

**POLITICAL ASPECTS OF SEERAH: A CASE STUDY OF  
MONTGOMERY WATT'S WORKS**



*Submitted By*

**Danyal Ahmad**  
**01-259212-005**

*Supervised By*

**Ms. Kiran Latif**

**Department of Islamic Studies**  
**BAHRIA UNIVERSITY ISLAMABAD**  
**NOVEMBER 2023**

POLITICAL ASPECTS OF SEERAH: A CASE STUDY OF  
MONTGOMERY WATT'S WORKS



DANYAL AHMAD

01-259212-005

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the  
Degree of Master in Science (Islam and Life)

Department of Islamic Studies  
School of Humanities and Social Sciences

BAHRIA UNIVERSITY ISLAMABAD

NOVEMBER 2023

## **Supervisor's Statement**

This is certified that the work contained in this thesis, entitled **“Political Aspects of Seerah: A Case Study of Montgomery Watt’s Works,”** has been carried out under my supervision by **Danyal Ahmad** and is approved for submission in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of MS Islamic Studies.

Kiran Latif

Senior Lecturer

Department of Islamic Studies

Bahria University Islamabad, Pakistan



# Bahria University

Discovering Knowledge

## MS-13

### Thesis Completion Certificate

Student's Name: DANYAL AHMAD Registration No. 01-259212-005  
 Programme of Study: MS-Islamic Studies Thesis Title: Political Aspects of Seerah: A Case Study of Montgomery Watt's Works.

It is to certify that the above student's thesis has been completed to my satisfaction and, to my belief, its standard is appropriate for submission for evaluation. I have also conducted a plagiarism test on this thesis using the HEC-prescribed software and found a similarity index of 7% that is within the permissible limit set by the HEC for the MS/MPhil degree thesis. I have also found the thesis in a format recognized by the BU for the MS/MPhil thesis.

Principal Supervisor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Kiran Latif

Date: 21-11-2023



# Bahria University

Discovering Knowledge

## MS-14A

### Author's Declaration

I, **Danyal Ahmad**, hereby state that my MS thesis titled "**Political Aspects of Seerah: A Case Study of Montgomery Watt's Works**" is my own work and has not been submitted previously by me for taking any degree from this Bahria University Islamabad Campus or anywhere else in the country or world.

At any time, if my statement is found to be incorrect, even after my graduation, the university has the right to withdraw or cancel my MPhil degree.

Name of student: **Danyal Ahmad**

Student/ Author's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 21-11-2023



# Bahria University

Discovering Knowledge

## MS-14B

### Plagiarism Undertaking

I solemnly declare that the research work presented in the thesis titled **“Political Aspects of Seerah: A Case Study of Montgomery Watt’s Works”** is solely my research work with no significant contribution from any other person. Any small contribution or help, wherever taken, has been duly acknowledged, and the complete thesis has been written by me.

I understand the zero-tolerance policy of the HEC and Bahria University towards plagiarism. Therefore, I, as the author of the above titled-thesis, declare that no portion of my thesis has been plagiarized and that any material used as a reference is properly referred to and cited.

I undertake that if I am found guilty of any formal plagiarism in the above-titled thesis even after the award of my MPhil degree, the university reserves the right to withdraw or revoke my MPhil degree, and that HEC and the university have the right to publish my name on the HEC/University website, where the names of students who submitted plagiarized theses are placed.

Student’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name:           **Danyal Ahmad**          

Date:           21-11-2023

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I have to be incredibly grateful to the Almighty for blessing me with all of the things that I needed to accomplish my thesis.

Additionally, I cannot envision a better supervisor than Ms. Kiran Latif. In the very competitive realm of academia, Ma'am, you honestly set a fine example for others with your remarkable academic background and commitment to helping early-career researchers. My academic writing has greatly improved, and my arguments have become more compelling as a product of your constant criticism and recommendations. Your regular presence and subject matter expertise have been essential in shaping my academic development as a social scientist.

Moreover, I greatly benefited from HOD Dr. Syed M. Shahid Tirmazi's provisions of relevant ideas in my course. He deserves a great deal of gratitude for always being there for me when I needed his counsel and support. Furthermore, an immense thank you to Dr. Sanaullah al-Azhari for his finest teaching of Oriental studies, which have strongly shaped my thoughts and without which I would have never followed this area.

Furthermore, I place on record my sense of utmost gratitude to my previous BS teachers for their intellectually constructive comments and recommendations for improving the study. To end with, a special appreciation goes to colleagues and the faculty members since taking part in thought-provoking conversations with each and every one of them proved a wonderful experience.

## ABSTRACT

The study contextually analyzes Montgomery Watt's claims regarding the political aspect of Seerah in the context of his sociocultural background. Despite the fact that he develops many different influential hypotheses, his writings have not been thoroughly examined. The objective of analysis is to identify the discourse's strengths and weaknesses, as well as the principles that shape his discursive positioning. The study employs Critical Discourse Analysis, a qualitative research approach, to examine Watt's opinion as part of orientalist's discourse on political aspects of Seerah. Instead of solely focusing on language and text, the technique primarily analyzes the relationship between linguistics and socio-historical background. The three stepwise analytical processes that constitute this study's approach paradigm are, in order, textual evaluation, methodological assessment, and contextual analysis. In findings, the overall conclusions of this study explored the fact that, despite Watt's lack of prejudice as a scholar, several of the ideas he holds are quite unpersuasive. With the exception of certain cases, his discourse constructed its hypotheses in an impartial and non-polemical manner. The research nevertheless found, among many other hypothesized claims, a correlation between Watt's ideological framework and the cultural dynamics of power. Weakness has resulted from context-related variables involving western skepticism, Islamophobia, the narrow scope of religion, and especially from studying Seerah via the prism of a materialistic perspective. It additionally explored the actual identity of Muhammad's ﷺ leadership by exposing and refuting hollow perceptions around his political character.

*Keywords:* Seerah, politics, Watt, discursive standpoint, claim, ideological formulations, CDA, social analysis, contexts, critique.



## LIST OF ABBRIVATIONS

CDA	-	Critical Discourse Analysis
AH	-	After Hijra
AS	-	Alayhis Salaam
RA	-	Radhi Allah
C.E.	-	Common Era
IJC	-	International Court of Justice
US	-	United States

## Contents

Acknowledgement .....	vi
Abstract .....	vii
List of Abbreviations .....	viii
<b>Part 1: INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1 The Background of the Study .....	3
1.2 Key Problematic Areas .....	7
1.3 Literature Review .....	9
1.4 Research Gap .....	10
1.5 Problem Statement .....	11
1.6 Research Question .....	11
1.7 Significance of the Study .....	11
1.8 Key Objectives .....	13
1.9 Theoretical Framework .....	13
1.10 Methodological Outline .....	14
1.10.1 Data Collection .....	14
1.10.2 Methodological Approach and Data Analysis Strategy .....	15
1.10.3 Delimitations .....	19
<b>Part 2: CRITIQUE ON WATT'S PERSPECTIVE ON MECCAN POLITICS</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>2.1 CHAPTER: THE MECCANS' OPPOSITION .....</b>	<b>21</b>
2.1.1 Early Political Philosophy .....	21
2.1.2 Meccans' Objective behind Opposing Muhammad ﷺ .....	26
2.1.3 Persecution during Social Boycott .....	31
2.1.4 Reasons for the Boycott .....	37
<b>2.2 CHAPTER: MUHAMMAD'S ﷺ SEEKING OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE ...</b>	<b>41</b>
2.2.1 Reasons behind Emigrations to Abyssinia .....	41
2.2.2 Support of Jewish Idea of Messiah in Accepting Muhammad ﷺ .....	59
<b>Part 3: CRITIQUE ON WATT'S PERSPECTIVE ON MEDINAN</b>	
<b>POLITICS....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>3.1 CHAPTER: POLICY OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE .....</b>	<b>65</b>
3.1.1 Muhammad's ﷺ Authority .....	65

3.1.2 Early Standpoint about Jews .....	70
3.1.3 Motives of Letters to the Princes.....	74
3.1.4 The Abyssinian Envoy’s Primary Mission.....	79
3.1.5 Rituals Adaptation for Jewish Alliance.....	81
<b>3.2 CHAPTER: MUHAMMAD’S ﷺ WAR POLITICS .....</b>	<b>86</b>
3.2.1 War Strategy in Early Expeditions.....	86
3.2.2 Aws’s Loyalty during the Judgement of Banu Qurayza .....	94
3.2.3 Muhammad’s ﷺ War Strategy in Comparison of Current Laws.....	98
<b>3.3 CHAPTER: POLITICAL ECONOMY .....</b>	<b>104</b>
3.3.1 Trade Avoidance .....	104
3.3.2 Booty as a Source of Income.....	107
3.3.3 Love for Booty .....	114
<b>Part 4: RESEARCH’s FINDINGS .....</b>	<b>119</b>
4.1 Watt’s Discursive Positioning .....	120
4.2 The Limitations of the Study’s Findings .....	130
4.3 Findings’ Contribution to the Field .....	130
4.4 Findings’ Implications .....	131
4.5 Recommendations for Future Research .....	132
4.6 Tabular representations of Findings .....	132

## Part 1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter will serve as an introduction to the study by first addressing the background and context, followed by the literature review, the research gap, the key problematic area, the key objectives, the questions, the significance, the theoretical framework, the delimitations, and eventually the methodological strategy for collecting data and conducting the analysis.

### 1.1 The Background of the Study

The Greek philosopher Aristotle's statement that "man is a social animal"<sup>1</sup> demonstrates that human beings cannot live without each other. Since long, individuals have been divided into diverse social classes in order to improve and be productive in their social interactions, while the authorities subsequently pressure these groups to perform well in their fields of specialty. Who should have this authority over power construction in society? In what situations should it be used? In addition, how does someone exercise this power? When such critiques about the social construction of power began to be considered in society, different ideologies<sup>2</sup> emerged in the field of politics<sup>3</sup>.

In order to acquire and retain authority and to resolve differences through institutionalized procedures in society, Muhammad ﷺ presented a political ideology that was based on divine teachings. He came into a society that was divided into clans, and people used to abuse their authority between themselves and against the weak in their

---

<sup>1</sup> Arnhart, "The Darwinian Biology of Aristotle's Political Animals.", 465.

<sup>2</sup> Ideologies, according to Fairclough: "constructions of reality (the physical world, social relations, social identities), which are built into various dimensions of the forms/ meanings of discursive practices, and which contribute to the production, reproduction or transformation of relations of domination." (Norman Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change* (Oxford, England: Polity Press, 1992), 87.)

<sup>3</sup> The word Politics, in modern English, has come from early modern English word *Polettiques* which was taken from Aristotle's book in which Aristotle introduced the Greek term *politiká*. This term was derived essentially from polis which means "state" or "city". According to Bernard Rowland Crick (1929 –2008 C.E.), a British political theorist and democratic socialist: "A distinctive form of rule whereby people act together through institutionalized procedures to resolve differences" (Bernard Crick, *In Defence of Politics* (Chicago; USA: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 12.)

societies<sup>4</sup>. Generally, individuals were sold into slavery after being taken captive in a war or losing their freedom due to being unable to pay the debt bondages they owed. These enslaved people had the flexibility to buy their liberation from slavery. The master and his slave may draw up a contract. The slave obtained a new social status—that of a *mawlā* (plural: *mawālī*)—after the contract's conditions had been fulfilled. It illustrates how classism<sup>5</sup> as an ideology was a dominant thought in pre-Islamic social structures. Additionally, prior to the advent of Islam, women's rights were less valuable than those of men. They were frequently denied a portion of the relative's inheritance<sup>6</sup>. While a husband might reject or divorce his wife, there was no right like *Khula'* that a woman could exercise at the time. Some families took the drastic step of killing female infants due to poverty and concerns about upholding family honor<sup>7</sup>. This exposes how the ideology of misogyny<sup>8</sup> actually prevailed over there, where women were predominantly viewed as property.

A thorough review of the pre-Islamic socioeconomic culture of Mecca also finds numerous parallels between that time period and contemporary capitalism. Meccan traders used dishonest methods, such as interest (*ribâ*), to boost their money<sup>9</sup>. It worsened inequality and further lowered the social standing of the poor while concentrating a large amount of money in the hands of a small number of people. As the study previously established, women were also excluded from receiving a portion of the family's inheritance<sup>10</sup>. In addition, the accounts emphasized the hunting of excessive wealth, the

---

<sup>4</sup> This theoretical establishment is based on the evidence that throughout the Meccan period, Muslims were mercilessly persecuted by the Meccans, who also expelled them from their homes, murdered them unfairly, and seized their wealth and property. (Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 2:113-4.)

<sup>5</sup> This is an ideology founded on the theory that an individual's worth in the context of society is determined by his or her social or economic standing. This conduct reveals a belief in discrimination or prejudice on the basis of class. This can be viewed as an example of how the upper class benefits from the structural oppression of those in the middle and lower classes.

<sup>6</sup> Niaz A. Shah, *Women, the Koran and International Human Rights Law: The Experience of Pakistan* (Brill Nijhoff, 2006), 27.

<sup>7</sup> *Al-Qur'an* 81:8-9.

<sup>8</sup> Misogyny is a belief system or worldview that has followed patriarchal, or male-dominated, cultures for thousands of years and continues to put women in subservient or inferior positions with restricted access to authority and decision-making power.

<sup>9</sup> *Al-Qur'an* 2:275.

<sup>10</sup> Shah, *Women, the Koran and International Human Rights Law: The Experience of Pakistan*, 27.

deprivation of the weak, and the neglect of the impoverished in Mecca<sup>11</sup>. These all expose how their economic culture was based primarily on the ideology of capitalism.

There was no ideal political framework among authoritative leaders for the fair use of authority<sup>12</sup>. In that kind of society, Muhammad ﷺ began his struggle to build a power base for the betterment of his people. In contrast, a formal Quraysh council was established to stop Muhammad ﷺ from advancing his religious movement<sup>13</sup>. His adversaries mercilessly persecuted many Muslims, and some of them were martyred<sup>14</sup>. A rope was put around the throat of Bilāl ibn Rabāḥ (Radiyallahu) (580–640 C.E.) as he was taken through the streets and marketplaces<sup>15</sup>. According to Ibn Hasham and Ibn Hazm reports, Ammar, his mother Sumayya, and his father Yasir all received a variety of penalties<sup>16</sup>. Zanira, Nahdia, Amir ibn Fahira, Hamama and Um Abis were also harshly mistreated<sup>17</sup>. Khabab ibn Alarat was likewise set on coals by the Quraysh, and a man stood with his feet on his breast<sup>18</sup>. Muhammad ﷺ advised the Muslims to depart for Abyssinia as the oppression of Muslims in Mecca worsened, and he saw that some of them found it difficult to resist what they were going through<sup>19</sup>.

In 622 C.E., Muhammad ﷺ was invited to the Yathrib<sup>20</sup> city<sup>21</sup>. At that time, the local Arab tribes of Aws and Khazraj were in constant conflict and animosity<sup>22</sup>. In such situation, he and his companions have thus migrated to Yathrib, and the disputes between

---

<sup>11</sup> *Al-Qur'an* 107:2-3.

<sup>12</sup> Despite the existence of a political institution called Dar-ul-Nadwa, one institution alone is not enough to be able to claim the existence of an effective political structure. Additionally, the claim that Arabia as a whole lacked a functioning political structure is shown to be unfounded by the absence of a central authority.

<sup>13</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 1:295–96.

<sup>14</sup> Ibn Hasham, 2:111–14.

<sup>15</sup> Ibn Hasham, 1:325–26; Ibn Hazm, *Jawami' as-Seera*, 85.

<sup>16</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 1:328; Ibn Hazm, *Jawami' as-Seera*, 85.

<sup>17</sup> Ali Ibn Ahmad Ibn Hazm, *Jawami' as-Seera*, trans. Muhammad Sardar Ahmad (Karachi: Nashryat-e-Islam, 1990), 85.

<sup>18</sup> Abu Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, trans. Abdullah Almu'adi, vol. 3 (Karachi: Nafees Academy, n.d.), 233.

<sup>19</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 1:329–30.

<sup>20</sup> This was Medina's former name.

<sup>21</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 2:47–51.

<sup>22</sup> Safi ur Rahman Mubarakpuri, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum* (Lahore: Al-Maktabah Salfia, 2006), 246.

these two tribes, the Aws and the Khazraj, have been considerably resolved. Muhammad ﷺ, as the leader of the Muslim community, consequently collaborated with the Jews and other local tribes and designed the charter among the diverse community of Medina. However, it has not been properly implemented since its establishment, as Safi ur Rahman's research findings suggest<sup>23</sup>. Thus, many wars were fought between Muslims and the Jews and between Muslims and some local Arab tribes<sup>24</sup>. Throughout this period, Muhammad ﷺ also dealt with various political affairs with polytheists, Romans, Persians and many other Arab clans.

Due to the extensive discourse that has been produced in this field of Seerah<sup>25</sup>, the political aspect of Seerah<sup>26</sup>, has emerged as a key area of debate in 20th-century Oriental studies. During this journey, many orientalists have continued to defame Muhammad ﷺ<sup>27</sup>. William Meur (1905 C.E.) blamed the Prophet as an epilepsy patient<sup>28</sup>; Richard Bell (1970 C.E.) claims that Muhammad's ﷺ philosophy was copied or borrowed from the Bible;<sup>29</sup> and many other scholars have written plentifully in this matter in Oriental studies,

---

<sup>23</sup> Mubarakpuri, 249.

<sup>24</sup> Like Battles of Qainoque, Qurayza, Nadir Make exact reference. Also provide source from where more could be read about these battles.

<sup>25</sup> The term Seerah with is derived from the Arabic word sāra, which translates as traveling or being on a journey. In Islamic studies, the term "Seerah" refers to the study of Muhammad's biography, including his birth, significant events in his life, conduct and personality traits, and their passing away. Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri (d. 124/741-2) was the one who introduced the phrase (Raven, "SĪRA," 660–63).; Ibn Hisham (d. 833), however, is credited with popularizing it (Raven, 660–63.)

<sup>26</sup> The term "political aspect of Seerah" refers to all aspects of Muhammad's ﷺ life in which he formed diverse contracts with his rivals and allies, assigned representatives to neighboring clans and states, carried out political dialogue or pacts with rivals, took military action against his enemies, or participated in any other activities intended to acquire or to maintain authority.

<sup>27</sup> In the argument of this, Watt himself says: "Of all the world's great men, none has been so much maligned as Muhammad" (William Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman* (London: London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 231.).

<sup>28</sup> William Muir, *Mahomet and Islam: A Sketch of the Prophet's Life from Original Sources and a Brief Outline of His Religion* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1884), 22, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/001931599>.

<sup>29</sup> Richard Bell, *The Origin of Islam in Its Christian Environment*, 2nd ed. (London: The Gunning Lectures Edinburgh University & London: Frank Cass and Company Limited, 1968), 100.

such as Spencer Robert<sup>30</sup> (2006 C.E.) and David Marshall<sup>31</sup>. Watt is also a well-known fellow of the western academics in this discipline of Oriental studies.

Watt, a Christian by faith, was born in 1909 C.E. in Ceres<sup>32</sup>, a tiny Scottish community on the Fife Peninsula. He was just 14 months old when his father, Andrew Watt, a priest in the Church of Scotland, passed away<sup>33</sup>. Watt had been fostered by his widowed mother as a single child. Attending Balliol College in Oxford, Watt began his undergraduate studies with a focus on Moral Philosophy and Ancient History. Since 1964 until 1979 C.E., he served as professor of Islamic studies and Arabic at the University of Edinburgh. He started working on his Ph.D. in 1933 C.E. at Edinburgh. Afterwards, he published several pieces of work regarding Islam. He passed away at the age of 97 in 2006 C.E.<sup>34</sup>, having made several contributions and authoring many notable publications on the subject of Oriental studies.

Watt's has constructed many of his different viewpoints and findings in his publications and built several diverse perspectives on the political aspects of Seerah. It is therefore, needed to evaluate the quality, significance, and reliability of his discursive positioning by reviewing the methodological approach he employed and his discursive ideological production. Thus, study will be able to frame, expose, and disprove weak illusions and will draw attention to power structures and social contexts that organize his ideological formations.

## 1.2 Key Problematic Areas

The primary objective of this study is to review Watt's viewpoint on Muhammad's ﷺ political position. He wrote frequently in this context and developed a variety of distinct perspectives, which form the key problematic areas of this study. Therefore, exploring

---

<sup>30</sup> Robert Spencer, *The Truth About Muhammad Founder of the World's Most Intolerant Religion* (Regnery Publishing, 2006),

[https://www.google.com.pk/books/edition/The\\_Truth\\_About\\_Muhammad/HiT6wAEACAAJ?hl=en](https://www.google.com.pk/books/edition/The_Truth_About_Muhammad/HiT6wAEACAAJ?hl=en).

<sup>31</sup> David Marshall, *God, Muhammad and the Unbelievers: A Qur'anic Study.*, 1st ed. (Oxfordshire, England: Routledge, 1999).

<sup>32</sup> Holloway, "William Montgomery Watt. 8"

<sup>33</sup> Holloway, 8.

<sup>34</sup> Hillenbrand, *Life and Work of W. Montgomery Watt*, 1; Three well-known newspapers, The Herald, The Scotsman, and The Times, all had covered the news on October 27, 2006.



the relevance, soundness, and authenticity of his theories would be the required challenges in undertaking this study.

Watt has thoroughly addressed Muhammad's ﷺ intellectual debates with Meccan polytheists. What he considers about his political philosophy is that there was nothing notably anti-idolatry in his early preaching<sup>35</sup>. He claims that during the Meccan period, there was minimal criticism of idols; the major criticism was economic, directed at the merchants. Additionally, what drove Meccans to oppose Muhammad ﷺ? Watt's claim in this respect is that the underlying issue for the Meccans was not idols since they meant little to them<sup>36</sup>, nor did his enemies experience anxiety due to the termination of their commerce for fear of the end of idolatry<sup>37</sup>. He says that selfishness, conservatism, and fear of other economic and political influences were the primary root causes of opposition<sup>38</sup>. Regarding Banu Hashim's social boycott, Watt claims that it has not been associated with any incidents of violence<sup>39</sup>.

Watt's discourse agrees that persecution was not the primary or sole motivation for the migration to Abyssinia<sup>40</sup>. He contends that additional important motivations included dread of suffering or persecution, trade, acquiring military support, fear of apostasy, and internal political division<sup>41</sup>. He backs the argument that Jewish belief in the coming of the Messiah led the people of Khazraj and Aws to embrace him at al-Aqabah<sup>42</sup>. In closing, there are a total of seventeen major claims that have been theorized by Watt's discourse. All of these viewpoints on Muhammad's ﷺ political life are the study's key problematic areas.

---

<sup>35</sup> William Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca* (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press Oxford, 1953), 121.

<sup>36</sup> Watt, 135.

<sup>37</sup> Watt, 134.

<sup>38</sup> Watt, 134-136

<sup>39</sup> William Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman* (London: London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 77.

<sup>40</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, 113–17.

<sup>41</sup> Watt, 113.

<sup>42</sup> Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*, 89.

### 1.3 Literature Review

Carole Hillenbrand wrote a book on Watt, titled *“The Life and Work of W. Montgomery Watt”*<sup>43</sup>. This discourse does not specifically discuss one aspect but gives a general overview of his life and academic career. In this book, the author also wrote about his famous lectures, but the study cannot find enough of the aspects that he wants to focus on. In the matter of Muslim heritage, Watt’s discourse has also been analyzed by three authors, collectively Wan MohdFazrulAzdi Wan Razali, MohdRosmizi Abd Rahman, and Jaffary Awang, in the article *“Watt’s View on Muslim Heritage in the Study of Other Religions”*<sup>44</sup>. In this article, Watt's idea is researched, which is that Muslims’ history of Islamic self-sufficiency or displaying little interest in understanding the teachings of other religions. However, this piece also has nothing to do with the part this study is going to analyze.

In 1996, Jabal Muhammad Buaben wrote his well-known book *“Image of the Prophet Muhammad in the West: A study of Muir, Margoliouth and Watt”*<sup>45</sup>. This book discusses three major oriental scholars’ perspectives: William Muir, Margoliouth and Watt. It just partly discusses, in the latter chapters, Watt’s general views, not specifically about the political life of Muhammad ﷺ. Thus, it is, presumably, insufficient to comprehensively analyze Watt’s discourse touching on the political dimension of Seerah. Andreas Felix D'Souza also wrote a book on, collectively, Watt’s and Albert Kenneth Cragg’s (1913–2012 C.E.) discourse called *“The Origin of Islam as Interpreted by W. Montgomery Watt and A. Kenneth Cragg: An Analysis and Evaluation”*<sup>46</sup>. This book is all about core theological matters, especially revelation and Prophethood, as interpreted by these two scholars. Along with that, many other Muslims’ scholars have also studied

---

<sup>43</sup> Hillenbrand, *Life and Work of W. Montgomery Watt*.

<sup>44</sup> Wan Mohd Fazrul Azdi Wan Razali, Mohd Rosmizi Abd Rahman, and Jaffary Awang, “Watt’s View on Muslim Heritage in The Study of Other Religions: A Critical Analysis,” *Al-Itqan: Journal of Islamic Sciences and Comparative Syudies* 1, no. 1 (2017): 21–42.

<sup>45</sup> Jabal Muhammad Buaben, *Image of the Prophet Muhammad in the West : A Study of Muir, Margoliouth and Watt* (Leicester : Islamic Foundation, 1996), <https://archive.org/details/imageofprophetmu0000buab/page/n419/mode/2up>.

<sup>46</sup> Andreas Felix D’Souza, *The Origin of Islam as Interpreted by W. Montgomery Watt and A. Kenneth Cragg : An Analysis and Evaluation* (McGill University, 1979), <https://escholarship.mcgill.ca/concern/theses/zk51vh936>.

his perspectives regarding the theological aspect<sup>47</sup>, the aspect of military wars<sup>48</sup>, the aspect of Tafseer<sup>49</sup> and many other Muslims scholars have written discourses from general perspectives as well, such as Ibrahim Kalin<sup>50</sup>, Khan Ali<sup>51</sup>, and Mustafeez Ahmad Alvi<sup>52</sup>.

#### 1.4 Research Gap

As an outcome, the aforementioned review of the literature clarifies that, with the exception of a few, the majority of academics have studied Watt's discourse in such a way that the political component has not been addressed. Few academics have also examined Watt's discourse in a single study where they also looked at various other orientalist in addition to Watt. For this reason, it has only received a brief inspection in one or two chapters. They have not specifically looked at Watt's ideological discursive foundation as social practice or to analyze the exercise of power in texts in the political dimensions of Seerah; instead, they have merely evaluated them from a general perspective.

As a consequence, the rationale for the gap on this topic is that, because Watt established several distinctive perspectives<sup>53</sup> relating to Muhammad's ﷺ political life and

---

<sup>47</sup> Benaboud, "Orientalism on the Revelation of the Prophet: The Cases of W. Montgomery Watt, Maxime Rodinson, and Duncan Black MacDonald"; Bilal Gokkir, "Western Attitudes to the Origin of the Qur'an: Theological and Linguistic Approaches of Twentieth Century English Speaking World from William Muir to William M. Watt" (Turkey, Istanbul University, 2002), Bilal Gokkir Istanbul University.

<sup>48</sup> Omar Bin Musaed AlShariofi, "The Position Of The Orientalist Montgomery Watt On The Conquests Of The Messenger - May God Bless Him And Grant Him Peace - Through His Book Muhammad In Medina" (Medina., Jami' al-Imam Muhammad bin Saud, 1995), noor-book.com/en/acy3br.

<sup>49</sup> Tariq Aziz et al., "William Montgomery Watt as an Interpreter of the Holy Qur'an," *Al-Qantara* 8, no. 3 (2022).

<sup>50</sup> Ibrahim Kalin, "Prophet Muhammad and His Western Critics A Critique of W. Montgomery Watt and Others by Zafar Ali Qureshi, Idara Ma'arif Islamic, Lahore, 1992, 2 Vols, p. 1103.," *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 18, no. 2 (2001), <https://doi.org/10.35632/ajis.v18i2.2026>.

<sup>51</sup> Ali Khan, "Hagarism: The Story of a Book Written by Infidels for Infidels," *Legal Scholar Academy*, 2005, <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.944295>.

<sup>52</sup> Mustafeez Ahmad Alvi, "Montgomery Watt on Sirah; An Analytical Study," *Al-Qalam*, 2022, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/358505353\\_Montgomery\\_Watt\\_on\\_Sirah\\_of\\_the\\_Prophet\\_PB\\_UH?enrichId=rgreq-5c095da6cc7f61545d3aa4e9396a4626-XXX&enrichSource=Y292ZXJQYWdlOzM1ODUwNTM1MztBUzoXMTIyMzU1ODMzMjQ1Njk2QDE2NDQ2MDE4OTE4NDY%3D&el=1\\_x\\_3&\\_esc=publicationCoverPdf](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/358505353_Montgomery_Watt_on_Sirah_of_the_Prophet_PB_UH?enrichId=rgreq-5c095da6cc7f61545d3aa4e9396a4626-XXX&enrichSource=Y292ZXJQYWdlOzM1ODUwNTM1MztBUzoXMTIyMzU1ODMzMjQ1Njk2QDE2NDQ2MDE4OTE4NDY%3D&el=1_x_3&_esc=publicationCoverPdf).

<sup>53</sup> These are mentioned in detail under the key problematic areas of the study.

no study has been conducted on his discourse in terms of this aspect, it is essential to analyze his discourse's findings as social practice in this domain.

### **1.5 Problem Statement**

Watt has formed a variety of opinions concerning Muhammad's ﷺ political life that have not been properly addressed. Now, the primary criticisms center on Watt's theoretical development, the merits and demerits of his discursive ideological production, and whether it served any particular purpose. In relation to these criticisms, there is a problem with the current body of knowledge in that there is no definitive research to explain Watt's discursive positioning. Through this research, I will attempt to analyze his discourse as social practice and draw attention to the principles that constitute his discursive stance.

### **1.6 Research Question**

In order to develop a critical analysis of Watt's viewpoints, the study poses the following queries that will be followed throughout the analysis:

How can Watt's discursive position be identified and explained through contextualization of his viewpoints in socio-historical framework? Also, in what form can his position be analyzed in under the contemporary trends of Oriental study.

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

This analysis of Watt's discourse is significant for several reasons: First, his discourse on Muhammad ﷺ has become one of the most widely readable in the fields of Islamic studies and Oriental studies. Muslim scholars have reviewed his perspectives from a theological<sup>54</sup> aspect, the aspect of Tafseer<sup>55</sup>, and many other Muslim scholars have written

---

<sup>54</sup> Benaboud, "Orientalism on the Revelation of the Prophet: The Cases of W. Montgomery Watt, Maxime Rodinson, and Duncan Black MacDonald; Gokkir, "Western Attitudes to the Origin of the Qur'an: Theological and Linguistic Approaches of Twentieth Century English Speaking World from William Muir to William M. Watt. "

<sup>55</sup> Aziz et al., "William Montgomery Watt as an Interpreter of the Holy Qur'an."

books from general perspectives as well<sup>56</sup>. However, despite the fact that he generated distinct ideas and research findings on Muhammad's ﷺ political position, nobody has looked at his research findings in this area. Consequently, due to the divergent hypothetical discursive formation and relative absence of research in this domain, this review would be critically significant. Second, Watt faces accusations of approaching the Seerah in a Marxist fashion<sup>57</sup>, despite the fact that Muhammad's ﷺ political standing serves as a source of guidance to about 1.9 billion Muslims worldwide, or around 25% of the global population<sup>58</sup>. Thus, it will be key to analyze his discourse as social power and place him within this historical framework or sociocultural setting in order to assess whether his discourse was shaped by this approach or whether his findings were free of the influence of Marxism.

Thirdly, Watt comes from a post-colonial era that has been linked to western skepticism. This method of skeptical approach focuses on literature developed in nations that were once or are now colonized by western nations. It therefore appears quite likely that the review would be crucial since it would examine the element of whether Watt's ideological discursive foundations are merely based on skeptical methods or whether there are any factual arguments there. Fourthly, his discourse was conducted in an era that has been closely linked to Islamophobia and the limited scope of religion. It therefore appears essential to review his findings in order to assess whether these cultural variables have influenced his discursive theories or whether his findings are free from them.

---

<sup>56</sup> Kalin, "Prophet Muhammad and His Western Critics A Critique"; Khan, "Hagarism: The Story of a Book Written by Infidels for Infidels"; Buaben, *Image of the Prophet Muhammad in the West: A Study of Muir, Margoliouth and Watt*.

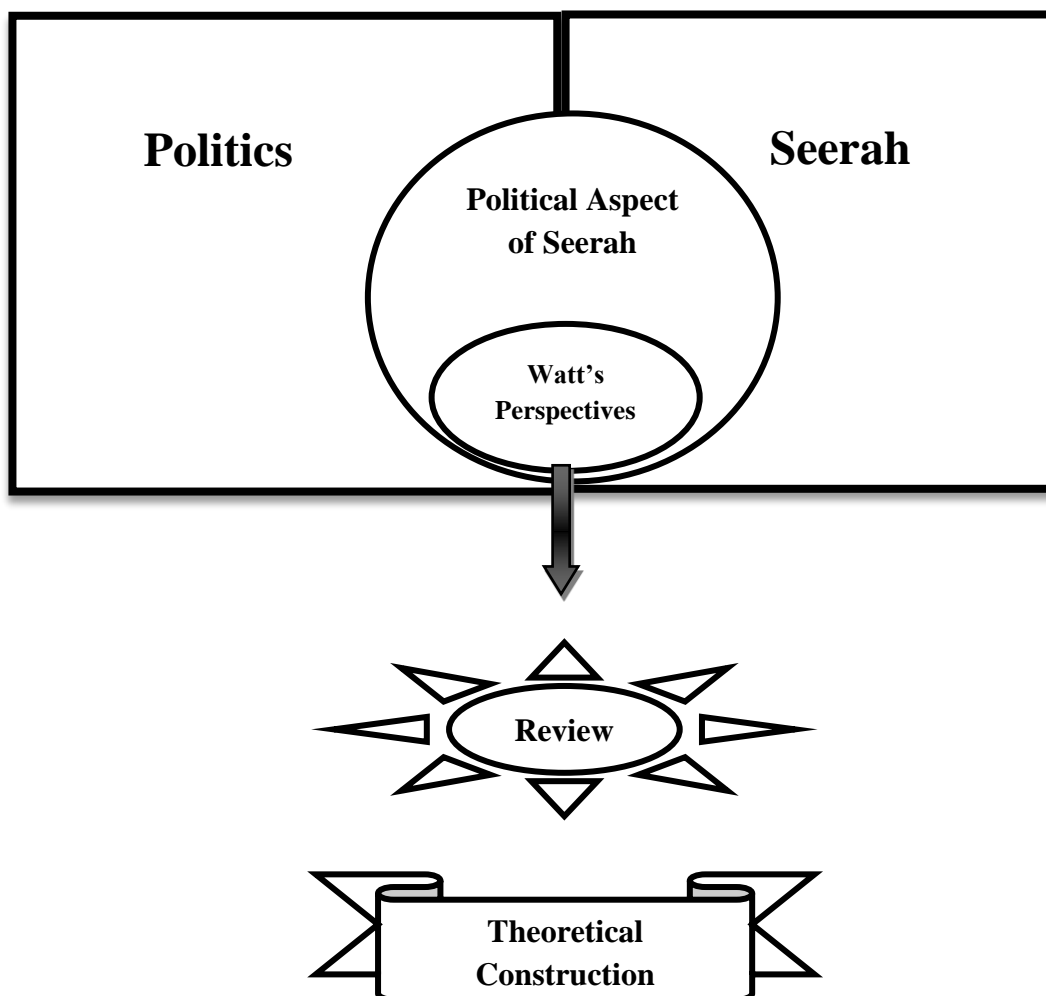
<sup>57</sup> Watt has been charged of conducting this approach by two scholars. The first is that Georges-Henri Bousquet criticized Watt's book *Muhammad in Mecca*, labelling it "A Marxist interpretation of the origins of Islam by an Episcopal clergyman." (Fred M. Donner, *The Study of Islam's Origins since W. Montgomery Watt's Publications* (Edinburgh: The University of Edinburgh, 2015), 4.). Second, social scientist Mustafeez Ahmad Alvi charged Watt of being a Marxist interpreter of Seerah in his publication, "*Montgomery Watt on Sirah of the Prophet (PBUH)*" (Alvi, "Watt on Sirah," 28.).

<sup>58</sup> Pew Research Center, "The Future of the Global Muslim Population," January 27, 2011, <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2011/01/27/the-future-of-the-global-muslim-population/>.

## 1.8 Key Objectives

1. Analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of Watt's methodological approach and his grounds or justifications for supporting research results on the political aspect of Seerah.
2. To label and expose weak delusion by highlighting the power structures that constitute Watt's discourse, as well as by making concealed causes evident.
3. To further develop the fields of Islamic studies and Oriental studies by opening the creative dimension of Watt's discursive practices and emphasizing his persuasive hypotheses.

## 1.9 Theoretical Framework



## 1.10 Methodological Outline

### 1.10.1 Data Collection

The study will primarily collect data from Watt's academic publications<sup>59</sup> and interview<sup>60</sup> in order to interpret his discourse. The researcher's study of Watt's discourse will serve as a supplemental source for the data collection process. His books include,

“*Muhammad at Mecca*”<sup>61</sup>, “*Muhammad at Medina*”<sup>62</sup> and “*Muhammad, Prophet and Statesman*”<sup>63</sup> will be used primarily. Additionally, his other book, mainly related to the political dimensions of Seerah, is “*Islamic Political Thought, the Basic Concept*”<sup>64</sup>. The last two chapters of the book “*What is Islam?*”<sup>65</sup> refer to administrative identity as well. Also, “*The Formative Period of Islamic Thoughts*”<sup>66</sup>, and “*Islam and the Integration of Society,*”<sup>67</sup> also will be used for additional understanding of his opinions.

---

<sup>59</sup> These were earlier discussed in the literature review.

<sup>60</sup> Interview with Prof William Montgomery Watt, 2000,  
[https://www.alastairmcintosh.com/articles/2000\\_watt.htm](https://www.alastairmcintosh.com/articles/2000_watt.htm).

<sup>61</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*.

<sup>62</sup> William Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Medina* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1981).

<sup>63</sup> Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*.

<sup>64</sup> William Montgomery Watt, *Islamic Political Thought, the Basic Concept*, 1st ed. (Edinburgh University Press, 1968).

<sup>65</sup> William Montgomery Watt, “What Is Islam?” 1968.

<sup>66</sup> William Montgomery Watt, *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought* (Oneworld Publications, 1998).

<sup>67</sup> William Montgomery Watt, *Islam and the Integration of Society* (London: Routledge, 1998).

The analysis may draw on the early sources in this regard, including the Qur'an, books of Hadith, Ibn Hasham book of Seerah<sup>68</sup>, "*Albidayah Walnihayah*"<sup>69</sup>, "*Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*"<sup>70</sup>, "*Jawami' as-Seera*"<sup>71</sup> and "*Al-Kamil fit-Tarikh*"<sup>72</sup>. Additionally, books written by contemporary researchers in the field will also be taken into account. These include Mubarakpuri<sup>73</sup>, Muhammad Tahir al-Qadri (1951–20— C.E.)<sup>74</sup>, Muhammad Hamidullah (1908–2002 C.E.)<sup>75</sup>, Muhammad Zubair<sup>76</sup>, Yasin Mazhar Siddiqi<sup>77</sup>, Ibrahim Kalin<sup>78</sup> and Abdul Qadir Jilani<sup>79</sup>.

The study will focus on the sociopolitical and sociocultural framework in which Watt formed his discourse in order to place Watt's ideological discursive production inside his natural setting, or contextual background. The sources of Alastair<sup>80</sup>, Gokkir<sup>81</sup>, Walker,<sup>82</sup> and Hillenbrand<sup>83</sup> will be the sources of the data that the study will use in this regard.

### 1.10.2 Methodological Approach and Data Analysis Strategy

---

<sup>68</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019.

<sup>69</sup> Ismail ibn Umar Ibn Kathir, *Albidayah Walnihayah*, vol. 3 (Beirut: Dar ul-fikr, 1998).

<sup>70</sup> Abu Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, trans. Abdullah Almu'adi, vol. 1, 8 vols. (Karachi: Nafees Academy, n.d.).

<sup>71</sup> Ibn Hazm, *Jawami' as-Seera*.

<sup>72</sup> Ali Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil fit-Tarikh*, vol. 2, 13 vols. (Beirut Lebanon: Dar-e-Sader, 1979).

<sup>73</sup> Mubarakpuri, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*.

<sup>74</sup> Muhammad Tahir al-Qadri, *Seerat ul Rasool*, 15th ed., vol. 3, 7 vols. (Lahore: Minhaj-ul-Quran Printer, 2017).

<sup>75</sup> Muhammad Hamidullah, *Rasool E Akram (SAW) Ki Siyasi Zindagi* (Lahore: Haji Hanif Printer, 2013); Hamidullah, *Ehd-e-Nabvi Main Nizaam-e-Hukmarani*; Hamidullah.

<sup>76</sup> Muhammad Zubair, *Islam aur Mustashriqeen*, 1st ed. (Lahore: Maktaba Rahmat ul lil Alameen, 2014).

<sup>77</sup> Yasin Mazhar Siddiqi, *Ehd e Nabvi (s.a.w) Ka Nizam e Haqoomat*, 1st ed. (Aligarh: Idara E Tahqeeq O Tasneef E Islami, 1994).

<sup>78</sup> Kalin, "Prophet Muhammad and His Western Critics A Critique."

<sup>79</sup> Abdul Qadir Jilani, *Islam, Paighambar e Islam aur Mustashriqeen e Maghrib ka Andaz e Fikar* (Lahore: Qudosia Islamic Press, 2005).

<sup>80</sup> Interview with Watt.

<sup>81</sup> Gokkir, "Western Attitudes to the Origion of the Qur'an: Theological and Linguistic Approaches of Twentieth Century English Speaking World from William Muir to William M. Watt."

<sup>82</sup> Walker, *A Biography of the 'Last Orientalist*.

<sup>83</sup> Hillenbrand, *Life and Work of W. Montgomery Watt*.



The review employs Critical Discourse Analysis<sup>84</sup> (CDA) to analyze Watt's discourse as a type of social practice, which means assessing the correlation between his discourse and societal contexts<sup>85</sup>. Because this approach is a socio-political discourse analysis method, this research will be mainly centered on the correlation between linguistics and social norms rather than the technical complexities of language. In order to evaluate the exercise of power in texts<sup>86</sup>, the research applies this technique to expose the hidden ideologies and the fact that whose interests and how are served by Watt's discursive positioning. Analysis attempts to critically explore the relationship between Watt's ideological discursive formation and the social dynamics of power. It implies that the studies of ideological discursive construction will take place against Watt's contextual background, with special emphasis paid to the socio-political and sociocultural environmental setting in which he developed his ideas. This is due to the fact that a decontextualized analysis is irrelevant to the type of research that this study is going to conduct.

Therefore, in order to conduct an effective CDA about Watt's discourse, the study has to critique links between textual properties and social mechanisms and relations (ideologies, power relations), as these connections often go undetected by those who

---

<sup>84</sup> The foundational manner of this approach was developed by critical linguists and theorists, and it has received considerable attention since the 1980s because of the works of British socio-linguist Norman Fairclough. He outlines it as: "By critical discourse analysis I mean discourse analysis which aims to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power; and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony."(Norman Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language* (London: Longman Publisher, 1995), 132–33.)

It suggests that the approach concentrates mainly on the significance of language in the construction of ideology and power and that it defines language as a type of social action with the goal of exposing the hidden ideological formations and power structures that are concealed in discourse.

<sup>85</sup> Social contexts refer to societal norms, the political environment, the chronological order of events, the place of practice, the target audience, and the speaker's socio-cultural and socio-political backgrounds.

<sup>86</sup> In accordance with Gramsci's theory of hegemony, dominance may be established by the persuasive potential of discourse, which develops consent and complicity in addition to coercive coercion, oppression, and exploitation. (Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971).)

produce and assess the texts in doubt and whose effectiveness relies on this blurred vision. It will allow one to identify and highlight how the text perpetrates, reproduces, or legitimizes the use of power. Similarly, this technique will uncover inequitable relationships of power and highlight the role of rhetoric in reproducing or opposing socio-political dominance.

The research will employ Fairclough, Norman's (1941–20— C.E.)<sup>87</sup> paradigm of the approach. This paradigm consists of three interconnected analytical processes and three interconnected discourse dimensions.

### **Dimensions**

1. The object of analysis<sup>88</sup>.
2. The procedures used to create the thing and deliver it to human subjects.
3. The socio-historical and socio-cultural frameworks that control these processes.

### **Analytical processes**

1. Textual evaluation<sup>89</sup>.
2. Analyzing the method of processing<sup>90</sup>.
3. Social analysis.

The ability to comprehend, expose, and resist social relations, social inequity, and social struggle in Watt's discourse will thus come through review, by taking off obstacles of presumptive beliefs justified through discourse through social intervention and exposing structured mechanisms of the development of power imbalances.

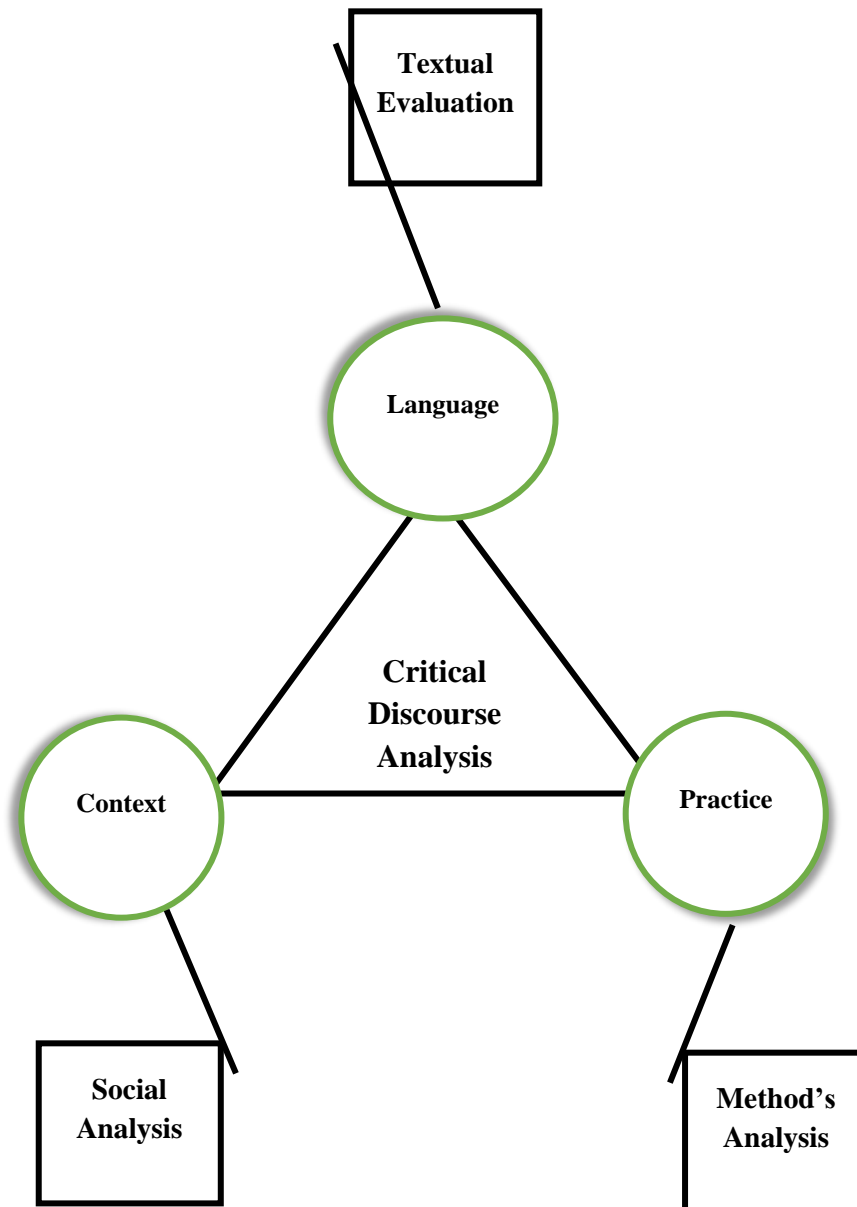
---

<sup>87</sup> Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language*.

<sup>88</sup> It refers to texts, including verbal, visual, or verbal and visual texts.

<sup>89</sup> It refers to a description.

<sup>90</sup> It refers to the interpretation that examines the production and reception processes.



### 1.10.3 Delimitations

This study will focus solely on Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ biography, specifically the section dealing with political affairs. Furthermore, in terms of the political elements involved with Seerah, it will exclusively analyze Watt's viewpoints. As a result, the rest of the Orientalists and non-political facets of Seerah will be exempt from the scope of the research. Additionally, just three of Watt's well-known books—“*Muhammad at Mecca*”, “*Muhammad at Medina*”, and “*Muhammad Prophet and Statesman*”—were employed in the study to collect data regarding what he theorized. In this regard, research will only support Watt's seventeen major claims<sup>91</sup> regarding the study area.

---

<sup>91</sup> In the key problematic areas of study section, they have previously been identified.

## **Part 2: CRITIQUE ON WATT'S PERSPECTIVE ON MECCAN POLITICS**

Muhammad's ﷺ early political position, termed the Meccan period, has been marked by his close political affairs with Mecca's polytheists. At the time of his political emergence, both sides, Muhammad ﷺ and Mecca's polytheists, initially tried to make peace and win over each other. But since the foundational political ideologies of the two parties were different, nothing much was achieved. As a result, they started scholarly critiques of one another's ideologies. Yet soon after, the Meccan polytheists actively participated in physical attacks on Muhammad ﷺ and his party, probably because they perceived themselves to be losing the intellectual debates.

During Muhammad's ﷺ mission to build an authoritative foundation, he also dealt with plenty of other political issues in order to accomplish the requirements of his followers. In order to put an end to his religious movement, an official Quraysh council was formed. Numerous of his companions, as earlier mentioned, were subjected to ruthless persecution by his enemies, with some of them ultimately being martyred. So, there have been two phases of Muslim migration to Abyssinia. In addition, due to their backing of Muhammad ﷺ, the whole Banu Hashim and Banu Matlab tribes were also under siege in Sha'b Abi Talib for three years.

Watt has his own particular method of conceptualizing all of the political environments of the Meccan period and has postulated Muhammad's ﷺ geopolitical orientation. His publications *"Muhammad at Mecca"* and *"Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman"* primarily provide his interpretation of these Meccan-era events. He builds a variety of hypotheses, six of which are specifically relevant to the subject of this discourse analysis—the political aspect of Seerah. Therefore, in this second section of the thesis, an in-depth review of these six theories will be conducted.

## 2.1 CHAPTER: THE MECCANS' OPPOSITION

### 2.1.1 Early Political Philosophy

Watt has deeply discussed the intellectual debate between Muhammad ﷺ and the Meccan polytheists. What he claims to be new there about his political ideology is that he says that there was nothing particularly anti-idolatry in his early message. He says:

“Indeed there is little about idols through the whole Meccan period.”<sup>92</sup>

Moreover, he asserts that throughout the Meccan period, the main criticism was economic, which was directed against the merchants there. In his analysis of the politics of the entire Meccan period, Watt's own words are as follows:

“The early Qur'anic ethic is entirely confined to matters of generosity and niggardliness or miserliness, to what the West would tend to call works of supererogation.”<sup>93</sup>

### Critique

While it is a fact that Muhammad ﷺ did not treat the idols in the same manner that Prophet Abraham did during the Meccan era, this fact does not necessarily imply that his teachings were any less explicit or were compromising. The conduct that he led was probably required for him in this Meccan era based on the fact that he had a broad plan and required not only the city of Mecca but also its inhabitants<sup>94</sup>. However, as far as Watt's theory is concerned, the study has to conduct the analysis to investigate the queries: Was the early message of Muhammad ﷺ just about the economy? Or were the economics merely a consequence, and the polytheists' idolatry or religious practices were the primary target? For this, the study should explore the earliest accounts in order to conduct analysis and get to the facts.

---

<sup>92</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, 121.

<sup>93</sup> Watt, 71.

<sup>94</sup> The justification for this claim is the declaration of the general amnesty on the occasion of the conquest of Mecca (Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, 1:359.).

In the beginning, the study tries to investigate Muhammad's ﷺ first sermon of open preaching, in which he invited, for the first time, the chiefs to a feast. There were 45 men in total, including a number of Banu Hashim and Banu Matab. In order to comprehend the actual sense of his preaching, the study cites here Muhammad's ﷺ exact words, which go as follows:

"All praise is due to Allah. I praise Him. And I seek His help. I believe in Him. I trust in Him and bear witness that there is no god worthy of worship but Allah. He is alone." He has no partner." He then said, "A leader cannot lie to his household. By God, besides whom there is no god, I am the Messenger of God to you in particular and to the people in general." By God, you will die as you sleep and be resurrected as you wake up. Then what you do will be reckoned with you. After that, either forever. Heaven or hell forever."<sup>95</sup>

Likewise, soon after Muhammad ﷺ announced his different identity, he demanded of the people on Mount Safa that they only believe in Allah, besides idols<sup>96</sup>. Furthermore, a few days later, an injunction in the form of the following verse from Surah al-Anbiya was revealed:

"Surely, you and (the idols) you worship besides Allah (all) are the fuel of Hell. You are going to enter it."<sup>97</sup>

These aforementioned accounts explicitly expose Muhammad's ﷺ standpoint that there is no idol worthy of worship but Allah, which further exposes how he has taken a clear stance against idols. These initial challenges against idolatry altered the overall religious and political climate of Mecca. This hypothetical building is formulated based on the fact that, after this, a few men from the elite Quraysh went directly to Abu Talib in order to complain. Ibn Ishaq and Ibn Sa'd recorded what they stated at the time, and it goes as follows:

---

<sup>95</sup> Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil fit-Tarikh*, 2:61.

<sup>96</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, n.d., 1:212.

<sup>97</sup> *Al-Qur'an* 21:98.

"O Abu Talib! Your nephew has slandered our gods, faulted our religion, called our intellects foolish, and misled our fathers. So, either you stop him from it, or withdraw from us and him."<sup>98</sup>

Similar to the above, Ibn Ishaq also reports a narration in which Abdullah ibn Umer highlights the circumstances regarding this particular subject. According to him, as he was meeting with Quraysh authorities, they made the following remarks:

"We have not been more patient with anyone than him. Speaks against us, defames our religion and abuses our forefathers. Insolent in the glory of our gods."<sup>99</sup>

Acknowledging the oneness of God unescapably implies a rejection of idols, which is what these accounts demonstrate that he was preaching for. Due to the fact that these above-mentioned accounts make Muhammad's ﷺ narrative on idols very evident, they seem to stand in sharp contrast to Watt's assertion that there was nothing anti-idolatry from an early standpoint.

In addition, the incident where the Quraysh sent 'Utbah Ibn Rabi'ah to Muhammad ﷺ as an ambassador of reconciliation is also considerably relevant. The Quraysh chief 'Utbah words also help one to grasp the polytheists' intentions and demands in order to get the facts regarding Watt's claim. Ibn Hasham recorded the remarks of 'Utbah in the following words:

"Nephew! You have created a difference in the nation by presenting a new religion. Listen carefully. I offer you a few things, maybe one of them will be acceptable to you. If you want to get wealth through your movement. So we gladly accumulate so much wealth for you, that you will become the richest among us. If you want the position of chieftaincy, we accept you as our chief. We will not settle any matter without asking you. If you want the kingdom, we accept you as our king."<sup>100</sup>

Now, the important point is: If, as Watt asserts, Muhammad ﷺ had not yet taken a stance against the idols, then what was the subject of this conflict? Let's consider some hypothetical situations. The economic element, as asserted by Watt, is one scenario that

---

<sup>98</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 1:256–57; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, 1:214.

<sup>99</sup> Ibn Hasham, 1:288-289.

<sup>100</sup> Ibn Hasham, 1:292–93.



might be possible<sup>101</sup>. But it does not seem plausible because, assuming that there was an economic issue, it seems irrational that the Meccan polytheists would offer Muhammad ﷺ much additional wealth. A further hypothesis is that the conflict was about political affairs. But if there were political differences, why did polytheists offer him the chieftainship and the kingdom? For that reason, it also does not seem strongly persuasive since it is not commonsensical. Eventually, this forces one to consider the third and probably final possibility—that the conflict was religious—as the most likely one. The solid explanation for this is corroborated by the traditions mentioned above, namely that Muhammad ﷺ explicitly opposed idols from the start of his teaching. This theory is further supported by his reaction to ‘Utbah at that time. He responded to this offer by reciting thirteen verses from the Qur’an. One of them was clearly against idolatry, as follows:

“Your God is One God, so be straight turned towards Him alone and seek forgiveness from Him. And destruction awaits those who associate partners with Him.”<sup>102</sup>

The framework of the above discussion was merely structured around the very early events of Seerah. Correspondingly, when the study examines the early Qur’anic revelations, an analyst finds that many verses have been revealed, particularly those that denounce idols. These are: 6. 46, 70, 100, 101; 7. 193, 194; 10. 19, 35, 90; 16. 36, 59, 60, 88; 17. 58, 111; 18. 50; 19. 84, 85, 86, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95; 21. 26, 27, 28, 44; 28. 62, 63, 74; 30. 10, 11, 12; 37. 149; 43. 15, 86; 53. 21, 22; and above all, the whole of Surah al-Kafrun strongly negates all doubts. The paradox lies in the fact that, on the one hand, when Watt presents the Qur’anic verses to prove the factual bases for the satanic verses, he exaggerates the idols, but on the other, he argues that there are slight records against idolatry<sup>103</sup>.

Logically, there would be no theological difference between Islam and the polytheists of Mecca if Watt’s ideological discursive formation that Muhammad ﷺ did not have an explicit message against idols were accepted. Due to the fact that the Meccan polytheists acknowledged the existence of God, they did not acknowledge His oneness and claimed that He had partnered with the idols. This disagreement was not primarily about politics or the economy, as the study has already justified. The study cannot

---

<sup>101</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, 71.

<sup>102</sup> *Al-Qur’an* 41:6.

<sup>103</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, 108–9.

consequently come up with any justification for the dispute between Muhammad ﷺ and the polytheists unless one admits that his position against idols was explicit and uncompromising.

Consequently, not only from the above verses but also from the aforementioned accounts, it is abundantly recognizable that Muhammad ﷺ had made his opposition to their idols clear from an early time. Additionally, his rejection of money and the kingdom demonstrates that he did not place as much importance on the economy as Watt has suggested. Muhammad ﷺ may have had secondary attention in economics; however, if his primary focus was anything, it was most likely religion.

For the reasoning, Watt's construction of the ideology that Muhammad's ﷺ early philosophy was not anti-idolatry does not seem persuasive in the presence of the aforementioned historical facts and rationales. It seems quite apparent that he only exaggerated the verses about economic affairs, which shows how he interpreted the case through a materialistic lens. Also, he overlooked the primary Qur'anic and Muhammad's ﷺ criticism against idolatry, which displays how he was skeptical in his mythological approach in this case. For that reason, the analysis critically exposes the relationship between Watt's ideological discursive formation and the sociocultural factor. The study shows that his claim clearly reflects the fact that his analysis is influenced by environmental factors associated with both Marxism and Western skepticism.

### **Assessment**

Watt's claim that Muhammad's ﷺ early philosophy was not anti-idolatry does not seem persuasive in the presence of numerous historical facts and logical reasoning. Critical discourse analysis explores the fact that his philosophy was based on faith. There's no God but Allah, which has the straightforward meaning of acknowledging Allah's oneness. Acknowledging the oneness of Allah requires rejecting idolatry because the oneness of Allah is the antithesis of idolatry, and the two are unable to get along. As a result, Muhammad ﷺ publicly objected to the people of polytheism and their idolatry and started to criticize the gods they believed in from the very beginning of his preaching; the Meccan accounts have an abundance of references to this subject. This study critically reveals the connection between Watt's sociocultural element and his ideological discursive development as a result.

### 2.1.2 Meccans' Objective behind Opposing Muhammad ﷺ

The main critique of the Meccan period is: who were Muhammad's ﷺ opponents? Were they religious people, merchants, or political leaders? Also, what were their motives or reasons for opposition? Watt's claim in this regard is slightly different. Watt says that the actual issue was not idols, because it meant little to them<sup>104</sup>. He asserted that the principal causes of reaction were conservative values, selfish motives, and fear of dominance both politically and economically. He states in the following words:

"The gods meant little to them. ... The grounds of opposition to Islam were thus, besides self-interest, fear of its political and economic implications, and sheer conservatism."<sup>105</sup>

#### Critique

The actual research point here is Watt's claim that the disagreement over idols was not a special issue for opposition between Muhammad ﷺ and his opponents. Thus, the main critiques are whether politics and economics were the main causes of opposition or were secondary and whether the main issue was the denunciation of idolatry. The study cannot give factual analysis to these critiques until it looks into the interaction between the opponents and Banu Hashim. The study should also review the warnings given by the opponents to Muhammad ﷺ and Banu Hashim so that one can find out what their actual demands were or what they wanted. In this way, the study will be able to formulate an effective hypothesis about the reasons behind the opposition.

In this regard, Ibn Hasham's account is quite notable, where he narrates that one day, Akhnas ibn Shariq and Abu Sufyan went together to Abu Jahl and asked him what his opinion of Muhammad ﷺ is. His explanation is very important since he said that they and the descendants of Abd Manaf were competing with each other in the pursuit of leadership. They both fed the people, gave rides to the people, and did many other favors. According to Abu Jahl, now that there is a prophet among them on whom divine revelation is revealed by God, we will never believe in it<sup>106</sup>.

---

<sup>104</sup> Watt, 135.

<sup>105</sup> Watt, 135-136

<sup>106</sup> Shafi, *Ma'ariful Qur'an*, 3:315-16.

Likewise, regarding his truthfulness, Abu Jahl said that by God he (Muhammad PBUH) has never lied, but if his words are accepted, then his clan will take over everything and nothing will be left for the rest of the Quraysh<sup>107</sup>. These two claims imply that there are multiple variables at play in resistance. Tribalism<sup>108</sup> appears to be the first element, with a strong likelihood given that Abu Jahl often made reference to his respect for his tribe. Additionally, it implies other factors, such as a threat to their economic interests and political standing, when he raises the fear that if they believe in Muhammad ﷺ, everything would fall under the control of Banu Hashim.

Similar to the above, there is also further justification in favor of the claim that politics and economics were variables in the rejection. When one examines the early sources regarding encounters between Muhammad ﷺ and the polytheists, such as the appeal and warning to Abu Talib to stop Muhammad ﷺ, the social boycott, the emigration to Abyssinia, the Battle of Badr, the Battle of Uhud, the Battle of Khandaq, and the Conquest of Mecca, it is determined that the people who played a key role for the Quraysh seemed to be the following:

S No.	Name	S No.	Name
1	Abu Jahl	7	Shaiba ibn Rabi'ah
2	Waleed ibn Mua'ira	8	Abu Lahab
3	'Uqbah ibn Mui't	9	Arwa bint Harb
4	Waleed ibn 'Uqbah	10	Waleed ibn 'Utbah
5	Abu Sufyan	11	Hinda bint 'Utbah
6	'Utbah ibn Rabi'ah	12	Umayya ibn Khalaf

---

<sup>107</sup> Shafi, 3:316.

<sup>108</sup> Being an ally of a tribe or having a deep sense of devotion to one's tribe is referred to as tribalism or tribal humanism (Webster, "Merriam-Webster.Com Dictionary, s.v."tribalism," accessed September 13, 2023, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/tribalism>).

With the sole exception of Abu Lahab, all of Muhammad's ﷺ notable opponents were members of the Banu Makhzoom and Banu Abd al-Shams. Despite the truth that Abu Lahab did not truly have a genealogical connection to any of these two clans, he was married into the clan of Banu Abd al-Shams<sup>109</sup>. Furthermore, the Banu Makhzoom and the Banu Abd al-Shams were the two tribes that were both economically and politically authoritative at the time of early preaching. Since all of his significant opponents somehow belonged to these two clans, which were economically and politically authoritative, a strong hypothesis in this scenario would be that they both opposed Muhammad ﷺ with a motive to preserve their predominant positions of leadership and commerce. Tribalism appears to be an additional component and the third most probable one. This theory is corroborated by the fact that all of the individuals mentioned above are from the Banu Makhzoom and Banu Abd al-Sham tribes, which often engage in conflict with the Banu Hashim.

From the aforementioned interpretations, it seems that tribalism, economic prosperities and political interests played a key role in the opponent's motivations. However, was this a primary motive, or was this merely a supporting variable factor, with the main concern being something else? In this regard, Watt claims, as mentioned earlier, that idolatry, which was the key difference between Muhammad ﷺ and his opponents, was not the primary issue; the actual issues were tribalism and economic and political interests. But as an analyst, one cannot just follow Watt blindly; a study has to conduct further analysis in order to bring out the factual root of the matter. Because it will not be an effective approach to establishing any hypothesis by inferring merely from a few incidents and overlooking other accounts. Accordingly, the study tries to get to the facts by contextually analyzing other events as well.

---

<sup>109</sup> Abu Lahab's wife's name was Umm Jameel who was the daughter of Harb ibn Umayya who a chief of the clan of Banu Abd al-Shams (Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 1:157.)

In this regard, Ibn Hasham quotes the words of warning given to Abu Talib by many leaders<sup>110</sup> of the Quraysh which are very important to infer from<sup>111</sup>. They explained the reason for the warning as follows:

“Your nephew has slandered our gods, faulted our religion, called our intellects foolish, and misled our fathers.”<sup>112</sup>

This account makes no reference to Quraysh having warned about political or economic factors in the warning. Abu Talib had listened to them politely, but Muhammad ﷺ had continued to call for the oneness of God. Ibn Hasham reports that Abu Lahab gathered some people and once again went back to Abu Talib. There, they warned again that they could not bear the condemnation of their gods and the insulting of their ancestors<sup>113</sup>.

Similarly, a very important event in this regard is ‘Utbah’s offer when Banu Quraysh sent him to Muhammad ﷺ. ‘Utbah offered, in exchange for stopping religious movement, wealth, the position of the clan’s chieftaincy and kingdom of Arabia but he refuted it<sup>114</sup>. This offer evidently reinforces that the primary problem was idolatry or religion and not politics or economy at all. If the economy was a problem, then they would not offer Muhammad ﷺ the additional wealth. Likewise, when they offer the chiefship or kingdom, it means that they have no political threat. This is based on the fact that offering Muhammad ﷺ the kingdom implies that the Meccans were ready to accept his political and influential status. An analyst can also infer from this that when Muhammad ﷺ made an offer to them on his own behalf<sup>115</sup>. He offered that if the people would accept only one condition, they would become the king of Arabs and Ajams. Abu Jahl said:

---

<sup>110</sup> Among them were ‘Utbah ibn Rabi’ah, Shaiba ibn Rabi’ah, Abu Jahl ibn Hisham, Umayyah ibn Khalaf, Abu Sufyan ibn Harb, and other Quraysh leaders whose total number, according to some sources, was twenty-five, but Ibn Ishaq has only mentioned 10 names (Ibn Hasham, 1:257.)

<sup>111</sup> Ibn Hasham, 1:257.

<sup>112</sup> Ibn Hasham, 1:257.

<sup>113</sup> Ibn Hasham, 1:258.

<sup>114</sup> Ibn Hasham, 1:295–96.

<sup>115</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 2:35.

"Tell me, what that thing is? By your father! If you offer ten such things, we are ready to accept them."<sup>116</sup>

Regarding the offer, Muhammad ﷺ said that the people say that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah and abandon what they worship<sup>117</sup>. But eventually, the Quraysh rejected this offer<sup>118</sup>. Here, the noteworthy point is that the polytheists were ready to accept Muhammad's ﷺ ten proposals, were ready to make him a leader and king, and were ready to make him the richest person in the whole of Arabia. Therefore, the question is: Why were they not ready to accept only one condition, believe in one Allah, and abandon worshipping idols? This will be because agreeing to this bargain of believing in one God will require negating their gods. Therefore, the only hypothesis is that the rejection of idols was the most difficult of all other matters, and consequently, religion will be considered the primary motive of the opponents.

Based on these aforementioned justifications, the study can conclude that the opposition's primary motivation was religious, while tribalism, political concerns, and economic interests were secondary. Although some traditions prove that tribalism and political and economic interests also played an important role in the opposition, Watt's discourse identification of politics and economy as the main concerns, to the exclusion of religious concerns, is by no means a satisfactory ideological construction. His approach exposes how his thought is shaped by his cultural background in the form of a Marxist approach. The main reason for not citing tribalism, politics, or economics as the primary reasons for opposition is that it will raise some critiques that may not be possible to explain. The question is, if economics were the main issue, why would the opponents send 'Utbah and offer more wealth to Muhammad ﷺ? Also, in the same way, if it is believed that the political aspect was the main issue, then why would the opponents offer Muhammad ﷺ the chieftainship and the kingdom? Furthermore, tribalism seems to be one of the most

---

<sup>116</sup> Ibn Hasham, 2:35; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, 1:215.

<sup>117</sup> Ibn Hasham, 2:35; Ibn Sa'd, 1:215. .

<sup>118</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 2:35.

probabilistic variables, but not the primary one. This is because if it were the main issue, then they would not offer chieftainship.

The main motive of opposition has been suggested to be religion because of the tough reaction that came from Muhammad's ﷺ declaration that only Allah is worthy of worship and idols are meaningless. In addition, although they were ready to accept his ten demands, they were not ready to accept only one of them and believe in one God. This means that the confession of religious factors was the most difficult for them compared to all others. The deduction is that despite the fact that tribalism, politics, and the economy were also significant variables in the polytheists' resistance to Muhammad ﷺ, these were all secondary variables; the primary issue was the religious aspect.

### **Assessment**

Watt's discursive standpoint considers politics, economics, and tribalism as the primary factors rather than idolatry, which he claims is a secondary factor. However, the discourse analysis supports the theory that idolatry was the primary issue and all other issues, including economic interest, political concerns, and most importantly, tribalism, were subordinated to it subsequently. Consequently, Watt's identification of politics and the economy as the main concerns, to the exclusion of religious factors, is by no means a persuasive hypothesis. Also, it seems that the method he employed for his discourse's ideological construction is possibly shaped by his cultural background in the form of a Marxist attitude toward Seerah interpretation.

### **2.1.3 Persecution during Social Boycott**

In his research on Banu Hashim's social boycott, Watt has established a complicated hypothesis that requires meticulous consideration. According to him, there have been no reports of violence during this social boycott, and the persecution has been exaggerated. The following are Watt's direct words:



“The situation of Hashim cannot have been as serious as it sounds. There is no record of any complaint of undue hardship, nor of recriminations against Muhammad.”<sup>119</sup>

## Critique

Does this boycott affect Muslims harmfully? How much did they cost if they were? Or, if they were not, is it actually overstated? Before entering into these critiques, it is crucial that the study first look into the traditions regarding the contract document. It may be seen by looking at several traditions that the polytheists joined to write a text that demands a boycott of the Banu Hashim and Banu Matlab. Despite the fact that this contract is not available in a solely compile form, studying the account of Ibn Hasham reveals the following boycott points<sup>120</sup>.

1. Banu Hashim and his backer, the Banu Matlab, shall not be allowed to marry Banu Quraysh or Banu Kinana.
2. There would not be any sort of buying or selling with them.
3. There would not be any sort of interrelationship between them.
4. The offer of reconciliation will never be accepted until they hand over Muhammad ﷺ.

The same conditions are also addressed by Ibn Sa’d<sup>121</sup>, Ibn Kathir<sup>122</sup> and Ibn Hazm<sup>123</sup>. However, what this agreement exposes is that it makes no mention of the sieges of Banu Hashim and Banu Matlab. By this, the dispute was only against Banu Hashim and his supporter, Banu Matlab, other tribes were out of the part as per the agreement. Furthermore, only Quraysh and Banu Kinana were prohibited from trading with Banu Hashim and Banu Matlab, and the agreement did not extend to any other tribes' traders or even outsiders. In light of the fact that this is only a preliminary aspect of the agreement, it is clear that Banu

---

<sup>119</sup> William Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman* (London: London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 77.

<sup>120</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 1:354.

<sup>121</sup> Ibn Sa’d, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa’d*, n.d., 1:205.

<sup>122</sup> Ibn Kathir, *Albidayah Walnihayah*, 3:84.

<sup>123</sup> Ibn Hazm, *Jawami’ as-Seera*, 91–92.

Hashim and Banu Matlab were not the victims of such extreme mistreatment. Based solely on this, it seems that Watt's claim is quite persuasive to this extent. But the key critique is: Was this very same agreement actually followed? Or did Kinana and Quraysh treat anything else differently that was not covered by the agreement? Therefore, it is extremely important to understand, as one frequently observes in daily life, that occasionally diverse behavior is performed on the ground rather than something written in a document.

Imam Muslim has reported 'Utbah ibn Ghazwan's narration that during the boycott, their entire week with Muhammad ﷺ would pass in such a way that they would have just the leaves of trees to eat<sup>124</sup>. In the same vein, Ibn Alqaim also has a report where Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas asserts that their lives in Sha'b Abi Talib were filled with adversity<sup>125</sup>. Regarding this, he said that once he was hungry and, by accident, tripped over something at night. When it was taken up, placed on the tongue, and swallowed, he used to remark that he did not know what that object was until now<sup>126</sup>. There is another similar confirmation, which indicates that the Banu Hashim wished to make purchases with a foreign caravan carrying food when it arrived in Mecca<sup>127</sup>. To them, they approached and warned that these are Muhammad's ﷺ companions; therefore, they compelled them to pay high prices in order to prevent these Muslim customers from making purchases<sup>128</sup>.

Moreover, Ibn Hasham said under the social boycott that Hakeem Hizam, Khadija's nephew, was once transporting some grain for his paternal aunt when Abu Jahl noticed him<sup>129</sup>. Abu Jahl said that he would never permit him to do so and would make everyone aware of this activity. Lately, the reason he would not let Hizam go for grain was a point on which Abul Bakhtari and Abu Jahl engaged in a bitter fight<sup>130</sup>. Similar to the aforementioned, Ibn Hasham also discusses that Hasham Ibn Amr Ibn Rabiyyah has also been transporting some

---

<sup>124</sup> Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, Kitab Al-Zuhd Wal-Raqaq, v.4, 2278, Hadith no: 2967.

<sup>125</sup> Mubarakpuri, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*, 158.

<sup>126</sup> Mubarakpuri, 158.

<sup>127</sup> Mubarakpuri, 158.

<sup>128</sup> Mubarakpuri, 158.

<sup>129</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 1:357.

<sup>130</sup> Ibn Hasham, 1:357.

bags of grain at night since Quraysh learned about it<sup>131</sup>. When the Quraysh referred to him as a very indolent person, Hasham apologized and said he would not act in such a way again. After quite a while, when the Quraysh caught him in the act and proceeded to punish him, Abu Sufyan gave him up.

Further, nearly identical to the above, Ibn Sa'd's accounts demonstrate that it was common to hear mothers and children crying outdoors due to being hungry<sup>132</sup>. Some of the Quraysh were delighted by these innocent voices, while the sympathetic Quraysh were significantly hurt by this conduct<sup>133</sup>. Along with these, when the study puts one of the incidents<sup>134</sup> in context and considers Banu Hashim's internal security services, it also becomes clear that Abu Talib used to organize his security on his own. He often placed him on a special bed when people went to sleep at night so that anyone planning a murderous attack would see him. He, however, would alter his bed while people slept. It demonstrates that there were some security concerns.

According to Ibn Sa'd, Banu Hashim were only allowed outside of the valley during the holy months<sup>135</sup>. If there is some truth to the claim, it would probably be the most painful of all these behaviors. Finally, at the end of this agreement, Abu Talib and his associates went to the Ka'bah to pray, which might also help a researcher to imagine the best-case scenario under the circumstances. The following phrases in their supplication to God reveal that they had suffered from three deeds of wickedness during this boycott:

“O God! Help us against those who have wronged us and cut off our kinship and made the things permissible which forbidden by God.”<sup>136</sup>

---

<sup>131</sup> Mubarakpuri, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*, 159.

<sup>132</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, n.d., 1:220.

<sup>133</sup> Mubarakpuri, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*, 159.

<sup>134</sup> Ibn Kathir, *Albidayah Walnihayah*, 3:106.

<sup>135</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, n.d., 1:220.

<sup>136</sup> Ibn Sa'd, 1:220.

The persecutions of the Meccans are also sufficiently supported by a number of additional occurrences that Safi Ur Rahman Mubarakpuri<sup>137</sup> and Tahir al-Qadri<sup>138</sup> have compiled.

Now, after analyzing all the above accounts, one discovers the evidence that, when he solely considers the contract, it exposes that the Quraysh acted in a normal boycott. By virtue of this agreement, Banu Hashim was free to buy the required products from merchants other than Banu Quraysh and Banu Kinana. Moreover, the contract makes no reference to besieging Banu Hashim. These factors allow a researcher to conclude that this boycott was not a serious persecution against Banu Hashim. Despite the fact that Banu Hashim and Banu Matlab experienced economic, social, or security issues as a result of the boycott from Quraysh and Kinana because they were leading solitary lives, this cannot be characterized as persecution. This deduction is grounded in the reasoning that if Banu Hashim's problems are referred to as persecution, then Quraysh and Kinana apparently have also been dealing with it as they were leading isolated lives from them.

As a matter of fact, if one cannot characterize the issues facing the Quraysh as persecution, study is also unable to attest so for Banu Hashim. Another rationale for this is that, in the past, enemies have frequently used boycotts of this nature to siege one another. In the context of the aforementioned, one cannot refer to this boycott as persecution when one excludes all other circumstances and solely considers the conditions outlined in the text of the contract.

In terms of application, the issue goes beyond the terms of this text of the boycott's agreement and requires consideration of the actual sociopolitical conditions. In practical terms, Kinana and Quraysh behave somewhat differently. Although this agreement did not restrict Banu Hashim from purchasing the necessary supplies from merchants besides Quraysh and Kinana, at certain stages, Quraysh prevented foreign merchants. The Quraysh did not permit Muhammad ﷺ and Banu Hashim to go outside except during the four sacred months, despite the fact that they had no legal basis for besieging them under the terms of the contract. In addition, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas is reported to have swallowed a piece of

---

<sup>137</sup> Mubarakpuri, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*, 158–62.

<sup>138</sup> Qadri, *Seerat ul Rasool*, 2017, 3:488–98.

leather<sup>139</sup>; however, by contract, it was merely against Banu Hashim and Matlab and not factually against Muslims in general. This implies that he was also among the people under siege, although he belonged to Banu Zahra. In addition, one may assume that Banu Hashim's circumstances would have been even worse as a consequence of the consumption restriction, which was not included in the contract.

The study can theorize that the polytheists' financial position was marginally better, based on the fact that they used to purchase commodities from foreign merchants at higher costs<sup>140</sup>. In contrast, the fact that the children of Banu Hashim were crying from hunger is indicative of their poor economy. In light of these different economic positions, Banu Hashim might have suffered the most loss due to his solitary life in comparison to Banu Quraysh. Eventually, when a research looks at tradition and learns that Banu Quraysh paid a hefty price for the items that were brought to Mecca, it may indicate some other facts. This leads the researcher to another conclusion: Banu Hashim's underdeveloped economy makes it difficult for them to buy any product. Subsequently, research can conclude that Banu Hashim was not only socially but also economically under siege in this particular circumstance.

The soundness of this narrative is further supported by the fact that, according to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas' account, they were forced to eat leaves and skins and that their hunger was so severe that the voices of children and women could be heard outside the clan<sup>141</sup>. Consequently, based on every aspect of the above reasoning, the study concludes that Banu Hashim and Banu Matlab suffered severe persecution during the social boycott. In the case in question, their lives were not merely socially under siege but also economically.

### **Assessment**

The assessment would be that Watt has developed the hypothetical discursive idea solely based on the contract's terms. He overlooks other accounts that reveal the violence of Banu Quraysh and claims that persecutions were exaggerated. Contrastingly, the review has no way to reject these accounts only on the basis of Western skepticism, which has clearly

---

<sup>139</sup> Mubarakpuri, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*, 158.

<sup>140</sup> Mubarakpuri, 158.

<sup>141</sup> Mubarakpuri, 158.

modified Watt's discourse's findings in this case. The analysis exposes that despite the fact that the terms of the boycott's contract were not particularly harsh, Banu Quraysh's conduct beyond that contract proved to be particularly cruel.

If these precautionary occasions are perceived as independent from the boycott contact, then the study will hypothesize that the contract by itself was free of persecution. However, if each of these factors is taken into account, it should be acknowledged that Quraysh and Banu Kinana severely persecuted Banu Hashim and Matlab and besieged them. Because it influences a variety of domains, including political, economic, and even psychological, hypothetically, this social boycott will be considered to go beyond the siege in the social realm.

#### **2.1.4 Reasons for the Boycott**

Watt has proposed additional advanced ideas in his analysis regarding Banu Hashim's social boycott, which also need to be examined further. According to him, Muhammad's ﷺ religion was not the sole reason for the boycott of Banu Hashim. He argues that providing protection for him was not the only point of dispute between Banu Hashim and Quraysh. Watt's own words are as follows:

“ ... The last point tends to confirm the view that Muhammad's religion was not the sole reason for the boycott.”<sup>142</sup>

#### **Critique**

The investigation is increasingly challenged by Watt's claim that the boycott was not solely motivated by the religious movement, because he does not go to a particular length to justify it. Merely looking into a few accounts, he said that since there is no record of any accusations against Muhammad ﷺ, it supports the idea that the boycott was not solely motivated by the religious movement<sup>143</sup>. According to him, financial gain was the primary motivating factor behind both his defense of Muhammad ﷺ and his resistance against the

---

<sup>142</sup> William Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman* (London: London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 77.

<sup>143</sup> Watt, 77.

monopolistic Quraysh<sup>144</sup>. So, the critique that needs to be analyzed is: were there any further contributing factors? If so, which ones? How much of a role did it play? And were they primary or secondary backing factors?

Contextual information on this social boycott has been covered by Tahir al-Qadri in his widely published book “*Seerat ul Rasool*”<sup>145</sup>. In accordance with his discourse’s conclusions, he has only mentioned the cause of the Islamic religious movement. Ibn Hazm has also said that the social boycott is solely motivated by Muhammad's ﷺ religious activity<sup>146</sup>. Similarly, Mubarakpuri depicts the religion of Islam as the driving force behind the boycott in his publication “*Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*” and ignores any additional variables<sup>147</sup>.

These are not simply a few researcher’s literature reviews; there are numerous additional Muslim scholars with the same research perspectives as those included here. However, one of their weaknesses is the fact that none of these authors provided a description of how their statements are justified. They also overlook the consideration of other probable explanations that Watt has suggested. So, considering this information as a framework, it is needed to perform additional research that is accountable for all relevant factors and then explore the underlying causes.

To get to the bottom of the above-mentioned critiques, the study will follow two different methodological lanes. In study’s initial analysis, it will examine this critical point from the viewpoint of the Quraysh and Kinana, who opposed Banu Hashim. In the next analysis, the study will look into the reasons why Banu Hashim joined Muhammad ﷺ in his campaign against the Quraysh. This method of independent analysis is employed because it is not necessary for both sides to be motivated by the same things if there is a controversy over an issue. It is possible that one party carried out the action for spiritual reasons while the other did it in order to gain some material advantages.

---

<sup>144</sup> Watt, 76.

<sup>145</sup> al-Qadri, *Seerat ul Rasool*, 2017, 3:487.

<sup>146</sup> Ibn Hazm, *Jawami’ as-Seera*, 91–92.

<sup>147</sup> Mubarakpuri, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*, 157.

Study already established the motives of the Quraysh under “Meccans’ Objectives behind Opposing Muhammad ﷺ,” where research has established that these opponents' prime motive was religion, with all other belongings contributing as a consequence. The fundamental point of this study’s claim was identified as Muhammad’s ﷺ religion because, despite the Quraysh's willingness to accept all ten of his demands, they were unwilling to embrace only one of his religious statements, La ilaha illa Allah (There is no God but Allah). The ‘Utbah offer of the chieftainship, the kingdom, and the wealth to Muhammad ﷺ in exchange for his stoppage of criticism against idols was also covered in this support. As a result, it is abundantly clear from Banu Quraysh's angle that they only agreed to a boycott when Muhammad’s ﷺ mission opposed the idols they worshiped, and no further investigation is needed. Further research is actually needed for a full comprehension of the critique of why the Banu Hashim came up in opposition to Quraysh.

The reason Banu Hashim went against the Quraysh in support of Muhammad ﷺ is now the subject of discussion. About this, Watt argues that his defense of Muhammad ﷺ and resistance to the Quraysh were motivated by material gain<sup>148</sup>. However, since a researcher cannot blindly follow Watt's assertion, the study should conduct further investigation to discover the actual causes.

In this aspect, it does not seem likely if one supposes that Muhammad’s ﷺ religious movement may be the motive. This is due to the fact that the majority of Banu Hashim and Banu Matlab did not embrace Muhammad’s ﷺ doctrines themselves; therefore, they would not struggle to defend his religion. Consequently, a research cannot believe it because it fails to make logical sense. The second justification is that the greater part of Banu Hashim and Banu Matlab were following the idolatry that was being criticized by Muhammad ﷺ himself; hence, it makes no sense for them to defend Islam. The third justification is that since a significant amount of Banu Hashim and Banu Matlab belonged to the same religious group as Quraysh and Banu Kinana, they had no need to engage in combat to defend Islam from their fellow believers. Thus, the religious factor does not seem to provide a plausible rationale in these surroundings.

---

<sup>148</sup> Watt, Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman, 76.



Additionally, if research assumes Watt's claim that Hashim offered the defense in order to get financial advantages, it seems unlikely. For this, a strong base is the fact that Banu Hashim did not make an effort to convince Muhammad ﷺ to receive the wealth from the Quraysh at the time when he refused to accept the wealth offered by Banu Quraysh.

Because Muhammad ﷺ was also offered a chieftainship and a kingdom on that occasion, it does not appear to be for political purposes either. Leadership in Mecca under Muhammad ﷺ will undoubtedly imply Banu Hashim's leadership, so they would have at least made an effort to persuade him. Yet, none of the Banu Hashim or Banu Matlab members attempted at all to convince Muhammad ﷺ after his refusal. Although Abu Talib made a poor attempt at persuasion<sup>149</sup>, the research theorizes that it was merely an emotional request for leniency for the polytheists' idols and had nothing to do with obtaining a position of authority or receiving the wealth that was offered. Regarding Watt's discourse weakness, it appears that he analyzed this particular problem with a materialistic lens as well as that he was skeptical about several essential variables that affects his discourse's conclusions. Consequently, study has to explore elsewhere.

As a matter of fact, none of the cases provide an explanation for the earlier-mentioned core critique. There is only one hypothesis that might account for it, and that is tribalism or tribal humanism. It is more conceivable because there was a concept of this kind among the Arabs, who were divided into different tribal groups. The study can infer from the numerous conflicts of the Jahiliyyah period that the Arab people were not subject to any specific external force under this tribal structure. They were only concerned with their own clan's power. They shared the same views on other people as nationalists<sup>150</sup>. Therefore, this justification appears to be relatively recognizable. Because of this, Abu Talib apparently thought that abandoning Muhammad ﷺ, a prominent member of his clan, and joining another

---

<sup>149</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 1:258–59.

<sup>150</sup> The nationalists principally state that the nation is their primary concern and all other concerns are secondary. The theory of nationalism emphasizes an individual's gratitude, devotion, and allegiance to their nation and claims that these commitments take priority over the interests of all others (Webster, "Merriam-Webster.Com Dictionary, s.v. "nationalist," accessed September 13, 2023, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/nationalist>).

clan would be against his tribal pride. Consequently, it is more likely that Banu Hashim found it difficult to turn against his own members due to the tribal nature of the age, and as a result, they neither embraced his religion voluntarily nor stopped his protection against Quraysh.

### **Assessment**

The ideological construction made by Watt's discourse that Muhammad's ﷺ religion was not the only factor seems to be strongly convincing as far as Banu Hashim and Banu Matlab are concerned. They did not oppose Quraysh and Banu Kinana for the motive of defending Islam. In contrast, Banu Quraysh and Banu Kinana established the boycott because Muhammad's ﷺ religious movement opposed their idolatry. Furthermore, Watt's assumption that Matlab and Banu Hashim opposed the Quraysh in their attempts to defend Muhammad ﷺ because of financial interests appears to be distant from the facts. The research explores the fact that the core motive for Banu Hashim and Matlab was tribalism rather than financial benefit.

## **2.2 CHAPTER: MUHAMMAD'S ﷺ SEEKING OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE**

### **2.2.1 Reasons behind Emigrations to Abyssinia**

What plans did Muslims have when they migrated to Abyssinia? Watt's discourse responds to this query by outlining many suggested objectives. In his assessment, Watt supports the idea that the fear of suffering was a likely reason<sup>151</sup>. However, he denies that this is the sole explanation and claims that since many emigrants continued to live there up to the 7<sup>th</sup> year of hijrah (628 C.E.), persecution was not the only reason for this emigration. He makes the case that there were also other key factors. One of Watt's most crucial points of ideological formation is that he suggests that the remaining variables are more likely to be key motives than persecution. Regarding what these causes were, the possibilities that he considered in the context of the case are as follows:

---

<sup>151</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, 113.

1. Fear of suffering or persecution
2. Engagement in trade
3. Gaining military support
4. Fear of apostasy
5. Internal political divisions

After going over each of these factors, he concludes that the last explanations are the strongest, while the rest of the causes are possible but not certain.

### **Critique**

Jabal Buaben has previously conducted research in this area<sup>152</sup>. However, given that his presentation is brief and that he did not take into consideration all of Watt's suggested factors, it appears that his textual production is ineffective in carrying out an in-depth discourse analysis. His analysis is less detailed than Watt's argument. Except for the persecution component, where he explicitly asserts that this was the compelling reason for migration, he does not appear to be taking a definite stance regarding the remaining factors. Similarly, Mubarakpuri has explored the migratory background, claiming that the reason for migration was harsh persecution by the Meccans<sup>153</sup>. He does not consider all of Watt's recommended variables, though, and he offers no rationale for ruling out the possibility of the remaining variables. The emigration to Abyssinia is also the subject of an article written by Sabahat Afzal, which was published very recently in 2018 C.E<sup>154</sup>. She has critically reviewed materialistic attitudes towards emigration. Although she explores a few of Watt's postulated discursive ideas, she rejects his assertions on the basis of a fragmented set of arguments and does not address all of Watt's recommended variables. She also asserts that persecution was the actual cause, but Watt's fundamental critique—why did they remain in Abyssinia for such a prolonged period of time?—went unanalyzed. That is why, as these studies are

---

<sup>152</sup> Buaben, *Image of the Prophet Muḥammad in the West: A Study of Muir, Margoliouth and Watt*, 224–48.

<sup>153</sup> Mubarakpuri, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*, 131–32.

<sup>154</sup> Sabahat Afzal, review of *Hijrat-e-Habsha ke Asbab wa Elal ki Madi Tawilat ka Tanqidi Jaiza*, by Muhammad Hamad Lakhvi Lakhvi, *Jihat Ul Islam* 12, no. 1 (2018): 112–26, <https://doi.org/10.51506/jihat-ul-islam.v12i1.40>.

disproportionately brief and do not adequately cover all the elements, the study will carry out additional in-depth investigations.

Despite Watt's admission that many of the possible causes are not certain, research has to keep investigating them further. Therefore, in an effort to better understand Watt's claims, the study should conduct additional investigation into all of the suggested hypotheses. The study will attempt to look into every possible reason independently in order to comprehend every aspect of the circumstances and discover the facts.

### **2.2.1.1 Fear of Suffering or Persecution**

In this regard, when one looks at the circumstances, it becomes apparent that there was a formal Quraysh council established to prevent Muhammad ﷺ from preaching his religion. Twenty-five Meccan chiefs were chosen to serve on this committee, and Abu Lahab was nominated as its chairman<sup>155</sup>. This council was formed in order to prevent people from receiving what Muhammad ﷺ is saying and from being persuaded of his importance and monotheistic beliefs<sup>156</sup>.

Similar to the last instance, the Quraysh delegation's primary goal, when it arrived to warn Abu Talib, was also to stop Muhammad ﷺ from propagating his religion. In addition to this, the whole Banu Hashim and Banu Matlab clans were persecuted and besieged in Sha'b Abi Talib for permitting Muhammad ﷺ to exercise his right to freedom of speech. These incidents show that Muhammad ﷺ was put in a position where he was unable to propagate the religion properly and that actual enforcement action was taken against him. Also, these instances indicate that their condition was not particularly peaceful because Muslims were prohibited from preaching their religion, which violated their right to freedom of expression.

Bilāl, an Umayya ibn Khalaf slave, was dragged through the marketplaces and streets while having a rope tied around his neck<sup>157</sup>. A stone so heavy was placed on their chests that their tongues moved out, and sticks were thrown on their backs. At midday, they were forced

---

<sup>155</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 1:258; Ibn Hasham, 1:294.

<sup>156</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 1:258.

<sup>157</sup> Ibn Hasham, 1:325–26; Ibn Hazm, *Jawami' as-Seera*, 85.

to lie down in the blazing sun on the hot sand. Umayyah ibn Khalaf<sup>158</sup> reportedly said to Bilāl ibn Rabāḥ (RA) (580–640 C.E.) that if he lives in Islam, he will die in the exact same manner. According to Ibn Hasham<sup>159</sup> and Ibn Hazm<sup>160</sup> statements, various punishments were meted out to Ammar, his father, Yasir, and his mother, Sumayya. Sumayya was the first female martyr in Islam when Abu Jahl killed her with a spear after striking her with it<sup>161</sup>. The circumstances surrounding Khabab were by no means normal<sup>162</sup>.

Zanira, Nahdia, Amir ibn Fahira, Hamama and Um Abis were also severely persecuted<sup>163</sup>. Quraysh also placed Khabab on coals, and a man stood with his feet on his breast<sup>164</sup>. The fat and fluid on his back even put out the coals. When Khabab told this story to Umar ibn al-Khattab years later, he opened his back and displayed it. He wept as soon as he saw it<sup>165</sup>. Similar to earlier, a long tradition of Bukhari illustrates that Abu Dhar Ghafari used to announce his belief in Islam in the Haram Ka'bah every day and every day the Quraysh beat him so severely that he bled<sup>166</sup>. Also, he was not provided with anything to eat or drink during those days, except Zamzam water. When Zanira, a slave girl, chose to embrace Islam, the infidels brutalized her, causing her eyes to go blind. But through Muhammad's ﷺ prayer, Allah restored his sight<sup>167</sup>.

This behavior was not limited only to slaves or weak-position holders; distinct personalities also suffered from it. When his uncle came to know about the conversion of Uthman to Islam, he wrapped him in a palm mat and smoked him from below<sup>168</sup>. Also, Abu

---

<sup>158</sup> Ibn Hasham, 1:326; Ibn Hazm, 85.

<sup>159</sup> Ibn Hasham, 1:328.

<sup>160</sup> Ibn Hazm, *Jawami' as-Seera*, 85.

<sup>161</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 1:328.

<sup>162</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, n.d., 3:233.

<sup>163</sup> Ibn Hazm, *Jawami' as-Seera*, 85.

<sup>164</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, n.d., 3:233.

<sup>165</sup> Ibn Sa'd, 3:233.

<sup>166</sup> Al-Bukhari, *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Kitab Manaqib al-Ansar, Bab Islam Abi Dharr, vol.2, 576, Hadith no: 3861.

<sup>167</sup> Al-Zarqani, *Sharah Al Zurqani Ala al Mawahib*, Volume 1: 270.

<sup>168</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, n.d., 3:132.

Bakr was described as being in the identical occurrence<sup>169</sup>. Aside from that, Amr ibn Aas, when Quraysh sent him as an ambassador, spoke the following words to Najashi:

"Some of our foolish youths have fled to your country. They have left the religion of their people and have not accepted your religion either. They have brought a new religion which neither we nor you believe in."<sup>170</sup>

In response, Ja'far Ibn Abi Talib said:

"These people of Quraysh are our enemies and want us to return to idolatry, because of which we have left our land and taken refuge in your land and we have preferred you over others."<sup>171</sup>

These two representatives' statements make it very evident that the Quraysh had been pressuring the Muslims to turn to idolatry. Since the Muslims refused to accept this, it is easy to establish that they were subjected to persecution. This is because it begs the question: Why would Quraysh leave them in peace in Mecca if they could ultimately follow them to Abyssinia? Consequently, it is observable from the pressure that Ja'far cited that they were subjected to oppression, which compelled them to migrate.

According to the aforementioned accounts, it is recognizable that Muslims were undoubtedly subjected to persecution; nonetheless, the crucial critique is whether or not this oppression contributed to the migration. For the purpose of this investigation, research would develop the rationale that since it was proven that Muslims in Mecca had been persecuted, it would logically follow that Muhammad ﷺ and his followers would find it difficult to carry on their activities as preachers, which were also proven from multiple events (cited previously). On the other hand, it also becomes apparent through multiple instances that Muhammad ﷺ was not prepared to give up his preaching at any cost. Hence, it gives the justification that the primary issue between the two parties was this contradiction regarding preaching, which later served as a reason for persecution.

---

<sup>169</sup> Ibn Sa'd, 3:17.

<sup>170</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 1:340.

<sup>171</sup> Ibn Hasham, 1:341–42.

In contrast, if one assumes hypothetically that no persecution occurred, Muslims would be entitled to the freedom to preach in Mecca. In light of this, if it were agreed that there was a right to freedom of preaching, it would follow that Muslims and polytheists had no differences<sup>172</sup>. Now, if there were no differences, why would Muslims seek refuge in a country like this, far from their family, tribe, and homeland, and for whom would they do so? It follows that their decision to leave their homeland and their family and travel to a faraway country in order to find shelter and begin a new life there could only have been made to save their lives. Consequently, the study develops the theory that the migration to Abyssinia was caused by persecution. This assertion is substantiated not only by the explicit statement of Ja'far but also by Ibn Hasham's statement in support of it. Ibn Hasham explains the causes of migration by saying that when Muslim oppression in Mecca increased and Muhammad ﷺ noticed that some Muslims found it difficult to defend what they were going through, he told these Muslims that migrating to Abyssinia would be better for them<sup>173</sup>.

### **Assessment**

In the assessment, the actual story seems to indicate that the Quraysh did not allow Muhammad's ﷺ religion to be preached against them, and Muhammad ﷺ was not backing down from preaching his religion. In response to this, since the polytheists were powerful, they became aggressive and started persecution, which led the Muslims to migrate to Abyssinia. Therefore, research simply assesses that oppression was the factual basis of this migration.

Nevertheless, the analysis has justified that migration was influenced by persecution, but was it the sole factor? Or were there additional variables involved? If so, what additional supporting factors exist, assuming this is the main factor? Or, in contrast, what was the key factor if this was a secondary factor? The explanations for each of these critiques will be analyzed to evaluate Watt's other asserted theories.

---

<sup>172</sup> This builds on the argument that numerous earlier accounts, many of which study has already cited, demonstrate that the underlying cause of the conflict between Muhammad and his opponents was religious preaching.

<sup>173</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 1:329–30.

Regarding additional theories, many critiques arise in this case when one analyzes the contextual reasoning. In the beginning, why did not all Muslims migrate to Abyssinia, assuming this movement was carried out for refuge from the hardships and persecution? Secondly, if Muslims kept silent, they would be secure. Thus, why did they choose migration over remaining silent? Third, assuming their departure was solely the consequence of persecution, why did some of them stay there until the 7<sup>th</sup> year of hijrah (628 C.E.), when they might have safely returned to Medina? It would be simple to respond to the second critique by arguing that silence was not chosen over persecution since Muhammad ﷺ was not prepared to cease preaching in any case and his message-preaching was more essential than migrating. However, both the first and third critiques are just the kind that make it apparent that persecution was not the only factor at play in this particular case. As a consequence of this, research attempts to assess the reliability of Watt's additional theories.

### 2.2.1.2 Engagement in trade

Not just Watt<sup>174</sup> but also the authors of the Encyclopedia of Islam article “*Muhammad*”<sup>175</sup> hypothesize that one of the motivating factors of the migration to Abyssinia would be commercial purposes. They assume that the emigrants could have conceivably migrated to Abyssinia in order to conduct trade there.

When one critically analyzes the scenario, it quickly becomes recognizable that trade was the primary mode of income for the inhabitants of Mecca. It also appears clear that trading opportunities would probably have existed in Abyssinia at this time because Abyssinia was not considered a weak state. Additionally, trading connections existed between Mecca and Abyssinia. But the question is, do these assumptions go far enough to support the claim they are making? Therefore, a straightforward response would be difficult since one would need to make convincing arguments that go beyond these assumptions in order to justify that migration was also motivated by financial interests.

---

<sup>174</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, 114.

<sup>175</sup> Clifford Edmund Bosworth, Emeri Johannes Donzel, and Wolfhart P. Heinrichs, “Muhammad,” in *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (New York: Brill Academic Publishers, 1993), 365.



Research does not find any historical evidence to substantiate the suggestion that these Muslim refugees to Abyssinia supplied financial assistance for their Meccan relatives or religious brethren. However, hypothetically, if one builds the theory based on the assumption that there were trade opportunities in Abyssinia, then it is not sound because such opportunities also exist here in Mecca. Mecca used to be an important trading center (Watt himself admits this<sup>176</sup>) since pilgrims from various areas traveled there for the Hajj, and different foreign traders also came here. Various kinds of international traders also arrive. Therefore, establishing the theory of migration to Abyssinia on the basis of commercial opportunities does not seem to be convincing at all.

Apart from the abundance of trade opportunities, Mecca was also one of the most peaceful cities of its day, and its citizens were free to move around the world peacefully all year. Even thieves and robbers did not persecute them since the Ka'bah was sacred to the Arabs. Therefore, it is unconceivable to believe that the refugees migrate for business from a peaceful city to the faraway foreign country of Abyssinia. Why would these people sacrifice their spouses, children, and other close family members for a trade where they would not even see them for 14 years? The reasoning is beyond comprehension as to how a father can sacrifice his children for financial gain without being able to see them, and he also does not provide them with any financial support for 14 years. The question is: if he did not send money to his children and his wife, then for whom would this father earn money? In light of this, it appears that this is not intellectually sound.

Despite the harshness and physical violence that Muslims suffered at the time, they had not been so poor that they were starving to death. Muhammad's ﷺ movement itself was going through extremely difficult circumstances, and other Muslim brothers of these migrants were suffering from terrible physical persecution. Consequently, it is difficult to believe that these migrants sought commerce while their religious brothers suffered under such circumstances. Therefore, it also does not appear to have anything strong enough.

### **Assessment**

---

<sup>176</sup> William Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*, vol. 409 (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 7.

Watt's discursive idea does not seem to have any historical support. Muslim migrants to Abyssinia did not send any financial assistance to Mecca. Despite the fact that the study has discovered that there are many justifications and materials to the contrary, one does not have any persuasive proof to substantiate Watt's hypothesized factor. Thus, the study draws the conclusion that Watt's interpretation of the sources seems solely materialistic and has overlooked its religious and spiritual dimensions. The analysis displays, after analyzing his discourse as social power, that Watt's discourse's interpretation has been influenced by his cultural variable of Marxist fashion, and his ideological foundations for this claim are simply based on a skeptical approach.

### 2.2.1.3 Military support

Watt hypothesizes that one of the other possible motivating factors for the migration to Abyssinia is military support<sup>177</sup>. He assumes that it is also probable that Muhammad ﷺ would have thought to establish a military base in Abyssinia in order to launch an assault on Mecca. Watt is not alone in this claim; the same hypothesis has also been constructed by David Samuel Margoliouth. He says that Muhammad ﷺ sent his followers in order to:

“... perhaps looking forward to seeing them return at the head of an Abyssinian Army”<sup>178</sup>

In order to soundly comprehend the justification behind Watt's assertion, one has to contextually analyze the relationships between Quraysh and Abyssinia. When one analyzes the possible scenario for this military aid, he can see, from one side, that Abyssinia was representing an independent state of affairs. It was a Christian state, but it was not under Byzantine rule. Abyssinians were the followers of Coptic Orthodox Christianity who suffered from Byzantine oppression. Similar to the one mentioned before, the Persia Empire also had no influence on Abyssinia. For this reason, an analyst may assert that Najashi was sovereign

---

<sup>177</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, 114.

<sup>178</sup> David Samuel Margoliouth, *Mohammed and the Rise of Islam*, 3rd ed. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1905), 157.

in making such judgments, and once he chose to provide military assistance to the Muslims, he did not require any approval from Persia or Byzantine.

Furthermore, neither a special diplomatic alliance nor agreements between the Abyssinians and Quraysh seem to have actually existed. The Quraysh's close relations with Yemeni Arabs, who wanted to bring down the Najashi regime, were a few of the factors contributing to the tense relations. Because of this, Yemenis rebelled against Najashi<sup>179</sup>, which sparked a conflict. Therefore, an analyst could deduce from this that Quraysh and Abyssinia had tense ties. The additional root cause, probably, was also that both sides' diplomatic relationships had suffered as a result of Abyssinia's armed invasion of Mecca, which was led by Abraha<sup>180</sup>.

On the other hand, the Quraysh had established friendly political relations with Persia. A prime example of the recognizable closeness between the two Quraysh and Persia is the fact that the Quraysh celebrated the defeat of the Roman Christians against Persia<sup>181</sup>. The Abyssinian government, on the opposite end of the spectrum, had a disturbing relationship with Persia; as a result, it is possible that Najashi would have turned against the Quraysh. Furthermore, internal political tensions also become apparent when an analyst looks into the fact that the Quraysh sent Amr ibn al-Aas and Abdullah ibn Rabi'ah gifts and demanded the return of the Muslims<sup>182</sup>. Nevertheless, Najashi refused not only the return of the emigrants but the gifts as well<sup>183</sup>.

From a religious perspective, Christianity was the predominant religion in Abyssinia; however, they were more orthodox than Byzantine Christians and were firm believers in the idea of the oneness of God<sup>184</sup>. Both Islam and Christianity were religions of the Book so that they shared a lot of commonalities. Najashi does not believe that Jesus was God; he considers

---

<sup>179</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 1:344-46.

<sup>180</sup> *Al-Qur'an* 105:1-5.

<sup>181</sup> Shafi, *Ma'ariful Qur'an*, 6:719.

<sup>182</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 1:338-39.

<sup>183</sup> Ibn Hasham, 1:343.

<sup>184</sup> Ibn Hasham, 1:343.

that he was a prophet of God<sup>185</sup>, which is what Muslims also perceive. His views about Merry were similar to those of Muslims<sup>186</sup>. Therefore, it appears that Najashi will have a much wider scope when dealing with Muslims. On the other hand, the Quraysh followed idolatry, which had nothing to do with Christianity. These two religions each have distinct foundational backgrounds. The Quraysh did not believe in the oneness of God and worshipped their own gods. Religions like idolatry have nothing to do with Christianity, which relies on the teachings of Prophet Moses (AS) and Prophet Jesus (AS). Consequently, an analyst can get the idea that, from a religious perspective, Muslims and Abyssinia also appear to be more cohesive.

Based on all of the aforementioned arguments, research may conclude that Muslims and Najashi were probably friendly and mutually beneficial in many ways. However, things were not going well between Najashi and the Quraysh. This is due to the fact that the Quraysh enjoyed friendly relationships with both Persia and Yemen's Arab people, but the Abyssinian state had issues with both of these states. Since the Quraysh were his rebels' friends, it is likely that Najashi would have, possibly, turned against them and chosen to militarily assist the Muslims, who were not only religiously closer but also opponents of his enemy, the Quraysh. But now the critique is: Can one actually prove any claim based on simply speculating about such a possible scenario? Therefore, the very straightforward response is no. However, since an estimation is not enough, further investigation has to be conducted in order to independently explore the reliability of Watt's discourse.

Historically, the research does not find any written accounts to reveal that Muhammad ﷺ ever requested military support from Najashi. In addition, the study also does not find any historical justifications to support the claim that Najashi sent any Abyssinian armed forces. It seems likely that Muhammad ﷺ would have been successful if he had intended to gain support for the Muslims because of the closer ties, both religiously and politically, between them and the Najashi. The Muslims who lived there for a period of fourteen years were also

---

<sup>185</sup> Najashi's affirmation of Ja'far's recital of Surah Al-Meriam served as the foundation for this claim (Ibn Hasham, 1:343.).

<sup>186</sup> This is supported by Najashi's testimony that Ja'far rightly mentioned the status of Merry in Surah Al-Meriam (Ibn Hasham, 1:343.).

given proper protection, and there are no reports of any troubles for them<sup>187</sup>. However, in the presence of all the scenarios, the study is unable to support the idea that Najashi had provided any troops since historically there are no factual bases.

Furthermore, the Muslims adopted a feeble defensive strategy in response to the circumstances they were facing in Mecca. Apparently, their sociopolitical conditions did not allow them to pursue an aggressive course of action. Consequently, taking an aggressive stance and asking for military aid when someone is incapable of even defending himself does not seem to make any sense at all.

On the other side, some accounts state that Najashi was involved in constant combat with the rebels<sup>188</sup>. In case he was dissolved by the rebels, he kept several boats ready for the Muslim refugees, and he gave orders to his men to ensure that they would return the refugees safely<sup>189</sup>. For this reason, the study is incompetent to establish the claim that this migration was administered for military support in a circumstance where Najashi himself did not have a strong position and was having trouble with internal security.

## **Assessment**

No such account comes to light that demonstrates Muhammad ﷺ had requested military assistance, and nothing at all is discovered that proves Najashi provided any armed troops by himself. Thus, it may just be skeptical ideologies and power structures that constitute the possibility of such a claim made by Watt's discourse. As a consequence, we're unable to conclude whether the hypothesis is strong when it relies on nothing more than suspicion.

### **2.2.1.4 Fear of apostasy**

According to Watt, fear of apostasy might have been one of the other driving forces behind the exodus to Abyssinia<sup>190</sup>. In addition to Watt, Aloys Sprenger, an Austrian

---

<sup>187</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, 1:216.

<sup>188</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 1:343–46.

<sup>189</sup> Ibn Hasham, 1:346.

<sup>190</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, 114.

Orientalist, also claims that Muhammad ﷺ commanded the migration because he was worried about apostasy. He asserts:

"At length persecution ran so high, and so many apostatized that Mohammad advised some of his followers to leave Makkah, lest his whole flock might desert him."<sup>191</sup>

When one takes the factor of apostasy into account, there are several perplexing concerns that arise. First, if Muhammad ﷺ had been afraid of his companions turning away from him because of the polytheists in Mecca, why was he not worried about the Christians in Abyssinia? Secondly, was Abyssinia not the wrong choice, despite the fact that the companions seemed more secure with their Prophet in Mecca? Thirdly, how is it conceivable that there was no threat from the people of the book, literates, in Abyssinia once Muhammad ﷺ was worried of his friends becoming apostates within the illiterate people of Mecca?

One can easily observe that this threat of apostasy came to light soon when Ubaidullah ibn Jahsh along with one another companion of Muhammad ﷺ embraced Christianity in Abyssinia. Additionally, Hajjaj ibn al-Harith turned back to idolatry and fought in Badr against Muslims once he migrated to Abyssinia<sup>192</sup>. So, from these grounds, it seems that there was somehow a fear of apostasy that motivated the migration.

From an additional perspective, if the cause of this apostasy is taken into account, it becomes more understandable. It is most likely that apostasy is not always caused by academic debates; occasionally, physical discomforts also play a role in its causation. In light of this, these Muslims in Mecca had to deal with serious physical worries. Muslims were not only slaughtered on several occasions; they were also under social and economic siege in the Shab Abi Talib. Najashi, on the other hand, was a kind ruler who governed Abyssinia. Muhammad ﷺ would have thus considered migration to be the ideal solution in order to secure his companions from apostasy. This assumption is further supported by a statement made by 'Urwa ibn Zubair. According to a hadith reported by 'Urwa that Tabari quotes, the

---

<sup>191</sup> Aloys Sprenger, *The Life of Mohammad, from Original Sources* ((Allahabad: Presbyterian Mission Press, 1851), 182.

<sup>192</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 1:331.

Quraysh imposed so much suffering on Muhammad's ﷺ companions that many of them turned away from Islam and were convinced by the pagans. To quote 'Urwa directly:

"So the Muslims abandoned except for a few whom Allah protected"<sup>193</sup>

In his well-known and prize-winning book, Safi research's findings also suggest the same theory, and he says that Muhammad ﷺ has taken this step in order to protect his companions spiritually<sup>194</sup>.

If Muhammad ﷺ had commanded emigration to protect Muslims from apostasy, this would have been an effort on his part as a prophet to uphold his followers' faith, which is a fundamental responsibility for any prophet. Parallel circumstances may be noticed in the life of Moses, who fled Palestine rather than fighting the Pharaoh within Egypt in order to preserve his followers' religion. Correspondingly, in order to rescue the faith of the people around them, Prophet Noah, Prophet Abraham, and Prophet Lot all migrated.

### **Assessment**

In light of the aforementioned accounts and reasoning, there are some compelling indications that the study could theorize that Muhammad ﷺ may have felt some sort of fear of apostasy regarding his followers since they were harshly persecuted. As a consequence, the research judges Watt's hypothetical discursive establishment to be strong since it relies on not only logical reasoning but also a few accounts that substantiate it.

#### **2.2.1.5 Internal political divisions**

In addition to the aforementioned theorized variables, Watt also held emigration accountable for the sharp political divisions among Muslims. According to him, this component is the strongest of all the others. In his own words:

"Most weight must be attached to a fifth reason, namely, that there was a sharp division of opinion within the embryonic Islamic community."<sup>195</sup>

---

<sup>193</sup> Ibn Jarir at-Tabari, *Tarikh Al-Umam Wal-Muluk*, v 2, 328.

<sup>194</sup> Mubarakpuri, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*, 132.

<sup>195</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, 115.

He asserts that the prolonged stays in Abyssinia show that these emigrants opposed certain political decisions made by Muhammad ﷺ and his lieutenant, Abu Bakr. In accordance with his statement, certain emigrants did not support the increasing political orientation of Islam. Also, he asserts that Abu Bakr was constantly making decisions with Muhammad ﷺ, whereas Khālīd ibn Sa‘īd and Uthman ibn Mazun's company had disputes with Abu Bakr. Muhammad ﷺ therefore considered that migration would be the wisest course of action in this particular instance. Watt claims that if the political decisions were satisfactory to these emigrants, they would have gone back to Medina before the 7<sup>th</sup> year of hijrah (628 C.E.), when there was no oppression there. Watt is not alone in this assessment; an Austrian historian and Arabist named Gustave Edmund Grunebaum (1909–1972 C.E.) also argued that political unrest within the Muslim community served as the primary motivating factor behind emigration<sup>196</sup>.

Now, did sharp political differences play a role in the emigration? In order to comprehend this critique, it is first essential to conduct analysis on the question: were there some Muslim groups that disagreed sharply with each other? Consequently, it will be simple to conduct research on the first critique.

Jilani<sup>197</sup> and Sabahat Afzal<sup>198</sup> have previously carried out helpful investigations in this part of the discourse. Nevertheless, both appear polemical in their methods at certain points, which may explain why their analyses did not appear to be successful in standing up to sufficiently effective discourse analysis. They are rejecting the narrative that Watt and Grunebaum have developed. Both have made some compelling points, but because their investigations are so brief, the overall case for their positions is not sufficiently persuasive. Thus, research will carry out further in-depth analysis in order to explore the factual grounds.

---

<sup>196</sup> Gustave Edmund von Grunebaum, *Classical Islam: A History 600-1258* (New York: Barnes Noble Books, 1997), 31.

<sup>197</sup> Jilani, *Islam, Paighambar e Islam aur Mustashriqeen e Maghrib ka Andaz e Fikar*, 269–70.

<sup>198</sup> Afzal, “Hijrat-e-Habsha Ke Asbab Wa Elal Ki Madi Tawilat Ka Tanqidi Jaiza,” 118–21.



Actually, Watt does not directly cite any narration to support his claim that there were severe distinctions of opinion among Muslims; rather, he infers it from a few events. Watt's has offered the following primary grounds to back up his claim:

- I. Hajjaj ibn al-Harith was captured by the Muslims at Badr; nevertheless, he was one of the Muslims who fled to Abyssinia.
- II. There was a coolness seems to have sprung up between Nu'aym ibn Abdallah and Abu Bakr's party, so at least he did not go to Medina until 6<sup>th</sup> year of hijrah (627 C.E.).
- III. Uthman ibn Maz'un was the leader of a group within the Muslims that was a rival to the group led by Abu Bakr.
- IV. Some of the Muslims remained so long in Abyssinia, even up to 7<sup>th</sup> year of hijrah (628 C.E.).

The first and second arguments represent specific instances involving two people Hajjaj and Nu'aym. In these two, Nu'aym migrated very lately, in the 6<sup>th</sup> year of hijrah (627 C.E.), which Watt makes as an argument for the narrative that there was political division. The late emigration of Nu'aym ibn Abdallah seems like an individual act that could have many possibilities. He may have been delayed because of a private issue, or he may have been stopped for intelligence services. Additionally, he may be subject to restrictions enforced by his tribe. Therefore, in the presence of several possibilities, it is by no means a strong claim to say, based on a just skeptical approach, that he had political differences with Muhammad ﷺ and Abu Bakr or that he did not like the increasingly political orientations. If it is accepted that he had differences due to the amassed political orientation, then the critique is: why did he migrate in the 6<sup>th</sup> year of hijrah (627 C.E.) when this political orientation had increased even more? For this reason, Watt's provided ground does not seem persuasive in this particular case.

Similar to the first argument, there may be a variety of explanations for Hajjaj apostasy. Therefore, it will not be a strong judgement to say that his apostasy was driven solely by political disagreements. Even if it is acknowledged that he had political disagreements, it still seems unlikely that he would have left his faith for merely political reasons. In addition to all of these presentations, it is also crucial to understand that if so many individuals migrated

there, it reveals that the decision was made as a whole at the institutional level. It would thus not be suitable to credit this emigration's motive to one's own private judgement.

As far as the third argument provided by Watt is concerned, Watt establishes his justification on an account that Ibn Hasham cites, where he says:

"I was told by a scholar that the first group (of Abyssinian emigrants) was led by Uthman ibn Maz'un." <sup>199</sup>

In the investigation of this account, the identity of the individual who reported this to Ibn Hasham remains unnamed. Since the narrator of the accounts is unknown, it is hard to consider it historically authentic. Additionally, none of the other historians, muhaddiths, or experts of Seerah who wrote about the migration to Abyssinia have made reference to any such tradition. Accordingly, it is difficult to consider such a narration to be a solid foundation for any argument. In his book, Ibn Sa'd devotes an entire chapter for discussing the qualities and accomplishments of Uthman<sup>200</sup>. There, he did not mention that Uthman led the first group of emigrants to Abyssinia. Ibn Sa'd would undoubtedly have included this significant achievement in his list of accomplishments if he had been a leader. The fact that Ja'far ibn Abi Talib represented the Muslims' standpoint on behalf of Najashi when the Quraysh delegation demanded the emigrants is another reason for the unsoundness of the chieftainship claim<sup>201</sup>. If Uthman ibn Maz'un had been the leader of the Abyssinian emigrants at the time, he would have represented the Muslims' viewpoint on this occasion instead of Ja'far ibn Abi Talib.

One might challenge Watt's assertion that Uthman ibn Maza'un and Abu Bakr's disagreements led to this migration. The argument is that on one occasion, Abu Bakr also decided to migrate, but after receiving protection from a tribal head, he gave up that plan<sup>202</sup>. Thus, why was Abu Bakr ready to migrate, on the other hand, if Muhammad ﷺ had to send Uthman away because of his conflicts with Abu Bakr? Alternatively, if it is assumed, as Watt

---

<sup>199</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 1:331.

<sup>200</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, 3:131-48.

<sup>201</sup> Ibn Hasham, 1:341-42.

<sup>202</sup> Ibn Hazm, *Jawami' as-Seera*, 93.

asserts, that he had disagreements because Islam's political orientation was becoming severer, then the critique develops: Why did he return from migration later, when political orientations had become even more powerful? Therefore, Watt's theory does not only seem irrational, but it also seems historically baseless. This is due to the absence of persuasive historical evidence backing the claim he makes.

In terms of the last argument, it truly deserves special attention. According to Watt, the fact that these emigrants continued to live there for a long time after the Meccan period's persecutions shows that there was political unrest. Watt brings up the critique of why they remained there for such a long period if there was no dispute with the prevailing political attitude. Therefore, the challenging inquiry that confronts this critical discourse analysis is: Is the reasoning that Watt provides sufficient to support his claim? In this regard, the length of their stays does not necessarily prove that they had differences. Because if it is believed that these emigrants had disagreements over political orientation, they would not return to Medina in the seventh Hijri when it had grown even more at that time. As a result, it does not appear to be strong either.

After all, however, the analysis still has no clarification for one of Watt's challenging critique; why some of the Muslims stayed so long. In this respect, an analyst may establish several possible explanations. After hearing about the position of the Muslim emigrants, Najashi sent a delegation of priests and monks to Mecca (mentioned earlier). This delegation met Muhammad ﷺ, listened to his arguments, and accepted Islam. If there is some truth in this account, an analyst may theorize from the discourse that these emigrants stayed there to preach or to bring Abyssinians to Islam.

Secondly, in Medina, due to frequent attacks by their rival forces, the Muslims were continuously in a state of war. Therefore, for a possible failure, they may have thought of Abyssinia as an available exterior refuge since their immigrant relatives were already living safely there. Therefore, another hypothesis that might apply in this situation is that Muhammad ﷺ probably recognized that if the enemy attacked and had hard conditions, like the battle of al-Ahzab, then such external support would exist. Muslims will therefore be able to find refuge and feel secure there. In fact, this may be the strongest explanation because,

indeed, the last group of emigrants returned when Khyber was conquered and the Muslims found alternative refuge abroad.

### **Assessment**

Nu'aym's late emigration and Hajjaj's apostasy seem like individual acts that have many possibilities. Therefore, in the presence of several possibilities, it is by no means a strong claim that they had political differences with Abu Bakr or that they did not like the increasingly political orientations. The unsoundness of the chieftainship of Uthman ibn Maz'un that was claimed by Watt's discourse is also found. Consequently, there does not appear to be strong evidence that migration was motivated by internal political divisions.

### **Conclusion**

Following a thorough analysis of Watt's five justifications for ideological discursive structure regarding the mission of migration to Abyssinia, research ultimately arrives at the conclusion that two of the five—persecution and fear of apostasy—appear to be strongly persuasive. The review exposes that the primary concern—which drove the Muslims to migrate—was the persecution they faced. But it should also be acknowledged that there was a degree of apostasy-related fear as a result of these persecutions. Research has not only provided some favorable accounts of the soundness of this hypothesis but also justified it rationally.

Also, the study's exploration revealed the remaining three migration motives, respectively engagement in trade, military support, and internal political divisions, as put forth by Watt, to be quite weak. The study criticizes links between textual properties and social mechanisms in Watt's discursive positioning and reveals the factual basis of his blurred vision. In conclusion, Watt's arguments are not only insufficient and feeble but also solely dependent on supposition. Therefore, research is unable to conclude the rest of the three as persuasive.

### **2.2.2 Support of Jewish Idea of Messiah in Accepting Muhammad ﷺ**

The pledges at al-Aqabah have been thoroughly examined by Watt. He substantiates the idea that Muhammad's ﷺ acceptance by the Medinans as a political leader was motivated by

many factors. He claims that one of these factors was the Jewish concept of the Messiah's arrival, which actually influenced the people of Khazraj and Aws to accept Muhammad ﷺ as a leader. He explains himself as follows:

“For several reasons, then, Muhammad was a most acceptable person to the Medinans ... the Medinan Arabs, doubtless influenced by Jewish ideas of the coming of the Messiah, were ready to accept Muhammad”<sup>203</sup>

## Critique

Watt's assertion that the Medinans undoubtedly were inspired by the Jewish idea of the Messiah and so embraced Muhammad ﷺ as a leader puts the study in challenge yet again. Had Medinans been merely impacted by the Jewish concept of the Messiah? If so, how much did they cost? Or, if it was not, was it exaggerated and the actual concern was something else? Exploring these critiques is essential in order to provide an analysis.

To begin with a literature review, it is critical to recognize that the well-known Muslim scholar Muhammad Ibn Qayyim also connects this Jewish thought, claiming that it was one of the grounds for impact<sup>204</sup>. Likewise, the fact that Mubarakpuri describes the same Jewish concept beneath Muhammad's ﷺ acceptance demonstrates how he connects this concept to his acceptance<sup>205</sup>. Furthermore, Tahir al-Qadri asserts, at the beginning of his presentation of Bait al-Aqba, that the Jewish thought component lends consideration to the possibility that there was a connection between these factors<sup>206</sup>. However, none of these have offered any historical information or logical support for their statements, so they are not sufficiently convincing. In order to contextually and logically investigate the impact of the Jewish belief in the Messiah's coming on Muhammad's ﷺ acceptance, additional research is needed.

From the psychology of religion, it is a highly challenging act for a person or a community to abandon their religious views. Most individuals do not hesitate to sacrifice

---

<sup>203</sup> Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*, 89.

<sup>204</sup> Muhammad Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawzi, *Zad al-Ma'ad Fi Hadi Kher ul 'abad*, trans. Rais Ahmad Jafri (Karachi: Nafees Academy, n.d.), v 2: 50.

<sup>205</sup> Mubarakpuri, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*, 196.

<sup>206</sup> Muhammad Tahir al-Qadri, *Seerat ul Rasool*, 12th ed., vol. 4 (Lahore: Minhaj-ul-Quran Printer, 2015), 35.

anything for their religious beliefs, even their economic, social, and political interests. Yes, it is a fact that people who live among individuals who follow diverse religions occasionally abandon their own religion and take up the beliefs of those other people since the environment has a significant impact on them. However, it is exceptional for a nation to rebel against its faith as a whole. Thus, if the Medinan as a whole embraced Muhammad ﷺ as a prophet, they would seemingly have been inspired by something far more significant. In light of this, it does not appear to be a persuasive claim, as Watt asserts, that the Medinans would have left their idolatry due to the impact of Jewish doctrine.

It is a historical fact that Medinans were familiar with this concept of Judaism<sup>207</sup>. However, a concept is not always necessarily operative just because one hears about it. The Meccans will likewise be aware of this Jewish concept due to the fact that Judaism was a major religion and this idea of the Messiah was their major belief. Analysts also have to wonder why, in light of the effect of this idea, the Meccans did not acknowledge Muhammad ﷺ as a prophet. Their non-acceptance is based on the argument that mere knowledge of a theory does not necessarily entail its application. Furthermore, it is quite puzzling that the inhabitants of Medina chose the Meccan animosity solely under the influence of a Jewish idea.

Assuming, as Watt argues, that it is accepted that the Medinans embraced Muhammad ﷺ as a result of the influence of Jewish philosophy, this will essentially imply that the Medinans were more profoundly impacted by Judaism than their own idolatry. This is due to Muhammad's preaching, which strongly denounced their worship of idols. Therefore, it appears quite unlikely that they would have rejected their own idolatry by adopting Muhammad ﷺ, just because of the impact of Jewish teachings. Subsequently, it seems quite unconvincing that the Medinans cared less about their own religion and more about Jewish philosophy, leading them to adopt another religion as a result. Importantly, assuming the Medinans had believed the Jewish principles to be quite influential, it logically implies that they would have adopted Judaism rather than Islam.

---

<sup>207</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, 1:47–49; Mubarakpuri, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*, 196; Qadri, *Seerat ul Rasool*, 2015, 4:35.

For additional justification, it is a fact that the Jews themselves did not consider Muhammad ﷺ to represent the Messiah and that they were ready to engage with him in open combat, which they later proved when they fought several battles. It thus becomes illogical that Medinans have been affected by this Jewish belief since the Jews themselves did not think that Muhammad ﷺ represented the Messiah. Furthermore, assuming that Judaism had such a strong effect on the Medinans, it further entails firmly that they would have supported the Jews rather than the Muslims. But in actuality, the anṣār have consistently sided with Muslims wherever there has been a disagreement between Jews and Muslims. Consequently, the claim of Jewish ideas' influence does not seem sound.

One critique, nevertheless, is frequently left unanalyzed: If this was not the variable factor behind the case, what would be the actual explanation? In this respect, when one considers the several scenarios that can possibly take place, there are two possibilities that seem strong enough: economic gains and religious rewards. Hence, the study takes the first possible variable factor into account. In practical terms, the emigrants were in an even direr financial situation than the anṣār, which is why Muhammad ﷺ established a brotherhood among them until the muhājirūn's financial position improved<sup>208</sup>. It suggests that the anṣār has no intention of obtaining economic assistance because the immigrants were themselves in a worse financial predicament, and in fact, the anṣār was even financially assisting them. Consequently, it appears that the assumption of financial gains could not be very solid. The strongest interpretation, nevertheless, appears to be the last variable factor.

If the anṣār can reject their idols in favor of Muhammad ﷺ and denounce them, oppose the polytheists in Mecca and the Jews in Medina, slaughter themselves and their family members in battle, orphan their children, widow their wives, and give up their wealth, then there is no materialistic possible explanation for them to embrace Muhammad ﷺ. Therefore, analysts can hypothesize the discourse that the Medinans had accepted him because something more than worldly resources had inspired them, not just the idea of the Jews. The success of life after death will be the spectacular factor that motivated the Medinans.

---

<sup>208</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 2:35.

Watt gives credit to Judaism in this instance, even though the analysis explicitly establishes that there was no connection between the Jewish belief in the Messiah's coming and the Medinans' acceptance of Muhammad ﷺ. This strongly suggests that his discursive interpretations are shaped by his religious context of Judeo-Christian beliefs. This is due to the finding that these two characteristics are independent of one another, and Watt attributes this to a single concept. He clearly discredited and overlooked the primary spiritual motive for the success of life after death. This illustrates the mechanism by which his philosophy was based on Western skepticism and, additionally, how his religious environment—specifically, Judeo-Christian teachings—affected his cognitive development of ideology. Thus, this assertion demonstrates his discursive ideological production's inadequacy as well as how his discursive positioning promotes his religious interests.

### **Assessment**

After carefully examining Watt's assertion, the analysis comes to the assessment that his claim that Medinans' acceptance of Muhammad ﷺ was influenced by Jewish idea, negates many facts regarding the anṣār's worldly sacrifices. Watt's only offered his assertion without any justification or historical supporting facts. The findings suggest that success in life after death was the most compelling factor that motivated the Medinans to accept Muhammad ﷺ. Consequently, this analysis exposes the socio-religious power structures, in the form of Judeo-Christian teachings, that constitute his discourse and shows that his ideological formation is unconvincing.



### Part 3: CRITIQUE ON WATT'S PERSPECTIVE ON MEDINAN POLITICS

Muhammad's ﷺ Medini period encompasses a wide range of events, commencing with his journey to Medina in the 13<sup>th</sup> Nabwi (622 C.E.). He formed the first Muslim state at this time jointly with the Banu Aws, Banu Khazraj, and the muhājirūn of Quraysh, and he later established the charter of Medina alongside Jews and diverse Medinan communities. In addition, he established agreements of peace with several surrounding tribes and Mecca's polytheists, and he formed many alliances with many surrounding local tribes. About 65<sup>209</sup> or 84<sup>210</sup> conflicts were waged during this time against several Jewish tribes, the Meccan polytheists, different local tribes, and the Roman Empire.

Watt specifically addresses the entire life of Muhammad ﷺ in Medina in his published discourse<sup>211</sup>, where he develops several of his diverse perspectives. However, Watt's studies are wide-ranging and include many different aspects. Since this discourse analysis is only concerned with the political aspect, only Watt's perspectives on Muhammad's ﷺ political position will be discussed in this section, focusing on the specific subjects of policy of peaceful coexistence, political economy, and war politics in Medina.

---

<sup>209</sup> Muḥammad Abdulmalik Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, trans. Qutbuddin Aḥmad Mahmoodi, vol. 3 (Karachi: Islami Kutub Khana, 2019), 48.

<sup>210</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, n.d., 1:225.

<sup>211</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*; Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*.

## 3.1 CHAPTER: POLICY OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE

### 3.1.1 Muhammad's ﷺ Authority

Watt asserts that Muhammad's ﷺ power in the early years was so slight that he, as chief of the muhājirūn, was on a level with the chiefs of the various clans<sup>212</sup>. Additionally, he says that various incidents of the first half of the Medinan period show the weakness of his position, and during his first year in Medina, several other chiefs were more influential than him. Directly quoting his own words:

“He is merely one among a number of important men. During his first year in Medina several others were probably more influential than Muhammad.”<sup>213</sup>

#### Critique

Watt claims that there were more influential personalities in Medina than Muhammad ﷺ and that his position was weaker. The question is: who were these influential figures in comparison to whom his position was weak? Watt is quiet on the matter at hand. If he had attempted to make this clear, the matter would be easier to analyze since the study directly compared these influential characters and explored the facts. However, because Watt does not identify any individuals, let's hypothetically investigate the noteworthy people and subsequently compare them with Muhammad ﷺ to evaluate the reliability of Watt's claim.

The early Seerah events have been analyzed by many researchers<sup>214</sup>. However, they did not put up any theory suggesting that Muhammad's ﷺ position was weaker or that there were other individuals in Medina who held positions more powerful than he did. Watt has based this narrative on instances (discussed later) where Muhammad ﷺ consented to outside advice. In this respect, Yasin Mazhar Sadiqi (1944–2020 C.E.), in his book “*Ahde Nabvi ka Nizame Hukomat*,” has conducted a study on consultation's events in Seerah. He counts in his findings that there are up to fifty of Muhammad's ﷺ consultants who have given consultation

---

<sup>212</sup> Watt, 228.

<sup>213</sup> Watt, 228–29.

<sup>214</sup> Ibne Hazm, Tahir, Hamid, Yasin, Mubarakpuri, Noor Muhammad, Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi, Abdul Qadir Jilani, Jabal Buaben etc.

on different occasions<sup>215</sup>. However, he did not assert on any occasion that this demonstrates Muhammad's ﷺ early lack of influence or that another consultant had greater influence.

Similarly, in his work *"Ahde Nabvi Mai Nizami Hakumrani,"* Hamidullah discusses the charter of Medina. Based on many constitutional articles, he claims that he was the leader of Medina<sup>216</sup>. He has not taken into account that his prominence was weaker in his formative years or the possibility that someone else had more influence. Nevertheless, there has not been any discourse conducted on the matter at hand in order to explore how Watt does conduct hypothetical discursive formulation. Therefore, in order to assess the soundness of Watt's claim, analysts should carry out more research to contextually and rationally compare Muhammad's ﷺ influence to that of others.

Watt bases these hypothesized factors regarding Muhammad ﷺ on two major occasions<sup>217</sup>. First, following the false charge against Aishah's (RA) modesty, Muhammad ﷺ was unable to take immediate action against Abdullah ibn Ubayy. He called a meeting of the anṣār and sought their permission. Secondly, in the case of punishing Banu Qurayza, Muhammad ﷺ did not make any judgement himself, and the decision was given to Sa'd ibn Maaz (RA), the chief of the Aws. These are the two grounds on which Watt has based his claim. Now, it is possible that Watt may give greater weight to these two figures, Ibn Ubayy and Sa'd ibn Maaz. Let's contrast his influence or status in Medina's political system with these two, and then also with everyone else as well.

First, even though he mentioned two instances to support his viewpoint, are these two instances—or perhaps several more instances that Watt did not cite—sufficient to prove that Muhammad's ﷺ position was weaker during his early years in Medina? In order to discover the facts, this critique required thorough analysis.

In almost all contemporary political systems, it is apparent that the head of state often calls meetings and asks for counsel from his or her ministers. When dealing with delicate

---

<sup>215</sup> Siddiqi, *Ehd e Nabvi (s.a.w) Ka Nizam e Haqoomat*, 18–21.

<sup>216</sup> Muhammad Hamidullah, *Ehd-e-Nabvi Main Nizaam-e-Hukmarani* (Karachi: Bab-ul-Islam Printing Press, 1981), 92–96.

<sup>217</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 229.

political conditions, leaders sometimes hold referendums in order to obtain the opinions of their constituents. However, none of these instances indicate that the concerned nation's leader is weak in comparison to his subjects. Asking for advice or calling a meeting does not always suggest that an authoritative figure is weaker. Accordingly, if Muhammad ﷺ did not directly challenge Ibn Ubayy, assemble the anṣār, or pass a decision only against Banu Qurayza, and Sa'd made the choice, it does sufficiently justify that he was weaker than these two or someone else, as Watt asserts. In the case of Aisha, if people had been consulted against Abdullah or if Sa'd had taken the decision of Banu Qurayza, then these cannot be strong enough arguments to construct the view that his position was weaker than that of Sa'd or Ibn Ubayy.

Additionally, if an analyst examines the charter of Medina, which was drafted in the 1st year of hijrah (622 C.E.), he can see a clear provision stating that Muhammad ﷺ would be the ultimate judge in the event of a disagreement. It proves he was in a position of prominence. Hamidullah utilizes this argument to support his assertion that Muhammad ﷺ was Medina's leader<sup>218</sup>. Although it is the most compelling argument for his prominent position, it might not be the most compelling argument for his top classification. This is due to the fact that judges are no longer always in the highest positions in the state.

In total, in 84 conflicts between Muslims and their opponents, Muhammad ﷺ independently exercised direct leadership of the army, or he appointed someone else to do so. All these instances followed the execution of his orders, which strongly suggests that the Muslims acknowledged him as a military leader. According to other accounts, all the booty seized during the battles was distributed in accordance with Muhammad's ﷺ orders rather than Sa'd's, Abdullah's, or those of anyone else in power<sup>219</sup>. This shows that he maintained a very powerful military status among all Muslims and that they all recognized him as their leader. The inhabitants of Medina would not have acknowledged the commands, or at the very least there would have been a dispute, if Muhammad ﷺ did not have a prominent position. The anṣār and the muhājirūn, on the other hand, immediately welcomed the decision,

---

<sup>218</sup> Muhammad Hamidullah, *Ehd-e-Nabvi Main Nizaam-e-Hukmarani* (Karachi: Bab-ul-Islam Printing Press, 1981), 92–96.

<sup>219</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, 1:245-315.

and there is no evidence of disagreement. Therefore, all of them lend credence to the idea that Muhammad ﷺ had a very prestigious position. Thus, it does not necessarily imply that these individuals were more important than him or their equals if just Ibn Ubayy's recommendation in the war of Banu Nadir was approved or Sa'd made a judgement against Banu Qurayza.

According to Arab tradition, the tribal chief would get a quarter of the booty to be utilized for the sake of the tribe. Muhammad ﷺ maintained a similar pattern of conduct<sup>220</sup>. After the Battle of Badr, the rules controlling the booty of various battles were somewhat altered. One-fifth of the booty from these battles was set aside for Muhammad ﷺ, whereas no evidence exists that any specific portion of it was fixed to Sa'd, Abdullah, or any other commander. As a result, one can clearly deduce that Muhammad ﷺ had the highest rank among the muhājirūn and the anṣār, and no one was more influential than him. He would not have had military leadership or the authority to distribute the booty if his position had been weaker or someone more powerful than him, as Watt contends. Additionally, if there were other influential figures, they would not allow him to receive a fifth of the booty.

There is no recorded instance of a specific conflict between the Meccans and Medinans before Muhammad's ﷺ arrival. Both communities practiced idolatry as their religion. The polytheists of Medina used to make the Hajj to the Ka'bah, but there is no history of them falling into any serious problems. The deductive inference that can be drawn from these facts is that the two of them had a welcoming relationship before the Medinans adopted Muhammad ﷺ. However, once they embraced Muhammad ﷺ, they turned the Meccans into their foes in an effort to defend him. The fact that the inhabitants of Medina stood up for him in the face of powerful opponents like the Quraysh exposes that the Prophet did not enjoy a lower position among them.

Likewise, in order to defend Muhammad ﷺ, they went against their allies, the Jews, and waged many wars against them. Watt's assertion is refuted by the fact that the Medinans not only defended Muhammad ﷺ inside of Medina but also from every angle outside of the city. If the anṣār and the muhājirūn had considered him as an ordinary tribal head, as Watt

---

<sup>220</sup> *Al-Qur'an* 8:41.

states, they would not have repeatedly agreed with his key judgements of battles that were continually threatening their security of life and property. Additionally, it does not appear to be strong enough that he was in a weak position based on the fact that he was regularly convincing the Medinans to fight against troops who were many times stronger than they were.

The additional key point in Watt's discourse's contention that Muhammad's ﷺ position was weak in the early Medinan period is how long he means from the early period. In this regard, an analyst can draw a deductive inference from Watt's own explanation. Among the two incidents he cites in support of his claim are the Battle of Banu Qurayza and the Afq incident, which happened in 5<sup>th</sup> year of hijrah (626 C.E.)<sup>221</sup>. This simply reinforces that the early era, according to him, refers to at least the first five years after migration. Now, if the Medinans had embraced Muhammad ﷺ as a prophet, it automatically implies that they also acknowledged the Qur'an. Let's analyze the early five years of the Qur'an to understand what the verses have to say about this situation. Numerous verses in the Qur'an promise the pleasures of paradise to those who obey God and His messenger<sup>222</sup>. In many verses, those who disobey are warned that they will suffer punishment<sup>223</sup>. Furthermore, many refer to orders to obey Muhammad ﷺ generally<sup>224</sup>. According to Watt's own research:

“The words 'obey God and His messenger' and various equivalents occur about forty times in the Qur'an, and are to be dated mostly in the months before and after the battle of Uhud.”<sup>225</sup>

Therefore, based on these Qur'anic verses and the aforementioned investigations, the study can construct the outlook that when the Medinans accepted Islam at the time of the Pledge at al-Aqba, it unavoidably meant that they also accepted Muhammad ﷺ as a prophet. Islam encompasses politics as a component of its entire code of conduct; therefore, it stands to reason that he was also considered a leader in political affairs. The fact that they

---

<sup>221</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 3:48.

<sup>222</sup> *Al-Qur'an* 4:13, 4:14, 33:71, 48:16, 49:14.

<sup>223</sup> *Al-Qur'an* 4:14, 33:66, 69:10, 33:36.

<sup>224</sup> *Al-Qur'an* 3:31, 3:32, 4:80, 4:83, 24:54, 24:57.

<sup>225</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 233.

acknowledged Muhammad ﷺ as a military leader in the battles that were fought to establish authority is a further argument in support of this. Nevertheless, merely because he sought someone's counsel or granted them the go-ahead to make a decision does not unavoidably imply that he did not have influential authority or that he held a weaker position. When the inhabitants of Medina tolerated the hostility of the Jews of Medina, the Christians of Byzantium, and the polytheists of Mecca in order to defend Muhammad ﷺ, it strongly suggests that he held the most powerful authority of all.

Therefore, when the study analyzes Watt's discourse as a type of social practice and correlates his discourse with his environmental setting, it becomes clear that he has approached the number of above-mentioned Qur'anic verses and rational considerations with clear skepticism. He is from Scotland and the post-colonial age, both of which have ties to western skepticism; therefore, it appears clear that the skeptical perspective substantially influences the formation of his ideological discourse. Thus, the investigation reveals hidden ideologies, the function of language in sustaining socio-political supremacy, and Watt's discursive positioning as advancing the interests of a particular demographic of the population.

### **Assessment**

Because he overlooked the facts that expose a distinct dimension in contrast to his hypothesized factor, Watt's analysis of the data seems to be restricted to only a few particular incidents. Therefore, the reliability of such an idea can be merely substantiated by skepticism; otherwise, no evidence has been found that suggests that Muhammad ﷺ possessed a weaker position on the political spectrum or that other individuals had greater influence in Medina. In light of the analysis, there are several convincing arguments that lead the researcher to form the assessment that Muhammad's ﷺ rank was the most powerful of all in nature and that Watt's discursive structure is shaped by his sociocultural variables.

#### **3.1.2 Early Standpoint about Jews**

Watt says that initially, in Muhammad's ﷺ eyes, Jews and Muslims were co-religionists, so he necessitated the Jews for financial assistance or at least interest-free loans because it

was against Jewish law to lend money to a co-religionist at interest. But, since the Jews did not think so, they were only willing to lend on interest.

“In his eyes Jews and Muslims were co-religionists, and therefore the Jews ought to make outright contributions to his cause, or at least to lend money without interest.”<sup>226</sup>

## Critique

What evidence supports Watt's assertion that Muhammad ﷺ understood that Jews and Muslims were co-religionists? The only argument Watt gives is that he asked the Jews for financial aid, or at least interest-free loans, which in Judaism could only be given to co-religionists. Now, even though it was against Jewish law to lend money to a co-religionist at interest, does the fact that Muhammad ﷺ demanded money imply that he was thinking of Jews and Muslims as co-religionists? Alternatively, are there any further facts that back up Watt's assertion in addition to this one? The study should thoroughly investigate these dimensions in order to assess Watt's discursive findings.

It is probable that, in terms of idolatry, Muhammad ﷺ viewed Judaism and Christians as being religions closer to Islam. Analyzing this, he had previously displayed this attitude towards Christians while he was in Mecca, and there was a war going on between the Roman Empire and the Persian Empire<sup>227</sup>. Muhammad ﷺ had sympathy for Christians at the time and saw them as having a similar resemblance to Islam<sup>228</sup>. But this cannot be a sufficient argument to assert that he considered these Jews or Christians to be his co-religionists.

Analysts may learn best about Muhammad's ﷺ approach towards the Jews by taking a look at certain articles of the charter of Medina. Due to the fact that it was formed just a few months after the migration, this document will be the earliest authentic source. The wording of a few articles of the charter of Medina, which has been mentioned by Ibn Hasham, is as follows:

---

<sup>226</sup> Watt, 297.

<sup>227</sup> *Al-Qur'an* 30:1-5.

<sup>228</sup> *Al-Qur'an* 30:3-5.



"A Yahūdī, who obeys us (the state) shall enjoy the same right of life protection (as the believers do), so long as they (the believers) are not wronged by him (the Yahūd), and he does not help (others) against them".<sup>229</sup>

"The Yahūd will be subjected to a proportionate liability of the war expenses along with the believers so long as they (the Yahūd) continue to fight in conjunction with them".<sup>230</sup>

"The Yahūd and the Muslims shall bear their own war expenses separately".<sup>231</sup>

The fact that the word "Yahūd," which is a name based on religion, is frequently used in these sources is notable. They are not defined based on their ethnic group, the caste system, or geography. This reveals that they had a distinct religious identity. If they did not have a separate religious identity and Muhammad ﷺ considered these Jews as his co-religionists, Muslims, he should have at least referred to them by the name of their tribes and not by the name of their religion. In support of this point of view, another section of the charter, contrary to Watt's claim, also clearly establishes Islam and Judaism as different religions. The actual words of this article are the following:

"For the Jews, they have their religion and for the Muslims, they have their own religion, whether they are their followers or they themselves. But, whoever commits oppression or the violators of treaties, they will bring evil only on themselves and their family."<sup>232</sup>

There is no question that many of the constitutional provisions establish that Jews were required to make financial contributions. According to the above-mentioned articles of the charter, as long as Jews and Muslims continue to engage in combat jointly, both groups will be liable for contributing their respective share of the war's costs. Now, the critique is: does the mere imposition of financial support prove that Muhammad ﷺ considered both religions to be one religion? No is the straightforward response to this query for a number of reasons. The first justification is that today's Jewish humanitarian organizations help individuals of

---

<sup>229</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, 1:122.

<sup>230</sup> Ibn Sa'd, 1:120.

<sup>231</sup> Ibn Sa'd, 1:121.

<sup>232</sup> Ibn Sa'd, 1:120.

Jewish and non-Jewish faiths<sup>233</sup>. However, neither the Jews nor the needy of other faiths consider each other to be co-religionists. This supports the idea that just because someone asks someone for help does not mean they must share their religious beliefs. The second justification is that everyone in Medina, including Jews, Muslims, and polytheists, was compelled to contribute financial support. Now, if the same evidence does not show that Muhammad ﷺ considered polytheists as co-religionists, then it will not necessarily follow that he likewise saw Jews as co-religionists.

The third argument is that he did not obligate the Jews to this financial commitment in order to utilize it for the Muslims, but rather to use it against their common enemy's attack on Medina. In this regard, the text of another article of the charter is as follows:

“The Jews along with the believers shall extend financial support to the State during the war period.”<sup>234</sup>

If the Jews had accepted Muhammad ﷺ as their prophet, or at least as the genuine prophet of the Arabs, there could have been a likelihood that he would have considered them his co-religionists. But, at this point, it is difficult to comprehend how Muhammad ﷺ could consider them co-religionists since they openly rejected him. Additionally, he formed separate regulations for the two with clear distinctions, as mentioned above, in the charter of Medina. He would not have treated Muslims and Jews differently if he had thought of them as belonging to the same faith.

The next factors, probably the most persuasive of all, is that there were considerable basic differences between the two religions. In several fundamental principles, including certain beliefs, prayer, marriage, and eatable foods, there were clear contrasts between the two of them. The Jewish place of worship was distinct from the Muslim one, and in contrast to Muslims, who disputed it, Jews thought Prophet Uzair was the son of God. Most importantly,

---

<sup>233</sup> Common examples are; World Jewish Relief (WJR), American Jewish World Service (AJWS) and The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA).

<sup>234</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, n.d., 1:120.

there are more than 150 Qur'anic verses mentioned by Ibn Hasham that clearly demonstrate that both Muslims and Jews have been severe enemies since early<sup>235</sup>.

Consequently, in light of all these clear distinctions, the assertion made by Watt's discourse that Muhammad ﷺ thought Muslims and Jews were co-religionists appears to be far from the factual grounds. The study demonstrates that he overlooked the primary concerns and merely exaggerated the economic element, which further establishes that he approached the case from a Marxist perspective.

This matter may be summarized as follows: Jews sought to lend money to Muslims solely at interest, while Muhammad ﷺ asked them to contribute without conditions. As a result of Muhammad's ﷺ denial of interest based contract, Watt developed the theory that, at the time, he considered Jews and Muslims to be co-religionists since, from a Jewish perspective, contribution without interest could only be for brother religionists. The research, however, shows that this support was only demanded in event of an invasion for joint warfare for the defense of the state. If Muhammad ﷺ had not taken it, he possibly could not have fought the common war with his wealth alone.

### **Assessment**

Given that his argument is ineffective in supporting his textual productions, Watt's construction of ideology and his reasoning are independent of one another. His analysis clearly displays that he viewed the situation through a materialistic lens by focusing exclusively on the sole economic component and ignoring the other significant justifications. As a result, the analysis highlights critically how clear a link exists between Watt's ideological discursive production and the sociocultural variables. His point of view clearly illustrates that his thinking is impacted by environmental forces linked with both Marxism and Western skepticism. In addition, the research demonstrates that Muhammad ﷺ did not regard Muslims and Jews as belonging to the same religion.

### **3.1.3 Motives of Letters to the Princes**

---

<sup>235</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 2:35.

Watt makes the following statement on Ibn Sa'd's account of six envoys, where he narrates that they were sent to kings to persuade them to embrace Islam:

“This story cannot be accepted as it stands. Muhammad was a wise and far-seeing statesman, and he did not ‘lose his head’ after the measure of success he obtained at al-Hudaybiyah. To appeal to these princes at this period to accept Islam would have done more harm than good.”<sup>236</sup>

Later in his discussion, Watt constructs the view that the religious component of the mission is a probabilistic element. According to him, the primary objective of the six envoys' missions was not to preach religion but to establish a mutually beneficial political alliance between Muhammad ﷺ and the relevant ruler. These are his own words:

“It is practically certain that the aim of the embassy was to conclude a friendly agreement between Muhammad and the ruler in question. Such agreements would be primarily political, though there would probably also be some mention of religion.”<sup>237</sup>

## Critique

What is clear from Watt's assertion is that he attributes the political element to the primary goal of these letters to the princes. He views the religious component as probabilistic, which unavoidably implies that he does not hold it to be certain. Now, the study's challenge is whether or not there was a religious component to the mission's objective. If the religious component was involved, was it the primary goal? Or was the establishment of political unification the main objective, with the religious component serving as an indirect objective, as Watt contends?

Hamidullah has undertaken a study in this regard where he analyzes the critique of whether these were actually sent or not. He concentrates on the letter to Negus's legitimacy, where he formulates his conclusions, which strongly suggest that it was actually sent<sup>238</sup>. In addition, he focuses on the letter to Hercules in particular, discussing it at appropriate length

---

<sup>236</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 345.

<sup>237</sup> Watt, 346.

<sup>238</sup> Hamidullah, *Rasool E Akram (SAW) Ki Siyasi Zindagi*, 119–20.

and considering many of the criticisms of orientalists. He then formulates his conclusions, which emphatically support the authenticity of these letters<sup>239</sup>. However, since Watt does not refute these letters but merely refutes his religious component, one must carry out further critical analysis of the discourse in order to determine the factual foundations.

In order to find the actual facts, the study needed to consult the original sources, namely the actual content of these letters. Consequently, it will be easier for the researcher to explore the factual grounds once the study examines the phrasing of the letters delivered to each of these six heads of state independently. The invitational segments of these letters are presented below:

#### **To the king of the Persia, Khosrow Parviz**

“Peace be upon him who heeds the advice, trusts in Allah and His Prophet, and declares, that there is no god but Allah, and I am His Prophet for all of mankind, warning each and every man of the awe of Allah. If you want to find peacefulness, adhere to Islam; if not, the sin of the Magi will come to you.”<sup>240</sup>

#### **To the emperor of the Rome, Heraclius**

"I will definitely invite you to Islam. God will double your reward and you will achieve peacefulness if you embrace Islam. If you refuse, you will be held accountable for your subjects' and followers' sins. O the people of the Book! Come to a point where we and you are on equal footing—we both worship only Allah. Never share anything with him. And we do not replace Allah with another as our Lord. So if you turn away, then say, you be witnesses that we are Muslims." <sup>241</sup>

#### **To the king of the Abyssinia, Negus**

"I invite you to God, the Unique, without any associate, and to His obedience as well as to follow me and believe in what has come to me, because I am the Messenger of God. I extend an invitation to you and your people to the Great Lord. Receive my guidance

---

<sup>239</sup> Muhammad Hamidullah, *Rasool E Akram (SAW) Ki Siyasi Zindagi* (Lahore: Haji Hanif Printer, 2013), 154–67.

<sup>240</sup> Ibn Jarir at-Tabari, *Tarikh Al-Umam Wal-Muluk*, v. 3: 90.

<sup>241</sup> Mubarakpuri, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*, 483.

now that I have completed my duties and admonitions. God bless those who follow the Guidance." <sup>242</sup>

### **To the ruler of the Egypt, Muqauqis**

"I invite you to Islam so that you might find peacefulness, and God will reward you double. If you refuse, you will bear the guilt of the nation you represent. Come to that which is common between you and us: that we would worship none but Allah, nor associate anything with him, nor accept others as masters but God. However, if you look away, say, "Be a witness that we are Muslims." <sup>243</sup>

### **To the Ghassanid governor of the Damascus, Harith ibn Abi Shamir**

"This is a letter from the Prophet of Allah, Muhammad to Harith ibn Abi Shamir. Peace be with the truth's followers, guides, and sincere believers. Oh, Harith! I call you to come to the One Allah Who possesses no associate. Your kingdom will survive if you accept Islam." <sup>244</sup>

### **To the Prince of the Yamama, Hawza ibn Ali**

"You need to be aware that my religion will soon sparkle on the distant horizons. So, O Hawza, become a Muslim in order to find salvation. Then I'll hand over control of your country to you." <sup>245</sup>

By examining all of these letters, it appears that the religious invitation is something that all of them possess in common. Comparatively, the letters to the princes of Yamama and Ghassan are the only ones where it is possible to perceive the political component. It is important to note that in the letters of these two princes, the political side was only conceivable when the religious invitation was accepted because there was a demand to adopt Islam. Additionally, the letters sent to Khosrow II, Heraclius, Muqauqis, and Negus unambiguously mentioned the invitation for religious beliefs without making any demands

---

<sup>242</sup> Hamidullah, *Rasool E Akram (SAW) Ki Siyasi Zindagi*, 119–20.

<sup>243</sup> Al-Zarqani, *Sharah Al Zurqani Ala al Mawahib*, Volume 3: 247-8.

<sup>244</sup> Mubarakpuri, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*, 489.

<sup>245</sup> Mubarakpuri, 488.

for political affairs. This illustrates how political considerations could not be the primary target but rather the outcome, which might just be the secondary objective.

Given that Islam is a religion in which politics also plays a role as a segment, it is not improbable that these letters contained political motivations in addition to the previously indicated religious side. However, it seems quite weak and unconvincing for Watt to make the case in this way that politics, not religion, was the primary objective of the letters in question. This hypothetical establishment is backed by several justifications, some of which are listed below.

1. All six of the letters include an invitation to Islam, but they do not all address political cases—in fact, four of the six letters make no mention of it at all. The letters from Khosrow, Heraclius, Muqauqis, and Negus contain no discussion of the political grounds. Therefore, it is quite likely that these letters' primary objective is not to form a political coalition or partnership.
2. There is no debate that, in addition to discussing religion, the two letters also reference politics in one way or another. Islam is a religion, however, in which politics is included as a component. When someone opposes the whole of something while simultaneously claiming that one part of it serves as the key goal, it is unlikely to be seen as having a strong stance.
3. The letters' apparent wording makes it clear that, primarily, there could have been only a religious motivation behind them rather than a political one. This assertion is supported by the observation that all of the letters begin with an invitation to Islam.
4. It can be acknowledged that these letters may have long-term political advantages, but these will be viewed as outcomes rather than primary goals. Because these political accomplishments were only doable after embracing Islam's invitation. As a result, the religious aspect appears to be dominant once more.

### **Assessment**

In the assessment, the religious tone is not only evident in the framing of all the letters but also supported by accounts. Although there is no doubt that the two letters had a somewhat political character, they were beneficial in terms of what might be accomplished

as a consequence, but they cannot be considered the fundamental motive. Watt's discourse clearly reflects the issue of bibliographical sources since he denies the verifiable reports of Arabian historians by stating that they cannot be accepted the way they are. Consequently, it explores that Watt's assertion that the primary goal of these letters was political rather than religious is quite unpersuasive.

### 3.1.4 The Abyssinian Envoy's Primary Mission

Particularly, in the case of the Abyssinian envoy, Watt contends that he was sent to organize Umm Ḥabībah's (RA) marriage and the return of Ja'far ibn Abi Talib (RA) and other refugees to Arabia, and that this was not intended to deliver a message of Islam, but theological interests manipulated the actual occurrence<sup>246</sup>.

#### Critique

Mubarakpuri has covered this case in his letter to Negus at appropriate length; however, he makes no mention of any marriage instance or the repatriation of refugees to Arabia<sup>247</sup>. Tahir has gone into appropriate lengths about this letter; however, neither marriage nor the return of refugees are referenced<sup>248</sup>. Similar to this, even though Hamidullah investigated this letter at considerable length, he makes no mention of any marriage-related situations or the coming back of refugees to Arabia<sup>249</sup>. If marriage and the repatriation of refugees are not addressed in their study, it does not necessarily follow that they are denying the authenticity of these elements. However, it reveals that they were not convinced that these were the mission's main motivations. Thus, it is needed to carry out additional research to examine the actual justifications for whether this ambassador was merely sent to facilitate marriage and the repatriation of refugees or whether he was actually sent there to preach Islam.

In the preceding section, the study has already mentioned the letter in which Muhammad ﷺ explicitly invites Negus to Islam. Letter words do not mention the marriage of Umm

---

<sup>246</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 346.

<sup>247</sup> Mubarakpuri, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*, 476–79.

<sup>248</sup> Muhammad Tahir al-Qadri, *Seerat ul Rasool*, 12th ed., vol. 6 (Lahore: Minhaj-ul-Quran Printer, 2017), 284–86.

<sup>249</sup> Hamidullah, *Rasool E Akram (SAW) Ki Siyasi Zindagi*, 126–33.



Ḥabībah. Now, if someone rejects an event that is proven by tradition, he has to offer a convincing defense that is satisfactory for denying it. Conversely, when one reads through Watt's contention, he just supports the assertion that the Abyssinian envoy was sent exclusively to arrange Umm Ḥabībah's marriage and the repatriation of the refugees without putting forward any justification.

On the one hand, it is evident based on the accounts that Khālīd ibn Sa'īd ibn al-Āṣ proposed and approved Umm Ḥabībah as Muhammad's ﷺ wife, proving that he was sent by Muhammad ﷺ with authority<sup>250</sup>. While Amr ibn Umayyah al-Damri submitted the letter he wrote to Negus at the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> year of hijrah (627 C.E.) or at the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> year of hijrah (628 C.E.)<sup>251</sup>. The diverse names for the letter and Nikāh leave the researcher in deep doubt about Watt's claim. But, assuming it is factual, a concern arises: supposing this envoy travelled to arrange Ja'far's return and Umm Ḥabībah's marriage, does this necessarily entail that no demand for embracing Islam was made? Since, evidently, it does not necessarily entail it, Watt's claim also does not seem fact-based from this angle. The probability that the envoy would have spoken for Ja'far's return and Umm Ḥabībah's marriage does not rule out the possibility that he invited Negus to Islam. The letter clearly exposes that Muhammad ﷺ called Negus to Islam. Though the possibility that he may have gone for both these activities is not implausible, it does not appear strong enough to refute the fact that he made a demand to embrace Islam.

Subsequently, when Watt denies a historically confirmed motive for the incident without justification, it may only be based on stubbornness or that he overlooked bibliographical sources and may not be the actual interpretation of facts. Verification of the facts is explored via persuasive reasoning and justification, and it has nothing to do with someone's desires, stubbornness, or doubt. Demand for embracing Islam is verified with certain accounts, while the other part is based on ambiguity. As a result, something that has been established with certainty cannot be dismissed only on the basis of skepticism. Therefore, the discourse

---

<sup>250</sup> Ibn Jarir at-Tabari, *Tarikh Al-Umam Wal-Muluk*, v 2, 235.

<sup>251</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, 1:120 and 129.

compels an analyst to consider that Watt's hypothesis is flimsy regarding the refutation of the religious element of the letter to Negus.

### **Assessment**

However, research suspects that there were different envoys assigned to Umm Ḥabībah's engagement and the religious invitation. However, if there is some truth in the ambiguity that the envoy was the same, Umm Ḥabībah's marriage or the notification of the muhājirūn's return do not necessarily confirm that Negus would not have been called to Islam. This is due to the fact that these two variables are independent of one another in nature, and the existence of one does not necessitate the absence of the other. Additionally, Watt establishes his case without offering any convincing explanation for his idea. Even after considering additional possible explanations, the research failed to confirm Watt's suggested theory. As a consequence, the findings lead a researcher to assess Watt's theory as feeble.

### **3.1.5 Rituals Adaptation for Jewish Alliance**

According to Watt, Muhammad (PBUB) quickly made the decision to confront Bayt al-Maqdis' during prayer before leaving Mecca in accordance with Jewish tradition<sup>252</sup>. Additionally, he argues that Muslims in Medina looked to the Jewish Day of Atonement, which was used as a model for the 'Āshūrā' Fast, and the same was the case about Muslims' Friday rituals and the Jewish Sabbath<sup>253</sup>. What is noteworthy is that Watt claims Muhammad ﷺ utilized this adaptation of Jewish rituals as a tactic for forming an alliance. Watt goes even further by saying:

“He seems to have been prepared to allow them (Jews) to keep their forms of worship and other distinctive religious practices if they would recognize him as a prophet parallel to their own prophets.”<sup>254</sup>

### **Critique**

---

<sup>252</sup> Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*, 99.

<sup>253</sup> Watt, 99.

<sup>254</sup> Watt, 99.

Did these rituals actually originate from Jewish teaching, or did Islam have its own independent divine origin for these customs? The study has nothing to do with this matter since it relates to core theological matters, whereas the focus of this research is solely on political aspects. The key challenge of the research is to explore whether Muhammad ﷺ actually carried out these actions in order to achieve the same goal or whether Watt only opposes the facts with this assertion and actually these actions had nothing to do with the alliance. Therefore, addressing these queries will now be the key subject matter of the research.

The alteration of the qiblah has been thoroughly examined by Muhammad Shafi (1897–1976 C.E.), especially its background and rationale<sup>255</sup>. The critiques study raised above, however, remain unanalyzed over there. Similar to what Ashraf Ali Thanwi did, he has also gone into considerable detail on the changing of the qiblah, explaining the historical background and motivations for it<sup>256</sup>. However, he has not addressed the critique that the study raised above. In terms of Friday, both Ashraf Ali Thanwi<sup>257</sup> and Shafi<sup>258</sup> stated that the rules and regulations are more lenient than the Jewish Sabbath. However, none of these makes any establishment of the claim that these traditions have been adapted for the political alliance. Watt, on the other hand, has theorized that this was modified in order to form coalitions with Jews. In order to assess the factual basis for determining whether these practices were adopted for alliance or whether they had nothing to do with alliance and were both separate elements, one needs to conduct a further analysis.

When analysts evaluate all of the practices that Watt identifies as attempts to form the alliance, diverse other considerations emerge. This evaluation begs the question: Were these traditions dropped after ties with Jews deteriorated in the form of physical oppression? Till today, Friday is an important day of worship for Muslims, and ‘Āshūrā’ fasting has

---

<sup>255</sup> Shafi, *Ma'ariful Qur'an*, 1:106–7 Al-Baqara : 148.

<sup>256</sup> Thanwi, *Bayan ul Qur'an*, v 1, 234 al-Baqra vesre 142.

<sup>257</sup> Thanwi, *Bayan ul Qur'an*, v 3, 543-4 al-Juma :10.

<sup>258</sup> Shafi, *Ma'ariful Qur'an*, 1:al-Jumah : 10.

considerable religious significance, which not only analysts observe but is also supported by Muhammad's ﷺ early accounts<sup>259</sup>.

However, the order for qiblah was revoked after a while. Therefore, Watt's claim that Muhammad ﷺ chose Bayt al-Maqdis' as the qiblah because he intended to form an alliance with the Jews may have a bit of soundness. This is due to the fact that the qiblah was Bayt al-Maqdis' while relations between Muhammad ﷺ and the Jews were pleasant, but when there was an open breakup, the qiblah was eventually altered to the Ka'bah. However, the key critique right now is whether the shift in qiblah is sufficient to justify Watt's suggestions or whether Watt's assumption is independent from the cancellation of Bait al-Maqdis'.

With reference to the above question, the acceptance of Bait al-Maqdis' as the qiblah happened before the move to Medina. Before the migration, Muhammad's ﷺ major attention was on the polytheists of Mecca, where he was at risk of his life. Analysts might deduce from this that, because there will be no particular mention of Jews at that time, this sort of action looks to be exceedingly difficult for the Alliance.

If Muhammad ﷺ had utilized the qiblah to form an alliance with the Jewish community, he should have designated the Ka'bah instead of Bayt al-Maqdis' as the qiblah. This is because there was more of a need for an alliance with the Meccans than with the Jews since he was there in Mecca at the time and was being severely oppressed by the polytheists. Secondly, according to the accounts<sup>260</sup>, the change in qiblah occurred seventeen months after the migration to Medina, while Muhammad's ﷺ relations with the Jews began to deteriorate shortly after the migration when he was not accepted as a prophet. This account suggests that the adoption or leaving of Bayt al-Maqdis' had nothing to do with Jewish relationships.

When Watt claims that adopting Bayt al-Maqdis' was an attempt to form an alliance, it will logically follow that Muslims attempted to form an alliance with polytheists when the Ka'bah was designated as the qiblah. Given the ongoing severe battles between Muslims and Meccan polytheists, this would be a very weak assumption. In the same manner, if adopting the Bayt al-Maqdis' as qiblah is considered an effort at an alliance, then it implies that when

---

<sup>259</sup> Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, Kitab al-Syam, Bab Istehbab Syam Slasa, Hadith no. 1162.

<sup>260</sup> Ibn Hazm, *Jawami' as-Seera*, 132.

Christianity adopted the Bayt al-Maqdis' as qiblah, they too were trying to establish an alliance with the Jews. Due to the fact that Christianity and Judaism were in conflict from the start, this is likewise a very weak inference. Since the study has established that adopting the qiblah has nothing to do with constructing an alliance, an analyst can therefore conclude that choosing the qiblah was simply a matter of belief, and its adoption or change by a prophet for the purpose of forming a political alliance does not appear to be appropriate.

In terms of fasting on 'Āshūrā', numerous traditions show that fasting on 'Āshūrā' is still as important in Islam as it was previously<sup>261</sup>. Muhammad ﷺ ought to have eliminated the significance of these fasts after his relationship with the Jews broke down, but that is not what happened. Because of this, it would not be stronger to refer to it as an attempt to form an alliance with the Jews. Another essential point to consider is that the Jews used to fast just on the 10th Muharram, but Muhammad ﷺ commanded the 9th and 10th or the 10th and 11th Muharram, which is contradictory with the Jews' fasting schedule. This opposite instruction was reportedly attributed by Muhammad ﷺ himself to his avoidance of Jewish custom<sup>262</sup>.

Regarding Watt's argument based on the Friday custom, it is important to note that there is no special comparability between the Jewish Sabbath and the Muslims' Friday customs. Both practices had numerous distinctions for the reason that Jews exclusively honored Saturday with worship and considered buying, selling, agriculture, commerce, hunting, and trading to be illegal on this day. While Muslims do not set aside this day wholly for rituals, they do set aside a portion of it for rituals and do not consider buying, selling, farming, trading, hunting, or trading to be prohibited on this day. In addition, the Jews designated Saturday as the day for this ritual, while the Muslims chose Friday to set themselves apart from the Jews. Similar to how virtually every religion places a strong focus on some special days, one cannot deduce that this emphasis is placed in order to set up a political partnership with another community. So, if the Christians made Sunday their holy day, would they describe it as an effort to form a political alliance with the Jews? Since the straightforward

---

<sup>261</sup> Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, Kitab al-Syam, Bab Istehbab Syam Slasa, Hadith no. 1162.

<sup>262</sup> Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, Kitab al-Syam, Bab Istehbab Syam Slasa, Hadith no. 1162.

answer to this query is no, it is unpersuasive that a religious leader would attempt to modify his core beliefs in order to construct a political ally.

All of the aforementioned arguments lead a researcher to the conclusion that Islam is a matchless religion with its own distinctive identity. If certain features of it and Judaism are shown to be similar, it does not follow that this similarity was an effort toward a political partnership. This is because almost all faiths share certain characteristics, but one cannot characterize them all as attempts at political alliance. If Muhammad ﷺ did this for a political alliance, it is exceedingly hard to comprehend why he would criticize the core beliefs of Judaism. Though logically, he should not have criticized the fundamental tenets of Judaism if he had administered it for the political alliance. As a consequence, based on all the aforementioned factors, the review theoretically develops the hypothesis that these actions did not actually represent an effort to establish a political coalition.

Despite the analysis's finding that there was no correlation between Medinans' acceptance of Muhammad ﷺ and Jews' belief in the arrival of the Messiah, Watt accords honor to Judaism in this case. This clearly implies that his theological setting, which includes his adherence to Judeo-Christian ideas, influences his discursive interpretations. He blatantly ignored and discounted the crucial historical context that explained how the Western skeptical mindset affected his ideological discursive construction. This claim exposes both the problems of his discursive ideological production and the ways in which his discursive positioning advances his religious goals.

### **Assessment**

The research exposes the fact that Watt's suggestion that adopting the qiblah, fasting on 'Āshūrā', and placing special emphasis on Friday was to make an alliance with the Jews is quite unconvincing. Watt's claim and provided evidence go independently, and there is nothing linked between the adoption of these rituals and making the alliance with Jews. Also, the way that approach socially intervened in Watt's discourse demonstrates that Western skepticism formed Watt's philosophy as well as his religious environment—Jewish-Christian teachings—affected his ideological growth.

## 3.2 CHAPTER: MUHAMMAD'S ﷺ WAR POLITICS

### 3.2.1 War Strategy in Early Expeditions

Watt argues multiple times that Muhammad's ﷺ early conflicts were aggressive in nature. Though Watt does not specifically identify these early offensive battles, he claims that they were violent conflicts in which the Muslim army ambushed Meccan caravans. The following are Watt's direct words:

“The chief point to notice is that the Muslims took the offensive.”<sup>263</sup>

“What happened was that the first expeditions were offensive expeditions from Medina in the hope of ambushing a Meccan caravan.”<sup>264</sup>

“In the raids the Muslims were taking the offensive.”<sup>265</sup>

### Critique

Aloys Sprenger also made a similar claim regarding Muhammad's ﷺ military approach<sup>266</sup>. Based on a few incidents, he formulates the hypothesis that his approach was cruel and based on fanaticism. Furthermore, based on specific conflicts for the deportation of Jews, Muir contends that his military strategy was brutal and inhuman, considering that he neglected particular people's appeals<sup>267</sup>. In their research on the viewpoints of orientalist, Jabal Buaben<sup>268</sup> and Zubair<sup>269</sup> discuss these elements of brutality and fanaticism in relation to Muhammad's ﷺ war strategy. These assertions are refuted by their discourse, which supports the idea that Muhammad's ﷺ military strategy was highly sensible. However, because they both evaluated only particular situations and did not assess all of the previous

---

<sup>263</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 2.

<sup>264</sup> Watt, 231.

<sup>265</sup> Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*, 105.

<sup>266</sup> Sprenger, *The Life of Mohammad, from Original Sources*, 91.

<sup>267</sup> Sir William Muir, *The Life of Mahomet ; From Original Sources*, 2002nd edition (Voice Of India, 2002), 241–42.

<sup>268</sup> Buaben, *Image of the Prophet Muhammad in the West : A Study of Muir, Margoliouth and Watt*, 83–87.

<sup>269</sup> Zubair, *Islam aur Mustashriqeen*, 123–24.

incidences, the review will undertake a more in-depth review to take into consideration each of the earlier circumstances.

Before anything else, it is critical to understand that Watt only used the term "offensive war" in reference to the initial Muhammad's ﷺ military operations. He does not, however, state that all of his conflicts were offensive; rather, he mentions early events specifically. Since the early missions Watt had in mind are not quite apparent, the study examines the early campaigns of Saif al-Bahr, Sarayyah Ubaidah ibn Harith, Sarayyah Sa'd ibn Abi Waqas, Raid on Nakhla, Ghawaza Wadan, Ghazwa Sufwan, and Ghazwa Badr. Each of these campaigns will be studied independently for the reason that each conflict may have an independent background and military approach.

### **3.2.1.1 Sarayyah Saif Al Bahr**

According to several early reports, the circumstances of the confrontation were such that in the seventh month of migration to Medina, Muhammad ﷺ put out an army of thirty soldiers under the command of Hamza ibn Abd-al-Muttalib<sup>270</sup>. Its goal was to learn the condition of a caravan of 300 Quraysh travelling from Sarayyah under the leadership of Abu Jahl<sup>271</sup>. When the Muslims arrived at the Red Sea coast in quest of this caravan, they came face-to-face with the Meccans. Both sides formed a fighting line, and the Muslims loaded arrows into their bows. However, the battle was averted thanks to the efforts of Majdi ibn Amr al-Jahni, the head of the Juhaynah tribe<sup>272</sup>.

When one evaluates the aforementioned reports, it appears that the Muslims travelled as far as the tribe of Juhaynah, which was located around 50 miles away from Medina. This demonstrates that the Muslims covered a considerable distance and, probably, faced hardships like food shortages, environmental changes, fatigue, or travel sickness. All of these difficulties show that the Muslims went simply to spy; otherwise, on such an occasion, Muslims would not have pardoned the Meccans based just on the plea of one individual. The second key point is that the Muslim army consisted of only thirty soldiers, compared to

---

<sup>270</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 2:246–50; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, 1:246.

<sup>271</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 2:35; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, 1:246.

<sup>272</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, n.d., 1:246.



around 300 polytheists. If Muhammad ﷺ had intended to launch an offensive battle, he would not have been content with such a small and weak army and would have prepared a huge one. In light of this, it appears that the tiny group did not arrive to engage in combat but rather to pick up on the scenario. Thus, it seems from the above-mentioned that the goal was to determine the status of the 300-person Quraysh caravan travelling from Sarayyah.

In light of the fact that the army of the unbelievers was outnumbered and may have assaulted Medina, one explanation for this is that Muhammad ﷺ perceived it as a danger. Therefore, in case these Muslim expeditions discovered indications of an attack on Medina, they would alert the city's populace and engage in a fight against the enemy so that the Muslims would have time to organize their defense. Since, according to the International Court of Justice, spying for self-defense is a basic right of any state<sup>273</sup>, it cannot be referred to as an aggressive war. Therefore, one might conclude from this theoretical construction that it was an intelligence service operation rather than an aggressive war.

### 3.2.1.2 Sarayyah Ubaidah ibn Harith

The records state that in the eighth month of migration, Muhammad ﷺ deployed an army of 60 migrants under the leadership of Ubaidah ibn Harith<sup>274</sup>. He was ordered to block the Meccan army's route at Saniyyah al-Mara and fight if necessary. In the Rabigh Valley, this army encountered Abu Sufyan, the head of Mecca, and around 200 Quraysh. There was only shooting between the parties, and neither swords were drawn nor was there any turn of battle<sup>275</sup>. So, no organized war took place here either.

By taking everything into account, it becomes clear that this time there were more Muslims than ever before, and they were pursuing the Meccans. However, the critique is, based simply on this explanation, can analysis claim that it was an offensive campaign? Analysis has two approaches to consider in this regard. The first is that the incident is seen as a standalone event and not in the context of other events. From this approach, since the

---

<sup>273</sup> Nagendra Singh, Case Concerning Military and Paramilitary Activities in and against Nicaragua (International Court of Justice Reports of Judgments. Advisory Opinions and Orders June 27, 1986).

<sup>274</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 2:35; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, 1:246.

<sup>275</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, n.d., 1:246.

Meccan army did not pursue the Muslims but rather the Muslims pursued them, an analyst shall refer to this warfare strategy as offensive in that scenario. The second reason, for justification of offensive strategy, is that the Muslim army was armed, and they were told to stop the Quraysh and attack them if they did not obey.

However, when an analyst chooses an alternative approach while keeping in mind the context of the preceding Meccan era occurrences, they should assume that the strategy was not offensive in nature in this expedition. Research established in an earlier studies that these Meccans had brutally persecuted the Muslims, driven them out of their homes, murdered them unjustly, and confiscated their riches and property. Consequently, after contextually relating each of these factors, it is easy to deduce that Muslims have not adopted an offensive approach; it was just a reaction.

### **3.2.1.3 Sarayyah Sa'd ibn Abi Waqas**

Considering the accounts of this expedition, Muhammad ﷺ gave charge of a group of 20 troops to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqas and dispatched them to Kharar to look for a caravan of Quraysh in the ninth month of migration<sup>276</sup>. He had warned them not to venture beyond Kharar. It was discovered that the Quraysh caravan had gone through Kharar at night when this army arrived there early on the fifth day. Consequently, having failed to collect any intelligence, the troops withdrew to Medina<sup>277</sup>.

As one can see, there were neither horses nor a sizable army. Only 20 members made up their group. Muhammad ﷺ would not have been satisfied with such a small number of infantry if he had intended to fight an offensive battle. The fact that these folks travel at night and hide throughout the day in valleys further makes it quite evident that they were just out to spy; otherwise, they would not have concealed at all. The traditions mentioned above also attest to the fact that his sole objective was to learn the situations of the Quraysh caravan. As a result, research may hypothesize that it was an intelligence service operation rather than a battle of initiative, with the aim of keeping a close check on the roads around Medina.

---

<sup>276</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 2:252; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, n.d., 1:246–47..

<sup>277</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, n.d., 1:247.

### 3.2.1.4 Raid on Nakhla

According to Ibn Hasham and Ibn Sa'd, in Rajab 2 AH, Muhammad ﷺ sent Abdullah ibn Jahsh with an army of twelve muhājirūn in the direction of Nakhla<sup>278</sup>. There was no anṣār on this team, and all of them were riding camels<sup>279</sup>. During this expedition, Muhammad ﷺ commanded the Muslim army in a sealed letter that, after they read the message, they ought to continue their journey until they reach Wadi Nakhla<sup>280</sup>. It was written to them that they should keep watch over the Quraysh caravan there, learn about their plans, and pass that intelligence along to us. But on reaching there, some Muslims attacked the caravan, and Amr ibn al-Hadrami was shot and killed<sup>281</sup>. In contrast to Nawfal ibn Abdullah, who was able to flee, Uthman ibn Abdullah ibn Mughira and Hakam ibn Kaisan were both arrested<sup>282</sup>. Because this fight took place in the prohibited month, Muhammad ﷺ did not receive any booty and instead paid Amr ibn al-Hadrami's expenses and freed the prisoners<sup>283</sup>.

Two justifications make it clear that this was not an attacking approach on behalf of Muhammad ﷺ. Firstly, it is clearly demonstrated in the letter that the aforementioned detachment was simply sent to gather information; they were not given permission to engage in combat. The second reasoning is that Muhammad ﷺ would not have paid for Amr ibn al-Hadrami's murder or freed the prisoners if he had intended to wage an offensive war.

### 3.2.1.5 Ghazwa Wadan (Abuwa)

According to the accounts, in order to seize the Quraysh commerce caravan and subdue the Banu Zamra ibn Bakr Kanani tribe, Muhammad ﷺ travelled from Medina to Abuwa during the twelfth month of the Hijra<sup>284</sup>. He sent Sa'd ibn Ubada to his position in Medina to address the issues of the Medanian people. Also, once again, no anṣār participated in this

---

<sup>278</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 2:252–58; Ibn Sa'd, 1:248.

<sup>279</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, n.d., 1:248.

<sup>280</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 2:35; Ibn Sa'd, 1:249.

<sup>281</sup> Ibn Hasham, 2:35.

<sup>282</sup> Ibn Hasham, 2:254.

<sup>283</sup> Ibn Hasham, 2:254.

<sup>284</sup> Ibn Hasham, 2:240–41; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, 1:247.

voyage. When Muhammad ﷺ arrived at Wadan, the caravan of Quraysh had left, and their ally tribe, the Banu Zamra, came to Muhammad ﷺ and formed a peace treaty. Mukhshi ibn Amr al-Damri signed the peace treaty on their behalf, and after 15 days, the Muslims returned safely to Medina without a fight<sup>285</sup>.

Considerations of the above accounts reveal that Muslims chased the Meccans this time, which leads a researcher to classify the campaign as offensive. However, if one approaches the sociopolitical conditions from a different perspective and adds prior occurrences of the Meccan period, analysis should assume that the campaign was not an offensive one but just simply revenge in some way.

### 3.2.1.6 Battle of Safwan

A Meccan leader named Kurz ibn Jabir Fahri invaded the Medina pasture with a small force in the thirteenth month of Hijra, and they stole some of the Muslims' animals<sup>286</sup>. When the news got to Medina, Muhammad ﷺ and his 70 companions went after them. On the outskirts of Badr, in the valley of Sufwan, he arrived, but the opponents had fled<sup>287</sup>. As a result, no fight occurred between them.

By its very nature, the description implies that the Muslims engaged in a defensive operation after being assaulted. This time, the Meccans pursued the Muslims, which prompted a researcher to categorize the campaign as aggressive on the part of the Meccans.

### 3.2.1.7 Ghazwa Badr

As Abu Sufyan's caravan of Quraysh travelled towards Syria, the Muslim army pursued them<sup>288</sup>. According to Ibn Ishaq statement three hundred and fourteen muslims pursued the caravan towards Badr with the intention of seizing it<sup>289</sup>. Previously, between 1000 and 900 soldiers had moved from Mecca to Medina at the request of Abu Sufyan in order to save this

---

<sup>285</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 2:35.

<sup>286</sup> Ibn Hasham, 2:252; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, 1:248.

<sup>287</sup> Ibn Hazm, *Jawami' as-Seera*, 128.

<sup>288</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 2:258; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, 1:249–50.

<sup>289</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 2:366.

caravan<sup>290</sup>. The Meccan armies were informed of the Quraysh caravan's safe return by Abu Sufyan, and the Muslim army was nearly powerless to approach them<sup>291</sup>. Although the news of the caravan's rescue had been delivered to the army of polytheists, Abu Jahl emphasized the need to continue to fight<sup>292</sup>. Thus, a significant conflict between the two armies occurred, with the Muslims ultimately coming out on top.

The aforementioned details of the traditions support the suggestion that the Muslims had no intention of engaging in battle against the Meccan army and were merely looking for the caravan. Analysis is also able to deduce that Muslims were offensive to the caravan because of this. However, after the caravan succeeded in fleeing safely and the polytheists launched a war, they would then be considered the aggressors and the Muslim army the defenders. Consequently, this probability comes to light because the Muslims had no desire to engage in combat with the army, but they did so out of concern that if they did not defend themselves, the enemy would pursue them and assault Medina.

Now, when these early expeditions are approached from a viewpoint independent of the Mecca era, it is not valid to claim that the Meccans launched unilateral aggressive operations and that the Muslims waged just a defensive battle. This approach leads to the conclusion that Muhammad ﷺ employed several styles of warfare throughout his military campaigns. The soldiers of Sarayyah Saif al-Bahr, Sarayyah Sa'd ibn Abi Waqas, and Sarayyah Nakhla were not instructed to engage in combat during these trips; instead, they were merely supposed to be used as intelligence agents.

Subsequently, the research cannot categorize the tactics of these campaigns as either aggressive or defensive. This is substantiated by the fact that these expeditions were designed to spy for self-defense rather than engage in combat. Furthermore, the Muslim army's strategy under Ghazwah Wadan and Sarayyah Ubaidah ibn Harith was offensive. Additionally, up until the attempt to take the caravan at Ghazwa Badr, the Muslim army's tactics would be termed offensive; however, when the polytheists continued to fight long

---

<sup>290</sup> Ibn Hasham, 2:269.

<sup>291</sup> Ibn Hasham, 2:271.

<sup>292</sup> Ibn Hasham, 2:271.

after the caravan had safely gone, that strategy would be considered offensive. In the same vein, the battle of Sufwan was also undeniably a Quraysh offensive military campaign.

In contrast, when all of these seven incidents are approached from an alternative viewpoint, independent of the Mecca era, it turns out to be undeniable that the Meccans took the initiative approach to war in the context of their Mecca period. That was the initiative approach, in the sense that they mistreated Muslims and pushed them to flee their homes. On the other hand, Allah forbade Muslims from doing so and forbade them from even raising their weaponry in self-defense. In light of this, it is evident that the Meccans had already declared war, in contrast to Muslims' non-violence approach.

Since this tactic was a retaliatory use of force, the research suggests that it was not offensive in nature. However, given that Watt's discursive interpretation seems to reflect apprehension and dislike towards Islam as a geopolitical force, it is probable that his cultural perspective—Islamophobia<sup>293</sup>—has impacted him. This is due to the fact that, in the presence of the Meccans' deployment of an aggressive military tactic against the peaceful Muslims, he claims that Muhammad's ﷺ expeditions took an offensive approach.

### **Assessments**

Based on an independent critical analysis of discourse without reference to the Meccan era, Watt's case that Muhammad's ﷺ early expeditions were offensive is partially valid but not entirely factual. Among these early expeditions, Sarayyah Saif al-Bahr, Sarayyah Sa'd ibn Abi Waqas, and Sarayyah Nakhla were solely meant to be intelligence oppressions, and these forces were not given the authorization to engage in combat. The Battle of Badr-al-Awla, or Safwan, was also evidently an aggressive military effort on the part of the Quraysh. However, the Muslim army's warfare strategies in Sarayyah Ubaidah ibn Harith, Ghazwa Wadan, and Ghazwa Badr were offensive, demonstrating how well-founded Watt's claim is.

---

<sup>293</sup> Islamophobia is the fear, hate, or prejudice toward anything related to the religion of Islam. In particular in case when it is considered as the geopolitical power or even as the origin of violence and terrorism. (Webster, "Merriam-Webster.Com Dictionary, s.v. "Islamophobia," accessed September 13, 2023, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Islamophobia>).

However, when these early expeditions are explored from another angle, in which they are connected to Meccan persecutions, it becomes abundantly evident that the Meccans adopted a warlike attitude when they took the initiative. Muslims have adhered to a non-violent strategy, although in Mecca they have been harassed and forced to evacuate their houses. From this standpoint, it might be concluded that the Meccans were offensive since they took the initiative. In addition, the results of the analysis from this angle will suggest that Watt's interpretation of the discourse reflects his mistrust and hostility against Islam as a geopolitical power, which further demonstrates the influence of his cultural perspective—Islamophobia—on the development of his ideological discursive formation.

### 3.2.2 Aws's Loyalty during the Judgement of Banu Qurayza

Watt has developed some unique views on the point of whether the allegiance of the Islamic Ummah was considered superior to all other alliances or not among the Banu Aws. He states that there was a wide-spread tendency among the Banu Aws to honor the old alliance with the Banu Qurayza<sup>294</sup>. Based on the Ghazwa Banu Qurayza, He establishes the claim that those among the Banu Aws who sought leniency for the Qurayza were disloyal to Muhammad ﷺ only, not to the Aws, and they still consider themselves primarily members of the Aws and not of the Islamic community. According to his own words:

“Those of the Aws who wanted leniency for Qurayza regarded them as having been unfaithful not to the Aws but only to Muhammad and they still regarded themselves as being primarily members of the Aws and not of the Islamic community.”<sup>295</sup>

### Critique

Mubarakpuri<sup>296</sup>, Ibn Hazm<sup>297</sup>, Hamidullah<sup>298</sup>, and most likely all other significant Seerah authors have thoroughly examined Ghazwa Banu Qurayza. They have studied Sa'd's decision-making process and the plea for mercy made by the people of Aws for the Banu

---

<sup>294</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 214.

<sup>295</sup> Watt, 215.

<sup>296</sup> Mubarakpuri, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*, 426–33.

<sup>297</sup> Ibn Hazm, *Jawami' as-Seera*, 200–206.

<sup>298</sup> Hamidullah, *Rasool E Akram (SAW) Ki Siyasi Zindagi*, 126–33.

Qurayza. However, not a single Seerah expert has asserted that any of the Banu Aws who appealed for mercy for the Qurayza were unfaithful to Muhammad ﷺ. Watt, on the other hand, considered it a betrayal to the Muslim community. Therefore, more research should be conducted in order to examine the factual justification for the petition for mercy and how it relates to devotion to Banu Aws.

The evidence that the people of Aws went to Muhammad ﷺ and appealed to treat the Banu Qurayza in the same manner as he had treated the Banu Nadir at Khazraj's request becomes clear when the early traditions are reviewed<sup>299</sup>. Similarly, in the case of Banu Qurayza, various accounts demonstrate the story that Muhammad ﷺ made the suggestion to these individuals of the Aws that Banu Qurayza may be decided by a member of their own tribe<sup>300</sup>. Those in Banu Aws who were concerned about the issue eagerly embraced this proposal. As a result, Muhammad ﷺ submitted everything to Sa'd ibn Maaz<sup>301</sup>. The anṣār hurried to Sa'd ibn Maaz and advised him, on the way, that he should be courteous and sympathetic to his former allies<sup>302</sup>. He was additionally told that the purpose for which Muhammad ﷺ appointed him a judge was to ensure he would deal with them kindly. This was advised to Sa'd not just once, but multiple times. In the final moments, Sa'd made the decision to carry out the murder of every man who was able to battle, seize their women and children, and divide their properties among the Muslims<sup>303</sup>. Then, after extracting khums from all the property, Muhammad ﷺ divided the loot into around 3,000 portions and gave them to the infantry and cavalry. The infantry force received one part, while the cavalry force received three parts<sup>304</sup>.

Based on the above-cited accounts, an analyst can infer that the Aws had allied relationships with the Banu Qurayza, much as the Khazraj and the Banu Nadir did. Additionally, it appears that these Banu Aws individuals appealed to Sa'd on several

---

<sup>299</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 3:48.

<sup>300</sup> Ibn Hasham, 3:48.

<sup>301</sup> Ibn Hasham, 3:48; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, 1:306.

<sup>302</sup> Ibn Hasham, 3:48.

<sup>303</sup> Ibn Hasham, 3:48; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, n.d., 1:306.

<sup>304</sup> Ibn Sa'd, 1:306; Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 3:48.



occasions to be forgiving after begging Muhammad ﷺ to be forgiving towards the Banu Qurayza. It becomes essential to comprehend whether Banu Aws' demand was motivated by merely humanity or whether they valued their traditions and old alliance with Banu Qurayza more than the Muslim community.

When one holds the opinion that the Islamic community is less significant for the Aws than their tribal customs and allies, then this theory seems unpersuasive. This perspective has weaknesses due to the fact that, in this scenario, the people of Aws would not have ever fought for Islam against the Banu Qurayza. If the inhabitants of Aws supported Muhammad ﷺ in combat against the Banu Qurayza and also subjected the Banu Qurayza to the hardships of captivity, it is clear that Islam was of greater value to them than their old ally, the Banu Qurayza. Another crucial aspect of this relationship is that, based on Hamidullah's discourse's findings, once Muhammad ﷺ arrived in Medina, the anṣār broke up all of their alliance relationships with Jews<sup>305</sup>. It means that Muhammad ﷺ was Banu Aws' contemporaneous ally, while the tribe of Qurayza was his former one.

In the commitment of Aqba to Muhammad ﷺ, these individuals pledged that they would defend him in warfare. Hamidullah's research suggests that this pledge was not merely an agreement in nature but an order from Muhammad ﷺ to the Medinans<sup>306</sup>. On the other side, at the Battle of the Trench, Banu Qurayza attempted to murder both Muhammad ﷺ and Banu Aws. Therefore, contextualizing each of these variables, it seems unlikely that the Aws people will sympathize with Banu Qurayza to the extent that they place the Islamic community's value below.

According to the aforementioned reports, Muhammad ﷺ gave Sa'd ibn Maaz authority over the Banu Qurayza after they surrendered to the Muslims. Sa'd decided that each man who could fight should be murdered, and women and children should be taken prisoners. The Banu Aws not only agreed with this judgement but also carried out their penalties themselves. The immediate acceptance and implementation of the judgement make it unlikely that the inhabitants of Aws were more concerned with their tribal traditions than with the Islamic

---

<sup>305</sup> Hamidullah, *Ehd-e-Nabvi Main Nizaam-e-Hukmarani*, 85.

<sup>306</sup> Hamidullah, 82.

community. They would not have given their permission to make this decision and would not have carried out these punishments once the tribe and their former supporters had greater value than the Islamic community. If they were killing these Banu Qurayza people for Muhammad ﷺ, it could mean that the Islamic community was more important to them than their tribe or former ally.

One of the points Sa'd ibn Maaz made in his ruling was that the Banu Qurayza's goods should be divided up as booty among the Muslims. Following suit, the Muslims divided it among all the combatants. Among them were the Banu Aws soldiers, making it quite unpersuasive to claim that these individuals were primarily concerned with their tribal customs rather than the Islamic community's policy-making. If the inhabitants of Aws were devoted to their alliance with Banu Qurayza, as Watt says, they would not have seized their ally's property as booty.

The event involving Abu Lubaba, a well-known Aws leader, is particularly crucial in this sense<sup>307</sup>. When Muhammad ﷺ dispatched him as an envoy to the Banu Qurayza, at that meeting he exposed Muhammad's ﷺ secret using a signal of death. Abu Lubaba tied himself to a pillar as a kind of self-punishment for this. Now, if the Aws were not considerate of Islamic doctrine above tribal customs, Abu Lubaba would not view such conduct as unlawful. This is due to the fact that, in accordance with their tribal norms, his favor to his tribe's ally constituted an act of kindness. However, Abu Lubaba's consideration of this as betraying Muhammad ﷺ and engaging in self-punishment compels a researcher towards the hypothetical construction that the people of those days valued the Islamic teachings above their own tribal customs.

Since the anṣār promised to defend the muhājirūn by inviting them to Medina, sacrificed their wealth for the muhājirūn, and fought side by side with them, all these facts compel a researcher to conclude that for the Aws, the Islamic community was more important. The significance of this is well demonstrated by the fact that these people, dissatisfied with their tribal structure, welcomed Muhammad ﷺ and his companions and embraced Islam. Although investigations have not found any factual support for Watt's claims, it appears that he gives

---

<sup>307</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 2:74–75.

Judaism inappropriate credit in the case. This further suggests that, despite the lack of any supporting evidence, Watt's interpretations were influenced by Judeo-Christian doctrines, which were the norm in his society. CDA suggests that if these individuals were appealing to Muhammad ﷺ for showing leniency, the underlying motive might have been human sentiments for Banu Qurayza rather than disloyalty to Muhammad ﷺ. In the current context, the weakness of Watt's claim can be understood as follows if a country insists on resolving problems with terrorists through political dialogue, it does not necessarily imply that terrorists are more important to that country than world peace and that they are devoted to terrorists.

### **Assessment**

In contrast to Watt's suggestion, the study is unable, in the presence of numerous opposing grounds, to establish either that the Banu Aws were disloyal to Muhammad ﷺ or that their tribal traditions were more significant to them than Islamic teachings. A careful review of the circumstantial context explores the factual ground that the Banu Aws appealed to Muhammad's ﷺ leniency for the Banu Qurayza purely based on human sympathy.

### **3.2.3 Muhammad's ﷺ War Strategy in Comparison of Current Laws**

After a thorough study of his early raids, Watt builds the narrative that Muhammad ﷺ was strategically confronting and provoking the Meccans in the context of his raids. According to Watt, he, as a religious leader, followed such offensive military services, which is difficult to comprehend in the pacifist age. In his own words:

“In these little raids, then, he was deliberately challenging and provoking the Meccans. In our peace-conscious age it is difficult to understand how a religious leader could thus engage in offensive war and become almost an aggressor.”<sup>308</sup>

### **Critique**

Comparing Muhammad's ﷺ offensive strategy with the international rules of war will be the most effective approach to reviewing Watt's assertion that Muhammad's ﷺ

---

<sup>308</sup> Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*, 105.

expeditionary offensive strategy is inconceivable in today's era. These laws will serve as a neutral arbitrator, and subsequently, the analysis will allow a researcher to accumulate details for developing novel faces of the concern case.

Do contemporary laws permit the state to employ force? If so, under what conditions and to what degree does international law permit the use of force? Lastly, the most essential rethinking is whether Muhammad ﷺ violated the borders of today's international law in the deployment of force or whether the nature of his military approach was more lenient than modern international legislation. Throughout this comparative analysis, emphasis will definitely be placed primarily on these queries.

As far as the first critique is concerned, it appears that there has been an agreement among human societies since the beginning that war should be avoided as much as possible. But on the contrary, it has also been agreed that in certain situations, war becomes necessary and the use of force should be permitted. Now, the question is, what are the conditions on the basis of which war becomes a necessity? In this regard, an American scholar named Wilson Heather (1960–2017 C.E.) has detailed in his book what academics have written on these foundations and circumstances in the last 50 years since the establishment of the United Nations<sup>309</sup>. Wilson outlines the circumstances that justify the employment of force by a state and where the use of force can be justified in international law. Subsequently, this discourse is sufficient for a reader to agree with the aforementioned theorization that contemporary law justifies the use of force by a state in certain circumstances. Thus, the study now comes to the second critique.

Regarding the second query, to what degree and in what situations should a state employ force when current legal frameworks substantiate such a course of action? Analysis should consult the International Court of Justice's rulings in order to establish the facts. On June 27, 1986, the International Court of Justice issued a ruling on a case involving the armed confrontation between the United States and the Republic of Nicaragua, finding that the US

---

<sup>309</sup> Heather A Wilson, *International Law and the Use of Force by National Liberation Movements* (England: Oxford University Press, 1988).

had violated international laws<sup>310</sup>. In addition to the main debate, the judges' remarks, relevant legal concerns, and a few fundamental principles are addressed in this judgement. It outlines valid and justified grounds for a state to employ force, some of which are as follows:

- I. Self-defense is referred to as the primary authorization for using force. The International Court of Justice's ruling provides extensive clarification on the parameters of this self-defense as well as the scope of its application. It has been expanded to permit the use of force in self-defense whenever a threat is perceived, even if it does not actually exist on the ground.
- II. When a state responds to another state's action by taking the same countermeasures as the first state, this kind of case has also been ruled to be a legitimate justification for the use of force in this judgement of the ICJ.
- III. Another case involves a state's citizens or the property of its citizens being assaulted in another state's territory. In this case, the state may use force in order to protect its citizens and their properties.
- IV. When a state requests a neighboring state or states for military intervention in a civil war and then they use force against the culprits of the civil war in order to settle the situation that is another scenario in which the use of power may be judged legitimate by the ICJ.

Now, for the third query, the research needed to take into account Muhammad's ﷺ military approaches for the application of force throughout the early expeditions. The study has previously theorized that Muhammad ﷺ used both defensive and offensive military strategies several times throughout these early conflicts. Since Watt has no concerns with the defense doctrine but considers his offensive warfare tactics unreasonable, the study now turns to offensive warfare. The study's preliminary analysis has already concluded that Raid on Nakhla, Ghazwa Wadan, and Ghazwa Badr were among the fights that displayed offensive qualities. Study has also heretofore analyzed these conflicts under Muhammad's ﷺ initiative; therefore, research will merely compare them to the international laws of warfare.

---

<sup>310</sup> Singh, *ICJ REP.*

- I. The first point of comparison is that the International Court of Justice ruling has justified the use of aggression in cases where one party takes the same countermeasures in response to another party's conduct as they already did. In light of this, if the persecution of Muslims in Mecca is placed within the contextual framework of Muhammad's ﷺ early military battles, it can be established that his war policy was quite justifiable.
- II. The second point of comparison is that, in accordance with the ruling of the International Court of Justice, such circumstances also fall under the definition of self-defense when a danger is just perceived, even if it does not actually exist on the ground. On the other hand, if one looks at the historical facts, it reveals that Quraysh trade caravans headed to Sarayyah. They were using it to travel between Medina and the Red Sea. It implies that, geographically, they were not far from the state of Medina, given that Medina is just 130 km from the Red Sea. So, due to the fact that both sides were in a state of war, they could attack the Muslims at any time without giving the Muslim army enough time to defend themselves. Based on these considerations, it may be postulated that the Medinans' survival was definitely in danger, which demands Muhammad's ﷺ advance preparation for the defense of his state. Therefore, based on this major threat to his state, there is no way to demonstrate that Muhammad's ﷺ attacking strategy of warfare violates any international rules of war.
- III. The Meccan polytheists seized the Muslims' properties in Mecca. Aqeel ibn Abu Talib occupied the residences of Muhammad ﷺ and the Banu Hashim emigrants<sup>311</sup>. Similarly, after the departure of the Banu Jahsh ibn Rayab, their properties in Mecca remained vacant. Abu Sufyan then confiscated their homes, claiming that one of them was married to his daughter<sup>312</sup>. Additionally, when Suhaib Rumi was moving to Medina, polytheists pursued him. Suhaib Rumi saved his life, but polytheists robbed his wealth<sup>313</sup>. Ibn Hasham also provided a number of additional examples<sup>314</sup>. A

---

<sup>311</sup> Al-Zarqani, *Sharah Al Zurqani Ala al Mawahib*, vols. 1, 218.

<sup>312</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 2:113.

<sup>313</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, 3:244.

<sup>314</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 2:111–14.

justification for offensive war has also been stated in light of the aforementioned ICJ decision if a state attacks the people or property of another state. Thus, Muhammad ﷺ had authorization to make use of force as a form of defense when Meccans attacked Muslims and their property. Therefore, there is no way to demonstrate that his offensive combat strategy violates any of the international laws of war.

- IV. In respect to the use of force, the ICJ has expanded the definition of self-defense to the point where even an assault motivated by a perceived danger, even if it is non-existent, qualifies as self-defense. This has the drawback of including any action carried out based on suspicion as self-defense. Muhammad ﷺ, however, never intervened militarily based only on suspicion in the absence of solid proof. Also, the Qur'an only authorizes self-defense combat in the presence of solid proof in the following circumstances:

“Permission [to fight] has been given to those who are being fought, because they were wronged. And indeed, Allah is competent to give them victory.”<sup>315</sup>

In light of this, it can be theorized that his war policy was quite compassionate. Even these show that his rules were more lenient and careful than the ICJ's ruling.

- V. The additional noteworthy fact is that Muhammad ﷺ adhered strictly to the pacts both in peacetime and during battle, and he considered them an essential component of his faith. About the contract, Allah also said in the Qur'an:

"And fulfill the covenant. Surely, the covenant shall be asked about."<sup>316</sup>

- VI. Also, even if his foe violated the agreement, Muhammad ﷺ first gave the enemy clear notice that the pact had ended before taking military action. While the international judgement makes no mention of such a peaceful ruling, the research theoretically proposes that his war program was more attentive to the covenant than the ICJ's ruling.

---

<sup>315</sup> *Al-Qur'an* 22:39.

<sup>316</sup> *Al-Qur'an* 17:34.

VII. In the case of Muhammad's ﷺ retaliatory attack, moral boundaries have to be observed. In the principles and rules of war, Muhammad ﷺ has limited the use of force only to combatants. Also, according to his rules, women and children cannot be killed. Perhaps this was the reason why the total number of their campaigns is 84 and the total number of casualties in them is 1018. Dividing it by 84 gives an average of 12 casualties per battle. While the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries conflicts, such as the First and Second World Wars, Russia's military intervention in Afghanistan, America's military intervention in Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan, India's military intervention in Kashmir, and Israel's military intervention in Palestine, all show that there is no such mechanism as moral leniency. Numerous deaths of women and children on various battlefields demonstrate how innocent civilians have been included within their perimeters. Compared to conflicts fought during Watt's claimed age of peace, this justification fully supports the peacefulness of Muhammad's ﷺ military principles.

Accordingly, all of these comparative factors establish that Muhammad's ﷺ military strategy was only a retaliatory use of force in behavioral conformity with current International Court of Justice judgments. His war strategy was more lenient, even from some comparative points of view. It explores how the manner in which Watt understood Islam as a geopolitical force seems to reflect fear and animosity towards the faith. Thus, it further suggests the considerable probability that his standpoints have been influenced by the Islamophobic mindset that was a dominant attitude in his society.

### **Assessment**

Watt's claim that the military strategy of Muhammad's ﷺ early conflicts is unthinkable in the current peaceful era has been suggested to be quite weak by research. On the basis of the foregoing debate, the research develops the idea that Muhammad's ﷺ approach to warfare was in fact more lenient and moral than the international rules of warfare and wars of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The findings of the discourse analysis point to Watt's interpretation of the discourse reflecting his mistrust and dislike of Islam as a geopolitical authority, which further illustrates the effect of his cultural standpoint—Islamophobia—on the growth of his ideological discursive building.



### 3.3 CHAPTER: POLITICAL ECONOMY

#### 3.3.1 Trade Avoidance

Regarding the political economy of the State of Medina, Watt argues that when the new social and political structure developed, Muhammad ﷺ looked at its economic foundation since an outlet for energy was required. He claims that Muhammad ﷺ ignored trade because he considered it to not be a productive means of generating revenue. According to his words:

“New source of wealth was required. ... So Muhammad felt that trade was not the solution.”<sup>317</sup>

#### Critique

Watt adds the argument that the reason for this trade being obsolete was the risk that it would encourage a false religious mentality similar to that of the Meccans. Since this touches on the core theological area and the way this study approaches it is centered on the political dimension, the study has nothing to contribute to this lens. This research will attempt to explore the actual nature of trade share in the political economy of the State of Medina, or the Muslim’s source of revenue. In order to put this into perspective, the analysts has to look into the earliest documents to address the query: Was Muhammad ﷺ believed trading was not an effective way, or did he contribute to the reformation of commerce? As consequence, based on this analysis, one will be able to assess Watt's ideas.

When one considers the historical accounts, he can evaluate the point that Muhammad’s ﷺ first step towards commercial reform was the establishment of a peaceful trading environment in Medina. This establishment of a tranquil environment for trade was significantly aided by the Treaty of Medina. All of Medina's tribal groupings were brought into economic harmony thanks to this pact. Through this arrangement, the trading conditions for the Aws and the Khazraj were provided to be peaceful on the internal front as well as more favorable for commerce with the Jews on the external front.

---

<sup>317</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 145.

A merchandise market was also established after Muhammad ﷺ arrived in Medina, which marked his second significant commercial reform<sup>318</sup>. The Jews had four big marketplaces in contrast to this market. Making the market attractive enough for merchants and clients to abandon their current market and come to this new market for buying and selling was, therefore a significant task. Muhammad ﷺ implemented several new approaches in this regard. First, any merchant was welcome to get into the market's area and erect a tent. There was no set location for the traders in the market, which had the benefit of encouraging competitiveness among merchants as the early one would secure his favorite position. Consequently, when no trader was permitted to occupy any location permanently, this was accelerating market business. The announcement that the merchants conducting business there would be free from paying taxes was the bazaar's most significant feature. Hoarding was forbidden by Muhammad ﷺ, who stated:

“Whoever hoards food is a sinner.”<sup>319</sup>

Furthermore, when research critically explores the formation of Mawakhat-e-Madina, it seems that it was a vital milestone in Muhammad's ﷺ program for commercial reform. Not only were the basic needs of life made available to the empty-handed, but muhājirūn also joined their anṣār brothers' businesses and farming operations. Thus, it had the advantage of turning unemployed muhājirūn into traders and farmers. Thus, these employment opportunities and the subsequent use of the services provided to the populace led to a boost in production, which is what made Medina quite prosperous economically.

Additionally, Muhammad ﷺ made various changes to agriculture and established the unusual rule that whoever developed a dead land would possess it<sup>320</sup>. This has the advantage of turning even the desert soil into agricultural land, which was their main means of trade. He also made a few particular provisions for the distribution of wealth at the level of administration. In this context, the law of inheritance came into effect, according to which a person's property is equitably distributed among his descendants after death, continuing the

---

<sup>318</sup> Abū Bakr Ibn Abī Shaybah, *Musannaf Ibn E Abi Shaibah* (Beirut Lebanon: Bab-ul-Islam Printing Press, 1967), 4, 305.

<sup>319</sup> Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, Kitab al-Msqat, Bab Tahrim al-Ihtekar Fi al-Aqwat, Hadith no. 1605.

<sup>320</sup> These events have been extensively addressed in Kitab al-Msqat of Sahih Muslim by Imam Muslim.

circulation of wealth throughout society. On the other hand, Zakat, which entails giving 2.5% of one's income annually to the needy and impoverished, was also made mandatory for affluent Muslims. Consequently, it not only directly assisted the impoverished but also helped to circulate wealth.

Furthermore, Muhammad ﷺ instituted certain theoretical amendments and instructed the community's residents on how to effectively use their financial resources. He supported the community's industrialists and skilled craftspeople. Muhammad ﷺ says:

"Nobody has ever eaten a better meal than that which one has earned by working with one's own hands. The Prophet of Allah, David used to eat from the earnings of his manual labor."<sup>321</sup>

Additionally, Muhammad ﷺ told his friends, while praising the merchant, that a sincere and reliable merchant will participate with the Prophets, the Righteous, and the Martyrs in the life of the hereafter<sup>322</sup>. In the same vein, the Qur'an encouraged traders to seek the reward once the prayers had been offered<sup>323</sup>. Additionally, there are many other important theoretical amendments that have been comprehensively compiled by Mubarakpuri<sup>324</sup>. The advantage of all these theoretical adjustments was that everyone started to organize his or her own trade or business and stopped depending on other people. Consequently, this improved the commercial sector in Medina.

All these accounts and reasoning over them are sufficient for the theoretical construction that Watt's claim—Muhammad ﷺ did not think trade was a productive strategy—seems unconvincing. In terms of his trading approach, the review explores the fact that Muhammad ﷺ also placed a high value on commerce in the political economy of his state. He not only established a market for commerce but also developed economic peace in Medina, provided new job opportunities, made effective use of his companions' services and available economic resources, and most importantly, provided the best theoretical framework.

---

<sup>321</sup> Al-Bukhari, *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Kitab al-Byoa', Bab Ksab al-rajole Wa Amlhi Byadhi, Hadith no. 2272.

<sup>322</sup> At-Tirmidhi, *Sunan At Tirmidhi*, Kitab al-Bayu, Chapter Ma Jaya fi al-Tajjar, 3: 515, Hadith no: 1209.

<sup>323</sup> *Al-Qur'an* 62:9.

<sup>324</sup> Mubarakpuri, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*, 257–62.

Watt's study of the data appears to be limited to just a small number of bibliographical sources since he failed to take into account the facts that reveal a separate dimension in contrast to his postulated aspect. Since no evidence has been discovered to demonstrate that Muhammad ﷺ did not believe trade to be a successful strategy, the veracity of such a concept can only be supported by skeptical thinking. It appears that Watt's discursive structure is influenced by his sociocultural factors since, in light of the results, there are multiple strong arguments allowing the investigator to conclude that Muhammad ﷺ has made many positive developments.

### **Assessment**

The findings of the study expose that Watt's assertion about Muhammad's ﷺ commerce approach seems unpersuasive. This analysis explores the fact that he not only provided government-level instruction for trade and established his own market but also made significant reform measures like bringing economic peace into Medina, creating new employment opportunities, and making the best use of services and available economic resources. In light of the fact that he ignored several of Muhammad's ﷺ trade sector developments, his analysis firmly demonstrates that he has demonstrated the detrimental impact of Western skepticism on his hypothetical construction.

### **3.3.2 Booty as a Source of Income**

On the subject of the political economy of the State of Medina, Watt asserts that as new tribes integrated into the Islamic community, they ceased conducting raids on one another. This resulted in a significant decrease in the death rate, which led to an increase in the population. Due to the requirement for an energy outlet, a new source of money was also needed. Watt claims that because of this, Muhammad ﷺ decided to turn to war as a means of income<sup>325</sup>.

### **Critique**

---

<sup>325</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 145.

First and foremost, before research begins to assess Watt's assertion, it is critical that the study examine the early accounts in order to comprehend the contribution of booty to the state's source of income.

Margoliouth makes a similar assertion, hypothesizing that Muhammad ﷺ was the leader of a robbery community<sup>326</sup>. In this regard, Jabal Buaben has undertaken research in which he appears to have conducted an effective analysis, but the critique is that his presentation briefly addresses merely the component of robbery<sup>327</sup>. His discourse lacks the capacity to be sufficiently convincing as an end result.

Furthermore, Jilani performed discourse analysis, rejecting the narrative that loot was adopted as a source of wealth<sup>328</sup>. He has made several compelling points, but because of the briefness and polemical tone, his textual production as a whole is not sufficiently persuasive. His studies are too brief, and he overlooked all those incidents where fighting was not carried out. He claims that there is no question of booty in those incidents where fighting was not carried out. But this is a baseless argument since there are many incidents (mentioned later) where fighting was not carried out but booty was captured. In light of all of this literature evaluation, a more in-depth investigation is consequently required.

Analyzing the accounts, it appears that Sarayyah Abdullah ibn Jahsh was the first conflict where booty was taken<sup>329</sup>. Following that, several gold and silver coins and vessels totaling 30,000 dirhams in weight were acquired in Sarayyah Zayd ibn Haritha towards al-Ais<sup>330</sup>. When Abu Ubaidah ibn al-Jarrah's army moved to the side of Dhi Qisa, he captured a few camels, whose numbers are not mentioned in accounts<sup>331</sup>. When Zayd ibn Haritha faced Banu Salim, he also took captives, goats, and camels<sup>332</sup>. In Sarayyah Zayd ibn Haritha, heading

---

<sup>326</sup> Margoliouth, *Mohammed and the Rise of Islam*, 149.

<sup>327</sup> Buaben, *Image of the Prophet Muhammad in the West : A Study of Muir, Margoliouth and Watt*, 88–90.

<sup>328</sup> Jilani, *Islam, Paighambar e Islam aur Mustashriqeen e Maghrib ka Andaz e Fikar*, 273–77.

<sup>329</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, n.d., 1:249.

<sup>330</sup> Ibn Sa'd, 1:315.

<sup>331</sup> Ibn Sa'd, 1:314.

<sup>332</sup> Ibn Sa'd, 1:315.

towards Tarif, 20 camels were captured<sup>333</sup>. During Zayd ibn Haritha's second attack in Husma, he captured 1000 camels, 5000 goats, and 100 slaves<sup>334</sup>. In Sarayyah Ali ibn Abi Talib, Ali defeated Banu Sa'd ibn Bakr in Fadak and 500 camels and 2000 goats were acquired<sup>335</sup>. Furthermore, there were an unknown number of camels captured as loot in Yemen by Bashir ibn Sa'd Ansar in his Sarayyah<sup>336</sup>.

Likewise, Ghalib ibn Abdullah Alaythi al-Kanani seized goats and camels while travelling through Sarayyah to reach al-Maifah<sup>337</sup>. Similarly, at al-Kadid, Ghalib ibn Abdullah fought another fight against Banu al-Moluh, capturing camels and goats, although the amount and quality of his seryia are not reported in accounts<sup>338</sup>. The third battle of Ghalib took place at Fadak, where several camels were taken as booty<sup>339</sup>. Correspondingly, in Seryia Abu Qatada, Muslims also received 200 camels and 2,000 goats<sup>340</sup>. There were seized camels and goats, the number of which is unknown, against the Hajd tribe, Siryia Ali ibn Abi Talib against Yeman<sup>341</sup>, Siryia Qutba ibn Amir<sup>342</sup>, and Siryia Ali against Banu Tay<sup>343</sup>. This is merely a summary of early reports regarding the Seryias, in which booty was seized.

Relatively, when study looks into the loot taken from the Ghazwat, it seems that, prior to the Battle of Badr, there were four Ghazwat—Wadan, Bawat, Badr al-Awli, and Dhu al-Asheera—in which no booty was seized. The Battle of Badr marked the first occasion that led to the capture of 70 captives, along with equipment, weapons, and riding animals. Additionally, gold tools and weapons, as well as money, were taken as seizures in the Ghazwa Banu Qainqa'a. Only two bags of plunder were taken by Muhammad ﷺ in the Battle of

---

<sup>333</sup> Ibn Sa'd, 1:315.

<sup>334</sup> Ibn Sa'd, 1:316.

<sup>335</sup> Ibn Sa'd, 1:317.

<sup>336</sup> Ibn Sa'd, 1:315.

<sup>337</sup> Ibn Sa'd, 1:341.

<sup>338</sup> Ibn Sa'd, 1:345.

<sup>339</sup> Ibn Sa'd, 1:346.

<sup>340</sup> Ibn Sa'd, 1:351.

<sup>341</sup> Ibn Sa'd, 1:380.

<sup>342</sup> Ibn Sa'd, 1:367.

<sup>343</sup> Ibn Sa'd, 1:375.

Suwaiq against Abu Sufyan's army. According to reports, 500 camels were also acquired in the Battle of Qarqarat al-Kadr.

Furthermore, there were 340 swords, 50 helmets, 50 armors, and several palm fields taken as booty in the Battle of Banu Nadir. The Marisiyah expedition against Banu al-Mutlaq resulted in the capture of 600 slaves, 5,000 goats, and 2,000 camels. Against Banu Qurayza, he reported the capture of 1500 swords, 300 armors, 2,000 spears, 1,500 shields, and many camels<sup>344</sup>. Similar to the last example, the Khyber expedition resulted in the capture of several captives, gold pieces, and enormous sums of money, but the reports fail to point out the numbering<sup>345</sup>. The Battle of Hunain produced the biggest loot during the lifetime of Muhammad ﷺ, including 6,000 captives, 24,000 camels, 40,000 goats, and 4,000 ounces of silver<sup>346</sup>.

Now, comparing these booty-related accounts with earlier discussions of commercial reforms, it is quite evident that booty played a considerably larger part in the Muslim economy than commerce. Therefore, Watt's estimation that booty was the Muslims' primary source of income would appear to be valid<sup>347</sup>. However, the point was not merely to compare the ratio of wealth gained through trade and war; there is another primary debate where Watt says that it was for this wealth that Muhammad ﷺ chose the offensive approach to war. In support, Watt explains that raids at that time were not actual attacks like they are these days, but rather a common aspect of life in the Arab desert and a form of sport<sup>348</sup>. Thus, the point is: does an abundance of booty highly suggest that conflicts were purposefully chosen as a source of income? Accordingly, it will be simple for the study to assess whether the major reason for these wars was to gain economic benefits, or whether the economic aspect was a bonus, extra consequence, or side benefit that aided Muslims financially, and whether the primary objective of the war was something else.

---

<sup>344</sup> Ibn Sa'd, 1:220.

<sup>345</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 3:123–24; Ibn Sa'd, 1:331.

<sup>346</sup> Ibn Hasham, 2019, 3:48; Ibn Sa'd, 1:367.

<sup>347</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 145.

<sup>348</sup> Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*, 105.

With the sole exception of the expedition of Bawat, the Muslim troops were clearly outnumbered by their adversaries in all of the early battles up to the 8<sup>th</sup> year of hijrah (629 C.E.). It is now common knowledge that a less powerful military has a greater probability of failing. Accordingly, it defies logic that Muhammad ﷺ would be willing to take part in war in an effort to gather resources for an army that is very likely to be defeated.

A further significant variable in this regard is that, even if it were possible that the fight might result in financial gain for these people, the fear of losing out was far bigger than the anticipated gain. The larger likelihood of losing is due to the necessity of making financial sacrifices in order to support conflicts, including those involving travel, shelter, food, and transportation. Going into combat also requires leaving behind one's personal belongings, spouse, children, etc. In addition, when one fails, they might suffer material losses in addition to the cost of the loss of life in general. Now, these arguments are perhaps enough for this deductive reasoning suggestion that, before the advent of Muhammad ﷺ, there was a significantly greater possibility of economic and physical losses than expecting booty.

Taking it into consideration while using an alternate approach, the Battle of Badr in this case may also be relevant. Although Abu Sufyan's trade caravan in this battle had chosen a different path, it had not travelled so far that the Muslims were unable to chase it. It is based on the fact that they had to cover a long journey. The Muslims' mission of pursuing the caravan would be challenging, but based on a few grounds, an analyst may still come to the conclusion that it was not impossible to chase.

The first ground is that, because the commercial caravan was travelling a long distance, its pace could not be such that a combat force could not chase it. The second explanation is that this caravan chose a lengthy path to reach Mecca rather than a short one. In this situation, despite the fact that the convoy chose a more diverse path than the Muslim army's route, the likelihood of the Muslim army capturing them was not reduced due to the caravan's slower speed. Thus, it demonstrates that Muhammad's ﷺ objective was not to amass money; if it had been, he would have followed the caravan to Mecca. Another supportive consideration in this respect is that if obtaining loot was the major goal, the Muslims would have gone to Medina immediately after the caravan left. In contrast, the reports confirm that the Muslims,



rather than chasing the caravan, marched to combat with an army three times bigger than they were.

If one examines the raid on Nakhla, it demonstrates that Muhammad ﷺ was dissatisfied with his companions since they engaged in battle because he did not receive the booty. Not only was this property returned to Quraysh, but the captives were also liberated, and the blood of one of their dead was payback. This instance thus invalidates the idea that financial gain was the underlying motivation of warfare. If acquiring booty was the goal of the battles, Muhammad ﷺ would not have given the wealth back, would not have freed the prisoners, and would not have paid blood money for the dead.

Another example is Sarayyah Zayd ibn Haritha, who was sent to Hami and brought five thousand camels, five thousand goats, and many captives to Medina<sup>349</sup>. The people in question adopted Islam once they arrived in Medina, which allowed Muhammad ﷺ to set them free by returning all of their properties. So, it is beyond comprehension that if a leader battles for riches and chooses booty as his source of income, how can he return the wealth? Forgiving everything in exchange for adopting Islam suggests that these people's underlying motive was about their religion instead of the economic factor suggested by Watt.

The fifth instance might be the Banu Nadir expedition, when, after conquering the Jews, Muhammad ﷺ let them take whatever they could carry with them for up to 10 days. Now, the critique that emerges is: If the factual goal was booty, as Watt argues, then it essentially entails that Muhammad ﷺ would not permit the Jews to take the wealth, and secondly, he would definitely make them slaves in order to sell and gain income.

In the same way, for the sixth circumstantial evidence, due to Jawariyyah's (RA) request, Muhammad ﷺ also released all of the enemy's prisoners after defeating them in the Battle of Banu al-Mustaliq<sup>350</sup>. In another matching seventh circumstance, when he vanquished the enemies in Mecca, he did not seize their possessions, turn them into slaves, and then sell

---

<sup>349</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, n.d., 1:316.

<sup>350</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 3:48; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, 1:296.

them to someone who would benefit materially. Muhammad ﷺ also freed all the prisoners taken at the Battle of Hunain without payment, which is the eighth example in this context<sup>351</sup>.

As a consequence of all of the aforementioned circumstantial grounds, the hypothetical construction seems unreasonable to suggest that Muhammad ﷺ would have chosen such a dangerous source of revenue where he and his entire community were numerically probable to lose their lives. Only a leader who provides no means of survival for the tribesmen and who has a larger army than the adversary can manage to employ an approach to fight for money. Muhammad's ﷺ army was smaller than that of his adversaries in nearly all battles, and his people had more effective commerce and agricultural practices. Therefore, in the presence of considerable economic means and in the absence of a bigger army, it is quite difficult to comprehend how Muhammad ﷺ battled the enemy for economic needs. The critical point primarily emerges from the fact that no sensible leader could choose such a challenging strategy for the income of his clan, where he would probably orphan his children, widow his wives, jeopardize his whole estate, and endanger the existence of his citizens.

It becomes extremely unclear why Muhammad ﷺ was exceptionally lenient with regard to the captives and booty if one assumes for a moment that his actual motivation was to amass riches. Thus, it becomes more clear that Watt merely exaggerated the one aspect associated with financial motivation for the conflict and overlooked the key religious objective, which exposes how he viewed the circumstances by employing a materialistic lens. His argument, which takes the shape of a Marxist method of interpretation, abundantly illustrates how variables, based on his sociopolitical background, have an influence on the research conclusion he arrives at. Consequently, because the circumstances on the ground are exactly the opposite of what Watt claims, one may draw the conclusion that booty was not a factual factor. Therefore, the review is compelled to build the theoretical judgement that Muhammad's ﷺ military actions did not primarily seek to strengthen his financial position.

## **Assessment**

---

<sup>351</sup> Ibn Hasham, 3:173, 368–69.

The overall findings of the review explore that Watt's initial claim that booty significantly helped the Muslims financially appears strong enough. However, his claim that Muhammad ﷺ fought for booty and chose booty as a source of income appears unpersuasive. As confirmed by this discourse analysis's findings, Muhammad ﷺ was expected to face a bigger danger of financial and physical losses than financial gains from conflict. Also, the analysis of Muhammad's ﷺ numerous instances of giving the enemy back their goods and releasing their prisoners leads to the conclusion that, despite Muhammad's ﷺ large booty gain, the core objective of these battles was not to accomplish material advantages but religious affairs.

### 3.3.3 Love for Booty

According to Watt, the love of booty was well-developed among the believers<sup>352</sup>. He asserts that the companions' enthusiasm for booty played a primary role in their migration to Medina and their attachment to Muhammad ﷺ. He chose the following words to say:

“It was doubtless love for booty that made many men come to Medina and attach themselves to Muhammad.”<sup>353</sup>

### Critique

Who were some of the individuals who migrated to Medina primarily for the purpose of making money? In this sense, Watt has merely made assertions without mentioning any particular person. Also, the fact that Watt does not provide any reasons favorable to his position makes analysis more challenging for us. If he had provided some arguments in favor of his viewpoint, research could have easily drawn a conclusion based on the weight of those arguments, along with other needed studies. Now that Watt has made an attempt without providing any justifications, this analysis will initially try to explore the effectiveness of his theory on additional hypothetical grounds. Consequently, it will be easy to evaluate if there is any ground supporting his argument or whether the Marxist interpretation just maintains this assumption.

---

<sup>352</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 145.

<sup>353</sup> Watt, 145.

When research thoroughly analyzes the battles waged between Muslims and their foes, it becomes recognizable that there was a noticeable gap in the size of the Muslim and their enemy's militaries. In the Battle of Saif al-Bahr, the Muslim army consisted of 30, while the non-believers numbered 300<sup>354</sup>. In Sarayyah Rabigh Shawwal, the Muslim army consisted of 60, while the infidels numbered 200<sup>355</sup>. In addition, 200 Muslims fought against the 100 soldiers at Sarayyah Bawat<sup>356</sup>, while 200 Muslims fought against 220 Meccan opponents in the battle of Suwaiq<sup>357</sup>. Both in Badr and Uhud, the Muslim army's size was nearly three times smaller than the opposition's fighters. If analyst compares the enemy army to the Muslim army at the Battle of Khandaq, the enemy force was about three times larger<sup>358</sup>.

Correspondingly, Muhammad ﷺ led about 500 companions in the Battle of Hamra al-Asad as they pursued more than 3,000 members of Abu Sufyan's army<sup>359</sup>. In addition, there were only 200 Muslims in the army at Ghazwa Banu Lahyan compared to the whole Banu Lahyan<sup>360</sup>, and there were only 6 Muslims in the Battle of Rajia compared to 100 enemies<sup>361</sup>. In the battle of Bayer Mu'una, 70 Muslims fought against a force that was far bigger than their own, while in the battle of Akasha, the whole Banu Asad tribe attacked 40 Muslims<sup>362</sup>. There was also a wide gap when the Muslims travelled to Mecca for Hudaybiyyah since the entire city of Mecca was in front of the 1400 Muslims<sup>363</sup>. Although there was a sizable Muslim army of 10,000 soldiers in attendance during their conquest of Mecca, it is also evident that they faced a larger opponent in the shape of the whole city of Mecca<sup>364</sup>. In the

---

<sup>354</sup> Ibn Hazm, *Jawami' as-Seera*, 126.

<sup>355</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, n.d., 1:246.

<sup>356</sup> Ibn Sa'd, 1:246.

<sup>357</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 2:427.

<sup>358</sup> Ibn Hazm, *Jawami' as-Seera*, 94-5.

<sup>359</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, 1:283-4.

<sup>360</sup> Ibn Sa'd, 1:308; Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 3:87.

<sup>361</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 3:48.

<sup>362</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, n.d., 1:314.

<sup>363</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 3:100.

<sup>364</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, n.d., 1:357.

end, there were 12,000 Muslims and 10,000 enemies when the study looked into the Ghazwa Taif<sup>365</sup>.

The conflicts waged against Jews, on the other hand, present a scenario that is analogous. Though the size of the Muslim army in Ghazwa Banu Qainqa' during the conflicts with the Jews is unknown, the whole Jewish tribe of Qainqa' was in front of him. Similar to this, there were around 1000 Muslim soldiers in front of the entire Banu Nadir force<sup>366</sup>. In Khyber, there were 1600 Muslim soldiers who were facing more than 10,000 Jews<sup>367</sup>. The whole Banu Salim tribe was posed in Ghazwa Banu Salim as opposed to 300 Muslim warriors<sup>368</sup>. In Ghazwa Dhi-Amr, just 450 Mujahideen were standing in front of both Banu Thaalba and Banu Muhareb<sup>369</sup>. Furthermore, in the War of Muta, one of several international conflicts, there were 3000 Muslims who were battling against a 100,000-strong Roman army<sup>370</sup>. The Muslim military totaled 30,000 while the opponent's mass consisted of 40,000 at the battle of Tabuk<sup>371</sup>. This compilation only includes battles where a certain amount of the army gets verified by tradition.

All of these statistics are sufficient to lead a researcher to the view that, with the exception of the Battle of Hunain, Bawat, and Taif, the Muslim armies were unambiguously outnumbered by their rivals in all the aforementioned events. Now, it is common sense that an army with fewer soldiers has a higher likelihood of losing. Therefore, it is beyond explanation that someone would engage in combat in an effort to amass loot on behalf of an army that is highly likely to lose. Since no sensible leader would go to join an army that is sure to lose for loot, from this perspective of the discussion, Watt's hypothesis appears to be weak.

---

<sup>365</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, 1:372-3.

<sup>366</sup> Mubarakpuri, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*, 401.

<sup>367</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 3:124.

<sup>368</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *Tabqat Ibn-e-Sa'd*, 1:272.

<sup>369</sup> Mubarakpuri, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*, 330.

<sup>370</sup> Ibn Hasham, *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*, 2019, 3:135-36.

<sup>371</sup> Ibn Hasham, 3:87.

By employing another approach, an analyst may establish the argument that when any non-Muslims joined the Muslim army and won the battle, they would also receive a portion of the booty. It simply suggests that accepting Islam was not necessary in order to obtain booty. On the other hand, it is also a fact that there is no account in which an individual migrated to Medina and engaged in combat for Muslims without embracing Islam. Now, the weakness to be addressed against Watt's argument is that if many were migrated for booty, then at least some of them would not have converted to Islam because accepting it was not needed for obtaining booty. Therefore, if they did not necessarily need to accept Islam, but they did, this additionally suggests that there are somehow shortcomings in Watt's perspective.

The third key factor in this respect is that, despite the possibility that the conflict might bring these individuals money, the threat of losing was far greater than the expected advantage. The fact that conflicts require financial support through sacrifices in travel, food, and means of transportation is responsible for the higher chance of loss. In addition, going to battle demands leaving behind one's personal property, spouse, and offspring. Additionally, when one loses, one will not only pay for the cost of the loss of life but also any financial losses that may be suffered. This leads deductively to the conclusion that, prior to these immigrants, there was a much higher likelihood of wartime loss than expected wartime loot. In light of all of these details, one may conclude that Watt's assertion that certain individuals moved in search of treasure and were associated with Muhammad ﷺ does not appear to make much sense.

However, a specific critical point remains unaddressed: if this was not caused by a love of booty, what may be the actual explanation? There are a few alternatives in this respect when an analyst contextually interprets the facts, including economic as well as spiritual advantages. It was clear from the debate above that the idea of financial benefits could not be particularly reliable. Thus, the second interpretation seems to be the one that is most convincing. There is no earthly plausible reason for these muhājirūn's migration if they can kill themselves and their family's members in combat, orphan their children, widow their partner, and give up their possessions. Following their journey, they renounced their gods in favor of Muhammad ﷺ and rebelled against the Jews in Medina and the polytheists in Mecca.

One might thus presume that inspiration drawn from places other than the material world was what led these folks to migrate and meet Muhammad ﷺ. Consequently, review has to develop the theory that the success of life after death would be this primary variable

Now, when approach contextually intervenes in Watt's assertion, it appears that he excludes spiritual considerations and instead emphasizes booty as the primary motivation that drives migration. However, based on the research shown above, it is clear that this theory is not compelling. Therefore, this economic context, which contradicts the facts, shows that the ideological construction process he employed in his statement may have been influenced by his cultural heritage in the form of an ideologically materialistic mindset. For that reason, the analysis critically uncovers the connection that exists between the dynamics of society and the ideological discursive production of Watt.

### **Assessment**

The study thoroughly assesses that Watt's claim that many of the people migrated for booty and were attached to Muhammad ﷺ does not seem conceivable. This is due to the fact that the probability of losing was many times greater in these battles than the probability of receiving rewards. Consequently, since the expectation of losses was many times greater than the expectation of gains, the research establishes the theory that the strongest explanation for this would be the success of life after death rather than the love of booty.

In terms of sociological analysis, the study demonstrates that Watt exaggerates only one economic factor and ignores the fundamental framework of religious drive. His discourse reveals that he analyzed the situation from a materialistic perspective. Similarly, this Marxist mechanism of interpretation powerfully illustrates that factors from his sociopolitical framework have a consequential effect on the discourse's judgments.

## **Part 4: RESEARCH'S FINDINGS**

This last part of the thesis will close the study by summarizing the key research findings in reflection to the research objectives, the research questions, and the key problematic areas of the study. Additionally, it will review the limitations of this discourse analysis in order to understand how far the discourse was conducted or what the discourse's scope was. Along with this, discussing the value and contribution of these research findings to the field of study will also be covered here. After discussing key explorations regarding Watt's discourse on Muhammad's ﷺ political stance, the approach will take into account the theoretical implications of the research findings in this section. Finally, this part will propose recommendations for future research in the area as well.



By reviewing Watt's perspectives regarding political aspects of Seerah, this thesis has shown how Watt formulated his ideas and how effective and reliable his justifications are for his theorized factors. Additionally, studies have exposed the connection between his ideological discursive construction and social, political, religious, cultural, and economic contexts. The overall findings from this research suggest that, despite the fact that Watt is not a biased scholar, he has constructed some theories that are unpersuasive and unconvincing. Except in certain instances, he tries to avoid reflecting his own beliefs in his hypothetical construction, which indicates how a neutral approach was tried. So, it is difficult to justify that he was prejudiced or that his discourse had a polemical stance. Although he has developed certain theories that are, in fact, unconvinced and influenced by cultural settings, this does not mean that he is generally partial.

Nevertheless, there are many hypothetical constructions where weakness has taken place due to contextual variables like western skepticism, Islamophobia, the limited scope of religion, and most importantly, looking at Seerah through the lens of a materialistic approach or employing Marxist interpretations, among many others.

## 4.1 Watt's Discursive Positioning

Based on textual evaluation, methodological analysis, the strengths and weaknesses of his ideological formations, and the exposition of the link between his ideological discursive construction and background contexts, the following key explorations come to light about Watt's discursive positioning regarding Muhammad's ﷺ political life:

### 4.1.1 Judeo-Cristian influence

In many of his claims, Watt has credited many customs to Judeo-Christians where studies did not find any link. This is supported by his claim that the Jewish concept of the Messiah's coming in fact influenced the Banu Khazraj and Banu Aws to accept Muhammad ﷺ<sup>372</sup>. Also, according to his discourse, Muhammad ﷺ confronted Bayt al-Maqdis' due to Jewish tradition<sup>373</sup>. Also, he claims that the 'Āshūrā' Fast was modeled after the Jewish Day

---

<sup>372</sup> Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*, 89.

<sup>373</sup> Watt, 99.

of Atonement, and the same applies to Jewish Sabbath customs and Muslim Friday practices<sup>374</sup>. He claims he utilized this adaptation of Jewish rituals as a tactic for forming an alliance. On the other hand, the findings have not found any link between these claimed factors and Judeo-Christian influence and have proved them independently.

Moreover, just based on the Ghazwa Banu Qurayza, Watt establishes the theory that The Banu Aws had a strong propensity to uphold their previous relationship with the Banu Qurayza<sup>375</sup>. In contrast to his discourse's suggestion, the discourse analysis opposed, based on numerous grounds, the theory that tribal traditions were more significant to the Banu Aws than the Islamic community. A careful review of the circumstantial context explores the facts that the Banu Aws appealed to Muhammad's ﷺ leniency for the Banu Qurayza based on human sympathy. All of this reflects how his understanding was shaped by a faith-based background setting based on Judeo-Christ teachings.

#### **4.1.2 Armchair<sup>376</sup> Scholarly Approach**

For any researcher to formulate a hypothesis about any topic in the modern age, it is required to look inside the relevant field. Otherwise, his capabilities in the concerned area would not be regarded as those of an expert. The authentic analyst needs to spend a significant amount of time within the society concerned with the subject of his thesis in order to understand his basic linguistic terminologies, customs and traditions, and ethical values, and then formulate hypothetical knowledge. One can normally see that a significant portion of Arabic and Islamic studies intellectuals have indeed been keen to move and spend considerable intervals of time in Muslim-populated areas. Because after a strong field survey, if he receives any critical problems, he immediately goes with the subject-matter specialists. Hence, the actuality of the situation is made clear by this approach. Regarding Watt, this discourse analysis was unable to find that he had spent any appreciable time in any kind of Muslim community. One of his longtime friends, Professor Hillenbrand, also acknowledged

---

<sup>374</sup> Watt, 99.

<sup>375</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 214.

<sup>376</sup> Armchair scholarship is an approach, in which researchers conduct careful studies of existing scholarships from libraries, offices, or the comfort of their armchairs without involving primary field work.

the above claim<sup>377</sup>. The study might therefore conclude that Watt does seem to lack this ability.

This armchair scholarly approach bound him to the written content; consequently, in many claims, his discourse merely exaggerated the text. He was not able to spend considerable amounts of time in the community that was the focus of the discourse, which had an impact on his comprehension of the fundamental language expressions<sup>378</sup>, cultural practices, and ethical standards. In order to discover specific issues linked to linguistic and cultural standards, he needed to conduct a study where he consulted with subject-matter specialists. But the fact that he did not spend a lot of time there made this more difficult.

#### 4.1.3 Non-polemical and Non-biased Approach

Generally, Watt's discourse does not demonstrate that he seeks to advocate, without justification, any single position through a straightforward claim. He did not pursue simply discrediting the opposition's case with bias. This is backed by many cases, like the argument that Christians and Muslims have differing academic opinions on whether or not the Qur'an is God's message. In this case, however, Watt has not spoken on this subject in terms of what "God says" or "Muhammad says". When discussing the same topic, he simply adds, "The Qur'an says"<sup>379</sup>. He comes up with the inference in all seventeen claims only after considerable debate. Research may also deduce from his words how unbiased and non-polemical he was when he made the statement that the question of why Muhammad ﷺ did not convert to Christianity is very interesting<sup>380</sup>. Also, he says:

“Christians must adopt some attitude towards Prophet Muhammad and that attitude should be based on theological principles.”<sup>381</sup>

---

<sup>377</sup> Hillenbrand, *Life and Work of W. Montgomery Watt*, 8.

<sup>378</sup> This is based on the fact that he has only used a translated version of the primary sources that have been written on Seerah. This is justified under “Bibliographical Strength and Weakness”.

<sup>379</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, 53.

<sup>380</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 315–16.

<sup>381</sup> Watt, x.

Moreover, his belief in the trinity, a core Christian belief, was completely altered after studying Islam. Justly, he declared that the trinity would not imply that God is made up of three beings<sup>382</sup>. He affirms that the Islamic focus on the absolute oneness of God led him to rethink the Christian concept of the Trinity<sup>383</sup>. All these show how unbiased he was. Although this discourse analysis has critiqued a few of his theories for their weaknesses, this does not necessarily imply that he is wholly polemical. This is because having objections to a few of his ideological constructions does not make him completely biased. Consequently, there is no hesitation that he does not follow a polemic approach in the area that research covered.

#### 4.1.4 Exaggeration

Due to an armchair-scholarship approach, Watt's analysis, in many claims, has been restricted to the text, and consequently, overemphasis is given to the text only. For instance, about the motives of polytheists, According to him, their primary worries were self-interest, fear of the effects on the political system and the financial sector, and sheer conservatism rather than gods, which mattered little to them<sup>384</sup>. In contrast, studies have proved that the actual problem was religious, and the others seem to overemphasize factors.

For another instance, just based on a single case, he claims emphatically that those Banu Aws who wanted mercy for Qurayza were treacherous to Muhammad ﷺ<sup>385</sup>. Probably due to the armchair-scholarship approach, Watt has ignored the rest of the sources of knowledge, like empiricism, traditional and cultural heritage<sup>386</sup>, etc. Consequently, he seemed more idealistic and self-serving and eventually made a few mistakes because of his lack of participation in the real system. Hence, the lack of these actual world experiences—residing in an Islamic-populated country, conducting fieldwork, and occasional interaction with Muslims—has considerably impacted his judgments.

---

<sup>382</sup> Hillenbrand, *Life and Work of W. Montgomery Watt*, 14.

<sup>383</sup> Hillenbrand, 14.

<sup>384</sup> Watt, 134-136

<sup>385</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 215.

<sup>386</sup> Cultural heritage is a source of knowledge where perceptions pass from one generation to another.

#### 4.1.5 Bibliographical Strength and Weakness

Usually, Watt utilized primary sources to form his views about Muhammad's ﷺ political position, such as the Qur'an, "*Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhari*", "*Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*", "*Al-Sirah Al-Nabawiyah*", "*Kitab al-Tarikh wa al-Maghazi*" by Al-Waqidi (747-823 C.E.), "*Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk*" by Muḥammad Ibn Jarir al-Ṭabari (839–923 C.E.), etc. By almost all explanations, these books are regarded as the primary sources of Seerah. Consequently, it becomes obligatory to give full credit to him in this regard.

However, there are some worrying aspects of Watt's sources as well. The first fact is that he attempts to analyze data and draw inferences from translated versions of the above books. These are in particular "*The Koran Interpreted*"<sup>387</sup>, "*The Meaning of: The Glorious Quran*"<sup>388</sup>, "*The Koran: A New Translation*"<sup>389</sup>, "*The Holy Koran: An Introduction with Selections*"<sup>390</sup>, "*The Teaching of the Qur'an*"<sup>391</sup> and "*Introduction to the Qur'an*"<sup>392</sup>. Similarly, he also used translated books of Seerah, including, "*The Life of Muhammad*"<sup>393</sup> etc. One additional worrying aspect of his bibliographical sources is that he has used some classical and contemporary sources of orientalists that have no final authority to be used as principal sources. These are "*The Life of Mohammad: from Original Sources*"<sup>394</sup>, "*Arabia Before Muhammad*"<sup>395</sup>, "*A Literary History of the Arabs*"<sup>396</sup>, "*The Origin of Islam in its*

---

<sup>387</sup> Arthur John Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted* (London: Oxford University Press, 1996).

<sup>388</sup> Mohammed Marmaduke Pickthall, *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'an* (New Delhi: Idara Isha'at-e Diniyat (P) Ltd., 1998).

<sup>389</sup> Nessim Joseph Dawood, *The Koran: A New Translation* (London: Penguin Classic, 1956).

<sup>390</sup> Arthur John Arberry, *The Holy Koran: An Introduction with Selections*, 1st ed. (Oxfordshire, England: Routledge, 1953).

<sup>391</sup> Herbert Udney Weitbrecht Stanton, *The Teaching of the Qur'ān: With an Account of Its Growth and a Subject Index*, 1st ed. (London: SPCK, 1919).

<sup>392</sup> Richard BELL and William Montgomery Watt, *Introduction to the Qur'an* (Edinburgh University Press, 1995).

<sup>393</sup> Alfred Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2002).

<sup>394</sup> Muir William, *The Life of Mohammad From Original Sources* (Edinburgh: Jhon Grant, 1912).

<sup>395</sup> De Lacy O'Leary, *Arabia Before Muhammad*, 1st ed. (Oxfordshire, England: Routledge, 2012).

<sup>396</sup> Reynold Alleyne Nicholson, *A Literary History of the Arabs* (New Delhi: Kitab Bhavan, 1994).

*Christian Environment*<sup>397</sup>, *“Mohammed: The Man and His Faith”*<sup>398</sup>, *“Mystical Elements in Mohammed”*<sup>399</sup> and *“Mohammedanism”*<sup>400</sup> and *“Kenneth Cragg's Call of the Minaret”*<sup>401</sup>. In order to review the critique of Islamic traditions by European scholars, he utilized Ignaz Goldziher's book *“Muhammedanische Studien”* and Joseph Schacht's *“Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence”*.

Now, the aforementioned sources make it quite apparent that Watt has, with a few exceptions, some skepticism regarding early Arabian historians. He only used the translated version, which affected his findings since many times the rhythm, wordplays, or other intricate aspects of a text get lost in translation. This is a fact: in many ways, the translation of a text is not the ideal way because, most of the time, the author's words cannot be captured fairly in a language other than that in which they were published. He did not take into account the later Muslim scholars and focused solely on the early accounts in their translated versions that were published by orientalist, which shows how western skepticism has influenced his hypotheses.

#### **4.1.6 Dubious Expressions**

The discourse analysis has found many cases where Watt interprets several incidents without discussing the background or circumstances. Just consider Watt's statement, where he says that Muhammad's ﷺ difficulties with 'Uthman suggest that he had no easy time canalizing the hopes and ideas of preexisting monotheists<sup>402</sup>. What sort of difficulties were actually there between these two? Not only are the early accounts silent, but Watt did not mention them either. It exemplifies how he provides nebulous explanations for the claims made in this instance.

---

<sup>397</sup> Richard Bell, *The Origin of Islam in Its Christian Environment: The Gunning Lectures*, 1st edition (London: Routledge, 1968).

<sup>398</sup> Tor Andrae, *Mohammed The Man and His Faith*, 1st ed. (London: Routledge, 1936).

<sup>399</sup> John Clark Archer, *Mystical Elements in Mohammed*, 1st ed. (New Haven: Yale University, 1924).

<sup>400</sup> Hamilton Alexander Rosskeen Gibb, *Mohammedanism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962).

<sup>401</sup> Kenneth Cragg, *The Call of the Minaret*, 1st ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1956).

<sup>402</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, 97.

For another instance, Watt has discussed the absurd charges of being an imposter put against Muhammad ﷺ by certain western scholars. After an in-depth review, he just states that this form of charge enhances more issues than it resolves, rather than unambiguously opposing or demonstrating its weakness<sup>403</sup>. It exposes how he makes vague clarifications of the accusations made in this case. Being an unbiased researcher, one does not have to be quite wary of pointing out such a serious fault once he has already highlighted it. This is due to the fact that it will reflect some doubt on his readers. Therefore, these cases make it very difficult to say that he properly interpreted. In actuality, a scholar like Watt was not actually fit for this approach; he did not provide any clear standpoint, which ultimately led to doubt in these cases.

#### 4.1.7 Limited Scope of Religion

Watt has a very narrow definition of religion when he uses the word in his literature. By restricting its application to the mosque, church, and temple, he believes it to be strictly limited to rituals and does not believe it is involved in economics, politics, social affairs, or cultural activities. This limited scope of religion has greatly modified his many theoretical findings. For instance, According to Watt's explanation of the Meccans' motivations for opposing Muhammad ﷺ, their major concerns were political and economic rather than religious<sup>404</sup>. Another example of the limited scope of religion's influence on his interpretations is that he claims that it is a tough concept to grasp how a religious leader might take part in an aggressive battle<sup>405</sup>.

Additionally, Watt supports the idea that the religious movement of Muhammad ﷺ did not constitute the sole rationale for the boycott against the Banu Hashim<sup>406</sup>. According to him, they defended Muhammad ﷺ and resisted the monopolistic Quraysh because they were primarily motivated by financial gain<sup>407</sup>. Also, in *Letters to the Princes*, he claims that it was

---

<sup>403</sup> Watt, 52.

<sup>404</sup> Watt, 135.

<sup>405</sup> Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*, 105.

<sup>406</sup> Watt, 77.

<sup>407</sup> Watt, 76.

not administered for religious reasons; it was political in nature<sup>408</sup>. Thus, all these claims have shown that Watt restricts religion only to rituals and does not expand its boundaries to areas of economic and political activity. Thus, the limited scope of religion has transformed his many ideological conclusions.

#### 4.1.8 Marxist interpretations

For a reliable researcher in the sociology of religion, it does not seem reasonable to award primary status to materialistic variables in the presence of theological factors. This is because religion is an ideological or spiritual conception in which the economy has a secondary position. Otherwise, it would be regarded as materialism because such an attempt would put a stop to the primary status of religious spirituality. On several occasions, Watt analyzes religious matters in such a way that he exaggerates the economic aspect.

For instance, about the motives of polytheists, Watt says that the actual concern was not gods because they mattered little to them; instead, it was anxiety about political and economic ramifications<sup>409</sup>. In contrast, research has shown that religion was the actual root of the issue, and it appears that the economic issues are exaggerated. Additionally, about the reasons behind migration to Medina and Muslims' attachment to Muhammad ﷺ, Watt said that many men came to Medina and adhered to him, undoubtedly because of a passion for booty<sup>410</sup>. Because of such an approach, many scholars have also charged Watt with being a Marxist observer of Muhammad's ﷺ life<sup>411</sup>.

#### 4.1.9 Western Skepticism

---

<sup>408</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 346.

<sup>409</sup> Watt, 134-136

<sup>410</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 145.

<sup>411</sup> Such as Mustafeez Ahmad Alvi in his article "*Montgomery Watt on the Seerah of the Prophet (PBUH)*" (Alvi, "Watt on Sirah," 28.) and the well-known French jurist, economist, and Islamologist, Georges-Henri Bousquet (1900–1978 C.E.), who criticized Watt's book "*Muhammad at Mecca*" in these words, "A Marxist interpretation of the origins of Islam by an Episcopal clergyman." (Donner, *The Study of Islam's Origins since W. Montgomery Watt's Publications*, 4.)



Watt skeptically disputes Ibn Sa'd's account of six envoys when he explicitly refers to the fact that they were sent to rulers to convince them to adopt Islam and states that this tale cannot be believed as it stands<sup>412</sup>. In the presence of clear accounts, Watt constructs the view without providing any justification that the religious component of the mission is a probabilistic element. Similarly, in the case of the Abyssinian envoy, Watt contends that he was not dispatched to spread an Islamic message; rather, he was primarily sent to arrange Umm Ḥabībah's (RA) marriage and the repatriation of the refugees, but that theological interests manipulated the actual occurrence<sup>413</sup>. All these hypothetical constructions were found skeptical since this review has reported a clear account of Ibn Sa'd's regarding these envoys.

Watt ignored the later Arab historians, which implies that he is skeptical in his approach to data collection<sup>414</sup>. Therefore, such a sort of establishment of standpoints, even without historical facts or reasoning, is contrary to modern research. Consequently, it goes without saying that certain interpretations are manifestations of skepticism toward primary sources.

#### **4.1.10 Impacts of Islamophobia**

Islamophobia against Muslims has existed in some form since the very beginning, because the chiefs of Mecca used to gather at Darul-al-Ndwah in order to prevent the expansion of Islam. At the start of the European Renaissance, this concept was likely suppressed in the West. This is probably due to the attitude of widespread opposition to the Church emerging in elite circles and also to the various modernization doctrines that came into being. However, the Runnymede Trust, a British organization, conducted an official study on it for the first time in 1992 C.E. The report claimed that Islam is viewed as a single,

---

<sup>412</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 345.

<sup>413</sup> Watt, 346.

<sup>414</sup> Watt had used only translations of the early sources of Muslims, like Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhari, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Sirah Ibn Hisham, Waqīdi's al-Maghazi and Tarikh al Tabari which are the primary sources. But in secondary sources, he has not used Arabian writers; he has only focused on orientalist like William Muir, Richard Bell, J. Arberry, Pickthall, etc.'s interpretations.

monolithic entity that is inflexible and unresponsive to environmental changes<sup>415</sup>. This report further declares that:

“Islam seen as inferior to the West, barbaric, irrational, primitive, sexist. Islam seen as violent, aggressive, threatening, supportive of terrorism, engaged in a clash of civilizations”<sup>416</sup>.

Watt's discourse has been conducted in a society where research institutions are publishing such reports on Islam. In a few hypothetical buildings, he has clearly been influenced by this cultural approach. For justification, Watt asserts repeatedly that Muhammad's ﷺ early battles were violent and offensive in style, with the Muslim army ambushing Meccan caravans<sup>417</sup>. However, research connects these battles with Meccan occurrences rather than investigating them separately.

The research reveals that this strategy was not hostile; rather, it was merely a retaliatory use of force in accordance with existing ICJ rulings. This is due to the Meccans' deployment of an aggressive military tactic against the peaceful Muslims during the Mecca period. Another example of Islamophobia's influence on his interpretations is that he claims, regarding Muhammad's ﷺ wars, that it is challenging to comprehend how a religious leader could wage offensive war and essentially act as an aggressor in today's peace-conscious society<sup>418</sup>. While the research develops the idea that the way that Muhammad ﷺ administered war was more ethical and lenient than the international laws and conflicts of the 20th and 21st centuries. Therefore, exploration clearly exposes that he actually viewed, in a few cases, Muhammad's ﷺ life through that prism of Islamophobia.

Overall, the results of this study indicate that, despite the fact that the author is an unbiased academic by nature, he has developed several unconvincing hypotheses. He does not impose any of his own beliefs on his imaginary structure, which exposes that a neutral approach was attempted. Consequently, it is challenging to establish that he was

---

<sup>415</sup> Gordon Conway, *Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All* (Runnymede Trust, 1997).

<sup>416</sup> Conway.

<sup>417</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 2; Watt, 231; Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*, 105.

<sup>418</sup> Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*, 105.

biased or that his publications had a polemical attitude. Though he has come up with certain views that are actually unpersuasive, this does not imply that he is generally biased. Nevertheless, western skepticism, Islamophobia, a confined view of religion, and most crucially, comprehending the Seerah by employing a materialistic lens or incorporating Marxist interpretations, have all contributed to his weakness in certain hypothetical buildings. Therefore, it is clear that some of his textual productions were influenced by sociocultural factors.

## **4.2 The Limitations of the Study's Findings**

The discourse analysis is subject to some limitations, and it has only addressed the perspectives presented by Watt. Also, the study has a limited scope of data collection regarding Watt's perspectives and only uses Watt's three well-known books: "*Muhammad at Mecca*," "*Muhammad at Medina*" and "*Muhammad Prophet and Statesman*". Moreover, due to the limited scope of the political area, this research did not address his perspectives regarding Muhammad's ﷺ life in general. Based on the fact that it has employed the approach of CDA, the study becomes additionally limited with reference to its methodological approach. This discourse analysis has concentrated solely on Watt's discourse and then interconnected it with his sociopolitical and sociocultural contexts. Therefore, the research conclusions may not be generalized to other discourses and contexts. This suggests that, beyond the particular context of the study, the insights derived through this approach might not be widely applicable.

## **4.3 Findings' Contribution to the Field**

This is the first review of Watt's perspectives regarding Muhammad's ﷺ political position. Prior to this, the studies were conducted for his biography<sup>419</sup>, view on Muhammad's

---

<sup>419</sup> Hillenbrand, *Life and Work of W. Montgomery Watt*.

ﷺ Wars<sup>420</sup>, view on Muslim Heritage<sup>421</sup>, the origin of Islam<sup>422</sup>, the Revelation<sup>423</sup>, and the Origin of the Qur'an<sup>424</sup> from general perspectives as well, such as those of Kalin<sup>425</sup>, Khan Ali<sup>426</sup> and Jabal Buaben<sup>427</sup>. So, in this way, although, Watt's discourse is widely readable and has critical impacts in the field of Oriental studies, his perspectives were only reviewed from these abovementioned aspects in the absence of political aspects. Consequently, due to the divergent viewpoints and relative absence of research in this area, this review has critical implications because of its coverage of the gap.

A further way in which the research advances the discipline is by exhibiting the factual skeletons for the political position of Muhammad's ﷺ, which provides a source of guidance to about 1.9 billion Muslims globally, or around 25% of the worldwide population<sup>428</sup>.

#### 4.4 Findings' Implications

The results of the analysis have several implications, both in the field of Islamic studies and oriental studies, since it has developed a body of knowledge in these areas. An additional implication of the review is that it exposes and dissolves weak delusions and highlights strong standpoints, which reveals the actual nature of Muhammad's ﷺ leadership, which is implacable for the Muslim leader to follow. The study has explored some of Watt's groundbreaking, strong perspectives on Muhammad's ﷺ leadership, which are helpful for organizing

---

<sup>420</sup> AlShariofi, "The Position Of The Orientalist Montgomery Watt On The Conquests Of The Messenger - May God Bless Him And Grant Him Peace - Through His Book Muhammad In Medina."

<sup>421</sup> Razali, Abd Rahman, and Awang, "Watt's View on Muslim Heritage in The Study of Other Religions."

<sup>422</sup> D'Souza, *The Origin of Islam as Interpreted by W. Montgomery Watt and A. Kenneth Cragg : An Analysis and Evaluation*.

<sup>423</sup> Benaboud, "Orientalism on the Revelation of the Prophet: The Cases of W. Montgomery Watt, Maxime Rodinson, and Duncan Black MacDonald."

<sup>424</sup> Bilal Gokkir, "Western Attitudes to the Origin of the Qur'an: Theological and Linguistic Approaches of Twentieth Century English Speaking World from William Muir to William M. Watt" (Turkey, Istanbul University, 2002), Bilal Gokkir Istanbul University.

<sup>425</sup> Kalin, "Prophet Muhammad and His Western Critics A Critique."

<sup>426</sup> Khan, "Hagarism: The Story of a Book Written by Infidels for Infidels."

<sup>427</sup> Buaben, *Image of the Prophet Muhammad in the West : A Study of Muir, Margoliouth and Watt*.

<sup>428</sup> Center, "The Future of the Global Muslim Population."

the internal political structure of the state and establishing foreign policies regarding both peacetime and wartime in light of the actual nature.

#### 4.5 Recommendations for Future Research

To better understand Watt's discursive findings on Seerah and the implications of these results, future studies could address further large-scale studies to analyze his perspectives on the social aspect of Seerah. Also, further research is needed to review his theories with reference to the economic aspects of Seerah as well. These aspects are observed, especially in this analysis, but the study did not explore them in this review due to a lack of relevance to this study's research aims. Therefore, research earmarks these aspects for further exploration in this section. Thus, it will help to additionally develop the body of knowledge in the area.

#### 4.6 Tabular representations of Findings

S No.	Watt's Claim	Finding	Evidence	Context for Motivation
1	Muhammad's early ideology was not anti-idolatry.	Ideology was distinguished by anti-idolatry teachings.	45 verses, accounts and circumstantial analysis.	Marxism and Skepticism.
2	Selfishness, conservatism, and a dread of outside political and economic influences drove Meccan hostility rather than idolatry.	Idolatry was the primary concern, and economic interests, political concerns, and most importantly, tribalism, were significant variables subordinate to it.	Accounts and circumstantial analysis.	Marxist attitude.

3	The social boycott was not associated with Meccans' violence and persecution.	The terms of the boycott's contract were not harsh, Meccan's conduct beyond the contract proved to be cruel.	Several accounts and circumstantial analysis.	Armchair scholarship.
4	The social boycott was not solely motivated by religious preaching.	Key aim for Bunu Hashim and Matlab was tribalism, and for Quraysh and Kinana was idolatry.	Incidents and rationales.	None.
5	Reason for the emigration to Abyssinia was not persecution, but rather need for commerce, military support, fear of apostasy, and inner political dispute.	Only two of the five—persecution and fear of apostasy—appear to be strongly persuasive.	Accounts and rationales.	Materialistic and skeptic view
6	One of the things that move Khazraj and Aws to accept Muhammad (PBU) was the Jewish faith in the arrival of the Messiah.	The success in life after death was the most compelling factor, not the Jewish faith,	Accounts and rationales.	Judeo-Christian Teachings
7	In Medina's early years, many people held positions of authority greater than Muhammad's.	His rank was most power of all.	Accounts and circumstantial considerations	Limited data analysis
8	In the beginning, Muhammad ﷺ saw Jews and Muslims as co-religionists.	He did not regard Muslims and Jews as belonging to the same religion.	Claim and provided evidence are independently	Marxist and materialistic perspectives

9	The envoys were not sent to preach; rather, they were sent to ensure political relationship stability.	The primary goal was religious and political character was a consequence.	The clear wording of the letters	Skepticism of Arabian bibliographical sources.
10	The envoy from Abyssinia was sent primarily to arrange Umm Ḥabībah's marriage and the return of refugees, not to preach.	The envoy was sent primarily to promote Islam and secondarily to the return of refugees and to arrange marriage	The clear wording of the letters	Skeptical overlooking.
11	Friday rituals, facing Bayt al-Maqdis, and 'Āshūrā', were adopted because of Jewish traditions to forge an alliance with them.	There is nothing linked between the adoption of these rituals and making alliance with Jews.	Claim and provided evidence are independently	Judeo-Christian Teachings
12	Muhammad's ﷺ early war strategy was offensive in nature.	Early expeditions were initiative in the absence of previous links, but in the context of Meccan era persecutions, the Muslim army's attitude was retaliatory and the Meccan were offensive.	Accounts, circumstantial analysis and rationale considerations	Islamophobia
13	Banu Aws who asked for forgiveness for the Banu Qurayza were only unfaithful to Muhammad ﷺ, not to the Aws.	For the Aws, the Islamic community was more important, and their appeal for the Banu Qurayza was based on human sympathy.	Presence of numerous opposing grounds	Judeo-Christian Teachings
14	Muhammad's military services' approach was	Compared to the international laws of war, his approach to	Comparison with ICJ's judgments	Islamophobia

	offensive in comparison to the modern pacifist age.	warfare appears to be more tolerant and moral.		
15	For the political economy of his state, Muhammad ﷺ ignored trade.	Along with founding markets and providing instruction, he restored economic peace to Medina, offered fresh job opportunities, and made ideal use of services and resources.	Several major reforms in the field	Utilization of limited bibliographical sources
16	Warfare was used as a source of income.	Despite significant booty gains, the main goal of these battles was to advance religious concerns rather than material ones.	Accounts, circumstantial analysis, and rationale considerations	Materialistic perspective Islamophobia
17	The companions' love of booty was a major factor in their migration to Medina.	The main motive was the success of life after death rather than the love of booty, since the fear of losses was far greater than the expectation of gaining.	Ignored the religious factor, as shown by the accounts	Materialistic perspective



## Bibliography

1. Afzal, Sabahat. Review of *Hijrat-e-Habsha ke Asbab wa Elal ki Madi Tawilat ka Tanqidi Jaiza*, by Muhammad Hamad Lakhvi Lakhvi. *Jihat Ul Islam* 12, no. 1 (2018): 112–26. <https://doi.org/10.51506/jihat-ul-islam.v12i1.40>.
2. Al-Bukhari, Muhammad. *Sahih Al-Bukhari*. Dar Ul-Hadith, 1978.
3. Al-Jawzi, Muhammad Ibn Qayyum. *Zad al-Ma'ad Fi Hadi Kher ul 'abad*. Translated by Rais Ahmad Jafri. 2 vols. Karachi: Nafees Academy, n.d.
4. *Al-Quran*, n.d.
5. AlShariofi, Omar Bin Musaed. “The Position Of The Orientalist Montgomery Watt On The Conquests Of The Messenger - May God Bless Him And Grant Him Peace - Through His Book Muhammad In Medina.” Jami' al-Imam Muhammad bin Saud, 1995. [noor-book.com/en/acy3br](http://noor-book.com/en/acy3br).
6. Alvi, Mustafeez Ahmad. “Montgomery Watt on Sirah; An Analytical Study.” *Al-Qalam* 2022.
7. Al-Zarqani, Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Baqi. *Sharah Al Zurqani Ala al Mawahib*. 2nd ed. 8 vols. Karachi: Dar al-Ma'rifah, 1973.
8. Andrae, Tor. *Mohammed The Man and His Faith*. 1st ed. London: Routledge, 1936.
9. Arberry, Arthur John. *The Holy Koran: An Introduction with Selections*. 1st ed. Oxfordshire, England: Routledge, 1953.
10. ———. *The Koran Interpreted*. London: Oxford University Press, 1996.
11. Archer, John Clark. *Mystical Elements in Mohammed*. 1st ed. New Haven: Yale University, 1924.
12. Arnhart, Larry. “The Darwinian Biology of Aristotle's Political Animals.” *American Journal of Political Science* 38, no. 2 (1994): 464–85. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2111413>.
13. At-Tirmidhi, Muhammad ibn `Isa. *Sunan At Tirmidhi*. Beirut Lebanon: Resalah Publishing, 2015.
14. Aziz, Tariq, Hafiz Muhammad Abrar Awan, Muhammad Shahbaz Manj, Ahmad Hassan Khattak, and Saima Munir. “William Montgomery Watt as an Interpreter of the Holy Qur'an.” *Al-Qantara* 8, no. 3 (2022).

15. Bell, Richard. *The Origin of Islam in Its Christian Environment*. 2nd ed. London: The Gunning Lectures Edinburgh University & London: Frank Cass and Company Limited, 1968.
16. ———. *The Origin of Islam in Its Christian Environment: The Gunning Lectures*. 1st edition. London: Routledge, 1968.
17. BELL, Richard, and William Montgomery Watt. *Introduction to the Qur'an*. Edinburgh University Press, 1995.
18. Benaboud, Muhammad. "Orientalism on the Revelation of the Prophet: The Cases of W. Montgomery Watt, Maxime Rodinson, and Duncan Black MacDonald," no. Vol. 3 No. 2 (1986): *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* (1986). <https://www.ajis.org/index.php/ajiss/article/view/2757>.
19. Bosworth, Clifford Edmund, Emeri Johannes Donzel, and Wolfhart P. Heinrichs. "Muhammad." In *The Encyclopedia of Islam*. Vol. 7. New York: Brill Academic Publishers, 1993.
20. Buaben, Jabal Muhammad. *Image of the Prophet Muḥammad in the West : A Study of Muir, Margoliouth and Watt*. Leicester : Islamic Foundation, 1996.
21. Center, Pew Research. "The Future of the Global Muslim Population," January 27, 2011. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2011/01/27/the-future-of-the-global-muslim-population/>.
22. Conway, Gordon. *Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All*. Runnymede Trust, 1997.
23. Cragg, Kenneth. *The Call of the Minaret*. 1st ed. London: Oxford University Press, 1956.
24. Crick, Bernard. *In Defence of Politics*. Chicago; USA: University of Chicago Press, 1972.
25. Dawood, Nessim Joseph. *The Koran: A New Translation*. London: Penguin Classic, 1956.
26. Donner, Fred M. *The Study of Islam's Origins since W. Montgomery Watt's Publications*. Edinburgh: The University of Edinburgh, 2015.
27. D'Souza, Andreas Felix. *The Origin of Islam as Interpreted by W. Montgomery Watt and A. Kenneth Cragg : An Analysis and Evaluation*. McGill University, 1979. <https://escholarship.mcgill.ca/concern/theses/zk51vh936>.

28. Fairclough, Norman. *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language*. London: Longman Publisher, 1995.
29. ———. *Discourse and Social Change*. Oxford, England: Polity Press, 1992.
30. Gibb, Hamilton Alexander Rosskeen. *Mohammedanism*. London: Oxford University Press, 1962.
31. Gokkir, Bilal. “Western Attitudes to the Origion of the Qur’an: Theological and Linguistic Approaches of Twentieth Century English Speaking World from William Muir to William M. Watt.” Istanbul University, 2002. Bilal Gokkir Istanbul University.
32. Gramsci, Antonio. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. Translated by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith. New York: International Publishers, 1971.
33. Grunebaum, Gustave Edmund von. *Classical Islam: A History 600-1258*. New York: Barnes Noble Books, 1997.
34. Guillaume, Alfred. *The Life of Muhammad; A Translation of Ishaq’s Sirat Rasul Allah*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2002.
35. Hamidullah, Muhammad. *Ehd-e-Nabvi Main Nizaam-e-Hukmarani*. Karachi: Bab-ul-Islam Printing Press, 1981.
36. ———. *Rasool E Akram (SAW) Ki Siyasi Zindagi*. Lahore: Haji Hanif Printer, 2013.
37. Hillenbrand, Carole. *Life and Work of W. Montgomery Watt*. Edinburgh University Press, 2018.
38. Holloway, Richard. *William Montgomery Watt: A Christian Scholar in Search of Islamic Understanding.*, 2006.
39. Ibn Abī Shaybah, Abū Bakr. *Musannaf Ibn E Abi Shaibah*. Beirut Lebanon: Bab-ul-Islam Printing Press, 1967.
40. Ibn al-Athir, Ali. *Al-Kamil fit-Tarikh*. Vol. 2. 13 vols. Beirut Lebanon: Dar-e-Sader, 1979.
41. Ibn Hasham, Muḥammad Abdulmalik. *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*. Translated by Qutbuddin Aḥmad Mahmoodi. Vol. 2. 3 vols. Karachi: Islami Kutub Khana, 2019.
42. ———. *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*. Translated by Qutbuddin Aḥmad Mahmoodi. Vol. 1. 3 vols. Karachi: Islami Kutub Khana, 2019.

43. ———. *Sirat ibn-i Hasham*. Translated by Qutbuddin Aḥmad Mahmoodi. Vol. 3. 3 vols. Karachi: Islami Kutub Khana, 2019.
44. Ibn Hazm, Ali Ibn Aḥmad. *Jawami' as-Seera*. Translated by Muhammad Sardar Ahmad. Karachi: Nashryat-e-Islam, 1990.
45. Ibn Jarir at-Tabari, Muhammad. *Tarikh Al-Umam Wal-Muluk*, n.d.
46. Ibn Kathir, Ismail ibn Umar. *Albidayah Walnihayah*. Vol. 3. Beirut: Dar ul-fikr, 1998.
47. Ibn Saad, Abu Abdullah Muhammad. *Tabqat Ibn-e-Saad*. Translated by Abdullah Almuaadi. Vol. 3. 8 vols. Karachi: Nafees Academy, n.d.
48. ———. *Tabqat Ibn-e-Saad*. Translated by Abdullah Almuaadi. Vol. 1. 8 vols. Karachi: Nafees Academy, n.d.
49. Interview with Prof William Montgomery Watt, 2000. [https://www.alastairmcintosh.com/articles/2000\\_watt.htm](https://www.alastairmcintosh.com/articles/2000_watt.htm).
50. Jilani, Abdul Qadir. *Islam, Paighambar e Islam aur Mustashriqeen e Maghrib ka Andaz e Fikar*. Lahore: Qudosia Islamic Press, 2005.
51. Kalin, Ibrahim. "Prophet Muhammad and His Western Critics A Critique of W. Montgomery Watt and Others by Zafar Ali Qureshi, Idara Ma'arif Islamic, Lahore, 1992, 2 Vols, p. 1103." *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 18, no. 2 (2001). <https://doi.org/10.35632/ajis.v18i2.2026>.
52. Khan, Ali. "Hagarism: The Story of a Book Written by Infidels for Infidels." *Legal Scholar Academy*, 2005. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.944295>.
53. Margoliouth, David Samuel. *Mohammed and the Rise of Islam*. 3rd ed. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1905.
54. Marshall, David. *God, Muhammad and the Unbelievers: A Qur'anic Study*. 1st ed. Oxfordshire, England: Routledge, 1999.
55. Mubarakpuri, Safi ur Rahman. *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*. Lahore: Al-Maktabah Salfia, 2006.
56. Muir, Sir William. *The Life of Mahomet ; From Original Sources*. 2002nd edition. Voice Of India, 2002.
57. Muir, William. *Mahomet and Islam: A Sketch of the Prophet's Life from Original Sources and a Brief Outline of His Religion*. London: Religious Tract Society, 1884.
58. Muslim, Abul Husain. *Sahih Muslim*. Beirut Lebanon: Dar Al-Kotob Al-Ilmiyah, n.d.

59. Nicholson, Reynold Alleyne. *A Literary History of the Arabs*. New Delhi: Kitab Bhavan, 1994.
60. O'Leary, De Lacy. *Arabia Before Muhammad*. 1st ed. Oxfordshire, England: Routledge, 2012.
61. Pickthall, Mohammed Marmaduke. *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'an*. New Delhi: Idara Isha'at-e Diniyat (P) Ltd., 1998.
62. Qadri, Muhammad Tahir al-. *Seerat ul Rasool*. 12th ed. Vol. 4. 7 vols. Lahore: Minhaj-ul-Quran Printer, 2015.
63. ———. *Seerat ul Rasool*. 15th ed. Vol. 3. 7 vols. Lahore: Minhaj-ul-Quran Printer, 2017.
64. ———. *Seerat ul Rasool*. 12th ed. Vol. 6. 7 vols. Lahore: Minhaj-ul-Quran Printer, 2017.
65. Raven, Wim. "SĪRA." In *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Vol. 9. Brill Academic Publishers, 1997.
66. Razali, Wan Mohd Fazrul Azdi Wan, Mohd Rosmizi Abd Rahman, and Jaffary Awang. "Watt's View on Muslim Heritage in The Study of Other Religions: A Critical Analysis." *Al-Itqan: Journal of Islamic Sciences and Comparative Syudies* 1, no. 1 (2017): 21–42.
67. Shafi, Muhammad. *Ma'ariful Quran*. Vol. 1. 8 vols. Karachi: Idaratul-Ma'arif, 2008.
68. Shah, Niaz A. *Women, the Koran and International Human Rights Law: The Experience of Pakistan*. Brill Nijhoff, 2006.
69. Siddiqi, Yasin Mazhar. *Ehd e Nabvi (s.a.w) Ka Nizam e Haqoomat*. 1st ed. Aligarh: Idara E Tahqeeq O Tasneef E Islami, 1994.
70. Singh, Nagendra. Case Concerning Military and Paramilitary Activities in and against Nicaragua (International Court of Justice Reports of Judgments. Advisory Opinions and Orders June 27, 1986).
71. Spencer, Robert. *The Truth About Muhammad Founder of the World's Most Intolerant Religion*. Regnery Publishing, 2006.
72. Sprenger, Aloys. *The Life of Mohammad, from Original Sources*. (Allahabad: Presbyterian Mission Press, 1851.

73. Stanton, Herbert Udney Weitbrecht. *The Teaching of the Qur'ān: With an Account of Its Growth and a Subject Index*. 1st ed. London: SPCK, 1919.
74. Thanwi, Ashraf Ali. *Bayan ul Quran*. 3 vols. Lahore: Maktaba Rahmānya, n.d.
75. Walker, Adam. *A Biography of the 'Last Orientalist': Rev. Professor Emeritus Dr. William Montgomery Watt*, 2016.
76. Watt, William Montgomery. *Islam and the Integration of Society*. London: Routledge, 1998.
77. ———. *Islamic Political Thought, the Basic Concept*. 1st ed. Edinburgh University Press, 1968.
78. ———. *Muhammad at Mecca*. Oxford, England: Clarendon Press Oxford, 1953.
79. ———. *Muhammad at Medina*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1981.
80. ———. *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*. London: London: Oxford University Press, 1961.
81. ———. *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*. Vol. 409. London: Oxford University Press, 1961.
82. ———. *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought*. Oneworld Publications, 1998.
83. ———. "What Is Islam?," 1968.
84. Webster, Merriam Noah. "Merriam-Webster.Com Dictionary, s.v." Springfield, Massachusetts, United States: Merriam-Webster, Incorporated, 1982.
85. William, Muir. *The Life of Mohammad From Original Sources*. Edinburgh: Jhon Grant, 1912.
86. Wilson, Heather A. *International Law and the Use of Force by National Liberation Movements*. England: Oxford University Press, 1988.
87. Zubair, Muhammad. *Islam aur Mustashriqeen*. 1st ed. Lahore: Maktaba Rahmat ul lil Alameen, 2014.