

RESEARCH ARTICLE

## Entanglements in the colony: Jewish–Muslim connected histories in colonial India

Razak Khan 

Centre for Modern Indian Studies, Georg-August-University Göttingen, Göttingen, Germany

Email: [razak.khan@cemis.uni-goettingen.de](mailto:razak.khan@cemis.uni-goettingen.de)

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### Abstract

This article examines often ignored ‘minority entanglements’ forged between European Jewish and South Asian Muslim intellectuals in Germany and traces their evolution in colonial India. The article focuses on three individual life histories and situates them within the more extensive Jewish-Muslim intellectual dialogue that resonated in the inter-war period. It brings to light the lives and writings of Josef Horovitz (1874–1931), professor of Arabic at the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College, Aligarh, and a prolific contributor to the journal *Islamic Culture* published in Hyderabad; Leopold Weiss alias Muhammad Asad (1900–1992) in Islamia College, Lahore, who also served as the editor of *Islamic Culture*, Hyderabad; and educationist and reform pedagogue Gerda Philipsborn (1895–1943) at the Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi. The intellectual dialogue between minority communities, together with the contribution it made both to modern Islamic studies as a discipline and the forging of a new reform pedagogy, allow us to rethink the Jewish and Muslim question as well as the minority response to it through a comparative perspective. The minor history of European Jewish and South Asian Muslim entanglements makes for a rich testimony to the problems and possibilities of studying minorities as the makers of minor cosmopolitan knowledge.

**Keywords:** Jewish-Muslim encounters; orientalism; education; knowledge; global history

### Introduction

‘There is nothing that is major or revolutionary except the minor.’<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), p. 26.

In their insightful reading of Franz Kafka's German-language writings, Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari call for greater attention to be paid to the creative potential of what they call minor literature. As they elaborate, '[a] minor literature doesn't come from a minor language; it is rather that which a minority constructs within a major language'.<sup>2</sup> In this article, I draw on this conceptualization of minor literature and the productive explorations to which it has led in the field of literary and cultural studies. At the same time, the article moves beyond the realm of literature to turn towards a specific instance of minor history that allows us to explore the historical rearticulation of majoritarian ideas, concepts, and practices by minority communities. Among the key questions it asks is: how do minority intellectuals engage, translate, and adopt majoritarian concepts through minority intellectual thought and politics? To answer this and other related questions, the article studies three German-speaking European Jewish scholars in the twentieth century and charts the journey of these actors and their ideas as they engaged with another 'problematic minority'—Muslims in colonial India. The minor history merits further research in the global intellectual histories of encounters and entanglements to bring minority European Jewish and South Asian Muslim histories together beyond the majoritarian nationalist frame.<sup>3</sup> The three Jewish scholars on which the article focuses were involved in three prominent Muslim educational institutions in colonial India. The first, Josef Horovitz (1874–1931), was professor of Arabic at Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College, Aligarh, and a regular contributor to the journal *Islamic Culture* in Hyderabad; the second, Leopold Weiss alias Muhammad Asad (1900–1992), was connected to Islamia College, Lahore, and was also the editor of *Islamic Culture*, Hyderabad; and lastly, the third, educationist and reform pedagogue Gerda Philipsborn (1895–1943), was affiliated with the Jamia Millia Islamia in Delhi.

We begin our story before the rise of fascism in Europe to trace the intellectual encounter which forged a dialogue and circulation of knowledge between Jewish and Muslim minorities from a longer historical perspective. Some of the old institutional ties were crucial in creating ideas, structures, and connections, which these individuals relied upon and considered while making their choices, and in the affective bonds they developed and the process of translation and transmission of knowledge that continued afterwards. I explore these minor intellectual histories by looking at the institutional relationships between minorities, that is, South Asian Muslim intellectuals and their German-speaking Jewish counterparts in the university context. I will also illuminate the personal relations and friendships that led to their evolution as intellectual interlocutors and the resultant affective knowledge and memory production.<sup>4</sup> This allows us to revisit South Asian Islam and Indian

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Aamir Mufti, *Enlightenment in the Colony: The Jewish Question and the Crisis of Postcolonial Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007). Faisal Devji, *Muslim Zion: Pakistan as a Political Idea* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013).

<sup>4</sup> Razak Khan, 'Minor cosmopolitanisms: institutions, intellectuals and ideas between India and Germany', *Comparative Studies in South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East*, vol. 40, no. 2, 2020, pp. 291–294.

Muslims' important place in European Jewish knowledge production in Islamic studies and secular education. This dialogue has a pre-history in the field of philology, oriental and religious studies, and other domains of knowledge production like psychoanalysis and sexology. If Indian Muslim students went to Germany to explore ideas beyond the British empire, German-speaking European Jewish intellectuals found India to be an incredibly fascinating culture through which to explore the issue of religion, culture, and coexistence outside of Europe. Moving beyond the entanglements within the European metropolis, it is time to think about entanglements in the colony.<sup>5</sup> Two points need to be clarified before such an elaboration.

First, this article uses German-speaking European Jewish intellectuals as part of knowledge formation rather than a national category (Hungarian, Ukrainian, Austrian, Polish, German) to put together the three case studies from diverse backgrounds. This is partly to think along with the language and knowledge networks of German Islamic studies and reform pedagogy (*Islamwissenschaft und Reformpädagogik*) as well as Arabic, Persian, and Urdu, and practices of translation between European and South Asian languages. Second, following Faisal Devji's work, this article studies minority as a political form and as 'the self-critical site from which the majorities, nations and the states that gave them meaning could be questioned'.<sup>6</sup> The analytical focus of this article is not only on the religious categories of Islam and Judaism but also on thinking about Jewish and Muslim as political categories identified by the state and engaged in by subjects as they were forced to deal with the nation-state and empire. It is with this logic that I have included Muhammed Asad, even though he converted from Judaism to Islam and became a practising Muslim. Nevertheless, Asad, just like Horowitz and Philipsborn, was put under surveillance and internment as a German-speaking 'enemy alien' by the colonial state. Asad also reflected on and engaged with political, religious, and personal identities in his own writings, as he appears in the colonial archives at the intersections of East and West, Jews and Muslims. Therefore, I found it compelling to see them as scholars and intellectuals who not only engaged with but also attempted to transcend religious identities in the world of politics of minority identity by building a dialogue across national and religious boundaries. The three of them felt drawn to Islam even before they faced any religious persecution in Europe; they felt welcomed and taken care of by their Muslim friends and were supported during the persecution of their families by fellow Europeans and internments by British colonial officials. The shared affinity of minorities under majoritarian nationalism united them in developing both this

<sup>5</sup> Anil Bhatti and Johannes H. Voigt, *Jewish Exile in India 1933–1945* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1999). Kris Manjappa, *Age of Entanglement: German and Indian Intellectuals across Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014). Panikos Panayi, *The Germans in India: Elite European Migrants in the British Empire* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017).

<sup>6</sup> Faisal Devji, 'Minority as a Political Form'. In *From the Colonial to the Postcolonial: India and Pakistan in Transition*, (eds) Dipesh Chakrabarty, Rochona Majumdar and Andrew Sartori (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 85–95. Faisal Devji, 'A minority of one', *Global Intellectual History*, 2021, pp. 1–7, here p. 6.

understanding and a dialogue, notwithstanding many differences, difficulties, and hierarchies of race, gender, class, and knowledge.

Lastly, moving beyond a focus on a European metropolis like Berlin, Vienna, or London as the site of global entanglements, this article focuses on entanglements in the colony, which allow us to bring British colonialism into this history. British India not only provided opportunities for escape and the promise of a career but also became the site of surveillance, persecution, and internment, especially when it involved Muslim and Jewish connections.<sup>7</sup> The article, therefore, studies Jewish internment in colonial India and the network of support provided by South Asian Muslim friends in minority educational institutions. It also brings to light diverse Jewish personal histories of difference with Zionism and the Jewish homeland project and provides an alternative vision of Jewish-Muslim coexistence. The article, therefore, hopes to connect these histories of minority and its multiple imaginations of coexistence amid conflict.

### Josef Horovitz in Aligarh

German-speaking Jewish orientalist scholars played an important part in the field of modern Arabic and Islamic studies in colonial India and post-colonial Pakistan.<sup>8</sup> Two names are exemplary in this history: Josef Horovitz and Leopold Weiss, who had strong South Asian Muslim institutional and personal connections. Josef Horovitz (1874–1931), the son of the rabbi and historian Marcus Horovitz whose roots were in Hungary, studied at Frankfurt, Marburg, and Berlin universities and also travelled in Egypt, Syria, and Palestine. He was appointed by the government of British India as the professor of Persian and Arabic languages at the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College, Aligarh, while simultaneously serving as the epigraphist for the Government of India for Persian and Arabic inscriptions in place of Dr B. D. Bose in 1907.<sup>9</sup> Sir Syed Ahmed Khan himself was deeply interested in the Hebrew language and took lessons from a Jewish teacher from Calcutta while preparing his commentary on the Quran. His interest in Hebrew was also shared by other Muslim intellectuals, most notably Shibli Numani and Maulana Hamiduddin Farahi.<sup>10</sup> At Aligarh, Horovitz forged intellectual and language exchanges in Arabic and Hebrew with Farahi, a fellow Arabic and Quranic studies scholar who was equally interested in comparative language and theology studies.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>7</sup> S. Manz and Panikos Panayi, *Enemies in the Empire: Civilian Internment in the British Empire during the First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).

<sup>8</sup> Annemarie Schimmel, *German Contributions to the Study of Pakistani Linguistics* (Hamburg: German-Pakistan Forum, 1981).

<sup>9</sup> Foreign Department, Internal B, Progs, February 1908. Nos. 246–247. National Archives of India, Delhi (hereafter NAI).

<sup>10</sup> On Shibli's cosmopolitan travels and connections, including with Farahi, see Gregory Maxwell Bruce, *Turkey, Egypt, and Syria: A Travelogue* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2020).

<sup>11</sup> Ruchama Johnston-Bloom, 'Dieses wirklich westöstlichen Mannes: the German-Jewish orientalist Josef Horovitz in Germany, India, and Palestine'. In *The Muslim Reception of European Orientalism: Reversing the Gaze*, (eds) Susannah Heschel and Umar Ryad (London: Routledge, 2018), pp. 168–183.

Horovitz also connected with visiting Egyptian Arabic scholars like Muhammad Rashid Rida, editor of the influential Arabic periodical *al-Manar* (The Lighthouse) of Cairo,<sup>12</sup> and was also in touch with Abdul Haq, Arabic scholar at Osmania University.<sup>13</sup> Other intellectual contacts included the Kheiri brothers, Abdus Sattar and Jabbar Kheiri, in Berlin, with intellectual and political connections in Aligarh, Beirut, and Istanbul.<sup>14</sup>

A dialogue between Arabic language and modern Islamic studies knowledge production was forged through these intellectual connections. Horovitz worked from 1907–15 at Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College, but the First World War changed his situation suddenly and dramatically.<sup>15</sup> While British officials noted Horovitz's excellent works in Indian epigraphy—he had edited the collection *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica* (1909–12)<sup>16</sup>—they worried about his 'suspicious conduct' and 'alleged enmity' against the British, particularly with the increasing anti-colonial agitation at Aligarh that took place during a period of rising Pan-Islamism Khilafat politics. Things were made difficult for Horovitz at Aligarh, and eventually colonial officials asked him to leave the politically turbulent Muslim academic institution. Fortunately, he had already been offered a position as professor at Frankfurt University, but he fought the allegations of being an enemy ally firmly before leaving British India.<sup>17</sup> His students and colleagues at Aligarh supported him during the difficult time of his internment. It was under the pressure applied by these strong affective bonds that the colonial officials agreed to release him from the Ahmednagar internment camp—they even compensated him for the financial loss he had incurred.

His time in India and even the difficult period spent in internment was a learning experience and left a deep mark on Horovitz. He developed strong

<sup>12</sup> Roy Bar Sadeh, 'Islamic Modernism between Colonialism and Orientalism: Al Manar's Intellectual Circles and Aligarh Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College, 1898–1914'. In *The Muslim Reception of European Orientalism*, (eds) Heschel and Ryad, pp. 103–128.

<sup>13</sup> The letter dated 3 December 1928 by Levi Billig, who was also an Arabic scholar and Horovitz's colleague from the University of Jerusalem, describes scholarly connections and networks during a conference held at the University of Oxford in 1928. Billig and Horovitz were introduced to Gad el-Maula, inspector of Arabic teaching in Egypt and representing the Egyptian government, through another Arabic scholar Abdul Huq who was professor of Arabic at Osmania University, Hyderabad. See Letter from Levi Billig to The Chancellor, Hebrew University Jerusalem. Central Archive of the Hebrew University, 91alef:1928. I am thankful to Amit Levy for sharing this document with me. These connections, which reveal the salience of Arabic even in twentieth-century Muslim intellectual networks that were especially promoted at Osmania University in princely Hyderabad, are explored in Kavita Datla, *The Language of Secular Islam: Urdu Nationalism and Colonial India* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2013).

<sup>14</sup> Heike Liebau, 'Networks of knowledge production. South Asian Muslims and German scholars in Berlin (1915–1930)', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, vol. 40, no. 2, 2020, pp. 309–321.

<sup>15</sup> Johnston-Bloom, 'Dieses wirklich westöstlichen Mannes'.

<sup>16</sup> Josef Horovitz (ed.), *Epigraphia indo-moslemica. Published under the authority of the Government of India. 1909–1910* (Calcutta: Government of India, 1912). C. H. Becker (Rez.), *Der Islam*, vol. 3, 1912, pp. 205–206.

<sup>17</sup> Delhi Records 6. 1915, Government of India, Department of Education, Education—A, Proceedings, April 1915, Nos 46–51.

emotional bonds with India and Indians, especially his Muslim friends and students. Horovitz is known for his important work on the Quran, the Prophet Muhammad, and early Islamic history.<sup>18</sup> He also gained insights into contemporary Islam in South Asia and continued his pursuit of learning and writing about South Asian Islam and its various aspects, whether old inscriptions or contemporary practices at Sufi shrines in India. This is evident from his essays which reflect on what he gained from the study of Islam in South Asia. One is titled 'Baba Ratan: the saint of Bhatinda' and a second one is called 'Eine moschee-inschrift aus Leh' (A mosque inscription from Leh).<sup>19</sup> However, Horovitz's major work on India is the political history *Indien unter Britischer herrschaft* (India under British rule) in which he critiqued British colonial rule in India.<sup>20</sup> He dedicated the book to his wife Laura Scheier in memory of the years they spent together in India (*Meiner Frau zum 3. Oktober 1927, In Erinnerung an unsere Indischen Jahre*). The book covered various aspects of pre-modern and modern Indian history. Horovitz devoted a section in his book to Hindu and Muslim religious, social, and economic connections and conflicts, and the possibility of bridging the chasms that lead to the latter (*Religios-Soziale und Wirtschaftliche Spannungen zu Möglichkeit einer Überbrückung der Gegensätze*).<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, he observed the educational system and the growth of modern education as well as oriental studies in Indian universities. He also highlighted the role of Indian students who went abroad, including Germany, and brought new ideas back to their colonized country.<sup>22</sup> He concluded his book with both the positive and negative sides of British rule in colonial India and his hopes for an educated and independent India.

Indian affairs continued to occupy Horovitz even after his return to Germany. Heike Liebau's research shows that Horovitz knew international members of the anti-British India International Committee in Berlin, especially those closely connected with Aligarh, like Abdus Sattar Siddiqi and Mansur Ahmad, and was also in touch with the Kheiri Brothers from Aligarh. The first president of the committee was Dr Mansur Ahmad, a Muslim Urdu scholar from Aligarh. Abdus Sattar Siddiqi was a linguist studying at Göttingen, with expertise in Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, Urdu, and German, who played an important role in the universities of Aligarh, Osmania, and Dhaka. Thus,

<sup>18</sup> Josef Horovitz, *Koranische Untersuchungen* (Berlin und Leipzig: Walter De Gruyther and Co., 1926). J. Horovitz, *The Earliest Biographies of the Prophet and their Authors*, (ed.) Lawrence I. Conrad (Princeton: The Darwin Press, 2002).

<sup>19</sup> Josef Horovitz, 'Baba Ratan: the saint of Bhatinda', *Journal of the Panjab Historical Society*, vol. 2, no. 2, 1913. J. Horovitz, 'Eine Moschee-Inschrift aus Leh (A mosque inscription from Leh)', *Der Islam: Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur des Islamischen Orients*, Vol. 8, 1 January 1918.

<sup>20</sup> Josef Horovitz, *Indien unter Britischer herrschaft* (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1928). He also wrote about Islam in Asia and India for a wider German audience. J. Horovitz, 'Ein arabischer Bericht über Indien', *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 4 April 1911. J. Horovitz, 'Islam, Asien und wir', *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 1 October 1928.

<sup>21</sup> Horovitz, *Indien unter Britischer herrschaft*, pp. 112–118.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 64–78.



**Figure 1.** Josef Horovitz (1874–1931). Source: © Abraham Schwadron collection, The Pritzker Family National Photography Collection, The National Library of Israel.

Horovitz remained involved in Arabic and Islamic studies and political networks between Berlin, Aligarh, and Hyderabad.<sup>23</sup>

The knowledge Horovitz acquired in India was also deployed in Germany. He worked with the German Foreign Office and was involved in the Royal Phonographic Commission's project to record the voices of First World War prisoners in the Hindustani language.<sup>24</sup> Horovitz's anti-British stance and knowledge production were therefore connected to his support for building German–Indian anti-British colonial connections, which may explain his work for German war propaganda.<sup>25</sup> However, what tied him more personally to India was the intellectual community that he had found and which contributed to developing his understanding of Islam. Moving beyond his obvious writings on India, Horovitz also kept up his connections with Indian Muslim

<sup>23</sup> Rauf Parekh, 'Literary notes: the man most Urdu scholars turned to on Urdu orthography and word origins', *Dawn*, 21 July 2014, available at <https://www.dawn.com/news/1120532>, [accessed 7 December 2021].

<sup>24</sup> Liebau, 'Networks of knowledge production'.

<sup>25</sup> Horovitz was also in touch with Abdur Sattar Siddiqui when he was studying in Göttingen. He also did translation work for the prisoners of war recordings. Another possible Aligarh connection was Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College alumni Raja Mahendra Pratap Singh (1886–1979) who was in Berlin and involved in anti-British activism and propaganda work in Germany. On the German propaganda work among South Asian prisoners of war, see Franziska Roy, Heike Liebau and Ravi Ahuja (eds), *Soldat Ram Singh und der Kaiser: Indische Kriegsgefangene in deutschen Propagandalagern 1914–1918* (Heidelberg: Draupadi Verlag, 2014).

institutions and intellectuals. Even after his forced return to Germany, he kept his personal and academic bonds with India alive by contributing articles from 1927–1931 to the journal *Islamic Culture*, published in princely Hyderabad.<sup>26</sup> The theme and content of these articles created an intellectual space for dialogue between Islamic and Jewish studies scholars and underlined the need to think of these disciplines comparatively. Horovitz expanded on these themes through such texts such as ‘The Origins of “The Arabian Nights”’, the earliest biographies of the Prophet and their authors, and ‘Judeo-Arabic relations in pre-Islamic times’.<sup>27</sup> His contribution to the history of shared Jewish–Muslim histories was connected with his own personal life. Simultaneously, as an academic adviser for the nascent Hebrew University, Jerusalem, in Palestine, he emphasized the need for the study of Islam in oriental studies in Jerusalem.

The problems and possibilities of mutual coexistence in the multireligious and multilingual society that Horovitz witnessed in India shaped both his politics and intellectual writings. Indeed, in the changing climate of Germany and the imminent rise of fascism, Horovitz was making plans to move back to India. In 1924, he was selected by Dhaka University to be the chair of Arabic and Islamic studies; however, his appointment was blocked as Intelligence Bureau officials objected to his selection as ‘most undesirable’.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, the vice-chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University Dr Syed Ross Masood<sup>29</sup> applied for official permission to appoint him to reorganize the Faculty of Islamic Studies at Aligarh Muslim University.<sup>30</sup> The grandson of Syed Ahmed Khan, he offered his personal guarantee and his own home in an attempt to secure official permission for Horovitz’s appointment, against much official resistance. Unfortunately, Horovitz died suddenly in 1931 from a heart attack. The editors of journal *Islamic Culture* observed and mourned the loss of its prolific contributor who had sent his last article to the journal just before he passed away. The journal published a glowing obituary:

<sup>26</sup> Eric Beverley, *Hyderabad, British India and the World: Muslim Networks and Minor Sovereignty, c.1850–1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

<sup>27</sup> Josef Horovitz, ‘Judeo-Arabic relations in pre-Islamic times’, *Islamic Culture*, vol. III, no. 2, April 1929, pp. 101–199. Also see J. Horovitz, *Die jüdisch-arabische Frage*. Zusammenfassender Auszug aus einem Referat von J. Horovitz und Korreferat von W. Fischer, *Mitteilungsblatt des Ordens Bne Brîß, Großloge für Deutschland*, no. 12, 1929, p. 241.

<sup>28</sup> Confidential, Government of India, Home Department (Political). S. L. Roy to V. Dawson, Secy, Public and Judicial Department, India Office, London, 8 February 1930, New Delhi.

<sup>29</sup> Syed Ross Masood (1889–1937) was connected with both Aligarh University and Osmania University, Hyderabad. An eminent educationist, he served as secretary of the Department of Education in the Government of Nizam, Hyderabad, until 1928 and was one of the founding members of the Osmania University. In 1929, he became the vice-chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University. He seems to have been instrumental in bringing together scholars and translators for intellectual dialogue and cooperation.

<sup>30</sup> Confidential [Draft] addressed to Mr Shephard, Mr F. W. H. Smith and Sir A. Hirtzel, signed R. P. [?], 26 February [1930]. I am indebted to David Lelyveld for sharing his archival notes with me. The exemplary book on the history of Aligarh remains David Lelyveld, *Aligarh’s First Generation: Muslim Solidarity in British India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978).



To the last, he retained his love for India and for Indian Muslims in particular, remembering the days which he had spent at Aligarh as among the happiest of his life. He knew Urdu well and was loved by his students and respected by his colleagues.<sup>31</sup>

Through his life and works, Horovitz had left behind a legacy—personal, intellectual, and institutional, forging connections and exchanging knowledge between Muslim and Jewish scholars of Islam.<sup>32</sup> This aspect is also at the heart of his works. In his study of the Quran, Horovitz emphasized a philological approach to study the commonalities and shared traditions between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.<sup>33</sup> These writings were revised, translated from German into English by the editor M. Marmaduke Pickthall (1875–1938), and published in *Islamic Culture*.<sup>34</sup> Lawrence Conrad emphasizes and summarizes the value of Horovitz's work as being 'foundational for *Sira* historiography'.<sup>35</sup> Additionally, Horovitz inspired an entire generation of younger scholars in Germany and mandate Palestine to understand the significance of language and archival studies in Islamic studies.<sup>36</sup>

The connection with Indian Muslims helped Horovitz to understand not only the plural pasts of, but also coexistence within, multireligious communities at that time. It is this nuanced understanding of Islam that he promoted in Germany and also in developing the curriculum and research priorities at Hebrew University, Jerusalem. With a vision that looked at historical connections and affinities between Islam and Judaism, and the connected histories and possible shared futures of Muslims and Jews, Josef Horovitz became the first director of the School of Oriental Studies at the Hebrew University.<sup>37</sup> Most of the founding members were committed Zionists, but, as Susannah

<sup>31</sup> Josef Horovitz, 'Ibn Quteiba's Uyun Al-Akhar', *Islamic Culture*, vol. V, no. 2, April 1931, pp. 194–224, here p. 194.

<sup>32</sup> Gudrun Jäger, 'Josef Horovitz—Ein jüdischer Islamwissenschaftler an der Universität Frankfurt und der Hebrew University of Jerusalem', *Im vollen Licht der Geschichte, Die Wissenschaft des Judentums und die Anfänge der kritischen Koranforschung*, (ed.) Dirk Hartwig (Würzburg: Ergon, 2008), pp. 117–130. Sabine Marngold-Will, 'Josef Horovitz und die Gründung des Instituts für Arabische und Islamische Studien an der Hebräischen Universität in Jerusalem: ein Orientalisches Seminar für Palästina', *Naharaim*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2016, pp. 7–37.

<sup>33</sup> Josef Horovitz, *Koranische Untersuchungen* (Berlin und Leipzig: Walter De Gruyter and Co., 1926) Inhalt II: Die Koranischen Eigennamen: Einleitenden; die eubzelnen Namen in der Reihenfolge des arabischen Alphabets, pp. 78–155; Anhangs: Biblische und sonstige Namen Jüdischer oder christlicher Herkunft in vorislamischer Zeit, pp. 156–165.

<sup>34</sup> Horovitz, *The Earliest Biographies of the Prophet*.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xxix.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xxxiii.

<sup>37</sup> Hava Lazarus-Yafeh, 'The Transplantation of Islamic Studies from Europe to the Yishuv and Israel'. In *The Jewish Discovery of Islam: Studies in Honor of Bernard Lewis*, (ed.) Martin Kramer (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 1999), pp. 249–260. For a wonderful discussion of Horovitz's role, based on his own papers and writings, see Amit A. Levy, 'Discipline in a Suitcase: The Scientific Nachlass of Josef Horovitz'. In *Contested Heritage: Jewish Cultural Property after 1945*, (ed.) Yfaat Weiss (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2019), pp. 117–127. Amit A. Levy, 'The archive as storyteller: refractions of German-Jewish Oriental Studies migration in personal archives', *Jahrbuch des Dubrow-Institute* (Dubrow Institute Yearbook), vol. XVII, 2018, pp. 425–448.

Heschel points out, Horovitz also belonged to the progressive Brit Shalom circle of German Jewish intellectuals who were committed to and worked for the peaceful coexistence of Jews and Arabs in Palestine. Indeed, we have some evidence that he made efforts to create a dialogue on the political question between Indian Khilafat members and progressive Jewish members in Palestine.<sup>38</sup> In a letter to Maulana Shaukat Ali, dated 10 September 1929, Mr Pickthall wrote:

Prof. Horowitz once of Aligarh, and now of Frankfurt, who is, as you know, a Jew, has just written to ask me whether the Khilafat Committee of India is in a position to help in the pacification of Palestine. He says that many of the Jewish notables in and out for Palestine now realize that the Balfour Declaration was a mistake and that they have come to terms with the Muslims on their own account. That is now quite evident to most Englishmen. If a round table conference of leading Jews and leading Muslims could be held, it might arrive at something useful. Can you do anything?<sup>39</sup>

We do not know the outcome of these efforts, but Horovitz kept up his personal efforts to achieving this goal. The desire for a Jewish homeland and a separate Jewish nation-state was not the only imagined outcome. With his experience in India, for Horovitz a Jewish homeland represented the coexistence of Jews and Muslims. Although he attended the opening of the Hebrew University in 1925 and also helped set up the Department of Oriental Studies, he chose not to move to Jerusalem. His main commitment was to Islamic studies and not Zionist ideology, with the cosmopolitan imprint he acquired through travel and work experience in India informing his vision. He remained committed to Muslim–Jewish dialogue and peaceful coexistence. Even in his vision for oriental studies, articulated in his memorandum to the university on 14 May 1925, he insisted on the importance of Arabic and Islamic studies and that they should not be given a subordinate status within oriental studies. This was crucial in the future of the development of Arabic and Islamic studies at Hebrew University, Jerusalem. Horovitz had the final word both in the administration and the academic vision of the university, and he shaped its early research projects.<sup>40</sup> He has been criticized for controlling the research agenda, while the labour of collecting primary sources was assigned to local

<sup>38</sup> Confidential, Government of India, Home Dept (Political), S. L. Roy, to V. Dawson, Secy, Public and Judicial Dept. India Office, London, 8 February 1930, New Delhi. I am indebted to David Lelyveld for sharing his archival research work notes on Horovitz with me and cite it here with his permission.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid. The letter also mentions the German address: J. Horovitz, 2 Meemstrasse, Frankfurt, Germany.

<sup>40</sup> Lazarus-Yafeh, 'The Transplantation of Islamic Studies', pp. 249–260, p. 252. Sabine Marngold-Will, 'Josef Horovitz und die Gründung des Instituts für Arabische und Islamische Studien an der Hebräischen Universität in Jerusalem: Ein Orientalisches Seminar für Palästina', *Naharaim*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2016, pp. 7–37. Marngold-Will provides an important rejoinder to Lazarus-Yafeh's work: while Horovitz did have the final word in decision-making, as a visiting

staff. Notwithstanding the power structure, he managed to build one of the biggest collections of concordance which survives even now in the archives as 'hallmarks of Jerusalem school'.<sup>41</sup> His work experience as an epigraphist for the Archaeological Survey of India might have come in handy in this project. In addition to his interest in classical Islam, Horovitz also became deeply interested in and committed to contemporary issues, especially Indian Islam. It is this lesson on the contemporary study of Islam that Horovitz learned in India and passed on to his students who also tried to bring modern studies of the Middle East and Islam into research and teaching. This was marginalized in the German Islamic studies tradition but was firmly embedded in and practised at Hebrew University, Jerusalem. Horovitz's sudden death did not end the impact of his ideas and his students carried forward his legacy.<sup>42</sup> Thus, Horovitz constituted the vital connecting link between the European, especially German, *Islamwissenschaft* tradition, modern Islamic studies in India, and the newly founded School of Oriental Studies at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem.<sup>43</sup>

Susannah Heschel has emphasized the importance of Horovitz's anti-colonialist life experience on shaping his works on Islam and the Quran. Thus, Horovitz's knowledge and politics shaped each other.<sup>44</sup> Certainly, he is an interesting case to study minority dialogue, the history of knowledge transfer, and what some call 'Jewish orientalism', which is differentiated from the dominant German Christian orientalism in the study of Islam.<sup>45</sup> Jewish orientalism, which may be better understood as 'minor orientalism', was arguably more sympathetic to Islam; one of the fields emphasized by Jewish scholars was an inter-religious influence, dialogue, and, most importantly, philology and comparative literature. More significantly, within the study of Islam, Horovitz insisted not only on including literary and philology studies of an earlier time but also emphasized the contemporary condition of Muslims in the multireligious world. India represented an important example for this historical adaptation, which he wanted to promote in the ongoing institutionalization of knowledge of oriental studies at Hebrew University, Jerusalem. It is no surprise that the next major Jewish intellectual, Leopold Weiss, who converted to Islam in the South Asian Ahmadiyya mosque, Berlin, also moved to colonial British India in the 1930s after extensive travels across the Middle East and living for years in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

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director based in Frankfurt, he was still reliant on the local staff and their demands shaped many of his decisions.

<sup>41</sup> Lazarus-Yafeh, 'The Transplantation of Islamic Studies', p. 253.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 258.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 259.

<sup>44</sup> Susannah Heschel, 'The rise of imperialism and the German Jewish engagement in Islamic studies'. In *Modern Jewish Scholarship on Islam in Context: Rationality, European Borders, and the Search for Belonging*, (ed.) Ottfried Fraisse (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2019), pp. 61–92.

<sup>45</sup> Michael L Miller, *European Judaism and Islam: The Contributions of Jewish Orientalists* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014).

## Leopold Weiss/Muhammad Asad in Lahore and Hyderabad

Leopold Weiss (1900–92) was born in Kemberg (present-day Lvov in Ukraine) and was raised in Vienna with traditional Jewish moral values and education. At the age of 20 he moved to Berlin to pursue a bohemian career as a writer and journalist but soon became disillusioned by the Weimar-era materialism. During a visit to Palestine in 1922 to escape from Europe, he became persuaded of the inadequacy of the Western way of life and the failure of Zionist ideology to provide an alternative moral and political solution, and was consequently drawn to Islam and Arab Muslim culture.<sup>46</sup> In 1924 he wrote a scathing critique of British colonial rule.<sup>47</sup> Thus it seems that the lasting impact of his critique of Western materialism and colonialism led to his turn to Islam.<sup>48</sup> He initially converted to Islam at the Ahmadiyya Mosque, Berlin, in September 1926, under the influence of *Islamischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* and its South Asian leader Abdul Jabbar Kheiri. He then travelled to Mecca and elsewhere in the Middle East, and officially converted again in Cairo on 27 April 1927.<sup>49</sup> Leopold Weiss became Muhammed Asad, after which he travelled around Central Asia, Afghanistan, and Turkestan.<sup>50</sup> He lived an interesting life at the intersection of Europe, the Middle East, and South Asia; the crossroads of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam; and the convergence of modern journalism, orientalism and scholarship in Islamic studies. His own writings and multiple scholarly explorations of his life allow us the opportunity to situate his migrant life and ideas.<sup>51</sup> We also encounter him in the British colonial archive as a German-speaking Jew, an Austrian journalist, and a special correspondent for the German newspaper *Frankfurter Zeitung*. Scholars have studied his next six years spent in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia where he came to be known as ‘Asad of Arabia’.<sup>52</sup> His disenchantment with the Saudi king Ibn Saud led him to experiment and in January 1931 he went on a secret, failed mission

<sup>46</sup> Kramer (ed.), *The Jewish Discovery of Islam*, p. 25.

<sup>47</sup> Leopold Weiss, *Unromantisches Morgenland: aus dem tagebuch einer Reise* (Frankfurt: Frankfurter Societäts-druckerei, 1924).

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>49</sup> Günther Windhager, *Leopold Weiss alias Muhammad Asad: Von Galizien nach Arabien 1900–1927* (Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 2003), pp. 177–182.

<sup>50</sup> Foreign and Political Department, Near East Branch, S. Nos 1–3. ‘Proposed journey of Mr. Leopold Weiss and party to Afghanistan through India’. No. 251 of 1925. His Britannic Majesty consulate Kerman 12th March 1925 to H. B. Ms Vice Consul Durban Memorandum. File No. 388 x, Secret 9, 1933, Government of India, Foreign and Political Department, External, Nos. 1–5. ‘Movements and activities of Leopold Weiss alias Mohammad Asad’. Copy of Notes of File No. 109/FOR/24.

<sup>51</sup> Windhager, *Leopold Weiss alias Muhammad Asad*. This book focuses on Weiss’s early years and his conversion to Islam and travels in the Middle East but not his years in South Asia. For that we can rely on an excellent detailed autobiographical travel account left by Muhammad Asad, *The Road to Mecca (1900–1932)* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954). For his time in colonial India and post-colonial Pakistan, see Muhammad Asad and Pola Hamida Asad, *Home-Coming of the Heart (1933–1992). Part II: The Road to Mecca*. Edited and annotated by M. Ikram Chaghtai (Lahore: The Truth Society, 2012). Muhammad Asad, *An Austrian Jewish Convert to Islam*. Edited and compiled by M. Ikram Chaghtai (Lahore: Pakistan Writers Co-operative Society, 2015).

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 221.

to Cyrenaica on behalf of the Grand Sanusi Sayyid Ahmad (1873–1932). After that he went into exile in Saudi Arabia where he laid plans to continue the anti-Italian struggle among the remaining Sanusi forces.<sup>53</sup> He left to embark on a new journey that led him to colonial India in June 1932.

Asad arrived in Karachi and initially travelled around meeting leading Muslim intellectuals like Muhammed Iqbal, who encouraged him to pursue textual studies of Islam and do translation work. His subsequent travels and meetings across India, including princely Kashmir, are fascinating chronicles of entanglements in the colony. In Kashmir, he met the Kashmiri anti-colonial Muslim leader Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah, creating colonial panic about the Bolshevik threat.<sup>54</sup> His movements were treated with suspicion but also with much interest. In 1934, he was offered the post of and went on to become the dean of Islamic instruction at the Islamia College, Lahore, but he soon left to pursue his translation of *Sabih al-Bukhari* as suggested by Iqbal. Between 1936–38, he served as the editor of the widely influential Hyderabad quarterly *Islamic Culture* supported by the nizam of Hyderabad. On the journal cover his name was published as Muhammad Asad-Weiss. In some way, his Jewish origins highlighted his status as a devoted and serious Muslim scholar. In 1939 he was again invited by the vice-chancellor of Punjab University to become the director of the Islamic Research Institute at Islamia College, but this did not transpire due to the outbreak of the Second World War.<sup>55</sup> Asad was interred, where he used his peripatetic entanglements in the colony and the knowledge thus acquired to negotiate agency with colonial officials through propaganda schemes.<sup>56</sup>

While confined in the internment camp, he wrote about the ongoing crisis in Iraq and the defects of British war propaganda as opposed to the success of German and Italian propaganda regarding Palestine. He provided a historical critique of the 'British foreign policy missteps' like the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1917, when the British gave Syria to the French; the Balfour Declaration to establish a Jewish national home in Palestine; and, lastly, the mandate over Iraq. He critiqued these treaties as missteps from the Commonwealth model to the establishment of the national state in the region accompanied by emulating the French and the resultant failure to communicate the ideas of the Commonwealth and imperial propaganda. He emphasized

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 233.

<sup>54</sup> File No. 388 X, 1933, Government of India, Foreign and Political Department, External, Nos 1–5. 'Movements and activities of Dr. Leopold Weiss alias Mohamad Assad'. He was particularly under surveillance, and his meeting with S. M. Abdullah was seen to be about the spread of Bolshevik ideas.

<sup>55</sup> M. Asad-Weiss, 'Islamic culture', *The Hyderabad Quarterly Review*, vol. XI, no. 1, January 1937. Also see M. Asad-Weiss, 'Towards a resurrection of thought', *Islamic Culture*, vol. XIII, no. 1, January 1939. It also carried a notice that Asad-Weiss relinquished the editorship of the *Islamic Culture* as of 6 October 1938.

<sup>56</sup> File No. 3 (2), 1941, The Government of India, External Affairs Department, Near East Branch. 'Proposal by Mr. Leopold Weiss alias Mohammad Asad regarding sentence deputation to India'; 1941, Government of India, External Affairs Department, Near East Branch, Progs NIS. File No. 161 NP. 'Article by Mr. Leopold Weiss alias Mohammed Asad on British propaganda in Arab Countries'.

respecting the Arab cultural values and sentiments and insisted that they needed to capture and express '*grande geste* to the Arabs'.<sup>57</sup>

In a second note addressed to colonial officials, which was based on his travels and journalistic writings in the Middle East, Asad highlighted that he had acquired deep insights into the existing political and social environment of the region. He pointed to the deployment of the mufti of Jerusalem Amil al-Husaini by the Nazis, and as a countermove he suggested: 'Why should not the British Government invite other Muslim personages of similar or even greater standing to help in the struggle against Nazism and Fascism?'<sup>58</sup> The note was discussed and copies circulated to ambassadors in Baghdad and Cairo and the high commissioner in Palestine, generating a paper trail in the colonial archive in India.

Even confined in his internment camp, Asad nonetheless championed the cause of the Sanussi religious brotherhood, especially the head Sayyid Idris Sanussi who was based in Egypt but whose influence over Muslims apparently extended even to British India.<sup>59</sup> He recommended an all-India tour by the Sanussi chief to take place in mosques and other public halls to raise Muslim public opinion against Nazism and fascism. As a journalist, and thus aware of the power of media, he emphasized that this tour should be covered not only through the press but also by All India Radio and in films.<sup>60</sup> Asad kept leveraging his knowledge about Muslims and his networks to get him out of the internment camp, and many prominent Muslims lobbied for his release as well. However, this only created more suspicion and Asad was kept in confinement precisely because of his knowledge of and connections with Muslims in the Middle East and South Asia.

Asad's memoirs of these years in confinement are also deeply revealing about the state of the internment camp and what he went through. He remembered his time there as 'The bleak years (1938–1945)'. (The 'difficult years' began with his failure to get his family out of Austria after its takeover by the Nazis. His father and stepmother were unable to escape, despite Asad's best efforts and the help rendered by his Muslim friends in high places. His family members were killed in the concentration camps of Theresienstadt and Auschwitz.<sup>61</sup>) Asad was initially confined to the makeshift camp at Rawalpindi before being moved to the Ahmednagar camp. He wrote a detailed account of the conditions in the internment camp, which housed about 3,000 men from all over British India as well as Afghanistan and Indonesia. Interestingly, a lot of those incarcerated were trade representatives of German firms and, ironically, socialist liberals who had escaped Nazism in Europe found themselves in the company of Nazis. Finally, there were Jewish refugees who were put in the same camp but soon segregated. Asad recounts that the living conditions were comfortable, with mattresses, an Indian cook,

<sup>57</sup> General Staff Branch, Note dated 3 July 1941, 11. NAI.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> General Staff Branch, Secret, 29 July 1941. NAI.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 10–11.

<sup>61</sup> Asad and Asad, *Home-Coming of the Heart*, p. 100.

and small allowance provided.<sup>62</sup> However, being confined with pro-Nazi Germans was a source of much anger and emotional discomfort. The global gloom marked by Nazi victories manifested in the camp with violent attacks by Nazi prisoners on other camp residents. However, Asad fondly recalls the support and love of the camp's Muslim staff which helped him survive the difficult times. They brought him food and provided emotional support. Asad recounts: 'Such encounters and demonstrations of affection by my Muslim brethren contributed a lot to my peace of mind and to the hope with which I looked towards the future; they provided a counter-weight to the series of hostile "interrogations" to which I began to be subjected during the third year of my internment.'<sup>63</sup>

Asad's Muslim friends also took care of his wife Munira and young son Talal while he was confined in the Ahmednagar camp. Neither the efforts of Sir Sikander Hayat and Sir Zafarullah Khan to release Asad nor his own attempts to secure a release by helping the British war propaganda plan succeeded. In 1942, the entire Ahmednagar camp was shifted to the Deoli camp. While the Jewish refugees were now separated from the Nazis, they found themselves in flimsy tents and not-so-comfortable circumstances in the difficult season of monsoon.<sup>64</sup> However, they were now joined by German Jesuit missionaries, which, Asad recounts, filled the camp with religious and intellectual discussions that he enjoyed personally. Asad was subsequently moved to Dehradun and finally to the 'family camp' of Purandhar near Poona in early 1944.<sup>65</sup> Things improved from this point on and he was eventually united with his wife and son. He also had more freedom to move around and had access to books so he could resume his intellectual work before finally being set free on 14 December 1945.<sup>66</sup> His internment years took away precious time from his intellectual life and also strained his relationship with his wife, but, at the same time, they brought him closer to his Muslim friends, especially Chaudhry Niaz Ali (1880–1971), a philanthropist and founder of the Dar-ul-Islam movement, who financially supported and provided a home for Asad's family on his estate and also protected Asad's manuscript and press in Jamalpur.<sup>67</sup>

The detailed information on Asad's years in the colonial files and his own personal memoirs highlight the fact that British officials did take him seriously based on his knowledge about Islam and Muslims, but that it was precisely this knowledge that also made them suspicious of this Jewish convert to Islam.

Subsequently, he played a major role in the development of Islamic studies in colonial and post-colonial Pakistan at Punjab University.<sup>68</sup> He was also the

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 111.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 105.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 107.

<sup>65</sup> In a recent biographical essay Talal Asad has written about his personal experience of the camp, which was divided between 'Aryans and anti-Nazis'. See Talal Asad, 'Autobiographical reflections on anthropology and religion', *Religion and Society. Advance in Research*, vol. 11, 2020, pp. 1–29.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p. 113.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Zahid Munir Amir and Muhammad Asad, 'Architect of the Department of Islamic Studies at Punjab University'. In *Muhammad Asad: An Austrian Jewish Convert to Islam*, (ed.) M. Ikram Chagtai



**Figure 2.** Chaudhry Niaz Ali Khan with his grandchildren and Muhammed Asad (seated right) and Asad's wife Pola Hamida Asad (seated left), at Chaudhry Niaz Ali Khan's house in Jauharabad, Pakistan, circa 1957. Source: [WikipediaFile:ChNiazAliKhan2.jpg](#)—Wikipedia (reproduced here under Creative Commons license).

first chair of the Department of Islamic Studies, and was offered the chair of the Institute of Islamic Culture, but he chose to either decline or soon resign from these posts. Yet, he left an impression on major Pakistani intellectuals like Iqbal, Maududdi, and Niaz Ali. He went on to write some of the most globally influential books on Islam, including *Islam at the Crossroads*.<sup>69</sup> M. Marmaduke Pickthall, who knew both Horowitz and Asad, concluded in his review of the book that 'It is the most thoughtful and thought stimulating

(Lahore: Pakistan Writers Co-Operative Society, 2015), pp. 265–290. Murad Hufmann, 'Muhammad Asad: Europe's gift to Islam', *Islamic Studies*, vol. 39, no. 2, 2000, pp. 233–247. Ismail Ibrahim Nawab, 'A matter of love: Muhammad Asad and Islam', *Islamic Studies*, vol. 39, no. 2, 2000, pp. 155–231.

<sup>69</sup> Muhammad Asad, *Islam at the Crossroads* (Lahore: Arafat Publications, 1934).



work on the means of Islamic revival that has appeared since Prince Sai'd Halim Pasha's famous "Islamashmaq".<sup>70</sup>

Edward Said's path-breaking book *Orientalism* has been critiqued for not adequately addressing German and Jewish orientalism.<sup>71</sup> Although Suzanne L. Marchand has made an important intervention in the field of German orientalism and she does pay attention to German Jewish scholars of Islam, there are few references to Horovitz and Asad in her book. Josef Horovitz is mentioned as an Arabist and then for his role in the establishment of the School of Oriental Studies in Jerusalem.<sup>72</sup> Asad is mentioned first as a 'writer of neoromantic travelogue text' and then as a 'radical anti-Zionist' and an 'Islamic militant'.<sup>73</sup> More recently, scholars have paid attention to these two figures. Martin Kramer makes a strong distinction between European and Jewish orientalism.<sup>74</sup> He contends that 'Needless, to say, these Jewish scholars remained completely aloof from the efforts to mobilize German orientalism for political purpose, and they stood at the forefront of the intellectual struggle against the increasing ethnocentrism of the German academy.'<sup>75</sup> Susannah Heschel has another theory about Jewish orientalism. She argues that 'The image of a remote, seductive, primitive, fascinating Islam was part of the often-contradictory image that dominated European orientalism. By contrast, the imagined "Islam" created by European Jewish scholars was primarily a rational religion free of mysticism and apocalypticism.'<sup>76</sup> These different interpretations of Islam within European Islamic Studies created what Heschel calls an 'epistemic space' in which Jewish scholars created a place for themselves in the Christian-dominated academy as well as a society that was discriminatory and excluded them.<sup>77</sup> Therefore, the study of Islam served various competing interests, desires, and interpretations.

Based on the two case studies included in this article so far, one can conclude that the relationship with European and Jewish orientalism in terms of the study of Islam is complicated to say the least. Horovitz did participate in German orientalism and anti-British colonial German politics. On the other hand, Asad also offered his knowledge for British anti-fascist propaganda work, and he is also owed credit for popularizing the oriental genre of adventure in the desert and European Muslim conversion narratives and hajj accounts as foundational to Muslim experience. The focus on Jewish orientalism and its contribution is important but such an approach keeps Islam as the object of analysis and representation by a Jewish orientalist and does not pay adequate attention to role of Muslim interlocutors on shaping Jewish

<sup>70</sup> *Islamic Culture*, Hyderabad, October 1934, pp. 665–668.

<sup>71</sup> Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).

<sup>72</sup> Suzanne L. Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire: Race, Religion and Scholarship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 322, 487, 482.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 27, 343.

<sup>74</sup> Kramer (ed.), *The Jewish Discovery of Islam*.

<sup>75</sup> Kramer (ed.), *The Jewish Discovery of Islam*, p. 20.

<sup>76</sup> Heschel, 'The rise of imperialism', p. 62.

<sup>77</sup> Heschel and Ryad (eds), *The Muslim Reception of European Orientalism*, p. 4.

orientalism knowledge production and personal transformation.<sup>78</sup> Last but not least, I wish to argue and emphasize that it is not Arab or Middle Eastern majoritarian Islam but Islam in a multireligious South Asia and Muslims as minority that truly attracted and transformed Jewish scholarship and understanding of Islam as well as Judaism, Zionism, and Jewish-Muslim coexistence.

Beyond these larger debates about the nature of Jewish engagement with oriental discourse and practices, a few other points emerge from the study of Jewish individuals' life stories, which are worth observing. First, these Jewish actors had already forged connections with Muslims as a minority in colonial India. Second, both had visited and personally seen and often participated in the Jewish homeland project but remained critical of it. Lastly, they were also committed to the need for a Jewish-Muslim dialogue and coexistence. More importantly, Islam was not just the object of a study to find affinity with Judaism, it was also a source of knowledge to rethink the history and politics of Judaism and Christianity. This is an important point to emphasize: minorities were pioneers of forging dialogic intellectual exchanges and creating cosmopolitan knowledge. These individual histories and knowledge often clashed with religious, national, colonial, or even global knowledge and policies that insisted on binaries, consistently treating the German Jewish presence in India as suspicious or threatening. This is evident in the policy regulations about Jewish refugees in the colonial archives in India.

Much new writing has appeared on Horovitz and Weiss and yet no comparative study has been undertaken. In this article, I have shown that their lives and works should be studied comparatively to look at the crucial role played by South Asian Islam in Jewish orientalism and intellectual formation. Their interest both started with Arabic texts in the Middle East and eventually turned to South Asia. Both wrote texts set in India; one even chose Pakistan as a homeland, rejecting the Zionist claim of Israel as a Jewish homeland. Horovitz too remained critical of the Zionist project and was considering moving back to India at the time of his death. Both suffered internment as German-speaking Jews, and both received comfort from their own knowledge about Islam and support from their Muslim friends and networks. The work they produced has been foundational for the study of Islam in a different context: Horovitz in Palestine and Asad in Pakistan. These case studies also allow us to critique the idea of German or Jewish orientalism from the fringe. It first tells us that not all Jewish scholars studied Islam to highlight it as a recipient of Judaism. Both Horovitz and Asad, in particular, conceptualized Islam as a more pragmatic and evolved Abrahamic religion. Both produced their knowledge in dialogue with local intellectuals (Farahi and Iqbal, among others). Both moved from classical oriental studies to a more lived idea of Islam, especially its Sufi dimension in the multireligious context of South Asia. Nevertheless, Horovitz and Asad operated under the orientalism paradigm,

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<sup>78</sup> Islam Dayeh, Y. Hever, E. E. Johnston and M. Messling, 'Formations of the semitic: race, religion and language in modern European scholarship', *Philological Encounters*, vol. 2, no. 3–4, 2017, pp. 199–200. Also see Henning Trüper, *Orientalism, Philology, and the Illegibility of the Modern World* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020).

especially Asad, as they tried to institutionalize their knowledge into guidelines and policies. Both also experienced resistance and disenchantment within their projects, but it would be fair to conclude that both derived deep knowledge and cemented it through their scholarly writings.

Moving beyond the oriental and Islamic studies circle, another Jewish figure has remained understudied, despite her important role and contribution to the history of secular education in Jewish and Muslim educational institutions in Germany, Palestine, and India. This is the history of Gerda Philipsborn.

### Gerda Philipsborn in Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi

In 1926, at the time Asad converted to Islam in Berlin, a young German Jewish woman Gerda Philipsborn was also learning about Muslims and education in South Asia from three Muslim students in Berlin—Zakir Husain, Abid Husain, and Muhammed Mujeeb.<sup>79</sup> By the early 1930s, she had decided to devote her life to education at Jamia Millia Islamia as a kindergarten teacher. Philipsborn made the long journey from Berlin via London and Jerusalem before eventually reaching and settling at the Jamia Millia Islamia in Delhi. Social services through the education of children was a personal driving force for her. From Muhammad Mujeeb's account, we gain an insight into the life and ideas of this remarkable Jewish woman. Mujeeb recounts that parties were organized in Berlin by the younger sister of the Indian revolutionary leader Virendranath Chatopadhyaya, Mrs Nambiar, to promote interaction between the 'right kind of Germans and Indians together'.<sup>80</sup> It was at one such party that the three Jamia Muslim educationists met Gerda Philipsborn. She came from a cultured Jewish bourgeoisie family who lived at 95 Haus Prinzregentenstrasse, not far from Albert Einstein's apartment in Berlin.<sup>81</sup> The Philipsborns possessed wealth and social status, but, most importantly, Gerda Philipsborn was the embodiment of the well-educated, integrated German Jewish bourgeoisie (*gebildet juden burgertum*). She had trained in opera singing under the famous conductor Bruno Walter and possessed what Mujeeb calls 'Begiesterungsfähigkeit, i.e., the capacity for romantic exaltation'.<sup>82</sup> This was the beginning of a long-lasting intellectual and emotional connection that lasted until Gerda Philipsborn's death in Jamia in 1943.

Philipsborn was committed to children's education and started her own kindergarten in Wilmersdorf, Berlin. She also worked with Siegfried Lehmann of Jüdische Volksheim (or the Jewish People's Home) in the kindergarten in Berlin's Jewish area. She continued her educational work and became a committed supporter of Lehmann's Ben Shemen Youth Village project in

<sup>79</sup> Razak Khan, 'Entanglements of translation: psychology, pedagogy and youth reform in German and Urdu', *Comparative Studies in South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East*, vol. 40, no. 2, 2020, pp. 295–308.

<sup>80</sup> Muhammad Mujeeb, *Dr. Zakir Husain: A Biography* (New Delhi: National Book Trust of India, 1972), p. 35.

<sup>81</sup> Gene Dannen, 'A physicist's lost love: Leo Szilard and Gerda Philipsborn', January 2015, <http://www.dannen.com/lostlove/>, [accessed 7 December 2021].

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

Palestine in 1927. Philipsborn helped raise funds in London for the project and visited the village in 1932. However, by September 1932, she had decided to move to colonial India for a life devoted to Gandhian experiments in education, away from Hitler's Germany and the politics of a Jewish homeland in mandate Palestine.<sup>83</sup> In this sense, like Horovitz and Weiss, Philipsborn's turn to India was not due to a lack of choices. Despite the promise of a Jewish homeland, she arrived in India on 21 December 1932 and was appointed as a kindergarten teacher in the Jamia primary school and soon became a beloved teacher and elder sister (*apa jan*) for a generation of Jamia students. She is still fondly remembered in affectionate oral histories and accounts in the Jamia neighbourhood.<sup>84</sup>

Gene Dannen's detailed research shows how Philipsborn was willing to give up a personal life of comfort with the renowned physicist Leo Szilard, who loved and pursued her. She also chose not to live with her wealthy relatives in England. The fascinating history of Philipsborn as not only a follower of distinguished men but also a maker of her own identity still needs to be written and this article hopes to shine a light on her educational role.

Philipsborn's own strong desire to dedicate her life to social work brought her to India, where she played an important part not only in Jamia but also in the larger Gandhian nationalist education project. Sughra Mehdi recalls in the book *Beloved Sister of Children: Gerda Philipsborn (Bachchon ki Apa Jan: Gerda Philipsborn)* that from Berlin Philipsborn exchanged letters with Zakir Husain about the conditions at Jamia, and despite much discouragement, she was determined to enact her plan to reach India.<sup>85</sup> That a European lady (*memsahib*) wanted to come and work in Jamia created a sensation in the Jamia neighbourhood and university. Mehdi recalls that Philipsborn formally joined Jamia in January 1933 and it was a 'precious New Year gift' for Jamia (*naye saal ka tohfa*) when she was placed in charge of the kindergarten.<sup>86</sup> Despite the boundaries and hierarchies of race, language, and gender, she soon became beloved and was affectionately referred to as a sister by her students and subsequently by everyone in Jamia.<sup>87</sup> In her book, Mehdi interviewed one of Philipsborn's students, an old artist, Obaidul Huq, who fondly remembered Philipsborn as someone who left a lasting impression on his heart and became a mother figure for him in the Jamia boarding house, despite their language barriers. While Philipsborn learnt Urdu, her students also picked up German words and phrases from her and remembered them into their old age.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Sughra Mehdi, *Bachchon ki Apa Jan: Gerda Philipsborn* (New Delhi: Maktaba Payam-e-Talim, 1996).

<sup>85</sup> Rajmohan Gandhi, *Eight Lives: A Study of the Hindu-Muslim Encounter* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1985), p. 291. Gandhi highlights the privileges of race and class that gave Philipsborn power and authority as a European Jewish woman in a Muslim educational institution.

<sup>86</sup> Mehdi, *Bachchon ki Apa Jan*.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

Gerda Philipsborn's role in the transfer and translation of knowledge on reform pedagogy (*Reformpädagogik*), which was especially influential in Jamia, deserves further elaboration to understand how the Jewish minority in Germany and Muslim minority in India took over and transformed majoritarian ideas and concepts like education and self-formation (*Bildung*). This is particularly useful lens through which to compare how Jewish and Muslim minorities engaged with the thought and practices of reform pedagogy. Gerda Philipsborn taught her students about education, hygiene, and sports, along with nurturing their creative expression in photography, painting, and music, which helped the development of children.<sup>89</sup> She also helped establish an educational society (*payami biradari*) and promoted children's literature and writings through encouraging letters and articles that were intended to connect with children not only across the country but also internationally through the Jamia children's journal *Payam-e-Talim* (Message of Education).<sup>90</sup> Her own teaching book *Children's zoo* (*Bachhon ka chidiya ghar*) is a picture book of designs to teach children how to make folded paper animals and birds, and was translated into Urdu and published by Jamia Millia Islamia.<sup>91</sup>

Another of her contemporaries, Irshad Husain Farooqui, wrote a note in his diary about Philipsborn's deep bond with the women and children in Jamia and the priority she gave to forging human bonds over material comfort. She provided emotional support and care for children, with her heart filled with a 'sea of sympathy' (*hamdardi ka samandar*).<sup>92</sup> Her other strength was taking care of the sick (*timardari*). Abdul Madoohi, a famous Jamia scholar, recounts Philipsborn's scrupulous supervision of his diet during his illness, and he named and remembered her as the strict sister (*ziddi behan*) for her insistence on serving healthy but watery food.<sup>93</sup>

Gerda Philipsborn also managed to cross religious, cultural, and emotional boundaries to earn the respect and trust of Muslim women in purdah. Slowly but steadily, she championed Muslim women's participation in social and educational events in Jamia. Her Jewish religion and culture was not an issue in its Islamic milieu (*Islami mahaul*). Sughra Mehdi notes that Philipsborn had started reading about Islam through books but learned more about the religion from the everyday habits and practices of the Muslims around her.<sup>94</sup>

Minorities are always the subject of state anxiety, and German-speaking migrant Jewish minorities in contact with the Muslim minority in India were under colonial surveillance and strictly controlled. Philipsborn appears in colonial archives as a suspect, and her application for British Indian citizenship was rejected even though many influential Indian nationalists as well as Qadiruddin Ahmad and Sydney Jacobson, news editor of *The Statesman* wrote to support her application. She had learned Urdu while residing and

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>91</sup> I am thankful to Sonya Surbhi Gupta for drawing my attention to this book and Gene Dannen for sharing his copy.

<sup>92</sup> Mehdi, *Bachchon ki Apa Jan*, pp. 17–20.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

working for Jamia in Karol Bagh and listed 'kindergarten teacher' as her profession on her application. From her application, we learn that she had visited and lived in the United Kingdom for over 21 months between 21 November 1928 to 23 July 1930 and then left for Germany. Subsequently, she visited Palestine and then lived continually in British India from 21 December 1932 without absence. An investigation of her application by the superintendent of police in Delhi reported that 'in June 1936 she went to Wardha in the C.P. to give lessons in drawing, embroidery and knitting to the inmates of the Gandhi [sic] Ashram there'.<sup>95</sup> Her citizenship application, it seems, was problematic because she did not want to leave India for Britain or Palestine, and her support for Indian nationalism, Gandhian Wardha education, and nationalist Muslims like Zakir Husain and others at Jamia made her Jewish identity doubly problematic in the eyes of the anxious colonial state.

When the Second World War started, things became even more difficult for Philipsborn. She was arrested as a German enemy and was interned at the Purandhar camp, Maharashtra, in 1940. Philipsborn wrote letters to her second cousin, Lady Reading, for help amid the difficult conditions in the camp.<sup>96</sup> Official help was not allowed, but her friends and students from Jamia kept in touch and sought her return. Although conditions in the camp aggravated her ill health, Philipsborn continued to cheer other interned Jewish refugees through her knowledge of opera singing and music. Despite Lady Reading's connections and efforts, Philipsborn was not released until late September or early October 1941, after spending more than a year in confinement at the Purandhar internment camp. She was also battling personal and medical issues and was attended with equal love and care in Jamia in her last days.<sup>97</sup> According to Sughra Mehdi's account, Philipsborn wanted to hear Quran recitation in her last days and for her last rituals to be performed in the Islamic way. She died on 14 April 1943, at the age of just 47, in Jamia, where she is buried in the company of her other fellow Muslim educationist friends.

Her affective knowledge and labour, particularly her singing Jewish songs on the harmonium in the Purandhar camp, helped many in those difficult times and was recounted in her obituary in *Jewish Advocate*, published in Bombay.<sup>98</sup> Zakir Husain devoted his lectures on education (*Talimi khutbat*) to Gerda Philipsborn's life, work, and commitment to education. After her death, she was commemorated with two buildings in Jamia: the Gerda Philipsborn Hostel for Girls and the Gerda Philipsborn day-care centre in Jamia. Indeed, Jamia and its founding members—Zakir Husain, Abid Husain, Muhammed Mujeed, and K. A. Hamied from their early days of doctoral

<sup>95</sup> Report by Superintendent of Police, Criminal Investigation Department, Delhi, 16–17 June 1937. Also in the file, see the praise of Philipsborn by Otto Schiff of the German Jewish Relief Committee. Cited in Dannen, 'A physicist's lost love'.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid. Philipsborn's letters to Lady Reading, OIOC Records, L/P&J/8/68 (Part 6), British Library, London. Cited in Dannen, 'A physicist's lost love'.

<sup>97</sup> Mehdi, *Bachchon ki Apa Jan*, p. 29.

<sup>98</sup> 'Cleverest ... most kindhearted woman. "Gerda Philipsborn"', anonymous letter to editor from 'a former co-internee', *Jewish Advocate* (Bombay), June 1943. Cited in Dannen, 'A physicist's lost love'.

education in Berlin—developed and maintained a progressive attitude on Jewish–Muslim dialogue and wrote about its value in public life as well as practising it in their personal lives. Abid Husain wrote about the historic model of shared Jewish–Muslim pasts of Spain.<sup>99</sup> K. A. Hamied also invoked this historic model of coexistence and wrote about the value of such Muslim–Jewish dialogue and peaceful coexistence in contemporary times and worked against anti-semitic Muslim communal politics and writings after the 1967 Arab–Israeli war.<sup>100</sup> K. A. Hamied practised what he preached. He was married to a Polish Jewish woman Luba Derschenska and wrote insightfully about the personal affective history of a Muslim–Jewish romance and marriage, lived with a mutual respect for different religions and culture.<sup>101</sup>

These personal histories also reveal the transformation of secular ideas on reform pedagogy that were taught by a Jewish woman and learned and embodied by Muslims as new education (*nai talim*) in Jamia Millia Islamia. Unlike colonial archival documents based on suspicion, this text is an affective archive of not only Jewish–Muslim connections but also the creative intellectual outcomes of those connections. These histories where a European Jewish woman became an intimate part of Muslim milieus and families as a sister and an exemplary role model allow us to rethink the role of Jewish women in the sphere of connected histories often forged not in the public domain but in drawing rooms or kindergarten playgrounds. Minor history reveals how private archives and public histories intersect in intriguing ways.<sup>102</sup>

The feminist scholar and activist Syeda Hameed has drawn attention to the role of Philipsborn among the first women of Jamia (*khawatin-e-awal*), including Asifa Mujeeb and Saliha Husain, who helped bring about women’s public participation in Jamia.<sup>103</sup> Philipsborn’s grave in the Jamia graveyard serves as the last affective material symbol of this Muslim–Jewish dialogue and history of coexistence in Jamia. The lesson of this dialogue and the legacy of the founding members and Philipsborn have been kept alive and are increasingly receiving wider appreciation, particularly by Muslim women living and working in Jamia Millia Islamia, a minority educational institution currently under vicious and relentless majoritarian Hindu nationalism attack in India. These minority histories, which are hidden in plain sight, need to be studied, preserved, and

<sup>99</sup> Syed Abid Husain, ‘Die Araber in Spanien’, *Muslimische Revue*, Berlin, 1926.

<sup>100</sup> K. A. Hamied, *A Life to Remember: An Autobiography* (Bombay: Lalvani Publishing, 1972), pp. 333–338.

<sup>101</sup> Razak Khan, ‘Entangled institutional and affective archives of South Asian Muslim students in Germany’, *Modern India in German Archives (MIDA)*, online article, 14 February 2019.

<sup>102</sup> On other histories of conflict and coexistence, see Navras Jaat Aafreedi (ed.), ‘Jewish-Muslim relations in South Asia’, *Cafe Dissensus*, issue 21, 8 January 2016. Yulia Egorova, *Jews and Muslims in South Asia: Reflections on Difference, Religion, and Race* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018). Aafreedi and Egorova document anti-Zionist writings in the popular Urdu press and in political speeches and conflate it with anti-Semitism. Egorova is more nuanced and calls for a better understanding based on more detailed research on the topic of anti-Semitism and Muslims in colonial India. Yulia Egorova, *Jews and India: Perceptions and Image* (New York: Routledge, 2006), pp. 57–58.

<sup>103</sup> Syeda Hameed, ‘Jamia’s first women’, *Seminar*, no. 739, March 2021.



**Figure 3.** The chancellor Dr M. A. Ansari with teachers (including Gerda Philipsborn) and students of Jamia Millia Islamia. *Source:* Image courtesy of the Photo Archives, Jamia's Premchand Archives and Literary Centre, Jamia Millia Islamia.

discussed to appreciate and understand the importance of minority histories in times of majoritarian nationalism in South Asia and Europe.<sup>104</sup>

## Conclusion

To uncover the neglected history of German Jewish and Indian Muslim encounters, in this article I have explored three individual life histories. In so doing, I have eschewed focus on the historical experience of such minority communities in their capacity as collectives—whether, say, as refugees or migrants—because even amid the crises in which their members were involved, we must not overlook the small voices and the individual stories that played out within the larger upheavals of the twentieth century. Even though these are—to be sure—histories of uprooted and exiled actors, the ideas that characterize their narratives nonetheless played the most creative role in building dialogic knowledge, both institutionally and individually.

<sup>104</sup> Mushirul Hasan and Rakshanda Jalil (eds), *Partners in Freedom: Jamia Millia Islamia* (New Delhi: Niyogi Books, 2012). Laurence Gautier, 'A laboratory for a composite India? Jamia Millia Islamia around the time of partition', *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 54, no. 1, 2020, pp. 199–249.



The intellectual engagement between the minority communities on which this article has focused and its centrality to knowledge production in various fields is intended to help us think about the Jewish and Muslim questions through the comparative framework of what I have called 'minor history'. In so doing, it has sought to allow us to not only explore minority connections but also to understand the individuals who mutually shaped each other's knowledge and politics. In the case of German Jewish studies, we need to further explore the importance of South Asian Islam and Muslims in the forging of the discipline, especially during the twentieth century, as well as its implications for the idea of Zionism and the possibility of inter-religious coexistence in the project of transforming Palestine into a Jewish homeland.<sup>105</sup> Similarly, the prominent role of Jewish actors in three leading Muslim institutions in colonial India also sheds new light on the cosmopolitan history of these institutions and the knowledge they produced. This raises larger questions about the place of German-speaking European Jewish orientalists and their relation to both majoritarian German colonialism and orientalism. We need to revisit the question of European orientalism from the standpoint of the minor history of Jewish orientalism, not just in terms of the appeal of Islam but of what Islam and Muslims in South Asia meant to German-speaking European Jews. The question of 'Jewish assimilation' and 'Muslim integration' already connected both communities well before the national project and homeland resolution of Israel and Pakistan. While Horovitz attempted to learn from the model of coexistence embedded within South Asian Islam in order to rethink Zionism as an accommodative academic and social system, Weiss created another image of Islam as his alternative to Zionism.<sup>106</sup> As Sadia Abbas argues, European orientalism and German romanticism were at the heart of Asad's anti-Zionism and shaped his support for Pakistan and can be seen as a desire for 'alternative geographies' outside of European modernity because Zionism, with its roots in European Jewish modernity, could not offer him this alternative.<sup>107</sup> Despite his active role in shaping such a vision of an Islamic nation-state, Asad was also left disappointed in Pakistan as a national project for a Muslim homeland in the subcontinent. He moved to the United States and eventually chose to spend his last years in Andalusian Spain with its shared Jewish-Muslim past. Asad's grave in the cemetery of Granada, Philipsborn's grave in the graveyard of Jamia Millia Islamia, and Horovitz's grave in Frankfurt memorializes the possibilities and failures of connected Jewish-Muslim minor histories between Europe, the Middle East and South Asia.

<sup>105</sup> Razak Khan, 'Knowledge in transit: global encounters and transformation in Magnus Hirschfeld's travelogue', *History of Knowledge Blog*, 9 November 2019.

<sup>106</sup> Sadia Abbas, 'Itineraries of Conversion: Judaic Paths to Muslim Pakistan'. In *Beyond Crisis: Re-evaluating Pakistan*, (ed.) Naveeda Khan (New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 344–369. For another reading of the conversion narrative, see Marcia Hermansen, 'Roads to Mecca: conversion narratives of European and Euro-American Muslims', *The Muslim World*, vol. 89, no. 1, January 1999, pp. 56–89. Rabin Abraham, 'Muhammad Asad's conversion to Islam as a study in Jewish self-orientalization', *Jewish Social Studies*, vol. 22, no.1, Fall 2016, pp. 1–28.

<sup>107</sup> Abbas, 'Itineraries of Conversion', p. 355.

In Jacqueline Rose's analysis of 'Zionism as psychoanalysis', she calls Zionism 'the most wonderful exemplar of the work of the psyche in the constitution of the modern nation-state'.<sup>108</sup> Horovitz, Weiss, and Philipsborn experienced the identification and negation of the Jewish homeland project based on their individual subjectivities, life journeys, and unconscious desires. As Faisal Devji has shown, Pakistan emerged as the 'Muslim twin' of the Jewish state during the interwar years.<sup>109</sup> He insightfully concludes that '[p]erhaps minority peoples, with their effort to assume political universality by taking the national idea to its abstract limits, can do no more than this, making for a politics of radical non-coincidence between nation and state, past and present'.<sup>110</sup> The three case studies detailed in this article represent different attempts at such a radical minor history and politics, despite and beyond religious and national boundaries.

However, the category of the minority was not without conflict, and we do have instances of Jewish-Muslim conflicts that can be found in the petition from the president of the Bombay Zionist Association regarding the communal tension between Jews and Muslims in Travancore-Cochin.<sup>111</sup> The politics and paradox of minority identity came together when Jews demanded minority status and recognition in the Central Provinces in colonial India.<sup>112</sup> The history of European Jewish and South Asian Muslim entanglements in the colony is a testimony to the problems and possibilities of studying minorities as the makers of minor cosmopolitanisms both in the metropolis and, more crucially, in the colony and post-colony, and for writing global history from a minority perspective. This article has brought to light three individual life stories that provide insight into the global history of entanglement of knowledge production and its transnational circulation. Furthermore, the focus on Jewish and Muslim minorities allows us to look at how they were in dialogue with one another while also shaping each other's worldview. This provides another perspective on Muslim and Jewish intellectuals, educational institutions, and the connected history of knowledge between Europe, the Middle East, and South Asia.

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<sup>108</sup> Jacqueline Ross, *The Question of Zion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), p. 68.

<sup>109</sup> Devji, *Muslim Zion*, pp. 20–23.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>111</sup> File No. 5(16)-P/50, 1950, Ministry of States, Political Branch, Nos 1–2. NAI.

<sup>112</sup> File No. 14/28/35, 1935, Government of India, Home Department. Establishment. NAI.

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