

Khulafaurrasyidin: Theological and Socio-Political Discourse During the Era of Caliph Abu Bakar As-Shiddiq

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Abstract

Abu Bakr As-Siddiq was one of the Prophet Muhammad's main companions and the first leader of Islam during the Khulafaurrayidin period. Abu Bakr's leadership was marked by various political upheavals. This study will discuss the discourse between theology and politics that occurred during the leadership of Caliph Abu Bakr As-Siddiq. This research uses a historical method using secondary sources. Caliph Abu Bakr had a different political legitimacy than Prophet Muhammad. The Caliph served as an enforcer of the law that had been perfected during the Prophet Muhammad's time. This difference in legitimacy resulted in political upheavals that often intersected with the realm of Islamic theology. The political upheavals during Caliph Abu Bakr As-Siddiq's leadership consisted of three main things: the successor to leadership after the death of Prophet Muhammad SAW, the Phenomenon of False Prophets, and the Refusal to pay zakat. These three phenomena are forms of discourse between theology and politics. These three problems were handled very well. Caliph Abu Bakr did not tolerate any form of violation of theological aspects.

Keywords: *Islam; Prophet Muhammad; Theology; Political; Abu Bakr.*

Introduction

Islam is a religion with a long history. It was delivered by the Prophet Muhammad amidst the moral and religious decay of pagan Arabian society, known as the Jahiliyah (ignorance). Muhammad himself was known for his moral qualities, earning him the nickname *Al-Amin* (the trustworthy) among the people of Mecca.

The spread of Islam within the Meccan community was not easy. The Prophet faced significant challenges, particularly from the Quraysh leaders of Mecca, who felt disturbed politically, socially, and economically. Islam was seen as a disruption to the existence of Mecca's traditional elite.

The spread of Islam took place in Mecca for 10 years, which culminated in the process of *migration* (hijrah) carried out by the Prophet Muhammad SAW and the early generation of Muslims to the city of Yatsrib, which was later renamed Medina, where he held a special position as both a political and spiritual leader. As a political leader, the Prophet Muhammad played a significant role in creating a civil society based on the principles of egalitarianism¹.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was a charismatic figure who was able to unite and unite all elements of Medinan society, both Muslim and non-

¹ Rambe, Yasir Maulana & Monika Sari. (2026). Islamic History: The Dynamics of Social Reconstruction towards the Realization of an Egalitarian Society 611–633 AD. *JUSPI (Journal of the History of Islamic Civilization)*. 395–405).

Muslim, Arab and non- Arab, including the Muhajirin (immigrants from Mecca) and the Ansar (native inhabitants of Medina). All components of Medinan society at that time were then consolidated into a fundamental bond known as the Medina Charter ².

The prophetic treatise brought by the Prophet Muhammad SAW has a simple theological concept with pure monotheism where there is only one Almighty God, namely ALLAH SWT, who cannot be equated with anything called *Tawhid*. Tawhid itself can be understood as a teaching that calls on mankind to worship only Allah Almighty, to serve themselves and surrender themselves completely to the will of ALLAH SWT.³ Belief in the oneness of Allah SWT does not mean dichotomizing vertical and horizontal elements ⁴. Therefore, the essence of faith is the realization of a social conception of community life.

In the process of spreading Islam, the Prophet Muhammad had companions who displayed strong loyalty to him and Islam. Their high level of faith bolstered their fighting spirit for the development of Islam.

One of the most important companions in Islamic history was Abu Bakr As-Siddiq. Abu Bakr As-Siddiq had a long and special relationship with the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Abu Bakr was a companion of the Prophet Muhammad in the early generations of Islam in Mecca. During the Mecca period, amidst various polemics and confrontations between Muslims and the Mecca authorities, Abu Bakr stood by the Prophet Muhammad and defended Islam with all his might. Abu Bakr was also related to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). He was the father of the Prophet Muhammad's wife (*Ummul Mukminin*), Aisha (RA).

Abu Bakr was actually the most persistent and consistent defender of the Prophet Muhammad. It is recorded in Islamic history when he defended the Isra' and Mi'raj events which were considered very unreasonable by the people of Mecca at that time. Abu Bakr calmly and without the slightest doubt believed everything that was conveyed by the Prophet Muhammad. For Abu Bakar, Isra'Mi'raj is not something that is impossible to happen and the Isra'Mi'raj event is considered by Abu Bakar to be the same as a prophetic treatise in which the Messenger of Allah received revelations conveyed by Allah SWT through the intermediary of Malikat Gabriel.

² Pulungan, J. Suyuthi. 2018. Relasi Islam dan Negara: Studi Pemikiran Politik Islam Dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an. Intizar: 185-202 .

³ Sarkowi. 2018. Teologi Islam: Dari Teologi Klasik Hingga Teologi Kontemporer. *Jurnal Qolamuna* 133-146

⁴ HK, Muhammad Rizky. 2021. "TEOLOGI POLITIK ISLAM ; Membaca Konstruksi Teologi Politik Hassan Hanafi dan Abed Al-Jabiri. *Al-Adyan: Jurnal Studi Lintas Agama*. 143-69

Abu Bakr's firm attitude immediately undermined the arguments of the Quraish officials. This statement is also a very clear and strong statement of faith. Abu Bakr without the slightest compromise or doubt regarding Islam and the prophethood of Rasulullaah SAW.

Not only to the Prophet Muhammad, Abu Bakr also sacrificed to the Muslims who came from slave circles where they experienced torture by the Quraish nobles as their masters. Abu Bakr then ransomed the slaves with the amount of money he had.

When the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) died, there was commotion, chaos, and confusion among the Muslims⁵. This upheaval affected almost all aspects of life, including politics. Muslims sought a successor. The Ansar (the Ansar) appointed Sa'd ibn Ubadah as their leader. However, due to his various strengths and virtues, Abu Bakr As-Siddiq was chosen as the leader of Islam and given the title *Khalifatu Rasulillah* (successor to the Prophet Muhammad). Historically, the Caliphate is a title or term that emerged after the Prophet's death, when Abu Bakr As-Siddiq succeeded him as the leader of Islam.⁶

As a companion of the Prophet Muhammad, Abu Bakr, with all the virtues he possessed, practically possessed strong legitimacy as a leader. However, the political realm certainly has its own dimensions, with political upheavals inevitably producing greater consequences than others.

In the political realm, Abu Bakr's legitimacy was not the same as that of the Prophet Muhammad. Abu Bakr was not as charismatic as Muhammad as a political leader. To the general public, Abu Bakr was a gentle figure whose physique gave the impression of being weaker than most of the Prophet's companions.

The Prophet Muhammad possessed strong legitimacy as a messenger carrying out a divine mandate. Abu Bakr, on the other hand, lacked such authority. After the Prophet Muhammad's death, Islamic law was final and unchangeable. Therefore, subsequent leadership served no other purpose than to uphold the Islamic law perfectly conveyed by the Prophet Muhammad.

In general, Arab society held the Prophet Muhammad in high regard, both as a person and as a political leader. Many Arab tribes embraced Islam before the Prophet's death, leaving them without a firm faith. Therefore, Abu Bakr's leadership presented unique challenges, with a constant and intense debate between theological and political concepts within the political landscape of the time.

This study is crucial, given the dynamic turmoil of Islamic politics in the early days of Islam. Following the death of the Prophet Muhammad, Islamic leadership

⁵ Yani Ahmad. 2022. Khulafah Al- Rasyidun: Menelaah Kepemimpinan Abu Bakar-Shiddiq. *CARITA: Jurnal Sejarah Dan Budaya*. 33–44.

⁶ Faidi, Ahmad. 2018. Sistem Kekhalifahan dan Konstruksi Budaya Politik Arab. *Al-Ihkam: Jurnal Hukum dan Pranata Sosial*. 187-225

lost a central figure who played a key role in spreading Islam throughout various regions.

will specifically examine the issues of discourse between theology and politics that emerged during the reign of Caliph Abu Bakr al-Siddiq. These political issues are highly complex and touch on areas related to Islamic theology. Such studies are rarely conducted due to their complexity. Therefore, this study, entitled ***"Khulafaurrasyidin: Theological and Political Discourse During the Era of Caliph Abu Bakr al-Siddiq,"*** was conducted.

The positive impact of this study will broaden our understanding of Islamic politics from a historical perspective. Readers will be presented with the complexity of political events that occurred during that period. The knowledge gained is expected to generate positive ideas for the development of political and religious life.

Research Method

This research uses historical methods. Data is presented qualitatively. The main discussion focuses on the reign of Caliph Abu Bakr al-Siddiq. Synchronically, the issues focus on the evolving discussion between politics and theology.

History itself is a discipline that specifically studies events that occurred in the past. The choice of study topics is based on the emerging urgency between theological concepts and the vibrant political discussions of the time.

History, as a science, has a research method consisting of several steps. The historical research method consists of four steps: *heuristics* (collecting sources), source criticism, data interpretation, and historiography (writing history) ⁷.

Historical sources consist of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources consist of past documents or archives, while secondary sources consist of articles, books, and other sources. In this study, the data used is secondary data from books, scientific articles, and other scholarly sources.

Results and Discussion

Theological and Political Discourse During the Time of Abu Bakr As-Siddiq

Abu Bakr Siddiq was known as a gentle and compassionate person. His full name was Abdullah bin Uthman bin Amir bin Amr bin Ka'b bin Sa'd bin Taim bin Murrah bin Ka'b bin Lu'ai bin Ghalib Al-Qurasyi At-Taimi ⁸. Therefore, Abu Bakr Siddiq was from the Banu Taim, a tribe belonging to the Quraysh tribe. He had established a friendly relationship with the Prophet Muhammad long before he

⁷ Sjamsudin, Helius. (2019). *Metodologi Sejarah*. Yogyakarta: Ombak

⁸ Muhammad Taufiqul Hidayat, Zhalfa Luthfi Fauza, & Bahaking Rama. 2024. Proses Peralihan Kepemimpinan Dari Nabi Ke Khalifa Abu Bakar As-Siddiq. *Ulil Albab: Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin*. 162-168.

received the message of prophethood. The age difference between the Prophet Muhammad and Abu Bakr was not too great.

The election of Abu Bakr as the first Caliph was a testament to the high level of trust and respect accorded him ⁹. Abu Bakr As-Siddiq's leadership was marked by considerable political dynamics. The death of the Prophet Muhammad dealt a severe blow to the socio-political situation of the Muslims. Political instability erupted in Medina, which then spread to other regions. This instability not only affected political matters but also theological issues and the foundations of Muslim faith. These issues included succession, the false prophet movement, and groups refusing to pay zakat.

1. Leadership Successor

The death of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was a devastating blow to Muslims in particular. It can be said that, by the end of Muhammad's reign, Islam had gained political and religious power. Islam was not just a religion; it had become an egalitarian and powerful political force.

The succession to leadership became a controversial issue after the death of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Muhammad held all political legitimacy within the Arab political system at the time. He was a member of the Quraysh tribe and belonged to the Hashim clan, a respected clan that played a crucial role in providing for the Hajj pilgrimage. This role made the Hashim clan (Bani) a well-known clan in the Arabian Peninsula and established strong ties with various other nations. Muhammad himself was the grandson of Abdul Muttalib, the leader of Quraysh during his lifetime.

Beyond the aforementioned factors, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was a charismatic figure with a noble character unlike any other, earning him immense admiration and respect from both friends and foes. The prophetic message he received was not an easy mandate. The people of Medina, especially the Muslims, realized that they would never find a leader as great and formidable as him.

Leadership succession became the first dialogue to emerge after the death of the Prophet Muhammad. Muslims, divided into Muhajirin and Ansar, held varying views on leadership. The Ansar considered themselves more worthy of leadership due to their significant contributions during a time when Islam was still being oppressed in Mecca, by providing a place in Yathrib.

The Muhajirin felt they had a right to leadership because the Prophet Muhammad was from Mecca and from the Quraysh tribe, which held a respected position in the Arabian Peninsula. Furthermore, the Muhajirin were among the first

⁹ Al Fajri, et.al. 2023. Peradaban Islam Pada Masa Abu Bakar As-Siddiq. *Madani: Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin* hal 1-8.

to embrace Islam and became loyal companions and protectors of the Prophet Muhammad during his difficult times in Mecca.

The Ansar had previously appointed Sa'ad bin Ubadah as leader, but this was rejected by the Muhajirin. The Muhajirin officials who came at that time, namely Umar bin al-Khattab and Abu Ubaidillah Ibn al-Jarrah, agreed to appoint Abu Bakar As-Siddiq. The appointment of Abu Bakar As-Siddiq was based on his closeness to the Prophet Muhammad, his high loyalty and the depth of his faith.

In reality, the polemics that arose at that time could have been resolved amicably by prioritizing deliberation. The Muhajirin and the Ansar were two groups that emerged after the Hijrah. The Muhajirin were immigrants from Mecca, while the Ansar were natives of Medina. Both were united and fraternalized by the Prophet Muhammad after the Hijrah.

The spirit of brotherhood and unity was the driving force in overcoming this problem. Both the Ansar and the Muhajirin welcomed Abu Bakr's leadership. Abu Bakr did not act alone in his leadership. In every decision-making process, he always involved those around him, including the Prophet's companions, as advisors, both from the Ansar and the Muhajirin.

Politically, in Islam, leadership is not based on lineage, but rather on the quality of one's personality. The Prophet Muhammad embodied several values in carrying out leadership, including leadership qualities, courage and decisiveness, self-control, patience and endurance, justice and equality, excellent personality, and truth and nobility of purpose ¹⁰.

The process of determining leaders in Islam, the decision-making process, and the problem-solving process are also based on deliberation. So the political process in appointing Abu Bakr as an Islamic leader does not violate theological concepts in Islam.

However, political views heavily influenced by the traditional Arab political system continued to emerge. Some believed that Islamic leadership should be continued by those with a lineage to the Prophet Muhammad. This was evident when some of the Muhajirin and Ansar met with Ali ibn Abi Thalib at Fatimah's house, intending to pledge allegiance to Ali, arguing that Ali ibn Abi Thalib was more suitable to be caliph because he was from the Banu Hashim (people of the family) ¹¹.

Some Muslims also believe that Abu Bakr was not descended from the Quraysh nobility. The Banu Taim clan in Mecca was not a major clan in Mecca's

¹⁰ Wahyu Hidayat, et.al. 2020. Kepemimpinan Dalam Perspektif Islam. *el-Hikmah: Jurnal Kajian dan Penelitian Pendidikan Islam*. 98-111

¹¹ Zulfikar, Ahmad. 2023. Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq dan Umar Ibn al-Khattab (Pembentukan Khalifah dan Perkembangan Islam Sebagai Kekuatan Politik. *Siyasah: Jurnal Hukum Tata Negara*. 18-34

social structure. Therefore, Abu Bakr's leadership was considered to lack strong political legitimacy.

This view is commonplace, and generally, those who hold such views are among the Prophet's companions who recently converted to Islam, particularly after the Conquest of Mecca (*Fathu Makkah*). Therefore, they do not yet possess a broad and solid understanding of the Islamic theological concept, which is very broad and encompasses various aspects of life.

Islam is not merely concerned with the vertical relationship between humans and their God (Allah SWT). Good behavior based on Islamic teachings and guidance is an integral part of faith and a fundamental theological concept for Muslims. Conducting politics in accordance with Islamic teachings in all aspects is a religious imperative.

2. The Emergence of the False Prophet Phenomenon

The tribalism that had become entrenched as a political and social system in the Arabian Peninsula seemed to be gaining momentum again. The Prophet Muhammad succeeded in uniting Muslims without distinction of tribe, ethnicity, or culture. In general, social and political conditions were well-controlled during Muhammad's lifetime.

The Quraysh, as the native inhabitants of Mecca, had rivalries with various other tribes outside Mecca. In the period before the prophethood, these rivalries intensified. The prophethood inherent in the Prophet Muhammad gave a new shape to politics in the Arabian Peninsula. For the Arabs, prophethood was something foreign . The leadership of the Prophet Muhammad resulted in a dualistic attitude among most Arabs. Some accepted Islam and considered the Prophet Muhammad a leader with spiritual and political authority, while others chose not to accept Islam, either with hostility or not.

Islam clearly states that there was no prophet after the death of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). This belief is part of the theological foundation of Islam, which states that anyone who acknowledges the existence of a prophet after Muhammad (peace be upon him) is deemed to have invalidated their Islam.

In this case, there was a heated dialogue between traditional Arab politics and Islamic theology. Based on traditional tribal rivalries, many Arab tribal leaders then claimed to be the new prophet, succeeding the Prophet Muhammad. Some of them initially accepted Islam in an attempt to gain political protection from the Muslims in Medina.

The Islamic victory at the Battle of Badr signaled the emergence of a new, previously uncontested power. Consequently, many Arab tribes declared their conversion to Islam and joined the Islamic forces in Medina. The teachings of Islam

and the figure of the Prophet Muhammad, with all his virtues, were the primary attractions of this mass conversion among the Arabs.

After the death of the Prophet Muhammad, some Arab tribes that had previously expressed support for Islam in Medina turned against its power. This hostile spirit was heavily influenced by the traditional political characteristics inherent in Arab society. This conflict took a unique and unprecedented form.

Some Arab communities opposed to Islamic power used the concept of prophethood as a means of rallying forces to counter the Muslim power in Medina. Many of these tribal leaders then claimed to be new prophets. The emergence of these false prophets was heavily influenced by the concept of *Ashabiyah*, which had long been embraced by Arab society.

False prophets adopted the same concept as existing Islam. They claimed to have received revelations from heaven, just as the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) did. These revelations, which they claimed to be divine words, were actually poems they composed themselves. Given that the Arabs were a people with a high level of literary skill, poetry served as a tool for expressing tribal prowess, fostering unity between tribes, and was even used on the battlefield to build tribal morale.¹²

In response to the emergence of the False Prophet, the Islamic government in Medina reacted to the False Prophet movement. The False Prophet movement clearly contradicts Islamic theological concepts. In Islam, there is no other prophet after Muhammad. He explained that there would be no other messenger to succeed him¹³.

Caliph Abu Bakr As-Siddiq firmly rejected the claims of these false prophets. However, Abu Bakr did not immediately crush the movement with violence. Abu Bakr gave the false prophets and their followers the opportunity to repent and abandon all false prophetic activities¹⁴. Caliph Abu Bakr offered them the opportunity to repent in order to achieve peace, but he did not tolerate the false prophets' claims in the slightest.

¹² Phillip K. Hitti. 2024. *Histry of The Arab: Rujukan Induk dan Otoritatif Sejarah Peradaban Islam*. Jakarta: Penerbit QAF.

¹³ Hasnani Siri. 2017. Abu Bakar: Fungsi Kekhalifahan Dan Kebijaksanaannya Memerangi Kaum Murtad. *Zawiyah Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 3, no. 1 143–147. <https://ejournal.iainkendari.ac.id/index.php/zawiyah/article/view/715/658..>

¹⁴ Tasya Aryati Sakinah, Wafiq Zahira Mardatilah, dan Sania Junila. 2024. Peradaban Islam Pada Masa Khalifah Abu Bakar Ash-Shiddiq. *PUSTAKA: Jurnal Bahasa Dan Pendidikan* 5, No. 1 (2024): 72–82, <https://doi.org/10.56910/pustaka.v5i1.1795>.

3. Rejection of Zakat Payments

Zakat comes from the word "zakat" which means holy, good, blessed, growing and developing.¹⁵ Zakat is an integral part of Islamic teachings. In Islam, zakat holds a crucial position and is given equal importance to other Islamic obligations such as prayer and fasting. Zakat is a form of social awareness, a commandment of Allah SWT¹⁶. Zakat is a crucial social aspect and a fundamental part of Islamic theology.

After the death of the Prophet Muhammad, Zakat experienced serious problems during the reign of Abu Bakar As-Siddiq. Many Arab tribes refused to pay zakat, which triggered the Riddah War (11-13 AH/632-634 AD)¹⁷. Zakat is a guideline in Islam that is binding and must be carried out by all Muslims.

Some Muslims at the time felt that the obligation to pay zakat had been lost after the death of the Prophet Muhammad. The rejection of zakat was not only due to economic factors, but also to the perceived loss of legitimacy by the authority of Medina after the Prophet Muhammad's death¹⁸. This ultimately forced Abu Bakr As-Siddiq to take decisive action.

For Abu Bakr, zakat was non-negotiable. Islamic law as a whole, including zakat, could not be abolished, either during the time of the Prophet Muhammad or after his death. For Abu Bakr, there was no tolerance whatsoever for refusing zakat.

The caliph actually has legitimacy as the implementer of Islamic rules or teachings that were established during the time of the Prophet Muhammad so that all forms of rules and teachings that were established during the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad cannot be changed in the slightest even though the Prophet Muhammad is gone.

Based on this, Caliph Abu Bakr took firm action against tribes that refused to pay zakat. For Caliph Abu Bakr, refusing zakat was tantamount to refusing other Islamic laws, as zakat holds the same status as other Muslim obligations.

Conclusion

Abu Bakr As-Siddiq was not considered a leader. Physically, Abu Bakr differed from other companions of the Prophet, renowned for their extraordinary strength and courage, such as Umar ibn al-Khattab and Ali ibn Abi Talib. Abu Bakr

¹⁵Ihsan, Muhammad Fahmul & Tri Arini Diana Haqiqi. 2023. Pengelolaan dan Regulasi Zakat Pada Masa Rasulullah dan Sahabat. *Jurnal Qiema (Qomarudin Islamic Economic Magazine)*182-193

¹⁶ Sofian, Muhammad, Syamsuwir, dan Dapit Amril. (2019). Penafsiran Ayat-Ayat Zakat Oleh Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya Al-Kandahlawi Dalam Buku Fadhilah Sedekah. *Istinarah: Riset Keagamaan, Sosial Dan Budaya* 1, no. 2: 55..

¹⁷ Septi Laila Nurpadilah, Siti Rahmawati Sudrajat, dan Sopi Nurul Kamilah. 2026. Kebijakan Zakat Pada Masa Khalifah Abu Bakar: Analisis Dampak Perang Riddah Terhadap Stabilitas Ekonomi. *Hadharatuna: Journal of History and Islamic Civilization*. 34–50

¹⁸ Ibid

was a humble figure, far from the image of a powerful man generally desired by the Arabs at the time.

Politics is dynamic. In political practice, conflict always occurs, often leading to negative consequences. Political interests are a common root cause of any conflict between political factions.

Abu Bakr's reign marked a transition from the Prophet Muhammad's reign to the Caliphate. With all his political prowess, Muhammad was an irreplaceable figure with immense legitimacy. He abandoned established Islamic teachings .

The Caliphs then succeeded the Prophet Muhammad in different capacities. The Caliphs did not have the authority to create or change Islamic rules and teachings. Rather, they merely implemented and upheld the Islamic teachings conveyed by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Abu Bakr demonstrated skill in navigating political discourse. Despite the complexity of the political issues he faced, Abu Bakr was still able to navigate them effectively and demonstrate a decisiveness that had previously been questioned by other companions of the Prophet.

Abu Bakr was clearly aware of the duties and consequences of being a caliph. For Abu Bakr, the caliph's role was to ensure the upholding of Islamic teachings. Therefore, Caliph Abu Bakr did not tolerate any political behavior that deviated from the foundations of Islam.

Politics is deeply fraught with vested interests. Managing a society is no easy task. A society comprised of diverse groups and individuals with diverse backgrounds naturally has varying interests. Some of these groups will advocate for their own interests. Therefore, in every decision-making process related to community governance, Caliph Abu Bakr always prioritized deliberation and sought input from the Prophet's companions.

Abu Bakr maintained a firm stance in upholding the law. Caliph Abu Bakr possessed a deep understanding of his role as caliph. He adhered firmly to the values he held as a Muslim. Caliph Abu Bakr consistently rejected any violation of the theological values contained in Islamic teachings. Caliph Abu Bakr successfully demonstrated a strong personality. Abu Bakr's strength lay in his steadfastness and firm adherence to principles. Caliph Abu Bakr's decisions stemmed from the principles and values of Islamic teachings he firmly held.

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