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## Editorial

This June 2022 issue of IIUM Journal of Religion and Civilisational Studies extends our commitment to engage with a wide range of topics related specifically to colonial history and policy, intellectual and scientific contributions to human civilization, as well as contemporary social studies.

The first article is co-authored by Togan Nezihat Sena and Iyad Muhammed Eid with the title “Challenges Faced by Turkish Students Adjusting to Multicultural Environment in the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM)”. Focusing on the challenges facing students studying abroad, the paper aims to investigate the psychological, sociocultural and academic problems encountered by Turkish students while studying at IIUM. Using a qualitative in-depth interview method, seven Turkish respondents were picked out of the population of 60 students. The findings reveal that the Turkish students generally endure two types of challenges. The first is linked to psychological or mental wellbeing where some of the respondents claimed to suffer from homesickness and loneliness, and secondly, problems in adjusting to a new environment which include their unfamiliarity with local cuisine, weather and culture. With regards to the culture, the main obstacle voiced out by the students is the difficulty in learning English especially during the early period of their study, and how their lack of mastery of the language affects their academic achievement.

The second article entitled “Measuring Time: An Islamic Contribution to Time Measurement Techniques” written by Syed Hasan Sardar throws light on the importance of time and how this motivated Muslim scientists to invent instruments for measurement of time. Driven first and foremost by the need to observe religious injunctions such as prayers, and numerous Quranic statements referring to the essence and significance of time, Muslim achievements in this area comprise shadow measurement, astrolabe and water clock to determine time. One such creative innovation

is Ismā'īl al-Jāzarī's water clock which inspired the design and technique of the modern 24-hour clocks. This accomplishment, according to the author, was by no means devoid of the contributions of other or past civilizations since Muslim scholars also made use of, for instance, the Greek theory i.e., Archimedes' pressure principle, the Persian method of releasing water and the Indian concept of division of time into days and nights. The article ends with a brief discussion on how religious orthodoxy and Muslims' own political weaknesses caused the stagnation of scientific development in the Muslim world.

Next, article "Colonial Civilisation: Consolation and Iron Fist within the Dutch Ethical Policy in Aceh" by Nia Deliana and Arshad Islam touches on the debate regarding the Dutch Ethical Policy in Aceh (from 1873-1942) - whether the policy was meant as a civilising mission on the part of the colonisers or, a result of their inefficient administrative policy. While the policy aimed to generate benefits to the local population and Dutch alike, the findings illustrate that it led to the exploitation of natural resources and the establishment of authoritarian and suppressive colonial authorities where those who were against the policy or the Dutch government were violently suppressed while Acehnese elites and nobles in support of the policy enjoyed privileges provided in the form of, for example, access to modern education system and land grants. Additionally, the Ethical Policy caused a division in the society leading to groups like *uleebalang* and *ulama* to be at loggerheads with each other, a situation that was detrimental to the unity of Aceh society.

The fourth article entitled "Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje on Makkah as a Centre of Pan-Islamism and Anticolonialism" by Spahic Omer assesses the views of Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936), a Dutch Orientalist and colonial administrator on Makkah as the centre of pan-Islamism and anticolonialism during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Following his visit to Makkah in 1885 on the pretence of being a Muslim, he concluded that the city posed a serious albeit remote threat to Western interests since from the place, pan-Islamic ideas could spread to all over the Muslim world. Believing that the first-hand experience in Makkah was necessary

to rectify what he saw as the faults in the approach of European Orientalists towards Islam and Muslims having relied profoundly on secondary sources, he observed that in order to maintain West's control and exploitation of Muslims and their natural resources, and get rid of fanaticism and resistance among Muslims to colonial rule, a thorough westernization, civilization and modernization should be affected through education, economic development, acculturation, democracy, etc. in the colonies. He further deduced that Makkah, despite being comparatively backward in comparison to Constantinople and Cairo at that time, posed a greater danger to the West via the idea of pan-Islamism primarily due its position as the spiritual centre of Muslims and a symbol of Muslim unity.

Next, Arshad Islam produced some viewpoints on "The Intellectual and Cultural Impact of Islam on India during the Delhi Sultanate (1206-1526)". Starting with the expansion of Islam to the Subcontinent, the author briefly explains the formation of the Delhi Sultanate attributing it partly to the role of Chishti and Suhrawardi Sufi orders. The author then sheds light on some renowned Muslim scholars and their contributions during the said period such as Rukn al-Din Samarqandi (d.1218), Malik Taj al-Din Reza, Amir Khusrau (b.1253), Zia al-Din Barani (d.1357), Kabir al-Din and Malik Shams al-Din Abu Rija. Written primarily in Persian language, their works cover various subjects like mathematics, astronomy, astrology, metaphysics, chemistry, medicine, logic, philosophy, etc. Many of these scholars left Persia to India where amalgamation between local and Persian high cultures that took place around Delhi contributed greatly to Muslim intellectual and cultural achievements. Not only was the intellectual renaissance made possible due to Delhi's cosmopolitan and diverse society, but also because of peace, security, and prosperity that prevailed under the rule of the Muslim Sultanate.

Finally, this issue contains a book review entitled *Religion's sudden decline: What's causing it, and what comes next?* by Inglehart, R. (published in 2020 by Oxford University Press) contributed by Makmor Tumin. Having gone through the book that deals with the reasons for the decline of religiosity and its effects, the reviewer highlights several conclusions, one being, in the West, the Nordic

countries and the Netherlands are the ones which demonstrate the most rapid decline of religiosity. Furthermore, he asserts that such trend is mainly caused by secularization which is essentially a product of existentialism that stresses on individual choice in deciding what to do, what to be and what to feel, leading to among others, nihilism, the decline in the belief of God and the Afterlife, the diminishing public confidence in churches, as well as the spread of practices which were previously deemed strictly unacceptable such as homosexuality, divorce and abortion. Stretching further into the future, these very practices, as pointed out by the author, will result in the irreligious population to shrink thus resulting in the religious people being the majority of world population.

On behalf of the Editorial Board, I would like to extend my gratitude to all contributors and reviewers who involved in this June issue. It is hoped that their valuable ideas and works will contribute to the enrichment of knowledge particularly in civilizational studies and be of interest to scholars worldwide.

Finally, I also wish to express my gratitude to all members of the Editorial Board, our Editor Dr. Mohd Helmi Mohd Sobri, Associate Editor Dr. Alwi Alatas, Book Review Editor Dr. Kaoutar Guediri and Assistant Editor Sr. Norliza Saleh, without whose efforts and dedication, the publication of this issue will not become a reality. Thank you.

**Fauziah Fathil**  
**Editor-in-Chief**  
**June 2022**