

SUFİ POLITICS, A STUDY OF THE ACTIVITIES AND POLITICAL THOUGHT OF THE KHALWATIYAH SAMMAN ORDER

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Abstract. This essay aims to delve into the activities and political ideology of the Khalwatiyah Samman order. Politics and Sufism are akin to contrasting poles: while politics navigates the affairs of the state and the intricate world, Sufism gravitates towards the afterlife, often disregarding worldly matters, particularly politics. Employing a mixed-method approach, this study incorporates literature review and interviews. Interviews were conducted with the successors of the order's leadership, two members involved in practical politics, and two participating members. Documentation was utilized, as certain fundamental and significant documents regarding the order remain unpublished, necessitating reference to ensure the research's comprehensiveness. As for the findings, the Khalwatiyah Samman Sufi order regards the world as a realm for deeds towards the afterlife; thus, it should not be shunned but rather utilized for deeds as much as possible. Similarly, in politics, which lacks inherent orientation, the morality of politics hinges on the politicians; hence, virtuous individuals must engage to uphold ethical standards. The political trajectory of the Khalwatiyah Samman has a rich history, commencing from its initial congregation of seven individuals in South Sulawesi, three of whom ascended to kingship—namely, the 28th king of Bone, the 33rd king of Gowa, and the 44th king of Wajo. During the *Orde Baru* era, one successor of the order assumed membership in the honor council in South Sulawesi. Post-reformation, numerous order

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members assumed roles in regional and central representative councils, as well as leadership positions such as regents and mayors. According to the Khalwatiyah Samman, politics is perceived as a tool for drawing closer to God by serving the community indiscriminately, characterized by honesty and trustworthiness. Therefore, politics represents a realm of merit for achieving success in both this world and the hereafter.

Keywords. Sufi Politics, Khalwatiyah samman, neo-sufisme.

INTRODUCTION

Politics and Sufism are contradictory. Politics is synonymous with world affairs that have many tricks and tend to justify all means (Andrew Heywood, 2018, p. 77-78). The game of world politics is full of intrigue, tends to bring down opponents to achieve victory, sometimes even costing lives (Axford, 1995). Politics in a democratic country still leaves a variety of problems such as money politics (Richard Robisen 2011: 12), black politics and intimidation (Pye, 1997).

Indonesia's political map in 2019 and 2024 is still dotted with money politics and verbal abuse, still vulnerable and tends to be dominated by unethical politics, ranging from money politics, spreading hoaxes, intimidation and character assassination of political opponents (Heywood 2018: 78). One of the evidences of bad politics in Indonesia can be seen from the results, legislation made arbitrarily such as *Omnibuslaw* which is not in favor of the people, hasty and tends to be imposed, as well as the rise of corrupt politicians from the regional to the central level.

This article uses a mixture of literature and field research. Literature is used to obtain past data about the history of the development of tarekat teachings and the political nuances of its followers. Field studies are used to obtain real time data on the political activities of tarekat followers and their thoughts about politics. This research is qualitative-analytic in nature, collecting data and presenting it qualitatively and providing in-depth analysis of the data obtained from literature and field studies.

There are many literatures about the Khalwatiyah Samman order in the form of books and journals such as the following, *Riblah Risalah Suci Tarikat Khalwatiyah Samman, Dari Kota Nabi Ke Tanah Bugis* (Ruslan

2021), *Sejarah Tarekat Khalwatiyah Samman, Ajaran Dan Strategi Dakwah Para Khalifahnya* (Najamuddin 2007), *Tarekat Khalwatiyah Dan Perkembangannya Di Indonesia* (Retna, 2020), *The Rise of the Khalwatiyah Samman Sufi Order in South Sulawesi: Encountering the Local, Escaping the Global* (Ubaedillah 2017), and *Leadership of The Caliphs Tarekat Khalwatiyah Samman* (Sata, 2020). The literature on Khalwatiyah Samman generally discusses its history, development, teachings and his *dakwah*. Similarly, the role of the caliphs in spreading the teachings of the order to the surrounding community. However, there is no discussion of the thoughts and work of the Khalwatiyah Samman in the political field.

THE KHALWATIYAH SAMMAN ORDER: MEANING AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

Tarekat Khalwatiyah Samman consists of three words, *tarekat* is an adaptation of Arabic (Tariqah) which means path, method, flow, system or school (Zakariya 1979). The meaning of terminology is a method to train the soul and morals in all aspects of life (Salamattang, 2012: 4, and Atjeh 1990, 67). In conclusion, the Khlawatiyah Samman order is a religious understanding or one of the methods of teaching Sufism in order to increase the quantity and quality of life (Ruslan, 2021: 18) to be closer to God by practicing dhikr and purifying the heart.

The origin of the Khalwatiyah Samman order according to Sheikh A. Sadjaruddin Malik (*Muryid* of *Tarekat*) in one of the unpublished manuscripts that the tariqat was founded by a very famous Sufism scholar and is known by the name of Muhammad bin Abdul Karim al-Samman al-Madani who was later known as Sheikh Muhammad Samman (Malik, 1999). Similar opinions were also expressed by Abdullah (1978), Bruinessen (1972), Ridhwan (2017) and Sata et al. (2020), in their research,. Sheikh Samman had many teachers and mastered several tariqahs, such as Suhrawardiyah, Qadiriyyah wa naqsabandiyah, Syadziliyyah, Khalwatiyah (Saude, Hamka 2021). All of these tariqats were understood and united, then modified into Khalwatiyah Samman (Salamattang, 2012: 117-118).

Sheikh Samman had disciples from all over the world and all of them became scholars (Ruslan, 2008: 21), and some of them even established new tariqas although they were still guided by the teachings of Sheikh Samman (Ainah 2016). There were four from

Indonesia, namely Abdul Samad al-Palimbani (Alhamuddin 2018: 89-102), Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari, Abdul Rahman Masri al-Batawi and Abdul Wahab al-Bugisi from Sulawesi but when he returned to Indonesia settled in Kalimantan with Arsyad in Banjarmasin (Najamuddin, 2002: 59 and Salamattang, 2012: 118).

While the Khalwatiyah Samman in South Sulawesi was introduced by Abdullah al-Munir, a descendant of Bone nobility who was educated with noble morals. Abdullah al-Munir studied with Idris bin Uthman in Sumbawa, West Nusa Tenggara (now), Idris studied with Siddik Umar Khan al-Madani a student of Muhammad Samman, during the time of Abdul Samad al-Palimbani and Arsyad al-Banjari. Abdullah al-Munir made the Barru area his home as well as teaching his tariqah. One of his students was his own son, Muhammad Fudail, who also gave him a diploma to teach the Khalwatiyah Samman order (Ruslan, 2008: 23). Muhammad Fudail taught the Khalwatiyah Samman order to seven nobles (Najamuddin, 2002: 60-61) among them;

1. Abdul Ghany Tajul Arifin (his son),
2. Ahmad Singkerru Rukka atau Sultan Ahmad bin Idris, the 28th king of Bone,
3. I Malingkaan Daeng Nyonri Karaeng Katangka who was titled Sultan Idris, the 33rd king of Gowa,
4. Petta Watang Lipue atau Petta Ambona Lamasalengke,
5. Ishak Manggabarani Karaeng Mangepe or *Arung Matoa* Wajo ke 46,
6. Guru Lambeng di Soppeng,
7. Seikh Abdul Razak.

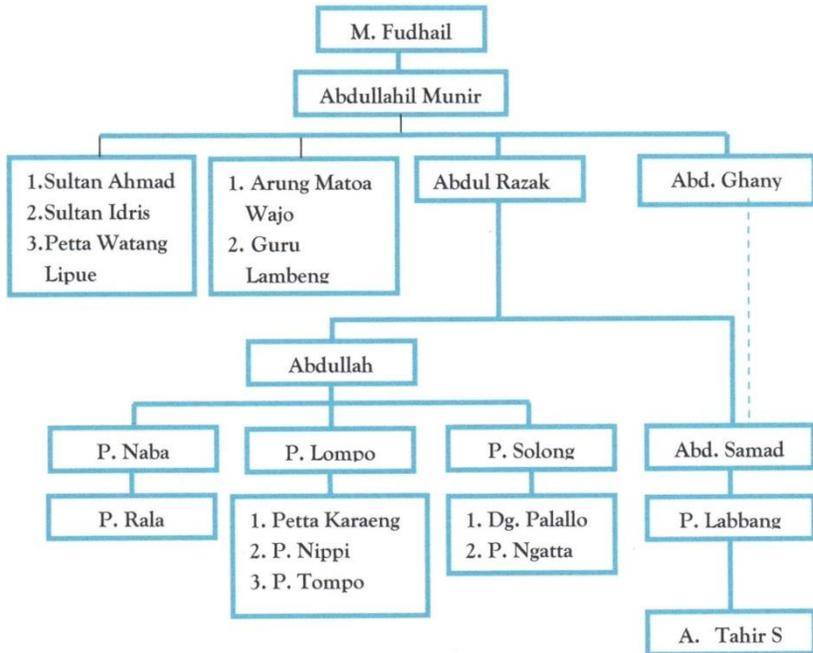
Of the seven students who studied with Muhammad Fudail, only two were given diplomas to teach the Khalwatiyah Samman, namely Abdul Ghany and Abdul Razak. After Muhammad Fudail passed away, Abdul Razak became the highest *mursyid* based on the agreement of all Fudail's students (Abdullah, 1978: 86). Then, Abdul Razak and his son (Abdullah) made Leppakomai as a place to teach and spread the Khalwatiyah Samman to the entire community without distinguishing between one another. Abdullah bin Abdul Razak also appointed three of his sons as the continuation of the Tariqah (Ruslan, 2014, p. 24-27 and Najamuddin, 2002, p. 61),

1. al-Hajj Muhammad Saleh
2. al-Hajj Muhammad Amin

3. al-Hajj Muhammad Ibrahim

The three brothers in teaching and spreading the Khalwatiyah Samman order honored each other and appointed Puang Lompo to be the highest Mursyid as the eldest and elder. In the third period, the Khalwatiyah Samman order developed very rapidly to various parts of the region, even abroad such as Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam (Patta, 1986, p. 39). Then, the three of them appointed their respective sons as successors to develop the teachings of the order (Abdullah, 1987, p. 33-36). Puang Lompo together with Puang Naba opened a new village called Patte'ne as well as the teaching center of the Khalwatiyah order until now. Puang Solong remained in Leppakomai to teach the order entrusted to him by his parents. The three of them appointed their respective sons to continue teaching the Khalwatiyah Samman order. Puang Lompo appointed three of his sons, namely A. Amiruddin, A. Hamzah and A. Sजारuddin Malik. Puang Naba appointed his son A. Abdullah, while Puang Solong appointed A. Abdul Rauf and his son-in-law A. Abdullah Puang Ngatta who settled in Pekkasalo Maros (Salamattang, Tarekat Khalwatiyah Samman, 140-144). Now, the Khalwatiyah Samman order has spread throughout Sulawesi, Indonesia, and even Southeast Asia and its teaching center is in the Patte'ne and Leppakomai areas of Maros Regency, South Sulawesi Province. For more details about the composition of the Khalwatiyah order, please see the following figure,





POLITICS ACTIVITY OF THE KHALWATIYAH SAMMAN ORDER: A HISTORICAL VIEW

In the *orde baru* government, Khalwatiyah Samman was affiliated with the Golkar Party, even one of the causes of Golkar's big name in South Sulawesi because of the Khalwatiyah Samman figure. At that time there was a representative of the Khalwatiyah order as a member of the honorary council represented by Andi Sjadjaruddin Malik, who later became a murshid called Puang Tompo (Rahim 2021). After he retired as an honorary member of the provincial council of regional representatives, an honorary member was still given to Khalwatiyah Samman represented by Ruslan Abdul Wahab.

During the democratic period, the Khalwatiyah Samman congregation took an active role in the election of the president and vice president of the Republic of Indonesia. In 2004, it gave support to the SBY-JK pair. In 2009, they supported the JK-Wiranto pair. In 2014 gave instructions to the congregation to support Jokowi-JK, and Jokowi-MA in 2019 (Rahim 2021). As for the South Sulawesi gubernatorial election, the Khalwatiyah tarekat gave its support twice to Amin Syam. In 2013, he supported SYL-AN and in 2018 he supported NA-AS. Khalwatiyah Samman congregation is directly

involved in the election of legislative candidates, even as candidates for DPR RI and DPD RI in 2009, 2014, 2019 and 2024.

The emergence of politicians from tarekat practitioners is a blessing for Indonesian politics. This is because the politics promoted is peaceful and shady politics. Making politics a field of charity, not just rhetoric. Sufistic politics departs from the intention of social worship as well as a form of responsibility as a caliph on earth (Rahim 2021). Sufistic politics is realistic politics, not making it a goal, but a place to do as much charity as possible.

PRACTICAL POLITICS: THE KHALWATIYAH SAMMAN'S THOUGHTS

The Khalwatiyah Order has an open mind towards world affairs, including politics, even practical politics. At the beginning of its spread in Barru Regency, when Sheikh Fudail taught this order, he had six students and three of his students pursued politics, even becoming leaders. Based on an interview with one of the Khalwatiyah Samman order leaders (Rahim 2021), the following information was obtained,

The Khalwatiyah Samman Order has a moderate view of the world and politics. The Khalwatiyah Order considers everything in this world can be used as a medium to reach God's grace. This opinion is based on a history that states that world life is a place to plant goodness in preparation for the next life. The world should not be wasted with the excuse of getting closer to God. Managing the world and the earth is also an obligation, because God has entrusted it to humans to be managed and utilized as best as possible. In another narration it is also mentioned, work as hard as possible as if you will live forever and worship as piously as possible as if you die tomorrow. The same with the expression, work hard, but remember death is a necessity.

Politics, in its ideality, is an empty vessel even though in reality it is a conspiracy between people and groups and even a hypocrisy (Heywood 2018). Therefore, politics needs to be returned to its ideals, then used to manage the earth, nature and humans properly. In the governmental order, ideal politics is needed to organize the state, society and its natural resources. The Prophet Muhammad also used politics in organizing the lives of the people of Medina and Makkah, even the lives of Muslims in various parts of the world. The politics

carried out by the prophet is the politics of justice, welfare that has been shown by the Qur'an.

Politics according to the Khalwatiyah Samman order is not something that should be avoided. On the contrary, if possible, there should be more people involved in the world of tarekat who enter politics and are directly involved with practical politics. However, it is still necessary to be introspective, lest when pursuing politics instead of providing color but being carried away by the many worldly temptations.

According to Rahim (2021), people living the life of suluk (tariqah) should not be ignorant of worldly life and politics. Humans are placed in the world as caliphs. Therefore, the good and bad life of this world is the responsibility of humans without exception. Everyone has their own responsibility to maintain the natural ecosystem. If there are those who cannot play an active role in maintaining and improving it, at least do not take part in destroying it at the smallest part, such as littering. Similarly, in politics, everyone must play an active role to improve the order of life of the nation and state and even globally. Being active means participating, either as an election participant, a participant or a smart voter.

The concept of *tasamwuf* understood by halwatiyah Samman order follows the sufistic thought of Junaid al-Bagdadi and applied by Abu Hasan al-Syadzili. According to Junaid, Sufism is a transition from something that is bad to good, from good to very good in all aspects of life. Similarly, in politics, if a politician really wants to make improvements with sincere intentions, then his political steps are the implementation of Sufism from Junaid's perspective. Similarly, Abu Hasan's concept assumes that this world should be a field of activity and reward. Therefore, everyone (Muslims and Tariqah practitioners) must participate in political activities to determine the direction of the life of the nation and state.

Thus, the political stage must be filled with people who have a conscience that does not make the world the ultimate goal of life, but as a place to get as much reward as possible. This kind of thinking has become a concept in Khalwatiyah Samman, the thought has been actualized with many followers of the congregation who have become politicians, officials in several regions and become members of the council as representatives of the people. Therefore, tarekat practitioners should be more involved with political activities so that

politics in Indonesia is not wild and arbitrary in carrying out political activities. Simply put, everything that is presented in this world has two aspects, positive and negative, including politics. Thus, politics will be good if it is in the hands of people who have an introspective attitude towards Allah and do not include the world in their hearts, but rather make politics a place to serve Allah and society based on sincere intentions. If a political work begins with the intention to get closer to Allah and get as much reward as possible, then political activities will be filled with honesty and grace so that *baldah tayyibah wa rabb gafur*.

CONCLUSION

Khalwatiyah Samman has progressive thinking by understanding the meaning of *zuhud* differently. Khalwatiyah Samman believes that the entire world is given to humans to be managed with various systems. The world is a field of reward that should not be avoided, but should be utilized to get closer to Allah. Likewise with practical politics, there is no need to avoid it, even more people who pursue the world of order should be involved in it. It's just that the participation of order practitioners in politics also needs to equip themselves with political, social and other related sciences. Politics is a forum or tool to organize the country. If the actors are good, fair and not greedy, the country will prosper. On the other hand, if the political actors are not fair, honest and considerate of people's lives, then misery and injustice will occur throughout the country. Therefore, practitioners of tarekat or tasawwuf need to enter the political world to color politics in Indonesia. If not able to influence other friends to be fair and not greedy, at least there are one or two people who do not act unjustly and greedily.

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