

CURRENT TOPICS

Dr. Christiaan Snouck-Hurgronje

Dr. Christiaan Snouck-Hurgronje, Emeritus Professor at Leyden University and known internationally as an Orientalist and Islamic scholar, died on June 29th at the age of seventy-nine. For more than half a century he was an acknowledged authority in his special field of Islamics. At the age of twenty-three he wrote his doctor's thesis for Leyden University, "Het Mekkaansche Feest". It dealt with the pilgrimage to Mecca and the pre-islamic origin of its ritual and ceremonies, in such scholarly fashion that his conclusions have never been overthrown and scarcely even modified. He was appointed instructor at Leyden in 1886, after a visit to Mecca, 1884-85. From 1889 to 1906 he became Advisor to the Dutch Colonial Government for Arabian affairs and in 1891-92 was sent to Koeta Radja, Sumatra, to study the Atjeh uprising. In 1906 he returned to the Netherlands and the following year became Professor of Arabic at the University where he himself received his education. He continued his work there and held the office of Advisor to the Colonial Government although called to be Professor of Arabic at Cambridge University in 1896 and to the Egyptian University, Cairo in 1911. In 1914 he gave a course of lectures at Columbia University and elsewhere in America.

His chief literary works were: *De Atjehers* in two volumes (translated into English, *The Achenese*, 1906); *Mekka*, two volumes in German with a large photographic atlas, (the second volume translated into English); *Het Gajo land*; *Lectures on Mohammedanism*, N. Y. 1914; *De Heilige Oorlog "made in Germany"*, 1915, (translated into English); and six large volumes of *Verspreide Geschriften*, 1923+, containing a series of invaluable contributions on many phases of Islam in its social and political life.

Many of the leading Orientalists of the Netherlands and a few outstanding missionaries in the Dutch East Indies owe their initiative and enthusiasm for Islamic study to Dr. Hurgronje, whose lecture-room became the Mecca of such devotees. He was a constant reader of our Quarterly and in 1915 contributed an article on *Islam and the Phonograph*. His portrait, with that of five other living leaders in the world of thought on Islam, appeared as frontispiece in Volume III of *THE MOSLEM WORLD*. Of the six, Nöldeke, Hartmann, Goldziher, Becker and now Hurgronje, have finished their earthly task. The tragedy of our loss is that there are too few hands stretched out to take up these torches and hold them aloft worthily.

S. M. Z.

The Situation in Palestine

Dr. W. M. Christie of Haifa, writing in the *British Weekly* (May 28, 1936) on the racial problem and its solution, presents both sides of the conflict between Arab and Jew and points out some of the difficult issues at stake:

There is an external as well as an internal cause for the unrest. Facts are sometimes difficult "to prove", but when one moves about among the people, knowing their speech, and understanding their mentality, much may be "known". And since the close of the war, on every occasion when disturbances have taken place, we have actually known that there was alien intervention, sometimes directed toward the Jew and sometimes to the Arab. During the past year not Arabs only have been dealt with, but likewise, though more secretly, the Revisionist Jews. Were Jews and Arabs left to themselves and required to deal directly with the Government there would be comparative peace.

The Jew has no cause for complaint regarding the infringement of the Declaration. If anything, the British Government has been too much his servant in carrying it through. His illegal immigrants, too, have been perhaps too often treated with over-gentle consideration. But the Christian world has reason to raise its voice. We know of no effort that has been made to preserve certain and intact our Gospel sites. Unbelieving Jews would fain blot them out. Bethany beyond Jordan has been removed so as to confuse geography; Magdala has had its name altered in form and is removed to a distance, leaving only on the original ground two houses concealed behind trees. And the Sea of Galilee, in its desecration, appeals to every Christian soul. Sites recovered by Protestants through reading the gospels on the shore at its normal height have been accepted by Roman Catholics without question, and against their own traditions. We do not know what the Sacred Sea may yet have to reveal to us of light on our Holy Book. And in connection with that sea the Arabs, especially the poor, are being badly treated. When the water is at its low level the peasants have to lead their cattle over 200 yards of burning stones, and women, jar on head, have to tread the same painful path to draw water for household purposes. And Jewish business men think that all can be paid for by a money payment or a virtual bribe.

English papers in Palestine, the only ones equally accessible to Jew and Arab, and those which have the chief influence on European thought in the country, ought to express themselves more moderately. Every Jew is not a saint, nor every Arab a rowdy and a hooligan. Yet this English Jewish Press would lead one to these, and to no other, conclusions. We have been actually consulted as to the necessity and advisability of an independent "anti-Semitic" newspaper in Palestine, but have till the present deprecated this idea.

The Arabs must be conciliated. Mediterranean ports will put them more and more under the power of the Jew, and they fear this. They are jealous, too, over Transjordan, which has been Arab since before the Christian era. Aretas (2 Cor. xv. 32) ruled there over the Beni-Ghassân. Now we learn from Old Testament Scripture the value of Elath and Eziongeber as ports to both Israel

and Syria. They are represented today by Akaba and Taba, both on the well-known eastern branch of the Red Sea, and there is deep water close in shore. If Transjordanian could have got one of these as a port, leaving the other to Palestine and Egypt, the whole southern hemisphere could be tapped without the expenditure entailed in the heavy dues levied for passage through the Suez Canal. Transjordanian, too, would get a great deal of the "carrying trade" by rail and by camel, and the delayed development of Transjordanian would be rendered certain. We have discussed this scheme with the Amir Abdulla, with his brother the late ex-King Ali, and with the Sultan of Kuwait, and all were impressed with its necessity and fairness.

The Christian world must be conciliated. This must begin with the restoration of the Sea of Galilee, and with guarantees that it will remain intact and inviolable in future. Being so far away and so unknown to most Christians, they do not know what they are losing by the desecration and practical destruction of their most precious asset in the Holy Land. All that we want is that it be left to the Christian world as intact and as inviolate as the Wailing Wall has been left to the Jew. Equality of treatment is the spirit of the Balfour Declaration, and here its practical working has come sadly short. If it be abandoned as it is, in the interests of dividends on the one hand, or in the hope of a bribe or a title on the other, every future writer and commentator on the Gospels will feel compelled to denounce the guilty parties, and their name shall rot.

We have not heard of a single Jew who has made appeal for Christian rights and consideration in the Sacred Sea, and, so long as it remains desecrated, the Jew has no occasion to complain of his being persecuted. We have here a worse violation of the Treaty documents than in Hitler's occupation of Rhineland, a more provocative act than all the incidents that led to the Crusades.

The Meetings at al-'Akaba

Gertrude Mélamède contributes a most interesting article to *Le Monde Oriental*, a review published by Upsala University, on an episode in the life of Mohammed which has often perplexed students of Islam. The article appears in Volume 28: pp. 17-58. We share with our readers the summary of her conclusions:

"This is an attempt to explain an episode in the life of Muhammed which has been surrounded by the mystic light of legend. It deals with the assemblies at al-'Akaba.

"It was at al-'Akaba that Muhammed took the decisive step to break with his fellow-men in Mecca, and instead, to join a number of Medina's inhabitants, who received him with welcome. The reports concerning how this event happened are numerous and the different authors' relations do not agree.

"We find in the collections of traditions and in the biographers' works very rich and varied material for these secret meetings. In the Koran, on the contrary, we look in vain for any report of these significant events, which form the beginning of the history of Islam. How is it then possible that a convocation of such great importance for the doctrines of Islam is not even mentioned in the Koran? . . .

"As a matter of fact, we have come to the conclusion, after having analysed the first meetings at al-'Akaba, that the two first meetings probably never existed. The various descriptions—with different writers—of 'Akaba II incline us to the opinion that it is only 'Urwa's story which has a historical background. I would like to change the supposition of Sprenger, who said that the prelude to the 'Akaba meetings and 'Akaba I are two variants of the same story. I would instead suggest that the prelude to the 'Akaba meetings, 'Akaba I, and even 'Akaba II are all three different variants of one story. We should consequently admit the existence of only one meeting

"The legend about 'Akaba I was most likely told in order to show that Muhammed as well as Moses and Jesus prescribed these old and traditional laws. In the meeting that 'Urwa describes, and which we technically call 'Akaba II, the number of the faithful has grown to 70 or more. One ought to be sceptical regarding numbers in the early Arabic works, in the same way as concerning chronological matters. 70 and 72 are often used by the Arabs simply meaning a round number.

"I will try to explain the reason why the other historians who have taken 'Urwa's description as a kernel, have added hereto stories completely different from his. The authors had probably in this case also a tendentious purpose in their narratives. They wanted, namely, to represent Muhammed irradiated by prophetic inspiration. They consequently compared Muhammed with Jesus, and they gathered their stories from the accounts of the life of Jesus and transferred them to Muhammed. If we study the story about Jesus as it is related in the Bible by Luke, Chapter 10, we find several features reminding us of the legends about Muhammed.

"If now the Bible or an apocryphal work has been imitated in the tales about the second 'Akaba meeting, then suitable episodes and new legends, which are appropriate to Muhammed and his times, were inserted in these narratives. The result which we have reached in examining 'Akaba II, is that one meeting took place at al-'Akaba. The adherents of Muhammed assured Muhammed on this occasion that they would protect and defend him as if he were one of their own relatives."

All the rest of the story is evidently without any historical basis. The whole article is carefully documented, especially as we have the Papyrus Schott Reinhardt (Heidelberg, 1906) fully translated and with a facsimile page.

The Sword of Mohammed

The new edition of Sir T. W. Arnold's "Preaching of Islam" should call attention once more to the one-sided character of the evidence there given of the spread of Islam. Leonce de Grandmaison, S.J., in his monumental study, "Jesus Christ" (three volumes, London, 1934) contrasts the methods of our Lord with those of the Arabian Prophet:

"Whatever Mohammed's views were in the first period of his career, it is certain (according to Goldziher, the work of Caetani has established the fact once and for all) that in the final and

decisive period of his life the Prophet thought of the establishment of the Kingdom of God in political and military terms. 'He reached the conception of a kingdom *of this world*; its character had fatal consequences, rendered inevitable by the political changes in Arabia following the success of his preaching, and by his own dominating activity. He carried his sword through the world it was not merely by the breath of his lips that he slew the wicked: sounding the trumpet of war, brandishing his bloody sword—thus did he establish his kingdom. A Mohammedan tradition which accords well with his career makes him bear in the Thora the title "prophet of bloodshed and war" and it was this material and terrestrial warfare that he bequeathed to his successors. He had no special love for peace. "Ye believers, obey Allah and obey his Envoy do not slacken, do not invite (the infidel) to peace, so long as you have the upper hand". *Koran*, sura. xlvii:35, 37; cf. ii:245; iv:97, 98; ix:5, etc., Goldziher, *Le Dogme et la Loi d'Islam*, pp. 20,21."

In the Desert a Highway

Mr. S. Arthur of the North Africa Mission tells of the imposing milestones in Algeria and the progress of road-building. The picture of one of these signs of the new day is interpreted as follows:

"For the sake of those who are not used to thinking in kilometres let us put the figures into plain English:—

Tamanrasset	1,440 miles
Zinder	2,410 miles
Lake Chad	2,720 miles

"Pursuing its policy of building roads, providing water and opening schools for the natives of the Barbary States, the French Government is really excelling in the first part of its programme. In some places these wonderful new desert highways cross mountains, skirt patches of ever-shifting sand, and traverse long distances through regions destitute of water. But in spite of all these hardships and even the risk of meeting marauders, there is a constant stream of tourist traffic along these desert routes, some sections of which are only indicated by a line of empty petrol drums.

"'In the desert a highway for our God' is happily true for Gospel messengers also, especially such as are concerned in the distribution of the Scriptures, who are already moving along these desert marches; and will probably do so in an ever-increasing measure as the roads are improved and extended."

Progress in Morocco

Those who are interested in the spread of the Gospel in North Africa will be thankful to hear that a very remarkable Conference has recently been held at Meknes, in Morocco, at which there were larger numbers of Christian Arabs and Berbers attending than on any previous occasion. Many of these (including a woman) bore witness at the testimony meeting to the saving and keeping power of the Lord Jesus; and at a later gathering, representing nine

nationalities, at which thirty-two out of the seventy-five persons present were natives (mostly believers), a baptismal service was held, followed by the Lord's Supper. One of the missionaries writes, "I cannot tell you the thrill and the joy it was to receive the bread and the wine at the hands of native brethren, who, only a few years ago, were followers of Mohammed, but now are one with us in Christ Jesus."—We rejoice with all who (whether working in connection with missionary societies or independently) have been instrumental in leading these brethren and sisters into the knowledge of Christ.

Arabic Journalism

The American University of Beirut has published a Bibliography of the Near Eastern Mandates. In this volume, Viscomte Philippe Tarazi has listed all Arabic newspapers and magazines which have been published from December 6, 1800, when *Al-Tanbih* (The Awakening) appeared in Alexandria under the auspices of the French Army of Occupation, to 1929, not only in Arabic-speaking countries, but also in Europe, the Americas, and Australasia. The names of the founders and the dates of first publication have been included with great accuracy, the only addition which it seems possible to contribute being that *Lisan al 'Arab* made its first appearance in Baghdad, following its transference from Damascus, on June 23, 1921. Viscomte Tarazi has also included a number of tables which, as he rightly observes, should "reveal many things pertaining to Arabic journalism, unknown to journalists, historians, writers, and Orientalists."

It is shown, for instance, that from the standpoint of numbers, Egypt, with a total of 1,398 Arabic periodicals, heads the list, but that from the standpoint of population the Lebanon has had one journal to every 2,000 of its inhabitants, whereas the average in Egypt is about one to every 10,000, and in certain other Arab countries about one to 600,000. It is also revealed that many centres far from Arabia, as New York with 52 periodicals, San Paulo with 49, and Buenos Aires with 39, have had more Arabic publications than many important cities in Arabic-speaking countries, as Jerusalem, Tripoli, Tanta, Jaffa, Algiers, and Basra. Explanation of this phenomenon, it may be suggested, is to be found not only in the extensive migrations of Syrians to the New World, but also in the growth of Arab Nationalism, which, repressed by the Turks, found expression in the Arabic Press abroad and was imported into the Ottoman Empire through the foreign post offices.

The growth of Arab Nationalism also seems to be the primary factor behind the 850 per cent. increase in Arabic journals in Syria and Palestine from 1904 to 1914 over the previous ten years (1894-1904), although the frequent suppression of newspapers by the Government authorities and the subsequent resumption of publication under another name undoubtedly swelled the list of publications.

The Bible Depot at Tunis

Here is an interesting account of the work of the North African Mission by R. S. Miles from their monthly magazine:

"The sign over the doorway reads: 'Dépôt Biblique; North Africa Mission', and personally, I possess a real love for this shop, as from its threshold I first made my missionary bow to Islam. I spent seventeen months in all under the guidance of the late Mr. A. V. Liley, and it was that big little man—quite as well-known as the shop itself—who opened it in 1911. He chose the position well, for it is splendidly situated in 'The Street of the New Door'. Since then it has called me back for certain periods of supply work, and now we are settled in Tunis, where much time is given to Gospel witness in this very same dépôt.

"A Bible shop does not justify its existence on every station. When opened in a place that is comparatively small, boycott may soon be experienced.

"But having seen most N.A.M. stations I consider Tunis dépôt to be unique in its everyday utility. Fresh faces are seen each week, which means, at least, tracts will be taken away to inland villages. During one quarter, representatives of no fewer than eleven different nationalities gave us a call. Its primary object is missionary witness, yet the amount taken for sales of books last year was very satisfactory. The window, freshly dressed each week, has for twenty-four years indeed been a light shining brightly in a dark place.

"For the student of psychology the place is ideal. The unkempt, plaintive beggar is often pushed aside by the entrance of the well-to-do merchant or landowner. A passing Jewish hawker, seeing an Arab inside, will be glad to add his quota to the conversation. Frequently a group listening to the Gospel message will show a merry negro sitting next to a green-turbaned *khalifa*, whose face is stamped with set fanaticism. The bearded countryman, dressed in pure native fashion, will visit us in company with his up-to-date son, versed in modern thought. The silent type, with features destitute of all expression, will be seen near to the man whose delight it is to multiply words without knowledge, and who calls aloud for all to witness to Mohammed. These, and many others, all become acquainted with our Bible shop."

Islam and the Harijans of India

We find the following appeal in *The Light*, of Lahore, to win the depressed millions to the fold of Islam:

"Maulana Mohammad Ali's touching appeal for systematic work among the depressed classes will speak to every true Muslim's heart. The declaration of Dr. Ambedkar and the most interesting view of the Thiaya leader, Mr. K. Sukumara, B.A., will free the Muslims from the accusation of interfering in the internal affairs of the sister communities, since these leaders have openly declared that it is necessary for depressed classes to go in search for some new religion.

"I therefore think that every Muslim, man or woman, who can in some way or other contribute to the upliftment of the depressed classes should do his or her very best to further this end. Having been concerned with the problems of Muslim mission for

years and having accumulated some experience whilst observing the Roman Catholic schools for missionaries, I think I can help in giving my opinion on this subject.

"1. The aim and object of the Muslim mission is to help others. The Muslim mission is not out to win such and such a number of souls, but simply to serve the spiritual, educational, hygienic and economic conditions of those to whom she wants to bring the light of Islam and the light of science.

"2. Every hostile attitude of mind, intellect, word or action against the sister-community of our Hindu brethren and their holy prophets or teachers must therefore be absolutely prohibited for every Muslim, whether he has been brought up in Islam, or converted to the same. Religious education should be given only to individuals or communities, who clearly have declared that they intend to adopt some new religion. If Muslim missionaries merely preach Islam to those who are at any rate determined to leave Hinduism and otherwise would embrace some non-Indian religion, chiefly residing in Europe, America or Japan they could scarcely be looked upon with reproach.

"3. As it is our first principle to help the newly converted individuals, Muslims must not only refrain from action which might lead to ill-feelings between Hindus and the converted or non-converted depressed class people, they must also prove that the converts from depressed classes, contrary to the custom in the Christian communities, are free to intermingle and intermarry with all the other classes and groups of Mussalmans. If this is honestly done the effect will prove healthy not only to the Mussalmans themselves but to all humanity, because the good example of Islam will be imitated by Hindu reformers and native Christians, thus raising the whole of the depressed class community, thanks to the healthy example of Islam.

"A further consequence of the Islamic principle must be, that Muslim missionaries do not confine their helpful activities to mere influence by spoken and written word, but rather help their depressed brothers and sisters with actions. It will therefore be necessary to train specialists for medical, educational and economic uplift. Every newly built Mosque should have attached to it a modern dispensary, if not a small hospital, a modern primary school for boys and girls and a small office which has the duty to impart to the converts better methods of agriculture and practicable suggestions for saving money and escaping money-lenders.

"4. The forcing of converted peoples into foreign and outward customs, usages or superstitions must be honestly avoided. Such customs as special dress, special social organization or national language might be regarded as '*packa Mussalmani*' by the Muslim missionaries. But they should be very careful not to allow the propagation of Islam to become a pretence for provincial or national egotism. Thus they would badly serve the holy cause of Islam. It is only the *pure unchanged idea of Islam* which they rightly may bring to the converts. And they must always remember that the soul of Islam lies *not* in this or that form of dress, in this or that type of social organization and not in this or that language. This principle was very wisely applied by Muslim missionaries in the West."

Thirteen Attempts at a Complete Translation of the Koran into English

I. *Nine Completed*

- 1648, Alexander Ross. A translation, not from the original Arabic, but from the translation into French by Sieur du Ryer.
- 1734, George Sale. Reprinted many times subsequently.
- 1861, J. M. Rodwell. Reprinted several times subsequently.
- 1880, E. H. Palmer. in "Sacred Books of the East Series", volumes 6 and 9. The two volumes bound together in American Edition volume 6, also by Oxford University Press. Entirely re-set, to be volume 328 in "The World's Classics" Series.

The four foregoing translations all by non-Moslems.

The following five translations all by Moslems.

- 1905, Muhammad Abdul-Hakim Khan. (Patiala, India.)
- 1911, Mirza Abul-Fadl, 2 vols. (Allahabad, India.)
- 1917, Muhammad Ali, 2nd edition, 1920; entirely re-set without the Arabic text, (1928).
- 1930, Marmaduke Pickthall. (A Britisher, converted to Islam.)
- 1931, Al-Haj Hafiz Ghulam Sarwar. (Singapore, and Woking.)

II. *Four Partial Translations into English (incompleted)*

- 1915, under the auspices of the Qadian Movement. First fascicule only, extends only to include a few portions of the Koran. Contains Arabic text, transliteration, translation commentary and sub-commentary.
- 1931, A. F. Badshah Husain. Lucknow. "According to Shia Traditions and Principles". Contains only the first two Surahs.
- 1935, S. N. A. Jafri, "with Arabic text and Explanatory Notes". Simla, Friends' Quran Society. First fascicule only. Item from the Library of Congress. No indication of the number of pages, or the extent of the Koran covered.
- 1935, Albania Abdullah Yusub Ali, Lahore. First of 30 fascicules to be published.

Three Attempts at Translating Selections Directly from Arabic

- 1843, E. W. Lane. A revised edition, with introduction by Stanley Lanepoole.
- 1882, Sir William Muir. Item from the Library of Congress.
- 1922, Abdulla Allahdin. Ahmadia Press, Secunderabad, India.

New York City

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