

# The Quranic Text Approach: A Review of Watt and Crone's Theses on the Emergence of Islam

Taufiqurrahman

Institut Agama Islam Negeri Kediri

rtaufiq@gmail.com

---

**Keywords :**

islamization, the historical context of the Quran, Montgomery Watt, Patricia Crone, Qur'anic texts.

**Abstract**

Montgomery Watt and Patricia Crone are two figures who are concerned to examine the emergence of Islam in Mecca, whether the trigger is socio-economic, trade, or socio-political, power. Watt states that Mecca from the beginning, which was already a center of pilgrimage, in the next process became an important trading center, giving birth to master traders. In the process, these conditions gave rise to Islam there. Crone, on the other hand, says it was Arab nationalism that determined the development of Islam in Mecca and the Arabian peninsula. This research will re-examine the two theses by trying to reveal through the approach of the Qur'anic texts, because according to the author, the revelation of the Qur'anic text cannot be separated from the situation that occurred at that time. This research is library research with documentation research techniques. Watt's thesis is closer to the truth that it was the trade factor that triggered the emergence of Islam. Crone's opinion is not in accordance with the text of the Qur'an. In Mecca there is no text that talks about political power, because Islam is still weak with few followers. Texts related to power only appeared after the hijrah, where it was needed to protect and defend the state of Medina from outside attacks, or even to expand power because of welfare needs, where financial resources were not found in Medina.

---

**Kata Kunci :**

islamisasi, kesejarahan al-Qur'an, Montgomery Watt, Patricia Crone, teks al-Qur'an.

**Abstrak**

Montgomery Watt dan Patricia Crone adalah dua tokoh yang konsen mengkaji kemunculan Islam di Mekkah, apakah pemicunya adalah kekuasaan sosio-ekonomi, perdagangan, atau sosio-politik. Watt menyatakan bahwa Mekkah yang semula sudah menjadi pusat ziarah, pada proses selanjutnya menjadi pusat perdagangan penting sehingga melahirkan para pedagang ulung. Dalam perjalanannya, kondisi tersebut memunculkan Islam di sana. Crone, sebaliknya, mengatakan bahwa nasionalisme Arablah yang menentukan perkembangan Islam di Mekah dan semenanjung Arab. Penelitian ini akan mengkaji kembali kedua tesis tersebut dengan mencoba mengungkap melalui pendekatan teks Al-Qur'an, karena menurut penulis, turunnya teks Al-Qur'an tidak lepas dari situasi yang terjadi pada saat itu. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kepustakaan dengan teknik penelitian dokumentasi. Pendapat Watt lebih mendekati kebenaran bahwa faktor perdaganganlah yang memicu munculnya Islam. Pendapat Crone tersebut tidak sesuai dengan teks Al-Qur'an. Di Mekkah belum ada teks yang berbicara tentang kekuasaan politik, karena Islam masih lemah dengan pengikut yang sedikit. Teks-teks yang berkaitan dengan kekuasaan baru muncul setelah masa hijrah, dimana diperlukan untuk melindungi dan mempertahankan negara Madinah dari serangan luar, atau bahkan untuk memperluas kekuasaan karena kebutuhan kesejahteraan, dimana sumber daya finansial tidak terdapat di Madinah.

---

<b>Article History</b> :	Received : 2023-06-15	Accepted : 2023-07-20	Published: 2023-08-5
<b>MLA Citation Format</b>	Taufiqurrahman, Taufiqurrahman. "The Quranic Text Approach: A Review of Watt and Crone's Theses on the Emergence of Islam." <i>Canonica Religia</i> , vol. 1, no. 1, Agustus 2023, hlm. 37–56.		
<b>APA Citation Format</b>	Taufiqurrahman, T. (2023). The Quranic Text Approach: A Review of Watt and Crone's Theses on the Emergence of Islam. <i>Canonica Religia</i> , 1(1), 37–56.		

---

## Introduction

Mecca in its history was a strategic area so that it became a highly contested area by the Arab tribes<sup>1</sup>. Because of this very strategic position, there is a proverb (adagium), which tribe controls it, then the honor and glory become an inseparable chart, attached to the tribe. This is due to the condition of Mecca being the center of worship as well as a meeting place for all Arabs, which indirectly fosters the economy.<sup>2</sup> Socio-politically, Mecca with the Quraysh tribe had assumed a significant role in the Arabian peninsula, where there were political and social divisions at the time.<sup>3</sup> Although politically it did not establish itself as a kingdom or empire like the Romans or the Parsis, its socio-economic choices saved it from division and destruction.<sup>4</sup> And this was inseparable from the role of the Kaaba on the one hand and on the other, the livelihood of the Quraysh as merchants. And from these two things, in fact, socio-politically, the Quraysh were divided into two tendencies, namely the tendency to hold economic political authority and the tendency to hold religious authority.<sup>5</sup>

In carrying out the mandate of being God's messenger, although only followed by a very small number, the Prophet Muhammad's loyal companions greatly helped his holy mission to spread the teachings of Islam for 23 years, so that it was able to spread throughout

<sup>1</sup> The Arabs inhabit a peninsula surrounded by the Red sea, the Indian Ocean, the Arabian sea and the Persian Gulf, consisting of deserts and barren mountains, and the population is nomadic. According to Hasan Ibrahim Hasan, the region was divided into three, namely Arab Petrix, Arab Disert/desert, and Arab Felix/green, and divided into the Tihamah region, West coast, from Yanbu to Najrah; Hijaz region, including Mecca and Medina; Najd region, including Riyadl, Yemen region, and Arudl region, East coast, much influenced by Persia. The origin of the Arabs began with the 'Ad, Tsamud, Jadis and Thasm, but they became extinct (Arabs of Baidah), and the Arabs of Baqi'ah, still flourishing consisting of Arabs of "Aribah and Musta'ribah. The "Aribah Arabs were called Qahthaniyyah or Yemeniyah, living in Yemen, while the Musta'ribah were called Adnaniyyah, Nizariyah and Ma'adiyah living in the North of the peninsula. They were also called the Ismailis, because of the descendants of Ismail, a Hebrew descendant who married an Arab woman, from the Jurhum tribe, the Arabs of 'Aribah. From the Qahthaniyyah gave birth to the 'Aus and Khazraj tribes who inhabited Medina and from the Adnaniyyah branched into the Rabi'ah and Mudhar tribes. And from Mudhar derived the tribe of Quraysh. See various sources, Hasan Ibrahim Hasan, 'Tarikh Al-Islam: Al-Siyasi, Wa al-Tsaqafi Wa al-Ijtima'i', *Diterjemahkan Oleh HA Bahauddin Dengan "Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam*, 1 (1964), pp. 1-5; Haji Rus'an, *Lintasan Sejarah Islam Di Zaman Rasulullah SAW* (Departemen Agama, 1981), p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> History tells us that Abrahah's desire to destroy the Kaaba with an army of elephants before the birth of the prophet was due to his envy of the role of Mecca with its Kaaba that lured Arabs to come there, which grew as an economic center. After an unsuccessful attempt to create a copycat center of worship in Yemen, he set out to destroy the Kaaba. And we are told that Abrahah failed with the descent of a viral plague, which killed his entire army and himself. The history of this incident is mentioned by the Qur'an in Surah al-Fil, with the descent of the ababil army carrying stones from the sijjil. See Taufiqurrahman, *Sejarah Sosial Politik Masyarakat Islam* (Surabaya: Pustaka Islamika, 2016), pp. 22-23; Umar Farukh, *Al-'Arab Wa Al-Islam Fi Al-Haudl Asy-Syarqi Min Al-Bahr Al-Abyad Al-Mutawassitah* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub, 1996), p. 37.

<sup>3</sup> Ira M. Lapidus and Ghufron A. Masadi, *Sejarah Sosial Ummat Islam* (Jakarta: Rajawali, 1999), p. 22.

<sup>4</sup> Mecca, at first the political power was held by the Jurhum tribe, and the religious power was held by the descendants of the prophet Ismail, after which the political power was held by the Khuza'ah tribe. But when Mecca was ruled by Qusha'i, then his descendants (Quraysh) took control of political and religious power. There were 10 positions in the structure of the city of Mecca, which were distributed to the tribe of Quraysh, namely Hijabah, Siqayah, Diyati, Sifarah, Liwa', Rifadahah, Nadwah, Khaimmah, Khazi'ah, Azlam. See Syed Amer Ali, *Api Islam* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1978), pp. 97-99.

<sup>5</sup> This split in orientation began with the sons of Abdi Manaf, who were four brothers: Abd Sham, who controlled the Habsyi route; Hashim, who controlled the Sham route; Naufal, who controlled the Persian route; and Muthalib, who controlled the Yemeni route. But only Abd Sham and Hashim competed fiercely for political and trade affairs. But in the end, Abd Sham controlled much of the political and trade affairs while Hashim held the authority of the Kaaba, namely religion. Historically, Hashim's descendants controlled hijabah, rifadah and siqayah. See Ahmad Syalabi, *Sejarah Peradaban Islam* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1973), p. 39.

the Arabian Peninsula after conquering the city of Mecca, in the last year of his life. In the course of preaching for 13 years in Mecca, Muhammad did not get many followers, because he received a lot of opposition and hostility from his people. All efforts were always blocked by intimidating, attacking, torturing his followers, and even attempting to kill him. This was because the prophet's mission had challenged the traditions and beliefs that they had inherited from generation to generation.<sup>6</sup> It was this unfavorable condition in Mecca that led Muhammad to make the hijrah to Yathrib in 622 AD. Hijrah to Medina, began with a meeting with pilgrims of the Khazraj and Aus tribes, where in his preaching, they accepted the teachings of Islam, and in the next process the people of Medina asked Muhammad to move.<sup>7</sup>

The issue of the emergence of Islam in Mecca, which developed prestigiously, is seen as an interesting phenomenon for historians. The question that arises among them is the question of what is the most important factor and has a significant impact on the emergence of Islam in the land of Hijaz. For Muslim scholars the view of the emergence of Islam will be answered theologically, and transcendental, which is related to the factor of God's will and His concern to move the course of history by sending the Prophet Muhammad as *rahmat li al-'alamin*, so that humans are able to run their lives based on the ideals and will of God. But for secular historians whose foundation is positivistic based on social science, the answer will certainly be based on the real facts they find in research on events that occurred at that time.

In the research that has developed so far, there are at least two opinions that are both diametrically opposed, and very far away from each other. The first was produced by William Montgomery Watt,<sup>8</sup> in his book *Muhammad at Mecca*, published in 1953, and the second by Patricia Crone<sup>9</sup> in her book *Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam*, published in 1987. In Watt's view, who approached the emergence of Islam by using socioeconomic analysis, said that trade was the main factor in the emergence of Islam in Mecca. The thesis he proposed in history became the main source used as a valid source about the history of the emergence of Islam. This is because Watt is considered to have qualified scientific credibility in putting forward his theory, in addition to the aspect of his intellectual weight that has been tested for a long time in his study of Islam. Although previously the same theory had appeared by

---

<sup>6</sup> According to Ahmad Syalabi, the Quraysh's rejection of Muhammad's preaching was caused by the socio-political threat that existed to them; the concept of social equality between humans, where social construction at that time had formed castes; the concept of the last day, where they believed life was in the world and there was no accountability; contrary to the traditions that had been passed down from generation to generation; and for fear of losing economic resources. Syalabi, *Sejarah Peradaban Islam*, pp. 61–65.

<sup>7</sup> The request of the people of Medina to the prophet Muhammad was also due to their desire to resolve conflicts between them and solve other social problems in them, in addition to following Allah's command to continue spreading Islam. It is not as Snouch Horgronye says that the prophet's move from Makkah to Madinah was a flight to save his soul, leaving behind the mantle of prophethood and giving more importance to political roles. C. Snouch Hurgronje, *Perayaan Mekah*, trans. by Supardi (Jakarta: INIS, 1989), pp. 1–2.

<sup>8</sup> Professor at the University of Edinburgh (UK) and a creative and prolific writer on Islam. Among other books, *Muhammad's Mecca: History in the Qur'an, The Majesty that was Islam, Islamic Philosophy and Theology The Influence of Islam in Medieval Europe, Early Islam*, with R. Bell wrote *Introduction to the Qur'an and with Chacia wrote A History of Islamic Spain*.

<sup>9</sup> Lecturer at the University of Oxford (UK) in Islamic History. Other books include *Slave and Horse: The Evolution of the Islamic Polity*, with Michael Cook wrote *Hagarism: The Making of the Islamic World*.

Henry Lammens,<sup>10</sup> in 1924, Watt is considered as the basic founder of the theory of the emergence of Islam in Mecca due to trade, so that Watt's theory seems to be a standard and established dogma.

In contrast to Watt, Patricia Crone understands that the emergence of Islam in the Hijaz was not caused by trade. Although Crone uses the same data sources as Watt, such as pre-Islamic poetry, Qur'anic commentaries, hadith collections, history books and other traditional sources, she criticizes that Watt uses his data sources based on stories, reports written by people about Mecca and its trade, without relying on real facts according to history. So the results are full of fabrications and myths, especially since Watt only wrote about the trade of Mecca in less than one page.<sup>11</sup> This research is library research with documentation research techniques. This research is different from what is done by Watt and Crone who pay more attention to socio-economic and socio-political factors in the perspective of social history. In this case, the author wants to try to analyze the factors revealed by Watt and Crone which are seen as interesting phenomena related to the emergence of Islam in Mecca through analyzing by searching the texts of Al-Qur'an.

### **Mecca and The Haram (Holy Land)**

The condition of Mecca, which has long been a center of worship for pilgrims coming from various regions, indirectly has an impact on the emergence of economic activities. Watt in his theory says that Mecca is an international trading city, because of its position in the middle of being a link between Yemen and Syria, and between Abyssinia and Iraq. As a center of pilgrimage, trade contacts were possible, so that Mecca developed into one of the famous market centers of the pre-Islamic period. In his statement, Watt explained that Mecca, where Muhammad lived for more than half a century, was entirely a trading city. Its growth as a trading center resulted from its location in the haram land, where people felt safe to come, without any disturbance and persecution.

Geographically<sup>12</sup> it was located on the North South, West East crossroads between Syria, Yemen, Abyssinia and Iraq, where travelers came to buy goods brought by the trade caravans. Mecca was also a financial center, where Meccans were financial experts, adept at manipulating credit, good at speculating, and interested in profitable investments from Aden

---

<sup>10</sup> Faisal Ismail, 'Perdagangan Mekkah Dan Kemunculan Islam (Mendiskusikan Tesis Montgomery Watt Dan Patricia Crone)', *Jurnal/Al-Jamiah/Al-Jamiah No. 64-XII Th. 1999/*, 2008, p. 95.

<sup>11</sup> Patricia Crone, *Meccan Trade and The Rise of Islam*, Princeton: University Press, 1987, 3. Crone's thesis has been criticized by various parties, not only Muslim historians but also Westerners. Serjeant, a lecturer at the University of Cambridge (UK), considers Crone's writing in his book to be a confused, irrational and illogical polemical work. Crone does not understand Arabic texts, the social structure of society and does not understand other sources of writing both ancient and modern. Crone's writing contains misconceptions, and one of them is his assertion that the Meccans did not trade in spices and silk. See Robert B. Serjeant, *Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam: Misconceptions and Flawed Polemics* (JSTOR, 1990), pp. 472–86. Other historians who reject Crone's thesis including; R Stephen Humphreys (Universitas Wisconsin Amerika), Hugh Kennedy (Universitas St Andrews).

<sup>12</sup> The Arabian Peninsula, with its center in the Hijaz (Mecca and Medina), was a region besieged by four empires, according to the trade routes of the time. The largest were the Byzantines (Romans) and Persians, and the two lesser powers of Himyar (Yemen) and Aksum were located west of the Hijaz across the Red Sea, and were closer to the Romans due to religious similarities. The Arabs were thus not isolated from social, economic and civilizational mobility, although the Arabs still strongly held to their hereditary traditions. See Fred M. Donner, *Muhammad Dan Umat Beriman Asal-Usul Islam* (Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2015), p. 3.

to Gaza or Damascus. The network involved many people not limited to Meccans, but other Arab tribes. Thus the Qur'an emerged in the context of a high-profile financial situation, not in the context of the desert.<sup>13</sup>

Watt's statement is refuted by Crone<sup>14</sup> who states that Mecca was not an international trade center, but merely a local one. The underlying reason is that it was located inland, where it was not possible for it to develop as a trading center. Trade centers will grow in coastal cities such as Aden, the port of Syu'aiba, as a small port near Mecca, according to Crone is not very significant for Mecca. Regarding the organization of bazaars during the pilgrimage season, Mecca according to Crone was not included in the list of bazaars. Crone goes on to conclude as follows:

Traceable traditional sources are unanimous in stating that Mecca was not the site of a bazaar during the Hajj season. In a list of pre-Islamic bazaars, 16 different types of bazaars developed at that time, none of the several versions listed mention Mecca. Clearly Mecca has not been forgotten in this regard. With regard to the three bazaars in question such as Ukaz, Dhul Majaz and Majanna, they were organized during the holy months, where after they completed their trade, they moved to perform the ritual obligations of Hajj at Arafat, in the vicinity of the bazaar, outside Mecca and after that they returned home. According to another version, we are told that they prepare for the pilgrimage to Mecca on the day of tarwiyah, the 8th of Dhul Hijjah, by stopping their trading activities and moving from the marketplace of Ukaz or Dhul Majaz to Arafat. They will also be followed by all those who do not visit the bazaar, where they have nothing to buy or sell. There is no trade in Arafat and Mina, so there is no trade in Makkah.<sup>15</sup>

From Crone's statement above, it can be concluded that the argument that Mecca was a prestigious trading center because it was associated with the Kaaba is a false assumption. Another argument is that the Meccans believed that trading during the Hajj season was forbidden. So the emergence of Islam due to trade factors is just a myth and not a fact.

Related to partners in trade with the people of Mecca, Watt argues that because Mecca is a trade center and the center of the movement of trade caravans where it is located on the path of the North (Syria) South (Yemen), West (Abyssinia) East (Iraq), then certainly the trading partners are traders who come from the path, whether regular or permanent. As a trade transit center where foreign traders usually arrive from various regions, then utilized by the Meccans one day took over as brokers who were able to intermediate trade goods between these regions. Unlike Watt, Crone builds his own hypothesis by saying that the biggest partners of the Meccan merchants were the Egyptians and Syrians, and also the Yemenis. But by Yemen he does not mean the southernmost tip, the coast of the Indian Ocean,

---

<sup>13</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, 2-3. F. M Donner states that Mecca was a center of exchange in a long-distance trade network, between India, Africa and areas close to the Mediterranean sea. Fred McGraw Donner, 'Mecca's Food Supplies and Muhammad's Boycott', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient/Journal de l'histoire Economique et Sociale de l'Orient*, 1977, 249-66 (p. 250).

<sup>14</sup> Patricia Crone, *Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam* (Princeton University Press Princeton, 1987), pp. 4, 109. Crone's sources of reference are Abdul Malik ibn Muhammad al-Tsa'labi, *Thimar Al-Qulub* (Cairo, 1965), p. 115.

<sup>15</sup> Crone, p. 170.

but the area between Mecca and Najran. As for Iraq and Abyssinia, the Meccans had no regular trade relations.<sup>16</sup>

In terms of commodities traded by the Meccans, according to Watt were luxury goods such as gold, silver, silk, porcelain, perfume, spices, fragrant oils, frankincense. The increase in trading status from middle-class retailers and traders to brokers, suppliers or even high-class entrepreneurs, made the Meccans able to trade these goods. Watt clearly says, that:

At first the Meccans were only middle-class traders and retailers, not importers and entrepreneurs capable of organizing trade caravans. But by the end of the sixth century AD, they could control almost the entire trade network from Yemen to Syria, the most important route. The West could obtain the luxury goods and incense of South Arabia. Thaif was a rival of Mecca, but Mecca had a stronger position as a trading center.<sup>17</sup>

Watt's opinion is rejected by Crone<sup>18</sup> who states that according to historical sources, the commodities exported and traded by the Quraysh were not of high value and exotic, but only ordinary goods such as leather, leather bags, clothing, donkeys, camels, and daily necessities. As for frankincense and incense, Crone confirms them as having once reached Mediteriania, but they have long since ceased to exist, and if they did, it was more due to the peculiar political circumstances in South Arabia. Crone further argues that the more common mode of trade was through sea shipping, as Mecca was confined by a sea of sand, and could not have played a significant role in trade. Crone's argument is that the Yemeni frankincense trade by the first century AD was entirely maritime, so the Hadramaut trade that replaced it would have been identical to the earlier pattern, let alone the Roman-Greek by the third century AD, its market having fallen off and not risen again. And when Mecca rose to prominence, there was no frankincense trade, and no Roman market.<sup>19</sup>

### **Social Construction of Mecca Society**

Pre-Islamic Arab society was socially known as a nomadic society, because it depended on natural conditions in the desert, with rocky mountains at some points, with a hot atmosphere with rare rainfall. They only rely on oases, water sources as a source of life that exist at several points, which are always contested, and one day will run out. And when it runs out they are forced to move to another oasis along with their tribe with their wealth, livestock, by setting up temporary camps, and so on, making it impossible to build a civilization.<sup>20</sup>

The Arabs were never united in a unified state building, but their social life was bound by family, then became a tribe and tribe. In the tribal Arab society, there were no universal

---

<sup>16</sup> Crone, p. 132.

<sup>17</sup> Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, 3 William Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca* (Clarendon Press Oxford, 1953), p. 3.

<sup>18</sup> Crone, pp. 8, 87.

<sup>19</sup> Crone, p. 29.

<sup>20</sup> Try to compare it with the northern region of the Byzantine and Persian Arabian Peninsula which had grown into the center of world civilization at that time. The Arabian Peninsula can be said to be a remote and peripheral region of the fair civilization. The developments that took place can be aligned with nations that are still in the early stages and ancient nations. They have not changed, making the Arabs still have a strong identity and culture that is still pure and original. They are not bound by a unified state, but the bond of the tribe is the basis of their lives. So that when there is a conflict between tribes, war is the main key to resolution. Taufiqurrahman, *Sejarah Sosial Politik Masyarakat Islam*, pp. 12–13.

moral principles and values. The important feature that stands out is the maintenance of security through the level of solidarity or tribal loyalty.<sup>21</sup> This solidarity is essential for a tribe in the desert. With a tribal form of humanism, one's life can only be meaningful if one is in a tribe. The consequence of this group solidarity, called *ashabiyah*, is that it views itself as a complete policy with no regard for external authority. This social condition also occurred in the people of Mecca, where they highly valued the values of tribal solidarity and social solidarity..

This tribal solidarity shaped attitudes such as courage in warfare, patience in the face of misfortune, persistence in taking revenge, protection of the weak and opposition to the strong. This attitude of life (*muruwah*) became a very strong basis in generating a feeling of self-respect and dignity of honor in Arab society and upholding this trait. Watt in this case says that *muruwah* is very suitable to be developed in the nomadic economic life order that has been deeply rooted in Arab society.<sup>22</sup>

The tribal and social consolidation that gave birth to the *muruwah* developed and survived in periodic small economic situations. But when the Meccans took control of the market economy, becoming brokers, suppliers and big traders, there was a shift in attitude, with the solidarity eroding, and even being uprooted from the traditions that had been practiced in their lives for generations. Individualism, materialism, monopoly, oligopoly, and even oligarchy became prominent attitudes among businesspeople who controlled the trading economy. Watt in this case said:

The trend at that time was towards the weakening of social solidarity and the growth of individualism. While tribal and clan organizations were still strong in some instances, in others, these ties had been abandoned. This was the case in Mecca, where commercial life had led to the rise of individualism and material and financial interests had become the basis for relationships. In fact, they were often placed on the same pedestal as blood ties. At that time there was a thought among the Meccans of hoarding profits, as cited in Surah 68:17, which reveals a sign of rampant individualism. This verse highlights the operation of a syndicate to gain a monopoly in various affairs in order to muzzle their less successful competitors.<sup>23</sup>

The change in the social construction of Arab-Mekkah society at that time from family-tribal ties and social solidarity based on blood ties to ties and solidarity of interests, which are economic, material and financial in nature, has triggered a gap between the rich and the poor, the emergence of an attitude of indifference towards orphans, other weak people and the poor. Even in matters of inheritance, many orphans are treated unfairly by their guardians or relatives by misusing their property. Thus the sense of community in society has been lost, and the result is the emergence of individuals who are isolated and excluded from their lives, and feel unhappy unless they must join and take refuge in the new order.

Later on, the wealth they have gained from their efforts in business has led to an attitude of arrogance, saying that it was all their own doing, with their own minds and hard

---

<sup>21</sup> William Montgomery Watt and Helmy Ali, *Politik Islam Dalam Lintasan Sejarah* (Perhimpunan Pengembangan Pesantren dan Masyarakat (P3M), 1988), pp. 7–13.

<sup>22</sup> Watt, pp. 16–24.

<sup>23</sup> Watt, p. 72.

work. The corollary is the feeling of not needing to rely even on God. Historically, when Islam was presented to them, they always rejected it, and one of them is materialism, which has the principle that there is only one life, namely in the world, now and early, and rejects the existence of the afterlife. Because life is worldly and rejects the accountability of the afterlife, then the economic attitude appears to justify all means, halal and haram are ignored, good and right are not considered, the most important thing in their minds is to get the maximum profit. They can be said to be economic actors materialistic capitalism.

The impact that occurred from the materialistic behavior of capitalism, with the neglect of God's role in every event, made the community, especially Mecca, had an influence on the attitude of generosity, generosity and social solidarity, because of the loss of social sensitivity due to the loss of gratitude for the abundance of sustenance that God had given them. Thus, the capitalistic economy of trade has influenced the erosion of the value of tribal humanism and their lives are undermined by moral and social crises.<sup>24</sup>

In contrast to Watt, Crone argues that Meccan commerce was not an important factor in the emergence of Islam, for the following reasons:<sup>25</sup> *first*, commercial wealth circulating in a short period of time is unlikely to cause damage to the lives of Meccan society, with the collapse of traditional norms that have been held for generations, because it takes a long time. According to Crone, Watt was hallucinating, the continuity that the Meccans were financial experts and practiced capitalist economics was happening like a transition period into the 20th century. Secondly, Watt's diagnosis related to corruption, the widening of the gap between rich and poor and the disappearance of care and generosity towards the poor, destitute, orphans, is wrong. The reason is that Muhammad, when his mother died, was raised by his grandfather Abdul Muttalib, when his grandfather died he was raised by his uncle Abi Talib, even when preaching Islam to the Quraysh, until the death of Abi Talib. Thus the tribal system and social solidarity were still maintained. *Thirdly*, it is a fact that the Arabs' acceptance of Islam was not in Mecca but in Medina. As long as Muhammad did not migrate to Medina, he would continue to be a prophet. It is in this connection that Crone says social politics is more of a major factor in the emergence of Islam, where the Meccans must be defeated first, and only then convey the teachings throughout the Arabian peninsula, and through conversion to Islam.<sup>26</sup>

To strengthen his thesis that socio-politics is the main cause of the emergence of Islam, Crone builds a theory, namely a strong sense of unity and unity in the life of Arab society based on ethnic and cultural ties to be the main foundation for Muhammad's success in preaching. The sense of unity had nothing to do with trade but rather with state-building and conquest. Without the conquests in Arabia and later in Iraq where the land is fertile due to the two great rivers Euphrates and Tigris,<sup>27</sup> Arab unity would not have been achieved. The

<sup>24</sup> Watt, pp. 75–79.

<sup>25</sup> Crone, pp. 231–35.

<sup>26</sup> Crone says that it is an exaggeration that a city in the remote desert has problems and that Muhammad responded by establishing a religion, which is electrifying. This is something of an exaggeration. See more clearly in Ismail, p. 106.

<sup>27</sup> The region is referred to as the Fertile Crescent, as the cradle of civilization, in the shape of a semicircle like a crescent that stretches from the Eastern Mediterranean, including the Egyptian Nile, Palestine, Jordan, Israel, Syria through the Tigris and Euphrates rivers to the Persian Gulf. The Fertile Crescent was named by American ancient Egyptologist James Henry Breasted.



decision of the ruling elite to launch conquests has no evidence of being related to commercial interests, so the trade of Mecca was not a factor in the emergence of Islam.<sup>28</sup>

Crone simply puts trade as a continuation of the process of conquest. There is no evidence that the collapse of the Meccan trade led to economic recession, and prompted the conquest. The conquest was more a matter of survival, with chieftains who commanded and protected nomadic tribesmen more likely to fight than not.<sup>29</sup>

Even in another section Crone states more clearly, that Muhammad's main purpose and mission in his preaching was more concentrated on a political mission by unifying in the frame of Arab nationalism to dominate the world. According to Crone, converting from polytheism by worshiping idols to monotheism is not too difficult for the Arab community to do. The Tauhid beliefs conveyed by Muhammad were more likely to lead to promises that stimulated them to power and conquest. This call was more about awakening militancy and ethnic pride which then encouraged them to support him. Thus this political mission became the driving force for the spread of Islam not only in the Arabian peninsula but beyond the borders of its development.<sup>30</sup>

On the other hand, Crone believes that Medina was a prophetic state, founded on religious authority rather than a secular state, based on material power. The conquest of the Arab pagans, and later the Byzantines and Persians, was due to the unity and fusion of the Arab tribes, not their disunity. The power of Arab-Islamic tribal unification was due to the situation of the squeeze between the two forces, so that the Prophet Muhammad could be used to make conquests.<sup>31</sup> Thus, Crone concludes that it was the political mission that was the basis for the emergence of Islam, rather than Watt's assertion that the trade of Mecca was the trigger.

### **Textual Interpretation Al-Qur'an of Watt and Crone Thesis**

Basically, the text of the Qur'an conveyed by God through the intermediary of the angel Jibril to the prophet Muhammad is a text that contains teachings intended for his ummah in dealing with his life in the world. It is a conception that provides life guidance both in relationships with God, humans and even with the universe with all its problems. As a text, it was revealed not in a vacuum and empty of interaction with the contextuality that occurred in society at that time, whether directly or not. In a contemporary perspective, the text is an expression that corresponds to its context.<sup>32</sup> In its form, the descent of the Qur'an is divided

---

<sup>28</sup> Crone, p. 243.

<sup>29</sup> Crone, p. 243. The emergence of the habit of war among the Arabs was due to many factors, such as the barren land, with extreme weather, hot during the day, cold at night, related to oases, the starting place for disputes over water sources, tribal fanatics, resulting in the defense of members of his tribe, even though he was the guilty one.

<sup>30</sup> Crone, p. 244. See Ismail, pp. 106–7.

<sup>31</sup> Crone, pp. 244–47.

<sup>32</sup> Fazlurrahman with his idea of contextual interpretation argues that interpreting the Qur'an must first understand the historical situation or historical context to draw the moral ideal of revelation, then project it in the current social context. The historical context is not limited to the cause of the revelation but includes the general situation and conditions, both political aspects, economics, traditions, beliefs, culture and others in Arab society. The Qur'anic verse that men get twice as much inheritance as women, is in accordance with the construction of patril Arab society. See Taufiqurrahman, *Pemikiran Dan Gerakan Pembaruan Islam Abad Modern Dan Kontemporer* (Pustaka Islamika: Pustaka Islamika, 2014), pp. 144–46.

into two components, namely the descent through clear causes and some are not through clear causes. According to its form, the *asbab al-nuzul* of Al-Qur'an text is divided into two, namely the form of questions from the community and the form of events. The form of questions revolves around the past, present and future, while events are related to disputes, mistakes and hopes.<sup>33</sup>

According to the author, the text of the Qur'an that was delivered to Muhammad consists of stories that reveal the condition of the previous ummah; stories that reveal what the Arab community experienced before and at that time; God's response and answer to the behavior of the Arab community in all respects, whether belief, culture, social, economic, political and others, which God considers deviating from good rules; in addition to other aspects that are human provisions in their lives. In relation to the emergence of Islam in Mecca, the author will analyze the texts of the Qur'an that were revealed in Mecca, in order to understand whether the socio-economic factors of trade were the main factors or socio-political, as proposed by Watt and Crone.

For this reason, it is necessary to reveal the problems that exist in economics and politics. In relation to the trade-economy, the effects arising from it are materialistic, capitalistic, arrogant-diminishing God, humiliating-degrading, exploitation-slavery-caste, individualistic-egoistic, loss of sensitivity- generosity and social solidarity. The problems related to socio-politics are power, strength, war-conquest, militancy and ethnic pride.

From the existing data from the text of the Qur'an, it is found that the emergence of Islam in Mecca was due to economic factors of trade. It can be seen that the verses that were revealed in Mecca in the early period before the Hijrah, were more *concerned* with issues of faith, belief in tawhidillah, the Day of Judgment, hereditary traditions, social and material-economic, none of which emphasized the issue of political power. Surahs that reveal the life of the Quraysh tribe can be seen in Surah Quraysh. Surah Quraysh 1-4 provides an initial description related to the social conditions of the people of Mecca, that their livelihood is as traders. Trade between distant regions, between Mecca-Syria and Mecca-Yemen, which was traveled in a short time, because of riding camel as vehicles. Under these circumstances, it can be concluded that the trade they conducted was not a small-scale trade, where the owner was not an ordinary trader, but a conglomerate, who had abundant wealth, with a lot of merchandise carried using dozens of camels as a vehicle.<sup>34</sup>

On the other hand, because they were of respectable descent who had inherited the Kaaba as a center of pilgrimage, they indirectly had the authority to manage and become middlemen who traded goods. Trade in two forms, export and import to various regions and sedentary trade by utilizing the arrival of pilgrims made the Meccans gain good fortune and become wealthy. The abundance of material possessions, can make him forget the Lord who

<sup>33</sup> See Subhi Salih, *Mabahith Fi Ulum Al-Quran*, 24th edn (Beirut: Dar al-'Ilm lil Malayin, 2000), p. 132; Muhammad 'Abdul'azim az-Zurqānī, *Manāhil Al-'irfān Fi 'ulūm al-Qur'ān* (Cairo: 'Isa al-Bab al-Halabī, 1362), p. 107. See also Ramli Abdul Wahid, *Ulumul Qu'ran* (Jakarta: Rajawali, 1993), p. 132.

<sup>34</sup> The merchants of Mecca could be said to be wealthy merchants, they were conglomerates, who traded various goods to be traded on the trade routes that had developed at that time. Their wealth can be seen in Khadijah bint Khuwailid, a widow who was able to dispatch a trade caravan led by Muhammad. According to the narration, the prophet received a lot of wages, and from part of the wages for dowry, about 20 camels. That's the value for peddlers of trading treasures, and what about the owner's merchandise?

gave him, so this letter was revealed with a verse about returning to worship Allah, who has maintained security and food shortages. Wahbah al-Zuhaili in Tafsir al-Munir says that Surah Quraysh was revealed based on the hadith, narrated by Baihaqi, that Allah honored Quraysh in seven ways: I am among them, prophet hood is with them, *hijabah* and *siqayah* are with them, Allah helped them from the elephant army, they worshipped Allah for ten years when no one else did, and Allah revealed a surah about them.

This effort was started by Muhammad's grandfather, Hashim ibn Abdi Manaf, which was preceded by the incident of the Banu Makhzum who wanted to travel alone because of hunger, narrated to death. Hashim heard about this, so they helped each other to make trading trips twice a year to the Levant in the summer and to Yemen in the winter. They agreed to divide the profits of the trade fairly between the owners and the traders. Historically, trade travel expanded to Iraq and Abessina, with the division of routes, namely Hashim to Syria, Abd Sham to Abessinia, Muthalib to Yemen and Naufal to Iraq.<sup>35</sup>

The people of Mecca after getting abundant wealth, eventually developed a materialistic attitude that loved the world excessively. Their behavior is responded to by the Qur'an as stated in Surah Humazah, which tells of people who like to collect property, and always count it, and consider it eternal. Materialism,<sup>36</sup> as an understanding of materialism, will lead to an attitude of ignoring God, because there is a feeling in himself that what he produces is his own efforts both mind and energy, not by the God's grace. Thus, this behavior will break the relationship with Him<sup>37</sup>. In addition, it will form an arbitrary attitude in building social relations, by ignoring ethics, because life is here and now and there is no accountability for the afterlife. According to Wahbah al-Zuhaili in tafsir al-Munir, said that the wealth that a person has can lead to feelings of *ujub* and arrogance, so that it affects the behavior of gossiping, swearing, denouncing others, because they feel the richest. While related to his wealth that is thought to make him live forever, has made him neglect the afterlife. So the first verse begins with the word *wail* (wretched), as a warning of the punishment of the hell of *wail*.<sup>38</sup> This Surah warns the people of Mecca to return to Him, with a warning of the painful punishment of Hell. They are people whose souls are stunted, confined in the abundance of wealth, so that they put themselves above everything, confined by wealth so that they consider themselves better than others.

Capitalistic attitudes<sup>39</sup> as a materialistic continuation are also a concern of texts that were revealed in Mecca. In addition to Surah Humazah, Surah al-Takatsur is proof that Mecca

---

<sup>35</sup> See Ahmad Syalabi, *Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam* (Jakarta: Jayamurni, 1979), p. 39; Taufiqurrahman, *Sejarah Sosial Politik Masyarakat Islam*, pp. 20–21.

<sup>36</sup> Materialism is an ideology that has a basic belief that everything comes from matter, does not believe in the supernatural, the senses are the only ones to get knowledge, positioning science as a substitute for religion, making character as morals.

<sup>37</sup> Surah Humazah was revealed in connection with the cause al-nuzul of many people swearing such as Walid ibn Mughirah, Umayyah ibn Khalaf, Akhnas ibn Shariq, Ash ibn Wail, Jamil ibn Mu'ammarr.

<sup>38</sup> The word *wail* is used to describe accidents and disgrace. The first verse contains a threat to *humazah* and *lumazah*. Lafadz *wail* is also interpreted as one of the levels in hell, so *humazah* and *lumazah* will be wretched there with torment. Ibn Katsir in his tafsir interprets *humazah* as reproaching with speech, while *lumazah*, mocking with actions. Tafsir al-Munir interprets *humazah* as denouncing people's honor, while *lumazah* is insulting with gestures.

<sup>39</sup> Capitalism is an economic ideology, where capital is the foundation of its thinking, with its main figure Karl Marx with the concept of Das Kapital. This understanding has a major influence on human relationships with

is the place where Islam emerged, because it warns of teachings related to how to treat property, which when not understanding it will lead to hell. This surah tells about the people of Mecca who boast about wealth, both property and children by paying more attention to the busyness of worldly love, jewelry and pleasure so that they have forgotten the search for the reward of the afterlife. In his tafsir ibn Katsir interprets this verse by revealing hadiths, including meaning that boasting has neglected obedience to Allah, until the grave, which is related to wealth and children.<sup>40</sup> In another perspective, this surah instructs to conduct economic transactions in line with religious morality, not exploitative which damages the natural environment and human relations, because part of the goal is to build harmony of life, and the glory of man as *khalifatullah fi al-ardh* based on the perfection of noble morals. The materialistic attitude of capitalism is also shown in Surah al-Jatsiyah: 24, where Allah threatens those who say that there is no other life than in the world, and they say that their life and death have nothing to destroy except time. Even their materialistic behavior forms an attitude of now, early, the world, so that their only hope is the happiness of the world, by ignoring the achievement of happiness in the hereafter. The effect on human relations will give birth to an attitude that does not pay attention to the ethics and morality of doing business, because it has lost from it the accountability of the afterlife.<sup>41</sup>

A clearer attitude was shown by Quraysh by rejecting the preaching of tauhid, and they believed more in the statues to be their worship which was positivistic in nature, where everyone had their own statue, every morning they rubbed it, then asked for blessings in life, as well as when they also brought results of gaining profits, then rubbed it by saying thank you. Not only is the statue owned by individuals, but every family has a family statue, every tribe has a tribal statue, every region has its own statue, so that in the history of statues, around the Kaaba appeared many statues around 360 and the largest is Hubal.<sup>42</sup>

Pride is an integral part of the behavior inherent in materialists and capitalists, as this self-righteousness led to the humiliation and even enslavement of people in Mecca. This arrogance towards Allah by not needing to depend on Him is due to the feeling that the

---

the emergence of slavery, exploitation of humans and nature as much as possible by ignoring whether it is good or bad, right or wrong, halal or haram, the most important thing is to get as much profit as possible. Capitalism as an economic system has many weaknesses including: 1). It creates inequality and economic disparity. 2). The emergence of exploitation of the rich against the poor. 3) It creates discriminatory and racist attitudes. 4). Leads to natural and social destruction. 5). Give birth to consumptive and hedonic behavior. 6). The creation of alienation and anomy symptoms due to individualistic and competitive life. More clearly see Amin Rais, *Cakrawala Islam* (Bandung: Mizan, 1988), pp. 90–93.

<sup>40</sup> This surah was revealed in connection with two Ansar tribes, Banu Harisah and Banu al-Haris, who boasted of having a lot of possessions. Regarding wealth, the prophet said that there is no wealth except in three things, namely what you eat, what you wear and what you give in charity, other than that it will go and be left for others. Narrated by Muslim from Suwaid ibn Sa'id, from Hafs, from al-A'la from his father from Abu Hurairah. In another hadith narrated by Bukhari, the prophet said: there are three things that accompany the dead, two return, one accompanies. The one that returns is family and wealth, and the one that accompanies his deeds

<sup>41</sup> The prayer that the people of Mecca used to offer during the market season. They always boasted of their ancestors, who had distributed food, lightened burdens and paid diyat. This hadith was narrated by ibn Abi Hatim. See Ebu al-Fida' Imaduddin Ismail b. Umar Ibn Kasir, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an al-'Azim* (Riyad: Dar Tayyiba, 1999), p. 1/332.

<sup>42</sup> The statues that existed in pre-Islamic Arabia were constantly renewed, replacing them with new ones of the best stone, and when they were not available, they made a mound of earth moistened by goat's milk and afterwards they went around it. See Abulhasan Nadwi, *Madza Katsir Al-'Alam Bi Inhithat al-Muslimin* (Kuwait: Dar al-Qalam, 1970), pp. 63–64.

wealth they have obtained is the fruit of their sweat and thoughts. The prophet's preaching in Mecca that caused them not to be accepted included one of them because they did not need God anymore, in addition to pride in the prophet Muhammad who according to them was an economically poor person.<sup>43</sup>

As a capitalistic society, where traders built their economy by monopolizing and were more profit-oriented without regard to ethics, it gradually led to a gap between capital owners and workers. The emergence of this gap between rich and poor eventually led to social barriers, resulting in the emergence of social classes, castes in Meccan society. Slavery is one example, although it did not affect many Arabs,<sup>44</sup> but had a major impact on social relations. The Qur'anic texts related to social class, where the principle of equality between humans becomes the foundation of social relations, was rejected by the Quraysh, due to the fear that their privileges and glory as honorable people would no longer exist. Historically, when the prophet preached to the Quraysh, many of the weak responded to the message and converted to Islam, including slaves. But because they were slaves, their wishes were not fulfilled so the prophet and companions, with their wealth, tried to free them. One of the texts of the Qur'an is contained in Surah al-Hujurat:13, although it occurred after the Conquest of Mecca (*Fathu Mecca*) where at that time Bilal wanted to call to prayer, but there was criticism of him. The emergence of criticism is due to the difficulty of erasing the feelings and conditions of the past, where Bilal was once a slave, in the eyes of those who are economically more prosperous and in a high position.

The capitalistic economy also gave rise to destructive behavior for welfare, such as the development of usury in the life of the Arab community at that time. Surah al-Rum: 39 which was revealed in Mecca became a verse that responded to the economic conditions of Mecca which was full of destructive economics. This verse warns the people of Mecca, that usury economic behavior, with the aim of getting more from (lending), so that their wealth increases, according to Allah does not increase. This economic practice turned out to be difficult to eliminate even though Mecca had been conquered, with evidence of the ribawi economy still taking place as stated in Surah al-Baqarah: 278-279. The reason for the revelation of this verse is as narrated by ibn Abbas, that one day the Banu Mughirah complained to the governor of Mecca 'Atab ibn Usaid that they owed property to Bani Amr

---

<sup>43</sup> Historically, the prophet's family, the Hashimites, were initially a family that could compete in wealth with the family of his brother Abd Sham, but because of the concentration of assignments given by the Quraysh, more related to the Ka'bah, they concentrated more on taking care of its pilgrimage, and did not develop much economic aspects. On the other hand, the family of Abd Sham, along with his allies, controlled the social polity and the economy. As a result, the economy developed in this clan, and they became a conglomerate in the economic aspect. Meanwhile, in another aspect, Muhammad was born from a father, Abdullah, who was a poor man, and was born in an orphaned condition, where history tells us that Abdullah only bequeathed one camel to Muhammad, while most of the Quraysh had abundant wealth. It was this fear of being lower than Muhammad that caused them to reject Islam and the invitation of the prophet Muhammad. And they were always followed by the entire Arab community, where when the Quraysh did not enter Islam, they also did not enter Islam, due to the honor of the Quraysh in terms of the ruler of the Kaaba and Mecca, as well as their position in the economic, political and social aspects. See Taufiqurrahman, *Sejarah Sosial Politik Masyarakat Islam*, p. 86.

<sup>44</sup> Slavery historically circulated in pre-Islamic societies. Although many were of non-Arab origin, such as Bilal, one of the slaves the prophet freed and later adopted, Zaid ibn Haritsah, was an Arab. These slaves were generally captives, who were then traded among merchants to be employed in their businesses.

ibn 'Auf from the people of Tsaqif, then the Bani Amr asked for their usury bill. In view of this conflict the governor of Mecca wrote to the Prophet, and this verse was revealed.<sup>45</sup>

The emergence of capitalistic materialism also affected the spread of economic monopoly or perhaps oligopoly among the Meccan conglomerates that existed at that time, ignoring the weak, the poor and the needy. They often hoarded merchandise, and released it at the right time. This individualistic-egoistic attitude is described in a parable in Surah al-Qalam:17-33, which is the parable of the garden that was destroyed because of their attitude. This verse tells the story of the behavior of businessmen who are concerned with making large profits by building economic syndicates that monopolize certain goods with the aim of suppressing their competitors in order to gain multiple profits. According to one narration, this verse was revealed in connection with the famine in Mecca, where the owners hid their crops by picking them early in the morning or at night, so that no one would notice. This story according to history did occur to the inhabitants of Yemen, some say Habasah, where his father was a follower of the book who was generous in spirit, but his three sons who inherited his father's property, did not inherit his father's attitude to give his wealth in charity to the poor, even hiding his harvest.<sup>46</sup>

The individualistic attitude of the capitalist group in Mecca led to the destruction of social solidarity bound by tribal ties. The poor, destitute and orphaned groups who had always received protection with adequate food, when egoism spread among them, were no longer cared for. This picture can be seen in Surah al-Ma'un 1-3, where Allah labels them as those who deny religion. *Al-din*, usually translated as religion, but ibn Katsir gives the word the meaning of the day of reckoning.<sup>47</sup> They are the ones who yell at orphans by mistreating them, mistreating their rights by not feeding them and not treating them well and refusing to feed the poor. The condition of such behavior is caused by the main factor, namely the condition of abundant wealth, so that they lose sensitivity to the weak groups in their environment. Another similar verse related to the behavior that lost their sense of solidarity is revealed in Surah al-Fajr- 17-18.<sup>48</sup> Thus, the main factor of the emergence of Islam due to trade that formed the attitudes as described above, can be accepted as an argument because the texts that were revealed to him corresponded to the conditions of their attitudes and behavior.

Related to Crone's opinion, which states socio-political factors as a trigger for the emergence of Islam in Mecca, it cannot be found from the text revealed to the prophet Muhammad. This is in line with the view of scholars who say Mecca is a trading city not a city with a political orientation of power to build a state. The unity of the Quraish to build ties in

<sup>45</sup> See Ibn Kasir, p. 1/442-443.

<sup>46</sup> See M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Pesan, Kesan, Dan Keserasian al-Qur'an*, 6th edn, 15 vols (Ciputat, Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2005). Related to the wisdom of this letter is as a warning to do good to the poor; even though you have paid zakat, you still have to give charity; being able to take lessons from the test because it is life education; should not despair; do not feel enough with the deeds we do today.

<sup>47</sup> Ibn Kasir. The reason for the revelation of the verse, which was revealed in Mecca (Hamka says it was revealed in Medina), concerns Ash ibn Wail (according to ibn Abbas), Walid ibn Mughirah (al-Saddi), Abu Jahal, who harmed orphans when they came to the rich man. According to ibn Juraij, when the verse was revealed it was related to the behavior of Abu Sufyan who used to slaughter camels every week, when orphans came to him, they were rebuked and expelled.

<sup>48</sup> "Its not absolutely the case, You have not honored the orphan, nor have you encouraged one another to feed the poor."

one "state" was more due to economic factors. It was with this trade economy that the Quraysh of Mecca gained prominence by other qabilahs in the Arabian Peninsula.

The establishment of a state with the orientation of political power to organize a new society occurred in Medina. Of course, the texts revealed by God to the prophet Muhammad in Medina contain more about how to build relationships in the state so that peace, prosperity and justice emerge. Mahmud Syaltut argues that the purpose of the descent of the texts of the Qur'an in Medina is : *first*, to regulate all affairs for the Muslims by determining the Sharia by seeing that they are an independent ummah, which has its own existence and way of life. *Secondly*, guiding them to refute matters of belief, the laws of guidance to muamalah with them in specific issues related to war and peace.<sup>49</sup> Manna 'Qaththan details the Madaniyah surahs containing teachings on worship, muamalah, social relations, war and peace, calls to the people of the book and hypocrites.<sup>50</sup>

War as part of a state, as a tool of resilience and political power, so it is a natural thing that the state of Medina needs these tools. The texts related to war and conquest use many keywords, namely *qital* and *jihad*,<sup>51</sup> and it was revealed in Medina, so talking related to political power can be interpreted as Madaniyyah. The mention of the word *qital* in the Qur'an is found in 170 places with various forms, namely *mujarrad* and *mazid*.<sup>52</sup> As a command, *qital* was only allowed after the hijrah to Medina, as a form of resistance to the Meccan polytheists, which while in Mecca it was impossible to carry it out due to weak conditions with very few followers. From here it is known that Islam in Mecca was not concerned with socio-politics, but paid more attention to aspects of strengthening faith, due to strong pressure from the Quraysh group. The strategy of restraining oneself by being patient by always taking the path of peace as a surefire strategy. *Qital* was carried out in a defensive form and for self-protection.<sup>53</sup>

*Qital* has many connotations, but the basic meaning is *idzlah* (conquest) and *imatah* (killing).<sup>54</sup> While *jihad* has many connotations such as, difficulty, severe trials, earnestness, ability, power, sacrifice. In other words, *jihad* is a difficult endeavor that requires sacrifice, and the exertion of all efforts to achieve the goal. *Jihad* is mentioned 41 times, where its use differs between Mecca and Medina. In Mecca *jihad* connotes the struggle to invite polytheists to follow the teachings of Islam, coercion not to associate partners with Allah, seriousness in swearing and patience. In Medina, it connotes a confrontational struggle with physical strength to face the obstacles of Islam to wage war with the polytheists of Mecca.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Mahmud Syaltut, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an al-Karim: Pendektan Syaltut Dalam Menggali Esensi al-Qur'an* (Bandung: Diponegoro), p. 647.

<sup>50</sup> Mannā' Khalīl al-Qaṭṭān, *Mabāḥiṣ Fī 'ulūmi'l-Qur'ān* (Cairo: Maktabatu Wahba, 2000), p. 83.

<sup>51</sup> here are many other words besides *qital*, including *harb*, *ma'rakah*, *sira'ah*, *ghazwah*, besides *jihad* itself. *Qital* linguistically means conquest and killing, and according to al-Asfahani means removing life from the body. See Raghīb al-Asfahani, *Al-Mufradat Fi Gharib al-Qur'an* (Mesir: Mustafa al-Babī'l-Halabī wa Awladihi), p. 393.

<sup>52</sup> al-Baqi, *Al-Mu'jam al-Mufahrash Li Alfadz al-Qur'an*, pp. 243–44.

<sup>53</sup> Jawahir Thanthawi, *Pesan Perdamaian Islam* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Madya, 2001), p. 179.

<sup>54</sup> Muhammad Quraisy Shihab when interpreting *qital* in relation to Surah al-Hujurat: 9, with action not with fighting. This is because it is related to disputes between Muslims. See Shihab, p. 13/243-244.

<sup>55</sup> Ibn Qoyyim al-Jauzi interpreted *jihad* as a war against polytheists and hypocrites. While al-Asfahani, interpreted it with war, fighting against the devil and lust. See Muhammad Suaib Tahir, 'Qitāl Dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an', *Nida'Al-Qur'an: Jurnal Kajian Quran Dan Wanita*, 3.1 (2018), 79–106 (p. 88).

From this description, once again the emergence of Islam in Mecca due to socio-political factors is not proven, because the texts of Mecca there is nothing that orders to conquer, and only when Islam was accepted in Medina by its inhabitants by building a unitary state based on multiculturalism, war and conquest occurred. The war was held as a means of defense and security of the people of Medina in order to be able to create stability that is possible to build a civilization. War in Medina, was more defensive in nature at first, such as the wars of Badr, Uhud, and even Khandaq, only after tasting the bitterness of war in the Khandak incident, there was offensive warfare, and of course still paying attention to the ethics of war by not killing children, women, not clearing crops and destroying civilization.

### **Analysis and Discussion**

In this section the author will analyze the two theses, Watt and Crone related to the emergence of Islam in Mecca. According to the author, after tracing the texts that were revealed both in Mecca and Medina by comparing the theses of Watt and Crone, it can be understood that Watt's trade is more in line with the texts in Mecca. Watt, from the point of view of social history, is very keen to put forward his argument, by looking at the facts with data that support his opinion. Mecca as the initial place of Prophet Muhammad's preaching, is an area that has long been a center of worship for humans. But over time there has been a religious diversion that used to monotheize (*Tauhid*) Allah, changing to worshiping statues made by themselves. According to the author, this is due to their view of materialism which thrives due to economic control by means of trade.<sup>56</sup> Materialism has changed the original character of those who believe in the unseen, to not believe in God, the Day of Judgment, on the one hand it has given rise to selfishness and individualism so that there is indifference to the *mustadh'afin*, weak, poor and orphaned groups. On the other hand, arrogance arises, and an attitude of criticizing others who have a lower social status, even causing social inequality, exploitative attitudes that harm the interests of many people. The texts of the Qur'an that were revealed in Mecca were full of efforts to stop the attitudes that were then carried out by the conglomerate group, so that the content of da'wah in Mecca contained more than faith in Allah and the Day of Judgment, also with regard to material material issues. Misunderstanding material possessions in a person's life will make them neglect Allah, and will even break ties with Him. Watt's view that the emergence of Islam in Mecca was due to trade is therefore more in line with the texts revealed by God to the prophet Muhammad.

Regarding Crone's opinion, according to the author's analysis, it is not in accordance with the texts that were revealed in Mecca. The texts that were revealed in Mecca emphasized the issue of faith in both Allah and the Day of Judgment, and nothing related to political power. Factually, Mecca was not a politically governed country, but was governed socio-economically, and it was more supportive of the conditions of Mecca which from the beginning had been named as a center of pilgrimage, where there was a meeting of nations, and the strength of security guards to become merchants for the Quraysh. Qur'anic texts related to socio-politics were only revealed in Medina. The attempt to build on the

---

<sup>56</sup> Just like the arrival of Isa / Jesus to the Jewish people who had deviated from the teachings of the Torah, such as, more concerned with a materialistic life, and did not believe in something spiritual in nature, so that the prophet Isa was given God's mu'jizat which was spiritual in nature.



established thesis made by Crone by saying that political factors are more of a major factor in the Islamization of Mecca, in the author's view is more due to wanting to label Islam as a religion of conquerors, a political religion, a religion synonymous with violence. Islam, according to the author, is a religion of proselytization, not a religion of interest, let alone Arab political interests, tribal communities. This statement is close to Snouck Horgronje's statement, which says that the hijrah of the prophet Muhammad from Mecca to Medina with the aim of removing the prophetic robe to seek worldly material. Crone has either misunderstood, or he wishes to construct a new theory that attempts to obscure the role of trade and economics, thus eliminating these factors in favor of power in Medina.

Conquest in the political perspective carried out by Islamic rule, as a natural thing. This is because the interest of building a state that can prosper and advance its people, requires natural resources, and it must be done by conquest. Islam must be distinguished from its practitioners. Islam is a religion that builds the concept of a good and happy life. While the practitioners is a person who has an interest in continuing a life that requires food intake. So conquest is a state affair that requires financing to run the wheels of government in order to prosper. The view related to Arab nationalism, according to the author, is unreasonable. This can be seen from the existing data in the text of the Qur'an, none of which speaks of nationalism, let alone Arabic. The text of Islam is a religion of mercy for all nature by building equality and equality between humans, and what is prioritized is devotion. Indeed, there have been wars and conquests carried out by the Quraysh clan throughout the peninsula and even beyond, but that is only a coincidence, because they are the main pillars of Islamic teachings. Conquest of Mecca (*Fathu Mecca*) was the best way, in the process of developing Islam throughout the region, because the strength of Islam was in the Quraysh who had honor among the Arab community, and had long had good relations with nations outside the peninsula.

These two theses are actually able to be synergized as a synthesis, where the emergence of Islam in Mecca is indeed more because the economic practices of the people of Mecca have changed attitudes and behavior both towards God and their fellow man, so that the text that came down was more concentrated on improving the attitude of life spiritually and morally, in accordance with the purpose of Muhammad's apostolate to improve noble morals. And in its continuation socio-politics became an inseparable part in the process of spreading Islam throughout the region, because indeed a state must exist to find sources of funding. With its emergence and development is a mutually supportive process and it cannot be separated from the significant role played by the Quraysh of Mecca. Perhaps what is meant by the emergence of Islam in Mecca, due to socio-political factors, which Crone suggests, is more because the political actors of power and conquest were carried out by the Meccans after the conquest of Mecca (*fathu of Mecca*), where they spearheaded the expansion of Islam later on.

## Closing

From this description it can be concluded that: *first*, Watt's view related to the emergence of Islam in Mecca due to socio-economic aspects, trade is closer to what is

conveyed by the texts in the Qur'an, where the text reveals efforts to improve the morality of life both to God and his fellow man, which is lost, because of the emergence of capitalistic materialism. *Secondly*, Crone's view that the emergence of Mecca Islam was due to socio-political factors, power is less precise. This is because there are no texts that speak of power, war and conquest. Texts that talk about it all occur in Medina, because it has been established as a state that must be protected and defended, it requires war, defense and even conquest to get a source of funding for the welfare of its people. *Third*, in principle the two theses can be synthesized, namely that the emergence of Islam did occur in Mecca through trade, and then socio-politics played a role in the process of expanding Islamic power and it was played by the Quraysh of Mecca.

## Bibliography

- Ali, Syed Amer, *Api Islam* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1978)
- Amin Rais, *Cakrawala Islam* (Bandung: Mizan, 1988)
- Baqi, al, *Al-Mu'jam al-Mufahrash Li Alfadz al-Qur'an*
- Crone, Patricia, *Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam* (Princeton University Press Princeton, 1987)
- Donner, Fred M., *Muhammad Dan Umat Beriman Asal-Usul Islam* (Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2015)
- Donner, Fred McGraw, 'Mecca's Food Supplies and Muhammad's Boycott', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient/Journal de l'histoire Economique et Sociale de l'Orient*, 1977, 249–66
- Farukh, Umar, *Al-'Arab Wa Al-Islam Fi Al-Haudl Asy-Syarqi Min Al-Bahr Al-Abyad Al-Mutawassitah* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub, 1996)
- Hasan, Hasan Ibrahim, 'Tarikh Al-Islam: Al-Siyasi, Wa al-Tsaqafi Wa al-Ijtima'i', *Diterjemahkan Oleh HA Bahauddin Dengan "Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam, 1* (1964)
- Ibn Kasir, Ebu al-Fida' Imaduddin Ismail b. Umar, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an al-'Azim* (Riyad: Dar Tayyiba, 1999)
- Ismail, Faisal, 'Perdagangan Mekkah Dan Kemunculan Islam (Mendiskusikan Tesis Montgomery Watt Dan Patricia Crone)', *Jurnal/Al-Jamiah/Al-Jamiah No. 64-XII Th. 1999/*, 2008
- Jawahir Thanthawi, *Pesan Perdamaian Islam* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Madya, 2001)
- Lapidus, Ira M., and Ghufron A. Masadi, *Sejarah Sosial Ummat Islam* (Jakarta: Rajawali, 1999)
- Nadwi, Abulhasan, *Madza Katsir Al-'Alam Bi Inhithat al-Muslimin* (Kuwait: Dar al-Qalam, 1970)
- Qaṭṭān, Mannā' Khalīl al-, *Mabāḥiṣ Fī 'ulūmi'l-Qur'ān* (Cairo: Maktabatu Wahba, 2000)
- Raghib al-Asfahani, *Al-Mufradat Fi Gharib al-Qur'an* (Mesir: Mustafa al-Babi'l-Halabî wa Awladihi)
- Rus' an, Haji, *Lintasan Sejarah Islam Di Zaman Rasulullah SAW* (Departemen Agama, 1981)
- Salih, Subhi, *Mabahith Fi Ulum Al-Quran*, 24th edn (Beirut: Dar al-'Ilm lil Malayin, 2000)
- Serjeant, Robert B., *Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam: Misconceptions and Flawed Polemics* (JSTOR, 1990)

- Shihab, M. Quraish, *Tafsir Al-Mishbāh: Pesan, Kesan, Dan Keserasian al-Qur'an*, 6th edn, 15 vols (Ciputat, Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2005)
- Snouck Hurgronje, C., *Perayaan Mekah*, trans. by Supardi (Jakarta: INIS, 1989)
- Syalabi, Ahmad, *Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam* (Jakarta: Jayamurni, 1979)
- , *Sejarah Peradaban Islam* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1973)
- Syaltut, Mahmud, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an al-Karim: Pendektan Syaltut Dalam Menggali Esensi al-Qur'an* (Bandung: Diponegoro)
- Tahir, Muhammad Suaib, 'Qitāl Dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an', *Nida'Al-Qur'an: Jurnal Kajian Quran Dan Wanita*, 3.1 (2018), 79–106
- Taufiqurrahman, *Pemikiran Dan Gerakan Pembaruan Islam Abad Modern Dan Kontemporer* (Pustaka Islamika: Pustaka Islamika, 2014)
- , *Sejarah Sosial Politik Masyarakat Islam* (Surabaya: Pustaka Islamika, 2016)
- Tsa'labi, Abdul Malik ibn Muhammad al-, *Thimar Al-Qulub* (Cairo, 1965)
- Wahid, Ramli Abdul, *Ulumul Qu'ran* (Jakarta: Rajawali, 1993)
- Watt, William Montgomery, *Muhammad at Mecca* (Clarendon Press Oxford, 1953)
- Watt, William Montgomery, and Helmy Ali, *Politik Islam Dalam Lintasan Sejarah* (Perhimpunan Pengembangan Pesantren dan Masyarakat (P3M), 1988)
- Zurqānī, Muhammad 'Abdul'azīm az-, *Manāhil Al-'irfān Fi 'ulūm al-Qur'ān* (Cairo: 'Isa al-Bab al-Halabī, 1362)