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THE JEWISH POGROM IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY C.E.: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE VIEWS OF SHEIKH AL-MAGHILI AND Dr. MARTIN LUTHER**Ahmad Murtala**Department of Islamic Studies and Shari'ah
Bayero University, Kano**Abstract**

The Jewish pogrom has been an age-long issue that went together with the Jews wherever they settled. The paper is an attempt to investigate the actual reasons for the persecution. Though not elaborated lengthily, the Qur'anic account on the causes of the Jewish suffering has been distinctively outlined in the research. It has also examined the miserable situation, Jews encountered in Christian Europe throughout history, while they were highly integrated to the core of peaceful co-existence in Muslim territories the world over, including their settlement in Tuwat in the west-central Algeria region. The paper has gone further and dwelt profoundly on the actual purposes that led to the persecution of the Jews in the 16th century in both Algeria and Germany. Maghili's life who was the mastermind of the Algerian Jewish pogrom was briefly highlighted. In the same vein, a biographical sketch of Dr. Martin Luther who was the architect of Jewish persecution in Germany, along with his views on Islam has been expounded. The research establishes that both Maghili and Luther had well studied their society and diagnosed its major problems in which the Jews had become the core. Hence, they conclusively described Jews as devils that both

2.0 The Persecution of the Jews in History

It is an undeniable fact that the Jews were persecuted throughout history. But what are the real reasons for the persecution wherever they resided? According to them, the reason is obvious. It was just because of their strict adherence to a unique set of religious beliefs and practices. Of course, their culture foreign to other people around their settlements was another source of hatred. Moreover, the major reason for the abhorrence, according to them, was their hard work and energetic strategy in trade and the ownership of middle-sized and gigantic businesses, as well as the attitude that makes them prosperous and independent communities wherever they settled. These, actually, were parts of the reasons. Jewish history, is full of uninterrupted suffering. They had been fleeing from one country to another, seeking shelter and comfort in about 79 countries. Their travail at the hands of Romans started with the destruction of the second temple in 70 C.E. followed by their expulsion from Jerusalem in 136 C.E. by the Romans. Hence, they went through suppression and ups-and-downs up to the 20th century where Western powers conspired the subjugation of the people of Palestine in favour of the Jews, who eventually occupy Palestinian land.

The persecution of the Jews, if viewed carefully, is two-fold. Sometime it can be viewed as the ill-blood of the Jewish clan. This is clear for wherever the Jews settled they would be accused of committing crimes in their settlements and may be insulted on account of previous anti-societal vices and activities, which their ancestors had committed. This, though rarely, had occurred in some places with people charging them of killing Jesus being a quite clear example. While on the other hand, some strong reasons of treason, treachery, breaking covenants and other

have agreed with their persecution as the last treatment. There are other similarities between the two scholars that have been vividly delineated in the last segment of the paper. It is hoped that the research will pave the way for further exhaustive researches. In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent and the Merciful

1.0 Introduction

In this paper, the views of two contemporaneous erudite scholars who had almost a common interest on the Jewish question have been methodically treated. Of course, this is a typical coincidence. The two were products of different orientations, outlooks and civilizations, which, as a matter of fact, would eventually give different perspectives. Maghili was a full-fledged Mujtahid in Islam and Luther was a Professor and remarkably the founder of Protestantism in Christianity. Both were reformers in their domains in the 16th century. They shared the first part of the sixteenth century though Luther was 21 years old (born in 1483 C.E) when Al-Maghili died in 1504 C.E. Moreover, each had accused the rulers of his time of the mismanagement of the masses, that violated the teaching of the scriptures.

In writing the paper, the firsthand sources written by or on Al-Maghili and Luther were directly consulted, while other sources that show familiarity and in-depth understanding of the two personalities and their works were also referred to. Though I was able to obtain most of the sources he depended upon, yet I benefited greatly from the work of Dr. Hassan Gwarzo, "The Life and Teaching of Al-Maghili with Particular reference to the Saharan Jewish Community".

immoralities were certainly identified against the Jews in their settlements. But the original inhabitants never agreed, therefore, they revolted because they could not withstand such bad behaviour, which mainly promoted sorcery, cultism, cannibalism and greediness⁽¹⁾.

Arnold Leese said, "It is known that there have always been two methods of instruction among the Jews: one *Exoteric*, which openly taught the Laws of Moses and the Rabbinical traditions; the other *Esoteric*, or mysteries confided only to certain persons bound to secrecy. This latter, the Esoteric teaching, is associated with Occultism and what is known as Black Magic, and the Mystical Cabbala is its source, for certain rites and ceremonies blood is necessary; and secret rites exist which are known only to the few"⁽²⁾.

Therefore, the ultimate option, which secular/Christian rulers resorted to, was to punish the Jews. Several ways were followed, which included "passing a resolution which prohibited the Christians from trading with the Jews, contracting marriages with them, or causing them to bless the produce of their fields"⁽³⁾, forced conversions, annihilation of the Jewish communities and, finally, expulsion. Ample examples can be given to support this argument. But before that, it is good to give a Qur'anic viewpoint on the actual reasons that caused such suffering for the Jews.

The Qur'an has been very particular, of course, about the Jews' old-age problems and diagnosed it to the last extent and gives a spreadsheet on the matter throughout the Qur'an. Here is a good sketch that everybody can easily reflect on:

1. Abusive words to God (Q3:181; 5:24, 64)

2. Harsh attitudes against the prophets and killing them (Q2:61; 3: 21, 112)
3. Distorting Allah's word/ Scripture for their whimsical benefits (Q2:58, 75, 104; 3:46)
4. Developing the habit of betrayal and breaking treaties: (Q2:83, 100, 246; 8:56)
5. Taking usury and devouring people's wealth by false pretences (Q4:161; 5:42, 62-3; 9:34)
6. Being a prideful nation and disobedient to the commandments of God (Q2:111; 5:18; 28:55)
7. Having hardened hearts towards the poor and non-Jewish nations (Q2:74; 5:13; 22:53)

For these reasons and many more, Allah punish them by leaving them suffering throughout history. He has already said, "Ignominy shall be their portion whosoever they found save (where they grasp) a rope from Allah and a rope from men. They have incurred anger from their Lord, and wretchedness is laid upon them. That is because they used to disbelieve the revelations of Allah, and slew the prophets wrongfully. That is because they were rebellious and used to transgress"-(Q3:112). A fair and careful study of Jewish history will prove such descriptions right. We can take examples right from the time of the Prophet (pbuh).

The Jews came to Arabia probably after the second destruction of the Temple by the Romans in the 6th century⁽⁴⁾. They formed three main communities in Yathrib (Medina), namely Banu Qaynuqa', Banu Nadir and Banu Qurayzah. They were outwardly friendly with the Prophet (pbuh) immediately after his migration to Medina and he, in turn, left them to peacefully continue with

their trades as jewelers, blacksmiths and potters. The Jews lived a peaceful life under Islamic state.

The Prophet made a covenant in their favour immediately after his arrival at Madinah. The treaty read, in part, "Whoever among the Jews follows us shall have help and equality; they shall not be injured nor shall any enemy be aided against them...The Jews shall contribute to the cost of war with the Believers so long as they are at war with a common enemy...The Jews shall maintain their own religion and Muslims theirs. Loyalty is a protection against treachery. The close friends of Jews are as themselves"⁽⁵⁾.

It was on this basis that the Prophet (pbuh) lived peacefully with non-Muslims and even took some loans from some Madinan Jews. It is a known fact that "the Prophet (pbuh) passed away while his armor was mortgaged to a Jew for thirty units of berley"⁽⁶⁾. It can be drawn from this that there had been a friendly relationship between the Prophet (pbuh) and the Jews. They were left to exercise their trade and commerce peacefully. But later, they changed their minds and became too hostile to the Prophet (pbuh) and his followers. This most probably was as a result of a number of factors. Firstly, it is that because the Prophet (pbuh) gained an immense ground in the hearts of the Medinan inhabitants shortly after his coming. Secondly, they were geared by a jealousy of his not coming from their descendants and having such acceptance in the twinkling of an eye. This was ingrained in their hearts to the extent that they tried killing him several times apart from the hatred-relationship they developed for the companions around him, more especially migrants. Thirdly, being the money lenders in Madinah, they treated people inhumanly. This can be seen in the story of Muhammad bn Maslama. Ka'ab bn Ashraf, one of the prominent

Jews in Medina, was known of his mercilessness toward Muslims. Muhammad bn Maslama asked him for a loan of one or two waqs of food grains. He answered, "Mortgage your women to me!" Muhammad bn Maslama remarked, "How can we mortgage our women, and you are the most handsome among the Arabs?" He said, "Then mortgage your sons, as the people will abuse them for being mortgaged for one or two *Waqs* of food grains? It is shameful for us..."⁽⁶⁾.

The three Jewish communities were not expelled at once but each was judged according to the blunder they committed. Banu Qaynuqa were situated inside Medina and expelled to Syria in 2 A.H./624 C.E. for their troublesome activities, which included molestating Muslim women and the tactical role they played in plotting a terrible civil war between Aws and Khazraj, the two dominant rival tribes in Medina, before their unification by Islam.

As for Banu Nadir, they showed fervent hatred to the faithful and attempted to assassinate the Prophet (pbuh) when he visited their courtyard to settle a dispute. Thereupon, they were expelled from Medina in 626 C.E. and set off to North where they found settlements in Khaibar (some miles far from Madina) and some went forward to Syria. On this issue, the entire *Surat al-Hashr* (Q:59) was revealed in which Allah says, "Had it not been that Allah had decreed exile for them, He would certainly have punished them in this world; and in the Hereafter theirs shall be the torment of the Fire" (Q59:3).

In the same vein, Banu Qurayzah committed a very grave mistake; no sensible society could neglect taking a harsh action against the culprits. It was treason. They allied with the Quraysh

(the enemy of Islam at that time) to extirpate Muslims in their hardest times. They paved the way for those Prophet's enemy to even besiege Medina for about one month. Had it not been for Allah's help of sending a strong wind, which destroyed the enemy tents, over-turned their pots and uprooted their ropes, they would have taken control of Medina completely from Muslims. But Allah's help disabled the enemies and made them return defeated.

Thereupon, the Prophet (pbuh) went directly to Banu Qurayzah. After a consultation, the men among the Jews were eventually judged by Sa'ad bn Mu'adh on whom the Jews agreed to pass judgment, to be killed, women and slaves captured and their property shared out among believers. This was in 5 A.H. / 627 C.E. It was Allah's decision and, of course, it was customary according to the rules of war then prevalent⁽⁷⁾.

The majority of the expelled Jews from Medina had settled at Khaybar and started conspiring plots again uproot the Prophet (pbuh) and his companions from Madina. This necessitated fighting them and breaking their evil planning⁽⁸⁾. They were eventually allowed to stay in Khaybar and cultivate the lands, giving half of the produce to Muslims. They remained there up to the 'Umar bn Khattab's regime, who concluded to evict them in 641 C.E. for the Prophet (pbuh) had willed to dispel all the Jews from the Arabian Peninsula⁽⁹⁾. Since then, there has been no trace of Jews in North Arabia.

It is worth noting here that it was widely alleged by the Jews that the Prophet (pbuh) exempted the Jews of Khaybar from giving Jizyah. The claim, according to them, was written by 'Ali bn Abi Talib and witnessed by Sa'ad bn Mu'adh and Mu'awiyah bn Abi

Sufyan (R.A). This claim was raised at different times and was actually falsified by hadith scholars like Khathib al-Baghdadi, Ibn Hazm and Ibn Taimiyyah. This is because Ibn Mu'adh had died immediately after the Battle of the Ditch long before the conquest of Khaybar. They enrolled Mu'awiyya among the witness, while it is known that he accepted Islam during Fat'hu Makkah in the year 8 A.H. and Khaybar took place in 7 A.H.⁽¹⁰⁾.

Anyway, after Khaybar, Muslims were able, undoubtedly, to conquer Iraq and Syria. 'Umar bn Khattab (R.A) made the very understandable pact between Muslims ruling and the communities of Jews and Christians therein. The pact, which is known for its rudiments of tolerance, has been a good reference for settling Muslim-Jewish disputes throughout history⁽¹¹⁾. For the right of allowing peaceful life for the Jews, in particular, has been taken care of as far as they followed the stipulated agreement.

Islam advanced and spread wide and far in the world, including Spain in Europe. Jewish communities, of course, were present in Spain long before its falling under the Muslim Empire in the 8th century. But during Muslim rule in Spain, Jews were allowed to exercise utmost freedom.

They even engaged energetically in different types of trade like leather, cattle, silk, etc. They even filled high governmental offices like viziers, ministers, physicians and philosophers and were given full rights to exercise all their rites and traditions almost without restrictions. It is known that Muslim rulers encouraged science and the arts and invited scholars from all over the world for that purpose. It happened that Muslims together with Jews had developed a splendid civilization and

lived for almost eight hundred years in Spain or what is known as *Andalus*. Fair-minded Western writers have talked positively about this onerous Muslim tolerance. Dubnow said, "With the growth of the Jewish population in Arabic Spain and the strengthening of its communal organization, the spiritual center of the Jewish people gradually established itself in Spain. The academies of Sura and Pumbeditha yielded first place to the high schools of Cordova and Toledo". "The Jews entered all sorts of careers: by the side of influential and cultivated statesmen, such as Chasdai ibn Shaprut -(882-942 C.E). He was a personal physician and chief advisor of the Caliph, Abdurrahman III, and the chief tax collector and Samuel Hanagid, at the courts of the Khalifs, stood a brilliant group of grammarians, poets and philosophers, like Jonah ibn Ganach, Solomon Gabirol and Moses ibn Ezra"⁽¹²⁾.

This cannot be compared with the Jewish status in Europe more especially in 1434, when the Council of Basel in Switzerland decreed that Jews could not obtain academic degrees. The Council had unanimously agreed that "we command both diocesan bishops and secular powers to prohibit in every way Jews and other infidels from having Christians, male or female, in their households and service, or as nurses of their children; and Christians from joining with them in festivities, marriages, banquets or baths, or in much conversation, and from taking them as doctors or agents of marriages or officially appointed mediators of other contracts. They should not be given other public offices, or admitted to any academic degrees, or allowed to live on lease lands or other ecclesiastical rents.

They are to be forbidden to buy ecclesiastical books, chalices, crosses and other ornaments of churches under pain of the loss

of the object, or to accept them in pledge under pain of the loss of the money that they lent. They are to be compelled, under severe penalties, to wear some garment whereby they can be clearly distinguished from Christians. In order to prevent too much intercourse, they should be made to dwell in areas, in the cities and towns, which are apart from the dwellings of Christians and as far distant as possible from churches. On Sundays and other solemn festivals they should not dare to have their shops open or to work in public"⁽¹³⁾.

In 1055 C.E. came the Almoravides (Al-Murabitun) who ruled Spain. Jews were not in good terms with this dynasty and, in turn, they were treated accordingly. After almost one hundred years came Almohades (Al-Muwahidun) in 1147 C.E. and took control of Andalus. The same had happened and Jews were severely persecuted for their anti-societal wrong-doing. Spain was at last taken from Muslims in 897 A.H./1492 C.E. after a long stay of about eight centuries.

The real trauma of the Jews continued with the domination of the Church over some parts of Spain in the 11th century. The followers of the other religions, including Muslims and Jews, had suffered from the ruthlessness and fanaticism of the Christian clergy. The disturbances against Jews had just continued. They had been molested in the area since ancient times in 305 C.E. by the Romans and later by ruling Christians during the Visigothic kings. "The persecutions of the Jews by the Visigothic kings of Spain and the Bishops Avitus of Clermont and Agobard in France (sixth to the ninth century) were the prelude to the more systematic and the more bloody cruelties of subsequent days"- according to Dubnow⁽¹⁴⁾.

It is important to note that it is not always that the Jews had hostile relationship with Christian rulers. In many areas, they were at first treated humanely and mutual Christian-Jew co-existence had prevailed for a long time⁽¹⁵⁾. But the problem started up as soon they began conspiring strategies for domination or making alliances with the enemies of those particular countries in order to overthrow and takeover from the incumbent rulers. This many a time went with their eagerness for having economical domination and strong lust for developing a prosperous life, which normally leads to political power.

Apart from that, it has come to the gallery that Jews were identified several times with the introduction of filthy activities to societies and the promotion of the services of taverns and whore houses that were owned by the merchants and moneylenders among them. "As the moneylenders gained power, the status of women began to break down. Under the power of the Semitic (Jewish) moneylenders, women became personal property and trade goods and whores. Doing business 'just as it had always been', the moneylenders seized the wives and daughters of debtors as payment for debts. As the moneylenders abused, beat, raped and reduced them to prostitution and servitude in order to pay back the loan-at-interest swindles, the status of women and the respect that they had enjoyed disappeared. Women -(during those times)-became the moneylenders' best cattle"⁽¹⁶⁾.

Of all times, the Church would not deny taking responsibility of the Jewish pogrom for one single reason that the Jews conspired the crucifixion of Jesus and eventually deserved to be humanly and divinely punished. Hence, Christians viewed the persecution of Jews as somewhat legal and had no resentment for what

happened to them for rejecting Jesus. Historians had it to say, "It was in Spain that the Christian clergy first aroused the fanaticism of the Christian population against the Jews. The same bishop Osius (Hosius) of Cordova, who had sat in the Council of Nice, and had convoked a council at Illiberis (Elvira, near Granada), also succeeded in passing a resolution, which prohibited the Christians, under pain of excommunication, from trading with the Jews, contracting marriages with them or causing them to bless the produce of their fields"⁽¹⁷⁾.

A cursory look at the maltreatment of the Christian territories would prove that. It is known in the history of the Middle Ages that strong verdicts were passed for the burning of Talmud, the most sacred book in Jewish eyes. The book had contained deadly instructions and hatred for non-Jewish people. For example in France in 1244, the King had ordered burning the Talmud and in the same year the Pope Innocent IV issued an order for burning the book in Roma. The same also happened in 1322 and 1353 with Pope John XXII and Pope Julius III, respectively. Both burnt the book publicly⁽¹⁸⁾.

Apart from burning the Talmud, the other measure was the massacre or the expulsion of Jews across Europe. This was known in history as "The Great Eviction"⁽¹⁹⁾. The ball rolling started with King Edward I of England in 1290. The other European kings followed suit. These included Germany and France in 1306, 1322 and 1394, Hungary 1367, Austria 1421, Poland 1450, Spain 1492, Portugal 1497 and many others. It reached its peak around 1941 at the hands of the Nazis.

In all these times, the Jews were found guilty. Here are some glaring examples from the European maltreatment of them from

the 13th century. In 1298, the Jews of Rottingen were charged with profaning the host, which led to a massacre and a lot of them were burnt. Likewise in 1347-1350, they were accused of poisoning wells in order to overthrow Christendom, though Pope Clement VI had defended them against these charges. But they were killed in their thousands.

It happened in 1247 that people accused the Jews of partaking of the heart of a murdered child. The then Pope, Innocent IV, had tried his best to defend them, but in vain. This was not the first. They were captured red-handed in 1130 for killing a sick man in London, a case that forced them to pay a compensation of one million marks for that. In 1475, the Jewish community in Trent, northern Italy, was put to death for murdering a boy for cultism purposes.

In the medieval centuries, the Jews had been on the edge and were accused of being usurers. This happened to the extent that in the late twelfth century, the name "Jew" and "usurer" had become synonymous⁽²⁰⁾. This and many other reasons compelled the rulers of many countries to put measures for distinguishing a Jew from a real citizen. In 1326, the Council of Avignon ordered the Jews to wear a round patch, but not when traveling, and in 1368, the Council of Vabres ordered them to wear a round patch. In 1435, King Alfonso ordered the Jews of Sicily to attach a round patch to their clothing and over their shops. In 1456, Pope Callistus III banned all social communications between Christians and Jews. In 1553, Cardinal Carafa instigated a public burning of copies of the Talmud and other Jewish religious works in a square in Rome. And also in 1555-1559, Pope Paul IV restricted the Jews to ghettos and decreed that they should wear distinctive headgear. In 1592-1605, Pope Clement VIII included a

ban on all Jewish books in the expanded index of forbidden books. And it was in 1826 that Pope Leo XII decreed that the Jews should be confined to their ghettos and their properties confiscated. At a conference of Catholic academicians in Innsbruck, Austria, Bishop Sigismund Waitz called the Jews an "alien people" who had corrupted England, France, Italy and especially America.

2.1 A Brief Biography of Al-Maghili

His full name is Muhammad bn Abdulkarim bn Muhammad from the Maghila tribe, which were Barbers. He was born in 828 H-1425 C.E. His father taught him Qur'anic recitation and the rudiments of the hadith, Jurisprudence, Arabic grammar and many other branches of knowledge, which qualified him to meet other learned scholars outside his surroundings for further studies. He traveled to prominent scholars like Sheikh Al-Tha'alabi (875 H), Jallab al-Tilmisani (875 H), Ibn Budair and many others⁽²¹⁾. He settled at Tlemcen, where he married the daughter of his master, Shaykh Tha'alabi, and gave birth to children. At the age of forty, he assumed the task of being a religious leader, a position which created for him many troubles. It can be said that he was envied by his contemporaries, who described him as an innovator, aggressor, etc. despite which he remained firm and confident and had a good sense of himself.

He traveled to many places in the Sahara and West Africa. He passed by Egypt to the Arabian Peninsula for the Hajj and went directly to West Africa, to Air, Takidda, Gao and Katsina and settled at last in Kano. This occurred precisely between 1483 and 1492 C.E. His main mission is to awaken people and advise local rulers to be alive to their respective commitments. He was held

at a high position and made an impact. Very few African scholars have had that in both North and West Africa as al-Maghili.

There was a claim that he came to West Africa in order to gather soldiers to take over the reign from Banū-Wattas for their incapacity to check the growth of Christian domination and Jewish influence in Morocco. This is not true at all. Maghili never thought of overthrowing a Muslim government but he rebelled against tyranny and Jewish denomination. He wrote many books on tafsir, 'ulum al hadith, jurisprudence, theology and logic. He died, most probably, in 909 H.-1504 C.E.⁽²¹⁾.

2.2 The Purposes for the Persecution of Tuwatian Jews

Tamantit in the region is in the west-central Algeria region, some 764 kilometers (475 miles) south of Tlemcen. This town and its environs had been Muslim territories since the Jihad of 'Uqbah bn Nafi' in the second century of the Hijri calendar. Of course, Jews came to settle in Algeria long ago before the advent of Maghili in Tamantit. There were many reasons that pushed them to immigrate to the area. In 1391 C.E. (seventh century after Hijri), they were persecuted in Spain, Catalonia, Valencia and the Balearic Islands – since that time most runaway Jews had taken refuge in Tuwat.

Long ago before Maghili, Sheikh Sa'id al-'Uqbani, who was a famous scholar in the area, wrote a book, *Tuhfat al-Nadhir Fi Tagyir Manakir*, issuing a fatwa against the settlement of Jews in Tuwat. He gave a minute description of their status and sought urgent treatment of the problem from the Muslim authority⁽²²⁾. The Jews, according to him, had authoritatively established themselves in different locations. He added, "The Jews had become very conceited and arrogant, wearing gorgeous clothes,

riding horses with saddles, availing themselves of the full attire of the Muslims and passing beyond the bounds of humility. All this was due to the strong security and esteem they enjoyed from the Arabs, which can be attributed to the divisions in Islam resulting from the indifference of Muslim kings. An Arab might agree to uproot himself and all his family to assist the escape of a Jew under his protection"⁽²³⁾.

In 1447 C.E., Antonio Malfante (a known merchant), travelled to Africa on behalf of the Centurione Bank,⁽²⁴⁾ visited the city and was astonished from what he saw of the prosperity of the Jews therein. He said, "The Jews are numerous here; they live pleasantly, for they are under the protection of different masters, and every master shields his protégés. Their communal life is therefore very satisfactory"⁽²⁵⁾. But very soon this pleasant living banished for the host community became suspicious of well-known Jewish attitude of domination.

In 1465, a strong riot led to the murder of the Sultan of Tlemcen, Abu Muhammad Abdul-Haqq II (1420-1465), and his Vizier, Harun (Aaron) bn Batash, who was a prominent Jew. The Sultan was rightly accused of over-supporting the Jews and having them reside in Muslim land⁽²⁶⁾. The situation led to violent attacks on them. It made quite a number of the Jews flee or make a hasty profession of Islam for self-protection. The same had happened in the subsequent two years, exactly in 1467, where a brutal anti-Jewish riot broke out in Tlemcen again and resulted in the killing of a considerable number of them⁽²⁷⁾. It was not Antonio Malfante alone who described the pleasant life of the Jew. Leo Africanus had also described the Tuwatian Jews as rich⁽²⁸⁾.

It is a Jewish tradition that as soon as they settled in towns they aimed at hijacking the trade and taking over the control of markets. Their efforts in infiltration into governments were also known; that they took the means seriously for corrupting rulers. They eventually gained a good reception in Tamantit even, unfortunately from local scholars. This, of course, gave them courage to the extent that they built synagogues at some strategic places without proper permission. People were not happy with the Jews' unjustifiable movements but they could not do anything. The Government was so powerful and everybody was afraid of the consequences. That is why when Maghili launched his vehement attacks against the scholars and rulers because of such compromising, people supported him to the core.

Before the settlement of Sheikh Maghili in Tuwat, it was reported that he started persecuting Jews, according to B.G. Martin⁽²⁹⁾, when he was at Sijlimasa (a mediaval Moroccan city at the northern edge of the Sahara), but this was not actually recorded by Muslim historians. Nevertheless, it was certain that in the 15th century, Jews were protected in Tuwat by Sultan Abdul-Wadud. Their stay in the city pushed some Muslim inhabitants to immigrate. Maghili was aroused against this ill-treatment of Muslims. It happened that he arrived at Tamantit around 1479 C.E. again. The area was already familiar to him since his stay in the early years for learning. At his arrival, people paid him much attention and received him warmly. He continued with the teaching and socializing with different strata of people, a contact that gave him the opportunity to easily diagnose the major problems that were facing the Tamatians. It was two major things:

- i. People were shrouded by ignorance and no one cared to observe religious practices correctly or setup himself for learning;
- ii. The inhabitants were very poor to the extent that they could not do but submit to the Jewish influence and economical domination. In addition to that, he saw the threats of a large extension of Jews in, at least, seven wards around the area, which were, among others, Tuwat, Tighurarayn, Tafilalt, Dar'a and many countries in Afriqiyya, as he identified.

Maghili saw no reason for the Jewish occupation of Muslim soil for a number of legal reasons, which he made clear in his book. The reasons are:

1. Muslims established Tuwat and, it being one of their territories, this would not give room for any non-Muslims to come and establish themselves or have the same rights with the indigenes. The opponent of Al-Maghili's fatwa, such as Sheikh Al-Ansununi, had agreed strongly with this point⁽²⁹⁾. The Jews, in the contrary, manufactured another view, which proclaimed their presence in Tamantit before any Muslim, precisely since the year of Prophet Muhammad's birth⁽³⁰⁾. This false argument, if heard by Al-Maghili and his supporters, would have been added along with the other purposes of the persecution for its wrong premises.
2. With no prior permission from the authority, the Jews started building synagogues and propagating their religion amidst Muslims. This would not be acceptable and had been considered by Maghili as breaking the pact that existed between Muslims and the Jews. Though on the opposite, Al-Ansununi was of the opinion that the Jews had not infringed anything, because they had been displaced from somewhere in Muslim land and they now found a better place, so,

eventually, they were entitled to erect praying places in their new homeland. This was the Fatwa of Ibn Hajj, according to Al-Ansununi⁽³¹⁾.

In addition, they aggressively maltreated majority of the Muslims in the new settlement and inflicted harm on them. The people of the area had authentically seen the Jews urinating over Muslim clothes or mixing flour with dirty hands full of lice and "there were many stories of this nature" testified by credible people⁽³²⁾.

The Jews attempted to destroy the Muslim community by introducing innovations and vices that would eventually lead to brutal corruption. The identified vices included, among others, practicing sorcery, flouting discriminatory regulations and publically abusing Islamic tenets⁽³³⁾. They even found a way of corrupting scholars and tribal chiefs by giving them bribery in form of tax (Jizyah), which is not in the actual sense, according to Al-Maghili⁽³⁴⁾. These vices alone are solid evidences to establish the fact that they had broken the covenant that granted them permission to settle in the area⁽³⁵⁾.

That was the situation in Tuwat. Just before the coming of Al-Maghili to the region, Sheikh Muhammad bn Abduljabbar Al-Fajiji was the first to raise an alarm about the Jewish problem in the cities situated half-way between Tlemcen and Tuwat. This even occurred before the Qadi of Tuwat, Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ansununi, who was the chief defender of the Jews during Al-Maghili's struggle against them. The protest of Al-Fajiji went in vain without having a concrete solution except a defensive reply issued by the Qadi⁽³⁶⁾.

... in the area composed this poem⁽³⁷⁾:

- ❖ Killed the houses of Gorerin and Ta'uti and desecrated the House of Him who is terrible in His doing.
- ❖ And after him arose an enemy in Dar'a and destroyed the whole house of prayer,
- ❖ And they also imposed upon them laws wicked and hard without pit.

2.3 The Legal Reasons for the Persecution

Al-Maghili, on his side, viewed Jewish domination and the disturbed situation in North Africa as Allah's wrath upon Muslims for neglecting the Shari'a⁽³⁸⁾. The best remedy that can be given is to make people alive to the stipulations of the Shari'a and arouse in them the sense of defending the religion. In doing so, he started giving lectures for public awareness and promoting the psyche of his followers towards a Jihad against the Jews. The lectures were successful as he was able to arise in people the zeal to defend their religion and regain their dominated land. He used to tell them that "Paradise is the last abode of anyone who destroys the synagogues and Hellfire shall be the abode of anyone who protects it"⁽³⁹⁾.

There is no reason whatsoever for a Muslim to closely befriend an unbeliever. Only one who has no religion and active sense and integrity does it. For it violates the proper teaching of the Qur'an and the Prophetic Sunnah. This, on one hand, on the other hand, a healthy-minded person would not have his enemies or enemies of his beloved ones closer to him. Jews are more hostile against Muslims and their Prophet. How could they be allowed to erect a building in which they annihilate our Prophet (pbuh). A man of integrity will not tolerate this⁽⁴⁰⁾.

He then outlined the major reasons on which he rested the Fatwa of the persecution of the Tamantian Jews. It consists of the following legal evidences.

1. Scriptural evidences: He cited numerous Qur'anic verses to support the view among which are: "O you who believed, do not take the Jews and the Christians as allies. They are in fact allies of one another. And whoever is an ally to them among you-then indeed, he is one of them. Indeed, Allah guides not the wrongdoing people" (Q 5:51).
2. Relying on the Prophetic tradition: Maghili asserted, "Prophetic sayings and traditions on this subject are numerous". The Prophet (pbuh) warned Muslims not to allow unbelievers to establish themselves in Muslim territories. He said, "There should not be two directions of prayers in a single town"⁽⁴¹⁾. This is an authentic tradition. Beside it, he mentioned other traditions none of which is authentic. This includes, "Neither a Jew or a Christian should be erected among you", and "Demolish synagogues and churches".
3. Actions of the Prophets' Companions: 'Umar bn Khattab said, "There should never be a church in a Muslim territory". He, therefore, gave orders that any church that had not been in existence before Islam should be demolished. He then forbade any church to be built"⁽⁴²⁾. 'Umar also decreed that the Jews "should never be butchers nor money changers and they should be evacuated from all our markets". He said (may Allah be pleased with him), "Indeed, God the Most High gives Muslims a sufficiency of fellow-Muslims; do not employ an unbeliever in any of your services"⁽⁴³⁾.
4. Consensus of Scholars: Maghili as a jurist was aware of the importance of consensus. He found strong consensus of scholars that prohibited building any synagogue in Muslim

land. "There is no difference of opinion among the learned Muslim leaders that it is not lawful to initiate a church in any place neither in the Muslim territory nor for them to set up a room neither for their prayers nor anything of their heresies even if they were to give for that an earth full of gold". The same is to be applied even if they really possessed the land by any method of possession⁽⁴⁴⁾.

Backed by these evidences, Maghili had courageously instructed his congregation to "humiliate them in their religion by denouncing everything that contradicts the Shari'a of Muhammad -peace and blessing of Allah be upon him-, even if it exists in the Law of Moses, so that nothing should appear before the Muslims of their prayer, recital and Books. Any they should not praise, in the presence of a Muslim, any of their learned men"⁽⁴⁵⁾.

After being convinced and before launching the attack, Maghili deemed that his only legal reasoning would not be enough to start this tremendous work. He had to consult the opinion of other great scholars of the time. He wrote them letters and explained the exact situation in Tuwat. He eventually sought them to advise and give legal ruling, which would show him the best way to solve the matter. Not all the scholars responded in the positive. Some disregarded the attack and persuaded Maghili and his supporters to leave the Jews alone. Among them were Abdullahi bn Abubakar Ansununi, the Qadi of Tuwat, Sheikh Ahmad bn Muhammad Ibn Zakari Al-Tilimsani and Abu Zikri Yahya bn Abu Al- Barakat, among others.

Most of them denied accepting the evidences made by Maghili and eventually his view was countered by other views that

asserted the Jews settlement at Tuwat. This was on the basis that synagogues had been there and were not the first of their kind in the area. They added that the early authorities and great scholars, who resided in Tamantit, had confirmed the Jewish settlements in it and elsewhere in Muslim lands like Tlemcen⁽⁴⁶⁾. In reply, Maghili disregarded these arguments as baseless opinion, saying, "In this time of great evil, the practice in cities and the silence of the learned men and virtuous people should not be taken as evidence"⁽⁴⁷⁾. The same was reaffirmed by Al-Wanshirisi, adding that in Cordova some newly established churches were demolished following the decision of the Cordovan council of advisers on the ground that all Islamic Schools of Law had declared them unlawful⁽⁴⁸⁾.

Beside those scholars, who can be described as the opponents of the persecution of Tamantian Jews, there were others who were the proponents of Maghili. They also wrote extensively in support of his ruling. Those included Sheikh Al-Sunusi, Al Tannisi, Al-Wanshirisi and a host of others. Maghili felt confident and persecuted the Jews, burnt their synagogues and demolished their houses. He even described those who denied supporting their persecution as imposters. By his words, "No one will hesitate to strike off the neck of the afore-mentioned Jews except one of those imposters, misguided themselves and misleading others, who have bought the life of this world with that of the next"⁽⁴⁹⁾.

Maghili left Tuwat in 1486 C.E. He went to Hajj and from there he probably came down to Hausaland⁽⁵⁰⁾. He spent a considerable time in the area preaching and teaching. After that, he returned. On his way home, he met Askiya Muhammad bn Hajj, who received and honoured him. During his stay, he wrote a treatise titled "Ajwibat Askiya".

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Thus, compelling non-Muslims who want to coexist with Muslims under the Islamic State to give Jizyah is a clear Qur'anic injunction that could not be changed. Likewise, the manners of making them humble during their submission to the Muslim authorities, both have clear-cut legal evidences. However, jurists have pondered over the required degree of humbleness and abasement (*saghar*) that should be imposed on them.

There have been several views in that regard, but Imam Maghili had chosen the Maliki School of Law's interpretation. That "on the day of paying it, they will all gather together in a conspicuous place. They will be on their feet and the guardians of Shari'a will be standing on higher ground holding over their heads that which will make them fear for the safety of their lives; until it is very clear to them and others that our intention is to humiliate them not just to receive their property. They will then realize that it is a favour on our part that we receive the poll tax from them and let them go free. Then they will be summoned one by one for payment. Each individual will receive a tap on his neck after paying the poll tax. He will then be pushed violently, which will make him realize that he is escaping the sword by paying the poll-tax.- This is how the lovers of the master of ancient and the modern should deal with his enemies-the unbelievers. Verily, glory is to God, His Messenger and the believers"⁽⁵⁵⁾.

It can be observed that by his saying, "Until it is very clear to them and others that our intention is to humiliate them not just to receive their property", Maghili was responding to Qadi Ansanuni's view. Though he admitted that the Tamantian Jews did not pay the *Jizyah* in the formal manner, yet he was of the opinion that they used to pay some amount to the local authorities at public festivals and also gave a helping hand

during any arising crisis. This, in fact, is a great contribution, according to him, more than which they would have been paying in regular time⁽⁵⁶⁾.

Dr. Hassan Gwarzo had not checked the records well when he leveled blame on Maghili on the assumption that he only exercised his own Ijtihad without bothering to check thoroughly early scholars' views. To support this argument, Gwarzo referred to three or four books only, namely *Tafsir Jalalin* of Suyuti, *Zad al-Masir* of Ibn Jauzi, *Fi Zilal* of Sayyid Qutub and Ibn Taimiyya's view, as narrated by his disciple, Ibn Qayyim in *Ahkam ahl al-Dhimma*⁽⁵⁷⁾. And then he asserts that Maghili's "method of reaching his goal was that when he wanted to give a ruling he would invent it or search in the teachings of his predecessors and pick up anything that would support his case, even if it was refuted by many eminent scholars, as he did in this instance. In both of these methods, al-Maghili was making Ijtihad- one of the necessary functions of a mujaddid"⁽⁵⁸⁾. -How dare Gwarzo describe Maghili as inventing supporting evidence! This conclusion is, partly, not accurate, because Al-Maghili had taken the entire parts of his arguments from Maliki juristic books, which were essentially in favour of his view. Take for example, *Al-Muharrar al-Wajiz* of Ibn Atiyyah Al-Girnati, *Al-Zakhirah* of Al-Qarafi, (the *Mukhtasar* of Sheikh Khalil and all its commentators asserted that) and many others, which explained that the Jews should be treated according to stipulations given in the Malik School of Law. One would confirm, indeed, that it was the bedrock of the Maghili view. Sheikh Al-Kharshi gave the same view almost word by word in his commentary on *Mukhtasar al-Khalil*⁽⁵⁹⁾. Being not taken from the popular exegetes or mentioned in some handful books, none of which is on the Maliki School of Law, as Gwarzo assumed, does not lead to the

invalidation of a view. Had Dr. Gwarzo expended his research, it would have been better and led him to understand Maghili properly in this case.

3.1 A Biographical Sketch of Martin Luther

Martin Luther was born on 10th November, 1483 C.E. in Eisleben Saxon in Germany, which was then an important part of the Roman Empire. He started schooling at the age of seven and received his doctorate at the University of Wittenberg where he became a professor of theology as a thirty-year old in 1513. His parents were initially orienting him to be a lawyer but an accidental happening changed his life to become a monk. It was during a rainy season in 1505 that an appalling thunderstorm cornered him and made him fearfully crying and saying, "Save me, St. Anne, and I'll become a monk!" Hence, he decided to fulfill such a difficult promise by a young inexperienced lad like him. His family was unhappy for the apparently bad choice. However, he determinately proceeded on to his fate. He was assigned as a priest when he was 24 and became a priest off-campus at Wittenberg's city church. At the age 31, he was appointed vicar in charge of eleven Augustinian monasteries, which remained under him up to the beginning of the reformation he brought to Christianity. He wrote several influential books, including translations of the Bible into the German language, five books on the Jews and hundreds of tracts on theology and the Christian faith. He composed the most basic of the Christmas carols "Away in a Manger." As a composer, Luther also wrote, among many others, the Smart Songbook and "A Mighty Fortress is our God". After a long illness, which had seriously affected his ability to work and write, he paid a visit to Eisleben, his hometown, and died there on February 18, 1546 at 62 years of age.

3.2 The Purposes of the Lutheran Reform

In the course of his ministry, Luther had identified the chief purposes, which geared him towards making a fundamental reform in Christianity. Since the beginning of his monastery in 1507, he had discovered the behavioral decay and luxury life of monks and priests. He eye-witnessed the problem, more especially after his participation in a church conference held in Rome in 1510 when he was 27 years old. The fulsome life-style of the priests disappointed him terribly. More so, in 1516 the Church initiated the issue that salvation was a matter of good faith together with hard work and not mere faith, as claimed by Luther⁽⁶⁰⁾. But Luther was not rejecting good work or singling it out of salvation; he even identified certain acts that people needed to observe for their goodness⁽⁶¹⁾. Thus, the bone of contention was between Luther and the Catholic Church in selling "indulgencies" as redemption of one's penalties, the matter that Luther could not agree with and viewed out right as commercializing the church⁽⁶²⁾, which is, by and large, a big offence in the God's sight.

In 1517, Luther was thirty-three and had been convinced beyond doubt of the Roman Catholic Church's decay and its incapacity in refining peoples' hearts. Thus, he denounced its authority and declared an end to the twelve century of its influence. He pinpointed 95 theses on which his reformation was based. The articles were posted on the church doors at Wittenberg on October 31. And in December of the same year, Johann Tetzel, who was the chief monger of selling indulgences on the borders of Saxony, wrote vehemently, countering the theses and describing them as baseless and unbecoming. And, immediately, the then Pope, Leo X, reissued the selling of indulgences.

Luther's refusal, at first, to recant the preaching against the Church made the council in Rome try him in absentia on charges of heresy. However, he later recanted and sent a letter of apology to the Pope. This had not taken long. After a while, he denied the primacy of the Pope, stating that all believers were priests; therefore, they had the right of interpreting the Scriptures. He even denounced the position of the Pope when Emperor Charles V summoned him in 1521. He unequivocally said, "Unless I am convicted by Scripture and plain reason, I do not accept the authority of popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other - my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. God help me"⁽⁶³⁾.

To him, Church authorities were no longer loyal servants of God but had become deeply worldly men. He even contended, "Is it not true that he [the pope] and his bishops have become worldly lords, and, led by the spirit of lies, have fallen away from the gospel and embraced their own human doctrine, and thus have committed murder to the present hour?" (*LW* 46:180). The Church took the matter very seriously and considered following Luther was a very grave mistake that one should be punished for. This is the reason why in 1523 some followers of Luther, formally known as 'Protestants' like Henri Voes and Jean Van Esschen, were burned at Brussels and other places⁽⁶⁴⁾.

He blamed most Christian leaders with ill intention and being incapable to confront Muslims who were at their door. He said, "And if the emperor were to destroy the unbelievers and non-Christians, he would have to begin with the pope, bishops and clergy and perhaps not spare us, or himself, for this is enough horrible idolatry in his own empire to make it unnecessary for

him to fight the Turks- (Muslims)- for this cause. Among us there are Turks, Jews, heathen, non-Christians, all too many of them, proving it with public false doctrine and with offensive, shameful lives. Let the Turk believe and live, as he will, just as one lets the papacy and other false Christians live. The emperor's sword has nothing to do with the faith; it belongs to physical, worldly things, if God is not to become angry with us"⁽⁶⁵⁾.

Luther resisted in the matter of marriage. He saw no solid reason whatsoever for celibacy, the fact that made him after eleven years of commencing the reformation marry a former nun, Lady Katherine von Bori, in 1525, when he was 42. She gave birth to him six children.

Protestantism as a new branch of Christianity became famous and in need of more stipulates to assimilate the changes of time. Therefore, in 1527, he wrote a doctrinal text for the new church and continued nurturing it until 1545. Throughout this period, the Pope was not pleasant with the new Church. He even waged vehement attacks against it and Luther was, indeed, defending until he issued a tract entitled "Against the Papacy at Rome founded by the Devil". He explained all the accusations and blamed the Pope as the spirit of the Antichrist⁽⁶⁶⁾.

It is clear from all these writings and many more that Luther blamed the attitude of the Papal office, which he described as a disaster. He built his reformation on those major reasons and moved enthusiastically towards waging a fierce war in order to reform such an endurable corrupted situation.

3.3 Islam in Luther's Vision

In his life, Martin Luther had put himself in confrontation with different people and directions. Islam, of course, would naturally

be one of his enemies for a number of reasons. He heard and probably read many things about Islam and Muslims. Most of his accusations, however, were based on medieval polemical sources. He thought Prophet Muhammad as one of the early Christians among the followers of Arius, who refused the Church and established his own branch of faith. This and many baseless criticisms were the best knowledge of Luther about Islam.

Adam Francisco identifies five main sources upon which Luther based his knowledge of Islam. This included two books written by Nicholas of Cusa. One of them is "Critique of the Alcoran" and the other is "Refutation of the Alcoran". Georgius de Hungaria in the 15th century had two books, namely "Tractatus de moribus" and "Conditionibus et nequicia Turcorum", the books that had enriched Luther's horizon on Islam. The last source was a Latin translation of the Qur'an by Theodor Bibliander, which could not reach Luther until 1542, one year after writing the vehement attack on the Turks. The book amazed Luther to the extent that he wrote a preface to it, though it was not published during his time, but was discovered and published later⁽⁶⁷⁾.

On the other hand, Luther also raged seriously at the victory of Muslims under the Ottoman Empire over Belgrade in 1521. It was also five years later in 1526 that Sultan Suleiman, the Magnificent was able to conquer a large part of Hungary⁽⁶⁸⁾ (especially Buda) during which time its King Louis II was killed. After that, Vienna was also sieged in 1529. Hence, some Christians were astonished by the Muslim successes in Europe and the kind of civilization they brought to the area. Luther had surprised such people. He said a considerable number of "German people are such a wild and uncivilized folk that there

are some who want the Turk to come and rule"⁽⁶⁹⁾. Those had not hidden their admiration of Islam and eagerly hoped to be under its government provided the Gospel would be allowed to be preached⁽⁷⁰⁾.

Having heard and realized all that was going round and to clear his conscience⁽⁷¹⁾, Luther wrote his book "On War Against the Turks" in order to combat the penetration of Islam into the German people. At first, he showed no retribution towards the attacks of Muslims on Christians. So, he argued that the Turks were sent by God as punishment and they should hesitantly be regarded "our schoolmasters", who were meant "to discipline and teach us to fear God and to pray; otherwise we will do what we have been doing – rot in sin and complacency" (*LW* 43:224). The Pope wanted to lead the war with the Turks. However, Luther stood against entering the war under the leadership of the Church because it could change form to be a crusade. He actually questioned the sincerity of the Pope. He was only pretending. He believed that "the Pope had never seriously intended to make war on the Turk, but use the Turkish war as a conjurer's hat"⁽⁷²⁾. In a number of stances, the spirit of being an academician overwhelmed Luther and made him speak the truth. He plainly rejected some concocted stories against Muslims and said, "Some indeed have invented outrageous lies about the Turks in order to stir up us German against them, but there is no need for lies. The truth is all too great"⁽⁷³⁾. He did not want to base accusations on mere hearsay. He was always after what he was sure about, as he said, "What I heard beside I will not bring forward, because I cannot be sure about it"⁽⁷⁴⁾.

In one of the passages of his criticism, he delightfully applauded Muslims by saying, "It is said that among themselves the Turks

are faithful, friendly and careful to tell the truth. I believe that and I think that they probably have more fine virtues than that. No man is so bad that there is not something good in him" (LW 46:182). He also remarked, "I cannot deny that the Turk esteems the four Gospels as divine and true, as well as the prophets, and that he also speaks very highly of Christ and of his mother. But at the same time, he believes that his Mohammed is superior to Christ and that Christ is not God." He said, "They tolerate no images or pictures and are even holier than our destroyers of images are". He said, "When the Turks go into battle their war-cry is no other than "Allah! Allah!" and they shout it till heaven and earth resound....I believe that the Turks' Allah does more in war than they themselves. He gives them courage and wiles, guides sword and fist, horse and man.." (75).

Luther, of course, has shown a great ability to "have some pieces of Mohammed's Koran" and even to pick out some doctrines, which he viewed as cruel. He even hoped he could have spared time to translate the Qur'an to German for other people to see 'what an abhorrent, foul and shameful book it is' (76). He first assumed like others that the Qur'an was a mere collation from different sources "patched together out of faith of Jews, Christian and heathen. He -(the Prophet)- gets it from the Christian when he praises Christ, Mary, other apostles, and other saints. He gets it from the Jews that people are not to drink wine, are to fast the certain times of the year, wash like Nazarited, and eat off the ground, and go on with such holy works as part of our monks do and hope for everlasting life at the Judgment Day, for holy people that they are, they believe in the resurrection of the dead, though few of the papists believe in it" (77).

Apart from these amalgamations, Luther had restricted the whole teaching of the Qur'an to three points, which he was very

"sure of them from the Koran of the Turks", thus, lies, murder and the disregard of marriage. As for being full of lies, he said, "Mohammed's Koran is such a great spirit of lies that it leaves almost nothing of Christian truth remaining". He also accused Islam that "Mohammed commands that ruling is to be done by the sword and in his Koran the sword is the commonest and noblest word"⁽⁷⁸⁾. Committing murder is the second problem that the Muslims' Qur'an had asserted in Luther's eyes. Therefore, he accused Muslims of murder in a different way and admitted that "where the spirit of lies is, there is also the spirit of murder".

As for marriage, which is the third predicament, the Qur'an, according to Luther, "permits everyone to take wives as he will. Therefore, it is customary among the Turks for one man to have ten or twenty wives and to desert or sell any of them that he will, when he will, so that in Turkey women are held immeasurably cheap and are despised; they are bought and sold like cattle... None of them takes a wife or has a wife with the intention of staying with her forever"⁽⁷⁹⁾.

Though the answer to this accusation is obvious, I have not known of any refutation, particularly of Luther's criticism against the Qur'an.

3.4 Luther and the Persecution of the Jews

The Jews migrated to Germany since long ago. Luther's attention was not drawn to them until 1510 when a converted Jew to Christianity, named Pfefferkorn, mounted a vehement accusation of his former people of being so cruel and blasphemous. Hence, he called for the burning of Jewish books. Luther was, then, at his peak age. He did not see the situation that way. He, rather, supported John Reuchlin, who was the then erudite Hebrew

scholar in Germany. Both were unhesitant in denying the accusation on scholarly grounds⁽⁸⁰⁾. Since then, Luther had an intimacy with the German Jews and wished they would have converted and followed the Christian faith, for being true-blooded relatives of Christ. He became more encouraged for achieving this goal after debating with two Jews in 1521 and he was able to convert one among them⁽⁸¹⁾. To support the view, he composed a pamphlet entitled "That Christ was born a Jew" in 1523. The book was sent to Spain and even as far away as Palestine. He hoped that if many of them dealt with it "in a kindly way", they would have optimistically turned to the faith of their fathers, the prophets and patriarchs. He laid the failure to convert them on papacy and clergy who have failed to properly preach the Gospel to the Jew⁽⁸²⁾.

It is worth noting that, unlike the prevailing view, that Luther, at first, made efforts to draw the Jewish attention to believe in his mission. That is why he was a kind to them. When it failed to work, he resorted to virulent accusation. This, to my research, was a wrong impression of Luther's first outlook of the Jews. While some of the current researchers viewed his harsh stand in the context of the 16th century norms and circumstance⁽⁸³⁾. He quite right heard of the Jewish ill-manners towards the German people, as he firmly asserted that he had read and heard many stories about the Jews, such as poisoning wells, assassinating and kidnapping Christian children, "hacking them in pieces" and using their blood in ritual fashion and "many other similar stories". Nevertheless, it seemed Luther at first disregarded all the allegations and believed with the Jewish denial of the accusation leveled on them. He even tried hard to defend them until he later came to realize the accusations against them were true. When it came vividly to his sight that the Jews, for sure,

were bad people, he sought forgiveness from God for the past unawareness. He said, "For whatever we tolerated in the past unknowingly- and I myself was unaware of it- will be pardoned by God".

What Luther found was terrible and he naturally would not forgive it for the Jews. He realized their dirty tongue was unequivocally cursing Christ and his mother. He even heard a "malicious rabbi" had unashamedly called Mary a "dung heap". It was known that they called Christ a "son of a whore", a "sorcerer and a tool of the devil". Luther himself met some three Jews calling "Christ a *tola*", meaning he was a hanged highwayman. He also got evidences that they had been practicing witchcraft. Beside all these, he found evidence to prove the efforts of the Jews in making "additions" to Mosaic teaching. "Now the Jews' doctrine at present", said Luther "is nothing but the additions of the rabbis and their idolatry of disobedient"⁽⁸⁴⁾.

The Jews were highly happy at first with the Lutheran reformation in Christianity. They embraced it with vigour, praying for him, "God's arm helped him" and hoped he would one day lead Christians "steadily to the law of Moses"⁽⁸⁵⁾. Soon Luther became aware of their tendency and so he responded, "The Jews hope that we shall join them, because we teach and study the Hebrew language, but their hopes are futile"⁽⁸⁶⁾. Henceforth, the Jews saw the first Luther friendly efforts as an entrapment and mere sweet tongue that would simply convert them into Christianity. They eventually resisted. The resistance, of course, was another point that inflamed Luther's anger against them. However, they defended themselves with the historically unsupported claim that Luther asked them some amount of

money. When they refused, he embarked in writing against them⁽⁸⁷⁾.

The fiercest attack of Luther had not come up in one night. There were cumulated causes that gradually made him aggressive against the Jewish people, as we mentioned earlier. In 1538, some Christians insisted on making Saturday (Sabbath) a proper day of service, as they literally understood the scriptures. Luther spared no effort in attacking this new interpretation and accused the Jews for creating divisions inside the Christian faith⁽⁸⁸⁾. He wrote a treatise on this entitled "Against the Sabbatarians". Moreover, in the course of his unsuccessful evangelistic approach, Luther read "The Whole Jewish Belief", a satirist book written by one converted Jew, Anthony Margaritha. The book was published in 1530 but Luther was able to ponder over it in 1539. He, however, did not confine his research to that book alone. As an academic, he further consulted other literature for broader understanding. But in reality, there are some other sources, which he consulted. Martin Bertram in his translation of "On the Jews and their Lies" had extracted three other sources, which Luther referred to apart from Anthony Margaritha's book. The others are "Investigation of the Scriptures" by Paul of Burgos, "Most Excellent Inquiries Rejecting Judaic Falsities by the Catholic Faith" authored by Nicholas of Lyra and "Victory over the Godless Hebrews" written by Salvagus Prophets.

In 1529, Andreas Osiander wrote a treatise, which was reprinted in 1540, with the intention to dispelling all the accusations against the Jews, more especially the issue of the murder of children and the use of their blood. This is baseless, according to him, for the simple reason that Jewish teaching has forbidden them to even eat the meat of animals containing blood. How

could they dare kill young people⁽⁸⁹⁾! Johannes Eck, one of the proponents of Luther, refuted that book of Osiander, on the ground that he had emphatically "placed his own fingers in the wound of a child who had died four weeks before at the hand of the Jews of Waldkirch in the Breisgau in 1503"⁽⁹⁰⁾.

Luther's close friend, Justus Jonas, had also encountered the harshness against the Jews when he translated "*Against the Sabbatarians*" into Latin. This is an indication that Luther had not been able to convince all the people against the Jews or rather some people had a lesser degree of hatred against them and in viewing the "the Jewish question".

In 1543, three years before Luther's death, he composed two treatises on the Jewish question. The famous one is "On the Jews and Their Lies" and the other is "Of the Unknowable Name and the Generations of Christ". The books were full of condemnation of the Jewish attitude. The first book was seemingly an answer to a treatise posed on Christians from some Jews. Luther's attention to the treatise was drawn by his friend, Count Schlick, who requested him to ponder on it for refutation. In the book, he drew the attention of the Jews to the first persecution made on them by the Romans during which "their principality together with the temple and priesthood were destroyed" and they remained "in exile for over fourteen hundred years". This alluded to the fact that they were people of multifarious sins, which led God's wrath to continuously befall on them.

The Jews became intriguing in the German society for their wealth and their attitude to behave so arrogantly and boast so proudly and despicably when Luther's people did help and serve them. However, they always pretended being close to God who,

according to their pride, has ordained them as Lords and other people as servants. Luther explained that the Jewish abominations had concealed and abrogated all the privileges that they had been enjoying⁽⁹¹⁾. Luther described them with a stiff description that "they are full of the devil's feces", "poisonous envenomed worms", "rejected and condemned", "base, whoring people, that is, no people of God", "we are at fault in not slaying them", etc. He condemned the Jews' boast of their lineage of Christ and for practicing circumcision. However, the main evidence of Luther in that description was Christ's declaration and his forerunner, John the Baptist. He reported them to have said, "They are venomous, bitter, vindictive, tricky, serpents, assassins and children of the devil", "stiff-necked, disobedient, prophet-murderers, arrogant, usurers and filled with every vice, as the whole of Scripture and their present conduct bear out". He also accused them of destroying Christendom from within through their usury and false teaching⁽⁹²⁾.

Apart from such depiction, Luther, in honour of his Lord and the protection of Christendom, as he said, listed seven pieces of "sincere advice" that would help in dealing with Jews and perhaps lead to the easy persecution of them. There are as follows⁽⁹³⁾:

1. All Jewish synagogues and schools should be set on fire, buried and covered with dirt;
2. The houses owned by Jews should also be razed and destroyed and they should be drawn out to live in agricultural outbuildings;
3. All their prayer books and Talmudic writings, in which such idolatry, lies, cursing and blasphemy are taught, to be burnt;
4. Their rabbis must "be forbidden to teach", because they changed the truth;

5. They would be denied trading and all economical activities. Hence, all the "safe-conduct on the highways should be abolished completely for the Jews. For they have business in the countryside, since they are not lords, officials, tradesmen or the like";
6. Usury should be prohibited to them, and all cash, treasure of silver and gold to be taken from them. Because they have no other means of earning a livelihood than usury, and by it they have stolen and robbed from us and they possess";
7. All young Jews should be put to work as agricultural slaves and laborers in order to earn their bread.

The Jewish problem, according to Luther, was so obvious that everyone can easily recognize it. So "Let everyone at least", said Luther, "be guided by his own conscience and form for himself a definition or image of a Jew".

It is surprising, as Luther observed that the Jews were playing such atrocities and ill-behavior in Christian countries only. They were even unable to arouse it amidst Muslims. He said, "The Turks and other heathen do not tolerate what we Christians endure from these venomous serpents and young devils, nor do the Jews treat any others as they do us Christians"⁽⁹⁴⁾. He concluded that all that is happening is a clear indication to the fact that the Jews were not the chosen people of God. If they were true his beloved, he would not let them be persecuted.

It seems that the Jewish question had somewhat become profoundly problematic to be ejected from the Germans. Luther resorted to defend his hometown. In 1546, the year, which he died, he authored a letter of exhortation entitled "Warning against the Jews" to his hometown "Eisleben" people. The letter

focused on the conditions, which should be regarded for the co-existing of the Jews in the area. First, they should accept the invitation of conversion and be baptized. Then, secondly, they should abandon their usury. If not, they would not be permitted to live among Christians in Eisleben and its environs. The lords should drive them away⁽⁹⁵⁾.

4.0 Similarities between Maghili and Luther

A cursory look at both Maghili's and Luther's analysis would reveal similarities of the two in understanding the nature and attitude of Jews. The following is the outcome of the observation:

1. Both strove to develop their criticism against the Jews in good faith, as they called on people to wage war against them out of conviction and free will. They used their mastery of theology in developing and defending their views. For this reason, I rebutted the views that say Luther's attack on the Jews was the effect of his failing health in old age⁽⁹⁶⁾. This is because during his early ministry he mounted attacks against Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and Turks with almost the same enthusiasm.
2. The bad attitude of the Jews in the societies had drawn the attention of the two critics. The Jews boasted they were masters above inhabitants despite the fact that they were strangers and practicing witchcraft.
3. Both employed public lectures for awareness tools for turning the public against the Jews. Maghili used to gather people to make them understand the situation. Huge crowds attended his lectures⁽⁹⁷⁾. Luther in a similar situation had used his ministries and congregation for spreading anti-Jewish propaganda and many a times he put it in writing as a letter and dispatched it to the churches under him.

4. They shared the idea of the persecution of Jews. Both had strongly described the killing and destruction of synagogues, burning Jewish books and similar things as the active way of persecuting Jews.
5. They based their accusations on experience on what they heard, saw or were informed by eye-witnessed people about the attitude of the Jews.
6. Both identified the tactic of bribery, which the Jews employed for corrupting scholars and chiefs and rendering good services to the authorities. Both Maghili and Luther had clearly cried about this malady. Maghili talked about it, saying "the appointment the Jews got from the people of authority and the services they render to the Sultan"⁽⁹⁹⁾. He also mentioned that the "Jews had rebelled against the injunction of the Shari'a by clinging to the authorities and using their own wealth to discriminate against those 'ulama who cause them to be humiliated"⁽⁹⁹⁾. Luther had proclaimed the same that they "donate large sums of money to improve the government", but, in fact, the money was not their own possessions⁽¹⁰⁰⁾.
7. Both had identified taking usury as the major means of incomes and earning livelihood for the Jews in their times⁽¹⁰¹⁾. Luther advised the authority to take heed from other countries. He hoped the authorities could have emulated, where necessary, "the common sense of other nations such as France, Spain, Bohemia, etc" to divide the accumulated usury with the Jews amicably and "then eject them forever from the country".
8. Both had the idea that the synagogues were used as a hideout for tuque, vilifying, cursing and blaspheming their Lords. Luther said the Jews "curse our Lord Christ so shamefully in their synagogues". Al-Maghili also said, "In

reality, we have no enemy like the enemies of our Prophet, our master and savior, Muhammad, may God bless him and give peace, especially the brother of monkey- they are our most enemies"⁽¹⁰²⁾.

9. Both accused the Jews of altering scripture. Luther denounced their habit of making additions to it. He even blamed the Christian authorities for having "fallen away from the gospel and embraced their own human doctrine".
10. The two blamed their contemporary scholars for a voidable long silence on the Jewish question.
11. The intention of Al-Maghili and Luther was to break the efficacy of the Jews in the economy, the domain, which they dominated for their own personal selfish interests.

Conclusion

It seems that both Al-Maghili and Luther feared the double standard behaviour of the Jews, which were described in both the Qur'an and the Bible. The status of the Jews in Tuwat and Germany portrayed that their hidden agenda was of constituting a nation within a nation. This has been the Jewish attitude throughout history⁽¹⁰³⁾. Both Maghili and Luther had well studied his community and diagnosed its major problem in which the Jews had become the core. Hence, they conclusively described Jews as devils.

Both, of course, were successful in persecuting the Jews in their respective areas and had successfully made other people understand the Jewish problem. For this reason, Martin Luther's resentment against the Jews has been seen partially by some protagonists of Semitism as a background for the terrible Jewish holocaust of Nazi Germany⁽¹⁰⁴⁾. The Jihad of Maghili was, indeed, crippled by the Jewish effort, though the idea of persecuting

them was sold to Askia Muhammad who, in his capacity, forbade the Jews from trading in his territory. Leo Africanus even described Askia as "a sworn enemy of the Jews"⁽¹⁰⁵⁾. It is clear from this study that not only had Al-Maghili and Luther wholeheartedly held the idea against the Jews, but they were also persecuted several times, as stated in the paper, more especially by Christian invaders in 1492 C.E, the same year in which Al-Maghili left Kano for Tuwat.

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