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Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje on Makkah as a Centre of Pan-Islamism and Anticolonialism

Spahic Omer¹

Abstract: This article discusses Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje's views on Makkah as a centre of pan-Islamism and anticolonialism. The discussion is set against the backdrop of the insatiable Western appetite for colonization and imperialism during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Hurgronje was an active protagonist in the developments. Apart from being a leading Orientalist, he was also an advisor to the Dutch government on its colonization project in the Dutch East Indies. To European colonial powers with Muslim subjects, Makkah had become a safe haven for religious fundamentalist activities. With its hajj pilgrimage, it became the nucleus, and epitome, of the ideology of pan-Islamism. The city was seen as a place from where pan-Islamic ideas could unhinderedly radiate all over the Muslim world, posing a serious and inaccessible threat. Hurgronje, therefore, studied Islam, with specific interest on Makkah and hajj, in order to create, at once, an ideological and operational blueprint for knowing the enemies and for prevailing over, as well as controlling, them.

Keywords: Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, Makkah, hajj, pan-Islamism, colonization.

Introduction

Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936) was a Dutch Orientalist and colonial administrator. He was a pioneer in the modern and scientific study of Islam in the West. If what Edward Said (1980) called "modern Orientalism" commenced after the last third of the 18th century, then

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the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries signified the climax of that process. Certainly, Hurgronje was one of the leading protagonists and his ideas and scientific works stood for the *crème de la crème* of the yields. So influential was he that, in many ways, he came to epitomize the age in which he lived and its ideological direction.

In the early days of Orientalism, Western scholars and political as well as military officials worked hand in hand to undermine the vigour of Muslim cultural and civilizational presence. Expectations and standards were minimal, commensurate with the efforts invested, the strategies that were in place, and also with the nature of prevalent circumstances from a practical and operational point of view. But later, as the Muslim world dramatically declined and its institutional wellbeing started to hang in the balance, Orientalism became enlivened. Sensing that ultimate victory might be not only attainable and complete, but also very near, Orientalists wielded an arrogant swagger. There was no limit to their valour and remits. Their ingenuity and “scientific resourcefulness” seemed limitless too.

In short, the range of the Orientalist representation of Islam, Muslims and the Muslim world (Orient, or the “other”) grew enormously. With more and more Europeans interacting with Muslims more freely and more confidently, and with many others living in the latter’s midst with greater authority and discipline, the pressing questions and subject matters were handled more systematically and with more effective methodologies. Thus, Orientalism as a Western branch of learning was winding up its evolution and was rapidly acquiring its coveted qualities, such as being scholarly refined, scientific and experiential. Orientalists were gradually feeling at home as much in the Muslim world, surrounded by Muslims, as within the compass of Orientalism as a science. The remoteness of Orient’s exoticism and curio was withering by the day, and its idiosyncrasy and barbarity were getting triumphed over as quickly and as efficiently.

This article delves into the subject of Hurgronje’s views concerning Makkah as a centre of pan-Islamism and anticolonialism. The man’s legacy matters on account of him being one of the most prominent and most influential Orientalists. He was an international intellectual luminary. The research method adopted is a blend of descriptive, thematic and content analysis. It involves accurate and complete descriptions,

critical and comparative thinking, and systematic evaluation of facts and information in relation to the subject matter at hand. There is also an interdisciplinary tendency whereby a unique perspective is created by thinking and researching across traditional boundaries that define established academic disciplines.

Hurgronje a man on a mission

Hurgronje was a student of theology in the Leiden University where he obtained his doctorate in 1880, in the field of Islamic studies. The topic of his PhD dissertation was “Het Mekkanische Feest” (in Dutch), which means “The Meccan Festival”. It was about the full description of the origins and significance of the rites of *hajj* as Islamic pilgrimage. He was then appointed a lecturer at the University of Leiden (1880-1889).

As part of his academic engagements, Hurgronje in 1884-1885 had an opportunity to visit and stay for a year in Arabia, about half the year in Makkah and half the year in Jeddah. According to some reports, however, his stay in Arabia lasted either eight or eleven months in total. At any rate, it is certain that he stayed in Makkah around six months, from February 22, 1885 until August, 1885. Before that he stayed in Jeddah - six, five or two months - in the house of the Dutch Consul. In the role of a student of Islam, he wanted to stay longer in Makkah and to perform the pilgrimage of *hajj* as well, which would have signified the climax of his intellectual growth and personal accomplishment. However, he was involved in an apparent misunderstanding, yet a precarious incident, due to which he was asked to leave Makkah. Hence, his studies were cut short and he was unable to be present during *hajj*.

The misunderstanding in question was international in character and was connected to Arabian archaeology, in particular, with the Tayma Stela (a slab with an ancient religious inscription) as a prized artefact. In a nutshell, Hurgronje was accused - baselessly though - of a complicity in an international plot that targeted the relic. As a result, it soon became noised abroad that he was no Muslim convert given up to the study of the Islamic sacred law, but a Christian in disguise, whose object was the stealing of local antiquities. “Needless to say what fate overtakes the Frank detected in Mecca”, was the concluding remark of Augustus Ralli (1909) after extensively dwelling on the matter.

In passing, Hurgronje might have arrived in Jeddah in 1884 during, or just before, the *hajj* season (September, 1884), witnessing but the secondary effects of the spectacle. His target was the *hajj* term of the following year, which was in September, 1885. But - as said before - in early August, only one month and a half before the commencement of *hajj*, he had to abandon his mission and leave the city of Makkah. As far as *hajj* was concerned, in its role as the pinnacle and Holy Grail of Hurgronje's life journey, it was a case of so near yet so far for him.

Hurgronje's study of Islamic sciences aimed to investigate the effects of Islam on human and social development within the pristine socio-economic, religious, cultural and political realities of Makkah. His unique anthropological and ethnographical approach was spurred by a perception of defects in the methods of European Orientalists whose knowledge was derived wholly from books and some other secondary sources. Hurgronje was convinced that nothing except an empirical method and his own sojourn in Makkah, as the spiritual centre of Islam and the entire Muslim world, could do the trick. He needed - and wanted - to be an influencer. The scholarly discipline of Orientalism needed it. It needed a Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje.

For this extraordinary mission of his, extraordinary measures had to be taken. Hurgronje thus pretended to be a Muslim, assuming the pseudonym "Abd al-Ghaffar". He yet underwent circumcision on January 5, 1885 at the hands of a certain Sayyid Muhammad Muzayyin, which can be gleaned from the contents of his diary wherein a vivid account of the practice has been presented (Hurgronje, 2007). Such was part of his making the conversion to Islam public, among Muslims that is. His excellent command of Arabic and vast knowledge of Islamic studies, in addition, proved very useful, rendering his case doubtless to each of sceptical officials, inquisitive scholars and the credulous public. He is reported to have admitted in a letter to a college friend about one year later that his professed Islam was nothing but a decoy.

Hurgronje's ostensible conversion to Islam attracted much controversy. His supporters jump to his defence by saying that doing so was necessary for the sake of realizing sets of magnanimous goals. Whatever actions as might have been necessitated thereby, regardless of whether they could be considered ethically or morally bad, were

worthwhile so long as the desired end results have been achieved. This is the implication of the slogan “the end justifies the means”.

However, others beg to differ. To them, by feigning that he had embraced Islam and had become a member of Islamic community, Hurgronje had acted in an insincere way towards all those honest Muslims in Jeddah and Makkah, and later in Indonesia as well, who had given him their unreserved trust and their brotherly love and had regarded him as one of their own. That is to say, he was a traitor and hypocrite. He reciprocated people’s trust with pretence and deceit, and their goodwill and affection with a knife in the back.

Recognizing the extent of the controversy, Jan Just Witkam in his “Introduction” to Hurgronje’s master work “Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century”, somehow attempted to quieten the storm. He did not want the polemic to stand, by any means, in the way of and to possibly take the shine off the man’s remarkable scientific reputation as well as contributions. Jan Just Witkam wrote that Hurgronje had always avoided to speak out publicly about his contentious conversion to Islam. In his letters, to his mother, to his teacher M.J. de Goeje in Leiden, to his friends Theodor Noldeke and Ignaz Goldziher, and possibly a few others as well, he had been more straightforward on this, but always up till a certain level only.

Jan Just Witkam then elaborated, adding a new dimension to the quandary: “For the agnostic expert of Islamic Law that Snouck Hurgronje was, Islam was a series of outward acts, to be performed without rational questioning and under certain conditions by which they got legal validity. In this sense he had certainly become a Muslim, someone who practices submission. Whether he was also a believer, a *mu’min*, someone with the inner conviction that Islam was the true and only possible religion, Snouck Hurgronje thought of no relevance to outsiders, since that was something between man and his Creator, who was the only One to look into the hearts and to judge accordingly. For our appreciation of Snouck Hurgronje’s study of daily life in Jeddah and Mecca as he participated in it in 1884–1885 it is an irrelevant question” (Hurgronje, 2007).

From 1890 (or 1889) to 1906 Hurgronje was professor of Arabic at Batavia (the capital of the Dutch East Indies, present-day Jakarta, Indonesia) and, as a government adviser on colonial affairs, he originated

and developed a Dutch colonial policy towards Islam that prevailed until the termination of Dutch rule in Indonesia in 1942. Though he was tolerant of Islamic religious life, his policy as a colonial official was to repress Islamic political activism (Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, 2021).

As a councillor to the Dutch government, Hurgronje took an active role in the latter part of the Aceh war (1873–1904). (From 1904 to 1914 the war continued as isolated guerrilla insurgencies). “He used his knowledge of Islamic culture to devise strategies which significantly helped crush the resistance of the Aceh inhabitants and impose Dutch colonial rule on them, ending a 40-year war with varying casualty estimates of between 50,000 and 100,000 inhabitants dead and about a million wounded. His success in the Aceh War earned him influence in shaping colonial administration policy throughout the rest of the Dutch East Indies” (Benda, 1958).

Hurgronje’s military recommendations centred on breaking Acehnesse resistance primarily by force. He promoted the view that resistance in Aceh was religious in character, led by Islamic leaders and scholars who were intent on waging a holy war (*jihad*) against the infidel Dutch. The government was hesitant, however, and only adopted the recommendations in 1896 after several incidents (Encyclopedia, 2021; Drewes, 1957).

In his own words, Hurgronje was commissioned by the Dutch government to proceed to Aceh in July, 1891, to make a special study of the religious element in the political conditions of that country. That was the last phase in his meticulous study of Aceh and its people’s stubborn resistance to the Dutch rule. Hitherto he gained some knowledge from literature and from his experiences in Arabia where he had intermingled with many Acehnesse and Jawah groups (the Jawah were the peoples of the East-Indian Archipelago and Malaya). Nonetheless, spending some time in direct relations with the Acehnesse on their own soil was required to round off the knowledge previously gained (Hurgronje, 1906). The overall aim was to identify - and do away with - the causes of the people’s fanaticism and dogged resistance.

Though Hurgronje remained a colonial adviser until 1933, he returned in 1906 to the Netherlands, where he was professor of Arabic and Islamic Institutions at the University of Leiden until his death (Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, 2021). He returned from Indonesia

to the Netherlands because he was convinced that his counsels were unsatisfactorily put into operation.

Hurgronje a dual personality

Hurgronje was a dual personality. He was, at once, a scholar and a colonization official. The two sides of his were subtly interwoven into a whole. They, at acute junctures, delicately separated and, at yet more critical junctures, converged again. They mutually supported one another, with one giving sense to and deriving its strength - and legitimacy - from the other. From a Western perspective, Hurgronje's being a great scholar of Islam and the ethnographies of some of its peoples was augmented by his successful translation of his knowledge into suppressive colonization policies and programs; and his being a distinguished counsellor was buttressed by his immense theoretical and empirical knowledge in the required fields. In every book, article or lecture of his, a sensible observer is capable of distinguishing an artful interplay between the two facets.

For example, while his two major works, namely "Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century" and "The Achehnese", can be seen as masterpieces in descriptive anthropology and social together with behavioural sciences, they, at the same time, served as guide books for knowing the enemies and as blueprints for prevailing over and controlling them. Hurgronje's books, therefore, were at once classic and modern, enlightening and directing, and also fascinating and repulsive. Just like their author, the books were multitiered and polychromatic. One needs to know what exactly he wants from those books and how to get it. Otherwise, one may easily be misguided and tricked into misreading them. Time and again, it follows, one is not sure whether to like and appreciate, or to loathe and depreciate, the man.

It was because of this disposition of the author that, by way of illustration, no sooner had he questioned and even repudiated the claims that Prophet Muhammad was one possessed, a poet, a soothsayer, a sorcerer, an impostor, one epileptic or hysteric, etc., than he emphasized and elaborated that the Prophet was an opportunist and cunning manipulator especially concerning the notion of the universality of Islamic message and the expedient relationships with the Jews and

Christians (the People of Scripture) in the interest of conceptualizing and propagandizing the former.

Similarly, while he endorsed and preached that Islam was a monotheistic and great religion, correcting several European misconceptions about it in the process - one of the most important one, perhaps, being the idea of the "harem" - he, all the same, expounded that Islam was spread by force only; that the Qur'an contains the large number of weak points which were later exploited by Jewish and Christian polemicists; that the work of Muhammad as the illiterate Arabian prophet features numberless mistakes, in particular where he maintained that he was repeating and confirming the contents of Jewish and Christian scriptures; that the Makkan rites of pagan origin were incorporated into Islam - most of all such as were related to the holy sites and ceremonies of *hajj* - albeit only after the purification which was required by Islam's monotheistic penchant.

The author, furthermore, worked tirelessly on brainwashing, colonizing and subjugating Muslims, while at the same time advocating that Muslims and their societies should be modernized, that they were capable of progress and were inclined to the coveted goals of peace, freedom and cooperation. As if he, on account of his matchless cunningness and duplicity, was suggesting that Islam as a derivative and unoriginal - that is to say, plagiarized - religion was bendy and accommodating enough as to have room for a few other philosophical and applied constituents dictated by the vicissitudes of modern and, certainly, most critical times. Islam, it goes without saying, was set to evolve, and be evolved, even further. It was against this backdrop that Hurgronje emphatically promoted the notions of civilization, progress, modernization and peaceful interactions between East and West (Orient and Occident). He did so as much to Muslims as to non-Muslims, and as much in his capacity as a scholar as a colonization bureaucrat. To him, *jihad* as a concept and systematic pursuit was a medieval phenomenon that entailed extremism and should be rescinded on account of the potencies of modern civilization and progress.

Jan Just Witkam stated that the 21st-century reader should realize that Hurgronje's book on Makkah in the latter part of the 19th century is a classic, but in many ways, it is also a modern book. It describes Makkan society in the 1880's, and as such it is an important historical

source - in fact, till today, the only one on the subject. “The lively and at times humoristic style in which Snouck Hurgronje describes the motives and feelings of some of the inhabitants of Mecca keeps his narrative fresh and attractive. In addition, his ideas of how to have dealings with people of different cultures and religions, and how to describe these, are downright modern” (Hurgronje, 2007).

Hurgronje’s perception of the *hajj* pilgrimage

If the holy city of Makkah was the nucleus of Hurgronje’s thought so was the *hajj* pilgrimage as the former’s pivot. It was preoccupying Hurgronje’s intellectual life and direction from the very first days, as the title of his PhD dissertation can testify. But *hajj* to Hurgronje was not that which people - Muslims, that is - normally believed. His understanding was deviously different, exemplifying his cardinal ideas about Islam *en bloc*, such as its unoriginality, liability and plagiarized character.

In brief, *hajj* to Hurgronje was “that curious set of ceremonies of pagan Arabian origin which Mohammed has incorporated into his religion, a durable survival that in Islam makes an impression as singular as that of jumping processions in Christianity.” To be fair to Hurgronje, he, at another place, while reiterating the same point, added that those pagan religious ceremonies were assimilated only after they had been purified (Islamized), which was required by the monotheistic spirit of Islam (Hurgronje, 1916).

There was a significant current of Hurgronje’s thought that underpinned - and determined - this perception. Hurgronje believed that the spiritual goods with which Islam set out into the world were far from imposing. It preached and offered to the world the simplest form of monotheism. Prophet Muhammad knew too well how little qualified he was for legislative work to undertake it, unless absolutely necessary. Thus, a form of legislative and even religious minimalism was adopted.

Religious formalities and behavioural conventions were generally amalgams of following indigenous Arabian elements and imitating Jewish and Christian sacraments - so far as Prophet Muhammad knew them. No wonder, then, that Hurgronje was of the view that certain scholars’ assertion that Islam was the Jewish religion simplified

according to Arabic wants and amplified by some Christian and Arabic traditions, contained a great deal of truth. So much so that the initial period of Islam's growth and expansion was regarded as one of naively adopting institutions, doctrines and traditions. Nevertheless, that was soon followed by an awakening to the consciousness that Islam could not well absorb any more of such foreign elements without endangering its independent character. "Then a sorting began; and the assimilation of the vast amount of borrowed matter, that had already become an integral part of Islam, was completed by submitting the whole to a peculiar treatment" (Hurgronje, 1916).

The case of *haji*, however, was totally different. There was nothing in it that was either Jewish or Christian. It was purely an Arabian institution, exuding the pure Mohammedan spirit and identity. And there was a reason for that, which, however, did not reflect a principle but an expediency.

Being what he is - according to Hurgronje - Prophet Muhammad never pretended to preach a new religion. He demanded in the name of Allah the same Islam (submission) that Moses, Jesus and former prophets had demanded of their nations. In his earlier revelations, Muhammad always drew parallels between his Qur'an and the contents of the sacred books of Jews and Christians, in the sure conviction that those communities will confirm his assertions.

But after migrating to Madinah, Muhammad was disillusioned by finding out that neither Jews nor Christians were prepared to acknowledge an Arabian unlettered prophet, not even for the Arabs only. He, therefore, was forced to adjust his strategies. In consequence, he started to distinguish between the true contents of the earlier scriptures and that which had been made of them by the falsification of later Jews and Christians. He became more critical of and more judgmental about the legacies of the latter. As part of the new strategies, furthermore, Muhammad preferred to connect his own revelations more immediately with those of Abraham, no books of whom could be cited against him, and who was acknowledged by Jews and Christians without being himself either a Jew or a Christian.

This turn, this particular connection of Islam with Abraham, made it possible for Muhammad, "by means of an adaptation of the biblical legends concerning Abraham, Hagar and Ishmael, to include in his

religion a set of religious customs of the Meccans” (Hurgronje, 1916). This applied most unequivocally to the conception and phenomenon of *hajj*, in which case it became most Arabian and so, most native and most home-grown, and became one of the most prominent Islamic services that cultivated all dimensions of the Muslim community, individually and collectively.

Hurgronje (1916) concluded that Islam thus became “more Arabian, and at the same time more independent of the other revealed religions, whose degeneracy was demonstrated by their refusal to acknowledge Mohammed. All this is to be explained without the supposition of conscious trickery or dishonesty on the part of Mohammed. There was no other way for the unlettered Prophet, whose belief in his mission was unshaken, to overcome the difficulties entailed by his closer acquaintance with the tenets of other religions.”

Pan-Islamism between Constantinople (Istanbul) and Makkah

Having been in tune with all Orientalists - together with Western architects of a new political world order - Hurgronje promulgated the prospects of civilizing and modernizing the Muslim world. Such, nonetheless, denoted no more than a misdirection and smokescreen. In truth, the attempts were aimed at the westernization, control and exploitation of Muslims and their diverse human and natural capacities. Rampant colonization in the latter part of the 19th and the early 20th centuries was an indication. It was a precursor of things to come.

From Hurgronje’s perspective, Western approaches and tactics should be astute, sundry and flexible. They should evolve with the evolution of circumstances. Muslims and their civilization should not be seen as a monolithic existential reality. They were as diverse and multifaceted as the world itself. Yet, they were its microcosm. Nor were Muslims strangers to the ideas of cultural sophistication and civilizational progress, albeit in traditional, i.e., medieval, terms. Hence, Muslims should be approached and enticed with the best that the West, as an alternative cultural and civilizational paradigm, can offer. Of the items that were expected to feature most prominently on the agenda were education, economic development, acculturation, freedom, democracy and welfare. Discourses on coexistence (pluralism), cooperation and

integration could be very useful too, especially when conjoined with the former. In the process, allies within and without the world of Islam should be sought out and closely cooperated with.

Accordingly, for instance, Hurgronje was in favour neither of radical anti-Islamic polemics nor of attempts to proselytize Muslims. In modern times, those were grinding to a halt insofar as producing and sustaining any tangible results was concerned. They were becoming more counterproductive than ever. It was almost as though no Muslim could be genuinely convinced of the mendacity of the universe of Islam as a way of life, or to be genuinely proselytized and converted to Christianity. The battles, notwithstanding, did not fundamentally change. The minds and hearts of Muslims were still the target, howbeit by dint of modern-day styles and methods. Instead of the fading credenda of Christianity, the “infallible gospels” of Western modernity, democracy, science, liberty and progress, have been served.

Hurgronje thus contended that there was no reasonable hope of the conversion of important numbers of Muslims to any Christian denomination. Broad-minded missionary societies have, therefore, given up the old fruitless proselytizing methods and have turned to social improvement in the way of education, medical treatment and the like. It cannot be denied, that what they wanted, above all, to bring to Muslims was just what they most energetically hitherto declined to accept. On the other hand, the advocates of a purely civilizing mission were bound to acknowledge that - but for rare exceptions - the desire of incorporating Muslim nations into the Western world of thought did not rouse the devoted, self-denying enthusiasm inspired by the vocation of propagating a religious belief. “The ardour displayed by some missionaries in establishing in the Dar al-Islam Christian centres from which they distribute to the Mohammedans those elements of our civilization which are acceptable to them deserves cordial praise; the more so because they themselves entertain but little hope of attaining their ultimate aim of conversion” (Hurgronje, 1916).

Hurgronje believed that Makkah was an epitome of the East-West (Orient-Occident) dilemma. It was the spiritual centre of Muslims. It likewise was their direction and the object of their spiritual and emotional aspirations and cravings. Simply said, it was an axis of Muslim unity and power, and was the end of all otherworldly ends. If Constantinople

(Istanbul) was the material centre of the Muslim world, Makkah was its spiritual centre, and in respect of looking towards both these centres, all Muslims formed a whole (Hurgronje, 2007).

However, the problem was that Makkah, in addition, was a safe haven for what the West had perceived as traditionalists, conservatives and fanatics. As such, in its capacity as the focal point of pilgrimage (*hajj* and *'umrah*) and the *qiblah* (direction in prayers and, by extension, in all life initiatives of a faithful Muslim spirituality-wise), Makkah easily fascinated and magnetized all kindred sentiments and like-minded persons from the entire Muslim realm. Briefly, the city was the Muslim centre of gravity. It was its model.

At the same time, though, Makkah was physically inaccessible to Western powers and influences. It was prohibited to non-Muslims and was known by a heavenly decree as a place of safety and security, in which case a Muslim, under all circumstances, could be an optimist, could harbour a hope, and could dream of an eventual sanctuary and asylum. In the midst of the local and global upheavals of the latter 19th and early 20th centuries, Makkah was increasingly functioning as a utopian context as much for people as for ideas. The sacredness and purity of the city served as a confluence of thoughts and programs as to how to preserve the integrity and future of Islam, Muslims and Islamic civilization, and how to resist the rapid and simultaneously aggressive advances of Western powers and their civilizational values and benchmarks. Makkah was a locus of escapism, so to speak.

Whereas the West could only look from a distance and study the happenings in a roundabout manner. The situation was calling for wisdom, creativity and lateral thinking. Makkah was proving, by the day, to be a serious hub of pan-Islamism as a political ideology advocating in the face of westernization and Western expansionism, the unity of Muslims under one Islamic country or state (caliphate). If the political and possibly intellectual dimensions of pan-Islamism were worked out in Istanbul, its spiritual and sentimental qualities were created, continuously bolstered and applied nowhere else better but under the auspices of the inviolability of the city of Makkah.

While the former category had to grapple with numerous social, political and ideological challenges, from inside and outside its domains, in the end conceding to them, the latter was able to operate at

relative liberty and without any serious restrictions. While the former, furthermore, was officially spearheaded by Sultan Abdul Hamid II (d. 1918) and some members of Muslim intellectual elites in Istanbul (Landau, 2016; Keddie, 1968 & 1972), the latter was spontaneously championed and practiced not only by the scholars and teachers of Makkah, but also by students, ordinary population and the majority of pilgrims. That is to say, while in Istanbul pan-Islamism was, first and foremost, an academic issue, in Makkah, on the other hand, it was an institution and a matter of actual existence. While in Istanbul it was a dream, in Makkah it was a reality. The city of Makkah - as it were - was pan-Islamism incarnate.

The ideology of pan-Islamism targeted the realization of the unity among all Muslims in order to resist the colonial occupation of Muslim lands. Divisions, infightings and shallow nationalist programs were only to cause and deepen further rifts between Muslim states and their peoples. It was believed that universal Muslim brotherhood and unity, positively, were more important than ethnic and national identities. They were a much more potent force.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the pan-Islamism pattern of Istanbul ultimately failed, whereas the one in Makkah, even though never succeeded as a unifying agenda of the Ummah (Muslim community), at no time stopped holding promise, nor displaying signs of eternal confidence and vivacity. Many a time it was the only shining light in the gloom of the Muslim real existence.

About the pan-Islamism pattern of Istanbul Sir Edwin Pears (1917) said in 1917 that Sultan Abdul Hamid II created and employed pan-Islamism as a weapon against Great Britain, and to oppose European - but especially British - influence in Egypt. The author then categorically declared that the idea completely failed, partly due to the Sultan's and his government's incompetence and partly due to the overall situation in the Muslim world as a whole and in Turkey and Istanbul as its capital specifically.

Conversely, the pan-Islamism pattern of Makkah was regarded as real and perilous. Nobody could deny it. It was a threat to the growing Western imperialist interests in the Muslim world. Hence, one of the reasons for Hurgronje's clandestine visit to Makkah was to study the threat and to come up with suggestions as to how best to deal with

it, exclusively with reference to the Dutch government and its own colonialist plans.

In the judgment of Jan Just Witkam, in the “Introduction” to Hurgronje’s *magnum opus* “Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century”, Hurgronje had come to Arabia, with a special focus on Makkah and its annual *hajj* season, for more than one reason. One of the principal reasons, of course, was to study Islam in all its aspects in its very centre, in an environment where it was least influenced by non-Islamic elements and where it was not under foreign rule. The aim, moreover, was to participate and experience the *hajj* pilgrimage. In the end, however, the author did not even participate in *hajj* since he was forced to leave Makkah well before the season. Even so, the stay in Makkah was not perceived as a failure.

That means that there was another major reason for which Hurgronje had visited Makkah and had attempted to stay in it as long as possible and which functioned as a benchmark of success. That reason was purely political. It was colonization-centric and might have been as important as the others related to knowledge and experience. Certainly, though, all of the reasons were interconnected and greatly supported each other. Neither would have been fulfilled without the others.

About the last imperialism-allied reason Jan Just Witkam had this to say. Makkah had become, in the eyes of European colonial powers with Muslim subjects, a safe haven for religious fundamentalist activities. The term “Muslim fanatics” was used in late-19th-century discourse to describe those that had subscribed to the ideology of Islamic fundamentalism and had lived accordingly. The city was seen as a place from where pan-Islamic ideas could unhinderedly radiate all over the Muslim world, a large part of which was by then governed by European nations, the hated unbelievers. These nations felt threatened by pan-Islamism, an ideology which made the Turkish Sultan and Caliph, in addition to being master of his own subjects, also the ruler of the hearts and minds of all other Muslims in the world, as if he were a sort of Islamic pope. The whole idea was a clever ploy of the Ottomans and they eagerly exploited the concept (Hurgronje, 2007). (Parenthetically, the Westerners counter-promoted the idea as anachronistic and impractical in modern times. It was yet wholly un-Islamic.)

“To have up-to-date and accurate information about the pan-Islamic ideas living within the Southeast-Asian community in Mecca was therefore deemed of prime importance by the Dutch government, and Snouck Hurgronje had taken upon himself the task to acquire more intimate knowledge on the Jawah, as the people of the Malayan world are called in Western Arabia. In this connection there was another, more practical reason for political fact-finding in Mecca: The Netherlands had found itself, from 1873 onwards, in a state of war of attrition against the Sultanate of Aceh, an independent state on the northern tip of the island of Sumatra, and it was a war with strong Islamic overtones. Snouck Hurgronje’s funds for his Meccan expedition had partly been allotted for the specific purpose of finding out to what extent the war was ideologically supported by segments in the Jawah community in Mecca” (Hurgronje, 2007).

From Makkah as a training ground to Aceh as a battleground

Due to this, in his “Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century” Hurgronje firstly spoke about daily and family lives in Makkah in the book’s Part One and Part Two respectively. That served as a prelude to Part Three where he spoke about learning in Makkah, deciphering and discerning thereby the milieu in which a particular mind-set and a particular behavioural template have been moulded. All that functioned primarily as a background - and a frame of reference - for the final Part Four wherein the psychology and conduct (geopolitics) of the Jawah community in Makkah were discussed. In a way, the instance of the Jawah community was a case study.

One can yet claim that the whole book, albeit most directly its Part Four, acted as a prolegomenon to Hurgronje’s another *magnum opus*, namely “The Achehnese”, which denoted the apex of the author’s thought and socio-political activism. Little wonder, then, that the last points mentioned in the book “Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century” revolved around whether the Jawah people taken as a whole, and the Jawah pilgrims in particular, were savages and how educated and enlightened they were and could have been. Hurgronje also mentioned that the Jawah were the “Dutch Jawah” and that the only way for not getting the wrong impression about them was the constant growth of

his countrymen's "knowledge" of the spiritual life of the Jawah, both at home and abroad in Makkah.

It was then most appropriate to allude in the last but one sentence of the book on Makkah to a voyage from Jeddah, as the gateway to Makkah, to Batavia (Hurgronje, 2007). In this way, as if the book transports a reader in geographical terms from Makkah as a training ground for the Jawah, and especially the Acehnese, to the territory of Aceh as a battlefield, and in intellectual terms from the book on Makkah to the one on Aceh (Drewes, 1957; Fogg, 2014). For that reason - it seems logical - Hurgronje began his latter book by referring to his proceeding or traveling, and with him his readership, to Aceh, so as to embark on a scientific study of the status and role of religion in the political landscape of that country. Next, he explicitly stated that doing so was a follow-up to the processes of obtaining in Makkah "an intimate knowledge of the influence of Mohammedan fanaticism upon the obstinate resistance of the Acehnese to Dutch rule" (Hurgronje, 1906).

The state of education and civilization (modernization) in Makkah

Hurgronje was of the view that Makkah was uncivilized and mediievally backward. It was dull and dismal, and still resembling the Middle Ages. For a modern man there could hardly be a better opportunity imagined for getting a true vision of the primitivism of the Middle Ages than what is offered to the Orientalist by a few months stay in Makkah. Hurgronje did exactly that, so he communicated his views with hindsight. He was convinced that he spoke nothing save the experiential truth. Inasmuch as Islam was treated by some historians of Christianity as belonging to its heretical offspring, if one was only able to abstract himself for a moment from all dogmatic prejudice and to become a Makkani with the Makkans - one of the "neighbours of Allah" - one would be able to feel in the city, and in its holy mosque, as if he was living and conversing with "our ancestors of five or six centuries ago" (Hurgronje, 1916).

Makkans were depicted as living in the cocoon of their primitivism and ignorance. Living aloof from the rest of the world, they developed myriads of misconceptions and prejudices about the outside world, with special reference to non-Muslims (infidels). According to Hurgronje, many thousands of Makkans do not travel in their whole lives further

than Taif and Madinah. They even go unwillingly to Jeddah, unless really necessary. This was so because, from their childhood, they were taught that the most terrifying thing was to come in contact with unbelievers. They were also taught, mostly by their mothers and other womenfolk, that unbelievers (*kafirs*, infidels) were horrible monsters, their pale complexion gave the impression of the leprosy and they cannot look up to Heaven, and so seldom walked with an upright carriage, and they had to shade their eyes with their great hat-brims; men and women sat shamelessly together, and quaffed wine; they were unclean, for they entered rooms with their dirty shoes, and did not know how to purify themselves, as is seemly, after going to stool or after copulation; they were of coarse manners, for they laughed loud like hyenas, and spoke all at once with violent gestures even when they were not yet drunk; they had no religion and were disoriented and shameless. On account of these and similar traditions against which the objections of well-informed persons were of no avail, the young Makkans (those of Madinah were in a still higher degree) shrank from meeting with unbelievers as they would from meeting with ghosts. The situation was similar to a Western man seeing for the first time a madman or plague-stricken man (Hurgronje, 2007).

Furthermore, education in Makkah was medieval, superficial and mismanaged. To Hurgronje, that not only was a problem, but also the source of all other problems. In the late 19th century in Makkah, yearly, two or three hundred thousand Muslims from all parts of the world would come together to celebrate *hajj*. From all those countries, in the wake of *hajj*, many young people were keen to settle in the holy city for years to devote themselves to the study of the sacred science. Arabic grammar and style, prosody, logic, and other preparatory branches, the sacred trivium, canonical law, dogmatics, and mysticism, and, for the more advanced, exegesis of the Qur'an and Tradition (*sunnah*) and some other branches of supererogation - were taught "in the mediaeval way from mediaeval text-books or from more modern compilations reproducing their contents and completing them more or less by treating modern questions according to the same methods" (Hurgronje, 1916).

The classes were conducted inside the holy mosque (*al-masjid al-haram*) which consisted of a vast central courtyard, with the Ka'bah in the middle, surrounded by large roofed galleries or *riwaqs*. This spatial arrangement of the mosque afforded lots of free space for the forming

of study circles whereby students would sit down around their teachers and would listen to their lectures. There was more than enough time between the appointed hours of prescribed prayers for doing so. Neither hot weather nor rain could disrupt classes. The lure of the extraordinary blessing (*barakah*) associated with the holy mosque played a pivotal role too.

Hurgronje called the holy mosque of Makkah the only university building in the city (Hurgronje, 2007). Such was the case before in the earliest times, and remained the case ever since. Makkah proved uncondusive to the tendency of independent madrasahs (schools and colleges) which was from the 10th century rapidly evolving elsewhere in the Muslim world. Undeniably, there were madrasahs built in Makkah as well, as part of a wide-ranging trend, however no sooner had they been instituted than Makkah's incompatibility with such uncommon educational institutions started to come to the fore, causing their intended purpose and function to be ineffective and ultimately short-lived.

Hurgronje wrote, based on the conventional knowledge of Islamic and Makkah history, that in the past there were three major *madrasahs* in Makkah built in 1233, 1477 and 1565. They were fine establishments duly furnished with libraries, lecture halls and living rooms. Besides these there were many other smaller ones of the same kind founded by members of royalties and rich pilgrims. However, "bad management and various abuses have brought all these institutions to decay, only a few years having generally passed before the process of decay began, the mismanagement diminishing the income of the foundation to such a degree that the salaries could no more be paid and the privilege of free lodging not being sufficient to attract teachers and students, while want of money entailed also neglect of the building. Then the administrators or Governments officials began to treat the madrasahs as abandoned property. Sometimes they established themselves as lodgers in the building. Sometimes they let the beautiful lodgings, appreciated for the proximity of the Mosque, to rich pilgrims or inhabitants of Mekka" (Hurgronje, 2007). Only a few of the poorer rooms during Hurgronje's stay in Makkah were still occupied by poor teachers and students, and here and there the rich occupier of the best rooms would arrange for a lecture out of respect for the founder to be given weekly in the hall or a room of the building. "In general the word madrasah in Makkah has

come to mean a fine house near the mosque, and the population at large has lost all idea of its original meaning” (Hurgronje, 2007).

In this educational environment of the 19th century, there was naturally no place for profane sciences, while even in the department of sacred knowledge people have known no higher aim than the preservation of the indispensable results of past intellectual activities. There was no room for modernization and civilization - in the Western sense of the word - either. Hurgronje maintained that, like every dogmatic system, Islam has always been unfriendly to natural science and to mathematics. The pious mind of a layman does not necessarily exclude the study of physics, although that study does not encourage his pious state of mind. But the representatives of sacred science were almost obliged to condemn enquiries into the laws of creation. There can be no laws of nature, but only a “habit of the Creator” who may, at any time make the sun rise in the west. The pure experimental sciences, moreover, have never belonged to the knowledge of Islam “any more than our astronomy has belonged to the knowledge of Christianity.” Medicine, likewise, was a mere trade rather than a study.

The same held true with regard to the rest of profane or worldly sciences. There were always warnings against the prevailing inroads of modern unlawful usages and generally against the infidel culture that might have contaminated the world of science. For example, a Makkan used to deny the utilization of the products of modern science such as steam and telegraphy, which, he would say, were in truth not new discoveries, and have brought more evil than good, and also of modern medicine, which he would say has availed nought against death. In passing, the government printing press was opened in Makkah shortly before Hurgronje’s visit. He mentioned that a Muslim classic on history “History of Muslim Conquests” was printed during his stay in Makkah (Hurgronje, 2007).

Having been the centre of Islamic traditionalism and religious fanaticism, Makkah, it goes without saying, was more representative and more expressive of this learning state of affairs than any other Muslim centre. The circumstance was as such for quite a while.

When Domenec Francesc Jordi Badia i Lebllich, aka Ali Bey el Abbasi, (d. 1818) - a Spanish scientist, explorer, soldier and spy - secretly visited Makkah and performed *hajj* in 1807, he similarly

highlighted that there was no Muslim city where the arts and crafts were so little known as in Makka; that the sciences and learning in the city were found in the same state of deficiency as the arts and crafts; that there were no regular schools, except those where children used to learn basic reading and writing skills; that there were only a few incompetent doctors; and that the people of Makkah were the most ignorant of mortals (El Abbasi, 1816). By the same token, when John Lewis Burckhardt (d. 1817), a Swiss scholar, Orientalist, traveller, explorer and geographer, travelled to Makkah in 1814-1815 for a clandestine *hajj* he described the city's state of learning in similar terms (Burckhardt, 1829).

These "scientific findings" of Hurgronje in the fields of Makkah's anthropology and sociology Augustus Ralli (1909) were viewed as the completion of the works of some of his prolific predecessors, namely Ali Bey el Abbasi, John Lewis Burckhardt and Richard Francis Burton (d. 1890). Ali Bey el Abbasi was the first Western man of scientific acquirements to reach the holy city of Makkah. The knowledge that he gained Burckhardt corrected and amplified. Burton's commanding personality fixed the gaze of the world. And finally, Hurgronje's highly methodical studies put the last touches on the productions of all three, but especially on the scientific proclivity, as well as yield, of Burckhardt.

Makkah in Islamic and Orientalist focus

Ali Shariati (1978), while reflecting on the meaning and significance of *hajj* and the succession of its rituals, said that the land of Makkah is tranquil and peaceful. That is so on purpose and as part of a heavenly design. Instead of fear, hatred and war, the desert is characterized by security and peace. An atmosphere of worship where people are free to connect to the spiritual kingdom of Almighty Allah is prevalent. Thus, an ecosystem of physical bareness and desolation has been turned into a milieu of spiritual abundance and emotional ecstasy. It has been turned into a catalyst of all goodness and virtue. As a result, Makkah has established its reputation as a spiritual paradise, so to speak, and even a type of celestial city within a terrestrial setting.

Going to Makkah for the sake of performing either *hajj* or *'umrah* as a lesser pilgrimage - or simply being associated with the city in any way - implies one's and mankind's progression towards Allah. It is

a symbolic demonstration of the philosophy of creation at large and that of mankind specifically. Moreover, it is a simultaneous show of many things; it is a “show of creation”, a “show of history”, a “show of unity”, a “show of Islamic ideology” and a “show of every positivity of the Muslim ummah”. The pilgrimage is a progression towards self-actualization. Such is a goal, whereas Makkah, both as an idea and experience, is an incentive, locus and facility.

Makkah always had it all. Even in times of crises, nobody could diminish, never mind take away, its divine and otherworldly import as well as beauty. The latter was always there as a sign of Allah’s generosity and providence. It was inspiring, radiating optimism and showing the direction. It never stopped performing as an illuminant and a beacon of hope. Makkah at all times was able to transcend intrigues, catastrophes and vendettas. The latter’s worldliness and temporality were no match for its ontological exclusivity and otherworldliness.

Without a doubt, Makkah was bigger than all empires, states, caliphs, sultans and ideologies that vied for it. It was preordained to rule, not to be ruled. And this, truly, was Makkah’s forte. It concentrated on intellectual (highly advanced and refined) spirituality and spiritual intellectualism. It did not, by any means, appertain to the material development of civilization, nor to the quantifiable and everyday aspects of culture.

The same was the case in the late 19th and early 20th centuries when the Muslim world was crumbling and, in terms of civilizational output, was at its lowest ebb. Makkah and *hajj* provided a sense of relief. They facilitated a form of escapism or a mental diversion from the upsetting aspects of people’s everyday lives. The circumstance likewise spelled a chance to individually and collectively reflect on what was going on and why, and to perhaps regroup for a counter-initiative.

That is why the *hajj* season, apart from being the largest annual convention of faith, is also an annual conference, or meeting, of Muslims, so as to illustrate, reaffirm and as much as possible galvanize the strengths of the Muslim ummah. In retrospect, the Prophet’s farewell *hajj* was one of the most historic and most consequential episodes not only in Muslim history, but also in the history of mankind. It set the highest standards in righteousness, integrity, humanity and civilizational excellence.

It was owing to these truths that Makkah and *hajj* - in their capacities as the symbols of Muslim unity and brotherhood, as the marketers of Muslim often dormant dynamism and power, and as the schools of virtue, perseverance and freedom - attracted the attention of Western Orientalists, explorers and spies. However, Makkah and *hajj* were not to be discovered and studied just like any other Oriental urban environment and like any other religious sacrament. Rather, they were to be meticulously scrutinized, decoded and interpreted. Each and every stage of discovery needed to be allied to an ideological predilection and be set against the backdrop of regional and international geopolitics.

Indeed, Makkah and *hajj* were perennially intrinsic nemeses of all Orientalism, imperialism and colonization axes. They signified their antitheses and their spirit the antidote to the latter's malice. Enduring perpetually off-limits to non-Muslims and to their direct interferences and influences, everything that was transpiring in Makkah and above all during *hajj* was intended to nullify and, if possible, weed out the malice. According to a Western anthropologist, pilgrimage in general, and in association with any religion, carries greater political significance than any other ritual. He further believed that the far-reaching political implications of *hajj* make it the most important pilgrimage of all (Robert, 2004). Hence, the major protagonists in the international politics of the late 19th and early 20th century, such as England, France, the Netherlands and Russia, which at the same time either colonized or directly ruled over certain parts of the Muslim world, scrambled to try to control *hajj* and its participants via numerous laws, governmental positions, institutions and commissions.

As Eileen Kane (2015) wrote in her book "Russian Hajj, Empire and the Pilgrimage to Mecca" concerning the case of Russia: "In this tense post-1905 context of political flux and contestation over religious policy, the *hajj* posed a particular challenge to Stolypin (Russia's minister of internal affairs who had appointed a *hajj* director for the empire). To ignore it was out of the question. The disorders of the 1907-8 *hajj* season, and the fears they stoked within the regime about sanitary and political threats to the empire, had made the need to organize the *hajj* more urgent than ever. At the same time, as Stolypin saw it, organization offered a chance for Russia to ingratiate itself with its twenty-million-strong Muslim population, to demonstrate its policy of religious toleration and support for Islam and to win Muslim loyalties

at a critical moment. Political revolutions in 1908 in both the Ottoman Empire and Persia had only deepened tsarist officials' concerns about Muslim loyalties."

The similar thing Richard Francis Burton, an Englishman, had in mind when he said that during his time - almost the end of the 19th century - there were no fewer than fifteen hundred Indians permanently in Makkah and Jeddah, besides seven or eight hundred in Yemen. He declared that such a multitude - plus the regular influx of thousands of pilgrims from the British Raj - required a British Consul in Jeddah, in line with what other superpowers were doing. People needed assistance and guidance. Burton (1893) believed that by the representation of a Vice-Consul, when other powers had sent an officer of superior rank to the Hijaz, they (the English) voluntarily placed themselves in an inferior position.

Richard Francis Burton said this because of the British attitude towards *hajj* at the end of the 19th century, which was rather slack. Wilfrid Scawen Blunt (1882) wrote in 1881 in his book "The Future of Islam" that the English government neither controlled nor encouraged the Indian *hajj*. It was yet showing a rather culpable negligence as to the interests of British subjects on pilgrimage.

Whereas the French government in Algeria, at the same time, was doing the opposite. Wilfrid Scawen Blunt (1882) concluded that during the era in question the portion of the pilgrims from Algeria sent annually to Makkah was the smallest of all the countries from the Muslim West. That was due mainly to hindrances raised by the French government whose policy was to isolate that particular province from the rest of the Muslim world. Every Algerian pilgrim was called upon to produce the sum of 1000 francs before he was permitted to embark for Jeddah, and he was subjected to various other needless formalities.

Hurgronje and the limelight of Makkah

As far as Hurgronje was concerned, he shared a similar outlook about Makkah. In his mind - as well - the city and its *hajj* ceremony were posing a threat to the Dutch colonial aspirations. He espoused that the Makkan fanatical religious sentiment and its medieval educational and acculturational systems were strengthening and promoting pan-Islamic

tendencies. One can only imagine how distraught Hurgronje was when ordered to leave Makkah before being able to perform *hajj* himself and before witnessing on the ground and empirically verifying much of what he was expounding. When all is said and done, his mission in Makkah was anticlimactic. In a sense, it was not fully accomplished.

Hurgronje (1916) believed that Makkah, more than any other Islamic religious and intellectual centre, resisted efforts to liberate Islam from the chains of the authority of the past ages. The faithful cultivators of mediaeval Islamic sciences preferred to live in Makkah, free from Western influence and control. Even the predilection of foreign students of law and theology was turning more and more towards Makkah. The more modernized other centres became, the more conservative and alienated Makkah came to be.

How immoderate Hurgronje's viewpoints have been is demonstrated in this example. In the context of his discourse about the origin of Islam, he first said that a vigorous combating of the prevalent fictions concerning Islam in the West would have been impossible. Such were their quantity and entrenchment. Doing so would have exposed a scholar to a similar treatment as that which, during Hurgronje's era, would have befallen any Englishman who maintained the cause of the Boers (the Dutch and Huguenot population that settled in southern Africa in the late 17th century). Hurgronje (1916) then went on and said that such a scholar, due to his extreme and unacceptable views, "would have been as much of an outcast as a modern inhabitant of Mecca who tried to convince his compatriots of the virtues of European policy and social order."

In other words, Hurgronje believed that so divergent, at all ideological and operational levels, the essence of Makkah and the essence of European values and European civilizational trajectory have been that any kind - as well as degree - of compatibility between them was impossible. Any such attempt was destined to be held as anomalous and aberrant, and to end in failure. Its protagonists, in equal measure, were destined to be presumed outcasts and national pariahs. All this boded ill for potential modernists and their modernization agendas either within the Muslim or Western colonizers' circles. The treatment of a modernist scholar in Makkah would have been akin to the treatment of an antediluvian and perverse scholar in Europe.

Hurgronje further opined - in all likelihood with the aim of sowing an extra doubt in the minds and hearts of Muslims and to pave the way for propagating the philosophies of nationalism, westernization and modernity - that originally *hajj* was an Arabian affair. Prophet Muhammad adopted it as such, but later made a concession and changed it into an international affair. What happened thereafter was unexpected. Hurgronje (1916) wrote that "Mohammed never could have foreseen that the consequence of his concession to deeply rooted Arabic custom would be that in future centuries Chinese, Malays, Indians, Tatars, Turks, Egyptians, Berbers and negroes would meet on this barren desert soil and carry home profound impressions of the international significance of Islam."

Still more astonishing was the verity that many people from all those countries were keen to settle in Makkah for years to devote themselves to the study of the sacred science. The mentality of those people was such that they learned those things not for curiosity, but in order to acquire the only true direction for their lives in this world and the salvation of their souls in the world to come. All that despite the fact that everything about the life in Makkah and its educational system was medieval and regressive. It was reminiscent of the spirit of the Middle Ages and was anti-civilization. Whatever positive was inherent in it was either negligible or latent.

Hurgronje presented a vivid picture of the medieval and backward state of education in Makkah, which was behind a primitive mentality and culture. He said that the most important lectures inside the mosque (*al-masjid al-haram*) were delivered during the forenoon and in the evening. A walk, at one of those hours, through the mosque's courtyard and under its colonnades, with ears opened to all sides, would enable anyone to get a general idea of the objects of mental exercise of the Muslim international assembly. There, one could find a sheikh of pure Arab descent explaining to his audience, composed of white Syrians or Circassians, of brown and yellow Abyssinians and Egyptians, of Negroes, Chinese and Malays, the probable and improbable legal consequences of marriage contracts, not excepting those between men and the *jinn* (genies). There, a Negro scholar was explaining the ontological evidence of the existence of a Creator and the logical necessity of His having twenty qualities, inseparable from, but not identical with, His essence. In the midst of another circle a learned mufti of indeterminably

mixed extraction demonstrated to his pupils from the standard work of al-Ghazali the absolute vanity of law and doctrine to those whose hearts were not purified from every attachment to the world. Most of the branches of Islamic (Mohammedan) learning were represented within the walls of the holy mosque (which Hurgronje, like the rest of Orientalists, called “the temple”) by more or less famous scholars. And still there were a great number of private lectures delivered at home by professors who did not like to be disturbed by the unavoidable noise in the mosque, which during the whole day additionally served as a meeting place for friends or business men, as an exercise hall for Qur’an reciters, and even as a passage for people going from one part of the town to the other (Hurgronje, 1916).

Hurgronje then proceeded to round off the picture of Makkah’s total backwardness - just because it defied modernization and change - which was so profound and powerful that, in the eyes of its population, the modern world, with all its problems, its emotions, its learning and science, hardly existed. Hurgronje (1916) said: “In order to complete your mediaeval dream with a scene from daily life, you have only to leave the mosque by the Bab Dereybah, one of its twenty-two gates, where you may see human merchandise exhibited for sale by the slave brokers, and then to have a glance, outside the wall, at a camel caravan, bringing firewood and vegetables into the town, led by Bedouins whose outward appearance has as little changed as their minds since the day when Mohammed began here to preach the Word of Allah.”

Having been ostensibly fair and willing to present the other side of the coin, Hurgronje also said that the same was true insofar as the greater part of the world represented by Makkah’s international exhibition of Islam was concerned. Revealing that the overall attitude was mutual, he next reminded that the Western world did not fare better either. The average modern man, he recalled, did not understand much more of the mental life of the two hundred millions to whom the barren Makkah - not only geologically, but also culturally and intellectually speaking - had become the great centre (Hurgronje, 1916).

Makkah versus Cairo

As a small digression, Cairo represented the other current of thought that was predominant in the Muslim world. The two: Makkah and Cairo, were geographically not far distant from each other, but were situated at the opposite poles of spiritual and intellectual life. In the judgment of Hurgronje (1916), “for centuries Cairo has stood unrivalled as a seat of Mohammedan learning of every kind; and even now the Haram of Mecca is not to be compared to the Azhar Mosque as regards the number and the fame of its professors and the variety of branches cultivated. In the last half-century (that is, the second half of the 19th century), however, the ancient repute of the Egyptian metropolis has suffered a good deal from the enormous increase of European influence in the land of the Pharaohs; the effects of which have made themselves felt even in the Azhar. Modern programs and methods of instruction have been adopted; and, what is still worse, modernism itself, favoured by the late Mufti Muhammed Abduh (d. 1905), has made its entrance into the sacred lecture-halls.”

Many reformist scholars in Cairo have sought to liberate and modernize the Islamic thought on the basis of independent interpretation of the Qur’an. The efforts stood in contradistinction to “the way of the Wahhabi reformers, who tried a century before to restore the institutions of Mohammed’s time in their original purity, but on the contrary with the object of adapting Islam by all means in their power to the requirements of modern life” (Hurgronje, 1916).

The feature was a segment of the legacy of Muhammad Ali (d. 1849), the Ottoman governor and the de facto ruler of Egypt (1805-1848). He was reputed as the founder of modern Egypt. He sought to modernize the country along the Western lines in the spheres of military, economy, culture and education. It stands to reason that it was as much symbolism as coincidence that Muhammad Ali fought and defeated the Wahhabis in a war of attrition from 1811 to 1818. While it would be a farfetched assumption to claim that the war denoted a clash between the material and immaterial forces of modernism and those of traditionalism, the same to a degree was the case - even though sheer politics and power struggle had a full bearing on the conflict.

Though moderately represented and having made some significant strides, modernization in Cairo was still very slow and insipid. It was

rather a crusade of individuals -or small groups at most - and was yet to be fully institutionalized. It stood for a tug of war especially in the spheres of institutions, policy making, administration and implementation. New modern institutions of learning were established, as the most conspicuous consequence, sidestepping the reputation and physical presence of the Azhar which was rapidly losing its appeal in the minds of both traditionalists and modernists. A troop of modernist scholars and modernist political leaders were in charge of the project. Yet, inside the Azhar itself, there were clear and wide rifts between reformists and traditionalists. The former followed the philosophy and example of Muhammad Abduh and the latter, having constituted the majority of the professors and students, have simply been labelled as the opponents of modernity.

Thus, despite myriads of obstacles, Cairo, in a way, was becoming a direction and centre of Islamic reformation and modernity, whereas Makkah was moving in an opposite direction. Both adopted some form of unyielding disposition, with each side carving out its independent path and self-rule, and minding its own business. There was little in the real world that was common to them and that could bring them closer to each other. As if the two ambits and trends were drifting apart day after day. Constantly, they were at once criticised and extolled by their respective enthusiasts and critics.

To illustrate the point, Hurgronje cited the example of a book that had been published in Cairo in 1911, and which contained “a description of the present Khedive’s pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina”. The book was titled “*al-Rihlah al-Hijaziyyah*” (*The Journey or Expedition in the Hijaz*) and was written by Muhammad Labib al-Batanuni. What was characteristic about the book was its modern approach, style and methodology. As Hurgronje put it, the book was “one of the numerous interesting specimens of the mental development effected in Egypt in the last years.” Its author evidently possessed “a good deal of the scholastic learning to be gathered in the Azhar and no European erudition in the stricter sense of the word.” (Hurgronje, 1916).

The topics of the book have been treated “almost as fully and accurately as we could desire from the hand of the most accomplished European scholar.” Notwithstanding that the author was inquisitive, articulate and innovative in his ways of dealing with various religious,

social and political issues, he did not disturb “the mind of the pious reader by any historical criticism of the traditions connected with the House of Allah, the Black Stone, and the other sanctuaries, but he loses no opportunity to show his dislike of all superstition; sometimes, as if to prevent Western readers from indulging in mockery, he compares Meccan rites or customs with superstitious practices current amongst Jews or Christians of today” (Hurgronje, 1916).

Hurgronje concluded that, although the mentioned book had been adopted by the Egyptian Department of Public Instruction as a reading book for the schools, in Makkah, on the contrary, a scholar of the old style would have shaken his head at the novel style and the atypically presented contents of the book and would have exclaimed: “We seek refuge near Allah from Satan, the cursed!” (Hurgronje, 1916).

Conclusion

Hurgronje was one of the most prominent and most influential Orientalists. He was an international intellectual celebrity. He lived and worked at the time when Islamic civilization was exposed to the unprecedented challenges of modernity and the Muslim world was undergoing the most difficult - and painful - changes, yet. Within the uncharted territories of modernity, both as a philosophy and a concrete civilizational reality, Islam-West (Orient-Occident) relations were developing on rather unfair terms against the backdrop of the growing Western appetite for colonization and imperialism.

Hurgronje was an active participant in the events. Apart from being a leading scholar of Islam and the Muslim world - from the Orientalist point of view - he was also an advisor to the Dutch government for its colonization project in the Dutch East Indies. Scores of Dutch undertakings and policies came about primarily due to Hurgronje’s involvements and counsels. His main contributions revolved around explaining and confronting the cardinal Islamic principles of Muslim unity and brotherhood (known in the 19th and 20th centuries in global intellectual together with political circles as pan-Islamism), *jihad* or holy war (as part of a total meritorious struggle for the sake of God) as a stimulus for anticolonialism, the origins and evolution of the Islamic religious and political thought, and the interpretation of Islam

as a source of political identity and action in contemporary contexts (paving thereby the way for what later came to be known in the West as political Islam). The focal point of the implementation of Hurgronje's ideas and programs were the East-Indian Archipelago with the Jawah groups in general and the Acehnese in particular, and the holy city of Makkah as the spiritual and emotional centre of all Muslims and the home of the thriving Jawah community (colony).

Some of the most noteworthy deductions of Hurgronje were those to the effect that the idea of pan-Islamism was initiated by Muslim political leaders concentrated in Constantinople (Istanbul) so as to seek solace in its potential intrigues for many a political and religious failure; that pan-Islamism could not work with any program except with the worn-out and flagrantly impracticable program of world-conquest by Islam, which however had lost its hold on all sensible adherents of Islam; that although pan-Islamism was not organized, nonetheless in Muslim countries under European rule - including Indonesian territories under the Dutch - it often would oppose the normal development of a mutually desirable relation between the governing and the governed; that the pan-Islamic idea had penetrated into the East-Indian Archipelago but it found little favourable ground, thus making Makkah, in its capacity as the locus of the religious and intellectual dimensions of pan-Islamism, and the blooming Jawah community in it, the heart of and the source of the biggest dangers to the religious life of the Archipelago; that history had entrusted the native population of Indonesia to the civilizational care of the Dutch, thus legitimizing colonization; and that the waning notions of caliphate, *jihad*, Islamic conquests and Muslim universal unity were medieval iniquities and the anachronistic forms of Muslim fanaticism, which were proving powerless in the face of the dynamic and prolific processes of westernization, civilization and modernization.

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