual discourse to suppress and break the chain of terror acts.

Some scholars proposed the factors that encourage radical, extreme, and terror acts. In her research published in the Journal of Political Ideologies, Elisabeth Carter argues that the radicalism movement has a strong relationship with party authoritarianism, anti-democracy, and exclusive nationalism. Meanwhile, David McKie and his team figured out a strong relationship between social, historical, and economic factors on the emergence of radicalism in the UK. Both studies above inform us that (1) radical movement is born out of social inequality, where the welfare of the people is below the average, and the unemployment rate is higher, and (2) attitude of injustice where certain groups are not satisfied with the unjust world. The research by Fourquest and McCants supported the fact that radicalism in Belgium, France, and other countries was born in the most vulnerable and poor areas where the unemployment rate is high. In other words, economic and social marginalization will inevitably be the driving factor for the growth of the radical movement in a region.

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5 Isaac Kfir, “Islamic Radicalism in East Africa: Is There a Cause for Concern?,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 31, no. 9 (2008): 829–855.
6 Merrindahl Andrew, “Women’s Electoral Lobby on the Continuum of Radicalism,” *Australian Feminist Studies* 29, no. 82 (2015): 366–377; Philip Schofield, “Jeremy Bentham, the French Revolution and Political Radicalism,” *History of European Ideas* 30, no. 4 SPEC.ISS. (2004): 381–401.
7 Nicholas Adams, “Radicalism, Anxiety, and Inquiry,” *Review of Faith and International Affairs* 15, no. 2 (2017): 5–9; Daniel Kent Carrasco, “Breath of Revolution: Ghadar Anti-Colonial Radicalism in North America and the Mexican Revolution,” *South Asia: Journal of South Asia Studies* 0, no. 0 (2020): 1–16, https://doi.org/10.1080/00856401.2020.1842154; Yusuf al-Qardawi, *al-Tatāruf al-Imānī fi Mumājat al-Īslām* (Cairo: Dar al-Syuruq, 2001).
8 Elisabeth Carter, “Right-Wing Extremism/Radicalism: Reconstructing the Concept,” *Journal of Political Ideologies* 23, no. 2 (2018): 157–182, http://doi.org/10.1080/13569317.2018.1451227.
9 Jordi Xifra, David McKie, and Maria Rosa Collell, “Creatively Escaping Insularity and Encouraging Internationalism: British Radicalism, History from below, and Public Relations Historiography,” *Public Relations Review* 45, no. 2 (2019): 275–281, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2018.06.007.
10 Turner, “Manufacturing the Jihad in Europe,” 112–125.
One way to respond to radical movements is through the religious moderation movement. Contemporary Muslim scholar Yusuf Al-Qardhawi, in his various works, emphasizes the necessity of Muslims and any religious community to build religious moderation, which is made according to the principles of *al-tawāzun*, namely the balance principle. Al-Qardhawi explained that groups practicing moderate principles are communities that balance knowledge and action, worship and interaction. He insisted that the concept is inherently Islamic. Arkoun stated that Islam is a religion that stands on the guidance of a just and balanced community that contains theological inclusion for all people. In other words, radicalism, terrorism, and anarchist actions are ideas contrary to the values of religious teachings that command a balanced or moderate attitude and mutual respect. According to the scholars, Islam is a religion that-upholds tolerance, anti-radicalism mentioned in the Quran and the hadith.

Some Muslim scholars also addressed the issue. Dr Salih Ghânim ibn Sadlân in his work “Factors Triggering Terrorism, Acts of Violence, and Extremism” discussed the causing factors. Salih discusses the emerging phenomenon of religious extremism. Muhammad ibn Alawi Al-Maliki—a known scholar who is also the prophet’s descendant—reconstructed the roots of terrorism that extremist groups propagate as written in his work *al-Ghulnāw wa Atsaruhā fī al-Irbāb wa Ifṣād al-Mujtama’*.

From the Muslim scholars mentioned above and other scholars concerning the topic, I have not found many works written...
on the issue of radicalism and terrorism by the descendants of the prophet Muhammad, commonly called habā’īb. Therefore, this research aims to explore the descendant’s perspective on the issue from the available sources. Another reason to examine the descendant’s view is that the habā’īb, particularly in Indonesia, has recently been displayed concerning bad and good news on the national television screen. Thus, this research is interested in further investigations on how the discourse of radicalism is revealed mainly from one of the habā’īb scholars, Muhammad ibn Alawi Al-Maliki. This research study uses a literature review or library research approach where the primary work is the book al-Ghuluw wa Atsarnāḥ fī al-Irhāb wa ʿĪsād al-Mujtama’. The secondary works include the text al-Mafālim Yajib an Tisabbah, al-Tahżīr min Mujāzafati bi al-Takfīr, Manhaj al-Salaf fī Fāhīm al-Nuṣūs baina al-Nadbariyyah wa al-Taṭbiq, and other titles to examine his style of thinking related to this discourse.

Redefining Heresy

In the view of Al-Maliki, the terminology of heresy (bid’ah), which some extreme groups understand, is seen as one of the triggers for extreme attitudes, blaming other opinions, and labelling infidels among Muslims. Therefore, reconstructing the definition of heresy is the first step to unravelling the problematic discourse of this radicalism and extremism. The stages include (1) tracing the hadith narrations related to the terminology of heresy, (2) understanding the context of heresy in history, (3) the definition of heresy in the view of the salaf (classical) Muslim scholars, and (4) some examples of new things that arose after the death of the prophet.15

According to him, the narrations of heresy are found in several well-known hadith, including:

1. From Jabir ibn Abdillah who said, “Once the Messenger of Allah when he was giving his sermon his eyes turned red, his voice rose, and his anger hardened until it was as if the situation was like a war commander who warned his troops and said, ‘Beware you will be attacked. early in the morning, watch out you will be attacked in the evening.’” He said, “I

15 Muhammad ibn Alawī Al-Mālikī, Manhaj al-Salaf fī Fāhīm al-Nuṣūs baina al-Nadbariyyah wa al-Taṭbiq (Beirut: al-Maktabah al-Ashriyyah, 2008).
was sent while (the distance) between the Day of Judgment and me (is) like these two things.” (He showed two fingers; index and middle fingers). He said, ‘Verily the best of words is Kitâbullâh, the best of guidance is the guidance of Muhammad, the worst of things are things that are invented anew in matters of religion, and every heresy is misguidance.”

2. “You should stay away from new things, for verily every new thing is an act of heresy, and every heresy is a misguidance, and every misguidance will be in hell.”

3. “Stay away from new things, for verily every new thing is an act of heresy, and every heresy is a misguidance and every misguidance will be in hell.”

Al-Maliki argues that the hadith is one of the principles representing Islam. However, history must be understood with a complete and comprehensive understanding by correlating other texts. We have to identify the narrators in the same theme and pay attention to the spirit of the Islamic sharia and different general rules that apply to the hadith above. The extreme group error occurs when carrying out several deviant interpretations, which include (1) absolute legal status of the hadith, (2) denying the division of heresy into two, namely bid’ah hasanah (good heresy) and bid’ah sayyi’ah (bad heresy), and (3) making a new division, namely bid’ah diniyah (religious heresy) and bid’ah dunyawiyyah (worldly heresy).

Al-Maliki asserts that the absolute legal status of the above hadith cannot be accepted in sharia texts and critical logic. According to him, fatwas, fiqh products, and new sciences that did not exist at the time of the prophet Muhammad are acceptable as the scholars are the prophet’s successor. As the guidance is suitable for all human eras, the idea that hadith is absolute is unacceptable. Furthermore, related to the deviations in the second and third

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16 Hadith by Muslim, in Sharh al-Nawâwi Kitâb al-Jum‘ab, Bab Takhfif al-Salah wa al-Khutbah (153/6).
17 Hadith by Abu Daud No. 4607.
18 Hadith by Tirmizî No. 2676; Hadith by Ibn Majah (42,43); Hadith by Ahmad (4/126).
19 Al-Maliki, Manhaj al-Salaf fi Fahl al-Nuṣūṣ baina al-Nadharîyyâb wa al-Taṭbîq.
points, he argued that dividing religious heresy and worldly heresy is the act of heresy as it did not exist at the time of the prophet. New foods, technological devices, and medicines that benefit human beings will be regarded as heresy when applied. Thus, he concluded that the deviant interpretations above are unacceptable in *shari‘a* text and critical logic.\(^{20}\)

According to Al-Maliki, the correct interpretation must refer to the prophet’s explanation implied in the hadith narration above. In Bukhari’s hadith collection, the keyword of heresy is mentioned in the sentence “*fī amrinā hāza*” which means in this religious affair. *Bid‘ab*, in the context of the above hadith, is defined as everything new that the prophet did not exemplify in principle. Al-Maliki argues that the two existing divisions of heresy are merely different in format. They agree that heresy is dangerous. Innovations that harm humans must be prohibited. Thus, the scholars’ understanding of heresy is an innovation that has not been based on the basic principles of Islamic teachings.\(^{21}\)

However, referring heresy’s meaning to the congregation’s concept attributed to the *salaf* (classical) scholars, according to him, is the best way when there is no common thread of conflict. Indeed, the *salaf* scholars’ division of good and bad heresy is considered wisdom that supports religious values. Good heresy is everything that contains goodness and benefit for worldly and religious matters. In contrast, bad heresy contains elements of evil and falsehood that are dangerous for religion and worldly affairs. Al-Maliki argued that radicalism and extremism are caused by ignorance toward comprehensive understanding, different opinions of the ulama, and also driven by embracing the *takfir* doctrine.

Moreover, we found out a common argument among Muslim scholars when addressing the hadiths about heresy. Abu Sulaeman Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Khatthabi argues that heresy is anything new that appears without being in harmony with religious principles.\(^{22}\) Al-Khatthabi’s opinion is in line with the following Muslim scholars such as Abu Umar Yusuf ibn Abdul

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\(^{20}\) Muhammad ibn Alawī al-Maliki, *Al-I‘lām bi Fatāwā Aimmah al-Islām baina Manhīb ‘alābi al-Ṣalāt wa al-Salām* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, 1971).

\(^{21}\) Al-Maliki, *Manhaj al-Salaf fi Fābī al-Nuṣūṣ baina al-Nadhrīyyah wa al-Ta‘ṣīq.*

\(^{22}\) *Ma‘ālim al-Sunan Sharh Sunan Abī Dāwūd li al-Khāṭṭābī* (301/4).
Barri al-Andalusi, Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali, Muhyiddin Abu Zakaria Yahya al-Nawawi, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, and Muhammad ibn Ismail al-San’ani.

Other references that strengthen the view of the division between bad and good heresy are based on the hadith that instructed Muslims to invite goodness to others. Among the narrations are:

From Abu Hurairah that the Messenger of Allah said: “Whoever invites to goodness, then he will get a reward as much as the reward obtained by those who follow him without reducing their reward in the slightest. On the other hand, whoever invites to error, then he will get as much sin which is obtained by those who follow him without reducing their sins in the slightest.” (Muslim).

“Whoever shows a good, then for him the reward is like the one who does it.” (Muslim)

“Whoever after my death revives a sunnah that I teach, then he will get a reward similar to the reward of those who do it without reducing their reward in the slightest. Whoever makes a bid‘ah dallab which is not approved by Allah and His Messenger, then he will get a sin similar to the sin of those who do it without reducing their sins in the slightest.” (Tirmuzi).

Historical studies show that there were good innovations made after the era of the Prophet initiated by the prophet’s companions, including (1) collecting the Quran during the Caliphate Abu Bakr which perfected it at the time of the Caliphate Utsman ibn Affan, (2) reciting long verses of the Quran in tarāwīh prayers in Abu Bakr’s period, (3) unification of tarāwīh prayers into congregation in Umar’s period, (4) gradual addition of rakā’at in tarāwīh, (5) mumbling the prayer at the end of tarāwīh, (5) early azān

23 Al-Istigkār Sharh al-Muwatta’ ʿli Ibn Abdil Barr (153-152/5).
24 Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm wa al-Ḥikam ʿli Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali (128/2).
25 Sharh al-Nawawī ʿala Šahih al-Mustās (154/6).
26 Fath al-Bārī, Kitāb Ṣalāt al-Tarāwīh bāb Faḍl Man Qāma Ramadān (318/4).
27 Subul al-Salām ʿli al-Imām Muhammad ʿli Ismāʿil al-Ṣanʿānī (48/2).
at Friday prayer, (6) renovating Ibrahim’s tomb, (7) performing prayers in several places in one country, (8) performing *eid* prayers at the mosque, (9) reading prayers to the dead at the grave, (10) celebrating the birthday of the prophet Muhammad with religious activities, and (11) commemorating the birthday of the prophet Muhammad.

In addition, al-Maliki explained many hadiths that command Muslims to rely to the Quran and the Sunnah, the four caliphs, and the followers of the caliphs after the Prophet’s death.

**The Doctrine of Takfīr in Mīzān al-Shari‘ah**

Extremism is an attitude that contradicts the moderate principle emphasized in the teachings of Islam as found in the Quran QS. 2:143. Al-Maliki insisted that extremism in religion is prohibited based on the texts of the Qur’an and Hadith. Concerning this, the Quranic verse narrated, “O People of the Book, do not overdo it in your religion.” This verse shows that the ideology of extremism in religion has existed in the classical time conducted by some Jewish, Christian, other religious groups. Ibn Katsir, in his commentary, argues that the verse above is a strong rebuke from God against the ideology of extremism shown by the Christians where they shifted the position of Jesus the prophet into God.  

Furthermore, Wahbah al-Zuhaili, in his *Tafsīr al-Munir* emphasized the prohibition of extremism and acts of extremism based on sharia texts as done by Jews who have accused the holiness of Maryam as God and Christians who made Jesus as God. God punished the previous groups because of their religious extremism. In a hadith, the prophet Muhammad warned Muslims of the tradition. The prophet said, “Avoid

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28 Muhammad ibn Alawi al-Maliki, *al-Ghuluw wa Aṣaruhub fi al-Irbāb wa Ijšad al-Mu‘tama*’ (Mecca: Al-Hiwār Al-Ważanī, 2003).
29 Ibn Katsir, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-Adhim*.
30 Wahbah ibn Musthafa al-Zuhaili, *Tafsīr al-Munir fi al-Aqīdah wa al-Syari‘ah wa al-Manbaj* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr al-Mu’āgīr, 1997).
31 Muhammad Mutawalli al-Sha’rawi, *Tafsīr al-Sha‘rawi* (Cairo: Dār Akhbār al-Yaum, 1991); Abu Hayyan al-Andalusi, *Tafsīr al-Bahār al-Muhīt* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, 1981); Ibnu Jarir al-Tabari, *Tafsīr al-Tabari: jami‘ al-Bayān ’an Ta‘wil al-Qur’ān* (Beirut: Muassasah al-Risalah, 1994); Abdullah ibn Umar ibn Muhammad al-Shirazi al-Baidawi, *Anwār al-Tanẓīl wa Asnār al-Ta‘wil: Tafsīr al-Baidawi* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāts al-‘Arabī, 1987).
excessive attitude (extremism) in religion, because in fact the previous people were destroyed because of the extreme attitude in religion.”

Mistakes in understanding religious practices lead to extremism. A hadith issued by al-Bukhari narrated extremism during the prophet’s time.

“Anas ibn Malik said: Three people came to the house of the wives of the Prophet asking about the worship of the Prophet. When they have been notified, it is as if they thought that the prophet had little worship. They said: Where are we from the position of the prophet? Allah has forgiven his past and future sins. One of them said: As for me, I will continue to pray at night. And the second said: I will fast all the time will not break the fast. And the third said: I will stay away from women and will not marry forever. The Messenger of Allah -peace and prayer of Allah be upon him- came to them and said: Did you say this and that? As for me, by Allah, I am the most fearful of Allah and the most pious of Him. But I fast but also break my fast and I pray at night but also sleep and I marry women. Whoever does not like my Sunnah, then he is not from my group.” (Bukhari and Muslim)

According to al-Maliki, the critical point to learn from the hadith above is that it is not allowed for a mujtahid (Muslim reformer) to establish a law not ordered by religion. It is not permitted to forbid what is not prohibited by religion. The key is moderation and balance principle in everything, including worship. Islam is a religion that is based on the balance principle in all aspects of human life. Worshipping God is crucial. However, social interaction with others, preaching goodness, carrying out the duties and obligations of a husband or wife in the household is also important thing. The religious practices should include all aspects of life without any ignorance to some parts of the teaching. Religious piety must be based on the balance principle (tawāżuniyyah), not extremism.

32 Muhammad ibn Alawi al-Maliki, al-Tabżir min al-Mujāzasab bi al-Takfir (Cairo: Dār Jawāmi’ al-Kalim, 2004).
The extremism is to claim other Muslim groups heretical and not being part of Islam, such as an accusation toward Ash’ariyyah, Māturidīyah, and sufism.\textsuperscript{33} This act is contradictory to the traditions carried out by the companions of the Prophet Muhammad. Al-Maliki addressed this paradigm as the seed of terrorism. Extreme groups deliberately burned scientific books and killed scholars whom they accused as the heretics. The accusation of Ibn Hajar who interpreted the attributes of God is one example.

The phenomenon of takfīr or accusing Muslims of infidels does not deal with the teaching of salaf. The association of international Muslim scholars named Hai‘ab Kibār al-Ulama’ insisted that, referring to QS. 2:204-205, the concept of taklīl and tahrīm (prohibition or permission in Islam) is God’s prerogative. Moreover, not all the infidelity (kufr) of words and actions causes people to become out of Islam. He gave a strong statement regarding takfīr as it is becoming a dangerous matter. The considerations of takfīr include: (1) there have to be evidence from the Quran and Hadith that define someone as an infidel, (2) it must be objective, which is not referring to mere prejudice, and (3) the existence of intentional elements of religious principles.

The Prophet Muhammad said,

“Criticizing a Muslim is disobedience and fighting him is kufr.” (Bukhari: 48 and Muslim: 64).

“No one should accuse another person of being ungodly and neither should he accuse him of being unfaithful, for the accusation will come back to himself if the other person is not what he accused.” (Bukhari: 6045).

“If a man disbelieves his brother, then one of the two has returned with the kufr.” (Muslim: 60)

The act of disbelieving Muslims and labeling them infidels is very dangerous. It can have implications, including (1) Justifying his blood and property, (2) prohibiting inheritance rights, and (3) denying their marriage. According to al-Maliki, the sinners who did wrong drank alcohol, committed adultery, and so forth, as long as

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid.
they believe in the religious creed, cannot be labeled as the infidels or the unbelievers. Several texts supporting this assumption include QS. 7: 33 and QS. 4: 93. There is also a hadith that says “Whoever kills an *ahl dhimmah* intentionally, he will not find the smell of heaven.” Among the scholars who share such the argument are al-Shaukani, Ibn Taimiyah, Ahmad al-Haddad, Anas ibn Malik, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Thahawi, and al-Ghazali.

Several narratives below are related to the attitude of the *salaf* scholars towards the practice of *takfīr*.

1. Abu Ya’la stated that Yazid al-Raqashi said to Anas ibn Malik: “O Abu Hamzal there are a few people who testify and accuse us of disbelief and shirk, so what do you think?” Anas replied: “They are the worst creatures of creation.”

2. Ahmad ibn Hanbal once argued, “Indeed the commands of obligations, prohibitions, rewards, sins, and *takfīr* (unfaithfulness), *tafsiq* (accusing of wickedness) are the authority of Allah and His messenger. One has no right to punish these areas. As for our duty to society, it is to enjoin the obligations ordered by Allah and His messenger. Forbid whatever is forbidden, and justify what Allah and His Messenger preached.”

3. Al-Tahawi has its own opinion: “They are the worshippers of the *qiblah*. We cannot testify that they are infidels as long as it is not really visible from these things regarding confidentiality. Leave it to Allah because we are really ordered to see with the only witnessed thing (*dhāhir*) and forbidden to have bad prejudice without any basis.”

Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, in his work *al-Iqtiṣād fī al-Iʿtīqād* even acts decisively and considers that letting a thousand unbelievers live is easier than getting a Muslim killed.

**The Categorizations of Monotheism**

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34 Majma al-Zawā’id, 1/107.
35 Majmu’al-Fatāwā, 5/554
36 Al-ʿAqidah al-Ṭāhawiyyah, 427.
37 Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, *al-Iqtiṣād fī al-Iʿtīqād*, 157.
Al-Maliki further wrote that the categorization of monotheism into rubūbiyyah, nūhīyyah, and al-asma’ wa al-sifāt were unknown at the time of the Prophet. This categorization is newly invented in the origin of the early period of religious study (usūluddīn). As he wrote, this division has become a reference for someone to label another Muslim as infidel. In addition, he also discussed other conflicting issues such as the pilgrimage to the grave and other religious matters.

However, many Muslim scholars support the three categories of monotheism as popularized in Islamic discourse. The scholars and the followers of the creed do not hesitate to publicly label other Muslims as unbelievers. For instance, some sects in Islamic Sufism have been perceived as infidels such as al-Sanūsiyyah, al-Idrīsiyyah, Tiğāniyyah, Qadāriyyah, al-Riḍā’iyah, Shāgiliyyah, and Mahdiyyah. They ignore the goodness of the Sufis as men who devoted their lives to the religion.

According to al-Maliki, the phenomenon of demonizing and seeing others as infidel and heretic are generated due to several factors such as (1) lack of understanding of the correct religious perspective, (2) feeling of being right and having the rightest opinion (al-i’jab bī al-ra’yī), (3) the tendency to follow the ego, (4) the existence of actors who deliberately create integrity among Muslims, (5) blind fanaticism for a certain group (al-ta’assub al-ra’yī), (6) ideological domination, and (7) the struggle to strengthen group identity.

The Contemporary Deviancy

According to Al-Maliki, the ijtihād which is directly driven from the Quran and the Sunnah, without consulting the previous scholars’ view, to some extent could create extremism. Muslim scholars have been doing ijtihād to solve religious problems occurred after the Prophet’s era. It could be only done by the experts on Islamic legal decision-making. Al-Maliki allows everyone to do ijtihād as long as he is capable: so that the fatwa and the product of ijtihād can be objective and find the truth.

Jalaluddin al-Suyūtī, in his book al-Iklīl, explains that around 500 Quranic verses are in direct contact with the legal aspects of Islam. This opinion was also supported by other Muslim scholars such as Ibn Qayyim in his book Īlām al-Muwaggi’īn and al-Khatib
al-Sharbini in *Mugnī al-Muhtāj*. For instance, QS. 4:83 commands Muslims to consult scholars over occurring problems. Muslim commentators describe that the *ijtihād* and legal decision-making should be based on the Quran and Hadith.

Al-Khazrajī stated that the *mujtahid* must have several competencies, including (1) having a comprehensive knowledge of Arabic vocabularies and language, (2) having a comprehensive knowledge of the Quranic sciences such as *asbāb al-nuzūl* (the causes of revelation), *nasīkh wa al-mansūkh*, and *muhkam wa al-mutashābīh,* 38 (3) mastering the Sunnah, (4) having sensitivity on common goods, (5) understand the rules of the basic principles of Islamic jurisprudence, and (7) mastering the rules of *ijmāʿ* (the consensus of the Muslim ulama) and *qiyas* (the logical analogy). 39

What is dangerous from *bidʿah* is a calling to ignore several Islamic-law schools of thought by assuming that the *ijtihād* is only achieved through the Quran and Sunnah. Ramadan al-Buti argued that there has been an orientalist effort behind the infiltration of the liberal *ijtihād* concept. 40 al-Maliki strongly recommends all Muslims to follow schools of thought (*mażāhib*) in Islam. It refers to QS. 16:43, “So ask the people of the message if you do not know.”

**The Roots of Terrorism and Radicalism**

For the last two centuries, Muslim and non-Muslim scholars have been concerned to find out the roots of terrorism and radicalism. Terrorism and violence, that some extreme groups have shown lately, have triggered more researches on the issue. 41 Acts of violence, terrorism, and radical actions are against any religion and threaten global security. 42 Salih ibn Ghanim revealed several factors that encourage acts of terror, including political, ideological,

38 Muhammad ibn Alawi al-Maliki, *al-Qawā'id al-Asāsiyyah fi 'Ulim al-Qur'ān* (Jeddah: Maktabah al-Malik Fahd al-Wataniyyah, 1999).
39 Shaikh Muhammad al-Khazrajī, *al-Qand al-Badī’ fi al-Radd ‘alā al-Qā’īn bi al-Tadhī*.
40 Shaikh Ramadan al-Buti, *al-Lā Mażāhibiyah Qantarab Lādinyyah*.
41 Tahir Abbas, “Muslim Minorities in Britain: Integration, Multiculturalism and Radicalism in the Post-7/7 Period,” *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 28, no. 3 (2007): 287–300.
42 Clare Saunders, “Reformism and Radicalism in the Climate Camp in Britain: Benign Coexistence, Tensions and Prospects for Bridging,” *Environmental Politics* 21, no. 5 (2012): 829–846.
psychological, social, economic, and educational factors. This research observed that reformist movements in the modern era started their activity from a smaller scope and limited funds with the help of social media to gain supporters.

According to Byman, the extreme group like Islamic State of Iraq and Siria (ISIS) employs a bottom-up model strategy to propagate fears simultaneously. This group also uses digital means in European countries. Charles Kurzman also found out the significant mass media utilization by extremist groups to persuade their vision.

Muslim scholars saw the action from another perspective. According to al-Maliki, the long physical battles in the public space initially begins with ideology. He saw that the doctrine of the terrorists and radicals starts from the attitude and perspective of extremism in religion. Religious extremism is later transformed into an act that makes it easier to disrespect someone outside their group’s ideology. In this case, this paper argued that extreme groups are more likely to use textual methods. The extreme ideology of ISIS, for instance, and other movements is similar to the radical group such as khamāriḥ after the Prophet’s era. Khamāriḥ radically labelled other Muslims outside their group as infidels.

In this regard, al-Maliki emphasized that Quranic and Hadith studies should involve the textual and the contextual aspects as long as the spirit of Islam. According al-Musṭafā al-Adawī in his book Mafātīḥ al-Fiqh fī al-Dīn, the radical understanding is formed out of a partial understanding of religious perspectives. However, some Western intellectuals have observed that terrorist and radical groups justify their action to achieve only political goal, as found in studies conducted by Philip Schofield, Jackie Latham, Sandler,

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43 Turner, “Manufacturing the Jihad in Europe: The Islamic State’s Strategy.”
44 Charles Kurzman, The Missing Martyrs: Why Are There So Few Muslim Terrorists? (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019).
45 Schofield, “Jeremy Bentham, the French Revolution and Political Radicalism.”
46 Jackie Latham, “The Political and the Personal: The Radicalism of Sophia Chichester and Georgiana Fletcher Welch,” Women’s History Review 8, no. 3 (1999): 469–487.
47 Shmuel Sandler, “Religious Zionism and the State: Political Accommodation and Religious Radicalism in Israel,” Terrorism and Political Violence 8, no. 2 (1996): 133–154.
and Michael Willis.\textsuperscript{48} Their vision is to establish a nation based on certain ideology.

**Conclusion**

As there an internal and external factor triggering radicalism, al-Maliki insisted that the internal factor is more dangerous and making a greater impact than the external one. Internal factors are directly related to ideology and way of thinking which may generate someone to conduct radical or harmful actions. The phenomenon of \textit{takfir} (demonizing others), \textit{tabdi'} (labelling others as heretical), and \textit{tafsi'iq} (judging others as hypocritical) tends to exclude other Muslim perceived as being out-group. Therefore, efforts must be made to reduce the danger of this ideological deviance. In this context, promoting religious moderation is significantly needed to build a better future of Islam and Muslim thoughts.

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\textsuperscript{48} Michael J. Willis, “Containing Radicalism through the Political Process in North Africa,” \textit{Mediterranean Politics} 11, no. 2 (2006): 137–150.
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