A CRITICAL STUDY OF WILLIAM MONTGOMERY WATT'S CONTRIBUTION TO ISLAMIC STUDIES

ABSTRACT

THESIS

SUBMITTED FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF

Doctor of Philosophy

IN

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By

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Under the Supervision of

Prof. Sayyid Ahsan

DEPARTMENT OF ISLAMIC STUDIES
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ABSTRACT

Since east is east and west is west, for better understanding, interaction between the two is must. Orientalism means the western attempt to know the East especially Muslims and their faith. The west has produced a large number of scholars who have worked on Islam and Islamic studies by making contribution in not only preserving, editing and publishing classical Islamic materials but by making them available for the scholars of Islamic studies.

W.M. Watt is one of those scholars who have produced quality material on this subject. Though in the earlier centuries the western scholars’ critical attitude created an atmosphere due to which the relationship between Islam and west could not flourish. During the past many decades a change of attitude has occurred. In this context the names of Dr. T.W. Arnold, Professor A.J. Arberry, Professor H.A.R. Gibb and Professor W.M. Watt can be included but these authors adopted a little impartial and sympathetic attitude toward Islam. From time immemorial many seers and seekers have tried to unlock the mystery of man in the universe. William Montgomery Watt has probably possessed the key to this mystery.
The present study “A critical study of William Montgomery Watt’s contribution to Islamic studies” proposes to critically examine Watt’s works on various fields of Islamic studies. It includes his methods, his sources, his treatment of subject and his point of view regarding the biography of the prophet in general and in Islam in particular. Watt has actually tried to reinterpret some of the things which were stated by earlier scholars by adding his own observations.

The thesis is divided into six chapters including introduction and conclusion. A detailed Bibliography and appendix have also been attached for convenient study purpose. The very first chapter deals with the definitions, evolution, origins and development of orientalism. It also takes into account the objectivity of the orientalists by analyzing their works thoroughly.

Chapter I focuses on the meaning and definition of orientalism, its evolution, origins, development, objectivity and some prominent orientalists and their works.

The term orientalism is derived from the Latin word oriens (east rising sun) and from the Greek word (“horos, the direction of the rising sun”) orient is the opposite of occident. The term occident means the west and orient means the east.
Orientalism had a positive or agreeable meaning referring to "the study of languages, literature, religions, thought, arts and social life of east in order to make them available to the west".

Mr. Edward W. Said, a renowned English scholar writes about orientalism as follows:

"By orientalism I mean several things, all of them, in my opinion are interdependent. The most readily accepted designation for orientalism is an academic area and indeed the label still serves in a number of academic areas and indeed the label still serves in a number of academic institutions. Anyone who teaches, writes about or researches the orient and this applies whether the person is an anthropologist, sociologist, historian or philologist either in its specific or its general aspects, is an orientalist, and what he or she does is orientalism".

There can be no two opinions about the need and importance of better understanding between Islam and the west. Islam, the religion of more than 500 million people, is the most misunderstood religion in the west. In the first half of the twentieth century, various Middle Eastern and European scholars taught Islamic studies at American universities, but remained very slight until the 1940s.
The origin of orientalism can be traced back from the 7th century A.D. and continues till date. Orientalism originated as a reaction to the basic concept of Islam regarding the origins of man and his religion right from the time of Adam down to Prophet Muhammad.

The journey to success by orientalists includes written material on or related to Islam, all these orientalists mainly concentrated on the teachings of Prophet Muhammad and Quran from their own perspective.

There are various reasons for which western scholars took interest in orientalism. The increasing economic interaction which was the result of close political relations, played a significant role. Geographical proximity made it convenient for the growing number of travelers and missionaries from the west to travel to the east. As a result, they studied Muslim values with much more objectivity.

There are countless orientalists in different countries i.e. France, Germany, England and other European countries who have particularly worked on Islam. It is almost impossible to discuss all of their work in detail. At the end of the chapter some orientalists and their works have been selected for the purpose of chronological analysis.
The biography of W.M. Watt has been included in chapter II, highlighting his place in Islamic studies, his interest in Islam and Christianity along with various scholar’s and teacher’s views on him.

He was born on 14th March 1909, in Ceres, Fife, Scotland, the son of the Rev Andrew Watt (d. 1910) and Mary Burns (d. 1937). After schooling in Lanarkshire and Edinburgh he studied at the University of Edinburgh (1927-30), and Balliol College, Oxford (1930-33), obtaining degrees in classics (Latin and Greek) and philosophy. He also studied philosophy for the summer semester 1934 at the University of Jena, Germany and theology (1938-39) at Cuddesdon College, Oxford. He was assistant lecturer in moral philosophy at the University of Edinburgh from 1934 to 1938; but, he, then became interested in the Christian approach to Islam, and after studies at the University of Edinburgh (1940-43) served as an Islamic specialist on the staff of the Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem from 1943 to 1946, having been ordained priest in 1940, and obtaining his Ph.D. from Edinburgh in 1944 for a thesis on ‘Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam’ (published 1949). From 1947 to 1979, he was head of the department of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of Edinburgh, from 1964 with the title of Professor and later as Professor Emeritus. He was also a visiting professor at the University of Toronto (1963, 1978) and at George Town
University, Washington (1978-79), and also delivered lectures at Makerere University, Uganda (1967), at Kuwait University (1970) and at the College de France Paris (1970). In 1981 he received the Levi della Vida Medal from the University of California, Los Angeles.

In chapter III a detailed account of Watt’s works, for example, his books, his articles and his reviews have been included.

It is said that his interest in Islam started in 1937, from his conversation with a Muslim student, Khwaja Abdul Mannan, who enabled him to realize Islam as a ‘centuries old system of thought and life’. This interest later developed further and led to his authoring over thirty books and over a hundred and fifty articles. One of his main interests was the career of Muhammad, represented by his famous trilogy, Muhammad at Mecca, Muhammad at Medina and Muhammad, Prophet and Statesman (1953, 1956, 1961), slightly different is Muhammad’s Mecca: History form the Qur’an (1988). Study of the early history of the Islamic sects also attracted him, and from this came his Ph.D. thesis, many articles, and the Formative Period of Islamic Thought (1973). Among his other books are: The Faith and Practice of al-Ghazali (translations, 1953); Islam and the Integration of Society (1961); Islamic Philosophy and Theology (1962; enlarged edition 1986); Muslim Intellectual: a study of al-Ghazali (1963); Truth in the Religions (1963);
Watt’s thoughts on Quran have been taken up in chapter IV. It mainly deals with the understanding of revelation not only among Christians but also among Muslims. Here he seems to differ from the traditional Muslim understandings of revelation. The emphasis is made on his Islamic revelation in the modern world.

Watt has contributed to the understanding of the revelation not only among Christians but also among Muslims. His view differs from the traditional Muslim understanding of revelation. He produced two significant works directly related to the Quran. The first was ‘Islamic Revelation in the modern world (1969)’. The second was the revised edition of his teacher Richard Bell’s Introduction to the Quran (1970).
places in his other publications. In the analysis of his views on revelation, I will focus my attention mainly on his “Islamic Revelation in the Modern World”, since an examination of the related passages of his other works has shown that there are no major changes, in his views on this issue.

William Montgomery Watt points out the possibility to believe that Muhammad had received some knowledge of the Quranic stories or events which were not earlier known to him. Through some informant who had acquired his knowledge from the books and this connection he misinterprets Quranic verses.

Watt elaborated the novelty in the content of the Quran by pointing out that Prophet Muhammad was sent as a warner to bring the message of Islam from God to his fellows. The remaining messages have been derived from Judaism and Christianity because these messages are God’s power and essential good character.

Chapter V, Views on Prophet provides a detailed analysis of the works of a number of leading orientalists who have made special studies of the Quran and have also translated it into many other European languages. The unsympathetic and sometimes hostile attitude of these orientalists has been frankly and fairly projected because this attitude is solely responsible for the distorted image of the prophet. At the same
time, the change of attitude into objective and positive one has also been incorporated.

Montgomery Watt is prominent among such well known orientalists. The west’s new analytical approaches were now targeted on the Prophet. Watt studied him in the context of his social background and environment relying heavily on Muhammad’s approach and stressing statesmanship. Maxime Rodinson applied a materialistic and Marx its approach, resorting furthermore to techniques of psychoanalysis to explain the Prophet’s revelation.

The orientalist says that the Holy Prophet used to suffer from epileptic fits. Watt refutes this allegation of the Prophet suffering from epileptic fits in his book “Muhammad Prophet and Statesman”.

Chapter VI, Modernist Writings on W.M. Watt uncovers the ignorance and prejudice practised by some Western writers on Islam. At the same time it also focuses on the contemporary thoughts and opinions on Watt in general and my own view on the author, in particular.

Khurram Murad was of the opinion that Watt was kind enough to lend a sympathetic ear and pen to Islam.
A.S. Basmee admires his openness and honesty in pointing out the problems non-Muslim western scholars face in the field of Islamic studies.

A modern writer, Andreas D’souza, critically analyzed the writing of Watt and said that Watt attempted to move beyond a mere description of Islamic date to the more challenging task of helping Muslim to deepen and strengthen their faith, making it more directly relevant to the questions and issues we faced today.

Josef Ven Ess points out that since Watt has been Anglican Clergyman throughout this life, therefore, sometimes his writings could be described as didactic or possibly propagandistic.

Muhammad Hamidullah, though praises Watt for his efforts in translating the works, yet he clearly spots the fact that Watt has offered an incorrect rendering of Al-Ghazali’s original.

The innermost desire of W.M. Watt is to bring the two religious together in friendly dialogue in order to avoid the impact of the rising tide of secularism and materialism. He adopted the technique of multi-methodology to reach out to a larger public.
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ALIGARH (INDIA)
2012
In Loving Memory
of
My Parents
CERTIFICATE

Certified that Ms. Razia Qayam has completed the Ph.D. thesis entitled "A Critical Study of William Montgomery Watt's Contribution to Islamic Studies" under my supervision.

Also certified that this is her own original contribution and is fit for submission for the award of the degree of Ph.D. in Islamic Studies.

(Prof. Sayyid Ahsan)
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(RAZIA QAYAM)
Introduction
INTRODUCTION

Orientalism, when defined in simple words, implies the Western attempt to know the East, particularly the Muslims and their faith, Islamic sciences and literature. For a limited period, especially in its early stages, it reflected missionary sentiments and zeal but soon it donned the mantle of so called “objectivity” and empiricism with which the West approached the East. In due course of time it became a movement, an approach and a way of life. All sorts of topics and subjects came under discussion. Organized efforts were made in Egypt, North Africa, and other regions to revive ancient languages and cultures. Arabic language was though to be incapable of fulfilling the need of the modern time. Emphasis was laid on local dialects and vernaculars. Arabic script was sought to be changed and replaced with the Roman one. The role of alien elements in the development of Islamic culture and civilization was highlighted.

For a proper understanding of Orientalism a brief account of Crusades will be in order here. In a sense the foundation of Orientalism was laid down much before the crusades. However, Orientalism acquired a great deal of significance only after the failure of Crusades in achieving the politico-military, even religious, goals of the West.
Muslim interaction with Christianity dates back to the times of the Prophet (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him); the Christians of Najran had met him in Madinah. After the early Muslim conquests which brought many Christians or Christian-dominated territories under the Islamic fold the two religions and their followers came in close contact with each other, The wave of early Islamic conquests swayed over a long part of the Christendom defeating it particularly in West Asia and North Africa, The Christian world suffered a setback on religious fronts as well. For a great number of Christians, attracted to, and impressed by the simple and rationale Islamic faith, embraced the religion of their conquerors. It is apparent that the Church was declining fast in the East. In Europe, however, it was spreading in a big way. Between 500 to 1100 AD almost the whole of Western Europe was forcibly brought under the Christian fold.

The Christianized or religiously united Europe gave a new life to the: ailing Christendom, which expressed itself in the form of violent mediaeval Crusades. At that time Crusades were viewed as wars with a ‘holy’ cause, namely, deliverance of Jerusalem from the Muslim “occupation”. The Crusaders almost achieved their goal when they successfully established the so-called kingdom of Jerusalem. At that time the Muslim world was badly divided. The central authority of the
Abbasids was weakened and a number of “dynasties” had come up which were often at loggerheads with each other. The politically divided world of Islam, thus, fell an easy prey to the first crusaders.

The crusades, probably, had a missionary character as well. It is well known that the first crusade was preached and launched by Pope Urban II, which suggests its missionary nature and orientation. In his sermon at Clermont the Pope had said that the Eastern Christians were in peril, their Churches were being desecrated and pilgrims visiting Jerusalem were being harassed. After highlighting the plight of Eastern Christianity the Pope urged people to rise up and fight for the deliverance of Jerusalem. In his speech one may even trace indications about the conversion of the Muslims. The Pope’s statement does show that he had some hope that a successful Crusade might create opportunities for conversion of Muslims to Christianity.

The Crusades (starting towards the end of eleventh century and continuing to the fifteenth), on the other hand, provided a unique opportunity for elaborate interaction between Muslims and Christians. There took place a kind of cultural interpenetration, which paved the way for direct contact between the Arabs and the Europeans. Over a period of time many crusaders realized that they could learn a lot from the culturally superior Muslims.
A positive outcome of the Crusades was that they awakened Muslims from deep, slumber. As a result they became united to a great extent and launched a counter-offensive under the leadership of Salahuddhi Ayyubi. Later Jerusalem was liberated after almost 90 years of Christian occupation. The Ottoman caliphs, too, earned on Ayyubi’s mission. The counter-offensive lunched by the Ottomans swept over Eastern Europe and sent a shock wave right across the European continent. It is for this reason that many Christian writers have described the crusades as a misadventure.

After the failure of the crusading movement the Christendom, particularly some far-sighted leaders and intellectuals, began to deliberate on why the crusades had failed. The idea behind this soul-searching was not to merely find out the causes of failure but also devise a new strategy to counter and check the advance of the Ottomans and their faith in Europe. They discovered that ignorance was the main cause of their decline. As a result they decided to acquire knowledge from all sources. So during the Renaissance i.e. between 13th to 14th centuries, European scholars and intellectuals concentrated on reviving their literature, art and other academic disciplines. This intellectual awakening also made them rethink about the Muslims and their faith. Consequently, many people, scholars as well as laymen, embarked upon acquiring knowledge from
Muslim institutions and individuals in Spain and the Fertile Crescent. Travellers wrote travelogues and scholars produced academic works and thus began the tradition of studying the East, which is known as Orientalism.

Orientalism is derived from Orient, which implies East; the countries lying east of Mediterranean are usually described as the Orient. Occident, on the other hand, means the West; the countries of Europe, particularly Western Europe, and the US are called the Occident. Orientalism, with all its connotations, came to be used towards the end of the eighteenth century. Now Orientalism signifies eastern characteristics, life style, values, knowledge, literature, art and culture. It further denotes learning or knowledge of the languages, religions and culture of the east. The person well versed in all these is regarded as “Orientalist”. There is no denying the fact that the West has for long thought of the “Orient” as one of her many inventions. In their imagination the Orient was a place of romance. It was taken to be a thing, a ‘subject’ to be discussed and analyzed. In his inimitable style Edward W Said wrote of Orientalism “as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient — dealing with it by making statements about it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it, in short Orientalism as a Western
style for dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient” (E W Said 1978, Orientalism, Introduction).

Undoubtedly Orientalism has been a kind of intellectual invasion through which Europe has sought to capture the heart and mind of the Muslim world in such a way that it becomes indifferent towards and averse to its glorious past and seeks a future which would have no connection with the great Islamic civilization. Efforts were made to overawe Muslims, intellectually so as to make them look towards the West for inspiration and leadership. Today it can be said that a remarkable attitudinal change is discernible in the altered circumstances especially since the industrial revolution in Europe. Today’s Orientalism is no longer focussed on early Islam. Instead, the religious movements, social trends and analysis of contemporary Muslim societies, both externally and internally, are the new themes that fascinate the Western scholars. The attitudinal difference is also marked by a substantial amount of rationality in their approach to various problems and issues.

Twentieth century dawned with a host of new trends. Great changes took place on all levels, political, economic and social. The colonized nations awoke after a long slumber. The movements of self-determination, scientific developments and coming together of a variety
of cultures find civilizations have radically transformed the nature of problems and issues. Under the influence of these changes Western scholars have conducted some positive researches also in which a good deal of objectivity has been observed. They are no longer concerned with deciphering codes and performing secret missions behind the enemy lines. Islamic Studies, in fact, has established new outposts such as in Mexico, Australia, Canada and the US. Muslims and Christians are mixing with one another as never before. To put it simply, the self-understanding of the 'Orientalist' has not remained unaffected. It has changed to a great extent.

The west has produced a large number of scholars who worked on Islam and Islamic Studies. Their contribution in preserving, editing and publishing classical Islamic materials and making them available for scholars of Islamic studies as immense treasure. William Montgomery Watt is one of those scholars who produced quality material and deep researches and works on Islam. His work especially in the field of early history of Islam as well as his works on intellectual history of Islam is highly valuable.

The present study proposes to critically examine his works on various fields of Islamic history. It will take into account his methods, his sources, his treatment of subject and his point of view regarding the
biography of the Prophet in general and in Islam in particular. It is perhaps not out of place to mention that a critical assessment of William Montgomery Watt has to be found in the whole work.

Some of the various reasons for which western scholars took interest in orientalism are the following.

The increasing interaction which was the result of close political relations, played a significant role in this context. Moreover geographical proximity made it convenient for the growing number of travelers and missionaries from the West to travel to the East. As a result they could study Muslim values with more objectivity.

Medieval Christendom has studied Islam for two purposes. First of all they wanted to protect Christians from the Muslims' onslaught and secondly they also had a keen desire to convert Muslims to Christianity.

The western scholars in the beginning refused to acknowledge the real contribution Islam made to science and culture. But with the passage of time this view changed. Now most of the leading scholars and orientalists admit and acknowledge their contribution.

It is difficult to say that orientalism is totally wrong and evil because many outstanding western scholars have devoted their lives to Islamic studies with sincere interests in it.
In the earlier centuries the western scholars' critical attitude on Islam had been responsible for creating an atmosphere in which the relationship between Islam and west could have been healthy. During the past many decades a change of attitude has occurred in some quarters. Dr. T.W. Arnold, Professor A.J. Arberry, Professor H.A.R. Gibb, Professor W.M. Watt, adopted a somewhat impartial and sympathetic attitude towards Islam.

The first institution *Ecole des Langues orientales vivantes* of the same mission was established in Paris in 1795.

Meanwhile Arabic studies in England became a major concern for all those who wished to study Muslim culture and a new chair of Arabic was setup at the University of London.

From time immemorial many seers and seekers have tried to unlock the mystery of man in the universe. William Montgomery Watt was one of the very few who probably possessed the key to this mystery.

The present study of this author is confined to the aspect of Prophet's life and mission. He has also tried to reinterpret some of the things which were stated by the earlier scholars in this field and he has added his own observations.
The purpose of this study is to present a comprehensive, understanding and analysis of W.M. Watt’s contribution to Islamic studies.

Watt’s main area of interest is, apart from the life and epoch of the Prophet, the early history of Islamic sects. He has written a number of articles on various aspects of this subject. His interest in Islam began in 1937 when a veterinary student from Lahore shared his flat with him for about eight months. Their conversations on the supper table aroused his interest in Islam. His contact with Islam, in fact, began with a dialogue. He got particularly fascinated with the problems of the relationship between Christianity and Islam. It was a turning point in his career. Watt has written some thirty books and over a hundred and fifty articles solely for a large reading public. And this was not the result of mere chance or persuasion but it was consciously planned by him. It appears that he wrote for the sake of writing or for eternity, and not only for his colleagues but also for educated people outside his discipline as well.
Chapter-1

Orientalism Definition, Evolution, Origin, Development, Objectivity, Some Prominent Orientalists and their Works
It is right that east is east and west is west, there can be no two opinions about the need and importance of better understanding between east and west\(^1\), but to understand each other both must meet broadly. Eastern studies undertook by western scholars is termed Orientalism. One term has been defined in different ways by different scholars. It is primarily a term used for the imitation or depiction of aspects of eastern cultures by the western writers\(^2\). "Orientalist" is also synonymous term for a scholar of oriental studies\(^3\).

A westerner who studies anything to everything of the eastern past of the world is an orientalist. Therefore a anthropologist who collect some data on the study of human race, especially its origins, development, customs and belief will be called an orientalist. So also a philologist who is spending a lot of time in the scientific study of time in the development of languages will be called an orientalist. The same is applicable to historians and sociologists.

**Meaning and Definition of the Term Orient, Orientalism and Orientalist:**

The term orient, orientalism is derived from the Latin word oriens ("east rising sun") and from the Greek Word ("horos, the direction of the rising sun"). "Orient is the opposite of occident. The term occident means the west and orient means the east."
Orientalism had a positive or agreeable meaning referring to “the study of languages, literature, religions, thoughts, arts and social life of east in order to make them available to the west”.

In brief, we may say that orientalism is the branch of knowledge initiated by the west when it began to take an interest in and sought to know the east.

Mr. Edward W. Said a renowned English scholar writes about orientalism as follows:

“By orientalism I mean several things, all of them, in my opinion, interdependent. The most readily accepted designation for orientalism is an academic area and indeed the label still serves in a number of academic institutions. Anyone who teaches, writes about or researches the orient-and this applies whether the person is an anthropologist, sociologist, historian, or philologist either in its specific or its general aspects, is an orientalist, and what he or she does is orientalism”.

In term of the old world, Europe was considered ‘the occident’ (the west), and its furthest-known extreme ‘the orient’ (the east).

Edward Said, further defines orientalism as follows:

“To speak of orientalism therefore is to speak mainly although not exclusively, of a British and French cultural enterprise, a project whose
dimension take in such disparate realms as the imagination itself, the whole of India and Levant, the Biblical text and the Biblical lands, the spice trade, colonial armies and a long tradition of colonial administrators, a formidable scholarly corpus, innumerable oriental "experts" and "hands" an oriental professorate, a complex array of "oriental" ideas (oriental despotism, oriental splendor cruelty, sensuality), many eastern sects philosophies and wisdoms domesticated for local European use the list can be extended more or less indefinitely".6

According to Webster’s third new international dictionary orientalism meant: A trait, custom or habit or expression, characteristics of oriental people.

Orientalism, as a field of scholarship, first emerged in the eighteenth century, when European scholars of the enlightenment period consciously studied Asian languages and cultures to gain a richer understanding of the middle eastern literary and historical environment in which Judaism and ultimately Christianity emerged.7

An ‘Orientalist’ is a specialist in oriental subjects8 and in other words an Orientalist one engaged in oriental languages and literature.9 Oriental mean of the orient i.e. of east, eastern or pertaining to east or a characteristic of the orient east. A native or inhabitant of the orient or east one belonging to a native race an Asiatic10.
In the academic field, the term “orientalism” has been adapted for “Area studied” or “Regional studies” in the academic circles in the west.

Edward Said, a renowned Arab Christian scholar exposing the shortcomings of the orientalist approach, defines orientalism as follows:

“The orient that appears in orientalism, then is a system of representation framed by a whole set of forces that brought the orient into western learning, western consciousness, and later western empire. If this definition of orientalism seems more political than not, that is simply because I think orientalism was itself a product of certain political forces and activities. Orientalism is a school of interpretation whose material happens to be the orient, its civilization, people, and localities.”

The study of the origin and development of Islam in the west commonly known as orientalism.

The phenomenon which is generally known as orientalism is but one aspect of western misrepresentation of Islam.

Orientalism is a style of thought based on anthological and, epistemological distinction made between “the orient” and most of the time “the occident”.

Orientalism was not only a scholarly discipline deriving from European enlightenment thought, but also an expression of the romantic
exoticizing impulse of nineteenth century European culture, which through its representation of other cultures permitted the exploration of other world.\textsuperscript{15}

Orientalism as a self conscious scholarly discipline began to emerge in the eighteenth century as one stream of enlightenment thought.\textsuperscript{16}

According to Said, “Orientalism is thus the net result of a historical vision of Islam rooted in the Christian European imagination, Islam could only be viewed as monolithic, scornful of human life, unchanging, uncreative, and intrinsically factitious\textsuperscript{17}.

The term orientalist first occurs in English around 1779, in French in 1799. “Orientalism” had then the broad meaning of “being oriented towards an oriental culture\textsuperscript{18}.

If we explain the term orientalism briefly, we may say that it is the branch of knowledge initiated by the west, when it began to take an interest in and sought to know the east\textsuperscript{19}.

As for as the technical sense of orientalism is concerned the movement and its academic activities were started properly after a long period, thus the words ‘orientalism’ and ‘orientalists’ are not of ancient origin. These words were used as the special technical terms only in the later period of eighteenth century\textsuperscript{20}. 
If we define orientalism in simple words, it implies the western attempt or activity to understand the east, especially the Muslim and their faith.

In the modern period the term ‘orientalism’ is rarely used except for a few centers and Journals that have retained the title. Instead, the field is identified by its component areas of study, such as middle eastern studies, North African studies, Iranian studies, or South Asian studies. In each area study, scholars adopt a variety of interdisciplinary approaches and methodologies. During the renaissance i.e. intellectual awakening they were made to rethink about the Muslims and their faith consequently, many people, scholars as well as laymen, embarked upon acquiring knowledge from Muslim institutions and individuals in Spain and the fertile crescent. Travelers wrote travelogues and scholars produced academic works and thus began the tradition of studying the east, which is known as orientalism.

In shark orientalism signifies eastern characteristics, lifestyle, values, knowledge literature, art and culture. It further denotes learning or knowledge of the languages, religions and culture of the east. The person well versed in all these is regarded as orientalist.
Evolution of Orientalism

The origins of orientalism can be traced back to the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries of the Christian era and can also be termed as the age of international awakening.

Islam is not new to the west nor is the west unknown for the world of Islam. It is significant that the first meaningful contact between Islam and Europe took place not in the context of the crusades or of any clash of economic interests, but at the initiative of the prophet of Islam in the form of letters he sent through his ambassadors in the later period of his life. The letters to Heraclius (610 to 641 AC), the ruler of the Eastern Roman Empire was sent on 11th May 628 CE (1st Muharram 7AH), sharing with him the message of Islam in the wider interest of all human beings. There was a gentle response.

After years of hard study, some western scholars and historians are now enthusiastically willing to acknowledge the supremacy of Islamic civilization that existed a thousand years before. They concede the contribution of Islamic civilization and knowledge to the development of medieval European learning. They unanimously agree that Islamic greatness of the past has gone forever, and its creativity completely exhausted since the beginning of the thirteenth century.
There can be no two opinions about the need and importance of better understanding between Islam and the west.\textsuperscript{21} Islam, the religion of more than 500 million people, is the most misunderstood religion in the west\textsuperscript{22}. In the first half of the twentieth century, various Middle Eastern and European scholars taught Islamic studies at American universities, but remained very slight until the 1940s\textsuperscript{23}.

A long trail, the seventeenth century, lies behind the western interest in orientology\textsuperscript{24}. Arabic and Islamic studies, now called Middle Eastern studies in many universities, have developed in a completely new world setting since World War II\textsuperscript{25}. The history of orientalism may be traced from the very beginning of Islam as the roots of Judaeo-Christian hostility of Islam were seen in the Quran.\textsuperscript{26} A very weak revival of learning had began in Europe with the efforts of the English theologian Alcuin (732-804) during the reign of Charlemagne, but this movement which continued for a period after him in the time of his disciple Hrabanus Maurus (776-856), who was called the first teacher of Germany (Primus Praeceptor Germanide), soon was extinguished in the course of the great upheavals of the 9\textsuperscript{th} and 10\textsuperscript{th} centuries\textsuperscript{27}.

After the failure of the crusading movement Christendom, particularly some far-sighted leaders and intellectuals, began to deliberate on why the crusades failed. The idea behind this soul searching was not to
merely find out the causes of the failure but also to devise a new strategy to counter and check the advance of the ottomans and their faith, Islam, in Europe. They discovered that ignorance was the main cause of their decline. As a result they decided to acquire knowledge from all sources including from the Muslims. So during the Renaissance i.e. between 13th to 16th centuries European scholars and intellectuals concentrated on reviving their literature, art, culture and other academic disciplines. This intellectual awakening also made them rethink about the Muslims and their faith, Islam. As a result many scholars embarked upon acquiring knowledge from Islam and Islamic studies as well as Arabic.

The origin of modern orientalism is basically connected to John of Damascus (700-749 BC) who initiated a revolution against Prophet Muhammad and his religion by making an effort to prove similarity between Islam and Paganism. According to him Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) distorted the Bible and started a new religion called Islam so that the people may worship him. John and his disciples declared that Prophet Muhammad (PBHU) was not a true follower of Islam and had based his ideas on violence and falsehood. John was the first Christian missionary who targeted Prophet Muhammad’s (PBHU) piousness which became an interesting topic of research for the western scholars. He misinterpreted the marital life of the prophet. He created scandals of the incident related
to Zenab-bin-Huj, and Zayed bin Harsa. These scandals were gradually better known as classical story of Europe. He did not mind even misinterpreting the concept of Talaq (divorce) and polygamy.

Based on the above mentioned misconceptions a substantial literature was made available for further work by the orientalists. So much so that from the middle ages through (Magribi Nishat-e-Sanya) down to 20th century a majority of orientalists were working against Islam. A well known Magazine can be mentioned in this respect which is related to Abdul Masin bin Issa (Al-kindi). It was published because it could effect many orientalists even today.

William Mouri brought out a peculiar translation in 1887. It was better known as the apology of Al-kindi. It was further translated in many languages. Basically it deals with not accepting Muhammad as a prophet considering Quran a collection of exotic and unorganized thoughts. According to this prophet Muhammad (PBHU) fought battles for his own/personal interest.

Inspite of Modern Criticisms by 20th century writers who scientifically debated the topic, the evil effects of the above work could be observed for a long time. During this phase orientalism was established as a discipline.
Origins

The origins of Orientalism can be traced back from the 7th century A.D. and continues till date. Orientalism originated as a reaction to the basic concept of Islam regarding the origins of man and his religion right from the time of Adam down to Prophet Muhammad (PBHU). It focuses on the fact that the only true religion before God is Islam and Muhammad (PBHU), is the last and final messenger of God as is revealed in Sura Al-Imran, Verse No. 102. The orientalists discarded this fact since they studied and understood Islam according to their own standards and understanding. These Orientalists refer back to John of Damascus, who developed a negative attitude towards Islam and the Prophet. Therefore the original concept of Islam was distorted by him, since he projected Muhammad (PBHU) as a propagator of paganism. According to him Kaba can be compared to an idol and Muhammad is the hero of mythology. On these ancient tales became the part of Islamic history of a church, and the orientalists considered it to be the sole purpose of their scholarship. John and his followers declared Muhammad (PBHU) atheist and Islam, a false religion. John was the first person to criticize Muhammad's character. Others also took inspiration from him, as a result, a substantial number of literature in the eight century was

*These information have been taken from Islam aur Mustashriqueen (Islam and Orientalism) held the Conference in Azamgarh in 1982, Volume 4 (ed) by Sabauddin, S.A.
produced by these orientalists who simply reflected an ugly picture of Islam and its prophet.

By the end of the eight century and at the down of the ninth century Theosophane produced his book called “Chronicles” (The chronicles of theosophane, the Confessor) all this history was further taken up by “Anatasius” and therefore these two became the ultimate source of reference for other orientalists.

A book against prophet Muhammad entitled “Refutatio Mohammad” and the same topic continued 10th and 11th centuries.

In Spain also a group of orientalists with the same bent of mind flourished. Although the study of Islamic science and Islamic knowledge and its culture continued the influence of people near about 900 years in Spain but these orientalists never tried to touch upon the topic of the Islamic material. Worst than this they focused on “Chronicles” as the only source of study. St. Eulogius stooped down to further level just to show his hatred against Islam and Prophet Muhammad to the extent that he used substandard language. All this distorted information continued to spread all over resulting in a book called “Speculum Historical” by “Vincen de Beauvais”. In this book he declared Prophet Muhammad (PBHU) to be low born person and a follower of Paganism who acquired
power by way of force and in the name of Wahi he cheated people for his selfish reason.

The Worst demonstration of hatred against Islam and Prophet Muhammad were the crusades which continued for near about five hundred years and the only mission was to remove or uproot Islam from the face of the earth. The first crusade was fought in 1099 A.D. while the second was fought during 1189 A.D. The third crusade was fought between Sultan Salahuddin and the King of England Richard during 1189 and 1193. The fourth crusade was fought during 1203 and 1204, while the six one was fought in 1448. 7th, 8th, 9th, the last crusades were fought during 1317, 1481, 1445, 1564, respectively.

The orientalists accumulated literature against Islam during 1099 and 1464 and during all crusades the entire western empire was crample under foot. Further it gave way to acute hatred against Islam. Along with prose, poetry too contributed a lot to criticize Islam. A new movement started where maximum work was done in the name of Sirat and the study of the history of Islam. The era of translations started by Peter the venerable in 1141 translated some Arabic books in his own language (Latin).

Robert and Harman Produced the translation of four Arabic books where the preface was written by Peter. Peter used all his energy in
supporting Robert who wrote the translation of the Quran by trying to prove that Islamic teachings and concepts are ridiculous. He started a campaign of writing or speaking evil of Islam. It resulted in the translation of Peter in various other languages, Walter expressed his thought, in Latin by criticizing the Quranic verses. Alexander also did the same in French.

There were two writers who tried to write differently from these orientalists. For example William of Malesburgh explored the fact that Islamic monotheism is very different from Paganism. He discovered that Muslims believed only in one God and they consider Muhammad to be the Prophet. Then Alfanso who basically was a Jew but later on converted to Christianity spoke a lot better about Islam in his dialogue. This dialogue was basically written for a better understanding between Judaism and Christianity. During the 13th century this continued. Then came William of Tripole who wrote the biography of Prophet Muhammad so that it could be utilized by their missionaries to propagated their own religion.

In this biography the writer could not produce anything relevant except the ill intentions hidden in his subconscious, he simply targeted a design of interesting tales to mislead the people. According to him, the arrangement of Quranic verses infact the compilation of the Holy Quran
was done long after the Prophet’s expiry. The work of its completion was handed over to the commission. They compiled the book themselves under the pretention that the prophet’s teachings were of no use. They highlighted the two aspects of the Prophet’s success, for example, it was the result of the witchcraft that he practiced or he was highly cunning to manipulate the facts in his own favour. Moreover these orientalists said that since the prophet declared himself an ordinary human being and no miracle is attached with his name, he cannot be confirmed as a prophet.

Dante, a renowned Italian Poet who has authored “Devine Comedy” has used objectionable ideas and words for Prophet Muhammad. According to him the Prophet is responsible for the bifurcation in Christianity therefore he is supposed to be condemned to hell. Dante has influenced the entire Europe through his poetry. In fact, he has played with their emotions to the extent that their attitude towards Islam did not change even in the wake of reasonable revolutionary ideas which demanded a comparative study of various religions and their due recognition. These orientalists remained rigid about their approach to Islam.

The starting of renaissance can be measured between 13th and 15th centuries. After renaissance came the age of Roman movement which
continued between 1750 to 1830CE. It challenged the Eastern conservating traditions and influenced all aspects of life.

Gradually and slowly a new movement came into being in Europe itself which left behind the Greek and Roman movement. While it continued to support the new English thought. Though the new thinking gave way to better understanding of various religions but these orientalists did not show any change in their approach to Islam, they remained rigid towards their understanding (so called wisdom). There was not any possibility of better change because the era of renaissance was also under the influence of middle ages. Therefore, Islam was also duly victimized. Prophet Muhammad was blamed for division of Christianity i.e. Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. Below Standard words were used for the Prophet and they showed as it the Prophet was a terrorist.

The orientalists were facing new kinds of problems during seventeen century. Since was the age of overall development, even Islam was also exposed to the countries like England, France and Holland. It gave way to proper interaction between Islamic world and western culture. Due to political upheaval the people of Britain, France and Holland exploited the situation on political and financial fronts. They
went on to drain treasure and transported them to London, Paris and Dutch.

In the light of the above mentioned facts it is observed that buy now these orientalists had actually landed up in the Islamic world with the sole mission to extract maximum from it. Is part of constructive movement, Arabic language became a part of their learning. Since without the study of Arabic language proper access was not possible, various departments where the Holy Quran was translated into English and French languages, were opened. As it was an age of broadmindedness it promoted a fair study of non Christian religions and thoughts. The orientalists also showed their interest in revising their understanding of Islam more.

Finally, the modern age started in Europe under the leadership of Martin Luther who was considered the master of modern thoughts in Europe. Islam had to face further deterioration. He considered Muslims to be against the truth. Because he basically targeted church and Pope he looked down upon prophet Muhammad as the enemy of Jesus Christ and called the Prophet Gog and Megog.

Bedweel has spoken a lot in his book “Muhammad is impurities” where he has done injustice to the prophets image. A renowned catholic writer “Genebard” has shown his objections to the use of Arabic language
for the Holy Quran instead of Greek, Latin and Ibrani languages. He pointed out that since Muhammad himself was a beast, he has chosen an uncivilized language, called Arabic and this was the only language he knew.

There were many writers who tried to deviate from the traditional pattern as they could not stick to it for long. The deviation was the result of the modern movements of 17th century. Therefore they wanted to study Islam comprehensively but they could not stop themselves from criticizing Islam for the reasons better known to them. A professor of Oxford University, Edward Peacock has translated various Arabic books. He tried to distinguish between reality and story telling under this category he has rejected various facts of Islam by criticizing the prophet. The only commendable fact is that, for the first time, something good or positive was said about Islam by “Alexander Ross” in his work” Pandebilia” in 1653. He deviated from the traditional pattern of writing which was practiced in Latin where the sole motive was to criticize Islam. “Hamphery Pridauz” has called Muhammad an imposter in his biography of prophet and this book was used for long time as a reference by the orientalists who wanted to prove Islam as a frond.

Unlike the previous centuries a little more literatures was produced on Islam in this period. Though all this Islamic literature was based on
political favours still the 18th century continued to practice the earlier thought pattern. H. Relan, a Dutch orientalist for the time demanded Justice with Islam and the Prophet in his book "Dereligione Mahommedica" in 1704. According to him, for better understanding of Islam it is necessary for the westerners to make themselves aware of the original interpretations of Islamic book and culture. He was the first orientalist who really practiced tolerance. He opined that only Islam was ridiculed throughout the west. In fact he went to the extent that he demanded proper justice in matters of historical information of the religions specially Islam. Some people were influenced by him, for example, Count Baulian Villagers became soft and positive about the Prophet in his book "Vie de Mohomet" (London 1730). He invited criticism from his own people because for the first time he termed Islam as a rational religion and he accepted the Prophets status as such.

This step of showing rational approach towards Islam was going against the Christian and Jewish theories and Practices. In order to uproot this practice the orientlists joined together for a common cases and started full-fledged movement. George Sale, J.M Rodwell, Jean Gangnier are some of the names that can be pointed out because these are the people who condemned Islam and the Prophet more than others and that, too, with intensity. Seveary produced a translation of Holy Quran in French
language and also wrote a biography of the prophet but he believed that the prophet bifurcated Christianity to promote Islam.

If we take a comprehensive view of the 18th century we find that all the orientalism were found to be more intense in their hatred against Islam in comparison to their predecessors. Neither any movement nor European Broadmindedness and tolerance could cure than of their rigidity.

The enmity with Islamic world not only continued and flourished in the 19th century. A number of books were published on Prophet Muhammad and Islam during 1800 to 1840. Poets and Prose writers together put in their efforts to express biased against Islam. Goethe thought that the Prophet Muhammad initialing was honest but later on lost his spirituality because he had turned materialist.

This very thought inspired all the orientalist scholars Carlyle stands out as one of the well known poets of the 19th century. During the second half of the 19th century people tried to show a little fair attitude towards Islam and Prophet Muhammad though there were many political reasons associated with this. Carlyle supported this thought probably due to political changes, modernism and scientific discoveries which were the part of the age. He did not do it honestly but he did it with a purpose. According to him, to write positively about Prophet Muhammad was no
more a threat to Christianity, there was no harm even it calling Muhammad clearly as a Prophet. He thought that no Christian would now convert even it Prophet Muhammad is praised.

The orientalists were trying to target Islam and the Prophet from different angles, according to political and financial situations. And in 20th Century the orientalists studied it from the point of view “psychodynamics”. Earlier they tried to diminish Islam by way of various blames for example, it was forcefully implemented. But now the focus is shifted to Holy Quran and Hadith. Now they thought the Holy Quran can not present the true picture of Islam and Prophet Muhammad because it is not properly compiled and to depend upon the Hadith is not advisable because it is considered next to Quran. Ignal Goldziher, in his book “Mohumaadensich Studien” proved that Hadith does not have any accountability, therefore, the details of Muhammad’s biography can not be taken from it. Another group of scholars from the orientalists was lost in communist movement. Some Jews and Christian orientalists from German were constantly working on Islam. Hubert Crimme was an Arabic scholar who demanded that Islam should be studied right from the 14th century on social, financial and political fronts since he was one of the orientalists from the same group, his motto was to look down upon
Islam and the Prophet. According to him Islam was not a religious movement and Muhammad Prophet was a simply a socialist.

When Psychology was established as a subject, orientalists were inspired to study Islam from this new angle. All of them put down their efforts together in a comprehensive manner. Tor Andrae and Danefrnatz Buhl are the names that can be taken for this psychological movement. They have worked on religions psychology for example the psycho mechanism of the prophet etc. Buhl discovered the fact that the prophet was suffering from abnormal nervous system because of which he talks about revelation, while his character is absolutely ambiguous. Either he was under the impact of epilepsy or he was suffering from hysteria.

William Montgomery Watt (1909-2006) is famous for his judicious approach towards Islam and the prophet. The three books namely Prophet Muhammad and statsman were liked by everybody. The books contains the fact that the Prophet had a different identity in Mecca and a very different one in a Medina. Actually Professor Watt had an ambition to have a comprehensive study of Islam, therefore he studied it in the light of social and historical backgrounds. In his book “Muhammad at Medina Watt has praised Prophet Muhammad for his hospitality and nobility but like other traditional writers or orientalists he was not ready to accept
Muhammad as a Prophet on whom was revealed the book i.e. Holy Quran.

Though the orientalists had written a lot, against Islam, it could be injustice to deny or overlook their efforts totally. They had put their heart and soul together for the life time just to understand Islam various perspectives (in their own wisdom) instead of ignorant of these writer it would be advisable to give recognition to their efforts. Molana Azad has give an recognition to these orientalists by accepting the importance of their work in these words.

"Under the orientalists numerous works were done in literature and history without which Islamic literature becomes in complete".

To a great extent a positive result of the efforts of these orientalists can be easily and clearly traced.

**Development of Orientalism**

The journey to success by orientalists includes written material on or related to Islam, all these orientalists mainly concentrated on the teachings, of Prophet Mohammad (PBHU) and Quran from their own perspective. The magazines, project the stay of missionaries who apparently were involved in social work, but actually they were leaving bad impact upon people. The further efforts of the orientalists can be
determined by their participation in various universities and seminars of various Islamic countries. The starting of orientalism may be traced from the very beginning of Islam, it may be also traced from the seventh century and is continued even now.

The development of orientalism can be divided into three phases:

**Phase-I:** The origins of orientalism may be traced from the very beginning of Islam. The west in the different periods of history, has reacted against Islam and its Prophet. The origins of orientalism can be traced to the seventh century, after the death of Prophet. The movement of orientalism may be also traced to John of Damascus (700-754), a Christian apologists, and its zeal from 850-859 by Eulogius and Alvaro of Cardova. The western image of the Muslim world came into shaper focus in the eleventh century. In the middle of the 10th century, the first influence of eastern medicine on western medicine in the city of salerno, known as Civitas Hippocratica (the city of Hippocrates) in Southern Italy. From that time on, the west began to know the east and a sort of orientalism came into existence. In 1060, Roger of Hauteville began the reconquest of sicily, Alfanso VI entered Toledo in 1085, and Geoffrey of Bouillon took Jerusalem in 1099, on these three fronts, direct contacts with Muslims began to occur, before it knowledge about Islam and Muslim lands in Latin Europe was limited. On the other hand, westerners
came into closer contact with the East as a result of the crusades, with the efforts of the English theologian Alcuin (732-804), a very weak revival of learning had began in Europe, after his death the movement continued in the time of his disciple Harbanus Maurus (776-856) who was called the first teacher of Germany (Primus Preceptor Germaniae)\textsuperscript{28}.

Adelard translated directly from Arabic the astronomical tables of Musa Al-Khwarizmi and fifteen books of Euclid’s elements\textsuperscript{29}. Gerard of Cremona (1114-1187). North Italian orientalist and head of a translation committee in Toledo, was the translator from Arabic into Latin of Almagest (Al-Majasti) of Ptolemy and the Cannon (Qanun) of Avicenna (Ibn Sina).\textsuperscript{30} In the 13\textsuperscript{th} Century Michael Scot, an English friar, translated Averroes (Ibn Rushd’s) commentary on Aristotle and Aristotle’s book on Zoology from Arabic into Latin\textsuperscript{31}.

The first instruments of work for the study of Arabic in Europe known to us come from Spain.\textsuperscript{32}

Roymond Lull, sometimes regarded as the founder of oriental studies in the west was of a scientific, creative philosophical and poetic bent of mind. He was religious minded and had written on almost all branches of knowledge.\textsuperscript{33} He founded a school of Arabic at Miramar in Majorca. The study of Arabic became institutionalised in a more regular way.\textsuperscript{34} At his behest the council of Vienna in 1311 approved that in each
of the five European universities i.e. Rome, Bologna, Paris Oxford and Salamanca two scholars would be appointed to teach oriental languages.

In the 12th century famous translators were Domingo Gonzalez and Gerard of Cremona (1114-87) who is said to have been responsible for the translation of more than 70 works in Arabic,35 and the Philosophical works translated in 13th century.

The influence of Arabic Philosophy on European thought in the 13th century is a case of orientalism in itself, several European Philosophers studied and quoted it36 i.e. Albertus Magnus (1206-1280) and Thomas Aquinas (1226-74) of the Aristotelian tradition, Robert Grosseteste (d.1253) of the Platonic tradition. Pedro de Alcala in his “Vocabulista aravigo en letra catellana” (Printed 1505) left a valuable account in Latin script of the Arabic vocabulary of the Spoken language.

With reference to orientalism seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, are of great importance because during these centuries orientalism augmented and enhanced. As far as the seventeenth century is concerned, it is the period of upliftment of modern Europe37, and information of the orient was also collected in these centuries.

In 1514 the first Arabic printed edition was produced in Rome, and printing works were established in 1586 by the Medici Cardinal
Ferdinand, Grand Duke. Another famous Arabic Press was in Rome around 1613 later transferred to Paris in 1615. All the Printing Presses were established towards the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries.

In 1630 Andre Du Ryer, Published Turkish Grammar for the first time in Paris and this Grammar was reprinted in 1634. Gluillaume Posel (1510) published his Grammatica Arabica based on the Arabic grammarians (1538-9), was appointed professor of Arabic (1538) at the newly established college Royal (1530) which was later to become the college de France and he created the first Arabic chair in 1539 in Paris. A separate chair of Arabic was created in 1599. Professor of oriental languages was appointed by Thomas Erpenius in 1613, and he published the first Arabic Grammar that was arranged in dictionary form Giovanni Monilo prepared a Turkish Italian dictionary which was published in 1641 in Rome. For the first time in Paris in 1630 a Turkish grammar was published by Andre Du Ryer and this grammar was reprinted in Paris in 1634.

Erpenius prepared some Arabic Maxims (1615) and a voweled text with notes and Latin translation of the Sura Yusuf (1617). In 1661 Castell prepared and published a dictionary in seven languages. Meninski, a famous orientalallist of the 17th century wrote and published a dictionary
in three volumes, from Arabic, Persian, and Turkish into Latin named "Theasurus Linguaram Orientalium".

The Latin "Kuran" translated by Robert of Ketton in 1143 was printed in Basel. The British scholar Edward Pocock (1648-1727 AD) was appointed to the new Oxford chair of Arabic in 1638. The French Orientalist, Barthelemy d'Herbelot (1625-95) compiled his "Liotheque Orientala" (Published Posthumously by Galland in 1697), which could be regarded as the first version of the encyclopedia of Islam. Between 1704 and 1717 Antoine Galland (1646-1715) published his translation of the Arabian Nights in Twelve volumes.

The end of the 17th century saw the appearance of the new series of publications on or related to Islam. One of the first publications breathing this new, fresh and open spirit was the thousand pages-long "Bibliotheque Orientale" (1697) edited by Bartholme d'Herbelot (1625-95), who represented a new type of enlightened orientalist. Meninki's dictionary was republished in 1780 under the auspices of Empress Maria Theresa, with an additional introductory chapter in Latin giving a long and detailed account of the origins and progress of orientalism in Europe, this work is a very useful source for the history of orientalism.

During eighteenth century orientalism developed steadily. Rationality prevailed and objectivity could be noticed. Acknowledgement
of orientalism and admiration began. In the eighteenth century Prophet Mohammad and Islam were recognized. The institutes of oriental languages were established, oriental libraries were founded, and Asiatic societies were organized. The terms orientalism and orientalists were for the first time used in this century in 1779 AD in England and 1799 AD in France. Oriental studies or area studies were organized on collective and state levels in this phase. Leibniz (1646-1716) considered Islam as a natural religion and in 1730 Henry Boulainvilliers (1658-1722) wrote "Vie de Mohomet" in which Muhammad is described as a heroic figure.

In 1670, a French school for interpreters had been established in a convent in Para, and in 1700 the Ecole des Jennes de langue was established in Paris and in 1754 the Orientalische Akademie was established in Vienna for the same purpose. The Ecole speciale des langues orientales was founded in Paris in 1795 for the study of living oriental languages. The chair of Arabic at the Ecole speciale fell in to A.I. Silestre de Sacy (1758-1838), who in 1806 also became professor of Persian at the college de France and in 1803 a chair for spoken Arabic was added at the Ecole speciale.

The 19th and 20th centuries are of great importance for oriental scholars. The 19th century saw the rise of Islamic studies and oriental
studies. The 19th century is also mentionable with respect to the growth of orientalism on the one side, and intellectual response to the anti-islamic views of the western scholars on the other. The first quarter of the 20th century is too much important in terms of quality and quantity.

French King Louis XVI in 1785 ordered the study of the oriental manuscripts available in his library and important studies on these manuscripts were prepared under the title “Notices of Extraits”, Holand also became interested in oriental studies especially to study Islamic Shariah. These studies constitute an important source for oriental research. The researches and studies took the most organized form, with the foundation of the Ecole des Langues orientales vivantes in 1795 in Paris. Modern orientalism began with this school which was founded and headed by Slevestre de Sacy, the great orientalist. The opening of the seminar “Fur orientalische Sprachen” in Berlin in 1887 and the introduction of the study of oriental languages at Cambridge university, England and later the founding of the school of oriental studies in London in 1906.

Orientalism Now

In Russia an oriental department was established in 1804 and in 1854 an oriental department had been organized in the university of St. Petersburg. In the United States, Departments of Oriental Languages and
Literatures have been established primarily at the University of Chicago and in the University of Harvard, Columbia and in about five other universities. At the university of Chicago there is also a separate oriental institute, and at Princeton university regular courses in the Turkish, Persian, and Arabic languages are given. A number of orientalists are working in these institutions at present.

The oriental studies undertaken before the nineteenth century had been primarily concerned with the study of languages, but orientalism now undertook to study the religion, history, Geography, Art and Literature, in short all those institutions of the east were included which had been organized in France, Germany, England, Italy, Russia and Spain. Now the study of Arabic gained an independent position in Germany. In recent years many European scholars are specialized in Persian studies.

Noldeke (d. 1930), wrote the first critical history of the Quran and the specialist of Arabic named Bergstraesser, completed the work of Noldeke and published its second edition. In 1842 G.L. Flugel printed the Quran in Arabic letters and in 1858 Lepzing numbered the verses, and published a very useful work under the little “Cancordantiae Corani Arabica”.
In France, must be mentioned the names of Rene Basset, one of the early editors of the Encyclopedia of Islam, and De Slane, who prepared the Arabic catalogue of the Bibliothèque national in Paris. In the 19th century France there were several others scholars who published works on Islam and the Arabic languages besides these scholars. The French also established academic research institutes in different countries overseas e.g. the institute francois d'études arabes de Damas” established in 1930. In Germany oriental studies developed around the middle of the 19th Century as an academic discipline at the newly founded universities. The most eminent oriental scholars in Germany were Carl Brockelmann, whose Geschiche der arabischen literature is one of the most frequently used source books for orientalists, A. Hartman, one of the editors of the encyclopedia of Islam and R.H. Nicholson who won his fame by his studies on Islamic Mysticism.

E.W. Lane (1801-1876) wrote his Arabic dictionary in England, which is very well known in Europe. There was immense development of oriental studies in Great Britain during 19th and 20th centuries. The Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland was founded in 1823 and it has been published its journals since 1834. Academic studies of Arabic, Persian and Turkish were accumulated in the universities of Cambridge, Oxford and Edinburgh. F. Buhl (d.1934) corrected and edited Caspari’s
Arabic dictionary in England. Sir Denision Ross the first director of the school of oriental studies in London.

The world's first society of oriental studies, the Batavian society for art and science, was founded in Batavia (Jakarta) in 1788. The foundation of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784 by Sir William Jones. Asiatic Society of Paris (1822), Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland (1923), American Oriental Society (1842) and Asiatic Societies were founded in Italy, in Florence in 1886. Each of these society published journals which contain the proceeding of the societies and worthwhile articles by member scholars.

A universities in U.S.A. began to town oriental studies in the 19th century. A faculty of oriental languages was founded in Russia (St. Petersburg) in 1854, and oriental languages were established as part of the Asiatic department in 1823. In the United States Princeton University became the main centre for middle Eastern and Islamic studies, as developed by Philip Hitti. E.J. Brill published encyclopedia of Islam in five volumes in English, Franch, and German edition between 1913 and 1942 and concordance et indices de la tradition musalman in eight volumes between 1933 and 1989.

Besides these details many others journals were published related to orientalism and Islam e.g. the Muslim world.
Objectivity of the Orientalists

Some of the various reasons for which western scholars took interest in orientalism are the following:

The increasing economic interaction which was the result of close political relations, played a significant role. Geographical proximity made it convenient for the growing number of in travelers and missionaries from the west to travel to the east. As a result they studied Muslim values with much more objectivity.

Medieval Christendom studied Islam for two reasons, first of all they wanted to protect from the Muslim onslaught and secondly they also had a keen desire to convert Muslim to Christianity.\textsuperscript{48}

The west began to move toward a more objective understanding of middle east and Islam for a number of changing factors: geographical proximity, close political relations, increasing economic interactions, the growing number of travelers and missionaries who travelled to the east and a unified Christianity in Europe\textsuperscript{49}. A greater objectivity was brought to the study of Muslim values\textsuperscript{50}. Besides that another factor was that the Europeans saw the Muslim east as a land of wealth and prosperity: an advanced civilization of grand monuments and sumptuous courts of unimagined splendor\textsuperscript{51}. 
Through the western scholars study of translations of the Quran, and the biography of Prophet Muhammad (PBHU) and the other Arabic language texts, European Christian scholars and theologians began to produce what would eventually be an extensive polemical literature designed to refute Islam as false, heretical and incompatible with Christian doctrines. They hoped that such works would prevent Christians in Muslim-ruled lands from converting to Islam while opening the way for the eventual conversion of the Muslims to Christianity.52

The objectively by the western scholars to acquire a more precise understanding of Islam because they thought that “Islam as a Christian heresy and argued that it could not be destroyed unless its errors were understood”53, therefore they set a team in Spain to rendering Arabic texts into Latin, thus the first translation of the Quran into Latin, completed in 1143 by the Englishman Robert of Ketton.54

Western scholars wanted to distort the image of Islam, to achieve this they had to study Islam deeply. This was initially the only purpose of their interest in east especially in Islam, Maryam Jamela a renowned western Islamic scholar expresses the western attitudes to Islam in her book Islam and Orientalism thus:

"That the Holy Quran is the work of Muhammad, that the Hadith literature is forged, that Islam is a mere politico-economic outburst by
impoveryed beduins rather than a religious movement, that Islam stilled
the artistic creativity of the people it conquered, that Islam is nothing but
the current practices of its present people, that it is superstitions, fatalistic,
that is unscientific, un-modern and opposed to development, that it stands
in need of the same reformation Christianity underwent, that the best in
Islam is Sufism with its individualism, anti-Shariah emphasis on the
falleness of man and his need for a master saviour, and the repudiation of
the warlike and exclusivist sunnism, and above all that Islam stands on an
inferior moral level with its materialistic conceptions of paradise and low
status of women, that its prohibition of interest is anti-industrialization,
its puritanical and anti-alcoholitic is against urbanization and modern
liberalism, its dogmatism is anti-progressive, and it drives its miserable
and vanquished people into psychosis by teaching them that God is one.
Their side and that he is the author of history. She further says that "all
these falsehoods are current in practically every western presentation of
the religion, culture, history and civilization of Islam."

According to Edward Said, Renaissance scholars began translating
Islamic sources into European languages not to enhance opportunities for
cross-cultural dialogue, but rather to assess the value of knowledge
production in Islam.
Some important scholars like Thomas Carlyle, Immanuel Kant, and Liebnitz views about the Islam, were that Islam is a rational and reasonable religion, but were more interested in pursuing the psychological makeup of the Muslims and learning how they went about constructing and sustaining a religious tradition.⁵⁸ Said argued that orientalists of the Renaissance were driven to understand Muslims only to prove that Islam was a false religion and stood in the way of truth. By targeting the deficiencies of the prophet and Islam⁵⁹ and hence to propagate the superiority of Christianity over Islam.

After the failure of the crusades Christendom, particularly some for-sighted leaders and intellectuals, began to deliberate on why the crusades failed. The idea behind this soul-searching was not to merely find out the causes of the failure but also to devise a new strategy to counter and check the advance of the ottomans and their faith, Islam in Europe. They discovered that ignorance was the main cause of their decline. As a result they decided to acquire knowledge from all sources including Muslims⁶⁰. Besides that the other purpose of war against some Asian Country was that the Europeans wanted to know a lot about their past, for such knowledge will enable them to better forecast the reaction of the enemy to various situations. Likewise, religion too⁶¹, as professor William Montgomery Watt says "is an element in knowledge. Sometimes
the Christian missionary takes to strategic thinking of a military type, and considers that knowledge of other religions will assist him towards his goal of making converts". The remarks of Lord Curzon "East is a university in which the scholar never takes his degree".

West began the study of east for the propagation of the Christian faith in the east it was found expedient to present a distorted picture of Islam. Besides the religion the other object was commercial. Oriental studies were taken up by many scholars in the west as a lucrative occupation, thereby always giving a ready market for the books on these subjects in the eastern as well as the western countries publishing houses willingly encourage the literary endeavours of the orientalists works on orientology which appear fast in Europe and U.S.A. and these generally, turn out to be good many spinners.

The orientalists’ desire to find out weaknesses is Islam and in the Islamic pattern of things which can be exploited to serve the political ends of the Christian west and they wanted to present a most hideous picture of Islam to the world, they search out with a microscope and then give a most exaggerated view of the whole thing to therenders. The western scholars of oriental research did their utmost to bring into disrepute the religious concepts of Islam and to extol and magnify in their place the moral and spiritual concepts of the Christian west. The
orientalists and their followers began to say that the classical Arabic of the Quran could not answer the needs of the modern society and therefore, local and colloquial languages should be encouraged in its place and adopted as media of literary and journalists expression throughout the Arab world. Orientalists suggested the replacement of Arabic by the Roman script and their pupils in the Arab countries at once, took up tune. Their main purpose to make the Muslims to lose their ability to read the Quran correctly. On the whole the orientalists wanted that Arab culture and literary inheritance becomes meaningless to them.

Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi has characterized the writings of the orientalists in his book “Western Civilization Islam and Muslim” as follows.

“From these activities and suggestions we can imagine what the real motives of the western orientalists are with regard to Islam and how deep is their antipathy todarts it. The writings of a majority of them are directed against the very roots of Islam. Their game is to create doubts about the original sources of Islamic jurisprudence. They encourage discord and strife in Musim society and teach the Muslims to question the competence of their jurists and traditionists. There works abound with shocking errors and ludicrous misunderstanding”\^\textsuperscript{67}. 
One of the many objects of west is also that the many people who visit the orient “feel impelled to publish accounts of their travels, because of the strange and exotic nature of the Muslims cast”.67

Some Prominent Orientalists and Their Works†

There are countless orientalists in different countries i.e. France, Germany, England and other European countries who have particularly worked on Islam. It is almost impossible to discuss all of their works in detail. A select number of personalities alongwith their works are discussed chronologically.

Orientalists from 622 to 1500:


Petrus Venerabilis (C. 1092-1156): Abbot of cluny (France), while in Hispania reconciles the Bible and the Talmud with Aristotle, and so discusses Al-Farabi Ibn Sina and Muslim Halam, especially the Mutakallimum, as well as the Mutazili influenced by Ibn Rushd.

Marco de Taledo (1193-1216): Castile an improved Latin translation of the Quran.

† This information have been taken from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islam_studies_by_author(Non-Muslim or academic).
Francesco d'Assisi (1182-1126): Italian saint, sent as placful missionary to Muslims, preached before Al-Kamil, Kurdish Sultan of Egypt, in 1219 during the fifth crusade.

Riccoldo di Monte Crole (1243): Italian Dominican, a missionary during the 1290s lived in Bagdad. His propugnaculum Fidei soon translated into Greek, later into German by Martin Lutter.

From 1500 to 1800:

Luis de Marmol Carvajal (C. 1220-1600): Spanish soldier in Africa twenty years. His work is descriptioon general de Africa (1573, 1599).

Alonso del Castillo (1520-1607): Spanish formative work in Arabic archives and inscription.


Ludovico Marracci (1612-1700): Italian Priest professor of Arabic, Latin translation of the Quran, Alcorani textus universus, publication delayed by church censors, in two volumes: prodromus contains a biography of Muhammad and summary of Islamic doctrine, and his early contributions translating the Bible into Arabic (1671).

Henry Stubbe (1632-1676): English author, his an account of the rise and progress of Mahometanism: with the life of Mahomet and a vindication of him and his religion from the calumnies of the Christians.

Antoine Galland (1646-1724): France, first in the west to translate the Arabian nights, Les mille et Une nuits (1704-1717).

Abraham Hinckelmann (1652-1692): Edited an Arabic text of the Quran, later published in Hamburg, Germany, in 1694.


Jean Gagnier (1670)-1740): Oxford University his De vita et rebus Mohammedis (1723), annotated Latin translation of chapter on Muhammad from Mukhtasar Tarikh, a Bashar by Abu-I'Fida also La vie de Mahomet biography in French.

George Sale (1697-1736): English lawyer, using Hinkelmann and Marracci Annotated and translated into English a well regarded The Koran (1734).

Washington Irving (1783-1859): USA author, minister to Spain 1842-1846, his chronical of the conquest of Granda (1829), Tales of the
Alhambra (1832-1851) *Mahomet and His successors* (1849), a popular, fair minded biography based on translation from Arabic and Western Authors.


**Garcin de Tassy (1794-1878):** France, *L'Islamisme d'aepre le Coran* (Paris 1874), the religion based on a reading of the Quran.


**From 1800 to 1900:**

**Gustav Flugel (1802-1870):** Germany, *Al-Qoran: Corani textus Arabicus* (1834), Arabic text for academics.


**John Medows Rodwell (1808-1900):** English translation of the Koran, using derived chronological sequence of suras.

**Pascual de Gayangos Arce (1809-1897):** Spanish Arabist, studied under de saky in Paris, translated *Al-Maqqari* (1632) into English as *History of the Mohammeden Dynasties of Spain* (1840-1843).
Aloyes Sprenger (1813-1893): Austria, Das Leben and die Lehre des Mohammad.

Car Paul Caspari (1814-1892): German, Christian convert from Judaism, Norwegian academic Grammatical Arabic (1844.48), Latin.

William Muir (1814-1905): Scotland, government official in India, the life of Mohamet (London 1861).

Ernest Renan (1823-1892): French, Catholic apostate, Historie genrale et system compare des langues semitiques (Paris 1863).


Friedrich Max Mullar: Spanish Arabist Leyendas historicas arabas, Historia de los mozarabes de Espana.

Ludolf Krehl (1825-1901): Beitrage zur Mohammed anischen Dogmatik (1885).

Alfred Von kremer: Austria, Professor of Arabist at Arabic of Wien, foreign service to al Qahirah, Kemet, Geschichte de Herrschenden ideen des Islam (1868), Culturgeschichte streifzuge auf dem Gebicte des islams (1873).


William Robertson Smith (1846-1894): Scotland, Kinship and marriage in Early Arabia (1885), Lectures on the religion of the semites (1889).

Ignaz Goldziher: Well regarded Jewish scholar, admirer of Islam, his work, Die Zahiriten (1884) Muhammedanische studien (2 volumes).

Martijn Theodoor Houtsma (1851-1943): Netherlands, lead editor of encyclopedia of Islam, 9 volumes.

Julian Robera Y Tarrago (1858-1934): Spain Valencia), Professor of Arabic, Studies in mixed culture of al-Andalus.

David Samuel Margoliouth (1858-1940): Anglican, his father a Jewish convert, his work, Mohammed and the rise of Islam (London 1905, 1923), Relation between Arabs and israelities prior to the rise of Islam (1924), Table-talk of a Mesopotamian Judge (1921-1922, 2 Volumes).

William St clair Tisdall (1859-1928): Anglican Priest, Linguist, traditional partism, The original source of the Quran.


Henri Lammens (1862-1935): Fliemis Jesuit, a modern partisan; Fatima et Is filles de Mahomet (Rome 1912), Le Berceau de l'Islam (Roma 1914), L'islam croyances et institutions (Beyrouth 1926).


**William Ambrose Shedd (1865-1919):** U.S.A. Presbyterian, Islam and the oriental churches: their historical relations (1904).


Margaret Smith (1884-1970): *Rabi’a the mystic and her fellow Saints in Islam* (Cambridge Univ. 1928) *development of early Christian mysticism, of Islamic re Sufism, and a comparison.*


From 1900 to 1950:


Donald Leslie (1922): Australia, Islamic literature in China, late ming and early chi'ng (1981), Islamic in traditional China (1986).


commercial law in the Gulf states: The Islamic legal tradition (German & Trotman 1984).

Wilfered Madelung (1930-7): Germany, The succession to Muhammad (Cambridge Univ. 1997), studies on the Shia.


Malise Ruthven (1942): Scotland, Islam in the world (oxford Univ. 1984), Fury for God Islamist attack on America (Granta 2002).

Gerald R. Hawting (1944): with Wansbrough at S.O.A.S, The first dynasty of Islam. The Ummayyad caliphate (AD 661-750), The Idea of
Idolatry and the rise of Islam. From Polemic to history (Cambridge Univ. 1999).


Some renowned and legendary figures among the orientalists and their works in the 19th and 20th centuries are briefly introduced as follows:

1. Edward Henry Palmer (1840-1882): Palmer was born in Cambridge as the son of a private school master. He was educated at the perse school from school, he was sent to London as a clerk in the city. He disliked this life. He began his oriental studies under the influence of Sayyid Abdullah, an Indian teacher at Cambridge. In
1863 he enrolled at St. John's college. He catalogued the Persian, Arabic and Turkish manuscripts in the university library, and in the library of kings and training during his residence at St. John's. In 1871 he became Lord Almoner's professor of Arabic at Cambridge university. In 1881 he left Cambridge, and joint the study of the standard to write on non-political subjects. In 1874 he was called to the English bar.

His chief writings are:

- *The Desert of the Exodus* (1871)
- *Arabic Grammar* (1874)
- *History of Jerusalem* (1871)
- *Persian dictionary* (1876)
- *Translation of the Quran* (1880)

2. Ignaz Goldziher (1850-1921)

He was a Hungarian orientalist and is widely considered among the founders of modern Islamic studies in Europe. He was born in Szekesfehervar of Jewikh heritage, and educated at the university of Budapest, Berlin, Leipzig and Leiden. He become privatedozent at Budapet in 1872, in the next year, he began a journey, under the auspices of the Hungarian government, through Syria, Palestine and Egypt, and took the opportunity of attending lecturers of Muslim Sheiks in the Mosque of Al-Alzar in Cairo. He was the first Jewish scholar to become
professor in Budapest university (1894). In 1889 he received gold medal at the Stockholm oriental congress, he become as member of several Hungarian and other learned societies, and was appointed secretary of the Jewish community in Budapest. He was made Litt. D. of Cambridge (1904) and LL.D of Aberdeen (1906). His main word are:

2. *Zur Literaturgeschichte der Shia* (1874)
4. *Abhandlungen zur arabischen Philologie* (1896-1899, 2 vols.)
5. *Buch V. Wesen d. seele* (ed. 1909)

3. **Thomas Walker Arnold (1864-1930)**:

   He was an eminent British Orientalist. He was teacher of famous poet-philosopher Muhamad Iqbal, Syed Sulaiman Nadvi and a very close friend of Shibli Nomani who was a teacher at Aligarh. Arnold was born on 19 April 1864 and educated the city of London School. In 1883 he enrolled at Magdalene College, Cambridge University. From 1888 he worked as a teacher at the MAO college, Aligarh and in 1898, he accepted a post as professor of philosophy at the government college, Lahore and later became Dean of the oriental faculty at Punjab University. From 1904 to 1909 he was on the staff of the Indian college as assistant Librarian and in 1909 he was appointed educational advisor.
to Indian students in Britain. From 1917 to 1920 he acted as advisor to the secretary of state for India. From 1921 to 1930, he was professor of Arabic and Islamic studies at the school of oriental studies, university of London, Arnold exposed Indian Muslim poet, Philosopher Muhammad Iqbal to western culture and ideas, and served as a bridge for Iqbal between the ideas of the east and west.

4. Carl Brockelmann (1868-1956)

Carl Brockelmann was a German Semitist, and the foremost orientalist of his generation. He was a professor at the universities in Breslan and Berlin. He is best known for his multi-volume. Geschichte Derarabischen Literature (1898-1902):

His main works include:

1. *Syrische Grammatic mit Litterature* (1899)
2. *Chrestomathic und Glossar* (1899)
3. *Semitische sprachwissenschaft* (1906)
4. *Lexicon syriacum* (1928)
5. *Arabische Grammatic* (1941)

Arthur John Arberry (1905-1969):

Arbbery was a respected and a prolific scholar of Arabic, Persian, and Islamic studies. He was the head of the department of classics at
Cairo University in Egypt, after sometime he returned home and became assistant librarian at the library of India office. Arberry was appointed to the chair of Persian at the school of oriental and African studies (SOAS), University of London in 1944-47. He subsequently became the sir Thomas Adam’s professor of Arabic at Cambridge university, and a fellow of Pembroke college, his alma mater, till his death in 1969. His translation of the Quran is one of the most prominent written by a non-muslim scholar and is widely respected. He is also notable for introducing Ram’s works to the west through his selective translation, and his interpretation of Muhammad Iqbal’s popular writings. His important works include:

1. Translation of Iqbal’s works
2. The Mysteries of selflessness
3. Javid Nama
4. The Koran interpreted

Hamilton Alexander Rosskeen Gibb (1895-1971)

H.A.R Gibb was a scattish scholar of Islam and the Middle east. He was born in Alexandria, Egypt. He returned to Scotland for education at the age after death of his father. He attended the Royal High School, Edinburgh. He studied Arabic at the school of oriental studies of London university and obtained an MA in 1922. His thesis on the Arab conquests
of Central Asia was later published by the Royal Asiatic society as a monograph. From 1921 to 1937 Gibb taught Arabic at the school of oriental studies, and becoming a professor there in 1930. In this period he served as an editor of the encyclopedia of Islam. In 1937 Gibb succeeded D.S. Margoliouth as Laudian professor of Arabic with a fellowship at St. John’s college at oxford, and remained there for 18 years. Gibb’s Mohammedanism published in 1949, become the basic text used by western students of Islam for a generation. In 1955 he become the James Richard Jewett professor of Arabic and University professor at Harvard University.

His works include:

1. *Arabic literature* (1926)
2. *Ibn Batata*, (1304-1377)
3. *Mohammadanism* (1949)
6. “*Islamic Biographical literature*” (1962)

**Joseph Schacht (1902-1969)**:

He was professor of Arabic and Islam at Columbia University in New York. He was the leading western scholar on Islamic law, whose
origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence (1950) is still considered one of the most important works ever written on the subject, essential for all advanced studies. He wrote many articles in the editions of the encyclopedia of Islam, he also edited *The Legacy of Islam* for Oxford University Press. His other famous book is an introduction to Islamic law (1964).
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Lucknow, 1974, p. 173.

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Quarterly: A Review of Islamic Culture, Vol. XXVI, No. 1 (First


28. Ibid., p 261.

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31. Ibid., p. 262.


33. Ibid., p. 737.

34. Ibid., p. 757.

35. Ibid., p. 738.

36. Ibid., p. 739.


44. Rodinson Maxime, *Legacy of Islam*.


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61. Ibid., p. 75.


65. Ibid., pp. 174-175.

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67. Ibid., p. 182.


Chapter 2

Life of William Montgomery Watt
Biography of William Montgomery Watt

William Montgomery Watt is considered to be a renowned and legendary figure among Islamic scholars. Watt was one of the foremost non-Muslim interpreters of Islam in the west. He was an enormously influential scholar in the field of Islamic Studies and a much-revered name all over the Muslim world.

Buaben has collected substantial information about W.M. Watt on the basis of a questionnaire that was sent to him in 1994. Moreover the 1993 edition of "who's who" an annual biographical dictionary provided him relevant information on Watt being the only published source. Apart from this a private interview with Watt supplied facts about his personal background. ¹

William Montgomery Watt was born in Ceres, fife, on 19th March and died 24th October 2006, 1909 and lived for 97 years. Watt, like many other famous Scots, was son of the manse. His father died when Watt was only 14 months of age and he was brought up, as an only child by his mother, uncle and aunt in Edinburgh.

Though Watt describes his mother as a truly religious woman, but we do not actually know which religion she practiced. Most probably she followed her husband Andrew Watt's religion who was a presbyterin minister. ²
His father’s untimely death affected both his own life and his attitude to life. He had to change his abode and lived in Billet which too was a temporary refuse. Though he wanted to be either a scientist or a philosopher but he ended up as a Clergyman and an academic.³

Professor Watt was constantly busy in intellectual and spiritual pursuits. He promoted a dialogue between Christians and Muslims. A little stability of life resulted in his education at George Watson’s College Edinburgh. Here he was awarded three degree’s in six years classics at Edinburgh, and Litltum and Blitt (for a thesis on Kant) at Oxford. He spent the 1934 summer semester studying philosophy at Jena, Germany. His thesis on “free will and pre destination in early Islam” is very comprehensive which proves that he spent sufficient time in the study of philosophy. He traveled to Germany for the same purpose.

He became interested in Islam in 1937, when it was introduced to him during his study for a doctorate at Edinburgh due to his interaction with a Muslim lodger K.A. Mannan. As he himself declare “My interest in Islam with a personal contact. In the autumn of 1937 a veterinary student from Lahore come to share my flat for six or eight months. He belonged to the Qadiani Ahmadiyya and was rather argumentative, and the arguments which began over the super-table argued my interest in the religion of Islam. This in a sense my religion Islam began with dialogue. I
had the impression, too that I was confronting not just this individual, but a whole centuries old system of thought”\textsuperscript{4}.

Mannan was a Veterinary student and a member of Ahmadiyya sect. After this W.M. Watt himself admitted that now he learned something about Islam which he had been unaware.

To make his study more profound he also had a dialogue with the Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem, named George Francis Graham Brown. Being responsible for the religious needs of People Brown William agreed to work on the intellectual approach to Islam. He was interested in working on inter-faith relations. The main purpose of Watt’s trip of Jerusalem was to work at the intellectual approach to Islam. As a result Watt’s interest in Islamic studies at the intellectual level also increased\textsuperscript{5} and he was appointed as a religious leader just below the rank of priest cuddesdon and they remained together for about three years (1943-1946).\textsuperscript{6}

A little stability of life provided him a real emotional foundation, he continued his pursuits at Saint Mary’s the Beltors, Kensington where he served as an assistant to the Vicar. He also studied Arabic at the school of oriental studies and after returning to Scotland in 1946 he worked as lecturer in Arabic at Edinburgh University. He was awarded a personal
chair both in Arabic and Islamic studies in 1964. He provided his services to the institute until 1979.

W.M. Watt worked on his doctoral thesis i.e. "Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam" during the time when St. Mary's was closed because of bomb damage and he returned to Edinburgh. At the time he had finished his training as a curator at old St. Paul's and returned to Jerusalem. He wrote his Ph.D. thesis, presented to the university of Edinburgh in 1944 and published four years later, in 1948. Islamic studies were still an undisputed Waqf of the Europeans.

After that he returned to Edinburgh University where he worked as a lecturer and later on he became professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies. Therefore he dedicated his life to study of Sirah, history and theology, specially during (1946-1964) during his tenure as a lecturer in Edinburgh university he produced 'Muhammad at Mecca' and 'Muhammad at Medina' in 1953 and 1956 respectively, and much before his retirement he brought out a popular abridgment of these two entitled Muhammad Prophet and Statesman in 1961.

His commitment to study of Islam led him to study Norman Daniel who is the author of 'Islam and the West: the Making of an Image', subsequently it dawned to him that historical prejudice of west against Islam had been created by the 12th and 14th century scholars. It was
simply a war propaganda. These wars were fought in Palestine by European Christian countries against the Muslims.

W.M. Watt believed that to make a long determined effort to distort the image of somebody can not be justified. He considered it to be a negative aspect of European identity. He therefore believed that distortion of image "was a negative aspect of European identity".\(^{10}\)

Buaben found Watt to have a reserve nature with deep introspection. He remained chairman of the Association of British Orientalist between 1964-65. He acquired an honorary degree from the university of Aberdeen. He was also awarded the level Della Vida Medol in Los Angeles.\(^{11}\)

Though Watt remained a Christian and worked for many years as a priest for the Scottish Episcopal Church, he studied passages from the Holy Quran. He also studied various Islamic mystical works. Charles De-foucauld a French priest who lived among Algerian tribes, influenced him a great deal. In order to show his positive identity as a Christian he spoke of something which was more profound. Though apparently he spent his life battling against the tide of intolerance, along the live, by focusing on the historical prejudices of the west against Islam, he turned out to be both an explorer and theological reconciler, who acquired a due place in the study of Islam.
Watt has produced an indepth study material on almost al aspects of Christianity and Islam. We have observed that the inter-faith encounter (with a Muslim friend) has been at the root of his thinking which gave way to deep introspection.\textsuperscript{12}

Watt's writings sometimes were described as propagandistic or possibly didactic by John Van Ess. It was observed in his interview that Watt expresses his concern regarding the rise of fundamentalism in almost all religions. But he had a belief that inter-faith relations would improve because he emphasized and appreciated the strengths of the positive assertions of the other side. His conscious effort to have a dialogue in this direction is remarkable and it is seen to grow tremendously throughout his life.\textsuperscript{13}

W.M. Watt retained enormous respect for the Preslyterian tradition, and respected the decision of his wife, Jean, whom he married in 1943 to become a catholic. He joined the Iona community in 1960 because he found its brand of radical, exploratory faith congenial. Indeed he continued to be both an explorer and theological reconciler to the end. His best book, "A Christian Faith for Today" was published in 2002 when he was 93. It was as distillation of the sort of generous Christianity to which he had given his life.\textsuperscript{14}
Watt and Jean bought their first house, the Neuk, at Bridgend, Dalkeith in 1947, and it remained an anchor for the family. In 1956 they acquired another house, in Crail, Fife where, during summer holidays by the Sea, William worked hard to create a small beach for his five children. He moved rocks, dug channels and battled seaweed to provide them with a clear space on the rocky shore. By summer’s end, it would be almost perfect, but when the Watt’s were duck in Dalkeith, the Sea would destroy what he had created. The following summer he would do it all over again.\textsuperscript{15}

William Montgomery Watt Islamic scholar and priest, died October 24\textsuperscript{th}, 2006.

**Watt’s Place in Islamic Studies:**

Professor William Montgomery Watt, was a legendary figure among Islamic scholars. He dedicated his life to the promotion of dialogue between Christian and Muslims. He is famous for his three books entitled *Muhammad at Mecca, Muhammad at Madina* and *Muhammad prophet and Statesman*, acknowledged by experts to be classics in the field. In Scotland he was a member of the Ecumenical Iona community since 1960. The Muslim press terms him as "The last orientalist".\textsuperscript{16} From 1947 to 1979, he was head of the department of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the university of Edinburgh. From 1964
with the title of Professor and later as Professor Emeritus, from 1963 – 1978 and at Georgetown University, Washington, 1978-79. He delivered lectures at Makerere University, Uganda (1967), at Kuwait University (1970) and at the college de France, Paris (1970). In 1981 he received the Levidella Vida Medal from the university of California, Los Angeles. Watt held visiting professorships at the university of Toronto, the college de France and Georgetown university, and received the American Georgio Levi Delles Vida Medal and was the first recipient of the British society for Middle Eastern Studies award for outstanding scholarship.

**His Interest in “Islam and Christianity”**

He had studied classic at Edinburgh University an “Great’s” - Philosophy and ancient history at Oxford. From 1934 to 1938 he taught moral philosophy at Edinburgh University. After the death of his mother 1937 his interest in Islam developed consequent upon his conversation with Khwaja Abdul Mannan, a Veterinary student from Pakistan and a member of the Ahmadiyya sect, Abdul Mannan was an argumentive Muslim, who enabled professor Watt realize that Islam was “ a centuries old system of thought of life” this interest later developed further and led to his authoring over thirty books and over hundred and fifty articles.
Watt’s Scholar

C.V. Muhammad Benaboud

Muhammad Benaboud was a Watt’s scholar he was born in Tetoun, Morocco on the 23rd of June 1980. He studied at and graduated from American School of Tangier and pursed his University studies at the United States International University, San Diego, California from which he obtained a B.A. in political science.

He obtain a Ph.D from Edinburgh University (Scotland U.K.) in 1978. His doctoral dissertation was entitled "A Political and Social History of Sevilla under Banu Abbad", and it was supervised by the famous Scottish orientalist William Montgomery Watt. The Arabic translation of this work was published in Morocco in 1983 and was awarded the prize of Morocco for the Human and Social Sciences by the Morocco Ministry of Culture during the same years. An abridged version of this work was published in Spanish under title Sevilla Enelsinglo XI. 1992.17

Watt’s Teacher

Watt write about his teacher Richard Bell in theses words in his book Bell’s introduction to the Quran. “When the suggestion of a revised edition of Richard Bell’s introduction to the Quran was first made in
discussion with the secretary of Edinburgh University Press, I was attracted by the idea of doing something to maintain the influence of a great scholar, and was emboldened by the success of Theodor Noldek’s pupil in revising and continuing his work. The task, however, as I soon realized, is not without its difficulties. Richard Bell was my greatly respected teacher under whom I did much of my study of Arabic and who guided me in the Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam. The sincerest tribute to such work a scholar is to take his views seriously and criticize them frankly. Bell’s followed his European predecessors in speaking of the Quran as Muhammad’s own, at least in his introduction, various remark he made lead me to think that he would have a considerable measure of sympathy with the views I have expressed about Muhammad’s prophethood.
References

9. [http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/2006/nov/14/guardianobituries.highereducation](http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/2006/nov/14/guardianobituries.highereducation)
Chapter-3

Work of William Montgomery Watt
William Montgomery Watt was a prolific writer his writings are very different from his contemporaries and predecessors in the English. Watt on Islam in general and on the Sirah in particular. His main area of interest is apart from the life and epoch of the Prophet, the early history of Islam and its sects. He has written a number of articles on various aspects of Islam. His contact with Islam in fact began with dialogue, Watt was particularly fascinated with the problem of the relationship between Christianity and Islam. It was a turning point in his career as he himself admits in his book and set about preparations which eventually led me to spending nearly three years in Jerusalem (then under British mandate) as an Arabic and Islamic specialist on the staff of the Anglican Bishop there. From that appointment events produced an easy transition to the academic work which has occupied me since 1947, namely, lecturing on Arabic language and literature and researching on various aspects of Islam as a religion.¹

Watt has written some thirty books and over a hundred and fifty articles. His two books on the life and the epoch of the Prophet have won wide acclaim and many consider them classics. These are Muhammad at Mecca (1953), Muhammad at Medina (1956), later on summarized in one single volume Muhammad Prophet and Statesman (1061) and
translated in several languages (French 1958-9, Turkish 1964, Spanish 1967, Japanese 1971). ²

Watt's first book, published in 1937, was entitled (an Christians be pacifists).³ His Islamic material started with an article, Free will and Predestination in Early Islam⁴, which was part of his Ph.D. thesis submitted to Edinburgh University in 1944. The thesis itself was published as a book in 1948 under the same title.

As Joseph Van Ess Writes: 'his thesis demonstrated an unusual gift for textual interpretation, combined with a certain lucidity of arrangement which made the argumentation immediately clear to the reader. Yet there was more than sound method and persuasive style. There was also a feeling for the individuality of historical situations and ideological decisions which was not to common, among philologists. Theology was not treated as an impersonal fight of ideas or even worse, as a catalogue of notions and values but as an expression of the way specific persons or groups reacted to the demands of their time'.⁵

After a series of articles and book reviews in the late forties and early fifties, his next major work published in 1953 was The faith and practice of al-Ghazali. Watt's next published material was his paper on Thomas Carlyle read at the Carlyle society, Edinburgh on 24 October 1953. This paper was an appreciation of the Scotsman's famous lecture in
1840. *The reality of God* (published in 1957) and is one of Watt’s few works on Christian theology.

Islamic Philosophy and Theology, published in 1962 was the first in the ‘Islamic Surveys’ series, a series designed to give the educated reader something more than can be found in the usual popular books. Each work undertakes to survey a special part of the field.  

*Companion to the Quran Base d on Arberry’s Translation* was Watt’s next major publication in 1967. Watt’s work on sociological and psychological outlook on religious truth, was published in 1968, under the title *Truth in the religions*.

His next book, *Islamic political Thought* came hard on the heels of his work on the socio-psychological study of truth in the religions. 1968 was perhaps one of the richest period in Watt’s academic life. A third book, *what is Islam* was published as part of the ‘Arab Background’ series under the general editorship of Nicalah A. Ziadeh then of the American university of Beirut. In 1970, Watt’s revised edition of Bell’s work on the *Quran, ‘Belis introduction to the Quran* was published.

In 1972 Watt turned his attention to Islam and Europe with *The Influence of Islam on Medieval Europe* the ninth in the Islamic Surveys
series the book was a result of Watt’s Visiting professorship at the college de France in 1970.

In 1983 *Islam and Christianity today – A contribution to dialogue*\(^{14}\) in appeared. *Islamic Fundamentalism and Modernity* \(^{15}\) published in 1988. In 1989 *Muhammad’s Mecca –History in the Quran*\(^{16}\) was published. This book continues the discussion begun in the earlier Muhammad at Mecca. Another significant work is *Early Islam-Collected Articles*\(^{17}\) published in 1990. This is an anthology of article by Watt that appeared in eminent journals during the period 1943 to 1983. 1991 saw the publication of one of Watt’s most recent books, *Muslim Christian encounters : perception and Misconceptions*\(^{18}\) Watt’s work *Islamic Creeds- A Selection*\(^{19}\) published in 1994 is a collection of classical creedal work by Muslim theologians.

**Books**

**PROPHET AT MECCA**

This book of Watt is about the Prophet Muhammad. It was first published in 1953\(^{20}\) and became very popular among Muslims and Christians a like. The popularity of this work among the masses is attested by its frequent republications in the form of second and third editions respectively. The short introduction on the back cover sets out,
basically, the status of the book in the context of academic study of Islam in general and Muhammad in particular, and states that the book was written to satisfy an apparent appetite in academia for a fresh life of the Holy Prophet set in a fuller historical context.

Watt takes special note of traditional sources and uses the Quran as a principal and key source, and examines Prophet Muhammad a fresh looking at the socio-political and economic aspects which were operative during the period. However, in Watt’s view these factors alone do not determine the course of events and that a strictly academic approach is not enough.

In the preface to the work, Watt mentions, among other things, that his teacher Richard Bell, deserves a mention since he consulted him on a number of issues. He also points out that Bell had some misgivings about the thesis of the work.

In the introduction Watt says that the work, in the first place, has been addressed to the historian. As for the theological issues between Christianity and Islam he tries to maintain neutrality. That’s why while referring to the Quran he puts it as ‘Quran says ‘ He writes as a professing monotheist and does not regard the adoption of a materialistic outlook as implicit “impartiality”. ‘To my Muslim readers he observes, I have endeavoured, while remaining faithful to the standards of Western
historical scholarship, to say nothing that would entail the rejection of any of the fundamental doctrines of Islam. There need be no unbridgeable gulf between Western scholarship and Islamic faith.²¹

This book Prophet at Mecca is in six main parts each part with well-defined subdivisions. He set out his objectives and ground plan for the work in the introduction.

Part one looks at the Prophet’s Arabian background, probing the economic, socio-political, religious and intellectual context.

In part two Watt focuses on Prophet Muhammad’s early life upto the Prophetic call and discusses his ancestral history birth, early years and infancy, marriage and the call to mission. Then, in a subsection, he discusses his prophetic consciousness, followed by a short chronology of events in the Maccan era.

Part three examines the prophet’s primary message, analyzing the Quran regarding its dating, and the essence of the earliest revealed passages, setting them in the context of early seventh century Mecca. The last part on further reflections is divided into two sub-sections, taking up the issues of the effect of the economic situation in Mecca on the message of Islam and the theory on the originality of the Quran.
Part four, 'The first Muslims' investigates conversions and accounts of converts, ending with the general impact of Prophet Muhammad's message to society.

Part five focuses on the issue of opposition. It investigates the 'Satanic verses, the first migration to Abyssinia, the methods of opposition, the witness of the Quran, and the prominent opposition leaders and their motives. These are discussed towards the end of this part.

Part six entitled "Expanding Horizons, looks at Prophet Muhammad's attempt to widen the spectrum of his mission by venturing outside Mecca. It studies the difficult personal problems the Prophet faced following the demise of both his wife and uncle within the first decade of his call. The abortive preaching mission to Ta'if is discussed, a section is devoted to the Hijra. The main part of the book, ends with a short two-page assessment of the Meccan era of the prophet's work.

The book closes with an eight-point addendum, which runs, through a discussion of the Ahabish* theory (For details of this theory See Watt's Muhammad al-Mecca (Oxford, 1953) pp. 154-7), the question of Judaeo Christian influence, The Hanifs, a survey of prominent Meccan Muslims and unbelievers, to a short analysis of traditions from 'Urwa b.

* For a detail of this theory see Watt's Muhammad at Mecca (Oxford, 1953), pp. 154-7.
al-Zubayr with regard to the Maccan period. The addendum ends with the first Hijra to Abyesinia and looks at those who were supposed to have returned to join the Muslim forces at the various battles which ensued.

Companion to the Quran (based on Arberry’s Translation)

The companion is based on Arberry’s translation, but can be used with other translations or indeed the original text, since the verses are numbered. He himself describes the aim in his introduction ‘the aim of the present companion is to provide the English reader with the background material needed to facilitate the understanding and appreciation of the Quran. Watt is well-known as an authority on the life of the Prophet Muhammad and the origins of Islam, and his name gives an assurance of the accurate and check character of the Companion. W.M. Watt emphasizing the richness of the Quranic language, in a way also acknowledges the inadequacy of English language and hence the immense difficulties faced by a translator of the Quran. The author has approached his task is exemplified by the number of occasions on which he has been driven to suggest correction to the host translation.

Elsewhere frequent elucidations and comments offered in a spirit of modesty light up the obscurer Arberry rendering. The work of a well known authority on the life of Muhammad and the origins of Islam, this
Companion to the Quran is, an essential tool to help readers gain a fuller understanding of one of the worlds most important religious texts, the verse-by-verse companion gives background information on Muslim beliefs and explains allusions that may puzzle readers unfamiliar with the culture of Islam, it discusses the ideas and expressions that are specific to Muslim thinking, and reviews the main variants in interpretation of Quranic text with notes based on Islamic sources.

Professor W.M. Watt’s authoritative study offers valuable clarifications for all English speaking scholars of Islam as well as for the general western writers. In his contents Watt translated the whole Quranic Sura’s from Arabic to English.

Professor Montgomery has appended to his book an index of proper names in the Quran and a separate index to the commentary. His book is surely an extremely useful introduction and should be recommended to all students.²⁸

**Muhammad Prophet and Statesman**:

In 1961, Watt’s two volume biographical work on Muhammad was published as one volume. Watt makes it clear in note on the sources that:

“The present work is essentially an abridgement of my book Muhammad at Mecca and Muhammad at Madina. The chief difference is
that in the present volume the chronological order has been more strictly adhered to here and there this may have produced a slight change of emphasis, but there is no fundamental change in the views presented".\textsuperscript{29}

Watt has already written two scholarly books on Muhammad's career as a Prophet and as a head of state. This volume is based on these two earlier studies, and seems to be addressed more to the general reader than to the specialist.\textsuperscript{30}

The book is a short account of the life and achievements of one of the great figures of history. This volume also serves as an excellent introduction to one of the world's major religions Islam.

The book consists of nine chapters and 248 pages and every chapter is divided into more than two parts. The first chapter deals with the gifted orphan or the Prophet. And the second chapter deals with the call of Prophet to Prophethood. In this chapter Watt has made a detailed survey of Prophethood.

In the view of Watt, Muhammad's special mission was the receiving of 'revelation' or message from God, as such a message was included in the first vision. For over twenty years, until the end of his life, Muhammad continued to receive such revelations at frequent intervals. He and his followers memorized them, and they were repeated in the ritual worship or prayer which he introduced.\textsuperscript{31}
Third chapter deals with opposition and rejection, fourth with the emigration to Medina; fifth one deals with the provocation of the Meccans; while six chapter is about the failure of the Meccan riposte; seventh chapter is the winning of the Meccans and eight chapter deals with the ruler in Arabia.

In the last chapter is assessment and in this chapter Watt goes on to argue that the Byzantine empire, after losing some of its best provinces to the Arabs, was being attacked in Asia Minor, while western Europe was threatened through Spain and Sicily, even before the crusades focused attention on the expulsion of the Saracens from the Holy land, Medieval Europe was building up a conception of ‘the great enemy’. At one point “Muhammad was transformed into Mahound, the prince of darkness”.32

In the end Watt answers the question ‘Was Muhammad a Prophet?’ in these words: “He was a man whom creative imagination worked at deep levels and produced ideas relevant to the central questions of human existence, so that his religion has had a widespread appeal not only in his own age but in succeeding centuries. Not all the ideas he proclaimed are true and sound, but by God’s grace he was enabled to provide millions of men with a better religion they had before. They testified that there is no God but God and that Muhammad is the Messenger of God.”33
In conclusion, written with objectivity, the book opens with a background chapter on the birth and early life of the Prophet in Mecca. Watt tells of Muhammad’s struggle to make his way as an untrained orphan in the and his call to Prophethood as a result of vision.

The book is well footnoted and there is a brief, selected biography, and not on the sources. According to Watt, the primary source for the life of Muhammad is the Quran and Watt used the early biographies of Prophet by Ibn-Ishaq (d.768) as edited by Ibn-Hisham (d.833) and the Maghazi or expeditions of al-Waqidi (d. 822) and English translation of Ibn-Hisham by Alfred Gillaume and other English translations of western writers.

MUHAMMAD AT MADINA

This book is written as a sequel to Muhammad at Mecca, the two works together constitute a comprehensive history of the life of Muhammad and the origins of the Islamic history. This volume continues the study of the life of the Prophet Muhammad. Muhammad at Madina is a remarkable volume that covers the second part of the life of the Prophet of Islam and the early days of his young nation after 622 CE., the year of Hijra when the Prophet left Mecca for Madina and also marks the first year of the Muslim calendar. This book is one of the most authentic works on the subject.
This book was published in 1956. The plan of the book should be clear from the table of contents. In the preface of this book, the author has made it clear that in the book he has endeavoured to write so as to be easily understood by the historian who has no knowledge of Arabic, but, he writes: “I have probably often fell short of this aim”. In particular, in discussions of a pioneering character, such as those in the fourth and fifth chapters.\textsuperscript{36} Watt also writes in preface: “It is appropriate at this point to draw attention to two gaps of which I have and which the normal type of European or American orientalist is incapable of filling\textsuperscript{37}, one is the production of a map of Arabia as it was in Muhammad’s time. The other serious gap is that the study of life in pre-Islamic Arabia has not kept pace with the development of social anthropology. I have done what I could to fill in this gap in so far as pre-Islamic conditions are necessary as background for an understanding of Prophet Muhammad’s social reform.\textsuperscript{38}

The book has ten chapters and twelve-point addendum. The first chapter examines the situation during the early period of Prophet Muhammad’s settlement in Madina, the earliest expeditions. The battle of Badr, the situation after Badr.

Chapter two focuses on the Qurayshi attempt to avenge the disaster at Badr. Then looks at the battle of Uhud and the siege of Medina.
Chapter three discusses the circumstances in which the Meccans were becoming more amenable to the Prophet’s message. It touches on the expeditions after episode of Khandaq, the Hudaibiyya incident and its aftermath and the general reaction of the Makkans to the apparent successes of the Prophet, ending with the battle of Hunayn and attempts to consolidation of victory.

Chapter four, the unifying of the arabs, considers the tribal system in Arabia and Prophet Muhammad’s policies.

Chapter five, the internal politics of Medina, he investigates the social and political organization in Prophet Muhammad’s time, it also incorporates sections on his supporters and internal oppositions.

Chapter six is devoted entirely to the Jewish questions, looking at the social standing of the Jews in general before and after the Hijra. The discussion also takes in what Watt terms the intellectual and physical attacks on Jews. The chapter has a conclusion.

Chapter seven, the character of the Islamic states, deals with the constitution of Madina, the Prophet’s status within the arrangement, nature of the Ummah and the financial affairs of the new community.

Chapter eight focuses on the elaborate social reform inaugurated by Prophet Muhammad, security of the life and property, marriage and family, and inheritance.
Chapter nine examines the new religious establishment, covering Islamic religious institutions, Islam and Arab Paganism and ending with a discussion on Islam and Christianity.

Chapter ten concentrates on Prophet Muhammad’s greatness. It looks at his appearance and mien, his supposed moral bankruptcy and ends with the foundation of greatness.

Then addendum, which Watt terms ‘excursus’ contains further comments on the sources, a lost of expeditions with dates, a list of slaves and freed men among the Muhajirun, and comments on the letters the Prophet sent to eminent personalities then.

**Islamic Political Thought:**

In this book Watt expounds and explains how the Islamic polity has developed from the structure established by Prophet Muhammad.\(^{39}\) This book contains 186 pages and lots of bibliographical material and on pp. XI, 81, and also in the notes pp. 135-44. It also contains eleven chapters excluding appendix. Every chapter is divided into three to four parts.

Watt writes about his aim in the introduction thus: “My aim in what follows is to show the roots or genesis of the political conception operative in the Islamic world today”.\(^{40}\) As part of a survey series, whose
general edition is the author himself 41, Islamic Political Thought is designed to "give the educated reader something more than can be found in the usual popular book" 42

"In the first chapter entitled 'The Islamic State under Muhammad' Watt describes his political achievements and writes that the great merchants of Mecca of the time became afraid of him and his religious movement. His contemporaries in particular saw that his claim to be the bearer of divine truth was a potential basis for political interference, since the ordinary citizen was likely to think that Prophet Muhammad knew better than those who had no access to such a source of wisdom 43 and his Hijra or migration to Medina in 622 marks the beginning of his political activity 44. The Islamic States had no precisely defined geographical frontiers, but it was certainly in existence 45.

Watt describes about 'the Jihad or 'holy war' as "it was a fundamental part of the mechanism of Islamic expansion both within Arabia and the wider world". 46

In the last chapter in the Epilogue 'Islam in contemporary politics' he elaborates the views that political writing under the influence of occidental ideas began among Muslims in the nineteenth century, and grew to flood in the twentieth 47 and focuses on nationalism and says: "An idea that appears to have been widely accepted in Islamic countries
is that of nationalism. This idea has been specially useful in the struggle against the colonialism and imperialism of the occidental powers.”

Watt examines the democracy, totalitarianism, and socialism, it might have been expected that many Arabs would have been ready to transform their polities into democracies. Watt further explains his views that Islamic politicians are sometimes accused of being totalitarian, and anti-democratic.

**The Faith and Practice of Al-Ghazali:**

It is a major work by Watt. The Faith and Practice of Al-Ghazali was published in 1953. This is a collection of some of the works of Al-Ghazali which Watt translated into English. The title does not suggest that this publication is only the translation of two of the smaller works of Al-Ghazali. There are five pages of introduction by Watt, three of index and the rest is the English version of the two treatises, together with about half a dozen very brief footnotes.

The aim of this book is to place the chief ethical and religious masterpieces of the world, both Christian and non-Christian, within easy reach of the intelligent reader who is not necessarily an expert.

The series, initiated by some scholars from Oxford, was a result of the feeling brought about by the two World Wars. People felt they needed
to know each other better and what better way was there then to share the moral and spiritual ideals of both sides.\textsuperscript{52}

Watt’s appreciation of Al-Ghazali is evident from his introduction. He points out that a deep study of al-Ghazali may suggest to Muslims steps to be taken if they are to deal successfully with the contemporary situation Christians too, now that the world is in a cultural melting pot, must be prepared to learn from Islam, and are unlikely to find a more sympathetic guide than al-Ghazali.

Faith and Practice of al-Ghazali by Watt has two distinct aspects which must be considered. Firstly, what the author has said and, secondly, how the translator renders it in another language.

In this work there are interesting references to facts of historical interest, for instance, Ghazali says he had classes of 300 students in Baghdad, I was burdened with the teaching and instruction of three hundred students in Baghdad.\textsuperscript{53} According to M. Hamidullah’s review in Islamic Quarterly, Watt’s translation is fluent and readable, and his English style is good. A reader of this translation who knows Arabic may, however, occasionally not agree with the interpretation the author has given to the original text.\textsuperscript{54}
M. Hamidullah further says that sometimes Watt emphasizes that the original was obscure, yet on other occasions he gives a rendering which does not seem quite adequate. For instance, he translates\(^5\) 'I commanded the use of the toothstick until I feared it would be written down against me'.\(^6\) A more correct translation would be 'I was commanded the use of the tooth stick so much that I feared it would be imposed on me as an obligatory duty.\(^7\)

We can say that Watt's translation of Faith and Practice of al-Ghazali enjoys a reputation as one of the most popular and reader friendly translation available.

**Early Islam**

This book Early Islam collected articles\(^8\) is a useful collection of articles written by William Montgomery Watt, and basically revolve around the division of Islam, such as the Prophet Muhammad (SWS), the Quran and the division of Islam into various sects and their histories as Watt himself writes: "The articles selected for reproduction here are those which contain material not found, or at least not found in such detail in my books. The selection has been restricted to my main field of research, namely Muhammad, the Quran and the early history of the Islamic sects".\(^9\) In this book, Watt brings forward many ideas and views of various Muslim historians on the mentioned issues and concludes each
article with his own view and comments on the topic under discussion. In a few articles, he defends his views on subjects such as authenticity of the Sirah material and the reliability of the material used to frame the biography of the Prophet (S.A.W.). At places, he raises important issues that question the long held concepts and traditions revered in Islam.

The book is divided into two parts, the first part dealing mainly with the issue concerning Muhammad and the Quran\textsuperscript{60} that have been raised by the orientalists. The second part deals with the Islamic thoughts\textsuperscript{61} on various issues such as questions relating to God, Islamic sects and the concept and history of caliphate and the relation between Muslims and the Christians, their agreements and differences in thoughts.

**The Influence of Islam on Medieval Europe:**

This admirable book, *the Influence of Islam on Medieval Europe*\textsuperscript{62}, is the ninth in the "Islamic surveys" series\textsuperscript{63} and was a result of Watt's visiting professorship at the College de France in 1970. In this book Watt traces the influence of Islam in medieval Europe, looking in detail at commerce, science and technology, philosophy and the development of European self awareness.

This book is divided into six chapters and every chapter is further divided into several parts. The main object of the book is to give a
comprehensive view of this influence and the reaction to it. A study of the influence of Islam on Europe is especially relevant at the present time when Christians and Muslims, Europeans and Arabs are becoming increasingly involved with one another.

Watt points out that for our cultural indebtedness to Islam, however, we Europeans have a blind spot. In the first chapter, Watt describes the lack of European scholarly writings on the influence of Islam on Europe and its subsequent contribution to the flowering of European civilization.

In the last chapter Watt goes to argue that it was the crusading movement which led to a growth of scholarly interest in Islam as a religion among Europeans. Something was known about Islam previously of course, partly through Byzantine sources and through the contacts between Christians and Muslims in Spain. Such knowledge as there was, however, was inextricably mingled with error.

According to Watt Muslims were self-indulgent in other ways to the Europeans and explained it in these words that the Quran was said to teach men to break their oaths when that suited their convenience, and to declare that a man would go to paradise without having performed any good acts, provided he had repeated the Shahada (the confession of faith). It was also supposed that the belief in fate prevalent among
Muslims was an excuse for laziness and drift. And he further says that in this respect also the image of Islam contains a mixture of truth and falsehood.

Watt also looks at commerce and technology, Arab advances in science and philosophy, and how these have influenced Europe. He again reminds us of the “way in which a distorted image of Islam has dominated thinking in Europe from the twelfth century almost until the present day”.

According to Watt the distortion of the image of Islam among Europeans was necessary to compensate them for their sense of inferiority. In the end of this book, Watt suggested that today an important test for us western Europeans, as we move into the era of the one world, is to correct this false emphasis and to acknowledge fully our debt to the Arabs and the Islamic world.

The view of Islam in Medieval Europe turned on four chief propositions, which are:

a. The Islamic religion is based falsehood and a deliberate perversion of the truth.

b. It is a religion of violence and sword.

c. It is a religion of self-indulgence; and

d. Muhammad is the Antichrist.
Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam:

According to Watt this work was substantially completed in autumn, 1943 and was accepted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Edinburgh University in 1944.\textsuperscript{76}

Professor Watt further says about his doctrinal work as “I have decided to allow my work to appear as it was originally written”. It does not seem likely that further collection of material would lead to any important modification of the chief points for which I have argued.\textsuperscript{77}

This extremely sensitive and volatile issue, Freewill and Predestination in Islam is accepted by all serious students of the subject as a useful compendium of important material written by Watt, and he himself described it as : “In my opinion, then this question of freewill and predestination or of the relationship of human and divine power is one where there are two opposing, yet complementary truths, which at the present stage of man’s intellectual development cannot be wholly reconciled with another, but which must nevertheless be held together”.\textsuperscript{78}

Watt vividly describes the scope of this book and writes that the “scope of this study is limited in various ways”. For the most part it is restricted to those theological who come within the purview of the heresiographers, that is those who flourished between the years 80 and
330 A.H. or so; but I have flourished views explicitly attributed to a particular man or also includes views explicitly attributed to a practical man or sect belonging to that period, where such material was available.79

Watt traced the fact that "the centre of interest in the present study is what is specially Islamic. The quest is, through and behind all the bewildering variety of the phenomena, for elusive reality which may be called the essence of Islam."80 It was published in 1948, and contains seven chapters. Every chapter is divided into several parts. In the introduction, Watt reveals the aim, scope and the sources of this book. The title of this book "Freewill and Predestination" describing the matter or content of this book. In the last chapter Watt presents the concluding survey.

This book is 'dedicated to the study of the history of Muslim speculation on the questions of predestination and freewill during the first three centuries of Islam, when that speculation still moved free and untrammeled except by the fundamental assumption formulated in the Quran.81

In the introduction Watt describes and judges, on the basis of thorough analysis of his sources, he discusses "the various conceptions of man's condition as advanced and argued by different sects, schools and individual thinkers of that period and has sought with undoubted success
not only to present and interpret these conception in their local and temporary circumstances, but also to trace their historical development and to determine the reasons, which led ultimately to the orthodox position by uncovering, wherever possible, the interplay of ideas between scholars, sects and school.  

**Truth in the Religions:**

A sociological and psychological approach published in (1968) in Edinburgh. In book, Professor Watt proclaims about the religion in these words: "Religion is the opiate of the people"; and he focuses on sociological and psychological outlook on religious truth as the title shows. Watt showed his interest in multi faith, and he further states according to his presumption "I have attempted to defend religion in general and not Christianity specifically, since I think that in the present world situation the great religion, whether they realize it or not, are allies against the opposing forces".

Watt’s already stated in his book, *Islam and the Integration of Society*, the sociological views of the function of religious ideas, but here he elaborates and repeats in more general terms.

In the first chapter explaining the problems and presuppositions, Watt focuses on bias (prejudice) in later period when they were
influenced by the war propaganda of medieval times, and they thought about the Islam as unoriginal and inferior religion. He criticizes westerns who neglect divine truth except Christianity. Here Watt deals with assonance of the religions among the Abrahamic faith (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam). He describes that in the modern world increased number of contact between leaders of different religions and every religion has tended (struggled) for supremacy. He set out four principles or maxims which would magnify (enhance, intensify) assonance.

He clarifies that the maxims to exclude the missionary work but reject the proselytization, Watt explain this word as “seeking to get people to attach themselves to your community. Chiefly because you want to glorify the community and not at genuine concern for the welfare of the people themselves”.

At the end of this book, Watt explains that his approach condemns the superiority complex than other religions and he states that “any genuine mission in future must more and more be a mutual personal relationship in which we are ready to receive as we as to give”.

The book is divided into two parts (eight chapter). First five chapter deals with sociological function of religious ideas and sixth and seven chapters deal with the religious ideas and the eight chapter deals with the inter-religious problems.
The Reality of God:

In this book, Watt explains the reality of God in terms of modern thought, and clarifies the weaknesses of our age. He says the weakness of our age is that many men, while holding a vague belief in God, are not prepared to commit themselves to it, yet spiritually this is a more dangerous attitude than atheism.\(^8^8\)

Christians have a tension between scientific humanism and Christian doctrine for some centuries. And Christians live in two worlds, for a part of our lives we are in the world of scientific humanism, and for another part in the world of Christian doctrine, and humanistic value count more than Christian ones. A similar but perhaps acuter tension has been felt by Muslims, and the same holds of Jews. Watt tried to contribute to the relieving of this tension in this book.

Watt writes about this book is: "I deliberately avoid mentioning the specifically Christian doctrines of the incarnation and the Holy Trinity" part, because the tension narrating the reason for writing this work, the author curies in the preface of this book. What I am trying to relieve is felt by other than Christian, but more fundamentally, because I hold that the great need of our time is for a fuller awareness of the reality of God.\(^8^9\)

This book was first published in 1937 in London. It contains five chapters including introduction. In introduction, Watt explains the reason
for writing this book. The second chapter deals with the making of Human Nature, and the third "God and Human Conduct", while the chapter is 'Man's knowledge of God' and Watt ends the work with a discussion on the 'Man's worship of God'. It deals with the contents of worship, the effects of worship, and the reality of worship.

**Islamic revelation in the Modern World**

Islamic revelation in the modern world\(^{90}\) is a short study and deeply humanistic account of Muslim Christian relations, and is particularly concerned with Islamic beginnings concept of revelation. It goes back to the beginnings of Islam and traces the interplay of Quranic revelation with that of early Christendom, and then asserts the validity of that revelation in the modern world, and its claim to co-existence with the other great faith.

It is in fact an essay the genesis of which goes back to the 'Revelation in Modern world by L.S. Thornton that appeared in 1950. First Watt reviewed it in the philosophical quarterly and then planned to write an article applying Thornton's ideas to Islam Watt, however, could not write the article but partly is place was taken by the book just mentioned. Watt says that his aim in writing this book is to present Islam in the best light possible to European and American readers, both the religiously minded and the secular in outlook.\(^{91}\)
W.M. Watt has observed that the write-up is also intended to counteract the residual of medieval war-propaganda. But even more, it is an attempt to bring about a fuller realization of the importance Islam is likely to have in next hundred years. A secondary aim is to show the Muslims that the attitudes of occidental scholarship are necessarily hostile to Islam as a religion but that it is possible to combine these attitudes with a layer, though more sophisticated acceptance.\(^{92}\)

This book attempts to give a justification of open dialogue.\(^{93}\) Watt feels the need for the Christians to take Islam seriously in so far as it is legitimate to think in strategic terms Islam is a dangerous rival of Christianity in the struggle for world leadership.\(^ {94}\)

W.M. Watt believes that dialogue is important today, but the adherents of different faith must meet as equals before they can engage in dialogue. The aim of this volume is to present Islam to European and American readers with understanding objectivity, in consonance with found scholarship and current standards of scientific rationalism. Watt hopes to counteract the residual effects of medieval misconception and also bring about a fuller realization of the importance Islam is likely to have in the next hundred years.\(^ {95}\)

The book consists ten chapters and biblical and Quranic references also.
Regarding this book Robert Garver, the Scotsman writes: “Watt’s is no merely a pious history of Islam, it is also politically correct”. 96

According to Watt the basic (Primary) purpose of the book is to provide the Western reader with a positive understanding of Islam of its origin its history and its beliefs and is also valuable for the Muslim reader. This books is based on the Nabuvat of Prophet Muhammad (based on the belief that Muhammad was a Prophet chosen by God for a particular task, and also that God was behind the spread of Islam throughout the world) According to Watt this book at the same time, accepts the main principles of the western intellectual outlook, including its historical criticism and consequently departs from some of the traditional ideas of Muslims about the history of their religion.

Watt used the translation is his own he writes – “I have deviated at two small points from the standard translation of Arabic words and names. First, while the Arabic definite article ‘al’ is always written with ‘I’ in certain cases it is assimilated in speech to the following consonant, and here I have indicated the pronunciation. Second, in proper names where a dependent genitive is virtually inseparable from the previous word, I have indicated this by a hyphen. Thus Ibn Zayd means the son of Zayd and Abd –Allah means. The slave or servant of God.97
The Majesty that Was Islam

The aim of this book is to give an account of the experiences and adventures of a large part of the human race over a period of four and a half centuries.\(^98\)

It was first published in 1974 and reprinted in 1976. The book consists of five parts and every part is divided into three to five parts and every part again is subdivided into several parts.

The other concerns of this book are to try to make clear the relationship between religion and politics in the events described\(^99\), Watt stated: religion is important, and in naming the period the term Islamic is more adequate than ‘Arab’.\(^100\) And William Montgomery Watt says that when a university colleague suggested that Islamic history should be regarded as a branch of ecclesiastical history, one could only laugh. The history to be studied is no more and no less religious than that of medieval Europe, but religion enters into it in a different way, since there is no papacy, no ecclesiastical hierarchy, and no priestly class in the strict sense, though there are religious intellectuals and what may be called a religious institution.\(^101\)

The other concern of this book is to show how the Christian culture of Egypt, Syria and Iraq was transformed into Islamic culture. This
change is one of the great failures of Christianity, though it has received little attention from Christian historians.\textsuperscript{102}

Watt has done a good job of collecting information about the Judeo-Christian influence and he gives his own views with such issues in the book under discussion. He writes.

"In respect of the Quran the matter was abundantly clear for the Muslim historian since according to Islamic dogma the Quran was the very speech of God could be ‘influenced’ by what Jews or Christians had written. So it came about that in many places where to the eye of the modern scholar Juda co-Christian influence obvious"\textsuperscript{103}, Watt elaborated the views.

At certain periods the practice of inventing stories was rife, and among the inventions were many tending to confirm an Arabic or Islamic origin for matters previously held by Jews or Christians, Watt gives an example and says. There is anecdote in which Muhammad is described as commending to his followers a prayer containing most of the clauses of the Lord’s prayer of the Christians.\textsuperscript{104}

In the first part of this book deals with the Umayyad period (661-750) This part divided into five parts first part is the internal struggle for power, second is the expansion of the Empire , third is the forms of
government and fourth and fifth are religious aspects of Umayyad rule, the beginning of the Islamic culture.

Others chapter subjects are Abbasid century 750-850, (The establishment of ‘Abbasid rule, The continuing political struggle, Arab self assertion in religion. Theology and the stimulus of Hellenism, Arab self — Assertion in the Humanities.

Third part is the Abbasid Decline 860-945 , it deals with the struggle at the centre, Growing Autonomy in the provinces . New forms of shiism, the consolidation of sunnism, Intellectual currents of the age.

Fourth part is the Buwayhid period (945-1055 ) it deals with the Empire of Buywayhids, the provincial Empires, Politics and theology, trends in literature, science and philosophy.

Last and the fifth part is the earlier Seljuq period (1055-1100), it deals with the Empire of the Great Saljuqs, the Mediterranean provinces, the intellectual struggle, In Epilogue Watt explains the replacement of Christian culture by Islamic.

An excellent bibliography and good appendix, to the readers watt gives a note on Arabic and a note on Islamic dates. Watt gives the full name of an Arab and of many non-Arab Muslims. He writes in the present work the dates have all been given according to Christian era. In
the sources, however they are all given according to the Islamic era, the era of the Hijra. This is considered to begun 16 July, A.D. 622, the first say of the old Arab year in course of which Muhammad made his Hijra or migration from Mecca to Medina. Unfortunately the calculation of equivalent Christian dates is a complex matter, since the Islamic year consists of twelve lunar months or 354 days.¹⁰⁵

**Islam and Christianity today – A Contribution to Dialogue:**

This book was published in 1983, is a very important addition to the long list of scholarly achievements by Watt¹⁰⁶, in which he looks at the whole subject of scholars studying other religion and seeks avenues for positive dialogue. He sees this book as a culmination of his own ‘inner dialogue’ since he considers the study of a religion other than one’s own a dialogue in itself.¹⁰⁷

In his forward in this book, *Shaikh Ahmad Zaki Yamani communals*: The very clear line of thought that has characterized his works, products of a distinguished career as an Islamist and Arabist, is evident in this book, his latest contribution to dialogue.¹⁰⁸

Watt sets out the primary concern of the work as doctrinal aspects of the meeting of the two religions, and hardly anything has been said
about ethical or other aspects Ethical aspects, in particular and are so complex that they would require a separate book.\textsuperscript{109}

Watt examines the traditional approaches and attitudes of both Christian and Muslims to each other and comes to an interesting and quite objective conclusion he writes.

The ‘distorted image’ however, has continued to influence the Western understanding of Islam into the present century, despite the efforts of scholars for two hundred years or more to correct the more flagrant distortions. Just as their efforts began to appear to be successful certain events linked with the present times are causing not a few westerners to turn back to the ‘distorted image.’\textsuperscript{110}

He does not share the fear that dialogue would lead to an amalgamation of faith, pointing out that rather it involves a mutual recognition where the various world religions accept one another as fellow climbers of the cloud covered mountain on whose summit in the mists God dwells unseen.\textsuperscript{111}

In his conclusion, Watt insists that every believer in God owes it as a duty to his creator, to himself and to his community to strive for a better understanding of people of other faiths.

This book consists of eight chapters such as are attitudes and approaches traditional Islamic attitudes to Christianity, Traditional
Christian attitudes to Islam, the nature of dialogue. The affirmation of religious truth against scientism, God the Creator, God as the Lord of history, Humanity to God Islam and Christianity today.

**Formative Period of Islamic Though:**

In this book Watt argues that the standard Muslim views are different from occidental’s views about the tradition. He writes that:

"The standard Muslim view also assumed that these devout men remembered from whom they had heard each anecdote or interpretation and mentioned the name when they retold it to others. In this way each item of knowledge came to be supported by a chain of authorities or isnad. In the course of time it was recognized by Muslim scholars that tradition about Muhammad could easily be distorted or even fabricated out of nothing, but it was held that, if there was an unbroken isnad back to Muhammad himself, containing only the names of reputable men, the tradition was trustworthy.\(^{112}\)

Occidental scholars have made devastating criticism of this standard Muslim views e.g. Ignaz Goldziher in the second volume of his *Muhammadanische studien* (1890) and Joseph Schacht in his *Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* (1950). Watt described the view of occidental scholar in the words.
"The latter in particular showed that up to the time of al-Shafii (d. 820) a complete isnad was in no way regarded as essential and that earlier writers gave anecdotes about Muhammad with a particular isnad i.e. only their immediate source, or none at all. Schacht also claimed to be able to show that in some cases an isnad had been produced backwards, that is, the earlier names in the chain had been added conjecturally. Goldziher showed how tradition had been affected by political and other sectional interests, and were far from being objective accounts of saying and action."^{113}

"Since writing the doctoral thesis which appeared in 1949 of free will and pre-destination in early Islam I have continued to be interested in the Islamic sects and have written a number of articles on aspects of this subject through my own work of this fields and that of other scholars: I have become convinced that before any attempt is made to describe the development of Islamic thought there has to be a radical critique of the sources."^{114}

When I commenced this book I had to include all that I still regarded as valuable in free will and predestination, but as I proceeded I realized that to do so would lead to imbalance in the treatment and therefore some material was condensed or omitted altogether."^{115}
The book has included a collection of 18 essays he wrote in Edinburgh between (105 and 10 A.D).

The book is a continuation of the insights evident in earlier works such as Free will and Predestination in Early Islam, Islamic Philosophy and Theology, and others he himself writes in his book.

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Islamic Creeds, A Selection

Islamic creeds, a selection, translation by W.M. Watt under Islamic survey’s General editor C. Hillenbrand published in 1954 (1994). In this book Watt has presented translation from 13 creeds. According to Watt about the ninety per cent of the Muslims in the world today are sunnites, and the other ten percent are nearly all Shiites of three different kinds so he described twelve Sunnite scholar jurists and one shii covering a period of about seven centuries Watt has selected in this book, 12 scholars from among the Sunnites three from Hanbalites four from Asharites three from Hanfites one from Maturides and one from Maliktes.146

The Hanbalites
Ahmad ibn Hanbal

A short Hanbalite creed

A longer Hanbalite creed

Al Ashari

Al Tahawi

The testament of Abu Hanifa

A later Hanafite creed

Al Qayrawani

Al Ghazali

Al-Nasafi, Al Sanusi, Allama I Hilli.

Another theological point which was discussed during the Umayyad caliphate (661-950) was God’s.

As regard the Hanbalites Creed’s are termed by Watt “A Hanbalite and a shorter Hanbalite Creed.

Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 855) Hanbalites creed has been narrated by his disciple Muhammad ibn ‘Awf, Watt also presented among the Asharites the creed of al Ashari (873-935) himself and Al Ghazali (1058-1111), Al Iji (1281-1355) and Al-Sanusi.117

Islam and the integration of Society:

In this book W.M. Watt tries to write something which will be of interest to both orientalists and sociologist.118 According to Watt this
book is likely to be read by those who have no specialist knowledge of Islam^119, and Watt says again in these words about this book:

"It is frequently held that there is no real unity in Islamic society and that we should rather take the view that there are several different societies, each with a religious which it traces back to the teachings of Muhammad. This is not necessary to deny that there is wide variety but only to insist that in some important senses Islam is a unity and that Islamic society has achieved some measure of harmony and integration.\textsuperscript{120} The aim of this book is to examine the positive achievements and to try to discover the general laws and principles exemplified in them.\textsuperscript{121}

Andreas D’souza says in his article about this book, Islam and the integration of society is addressed to orientlists and sociologists so that the latter become aware of the rich material available on Islam, and the former start asking sociological questions. Watts main concern in this book is a theme he returns to repeatedly in subsequent works. The possibility of integrating world society.\textsuperscript{122}

Perhaps a study of the achievements of Islam may through on have the integration of world society is likely to some about and may even suggest ways in which man may consciously contribute to this process.\textsuperscript{123}
This book was way first published in 1961 in U.A.E. This book contain seven chapters and every chapter has several parts. Every chapter is divided into two or three parts and every part is also divided into subparts. The first chapter is Problems and Presuppositions and the second chapter is the Place of Economic and Social Factors it contains 4 part is and the first parts also divided into 4 parts.

Second chapter is divided into three parts and the first parts and other parts are divided into other several sub parts. And this chapter deals with the rule of ideation.

The name of the fourth chapter is the Will to Unity and Disunity .This chapter is divided into five parts and every further subdivided into other parts.

First chapter deals with the place of economic and social factors. In this chapter W.M. Watt describes the origin of Islam in Mecca, Medina and rest of Arabia and some later .Islamic developments and the derivation of economic and religious changes.

Fifth chapter deals with the integration of political life, and is divided into 4 parts the first parts deals with the General Consideration, The second one is on the Community, and third is the Ruling Institution and the fourth is Conclusions.
Six chapter deals with the Integration of the Mores.

A History of Islamic Spain:

This short history of Islamic Spain covers the period from 711-1492 A.D. It deals with the Muslim conquest, the growth and grandeur under the Umayyads, the decline of Arab rule, and, finally, the reconquesta.

It pays special attention to social and religious movements and institutions to intellectual and to creative life, including poetry, philosophy, mysticism, art and architecture.

First published in 1965 it was reprinted in 1967 and the paperback edition in 1977. It contains eleven chapters and every chapter has 3 or 4 sub chapters.

The "Islamic surveys" services is designed to give the educated readers something more than can be found in the usual popular books. Each work undertakes to survey a special part of the field, and to show the present stage of scholarship here. Full and annotated bibliographies will afford guidance to those who want to pursue their studies further.125

While the series is addressed in the first place to the educated readers, with little or no previous knowledge of the subject, its character is such that it would be of value to university students and others whose interest is of more professional kind.126
Islamic Philosophy and Theology:

This book was first published in 1962 and substantially extended in the later edition in 1985. The "Islamic Surveys" series is designed to give the educated reader, something more than can be found in the usual popular books each work undertakes to survey a special port of the field, and to show the present stage of scholarship here, and full and annotated bibliographies will afford guidance to those who want to pursue their studies further. While the series is addressed in the first place to the educated reader, with little or no previous knowledge of the subject, its character is such that it should be of value also to university students and others whose interest is of a more professional kind. In this survey Islamic philosophy and theology are to be looked at together in a chronological framework.

This book consists of five parts and nineteen chapters. Watt gives the sources of the material before the chapters and also gives a list of primary, secondary materials and modern studies. In the first part Watt looks at the Umayyad period, and the second part concerning the first wave of Hellenism 750-950. Part three is "the second wave of Hellenism" and the fourth part deals with "The period of darkness" followed by the last and fifth part "The New Dawn".
Watt surveys the historical development of philosophical and religious thoughts in the Muslim world, particularly its early formative period. He analyses the sectarianism that followed the death of Muhammad, describes the assimilation into Islam of Greek thought, leading to the elaboration of theology on the basis of Aristotelian logic.\textsuperscript{130}

Watt's Islamic Philosophy and Theology' is widely recognized as the general account in English. Now re-issued in the new Islamic surveys format it is available for another generation of student and scholars. Watt takes the reader through the development of Philosophy. He shows how medieval Islam assimilated Greek thought, particularly Aristotelian logic in its early stages, and traces the development of Islamic philosophy to early middle ages. He then examines the elaboration of Shiism and the supposed stagnation of Islamic thought from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries.

According to W.M. Watt the aim of the last concluding chapter is simply to give a general picture of the problems now confronting Islamic theology. Philosophy need not be considered separately, since there are now no “bearers of Islamic philosophy apart from the theologians.”\textsuperscript{131}

Two educational systems functioning side by side has created two distinct classes of intellectuals, the ulema or old-fashioned religious intellectuals, and the new western educated intellectuals. In Watt's view
both of these are, largely cut off from the common people; the Ulema because of their excessive philosophizing and because of the rigidity which prevented adaptation to changing conditions, and the Modern because they had become almost completely western in their outlook.¹³²

Watt gives a suggestion that the Ulema have become alive to the need for reform, and they have devised various methods or stratagems for bringing the legal practice of Islamic countries more in line with the general world outlook although they have been much slower.¹³³

What is Islam:

This book written in 1968 is about what Islam is in this book he discusses the history of Islam whilst considering its future as a way of life. Capable of making important contributions to developments in international affairs in epilogue, he describes the trends that Islam has been taking in the twelve years since the book was first written.¹³⁴

The second edition of this work was published in 1979. It was published as part of the ‘Arab Background’ series under the general editorship of Nicola. A Ziadeh, then of the American university of Beirut. In his preface to this work Ziadeh explains:

“The series was meant to educate the English speaking populace of the role of Islam as the, guiding principle of the Arab world.”¹³⁵
In the introduction, Watt looks at Thomas Carlyle’s public lecture on 18th May, 1840 in Edinburgh in which, perhaps for the first time, a westerner pronounced Muhammad as sincere with and the religion of Islam basically true an open and earnest soul.136

Still, Watt argues, Carlyle had one basic hurdle to overcome, a hurdle which has plagued and will possibly continue137 deep-seated prejudice which goes back to the “war propaganda” of medieval times.138

The enormous spiritual and military threat posed by Islam was instantly seen as the greatest enemy to Christendom. Therefore, in deadly year Christendom had to bolster confidence by placing the enemy in the most unfavourable light possible, consistent with some genuine basis in fact. The image created in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries continued to dominate European thinking about Islam, and even in the second half of the twentieth century has some vestigial influence.139

Though Watt leaves room for acceptance of the Quaran as embodying a large measure of truth, he writes at the same time we cannot fully accept the standard Islamic view that the Quran is wholly true and the criterion of all other truth, for in the strictly historical field, we cannot hold that the Quran overrides the usual canons of historical evidence.140
Watt views about Dogma and Unity of Islam. He says “The view that Islam is something absolutely unchanging has been popular with Muslims in the past and is still held firmly by some. Similar views are indeed held about other religions by their adherents. In the case of Islam such a view doubtlessly owes something to the outlook of the Arabs of the desert.”

In Watt’s view about the unity “The difficulty of regarding Islam as a unity is also made clear when one considers the various sects and the variations in practice from region to region. Similar difficulties arise when one considers the variations in local practice in various counties. Watt further argued that “some Occidental observers have gone so far as to say that there is not one Islam but many the question whether Islam is one or many is not a question that can receive an objective answer”.

‘What is a Islam’ is a significant work not only for its being some sort of a comparative study of Islam and Christianity but also because of the sociology of knowledge that manifests in it and various attitudes and trends that he discusses and presents in this work.

Significance of the understanding of W.M. Watt are his remarkable words: “Critics of my books on Muhammad have accused me of not stating my views clearly presumably they meant that I did not state a view obviously concordant with their own, or else one they could easily
denounce as false. I may have fought shy of a decision, but the matter is difficult when one is writing for a great variety of readers who will understand the key concept in many different ways. May I put my position as follows "I am not a Muslim in the usual sense, though I hope I am a Muslim as ‘One surrendered to God’ but I believe that embedded in the Quran and other expressions of the Islamic vision are vast stores of divine truth from which I and other occidentals have still much to learn."

In chapter eleven "Islam in a competitive world " Watt purposes to consider false attitudes under the three heads, viz : isolationist, inflationary and fixational Watt writes again on these three attitudes.

The three following sections deal with some illustrations in the Islamic world of the three attitudes.

Watt tried to write here about this book and the author goes on to argue that :I hope it will be clear to Muslim readers that these are the criticisms of a friend intending to help towards the o. What has been said in this section will show that I make similar criticism of Christianity and other religions, while it will be clear, I hope, from the final chapter of this book that I have a high positive appreciation of Islam.

In the last chapter of this book under the title “Islamic values today” Watt deals with the Islamic values in individual and communal
life and says that the Islamic ethical ideal is not very different from the ethical ideals of the other religions and the virtues such as honesty or respect for property, truthfulness, respect of life, respect for marriage, endurance of hardship, and concern for the weak and needy, must have place in any great civilization.\textsuperscript{144}

In the concluding chapter, Watt looks at Islamic values in the contemporary world. He acknowledges that so much moral abuse has been hurled at Muhammad in Europe over many centuries that it is difficult if not impossible, for any occidental to think of him as a moral exemplar.\textsuperscript{145}

In his concluding paragraph, Watt looks back at his analysis of the question raised by the title what is Islam and reassures himself that he has done justice to it by appealing to both Muslims and non-Muslims to acknowledge his efforts. He writes:

"It is my hope that this book will enable occidental to understand better this living and powerful community which is both their partner and their rival, and also that it will show Muslims how a sympathetic occidental sees them and will thus bring them to appreciate another facet of their own identity".\textsuperscript{146}
ARTICLES

SECULAR HISTORIANS AND THE STUDY OF MUHAMMAD

In this article W.M. Watt shows that the all works of history should follow scientific historical methods, and describes the nineteenth century Western writers aim and Watt write because of this aim they tended to use strict historical method throughout, and this led them, among other things, to reject the authenticity of not Hadith.\textsuperscript{147} Watt compare the writing of Muslim and western writers and says that the scientific historical methods of western writers were hostile to Islam and its Prophet. He admitted this claim and denied some other things and says”\textsuperscript{148}

It must certainly be admitted that hostility was present in such works, but the contention of the present paper is that hostility was due to personal attitudes of the writers and not to scientific historical methods.

In the nineteenth century Western historians of Muhammad and early Islam it is not surprising that Muslims feel that they generally gave a hostile picture while no Muslim writers sufficiently deeply versed in scientific historical methods was able to make effective criticism.

Watt argued that : There were Eastern writers hostile to Christianity some even claimed that they could prove that Jesus had never lived, Christian scholars became more experts in scientific historical
methods and were able to show to expose the weakness in hostile arguments, when properly understood and interpreted, led to richer conception of Christianity.

In the time of Al-Ghazali, the intellectual development of Islam is the closest parallel to the situation. The difficulty here was in respect not of history but of theology or Kalam.

Watt gives suggestion to Muslims and writes his personal views about to Muslim that how they should write in proper and writer way- I believe that at present time it is important that more Muslims should become experts in scientific historical methods and should apply these to some of the more difficult matters concerning the life of Muhammad and the early history of Islam. There are already, of course, a few Muslim historical experts working in this field, but the work requires to be further...extended.

Watt further says that a Turkish Muslim scholar, Fuat Sezgin, Producing a mammoth new history of Arabic literature is being accepted by western scholars as the standard work on the subject and is replacing the previous standard work, that of Brockelmann. And the thirty page introduction to the section of Hadith in the volume is coming to be recognized in the west as a landmark in Hadith studies. He has done this by collecting a great amount of material about the use of writing in the
transmission of Hadith. He has made the first step towards a new appreciation of Hadith on the part of both Muslims and western scholars. It is to be hoped that there will be many more Muslim scholars of this calibre.\textsuperscript{149}

**The authenticity of the works attributed to al-Ghazali:**

This article is divided into three parts. The first part is “The problem and its importance” here Watt says that before the invention of printing press when copies of a book were few, it was common to find works falsely attributed to an author.\textsuperscript{150} He gives D.B. Macdonald and Goldziher’s views.

The second part is “General Principles” this part is further divided into three points and Watt himself states that “I pass on to consider three points which, I claim, provide three criteria of the authenticity of the works attributed to \textit{al-Ghazali} \textsuperscript{151}”

Third part is “Provisional Results and conclusions”

**Free will and predestination in Early Islam:**

In this article Watt describes the difference between Islam and Christianity on the question of free will and predestination and writes: It is commonly held that one of the striking difference between Christianity
and Islam is that the farmer insists on the freedom of will, whereas the latter teaches predestination.\textsuperscript{152}

Watt says that the matter is not nearly so simple and gives the examples "St. Paul believed in predestination in some sense of the word, and the Augustinian and Calvinistic strains in Christianity have elaborated that aspect of his teachings. On the other hand, the doctrine of free will in the form given to it by Pelagius is accounted hereby orthodox Christianity.\textsuperscript{153}

According to Watt the following studies will show that there is almost as much diversity within Islam.

Watt gives the words of a standard Anglican theologian.

"Scripture holds before us two great counter-truths-first, God's absolute sovereignty (Cp. Rom . 9 20 ff) and secondly, man's responsibility, our intellects cannot reconcile them.

So far as we can reconcile them at all it is by right action and vigorous moral life".\textsuperscript{154}

Both these great truths will be found in Islam, though the balances are weighted in favour of the first. Just because of that, however, western Christianity with its rather planarian sympathies has probably something to learn from Islam.\textsuperscript{155}
In the conclusion Watt says that this study has perhaps served to show that the difference between Christianity and Islam on the question of free will and predestination is in same way much less than is commonly supposed.\textsuperscript{156}

The logical basis of Early kalam:

This article have been taken from the Islamic quarterly and in this article William Montgomery Watt describes the knowledge of early Kalam and says that Ibn Khaldun in a well known passage explains how the later Kalam, beginning with al-Ghazali, had a different logical basis from that of the earlier period. To understand the change brought about by al-Ghazali it is necessary to have some idea of the earlier conceptions of knowledge and epistemology, and no better introduction can be found than the first chapter of K. Usul and Din by al-Baghdadi (d. 1037) we have other works K al-Irshad by al-Juwayni Imam al-Haramayn (d. 1085), but the less subtle presentation of al- Baghdadi is more suitable for preliminary study\textsuperscript{157}. Watt added a few simple comments.\textsuperscript{158}

Early discussion about the Quran:

In this article W.M. Watt dealt with the discussions about the uncreatedness of the Quran among the Muslim theologians from the early to our days. He says that the Quran among Muslim theologians up to the
time of al-Ashari is not of purely antiquarian interest, it has a direct
bearing on the problem of time and eternity which is some time said to be
the most important Philosophical question of this age. In the end
however, men are usually driven to undertake a reconcile by the
requirement of apologetic against other religions or against fellow
members of their own religion who emphasize different aspects of it.\textsuperscript{159}

Watt gives his views and quoted \textit{Al-Mamun} suggestion in these
words – It has sometimes been claimed that Christian influence was
important in the evolution of Muslim views about the word of God, but
detailed study gives little support to this claim. There was doubtless some
familiarity with the outlines of Christian doctrine Al Mamun himself
drew a comparison between Muslims of the opposing party and the
Christians on this very point but any strong influence would presuppose a
much deeper understanding of Christian theology than any Muslim
possessed.

Watt further describes questions about the Quran and writes; Its
ultimate basis was the belief that God had spoken to Muhammad, or
perhaps rather had spoken through him to the Arabs and other Muslims,
the Quran was what had been said, and therefore it must be God’s Word
or speech.\textsuperscript{160} Undoubtedly, then both these convictions express something
fundamental to the Muslim faith, but just becomes of that they quickly
lead to the Philosophical and metaphysical problems to the relation of the eternal and temporal.\textsuperscript{161}

Watt has given a very interesting and valuable account of the theologian's views about the whether Quran is created or uncreated as follows:

1. **The Jahmiya**: The Jahmiya held the doctrine of tawhid, the assertion of the unity (of God), which in practice meant an extreme monotheism.\textsuperscript{162} One expression of this is the view that paradise and hell will come to an end, together with all those who dwell in them, so that God alone will remain in solitary state to all eternity, just as He from all eternity before He created the world.\textsuperscript{163}

2. **Al-Ma'mun and the Mihna**: W.M. Watt writes that al-Tabri in his History has preserved some letters of the caliph al Mamun, the friend of the mutazilite, written when he was trying to make the acceptance of the createdness of the Quran compulsory for all state officials. These may be regarded as a sample of Mutazili arguments.\textsuperscript{164} Mamun upheld the principle of Tawhid which was common to Mutizila and Jahmiya.

3. **Ahmad b. Hanbal and the doctrine of Uncreatedness**: *Al-Ashari* gives a last of the older doctors who held the first detailed
account of the arguments for the eternity of the Quran is found in
the biographical and historical notices about Ahmad b. Hanbal.\(^{165}\)

Those Muslims who said the Quran was created mostly also said
that God created no evil, those who denied the createdness of the
Quran mostly affirmed that God was the creator of everything, both
good and evil, and that implies that creation does not express His
essential being that was the fundamental issue between the Jahmiya
and Ahmad b. Hambal.\(^{166}\)

4. **Mediating views**: According to Watt brief accounts have been
preserved of views which come somewhere near those of the
Jahmiya and Mutazila on the one hand, and of Ahmad b. Hambal on
the other. These views are interesting is that they give us a glimpse
of Muslim Thought Wrestline with various problems in the
relation of God the eternal to temporal and historical events and in
particular to the fact that the Quran "was not, then it was".

5. **Man’s Utterance of the Quran**: According to Watt fresh
problems are raised by the fact that Quran can be recited, written
and understood. How is it possible for man to recite the word of
God. In one respect this is the problem of eternal and temporal in a
new form.\(^{167}\)
6. **Al-Ashari**: Watt write from his book "Al-Ibana “an usul al-Diyana” we have comparative full information about al-Ashari’s arguments about the Quran. These argument mostly aim at disproving that the Quran is created and establishing its eternity. He very clearly stands in the tradition of Ahmad b Humbal and the group around him, repeating and developing the arguments used. Among these arguments are several of those from verses of the Quran.

In the concluding remark of this article watt stated that such are the heading views on these matters in the formative period of Muslim theology. It is remarkable how much of the discussion touches on questions that are of interest to western and particularly Christian thinkers.

**Economic and social aspects of the origin of Islam**:

In this article Watt discussed the economic and social aspects of the origin of Islam, and says it is thus not merely interesting in itself, it is also a good specimen test case for closer investigation on the wider issues raised by the Marxists.

Watt says about the article and write for the main part of this article I shall treat the subject on its own merits, but in conclusion I shall briefly
touch on these general matters and try to point the moral of this particular study.

He divided this article into four points:

1. **The Economic Milieu:**

   When the question is raised whether the rise of Islam corresponds to any great economic change, the first possibility to be considered is a change of climatic conditions on the Arabian steppe. Islam was born, not in the desert, but in an atmosphere resembling that of the city of London. Islam originated in Mecca, and the men of Mecca had passed from a nomadic economy to a mercantile and financial one, instead of gaining a livelihood breeding camels and sheep, they now did to by organizing long distance trading caravans.

   **The social repercussions of the Economic change:**

   An economic change of this sort is bound to social repercussions, though they are more difficult to isolate and describe. In Mecca where Muhammad preached there were at the top a few powerful men probably those who were able to organize caravans and these had practically monopolistic control of all the trading operations. Wealth was thus making men individualistic and breaking up the solidarity of the group,
weather tribe or family. There was consequently a feeling of insecurity in many sections of the community.

According to Watt it is a mistake, however, to think that it was the poor and indigent who were to attracted Muhammad’s preaching only a few of these are mentioned in the basis of early Muslims and perhaps some of this small number are classed as ‘weak’ not because of poverty, but because they lacked adequate tribal protection. The bulk of Muhammad’s followers in Mecca were junior members of the most powerful families and senior members of less important families Islam was not a movement of down and outs. 172

3. The Religious change:

Watt writes about the religious conditions in the time of Prophet in particular Mecca in these words. The Meccans to whom Muhammad first preached, were men in whose outlook humanism and vague monotheism were prominent. Their beliefs had no expression in a cult, and they may not always have been aware of the incompatibility of monotheism with certain polytheistic practices, but they were not simple pagans. The message he delivered to them to contain in the Quran, and in those passages which are generally agreed to be earliest there are no attacks on polytheism. Such attacks are made in the Quran, but they first appeared late in Muhammad’s Meccan Period. 173
4. Development of Islam:

The message originally delivered by Muhammad emphasized points which were relevant to the needs of the Meccans in early seventh century A.D. By his preaching Muhammad gathered together a number of followers, and for a time apparently all went well. The stream of new adherents to Muhammad’s religion almost dried up, and some of the early adherents may have detached themselves.  

The Christianity criticized in the Quran

The aim of this article is to take a fresh look at the criticism or apparent criticisms or apparent criticism of Christianity to be found in the Quran, and to consider whether these are attacks on orthodox Christianity, or whether they should not be regarded as attacks on Christian heresies which orthodox Christians would themselves criticize.

The enmity between the Muslims and the Christians is believed to have started after the conquest of Mkkah when Muslims started expanding their empire and were met with Christian opposition. The start of the hostility gave rise to criticisms—many of which were actually directed to the heretic Christians rather than the Orthodox Christians. One of the major criticism that have been raised is that Christians believe in
three Gods—a concept that is mistakenly associated with the Orthodox Church which officially claims to believe in one God only. Secondly, the Qur’an talks of the “Virgin Birth” as a miracle, but in recent times it being said that if scientifically birth from a virgin is impossible then does this disprove the divinity of Jesus (sws)? This general argument has been wrongly associated with the Qur’an; thus once again the Qur’an is said to be criticizing Christians when in reality it is just a matter of interpretation.

Referring to Waraqah and Negus and their apparent friendliness or sympathy for Muhammad, Watt claims that Quranic ideas were revised, so that critiques earlier known to be directed at Jesus were now applied to Christians. He insists that the Quranic understanding of the Christian doctrine of trinity is at best described as ‘Tritheism’ Which Christians vigorously deny.

Even in the specific Quranic reference to the Christian doctrine of the sonship of Jesus, in Surah al-Tawbah(9:3), Watt maintains that this was not intended as an attack on the orthodox Christian conception of sonship of Christ, but on something else. 

On the Quranic claim that Jesus was not killed on the cross but it was made to appear like it to the people {surah-al-Nisa 4:157-8} Watt interprets it in a unique way. He writes once again the primary denial is
of something heretical, namely, the Jewish contention that the crucification had been a victory for them, and this same denial would of course be most vigorously affirmed by Christian orthodoxy.\(^\text{177}\)

His conclusion is that rather attacking primary Christian orthodoxy, the Quran is championing its cause in the face of heresy and Jewish invectives.

**The Expedition Al-Hudaibiya Reconsidered\(^\text{178}\):**

In this article Watt dealt with the Muslim Scholar, Furrukh B. Ali's article "Al-Hudaybiya an alternative version" and says that Mr. Furrukh Ali sets out from a very dubious assumption, while Watt strongly disagrees with all this.

**Philosophy and Social structure in Almohad Spain:**

This article does not deal with this philosophy which the flowering of Philosophy in Islamic Spain during the period of Almond rule is a culture phenomenon with fascinating ramifications) as a whole but concentrate one particular question. How for do certain philosophical doctrines of Ibn-Tyfayl and Ibn-Rushd (Averroes) reflect the social structure under the Almohad regime, and to consider this question, it is necessary to look at the teaching of the founder of Almonad movement, Ibn-Tumart, he was a fierce opponent of anthropomorphism, ‘tajism’ this was one of the points in which he was in agreement with the Ash arites, it
was also a mark of the kinship of his views with those of Mutazilite theologians and neo platonic philosopher.\textsuperscript{179}

Finally Watt write about the sociology and Islam and states the study of Islam from a sociological point of view might itself help to increase Islamic unit of one of the serious tension.

"There is a need for Muslim to study sociology and then to study their own religion from a sociological stand point. In this way Muslims will share in this new sociological (and scientific) understanding of religion which look like being a feature of the next quarter century".\textsuperscript{180}

By saying this treatment Mr. Watt tried to say that the Muslim have a no complete knowledge of their religion. The Quran is a full of knowledge of religion of Islam. Muslims learned the Quran than now can possible they have no knowledge about the Islam. Comparison with the other who believe in religion other than Islam. Persian like Cheristia Jews while Mr. Watt was a Christian who deliverer this statement.

In the first and second section of this article Watt write the detail and aim of the conference.

In the third section Watt write the political problem of the dry and gives the some suggestion of the scholars, and says 'The scholar has admitted his involvement in the political problems of the day, he should
try as a scholar to understand the nature of these problems, he ought to try
to see his work as a scholar against the background of the major issues of
his century. Pure scholarship is little more than curiosity run riot, and a
luxury that we can less and less afford in the present age.\textsuperscript{181}

After these preliminary remark watt gives a personal statements
and states how I understand the central problem of the present age and
how I think Islamic studies can contribute to its pollution. So that the
reader way discount my ideological bias I add that my upbringing has
been in the British (More particularly Scottish) Christian tradition.\textsuperscript{182}

In the conclusion of this article professor Watt Write:

That there is at least a Prime facie case for holding that some of the
Philosophical doctrine of Ibn-Tufayl and Ibn-Rushd reflect aspects of the
social structure in al-Andalus. Ibn-Tumart’s critique of ‘mere opinion’
suggests a desire for objectivity that is probably also to be seen in the
work of Ibn-Hazm, and the question underlying the work of Ibn-Tufayl
and Ib-Rushd of how scientific and Philosophical thinking can be
influential in political life in a sense answered in the prolegomena of Ibn-
Khaldun.\textsuperscript{183}

**THOUGHT IN ISLAMIC UNITY:**

This article of watt is a reflection of von Grunebanum’s book
‘unity and variety in Muslim civilization, and this book is best described
as the report of a conference on this subject need at Liege and Spa in Belgium in September 1953.\textsuperscript{184}

With in Islam at the present time is that between the exponents of traditional Islamic thought and the Western educated Muslims whose basic stand point is that of the empirical sciences.\textsuperscript{185}

Watt give the suggestion to Western educated Muslims and writes: there is a need for Muslims to study sociology and then to study their own religion from a sociological stand point. In this way Muslims will share in this new sociological (and scientific) understanding of religion which looks like a feature of the next quarter century.\textsuperscript{186}

**Thoughts on Islam Christian Dialogue**

In this article W.M. Watt described the meaning of dialogue and writes: The word dialogue has become fashionable in some circles nowadays, and people talk glibly about the fact and necessity of dialogue. The word conjures up pictures of serious minded adherents of the two religions or ideologies, perhaps academics, sitting around a table and discussing abstruse theological or philosophical questions. Dialogue is far from describing all that is actually happening today in respect of Muslim Christian relations.\textsuperscript{187}

To express a new word instead of dialogue he says that what is actually happening is that we need a word to suggest something much
more pervasive than ‘dialogue’ some writers speak of us as living in a condition of ‘inter-religion’ and this is a useful term for it indicates the fact that the present time there is a greater mixing of the adherents of different religions than in any previous age.\textsuperscript{188}

Watt further stated that where men had a high centuries old culture and were proud of it, there has been little Christian penetration, now-a-days however the elites of the high culture of Asia and the Islamic world are sending their young people to Europe and America for studies. At the same time, far more occidentals are traveling to Asia and the Islamic world, and are meeting people there as equals, not as superiors.

Watt stated that it is clear that one cannot expect men of the other faiths to read extensively in the Christian faith, so as to gain a clearer idea of something about which the average Christian is not clear. It is also clear that, Whatever a handful of missionaries may do, the average Christians is not going to make himself an expert in the thought forms of Islam and Buddhism. There is a place for the Christian expert in Islam and for the Muslim expert in Christianity. In the main, however, the presentation of Christianity to Muslims must be in terms of modern scientific thought.\textsuperscript{189}

He elaborates on the idea that Christian thoughts should be presented to Muslims and people of other religions through secular
scientific arguments. In the conclusion Watt writes: We are called to seek involvement in contemporary secular thought as a response not merely to the internal concerns and tensions of occidental culture (in which western Christendom is comprised) but also to the great new fact of our century, namely, our condition of "inter-religion".  

1. The Problems Before Islam Today:

Watt writes about the article himself and says that in this article I want to continue this discussion, and to contribute something from the standpoint of an orientlist who looks at Islam from without. Recently a number of Islamic literature was largely devoted to considering the present condition of Islam. In that distinguished Muslims looked at Islam from within and called attention to points where there were defects that could be remedied.

Watt says that: I do not propose however to critics the interesting and valuable papers that appeared in that number but to follow a complementary line. I shall not ask "what is wrong with Islam today" and attempt to give an alternative answer. Instead I shall put the related question, what are the problems confronting Islam" and attempt to answer that.
According to him "The special circumstances in which the Islamic countries find themselves at the present time are mainly due to the great scientific and technological developments which have taken place in Europe during the last 150 or 200 years."

In this Article Watt has attempted to clearly define the problems which are forcing Islam today and he says "now the whole world is much near in time to any given city in it and there are no geographical limits to prevent the whole world from being ruled from single city".¹⁹²

He goes on to say: "The Islamic countries (in common with other countries) have thus a problem of external relation. It is the problem of how to obtain a satisfactory position for themselves in the "one world".¹⁹³ There is also a problem of internal relations which is more immediately urgent, though not ultimately more serious. And the effect of the economic impact of Europe on the Islamic countries has been to disturb the balanced of classes. It must appeal to ordinary men who are living in the state of tension caused by the problems extreme and internal relation already described.

Watt attempts to give an alternative answer about these problems and writes "To restate old truths with a fresh emphasis is, of course, not to change them and it is this possibly of re-statement that allows us to
hope that an old religion will succeed in producing the basis for a new social system for the whole world.194

And Watt further writes “in the eyes of orientalists is the challenge to Muslim of the present situation of Islamic countries. It is the challenge to express the fundamentals of Islam in their words, in their individual lives and in the life of their community, that on this basis a new social system for the whole world becomes possible. The task is immense. The difficulties are formidable. There are factors that might lead man to despair of success. Yet success is not impossible if men, relying on the help of God, are ready to respond to the challenge of the hour.195

The use of the word Allah in English:

This article was written by W.M. Watt and published in Muslim World. In this article Watt tried to write the similarities and the differences between the word ‘Allah’ and ‘God’. The author goes on to argue that: “The time seems to have come to make a protest against the use of the ‘Allah’ in English in connection with Islam. The recent emphasis in missionary thinking on getting along side the Muslim demands the abandonment of this usage, which tends to widen the gap between Christians and Muslims rather than reduce it, and which in any case appears to be of recent origin.”196
According to Watt: The use of the word Allah is perhaps originally a literary device to give an eastern atmosphere. It has associations with the romantic east of the early nineteenth century. A publisher of famous novels with the alternative from ‘Allah’ and ‘God’ will unfailingly choose.

Christians make it clear that they do not accept the claim of Islam to supersede Christianity but is the use of the word ‘Allah’ instead of ‘God’ a good way of doing so.

In this way the use of Allah seems to imply that the connotation of the world ‘Allah’ for the Muslim is different from the connotation of the word ‘God’ for Christian.

At the last of this article Watt says that there are the Christian Arabs, for God they use the word ‘al-lah’ their ancestors probably used it before the time of Muhammad, for most of them belong to the ancient churches, and there were many, Christian Arabs by Muhammad’s time.

W.M. Watt gave his views and suggestions in these words. If there is some justification for using Allah of which I am not aware, I should be glad to learn it. If there is not, I would plead with my fellow Christians, in the interests of communication with Muslims, to abandon this unfortunate usage.
Shiism Under the Umayyads:

This article “Shiism under Umayyads” is divided into three parts. The first part is “The early revolts in this part Watt dealt with the revolts against the Umayyads. And the second part is Al-Mukhtar. Al-Mukhtar, the originator of Shiites was Al-Mukhtar. b. Abi ‘Ubayd ath-Thaqafi, who had to go into exile shortly before karbala, and joined the Penitents in 684. Mukhtar said he would base his policy on “The book of God, the Sunnah of the Prophet, vengeance for the family, defence of the weak, and the Jihad against the evildoers. According to Watt Al-Mukhtar included not only the book and Sunnah the central principles of any Islamic government, but also the aim of the Penitents (tawwabun) and when he got control of Kufah he actually executed those responsible for killing “the family” at Karbala the “defence of the weak” referred specially to the clients or Mawali.

The third part of this article is “The period of Quiescence and the latter revolts” According to Watt, the descendants of al-Husayn, who latter become imams or the imamites, were not during their lifetime the centre of any political or religious movement of consequence. The biographies of these men have been touched up by Shiite (Imamate) writers in the attempt to show that all along they claimed to be imams and
acted as such\textsuperscript{202}. After the defeat of al-Mukhtar in 686 there is no real historical events involving the Shiite movement until 737.\textsuperscript{203}

**Towards A world Religion By W.M. Watt:**

In this article W.M. Watt contains some fruitful ideas. The claim made by him that this world has become or is likely to become one world is open to serious doubts. Neither physical propinquity nor the exchange and free flow of ideas is an unmixed blessing. It is leading to as much conflict as the past. Powerful nations are trying to impose their own ideas on others. The economic and political imperialism of the past is giving way to ideological imperialism and the fight is as sharp as ever.\textsuperscript{204}

Watt defines the one world as – “It is a common place at the present time the world has become “one world”. It is worth while, however thinking, a little about this phrase “one world” for there are many different kinds of unity. As soon as we begin to think about the implication of “one world” it is clear that, whereas the world may be one in some senses there are another senses in which it is not one.\textsuperscript{205}

W.M. Watt explain about the world religion and says: Nationalism cannot unite hostile nations. Class feeling cannot unite hostile classes, thus, if this one world of ours with its hostile classes and nations is to be integrated there must be some force beyond those just
mentioned. History suggests that the only possible force is religion or something closely akin to religion. In this respect, Islam has a great achievement to its credit, and is one of the outstanding examples of the integrative force of religion. Islam has spread over a large part of the world and has adherents among many different races. Among these varied groups it has established a large degree of brotherhood and honourly. It is thus a conspicuous example of how religion leads to the integration of diverse group and communities.

Watt suggests how man can help to commend his own religion to the rest of the world, and gives some points.

1. One of the first things is that he must steep himself thoroughly in the fundamental conceptions and dogmas of his own religion, so that they become as it were, second nature to live.

2. And the second is a man must have a deep appreciation of the needs of his own time, especially of that part of the world and section of society in which he lives.

3. Thirdly, a man must have some appreciation of the way in which members of others religions and other sections of society look of the problems of their time.
Finally Watt says: The allegiance of men to a new religion is not won simply by reasoned arguments, through reasoned arguments undoubtedly have their part to play. Ultimately the allegiance of men is gained by the presentation of a conception or set of conceptions which catch their imagination and kindle a fire within them now this happens, and when this happens, no man can be quite certain.\textsuperscript{210}

\textbf{Thoughts on Muslim-Christian Dialogue By W.M. Watt:}

This article published in \textit{Hamdard Islamicus}, and editor of Hamdard Islamicus gives a note about this article and writes: The following article which may be called a monograph is a scholarly and thoughtful attempt of Professor Montgomery Watt, one of the participants of the seminar (which was held in Tripoli, Libya in February 1976. It was attended by 500 leading Muslim and Christian scholars from over 50 countries) to present his reflection on the deliberation of the seminar and to elaborate pertinent arising questions out of it.\textsuperscript{211}

The opening paragraph, are addressed mainly to Christian, and editor gives his views and writes that since the writer is a Christian he is most likely to have influence with his fellow Christians: we must also appreciate his courageous attitude in exposing certain misunderstandings about Islam among the Christians and particularly his frank remark that “the British Christian is generally very badly informed about Islam.”\textsuperscript{212}
Here W.M. Watt discussed about the meeting of Christians and Muslims and two or more than two religions and says. There was a relatively small number of meetings between fellows of different religions, but these normally remind at a superficial level. Indeed, especially between Muslims and Christians, traditional attitudes encouraged the maintenance of superficiality and prevented and deeper religious encounter.

In this article Watt shows the resembleness of Islam and Christianity and writes: In Christianity and Islam many technical terms in common such as religion, ‘revolution’ Prophet.

Watt thinks that Christians do not believe in three Gods and says Christians believe in one God and also believe, like the Muslims, that there is no deity other than God, and Christians combine their belief that God is one with the belief that he is also somehow threefold. This is known as the doctrine of the Trinity.

The one thought of Watt is that the Biblical Prophets did not all proclaim the same message. The common view among Muslims is that all prophets proclaimed the same message Watt stats that prophets of the old testament have each a distinctive message, specially adopted in conditions in their own times. Some spoke of God’s continuing love for His people despite their sins in worshipping other Gods, etc.
Watt describes the reasons of distorted image of Islam by Christian scholars in Western Europe and says from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries there was, largely because of the crusades, much study of Islam by Christian scholars in Western Europe, but the result was the creation of a ‘distorted image’ of Islam and something of these distortions is still present in the minds of westerns in the twentieth century. According to Watt the reasons for the distortions are not far to seek. The Muslims were established in Europe, in Spain and Sicily, and up to eleventh century western Europeans had been conscious of the superiority of the Muslims, not only militarily and economically but also in the intellectual sphere (notably in Philosophy and science) and in the arts of gracious living.

Watt stated that the accusation that Islam is a religion of violence and sword may seem to be justified by history, but this is so only on a superficial reading of events and he further says that Islam was from the first a body politic as well as religion, and the body politic was often involved in warfare a war against non-Muslims was normally regarded as a Jihad or ‘holy war’ but the aims of such a war were political and economic not religious.

In this article Watt writes about the distorted image of Islam and says that the assertion that Islam is a religion of sexual indulgence is based on the fact that a Muslim may legally have four wives, that
Muhammad had even more than that number, and the Quran describes how in Paradise dark-eyed maidens (nouris) will be provided for the faithful Muslims" and further says that the Christian of today is in no position to condemn outright the sexual ethics of Islam.\textsuperscript{222}

**CONDEMNATION OF THE JEWS OF BANU QURAYZAH : A STUDY OF THE SOURCES OF THE SIRAH\textsuperscript{223} :**

This article is a response to the statement made by Caetani about the responsibility for the slaughter of the men of Banu Qurayzah falling on the Prophet (sws). To refute this statement and also using this as an example, Watt has introduced the concept of isnad, that is, use of a complete chain of authority to verify a certain tradition. Since the earliest authorities might have ignored mentioning the sources, Montgomery introduces a concept of "hypothetical reconstruction" which bases the earlier links in the chain on what the scholars believed would have been true (justified in most of the case), as opposed to what Dr. Joseph Schacht believes, which is that the constructions are just inventions. Watt then uses the distinction between scientific and informal transmissions to highlight the possibility of fabrication in the traditions and to separate historical facts from legal doctrines. He then concludes the article by defending the Islamic stance on sirah, by saying that scholars must realize
what the core argument is, before raising questions on the biography of the Prophet (sws).

The reliability of ibn Ishaq’s sources

This article starts by pointing out the weakness in the Western view of the collection of sirah by Ibn Ishaq, which are that the origin of the chronology are unknown and secondly that the Western Scholars have failed to distinguish between sirah and hadith. The author also disagrees with the Western view of the Qur’an being the only source for the biography of the Prophet. Watt then goes on to analyze the sources (materials) used by Ibn Ishaq in writing the biography. First and foremost is the use of sirrah, which cannot be derived from the Qur’an, as opposed to what most Western scholars believed. Use of the methodology of interlocking items in history, along with the documented material such as the constitution of Madinah, have been used to support that aspect of the biography which deals with Arab genealogies and the pre-Islamic events. When the Qur’an has been used by Ibn Ishaq, a distinction has been on the type of elaboration used, that is whether it is a detailed version by the Biblical preachers or is related to the use of occasion of revelation or Hadith of the Prophet(sws) relating to the interpretation and elaborations in Qur’an. Apart from supporting the sources used by Ibn Ishaq, Watt concludes the article by raising a few criticisms on the work of Ibn Ishaq,
but restating the fact that the mentioned biography is acceptable on the grounds that the methods used are reliable and justified.

**The dating of the Qur’an: A Review of Richard Bell’s Theory**

The dating of the Qur’an is summarized by Richard Bell in three basic principles. Firstly, he believes that the units of revelation were shorter in nature, that is, the long passages found in the Qur’an are made up of these shorter passages which can be further divided into three major types—sign passages, punishment passages and slogan passages. The second principle (which is quite disputable) states that when the Prophet (sws) combined the shorter passages, he made some revisions for the general good of the Muslim community; to support this principle, Bell describes a few formal ways factor in the dating of the Qur’an is the discovery of a few inscribed passages of the Qur’an in the form of written material. Watt, after giving a brief introduction, critically analyzes the three principles and raises questions such as the length and the basis on which the longer passages are divided into shorter ones, reasons and occasions of revisions and the degree of certainty in all three cases.

**Conversion in Islam at the Time of the Prophet (sws)**

The study of the earlier passages of the Qur’an helps understand the concept of conversion. Initially, there was no concept of strict
conversion the only concept that was highlighted was how the person responded to the message of God that was revealed to the Prophet (sws). This has been supported in the article by stating that it was not before the second year after hijra that the followers of the Prophet (sws) formed a separate identity and thus the terms “Islam” and “Muslim” came to use. Thus the idea of conversion cannot be generalized. The only other fact remaining to be considered is that in early times the theory of conversion relied more on the external appearance of the person as compared to what his inner-self believed. This then leads us to the issue of hypocrites as seen in the early times, and it is then that the concept of conversion is defined as seen today—that is a change of the inner beliefs of the person.

The Camel and the Needle’s Eye

The famous parable of the camel passing through a needle’s eye can be found in both, the Qur’an and the Gospel. Interestingly scholars from both the traditions are caught in the interpretation of the word “camel”. The two interpretations but forward by them are that of a reference to either an animal or a rope. Those who hold the first of these opinions concentrate on the metaphorical meaning of the use of the term animal to show the greatness of God. On the other hand, those who believe in the second interpretation, concentrate on the fact that rope and needle go together. Watt ends this article by highlighting the occurrence
of the similar interpretation in the two religions, and briefly associates it to similar linguistic origin of the root word kamelos.

**God’s Caliph, Qur’anic Interpretations and Umayyid Claims**

The word Khalifah has been interpreted in various ways which had led to many complications, one of them being its association to being a God’s deputy. This particular interpretation is said to be used by the Umayyid Caliphs to strengthen their hold on the Muslim world but Watt denies this on the basis of historical analysis which proves that the Umayyid claim to the caliphate relied more on the Arab culture of blood-revenge. Ibn Ishaq is of the view that the word refers to “the one who settles or inhabits”; Zamakhshari and Tabari slightly alter the previous given definition of the word Khalifah to state that it was used for “Adam as a successor to the angels.” With reference to the term being associated with the title for Abu Bakr, many scholars believe that it has no relation to the usage in the Qur’an; Khalifah in this case meant “successor to the Messenger of God”.

**Two Interesting Christian-Arab Usages**

The article’s basic emphasis is that there was a specific linguistic tradition found in the Christian-Arab period, which is believed to have influenced the language of the Qur’an. The argument is supported by
giving the example of the word rijs as used and interpreted in the Qur'an. One interpretation of the world is with reference to the filth of the devil; several others interpret it as a form of anger or wrath or a severe punishment from God. In these different interpretations, a slight transformation from the pre-Islamic meaning is seen, from an internal feeling of anger to an outward expression of anger. This specific interpretation is often related to the meaning of the word as seen before the times of Muhammad (sws) and the meaning is often said to be formed under Christian influence.

**Early Development of the Muslim Attitude to the Bible**

When looking at the development of the Muslim attitude to the Bible, first consideration is given to what is actually stated in the Qur'an. According to Watt, the Qur'an states four major points: (1) there have been previous revelations, (2) the arrival of Muhammad (sws) was foretold in the Bible, (3) Jews have hidden some of the revelations from their book, and (4) Jews have also been accused of falsifying their revelations. Watt then divides the article in various parts: the first deals with the fact that the Muslims were using the falsification and hiding of certain verses to strengthen their belief that Muhammad (sws) was the last Prophet. The second phase is marked by strong hatred for the people of the other Books, and this is the phase where great intellectual activity
started and there was a closer contact between the two schools of intellectuals. The last phase of the development, as put forward by Watt, is when the discussions between Muslims and the people of the other Books stopped due to the beliefs being contradictory in nature.

**Some Muslim Discussions of Anthropomorphism**

Anthropomorphism is the attribution of human motivation, characteristics, or behaviour to inanimate objects, animals, or natural phenomena. This section deals with the thoughts of different schools on the attributes on God and their association with the physical attributes found in men. The initial step of bringing light to this aspect of academies can be attributed to the doctrine of bala'ifiyya which emphasizes on the use of pictures to understand religious concepts such as God. Later schools of thought such as the Mu'tazalites and the Ash'arites brought about slight changes in the association, that is, they said that the physical attributes such as God has hands and eyes, does not mean that He has these characteristics physically, but is a metaphorical use to emphasize the power and qualities of God. The article then explains the evolution of the basic doctrine with time and with the formation of a new school of thought that is in reality an offshoot of the original Ash'arite school of thought.
Created in His Image: A Study in Islamic Theology

This piece of writing focuses on the differences in the school of Muslim thought who believe in the "absolute otherness of God" and those who believe that there is an "affinity between God and man." The basic line of argument was a statement given by a Muslim from a Jewish background who said that "God created Adam in his image." There are four stages found in the interpretation of the above statement by the Traditionalists, many of whom believed that the use of the word "his" referred to Adam and not God; there is only one group of Traditionalists who believe the contrary, that is, "his" referred to God and not Adam. Watt, towards the end of the article, presents various arguments for and against the views mentioned above, and also raises the question of anthropomorphism in relation to the above stated interpretations of the statement of the relation between God and man.

The Logical Basis of early Kalam

This article details with ways and approaches to understand the concept of knowledge, its relation and the function of the knower in the way that he perceives the acquired knowledge. Many definitions can be found of term knowledge. Furthermore, the article explains the various forms of sensible knowledge as compared to reflective knowledge (there are four kinds of reflective knowledge – use of analogy and reasoning,
experience (tajariba) and customs (adab), revelation (sharah) and inspiration (ilham), wide transmission (tawatur) as opposed to individual transmission (ahad) and far-spread (mustafid). The article then ends with a small section on the theory of legal knowledge which depends on the Qur’an the Sunnah, the Consensus and the Analogy.

The Origin of the Islamic Doctrine of Acquisition

The basic idea of this article is that “it is God who ‘creates’ the acts of man, whereas man merely ‘acquires’ them. “The Jahmite view is that it is in fact God who does all the actions. Dirar, on the other hand, believes that “man has his own share in human acts.” Hisham Ibn Hakam believes that acts are created by God but adds a few conditions such as cause, conscious willing and the soundness of the act to create links between what a person does and what God wants him to do. Shahham brings in concepts that highlight the actions directed by God as some external power and associates man with a mind and a conscious, and thus distinguishes between the voluntary and the involuntary acts of the humans. Al-Najjar and Muhammad Ibn ‘I1% sa are of the view that humans have been given the power to acquire (kasb) but they cannot create (khalq). This is further explained by stating that the just like faith, God cannot create a person’s need for acquisition; this is something that the person has to do himself. Later scholars built up on the above views,
sometimes by combining two or more schools of thought together; other times by expanding and elaborating on one chief belief only.

**His Name is Ahmad**

This article "His name is Ahmad: has been taken from the Muslim World and the author developed his thought about the name of Prophet. Watt says that the actual name of Prophet was Ahmad quoted the words in Surah ixi, 6 ismu-ahmadu. According to him after the death of Prophet Muslims were interpreted the text of Quran according to their new testament. Watt argued that the 'ahmadu' must be taken in an adjectival sense rather than regarded as an interpolation. They offer evidence on the single point of the currency and significance of Ahmad as a name, after the Prophet's death and do not broach the larger field of Muslim new testament interpretation.

Watt stated that "Muslim children were practically never called Ahmad before about the years 125 AH, on the other hand, there are many instances prior to this date of boys called Muhammad after the Prophet; some of these had apparently received that name during the Prophet's lifetime."

He further says that if we look at the French translation of Kitab al-Kharaj by Abu Yusuf, which must be prior to his death in 182/798, we
find that the index contains the names of 29 Persons called Muhammad, other than the Prophet, but does not mention any one called Ahmad.\textsuperscript{239} Biographical dictionaries such as the \textit{Tabaqat of Ibn Sa’d} contains many Muhammads who died before 200 A.H. but hardly any Ahmad. Some of the Muhammads died in the first century, but the earliest Ahmads are only a few years before 200.\textsuperscript{240}

Watt argued that “I have made a detailed examination of \textit{Tahdhib al-Tahdhib} by Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani which contains 160 entries for Ahmad and 888 for Muhammad.\textsuperscript{241} The name Ahmad, like Muhammad, occurred in the \textit{Janiliyah}. It is now generally recognized that the name Muhammad was in common use in the \textit{Janiliyah}.\textsuperscript{242} In the last of this article Watt defines the meaning of Ahmad and Muhammad and stated that Ahmad means ‘more or most praised’ whereas Muhammad merely means, ‘Praised’.\textsuperscript{243}

\textbf{1. The Political attitudes of the Mutazilah}

The article is an W.M. Watt attempt to gain a deffer understanding as the Mutazilite theology by looking at the politics of its exponents and he was much indebted to H.S. Nyborg’s inhoverator work especially his article Al-Mutazilia in the encyclopedia of Islam\textsuperscript{244} and his edition of Kitab al –Intiteer.\textsuperscript{245}
This article was published in Royal Asiatic Society in 1963, and explains in this article by the some headings i.e. The nature of sources as showed by the accounts of the Jahmiyyah. The political attitudes of some leading Mutazilites\textsuperscript{246}. The origins of the Mutazilah\textsuperscript{247}. Itizal and Irja.

As regards the fame of Mutazilites by Abu-I Hudhayl, an-Nazzam and Bishr ibn-al-Mutamir in the reigns of Harun as-Rashid and Mamun, 780-850, Watt find the background of the political attitudes of these men and their successors.

A forgery Al-Ghazali's Mishkat:

This article has been taken from journal of Royal Asiatic Society and Published in 1948. The purpose of this article to argue that the contradiction amount to conflict and is not manifest but real and he argued that therefore the veils-section is not the work of Al-Ghazali but a forgery either completing a work dealing one with the light verse or else substituted for the real Ghazalian interpretation of the views tradition\textsuperscript{248}.

According to Watt the importance of the \textit{Mishkat al-Anwar} for a full understanding of the thought of Al Ghazali was long recognized by Goldziher, he impressed this on W.H.T. Gairder. When, in 1911 he was guiding him into the higher are reaches of Islamic studies most of the problems formulated by Gairder most of the problems created, are
connected with the last section of Mishkat, the detailed interpretation of the tradition about the seventy (or seventy thousand) veils. The main problem is in the apparent contradiction between various statements in the veils section and Al-Ghazali’s general position.

In his conclusion Watt states that the veils section of *Mishkat al-Anwar* is forgery, and he agreed that the contrast between that section and the rest of the book is glaring.

**Economic and Social Aspects of the Origin of Islam:**

It has been taken from Islamic quarterly and published in 1954. Watt discussed and define the article with many points. The economic Milieu, the social repercussion of the economic change, The religious change, the development of Islam.

**The forces now Moulding Islam:**

This article divided into six parts and the first part is-

1. **The Historical background**

The impact of the west Watt writes about the impact of the modern west on Islamic east and says to consider Islam mainly in its intellectual or theological aspects, and to emphasize the intellectual influence of the west. This, however, is by no means the only way in which the west has influenced the Islamic East. In the total impact of the West economic,
social and political influences are probably more important facts than the purely intellectual.\textsuperscript{252}

2. \textit{The Resultant Problems}:

The Problems facing the Islamic East as a result of having become engulfed in the industrial civilization of Europe and America may conveniently be described as the problems of external and internal relations.\textsuperscript{253}

3. \textit{Western Ideas}:

For over a century the Islamic East realized that, if it is to have anything approaching much of the learning of the west. Young men and latter also women have been sent in increasing numbers to study in the universities and technical colleges of Europe and America. Many of these, on returning to their homes, have become professors or teachers, and so have handed on something of the Western outlook which they had imbibed. At the same time, Christian missionaries from Europe and America have been allowed and even encouraged to found schools and colleges in Islamic countries.\textsuperscript{254}

He says also that the aspects of Western thought influential among Muslims may be considered under four heads.

- Nationalism
4. The religion of Islam:

Watt stated that the Islamic sentiments, then, are still strong in the countries and in the form of Islamic nationalism are likely to become stronger. On the other hand, it is improbable that the religion of Islam will be able to make an important contribution to solving of the problems of external and internal relations.

5. Christianity:

The Church in the East appears too weak to be likely in the visible future to make any large contribution to the treatment even of local problems. In so far, however, as it is building up the personal piety and devotion of its members and of converts it attracts, it is helping to create the basis for a long term solution.

6. The Prospect:

In conclusion Watt says that no genuine solution of the external and internal problems is likely within the present century. Such a solution would only be possible if there was a wide spread religious revival within Islam, and this is unlikely What is likely is the increase of Islamic nationalism, but this would hinder a real religious revival.
Reviews by William Montgomery Watt


This review has been taken from the Islamic quarterly and William Montgomery Watt describes the value and importance of the Quran and states that the lack of knowledge in this country, and in Europe generally is of course not due to any absence of translation. In English we have a great variety, extending from that of George Sale, who follows the orthodox Islamic interpretation, to that of Richard Bell who, by the methods of higher criticism, attempted to discover the original meaning of the Quran, and to give an approximate date of the fragmentary of which it consists.  

Watt says that Professor Arberry avoids the unfortunate practice of some of his predecessors of trying to represent the rhymes of the Quran, he prints his translation in short lines, rather like poetry and its uses devices of spacing and indention to make it easy for eye to see the divisions into which the passage naturally fall.  

Watt further appreciates. Arberry’s translation and says all this is very great gain and should make much easier for the English reader to appreciate the greatness of the Quran.

This review has been taken from Islamic Quarterly and Watt says about the writer the writer of this work, known as Ibn al Bayyi, flourished about the middle of the fourth Islamic century, and his writing was influential in later time. Again he says from the present work it is clear that, by this period, the science of tradition was employing standards that were not widely different from those of the European orientalist.


W.M. Watt expresses his views about the writers point of view, and writes that the total impression of the present volume is such that Islamologists in general are bound to take notice of the author’s central contention of the continuity between Pre-Islamic Arab ideas and these of early Islam. This work is to be most thoroughly commended.

About this volume Watt says that it is a scholarly edition of one of the chief works of the sect and the edition of the text has been competently done, and the editor has provided both many informative footnotes and an index to the Ismaili technical terms in the work. He further says that this addition to the bibliotheca Islamica is thus of considerable importance for its specialized field.


In this review W.M.Watt expresses the importance of the book, and says this is a useful source book for certain aspects of the religious history of Islam, notably, as the editor-translation, in that it throws important new light on the tradition of popular preaching in Medieval Islam. The edition has been competently done, and the translation is easy to read. There is a full index of
name Watt says that scholars in various fields will welcome this publication.


W.M. Watt described that these volumes are the translations of the second and thirty-third books respectively of al-Ghazali’s *Ihya ulumal-Din*. In both cases the task has been accomplished with a high degree of competence. Yet both illustrate in different ways the terms and difficulties of translating materials of this type. Watt concludes that this translation, despite many merits, was not ready for publication. An Arabic writer like al-Ghazali has something sensible to say, and the English reader ought to be able to understand most of it without too much trouble; but this makes much greater demands on the translation than it is commonly realized.

7. Laura veccia Vaglieri vaglieri and Roberto Rubinacci (tr) *Scritti scelti Al- Ghazali*’ pp. viii, 702 1970
W.M. Watt says about this work—that until 1969 there was no translation into Italian of any work of al-Ghazali, apart from some passages of the *Munqidh minal-Dhalal*, but now Laura Veccia Vaglieri and Roberto Rubinacci have produced the most complete volume of translation in any European language. He further says a number of explanatory footnotes ease the path of non-specialist reader. Arabists who know Italian will doubtlessly take note of the interpretation of difficult passages given here.


The book consists of ten studies of which four and part of another one have previously appeared in periodicals, the subject matter of six is logical, and the final assessment of these must be left to the specialists, since they abound in symbols that are mysterious to those not abreast of recent developments in logic. Watt appreciates the book and says it used to have all these articles in book form, but two slight errors may be noted.

Watt writes about this work and states that the work here was edited and translated a *Tafsir al-Kurab fi Tadbir al-Hurab*, and written early in the fifteenth century for the ruler of Egypt. The author one 'Umar ibn Ibrahim al-Awsi al-Ansari, is otherwise unknown, though Dr. Scanlon has a plausible suggestion about his identity.\textsuperscript{273}


According to Watt this book is interesting both because of its author and because of its aim, and the aim of the book is to present the life of Muhammad to Children presumably of about the age of twelve, since that is the age of Fatima to whom the story is told.\textsuperscript{274}


According to Watt Professor Syed Abdul Latif, gives a presentation of Islam not unlike that of Ameer Ali. About Latif's book Watt writes this book is one of a series, which aims at fostering mutual understanding between India and the countries of the middle east.\textsuperscript{275}

Watt says that Issac Albalag translated al-Ghazal’s *Maqasid al-Falasifah* into Hebrew, and wrote long annotations to which he gave the title *Tiqqun ha Deot*. Watt says about the writer and the book Dr. Vajda’s scholarly work can be warmly recommended to all interested in this field.276


The above mentioned of Nicholas are preliminary results of an extensive investigation of Arabic logic which is to lead to a larger volume, promised for later this year, on the development of Arabic logic. And these works belong primarily to the history of logic, their interest for the ‘Pure’ orientalist is slight.


W.M. Watt writes about the author. Dr. Parrinder, who is reader in the comparative study of religion in the university of London, considers that the encounter of the world religion is a major fact of our times and it demands a restatement of traditional
theological expression. Watt's assertion that Dr. Parrinder carefully collected the relevant material and still more his eirenic exploration of various possibilities of interpretation have produced a fascinating work from which the present reviewer gladly acknowledges that he has gained much value.


According to Watt it is good after nearly go years to have an English translation of Goldziher's *Zahiriten*. His sub-title a contribution to the history of Islamic theological thinking, by a study of usul-al-fiqh. Despite the decades that have passed since Goldziher wrote, there is still much of value in his work. A valuable addition is the full index of names, and since the original raging is given in the margins. This index may also be used for the German edition, which lacked an index. In the and Watt says that Goldziher's remark here makes it virtually certain that he used the Leiden edition as far as available, and it should therefore have been included in the bibliography. Despite the weaknesses here illustrated, this translation will be of great value to many students
of the subject, Watt remarks again but clearly the careful scholar will often want to refer to the origin.


The sub-title of this book shows the author has come under the influence of Louis Massignon (as he acknowledges in the introduction), and is in a sense continuing his work). At the same time the book contains studies of various texts which have not so far received the attention of islamists. Watt says that Nwyia’s book is thus of considerable interest as containing studies of several virtually unknown, while his main thesis about the development of the technical of mysticism is likely to provoke much discussion.

17. W.M. Watt presented a review, a book *La Pense religieused Aviconna* by Louils Gardet, Paris 1951, in Muslim world Vo. XLIII October 1953. No.4 p.284-5. In this review Watt gives the comments that the M. Curdets’s thesis of the genuinely Islamic
character of Avicenna’s thought (in contrast to previous European writers who denied this) is seen to be of more than academic interest.\textsuperscript{282}
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169. Ibid., p. 103.

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172. Ibid., p. 94.

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Chapter-4

Watt’s Thoughts on Quran
W.M. Watt’s Thoughts on Quran

Watt has contributed to the understanding of the revelation not only among Christians but also among Muslims. His view differs from the traditional Muslim understanding of revelation. He produced two significant works directly related to the Quran. The first was Islamic revelation in the Modern World (1969)\(^1\) and the second was the revised edition of his teacher Richard Bell’s ‘Introduction to the Quran’ (1970)\(^2\). Watt has also dealt with the issue of Islamic revelation in a number of places in his other publications.\(^3\) In the analysis of his views on revelation, I will focus my attention mainly on his “Islamic revelation in the Modern World”, since an examination of the related passages of his other works has shown that there are no major changes in his views on this issue.

William Montgomery Watt points out the possibility to believe that Muhammad had received some knowledge of the Quranic stories or events which were not earlier known to him. Through some informant who had acquired his knowledge from the books and this connection he misinterprets Quranic verses.

On one hand he says that there is no difficulty in understanding the verses of the Quran that convey the factual historical information which was earlier not known. On the other hand, he points out another
possibility by saying that these Quranic verses in question, were probably understood in a slightly different way. He emphasizes on the absence of information by the usual channel of oral tradition in Quranic verses and he highlights the possibility that they have been some information received by someone whom he does not name. He calls it the extraordinary channel of written books.

What the reader is made to understand is that there are contradictory statements here as well as and the interpretation of Quranic verses given by Watt don’t carry weight for example the lost word of Sura Joseph.

“In telling the story of these (people) there was indeed a lesson for men of insight, it was not an invented tale, but the confirmation of what (revelation) was present already, and the exposition of everything, and guidance and a mercy to a believing people”.

He concludes that the Quran does not claim to give information which is not known to any human being. Further Watt says that it is only form of lesson of the stories that comes by revelation is really well grounded in itself.

Dealing with the same topic he quotes different verses from Quran which gives the account of the unseen that God revealed to Muhammad was neither known to him nor to any Prophet’s people before this. To
mixup two different verses of the Quran and to interpret it in a different connotation shows the text of Quran needs to be understood properly. God’s words can not be taken for granted whether we are able to understand it or not, the text can not be exploited at any cost.

Watt provides a detailed discussion on the presuppositions of the Quranic revelations. In doing so apparently, he discusses all aspects, but when the reader goes into the fact, he would sometime find the writer has understood certain facts to a greater extent. For example the Quran gives similar message through Muhammad what other Prophet’s communicated to their people it is related to essentials of the message, for example, the belief in God, the last day, the belief in Prophet’s their books and the Angels.

Going into the depth one notices Watt analyzing the Arabic language. He finds it linked with a special cultural Milieu and much of the Quranic text is addressed specifically to Arabs, for example, the address to the tribe of the Quraysh, the great success at Badar, the reverse of Uhud. All this is mentioned to discuss the relation of divine universality to human particularity. He himself says:

“It might be held, for instance, that the particular events of Muhammad’s life time were spoken of in the Quran because they exemplified and typified fundamental aspects of human experience”.
Watt also says:

“There is a short reply, however, to the claim that Islam is for man universally, namely, that there are many cultural regions which it has not yet penetrated or not to any significant degree. There are the cultural regions where the other great world-religions are dominant.”

It is not impossible, of course, that some day the majority of the inhabitants of these regions will be converted to Islam; but it is also possible that Islam will fail to make any appreciable headway there. All that one is justified in concluding, then, is that in the past Islam has expanded far beyond the Arab milieu in the strict sense, and that there is nothing to show that further expansion is impossible.\footnote{6}

What the reader may conclude is that the importance of the text of the Quran can not be determined on the basis of Islamic expansion in a particular period, whether related to Arab or non-Arab regions. According to Watt certain cultural dissimilarities caused hindrance in the way of Islamic expansion. For examples:

“There are certain East African tribes where circumcision was thought to make a man unfit for marriage, and, while this belief continued to be held, it was difficult for the men to become Muslims”.\footnote{7}

Watt held that “I am not a Muslim in the usual sense, though I am a “Muslim” as “surrendered to God”.\footnote{8}
In declaring himself a ‘Muslim’ Watt seems to have an intention in his mind to misguide people. Although the basic meaning of the Word ‘Muslim’ is to surrender to God’ but Watt has forgotten that to be a Muslim one must believe in five pillars of Islam, the very first of which is to believe in Almighty Allah and His Prophet. He himself has criticized the Prophet which a sensible Muslim can never ever dream of. Therefore there is no point in considering him a Muslim spending life time in the study of Islam, leaving the basic pillars of Islam, how can one declare himself a Muslim. The intention is obvious, Watt wanted to misguide the people with the help of his fabricated words.

“When he went to Medina, Muhammad was surprised and dismayed to find that the Jews there, with one or two exceptions, for from regarding him as a Prophet, used their knowledge of the old Testament to criticize his claim to prophet hood. In the closing years of his life he appears to have met Christians whose attitude was similar. This led to a change of attitude among the Muslims. Originally the Quran had presented Islam as a religion parallel to Judaism and Christianity and confirming their scriptures”. ⁹

Watt has confirmed the identity of Torah, Bible and other Holy books with the help of the Holy Quran which was revealed to Muhammad (P.B.H.U.). But here again he deviates from the truth by way of
exploiting the facts. The logic given by him is that Muhammad was surprised to see that Jews in Madina did not regard him as a prophet and their knowledge of old Testament helped them to criticize Muhammad’s claim of Prophethood.

If we go into the history of religion we find that Adam and Eve followed God. After them many other prophets were sent to the world. Some of them were chosen to have the Holy books were as per requirement for a particular period which God did not feel necessary to preserve. Most probably because the last and final book was to be revealed to Prophet Muhammad for the whole humanity, for ever. So there is no question of ‘Christianity’ and ‘Jewism’ because such works do not feature in any of the Holy books. They all followed God and surrendered their will to God.

While discussing Christian attitude to Islam Watt has pointed out the distorted image of Islam on the basis of violence, self-indulgence, moral and sexual weakness especially in connection with the practices of Prophet Muhammad who was popularly identified with the devil. As Watt say “The image of Islam which they produced for Western Europe was distorted one. This was probably because even the scholars had a feeling of cultural inferiority, and so by way of ‘defence’ had to show that as a religion Islam was much inferior to Christianity. Among the points
which went to compose this ‘distorted image’ of Islam was a religion of violence, spread by the sword. It was a religion of self-indulgence, especially sexual; and since Muhammad, besides exhibiting moral weaknesses, was the author of a false religion he must he a tool or agent of the devil”.

Similar kind of argument is given in his article “Thoughts on Muslim Christian dialogue” in “Hamdard Islamicus”, where he has spoken mainly about his efforts of understanding Islam in a better perspective. He goes to the extent to confirm that the ‘Christians of today are in no position to condemn outright the sexual ethics of Islam’.

Actually what appears is that Watt is trying his best to understand certain aspects of Islam comprehensively but if not altogether, at times, he seems to have failed. In reality Islam is a religion of peace, Justice, non-violence and morality. And all these points can be confirmed from various direct references from the Holy Quran. Whether it is about polygamy, mutual differences on various fronts, moral degradation, sexual ethics or any other issue, Islam provides solution to all these issues.

The contradictory statement about the names and attributes of God, have been thoroughly discussed by Watt himself. At one place he says:
"The Quran also speaks of the Jews and Christians as having deviated from the pure religion of Abraham in various ways, it fully accepts that God who gave revelations to Moses and Jesus and is worshipped by Jews and Christians is none other than the God who revealed the Quran to Muhammad and is worshipped by Muslims".\(^{13}\)

Watt has quoted George Sale thus:

"That both Mohammad and those among his followers who are renowned orthodox, had and continue to have Just and true notions of God and his attributes (always excepting their obstinate and impious rejecting of the Trinity), appears, so plain from the Koran itself and all the Mohammedan divines, that it would be loss of time to refute those who suppose the God of Mohammed to be different from the true God".\(^{14}\)

It is almost impossible for the common man or for scholars to understand the existence of God understood by major religions as the Writer has presented. At one place he is mentioning the rejection of Trinity, at the other he admits that God who gave revelations to Moses and Jesus and is worshiped by Jews and Christians is the same God who revealed the Quran to Muhammad and is worshiped by Muslims.

Watt is able to perceive the Islamic concept and understanding of the 'Holy book' called Quran which was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (P.B.H.U.) who was just a messenger chosen by God to carry the
message. Initially the messages communicated through Quran were only limited to the people of Mecca or Arabs but, later on, after the spread of Islam, world wide Watt confirmed its global relevance.

Watt says “The message was directed in the first place to the people of Mecca, and then more generally to all the Arabs, and thus it takes the form of ‘an Arabic Quran’. Yet there are few verses in the Quran which indicate that it is even more widely relevant and has a message for the whole of mankind. This universal relevance is indeed confirmed by the world wide spread of Islam and its acceptance by men of nearly every race”.  

At various places in his book ‘Islamic Revelation to the Modern World’. Watt defines revelation as an activity of God which is directed towards human beings. Further he emphasizes that a ‘mode of divine activity by which the creator communicates himself to man and, by so doing, evokes man’s response and cooperation’.  

The mode of revelation however in Christianity is slightly varied, for example.

‘They have not usually supposed that the words were brought, externally as it were, by an angel to the writers of the sacred books, but they held that these writers were inspired in such a way that the words they wrote were in fact the words of God. The prophets of the old Testament who unhesitatingly proclaimed ‘Thus saith the Lord…’ must
have believed that the words they spoke were in some sense truly the speech of God. The Bible, as a whole is called ‘the word of God’. But Watt believes that according to Islamic theology also the human response to divine activity is also, at the same time a mode of divine activity. Therefore he accepts that the assertion of Muslim about the Quranic revelation are accepted totally, and particularly he admitted that the Quran can not be treated as the product of Muhammad’s consciousness.

Watt elaborated the novelty in the content of the Quran by pointing out that Prophet Muhammad was sent as a wamer to bring the message of Islam from God to his fellows. The remaining messages have been derived from Judaism and Christianity because these message are God’s power and essential good character. Test of accountability on the day of Judgement, apart from this man’s duty to worship God and his generosity with his wealth and power, are the remaining two points that are already contained in the book of Judaism and Christianity. Therefore the originality lies only with the existence and the teaching of Prophet Muhammad. Watt holds:

“In these passages five main points appeared to be insisted on (1) God is all-powerful and good; (2) men will appear before God on the last day to be Judged and assigned to heaven or hell according to their deeds; (3) man ought to be grateful to God and Worship him, (4) man should be
generous with his wealth and upright, (5) Muhammad has been sent as a
caller to bring this message from God to his fellows. Now the first four
of these points might be said to be derived from emphasis; for example,
the older religions usually lay for  less emphasis on generosity with
wealth. The pivot of new religious movement, however, was the fifth
point; and through the idea of conveying a divine message may be
derived, the assertion that in particular Muhammad is such a messenger
cannot be derived. Here at least is one element of originality.19

If we look into the truth about these points mention above, we can
easily make out the lack of understanding about the basic concept of
Islam in terms of its originality. Islam is a religion where the messages of
God’s existence and the rules and regulation for the then people have
been communicated through various messengers right from Adam down
to Prophet Muhammad (P.B.H.U.) Jesus, Moses, Abraham, David, Isaq,
Noah, and various others have communicated the truthful messages to
their people accordingly. Their sincere efforts have been duly
acknowledged in the Quran. The complete form of Islamic constitution
has been propagated by Prophet Muhammad who is declared in the holy
book as the last and final messenger. Regarding the existence of Adam
and Eve we get references in other Holy Books also. Therefore there is no
question of any message being derived from either Judaism or
Christianity. And the fact is that we don’t get any example even in Bible where Jesus declared that he was either a Christian or Muslim. In a nutshell the requirement is that one must have a comprehensive knowledge of Islam right from Adam down to Prophet Muhammad.

As quoted by Watt in his ‘Islamic revelation in the modern world’ ‘one of the point…. of the scriptures.  

Basic reasons of the opposition between Jews or Muhammad and between Christian or Muhammad was the fact that they had deviated from the original or pure form of their religion Quran promoted pure religion and discarded the corruptions of Jews and Christians as a result they rejected Quran also.

Watt further identifies the similarities between Islam and Jews, and Islam and Christians by pointing out the religion of Abraham which is considered to be the pure religion. It insists on the fact that Jacob and Moses both were the descendants of Abraham who was neither a Jew nor a Christian. Besides this, Watt has confirmed the claim that Islam was a restoration or revival of the religion of Abraham in its purity and also that in these related matters the Quran shows originality and practical guidance for the community. For example:

‘From all this it will be clear that the Quranic interpretation of contemporary events and situations was no academic exercise, but was
practical guidance for the community in the handling of actual problems. The guidance was no mere mechanical application of some rule, but was a creative response to the particular challenge. There can be no question but that in these matters the Qur’an shows originality.²¹

According to Watt, another un-Biblical feature of the Quranic account of Abraham is his connection with Mecca and his foundation of Kaba there [2.124 /18-128/3]. Again, though this does not provide material for scientific history of the Abrahamic period,²² and he further says that despite the connection of Abraham with Mecca, the Quran does not specifically state that any Arabs descended from him.²³

The religion of Abraham denounced idol worship which was a regular practice of Muhammad’s Mission. Even the old Testaments Prophets rejected idol worships.

Watt has been able to make out the urgency of complete mutual understanding between the great religions Christianity Islam and Judaism, which is necessary for a better future and better prospects Watt quotes: “In the achievement of such understanding it would seem that the concept of ‘the religion of Abraham’ has an important part to play. For one thing this concept places the three religions on an equal footing, and avoids the appearance of making Islam the poor relation of Judaism and Christianity. It also indicates how the essential experience or ‘pure
religion' of Abraham—a positive response to divine prompting—is the basic element shared by Jews, Christians and Muslims.\textsuperscript{24}

Watt has given a detailed account of the influence of the revelation specially elaborating a form of the Quran and the Islamic way of life. The expansion of Islam resulting into the expansion of Islamic state was done by way of military support.

These kinds of accusations or blames regarding the course of military operations are the result of partial or incomplete understanding of the facts. As he himself says that the main expansion of Islam was actually observed after Muhammad’s expiry, therefore we must witness the examples of Holy wars (so called ) in the Quran which was revealed to Muhammad (P.B.U.H.). Watt says:

"The aim of the holy war was not simply to defeat the enemy, but, once that had between done, to bring him to accept Islam if he was an Arab Pagan, and to bring him to accept the status of ‘Protected Person’ (dhimmi) if he was a non-Arab and a member of a scriptural religion. Those who become Muslims or dhimmis could not longer be attacked by Muslims, and therefore the warlike energies of the Arabs, which had been developed through life in the desert, and which could not simply be suppressed, had to be directed continually outwards. This gave impetus to the expansions."\textsuperscript{25}
Factually there is no terminology as ‘Holy War’ in Quran. What the author refers here is very different from that of real facts. The orders of fighting bravely to the extent to killing the enemies were for self defence in the actual battle field which was caused by the enemies only, since they had broken the peace treaty. There, too, further orders were to protect people and escort them to safe place if they decided to come back to the mutual treaty. So it appears that the facts are distorted for reasons better known to the author. Probably one must have a fresh understanding of the Quran if there is some doubt or confusions.

History bears witness that all the wars waged by the most noble messengers, were defensive in nature. The purpose was always to respond to the attacks of the enemy, with the exception of certain cases where the Muslims were convinced that the enemy would persist in its aggressiveness and treachery and were correspondingly ordered to take the initiative in defending themselves.

In the following verses from the Quran the initial reason for legislating Jihad is mentioned:

“Permission is given to the followers of Islam to against their enemies, for fight against their oppression at their hands God is able to aid them and they are people who have been expelled from their
homeland without due reason. Their crime was that they said, “God is our Lord” (V 22: 39-40).

Fight in the way of God against those who battle with you, but be careful not to transgress the bounds, for God’s loves not the transgressors. (V-2:190)

The war waged by Muhammad, was a war of monotheism against polytheism. It was a struggle of fight against darkness, and represented the last resort for the destruction of misguidance and diffusion of virtue and justice.

In “Islamic Fundamentalism and Modernity” (1988), he underlines that he has no objection to the Muslim belief that the Quran came to the Prophet Muhammad from God. “What he objects to is the belief that there is no human element in the Quran”.26 By arguing this, it seems that Watt implies that while the Quran was not produced consciously by the Prophet but came to him from God, it contains both divine and human elements together. Watt strongly claims that there are human elements in the Quran since it contains errors and mistakes.27 For that reason he argues that it cannot be the verbatim speech of God which was revealed to Muhammad through the angel Gabriel. To support this view, he develops the following arguments. The first is that being in the Arabic language naturally proves that the Quran has a human element, since “a
language does not happen to exist, but has been made by a human community in a forgotten past”. Secondly by comparing the Quranic presentation of events with the Bible, Watt concluded that there are the errors and mistakes in the Quran. According to Watt, these errors are: the confusion of the mother of Jesus, Mary with the sister of Aaron, the rejection of the historical events of the crucifixion of Jesus, and the assertion that Christians worship three gods. 

Thirdly, he argues that the Prophet Muhammad deliberately revised the Quran. For example, in Medina when Muhammad encountered the Jewish opposition, he took some verses which condemn only the Jews, but later when the Christian opposition arose he might have revised those verses again by addition of words “and Christian”. On this point, Watt claims that Muhammad himself or those who collected the Quran after him put the later verses in the Quran and omitted the former ones. 

Watt argues that in the light of the modern western historical critical method, it becomes clear that the Muslim belief that the Quran as the verbatim speech of God revealed to the Prophet through an angel can no longer be defended. Instead of this understanding, he suggests that Muslims advocate that “God had adapted the wording of the Quran to the outlook of the people of Mecca, among whom these erroneous opinions
were current, and that it was not part of the purpose of the revealed message to correct such errors.\textsuperscript{30}

Watt advocates that messages of the Quran came to the Prophet Muhammad from both his personal and cumulative unconsciousness. This means that Muhammad found the content of Quran in cumulative unconsciousness, and then he experienced them by responding positively.\textsuperscript{31} According to Watt “most religious ideas emerge from the collective unconsciousness into consciousness, and most religious practice is the conscious response to these ideas”.\textsuperscript{32}

By generalizing this understanding of the nature of revelation, he concludes that “the revelation on which Judaism, Christianity and Islam are based are ‘contents’ which have emerged from the collective unconsciousness’ then he clarifies what he means by this conclusion: while in Judaism and Christianity the development of those collective unconscious ideas and images emerged in continuity with each other because of their familiarity to people, in Islam, too, since the region where they emerged was “only slightly influenced by Judeo-Christian ideas, there was a sudden and largely unprepared for emergence of contents from the collective unconsciousness”.\textsuperscript{33}

When we think of Watt’s thoughts on the status of the Quran as a whole, we may argue that Watt arrives at the following conclusion that
the Quran is not the Prophet Muhammad’s own product which came to him from God, by following a scholarly approach to the Quran. He explains this conclusion by citing the findings of modern social science.

Further, as has been seen, Watt does not only reject the orthodox Muslim’ understanding of the Quran that it is the verbatim speech of God, but also wants to illustrate that in several points there are errors and mistakes in the Quran by taking the Biblical accounts as criteria. This argument seems to contradict his own understanding of revelation. For, as has been observed, according to him, revelation in the Bible and the Quran is the positive response of the Prophets to what is found in their hearts. In this sense, a Muslim quite rightly asks would it be fair to claim that there are mistakes and errors in the Quran in the light of the Quran. It seems that here Watt contradicts himself. Concerning the source of content of the revelation, on the one hand, he says that the content of revelation was totally, from beyond Muhammad’s consciousness; on the other hand, he argues that the Prophet or those who collected the Quran revised its verses deliberately.
References

11. Ibid., p. 45.

Chapter-5

Watt’s Views on Prophet
Views on Prophet

A number of leading orientalists have made special studies of the Quran and some of them have translated it into European languages. On the whole the attitude of such scholars of the occident has been unsympathetic and sometimes hostile.

The writing of a biography call for exercise of the highest qualities of the author. He has to undertake extensive research into the events of the subjects life and their causes and effects. It is, indeed, a fact that the biographical literature about the Holy Prophet is quite substantial. A great deal of these have been written by a number of authors, scholars, and historians, including Christian missionaries in a number of languages such as French, Greek, German, Spanish, English and Arabic etc. It is indeed a fact that no great attempts at writing the biographies of other Prophets have been made as in the case of biographies of the Holy Prophet Mohammad. Mostly written by non-Muslim writers of the West with pre-conceived and pre-planned idea of criticizing, slandering and speaking ill of this great personality and at the same time most of them had to admire his nobleness, truthfulness and simplicity.

The Prophet’s biography has attracted great interest also in the west, during the Middle ages. During the medieval period in which Islam
was regarded as the work of the devil and that Prophet Muhammad was inspired by him. Almost every polemical work repeatedly expressed that Prophet Muhammad was a wicked man who founded Islam with force and spread it with the sword. He was also regarded as an erotic man who was very fond of women. On every level this image was expounded, and it helped to prove to Europeans that this man could not be a real prophet, but a false one. The following observation of W. Montgomery Watt clearly shows how the image of Muhammad was distorted by western writers.

After the second half of the nineteenth century, these kinds of distorted images began to change to more objective and positive ones. Since during this period more and more western Christian scholars started to think about Muhammad more positively than before by appreciating his prophethood and teachings.

Montgomery Watt is prominent among such well-known orientalists. The west’s new analytical approaches were now targeted on the Prophet Watt studied him in the context of his social background and environment, relying heavily on Mannheim’s approach and stressing statesmanship Maxime Rodinson applied a materialistic and Marxist approach, resorting furthermore to techniques of psycho-analysis to explain the Prophet’s revelation.
The orientalists say that the Holy Prophet used to suffer from epileptic fits. They have arrived at this conclusion either from physical accompaniments which marked the Prophet at the time when he received a divine revelation or from an incident in the boyhood of the Prophet when he lived with his foster-mother, Halima.

Watt refutes this allegation of the Prophet suffering from epileptic fits in his book, *Muhammad Prophet and Statesman*. He says:

“Such accounts led some western critics to suggest that he had epilepsy, but there are no real grounds for such a view. Epilepsy leads to physical and mental degeneration, and there are no signs of that in Muhammad; on the contrary, he was clearly in full possession of his faculties to the very end of his life”.¹

Watt criticizes the Christians’ distorted images of the Prophet in order to highlight the starting point of his own arguments in his “Muhammad at Medina”. He totally rejected the past allegations made against Muhammad as an impostor: “how God could have allowed a great religion like Islam to develop from a basis of lies and deceit”.²

At another place, he criticizes early Christian scholars’ views on the issue of Muhammad’s Prophetic vocation by remarking that:
“In medieval Europe there was elaborated the concept of Muhammad as a false prophet who merely pretended to receive messages from God; and this and other falsifications of the medieval war propaganda are only slowly being expunged from the mind of Europe and Christendom”.3

Watt urges Christians to try to understand some events of Prophet Muhammad’s life within the context of his own circumstances without judging them according to their own circumstances. In this connection, he states that Christians accused Muhammad of being treacherous and lustful because of events such as the violation of the sacred month and his marriage to the divorced wife of his adopted son, without thinking about the circumstances of his time. He argues that if those Christians careful scrutinize early Islamic sources, they can easily find out that they judge Muhammad’s actions without taking into consideration the moral criticism of his contemporaries.4

Watt criticizes the theory that Muhammad was a pathological case by stating that the argument would be completely unsound and based on mere ignorance and prejudice such physical commitments neither validate or invalidate religious experience.5 On this issue, Watt declares:

It is incredible that a person subject to epilepsy, or hysteria, or even ungovernable fits of emotion, could have been the active leader of
military expeditions, or the cool far-seeing guide of city state and a growing religious community; but all this we know Muhammad to have been. In such questions the principle of the historian should be to depend mainly on the Quran and accept traditions only so far as it is in harmony with the results of Quranic study.⁶

Watt defines his theological appreciation by defining prophethood as follows:

Prophets share in (what may be called) ‘creative imagination’. They proclaim ideas connected with what is deepest and most central in human experience, with special reference to the particular needs of their day and their generation. The mark of the great Prophet is the profound attraction of his ideas for those to whom they are addressed.⁷

Watt depicts a Prophet “as a religious leader who brings truth in a form suited to the needs of his society and age”.⁸ As we will see, his evaluation of the Prophethood of Muhammad appears to conform to this definition.

In Watt’s article “Thoughts on Muslim Christian dialogue” (1978), he notes the differences between Christian and Muslim understanding of the term ‘Prophet’. In connection with the issue, whether Muhammad was
a Prophet or not, he opines in his book *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*. He points out:

He was a man in whom creative imagination worked at deep levels and produced ideas relevant to the central questions of human existence, so that his religion has had a widespread appeal, not only in his own age but in succeeding centuries. Not all the ideas he proclaimed are true and sound but God’s grace has been enabled to provide millions of men with a better religion than they had before they testified that there is no god but God.

Watt argues that it would be very difficult for Christians to regard Muhammad as a Prophet. According to him, if Christians did, perhaps Muslims would draw the conclusion that Christians considered Muhammad as a Prophet in the Islamic sense in which Muhammad is understood as “a mere instrument for transmitting to his fellowmen the actual speech of god without his personality entering into the transaction in any way”. ⁹

In his *Islam and Christianity Today*, he develops his views about the status of the Prophet Muhammad’s teachings on his followers. In this connection, he argues that Christians should accept the facts on the basis of the revelation which came to Muhammad.
A religious community developed, claiming to serve God, numbering some thousands in Muhammad's lifetime, and now having several hundred million members. The quality of life of this community has been on the whole satisfactory for the saintliness of life, and countless ordinary people have been enabled to live decent and moderately happy lives in difficult circumstances. These lead to the conclusion that the view of reality presented in the Quran is true and from God, and that therefore, Muhammad is a genuine Prophet.¹⁰

Watt announces his own understanding of the status and the Prophethood of his Muhammad at Mecca. Personally I am convinced that Muhammad was sincere in believing that what came to him as revelation (wahy) was not the product of conscious thought on his part. I consider that Muhammad was truly a Prophet, and think that we Christians should admit this on the basis of the Christian principle that 'by their fruits you will know them', since through the centuries Islam has produced many upright and saintly people. If he is a prophet, too, then in accordance with the Christian doctrine that the Holy spirit spoke by the Prophets, the Quran may be accepted as of divine origin.¹¹

Watt alleges that for sometime in his early Medinese life, the Prophet did not demand form the Jews that they should recognise him as a Prophet. He says:
There is some justification for thinking that at some period during the first year or so at Medina (not necessarily in the first months) Muhammad contemplated an arrangement which would give a measure of unity but would not demand from the Jews any renunciation of their faith or acceptance of Muhammad as a Prophet with a message of them. Such an arrangement would be in accordance with the general idea that each prophet was sent to a particular community and that the community to which he was sent was the Arabs”.

This is mere speculation for which Watt adduces no proof. He fails to substantiate his allegation. There is not a single verse in the Holy Quran where it is said that Muhammad was a Prophet for the Arabs only. If the Prophet contemplated an arrangement of the type suggested by Watt, it must have found mention in the Holy Quran, and the Hadith (tradition). It is true that Islam gives complete religious freedom to every faith and does not force the non-Muslim to recognize that Muhammad is a Prophet. But that is very different from saying that Islam is a religion for the Arabs only or that Muhammad had no mission for the non-Arabs.

On the subject of the Prophet’s knowledge of the Bible, the Orientalists make contradictory statements. Watt seems to be of the view that till his early Medinese life, the Prophet knew next to nothing about the Bible and its contents. He says, “The presumption is that at first the
Muslim did not know the connexion of Islamael with Abraham and (according to the old Testament) with Arabs. At Medina, however, in closer contact with the Jews, they gained knowledge of such matters.¹³

Watt alleges that the Prophet tried to provoke the Meccans soon after he took up his residence in Medina. He says, "In all this we may see a deliberate intention on Muhammad’s part to provoke the Meccans".¹⁴

This is a false allegation. It is hardly conceivable that in the first two or three years of his Medinese life, when the Prophet lacked sufficient armed strength and when he was ringed round by his Jewish enemies, he should have invited the Meccans to attack him in Medina. That would have been a suicidal policy. Watt contradicts himself in this when he says,

"As these expeditions, even that to Badr, were razzias, where the aim was to capture booty without undue danger to oneself, the Ansar did not presumably think the they would provoke a great expedition against Medina, such as that of the Meccans to Uhud".¹⁵

According to Watt Prophet Muhammad was given in cause of wet nurse due to the fact he had lost his parents (being orphan) and says:

"The fact that Muhammad was a posthumous child may, of course have been part of the reason for sending him to a wet nurse".¹⁶
Watt contradicts himself in this when he says, “It was the custom in Mecca for upper classes to give their children to wet nurses of the nomadic tribes, so that the children would grow up in the healthy air of the desert and develop a strong constitution. This was done with Muhammad for two years or longer”.17

Watt holds that the Prophet’s sense of deprivation was caused by the loss of parents and also due to poverty. He opines:

“Psychology teaches us the importance of painful experiences in the first two or three years of life. The absence of a father must have produced a sense of deprivation in Muhammad, and the real experience of poverty as a young man may well have nourished the sense of deprivation”.18

Although Watt has criticized and blamed the Prophet for various reasons, but he denied the possibility.

To point out that the people in Arabia were fed up with their socio-cultural practices and wanted some changes, therefore it provided suitable atmosphere to Prophet Muhammad to bring about necessary social reforms, is not absolutely true because inspite of all this the Prophet’s job was quite challenging which only a capable leader can afford. Therefore the following comments by Watt seems out of context and irrelevant e.g.
“It is axiomatic that new religious movement of Islam must somehow or other have risen out of the conditions in Mecca in Muhammad’s time of epilepsy or any other such things. He holds:

“On some occasions at least there were physical accompaniments. He would be gripped by a feeling of pain, and in his ears there would be noise like the reverberation of a bell. Even on a very cold day the bystanders would see great pearls of sweat on his forehead as the revelation descended upon him. Such accounts led some western critics to suggest that he had epilepsy lead to physical and mental degeneration and there are no signs of that in Muhammad on the contrary he was clearly in full possession of his faculties to the very end of his life”.19

A new religion cannot come into being without a sufficient motive. In the experience of Muhammad and his early followers there must have been some need which was satisfied by the practices and doctrines of the embryonic religion”.20

Watt is under the impression that the financial strains had caused a kind of restlessness leading to a feeling of failure, therefore he (Prophet) projected himself as a messenger of God he acquired satisfaction in availing a distinct personality Watt quotes:
“Yet he felt that his gift were not being used to the full. He had a talent for administration that would have enabled him to handle the biggest operations then carried out in Mecca but the great merchants excluded him from their inner circle. His own dissatisfaction made him more aware of the unsatisfactory aspects of life in Mecca. In these, hidden years, he must have considered over such matters. Eventually what had been maturing in the inner was brought to light”.21

Islam rejects the concept of idol worship but still many old ideas and practices have been projected by Watt as slightly similar. For example the existence of lesser local deities better known as angels. Indirectly it is a blame of the practice of idol worship. Watt holds:

“Muhammad’s original belief may have been in Allah as high God or supreme deity, combined with lesser local deities whom he may have come to regard as angels who could intercede with the Supreme Being”.22

Watt further says: “Despite this extirpation of idolatry many old ideas and practices were retained”.23 Watt again stated: “It is further to be noted that in the early passages of the Quran there is no assertion that

The orientalists can never believe the unseen power if they are materialistic and secular. Moreover if they belong to the Jewish community they will not accept any outsider to be the messenger of God
and they can not confide in anybody else accept Jesus Christ if they are Christians.

W.M. Watt has enjoined the reputation of an orientalists who has been quite fair in his approach towards various aspects of the Prophet’s life and he has especially maintained an unbiased approach especially in connection with some unseen incidents and happenings in the life of the Prophet. He has been very different from his predecessors as well as the orientalists of his own era. He writes in his own book *Muhammad at Mecca*:

“In order to avoid deciding whether the Quran is or is not the word of God, I have tried using the expressions and have simply said ‘the Quran says’. I do not, however, regard the adoption of a materialistic outlook as implicit in historical impartiality, but write as a professing monotheist.”

Watt further says: “To my Muslim readers I would say something similar. I have endeavoured, while remaining faithful to the standards of western historical scholarship, to say nothing that would entail the rejection of any of the fundamental doctrines of Islam”.

In matters of rejecting various facts related to the life of Prophet Muhammad or creating doubts in such matters, Watt has been very careful and therefore unbiased.
Write from the birth of Prophet Muhammad down to his marriage with Hazrat Khadija. There are various incidents which have been exploited as per requirement.

The Prophet’s marriage to Khadijah has been taken up by Watt in a very comprehensive manner specially in comparison to other orientalists, and immediately expresses doubt about her age at the time of marriage and that it age of khadijah has perhaps been exaggerated'.

His argument is simply that granted that the seven children Khadijah had were born at yearly intervals, the last would have been born when she was about forty eight years old. The question that he has raised is that keeping in view the age of khadijah, the seven to eight deliveries between forty and forty-eight years is not natural. It may be possible but very rare. Then he adds this possibility of miraculous aspects in the matter and says:

"This is by no means impossible but one would have thought it sufficiently unusual to merit comment; it is even the sort of thing that might well have been treated as miraculous. Yet no single word of comment occurs in the pages of Ibn Hisham, Ibn S’ad, or al-Tabari.

Watt doubts whether Khadija was quite the woman of substance that the traditional accounts portray her as being. In his search for
material on Muhammad’s early married life during prophethood, Watt says he draws a blank and therefore he has to deduce from passages of the Quran and he draws on Surah al-duba where references are made to Muhammad’s past.

According to him the followers of the Prophet were in a habit of calling every unusual event a miracle. So also Watt invites a discussion on this matter.

Watt claims to make an effort to collect historical facts and prevalent traditions in a better way which was a really difficult task because of lack of dependable evidence. Actually it appears that Watt is also entangled in various doubts, though unlike other orientalists. Consequently there are certain misguided interpretations for example in connection with ‘wahy’ revelation he opines.

“Muhammad’s prophetic experience began with true vision’. This is quite distinct from dreams. The usual exegesis of this by Muslims is that these were visions of Gabriel; but there are grounds for thinking that Muhammad originally interpreted these as vision of God Himself”.

Watt discusses the account of Muhammad’s call to prophethood in the work of al-zuhri and examines what he considers to be some inconsistencies in the various reports. He casts doubt on the interpretation
given to Muhammad’s early visions which involved the angel Jibril and asserts that Muhammad might have thought that he saw God Himself. Acknowledging that this does not agree with the Muslim understanding of the nature of God, he reasons that the position is reinforced by the fact that Jibril does not appear in the verses revealed in Mecca until the Madinan period. Watt points out that: “The formal interpretation of the vision, however, is not so important from the standpoint of the life of Muhammad as the significance of it for his religious development”.28

It is observed that the incidents related to the help from Waraqa and the influence of Waraqa in the teaching of Islam has become a matter of concern for an ordinary person.

There are many historical facts provided by many sira writers which support and confirm the originality of the first ‘wahy’. So, to create doubts, by ignoring facts, does not provide any relevant supporting detail to established facts about the influence of Waraqa.

On the visit to Waraqah by Muhammad and Khadijah, Watt does not find to expedient to doubt it. He reasons that the incident shows how desperate Muhammad was to boost his confidence after the initial experience in the cave and therefore it could not have been fabricated.

Probably precisely because of this, Watt goes on to suggest that the expression in the first revelation in Surah al-Alaq ‘teaching of the Pen’
might have reminded Muhammad of that ‘... Muhammad had frequent communications with Waraqa at an earlier date, and learnt much of a general character. Later Islamic conceptions may have been largely moulded by Waraqa’s ideas, e.g. of the relation of Muhammad’s revelation to previous revelations.²⁹

He is of course aware that this is a mere assumption since there is no evidence that Muhammad met Waraqa before the incident. Assumption itself is interesting considering that Waraqan might have died some three or four years after the incident.³⁰

Regarding the blames that God to has daughters which according to the orientalist was maintained by the Prophet, the truth is very different. According to Watt Prophet Muhammad while reciting the lines of the Quran, readout satanic verses, and that this incident has not been invented by unbelievers. He further points out that Prophet Muhammad later announced that these verses should not be considered verses from the Quran. Instead, he advised people to recite the Quranic verses which were very different rather opposite from the subject. In order to create further doubts Watt calls it the diplomacy of Prophet Muhammad. All this was done in order to get due attention from the unbelievers (Mushrikeen). These satanic verses were related to the establishment of the three idols Lat, Uzza, and Manat who were worshipped at the nearby places.
Watt says in Muhammad at Mecca. "When Muhammad saw that the Meccans were turning from his message, he had a great desire to make it easier for them to accept it. At this juncture surat an-Najm was revealed; but when Muhammad came to the verses, 'Have you considered al-Lat and al-Uzza, and Manat, the third, the other then the tradition continues, 'as he was saying it to himself, eager to bring it to his People, Satan threw upon his tongue (the verses), "These are the swans exalted, whose intercession is to be hoped for" on hearing this the Meccans were delighted, and at the end when Muhammad prostrated himself, they all did likewise. The news of this even reached the Muslims in Abyssinia. Then Gabriel came to Muhammad and showed him his error; for his comfort God revealed 22.51, and abrogated the satanic verses by revealing the true continuation of the surah. Quraysh naturally said that Muhammad had changed his mind about the position of the goddesses, but meanwhile the satanic verses had been eagerly seized by the idolators.\(^{31}\)

Watt suggests that the story could certainly be true because there is no reason to assume that it was invented by Muhammad's enemies and also, that since the tales say that the actual expressions were abrogated it means the incident actually occurred. He writes: firstly, at one time Muhammad must have publicly recited the satanic verses as part of the
Quran; it is unthinkable that the story could have been invented later by Muslims or foisted upon them by non-Muslims. Secondly, at some later time Muhammad announced that these verses were really part of the Quran and should be replaced by others of a vastly different import. The earliest versions do not specify how long afterwards this happened; the probability is that it was weeks or even months.\(^\text{32}\)

The story related to the satanic verses where God has been accused of having three daughters it can be pointed out that all these examples do not have relevant supporting details and lacks original sources and there is no mention of the eye witness in this connection. Therefore there is no question of the wrong interpretation of Muhammad’s diplomacy where he himself has to follow the wrong school of thought which was earlier rejected. Muslim world never believes that the Prophet Muhammad had also joined the unbelievers. The entire Holy Quran which was revealed to Prophet Muhammad repeatedly emphasizes on oneness of God and the Prophethood of Prophet Muhammad. How could the Muhammad go against the basic norms of Islam. The oneness of God has been accepted in many religious, whereas people have raised objections to the very existence of the last Prophet. Therefore such kinds of misinterpretation to demolish the actual and due image of the Prophet is very much possible Watt has also raised similar kinds of doubts, whether intentionally or unintentionally, better known to him, He opines.
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22. Watt, at Mecca, p. 49.
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26. Ibid., p. 48.
27. Ibid., p. 42.
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29. Ibid., pp. 51-52.
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Chapter-6

Modernist Writing on William
Montgomery Watt
Modernist Writings on William Montgomery Watt

Islam and the west is no new subject. Islam is the most misunderstood religion in the west. A critical study of the western writers on Islam reveals ignorance and prejudice.

A few outstanding western scholars have devoted their works to Islamic studies because of their sincere interest in it. This is undoubtedly a welcome change, but despite the sane and fair approach of only a few, the general atmosphere still abounds with ignorance and prejudice. Real teachings of Islam are extraneous to the west.

Western writers on the whole has impelled by the desire to find out weakness in Islam and the Islamic pattern of things which can be exploited to serve the political ends of the Christian west.

In the opinion of many modernist writers of east William Montgomery Watt was acknowledged a leading western authority on Islam and prophet Muhammad at the same time. He was a learned Christian scholar whose writings on Islam and Christianity and biography of Prophet and historical subjects are well known among the Muslim scholar also.

There have been very few scholarly writings by Muslim scholars in English about orientalist views on Islam in general and the Quran in
particular criticized the orientalists have always tried their best to study on the Islam but the Muslim Scholars have now presented their views of what had been written about Islam by them.

Regarding the study on Islam it is obvious that an analysis and evaluation of the works of Watt by Modern writers be done. Because many modern writers have not only analyzed but have also presented a healthy and factual criticism of Prof. Watt’s writings on Islam and Prophet.

In the seventh century Islam crossed the border of Arabia and was spreading faster in Iran and other parts of the world. This made the western writers very apprehensive. So they decided to arrest spreading power of Islam and they began to projected it as the most despicable and repulsive force against Christianity. The reason behind it that they considered Islam a great threat against Christian faith. A glance at twentieth century literature on Prophet Muhammad shows that many authors treated the subject not an area of substantial interest but an additional issue. We also have observed an intense prejudice and hatred against the religion and two fundamental sources i.e. the Quran and the Sunnah. Therefore the need of the time was to develop a better understanding between the two civilizations i.e. Islamic and Western.
Among the 20th century Western Scholars of Islam, W.M. Watt stands out as the most prolific writer on Prophet Muhammad. Since he seems to have a better understanding of Islam, he is able to occupy a special chair of Islamic studies in the western orientalist school. Unlike others, who has spent all their energies in painting the darkest possible picture of Islam and the life of Prophet, W.H. Watt has used a subtle technique of interpretation by using the Modern attire of objective study.

Sheikh Ahmad Zaki Yamani has indirectly spoken about Watt’s eminence among western scholars in the foreword to Watt’s book ‘Islam and Christianity today’. Sheikh Yamani says: Professor Watt has done much in the effort to free the western mentality of the shackles of prejudice and hatred that originated in the hostilities of medieval times and that have for so long blinded the western world to the merit of trying to understand Islam. In spite of the phenomenal difficulties inherent in attempting to reconcile positions that are generally regarded as irreconcilable he has achieved a high level of open-mindedness. He recognized the efforts of Watt to free the Western mentality of the shackles of prejudice by using a high level of open-mindedness. According to him Watt has maintained a more balanced attitude towards the understanding of Islam than of his contemporaries.
Antonic Weakeles considered W.M. Wat’s ‘Muhammad At Mecca’ and “Muhammad at Modena” very profound and respectable accounts regarding the biography of the Prophet Mohammad. Imaduddin Khalil favoured him by saying that Watt rendered it necessary to maintain respect and impartiality while writing about the unseen foundation in the background of the facts and events related to the prophet’s life.

According to Khurshid Ahmad, Watt has made an effort to change the attitude of Western scholarship on Islam and Prophet.

A.L. Tibawi who could usually see through the hidden facts and spot the wrong impression about Islam, which was the result of hypocritical stance by many Western scholars, has praised Watt’s work in his words that Watt has made an honest attempt and also his command of the facts and his imaginative reconstruction of events are really admirable.

Khurram Murad was of the opinion that Watt was kind enough to lend a sympathetic era and pen to Islam.

A.S. Bazmee admires his openness and honesty in pointing out the problems non-Muslim Western scholars face in the field of Islamic studies.
A modern writer, Andreas D'souza, critically analyzed the writing of Watt and said that Watt attempted to move beyond a mere description of Islamic data to the more challenging task of helping Muslims to deepen and strengthen their faith, making it more directly relevant to the questions and issues we face today.\(^6\)

There can be no doubt about W.M. contribution of Watt in the field of study of Islam. But inspite at all this, we can not deny the fact that Jabal Mohammad Bauben has accused Watt to have relied on his own conjectures overlooking the contemporary Islamic scholars. All this is specially in connection with the image of Prophet Muhammad.\(^7\)

There is no doubt that Jabal Muhammad Buaban brings out the historical background of the negative image of the prophet in the writing of the western writers. In doing so he discovered that Watt has insisted that the Quran is a subdued revelation, and not wholly true. He furthers points out that Watt has shown a special fascination with the concocted story of the “satanic verses”.

Josef Ven Ess points out that since Watt has been Anglican Clergyman throughout this life, therefore, sometimes his writings could be described as didactic or possibly propagandistic.\(^8\)
Muhammad Hamidullah, through praises Watt for his efforts in translating the works, yet he clearly spots the fact that Watt has offered an incorrect rendering of Al-Ghazali’s original.

Dr. M.M. Ali in his book *Sirat-al-Nabi and the orientalists* has critically analysed the works of Watt in order to refute the life of Prophet Muhammad. According to him the suggestion made by him regarding the ambition and preparation on the prophet’s parts to become the messenger of God are totally groundless and they are not supported by the text of Quran or by the traditions of the Prophet.

Whether it be Muhammad’s experience of poverty as a Youngman. Novurshing the sense of deprivation or his exclusion from the most lucrative trade or his consciousness of having great organizing ability, all allegations are baseless. We donot get any record of any kind of criticism by his subsequent opponents if they had knowledge of Muhammad’s preparation for becoming a leader. Apart from this, we get the example of divine consolation to the prophet of the movement of dejection which was caused by people continuous disobedience.

The Quranic passage “And you were not used to reading /reciting any book before this, nor to writing it with your right hand “ (29:48) clearly shows that the statement has been made in the context of unbeliever’s allegations that the Prophet had himself composed the text.
Since the passage itself expresses the absurdity of allegations of Watt’s statement “there is a presumption that Muhammad knew at least enough to keep commercial records” or when Watt says that probability Muhammad had the old world stories written down for him by secretaries”, it can be discarded because Watt does not provide the relevant source in this connection. Depending upon only on probabilities does not make any sense.

Though it is obvious that an analysis and evaluation of the works of these idea of their approach to the 19th century and at the beginning of 20th century. It also gives us relevant information about the evaluation of their ideas and opinions throughout and till the present time.

While having a close look at Watt’s tall claim i.e. “I am not a Muslim in the usual sense, though I hope I am a “Muslim” as “one surrendered to God”. It can be observed that in declaring himself a ‘Muslim’ he seems to have an intention in his mind to misguide people. Although the basic meaning of the word ‘Muslim’ is to surrender to God’ but Watt has forgotten that to be a Muslim one must believe in five pillars of Islam, the very first of which is to believe in Almighty Allah and His prophets. He himself has criticized the prophet which a sensible Muslim can never ever dream of. Therefore there is no point in considering him a Muslim spending life time in the study of Islam, leaving the basic pillars
of Islam, how can one declare himself a Muslim. The intention is obvious Watt wanted to misguide the people with the helps of his fabricated words.

In his book ‘Islam and Christianity today’ discussing Christian attitude to Islam Watt has distorted the image of Islam on the basis of violence, self indulgence, moral and sexual weakness especially in connection with the practice of Prophet Muhammad who was popularly identified with the devil. Though he further highlighted the efforts of various scholars who could correct more gross and enormous distortion resulting into positive image which is presently revived.

Similar kind of argument is given in his article “Muslim-Christian dialogue” in Hamdard Islamicus published from Pakistan. In this article he has written mainly about his efforts of understanding the extent of confirm that the Christians of today are in no position to condemn out right the sexual ethics of Islam.

Actually what appears is that Watt is trying his best to understand certain aspects of Islam comprehensively but of not all together, at times, he seems to have failed. If we will go through the study of Quran and Sunnah any body can find that Islam is a religion of peace, Justice, no-violence and morality. And all these points can be confirmed from various direct references from the life of Prophet and Sahaba. Whether it
is about polygamy, mutual differences on various fronts, moral
degradation, sexual ethics or any other issues, Islam provides solution to
all these issues.

Zafar Ali Qurashi says: Montgomery Watt is prominent among
such well-known orientalists. His two volume biography Muhammad at
Mecca and Muhammad at Medina, has become a veritable orientalists
classic upheld as the uncontested authority on the subject even at
Pakistani Colleges and universities.12

Mazeruddin Siddiqi write: Most of the books written by Prof. Watt
on Islam and life of the Holy Prophet of Islam show him to be not too
much sympathetic to Islam.13

Tibawi writes: My acquaintance with Montgomery Watt is slight,
but I studied all his works on Islam and reviewed a number of them. As a
typical example, I quote here from my assessment of his portrait of
Muhammad as a prophet and statesman. It simplified and popularized the
author’s earlier and more scholarly volumes. Almost every Orientalist has
at one time or another tried his hand on the life of Muhammad, but down
to our own time their approach and its outcome continue to be colored
with prejudice and hostility. Often enough, the Orientalists sat in
judgement on Muhammad and Islam according to standards that ill befit
his time and environment. Often enough they lingered on inevitable human contradictions in order to discredit the man and his cause.

Montgomery Watt’s contributions “had been remarkable for attempting to redress the balance. His command of the facts and his often imaginative interpretation are admirable. But his treatment of Muhammad the statesman is more acceptable to Muslim opinion than that of Muhammad the prophet”. For while his Prophethood and sincerity are recognized, it is asserted in the same breath that he was “aware” of Jewish and Biblical traditions. This is an ill-disguised resurrection of the hoary story of the alleged Judaeo-Christian “origins” of Islam. That is in conflict with the Qur’an, or that its propagation in these “liberal” times is offensive to the believers does not seem to have troubled the mind of the writer. He cannot be accused of ignorance of the Qur’an or of Islamic sentiment. It is therefore inexplicable why he tried to ride two horses at the same time.\(^\text{14}\)

In M.M. Watt article “Thought on Muslim Christian Dialogue” editor write in his note about the Watt’s writing Professor Watt is certainly one of the best qualified to write on such a delicate and sensitive subject as he is at one’s both a committed Christian who combines in himself loyalty to his faith with deep scholar of approach and, at the same time, a renowned scholar in Islamic studies with an unusual sympathy\(^1\).
In this long article he has tried to pose the problems and the points of dialogue without taking any definite position for himself. Watt makes it clear that "the following pages are addressed mainly to Christians in the sense that, since the writer is a Christian he is most likely to have influence with his fellow Christian Editor further stated – we must also appreciate his courageous attitude in exposing certain misunderstanding about Islam among the Christian and particularly his frank remark that "the British Christian is generally very badly informed about Islam".

Mazheruddin Siddiqi and Ali Quli al-Qarar write a review article of Watt’s book *Islam and Christianity today- A contribution to dialogue*. In his review Mazheruddin look at the book positive and negative both. Acknowledging what he sees as a positive posture of his work, Mazheruddin cites- Professor Watt has been involved in the study of Islam since 1938. He has written numerous books on Islam including Islam and the integration of society, *what is Islam?* The *Formative Period of Islamic Thought* etc. Prof. Watt is considered to be a leading authority in the English speaking world on the life of the holy prophet of Islam and the early history of Islamic theology (Kalam). According to Mazheruddin most of the books written by Prof. Watt on Islam and the life of the holy Prophet on Islam show him to be not too much sympathetic to Islam. In this respect he does not stand favourable
comparison with Prof. H.A.R. Gibb; because sometimes he makes very adverse remarks about Islam. His book *Muhammad at Medina*, is notably defective from this print of view.\(^\text{18}\) Al Qarai detects a dual efforts in Watt’s writings, he finds that Watt’s inner dialogue is prompted by the need to defend his own faith against the continuous growth of scientism, and by defending Christianity, he would be defending aspects of Islamic beliefs as well.\(^\text{19}\)

In his article “*Free will and Predestination in Early Islam— A critique appreciation*” William Thomson writes about the Watt’s writings and says “Dr. Watt would perhaps disavow such an ambitious intent. But his synthetic treatment of subject, which is virtually a new departure in the study of Muslim religious thought, opens out that prospect for the readers and he has put forward, well considered views regarding the historical development of a department of that thought, wherever in his opinion his sources entitled him to do so.\(^\text{20}\) Thomson further says “How valid his modestly tentative conclusions are will undoubtedly be the subject of much further inquiry and discussion, but many of them will assuredly stand the light of criticism and find ultimately general acceptance, even if some restatement, or modification, be required in the light of new material, or by the general recognition of some still disputed foreign influence.\(^\text{21}\)”
A.L. Tibawi, in his review writes that Professor Montgomery Watt is a prolific writer. His writing is clear, logical, and sparkles with inventive comments.\textsuperscript{22}

James E. Royster in his article ‘A survey of approaches from the perspective of the history and phenomenology of religion’\textsuperscript{23} says about the Watt that he accepts Carlyle’s guideline in focuses on the good side of Muhammad.\textsuperscript{24}

Royster writes that as one of the most prolific western writers on Muhammad in the mid-twentieth century, Watt warrants special attention.\textsuperscript{25} Further Royster says Watt’s work, his overall approach to the study of Muhammad and Islam may be termed multi-methodological. Second only to the underlying religio-historical orientation of most of his work is a decided sociological current.\textsuperscript{26}

William A. Bijlefeld write in his article “some recent contributions to Quranic studies: Selected publication in English, French, and German, 1964-1973 Part I “ about the Watt work ‘index to the Quran’ in Montgomery Watt’s edition of Bell’s introduction are helpful for anyone who seeks to find Quranic data on a specific issue\textsuperscript{27}. Bijlefeld further says that Montgomery Watt’s companion is the most difficult one to characterize, partly because of the extreme brevity of many notes. The book certainly provides some helpful data which can be consulted with
ease and quickly. But with regard to Quran exegesis it is as true as in many other cases that in trying to save time we may be in danger losing it. It would be irresponsible to compare Montgomery Watt’s companion with Paret’s for more demanding Kommentar without taking into consideration that they try to reach different group of readers and intend to serve different purposes. However, Montgomery Watt himself seems to suggest in his ‘introduction’ that his commentary is not intended for “the direction Watt’s index is the remarkable scarcity of printed index to the Quran in English Leaving the language aspects aside, it seems to me that even these indexes, in themselves excellent.\textsuperscript{28}

\textit{Bijlefeld point out that Montgomery Watt had done earlier, the question of the sources of the Quran is helpfully discussed in term of influences of Jewish and Christian ideas on Arabs in the Pre-Islamic Period.\textsuperscript{29}}
References


Conclusion
CONCLUSION

Professor Montgomery Watt’s study provides the understanding of the social and theological system of thought that motivated Islamic civilization. The fundamental difference between Islam and occidental concepts of religion make it difficult to explain Islam to the west but by adopting the methodological standpoint of sociology, the author is able to overcome these differences and to give a balanced account by western readers.

The role of the Middle Eastern countries in world politics and economics had become more prominent in recent times, in this light the west and the meeting of Islam and Christianity take on new importance. W.M. Watt, one of the foremost experts on Islamic studies looks at the meeting of the two religions, how they see and have seen each other over the ages and considers how they can aid each other in dealing with the problems of the world today.

As a Christian who has studied Islam for over forty years, Professor Watt is convinced that, in defending Christianity from antireligious currents in the modern world, notably scientism, one must also defend Islam. He therefore emphasizes those beliefs which Christianity and Islam have in common, and shows that may be justified intellectually.
However, Watt like many other contemporary orientalists still thinks and perceives Islam as an extension of Christianity. He strongly believed that the Prophet Muhammad was influenced by Christian thought. The event of the Prophet’s meeting with Nestorian monks in Syria in his early life has been presented in such a way as to show that the seeds of Christian influence on the Prophet Muhammad were sown during his young age. He spared no change to show many teachings of Islam where nothing but continuation of Christian thought, such events from the Prophet Muhammad’s life which show his lenient and compromising attitude towards Christians of Madina and also shown in the same light, the Prophet Mohammad’s attachment with Christian scholars of Mecca, are highlighted in such a way as to show his inclination towards Christians.

His primary aim in the study is, consonant with sound scholarship to present Islam in the best light possible to European and American readers, to both the religious minded and the secular in outlook. In part, this intended to counter-act the residual effects of medieval war – propaganda, but even more, it is an attempt to bring about a fuller realization of the importance, Islam is likely to have in next hundred years. A secondary aim to show to the Muslims that the attitudes of occidental scholarship are not necessarily hostile to Islam as a religion
but that it is possible to combine these attitudes with a loyal, though more sophisticated, acceptance of it.

Professor Watt has done much in the effort to free the western mentality from the shackles of prejudice and hatred that originated in the background of these hostilities of medieval time and that have for long blinded the western world to the merits of trying to understand Islam.

Rodison considers Watt to be a person who occupies a middle position between the denial of the importance of religious factors on one hand and on the other, the denial or minimization of the role of sociological factors.

Watt's impact on English speaking students of Islam, and the Prophet's biography for the matter, is more persuasive than any of his predecessors or contemporaries. His books have been seriously reviewed by various scholars through the views of these scholars. Watt falls into a very different category.

His method of research is sound and his style persuasive. He did not say openly regarding Islam and Prophet like all Christians. His dialogue is on two fronts: with his own society, and with the Muslims. He, in his own way, tried to distil the fundamental notions of Muslim civilization out of mass of material. He has tried to make clear the alternatives, which Islam offers.
Sometimes he seems to have maintained a very balanced approach between Islam and Christianity. While at times, he has inclination towards Christianity, at the same time his study offers an analytical approach. There are certain points where he has not been able to supply plausible evidences for what he believes. Yet he has remained quite diplomatic.

Watt has tried to interpret the beginnings of Islam as per the function of the entire situation of the time, not only by the religious circumstances at that moment. One may understand it as the simple inversion of the insight that Islam itself was not a religion in the sense of modern Christianity, mainly concerned with the 'inner soul' but an attempt to shape society in its entirety.

If we made a comprehensive study of Watt’s statements we will find that there are a lot of discrepancies in it. While writing about Sirah he has forgotten all his objections on the orientalists and without realizing it he also followed them in presenting a critical view of the historical facts related to Prophet. Therefore, it is clear that all his writings appear to be ambiguous.

It can be stated that Watt made a number of bold statements towards the acknowledgement of Prophet Muhammad in his writings. One of the ambiguous points is that although Prophet Muhammad
received revelation from God in reality he might not have. This point needs to be clarified more from Watt himself for the sake of better Christian Muslim understanding.

Second point is that the Christian doctrine that the Holy spirit spoke by the Prophets, implies that the Prophet Muhammad was inspired in the same way, and also by the Trinitarian God. By doing this, it seems that Watt downgrades the value of Prophet Muhammad not only in the eyes of non-Muslims but also Muslims.

Significant points in Watt’s thoughts on Prophet Muhammad is that Watt urges Christians to test the lives of those who follow Prophet Muhammad in the light of the Christian criterion that their fruits you will know them before deciding whether Muhammad could be a Prophet or not? This is the positive Christian appreciation of the prophethood of Muhammad. The second one is that by comparing Prophet Muhammad to the old Testament prophets.

William Montgomery Watt continuously exhibits many qualities. To start with, he is unusually gifted for textual interpretation. He has the knack for arranging materials lucidly. His arguments are clear for the reader. His style of writing is generally persuasive. His range of scholarship is quite wide for he takes into account not merely the theological matters but the historical and sociological issues as well. It,
however, serves no useful purpose at least with regards to Islam. Because of theological points, he tries to maintain neutrality but his thrust has been on emphasizing the role of material factors. He tried to show that the beginning of Islam was, in fact, an event brought about by the circumstances of the time. His contention is that Islam has incorporated the divergent elements, which have shaped its civilization and developed it worldview.

From all the works of Watt, the way he harks back on the description of various sects and differences among Muslim people, one gets an unmistakable impression that he is more interested in sects and through his work he highlights the differences among Muslims.

At the times he has observed that his aim in his writings is to present Islam in the best possible way for European and American readers.

It has been generally observed that Watt’s views on the Quran, to a great extent, have negative implications yet they need to be taken seriously because, it appears, that his intention is not to reduce the value of the Holy Book deliberately. His focus is rather to highlight the active role of Prophet Muhammad in it, to the extent, that at times he loses balance by regarding Prophet Muhammad as a real source of certain
verses. It can also be noted that the literature provided on Prophet Muhammad is though significant, but at times, ambiguous.

In a nutshell, it can be concluded that Watt has paved the way in providing a great shift from the distorted medieval images of the Prophet to the positive assessment of his status. In the same manner the views of Salman Rushdie can be disregarded in ‘Satanic Verses’ because by highlighting negative aspects (intentionally or unintentionally, better known to him) he has invited the attention of many passive individuals which brought them closer to the truths related to Islam and Prophet Muhammad.

In the light of above example it becomes clear that the efforts of Watt have brought about radical changes in a western way of thinking and behaviour towards Islam.

To the very last Watt’s academic activities could not continue because of his unfortunate demise and the gap left by him can not be filled.
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Appendices
Appendix – I

Interview of William Montgomery Watt

Professor Watt, how did you become interested in Islam and Christianity?

Well, I had studied Classics at Edinburgh University and “Greats” philosophy and ancient history at Oxford. From 1934 to 1938 I taught moral philosophy at Edinburgh University. In 1937 when my mother died, I asked an Indian (later Pakistani) Muslim to come as a paying guest to help me pay for a housekeeper. Khwaja Abdul Mannan was a student of veterinary medicine and at that time, aged about 20, a member of the Ahmadiyya Community – something he would have had to give up later when he became a Colonel in the Pakistani army. Mannan, as he called himself, was an argumentative Muslim, and our many discussions over breakfast and evening meals raised my interest in the world of Islam. I believe that he is still alive in Lahore.

When I heard that the Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem wanted someone to work on Muslim-Christian relations I applied for the post. After studying theology and being ordained priest, I began to learn Arabic in London. Between 1941 and 1943, I completed my Ph.D. at Edinburgh on freewill and predestination in early Islam. That was with Richard Bell, famous for translation of the Qur’an (Koran). Between 1944 and 1946 I worked in Palestine under the Bishop of Jerusalem. I had hoped to have discussions with Muslims, but Jerusalem proved not to be a good place to get in contact with intellectual Muslims. In 1946 things became difficult. I lost a friend when they blew up the King David Hotel. After leave I decided not to return to Jerusalem. In 1947 I became head of the
department of Arabic and Islamic Studies at Edinburgh University and continued there until my retirement in 1979 at the age of 70. In 1964 I received the title of Professor. I remain a priest in the Scottish Episcopalian Church and am presently writing another book about a Christian faith for today.

Your life's work has been devoted to dialogue between Islam and Christianity. Why is this important?

In the outburst of missionary activity round about the year 1800 the ideal was to go into the non-Christian parts of the world and convert everyone to Christianity; and this is still the ideal of some Christians. From Islam, however, there were very few converts. I have now come to doubt the appropriateness of conversion in many cases. The nineteenth century missionaries did not appreciate the positive achievements of the great religions in giving their communities a tolerable and meaningful form of life. In the course of the years I have made many Muslim friends, some of them in influential positions. These persons are deeply rooted in their religion and are doing excellent work not only for their fellow-Muslims but also for wider circles. I would indeed admit that sometimes conversion may be necessary for an individual's spiritual health and growth; but this is exceptional. For such reasons I hold that the Christian aim for the foreseeable future should be to bring the religions together in friendly dialogue and, where possible, in cooperation, for there is a sense in which all are threatened by the rising tide of secularism and materialism.

Many Westerners would question the value of dialogue with Islam because, for example, they see the Sharia as being cruel. Do you think this is true?
Well, similar punishments are found in the Old Testament – including, for example, the cutting off of women’s hands in Deuteronomy 25. In Islamic teaching, such penalties may have been suitable for the age in which Muhammad lived. However, as societies have since progressed and become more peaceful and ordered, they are not suitable any longer.

If we demonise one another we cannot even debate such things. Dialogue is therefore imperative. It helps us to discern not just the meaning of the Holy Scriptures, but also the relevance that God wants them to have in our times.

**What about the attitude of Muhammad (peace be upon him) towards women?**

It is true that Islam is still, in many ways, a man’s religion. But I think I’ve found evidence in some of the early sources that seems to show that Muhammad made things better for women. It appears that in some parts of Arabia, notably in Mecca, a matrilineal system was in the process of being replaced by a patrilineal one at the time of Muhammad. Growing prosperity caused by a shifting of trade routes was accompanied by a growth in individualism. Men were amassing considerable personal wealth and wanted to be sure that this would be inherited by their own actual sons, and not simply by an extended family of their sisters’ sons. This led to a deterioration in the rights of women. At the time Islam began, the conditions of women were terrible – they had no right to own property, were supposed to be the property of the man, and if the man died everything went to his sons. Muhammad improved things quite a lot. By instituting rights of property ownership, inheritance, education and divorce, he gave women certain basic safeguards. Set in such historical
context the Prophet can be seen as a figure who testified on behalf of women’s rights.

A lot also depends on what sort of Muslim society you look at. Many Westerners today think that Islam holds women in the heaviest oppression. That may be so in some cases, but only because they look at certain parts of the Islamic world. Pakistan, Bangladesh and Turkey have all had women heads of state. I therefore don’t think the perception of Westerners is entirely correct.

What about war – Jihad versus Crusade? Terrorism, for example, can be considered both unislamic and unchristian, yet we see it justified by extremists whether in Egypt or Northern Ireland. Do you think violence can be part of faith?

Well, I think fundamentalists of any religion go beyond what their religion is about. But let me take an example from our Old Testament. I’m becoming very worried about the Old Testament because so much of it is unchristian. I read a passage every day and find it more and more so. There is a serious matter which is not clear from some translations. The New Jerusalem Bible that I read uses the phrase “curse of destruction”, and this was applied to towns when the Hebrews were coming into Palestine. They killed everyone in a town – men, women, children and sometimes also animals. This happened in Jericho as we see in Joshua 6, and in about a dozen other places; and there are also later instances. This is definitely unchristian.

I think on the whole Christianity is against war, though in the past Christians have supported wars. I don’t think Islam is basically anti-Christian, but some extremists might take such a view.
There was a formal gathering of Scottish Christians and Muslims at the national service of reconciliation in Edinburgh following the Gulf War a few years ago. Scottish church leaders had refused the government’s wish to make it a service of “thanksgiving”. They called it, instead, one of “reconciliation”. The time of day coincided with the Muslim’s evening call to prayer. At first the Muslims thought this would prevent them from attending. But then, to avoid any problem, they were allowed to say their prayers in St Giles Cathedral in front of the Christian altar while the Christian congregation kept silent. The following week Christians prayed in the community centre of the Glasgow Mosque. This would mirror the Tradition that Muhammad allowed Christian delegations visiting him to pray in the Mosque. Such a happening in modern Scotland, even after a war, suggests that religion can bridge the wounds of war.

I therefore certainly don’t think the West is locked into Jihad with Islam, though I suppose if the fundamentalists go too far they’ll have to be opposed. Iran’s comments about the “Great Satan” were aimed mostly at the United States: they were not made because the West was Christian. I think the West should try to overcome these strains between different religious groups. I do, however, think that the US is following a very dangerous policy in relation to the Middle East. The root of this trouble is that the US gives too much support to Israel. They allow them to have nuclear weapons and to do all sorts of things, some of which are contrary even to Jewish law. Jewish families occupy Arab houses without payment. That is stealing. I think that the US should be much firmer with Israel and put a lot of pressure on them, though this is difficult because of the strong Jewish lobby. Unless something is done there’ll be dangerous conflict in the Middle East. Such danger would be less likely to arise if all
three Abrahamic faiths - Jews, Christians and Muslims - paid greater respect to what God teaches us about living together.

Do you think that the newly re-established Scottish Parliament should take any position on the Middle East?

The Scots Parliament should keep to a middle course and certainly not join the anti-Islamic side. I’m sure it would like to see some balance of Jews and Muslims in the Middle East, and of course, fair treatment for the Palestinian Arabs, some of whom are Christian. The Scottish Parliament might try and help them to come to terms with one another.

Within Scotland, the parliament should work for some harmony between religions as there are Muslims and Jews, as well as Christians, in Scotland. With luck there will be one or two Muslim MSPs. The big question is whether the Nationalists will win and go on to demand independence which I think might be a good thing, though I am neither strongly for or against independence.

Islam maintains that the word of God is final and we can’t change it, Christianity, with its understanding of the dynamic presence of the Holy Spirit, is in constant flux. Where do you stand on this difference?

I would be inclined to say that the Qur’an is the word of God for a particular time and place and will not therefore necessarily suit other times and places. The prohibition on usury may have been good for a certain time and place but that doesn’t mean it will always be good.

You see, I think that Muslims need help in reaching a fresh understanding of the Qur’an as God’s word, but comparison with the Bible does not help much. The Qur’an came to Muhammad in a period of less than 25 years, whereas from Moses to Paul is about 1300 years.
Christians could perhaps show from the Bible that there is a development in God’s relation to the human race. For example, Moses was told to order the death penalty by stoning for anyone who broke the Sabbath by gathering firewood on it. Joshua was told to exterminate the whole population of various towns, men, women and children. Could the loving God taught by Jesus have given such barbaric and bloodthirsty orders? To say “No”, as one would like to do, throws doubt on the inspiration of the Bible. We seem to have to say that the precise commands which God gives to believers depend on the form of society in which they are living. Traditionally Muslims have argued from God’s eternity that the commands he gives are unalterable, and they have not admitted that social forms can change.

I therefore do not believe that either the Bible or the Qur’an is infallibly true in the sense that all their commands are valid for all time. The commands given in both books were true and valid for the societies to which the revelations were primarily addressed; but when the form of society changes in important respects some commands cease to be appropriate, though many others continue to be valid. I do, however, believe that Muhammad, like the earlier prophets, had genuine religious experiences. I believe that he really did receive something directly from God. As such, I believe that the Qur’an came from God, that it is Divinely inspired. Muhammad could not have caused the great upsurge in religion that he did without God’s blessing.

The diagnosis of the Meccan situation by the Qur’an is that the troubles of the time were primarily religious, despite their economic, social and moral undercurrents, and as such capable of being remedied only by means that are primarily religious. In view of Muhammad’s
effectiveness in addressing this, he would be a bold man who would question the wisdom of the Qur'an.

What do you think of the Qur'anic statement that the Old Testament has been changed, thus accounting for some of the differences between the Abrahamic faiths?

Well, I think that the later writers sometimes changed earlier things to make them more suitable for their contemporaries. I think there was a lot of rewriting of the Old Testament, though the form in which we have it hasn't been changed since the Christian era. I see the Old Testament as the record of a developing religion. As a religion develops some of the earlier stages may have to be abandoned completely. An example might be Islamic teachings on usury. I don't see how it is possible completely to get rid of usury. We will have to see how Islamic attempts to get rid of usury work. Undoubtedly capitalism has got to be restricted in various ways. The world is certainly in a mess at the moment, but how we can get out of it, I don't know. All I can say is that there are things that Christianity can learn from Islam, especially on its spiritual side, and Islam can perhaps learn from Christian understanding of God in relation to the universe and human life. I think Muslims would find that this might give a slightly greater emphasis to something in their own faith.

I think another thing is that we have all got to come to terms with the scientific outlook of today. That is very critical of the Old Testament. Old Testament says a lot about God's anger which I think is based on some of the false ideas that the Old Testament people had. They thought, you see, that God could interfere with the laws of nature. They thought that God made the sun stand still for a whole day so that Joshua could get a great victory. Well, that's impossible. They thought that God could
intervene with his own natural laws and punish people. Well, I think there is a sense in which wrongdoing is punished, but even in the Bible it is recognised that the wicked sometimes flourish. There are different strands of thinking in the Bible.

Islam requires belief in God as revealed in “the books” - not just the one book. This arguably incorporates Christian and Jewish scriptures. What, then, do you think Judeo-Christian understandings might have to teach Islam?

I think Muslims will have to take the work of Christ more seriously, even if they simply regard him as a prophet. The view I take, in accordance with the creeds, is that he was truly human. He wasn’t a superman. That leaves you with the question of how he was also divine, but I think we have to look much more at his humanity. I also don’t think he was able to work miracles except for those that other saints could also do -such as curing the sick. I don’t think some of the other miracles really happened. For instance, one of the outstanding things was the supposed changing of water into wine at a marriage feast. This is given in the 4th gospel and is said to be the first of the signs of Jesus achievement. Clearly, this was meant to be understood symbolically, because making a lot of wine has nothing to do with the Gospel. It was meant to symbolise changing something ordinary into something precious, which is what Jesus had achieved. It was not meant to be taken literally - there was a tremendous amount of wine involved - the equivalent of about 900 bottles - and I don’t think Jesus was an alcoholic.

In the Quran there is very little knowledge of Judaism and almost none of Christianity except about such points as the virgin birth. There are references to Moses and Abraham and so forth, but nothing about, for
example, the settlement of Israel in Palestine and the achievements of the later prophets with their important emphasis on justice. I cannot believe that God would not bless the development of greater awareness amongst Muslims of these things.

**And what can Islam teach Christianity?**

Speaking personally, it has taught me to think more deeply about the oneness of God. I am not happy with the traditional Trinitarian Christian formulation of God comprising three “persons” - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The word “person” has changed since it was first used in English four centuries ago. It was a translation of the *Latin persona* - a face or mask, such as that used by actors. Now the English word means an *individual*, which is different. Christianity is not trying to say that God comprises three individuals. Islam, with its many different names for the qualities of God, can help the Christian see a more true meaning of Trinitarian doctrine. The Trinity is different faces or roles of the same one God. For me, that insight has been a direct result of my study of Islam.

**There is a prayer that you have long used that brings together the Judeo-Christian with the Islamic before the God of us all. Might we close our interview with that?**

O Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God, grant that the whole house of Islam, and we Christians with them, may come to know you more clearly, serve you more nearly, and love you more dearly. Amen. **Professor Watt, thank you, so very much.**
Appendix – 2

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