

UC Berkeley

UC Berkeley Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

Ignaz Goldziher and the Rise of Islamwissenschaft as a 'Science of Religion'

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/6vx7w906>

Author

Moshfegh, David

Publication Date

2012

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

Ignaz Goldziher and the Rise of *Islamwissenschaft* as a ‘Science of Religion’

By

David Moshfegh

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in

History

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California at Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Martin Jay, Chair

Professor Thomas Laqueur

Professor John Efron

Professor Vasudha Dalmia

Fall 2012

Abstract

Ignaz Goldziher and the Rise of *Islamwissenschaft* as a ‘Science of Religion’

by

David Moshfegh

Doctor of Philosophy in History

Professor Martin Jay, Chair

This study discusses the rise of *Islamwissenschaft* as a ‘science of religion’ in the reformist scholarship of the Jewish Orientalist, Ignaz Goldziher. The ‘science of religion’ tradition in nineteenth-century European scholarship was a historicist discourse that approached religious traditions critically and with the tools of critical scholarship. But, it did so *not* to debunk their sacred claims, but to argue that their *religious* meaning was present not in their traditionalist and transcendental demarcation of themselves but in their teleological development as they moved towards the definition and realization of ‘religion’ itself. All religions had something of religion in them and there was religious progress in human history towards ‘religion’ as such. Hence, comparative religious history—History as such—was made a medium for gauging the character of the progress and purification involved in the ultimate fulfillment of ‘religion’, the relative capacity of different religions for such progress and critical reformist prescriptions that functioned as the completion of this process itself. The ‘science of religion’ began as a liberal Protestant theological historicism, but its bid to project and idealize Christianity as ‘religion’ found, over the course of the nineteenth century, an increasing number of competitive historicist rivals. There developed a humanist historicism, out of this stream of thought, that projected the self-conscious divinity of humanity as the end of History and so a ‘religion of man’. Soon, Protestant historicism was further flanked by a Jewish historicism that worked towards the reformist idealization of Judaism’ as the ultimate universal faith of humanity. The fundamental thesis of this study is that the emergence *Islamwissenschaft* in Goldziher’s scholarship represented another such competitive instantiation of the ‘science of religion’. Emerging from the reformist Jewish tradition of scholarship, Goldziher shifted his project of the critical historicization and idealization of Judaism as ‘religion’ to Islam. *Islamwissenschaft* was a bid to project Islam as ‘religion’, which Goldziher embraced on the basis of a universalist belief in purified monotheism as the telos of History, which viewed both the Jewish and Islamic heritage as capable of idealization to this end. Admittedly, the emergence and development of *Islamwissenschaft* have not generally been understood in this fashion. Rather, the discipline has often been seen as having propagated essentialist theologocentric conceptions of Islam and Islamic history that reduced everything in it to a totalizing ‘Islam’. Or, it has been viewed as also another vector of the Philological Orientalism of the nineteenth century and its invidious essentialist distinction between Semites and Aryans, ‘Islam’ being then made the paradigmatic ‘Semitic’ religion. In this study, I will show that Goldziher’s scholarship and his founding of

Islamwissenschaft were meant in fact precisely to counter such essentialist understandings of Islam and Islamic history. The critical historicization and idealization of Islam meant showing that Islamic law had in fact never functioned as a positive law but rather as a reified ideal used for ideological purposes of rationalization. One had, through critical historicization, to recover sociopolitical and cultural developments in their own right, if Islam was to achieve its full religious role: one had to overcome Islam as ‘ideology’ for Islam to become ‘religion’. As for the claim that *Islamwissenschaft* represented a reiteration of invidious nineteenth-century racial distinctions, I demonstrate that the singular result of Goldziher’s reformist reading of the Islamic heritage was to replace the Semitic/Aryan dichotomy as the fundamental framework of Orientalist scholarship with a universalist historicist one between the Medieval and Modern. It was on the basis of this division that Goldziher engaged ‘dialectically’ with the Islamic modernism of his time: the traditionalist consciousness that viewed Islam in terms of a transcendental unity and origin, he argued, had to be displaced in favor of the critical historicist examination of Islam’s development, if its providential destiny was to be realized. It is, however, also on this basis that I emphasize Goldziher’s scholarship must be viewed within the broader Islamicist context of his time and not read out of it. For, the same reformist, modernist thinking that, in Goldziher, envisaged reform as the ownmost potential of the Islamic heritage and an inherently internal process radically opposed to any European imperialist intervention, could in the hands of other scholarly colleagues be turned to the purposes of colonial politics.

This work is dedicated to my parents, Helen and Youssef Moshfegh, who have lived my life over a thousand times

Preface	iv
Acknowledgments	x

Introduction

Contemporary Approaches to <i>Islamwissenschaft</i> : The Orientalism Debates and the ‘Third Way’	2
---	---

Part I: The Advent of ‘Religion’ and *Islamwissenschaft*

I. The Critique of Theologocentrism and <i>Islamwissenschaft</i>	26
II. ‘Religion’ and the Protestant Science of Religion	33
III. ‘Religion’, ‘Culture’, ‘Nationality’	46
IV. The ‘Religion of Man’ and the <i>Tübingen Schule</i>	72
V. <i>Wissenschaft des Judentums</i> : Competitive Historicism vs. Jewish Orientalism	111

Part II: Ignaz Goldziher’s Prophetic Scholarship: The Emergence of *Islamwissenschaft* as a ‘Science of Religion’

VI. <i>Islamwissenschaft</i> as a Shift in Orientalist Scholarship from Philological to Universalist Historicism	171
VII. Goldziher’s Reformist Reading of Islam and Islamic History	211

Part III: Goldziher's Dialectical Modernism

VIII. Goldziher's <i>Islamwissenschaft</i> as a Reformist Practice	260
IX. Goldziher's Turn to <i>Islamwissenschaft</i>	305
Conclusion	357
Bibliography	375

Preface

In the last decade, since the September 11 attacks, 'religion' has assumed a higher prominence and public profile in world politics as well as in the internal dynamics of many societies across the globe, certainly in the United States and in the Islamic world. It is not simply that the old divisions of the modern world between 'secularists' and the 'religious', long attenuated, have reemerged. These divisions have taken on new and unprecedented forms. Many in the world today brandish religion or their religion as the 'solution' to the fundamental problems their societies face, culturally, socially and even politically. On the other hand, a vociferous if outnumbered group brand religion as the root of all the conflicts and problems of society and the world. These new divisions and the new global situation they reflect have been decades in the making. They made the September 11 attacks the amplifier they became, not the other way around. The roots of these divisions go back at least to the sputtering out of the Cold War and the ideological divide and focus it had entrenched across the globe on whether socialism or capitalism was to be the future of Modernity. The future of Modernity apparently decided, it became in fact opaque and this opacity is one explanation for the growing faith put in religion as a source of trust. More important that even this consideration has been the growing reconfiguration of the nation-state away from its position as the fundamental unit and source of cultural identity and political legitimacy in the modern world. In the late nineteenth century, the expansive internationalization of the world economy and market led to a gargantuanization of the nation-state beyond the older claims of territoriality, the racialization of its identity, the struggle for imperial expansion and protected imperial markets, all in a bid to maintain its position in a now globally competitive environment. After the world wars of the twentieth century, for which these developments were in large part responsible, our own 'globalization' at the turn of the twenty-first century has been attended by a reorientation of the nation-state within broader, international though as yet mostly loosely defined and unelaborated frameworks. 'Religion' has also stepped into the fissures of identity produced by this new global situation. It has acted as a 'solution' in this sense, while sowing all manner of new conflicts of its own. In any case, the world faced by religion today and the role it is playing within it is new. In 1945, it would have been preposterous to suggest the root of the world's problems, much less its solution, lay in religion. In 1968, the claim would have still been a strange one.

What I want to highlight here is a certain moderate, educated response to the heated encounter between secularists and the so-called 'fundamentalists', who in the nineteenth century would have been dubbed 'fanatics'. One will easily come across this moderate position in everyday discussions of religion and in the popular media, though not so in academia as this kind of debate is mostly absent from it and its fora. Above all, what I'm calling 'the moderate position' attempts to defend religion or, namely, a particular religion from secularist attacks on it by marking the monopoly presumed by fundamentalists with regards to it an abuse of religion and the latter's totalizing, 'extra-religious' reduction of all to religion as the cause of such abuse. The two examples I provide come from American popular culture. In the United States, the full-

throated secularist position has little political outlet but has nonetheless found a niche within popular media. The television host, Bill Maher, has become the most prominent face of an unabashed secularist standpoint in contemporary American popular culture. On his show, Maher regularly rails against the Christian Right and their role in American social and political life. But, Maher is hardly 'sensitive' about the claims of other religions or even the merely pious: he just as regularly lets his audience know that religion and its blinkered dogmatic attitude *is* the fundamental root of most contemporary conflicts and problems in the world and the reason why we have not come to a reasoned and reasonably hedonistic enjoyment, without eternal hangovers, of what the modern world at least can give us in this life.

Moreover, for Maher and most contemporary avowed secularists, like their European counterparts of the nineteenth century, it is 'Islam' that remains the great 'untamed' religion. As he imagines it, Christianity may be attempting to regain its social position and hold over people's minds in the West. But, Islam is actually still in charge in the 'Islamic world'. In his recently released film, *Religulous*, Maher mocks a coterie of religions and bandies long established faiths with contemporary laughable ones for such effect.¹ After a good bit of fun with Jesus and his divinity, Maher eventually also makes his way to Islam. Here, however, he experiences a small backlash from the hip, in no sense right-wing or 'fundamentalist, Muslims to whom he speaks: they tell him that he is confusing the horrible political abuses of Islam with the religion itself. Maher is not convinced and thinks they are only being defensive because he is criticizing as an outsider. My second example is more surprising. In *Rick Steves' Iran*, an important PBS special given the present geo-political situation, the traveler writer, Rick Steves, goes to Iran and gives his American audience a culturally and historically informed but also a more intimate and human perspective on Iran than the menacing one on the evening news. At one point, he asks the government minder accompanying his crew about the endless, polarized conflict between the Shi'a and Sunni in Islam's past and present. The government minder of the Islamic Republic—the 'Islamic Republic' mind you—enlightens Steves that he should not adopt a reductionist perspective, that the Shi'i/Sunni conflict was not a religious but a political one. He then gives the rather convenient example of Ireland struggling for autonomy against the British Empire as the proper paradigm for understanding the matter.

This moderate, anti-reductionist defense of religion may be termed an 'anthropological' defense of it, to the extent that it approaches religion at the level of historical experience and argues that what can go wrong with religion is historical abuse or the improper understanding and use of the experience it actually is and is supposed to be. The purpose of this study is to show that this 'anthropological' defense of religion *and* of Islam has a massive and earth-shattering nineteenth-century history behind it, which it would be difficult to reconstruct from these residues left in our everyday discussions of religion. The 'anthropologization' of religion itself is of course an older phenomenon that goes back to the Enlightenment and has systematically shifted tenor numerous times in the intervening comparative, philosophical and theological study of religion, with no end in sight. Such 'anthropologization' of religion has not been nor can it be understood as any simply anti-religious or simply secularizing tendency. The anthropological defense of religion I have cited is a case in point. But, it is a quite distinct and crucial historical species of the 'anthropologization' phenomenon as a whole, because beating within heart of the anthropological defense of religion is, though the note generally goes undetected today, a *historicist idealization* of 'religion'. For, the very idea that 'religion'

¹ *Religulous*, Dir. Larry Charles. Prod. by Thousand Wonders, 2008.

encompasses fundamentally a healthy and vital experience that may however be instituted and deployed historically in improper fashion and abused suggests that it may also be *historically* understood and realized in its purity.

In the nineteenth century, there emerged in the philosophical and theological study of religion a scholarly tradition that came to be known as the ‘science of religion’. The proud products of nineteenth-century scholarship, the critical historicist and comparative study of religion as well as mythology all developed within its framework. What the nineteenth-century scientists of religion proffered were comparative and historicist accounts of the *religious* element in its progress through the religions and religious history of humanity, *and* the promise that their own critical historical study was the means of the proper understanding and realization of pure ‘religion’. As I argue in this work, our very category of ‘religion’, which I have so freely and ahistorically thrown about in these pages, arose in this nineteenth-century liberal Protestant conception of ‘religion’ as a distinct sphere of human experience, more *and* less progressively represented in humanity’s religions and religious history, whose Historical telos was its fulfillment in its purity. The ‘science of religion’ then, far from any secularist debunking of ‘religion’, involved historicist idealization and *production* of it that parsed religious traditions and canons against the history of their formation to argue their promise lay not in any presumed immaculate origin, but in their end, as divulged critically. No doubt more surprising for the reader, the fundamental thesis of this study, in laying out the trajectory of the ‘science of religion’ in nineteenth-century European scholarship, is that *Islamwissenschaft* (the Scientific Study of Islam) arose in its second half as a science of religion aimed at the teleological purification and idealization of the Islamic heritage.

The ‘science of religion’ also first emerged in the early nineteenth century as an anthropological defense of ‘religion’, which as I have been arguing, was also the historicist idealization and genesis of it. The thinker most single-handedly responsible for this defense and genesis was the Protestant theologian, Friedrich Schleiermacher. It was Schleiermacher who first produced a historicist defense of religion against Enlightenment reductionist treatments of it. Enlightenment thinkers made a radical distinction between natural or rational religion and the positive, historical religions of humanity and reduced the former to proper rational beliefs about God and soul or to morality as such, while critiquing all actual religions as an as yet immature philosophy or moral community. Schleiermacher, by contrast, insisted that ‘religion’ was a fundamental human experience in its own right, or in fact *the* fundamental human experience to be found only in the actual religions and religious history of humankind. This history meanwhile he saw as one of progress, namely, as the major scene of History, its telos the progressive uncovering of ‘religion’ in its purity. In Schleiermacher, the ultimate subject of this progress was to be Protestant Christianity which he argued alone had the capacity for the full idealization, to become fully ‘religion’.

The impetus Schleiermacher gave to the ‘science of religion’ underwent radical transformation and multiplication in the course of the nineteenth century, as the fateful articulation of the ‘uncovering’ of ‘religion’ and what it exactly meant became the subject of trenchant scholarly, philosophical and religious divides. A first breach was made when Left Hegelian humanism claimed that the uncovering of ‘religion’ meant that it was not ideal religion that was ‘covered’ by all-too human realities but that ‘religion’ was in fact the cover for divine humanity, who would claim its scared History in arriving at self-consciousness at its end. But, the ‘religion of man’ was only one off-shoot of the burgeoning ‘science of religion’. Other Protestant thinkers however applied Hegel to Schleiermacher to develop a new critical historicist

methodology. This new methodology focused on the canonical corpus and tradition of Christianity to argue that this homogenized whole, assumed to be one in its transcendental unity, had in fact involved a dialectical process of historical formation and ongoing reception, whose very internal telos was said to be a critical historicization and reconstruction. This critical telos would reveal and enact Christianity's progressive purification towards its ideal, providential destiny. Protestant thinkers however did not remain alone in their bid at the critical historicist idealization of their religious tradition. Jewish thinkers soon followed their lead and projected a purified Judaism as meant to play the role of 'religion', namely, the universal faith of mankind. The fundamental thesis of this study is that *Islamwissenschaft* (the Scientific Study of Islam) emerged in the work of Ignaz Goldziher, a reformist Jewish scholar, as a further such iteration of the 'science of religion'. *Islamwissenschaft* began as a reformist bid at the critical idealization of the Islamic heritage to arrive at Islam as 'religion', the purified monotheism that would be the faith of humanity.

Again, admittedly, this thesis will come as a surprise to a large number of readers and scholars who are used to thinking that the unenlightened 'theologocentrism' of the secularist position cited above, one viewing the Muslim world and Islamic history as an 'untamed Islamic totality', forms also the historical background of the European study of Islam until their own critical rejoinders to it. In other words, in order to illuminate the emergence of *Islamwissenschaft* as a 'science of religion', we must face the contemporary historiographic situation of the debates about Orientalism and the claims therein that the European Orientalist study of Islam has involved inherently the production of invidious essentializations of it for invidious purposes. Hence, in the introductory chapter of this study, I examine the different contemporary approaches to *Islamwissenschaft*, in order to address the historiographic reception of the field in the context of the 'Orientalism debates' of the last decades. I argue that virtually all the parties to the debate—Edward Said, Bernard Lewis and those now dreaming of a 'third way' beyond them—end up with rather reductionist perspectives on the Islamicist field. I conclude that the fundamental questions asked in the debate cannot and should not be shirked or bracketed, but that actually taking them on in a historical manner will lead to different conclusions than those given thus far. They will lead not to using banners like 'imperialism' or 'knowledge' to try to capture the Islamicist field. Instead, they will show that Islamicist debates and agendas focused squarely on critical historicist analyses of religious, legal and cultural development that asked what it is to be modern and how one was to modernize. More, that historically splits developed between Islamicists on these question along fault-lines that are still with us.

In the first part of this study, I turn directly to trace the roots of *Islamwissenschaft* as a nineteenth-century 'science of religion'. I begin by revisiting once more the accusations that *Islamwissenschaft* was a 'theologocentric' discipline that totalized Muslim societies in terms of Islam. I explain, however, that such accusations stem from a lack of understanding of the dynamics of the nineteenth-century tradition of the 'science of religion' to which, in their anti-essentialism, the accusers themselves belong. Hence, here I reconstruct the emergence and configuration of discourse about 'religion' in nineteenth-century intellectual history from Schleiermacher onwards. I argue that this discourse involved a teleological analytic of 'religion' that sought to purify 'religion' critically from all the sociopolitical prerogatives that had historically allegedly masqueraded ideologically under its banner. And, that this discourse of 'religion' or, as it came to be known, 'science of religion', fragmented, in the course of the nineteenth century, competitively into Left Hegelian historicism, Protestant historicism,

Wissenschaft des Judentums and, ultimately, *Islamwissenschaft*. Thus, as I read it, the ‘science of religion’, far from an essentialist discourse, was rather in fact the first post-accommodationist ‘ideology critique’ founded on a distinction between religious theory and practice. By highlighting the divergences between traditionalist religious ideology, in its essentialist self-understanding, and its historical formation, ongoing reception and deployment, these thinkers sought to chart the teleological process whereby ‘religion’ was finally to arrive at its proper meaning and end. In fact, it was the Left Hegelian critique of religious ideology that Marx then generalized.

In the second part of the study, I move to Goldziher’s own scholarly trajectory to account for the emergence of *Islamwissenschaft* as a ‘science of religion’ in his work. I argue that not only did Goldziher’s scholarship not follow the pattern of the dominant Philological Orientalism of its time, but that his whole scholarly career was defined by diametrical opposition to it. Namely, there was a philological historicist brand of the ‘science of religion’ that defined the teleological trajectory of ‘religion’ in terms of the very different role played by the Semites and Aryans within it. Semites were said to be more prone to monotheism because of the very nature of their language and so they’d gotten ‘religion’ more right at the beginning. But, the proper understanding and universalization of ‘religion’ that was the culmination of Christianity had been the work and was to be much more the work of the Aryans. Goldziher throughout his scholarship worked to displace this philological with a universalist historicism moving towards a critically purified monotheism as its end. In his initially reformist focus on the Jewish tradition, he in fact sought to show that the Jews were in no sense ‘instinctive’ monotheists. They had had mythology, like all other peoples, as this was the universal beginning of all human culture. Monotheism was an achievement over time and its first full ideal potential had been announced in Prophetic Judaism, which Goldziher saw as the locus for the coming critical idealization and fulfillment of Judaism as ‘religion’. However, the rejection of both the Hungarian Jewish and national communities of Goldziher’s prescriptions for them, whose consequences will be fully evaluated in the third part of the study, he, in the course of his life transferred his reformist project from the Jewish to the Islamic heritage. Goldziher, in any case, always viewed both as monotheistic traditions capable of idealization in a way that Christianity was not, and his capacity to make this shift itself displays the universalist character of his project.

It was in his reformist reading of the Islamic heritage that Goldziher definitively displaced the Semitic/Aryan distinction as the organizing principle of the Orientalist scholarship of his time with a universalist historicist division between the Medieval and Modern. Goldziher envisioned the religious growth of Islam and Islamic history in terms of the canonical formation of an Islamic Orthodoxy that had proven capable of assimilating the ideal aspects of ‘religion’ within itself, but had done so in a traditionalizing and uncritical manner that sought to read all development back into the origin. This traditionalizing attitude had then eventually led to the ‘medieval’ abuses Goldziher associated with the function of Islamic law in traditional Muslim societies. A reified ideal that pretended to regulate all, Islamic law, Goldziher argued, had come to function as an ideological language for the rationalization of sociopolitical and cultural realities and changes that were merely legitimated through it. Only a critical reconstruction of the Islamic heritage and of the history of Muslim societies could change Islam from ‘ideology’ to Islam as ‘religion’.

In the final part of this study and in the Conclusion, I turn to examine *Islamwissenschaft* as a reformist practice not simply in Goldziher’s scholarship, but in his life. I show that Goldziher engaged critically and ‘dialectically’ with the Islamic modernism of his time

and insisted that while traditionalist Islam had always been and would continue to be capable of assimilating historical changes within itself, including those of the modern world, that the larger modernist, reformist and ideal task entrusted to it required something quite different. It enjoined namely a fully critical historicist reconstruction of the Islamic heritage, one that would be capable of moving towards its purified destiny rather than rationalizing the present or reading fundamental changes into the supposedly immaculate origin. Goldziher I will show must, in his reformist, modernist approach to the Muslim past and Muslim present, be understood in the context of the other pioneering scholars who, alongside him, founded the new discipline. He stood out in that he viewed Muslims as protagonists in the progress of History in a way the pedagogic critiques of Muslim self-understanding by fellow Islamicists did not. Yet, it is only in the constellation of also their Islamicist practice that one can understand Goldziher's own work and life. Hence, in explaining the circumstances that led Goldziher to shift his reformist project from a primary focus on Judaism to Islam, I again warn against attempts at 'Goldziher-exceptionalism' that would read him out of his time. In this spirit, I conclude by showing how Goldziher and his scholarly partner, Snouck Hurgronje, could share the same modernist and reformist perspective, while the one viewed Muslim modernization as an internal potential of the Islamic heritage itself, the other the result of external political forces, the one understanding this modernization in a patently anti-imperialist fashion, while the other turned it to the purposes of colonial policy.

Acknowledgments

I have been waiting to write these acknowledgments for a long time now. Unfortunately, as I now come to them, I lack the time necessary to do justice to all those I must thank. In any case, the debt I owe to so many cannot be repaid by mere words. I want first to thank the staff at the various archives I carried out my research, namely, those at *Geheimes Staatsarchiv* in Dahlem, the Oriental Collections of the University of Leiden, the Goldziher Room at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest and the Library of the *Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft* in Halle. Without the help of a fellow graduate student, Judit Bagi, at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, I simply would not have been able to accomplish much during my time in Budapest. She actually petitioned her colleagues to allow me more time with the source materials and procured all the necessary documents for me to use Goldziher's correspondence. I hope, if I find myself in the future in a position to help a fellow scholar, that I might muster the same generosity. In Halle, Frau Guhlmann actually shared her office with me, as I pressed through Hartmann's correspondence on a very tight schedule. I thank her and hope I will be able to spend more time during my next visit to Halle.

I want, in terms of the completion of this project, particularly to thank the members of my dissertation committee. Professor Martin Jay, my dissertation chair, has shown a great deal of patience and good will to me over more years than I would like to count. His good humor has shown me what truly counts in the intellectual realm of scholarship but also more generally. I am still learning from him about how to ask the right questions and not lose sight of the bigger picture. As will become a mantra in this brief space allowed to thank those who have meant the most, this project would simply not have been completed without his support. I hope to be able to continue to earn it. I want next to thank Professor Thomas Laqueur, who has also been alongside me from the moment I entered Berkeley as a much younger person. My first class was with Professor Laqueur, and when I was asked, during the exit survey about which class during my time at Berkeley I enjoyed the most, I happily chose that first one. Professor Laqueur has taught me a great deal about how to be a historian, while keeping one's ideas and interests open and one's humanity about one...he has passed on wisdom of long lineage about the historian as one suspended between the human and the cosmic. I hope he will one day enjoy my work as much as I do his; it will happen Professor Laqueur! I want to thank Professor John Efron for struggling through earlier incarnations of this dissertation that had in them the capacity to damage even the strongest of souls. He has always provided the most generous interpretations of my shortcomings and so allowed me to overcome them. I continue to learn from him about the crucial importance of Jewish Orientalist scholarship in understanding the European study of Islam. Finally, Professor Vasudha Dalmia, formerly of the Berkeley South Asian Studies Department very graciously took on this project at the last moment and stayed with it faithfully to the end. I have learned from her always to keep in mind the ambivalences in the Orientalist project and not to forget that demonization is not the means of overcoming them. Her new chair in Modern Hinduism at Yale proves how much can be accomplished by a sober approach to the European encounter with non-Europeans.

There are two other faculty members I want to thank, who have become like family for me. I want to thank Professor Ira Lapidus, whom I met late in my graduate career but whom I now consider as the pivotal figure in having brought me to the happy point of writing these lines. He has always seen the best in me, when I myself could not and others did not try. There has not

been one occasion where our meetings did not leave me uplifted and with renewed belief in myself and the possibilities of humanist scholarship. The dissertation in its present incarnation is essentially his idea. He has always shown me possibilities when I thought none existed. He is a great scholar and a great human being and he has taught me one must never stop trying to be both. He himself belongs to the Islamicist tradition that began with Goldziher and represents its open, universal and human point of view. Meeting him has been one of the great strokes of good luck in my life, which I do not plan to do without. In this same breath, I would like to thank Professor Joel Beinin and Miriam Beinin. The two of them have been surrogate parents for me since my Stanford years. I would simply would not have survived these past years, much less completed this project, without their constant support. Joel is for me one of those representatives of the Prophetic Judaism that Goldziher believed in, and in that sense, this work belongs to him. Miriam I will simply never be able to repay for the constant love she has shown me. I love her with all of my heart.

My fellow graduate students have almost always been the best thing about graduate school for me. I thank here two great friends whom I hope to grow old with in life and in scholarship. Heather Ferguson and I continue to be, to the surprise of some, the chagrin of others, completely tied at the hip. We made a pact with each other through some difficult years in our graduate years to help one another as human beings as well as intellectually. I have sought to honor that pact and our enduring friendship is a sign that what we have created has a beautiful life of its own. There is virtually no part of my life or work that does not have Heather's imprint. I hope that she and her husband, Jerry, will continue forever to be a part of my life. I want also to thank Lena Salaymeh, who besides a simply hilarious person has been the bibliographic conscience of this work. Without her, it would be even more out of date before even being born. I honestly do not know of a person more generous with her time and her commitment to others. She is the one who has actually turned in all of my dissertation materials, while I have been working in Spain. Though she might disagree, I see her work very much within the line of Judeo-Islamic scholarship represented by Goldziher and I believe it to be one of our greatest and only hopes for a better future.

There are many other faculty I must thank but don't have the time to devote the sufficient space to here. Professor Margaret Anderson at Berkeley first gave me the idea for this project and her sheer enthusiasm kept me going for years when there was little other fuel. It is altogether fitting that she is married to Professor Sheehan at Stanford, who was one of my favorite teachers there and wrote one of my recommendations for graduate school. I thank her for her pedagogic seriousness and love her infectious manner. I want to thank the faculty advisors in the Berkeley History department who helped a great deal through some difficult times. Both Professors Andrew Barshay and Maureen Miller went beyond the call of duty to treat me with personal care. I owe a very great deal to them in now having completed the program. Professor Cathryn Carson was essentially the only anchor I had in my first years at Berkeley and, without her, I honestly don't know where I would be today. I hope she will take this work as an imperfect, but heartfelt tribute to all of her efforts and trust. I want to thank further Professor Mark Mancall at Stanford, who first put me on the path to graduate school in History. I would also like to thank Professor Sumathi Ramaswamy at Duke, who, while not directly involved in this dissertation, has always acknowledged my contributions in other venues with greater generosity than I deserve. I mention her here because her name makes mine sound better by the mere association! Finally, it is such a privilege for me to thank Professor Emily Gottreich, who has been like a big sister to me at Berkeley; and, though I should be more formal,

I want to let her know that I love her dearly and have learned a great deal from her. Her great and important classes on Jewish/Muslim relations inspired me to learn more about my own Iranian Jewish heritage from a scholarly standpoint and I hope now never to stop learning more about the pivotal history of the Jewish people amongst Muslims.

I want finally to thank friends and family who have lived through this whole tumultuous period in my life and allowed me to come out on the other side. First, I'll mention my colleagues at IE University, Professor Rolf Strøm-Olsen and Julia McAnallen, who have treated me more like friends than anything else, have made me feel altogether at home on a different continent and given me the room to finish the dissertation on good time. I am so lucky to have gotten to know them. Rolf especially has essentially changed my life by deciding to hire me! Thank you! Then, there are my friends Arnab Chanda, Arundhati and Shalin Parmar and 'our' Ma and Baba (Professor Anuradha Chanda and Amajit Chanda), as well as my very good friend, Daniel Green and his family. We have been the closest friends since my Stanford days. They probably thought they would never see this day. The life of graduate students is strange to professionals and their unstinting loyalty has meant the world to me. I end by thanking the people who mean the most to me in the world, my family. We live in a world where things look good on the surface and the closer one comes, the more 'issues' and problems one encounters. My experience with my parents and my family has been the opposite. The older I grow, the more I admire my parents and realize that they are the greatest people I have ever met, whether in books or real life. I very much love my sister, Lili Geller, and her husband Damon. I just wish I had more time with my niece and nephew! I end also by thanking my cousin, Mark, who has been a great family find for me.

Introduction

The Orientalism Debates and the ‘Third Way’: Contemporary Approaches to the History of *Islamwissenschaft*

The Argument

The scientific and academic fields first formed in the closing decades of the nineteenth century—the age of disciplinary proliferation—have become, in the last decades, subject to radical questioning, both as to the assumptions and the dynamics underlying their particular specialization and their claim to represent the progressive accumulation and march of ‘objective’ knowledge. Nowhere has been this more true than in the case of areas of cross-cultural study, in which the notion of epistemic privilege in conceptualizing the traditions and practices of (non-European) others has been increasingly contested. And, few areas of humanistic scholarship awaken more controversy and dispute today in this regard than the European Orientalist heritage. In this chapter, I discuss the emergence of *Islamwissenschaft* in the German Orientalist scholarship of the last decades of the nineteenth century vis-à-vis the available approaches to it in the contemporary literature, which is to say, with respect to the debates about Orientalism that have come to surround the subject. A point I will touch on again and again is that a history of *Islamwissenschaft* today cannot bracket or skirt the vehement polemics that have raged in the last decades over the Orientalist legacy and that have rendered the Islamicist field a ‘disputed discipline’.

With the advent of post-colonial thought, and particularly in the aftermath of the publication of Edward Said’s *Orientalism* in 1978, the legacy of the European study of the ‘Orient’ and especially the on-going practice of what he dubbed ‘Islamic Orientalism’ became subject to vehement polemic. On one side of the ensuing ‘Orientalism debates’ stood those like Said who counted European Orientalist study (or rather objectification of the ‘natives’) the very essence, as well as hand-maiden, of Western imperialism.¹ For proponents of this approach, the Orientalist tradition represented primarily a *political* phenomenon, a main branch of nineteenth-century European racism grounding imperial ambitions and rule.² But, while such critics became increasingly prominent within the ‘Middle-East’ field—the Area Studies extension of *Islamwissenschaft* in the post-WWII American academy—they were opposed by stalwarts such as the Islamicist Bernard Lewis, who, in his early heated exchange with Said, painted the trajectory of Orientalist scholarship as characterized by the ever clearer epistemic imperative to push beyond all such alleged interested attitudes and biased motivations towards genuine humanistic understanding.³ For these defenders of the Orientalist tradition, it was to be judged as *knowledge*, raising itself beyond the merely cultural and political.⁴ Given the raging conflicts of the past decade, this characteristic knowledge/power divide has moved decidedly outside the

¹ See Said, *Orientalism* (New York: 1978; Afterword, 1994). Calling Orientalism at root a political doctrine, in the page of the text, Said thus concluded Orientalist scholarship constituted a “degradation of knowledge”. Ibid, 328.

² I will seek here, however, also to highlight the diversity within the post-colonialist standpoint that, while acknowledging Said, has been too easily lumped in with him.

³ Bernard Lewis, “The Question of Orientalism” in idem, *Islam and the West* (New York, 1993), 99-118. The essay was first published in *The New York Review of Books*, June 24, 1982.

⁴ From the start, however, the critics of Orientalism viewed Orientalist claims and ‘pretensions’ to epistemic purity and professionalism as itself something deeply political. Namely, they accused Orientalists of playing a ‘politics of Truth’, of pretending, on the basis of allegedly objective standards, to be able to intervene in an apolitical manner in political life and thus to have an especial privilege in doing so.

academy and threatened to become engrained in world politics as a shorthand for a supposed ‘civilizational’ clash between the ‘West’ and ‘Islam’ or the West and the rest.

More recently then, attempting to counter the accumulating polarizations and cross-demonization, many scholars, as magisterially represented by Suzanne Marchand’s new work, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire; Religion, Race and Scholarship*, have worked to displace the one-dimensional characterizations of the Orientalist legacy in the Orientalism debates.⁵ These proponents of a ‘third way’ have focused on the Orientalist heritage as primarily a pregnant *cultural* phenomenon: they’ve shown, for example, that one is bound to find in the academic Orientalism of the nineteenth century not simply the creation and ordering of ‘Others’, but also a search on the part of Europeans for their cultural roots and origins. This search for cultural identity came, of course, to involve all manner of self-projections, and some with quite ambivalent and invidious consequences for ‘internal outsiders’, like the Jews, who were often thereby pushed to the margins of this new story of Western civilization. But, by expanding the range of cultural identity and identification beyond the Christian and Classical canons, the Orientalist tradition is said also to have introduced the promise—if left to us to fulfill—of a more cosmopolitan, less ‘Eurocentric’ sense of self. Nonetheless, in this new scholarship too, ‘Islamic Orientalism’ has tended, no doubt with an eye to the teleologies ending in contemporary conflicts, to remain on the margins as something like the imperialist, ‘politicized’ bad apple of the Orientalist canon.

In the course of this chapter, I outline the importance of foregoing the thus far reductive treatments of the emergence and development of *Islamwissenschaft* (Islamic Studies) in the German Orientalist context of the latter part of the nineteenth century. Accordingly, I argue that *Islamwissenschaft* must be in the same breath treated as epistemic, cultural and political rather than highlighting one of these dimensions in order to disclaim or downplay the role of the others. I also seek to expose the virtually distinct reading publics created by the ‘political’, ‘epistemic’ and ‘cultural’ approaches to one another. Ultimately, my re-reading of *Islamwissenschaft* aims at a re-evaluation of the context of its emergence in German Orientalism. And, it seeks thereby to set the stage for a broader understanding of the field’s development from the closing decades of the nineteenth century to the present. Moving beyond assessments of *Islamwissenschaft* as a brand of racist politics or as apolitical, super-cultural academic knowledge, or even as the—as yet unrealized—promise of multi-cultural cosmopolitanism, I argue that the early development of the Islamicist discipline speaks to ongoing problematics and dilemmas in both the Middle-East field and in our global culture writ large. In providing such a reading, I aim to combat directly the rampant polarizations and cross-demonization characterizing our time, and demonstrate that the universal humanist creed avowed by all the other approaches—the political, epistemic and cultural—has failed to achieve this.

1.

The Orientalism debates had their roots in, and were first and primarily fought out in the field of, Middle-Eastern Studies—the Area Studies extension of the Islamicist discipline.⁶

⁵ Suzanne L. Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire; Religion, Race, and Scholarship* (New York, 2009).

⁶ See Zachary Lockman, *Contending Visions of the Middle-East; The History and Politics of Orientalism* (New York, 2004), 111-147 and Martin Kramer, *Ivory Towers on Sand; The Failure of Middle-Eastern Studies in America* (Washington, 2001). These two books encompass divergent descriptions of the Area Studies iteration of the field, from opposing sides of the Orientalism debates, the first for, the second against the post-Saidian shift in Middle-East

Conversely, ever since the Orientalism debates, critical accounts of the history of the Islamicist field have tended to spill over the banks of ‘internal history’—disciplinary practitioners reckoning about and primarily for themselves—and to evaluate their subject rather in the light of the European Orientalist tradition as a whole (not to mention also referencing cross-civilizational attitudes since the Greeks, the self- and anti-projections of Western Modernity, etc.)⁷ Outside of internal histories, in other words, a critical historical assessment of *Islamwissenschaft*, in its own right, remains a desideratum. Meanwhile, in the historiography of European Orientalism—the Islamicist field treated as part of and with respect to it—three paradigmatically potent approaches have stood out. Here, I begin with Edward Said’s text, *Orientalism*. The reason for starting with this lightning rod of the Orientalism debates is not the paucity and certainly not the uninteresting character of the previous internal history, which goes back already to the nineteenth century and some of which, in the case of the Islamicists, came to be of a quite sophisticated character and directly influenced Said’s own work.⁸ It is not even that Said was the first author to have made of European Orientalism a phenomenon of civilizational and epochal significance; as will become clear shortly, he was not. It is that Said’s *Orientalism* issued a radical and blanket condemnation of the European Orientalist tradition, calling it, as scholarship, a “degradation of knowledge”, as cultural discourse, the acme of a vast and vastly systematic racist and dehumanizing mythology.⁹ The work helped to endow the term ‘Oriental’ with the questionable and dirty aura that now hangs about it in the American academic and professional environment. And, in it, Said made a revolutionary bid to break the history of modern scholarship on the Middle-East and Islam in two, that coming before and after his exposé. Even his enemies must today admit that he largely succeeded in this bid.¹⁰ Viewed as the vanguard of a generation of scholars, many of whom found themselves already quite disenchanted with the state of affairs in the Middle-East field, Said’s arguments have by now indelibly marked the self-understanding of the succeeding generation today in charge of it and their perception of the academic heritage, Orientalist and Islamicist, bequeathed to them.¹¹ Particularly in the Anglo-

Studies. Despite fundamental disagreements, both argue that the modernization theory that dominated the field in the 1950’s was proven a failure and that this invited the shifts which eventually overtook it.

⁷ Two recent comprehensive histories of Orientalism that begin with the Greeks are Lockman, *Contending Visions of the Middle-East; The History and Politics of Orientalism*, 8-14; and Robert Irwin, *Dangerous Knowledge; Orientalism and Its Discontents* (Woodstock, 2006), 9-18. In this regard and throughout, for and against, they shadow the treatment in *Orientalism*.

⁸ For instance, J. D. J. Waardenburg’s *L’Islam dans le Miroir de l’Occident*, argued for a phenomenological approach to Islam and so used his case studies of five commanding figures in the field’s history, Goldziher, Snouck, Becker, D.B Macdonald to formulate the proper method for the study of religion as such. Róbert Simon’s *Ignác Goldziher; His Life and Scholarship as Reflected in his Works and Correspondence*, meanwhile, was a Marxist account of the meaning of Goldziher’s life and work and his place in the discipline. It sought to recapture what it saw as the revolutionary/materialist impetus of Goldziher’s early scholarship for the study of Islamic history.

⁹ See Edward Said, *Orientalism*, 328, 321-2.

¹⁰ For instance, Irwin wrote of *Orientalism*, “that book seems to me to be a work of malignant charlatanry in which it is hard to distinguish honest mistakes from willful misrepresentations.”, idem, *Dangerous Knowledge*, 4. But he said that the book wouldn’t have been written without Said’s work, ibid, 3. And, he began his chapter on him with the subheading, “The Man of the Book”, ibid, 277. Kramer also devotes a whole chapter specifically to Said, making him a pivot in the before and after he decries in the development of Middle-East Studies in America. See Kramer, Chapter 2, “Said’s Splash”, *Ivory Towers on Sand*, 27-43.

¹¹ Richard M. Eaton, “Islamic History as Global History” in M. Adas (ed.), *Islamic and European Expansion: The Forging of a Global Order* (Philadelphia, 1993), 1-35. This introductory survey assigned to undergraduates on the state of the field is brimming with a ‘they thought, but we now know’ attitude and treats the Islamicist figures dealt

American context, in the wake of the bitter polemics that, following *Orientalism*, here set off the ‘Orientalism debates’ and threatened to divide the Middle-East field, practitioners have been wont to refashion ‘internal history’ into wide-ranging historical tracts *for* and *against* Orientalism, an old-guard of defenders pitted against supporters of the post-Saidian shift.¹² Accordingly, a historical account of the development of the Islamicist discipline *cannot but* begin with Said today, because this history remains at present a fundamentally contested one, written to convert. To use Kuhn’s language, one cannot pretend that in writing of the origins and trajectory of *Islamwissenschaft*, one is describing the background to any contemporary ‘normal science’.¹³ Rather, we are at the far end of a revolutionary process, wherein the very standing and direction of ‘Western civilization’ has seemed up for grabs (which is why the idea that the Greeks might have anything to do with this could be seriously entertained).

Said’s own outlook on the Orientalist tradition came down to the fact that he viewed it as something inherently *political*. As he put it in one of the unyielding attempts in *Orientalism* to capture his stance: “My contention is that Orientalism is fundamentally a political doctrine willed over the Orient because the Orient was weaker than the West, which elided the Orient’s difference with its weakness.”¹⁴ This fundamental political animus of the West, encoded in Orientalism, Said traced back to its alleged roots in invidious ‘Western’ self-projections vis-à-vis an Eastern ‘other’ already in Greek Antiquity¹⁵ and thenceforth—the Greeks vs. the Persians, Medieval Christendom vs. Islam. Orientalism itself, however, belonged to and was, as a political doctrine, an essential and definitive aspect of ‘Western modernity’ and the era of its political, economic and cultural predominance. Orientalism, that is, was a modern secular discourse and represented the secularization of the earlier animus onto the historical plane through the nineteenth century’s racialized reduction of language, ethnicity, and destiny. The architect of Orientalism’s master narrative of ethno-philological essentialism and racialized historicism, according to Said, had been the French thinker, Ernst Renan (1823-1892). Since the latter’s preparation of the potent concoction in the 1840’s, the Orientalist doctrine had grown progressively more retrograde but remained allegedly, in its essentials, the same all the way up to Said’s writing of *Orientalism* in its latest home, the United States.¹⁶ What Renan’s racist brew

with in this work as figures almost of another planet, without due awareness of how much its own descriptions are beholden to them.

¹² Writing for the post-Saidian shift is Lockman, *Contending Visions of the Middle-East; The History and Politics of Orientalism*; writing against are Kramer, *Ivory Towers on Sand; The Failure of Middle-East Studies in America* (focusing on the Middle-East field as Area Studies post-WWII) and Irwin, *Dangerous Knowledge; Orientalism and Its Discontent* (also a disquisition on Orientalism’s place, or rather lack thereof, in Western civilization).

¹³ On ‘normal science’, see Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago, 1970), 10-42

¹⁴ Said, *Orientalism*, 204.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 56-8. It is utterly damaging that Said simply cedes the Classical Greek heritage to the ‘West’, drawing it as the fount of Western Orientalism. Of course, the Classical tradition was as crucial for the development of the ‘Islamic East’ and European Christendom’s first full encounter with the Greek heritage came through the medium of Christian, Jewish and Muslim writers in Medieval Muslim societies. The ‘East’ should be able to lay claim to the Classical heritage as much as the ‘West’. Such penchant for giving the nefarious thoughts and deeds of European Orientalism a grand lineage, extending to its self-claimed foundations, even when this distorts and diminishes one’s own history, captures the demonizing tendency of Said’s descriptions of the Orientalist tradition. Further, the book’s talk of “Western potentates”, from at least the second century B.C.E forward, moves against and not towards the increasing attempts to understand the world of Classical Antiquity in terms of its own evolving categories, which involved more complex associations than simply ones between West and East.

¹⁶ “I myself believe that Orientalism is more particularly valuable as a sign of European-Atlantic power over the Orient than it is as a veridic discourse about the Orient (which is what, in its academic or scholarly for, it claims to be). Nevertheless, what we must respect and try to grasp is the sheer knitted-together strength of Orientalist

consisted of was an essentialist, ethno-linguistic divide between the Semites and the Aryans: the Semites were made the fount of all that is undifferentiated, worshipful of the one God, born of the desert, eternal, ahistorical, artificial; the Aryans, by contrast, were identified by their recognition of difference, multiplicity, capacity for organic synthesis, mythology become science, self-definition, historicity, agency.¹⁷

For Said, nothing about this, as he took it to be, most *transparent* iteration of the Orientalist doctrine was contingent or particular. The essentialized and eternalized Semites demonstrated rather what was said to be the very essence of Orientalist scholarship, its objectification of the ‘Oriental’ and ‘Orient’ and their creation thereby. The Semites, their development arrested, their historical subjectivity denied, were, in other words, rendered *as such* the proper objects of a specifically Orientalist knowing, a kind of knowing vindicated in turn by its passing of ‘objective’ reports about their ‘objective’ characteristics.¹⁸ What this in fact involved was a dehumanization of the thus ‘Orientalized’ natives, an ‘absencing’ of them from the scenes of their own history and lives. Orientalism made the Orientals virtually impervious to themselves, subject only to Orientalist ‘knowledge’ about them. And, it thereby took the extant power differences between the West and the rest, in this case the Arab and Muslim East, and naturalized and moralized them, meaning, the Orientals could not be expected to be shaken onto the historical plane, to enter the modern world, without the ersatz agency of this West defined as Aryan.¹⁹ It is on this score that Said has been most often and most fundamentally misunderstood. When he claimed an indelible link between Orientalism and Western imperialism, he was not only suggesting that Orientalists provided imperialists the tools with which to implement and justify what they did. Said’s argument was much more radical; what he said was that Orientalism’s discursive appropriation, ‘conquest’, of the Orient was the first imperialist blow: equating robbing the natives of their historical agency with their form of knowledge, Orientalists *anticipated* and invited the imperial projects on the ground, even when they were themselves nowhere on the ground to see them through.²⁰

As for the place and role in all of this of a burgeoning Islamic Studies—what Said dubbed ‘Islamic Orientalism’—from the latter part of the nineteenth century forward, well, this was simply the latest version of the same “latent” essentialist, ethno-philological Orientalist

discourse, its very close ties to the enabling socio-economic and political institutions, and its redoubtable durability. After all, any system of ideas that can remain unchanged as teachable wisdom (in academies, books, congresses, universities, foreign-service institutes) from the period of Ernest Renan in the late 1840’s until the present in the United States must be something more formidable than a mere collection of lies.” Said, *Orientalism*, 6.

¹⁷ See especially *ibid*, 130-148,

¹⁸ See *ibid*, 96-7, 104-6, 231

¹⁹ “Orientalism assumed an unchanging Orient, absolutely different (the reasons change from epoch to epoch) from the West. And Orientalism, in its post-eighteenth century form, could never revise itself. All this makes Cromer and Balfour, as observers and administrators of the Orient, inevitable” *Ibid*, 96. See also especially *ibid*, 208, 240-243.

²⁰ “To say simply that Orientalism was a rationalization of colonial rule is to ignore the extent to which colonial rule was justified in advance by Orientalism, rather than after the fact.” *Ibid*, 39. “The nineteenth-century colonial “scramble for Africa” was by no means limited to Africa of course. Neither was the penetration of the Orient entirely a sudden, dramatic afterthought following years of scholarly study of Asia. What we must reckon with is a long and slow process of appropriation by which Europe, or the European awareness of the Orient, transformed itself from being textual and contemplative into being administrative, economic and even military.” *Ibid*, 210. Apparently, for Africa, simply calling it the ‘Dark Continent’ sufficed; but for Asia, centuries of discursive preparation were needed.

dictum.²¹ There was a difference now though: scholarship in the rest of the humanities and the social sciences had moved onto new and better things, which thus rendered ‘Islamic Orientalism’ the most “retrogressive” brand of its kind, marked by a distinct “methodological and ideological backwardness”.²² In Said’s eyes, the Islamicist shift also translated neatly enough onto the contemporary political scene. The Jewish branch of the racialized ‘Semites’, so horrendously victimized as such, had come, through Zionism, to identify with the Orientalist oppressor, particularly as the latter had come to be appropriated by and take up residence in its latest home, the United States.²³ Reductively Islamicized meanwhile by Islamic Orientalism, the Arab and Muslim East, especially the Palestinians, had now to bear the burden of the Orientalist mentality as its primary targets.²⁴ With this reading of the situation at hand, Said turned his exposé, in the last pages of *Orientalism*, into a plea for a much broader and fuller recognition of mutual humanity and cross-cultural encounter and scholarship conducted on this basis.²⁵ It was in his later work, particularly in *Culture and Imperialism*, where he tracked the imperialist thread in the high art and literature of the West from the period of its imperial ascendancy through the colonial era reactions and post-colonial responses to it, that Said turned this plea into the cornerstone of a

²¹ “The distinction I am making is really between an almost unconscious (and certainly an untouchable) positivity, which I shall call *latent* Orientalism, and the various stated views about Oriental society, languages, literatures, history, sociology, and so forth, which I shall call *manifest* Orientalism. Whatever change occurs in knowledge of the Orient is found almost exclusively in manifest Orientalism; the unanimity, stability, and durability of latent Orientalism are more or less constant [italics in text].” Ibid, 206.

²² Ibid, 261

²³ See *ibid*, 306-7

²⁴ This line of thought has now been particularly elaborated on and made into a thesis, or as he calls it the ‘Semitic hypothesis’ by Gil Andijar, *Semites; Race, Religion, Literature* (Stanford, 2008), 13-38. According to this ‘Semitic hypothesis’, the ‘Semites’, defined and understood as the ‘religious race’ in the nineteenth century, a la Renan for instance, came by way of both long term processes (*vis-à-vis* Jews) and more short term ones (*vis-à-vis* Arabs) to be in the twentieth century dissolved and bifurcated into Jews, who were de-theologized, racialized and nationalized and Arabs, who were reductively Islamicized. As Andijar has it, the Nazis represent the key exemplar and driver of these developments: they drove to its logical conclusion the racialization of the Jews and they were pioneers in the reductive Islamicization of the Arabs. Andijar next moves on to argue that the Zionists thus followed the lead of the Nazis: “In this context the historical configuration whereby within two years after the publication of *Mein Kampf* the Hebrew University of Jerusalem established the first two of its institutes may appear in a sharper light. Indeed, by distinguishing epistemologically and institutionally the study of Judaism from the study of the Arab and Islamic Orient, the Hebrew University—representative of a general Zionist outlook—initiated an academic trend that would be sealed in the post-World War II academic world of the United States”, *ibid*, 20. One can understand the satisfaction opponents of Zionism may take in claims of the type: the Jews who supported Zionism followed the lead of the Nazis. But is this a good kind of satisfaction? In any case, there is also a certain unawareness or distortion of the historical record here. Namely, those involved in the emergence of ‘Jewish Studies’, allegedly *against* ‘the study of the Arab and Islamic Orient’ were often, particularly in the United States, Jewish Islamicists, like the great historian, S. D. Goitein (1900-1985) who studied Jewish history under Islam. It was Goitein’s fundamental thesis that much of what we take to be definitive of Judaism and the Jewish people evolved and was consolidated in ‘symbiosis’—his famous word—with comparable developments in Islam and Muslim societies. The result was a ‘Judeo-Islamic civilization’, a notion he put at the forefront of his understanding of his own Zionism. Of course, such a Zionism may seem a logical contradiction for some today, but it existed, even if it was marginalized. See the group of papers that were presented at the conferences to celebrate and consolidate the coming together of the Association for Jewish Studies in America, S. D. Goitein (ed.), *Religion in a Religious Age; Proceedings of Regional Conferences Held at UCLA and Brandeis University in April, 1873* (Cambridge, 1974). See also Goitein’s primer on Judeo-Islamic Civilization: Goitein, *Jews and Arabs; Their Contacts through the Ages* (New York, 1955), a book that after more than half a century still reads as a manifesto for our times.

²⁵ See Said, *Orientalism*, 325-328

full-fledged redemptive politics.²⁶ The work suggested a tri-partite historical schema: first, in the period of its imperial ascendancy, the West, under the sign of its own numinous humanity and so Empire, absented and excluded the native from the full scope of moral consideration; second, in the era of anti-imperialist struggle and colonial liberation, the natives came to adopt and adapt Western exclusivism against it, to tout in nativisms and nationalisms their own now semi-essentialized self-understandings put to assertive effect;²⁷ third, in the post-colonial context, the natives come to take up the challenge of talking back to Empire, to reclaim the promise of a full and mutual humanity, by exposing the inhumanities committed in the name of Western pretensions to the same. *Orientalism* became thus the very exemplar of such redemptive politics. And, its particular weapon, one could now see, had been the projection of a kind of cosmic revenge: those who dehumanized others could not but become progressively dehumanized themselves. This was the import of Said's constant harping in the text on the idea of Orientalism's having become the mirror image of its claims about the Semites, incapable of development: "Of itself, in itself, as a set of beliefs, as a method of analysis, Orientalism cannot develop. Indeed, it is the doctrinal antithesis of development. Its central argument is the myth of the arrested development of the Semites."²⁸

As I will show in this study, the rise and development of *Islamwissenschaft* encompasses the antithesis of this sentence on all fronts. For now, it is crucial to note that Said's critique was not a structural one: he did not ask what kind of 'humanity' was it that could enable and participate in imperialism.²⁹ His was rather a moralizing discourse: the victims were to realize what the perpetrators had wielded. Said began profitably by questioning the political dimension of Orientalist scholarship and all scholarship as such. But, he ended by dismissing the epistemic status of Orientalist inquiry and its claim to knowledge because he did not like its politics.

Is this particular focus on the Saidian perspective simply overblown? I readily admit that *Orientalism* and Said's later work should not as such be conflated with the whole course of post-colonial theory that has grappled with comparable questions. Even, for example, a recent history of Orientalism written as a defense of the post-Saidian shift in the Middle-East field, Zachary Lockman's *Contending Visions of the Middle East; The History and Politics of Orientalism*, has wisely seen fit to do away with the conspiratorial tone of Said's prose. Namely, here, widespread European conceptions of Oriental stasis in the nineteenth century are explained in

²⁶ See Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York, 1993).

²⁷ It is uncanny that Said makes Islamic modernists such as Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani (1838-897) and Ali Shariati (1933-1977) exemplars of nativist exclusivism and so of native appropriation of European 'Othering'. See Said, *Culture and imperialism*, 30, 252, 263. For both Afghani and Shariati are remarkable for the depth of their exchanges and encounters with European intellectuals and Islamicists. I will have more to say of Afghani's friendship with Goldziher in the coming chapter and Shariati, who called what he did 'Islamshenasi' (i.e. Islamic Studies), I will touch on in the conclusion. Shariati, meanwhile, famously touted all that he'd learned about Islam from his student days with Massignon and Henri Corbin and his reading of Islamicists, like Montgomery Watt; see *Ervand Abrahamian, The Iranian Mojahedin* (New Haven, 1989), 107, 118. Of course, one could claim that it was at the feet of such masters that such figures learned their alleged nativism; but, it's a bit of a distortion to turn what was intellectual exchange and encounter into the banner of 'exclusivism'.

²⁸ Said, *Orientalism*, 307.

²⁹ This was essentially the sense in which James Clifford questioned whether one could call Said's critique a Foucauldian one. See idem, "On *Orientalism*" in *The Predicament of Culture; Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, 1988), 255-276, on Foucault 264-266. Said, moreover, did not even ask, in a Marxist sense, how the universal humanism espoused by Westerners in the nineteenth century could not but, given the social and economic context, operate ideologically as it did. He sought to discipline them for not being true to it.

terms of the historical experience of the imperial age, not vice versa.³⁰ Meanwhile, a now vast literature has inquired into the modes of knowing that have enabled and informed imperial rule in other ‘Oriental’ contexts, particularly in British India. To suggest a distinguished sample, texts like Thomas Metcalf’s *Ideologies of the Raj*, Bernard Cohn’s *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge; The British in India* and Vasudha Dalmia’s *Orientalism; European Knowledge Formation in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, have all of them also focused on the distinct role played by objectifying discourses in colonial governance.³¹ In them, one finds explained how the British colonists came completely to displace native forms of knowledge from their extant trajectories so as to normalize and contain them—and hence the natives—in British conceptions of what they were and what they could be. The native was to be made incapable of understanding who he was and what he could be except through the British preconception of the matter.³²

But, because these accounts addressed the actual course of the colonial encounter, they were less wont than Said to dismiss the contingencies of the situation or to read resulting contradictions in a moralizing manner. There was a distinction to be made between what the British claimed to be doing (acting as custodians of Indian practices bottled-up for the purpose) and what they actually did (allowing those practices to change as it fit their interests to do so).³³ A contradiction developed in the projections of the British themselves of the nature of their rule, for they pretended both to be the guardians of Indian traditions (keeping their difference) and civilizers of their Indian wards (making them the same).³⁴ Finally, the normalizing discourses undergirding imperialism came themselves to be rethought as the imperial project assumed in the twentieth century a quite different face: attempts to establish and stabilize difference (‘Othering’) yielded to normative prescriptions of development (Modernization theory);³⁵ a forewarning that the denial of difference can become as much an ‘imperial’ strategy as the insistence on it. It was by exploiting such contradictions that the natives regained themselves and made a bid at forging a new history, and this involved more than just a swallowing of their own essentialization and changing of its valuation.³⁶ I will, for the moment, only enter the following caveat: the attitude towards native Muslims in pre-war Islamicist discourse and praxis, whether in its imperialist or

³⁰ For instance, Lockman, *Contending Visions of the Middle-East*, 74: “The dramatic expansion in this period of European power over vast stretches of the Muslim world served to bolster certain premises and assumptions, certain ways of understanding Islam and the Orient (as well as the West) rather than others. This in turn made it more likely that scholars would define what they were studying, and the questions they were asking, in certain ways rather than others, yielding interpretations which in turn served to bolster largely taken-for-granted assumptions about the sources and character of Western superiority and of Islam’s inferiority and decadence.”

³¹ Thomas R. Metcalf, *Ideologies of the Raj* (New York, 1995). Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge; The British in India* (Princeton, 1996). See Vasudha Dalmia, *Orientalism; European Knowledge Production in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (New Delhi, 2003).

³² See especially Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*, 1-11, 76-105.

³³ “Today when one picks up a book on Hindu law [British codification of such], one is confronted with a forest of citations referring to previous judges’ decisions—as in all Anglo-Saxon –derived legal systems—and it is left to the skills of the judges and lawyers, based on their time-honored abilities to find precedent, to make the law. What had started out with Warren Hastings and Sir William Jones as a search for the “ancient Indian constitution” ended up with what they had so much wanted to avoid—with English law as the law of India.” Ibid, 75.

³⁴ See Vasudha Dalmia’s essay on the contradictions in the British response to Sati in idem, *Orientalism*, 53-78; and the her essay here on the changing status of native scholars and scholarship in the historicist context of British academic intervention during their rule in India, ibid, 53-75. See also Metcalf, *Ideologies of the Raj*, 100, 160.

³⁵ See Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*, 11-15

³⁶ This is a major part of the argument of Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments; Colonial and Post-Colonial Histories* (Delhi, 1995). See 1-13.

anti-imperialist veins, conformed little to the mantra of objectification but was rather closer to what Foucault has described as ‘subjectification’.³⁷ The early Islamicists did not seek to bottle-up and administer Muslim traditions and understandings; they tried instead to show up the incongruent and ideological relation between Muslim self-understandings and their cultural practices and history. By criticizing and challenging Muslim traditional understandings, they intended to make Muslims face the ‘truth’ about their traditions and themselves, to infuse, in reformist spirit, a self-consciousness, forcing Muslims to manage their thinking, in ‘modern’ manner, in line with their practice and history.

2.

It was necessary to begin with Said’s approach and that of post-colonial theory to the history of Orientalist scholarship because, in the aftermath of such critique—its immediate focus the legacy of the Islamicist field or ‘Islamic Orientalism’—the latter has become a ‘disputed discipline’. And, hence, one cannot simply approach its history—history having become *the* weapon in the dispute—through the intermediary of ‘internal history’, namely, by testing this, refining it, plumbing its depths, etc. Nonetheless, the standpoint of ‘internal history’ remains a crucial one, both as a practice before the Orientalism debates and as a mantra deployed by defenders of the field’s legacy within and in response to them. Broadly defined, the approach of disciplinary or internal history to the trajectory of *Islamwissenschaft* has been to measure the *results* in epistemic terms, as *knowledge*. Not surprisingly, this second approach to the discipline’s history has also invited teleologically marked stories of increasing purification towards an increasingly autonomous or proper search for knowledge. The emergence in the European *Orientalistik* of the nineteenth century, in the generations before the rise of *Islamwissenschaft*, of something akin to internal history is itself an event of great historical importance about which I’ll have more to say in the chapters to come. What it, alongside a host of other phenomena, pointed to was the gradual development of professional communities, with their own heroes and standards, allowing them to move beyond both the literary and philosophical breadth as well as the constant backbiting, on technical grounds, that had come before.³⁸ As such, internal histories remain indispensable to historians of Orientalism: they tell us about the formation of new fields, distinct disciplinary publics and how their members positioned and perceived themselves with respect to one another, those on their immediate boundaries and the public at large. And, they provide clues as to the scholarly genealogies, axes and fault lines within disciplines as well as how ‘they’ experienced or remembered their

³⁷ See Michel Foucault, “The Subject and Power”, 208-226, in Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow (ed.), *Michel Foucault; Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (Chicago, 1983). See also Foucault, *The History of Sexuality; An Introduction, v. 1* (New York, 1978).

³⁸ Here, for instance, is Anthony Grafton, writing on probably the greatest scholar of the Renaissance, Joseph Scaliger (1540-1609): “Scaliger, the best of students, was the worst of disciples. He thrust his former masters away as forcefully as he had once clasped them to him. . . Renaissance philology always remained a field populated by rhetoricians—men trained to polemize and constrained to do so by their situation. Philological treatises were cast as much in personal as in substantive terms, designed as much to win support from inexpert patrons as assent from expert readers. . . Few scholars felt any need to enumerate all the evidence that supported or opposed their position, to give fair hearings to their critics, or to refrain from sniping at irrelevant minor breaches in the armour of the other side. . . [Hence] to judge Renaissance scholarship by its success or failure in anticipating the professional philology of the nineteenth century is to obscure matters rather than clarify them.” Anthony Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger; A Study in the History of Classical Scholarship, v. 1* (Oxford, 1983), 227-9. Polemics hardly went away, but they were domesticated, deployed to police disciplinary boundaries and perspectives not to explode the very possibility of their existence. Hence, there developed, in nineteenth-century Orientalist scholarship, a veritable cult of the ‘mentor’.

development.³⁹ This study, in order further to witness such processes virtually as they occurred, makes extensive use of a thus far thoroughly neglected resource, namely the *Proceedings of the International Congress of Orientalists*, starting with the first in Paris, 1873.⁴⁰

Consider later texts like Johan Fück's *Die Arabischen Studien in Europa bis in den Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts* and its extension by Rudi Paret, *The Study of Arabic and Islam at German Universities; German Orientalists since Theodor Nöldeke*. Fück's great comprehensive, still invaluable and altogether irreplaceable, study of his subject covered it primarily by means of prosopographic treatments, but he also discussed national contexts, particularly when no 'great figures' were available to organize the material, and he made a definite note of the rise of *Islamwissenschaft*. What Fück's work allows us to see, however, is what had most mattered to, moved and substantiated the professionalizing ethos of Orientalist scholarship from the nineteenth century forward, namely, the production of critical editions of manuscripts and texts. The greater part of Fück's prose tracked meticulously the creation of such critical editions over time and their relative merit; in this sense, the book comprised not only a history of the field but was itself a resource for the contemporary scholars furthering it.⁴¹ Meanwhile, in moving to Paret's work, the addition of 'Islam' to the title is itself less striking than the fact that here thematic schema are used to organize the material and that the focus rests particularly on substantive and historical works, characteristic of the new ethos introduced by Islamicist scholarship, and rather less so on critical editions.⁴² Meanwhile, in the broad sweep of his history, Fück emphasized two processes as having definitively transformed scholarship in Arab Studies. First, in the aftermath of the Enlightenment, increasing secularization had allowed Arab Studies to escape the clutch of clerical interests and theological prerogatives. Second, romantic and exoticizing predilections had been progressively displaced by the sober scholarship of professionals.⁴³

With such internal histories and self-perceptions in mind, it becomes easier to understand the indignation many of the defenders of the Orientalist legacy and that of their own Islamicist field felt in the face of Said's critique. And, why 'internal history' was wont henceforth, in their hands, to slip from a practice to a mantra. For, such practitioners tended to congratulate themselves on the sobriety of their scholarship, on having excised their work from the popular prejudices and exoticizing demands of the public, namely, to have their remit in this very autonomy. But, now, under the banner of 'discourse', their scholarly tradition was being dissolved into Western cultural production and prejudice; and, not only was the whole thing

³⁹ In the case of the Islamicists and their background, there was, for instance, Goldziher on his great teacher: idem, "Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer" in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* (Munich, 1904), 584-94. There were Snouck's treatments of the field's great precursors: Snouck, Michaël Jan de Goeje (Leiden, 1911) and Snouck, "Theodore Nöldeke" in *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft (ZDMG)*, 85, no. 3 (1931), 239-281. Especially crucial for our purposes are Becker's In Memoriam essays on the figures pivotal in the development of the field, i.e. Hartmann, Goldziher, Wellhausen, Nöldeke, first published in his journal *Der Islam* and now to be found in idem, *Islamstudien II*, 470-522.

⁴⁰ The International Congresses of Orientalists (ICO) were held generally every other year; we can use two book-ends in this regard: the VI ICO at Leiden in 1883, where the 'Arab/Muslim' section first broke away from the 'Semitic' to form its own subsection and the XVIII ICO at Leiden in 1931, the last which Snouck and Becker both attended.

⁴¹ See Johann Fück, *Die arabischen Studien in Europa bis in den Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig, 1955), *passim*

⁴² See Rudi Paret, *The Study of Arabic and Islam at German Universities; German Orientalists since Theodor Nöldeke* (Wiesbaden, 1968), V-VI.

⁴³ See Fück, *Die Arabischen Studien in Europa*, 97-105, 140, 244-5

called a noxious political concoction, but they were designated its ringleaders. Bernard Lewis, who most publicly and consistently took up the cudgels against Said, ended his “The Question of Orientalism”, responding to, amongst others, the latter’s critique, with the adamant assertion that criticism of ‘Orientalism’ as such was nonsensical; there could only be criticism of individual Orientalists or schools of Orientalist scholarship by other Orientalists.⁴⁴ That is, there could only be internal history. In the rest of the essay, Lewis harped on the facts, tried to show up how Said had ignored or abused them. He parried the accusation that Orientalists cared only about texts and lost sight of people and human beings, by saying that such critics did not want to take the painstaking trouble necessary to learn difficult languages and develop the requisite Orientalist expertise. Lewis seemed unwilling or unable to reproduce Said’s discursive argument,⁴⁵ but when it came to the nexus of knowledge and power, and its capacity to determine the character and deployment of scholarship, he argued that, yes, cultural prejudices were wont to infect all cultural activities. But, the Orientalists at least made an attempt to overcome such prejudices, which is more than he could say—a distinct Cold War air running through the piece—about the Marxist-Leninists making such accusations or their anti-Western, anti-American sympathizers in the United States. In a later essay, “Other People’s History”, Lewis suggested his own trajectory of the Western study of Islam, from a purportedly defensive reaction to the threat of Muslim invasion, eventual commercial interests in the Ottoman Empire, to the growth of that epistemic curiosity characteristic of Western intellectual development and ultimately honed in on the Enlightenment and “the scholarly revolution of the nineteenth century”.⁴⁶ It was incumbent on Westerners today to study Muslims and Muslim traditions, Lewis concluded, because the former lived in free societies whereas many of the latter did not, so that their histories had to be kept alive until they would be able fully and freely to reclaim them. But, ultimately, Westerners had to study Islam for the same humanistic reasons cited by Said, the mutual understanding of mutual humanity.

Given the impact of the political developments of the last decade and the fact that the post-Saidian shift in the Anglo-American Middle-East field is well-nigh complete, a distinct bitterness has crept into the work of some who brandish today the imperative of ‘internal history’ in this context. Robert Irwin’s recent *Dangerous Knowledge: Orientalism and its Discontents* is a point by point rejoinder to Said from the Greeks to the Orientalism debates, which broadly adapts Fück’s prosopography to this end and concludes with an account of other Arab and Muslim “enemies of Orientalism”. Its thesis is that Arabs and Muslims should not flatter themselves so much that Western civilization somehow turned on its attitudes towards them or that it has ever cared so very much about them. It has not. Historically, the only ones who have cared enough to try to get the facts straight on the subject have been a motley group of Orientalists, who received little reward for their lonely, obsessive labor, except apparently now the abuse and scorn of those to whose study they’d devoted themselves.⁴⁷ One cannot put away

⁴⁴ Bernard Lewis, “The Question of Orientalism” in idem, *Islam and the West* (New York, 1993), 99-118. There was a reply and further ‘exchange’, though it was thoroughly underwhelming as such, two months later: Said, Oleg Agbar, Lewis “Orientalism: An Exchange,” NYRB., August 12, 1982.

⁴⁵ Lewis, “The Question of Orientalism” 107. “This is a book with a thesis—that “Orientalism derives from a particular closeness experienced between Britain and France and the Orient, which until the early nineteenth century had really meant only India and the Bible lands.”” The text is from Said, *Orientalism*, 4. From all the non-stop manifestos in the book, this was a strange choice.

⁴⁶ Lewis, “Other People’s History” in *Islam and the West*, 119-130, 127.

⁴⁷ As Irwin put it in the introduction: “I have done my best to make this book interesting, so that it can be read for pleasure, as well as for information. However, this has created problems for me, in that a leading theme of my book

such work without feeling that the mantra of ‘internal history’ has come increasingly to damage its practice. Even the insight of scholarship of the highest caliber, like that of Lawrence Conrad on Goldziher, namely, his influential essay, “Ignaz Goldziher on Ernest Renan: From Orientalist Philology to the Study of Islam”, has been blunted as a result. In this essay, a mainspring of my own investigations of the subject, Conrad discusses the Jewish reformist background of Goldziher’s early thinking and scholarship; but he stops short and reads his role as the founder of the Islamicist discipline in terms of the contribution he thus made to the professionalization of Orientalist scholarship.⁴⁸ Suggestions in earlier articles about the possible impact of Goldziher’s Jewish reformism on his conception of *Islamwissenschaft* are pushed aside.⁴⁹ And, Goldziher’s relationship with the colonialist Snouck is euphemized, though their scholarly partnership was common knowledge to their contemporaries and is hard to miss in the documentary evidence.⁵⁰ In Irwin’s own case, insights, such as the extent to which Orientalists, until rather late, mostly only appropriated the understandings of native authorities and texts are left fallow; instead, one finds the author too busy ridiculing Medieval Islamic science and medicine as so much woolly nonsense.⁵¹

Meanwhile, the tail has come to wag the dog. One need not plumb deep to arrive at the political connotations and prescriptions of Lewis’s scholarly enterprise and his political advocacy is by now notorious.⁵² He belongs, like others we will study, to that tradition in Islamicist theory-praxis which has held that scholars wielding objective scholarship can

is that its subject is neither very important nor very glamorous—still less actually sinister”, idem, *Dangerous Knowledge*, 2. On the next page, he put forth the following as one of the main questions of the book: “Was the study of Arabic and Islam really important within the broader framework of Western intellectual life...” The answer was no.

⁴⁸ See Lewis I. Conrad, “Ignaz Goldziher on Ernest Renan: From Orientalist Philology to the Study of Islam” in Martin Kramer (ed.), *The Jewish Discovery of Islam; Studies in Honor of Bernard Lewis* (Tel Aviv, 1999), 137-80.

⁴⁹ See Conrad, “The Dervish’s Disciple: “On the Personality and Intellectual Milieu of the Young Ignaz Goldziher” in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (1990) no. 2, 225-266 and Conrad, “The Pilgrim from Pest: Goldziher’s Study Tour to the Near East (1873-4)” in Ian Richard Netton, *Golden Roads; Migration, Pilgrimage and Travel in Medieval and Modern Islam* (Richmond, GB, 1993), 110-159.

⁵⁰ See, for instance, Goldziher to Nöldeke, 2/7/1915, in Simon (ed.), *Ignaz Goldziher*, 373, where Goldziher told his German colleague that the latter knew why Snouck’s pamphlet had been especially hard to bear for him; namely, because they’d formed since 1882 the “closest friendship”, and because “I owe him both for the furtherance of my science and for his human participation in the hardest times of my life a thousand and more than a thousand thanks.” In his *Tagebuch* as well, Goldziher pointed to their “scientific elective affinities (*Wahlverwandschaft*)” and the pivotal role Snouck had played in the development of his own work. See Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 93-4.

⁵¹ See for the first instance, Irwin, *Dangerous Knowledge*, 149-50; for the second, *ibid*, 32-4.

⁵² The ever more insistent agenda of Bernard Lewis’s work can almost be put into a list format of the main import of his books: *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London, 1961) made the Turkish model of secularization the only possible path forward for the Middle-East and Islam; *The Assassins: A Radical Sect in Islam* (London, 1967) made this medieval Isma’ili sect a predecessor of modern Arab/Muslim terrorism; *Race and Color in Islam* (New York, 1971) argued that not only the West but Islamic civilization had also been racist; *Race and Slavery in the Middle East: An History Inquiry* (New York, 1990) showed that slavery was not a Western specialty had also been a deeply rooted part of Muslim societies; *The Muslim Discovery of Europe* (New York, 1982): there had not been much of one. *The Jews of Islam* (Princeton, 1984): a good book on Judeo-Islamic civilization, which, however, told the story as one of teleological demise. Finally, there was Lewis’s famous Jefferson lecture, published as “The Roots of Muslim Rage” in *The Atlantic*, Sept. 1990 issue, which developed the notion of an ongoing millennial ‘clash of civilizations’ between Christendom and Islam. Even Irwin, in his glowing assessment of Lewis warned, by way of almost the same list, that, “Although his selection of topics might suggest an agenda...” before effacing the idea. See Irwin, *Dangerous Knowledge*, 260-1. For Lewis’s role as an almost hectoring cheerleader, pushing for the Iraq war after 9/11 in both the media and behind the scenes with Bush administration officials, see Michael Hirsh, “Bernard Lewis Revisited” in *The Washington Monthly*, Nov. 2004, available online.

intervene in political affairs without becoming political. And, in recent years, Martin Kramer, a self-avowed ‘Middle-East expert’ and Lewis student, who has made a career of criticizing the post-Saidian shift in Middle-East studies, has more and more vociferously bemoaned the unwillingness of the contemporary scholarly establishment in the American Middle-East field to put its expertise at the service of the United States government and its foreign policy interests. In *Ivory Towers on Sand; The Failure of Middle Eastern Studies in America*, published in the immediate wake of 9/11, Kramer treats and measures Middle-East scholars primarily as forecasters. And, he takes them as such to task for having focused, in these last decades, on Islamic reform rather than the Muslim threat, on cheering the prospects of social and democratic revolution and, when this proved illusory, the expansion of civil society in the Middle-East rather than on the “cultural factors” (read Islam) obstructing this.⁵³ The shortcoming of American Middle-East academics in this regard, Kramer argues, is part and parcel of their more fundamental failure to engage with (read support) their own society and government. What Kramer advocated for the field was, “rediscovering and articulating that which is uniquely American in the American approach to the Middle East. The idea that the United States plays an essentially beneficent role in the world is at the very core of this approach.”⁵⁴ In his latest work, Kramer, no longer addressing academics, has sought to decode the obscure logic of academic mores—as seemingly “impenetrable as Afghan tribal rivalries”—to people in government, so that they might most successfully entice and pressure Middle-East scholars to work with them.⁵⁵ For the standard bearers of the Orientalist legacy, of Orientalism as knowledge, its epistemic *bona fides* was also wont to come down to where one stood on the political realities of the day.

3.

Not surprisingly, exhaustion with both the vitriol and the polarization of the Orientalism debates has begun increasingly to set in, particularly as this polarization has seemed to mirror—and been made by some ‘defenders of the West’ to mirror—that peddled in the last decade between the ‘West’ and ‘Islam’ (i.e. Muslim world). Many European and American scholars, in this context, have been rightly weary of taking this bait and of enrolling in reductive histories for and against the ‘West’. Hence, in the hope of overcoming the aura of polarization, there has increasingly been a call for a “third way” capable both of making available a critical historical understanding of European Orientalism and simultaneously moving thereby beyond both the bitterness and modalities of the Orientalism debates.⁵⁶ What may be surprising, and all the more interesting, is that the approach that has been most favored and found, in this regard, the most resonance, is one that well preceded the Orientalism debates. It was the first approach to the history of European Orientalism to move comprehensively beyond the perspective and confines of mere ‘internal history’ and to raise it simultaneously to a phenomenon of singular civilizational and epochal significance. It even influenced directly, though ultimately only in an obverse manner, Said’s own perspective in this vein.⁵⁷ The book that set out this approach was

⁵³ See, respectively, Kramer, *Ivory Towers on Sand*, 44-57, 62-70, 78-9. Citation is from 79.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 129.

⁵⁵ Kramer, *Rules of Engagement: How Government Can Leverage Academe* (Washington, 2011), 2. Both this piece and the book cited above were published by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

⁵⁶ See Suzanne Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, xxii; the book cites Bradley Herling on the German-India connection in this regard.

⁵⁷ See Said’s celebratory foreword to Raymond Schwab, *The Oriental Renaissance; Europe’s Rediscovery of India and the East* (New York, 1984), v-xx. It is also worth noting that all of the references to Schwab in *Orientalism*, as can be tracked through index, were highly positive ones.

Raymond Schwab's *La Renaissance Orientale*, published at the exact half way point of the last century and eventually translated as *The Oriental Renaissance; Europe's Rediscovery of India and the East 1680-1880*.⁵⁸ This approach celebrated Orientalism as something fundamentally *cultural*, a cultural break within Europe that made available the prospect of a super-European, *fully human*, reality and, for the first time, a world of global, *civilizationally plural*, nimbus. Schwab argued that as Europeans began particularly after the 1770's to seek out and eventually be able to translate foundational texts from, for instance, first the Persian and then stupendously the Indian traditions, this exposure to and 'revival' of Classical Antiquities other than the Greek and Judeo-Christian served altogether to revolutionize European consciousness and cultural self-understanding. For this involved, as he put it, nothing less than "the discovery that there had been other Europes."⁵⁹ This 'Oriental Renaissance' worked to displace the provinciality of the original one, which is to say the unquestioned centrality and dominance of the Classical and Christian canons. It thus made possible, according to Schwab, the inauguration of an era of truly "integral humanism".⁶⁰

The contemplation of the idea of civilizational plurality and the process of its absorption—inimitably tracked by Schwab through the literary history of Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth century—had been no small matter, but one of truly epochal significance and range. For one, the Romantic movement cannot be quite conjured up outside the contemplation and absorption of this idea: through it, the Romantics were able to posit the notion of the universal development of human consciousness and to consider religious traditions, in all their multiplicity, as the lynchpin of their stories of spiritual progress and regeneration.⁶¹ The fact that religion and spirituality came progressively through this time to be, in a now ineluctable "comparativism", wrested from their traditional confines and the hands of their traditional wards was part and parcel of this same cultural process, in which the Oriental Renaissance played a singular role.⁶² Schwab suggested a connection of comparable weight in politics: the philological genealogies and trees now revealed by the Orientalists revealed a history populated by peoples and thus justified the emergence of mass identities and the role of the populace in the political process.⁶³ The Orientalist Renaissance had posed "the great question of the Different" to European self-understanding.⁶⁴ However, as Schwab also emphasized, there was no such thing as an abstract 'European self-understanding' to speak of; all such self-understanding was concrete and had come to and confronted the great question by way of specific historical needs and within particular cultural and political contexts. A sense of spiritual fragmentation and degeneration had played a role, so had the need to establish or service national identity and even the requirements of imperial administration had been involved.⁶⁵

Accordingly, notwithstanding his generally highly celebratory and contemplative tone, Schwab's prose was marked by a deep ambivalence as he tracked the divergent cultural

⁵⁸ The original publication was Schwab, *La Renaissance Orientale* (Paris, 1950).

⁵⁹ Schwab, *The Oriental Renaissance*, XXIII

⁶⁰ Ibid, 49, 473-478.

⁶¹ See *ibid*, 216-221.

⁶² See *ibid*, 453-469.

⁶³ "The millennial multitudes exhumed by the philologists were the forerunners of all the ideas concerning "the masses", *Ibid*, 17.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, 6.

⁶⁵ On fears of European degeneration, see *ibid*, 482; on the German Orientalist drive to establish German nationalist identity and trajectory, see *ibid*, 76, 185-7; on the impetus provided by British imperialist motives, see *ibid*, 33-5.

repercussions of the Orientalist breakthrough in different contexts, particularly national ones. Namely, the British, the ones who had first opened up Europe to India and helped break down the cultural barrier between East and West, had been unable to follow through on the spiritual implications of what they'd wrought. Imperial imperatives had closed the path to self-implicating inquiry they themselves had opened.⁶⁶ But Schwab's real ambivalence was about the Germans. For, in their hands the encounter with the Different had been turned not only into schemas of universal development, but also the invidious assertion of one's own roots, origins and national identity (he called it the "*furor teutonicus*").⁶⁷ Comparison of Christianity and the religious heritage of India had served here the cause of a universal spirituality; but, then, the relation had been turned into an association with 'Aryan India' against the Jews.⁶⁸ Not surprisingly, Schwab thought French thinkers had played the most constructive role, not least in reading the Different in a universal spirit to mean the dignity of peoples and the masses they stood for.⁶⁹ Altogether, however, he was hopeful: the Oriental Renaissance had rendered Europe an 'open civilization' and global, civilizational plurality had ultimately also allowed the Orientals to assert themselves.⁷⁰

The most important recent evocation of Schwab's approach and, in fact, the most significant text to emerge in the historiography of Orientalism in the new century, has been Suzanne Marchand's *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire; Religion, Race and Scholarship*. In addressing the immense breadth of Orientalist scholarship in Germany during the long nineteenth century—where the Orientalist tradition attained its European apogee—Marchand has taken on what has generally been recognized as the weakest point of the Saidian narrative, one he had himself admitted and only badly effaced. According to Said, German Orientalism, bereft, given Germany's late entry into the game, of much of a direct imperial context of its own, had relied rather parasitically on sources and ideas looted by the French and British from the Orient. And, it had produced thereby, following French and British cues, a ponderous Orientalist corpus which certainly functioned to produce authority over the Orient, but which lacked "actuality".⁷¹

⁶⁶ See *ibid*, 43

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 446.

⁶⁸ See particularly the section on Schopenhauer: *ibid*, 427-434.

⁶⁹ On the positive French role, see *ibid*, 45-6. For Orientalism as a catalyst for the dignity of the people, see the section on Michelet, *ibid*, 388-403; the chapter ended with a citation from Emerson that was said to capture "the ultimate meaning of the Oriental Renaissance, the absolute equality of all races and ages." *Ibid*, 403.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 486. As he'd put it near the beginning: "Through the authority of its age, Asia suddenly began to seem again an equal in modern controversies. For example, would there have been a Ramakrishna without William Jones or independence for India without Gandhi", *ibid*, 19.

⁷¹ Said's dalliance with German Orientalism can be found at *Orientalism*, 18-19. It began with a playful, *faux* apology: "Any work that seeks to provide an understanding of academic Orientalism and pays little attention to scholars like Steinthal, Müller, Becker, Goldziher, Brockelmann, Nöldeke—to mention only a handful—needs to be reproached, and I freely reproach myself." From there, he moved to a scene from Eliot's *Middlemarch* to exhibit—with a palpable note of derision targeting a range from the ethereal to the pedantic—the 'authority' assumed by 'German scholarship' (especially German Orientalist scholarship) already before the middle of the nineteenth century. Next, it came out that the Germans' essentially "scholarly" or "classical" Orient—always ethereal as against the "actual" one of the British and French—was physically and metaphysically predicated on French and British looting. Finally, on the bottom of page 19, German Orientalism's especial "intellectual *authority* over the Orient", which it shared with Anglo-French and later American Orientalism, was subtly associated with a "serious, perhaps ponderous style of expertise", by which, Said meant again the immoral moralization of power. It is again uncanny the way in which Said, behaving like the type of Orientalist he denounced, thus dismissed a whole century of scholarship with a passage from a novel; in fact, Said's whole ugly duckling treatment of German Orientalism is akin to how he said Orientalists took care of Orientals who did not behave as the Orientals that they were, namely,

Marchand responded that if the German Orientalist tradition was not in any essential sense tied to a German imperialist project, that hardly rendered it phantasmagoric. For, it had involved matters of crucial cultural importance: its focus, namely, had been not so much on ‘producing authority’ over the Orient, but especially, for instance, on questions about the origins, ultimate character and destiny of Christianity and as such about German cultural identity and self-understanding.⁷² The most sustained ‘German Orient’ had thus been the Biblical Orient.

In this fundamental conclusion, one can already see that Marchand’s narrative was anything other than a mere recapitulation of Schwab’s schema, applied specifically to Germany. For one thing, Marchand demonstrated how problematic Schwab’s periodization of what he called the ‘Oriental Renaissance’ and of the cultural work he claimed it to have done became when one started paying serious attention to the dynamics of German intellectual history in the nineteenth century. Schwab had posited a period of exuberant cultural breakthrough from the 1770’s to the 1830’s and then imagined a kind of positivist settlement—specialization and professionalization—thereafter.⁷³ Marchand pointed out, however, that the Romantic Orientalism in the German context, so celebrated by Schwab, had not only been wont to laud and incorporate the Greeks as much as the Indians and other Orientals in its numinous musings, it was faced, already early in the nineteenth century, by a Philhellenist backlash which took it to task for the speculative quality of its scholarship and its unorthodox spiritualist nimbus.⁷⁴ It was the Classicists who dominated German cultural and educational institutions for most of the nineteenth century and the Orientalists were forced, for long, to play second-fiddle and to fight for recognition from the shadows.⁷⁵

According to Marchand, it was only through a ‘Second Oriental Renaissance’, in the waning decades of the nineteenth century, that the Orientalists began to gather the wherewithal, if not to storm the institutional and cultural status quo, at least to mount a vociferous challenge to it. At the heart of the ‘Second Oriental Renaissance’ was the revelation of massive new sources, i.e. from Babylonian and Egyptian Antiquity, which catalyzed the formation of new fields, ‘Assyriology’ and ‘Egyptology’.⁷⁶ It was through the gradual absorption and eventual privileging of such sources—as well as, for instance, a new willingness to countenance criticism of the New Testament and to confront the Late Antique Hellenism from out of which it had emerged—that Orientalists were finally able to make a serious assault on the normative status and alleged autonomy of the Classical cannon and the staid liberal *Kulturprotestantismus* of the mid-century.⁷⁷ Here, one finally comes to the fundamental point, hinted at earlier, on which

as exceptions that metaphysically prove the case. Maybe, he believed that Schwab had already displayed the dastard tendencies of German Orientalism (i.e. vis-à-vis Jews) but didn’t want to spend his time talking about the Jews.

⁷² See Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, xvii-xxiv.

⁷³ Schwab had claimed that the Orientalist Renaissance had followed the maturation process said out by Max Müller for all science: the empirical phase of discovery, for Orientalism, from the 1770’s to the 1830’s, the classificatory organization of the material around linguistic fields, from the 1830’s to 1850’s and that of theoretical elaboration and specialization, from the 1850’s to the 1870’s. See Schwab, *The Oriental Renaissance*, 121-2. He took the publication of Theodore Benfey’s comprehensive *Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaften Orientalischen Philologie in Deutschland* in 1869 as a signal of the “closing of the heroic period.” Ibid, 8.

⁷⁴ See Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 66-74. Schwab was not altogether unaware of this; see idem, *The Oriental Renaissance*, 188.

⁷⁵ Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 74-1-101.

⁷⁶ See particularly ibid, 157-67, 194-211.

⁷⁷ In this sense, Marchand’s narrative in her account of German Orientalism appears to be the obverse of that in her earlier publication, *Down from Olympus; Archaeology and Philhellenism in Germany, 1750-1970* (Princeton, 1996);

Marchand diverges from Schwab: he argued that it had been the European encounter primarily with India from the close of the eighteenth century that had led to a radical cultural break and the institution of a new civilizational plurality beyond the Greek and the Christian. Marchand stressed, by contrast, the continued centrality of the Biblical Orient for German Orientalist scholarship: projects, already underway from the Renaissance onwards, like that of purifying Christianity and querying of the status of the Old Testament to this end, simply emerged in ever new guises and afforded ever more radical but also highly problematic solutions, for instance, progressive historicization of the Jews (and the Old Testament) and their thereby excision from the sacral narrative.⁷⁸ In this vein, Marchand rightly takes exception to the secularization narratives proffered both by Said and the opposition to him in their accounts of the emergence of modern Orientalism. But, a radical change did come about in the aftermath of the ‘Second Oriental Renaissance’. For, by privileging the new sources made available by the latter, the younger generation of Orientalists made a bid to change the whole profile of the Biblical Orient and, in doing so, challenged both traditional religious and cultural authorities (Christian and Classicist) and proffered new versions of German identity with newly primed civilizational antiquities at their fount.

Here, Marchand adapted Schwab’s ambivalence about the Oriental Renaissance, which he had assigned exclusively and wholly to its German iteration and called the *furor teutonicus*. She rather applied it especially to this younger generation of Orientalist scholars who, she said, displayed a ‘*furor Orientalis*’; for, the work of this generation was iconoclastic and thus potentially promising but also highly problematic and dangerous.⁷⁹ The generation of the *furor Orientalis* insisted on the singular relevance of its sources and scholarship for German cultural self-understanding: Many Assyriologists argued that the newly unearthed Babylonian Antiquity exploded the originality and autonomy of the Old Testament, revealing an older and a deeper heritage; certain Indologists peddled an ‘Aryanized’ Christianity; New Testament scholars derived an ‘Oriental’ Christianity from the gnostic and mystery cults of late Hellenistic Antiquity.⁸⁰ In all this, the source of what is in fact Marchand’s unending ambivalence about the German Orientalist tradition—omnipresent in her text—comes to the fore: the tradition’s (i.e. the book’s) most constant theme revolved about the need to cleanse Christianity of its Jewish nimbus, the more cleansed the better. But, here too the scholarly bearers of the *furor Orientalis* represented a new departure, one that was equal parts culturally expansive and ominous. For, the weapon of purification was no longer merely critical historicization and a de-sacralization of Jewish history and the Old Testament; rather, a bid was made to replace the Jews in their genealogical role vis-à-vis Christianity with allegedly more fundamental civilizations and thus to provide an Oriental, though decisively non-Jewish, parentage for modern Germany. The Assyriologists who, for instance, became involved in the so-called *Babel-Bibel Streit* of the turn of the twentieth century, certainly did question, by citing the greater age and originality of Babylonian Antiquity, traditionalist religious authority, as well as the stranglehold of the Classicists on German culture and education.⁸¹ But, their version of purifying Christianity—

that book dealt with the development of Classicist ascendancy and turned to its increasing questioning, including by Orientalists, by the twentieth century.

⁷⁸ See, for instance, *ibid.*, 35-52, 105-113, 167-186, 236-244.

⁷⁹ See *ibid.*, 212-227, 236-249.

⁸⁰ See *ibid.*, 239-40, 244-5, 300-11, 267-70, 279-291.

⁸¹ See *ibid.*, 241, 245-9; as Marchand put it in her earlier book, “I would suggest that it [the *Babel-Bibel Streit*] might be seen as the German equivalent of the Scopes Trial, in which the long-standing context between science and

replacing the Jewish heritage with a Babylonian one—was wont, unlike previous attempts, to become entangled in outright anti-Semitism.

Marchand, however, also ended on a hopeful note: she admitted that the German Orientalists who touted the fundamental importance and decisive originality of respective newly discovered Oriental antiquities and challenged the dominance of the traditional Christian and Classical canon in their name, could not be called ‘multi-culturalists’ *avant la lettre*. Their efforts had been too self-absorbed, too engrossed by questions of origins and precedence asked with respect to German cultural identity, as to be able to conceive the civilizations they discussed in their own rights or to think in terms of civilizational plurality (a point that echoed Schwab’s own conclusions on this score). And what civilizational ecumenicalism they had been able to imagine applied only to antiquities and not to any modern non-European claimants to them.⁸² Still, German Orientalists had demonstrated the gravity and depth of Oriental civilizations other than the Christian and Classical ones on which ‘Europe’ had been founded and as such they had opened the door to a cosmopolitan multi-culturalism of a “truly universal perspective”, even if they themselves had not been able to walk through it.⁸³

Well, where in all of this, did *Islamwissenschaft* figure? Marchand discussed its emergence near the close of the nineteenth century as part and parcel of the *furor Orientalis* and its general ethos of and insistence on being relevant. However, ‘relevance’ in its case morphed into the practical and modernist aims of informing Germany’s colonial and foreign policy agenda.⁸⁴ And, as such, it, and other more marginal scholarly endeavors like ‘East Asian Studies’, diverged from the ‘core’ German Orientalist project of establishing German cultural identity.⁸⁵ The German Islamicist role in the Ottoman Jihad campaign of WWI was made a case in point. For now, I would like merely to put in certain caveats. The immense breadth of Marchand’s vision and achievement in this book is unquestionable. In reading it, one sees a whole thriving scholarly and cultural landscape, a whole cast of intriguing figures and episodes—some of them known to a few, all of them together not known to anyone—come to life. Whereas before, ‘German Orientalism’ had been a cipher and one standing generally for that pedantic and ponderous corpus of scholarship Said dismissed it as, its generally acknowledged ‘importance’ notwithstanding. Still, for a historian of *Islamwissenschaft* writing today, there are problems with Marchand’s discussion and conceptualization of the discipline, and this on a number of fronts. For example, take, first, the book’s account of Ignaz Goldziher: it is certainly awkward that Goldziher, the very founder of *Islamwissenschaft* and acknowledged as such both in his own day and today, is treated not in this vein but categorized and discussed rather as a ‘Semiticist’.⁸⁶ In Marchand’s narrative, he appears as a phil-Semitic counterpart to the Aryanizing tendencies within the *furor Orientalis*: as one struggling, as other Jewish scholars

religion for social and intellectual hegemony came most forcefully into view”; but, here there were also the ominous anti-Semitic tendencies involved. See Marchand, *Down from Olympus*, 225, 224-7.

⁸² See Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 495-8.

⁸³ See *ibid*, 498.

⁸⁴ “We will see strong echoes of “furious” orientalism in Indology and in art history—though I will argue that in some fields, such as Islamic Studies and Sinology, involvement in the imperialist projects of the Reich blunted or redirected passions that might otherwise have been turned inward.” *Ibid*, 216; see also 220, 356-367.

⁸⁵ See *ibid*, 367: “Most crucial [for why the Germans uncharacteristically lagged behind in Sinology], however, was the irrelevance of Japanese and Chinese to the interpretation of the Old Testament and the history of classical antiquity, which placed the study of the Far East outside the perimeter defined by the humanist tradition.”

⁸⁶ Marchand speaks of “Goldziher’s passionate attachment to Semitism”; see *ibid*, 294-5. And, the rubric under which he is discussed is “*Semitistik* in the Post-Liberal Period”. See *ibid*, 321-332.

had earlier done in the German Orientalist tradition, against the penchant to read the Jews and the Semites out of the history of civilization. One also suspects this route was taken because Goldziher was anything other than involved in any German colonial or foreign policy project, a matter not easily reconciled with the basic tenor of the book's description of *Islamwissenschaft*. The difficulty is that Goldziher did not conceive of himself as a 'Semiticist':⁸⁷ he believed in a thoroughly egalitarian historicism which took History to be destined for the universal realization of a purified monotheism, *and* he struggled all his life against attempts to view monotheism, as Renan had suggested, as something in its essence Semitic.

Second, this problematic characterization of Goldziher elicits the more fundamental question of the division in Marchand's narrative between *Islamwissenschaft* as something (serving German foreign ambitions) more political and the "core" German Orientalist fields as (querying and seeking to establish German identity) much more cultural. My sense is that present realities have played a deleterious role in making such a historiographic binary seem retrospectively almost common-sensical. For, the legacy of 'Islamic Studies' today—which polarizes in ways that often map only too neatly onto defense of and opposition to ongoing wars and breeds ineluctable conflict, made by some of 'civilizational' scope—speaks to an endeavor so 'politicized' that the wisest route for scholars seeking, in a still critical spirit, to demonstrate the cultural depths of the Orientalist tradition must be to make a sacrificial offering of *Islamwissenschaft* to the political gods (maybe it's the Saidians) and to seek their fortunes in calmer waters. However, as I have argued, *Islamwissenschaft*, as a disciplinary undertaking, *was* of great cultural depth and not despite, but in line with, its political dimensions, which were as such diverse, complicated and evolving. Its practitioners queried the meaning and role of tradition, religion, culture, law and scholarship in pre-modern and modern societies and asked, thereby, what it meant to be modern and where it was headed, questions that have only gained in resonance since Islamicists grappled with and became entangled by them in what I am calling 'the era of WWI'.

Finally, third, the very noble sentiment that has driven Marchand and other scholars to seek a 'third way' beyond the bitterness and ugliness of the Orientalism debates itself assumes for the historian of *Islamwissenschaft* a problematic aspect. Namely, such a historian cannot

⁸⁷ Hence, one should consider the following episode: Enno Littmann (1875-1958), one of Becker's closest friends, a student of Nöldeke who worked on Tigré and a scholar who *did* think of himself primarily as a 'Semiticist', convinced Becker that they should convoke the grand project of a "Grundriss of Semitic Philology", on which the great scholars working on various branches having to do with Semitic material would take various subjects, compose volumes on them, creating a summation of up to date research. Becker himself, for instance, wanted Goldziher to work on "Arab religious literature". Becker and Littmann went about trying to persuade colleagues of the project. Both Goldziher and Snouck flatly refused to get involved, which essentially killed the whole thing (though Goldziher seriously fretted scuttling Becker's plans). Goldziher told Becker that he simply was not able to do justice to the project, given the "context" in which it was conceived. That he kept seeing more and more holes in contemporary research and hence that there was the real possibility of irresponsible generalizations; that, in any case, he was not up to the synthesis required to make everything fit as necessary. Becker, having guessed perhaps what Goldziher's concerns really were—and, given, Snouck's also "fundamental" reservations about it—referred to the project, in his next letter to Goldziher, as a "systematic *Lehrbuch* (text-book) of Islam"! It was ultimately to no avail. Becker, as we'll see, decided Goldziher was simply scared of thinking in grand synthetic terms. However, Goldziher had been involved in moving forward a number of grand Islamicist projects, i.e. the Encyclopedia of Islam, not to mention that he had been the inspiration behind the founding of Becker's own journal *Der Islam*. It was the terms he disapproved of. See Becker to Goldziher, 1/16/1912 and 2/2/1912 and Goldziher to Becker, 1/31/1912 in Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz (GStA PK), VI. HA, NI C. H. Becker, Nr. 449 and Becker to Snouck, 1/16/1912 and 1/22/1912 in *ibid*, 4227. Unfortunately, we seem not to have Snouck's first response to Becker in this connection.

‘bracket’ and must rather begin with the fact that he or she is telling the history of what is today a ‘disputed discipline’. From the perspective of such a historian then, the clamoring for the third way is bound to appear targeted at a polite public hoping to reclaim its cultural heritage from the polarizing and cross-demonizing uses to which it has been put in the world in the last decade and for much longer within the Middle-East field. The historian of *Islamwissenschaft* does not have this luxury; he or she must get into the muck and work through it.

4.

It is now time to spell out where this study stands with respect to the approaches thus far outlined, both as represented within the Orientalism debates and looking beyond them. Said viewed Orientalism as a radically *political* phenomenon (the vanguard and embodiment of European cultural racism and imperialism and divested as such of all its grand epistemic pretensions). The old-guard defenders of the legacy of ‘Islamic Studies’ have, in the mantra of ‘internal history’, presented Orientalism as a progressively *epistemic* phenomenon (ever seeking and moving beyond the merely cultural and political). Meanwhile, according to the proponents of a ‘third way’ outside this dichotomy and the scholarship they have drawn on, Orientalism should be viewed as a primarily *cultural* phenomenon (an episode in European self-understanding and self-projection which, notwithstanding its disturbingly ambivalent tendencies towards cultural and political particularism, can nonetheless be viewed as having either inaugurated or formed the background to a future of more open, multi-cultural cosmopolitanism and ‘integral humanism’). And, by now, these three approaches have come to encompass almost distinct audiences and publics. The approach of this study is *not* to make a choice between Orientalism as politics, culture or knowledge, but rather to take it as having been in the same breath all three. It is also thus, to the extent possible, that of merging the disparate publics that have formed around the subject and exposing them to one another. I understand that this may seem a foolhardy or utopian project. But, I believe that adopting such a perspective makes available all manner of stories unlikely to be told in the other approaches. The most important is the one with which we’ll begin, namely, the fact that the roots and moving impulses of *Islamwissenschaft* came, in the work of Ignaz Goldziher, altogether out of the Jewish reformist thought and scholarship of the nineteenth century. Great ironies (and other such ‘lessons’) are then much more wont to escape to the surface in a history which thus far has been written distinctly without a sense of their existence.⁸⁸

In any case, whether this study succeeds in ingratiating this other attitude or not, the new and different history it puts forth emerges out of its critical response to the other approaches cited. To begin with the old-guard defenders of the Islamicist legacy and their contemporary scions, their claims about the growing epistemic puritanism of Orientalist scholarship and their own pre-Saidian discipline—enjoining disciplined suppression of cultural and political ‘prejudices’—are, in their own case, simply incredible. What is one after all to do with the often

⁸⁸ I have alluded to one such, the fact that Said’s demonization of Orientalism emerged out of Schwab’s celebration of it as the incubator of ‘integral humanism’. See note 111. To stay with Said, here’s another: the fact that he took his ideas about ‘Islamic Orientalism’, pitched as the apex of Orientalist essentialism, out of J. D. J. Waardenburg’s study, *L’Islam dans le Miroir de l’Occident*, while the book actually touted (reading it out of Massignon) a phenomenological approach to Islam, seeking its essence as a unitary ‘religious experience’, as against the critical historical accounts of the earlier generations of Islamicists (Goldziher, Snouck, Becker). See Waardenburg, *L’Islam dans le Miroir de l’Occident*, 315-28.

transparent agendas within their scholarship, their own political activism and the fact that the scions are no longer even wont to downplay any of this but rather vociferously solicit it? To believe that such interventions in the political sphere are nonetheless apolitical, one would have to believe that the agendas they embody have been hard wired into the historical process, which, if true, would be, given the state of the world today, a truly depressing prospect. As for the Saidian account of ‘Islamic Orientalism’, Said viewed all Orientalist scholarship from the mid nineteenth century—the Islamicist the most retrograde offender—as founded on a racist philological essentialism that, by objectifying and de-historicizing the Semites (by contrast with the Aryans), became itself a paradigm of non-development. This study will show that the disciplinary emergence of *Islamwissenschaft* represented rather a displacement of the philological framework and the Semitic/Aryan distinction as the fundamental operative one within Orientalist scholarship in favor of a more universal historicist division between Medieval and Modern. According to Said, Orientalist objectification served to absent the natives and as such anticipated, enabled and rendered inevitable European imperialist takeover rather than merely justifying it *post facto*. This study will show that early Islamicists were—applying Foucault to this history in earnest—much more given over to the subjectification of Muslim natives.⁸⁹ That is, the Islamicist agenda, founded on a reformist critique of Muslim self-understanding, was most often that of driving Muslim natives to eschew traditionalist consciousness in favor of modern historical and self-consciousness, an agenda, which, however, could be and was put to quite divergent political ends (anti-imperialist, imperialist and something that was a bit of both). Finally, Said described Western imperialism and Orientalism as body and soul of one cultural organism, whose degrading trajectory was that of a practice and discourse of difference. This study will show that, in its first generations, *Islamwissenschaft* deployed, though with unresolved and building contradictions in practice, a historicist discourse of modernist autonomy for Muslims and Muslim societies.⁹⁰

Said produced a counter-myth to what he called the mythic discourse of Orientalism; it is time not simply to bracket his account or to grant him ‘Islamic Orientalism’, but to move through the links he averred always existed between politics, culture and scholarship—minus his then demonization of them in the Orientalist constellation—towards attempts at history. Hence,

⁸⁹ Foucault of course understood ‘subjectification’ as something disciplinary and hegemonic, as the problem we had to confront rather than as something to be celebrated. However, in describing Islamicist work as given to the ‘subjectification’ of Muslims, I am emphasizing that their goal was not, *pace* Said, an ‘othering’ objectification of the natives. Subjectification implies a global process whose ethic of normalization and disciplines of self-control impact all: normalization and self-control are exhaustive processes as Foucault presents them. When Islamicists suggested in their works that Muslims would only become subjects of their heritage and histories by approaching them critically, they were proffering a subjectification they were proud of in their own case. And, there is no necessary discrepancy here. It was Foucault’s aim to show that much of what modern society was proud of was in fact a hegemonic regimen of self-control. Just as Nietzsche argued in his genealogy of the modern self that the proudest figure of modern civilization was the man who could make promises and then went on to show that this figure had in fact been the culmination of the process whereby humanity had been tamed, made calculable and regularized to the point that he could do the same to himself and take pride in the fact. See Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals; Ecce Homo* (New York, 1967; orig. 1887), 57-96.

⁹⁰ In fact, to reverse Said, perhaps the greatest degree of political and cultural autonomy projected for natives—i.e. to craft a distinct Modernity and Europeanization out of their own traditional vocabularies—came rather in Carl Heinrich Becker’s writings during the war, where this was done on the basis of an ideology of difference (a pluralist Modernity). This will be the subject of forthcoming work on the development of the Islamicist discipline through the First World War and the ‘Jihad debate’ that broke out within it in the wake of the German Islamicists’ decision to back the Ottoman Jihad call.

finally, this study cannot operate according to the division in Marchand's account of German Orientalism as between a modernist, political *Islamwissenschaft* serving practical, foreign policy aims and the 'core' German Orientalist fields, grappling with the origins and character of German cultural identity. For, if *Islamwissenschaft* was modernist and political, it asked fundamental questions about the nature of modern cultural identity and of German Modernity and projected them in systematically related but divergent ways.

The ways in which the political, cultural and epistemic have intersected in conceptions of Modernity elicit a final crucial question: where do the 'natives' figure in all of this? To what historical plane should we understand them—here the Muslim majority societies of the Middle-East—as belonging at the time of the formulation of the European accounts and conceptions of their history we are engaging? We are in the 'Age of Empire'. According to Said, the Orientals were absented and even in their struggles for liberation merely parroted the exclusivism that had been meted out to them; only in Said's own generation were they beginning to talk back to Empire and reclaiming their historical presence and humanity. Accusations of dehumanization yield here to stories of how the Orientals were *in fact* dehumanized. According to Lewis, what Orientalists like him had been doing the whole time was keeping the natives' history and heritage safe and alive for them, until when they'd be ready and in a position to assume them freely. Alas, Lewis cannot see the end of this gracious custodianship for the Arabs. Meanwhile, according to Marchand, German Orientalists were wont to greet all manner of Orientals as cultural ancestors, but much less so to recognize them as present living realities. Even when WWI catapulted the Orientals ineluctably onto the scene of contemporary history, the Islamicists who mostly dealt with them are said to have treated them essentially as useful political props and hardly as subjects of self-implicating intellectual inquiry or exchange.⁹¹

I have suggested thus far something different, namely, that Muslims natives had been, for Islamicists, rather interlocutors throughout whom they wanted to push to a higher, critical, modern consciousness. It is here, however, that great irony enters the picture. Namely, the Age of Empire encompassed not only the high point of European imperialism; it was also the period in which the efforts of the 'natives', of peoples and cultures in many regions of the world, to rethink themselves into the modern world—whether by way of sovereign rejection of cultural traditions or reformist programs couched in traditional vocabularies and reconciling formulations—reached a tipping point. The European horizon of Modernity became thereby something increasingly plural and global. In the Middle-East, this was the era of its constitutional revolutions, circling Egypt to Iran to the Ottoman Empire. It is today clearer than ever that the people of the region continue to struggle within the horizon opened up by these revolutions and this period. But, in Europe, the Age of Empire was also an era of cultural transformation, one characterized by a new questioning of Modernity that has equally continued unabated to this day. H. Stuart Hughes and Carl Schorske, in their great works on the intellectual history of the period, described its cultural upheavals, respectively, in terms of crises of positivism and historicism.⁹² The capacity to identify with the forward march of History was either distorted as Darwinian struggle or waned as the relationship between past and present assumed a more problematic aspect than that allowed by the idea of progress. New forces viewed as less than liable to rational control, the 'unconscious' and the 'masses', were

⁹¹ See Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 436.

⁹² See H. Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society; The Reorientation of European Thought, 1890-1930* (New Brunswick, 2002; orig. 1958). Carl E. Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna; Politics and Cultures* (New York, 1980; orig. 1961).

thematized to explain the arational in life and history. The modern social processes imagined by the new bourgeois sociology—‘anomie’, ‘rationalization’, etc.—lacked clear cut historical subjects. The very idea of ‘rationalization’, previously a marker of the humanization of the world, came rather to be seen as something not affording agency but to which one was subject, not heroic but exhaustive and exhausting. In other words, in the very period in which Islamicists sought to cajole Muslim natives to adopt modern consciousness, their own cultural milieu found itself increasingly in a situation comparable to that of the natives, asking what was involved in being modern and how to reconcile oneself with it. Since that time, namely, from the ‘era of WWI’ forward, the modernizing natives have belonged and been *present*, not only chronologically, but historically, within the same contemporary period as the Europeans. Becker’s eventual decision to compare Germany’s dynamic traditionalism and distinct modernity with the Ottoman one, during the war, is suggestive in this regard. Our Modernity has been, since the era of WWI an increasingly plural, global and integrally human one. But, this Modernity has unfolded not in any celebratory but in a disenchanting Weberian sense, with all peoples and parties making use of the same instrumental means in the cause of what have thereby become reified opposing visions and ‘values’. The task today, accordingly, is not that of the recognition of mutual humanity: if the ‘Orientalism debates’ can teach us anything, it is that demonization can and has occurred on the basis of grand humanistic pretensions to which all the parties have in fact laid claim. The task is rather to think beyond demonization. This study is taken up in that effort.

Part I: The Advent of 'Religion' and *Islamwissenschaft*

I. The Critique of Theologocentrism and *Islamwissenschaft*

1.

The very notion of *Islamwissenschaft* or ‘Islamic Studies’ used to designate the academic study of Muslim majority societies in all their historical and cultural diversity seems epistemologically problematic and ideologically loaded. Such terminology will likely lead the reader to associate the new Islamicist discipline, whose emergence in late nineteenth century Orientalist scholarship forms the focus of this first part of the study, with a ‘theologocentric’ approach. *Islamwissenschaft*, namely, must have been founded on the premise that ‘Islam’ constitutes the essential factor and defining characteristic in the formation and historical development of Muslim majority societies, irrespective of their otherwise myriad differences. As Maxime Rodinson defines the matter in beginning a section titled “Theologocentrism in Scholarship”: “Those schools of thought that believe that almost all observable phenomena can be explained by reference to Islam, in societies where Muslims are the majority or where Islam is the official religion, suffer from what I will call theologocentrism.” He continues, “In the past, such a vision was held implicitly by all researchers in the [Islamicist] field.”¹ Rodinson is hardly alone in this assessment of Islamicist scholarship. Edward Said wrote of ‘Islamic Orientalism’ as the especially reactionary face of contemporary Orientalism, and explained that of all the available explanatory rubrics (social, ethnic, etc.), “Orientalism, however, clearly posits the Islamic category as the dominant one, and this is the main consideration about its retrograde intellectual tactics.”² In writing thus of “Orientalism Now”, Said’s focus was on how his generation of Orientalists had been busy perpetuating an essentialized image of eternal Islam.³ And, he castigated their reduction of contemporary Arabs on the one hand to their biological (sexual) rhythms, on the other to their equally ahistorical Islamic identity. The impression of his unnerved prose was that Islam was being made into a kind of animal nature and Arabs described as animals.⁴ More recently, Gil Andijar has expanded this line of thought into a so-called ‘Semitic thesis’. He contends that the nineteenth-century anti-Semitic trope of the ‘Semite’ as *the* religious ethnos has in no sense disappeared, but rather been since split into a progressively racialized (nationalized) Jew and a correspondingly theologized (Islamicized) Arab (with Zionism doubling down on both).⁵

As may be gathered from this brief description and conceptual trajectory, the theologocentric critique of the Islamicist field exposes an epistemological and political minefield. However, as with much having to do with the understanding of Islam and Muslim societies in our time, the theologocentric critique is not immune to events. Consider that, as of this writing, a world in which democratically elected Islamist parties dominate political life in Muslim majority polities from North Africa to South Asia is no longer a dream or a nightmare

¹ Maxime Rodinson, *Europe and the Mystique of Islam* (New York, 2006), 104. The book was originally published as *La fascination de l’Islam* (Paris, 1980). Rodinson’s account and his discussion of how the “positivist” tendencies in previous study of Islam probably did not grasp that their own work undermined theologocentric presumptions just goes to show the evisceration from memory of the tradition to which he himself belongs.

² Said, *Orientalism*, 305. See in this vein also, Said, *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World* (New York, 1997), xvi, xxxi-xxxiii, 10-11.

³ I will here, however, argue that the new field of *Islamwissenschaft* proffered precisely an anti-essentialist, anti-theologocentric vision of Islam and Muslim societies. However, the presumption about the use of ‘Islam’ as a primary rubric by which to study Muslims has been the one I am outlining in this paragraph.

⁴ See Said, *Orientalism*, 296-321.

⁵ See Gil Andijar, *Semites; Race, Religion, Literature*, 13-38. For further elaboration, see Introduction, note 78.

but a distinct possibility. Imagine then a coterie of Islamist led governments citing their popular mandate to stress the Islamic character of their societies. What would become of the critics of theologocentrism in such a scenario of democratic Islamic self-interpretation? Would they turn into critics of the Muslims they study, seeking to reveal to them who they *really* are and thus prescribing to them who they *should* be (in other words, would they then adopt a position of intellectual hegemony cited by these same critics as one of the gravest sins of Orientalism?)⁶ After all, the ‘secularist’ bent of the critics of theologocentrism—or whatever more diplomatic vocabulary they might now use to express their discomfort with the Islamist scenario—is not in question.⁷

Let me make myself clear. My aim in taking stock here of the challenge posed by the popular avowal of political Islam to secularly inclined critics of theologocentrism is *not* to suggest that such a scenario represents a kind of absolute event these critics cannot encounter or grasp. Quite the opposite. It is rather the case that the critique of theologocentrism arrives at its *raison d’être* to the extent it proves itself capable of *measuring* such Islamic self-avowals in terms of their broader social and historical meaning. They, in other words, are the stone on which it has been hewn. In fact, ‘critics of theologocentrism’, which may be taken as a shorthand for contemporary practitioners of the Middle-East field, have done some of their most interesting work shining a light on the complex development and trajectory of extant Islamist movements. They’ve analyzed these movements *not* as mere reactionary and inveterate traditionalist expressions but as a diversified modern stance responding to specifically modern situations and challenges.⁸ The emergence of the Islamist tendency has been traced to the

⁶ This Orientalist sin appears on virtually every page of Orientalism and goes to the heart of what Said means by the Western creation or ‘Orientalization’ of the Orient. It is captured epigrammatically by citation of Marx’s famous line from *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (about the French peasantry), “They cannot represent themselves; they must be represented”, to lead the book.

⁷ In the Introduction to the new edition of his biography of Muhammad in 1980, Rodinson took the opportunity to cast the work in the light of and in part as response to the Iranian Revolution. He viewed it as a resurgence of the ‘Islamic ideology’, whose origins were the subject of his book, and spoke of the “(already disquieting) Muslim fundamentalist movements whose hopes it nurtured.” He was not simply dismissive of this new form of the old ideology—Liberalism and Marxism, just as Christianity in an earlier age, were also such ‘ideologies’—but handicapped the contemporary Islamist scenario as too much to ask of God and of human society. See Rodinson, *Muhammad* (New York, 1980; orig. 1961), xliii. As for Said, he’d already tried to ward off any Islamist appropriation of his critique of Orientalism in his 1994 Afterword to *Orientalism*, 331-3. In 1997, acknowledging the accumulating ills across the Islamic world and the intensifying “emotion” in response, he noted: “In addition, the (to me) simplistic reductiveness of some numbers of people who have recourse to a hazy fantasy of seventh century Mecca as a panacea for numerous ills in today’s Muslim world makes for an unattractive mix that it would be hypocrisy to deny.” *Covering Islam*, xv. Later in the same piece, he stressed his stance that “it was secularism, rather than fundamentalism, that held Arab Muslim societies together” leading to the conclusion that, “At the very least one should say that in the contest between the Islamists and the overwhelming majority of Muslims, the former have by and large lost the battle.” *Ibid*, xxvii. Later he noted that “Political Islam has generally not done well wherever it has tried through Islamist parties to take power.” *Ibid*, xxxv. For readers looking for a live and outspoken secularist critic of theologocentrism cum ‘Islamic fundamentalism’, see Professor As’ad Abu Khalil’s Angry Arab blogpost and archive at <http://angryarab.net>

⁸ The list would be endless: here are some titles showing the diversity and development of views on the subject: John Esposito, *Islam and Politics* (Syracuse, 1998; orig. 1987). Ervand Abrahamian, *The Iranian Mojahedin* (New Haven, 1989), Joel Beinin and Joe Stork (eds.), *Political Islam: Essays from Middle East Report* (Berkeley, 1997), 3-25. Saba Mahmood, *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. Charles Hirschkind, *Ethical Soundscapes: Cassette Sermons and Islamic Counter-Publics* (New York, 2006). Asef Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn* (Stanford, 2007). Sami Zubaida, *Beyond Islam: A New Understanding of the Middle-East* (New York, 2011).

modern cultural and political transformation of Muslim societies within the context of European political and intellectual hegemony: late nineteenth-century proponents of pan-Islamic solidarity, like Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani (1839-97), propagated far-reaching notions of religious, social and political reform couched within Islamic literary traditions and vocabulary. Afghani sought an internal transformation of Muslim societies that would allow them simultaneously to reassume political autonomy from Western imperial powers while preserving their cultural autonomy.⁹

The dialectical tension between the search for political and cultural autonomy remained at the heart of Islamist movements, when they came in the twentieth century to mediate and advance quite divergent socioeconomic and geopolitical interests. In the second half of the twentieth century, some were supported and arrayed by authoritarian regimes in conjunction with (and in some instances directly by) the United States against the ‘threat’ of communism and radical nationalism. By the close of the century, a developmental dialectic pitting the abysmally unfulfilled goals of political and cultural autonomy against the very sidelining or failure of leftist and nationalist alternatives had brought Islamist movements to the point of representing significant parts of the populace of Muslim societies, thus far shut out of the political process by their Western educated elites.¹⁰ In setting out this trajectory, Middle-East scholars have, as critics of theologocentrism, highlighted how, in the Islamist tendency, the sacral heritage of Islam has been instrumentalized to serve economic and political interests and refashioned to address ongoing demands for political and cultural autonomy in the modern world. They have made this case in the face of the often equally essentialist, ahistorical appropriations of the Islamic heritage by both Islamist proponents and secularist opponents.¹¹ And, thereby, they have put themselves in a position to explain why in the Middle-Eastern context ‘Islamic’ formulations of exigent political and cultural problems could achieve the resonance they have and compete with alternative ideological vocabularies to the point of assuming almost democratic character today.

2.

The reader can be excused for thinking that—my aim being to contextualize the emergence of *Islamwissenschaft* in the Orientalist scholarship of the nineteenth century—I have now reduced the matter to extraneous reflections on political Islam. Nothing, however, could be further from the truth. As I’ve described it, in order to account for the growing popular mandate of Islamist movements in a competitive modern ideological environment, the critics of theologocentrism historicized them *rather than* reaching for teleological dramas of Muslims

⁹ See Nikki Keddie, *Sayyid Jamal ad-Din “al-Afghani”: A Political Biography* (Los Angeles, 192). The pioneers of the Islamicist discipline also were altogether engaged with the Islamist movements of their time, in all their variety, from the Islamic modernism of Afghani and India to Wahhabis, Mahdi movements, the Senussi.

¹⁰ See for instance: Joel Beinin and Joe Stork, “On the Modernity, Historical Specificity, and the International Context of Political Islam” in Beinin and Stork (eds.), *Political Islam: Essays from Middle East Report*, 3-25. John Esposito, “Political Islam, Beyond the Green Menace” in *Current History*, Jan. 1994. Nikki Keddie, *Iran and the Muslim World: Resistance and Revolution* (New York, 1995). Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions* (Princeton, 1982).

¹¹ See Ira M. Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies* (Cambridge, 2012), which puts the future prospect of ‘Islamic societies’ in the context of the whole breadth and trajectory of Islamic history and modern transformation. See also, the newly minted dissertation of Lena Salaymeh, *Late Antique and Medieval Islamic Legal Histories: Contextual Change and Comparative (Re)considerations*, U.C. Berkeley, 2012, which enacts a new historicization of Islamic law outside of the secularist and Orthodox appropriations of and agendas for it.

arriving at their Muslim ‘nature’. The point though is that this was just a special case, derived *mutatis mutandis*. For the critics had been equally proficient at their larger project of explaining the genesis and institution of the Islamic heritage in Muslim societies not in terms internal to it but historically and at each point contextually. The Islamic tradition, which had remained the overriding synthetic language of self and societal understanding in the pre-modern Muslim contexts, was made thus witness not simply to a transcendent truth but to multifarious socio-cultural developments and fateful historical transformations. But, if we take this idea that ‘Islam’ or in fact ‘religion’ must be understood not in terms of sacral-canonical pronouncements and self-presentations but rather that these must be illuminated as encompassing and responding to social and historical realities. If we approach the rarefied claims of religious traditions to encapsulate all of history and reality as an *aspect* of the broader human and cultural condition of which they are part; in one word, if we anthropologize ‘religion’, then this guiding light of the critique of theologocentrism in contemporary Middle-East scholarship can hardly be thought an in-house invention. It began in the European Enlightenment, with distinctions made between ‘natural religion’ as against the dogmatic and institutional kind,¹² and reached its apotheosis in the nineteenth century in the ‘religion of humanity’ of figures like Ludwig Feuerbach (1804-1872). Feuerbach, arguably the first thinker to turn Hegel on his head, contended that the Hegelian dialectic had the history of Spirit backwards. It was not that God (Absolute, infinite Spirit) came to concrete self-consciousness and so ultimate fulfillment through man: a drama of immanent differentiation in Spirit whereby it was alienated (objectified) into natural and human history, until the finite consciousness in the latter came through a process of dialectical overcoming to know itself as the subject of divine consciousness. Rather, it was God (i.e. Christianity) that represented man’s alienated, immature self-consciousness on the road to his coming to know himself concretely as a species being. For Feuerbach, humanity objectified the individual ego with its limited capacity to fulfill its natural needs into an absolute ego (God), which became the subject of substitute, symbolic gratification. Ultimately, however, humanity was to overcome this alienated consciousness (Hegelian Absolute Spirit its last incarnation) by coming to know itself as a species being that eschewed symbolic gratification in favor of concrete collective fulfillment of needs through a process of *Bildung* (cultural self-formation).¹³

Feuerbach’s religious anthropology represents one particularly radical Left Hegelian attempt to historicize ‘religion’, to describe its place and role within the progress of human historical development as a whole. But, much of the academic study of religion in the nineteenth century—whether carried on in idealist or materialist key or a synthesis of the two—was devoted to *this* task. Even providence could be salvaged, but it now needed History to survive, rather than the other way around. What about the study of ‘Islam’? Here, our contemporary critics of theologocentrism will balk. They will argue that while nineteenth-century European thinkers and scholars were ready to measure Christianity, positively or negatively, in terms of its mediation of and response to the presumed historical progress of European Christian peoples, they made Islam a stand-in for the alleged stasis and stagnation of Muslim societies and

¹² As we’ll see, in the Enlightenment, ‘natural religion’ was opposed to ‘positive religion’; Kant pitted, in a comparable though different sense, the one “pure religion of reason” which was the singular “moral faith” of all mankind to the “historical faiths”, the “revealed faiths”, the “Church faiths”. See Immanuel Kant, *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft* (Leipzig, 1922; orig. 1793). In the nineteenth century, by contrast, it was positive and historical religion that took center stage.

¹³ Feuerbach, *Das Wesen des Christentums* (Berlin, 1956; orig. 1841). See also John Edward Toews, *Hegelianism: The Path Toward Dialectical Humanism, 1805-1841* (Cambridge, 1980), 175-199, 327-355.

moreover responsible for it.¹⁴ Muslims were defined by Islam, Christianity defined in terms of the historical development of Christians. This assessment of the general tenor of nineteenth-century European thinking on Islam has a solid basis in fact and must be equally extended to European evaluations of Jews and Judaism before European Jewish scholars took up the critical academic study of the subject on their own behalf.¹⁵ However, what remains problematic about this assessment is the near total lack of awareness that the Orientalists who pioneered *Islamwissenschaft* did not conform to, rather reacted against this pattern. As the starting point of their work, these scholars insisted that Islam be understood in terms of the broader social, cultural and historical development of Muslims rather than vice versa. They were, in other words, adamant critics of theologocentrism *avant la lettre*. As we'll see in this first part of the study, if the founders of *Islamwissenschaft* erred in any direction, it was in approaching Islam *too much as an epiphenomenon*. For, in their prose, it had soaked up and to the critical eye reflected the myriad historical tendencies and conflicts of the centuries of its canonical formation. And, as an ideological register, it had more generally been inveterately used to accommodate and rationalize social and cultural transformations, including those brought by Modernity.¹⁶ To bring the point back to the nineteenth-century European study of religion, Islamicists hotly debated whether Islam would be more an obstacle to or a fulcrum of the modern progress of Muslims. But, for just so long as 'progress' remained the barometer of their studies, they measured Islam, positively or negatively, in terms of what they saw as guaranteed prospects of Muslim progress.

Our task then, in the sections to come, is first to locate the emergence of *Islamwissenschaft* within the nineteenth-century European study of religion more broadly. For 'religion' as a transhistorical, transcultural concept is not itself transhistorical and transcultural but emanates from a particular historical context. Its fundamental moorings as such a category are to be found in the life-work of particularly nineteenth-century Protestant thinkers and theologians who defined it by reference to a complex of other than ascendant transhistorical, transcultural concepts like 'culture' itself and 'nation'. These concepts have remained, even if now having lost their innocence by advancing historicization, the hallmarks of contemporary understanding and investigation. I conclude this section though by simply noting a comparison between our contemporary critics of theologocentrism and those I claim the pioneering Islamicists to have been. I intimated that our critics put Islamist publicity and popularity under a historical microscope: they expose unspoken innovations as against the sacred nimbus claimed for them in the name of transcendental Islam and seek the source of Islamist support in geopolitical realities and the illusive search for autonomy in a still imperialist Modernity.

¹⁴ We will meet a coterie of figures making just such distinctions between Christian vs. Islamic history.

¹⁵ See Ismar Schorsch, *From Text to Context: The Turn to History in Modern Judaism* (Hanover, 1994), 164-6.

¹⁶ In fact, the Islamicist pioneers were fascinated with the contemporary conditions of the 'Muslim world' and with its ongoing modern transformation. I mention, only by way of foretaste, such essays and articles as: Ignaz Goldziher, "Muhammadan Public Opinion" (orig. 1882), translated from Hungarian by J. Payne and J. Sandgrove in *Journal of Semitic Studies* 38 (Spring, 1993), 97-133. C. Snouck Hurgronje, "Islam und der Phonograph" (orig. 1900) in idem, *Verspreide Geschriften* (Bonn, 1923), V. 2, 419-447. Martin Hartmann, *The Arabic Press of Egypt* (London, 1899). Martin Hartmann, "Die Mekkahbahn" in *Orientalische Literatur-Zeitung*, 2, no. 1 (Jan. 15, 1908), 1-7. This just by way of telling titles...but, the reader can also go on youtube to see the first pictures that we have of Mecca, which Snouck partly took himself during his five month sojourn there in 1884-5 and partly had a local doctor make for him, plus a soundscape from the same time! <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iGZIJ-CH3Sk> (or google search Snouck soundscape). A new monograph has now been published on these photographs and the story of their production: Durkje van der Wal, *The First Western Photographer in Mecca, 1884-5* (Amsterdam, 2011).

Explicit or not, this critical discourse tells Muslims who take ‘Islam’ to be the overriding aspect of their identity what they are really about; *they criticize not just Orientalist but also Muslim theologocentrism*.¹⁷ The Islamicist academics we will encounter in this study were in large part the progenitors of this critical line. And, ‘*Islamwissenschaft*’ was meant also as critique, half of the philological orientation of nineteenth-century Orientalist scholarship, half of Muslim (including contemporary) self-understanding and theologocentrism. Again, the notion that Orientalists were philologists who read their Oriental counterparts out of ancient texts with little regard to their actual conditions and concerns will be decisively challenged and refuted. It was rather that the leading Islamicists criticized Muslim contemporaries for rationalizing themselves through canonical traditions. But, *Islamwissenschaft* only began as a coherent, self-confident critique of Muslims societies, showing them the path to Modernity; WWI showed a different festering reality.

In the rest of this chapter, I describe the rise in the nineteenth century of a Protestant ‘science of religion’, describe its appropriation by Jewish reformist scholars and set the scene of Orientalist developments that led to the formation of *Islamwissenschaft* in the hands of one such Jewish scholar, Ignaz Goldziher. The chapter is laid out in four sections. First, I focus on the advent of ‘religion’ as a transhistorical and transcultural category in the nineteenth century. This, I argue, occurred first prominently in the work of the Protestant theologian, Friedrich Schleiermacher, whose conception of ‘religion’ involved simultaneously a historicization as well as a teleological theologization of it. Schleiermacher’s work set the foundations for the Protestant ‘science of religion’ in the nineteenth century. Second, I move to an extended discussion of the historiographic meaning of the advent of ‘religion’ in the nineteenth century, and describe how its emergence has been dealt with in the contemporary scholarship on the model of and in relation to the other great transhistorical, transcultural concepts consolidated at the time, i.e. ‘culture’ and ‘nation’. This section introduces the concepts whose mutual play, tensions and contradictions remained at the heart of Islamicist thinking and doing in the period under study, but which, as the contemporary critique of theologocentrism (Western and Muslim) suggests, have not abated. I argue in this section against the idea that the advent of ‘religion’ simply meant and did the work of secularization. ‘Religion’, which came to be understood in terms of and judged by the universality of its consciousness, as universal consciousness when purified, could be appropriated as Christian triumphalism, Jewish providentialism as well as a more or less skeptical secularism. Third, I discuss the post-Hegelian transformation that brought about just this new multiplication of ‘religion’, in three different guises, each dealt with under its own heading, as the ‘religion of man’, the new Protestant theology of the *Tübingen Schule* and the Jewish *Wissenschaft des Judentums*.

The reader awaiting in all of this some discussion of the Orientalist scholarship of the nineteenth century and its relationship to the thematic of the ‘science of religion’ need not despair. The second part of this work will begin with a sketch of the philologically oriented Orientalism of the mid to late nineteenth century, and argue that Orientalism sought in philology its own universalism. Philology could be an ideal of pure (universal) scholarship, but when it set ethno-linguistic groups on the stage of history, it bore deep connections with the ‘science of religion’ and unfolded itself under this rubric. Ultimately, however, both philological

¹⁷ As Rodinson put it of the Iranian Revolution and its concomitants: “Once again the Muslim world became an entity jealously guarding its uniqueness, its own culture, comprising much more than just spirituality.” In other words, once again, the Muslim world threatened to go theologocentric, to re-embrace the Islamic ideology. See Rodinson, *Muhammad*, xliii.

scholarship and philological historicism arrived at the crossroads from which *Islamwissenschaft* emerged: could philological scholarship truly maintain its autonomy, when it was based so much on the regurgitation of the work of Orientals? Was one to embrace a fully racialized account of historical development and, if not, if one's marker was to remain religious universalism, what was left of philological historicism? It was in this context of the discomfiture of philological scholarship and philological historicism that Goldziher's work established *Islamwissenschaft*, on the model of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*.

A final word before proceeding: the reader will encounter here in-depth discussions of thinkers like Kant and Schleiermacher, and the relevance may not immediately be clear. If I may explain, it has become common in critiquing Orientalism to focus on what Hegel said about Islam, Weber about Islamic jurists, Nietzsche about the Assassins, etc. and then to think one has said something about Orientalist scholarship. This is at best a backward way of doing things. Thinkers at such heights, who are viewed as both embodying and standing beyond their times, included 'Oriental' subject-matter within their work at second or third-hand, relying on Orientalists and others, if that. If we want to understand how Orientalist scholarship developed, it makes more sense to proceed in the opposite way, to try to understand how Orientalists tried to make sense of the meaning of the thinking of their time for their own work. That is how it happened historically and that is how I propose to account for it.

II. 'Religion' and the Protestant Science of Religion

3.

The idea of religion as an *anthropological* reality will be familiar to most readers. And, the idea that in the sanctified aura of religious pronouncements all manner of pressing interests and mundane realities worthy of a more profane language shine through may be even more so. If anything, first-hand experience suggests that today's religious 'fundamentalists'—a term loosened from its Protestant provenance and now applied with abandon also to right-wing religious Muslims, Jews and Hindus¹⁸—are the most manipulative purveyors of religion. Their sincerity seems focused more on proffering sanctity against our incorrigibly profane world than on any particular sanctified message.¹⁹ However, there's another usage of 'religion' that was almost second-nature in nineteenth-century Europe and went hand in hand with its historicization of religion, but which has now lost much of its self-evidence and resonance. For instance, if we turn to the opening pages of Goldziher's two volume, *Muhammedanische Studien*, whose seminal impact I'll outline in due course, we encounter descriptions of the religious life of Arabs in the period immediately preceding the rise of Islam that have a curious ring to them today.

Goldziher began his account by directly challenging then prevalent notions about the Semites as the Ur-religious or inherently monotheistic peoples. He argued instead that what actually characterized the pagan Arabs of the central parts of the Arabian Peninsula to whom the prophet Muhammad had first pitched his message was, as could be seen from their poetry, "the lack of recognizable traces of a deeper religious sense."²⁰ Goldziher hedged this conclusion by way of all manner of qualifications and warnings about false generalizations: he was not talking about the Northern Arabs, whose religious life had "developed under the influence of the more refined culture...in Petra, Syria and Mesopotamia."²¹ He was also not talking about "the old culture of South Arabia", for how differently matters stood with respect to the "religious sense" of the "South Arabian *Kulturland*" could be read from the monuments its denizens erected to their Gods, who were invoked and honored at every crucial turn.²² He was not even talking fully about the inhabitants of the burgeoning Central Arabian towns, who had traffic with the "civilized circumstances" to North and South and from whose ranks Muhammad had

¹⁸ For critique of the notion of 'Islamic fundamentalism', see Joel Beinin and Joe Stork, "On the Modernity, Historical Specificity, and the International Context of Political Islam", 3-4.

¹⁹ In *The Jargon of Authenticity*, Adorno described the sanctity protagonists of his time as putting their "emphasis on a newly acquired religion, and not the religion itself" and as "less interested in the specific doctrine, the truth content of revelation, than in conviction." To Adorno, the sanctifying mentality was predicated on the willful assertion of the privileges of the sacred in the midst of a consumer society whose functioning fundamentally denied it. The pathetic result was that the self-appointed apostles of the sacred ended up sanctifying the most disturbing aspects of their societies—in his case, dislocation, lack of human solidarity, anxiety—as ontological facets of human existence, rather than striving to change them. Adorno's critique was of course directed against the propagators of the 'jargon of authenticity'. This was his term for the existentialist vogue in Germany in the post-WWII period, which he read as carrying on in language the ethos that had found institutional form in Fascism, now that Fascism as an ideology had been defeated. Adorno's critique of existentialism is too streamlined and even his critique of 'authenticity' did not quite foresee how this notion would become an indispensable, functioning part of the 'Culture Industry'. However, his critique can be seen as an anticipation of 'fundamentalism' as a global category.

²⁰ Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien* (Halle a. S., 1888), B. I, 2.

²¹ *Ibid*, 1.

²² *Ibid*, 1, 3.

emanated.²³ Rather, his subject was the largely irreligious desert Arabs, the Bedouins of Central Arabia with their poetic traditions, who he referred to repeatedly as “the authentic Arab (*der echte Araber*)”, “the representatives of authentic Arabness” or “every authentic Arab, who was not easily driven from the pagan ways.”²⁴

The whole point then of Goldziher’s discussion of the advent of Islam was that it represented a fundamental challenge to and break from the ‘authentic’ Arab tribal virtues and way of life. Moreover, this battle, rather than won, had only begun with the official triumph of Islam and continued for centuries with only halting success (and, as was only intimated, monotheism’s full overcoming of paganism was as yet ongoing and awaited fruition).²⁵ In fact, Goldziher insisted that in the fundamental division made by Islamic historical consciousness between the respective eras of *Jahaliya* and Islam in Arab history, ‘*Jahaliya*’ referred not as later Muslim tradition had it to the ‘Age of Ignorance’. Rather, when properly philologically elucidated, it became clear that early Muslims meant by ‘*Jahaliya*’ the ‘Age of Barbarism’. Namely, it was ‘Islam’ as the voice of civilized devotion and moral reform that they counter-posed to the tribal “barbarism and cruelty” of the *Jahaliya*.²⁶ That Goldziher himself ultimately shared this evaluation of the Bedouin Arabs as ‘barbaric’, there can be no doubt.²⁷ However, it was not his purpose to inveigh against them as Muslim theologians had done: he sought, through their poetic traditions and as much the resistance they offered to the *din* (‘religion’ and discipline) of Islam as its view of them, to understand these original Arab peoples’ own conception of their tribal virtue (*muruwwa*) and themselves from the inside.²⁸ As anecdote after anecdote made clear, Goldziher viewed the original Arabs as a people of spirit and poetic genius and repeatedly compared them to those other peoples of pagan Antiquity favored by Europeans as founts of *Kultur*. He noted that their tribal virtues encompassed a deep sense of justice and honor, which though modified was eventually assimilated by Islam and that if this code entailed cruelty in retaliation and barbaric revenge it made them no different from “the most cultivated (*gebildetsten*) peoples of Antiquity, the Egyptians and Greeks.”²⁹

All the same, none of this militated against Goldziher’s conclusion that the Bedouin Arabs were people of a “low level of religious development.”³⁰ What did that mean? For Goldziher, it meant that their sense of their fate and that of the world expanded out of and was wholly identified with the fate of their tribe. And, as this was naturally fickle, they saw no grand designs; as Goldziher put it, they were a “people through and through realistic in character”³¹: they believed only what they could see with their own eyes and knew from their own experience. What sense of the sacred they did have revolved about the history and traditions of their tribe, the triumphs and ways of their ancestors—“piety towards the ancestors”, Goldziher said, “was one

²³ Ibid, 1-2.

²⁴ Ibid, 1-2, 22, 27, 76.

²⁵ The point is that the Islamic imprimatur on “the equality of all men” and on the “universalism of Islam” could only develop in a dialectical relationship to its historical context. The diverse Arab tribal life pre-Islam was brought by the prophet and his successors under the rule of one state, but the result was not just a united Arab nationality, but an unprecedented new polarization and animus between northern and southern Arab tribes. In the aftermath of conquest, presumed Islamic equality and universalism became the ground of contestation between the privileged Arab nation vs. the claims of the conquered, etc. See *ibid*, 73.

²⁶ See *ibid*, 219-228.

²⁷ *Ibid*, 1.

²⁸ For the opposition between *muruwwa* and *din* see especially *Ibid*, Ch. 1, Sec. IV, 12-19.

²⁹ *Ibid*, 15-16; Comparison to Romans, 35, 45 note 3. But also compare 54, 66.

³⁰ *Ibid*, 34.

³¹ *Ibid*, 7.

of the few religious sentiments that moved their soul”.³² Tribal lore thus accumulated a great spiritual force driving them to glory that, attained, became imbricated with it. By contrast, only the realities of death and defeat led them to conjure those morally indifferent spirits and demons that militated against them. For the pagan Arabs had ultimately no sense of a universal cosmic and moral order; their religious sense was as yet at a low point of development.³³

As already intimated, this usage of ‘religion’ in Goldziher, i.e. the delineation of lower and higher levels of ‘religious development’, does not have a natural ring to it in the ears of today’s cultivated and academic readers. The idea of ‘religious progress’, very much like that of its sister, ‘moral progress’, seems like those characteristically self-congratulatory notions of the nineteenth century which, far from being now taken for granted, must at best be somehow defended or rehabilitated. Trumpeted too blithely, they now actually suggest a moral deafness to the abysmal realities of the twentieth century from which we’ve barely emerged and ourselves face. The piling genocides of the last century certainly infuse a pathetic aura into invitations to consecrate humanity as the subject of moral progress.³⁴ But, that’s not all. From high anthropological theory, we’ve learned to understand the ‘savage mind’ as in structural prowess and reach, though directed differently, altogether equal in consciousness to modern humanity.³⁵ Finally, ‘religion’ in our contemporary experience of it is mired on so many fronts in ongoing sociocultural and political conflicts, that it is impossible to imagine it playing the universal, ideal role a whole range of nineteenth-century scholars and intellectuals projected for it. But, for the greater part of the nineteenth century, matters stood differently. It is true that for long the anthropologization and historicization of religion were viewed as crucial part of *The Secularization of the European Mind in the Nineteenth Century*, to cite the title of Owen Chadwick’s classic study on the subject.³⁶ But a lot here depends on what one takes ‘secularization’ to mean; because, if one understands by it advocacy and propensity for living without and doing away with ‘religion’, then the majority of those engaged in the anthropologizing and historicizing (as Chadwick does not fail to mention) would have to be counted *opponents* of secularization.³⁷ The great materialist Feuerbach and the positivist apostle,

³² Ibid, 41.

³³ See especially Ibid, 3-12, 33-39, 41-50.

³⁴ There are those in the tradition of the English moralists Nietzsche so cheerfully discussed who, however, are still not discouraged. See for the latest, Steven Pinker, *The Better Angels of Our Nature: The Decline of Violence in History and Its Causes* (London, 2011).

³⁵ See Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (Chicago, 1966; orig. 1962), especially on the ‘savage’ “Science of the Concrete” and the famous discussion of the ‘bricoleur’, 1-33. Today Lévi-Strauss is more likely to be blamed for the essentialization and de-historicization of the so-called ‘savage mind’ than his suggestion of fundamental equality in consciousness between the pre-historic and historic frames of human consciousness.

³⁶ Owen Chadwick, *The Secularization of the European Mind in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1975).

³⁷ Chadwick himself defined ‘secularization’, in intellectual terms, as “widening of the area of agnosticism”, “a wider agnosticism” and “recognition of ignorance”. Ibid, 185, 228, 252. What Chadwick meant was that secularization as an intellectual process effecting not simply European intellectuals but European peoples did not ultimately have so much to do with the dramatic challenge posed by growing scientific and historical knowledge to traditional Christian narratives. After all, by the nineteenth century, these narratives had been under assault by a range of European intellectuals for a century or more. What precipitated a shift in the European relationship with its Christian heritage—i.e. secularization—in the nineteenth century was not that Europeans came suddenly to see that they knew more and differently from Christian teachings. Rather, it was that with the epochal advances in scientific and historical knowledge, Europeans began to understand how relative their knowledge was, how much they in fact did not know and still needed to find out. The area of their ignorance grew exponentially with their knowledge and the agnostic attitude that resulted was fateful. For, it was this agnostic intuition that militated against true religious authority, against the ultimate answers demanded and invoked by faith. This account of secularization led to an

Auguste Comte, were not going to cede sublimity of religions experience and the sacred to the forces of the past, and proffered instead the religion of the future as the religion of culture (*Bildung*) or of science, i.e. as humanity's apotheosis and worship of its own advancing civilization and self-consciousness.³⁸

4.

The great apostle for the nineteenth century of 'religion', of humanity's universal "capacity for religion"³⁹ (its "religious sense")⁴⁰ and of History as the progressive drama of the "development of the religious sense"⁴¹ (its "ever stricter purification"),⁴² was the German Protestant thinker and theologian, Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834). In 1799, in what was to become a prelude to the coming century, he wrote his famous tract, *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers*, addressed to his romantic friends in Berlin (the cultured despisers).⁴³ In

interesting paradox in Chadwick's prose. For, in the course of his study it eventually became clear that so long as the European intellectual vanguard thought that science could replace religion or act as an ersatz religion, then the secularization process was as yet incomplete. It was only at the end of the nineteenth century when the failure of science as religion became clear, when it was seen that science could not provide any ultimate answers to the mysteries of human existence and relations, did secularization come full circle. For, paradoxically, it was then as Europeans began to grope anew for mystical experience and religious emotion, that the absence and irreplaceability of religion became fully visible. And only then did the contemporary world come to seem 'disenchanted'. See *ibid*, 161-266. This evaluation of the mystical and spiritualist vogues of the late nineteenth century as emanating from an agnostic laden cognition and conjuration of religion as a haunting absence echoes Nietzsche's witty contemporary epigram: "When skepticism and longing mate, then mysticism is born." Paul Mendes-Flohr cites the epigram to open his essay on the cultural background and reception of Martin Buber's project of Orientalizing Jewry. See Paul Mendes-Flohr, "Fin de Siècle Orientalism, the *Ostjuden*, and the Aesthetics of Jewish Self-Affirmation" in *idem*, *Divided Passions: Jewish Intellectuals and the Experience of Modernity* (Detroit, 1991), 77-80.

³⁸ See Auguste Comte, *The Catechism of Positive Religion* (London, 1858; orig. 1852). For more on Feuerbach, see also note 222 below.

³⁹ The phrase is constantly repeated in Friedrich Schleiermacher, *On Religion, Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers*. Translated by John Orman (New York, 1958; orig. 1821). See for instance, *ibid*, 25 (note 6), 54.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 48.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, 95.

⁴² *Ibid*, 244-5. See also, *ibid*, 141, 22 (note 2).

⁴³ Ever since Dilthey's great intellectual biography of Schleiermacher, it has become common to echo his sentiments about the different editions of *On Religion*. Of the later editions—the first was 1799, second, 1806, third, 1821—he said that they'd brought the text into Schleiermacher's "completed system", but that the "systematic assumptions" that had led Schleiermacher to recast the work in the later editions had "much damaged" it. Moreover, the basic psychological form of the religious consciousness had been better captured in the first edition. See Wilhelm Dilthey, *Leben Schleiermachers*, Second Revised Expanded Edition (Berlin, 1922), 422. There is no doubt that the first editions was a much more 'romantic', the second a more 'systematic' text and, notwithstanding whether we agree whether 'romantic' or 'systematic' texts read better, it's not hard to see that 'systematic romantic' prose would have something off-putting about it. Nonetheless, there's a good deal of irony in Dilthey's comments, because what he actually found missing in the first edition was much more present in the later ones. He thought that Schleiermacher's accomplishment was to have established the autonomy of scientific and moral life, respectively, from the religious; but, he had not done enough to show that morality could only be what it is ultimately through religious consciousness; he had under-estimated the active and operative aspect of religious life. See *ibid*, 456-7. But, as Richard Crouter argues in his important Introduction to his translation of the first edition of the work, it was precisely after the second edition that Schleiermacher put forth the idea of religion as an autonomous sphere of life through which, however, all the others achieved concretion and were mediated. See Crouter, "Introduction" to Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers* (Cambridge, 1988), 60-3. Dilthey's discomfort with the later editions, however, probably had other grounds. Namely, in line with just that kind of historicism he found inspiration for in Schleiermacher, he probably believed that the author had bastardized his work. Instead of recognizing the work as belonging to a different, earlier context in his life and his time and allowing it to breath as

these speeches, Schleiermacher produced a ‘theology of religion’ that put it on the German philosophical and literary scene in a new way. As the text’s targets and arguments make clear, it was directed primarily against the marked tendency in not only the Enlightenment but also the ascendant German idealistic tradition to resolve religion into more ‘fundamental’ aspects of life. So, religion had been cast as a species of knowledge, a set of un-dogmatic dogmas about the existence of God and immortality of the soul that could be rationally believed by all humanity, while religion, existing and historical religion, that went beyond this kernel of ‘natural religion’ was figured as epistemic distortion. Or, religion had been recast as an aspect of morality, whether with Lessing as encompassing the providential course educating mankind towards moral perfection or with Kant as embodying postulates of practical reason, for instance, God as the guarantor of moral life who, by ultimately apportioning justice to virtue, would bring it in the immortal soul into union with happiness.⁴⁴ Here too, religion falling away from its moral role distorted it. Schleiermacher protested vehemently against what he took to be the reductive tendency of these accounts and charted by contrast a distinct “sphere of religion”, of which he argued, “a province of its own in the mind belongs to it, in which it has unlimited sway.”⁴⁵

The particular province of religion, according to Schleiermacher, was human *feeling*, by which he meant the impressions made on us by the universe in our interaction with it, to the

such, he’d constantly shifted and instrumentalized it to fit later concerns and agendas. Minus the judgment, there is some truth in the evaluation, but also some misperception of Schleiermacher’s own holistic historicism. For the latter, every later point in history includes all of the earlier (just as the earlier are “prophecy” for the later). The point then is to encompass the earlier, allowing it its own independence, but as viewed from a more universal stance. This is essentially how he treats his earlier work. He disagrees with himself in the notes to the third edition, but he also constantly strives to incorporate and explicate the ‘truth’ contained in the earlier, in light of historical reception and maturation. In this light, the third edition of the work is actually an example of Schleiermacher’s historical hermeneutics as well as, as Crouter suggests, a fascinating encapsulation of a whole period of Protestant Christian thought. See *ibid.*, 71. Thus, I have, unless otherwise stated, made most use of the third edition, citing from John Orman’s 1893 translation.

⁴⁴ This is the division as Schleiermacher himself presented it in his work. On the one hand, he took on those who tried to reduce religion to rational belief (deists, etc.), on the other, those who tried to reduce it to the moral sphere. Though simplistic, this division does make some sense for the German context. Hence one could cite Reimarus and Mendelsohn’s defenses of ‘natural religion’ as rational belief. See for instance, Moses Mendelsohn, *Morning Hours: Lectures on God’s Existence* (New York, 2011; orig. 1785). Herman Samuel Reimarus, *Apologie; oder Schutzschrift für die vernünftigen Verehrer Gottes* (Frankfurt, 1972). On the other hand, Schleiermacher’s other target was Kant’s theory of religion, which made it a precondition of moral autonomy. Or, as Crouter argues, probably even more than Kant, Fichte, who made God the voice of conscience and moral perfectionism, the subject’s freedom. See Crouter, “Introduction”, 30-1. One should note, of course, that Kant’s postulates of practical reason presupposed in moral autonomy, the core of the “one (true) religion”—there were many faiths but only one religion—were just those rational belief usually sought to salvage: God and immortality. And, Kant made a basic distinction between the one eternal moral faith, the “pure religion of reason” and the various “historical faiths”, the “revealed faiths” and “Church faiths” which had only been necessary for the introduction of the bases of moral life because of human weakness, because communal Church organization would have been impossible without, initially, the sensual, experiential confirmation they provided obedience. But, all such faiths and Churches were meaningful to the extent one viewed them from the prism of moral faith; otherwise, they were meaningless and Kant believed in a convergence towards this religion of reason in approaching the “Kingdom of God. See Kant, *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft*, 123-6, 132-142. In France, ‘natural religion’ was more clearly associated with deism shading into materialism; there, the distinction between rational belief and moral piety does not apply. Overall, Schleiermacher was appalled by the situation made clear by Hume’s *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* (Indianapolis, 1998; orig. 1779): that rational proofs and discussion might be able to salvage some rational belief in the supernatural, however negligible, but that regardless of who we side with in the dialogue, the results would have no resemblance to the religious person’s experience of their religion.

⁴⁵ Respectively Schleiermacher, *On Religion*, 48, 21. See also on the “peculiar sphere of religion”, *ibid.*, 230.

extent these are not reduced and assigned to discrete objects and concepts but retain their connection to the whole.⁴⁶ He even went so far as to say that “there is no sensation that is not pious”, meaning to the extent in it the self can become conscious of itself in relation to and at one with the whole,⁴⁷ “the One in All” (Schleiermacher’s favorite phrase for again warding off reduction and pressing the equal plurality and unity of consciousness).⁴⁸ The reader may in this connection recall Freud’s famous discussion in the opening pages of *Civilization and Its Discontents* of the “oceanic feeling”, suggested to him by Romain Rolland as the foundation of religion. Of this “sensation of ‘eternity’”—Schleiermacher called it “sense and taste for the infinite”⁴⁹—Freud said he’d never felt it and dismissed it as any foundation for religion, which he traced to the formation of patriarchal authority and the superego. The oceanic feeling he diagnosed instead as the ego’s recollection of primary narcissism, before the reality principle had enjoined externalization of the world for sustenance.⁵⁰ Schleiermacher moved in almost the exact opposite direction: he made religious experience the key to the proper demarcation and definition of the distinct parts of life and to all discovery, creation and formation within them.

I will return to this last point when we are in a position better to appreciate its importance. For now, I will add a few words about Schleiermacher as the pioneer of the anthropologization, historicization *and* theologization of ‘religion’,⁵¹ as we’ve provisionally

⁴⁶ See *ibid.*, 39-46.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁴⁸ See *ibid.*, 137, 101.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 39.

⁵⁰ See Sigmund Freud, “Civilization and Its Discontents” in *idem, The Freud Reader* (New York, 1989; orig. 1930), 722-35. Freud’s diagnosis of the ‘oceanic feeling’ described it as a reliving of primary narcissism, the condition in the womb in which the boundary between ego and the world as yet does not exist. In the ‘oceanic’ feeling, these boundaries were erased, the feeling being that of at oneness with the world. It must be said that such dissolution of the ego does not, as we’ll see further, in fact capture Schleiermacher’s vision of religious feeling. For him, this feeling of experiencing the ‘one in the all’ was in fact that of a holistically integrated, inexhaustible plurality of consciousness and perspective. Nonetheless, if Freud was not referring directly to Schleiermacher or reducing him to psycho-analytic categories in which he does not quite belong, I have no doubt he was in this strategically positioned opening of his essay directly taking on the whole Schleiermacherian legacy of thinking on religion. My purpose will be to show that this legacy was the dominant frame of understanding ‘religion’ in the nineteenth century. The essential component was the idea, attested by Rolland, that there was some pure or essential ‘religious feeling’ at the bottom of all ‘religion’, which had then taken various historical forms and might come to be cognized in its own purity through critical perspective. It shouldn’t be missed that Freud put the romantic vision of religion into the mouth of an artist and clinically divested himself of it.

⁵¹ One must distinguish here between theological religion and theologization of ‘religion’. Schleiermacher was vehemently against the first, but the whole task of his life eventually became the latter; namely, to properly historicize *cum* theologize the religious consciousness. Given his constant fight against theological religion, this was not at all clear in the first edition of the *Speeches*, but it very much became so by the third, where Schleiermacher read the *Speeches* through the prism of his later *Glaubenslehre* and spoke, for instance, of defending the “scientific stability” of Christianity and the need for theology to be entrusted only to those with “scientific training”. What drove him in this direction was actually the need to bolster his universalist imperatives on ‘religion’ and its development. Hence, “scientific stability” here referred to the need to view Christianity from a holistic historical perspective, so that for example Unitarianism would not be pushed outside it. And, Schleiermacher argued, somewhat at cross-purposes to the tone of the first edition of *Speeches*, that theologians had to be of “scientific training”, to be able to maintain the required broad and holistic perspective rather than getting bogged in exclusivist identifications. See *ibid.*, 195 (note 14) and 196-7 (note 16). In fact, ever since Hegel, Schleiermacher’s anti-theological theologization of ‘religious consciousness’ has been attacked as a fundamental contradiction and weakness in his thought. Namely, “since they rest on the demand to raise an unmediated relationship [religious experience] to a level of mediation (i.e. to conceptual clarity) while simultaneously wanting to retain the initial claim.” Crouter, “Introduction” in *Schleiermacher, On Religion*, 63. Schleiermacher’s answer would probably have

discovered this in Goldziher. To begin with, Schleiermacher contended, “Man is born with the religious capacity as with every other”, which cast the religious sensibility as the universal patrimony of humanity.⁵² That in itself was old news. More interesting and telling, he argued that virtually *any* “positive religion” was better and a better representative of its kind than so-called “natural religion”, for the latter was a *post facto* rationalization of experience and belonged to no individual’s or society’s actual, immediate religious experience.⁵³ ‘Natural religion’ was no religion at all because “Religious men are throughout historical.”⁵⁴ Radical conclusions followed from this valorization of positive/historical religions: not only did Schleiermacher see himself as trying “to show how all forms of religion, even the most imperfect, are the same in kind.”⁵⁵ He maintained that, though he did not want to be misunderstood on this point, he eschewed “such a comparison as true and false, which is not quite appropriate to religion...All is immediately true in religion.”⁵⁶ He did not want to be misunderstood because he thought all is immediately true in religion *as historical*. All religious experience is true as historical, as belonging to a particular “stage of culture”, meaning that “the lower and the higher stages of religion”, “in essence” alike, had to be viewed in terms of the spiritual development they sketched and Schleiermacher never wanted to be seen as having “sacrificed the interests of the most perfect religion to the inferior.”⁵⁷ Hence, he played his romantic friends as beyond the pale, if they “could really mean that the most cultured religious system is no better than the rudest”, because they took “most refined Deism” to be that system! He could not, he said, “speak of it without indignation.”⁵⁸ But, the “progress” and “consummation of religion” was something other, for only by understanding religion as “it really exists and displays itself, would you comprehend it as an endlessly progressive work of the Spirit that reveals Himself in human history.”⁵⁹

In the notes to the later editions of the text it was made clear early and often, but readers of the original arrived only in the concluding sections at Schleiermacher’s manifesto that it was *Christianity* that represented the greatest progress of the religious sensibility and *its ongoing purification* religion’s consummation. As he put it in one of these later notes, the rejection in the text “of the thought of the universality of any one religion and the assertion that only in the sum of all religions is the whole extent of this bias of mind [towards any single one] comprehended, in no way expresses a doubt that Christianity will be able to extend itself over the whole human race.” For not only was Christianity bound to be transformed in the process, but its whole history already represented a compendium of the progress of the religious spirit, so that in its ultimate displacement of all other religions, “the religious sphere would not be enclosed in

been that since all concretion and formation ultimately derive from the religious consciousness, the thinking ultimately allowing it to be understood in its full universality and essence would be privileged rather than contradictory. This in any case was the stance that moved the critical pens of the theologians of religion to come.

⁵² Schleiermacher, *On Religion* (3rd edition), 124.

⁵³ See *ibid*, 214-238.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 236.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 102 (note 1).

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 54. As he explained in a note added to a later edition: “in religion, error only exists by truth and not merely so, but it can be said that every man’s religion is his highest truth...how little this prejudices the superiority of one type of faith to another is in part plainly stated and in part easy to infer. One may be the utterance of a superior state of mind, or there may be in the religious communion a higher spiritual power and love.” *Ibid*, 108 (note 8).

⁵⁷ See also *Ibid*, 250.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 14-15.

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 15, 214.

narrower borders, but all religions would in a historical way be represented in Christianity.”⁶⁰ In the closing pages of his final speech, he declared Christianity in like spirit “the religion of religions”, for it and its history constituted the paradigm of the search for *redemption* from corruption (glossed a la Schleiermacher as the loss of connection of self and society from the life-giving power of the One in All).⁶¹ Christianity thus represented the concretized, historical instantiation and understanding of ‘religion’ as religio-historical overcoming and development, meaning every renewal, every new “such epoch of humanity is a palingenesis of Christianity.”⁶² Hence, Schleiermacher told his romantic interlocutors that he was happy to leave it to them to “decipher the rude and undeveloped religions of remotes peoples” or the “beautiful mythologies of Greece Rome.”

But, when you approach the holiest in which the Universe in its highest unity and comprehensiveness is to be perceived, when you would contemplate the different forms of the highest stage of religion which is not foreign or strange, but more or less existent amongst ourselves, I cannot be indifferent as to whether you find the right point of view.⁶³

The right point of view, it turned out, was the ‘elucidation’ to begin with of Judaism as a most charming, fateful though now obsolete religion of humanity’s childhood before the theologization of Christianity as *the* religion of its adulthood.⁶⁴ The concluding gloss of Christianity as the *telos* of religion and History, however, was *not* the ultimate message driving Schleiermacher. His high-strung prose intoned a rhapsodic mood but was everywhere a dialectical hammer and what stood out at every turn was its having been written *not* as any indictment of the ‘cultured despisers’ but as an impassioned plea to them. In a world figured as spiraling in the confusion of soul-destroying utilitarianism, sophistication and revolutionary upheaval, his German romantic friends were alone the servants of cultural renewal and Schleiermacher told them of his “deep conviction that you alone are capable, as well as worthy,

⁶⁰ Ibid, 108 (note 8).

⁶¹ Ibid, 252.

⁶² Ibid, 251.

⁶³ Ibid, 238.

⁶⁴ See *ibid*, 238-253. Immediately after completing the *Speeches*, Schleiermacher wrote his *Briefe bei Gelegenheit der politisch-theologischen Aufgabe und des Sendschreibens jüdischer Hausväter*. He attacked David Friedländer’s proposed scheme of nominal conversion by Jews to Christianity, allowing them full equal rights of citizenship without formal participation in the Church: they would only be beholden to the dictates of rational belief. Schleiermacher was for Jewish emancipation, but precisely against any such schema of conversion, because it would amount to an outright acknowledgment that Christianity had no spiritual purpose but was reducible to an authoritarian relationship with the state. The religious meaning of Protestantism could only be maintained by getting the state out of the business of mixing citizenship and confession. He did note, however, that the state had an interest in whether Jewish legal and messianic commitments were compatible with its own interests. In other words, he fulminated against the *actual* tie between the Christian Church and the state as irreligious and turned to the Jews to insinuate that such a tie was a problematic Jewish kind of affair. This mode of argumentation would become *de rigueur* for post-Orthodox Protestant theologians in the nineteenth century. See the discussion in Dilthey, *Leben Schleiermachers*, 467-71. But, this did not make for the convenient solution imagined. In the *Speeches*, he referred to those pining for the authoritarian Christian state as “wanting to rear again the fallen walls of and gothic pillars of their Jewish Zion.” Schleiermacher, *On Religion*, 3. But, he moved in the Jewish salon world of Berlin at the turn of the nineteenth century and in his brochure against formal conversion called for reform of Judaism, which didn’t vie so easily with the above idea in the *Speeches* that it was a dead letter.

of having awakened in you the sense for holy and divine things.”⁶⁵ Schleiermacher’s task was to convince the romantic despisers that, alone ‘cultured’ and representing the highest reach of Spirit’s progress, they reflected unbeknownst the light and experience of religion—they were the most religious of their time without knowing it—meaning “the goal of your highest endeavors is just the resurrection of religion” and that “bringing religion to completion” was theirs to do!⁶⁶ Nothing irritated Schleiermacher more than the idea that religion was meant for “the lower portion of the people”, for the “rude and uncultured” classes of the “common standpoint”, its role to keep them in check and in line.⁶⁷ Religion he proffered rather as the engine and soul of human culture at its historical height; he bid his romantic friends to embrace the “true science” of revealing Philosophy, Ethics, Natural Science and Art in their distinct, proper, *religiously disseminated and only thus prosperous*, spheres.⁶⁸

5.

The pioneering role Schleiermacher played in shifting the grounds of literary, philosophical and eventually theological examination and discussion of religion in the nineteenth century, by contrast to the Enlightenment, came already to be well appreciated by commentators in the century after his death.⁶⁹ Schleiermacher of course did not write in a cultural vacuum. Lessing, to give one instance, had already conjured History as a drama of religious progress, a providential course of revelation educating mankind towards the *telos* of full comprehension and realization of its ‘humanity’. But, Lessing expected a new dispensation: after the Jewish childhood and Christian adolescence, a “new, eternal gospel”, a new religion of humanity would usher in the moral perfection of adulthood, wherein man “will do the good, because it is the good” and not in expectation of worldly or otherworldly rewards.⁷⁰ Schleiermacher, by contrast, settled on the historicist exposition and purification of Christianity as the apex of positive/historical religion. This was to become a characteristic divide in the nineteenth century. Philosophers, after Hegel, increasingly went into the business of describing and founding different versions of the new ‘religion of humanity’ as the sacralized subject of History. The theologians who were and remained much more scholars took upon themselves the philologically endowed project of purifying historical religion (meaning mostly, but as we’ll see not at all

⁶⁵ Ibid, 9.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 141.

⁶⁷ Ibid, 11-12.

⁶⁸ This stance will be further elaborated in Section 3 below.

⁶⁹ Ferdinand Christian Baur, notwithstanding his critique, said of Schleiermacher’s *Speeches* that they conveyed the dawn of the nineteenth century, “as if the genius of the century, powerfully beating its wings, moved in them.” He also called his later theological work “epoch-making” and said that later developments simply could not be understood without them. Baur, *Kirchengeschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts, in Ausgewählte Werke in Einzelausgaben* (Stuttgart, 1970; orig. 1862), 85, 105, 212. The number of pages Baur devoted to Schleiermacher was completely out of proportion to any other figure in his text. See also the introduction by Rudolf Otto, included in Orman’s translation, Schleiermacher, *On Religion*, vi-xx. Dilthey, *Leben Schleiermachers*, 471-89, chronicles the initial reaction and then then growing influence of the *Speeches*.

⁷⁰ See Lessing, *Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts*, (Project Gutenberg, <http://gutenberg.spiegel.de>; Orig. 1780), Sections 85-86. As Lessing put it in Section 83, the whole point of the education of humankind was to raise it to become a “man” who would do his “duty” irrespective of the charming prospects put before him for doing it that were precisely the means of this education in his childhood and adolescence. What made Lessing the true forerunner of Schleiermacher and in fact the common progenitor of both the ‘science of religion’ and the ‘religion of humanity’ was his championing, on a developmental basis, of the positive religions. See his preface to *ibid*. Dilthey noted the resemblance with Lessing, but was not willing to vouch for it. Herder, as the editor of Dilthey’s text points out, has come to be seen as the more likely model. See Dilthey, *Leben Schleiermachers*, 421 (note 2).

exclusively, Protestant Christianity). Let's take an example that will eventually prove indicative on a number of fronts. The deep imprint left by Schleiermacher on the religious thought and scholarship of the nineteenth century is on full display in the 1882 Hibbert Lectures of the Dutch Protestant theologian, Abraham Kuenen, on *National Religions and Universal Religions*.⁷¹ Kuenen set himself the task of explaining what constituted a 'universal religion' as against the national kind; this could not, he contended, be simply a demographic matter of counting numbers and adherents across classes and peoples. It was rather a question whose resolution belonged to "one of the youngest in the rank of sciences—the science of religion."⁷² And, what the 'science of religion' called for in this connection was a historical examination of the relationship between presumed universal and national religions as the means of defining and measuring religious universalism.⁷³ Kuenen considered Islam, Christianity and Buddhism as candidate universal religions, but his discussion of Islam and Buddhism functioned as no more than bookends to his major theme: the development of Christianity from the historical working out of a supposed internal contradiction in Jewish history, i.e. the advent of ethical monotheism in a Jewish national religious context.

Schleiermacher's ethos is everywhere traceable in Kuenen's science of religion. It can be seen in his insistence that religions be judged in terms of the actual religio-historical and cultural situation of adherents: do they address "the satisfaction of his religious needs"?⁷⁴ Do they meet an "existing want...and the longings of his people", have they "struck root in the heart of a people"?⁷⁵ Moreover, do they express a "longing for something higher and better in the matter or religion", or most ideally, open a path for "free spiritual development"?⁷⁶ It is Schleiermacher's hand, when Kuenen rejects any severe judgment against saint veneration in Islam, because "it evidently satisfies deeply rooted wants and possesses a genuinely religious significance." Kuenen thus uses the phenomenon to abuse Islam, to read it as a "protest" against Islam's supposed incapacity to provide anything better. But, iniquitous from a more developed religious standpoint, in itself, saint veneration is said to display many religious virtues, not least amongst them: "Here the sense of dependence and the need of redemption assert their claims."⁷⁷ (Schleiermacher, in his later work, famously defined religion as based on "the feeling of absolute dependence").⁷⁸ Likewise, in a section that conjured Jewry's original popular devotion to Yahweh as an ethnic God, he bid his readers to stay their judgment on the gruesome practices the propitiation of this deity involved, for there was in it genuine worship, reliance and succor. "All sincere religion is true religion, and must secure its beneficent results."⁷⁹ Finally, one need not strain to hear Schleiermacher when Kuenen concludes that only "the identification of religion and dogmatics", meaning the confusion of Christian theology and the Christian religion, could have led commentators to take Hellenistic as against Jewish developments as the fount of Christianity.⁸⁰ Above all, however, what marked Kuenen's science of religion in the Schleiermacher mold was his discussion of the development of 'religion' as the universal subject

⁷¹ Abraham Kuenen, *National Religions and Universal Religions* (London, 1882).

⁷² Ibid, 4.

⁷³ See ibid, 8-9.

⁷⁴ Ibid, 45.

⁷⁵ Ibid, 34, 37-8.

⁷⁶ Ibid, 21, 36.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 42-3.

⁷⁸ Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith* (New York, 1999; orig. 1830), 131-2.

⁷⁹ Kuenen, *National Religions and Universal Religions*, 76.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 197, 193-8.

of History. That was at stake in statements like that the emergence of “synagogue” worship outside of Palestine and the Temple practices associated with it “contributed most powerfully to the independence of religion”,⁸¹ or, that Pharisaism, despite its clear shortcomings, was “capable of being turned into the right channel and made to serve the true advancement and development of religion.”⁸² Kuenen, concluding, noted he’d dealt “with the past, not with the future, of religion”; but, I can save the reader the suspense and divulge that the whole point of his exposition we’ll have to return to was that Christianity was the only ‘universal religion’ and that the future belonged to it.⁸³

In setting out this trajectory of the anthropologization, historicization *and* theologization of ‘religion’ from Schleiermacher through to the work of Kuenen and Goldziher, my goal has *not* been to outline any stable or reified notion of the ‘science of religion’ for the nineteenth century. In fact, another reason (beside the contemporary ones provided above) why the religious temperament and mentality associated with this science of religion has to us a foreign ring, has to do with the reality that, by the close of the nineteenth and into the first half of the twentieth, the idea of ‘religion’ and *religious feeling* as History’s universal subject and process moving from their various historical forms towards teleological self-cognition, purification, fruition was increasingly discarded. We’ve already noted how Freud came eventually to link religion with the formation of social authority and the superego and thereby with the discontents of civilization.⁸⁴ And, in the new sociology of religion that took root at the turn of the twentieth century in the work of thinkers like Weber, Durkheim and Troeltsch religion was cognized as fundamentally social, meaning plural and not easily liable to a universal history in its own name. Religions, namely, came to be approached more as fundamental aspects of particular societies, as distinct ways of being embodying or engaging *their* situations, trajectories and transformations, rather than as part of a universal historicist project—religion—coming to its essence through the various religions and peoples.⁸⁵ According to Chadwick, it was in fact only at the end of the

⁸¹ Ibid, 172-3

⁸² Ibid, 210-211.

⁸³ Ibid, 296-8.

⁸⁴ As is known, there were remarkable shifts in Freud’s thinking on religion in the space of his writing of *The Future of an Illusion* and *Civilization and its Discontents* (see *The Freud Reader*, 685-772). In the earlier essay of 1929, Freud’s discussion can be compared to a disenchanted version of the Lessing schema: religion is explained as a vehicle of the renunciation demanded by civilization, in place of which it proffers to individuals illusory rewards as consolation. Religion is thus attacked as an aspect particularly of the pre-scientific age and temperament incapable of facing up to the libidinal requirements of civilization openly. In *Civilization*, two years later, Freud discussed religion as a much more integral part of the functioning of the superego and its deployment of guilt. Freud remained a critic of religion. On the one hand, he argued, religion tended to exacerbate the ravages of the superego by feeding it all manner of utterly unrealizable ideals like, ‘love all mankind’ and ‘love your enemy’, etc. On the other hand, religion offered redemption and remission of sin—i.e. guilt—the alleviation of which Freud himself thought a desperate necessity if the repression that made civilization possible was not also to destroy it. All of this made religion a much more dangerous game than any passing illusion, for religion both upped the ante on guilt but then turned to proffer a dam to self-destruction. This whole new thematic as well as the idea of ‘internalization’ prominently featured in *Civilization* can be traced to Nietzsche’s *Genealogy of Morals* in idem, *On the Genealogy of Morals and Ecce Homo* (New York, 1969; orig. 1887).

⁸⁵ Ernst Troeltsch is probably the most instructive example as one can watch this change develop through his work. Having written *Die Absolutheit des Christentums und die Religionsgeschichte* (Tübingen, 1902), he came increasingly to doubt that Christianity and other religions that had emerged in different cultural situations and thus addressed different problems could actually be judged by any absolute standard called ‘religion’. This shift had resulted from a growing perception that Christianity itself had meant radically different things in different historical and social contexts. Hence he concluded his transformative study, *The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches*,

nineteenth century, when the idea of science as the new religion (or for our science of religion, science heralding the completion of religion) waned, that religion came to feel absent, the world disenchanted and in need of re-enchantment and secularization a full reality.⁸⁶ However one judges this assessment, the idea of a radical shift in European consciousness at the end of the nineteenth century deeply animates and impinges on this study.

My purpose in beginning with a contextualized discussion of the science of religion in the nineteenth century has been two-fold. First, *Islamwissenschaft*, as it emerged in the work of Goldziher, began as a science of religion, and followed in the wake of a multiplication of such historicized ‘religion’ in the post-Hegelian period (Humanist, Protestant, Jewish). Unlike what we’ve seen of Schleiermacher and Kuenen, it was the Islamic heritage Goldziher took as the subject of historicist purification and teleological idealization. I will provide readers sufficient evidence in the following chapter to believe their ears on this point. Consider for now simply the opening pages of Goldziher’s *Lectures on Islam* (1910), viewed immediately at the time as the epitome of the young field. Goldziher began by noting that from the time “religion came to be dealt with as an object of independent science (*Wissenschaft*)”, scholars had sought out the “origin of religion in the psychological sense.” Many such foundations had been proposed: human consciousness of causality, the feeling of dependence, internalization of the infinite, renunciation of the worldly. But, religion was too complex a phenomenon to be reduced to any one such motivation and it was a thoroughly historical phenomenon, an outgrowth of distinct social formations, of different stages of historical development. But, it could be said that in different religions, one or another motivation played the dominant role in their respective historical development. In the case of Islam, it was “*the feeling of dependence*” on the unconditioned power of God. Islam just meant “absolute devotion (*Hingebung*); the believer’s giving himself over (*Hingebung*) to Allah.” This underlying principle had shaped every facet of Islam and it was at the core of the education Islam intended for humanity. And, he added, “It [Islam] is the most powerful example for Schleiermacher’s thesis, that religion is rooted in the *feeling of dependence*.”⁸⁷ I hope that serves as some indication.

But, in order to understand the emergence and trajectory of *Islamwissenschaft*, we need to grapple with the way in which the originally Protestant science of religion first cast ‘religion’ as a transhistorical and transcultural concept in relation to other ones of its kind, ‘nation’ and ‘culture’. This conceptual constellation belonged of course, despite its pretensions, to an evolving nineteenth-century context. But, its contours remain deeply implicated in our own contemporary discourse on ‘religion’, even if the constellation today is deeply contested and even if, as I’ve been saying, its lineage is no longer immediately recognizable to us. Where did

by observing: “Nowhere does there exist an absolute Christian ethic, which only awaits discovery; all that we can do is to learn to control the world-situation in its successive phases just as the earlier Christian ethic did in its own way. There is also no absolute ethical transformation of material nature or of human nature; all that does exist is a constant wrestling with the problems which they raise. Thus the Christian ethic of the present day and of the future will also only be an adjustment to the world-situation, and it will only desire to achieve that which is practically possible.” See idem, *The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches* (London, 1931; orig. 1912), 1013.

⁸⁶ See note 37 above.

⁸⁷ Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam* (Heidelberg, 1910), 1-2. The English translation of the lectures by Andras and Ruth Hamori—Goldziher, *Introduction to Islamic Law and Theology* (Princeton, 1981), 1—makes “*Hingebung*”, in line with contemporary scholarly usage as to the meaning of Islam, into “submission.” But, Goldziher is trying to emphasize the ‘giving of oneself’, the ‘devotional’ not the ‘submitting’. The validity of the latter translation derives from the translators’ attempt throughout their work to bring Goldziher into and update him in the light of contemporary scholarship. Reading him in this vein, in terms of his continued scholarly relevance, is an important one and I don’t under-estimate it. But, it does not adequately serve historical understanding.

'religion' come from and what was it supposed to mean? I begin with a historiographic discussion and will return to Schleiermacher and Kuenen in its light.

III. 'Religion', 'Culture', 'Nationality'

6.

One prevalent account of the emergence of 'religion' as an anthropological category makes its advent a centerpiece of the 'secularization' process in European history. Namely, just as the religious community was losing its dominant position in European social and political life to the newly minted national community, the notion of 'religion' came to be conceived on the model of the 'nation' as something multiple and modular, as a human phenomenon ranging across the diversity of human history and culture. 'Religion' was thus a defanging of dominant and exclusive religions. Said's own discussion of the rise of Orientalism as a *distinctly modern discourse* was itself one that reflected this secularization story. In his telling, Orientalism shed its associations with Christian heresiology or, more accurately, *secularized* the latter's polemical animus towards its Oriental/Islamic subject,⁸⁸ by configuring itself as *philology*. For, the singular achievements of the 'new' philology of the nineteenth century—"comparative grammar, the reclassification of languages into families, and the final rejection of the divine origins of language"—according to Said, were ultimately "a more or less direct consequence of the view that held language to be an entirely human phenomenon."⁸⁹ In Orientalism cum philology, the vertical conception of language as a sacred medium of revelation, cascading from the divine (Hebrew, then divined in Greek, Latin) down to the profane tongues of man, was replaced by a horizontal conception of it as encompassing and articulating human relations.

This idea of philological secularization has received its most extensive formulation and achieved its widespread academic popularity in the work of Benedict Anderson, who utilized it to theorize 'nationality' as the normative socio-political identity of the modern world. The pre-modern "religious community", à la Anderson, had been centered on a sacred language/narrative mediated hierarchically by religious and political elites: power, religious cum political, emanated centripetally from focused points of authority, territorial cum spiritual. And, time, historical time, was timeless as each generation found itself in the nimbus of playing out the sacred narrative in its own right.⁹⁰ The "national community" by contrast was founded on the abstract and egalitarian identity of membership in the new commercial reading publics of the modern era fostered by print capitalism.⁹¹ It reflected the ongoing relativization of languages and the sacred narratives associated with them in the early modern period.⁹² In the national public, timeless simultaneity and community *across* time was replaced by the new experience of imagined simultaneity and community *in* time. And, the first politicization of this public derived allegedly also from its egalitarian ethos, i.e. the violation of the latter in the experience of New World functionaries excluded from climbing imperial hierarchies because of their American birth.⁹³ In

⁸⁸ "Modern Orientalism derives from secularizing elements in eighteenth-century European culture...But, if these interconnected elements represent a secularizing tendency, this is not to say that the old religious patterns of human history...were simply removed. Far from it: they were reconstituted, redeployed, redistributed in the secular frameworks...For anyone who studied the Orient a secular vocabulary in keeping with these frameworks was required...[but Orientalism] also retained, as an undislodged current in its discourse, a reconstructed religious impulse, a natural supernaturalism." Said, *Orientalism*, 120-1. See also, for instance, *ibid*, 82-6.

⁸⁹ *Ibid*, 135.

⁹⁰ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, 1991), 12-20.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, 37-46.

⁹² *Ibid*, 67-82.

⁹³ See *ibid*, 22-36, 47-65.

this secularization story, accordingly, the ‘nation’, hand in hand with the new philology, is traced to the advent of a horizontal experience of language and community.⁹⁴ By the same token, it is explicated as “modularly imagined”⁹⁵: modular in the abstract identification of national insiders with one another but, more important, in that comparable outsiders must always be imagined. An all-encompassing nationality would be an oxymoron for the concept presumes limitation, multiplication and has remained open to incessant modeling or “pirating”.⁹⁶

In Talal Asad’s influential collection, *Genealogies of Religion*, the emergence of ‘religion’ as a “transhistorical and transcultural phenomenon” is placed within this same context and narrative of secularization drawn on to historicize the ‘nation’.⁹⁷ Asad’s account, however, moves naturally in the opposite direction of Anderson’s. His discussion of the universalization and modularization effected through the modern concept of ‘religion’ is meant to highlight not the triumph but rather the domestication of religion in modernity. Asad’s collection begins with an important critique of the continuing academic mania for talk of native “agency” and talk of cultural “hybridity”, meant to bolster this supposedly counter-hegemonic agency in the face of normative notions of Western modernization reinventing the world in its own image.⁹⁸ Noting that radical critics who put great store by concepts like ‘agency’ did not do enough to investigate their moorings in European intellectual history, Asad suggested what was needed was less congratulatory spokespersonship and greater inquiry into two dialectically charged processes: the projects of Western Modernity that literally ‘made history’, not least by transforming via their arsenal of categories and practices the very existential possibilities of “preliterate, precapitalist, premodern” peoples; second, the Western discourses, particularly anthropological, devoted to defining the ‘West’ through the maelstrom of this very encounter.⁹⁹ For, what marked Western modernity exactly was its historical consciousness, its collapsing of all human history and culture onto a linear, progressive temporal plane with the West standing at the end of History and all other societies, contemporary as much as historical, located at some earlier level in the past. And, the construction of ‘religion’ had played no small part in the consolidation and deployment of this historicist consciousness and thus in “narrating the secular story of European world hegemony in developmental terms.”¹⁰⁰

Turning hence to anthropological literature and the definition therein of “our concept of religion as the concept of a transhistorical essence” having as its object “a distinctive space of human practice”, Asad retorted there was nothing neutral about this universalized, modularized construction of ‘religion’ as an anthropological category.¹⁰¹ In it, religion was defined in terms of voluntaristic affiliation as a system of belief and ritual having as its province those cosmic, inscrutable areas of life generally unapproachable by the usual means at the disposal of the

⁹⁴ Anderson in fact quoted Said on this point and went on to speak of the “philological revolution” that first imagined the new linguistic/print solidarities and genealogies of linear time. See *ibid*, 70 (note 8), 77.

⁹⁵ The idea of ‘modularity’ has been used in such contexts generally to stress the horizontal, homogenous character of modern social identity as against the differentiated, hierarchical character of the pre-modern.

⁹⁶ See *ibid*, 113, 80-1; see also 7. Such modeling and piracy made for great ironies: it was colonial governments, à la Anderson, who first imagined native nations and staffed them with native officials circumscribed within their confines, and these eventually made those imagined nations sovereign. See *ibid*, 163-185.

⁹⁷ *Ibid*, 28-9.

⁹⁸ See *ibid*, 3-19. Unfortunately, Asad’s critique has made no dent on the health of the ‘agency’ industry.

⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 23-4.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 20.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, 29, 27.

scientific, moral and artistic imagination.¹⁰² But, *this* ‘religion’ had little to do with what, for instance, made the singular authority of the Church legitimate in Medieval Christendom; it was ‘religion’ that corresponded rather to “the privatized idea of religion in modern society” and to “the post-Enlightenment secularization of Western society.”¹⁰³ The universalized, modularized idea of religion as an anthropological category was accordingly thoroughly marked by its genealogy. It was the off-spring of a specific locus in Christian history: the crisis of Christian authority in the European Enlightenment. It was, in other words, precisely at the moment when religious ‘beliefs’ were relativized that a common, rational standard for judging and apportioning them their due—a ‘natural religion’—was proposed.¹⁰⁴ Eventually, ‘rational religion’ gave way to the rational allotment to ‘religion’ of the inherently irrational aspects of life, leading naturally to the thought, à la Freud, that a sufficiently mature person might be able to do without the thing altogether.¹⁰⁵ That, to Assad, proved just how euphemistic anthropological talk of the “religious perspective” on life on a par with the “scientific perspective” was: “the optional flavor conveyed by the term *perspective*” could not be “equally applied to religion and science in modern society: religion is indeed optional in a way that science is not.” Or, as he reiterated, the point was that “science and technology *together* are basic to the structure of modern lives, individual and collective, and that religion, in any but the most vacuous sense, is not.”¹⁰⁶

In the secularization narrative, the modern emergence of ‘religion’ is explained as a kind of coup de grâce to religion. The advent of ‘religion’ as a transhistorical, transcultural category is here viewed as a euphemistic method of relativizing each particular so-called religion’s absolute claims and institutional authority emanating therefrom. Religion as the basis of communal life was in the modern secular West replaced by the ‘nation’ and modularized on its model: ‘religion’ was allotted a distinct area of life that might literally contain and normalize all dubbed religious and proffer in criticism of the past and prescription for the future the legitimate proportions of its operation. The ‘secularization narrative’, I must warn the reader, is my creation. It does not exist in the form I’ve elaborated it in any of the authors I’ve drawn on, though it captures the main lines of their work within a coherent framework. In constructing it, my aim has been to stress and bring together two tendencies within the secularization literature: one, that views the ‘nation’ as displacement of religion, the second, that reads modularized, circumscribed ‘religion’ in terms of its domestication. Now, the equal parts universalization and privatization of religion in the nineteenth century and its placement vis-à-vis nationality will remain constant themes in this study of the trajectory of *Islamwissenschaft*. However, the question remains: does ‘secularization’ adequately explain these phenomena? I can imagine some readers approaching the question from a contemporary perspective. Has ‘secularization’ really been as triumphant as suggested by Asad and others like him? Has the indignant questioning of secular Western modernity’s universalization and normalization of religion proven all too successful? Looking at recent global history, everywhere the genie of religion threatens to escape from the bottle, if it has not done so already! I leave the reader to judge the

¹⁰² Asad took on Clifford Geertz’s attempted anthropological *definition* of religion and bruised it bloody. See *ibid*, 29-54. The essay he attacked was “Religion As a Cultural System” in *idem, Interpretation of Cultures* (New York, 1973), 87-125.

¹⁰³ Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*, 48, 46-7.

¹⁰⁴ See *ibid*, 40-43.

¹⁰⁵ This was certainly Freud’s earlier, happy conclusion to his “The Future of an Illusion”. See Freud, *The Freud Reader*, 718-22. Freud did not change his mind about the dispensability of religion, but his perspective on the prospects of civilization on its own terms darkened.

¹⁰⁶ Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*, 49.

basically miscast formulations of, as well as the generally polarized reactions to, this prospect. My goal is not to accept the premise of secularization and then to judge its success or frankly its legitimacy. I want to show that secularization is limited in its capacity to explain the emergence of 'religion' as a universal, historicist category, meaning also its relations with the idea of nationality in the nineteenth century. It explains the work and actions of some, but not others and thus misses the larger constellation of which 'secularism' was one part.

7.

In order to understand where the secularization narrative is limited, I move to a second body of literature that deals with the modularization of religion in the nineteenth century—or, as Martin Jay calls it, the “modalization” of religious experience as one kind amongst others, epistemological, aesthetic, political, etc.¹⁰⁷ In this literature, the spoken or silent referent and model in evaluating the advent of 'religion' as a distinct sphere of human life (i.e. as 'religious experience') is not the 'nation' but, as the reader may have suspected, that other great, highly intricate universal category of the nineteenth-century: 'culture'. Let's go back to the three nineteenth-century authors on 'religion' introduced thus far: Schleiermacher, Kuenen and Goldziher. The philosophic apostle of 'religion' as well as the two scholars of the 'science of religion' who followed in his footsteps saw themselves as devotees and champions of religion. More, they all wrote on behalf of the future of religion: they believed religion was meant above all for the modern world, that only now would it come into its own and arrive at fruition. And, they viewed their own critical historicization—purification—of the ideal religious heritage they chose as doing precisely that, imagining they wielded their scholarly pens as the hand of providence moving toward its ultimate goal. It would thus be strange to discuss these figures as involved in the project of killing religion softly with their 'religion'. To be fair, Assad is hardly unaware of such phenomena, just as other aspects of his critique will also ring familiar in what I have to say. He acknowledges that the privatization of religion, “the demand in our time that it be kept quite separate from politics, law and science” is “at once part of a strategy (for secular liberals) of the confinement, and (for liberal Christians) of the defense of religion.”¹⁰⁸ But, he takes this defense of religion by liberal Christians—the 'liberal' in 'liberal Christians' apparently doing the work here—as one more act in the larger drama of secularization and demotion of religion.¹⁰⁹ The point here is that champions of 'religion' like Schleiermacher, Kuenen and Goldziher were not seeking simply to reconcile religion with modern life and create enough room for it to survive. Like Schleiermacher, they viewed religious experience in ideal terms, and Schleiermacher was adamant that it was for religion to play the necessary *redemptive* role in taking on the fault-lines and problems of modern life. Modernity desperately needed religion; hence, 'religion' was also a critical and oppositional term, much like 'culture'.

Let's begin with Hans-Georg Gadamer's *Truth and Method* which, from the philosophical standpoint, is the most sustained criticism of the modularization of cultural life and cultural self-understanding in the nineteenth century.¹¹⁰ The focus of Gadamer's criticism is

¹⁰⁷ Martin Jay, *Songs of Experience: Modern American and European Variations on a Universal Theme* (Berkeley, 2005), 78

¹⁰⁸ Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*, 28.

¹⁰⁹ Asad thus spoke of the “Higher Criticism” in the same light, as having “virtually evaporated” the theological problem in Christianity of “saving the biblical story”, towards a secular narrative, “formed in the pursuit of a new universality.” See *ibid*, 20-1.

¹¹⁰ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York, 1994; orig. revised edition, 1986).

two-fold: the nineteenth-century consolidation of Art and aesthetic consciousness as an *autonomous* realm and the attempt, growing out of this same development, to establish and legitimate the autonomy of the Human Sciences and historical consciousness.¹¹¹ Note that this double focus corresponds exactly with the complexly interrelated, double-meaning the concept of ‘culture’ developed in the nineteenth century as describing, 1) a “general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development”; 2) a whole “particular way of life”.¹¹² Gadamer began his inquiry by following the pre-history, in the humanist tradition, of especially those concepts—common-sense (*sensus communis*), judgment, taste—the Kantian revisioning of which in the third Critique he argued set the stage for the theorization of the autonomy and eventually even the presumption of the sovereignty of aesthetic consciousness. Common-sense, judgment and taste, Gadamer suggested, were notions that had remained even through the eighteenth century an integral part and catalyst of social practice. They were all in distinct senses associated with practical wisdom and knowhow: they represented the distillation of an accumulated canon of practical experience and ideals into a kind of second sense capable, in the encounter with a given social situation, of illuminating *in actu* its unique, concrete underlying logic and disclosing the right way to act within it.¹¹³ In Kant’s *Critique of Judgment*, however, the judgment of beauty in nature and art, called a judgment of taste (*Geschmacksurteil*), was strictly separated from knowledge of objects, on the one hand, from the realm of morality and action, on the other.¹¹⁴ Equally crucial, though, the whole point of Kant’s demarcation of

¹¹¹ See Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 41.

¹¹² Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (New York, 1983), 90.

¹¹³ See Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 19-40.

¹¹⁴ I am of course not suggesting that discrimination of the pleasures afforded by beauty and art as being of a special and different kind, or the differentiation of Art from craft and its institutionalization in special public places (museums) or the branding of artists as special kinds of persons—that these momentous shifts somehow sprang Athena like out of Kant’s mind. Nor does Gadamer say any such thing. In fact, all these intellectual, institutional, social elements in the constitution of the constellation ‘Art’ were already well under way and coming into their own in the Eighteenth Century. For instance, Addison’s 1712 *Spectator* essays on “The Pleasures of the Imagination” sought primarily to describe the refreshing “safety” of these “innocent pleasures” taken in the beauty of nature and art as divided from the more gross and “criminal” pleasures of the body as well as the edifying but laborious and difficult pleasures of the mind. The special ground of these pleasures of the imagination, Addison, following the lead of French Classicism, located in the realm of human sensibility, i.e. the so-called secondary qualities emanating from the interaction of objects with our sensory organs, but, not, like the primary qualities, inhering in the objects themselves. See Joseph Addison, *The Spectator* (Oxford, 1965), no. 411-421: 535-582, particularly no. 411: 538-9 and 413: 546. As for the “subjectivization of aesthetics”, which Gadamer lays directly at Kant’s door, clearly ‘subjectivization’ was well-advanced at the time Hume’s *Of the Standard of Taste* declared in his outright manner: “Beauty is no quality in things themselves: It exists merely in the mind which contemplates them; and each mind perceives a different beauty” and that “to seek the real beauty, or real deformity is as fruitless an inquiry, as to pretend to ascertain the real sweet and the real bitter.” Namely, Hume contended that the pleasure of beauty was just that, a “sentiment”, and very much like the moral sentiments, it did not judge anything about matters of fact; it did not say what the world was like. Rather, it was itself a sovereign fact about the world; as, Hume put it, “All sentiment is right: because sentiment has a reference to nothing beyond itself, and is always real, wherever a man is conscious of it.” David Hume, *Of the Standard of Taste and Other Essays* (New York, 1965), 268-9. In other words, taste was not liable to correction in terms of adequacy; the task was instead to *refine* it, to make it ever more sure and universal in discernment. Here though, we’ve arrived at the point Gadamer is trying to make about the Kantian departure. For, both Addison and Hume’s singing of the virtues of “the pleasures of the imagination” and “the refinement of the arts” were aimed ultimately at sociability and politeness. Addison’s “man of polite imagination” was to learn to savor the “secret” delight in the beautiful—‘secret’ was the ubiquitous word—and the vicarious experience afforded by the arts, all attuning one to self and to others and the needed calibration between the two. See op. cit. 411: 538, 412: 542, 543, 413: 545, 546, 418: 567-8, 421: 579-80. As for Hume, his essay in defense of luxury entitled, “Of Refinement in the Arts”, spoke thus of the “polite” and “liberal arts”: “The more

these refined arts advance, the more sociable men become... They flock into cities, love to receive and communicate knowledge; to show their wit or their breeding; their taste in conversation or living, in clothes or furniture... So that, beside the improvements which they receive from knowledge and the liberal arts, it is impossible but they must feel an encrease of humanity, from the very habit of conversing together, and contributing to each other's pleasure and entertainment." Alongside the public and political improvements Hume ascribed to expanding refinement and sociability, what he meant by an increase in humanity was polished manners, greater civility and politeness, i.e. the progressive inculcation and actualization of moral sentiments generally felt but not acted upon. See Hume, "Of Refinement in the Arts", *Essays Moral, Political, Literary* (London, 1898, orig. 1742), 301-2.

Turning now to Kant, we can see how radically he's severed taste, beauty and art from the *telos* of sociability and civility. Kant's whole point in fact is that the *telos* of the Art of Beauty (*schöne Kunst*) is internal to it, that it is "a kind of representation that is purposive in itself (*für sich selbst zweckmäßig ist*)", and hence that its social meaning and end must also emanate from inside of it. Kant was not slighting the goal of communication in the experience of Art or its communicability; exactly the opposite: as he understood it, only the Art of Beauty had *something lasting to say* and was not mere momentary pleasures exhausted in the course of social interaction. As he put it, the Art of Beauty had to be strictly separated from the entertaining arts (*angenehme Künste*), which had to do only with "enjoyment" and "all the stimulation that a group of people could have fun with at a party gathering." Here belonged the "jokes and laughter" to create a good mood and fun atmosphere in which much is bandied about but where "no one wants to be responsible for what he says, because it has only to do with the momentary entertainment (*Unterhaltung*), not any lasting matter meant for reflection and review." Here also was the place of party music (*Tafelmusik*), which was little more than happy background noise to which no one "pays the least attention." Here finally was the arena of "all games", which like all of this had no further goal but "making the time pass by unmarked." Kant was clearly concerned enough about separating artistic beauty from sociability that it is difficult to read his tone in this passage as anything but indignant. Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (Köln, 1995; orig. 1790), Section 44: 187-8. By contrast, he described the pleasure taken in the representations of the Art of Beauty as something deeply felt and meaningful, because pushed forth by ideas that opened an engrossing discourse, which absorbed one, but could never be fully captured or exhausted and awakened just as such a sense of holistic purposiveness in place of any particularized one. The soul, sensing itself exemplary in this expansive feeling of meaning pushing through discourse beyond it, naturally sought to share and find community in it with other souls. This last somewhat rapturous reading pushes Kant towards the way in which the romantics were to read him, but there is ample evidence for it in the Third Critique. I'll point here only to the rather hilarious passage in which Kant distinguished "Mannered Art" (*das Manieren*) from the "Art of Genius", lampooning the former as incapable of the actual creativity allowing its novelty to be "exemplary": the ground of mannered art's self-absorbed desire to be different was thus "mere peculiarity (bloß *Eigenthümlichkeit*)", which was just "another kind of aping." Ibid, Sec. 49: 204. Altogether, it was in fact only now that Kant tied genius as an inborn talent bestowed by nature *exclusively* with the creation of the Art of Beauty; only in thus radically sundering it from the process of epistemic discovery as incapable of explaining itself or being explained, that "Art" with a capital A vs. the arts shading into one another became philosophically feasible. See *ibid*, Sec. 46-7: 189-94.

Hume and Kant proffered mirror opposite positions on not only this point. Hume admitted that "good-manners" had been invented so that "wherever nature has given the mind a propensity to any vice, or to any passion disagreeable to others, refined breeding has taught men to throw the bias on the opposite side, and to preserve, in all their behavior, the appearance of sentiments different from those to which they naturally incline." The polite arts taught propitious dissembling and self-control. See Hume, "Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences", in *Essays*, 192. Kant, on the other hand, described the judgment of taste attuning us to beauty as putting us thus symbolically in tune with the noumenal realm of moral ideas, and so as being the source of our receptivity to the moral feelings attending the latter. In other words, in our experience of beauty, *feeling and duty came together*, leading in the cultivation of moral feeling to the perfection of taste. See *op. cit.*, Sec. 60: 251. Hume blasted the ancient poets for their "want of humanity and of decency", and ancient orators for their "scurrility", "quite shocking", and their lack of "delicacy of breeding" or "polite deference": the most universal and open standard of taste could precisely not tolerate or sanction *this*. See Hume, *Of the Standard of Taste and Other Essays*, 282; "Of the Rise and Progress", in *Essays*, 188-9. Kant instead held up the classical tradition as the eternal educator of genius, because of the product of the first society to have achieved a lasting autonomous form by reconciling freedom and legality (i.e. as duty). See *op. cit.* Sec. 60: 250. In conclusion, one may follow Ernst Cassirer in reading the whole philosophy of the Enlightenment as culminating in Kant, meaning the adequate reconciliation in the aesthetic realm as well of what had been otherwise warring 'components': the recognition of 'human sensibility' as

aesthetic experience was to demonstrate *it* as the bridge overcoming the otherwise chasm in his system between knowledge and morality, nature and autonomy, necessity and freedom.

The means by which Kant transcendently circumscribed the judgment of taste and allowed it simultaneously to play a mediating role between the phenomenal (facts) and noumenal (values) realms remains one of the most intriguing aspects of his thought. He argued the judgment of beauty was, like teleological judgments, both of them *a priori* in character. But they were *reflective* rather than determinative judgments: their concern was not with a universal rule *applied* to particulars, but rather, *given* the concrete case, they strove towards the whole of which it was a part. This made them different from the *a priori* principles in cognition and action, for the categories of the understanding legislating to the imagination and the moral maxims legislating to desire constituted their objects as what they were. By contrast, the kind of necessity reflective judgments *projected* was just that: open and ultimately only regulative.¹¹⁵ In the case of the judgment of taste, the concrete instance and starting point was our feeling of beauty, which resided in a very distinct kind of pleasure. Kant's task was to show the pleasure in beauty was transcendental, subject to critical analysis and hence universal in its claim. Kant's formulations of what remained after all a subjective feeling of pleasure but played, in the case of the beautiful, this transcendental role are well known. He said this pleasure, unlike all others, was a disinterested one (*ohne alles Interesse*):¹¹⁶ its source was neither the gratification of the enumerable desires of the body nor the categorical approbation attending the fulfillment of duty. Rather, it was an immediate, unscripted pleasure in something beautiful that was beautiful not because this was an objective characteristic of it, but because the mere encounter with its representation put our faculty of cognition in a state of free play: in such representations, the imagination was not simply ruled by the understanding towards conceptual recognition; it was free, equal and in accord with the understanding. That is, in this encounter, the whole faculty of cognition was fascinated and absorbed by the representation, which made it "singular and without comparison" as well as pleasurable.¹¹⁷ Hence, Kant stressed that the judgment of taste did not judge in terms of concepts, for its criterion of beauty was rather a feeling of pleasure that resulted from our finding a representation fascinating and unique. The radical repercussions of this capacity of ours to experience beauty were captured in the Kantian saying that, as beautiful, the representation was judged "purposive without a purpose."¹¹⁸ It is not difficult to discern Kant's meaning, given what has already been suggested: if I see a flower and approach it in terms of its possible herbal and medicinal properties or usefulness for dyeing, then, according to Kant (by contrast to other eighteenth-century thinkers like Hume), I simply do not see the flower

the locus of the beautiful (but not as having to do with categorical rules and knowledge); the understanding of the judgment of beauty as based on a special kind of pleasure (but only when the latter was not interpreted in utilitarian fashion); the emphasis, finally, on holistic creativity and meaning (only when taken as outlawing formal perfectionism as the artistic ideal). See Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment* (Boston, 1951; orig. 1932), 275-359. My concluding point, however, is that Kant saw himself as having overcome the philosophical problems of the Eighteenth Century. In that sense, he should also be viewed as a new point of departure, from which one looks forward. I have followed Gadamer on this path.

¹¹⁵ To put it another way, a world in which causality did not operate would simply no longer be the world we live in. But, it was not a logical impossibility that we might stop being able to experience things as beautiful. See Kant's Introduction to *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, 18-51.

¹¹⁶ See *ibid.*, Sec. 2-5, 59-67.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Sec. 15, 87.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Sec. 15, 86.

as beautiful.¹¹⁹ Rather, I *need not know anything* about the flower, its variety or utility: it is just when, standing back in observation I am overtaken in contemplation of it; when I sense that, irrespective of any concept or purpose from me, it is just as it should be and expresses an overall meaningfulness; only then do I judge it as beautiful and, in Kantian terminology, this is the purest possible judgment of its beauty.¹²⁰

Beauty, for Kant, in all of its forms is a gift of nature, something that in the ultimate instance is *found*. In the pure beauty of flowers, we experience nature as meaningful and purposeful in itself, because we find it ‘speaking’ to us beyond our concepts and aims. Because the pleasure in beautiful representations was disinterested and emanated not by judging in terms of identifiable concepts and purposes but because of the imagination’s freedom in them at play with the understanding, Kant argued that, the cognitive faculty being formally the same in all humanity, all sensing of something as beautiful was exemplary: universal in its claim. As a transcendental feeling, the pleasure in beauty took itself to be a *necessary* pleasure and thus communicable; as non-conceptual though, it could not be captured in discourse, which led Kant to designate taste humanity’s common sense (*Gemeinsinn*), to describe its super-discursive communicability.¹²¹ The problem with Kant’s discussion seems to be that, by demarcating ‘pure beauty’ as non-discursive, he’s reduced us to the appreciation of flowers and patterns, while the whole realm of the discursively beautiful, in which we find beauty in humanity, human creation, in Art, has been as with all conceptually charged perfectionism relegated to second-class status.¹²² This is simple miscomprehension, as Gadamer stressed.¹²³ To judge discursively of the beauty of living things—i.e. to judge each in terms of what it actually was—did not for Kant mean only the aesthetic derogation of ranking perfection on the scale of some pre-conceived notion: did the horse look like what horses are supposed to look like? Rather, nature as discursively beautiful, which is to say the beauty primarily of human beings, could be approached “in so far as it is actually Art (though of a superhuman kind).”¹²⁴ To judge nature as divine Art was not to do so by way of some formal perfection, but to judge the beauty of a being’s form in terms of a teleological ideal of what it should be, something only humanity could live up to and which went quite beyond the mere judgment of taste.¹²⁵ But, the Art of human creation was in a comparable situation (which is why Kant could at all make the comparison) because “taste is but a mere capacity to judge, not a productive power.”¹²⁶ The *creation* of Art required genius, and genius was an inborn gift of nature that allowed the artist to create ‘aesthetic ideas’: to use symbol, metaphor and analogy to literally embody, narrate and put in play ideas like ‘death’, ‘eternity’, ‘virtue’ and ‘happiness’ in representational form, which ideas however could simply not be adequately represented in phenomenal, cognitive terms. What genius did was to take a subject and, giving free rein to the imagination over the understanding, to race in the

¹¹⁹ See *ibid*, Sec. 2-5, 58-67. Compare to Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, 364-5. Hume distinguished a “beauty of interest” and a “beauty merely of imagination” and “form”. The former extended to “tables, chairs, scritoires, chimneys, coaches, saddles, ploughs, and indeed to every work of art; it being an universal rule, that their beauty is chiefly deriv’d from their utility.” As for the ‘beauty of form’, it too had to do with a kind of comfort and discomfort, a more abstract one that led to pleasure in proportion and pain in the lack thereof.

¹²⁰ See Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, Sec. 16, 90-93.

¹²¹ See *ibid*, Sec. 20-22, 101-4.

¹²² See *ibid*, Sec. 16, 90-93.

¹²³ See Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 44-6.

¹²⁴ *Ibid*, Sec. 48, 195.

¹²⁵ See especially *ibid*, Sec. 17, “On the Ideal of Beauty”, 93-8.

¹²⁶ *Ibid*, Sec. 49, 197.

representation of it through a whole corpus of concepts that could never capture or exhaust it as such, but which, in their very unending play carried a coherence, a sense of holistic meaningfulness not yielding to any painfully identifiable purpose, that made Art beautiful. But, not only beautiful but communicable, which is to say the subject of an equally endless discussion.¹²⁷ True Art—has Kant not described it well?—overtakes us, occupies our mind with ideas of limitless implication not anticipated in any such form beforehand and invites us, in this expansive contemplation that itself has the to and fro character of conversation, to discussion.

8.

To make our way back to the nineteenth-century modularization of ‘religion’, on the model of ‘culture’, I follow Gadamer in emphasizing that while Kant’s work set the philosophical stage for the coming apotheosis of Art, he himself was rather removed from this spirit. Given his transcendental concerns and aims, Kant privileged natural beauty over artistic beauty: since human pleasure in natural beauty revealed nature as purposive and meaningful without any actual, identifiable purpose being present at hand, that suggested nature was not alien to our ends, that it was in fact made for us and that the natural and moral realms were in the ultimate instance reconciled and one.¹²⁸ Kant had removed ‘judgment’, ‘taste’ and ‘common-sense’ from the context of social practice and launched them into their own autonomous realm of beauty which, by revealing the moral in the material world, the noumenal in the phenomenal, bore its own distinctly human form of communion. In the nineteenth century, however, what had in Kant been a province of aesthetic autonomy began to set its eyes instead on hegemony. The subsequent Idealist tradition and Romanticism had, namely, as their goal not simply the reconciliation but rather the *overcoming* of the Kantian dichotomies of fact and value. And, for the Romantics, it was Art and the artist as genius—certainly not natural beauty and taste with their reactive connotations—which were destined for this task. For, in the realm of Art, the great divide between is and ought was said to be overcome in the artist’s dynamic, holistic creativity: in the work of art, genius, as like a virtuous formation-evaluation loop, allegedly transmuted the double-coercion of (material) necessity and (moral) duty into an opportunity for unending, ecstatic play. Hence, the realm of Art, fashioned sovereign and ethereal, was made over into that of an ideal and set above the profanity of an industrializing Europe, increasingly mechanized, specialized, fragmented and alienated. Speaking of Schiller’s *On the Aesthetic Education of Man* and the pivotal role these letters had played in effecting this shift away from Kant, Gadamer commented pithily on how the turn could be located in their very course: “As we know, an education by art becomes an education to art. Instead of art preparing us for true moral and political freedom, we have the culture of an “aesthetic state,” a cultured society (*Bildungsgesellschaft*) that takes an interest in art.”¹²⁹ In the Romantic movement, the apotheosis of Art became a European phenomenon, with fateful consequences for conceptions of literature.¹³⁰ Its great British exponents, Wordsworth and Coleridge, touted as dictum for both poet and audience: “that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic

¹²⁷ See *ibid*, sec. 45-49, 188-202

¹²⁸ See Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 49-53. Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, Sec. 42, 178-84.

¹²⁹ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 83.

¹³⁰ The whole impact of modern fiction, founded on the conceit that art must be judged on the basis of its capacity for greater emotional reality than ordinary life, would be incomprehensible without the Romantic movement. See in this light particularly, Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* (Princeton, 1953), 454-553.

faith”, for just as God created the world each moment anew, in the experience of Art, we saw and entered into it with new eyes and were thus remade.¹³¹

That at least was the theory. Gadamer’s critical discussion, however, painted the consolidated autonomy of aesthetic consciousness as an in fact modularization. Modularization, in other words, had been the real work accomplished by the category ‘Art’. As a redemptive, ideal realm, Art and its artist denizens were imagined and conjured in decisive remove from social practice. Already in Kant, the genius was described as a person of a different kind from the general roll of humanity, to whom much was allowed forbidden to others, for a too “anxious cautiousness” would ruin his inborn “privilege” boldly to impress his ideas upon us.¹³² To Gadamer, the redemption promised by Art was thus proven thoroughly parasitic and dependent on the damaged world it was to redeem: the artist might be figured a secular savior and creator of a new mythology, but his work could be no more than a respite, a momentary sensation relative to the next such and on the way to museumification to stand in simultaneous space with all art that accordingly could not be presumed anything more than such.¹³³ Ultimately then, the differentiation of the aesthetic realm was itself a symptom of the disease that was supposed to be cured within it. Gadamer made virtually the same criticism of the putative autonomy of the Human Sciences, established on the basis of historical consciousness. On the one hand, historical consciousness decisively severed contemporary social practice from accountability to past cultural traditions; on the other, by promising to give us access to past cultures as whole, distinct ways of life whose integrity might be relived through empathetic study, it sought to heal the rift inherent within it.¹³⁴ In both aesthetic and historical consciousness then, the salvation proffered by ‘culture’ could only be imagined within a modular order: in high culture, works of art, in the study of the cultural past, each period and place, was taken for a self-contained experiential whole that one traveled to as from world to world and whose respective worldview one hallucinated to arrive at a more meaningful, reinigorated sense of self.

Clearly Gadamer was a severe critic of ‘redemptive modularization’. His stance was that we should relinquish our hollow sovereignty of modularizing cultural action and tradition that only shrunk our horizon to the zero point. We had to realize that works of art and the cultural past speak from their distinct horizon directly to us and illuminate as such our present situation and problems, opening up new paths to us. Still, from a historical standpoint, the problem with Gadamer’s characterization is that like the secularization narrative it is written too much from a retrospective standpoint, for instance, from within a time when the presumption of aesthetic autonomy and Art had for long been under withering attack.¹³⁵ Hence, there was little sense or

¹³¹ Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria: or, Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions* (London, 1984; orig. 1817), v. 2, 6; in the same vein, Wordsworth’s preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (London, 1992; orig. 1800), 72.

¹³² Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, Sec. 49, 204.

¹³³ See Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 86-88.

¹³⁴ “Just as the remoteness from and hunger for experience caused by distress over the complicated workings of civilization transformed by the Industrial Revolution, brought the word *Erlebnis* [experience] into general usage, so also the new, distanced attitude that historical consciousness takes to tradition gives the concept of *Erlebnis* its epistemological function...The spiritual creations of the past, art and history, no longer belong self-evidently to the present; rather, they are given up to research...from which a past can be made present.” *Ibid*, 64-5. On the *aporias* historical consciousness imposed on the construction of the human sciences, see Gadamer’s discussion of Dilthey, *ibid*, 218-42. On the concept of *Erlebnis* see note 139 and 140 below.

¹³⁵ Gadamer acknowledged this, *ibid*, 81. The logic of Gadamer’s argument was that “aesthetic consciousness” was itself a historical horizon and not the end-all of all horizons. But, he was too engrossed in arguing against its “dubiousness” to be able to take it seriously as such. See also Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*

patience in Gadamer for the progressive element in Romantic schemas of historicist redemption—we've already witnessed it in Schleiermacher—in which growing cultivation and consciousness of the ideal and consequent humanization was equated with the hand of History moving towards realization.¹³⁶

An exact counterpart of these Romantic inklings was the conceit amongst European scholars in the nineteenth century that, in their cross-border collaboration and commitment to the universal ideal of knowledge, they were the harbingers of world peace. Such sentiments pulsate through the International Congresses of Orientalists (ICO) of the time. As August Dillman (1823-1894), the pioneer of Ethiopic Studies and president of the fifth ICO in Berlin (1881) put it, the real importance of the Congresses did not have so much to do with the progress of scholarship per se. How much they aided in that was debatable. Their real meaning was an affirmation of the ideal of scholarship itself as an international undertaking of universal standpoint: "It is the actual acknowledgment of mutual cooperation and actual ability, and—so to say—the seeing of things from a higher and broader perspective, and in both respects the glad tidings (*glückverheissende Zeichen*) of a better future, the omen of original (*einstigen*) international peace."¹³⁷ Yes, looked at from the standpoint of the experience of the twentieth century, these pretensions appear at best farcical. But, by presuming them to be such in retrospect, we lose access to crucial cultural moments in the self-understanding of the nineteenth century and, more important, to the eventual context and meaning of their re-evaluation.

To understand the emergence of the category of 'religion' in a redemptive key I turn, hence, to Martin Jay's *Songs of Experience*. What I've here referred to as the modularization wrought in the nineteenth century by the notions of 'culture' and 'religion' is discussed by Jay under the rubric of "what can be called the "modalization" of experience".¹³⁸ Namely, particularly in the post-Kantian context, two modalities of experience were demarcated—the religious (focused on the spirit) and the aesthetic (focused on the body)—whose mission was to provide what an 'experience' reduced in the modern period to its epistemological role could not. For, *that* thoroughly de-personalized variety of 'experience' equipped one for an objective encounter with objects, but it no longer had much to say about how life was to be lived as a meaningful whole. By contrast, religious experience, like aesthetic experience, was promoted as a distinct modus of encounter with the world, in which the individual's entanglements in all manner of immanent processes revealed themselves as reflections of the transcendent or ideal whole, in and through which he could discover what he was and what he was meant to be. Hence, putting Gadamer's claim on a much wider historical basis, Jay further traced the emergence of the religious and aesthetic modalities to the attempt to confront the Kantian dualities of subject and object, fact and value: to find a space in which to "heal the wound" and "overcome the divisions legislated by Kant", which, as suggested on more than one occasion,

(Minneapolis, 1996; orig. 1974). Bürger argues that twentieth century Avant-Garde art movements must be understood precisely as reactions *against* the bourgeois concept of Art as an ideal, autonomous realm; by negating the autonomy of Art, they sought to make art in transformative engagement with social practice.

¹³⁶ M. H. Abrams argued that the eschatological teleology of Romantic schemas should be seen as a secularization of the Christian narrative of fall and redemption. See M. H. Abrams, *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature* (New York, 1971). For a critique of such accounts of 'secularization', see Hans Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age* (Cambridge, 1983; orig. 1966).

¹³⁷ *Verhandlungen des fünften internationalen Orientalisten-Congresses, Erster Theil* (Berlin, 1881), 31-2. I've sought to bring out the theological inflections of the speech, which were made explicit at the end.

¹³⁸ Jay, *Songs of Experience*, 78.

was the “hope of re-enchanting life and healing the wounds of modernity.”¹³⁹ Jay’s account diverged remarkably from Gadamer’s, however, in that it was concerned not only with the fateful modalization of experience in the nineteenth century, but equally the attempts that gathered steam in the twentieth to conjure a notion of ‘experience’ eliding all such modalization: he worried that these attempts bore reductionist tendencies of their own and threatened what is most valuable about the idea of ‘experience’, its openness and diversity.¹⁴⁰

Hence, rather than a blanket critique of modalization, he followed the trail of each on its own terms. ‘Religious experience’, he demonstrated, was through the nineteenth and into the twentieth theorized in quite different terms. In Schleiermacher, its great innovator, it was explained as a feeling of absolute dependence on the infinite All, in whose awe-inspiring midst one learned to forgo egoistic possibilities in favor of God’s calling for us revealed on the basis of our specific conditions. William James’s empiricism stressed the variety of religious experiences and tended towards medico-functionalist legitimation, conjecturing on the subconscious access they allowed the faithful to a saving power. Rudolf Otto, on the other hand, sought to re-orient religious experience back towards a transcendent etiology acting as a source of knowledge and expounded on our capacity to sense the presence of the ‘holy’, the ‘numinous’, the ‘wholly other.’ As in the early work of Martin Buber, Otto’s idea of sacral ‘experience’ (in German, *Erlebnis*),¹⁴¹ was figured as an immediate realization in which past, present and future coalesced in meaningful concretion. As such, it was the other of anything that involved inference, mediation, association, calculation or understanding. In other words, religious experience, however differently defined in these thinkers, was generally conceived as an absolute experience yielding meaningful concretion and so redemption.¹⁴² But, this tendency to define ‘religion’ experientially and in terms of its redemptive capacity—i.e. to derive religious texts and traditions from them rather than vice versa—also had, Jay concluded, an ominous potential to it. To go from ‘absolute experience’ to what was meaningful and redemptive meant only too easily and generally going in the other direction: one absolutized and sacralized what one wanted authenticated as a meaningful and redemptive experience in one’s own situation, as Buber did with the German war effort in WWI.¹⁴³ Hence, as with the absolute Christology of Karl Barth and Rudolf Bultmann, much theological opinion in the twentieth century looked askance at ‘religious experience’, alleging it defined the divine in terms of redemption measured historically, rather than judging history by the measure of God as in need of his redemption.¹⁴⁴

That reaction however only serves to highlight further the point being made here about the redemptive *telos* of the religious modality, which is also to say of the consolidation of ‘religion’ as a universal category. And, if I must say it once again, ‘religion’ was established in this guise on the model of ‘culture’. As Raymond Williams has shown, ‘culture’—both when

¹³⁹ Ibid, 87, 147; see also 162.

¹⁴⁰ For a synopsis, see the conclusion in *ibid*, 401-9.

¹⁴¹ On experience as *Erlebnis* and the fundamental distinction between it and experience as *Erfahrung*, see Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 60-100; Gadamer’s is itself a philosophical championing of his version of *Erfahrung*. For a broader historical account of the changing appropriations and evaluations of these concepts, see Jay, *Songs of Experience*, 11-12, 124-9, 222-234, 334-343

¹⁴² For instance, *ibid*, 112; for all these figures, 88-130. The very conception of an absolute experience is rejection in nutshell of the Kantian thesis, which holds that there is no such thing as necessary cognition, no possibility on our part to experience any being as necessary being, i.e. no way to ‘experience’ God. See his discussion of the fourth antinomy in Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (London, 1929; orig. 1781-7), 415-21.

¹⁴³ See Martin Jay, *Songs of Experience*, 126-7.

¹⁴⁴ See *ibid*, 101-2, 129-30.

conceived as an organic, integrated whole way of life or as humanity's highest intellectual and cultural achievement invoking in Mathew Arnold's words our 'best self'—was an oppositional ideal meant to effect a rescue from the frightening prospect of a market-driven, specialized, fragmented, machine-like, soulless industrial society.¹⁴⁵ This historical logic welded the two usages of 'culture' into one and the same concept through the course of the nineteenth century. But, as Norbert Elias showed long ago, the German antecedents of the concept in the ascendant *Bildungsbürgertum* already prefigured much of the thrust of this critique to come. *Kultur*,¹⁴⁶ going hand in hand with the ideal of self-formation called *Bildung*, was deployed against the artificial sophistication of polite manners, of the mere civility and sociability characteristic of the court: its measure of value by contrast was the natural, interiority, the deeply felt, the humanly achieved.¹⁴⁷ In the hands of the German Romantics, anti-utilitarian 'Kultur' was not only turned to the purposes of national definition and demarcation¹⁴⁸—in his *Speeches* to his cultured compatriots, Schleiermacher was playing to the crowd by opposing German profundity to the moneyed righteousness of the British and the terrifying frivolity of the French.¹⁴⁹ It figured equally as an antidote to a society characterized by the mutual alienation of nature, humanity and divinity and one that was accordingly simultaneously sophisticated and barbaric.¹⁵⁰ Into this project of 'culture', 'religion' was recruited. Hence, to review, I began with the 'secularization narrative', in which the emergence of 'religion' as a transcultural, transhistorical category has been explained in terms of the socio-political supersession of the religious by the national and the modularization of the former on the model of the latter. 'Religion' thus could only be a dismissive privatization of the religious, the reduction of it to something optional. Now, we have encountered a second body of literature in which the modularization and modalization of 'religion' has been linked to that effected by the concept of 'culture'. The first body of literature I faulted for not recognizing the redemptive self-understanding in religious modularization; in the second, I warned against dismissing this redemptive self-understanding, because it was modular.

9.

¹⁴⁵ See Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society, 1780-1950* (New York, 1983).

¹⁴⁶ Kant still wrote "culture". See, for instance, Kant, *Kritik der Urteilkraft*, Sec. 44, 188; Sec. 60, 250-1.

¹⁴⁷ See Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process* (Oxford, 1994; orig. 1939), 3-41.

¹⁴⁸ Elias argued that the German bourgeoisie who had used the concept of *Kultur* to express its animus against the German civilized (i.e. Frenchified) court nobility came eventually to wield its alleged virtues against the rival nations, i.e. French and British civilization: "from a primarily social it becomes a primarily national antithesis." Ibid, 25. However, this dichotomy, we'll see, achieved a much broader resonance than allowed by Elias's account.

¹⁴⁹ See Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers*, 9-10.

¹⁵⁰ Schiller's "aesthetic state" was devised as the answer to precisely this problem: the mutual co-existence in contemporary society, as he described it in his fifth letter, of the most elementary, animal-like mentality on the part of the lower and more numerous classes and a refined, sophisticated, denatured, depraved, corrupt and at base only egoistic disposition on the part of the "civilized" classes. Outside of the externals, in other words, both were the same, incapable of morality. The solution was "aesthetic *Kultur*" and the "aesthetic state". See Friedrich Schiller, *Über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen, in einer Reihe von Briefen, Sämmtliche Werke* (Munich 1962; orig. 1795), B. 5, Letter 5, 579-581; L. 27, 661-669. By the way, one can see in the very course of Schiller's letters the transformation that was taking place in the concept of *Kultur*; for, whereas, in the fifth and sixth letter, *Kultur* is read in terms of civilized cultivation and handled as a culprit, in the later letters, i.e. letter 21 and 23, it is realigned with the task of Art, the freeing of nature in aesthetic creativity, i.e. as "aesthetic *Kultur*". See *ibid*, L. 6, 581-8; L. 21, 635; L. 23, 643.

My focus here on the co-emergence of ‘religion’, ‘nation’ and ‘culture’ as modular categories in the nineteenth century, and the way in which each has been and might be read in terms of the others is not an arbitrary exercise. These concepts were read and defined vis-à-vis one another throughout that period with fateful consequences with which we are still contending. They constitute the basic concepts of this study, because they were constitutive of the discourse and trajectory of *Islamwissenschaft* in its first generations (and arguably since). The relation between them in this discourse did not remain stable and our task in the chapters to come will be to understand how an initially consolidated understanding of this relationship, for long virtually definitive of *Islamwissenschaft* as a discipline, eventually became highly contested. But, to conclude our conceptual history of ‘religion’ in this section, we need a better initial understanding of how modular ‘religion’, ‘nationality’ and ‘culture’ tended to be mutually defined in the era of their co-emergence, *particularly*, in the ‘science of religion’. We need, in other words, to begin to put some flesh on the rather schematic discussion of the matter thus far.

Jonathan Sheehan’s work on the transformation of the Bible, through the crucible of the Enlightenment from a fundamentally theological text to the primarily cultural one it became in the nineteenth century points the way. The Bible of pre-Enlightenment Europe, he argues, was not “a piece of heritage”; it was not “the familiar figure we know today as our Biblical heritage.”¹⁵¹ The pre-Enlightenment Bible was bolstered by an elite theological tradition and/or elite theological scholarship that allowed it the definitive unity to set about defining the Christian world in its image: every theological translation of the Bible into a specific language and context was thus equally a translation in the other direction, a remaking of that language and context in the Biblical image. But, through the course of the eighteenth century, such theological sacralization of the Biblical text lost its self-evidence in the German Protestant world. As the rationalist theologian Johann Semler (1725-1791) put it, “Holy Scripture and the Word of God must be differentiated”, meaning, scripture as text was too entangled in human historical processes to be *tout court* identified with the divine word and the Christian truth: the former could only be an inflection of the latter, which remained transcendent and had to be critically reconstructed.¹⁵² The spark for this turn to a post-theological Bible had initially come—the reader may no longer be surprised—*not* from skepticism, but from pietist religious zeal, namely, from efforts within the German pietist tradition to render the Biblical text absolutely transparent. The Biblical text was translated as literally as possible (and then some) into the vernacular; likewise, it was placed, in the vernacular and in encyclopedic manner, within the context of the totality of human knowledge available.¹⁵³ External transparency of the Biblical text was, in pietist thinking, to be the exact counterpart of the inner purity of the Christian heart.

But, the springing of the Bible from its theological confines in order to bring it into the world and elaborate it within the known did *not* render it transparent; it only proved the primacy of inner purity in the face of the dramatic confusion which resulted. What it did ultimately effect, however, was a fateful modalization of the Bible: the translation of it into different types of text forged to deal with the transposition of its sacred narrative into the human, historical terrain. In the Philological and Historical Bibles, the Biblical text was thoroughly historicized. In the philological mode, German theologians, like the pietist scholar Johann Albrecht Bengel (1687-1752), handled Scripture as a document subject to the same processes of reception and transmission as any other, but also one whose integrity and purity could thus be painstakingly

¹⁵¹ Jonathan Sheehan, *The Enlightenment Bible: Translation, Scholarship, Culture* (Princeton, 2005), xiv., 221

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 90.

¹⁵³ See *ibid.*, 56-85.

reconstructed through philological criticism.¹⁵⁴ In the historical mode, others like J. D. Michaelis (1717-1791) approached the Bible's translation by placing it within the geographical and historical context of the peoples of the Near East, of Oriental languages and customs, reading it thus as an archive of the human race.¹⁵⁵ But, given the alienation threatened by such historicization, the Bible yielded further to modalities devised to *translate it into the present*, although this was not to happen without a fateful schism within the scriptural canon itself. The Old Testament became the cornerstone of the Literary Bible, rendered into the vernacular as the sublime, original *national* poetry of the Jews; the New Testament, on the other hand, was transformed in the Pedagogical Bible into a repository of edifying morality tales.¹⁵⁶ In all these modalities, however, Biblical translation was now a historical rather than a theological act.

Hence, these modalities coalesced in the nineteenth century to create the "Cultural Bible", a Bible, in other words, that was constitutive of Europe's literary, moral and historical heritage but whose meaning and still creative force was made dependent on the efficacy of historico-cultural translation.¹⁵⁷ That constitutive task of translation—not only religious but cultural and so also *national*—Germans in the nineteenth century came to view as having been the real achievement of Luther's translation of the Bible into German. For them, this "German Bible simultaneously created a German religion, a German culture, and a German nation."¹⁵⁸ By having made the Bible's continued authority cultural, i.e. dependent on cultural translation, nineteenth century Europe "allowed religion itself to become a cultural phenomenon par excellence."¹⁵⁹ There was a move "from the Cultural Bible to the Religion of Culture", meaning, "the invention of a cultural religion, a religion arranged under the heading of culture": "Where the cultural Bible assured any concerned that Scriptures would remain a part of the national heritage, Christian theology was allowed to range away from its foundational text and seek its ground in a more stable medium."¹⁶⁰ What this amounted to was an amalgamation of religion, culture and nationality, for "as theology itself conformed to an ideal of religious culture, the nation in effect stepped in to guarantee the cohesiveness of (religious) community." For Germans, namely, "religious man was not only Christian man but, culturally, also German man." The eventual search for a "German Christianity" and "a specifically German religion" had their roots here.¹⁶¹ Of course, 'religion' was "redefined, and made abstract, deracinated from the particularisms of Protestantism, Catholicism, Judaism, and so forth", but "religious culture" was invented as an ideal such that, "Only for Germans... did a particular religious culture and a universally true religion combine in perfect harmony."¹⁶² In fact, Christianity, "as an expression of German culture" in this sense, was defined distinctly against "the *culture* of Judaism", which was characterized by contrast as rigidly textual, ritualistic and legalistic.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁴ See *ibid*, 194-117.

¹⁵⁵ See *ibid*, 184-217.

¹⁵⁶ See *ibid*, 118-181.

¹⁵⁷ See *ibid*, 219-240.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 227.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 224.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 227, 228, 230 respectively.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid*, 233. The classic treatment of Paul de Lagarde (1827-1891), the progenitor of the dismal, anti-Semitic conception of a Germanic religion is Fritz Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair: A Study in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology* (New York, 1965; orig. 1961), 25-128. Susannah Heschel examines the culmination of this trajectory in the Nazi period and its aftermath in Heschel, *The Aryan Jesus: Christian Theologians and the Bible in Nazi Germany* (Princeton, 2008).

¹⁶² Sheehan, *The Enlightenment Bible*, 233

¹⁶³ *Ibid*, 235, 236.

10.

Sheehan has pinpointed a potent synthesis of religion, culture and nationality in nineteenth-century Germany that was, as he demonstrated further in the case of Britain, to achieve resonance throughout Protestant Europe.¹⁶⁴ His work also goes to show the point I've been making about the co-emergence of these categories at this time as defined in terms one another. Still, the idea of a 'nationally inflected religious culture' was a *synthesis* that must be unpacked, for its component parts were assigned quite opposite roles in its constitution by many nineteenth century commentators, particularly those involved in the 'science of religion'. Mere identification or super-imposition of religion, culture and nationality thus threatens to confuse the manner in which their interrelationships were conceived in this context. For instance, 'Christian culture' was opposed to the Jewish kind not only in terms of the latter's alleged stultifying rigidity, insularity and particularity, but because it bore in just these characteristics the marker of a *national religion*. In retrospect, it could even be taken to represent *the* 'national religion' par excellence for having rejected the offer of Christian universality from within its own confines and, as at least some were willing to grant, from out of its own trajectory).¹⁶⁵ As Kuenen—actually one of those Christian theologians who argued Christianity arose from out of the nascent universalist elements within Judaism—averred: the establishment of something that could still be called 'Judaism' in the Second Temple period meant the consolidation of monotheism as a national prerogative: "Yahwism became *the religion of the Jewish people*."¹⁶⁶ Even the Jewish prophets, most responsible for the universalist aspects of Jewish monotheism, took "Israel and Yahweh" to be one and the same, which presumption was "really nothing less than *the very essence of the Israelitish religion*, to which even the greatest prophets could not be untrue without sacrificing the religion itself."¹⁶⁷ His task, Kuenen accordingly said, was to show "how there grew up out of Judaism a world-religion—Christianity" in a manner as to explain "this one noteworthy transition from national to universal religion."¹⁶⁸

If Kuenen sought to trace Christian universalism back to the trajectory of the Jewish national religion, the theologians associated with the Tübingen School moved notoriously (and influentially) in the opposite direction. Their aim, as their leading voice Ferdinand Christian Baur (1792-1860) put it, was to demonstrate how, in the advent of the Christian religion and in the very coming of Jesus Christ as the Messiah, Christianity's "ideal spiritual content entered however into the finite form of national existence, the universalism of the idea attached itself to the particularism of the Jews (*Judenthum*)".¹⁶⁹ How the whole development and trajectory of Christianity, beginning with the person of Christ, was animated by a struggle between "universality and common humanity on the one side and the nationally narrow-minded on the other" (*ergo* by Pauline vs. Jewish tendencies).¹⁷⁰ How "all those theocratic institutions and aristocratic forms" that underlay the hierarchical organization of the Catholic Church into the medieval papacy and allowed it to amass power over the world derived from Judaism

¹⁶⁴ See *ibid*, 223-258.

¹⁶⁵ The question of the extent to which Christianity emerged from within a Jewish trajectory or rather represented a repudiation of the same was one of the great fault-lines of Christian theology and science of religion in the nineteenth century. I will have more to say of it presently, but you can see note 210 below.

¹⁶⁶ Kuenen, *National Religions and Universal Religions*, 160-1.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 109-110.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 187.

¹⁶⁹ Ferdinand Christian Baur, *Die Tübingen Schule* (Tübingen, 1859), 31.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 33.

(*Judenthum*) and its “inborn drive towards theocratic world domination.”¹⁷¹ How even St. Paul’s universalism, in embracing the notion of Jesus’s crucifixion as sacrificial redemption of the sins of mankind, could still only conceive of God’s mercy in legal terms and so on the basis “again of an idea taken from the religious perspective of Judaism.”¹⁷² In other words, as the Tübingen theologians saw it, Christianity was still struggling to rid itself of the “infinite developmental capacity of Jewish Christianity”, which is to say, of the still sway of Jewish national forms in the universal religion.¹⁷³ Kuenen and Baur moved in opposite directions, but they agreed: ‘religion’, *purified religion*, which is to say Christianity moving towards its ideal realization, was *universal*; and, this realization involved the overcoming of Judaism as a *national religion*.

As for ‘culture’, Norbert Elias was certainly right when he said of it that, “The concept of *Kultur* delimits.” It was applied to human activity to the extent it could be presented as an *achieved individuality*, i.e. to art works, books, philosophies, all things “in which the individuality of a people expresses itself.” It was a concept, accordingly, that placed “special stress on national differences and the particular identity of groups.”¹⁷⁴ Elias’s focus in speaking of *Kultur* was on the competing concept of ‘civilization’, to which it was opposed. ‘Civilization’ was envisaged rather as a universal process that overtook national distinctions: ever mobile and expansive, its techno-behavioral progress pushed constantly further and into the future. Elias over-schematized matters by reading ‘civilization’ as the characteristic self-understanding of the French and British, confident peoples whose self-assertion overflowed into colonizing attempts to remake the world in their own image. *Kultur*, on the other hand, he said reflected the anxieties and compensatory self-image of the German *Bildungsbürgertum*, tasked as it was with establishing a coherent national identity in the face of political incoherence and immaturity.¹⁷⁵ However one does account for the clear links between *Kultur* and the *Bildungsbürgertum*, equally clear is that the concept of ‘culture’ amassed European resonance in addressing the discontents of ‘civilization’.¹⁷⁶ Moreover, the cure of *Kultur* highlighted the concept’s

¹⁷¹ Ibid, 72-3. See also ibid, 40-1, 74-8.

¹⁷² Ibid, 37.

¹⁷³ Ibid, 73.

¹⁷⁴ Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, 5.

¹⁷⁵ See ibid, 3-21

¹⁷⁶ See Raymond Williams, *Keywords*, 57-9, where he discusses the spread of this dichotomy through Coleridge and then, on his model, J. S. Mill, to Britain. The appropriation of this dichotomy by German academics and intellectuals for propaganda purposes in the Great War, in which they pitted the depth and authenticity of German *Kultur* against the shallow uniformity and ‘progress’ of European, i.e. British and French, civilization, has turned it into one of those invidious markers of German exceptionalism with its disastrous *telos*. Thomas Mann’s *Reflections of a Nonpolitical Man* (New York, 1983), published near the end of the war, was a kind of German manifesto, endlessly spun out of this dichotomy and spewing against “civilization’s literary man”. It was filled with dramatic divisions: “Culture binds together; civilization dissolves. This is obvious”, from which he gleaned that the “pacified Esperanto-world” and psychologism of civilization at least had an opponent, and one had to be thankful for it, in the “poetic way of seeing things” that was the “Germanic way”. Mann, *Reflections of a Nonpolitical Man*, 123, 35-46. Or, he asserted “the difference between individual and personality, civilization and culture, social and metaphysical life.” For, while society was just an “individualistic mass” beholden to the democratic principle, what was valuable in the idea of the “nation” was that it was a “metaphysical being” and aristocratic in character. See ibid, 179. Here’s German exceptionalism that wanted to be exceptional...why beg to differ? But, as with Thomas Mann’s whole later political transformation and the fact that he contextualized but never repudiated this tract, the situation is not so convenient. As Williams’s work suggests, the dichotomy between ‘culture’ and ‘civilization’ has a much longer and broader history, cannot be reduced to the polemics of WWI and must rather be approached as a *European legacy*. Ironically, this is actually suggested by the tenor of British propaganda against Germany during WWI, which cleverly wielded the “two Germanies” thesis: the land of philosophers and poets swallowed by Prussian

connections and, when used as prescriptive ideal, virtual interchangeability with the notion of *Bildung*. Namely, the formative experience of *Bildung* showed the autonomous creativity whose achieved concretion Elias called *Kultur* had its own kind of universality and relation with it. The concrete individuality of *Kultur* could only be achieved by moving beyond the given to define oneself in the face of the universal, through ‘experience’ (internalization) of other ways of being and the ‘formation’ of resulting higher consciousness.¹⁷⁷ A suggestive paradigm is the experience of learning a new language as one eventually *finds* oneself, not again but *anew*, in the initially foreign medium and as the language becomes thus a new ‘home’ or path that recasts the whole sense of self and is inevitably felt as expansion of consciousness.

‘Religion’, as we find it in Schleiermacher, figures as mirror image of the movement of *Bildung*: if the achieved individuality of *Kultur* represents creative autonomy arrived at through universal encounter, religion moves in the other direction; religion places all individual things in

militarism. This distinction clearly itself depended on an affirmative, idealized notion of ‘culture’ in opposition to the merely external, material, soul-destroying trappings of power. After all, the notion of military prowess cannot be so easily subtracted from civilization in the same way as it can from ‘culture’. Suzanne Marchand, for instance, has argued that German academic propaganda was mostly acting in defensive manner against this culture/power distinction—long current amongst Germans and now turned against them by the British—when they opposed the holistic identity of German *Kultur* to the empty homogeneity of Allied civilization. In other words, German projections of *Kultur* during the war were meant precisely to shift its past damaging associations of a rift between culture and worldly power. See Marchand, *Down from Olympus: Archaeology and Philhellenism in Germany, 1750-1970* (Princeton, 1996), 231-40. For the traditional, opposing view, contending German academic response to WWI “was not at all defensive”, see Fritz Ringer, *The Decline of the German Mandarins: The German Academic Community, 1890-1933* (Hanover, 1990; orig. 1969), 189-99. Interestingly, the tensions within Mann’s own tract yield credence to Marchand’s account. For on the one hand, he claimed: “I was always little inclined to play Goethe off against Bismarck, as disconcerted foreign countries and German radical literary men did. I found it foolish not to recognize one in the other.” But, then he went on to say that his admiration was for Bismarck’s personality, not so much his work, i.e. of “Prussianization” and “dehumanization” in areas (education) where it was particularly damaging. Op. cit., 172-3. He also granted Nietzsche’s point that Bismarck’s *Reich* was one quite deficient in culture. And, when he eventually came to what he called the “specifically German antithesis of power and intellect”, the “conviction...that a politically powerful Germany would necessarily be opposed to intellect and culture, that German intellectual blossoming would never be united with the flowering of the state”, his response was telling: “Bismarck’s epoch was not a cultural epoch. But the real, general enthusiasm of the Germans at the outbreak of this war was of course that one was now stepping out of this epoch and into another—into what kind? Into one that would possibly give the lie to the old, antithetical prejudice that an unhappy history had firmly established.” In other words, the war was to be the new unifying *solution*. Op. cit., 183-4, see also 172-6. For Mann’s ‘ironic’ transformation into a democrat, very much on the back of rather than as against his ‘unpolitical reflections’, see the introduction by Walter D. Morris, op. cit., vii-xiii; also, in this the same spirit, but with a much more critical and ominous undertone: Wolf Lepenies, *The Seduction of Culture in German History* (Princeton, 2006), 27-35.

¹⁷⁷ Both Gadamer and Lionel Trilling turn particularly to Hegel to explain the self-formation of *Bildung* as an expansive process—a “rising to the universal” as Gadamer puts it—in which the self returns to itself after having moved through and made its own what is other to it. “Thus what constitutes the essence of *Bildung* is clearly not alienation as such, but the return to oneself—which presupposes alienation, to be sure.” Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 12, 14. As with learning a language, moving into a sphere where one is not at home, “to affirm what is different from oneself”, and thereby to find oneself in it again from a higher standpoint, is something inherently difficult, requiring the moment of alienation. See *ibid*, 14, 9-19; Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity* (Cambridge, 1971), 33-47. In his essay, “On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life”, Nietzsche argued that this process of self-formation through expansive universalization ended up doing the opposite of what it claimed to do. As against higher individuality and a deepening of self, what it actually involved was ever greater interiorization, divorce from the outside world and one’s actual situation and thus an incapacity to create a coherent style. This is pretty much the crux of Gadamer’s own critique. See Nietzsche, *Untimely Meditations* (Cambridge, 1997; orig. 1874), 57-124.

the whole, evaluates their meaning and role from this perspective and as such underlies all (cultural) definition. It should be no surprise that I turn again to Schleiermacher, the apostle of religion for the cultured, to stake out a sense of how ‘religion’ and ‘culture’ were constituted in terms of one another. As Dilthey later put it, Schleiermacher was not comparable to a Luther, who was superior to him both in depth of religious character and as representative of the historical power of religion. But, Luther had appeared at a time when Germans had not yet developed an “independent spiritual *Kultur*”: the question of the latter’s relationship with the power of religion was as yet not on the horizon. It was Schleiermacher, rather, who coming at a time when Germany’s “spiritual *Kultur* had reached its highpoint” and having imbibed all the results of the “new *Bildung*”, made it his task “to reconcile this *Bildung* with religion” and so to undertake “the reconciliation of the religious perspective with the power of spiritual *Kultur*.”¹⁷⁸ The contours of this reconciliation were for Dilthey crystal clear: Schleiermacher had succeeded in freeing religion from all dogma questioning the autonomy of the sciences. He’d likewise established the “freedom of religion” from all authoritative prescriptions contradicting the singular pride of the modern world, the sense of moral autonomy.¹⁷⁹ Schleiermacher’s ‘religion’ respected, moreover, not only the respective independence of science and morality; it further balanced “the ideal of personal independence (*selbständigen Lebensideal*) and the fact that all things national and all collective ideals of conduct (*das Ganze durchdringende Gesittung*) are founded on religion.”¹⁸⁰

11.

Schleiermacher’s *Speeches* are in fact riddled with triads in which the opposing poles of an unhappy dichotomy are reconciled in a higher realm (i.e. the holistic one of religion), through which alone they can be understood and allowed to prosper according to their own proper essence and rule. For instance, he began his exposition with a triad of the kind thoroughly familiar to his romantic readers: human life was dominated by contrary impulses, on the one side, the egoistic one in which the individual measured the world in terms of desires and their satisfaction, on the other, the fearful appraisal of the whole standing against one, that led to clamor for the safety of necessary connections, uniform laws and collective order. In the first, the danger was the severing of the world, its replacement by the self and one’s becoming lost in it; in the second, it was the very loss of the self in total identification with the world, the incapability hence of “acquiring any characteristic, definite culture” and the reduction of all to means in the absence of any end. But, there were those capable of uniting these opposed impulses into a “creative power”, “by imprinting in their lives a characteristic form”. “They seek order and connection, right and fitness and they find just because they do not lose themselves.” They did not “devour destructively”, but made the object of enjoyment the emblem of “the heavenly and the eternal”, “the One in All, and All in One.” These *culture creators* Schleiermacher called “ambassadors of God” and the “priesthood of humanity” and invoked them in his defense of religion.¹⁸¹

In his second speech, “On the Nature of Religion”, Schleiermacher’s dialectics fought constantly, on the one hand, to demonstrate the all-encompassing character of religious

¹⁷⁸ Dilthey, *Leben Schleiermachers*, 461.

¹⁷⁹ If this sounded like Kant, the point however was that Schleiermacher had *not* dissolved ‘the freedom of religion’ into moral autonomy.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid*, 457-8.

¹⁸¹ Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers*, 4-8.

consciousness as the immediate grasp of each thing in feeling as a message from the infinite, on the other, to distinguish this holistic consciousness by the same token from all the distinctly defined areas of life whose inspiration it was said to be. In the realm of action—that of morality and culture—piety was related to artistic inspiration but could not be identified with it; love, pity and compassion—the height of religious feeling—were certainly related to right action but could in no way be collapsed into moral duty.¹⁸² In the realm of knowledge, religion certainly had something to say about the relation between humanity, God and the world, but it was as such reducible neither to scientific knowledge about the natural nor practical knowledge about the ethical world.¹⁸³ As Schleiermacher put it, “Religion never appears quite pure. Its outward form is ever determined by something else.” But, that was the problem! Hence: “Our task first is to exhibit its true nature, and not to assume off-hand...that the outward nature and the true nature are the same.”¹⁸⁴ Thus, to circumscribe properly the religious realm in its purity, he averred: “In order to make quite clear to you what is the original and characteristic possession of religion, it resigns, at once, all claims on anything that belongs either to science and morality.”¹⁸⁵ To describe what truly belonged to the realms of knowledge, action and piety respectively, he said: “True science is complete vision; true practice is culture and art self-produced; true religion is sense and taste for the infinite.”¹⁸⁶ Not that this meant scientific inquiry, moral action, cultural practice and pious feeling could be pursued in isolation from one another; just the opposite. As Schleiermacher complained: “Such a separation of knowledge and piety and action, do not accuse me of making...Just because you do not acknowledge religion as the third, knowledge and action are so much apart that you can discover no unity, but believe that right knowing can be had without right acting and *vice versa*.”¹⁸⁷ His point rather was that only in the religious surrender to feeling in which *everything* was revealed as mirror of the infinite—meant to be and meaningful in the whole—could the conceptual systematization of science, the universal standard of morality and the paradigmatic achievement of culture retain their characteristic creativity rather than becoming “mechanical erections” and “formulas”.¹⁸⁸ The “truly scientific man” had to be pious, for “the pious man may not know at all, but he cannot know falsely.”¹⁸⁹ And, religion prescribed no action, but “while man does nothing from religion, he should do everything with religion.”¹⁹⁰

One begins to see how Schleiermacher made the purification and thus completion of ‘religion’ the appointed task of his own ‘cultured’ age: the more definitive and conscious ‘culture’ became, the less willing it was to confuse itself with religion, freeing the latter in its holistic embrace and consciousness. By the same token, the more ‘religion’ was purified of association with specific beliefs, prescriptions and practices, the wider its universal standpoint and so the greater the depth of the ‘cultural autonomy’ achieved in its light. The reconciliation of religion and culture—i.e. the synthesis of ‘cultured religion’ and ‘religious culture’—meant also their growing independence: religion towards universality, culture towards particular nationality. Schleiermacher’s prose did not shy away from the radical implications of his

¹⁸² See *ibid*, 27-9, 57-62, 83-6

¹⁸³ See *ibid* 29-33, 46-50, 92-101.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 33.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid*, 35.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 39.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 38-9.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 40.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid*, 38.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 59.

schema and his conclusions animated the premises of the science of religion for the duration of the nineteenth century. First, he elucidated ‘religion’ in his *Speeches* as simultaneously the *most individual* as well as the *most universal* kind of human experience. Morality was founded on the uniformity of its expectations, but, “In religion, on the contrary, everything issues from the individual life, and the more individual the more effective, and all common elements arise simply from observing affinity and connection.”¹⁹¹ ‘Religion’, as the personal light of the infinite, meant that “the piety of each individual, whereby he is rooted in the greater unity, is a whole by itself. It is...based on his peculiarity, on what you call his character. Religion thus fashions itself with endless variety down even to the single personality.”¹⁹² Every definite, organized religion was thus only an endless variation on a theme that no single person could exhaust, just as ‘religion’ encompassed all religions (i.e. the religions of all). That all religion was ultimately personal religion was, for Schleiermacher, the source of its distinct kind of freedom: that it was “from nothing further removed than from all semblance of compulsion or limitation”, that, in it, all necessity was “taken up into freedom”, into the “unbounded liberty” of finding oneself in the infinite.¹⁹³

But, in defending the individual freedom and endless plurality of religion, Schleiermacher argued that the absolute freedom of religious association this implied meant the true Church could only be universal, i.e. ecumenical: “I condemned the plurality of the church, but my argument presupposed the plurality of religion.” In explaining the organizational implications, he noted: “A strong religious life, even if hedged in by narrow forms, sooner or later breaks through the limits of nationality. This even Judaism did...”¹⁹⁴ And, he saw in this a clear historical trajectory: “as religion advances and piety is purified, the whole religious world must appear as an indivisible whole... The highest and most cultured always see a universal union, and, in seeing it, establish it.”¹⁹⁵ Thus, within the compass of the true Church of the truly religious, he saw no scope for attempts at conversion: here there was only room for free cross-discipleship. He did encourage proselytization to draw in the less religiously attuned or to aid the “progress” of adherents of lower to higher religions, but this could “never be more than a private business of individuals and...rather in so far as a man is outside the church than as he is within.”¹⁹⁶

The question then emerged of course of why the “visible church” of history, interminably authoritarian and intoxicated with boundaries, fell so short of the ideal and still *telos* of the “true church”? Schleiermacher was only too glad to tell his cultured readers who the true culprit responsible for all that made them despise religion was: it was the state. They preferred to glorify it at the expense of religion, but the state’s manipulation and distortion of religion to its

¹⁹¹ Ibid, 262 (note13); see also *ibid*, 237.

¹⁹² Ibid, 51.

¹⁹³ Ibid, 51, 56. He also told his interlocutors: “You wish always to stand on your own feet and go your own way, and this worthy intent should not scare you from religion. Religion is no slavery, no captivity, least of all for your reason. You must belong to yourselves. Indeed, this is an indispensable condition of having any part in religion.” Ibid, 91. In the first edition, Schleiermacher had sought especially to stress that humanity’s sense of individuality and freedom emanated from its relationship to the Infinite (God) and not from within the finitude of human relations. Hence, he said of his generation: “Man has but stolen the feeling of his infinity and likeness to God”; his aim was to return the goods. See *ibid*, 278, 283. Interestingly, Schleiermacher significantly expanded his rhetoric about religion as true liberation in the later editions: “Only when the free impulse of seeing, and of living is directed towards the Infinite and goes into the Infinite, is the mind set in unbounded liberty.” Ibid, 56.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid, 261(note 12).

¹⁹⁵ Ibid, 154.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, 156, 187 (note 7).

own ends was what had made for such much “evil”: “As soon as a prince declared a church to be a community with special privileges, a distinguished member of the civil world, the corruption of that church was begun and almost irrevocably decided.”¹⁹⁷ And, continuing his “indictment”: “The state pollutes religious fellowship by introducing into its deepest mysteries its own interests.”¹⁹⁸ But, it was with the state, as with science, morality and culture: as it came progressively into its own and became constitutional, it loosened its yoke on religion and moved away from the “dark barbarousness” of the “theocratic times.” Schleiermacher expressed accordingly his “strong conviction that it is one of the most essential tendencies of Christianity to separate completely church and state...”¹⁹⁹ And, though he vacillated on what exactly the separation but mutual dependence of church and state was to look like, he could go so far as to say that “the state cannot work more effectively than by allowing all the religious societies within its domain to operate with the fullest freedom” and that “it should begin early to protect the freedom of conscience of the children even against the parents.”²⁰⁰

Does not Schleiermacher’s project for his ‘cultured age’ of purifying religion in its universality, of working to clear ‘religion’ from identification with past belief, culture and politics it may have historically helped to inspire or become entangled by *but was not one with*; does not this make him the forerunner of that critique of theologocentrism with which we began? In any case, these were the premises that, now largely forgotten, were passed to the ‘science of religion’ tradition, which made reading culture under the cloak of religion its watchword through the larger part of the nineteenth century. Equally clear now should be another crucial fact: that Schleiermacher’s championing of freedom of religion as the thing both most personal and universal amply matched the secularist dream of thorough privatization of religion. But, unlike Talal Assad’s ‘liberal Christian’, whose aim of protecting religion from society mirrors the secularist’s of protecting society from religion, Schleiermacher’s stance was not a defensive one, but a Christian triumphalism that read purified (Protestant) Christianity to be the future faith of all humanity and no less than the *telos* of History.

12.

This schema of religious purification and development, without naming Schleiermacher and shorn of the romantic edifice, was nevertheless, to reiterate, very much at the heart of Kuenen’s lectures on universal and national religions. The subject-matter of these ‘science of religion’ lectures allow us accordingly to conclude this line of investigation by canvassing how ‘nationality’ was, in this context, related to ‘religion’ and its projected universal essence and end. The focus of his study, Kuenen said, would be: “*The connection between the universal and the national religions as furnishing the explanation and the measure of their universalism.*”²⁰¹ Simple demographics would not do. Islam, Christianity and Buddhism were to be measured in their relationship to their national antecedents and the nationalities within them as the key to their universal *bona fides* or lack thereof.

Kuenen began with Islam and ended his review of it by admitting it probably read as an “indictment of Islam.”²⁰² Islam, it turned out, was when properly sized up, like Judaism, from

¹⁹⁷ Ibid, 164, 167.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid, 169.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid, 19, 24.

²⁰⁰ Ibid, 202 (note 20), 201 (note 19).

²⁰¹ Kuenen, *National Religions and Universal Religions*, 8.

²⁰² Ibid, 52.

which it borrowed so much, ultimately more of a national religion. But, here was the gigantic difference. While Judaism had developed progressively from a national towards a universal religion, Islam represented the inversion of this process, namely, the borrowing by its founder, Muhammad, of the monotheistic and universalist traditions of the Jews and Christians, not to meet any great religious clamor from within the Arab nation, but as adapted to the customs and cultural level of the Arabs of his time.²⁰³ Hence, Kuenen castigated the “*artificial origin of Islam*” and concluded that, “The Arabic nationality was not the cradle but the boundary-wall of Islam.”²⁰⁴ Wahhabism, with its puritanical rigors and pretensions to immaculate, original Islam was in fact the “true Islam”, for the latter was “destined...to stereotype itself once and for all and assume its unalterable shape” early on.²⁰⁵ All the other tendencies streaming into Islamic history from the inclusion of non-Arab sources and nationalities—theological rationalism, Sufi mysticism just as much as the proliferation of saint veneration—just proved ‘development’ in Islam could only proceed by the repudiation of it.²⁰⁶

But, Buddhism, which Kuenen considered last, had the opposite problem from that of Islam: its universalism bore no credible, living connections with national life. Buddhism had, a la Kuenen, emerged from the ascetic, monastic orders of India and its highly metaphysical conceptions of “absolute quietism” and “indifferentism” had their roots here.²⁰⁷ But, what made Buddhism different from the generally elitist monastic orders in this context was that, probably due to the personality of its founder, the Buddha, it was driven by a spirit of compassion to carry its message to all humanity: “*A monastic order with its lay associates: such is Buddhism.*”²⁰⁸ Kuenen compared it in this regard with St. Francis and the Franciscans in medieval Christianity.²⁰⁹ But, Buddhism’s quietism and indifferentism—its castigation of the very idea of truth—stymied precisely that spirit of compassion that was its greatest virtue from maintaining a living connection with developments in ongoing, meaning, national life. That “quietism” had “at last maimed compassion” and led to stagnation meant Buddhism was also not a truly universal religion.²¹⁰

Matters were different with Christianity because of its direct connection with the “Israelite nationality” and its religious overcoming.²¹¹ There were in the post-Orthodox Protestant thought of the nineteenth century three broad strategies for narrating A whole history of the post-Orthodox Protestant theology and Protestant ‘science of religion’ of the time can be written in terms just of this question; it was that pivotal. On the one side, there were those who accepted the traditional Christian idea of Christianity as having emerged from a Jewish trajectory, i.e. out of the Old Testament, the history of the ‘Hebrews’, the People of Israel. But,

²⁰³ “Islam is a side branch of Christianity, or better still, as we should now say, of Judaism: a selection as it were from Law and Gospel, made by an Arab for Arabs, leveled to their capacity, and further supplemented—or must we say adulterated?—by national elements calculated to facilitate their reception of it.” Ibid, 53-4.

²⁰⁴ Ibid, 31, 53. When it came to Islam, Kuenen felt no compunction to be consistent. Hence, he claimed simultaneously that Muhammad’s religion met no great rising towards monotheism on the part of the essentially polytheistic Arab nation, while turning to explain thus the prophet of Islam’s own monotheistic strivings: “Muhammad was a Semite of the Semites. And this implies...that he was predisposed to become a monotheist.” Ibid, 24.

²⁰⁵ Ibid, 51, 54.

²⁰⁶ See ibid, 37-50.

²⁰⁷ Ibid, 281.

²⁰⁸ Ibid, 268. See ibid, 276-80.

²⁰⁹ Ibid, 270-5.

²¹⁰ Ibid, 285.

²¹¹ See ibid, 288-92.

the scholarly aim of representatives of this perspective—Heinrich Ewald (1803-187) was its great exponent and standard bearer—was to reconstruct the traditional Christian narrative on a critical historical basis, rather than simply following tradition in reading the Old Testament through the eyes of the New, as foretelling it.²¹² Second, there were those who sought to present Christianity’s formation and establishment as a distinct religion out of the universalist, Hellenistic cultural environment of its Roman context and so as in fact representing a thorough repudiation of any specifically Jewish trajectory. This outlook gathered steam through the nineteenth century and was, as in the case of Bruno Bauer, its most truculent spokesman, the distinct preserve of former theologians as well as non-theologians.²¹³ Third, there was the work of all who followed in the footsteps of the *Tübingen Schule*, which interpreted Christianity’s consolidation and development in terms of an ongoing dialectical struggle between the (national) ‘Jewish’ elements in its advent and the (universal) ‘Pauline’ promise of its future. This triad is of course meant to suggest a constellation of which the gradations were always the more numerous but Kuenen belonged clearly in the first camp; as he put it, “I seek to trace the antecedents of

²¹² Ewald argued that the different designations for the Jewish people—‘Hebrews’, ‘Israel’, ‘Jews’—bore a deep historical meaning, referring to the successive epochs in the historical developments of the Jews in which each had allegedly become the dominant form of self-identification: ‘Hebrews’ referred to the ‘Hebrew nation’ as it emerged to self-consciousness from the outlines of pre-history; ‘Israel’ referred to the political establishment of the Jews in the Kingdom period; ‘Jews’ became the dominant designation in the period of the post-exilic settlement, what Ewald called that of the *Heiligherrschaft* (hagiocracy). This last period, as in Kuenen’s, was the period of contradiction, of the deepening establishment of monotheism but increasingly externalized and legalized as the tradition of the Jews and so belying the universal mission of Israel as the chosen people of God. See Heinrich Ewald, *Geschichte des Volkes Israel* (Göttingen, 1864), B. 1, 17, 408-9; B. 4, 27-51, 70-87. Where Ewald’s eight volume history of the people of Israel as God’s chosen was headed was already clear from the opening sentence of the opening volume: “The history of the ancient people of Israel lies as a fully realized (*abgeschlossen*) section of human events long since behind us; the last page of its book was written more than eighteen hundred years ago, and no one who knows how to read it, or also, to decipher many of its barely legible characteristics, will await from the future a new page that would have only now to bring this piece of world history to completion.” If this wasn’t clear enough, Ewald repeated again and again that the history of Israel came to its fruition with Christ and the work and legacy of his apostles. *Ibid.*, B. 1, 3, 17. In his volume on Christ, he made Jesus the individual who gathered together and realized in his person the whole history and potential of the people of Israel. See *ibid.* (1867), B. 5, 587-96.

²¹³ Bauer put special emphasis on the supposed associations with Stoicism and Philo of Alexandria. See Bruno Bauer, *Christus und die Caesaren. Der Ursprung des Christenthums aus dem römischen Griechenthum* (Berlin, 1879; orig. 1877), especially 300-308, 47-61. By the close of the nineteenth century, particularly the gnostic ingredient in the determination of Christianity came to be stressed. The importance and to an extent even the syncretistic character of the gnostic ingredient in this Hellenistic environment had been noted already, but by the end of the century, Gnosticism and with it, the ‘Hellenistic’, were apportioned a much longer standing and consequential ‘Oriental’ character. Hence, Christianity could now be viewed in light of Oriental (i.e. Persian, etc.), and so as such, non-Jewish factors! See Baur, *Die Tübingen Schule*, 49-53; Baur, *Die christliche Gnosis: oder, die christliche Religionsphilosophie in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung* (Tübingen, 1835); Suzanne Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 111, 252-90. Marchand acknowledges Baur’s pioneering role in this regard. She rightly paints him as one of the apostles of *Kulturprotestantismus*, but mostly positions the latter at cross-purposes with the eventual bid at ‘Orientalization’ of Christianity. I speak in this work rather of different traditions within *Kulturprotestantismus* and hint at some aspects of its evolution over time with respect to its general bid at historicist supersession of the Jewish tradition. Baur himself did not view the syncretic Hellenistic, Gnostic or Roman influences on Christian development as ‘universalizing’ non-Jewish ones as such. Rather, he viewed the Jewish/Pauline divide as being that of universal Historical principles with analogous counterparts, for instance, in the Roman aristocratic/plebian divide or in Gnostic dualism that became crucial contributing factors to Early Christian development.

Christianity in Judaism as expressly as the advance and internal development of Judaism in the direction of a religion of the world.”²¹⁴

His schema was not particularly complicated. Yahweh had begun as a national god in the popular religion of the Jews, his role to protect and preserve particularly them. That he was also a god who dispensed justice had meant little outside of a local context until the train of Jewish prophets emerged who proclaimed such justice as “the *moral government of the world*”, encompassing a universal standard by which all, Jews and non-Jews, would equally be judged.²¹⁵ Monotheism had actually emerged from this moral universalism: it was inherently “ethical monotheism”, the conception of the one God as the transcendent judge of all.²¹⁶ The Jewish prophets had come progressively to understand that Yahweh was the God of all peoples, but even they viewed Israel as his chosen, even the most exalted of them seeing the Jewish nation as the chosen messenger.²¹⁷ In any case, such ethical monotheism, not to mention the ideal of universalizing it, was not subject to historical realization in the pre-exilic period; the prophets in fact wrote against their time, though theirs was literally the prophetic step in the “course from a national to a universal religion.”²¹⁸ When, in the post-exilic settlement, this ethical monotheism finally *was* realized and established, it was done so as a “*national institution*”, the worship of God balled up in laws and rituals to effect purity and distinction: “*Judaism was established*” thus, as the religion of the Jews.²¹⁹ But, the radical internal contradiction between (ethical) monotheism and its national Jewish construction would not stand: the international spread of the Jewish people, the rise of synagogue worship and piety away from the rituals of the temple, proselytization, the messianic context of Roman occupation, even the Pharisaic desperation calling people to the puritanical monotheism, all of this was the calling of Christianity.²²⁰ Emerging from the internal struggle within the Jewish nation to realize the universal principles of ethical monotheism, Christianity as the only true universal religion was bound historically ever to have its message developed anew in distinct national contexts and at different stages of civilization, providing impetus to the forward progress of both:

In a word, Christianity was calculated by virtue of its origin, and found itself by its resultant nature, to enter into ever fresh combinations with the national life of its confessors. It could not help *nationalizing* itself, nor does it cease through the centuries actually to do so. Its history is that of the mutual reactions of the Christian principles, in the narrower sense, and the national development of the Christian peoples.²²¹

Christianity was “the most universal of religions...because it is best qualified for its moral task—to inspire and consecrate the personal and the national life.”²²² Islam was just national,

²¹⁴ Kuenen, *National Religions and Universal Religions*, 187.

²¹⁵ Ibid, 187

²¹⁶ Ibid, 125, 119-25

²¹⁷ Ibid, 124.

²¹⁸ Ibid, 143.

²¹⁹ Ibid, 167, 156.

²²⁰ See *ibid*, 171-231. Uriel Tal argues that in the second half of the nineteenth century, Christian scholars gravitated towards the idea that Jesus was the true heir to the Jewish prophets, while post-exilic Judaism represented a decline into legalism. See Uriel Tal, *Christians and Jews in Germany: Religion, Politics, and Ideology in the Second Reich, 1870-1914* (Ithaca, 1975), 191-211.

²²¹ Kuenen, *National Religions and Universal Religions*, 291

²²² *Ibid*, 292.

Buddhism not national at all and Christianity the most universal religion because subject to ever renewed nationalization; it was the religion of the future.²²³

We have come full circle. In the emergence and mutual definition of ‘religion’, ‘culture’ and ‘nationality’ as trans-cultural, trans-historical categories, *but as belonging distinctly to the historical and cultural world of the nineteenth century*, ‘religion’ was made a barometer of universality and universal consciousness; the ideal of ‘culture’ meant formation of a characteristic individuality in the light of such universality; ‘nationality’ was the great fruit and embodiment of cultural life. The mutual play between these categories in the nineteenth century began as a distinctly Christian game, bearing a message of (Protestant) Christian triumphalism. But, it was not to remain so. By the middle of the nineteenth century, it had been thoroughly appropriated by Jewish scholars, whose *Wissenschaft des Judentums* literally reformed ‘Judaism’ in its guise and one such Jewish Orientalist applied the schema to Islam to establish the new discipline of *Islamwissenschaft*.

²²³ See *ibid*, 297-8.

IV. The ‘Religion of Man’ and the *Tübingen Schule*

13.

I suggested earlier that that the historicization of—the universalization and anthropologization effected by—‘religion’ bifurcated by the mid nineteenth century into two important tendencies: the secularizing philosophers who carried it forth speculatively under the sign of a new ‘religion of man’ and scholars of a ‘science of religion’ who undertook it as philologico-critical surgery on religious canons in the interest of their teleological purification. There were gradations here as well, people like Ernest Renan who found themselves caught between the two. Instructive for our purposes is that even the Left Hegelian pioneers of the ‘religion of man’ remained ensconced in the mutual play of categories just outlined. Feuerbach, whose anthropology of religion revealed it as the history of the growing self-consciousness of humanity, but in alienated and objectified form, argued nonetheless that “our relationship to religion is therefore no *mere negating* but a *critical* one; we only separate the *true* from the *false*.” But, that involved a radical new universal consciousness, the move from the perspective of the individual, objectified into the transcendent God, to that of the human species-being and the realization that “man can think, sense, imagine, feel, believe, want, love or worship no other being as *absolute*, as *divine being* but *human being*”, that “*Homo homini Deus est.*”²²⁴ Human species-being, accordingly, was the true object of ‘religion’: in it, human beings realized their universal purpose and goal. The practical realization of this goal Feuerbach called culture (*Bildung*), meaning the concrete activity leading to the ever further cultivation and growth of humanity as a whole.²²⁵ As for Bruno Bauer, he began his career desperately seeking to keep faith and *Wissenschaft* on the same page and ended as one of the most vociferous advocates of the overcoming of religious consciousness by the philosophical. But, for him as well the problem with religious consciousness was that it was actually an occluded, alienated human self-consciousness: what the religious idea of the divine, transcendent and infinite coming into and determining human consciousness hid was that it was an objectification and alienation of humanity’s universal creativity and freedom. Once humankind realized that it was the creator of ‘religion’, then its relationship to all human self-objectification would also change: all of humanity’s self-objectification and self-creation in the past had been limiting, occurring under the sign of ‘religion’. But, the self-objectification of the self-conscious creators of the future would be free as undertaken in the consciousness of humanity’s universal freedom.²²⁶ Religion is no longer resurrected here, but it is still barometer of and judged in terms of universality: it is no longer redefined to be able to escape just being past culture, but future cultural self-objectification is re-calibrated as the free self-determination of the universal human subject.

The Left Hegelian anthropologization of religion brought forth a new ‘religion of man’ within that same historical constellation in which ‘religion’, ‘culture’ and ‘nationality’ emerged as mutually defining categories of universal historicization. However, the bifurcation of thinking on religion into a philosophical ‘religion of man’ and philologico-critical ‘science of religion’ serves itself to demonstrate a remarkable shift from the days of Schleiermacher. By the middle of the nineteenth century, ‘historicization’, particularly when religion was its chosen vector, carried new implications, unknown to the earlier period, that had everything to do with the post-Hegelian turn. For instance, one would be hard put to find in Schleiermacher anything akin to

²²⁴ Feuerbach, *Das Wesen des Christentums*, B. 2, 409

²²⁵ See Toews, *Hegelianism*, 349-355.

²²⁶ See *ibid.*, 288-326.

the theory of *false consciousness* that acts as the dynamic engine of the Left Hegelian narratives and makes them work. In fact, the whole point of Schleiermacher's conception of religious consciousness was that there was lower and higher, more and less pure, but not the possibility of false consciousness in it; all were perfect in their own historical context. If we turn, however, to Kuenen, it should be equally clear that his whole account turns on the idea of a contradiction in the fusion of monotheistic and national consciousness in Judaism. This should serve as warning against unilateral readings of 'historicization', as the advent of 'historical consciousness', 'homogeneous empty time' or 'secularization'—take your pick—which can then be neatly identified with 'modernization'.²²⁷

'Historicization' was and remains something plural and changing, like its subject-matter itself a moving target. Anthony Grafton has actually argued that the idea that it was the new German hermeneutics and philology that, after the French Revolution, "learned from the radical changes of its own time to see the past as a genuinely foreign country" is altogether belied by the continuity of the humanist tradition, which persisted through the Early Modern period to innovate and work out rules of historical criticism and contextualization.²²⁸ What better proof of this could there be than Scaliger's ecumenical collapse of past religious, communal and imperial calendars onto the unified chronological time-line of World History?²²⁹ On the other hand, one must not get caught in the opposite trap of imagining only continuity in humanist historical scholarship and contextualization. That would lead to the curious paradox of a universal humanist understanding standing outside time to apportion historical difference. The universal historicization effected by 'religion', 'culture' and 'nation' was radically different from Scaliger's, who, according to Grafton, was led to his own ecumenical stance as a kind of escape from the religious divisiveness of his time and his personal dislocation as a result of it.²³⁰ In this section, I will trace how the historicization of religion nonetheless shifted and bifurcated in the post-Hegelian period and how this multiplication came to involve a remarkable new development: the competitive projection of the Jewish heritage by Jewish reformist scholars as in fact the privileged one, the one whose historicization would reveal its having been destined for ideal purification, the one which *was to be* 'religion' arriving at its end as the universal consciousness of humankind.

14.

Dilthey, writing of the first evidence in Aug. 1798 of the emergence and development of the *Speeches* in Schleiermacher's notebooks, called attention to those fundamental features, in embryo, of the completed work. And, he also pointed to a comment Schleiermacher made about Judaism, in the midst of his general observations about the basic character of Christianity. The comment ran along the lines of saying of "Judaism": "This latter is actually not at all a religion, but merely the union of a number of people, who, given that they belonged to a particular tribal background (*Stamm*), formed themselves into a joint institution under mere political laws, but not therewith into a Church." Except that this line, which uncannily matches Dilthey's report, is

²²⁷ In his essay on "Alleged Relativism in Eighteenth Century Thought", Isaiah Berlin argued that the "ideas of false consciousness, of ideological or psychological distortion of the nature of objective truth, of the complex relationships between fact and interpretation, reality and myth, theory and practice" were basically absent from eighteenth-century historicism, belonging rather to the post-Hegelian legacy. See Berlin, *The Crooked Timber of Humanity* (New York, 1992; essay from 1980), 89, 70-90.

²²⁸ Anthony Grafton, *Defenders of the Text* (Cambridge, 1991), 3, 1-12.

²²⁹ See *ibid.*, "Scaliger's Chronology: Philology, Astronomy, World History", 104-44.

²³⁰ See *ibid.*, 144.

not from Schleiermacher's notebook, but rather from Kant's *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*.²³¹ Here, Kant was trying to provide a historical account of the progressive establishment of the pure moral religion through the ecclesiastical/historical faiths. He not only concluded that such an account would have to begin with Christianity, whose religiosity as against problematic historicity had nothing to do with Judaism. He claimed that if the Jewish state was a theocracy that called on the name of God and based itself on his teachings, this God was merely an "earthly regent" which "made no claim whatsoever on the conscience."²³² What's more, Kant saw nothing redemptively ethical about Jewish monotheism, arguing that a sufficiently abstract polytheism given to the celebration of sincere virtues was much preferable to the "mechanical cult" of a monotheism devoted to statutory obedience.²³³ As for the comment in Schleiermacher, Dilthey reported it as saying that "Judaism was supposedly never a religion, but rather an order, founded on a family history." To Dilthey, it proved "better than any critique" how little Schleiermacher's treatment of individual religions in the *Speeches* resulted from any "deep study."²³⁴

The most reasonable conjecture would be that, since this conception of Judaism is included only in a negated form in *On Religion*, but appears amidst observations on Christianity that were ultimately confirmed and elaborated on in the completed text, that Schleiermacher was here attempting to think through his own position on Judaism, using Kant as a starting point.²³⁵ Schleiermacher ended up being rather more generous in *On Religion*: following the 'ages of man' framework of Herder and Lessing, he called Judaism, also like them, *the* religion of the childhood of humanity.²³⁶ Kant's own account of the progress of historical religion was also couched in terms of the growing maturity of humanity from its childhood, through adolescence to burgeoning adulthood.²³⁷ But, for Kant, the one true religion of morality, the pure religion of reason, was the sole arbiter of the religious potential of any extant, ecclesiastical ('revealed') faith in history.²³⁸ Historical religions of Scripture, Kant acknowledged, were necessary vehicles for the *introduction* into society of the ideal of moral community: the universal Church of the ethical kingdom of God. But, Kant took their very necessity for this purpose, although their empirical historicity made them fall inherently short of the ideal by which alone they were to be

²³¹ Kant, *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft*, Stück III, zweite Abteilung, 144.

²³² Ibid, 145.

²³³ Ibid, 147.

²³⁴ Dilthey, *Leben Schleiermachers*, 416.

²³⁵ We know that Schleiermacher had a copy of *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft* and that he was aware of the controversy surrounding the work. Crouter argues, however, that we have no direct evidence of Schleiermacher's engagement with the work; but, that it was altogether likely that Schleiermacher was quite conversant with Kant's thinking and argumentation on religion, "even if *On Religion* does not directly reflect that knowledge". Well, I think we have now discovered some indirect evidence of precisely such engagement in the course of the composition and completion of the text. That will become even clearer presently. See Crouter's Introduction in Schleiermacher, *On Religion* (first edition), 20-1.

²³⁶ This point will presently be demonstrated in Schleiermacher's case and already has been for Lessing. On Herder and Hebrew poetry as primitive revelation, see Maurice Olender, *The Languages of Paradise: Race, Religion and Philology in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1992), 31-9; also, Henning Reventlow, *The History of Biblical Interpretation, V. 4: From the Enlightenment to the Twentieth Century* (Atlanta, 2010: orig. 2001), 196-200. On Hebrew divine patriarchy as the first age of man, see also Herder, *This Too a Philosophy of History for the Formation of Humanity* (1774) in idem, Michal N. Foster (ed. & tr.), *Philosophical Writings* (New York, 2002), 275-80.

²³⁷ See Kant, *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft*, 140.

²³⁸ See Ibid, 125-31.

judged, as show of the initial weakness and immaturity of humanity.²³⁹ Humanity could at first conceive only of honoring and obeying God, whose commandments were ‘revealed’ from the outside, and outside of this no Church would’ve been organized. Immature humanity required, in other words, “sensory affirmation”, i.e. some manner of “experiential confirmation” in which a *knowable* given order guaranteed salvation, notwithstanding that matters stood the other way round, that it was the internal human capacity for moral autonomy that presumed divine providence for its communal fulfillment.²⁴⁰ Judaism was thus the dark side of historical faiths: external worship without the internal moral message. Christianity added the moral message, becoming ‘religion’, but was still engaged in the full moralization of this message. Schleiermacher went in his *Speeches* in a quite different direction. Judaism’s historicity he made a marker of what was right about it, rather than the prototype of all that was wrong with ‘historical religion’. Schleiermacher emphasized the dialogic character in Judaism of the relationship to the divine and called it the religion of prophecy, although he took this prophetic conception to have been inherently circumscribed by limited historical and national horizons, i.e. preoccupation with communal fate, and thus now completely superseded.²⁴¹

The comparison of Schleiermacher and Kant on Judaism is important for us in two respects. First, it throws into sharp relief the relationship of Judaism, conceived as the religion of humanity’s childhood, to Christianity, the supposed religion of its maturity. Second, it serves accordingly to clarify Schleiermacher’s own conception of religio-historical development, as we seek to account for changing conceptions of the same in the nineteenth century. On the first question, while Schleiermacher diverged from Kant in acknowledging Judaism’s status as a ‘religion’, he followed Kant in instituting a strict historical divide between Judaism and Christianity, by claiming they represented radically different religious principles. In the nineteenth century, Schleiermacher became in fact the face of the gathering tendency in Protestant thought of the previous century to separate the Old Testament (as Jewish) from the New (as Christian) Scripture and to make an invidious distinction, from the religious standpoint, between them. Abraham Geiger, whom we’ll soon take up as the great representative of reformist Jewish scholarship, was particularly sensitive to this development in Protestant Christianity. When he came, in his early pioneering study, *What Did Muhammad Take from Judaism?*, to decide whether Jews or Christians must be considered the most likely source of Muhammad’s borrowing from Old Testament narratives in the Qur’an, he began with *prima facie* reasoning in favor of the Jews and turned only later to scholarly demonstration. Telling was his qualification of that reasoning:

The Christians, for all that they accepted the Old Testament as a sacred writing, and although in those days no doubt had arisen as to whether or not they were to put the Old Testament on a level with the New in respect of holiness and divine inspiration, a doubt which has been brought forward for example by Schleiermacher in later times—the

²³⁹ See *ibid*, 114-23.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 125.

²⁴¹ See Schleiermacher, *On Religion*, 239-40. This is what became of the ‘Kantian’ analysis of Judaism in the text: “Remove everything political and moral, so God will, whereby this phenomenon [Judaism] is supposed to be characterized. Forget the experiment of joining the state to religion, if I should not say to the church; forget that Judaism was, in a certain sense, an order founded on an ancient family history and sustained by priests. Regard only its strict religious elements...” *Ibid*, 239.

Christians of that period, I say, had nevertheless a more lively interest in the New Testament, since it was the expression of their separation and independence.²⁴²

Schleiermacher's historicist reformulation of Christian supersessionist attitudes has struck many scholars as an ominous development, though it actually represented an 'improvement' over Enlightenment reactions to Judaism that read it as a purely socio-political phenomenon and thus deprived it of legitimate existence even as a historical remnant.²⁴³ Our focus on Schleiermacher's historicist supersessionism has, however, the different aim of answering the second question above: how could Schleiermacher claim that Judaism and Christianity represented altogether distinct kinds of religious consciousness—he said he despised reconstructions of influence in the historical relationship of religions that undermined the absolute necessity and originality of each in its own realm—while arguing simultaneously that Judaism represented religious childhood, Christianity maturity?²⁴⁴ Or, *how did his historical account of concrete religions line up with his philosophical conception of historicist religious progress?* The answer is almost disarmingly simple. Jewish prophetism, which gloriously presumed divine judgment in every single occurrence, however accidental, could only survive, given its limited communal horizons, in a simple historical environment. With growing complexity of inter-communal interaction, it ended in the messianic ideal, which reacted against this confusing complexity by dreaming of a return to an original purity in which communal laws and expectations might again claim universality. But, particularly after the reduction of such messianism by Christ, continued expectations on its model became the path to that utter corruption and confusion which was contemporary Judaism.²⁴⁵

What about Christianity, what was its original religious intuition that could make it the *telos* of 'religion' as such? Well, Schleiermacher called Christianity nothing less than the self-conscious awareness of and continuous struggle against *corruption* as such. Christianity he repeatedly called the most "polemical" religion in its restless confrontation with corruption, by which he meant the ever confusion of the given, finite order with the eternal and so loss of touch with the religious consciousness in which all things are understood to have their meaning and distinction through the divine, historical whole.²⁴⁶ Its self-conscious religiosity made Christianity a kind of second-order religion, "best conscious of God, and of the divine order in religion and history. It manipulates religion itself as a matter for religion."²⁴⁷ Christ was the historical figure who understood that mankind's sole salvation was in redemption: he realized himself and his religion as the ineluctable mediator, the ever open path to the divine, and it was his perfect piety, the absolute constancy of his religious consciousness which was God's ceaseless presence in him that made him in fact the man-God, *the* religious archetype for humanity.²⁴⁸

²⁴² Abraham Geiger, *Judaism and Islam* (New York, 1870; orig. 1833), 74. The title is the English rendition of the German.

²⁴³ On the general Enlightenment contempt for the Jews, represented most vociferously by Voltaire, see Arthur Herzberg, *The Zionist Idea : A Historical Analysis and Reader* (New York, 1959), 27-8. As Herzberg rightly suggests, what proves the general character of this contempt is that the starting point of the *advocates* of Jewish emancipation, like the Abbé Grégoire, was Jewish degeneration.

²⁴⁴ See Schleiermacher, *On Religion*, 238-9

²⁴⁵ See *ibid*, 240-1

²⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 242-3.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 242.

²⁴⁸ See *ibid*, 246-9.

Schleiermacher famously went so far as to call the dominant mood of Christianity a “holy sadness”: always “finding the sacred and the profane, the noble with the common and the mean intimately united” and grasping the “universality of this combination”, Christianity realized that corruption and illumination were two sides of the same coin, the scene of a relentless struggle.²⁴⁹ The engine of historical and religious development in Schleiermacher’s thinking was simply corruption and confusion. Christianity was the ultimate bearer of universal consciousness and *the* historical religion not because it was exempt from corruption, but because of its self-conscious vigilance against its own corruption and hence dynamic capacity for overcoming and purification.²⁵⁰ What is striking about Schleiermacher’s treatment of Judaism and Christianity is fundamental insights about these religious traditions, which are however largely lifted from the scene of the historical record and translated into his own schema and vocabulary of religious progress. The congenial stress on the dialogic character of Judaism turned in Martin Buber’s later work into the lynchpin of a grand philosophical elaboration of the Jewish relationship to the divine.²⁵¹ But, à la Dilthey, no great critique is required to see this insight was not based on any serious confrontation with Jewish history: in fact, Schleiermacher tried to marry his idea of the Jewish dialogue with God and its great offspring, Jewish prophetism, with the contemporary Herderian mode of celebrating the ancient Hebrews in terms of patriarchal simplicity and innocence.²⁵² This was so, even though the most cursory glance at the trajectory of Jewish prophetism would have to conclude it represented *not* ‘childlike trust’ in divine judgment but growing response to just such social and political complexity in which a gulf between reality and the divine ideal became thematized as an existential concern. No accident that Jewish prophetism reached its height in the exilic era, or that *its excoriation of the present* issued in visions of divine fulfillment.²⁵³

Something comparable, though in the opposite direction, occurred in the case of Christianity. One can imagine Schleiermacher’s focus on Christ as the absolute and ineluctable mediator warming the hearts of proponents of Christological approaches that take him for the enemy. But, his translation of such divine mediation into a schema that reads it as Christ’s absolute and archetypal religious consciousness cannot but be seen as a philosophical redefinition of the Incarnation away from the traditional historical claims made on behalf of it. Schleiermacher was particularly deft at such redefinitions, which filled out his notion of ‘purification’, and he spent much of the Second Essay of his *Speeches* ‘explaining’ the actual religious meaning of traditional categories such as ‘miracle’, ‘revelation’, ‘inspiration’, ‘prophecy’, ‘grace’, ‘God’ and ‘immortality’.²⁵⁴ His recasting of the notion of ‘miracle’ is particularly indicative of the kind of historical criticism to which his redefinitions led. A ‘miracle’, he claimed, was not a strange, special class of supernatural events; rather, every event was a ‘miracle’ when understood religiously as a sign of the infinite whole: “Miracle is simply the religious name for event. Every event, even the most natural and usual, becomes a miracle, as soon as the religious view of it can be the dominant. To me all is miracle.”²⁵⁵ As F. C. Baur

²⁴⁹ Ibid, 245.

²⁵⁰ See *ibid*, 243-5.

²⁵¹ See Martin Buber, *I and Thou* (New York, 1970; orig. 1923).

²⁵² See Herder, *This Too a Philosophy of History for the Formation of Humanity* (1774) in *idem*, Michal N. Foster (ed. & tr.), *Philosophical Writings*, 275-80.

²⁵³ This in fact became, as we’ll see, the common position of Protestant and Jewish historicism in the next course of the nineteenth century.

²⁵⁴ See Schleiermacher, *On Religion*, 87-101.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 88.

later put it, such a conception of ‘miracle’ represented a more thoroughgoing destruction of it than the previous rationalist critique which had kept the concept but diverted its actuality. What it led to was a reading of the Gospel narratives, in which all the great miracles of Christ—his supernatural birth, his resurrection, his ascension—while not denied as such as having occurred, were called *irrelevant* from the religious point of view, the true miracle having been rather his religious consciousness and its redemptive appearance in human history.²⁵⁶ What such historical criticism amounted to was an appropriation and defense of traditional Christian concepts and narratives *to the extent* they could be represented in the ‘purified’ language of sacral historicism.

15.

In the Protestant theological scene of the second and third decades of the nineteenth century in which Schleiermacher’s historicist criticism was fully elaborated, it came to be positioned equally against rationalist criticism, on one end, and the advent of the neo-Orthodox pietism of the time on the other.²⁵⁷ But, it might seem we can locate, already in this context, the attested bifurcation into historicist ‘criticism’ and ‘philosophy’ in the progressively bitter rivalry between Schleiermacher and Hegel after the latter’s arrival in Berlin in 1818. Schleiermacher had played an instrumental part in Hegel’s call to the philosophy faculty of the burgeoning University of Berlin.²⁵⁸ But, the deepening conflict that developed between them and their supporters testifies to the extent to which their respective thinking represented total responses to their time: their disagreement was truly systematic, taken from first philosophical principles all the way to the burning issues, socio-political controversies and trajectories of the day. On the latter score, Schleiermacher and Hegel disagreed on the proper course of the German and Prussian reforms that had emanated from the French revolutionary wars: was the right path, respectively, mobilization and greater participation of society from below or its rationalization from above? These opposing answers attested to fundamental disagreement on the proper relationship of state and civil society: was the former the most noble organic expression of the latter and its independence, or was the *telos* of the state the sublation of society into a universal, constitutional will? Which in turn underscored disagreement on the status of church with respect to state: was the former to be characterized as equal, independent counterpart of the latter or was the church as medium of ethical community ineluctably bound with the state? Most explosively, they were at odds when it came to the student agitation that attended faltering of German

²⁵⁶ See Ferdinand Christian Baur, *Kirchengeschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1970; orig. 1862), 184-8, concluding with the following sentence: “One must know this peculiar character of Schleiermacherian dogmatics, this artificial attempt to hide the modern philosophical viewpoint under the cover of the old Orthodoxy, in order to understand it as the product of a time that made it its highest task to unify, in this externally transparent fashion, the contradictions that were suddenly there and could not be otherwise mediated”.

²⁵⁷ This was in fact the context in light of which Schleiermacher revised his third edition of *On Religion*, from which I have all along cited. On the positioning of the text now against not moral and dogmatic rationalism but between rationalism, on the one hand, and the new reactionary and exclusivist pietism, on the other (i.e. with flourishes of ecumenism sprinkled throughout the notes), see Crouter’s Introduction to Schleiermacher, *On Religion* (first ed.), 68-73. See, for instance, Schleiermacher, *On Religion*, 188-9 (note 8), where he made clear his ideal was the inclusive Moravian one and not the new exclusivist pietism; and 254-5 (note 1), where he said that though a Catholic would benefit much more from a Protestant service than the other way around, Protestants had to engage Catholic practice and make a serious attempt to understand the Catholic point of view. On the rise of the new fundamentalist pietism, which Toews read as being, unlike the earlier movements from below, an aristocratic led reaction from above, see Toews, *Hegelianism*, 243-54.

²⁵⁸ On Schleiermacher’s support for Hegel’s call to Berlin, see Crouter, “Hegel and Schleiermacher at Berlin: A Many-Sided Debate” in *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Vol. 48, no. 1 (Mar., 1980), 27-9

nationalist aims and on the state crackdown enshrined in the Carlsbad decrees and their attacks on university freedom.²⁵⁹

Pertinent to our purposes is that this whole range of disagreement in which Hegel took the state to be the rational historical actor, Schleiermacher as only an agent of *Kultur*, was also institutionalized in the academic and scholarly sphere as a divide between ‘philosophy’ and ‘historical criticism’. Schleiermacher was a prominent member of what Ranke later recalled as the “Historical School” at the university, which included Wilhelm von Humboldt, Savigny, Niebur, Eichhorn and the philologists, Böckh and eventually Bopp and Lachmann.²⁶⁰ After Hegel’s arrival at Berlin, Schleiermacher played an important role in making certain the philosopher was excluded from the Royal Prussian Academy of Sciences, which was associated with the university. The more coherent “philosophical” party under Hegel against which the “Historical School” came to be loosely positioned, founded in turn a rival academy, the Society for Scientific Criticism, in 1826.²⁶¹ In order for Hegel’s exclusion from the Academy to be carried through, its philosophical division was actually abolished, a serious move considering that Leibniz had been the body’s first president. But, in fact, already in the aftermath of the university’s founding, Schleiermacher had given voice to Academy members’ concerns about the monopolistic tendencies of speculative philosophy and proffered the historical-critical standpoint as the only appropriate one.²⁶²

Schleiermacher’s judgment on this score best frames the fundamental philosophical cleavage that divided him from Hegel. In Schleiermacher’s approach, philosophy, science, morality, art, religion as well as church and state were viewed as coming evermore into their independent sphere of competence: understood in the light of universal (religious) historical consciousness, earlier confusions became progressively clarified and corruptions purified. By contrast to this schema of mutual teleological recognition through the historicist prism, Hegel instead historicized art, religion and ‘scientific philosophy’ as different stages in Absolute Spirit’s coming to an understanding of itself, something that had occurred fatefully in Hegelian philosophy itself! Philosophy, i.e. Hegelian philosophy, became the sole means of making conceptual sense of the yet incomplete understanding of these earlier moments. Hegel, for his part, viewed Schleiermacher’s basing all on the absolute immediacy of religious feeling and his relativist historicist attempt to conjure an immediate sense of past contexts and judge them internally as of one piece. Both betokened a reification of and a resignation to subjective states whose historical immediacy was in fact mediated by a dialectical process that was constitutive of their rationality.

²⁵⁹ See *ibid.*, 30-33.

²⁶⁰ See Toews, *Hegelianism*, 60.

²⁶¹ See *ibid.*, 33-5. The new Hegelian Society, though clear in its philosophical orientation, did not remain a Hegelian closet. By 1828, it had attracted members like Wilhelm von Humboldt, A. W. Schlegel, Goethe and F. W. Creuzer. Its first chairman was actually Eduard Gans, the first and only president of the *Verein für Kultur und Wissenschaft des Juden*, of whom I’ll have a good deal more to say in the next chapter. He had converted in 1825 and was, for official purposes, a ‘Christian’ at the time he drew up the statutes and was elected chairman of the new Society. See Toews, *Hegelianism*, 131.

²⁶² See Crouter, “Hegel and Schleiermacher in Berlin”, 33. In his history of the Prussian Academy of Sciences, Harnack sought to play down rivalry between Schleiermacher and Hegel as the proximate cause for the latter’s exclusion from the Academy, citing instead the already adopted policy of combating Speculative, Philosophical monopoly in favor of historical and philological approaches. See Adolf von Harnack, *Geschichte der königlich preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin* (Berlin, 1900), V. 2, 692-3, 735.

For Hegel, to put it programmatically, at any historical moment, Absolute Spirit was in contradiction with and alienated from itself. That's because it was at all times nothing other than the historical process whereby, progressing dialectically through finite nature and humanity, Spirit came ultimately to know itself conceptually in its infinity as absolute identity in difference. And, that meant the philosophical consciousness of its absolute identity in difference that completed the process by reconstructing it. The historical reconstruction of the Spirit at each stage of its alienation in material and bodily form became thus an exposition of the necessity and rationality of each such moment, namely, of the dynamic contradiction and overcoming by which it proved the path to a higher stage. For instance, Hegel took Art to represent the first stage of Spirit's coming to know itself: in the work of Art, Spirit conceived itself primarily in sensuous, objective form as the Ideal. In the aesthetic mode, Spirit confronted itself by objectifying itself; its perfection was the reconciliation, to the extent possible, of subjectivity and objectivity, the embodiment of the Idea as this had been achieved in Greek sculpture. Since Classical Antiquity, Hegel however provocatively argued, Art—the aesthetic mode of self-understanding—had been in decline and this decline was to be terminal. The final full stage of Art was the Romantic art of Christian Europe. And, particularly in the poetry that was its most characteristic product, it was now clear Spirit could not be adequately captured in sensuous form, its infinity and mobility in subjective feeling breaking through the objective representations of it.

This art constituted the regression of Art, for it made manifest the ultimately deficiency of the aesthetic mode of self-understanding; but, it represented as such also a fundamental advance in consciousness, as Spirit's infinity overflowing its aesthetic representation in Romantic art indicated the passage to Religion as the next stage of its destiny of self-knowledge.²⁶³ Religion trumped Art in its capacity to grasp the infinite character of Spirit—it was capable of thinking God—but it did so not conceptually (*Begriff*) but ideationally and representatively (*Vorstellung*) in figurative and narrative format. Moving dialectically through religions that identified God pantheistically with the world as such and then those that imagined God as standing over against the natural and human world, religious consciousness had finally arrived at the absolute religion: Christianity. In the narrative of Christ's incarnation, his overcoming of mortality and humanity's prescribed union with God through him, Hegel saw the absolute content that was to be scientifically reconstructed and made conceptually known by philosophy. God's becoming man and returning to himself as the means of ultimate salvation representatively prefigured philosophy's dialectical elucidation of Absolute Spirit's move through finitude in order to return through human consciousness to just such knowledge of itself fulfilling it.²⁶⁴

As Hegel put it already in *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, Christianity as the “revealed” religion “*intuitively apprehended*” the absolute Being as self-overcoming self-consciousness, but it did so in the form of “picture-thought” of the Incarnation and Resurrection of the God-man and his church.²⁶⁵ And, though, he noted again and again that this “picture-thought is the true, absolute *content*” of its scientific reiteration;²⁶⁶ he also stressed that “God is attainable in pure speculative knowledge alone and *is* only in that knowledge, and is only that knowledge itself, for He is Spirit; and this speculative knowledge is the knowledge of the *revealed* religion.”²⁶⁷ The

²⁶³ See G. W. F. Hegel, *Introductory Lectures on Aesthetics* (New York, 1983; orig. 1835).

²⁶⁴ See Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion; Lectures of 1827* (Oxford, 2006).

²⁶⁵ Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit* (Oxford, 1977; orig. 1807), 476-7; also 460.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 476, 463.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 461.

upshot of this admittedly cursory review of Hegel's highly complex account of Christianity as absolute religious consciousness must be that, despite his rivalry with Schleiermacher, we would be hard put to discover in their respective *modi operandi* the anticipated bifurcation into 'historical critical' vs. 'philosophical' approaches to historicizing religion. In both thinkers, rather, central Christian dogmas were salvaged but only when reformulated in terms of historicist schemas in which their 'purified' or 'true' meaning can ultimately be revealed or demonstrated.

One could, with Schleiermacher, articulate Christ the mediator as *the* anti-corruption balm and Christianity as History's self-purifying agent. With Hegel, one could reconstruct Christ and Christianity as the figuration of Spirit's self-overcoming self-fulfillment in philosophical self-consciousness. Either way, the result was such loosening of Christian conceptions from their textual and traditional contexts that would allow them to be understood from the standpoint of and defined as enacting universal historical consciousness. That is how Christianity became 'religion' as such or 'absolute religion'. In both thinkers, Christianity's universality as religion was measured against its textuality, and its historicity gauged by its assigned capacity of moving from the latter to the former pole by overcoming the confusions or contradictions within itself. As Toews has argued, it should be no great surprise that Hegel and Schleiermacher plied, despite their systematic rivalry and disagreement, an altogether comparable path in the German context of their time. For, both were ultimately reformists, defined by the French Revolutionary era, who sought to envision a new German order capable of responding to the socio-political landscape remade by its wars and conflagrations. Schleiermacher chose to idealize German nationality, the independent formation of *Kultur* and a 'People's Church'. Hegel saw the owl of Minerva flying over the Prussian constitutional state. But, neither invoked a new order bereft of the divisions and contradictions of the old, but rather a reformation that would clarify or overcome them through super-definition. Schleiermacher projected growing mutual autonomy and recognition of independent modalities grounded in universal religious consciousness. Hegel put his trust in rationalizing philosophical reconstruction of universal consciousness and the rationalizing universal will of the constitutional state. Both accommodated the old by redefining it for the new.²⁶⁸

But, this accommodation and affirmation of Christian dogma in universalized historicist guise was not to last. And, when the open break with Christian tradition finally came, it should also not surprise that it did so under *not* Schleiermacherian but Hegelian auspices. For, the reception of Schleiermacher's thought was marked by great openness and undecidability: what Christian purity and purification ultimately meant, Schleiermacher averred, depended on interpretation of immediate religious feeling. And, while he worked strenuously to demarcate such feeling and prescribe how it should be interpreted, it is altogether telling that a 'Schleiermacherian phase' turned into the common prelude of the most radically divergent theological standpoints in the first half of the nineteenth century. It was a crucial part of the experience of many of every shade who eventually embraced Hegel: these included Right Hegelians, like Philip Marheineke (1780-1846), Centrists, like Karl Rosenkranz (1805-1879), who tended to accommodation and F. C. Baur, who did anything but and even D. F. Strauss, the progenitor of Left Hegelianism and this schematization of the Hegelian School.²⁶⁹ On the other hand, it was also the formative background for the wave of fundamentalist pietism that overran both Prussia and the South German states in the 1820's and became the predominant force in

²⁶⁸ See Toews, *Hegelianism*, 56-67.

²⁶⁹ See *ibid.*, 159, 257-8. Much of our discussion of Baur will focus on the question of accommodation.

state, church and the academy in the following decade.²⁷⁰ The Hegelians had been drawn to the experience of their own consciousness as a reflection of the infinite, but were discomfited that this was to be only a feeling and hankered that it be anchor of and anchored by knowledge. The new pietists had begun seeking a 'living faith' in Schleiermacher's experiential Christianity but, with their conservative and aristocratic connections, they had turned to the certainty of neo-Orthodoxy and an openly reactionary authoritarianism. In addition, this ontogenetic ecumenism in the Schleiermacher reception, only served as reminder of the fact that the early Romantic audience of his message had then found their way by it to the Catholic church.²⁷¹

Hegelianism, by contrast, was something much more self-contained: in 'converting' to it, one imbibed a total historicist ideology and had to square it with ongoing reality and vice versa.²⁷² Already in the early Hegelian movement of the Restoration period, it had become clear that Hegelian philosophy could serve as pathway equally to accommodation, critical reform or even radical transformation. Hegelian historicism always prefigured a Right, Center and Left.²⁷³ At its heart was analysis of historical contradiction and rationalization of it as dialectically necessary but thus also overcome. But, was one to view the very advent of the Hegelian philosophy as proof that all contradictions had in its time been rationalized and overcome? Was one to think the Hegelian dialectic not yet fully actualized and its projected process of rationalization thus as an ongoing one? Or, was to conclude that the Hegelian system itself mirrored the extant contradictions of the world, both of which would have to be radically transformed in the interests of rational realization? In his role as philosopher-king of Berlin in the last decade of his life, Hegel and his disciples on the right clearly chose the first path. On the theological plane, on which these questions were in the 20's and 30's predominantly fought out, they proffered the view that Hegelian philosophy had now fully conceptualized and elucidated, so confirmed and guaranteed for all time the absolute content of Christian religion, arrived at by it first ideationally in the form of *Vorstellung*.²⁷⁴ Philosophy and religion (reason and dogma) had now been *reconciled* and the Church prepared for the fundamental ethico-communal role it was to play in the modern state.

But, turn to the earlier work of, again, *The Phenomenology*, and it becomes clear the Hegelian project bore potentialities its founder no longer felt comfortable acknowledging. For, in the earlier work, philosophy cannot be viewed as essentially elucidating and immunizing Christianity: it is the contradictions in Christianity's picture-thinking of its absolute content that are foregrounded as necessitating scientific rationalization that would be equal parts elucidation and overcoming. For one thing, Hegel says here, Christianity envisions Christ's incarnation as Spirit "in *this individual* self-consciousness" and "so in an antithesis to universal self-

²⁷⁰ See *ibid*, 247-8.

²⁷¹ In fact, as Crouter has pointed out, a good number of the revisions in Schleiermacher's second 1806 edition of *On Religion* were directed against this turn on the part of some of the 'cultured despisers' to 'religion' alright, but the wrong religion! The Catholic turn he said was not one towards 'religion' but idolatry. See Crouter's Introduction to Schleiermacher, *On Religion* (first ed.), 67-8.

²⁷² On the Hegelian "conversion" experience, see Toews, *Hegelianism*, 88-93.

²⁷³ Toews articulates the different political possibilities of the Hegelian "conversion" as "accommodation, critique, and historical transcendence", *ibid*, 97. These different tendencies could all be traced back to different aspects of Hegel's thinking. As Toews shows, on three separate occasions, Heine characterized Hegel as conforming fundamentally to one of these political interpretations of his system. See *ibid*, 95-8. Moreover, the outlines of a Hegelian Right, Center and Left had already formed in the Restoration period. See *ibid*, 112-40.

²⁷⁴ It is one of the major point of Toews's analysis that the question of 'accommodation' vs. 'criticism' or 'transcendence' played out in the Hegelian school first on the theological plane. See *ibid*, 141-199. D. F. Strauss was, as we'll see presently, the first self-avowed 'Left Hegelian', that is proponent of a humanist Hegelianism.

consciousness". One has not yet learned to see oneself in Christ: "Spirit as an individual Self is not yet equally the universal Self, the Self of everyone."²⁷⁵ Only in philosophy did it become clear that divine fulfillment requires universal self-consciousness, in which the Self grasps its universality without losing its individuality. We must all come to understand ourselves as Christ. More, the sensuous locatedness of Christianity's picture-thinking was betrayed by its conception of the Fall into Good and Evil as a *contingent happening* to humanity, rather than as a necessary movement in the divine.²⁷⁶ Altogether, what was missing in the figurative thinking of Christianity was universal historical consciousness through which the separated parts of the former became "moments" in a "spiritual unity": "each part of the picture-thought here receives the *opposite* meaning to what it had before; each meaning thereby completes itself in the other, and only through this self-completion is the content a spiritual one."²⁷⁷ Christianity envisioned the Incarnation as something that had *happened* in the past, *revealed* externally in a present, passed on externally by *tradition* since; it conceived of the present world as evil; it envisioned a salvation in a *distant* otherworldly future.²⁷⁸ But, the Incarnation as Spirit's self-consciousness was the figuration of universal self-consciousness; from one standpoint, Spirit's descent into the finite world was evil, from the ultimate standpoint however, it was the dialectically necessary and good; salvation was just the completion of God in human self-consciousness that was universal Christhood. Schleiermacher had allowed 'religion' and 'science' to co-exist as autonomous modalities with respective spheres of their own. Hegel argued that 'science' and 'religion' (*Wissenschaft*)—absolute science and absolute religion—had the *same* content and his own work had suggested there was contradiction in the latter, overcome by the former. It was in the working out of the relationship between 'science' and 'religion' in post-Hegelian thought that the religion of science (or man) and the science of religion bifurcated.

16.

The story of the split between the religion of science and humanity and the science of religion, between the philosophical anthropology of religion and the critico-philological study of its progress, is, in the brief space I can devote to it here, that of a fateful and ironic crossing. The lives of its two main protagonists, David Friedrich Strauss (1808-1874) and F. C. Baur were altogether entangled: Baur had been Strauss's teacher at the lower seminary of Blaubeuren between 1821 and 1825 and then again professor at the Tübingen Stift, from which he graduated in 1830. But, it was Strauss and his young cohorts at the seminary who first led the march to Hegel in their final undergraduate years at Tübingen and anticipated their teacher's own eventual move in this direction. And, since Strauss's 1835-6 publication of the *Life of Jesus* set the German theological world ablaze, the exact nature of the relationship of student and teacher has remained a crucial question, particularly for those still animated by the controversies of that time.²⁷⁹ From the standpoint, I will outline here, however, the life-long theologian teacher, Baur, and the ex-theologian philosopher, Strauss, must be understood as inaugurators of two quite distinct traditions. From Strauss, the first self-styled Left Hegelian, the line of dialectical

²⁷⁵ Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, 461-2.

²⁷⁶ See *ibid*, 467-75 for Hegel's complex account of the shift from an essentialist/reified to a dialectical understanding of 'Evil'.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid*, 474.

²⁷⁸ See especially *ibid*, 462, 466, 472, 478.

²⁷⁹ This will be the central question, as we turn below eventually from Strauss to Baur and the *Tübingen Schule*. The first edition of Strauss's text appeared as: D. F. Strauss, *Das Leben Jesu, kritisch bearbeitet*, V. 1, 2 (Tübingen, 1835-6).

humanism moves through the religion of humanity of Bruno Bauer and Feuerbach, as all know, to the historical materialism of Marx and Engels, though Strauss himself ended at a distinctly undialectical materialism and scientism. Baur, by contrast, became the leading spirit of the Tübingen School of theology, and redefined through this theological movement the intellectual agenda and methodological problematic of Higher Criticism to create a brand of ‘scientific criticism’ of the Christian canon that functioned simultaneously as a critical historicist theology. Substantively, the Tübingen standpoint was eclipsed by 1860. But, even in theological counterpoint, this brand of the science of religion set the ‘critical historical’ tone for post-orthodox Protestant scholarship from the Tübingen School apostate, Albert Ritschl (1822-1889) to those, whom as we’ll see, emerged from different theological traditions: Julius Wellhausen (1844-1918), Adolf von Harnack (1851-1930) and members of the History of Religion School, but equally the Jewish reformist scholarship of Geiger and our own Goldziher.

But, the bifurcation of science of religion and religion of science and man has not been much by appreciated contemporary historians. For, judged from the perspective of the denouement at the turn of the twentieth century, both have been thrown together as having led more or less directly to irreligion and the hollowing out of religion. We are, in other words, back again at Chadwick’s ironic conclusion about Europeans having only at the end of the nineteenth century palpably experienced absence of religion and secularization, in the midst, that is, of bids at revitalization. Gordon Craig, for instance, discussed with obvious disgust the crass materialism and apotheosis of the new German nation-state in Strauss’s last work, *The Old and the New Faith* (1872).²⁸⁰ He then turned immediately to argue that Protestant leaders and thinkers essentially accommodated these trends—“ben[t] to the storm”—and that revision of faith through scholarship in theologians like Wellhausen, Ritschl and Harnack led to “an incautious eagerness to adapt the beliefs of the Church to the latest fashions in scientific speculation.” The result was a reduction of Christianity to a “bundle of ethical rules”, encompassing not “divine authority” but “social utility”, that made it rather akin to the “secular religions” it was competing against.²⁸¹ Karl Barth, who first perfected this type of analysis and its theological deployment, explained the whole course of nineteenth century-theology from Schleiermacher to Ritschl as that of a subterfuge religion of humanity and human self-realization.²⁸² Not surprising then that, looking back from this standpoint, scholars have come to characterize this whole movement of Protestant scientific theology from Schleiermacher to Ritschl in terms of *Kulturprotestantismus*, envisioned as a rather staid, uninspiring phenomenon.²⁸³ The historicist triumphalism of this Protestantism that basked in itself as universal consciousness and the handmaid of *Kultur* we are to see as accommodationist dressing up of Christianity in scientific, progressive and nationalist garb. What’s wrong with this historical picture is that Protestant theology here did not so much ‘accommodate’ science and modernity as that, as so often in the modern world, the confrontation of science and theology made the latter a medium of modernist cultural development and transformation.²⁸⁴ The science

²⁸⁰ See Gordon A. Craig, *Germany, 1866-1945* (Oxford, 1978), 181. D. F. Strauss, *The Old Faith and the New: A Confession* (London, 1873; orig. 1872).

²⁸¹ Craig, *Germany, 1866-1945*, 182-3.

²⁸² “We can ask”, he said, “whether the entire theological movement of the [nineteenth] century resulted not at all in an overcoming of the Enlightenment, of its decisive interest of man in himself, but in its fulfillment.” Karl Barth, *Protestant Thought from Rousseau to Ritschl* (New York, 1952; orig. 1959), 391-2.

²⁸³ See, for instance, Suzanne Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 77-8, 256-9, esp. 217.

²⁸⁴ See for earlier incarnations of theology as the medium of intellectual and cultural transformations, particularly in the birth of modern natural science: Pierre Duhem, *Medieval Cosmology: Theories of Infinity, Place, Time, Void*

of religion did not represent an accommodation of the religion of humanity; both grew together and in the same body out of the German Enlightenment and Early Romanticism. They split in the nineteenth century because they represented divergent paths *beyond* accommodationism.

The appearance of Strauss's *Life of Jesus* in 1835, which at the time he fervently proffered as an elucidation and fulfillment of Hegelian Christian theology, was the very opposite of accommodation; it spelled the end of accommodationism and championed instead honest polarization.²⁸⁵ Already beforehand, conservatives and fundamentalist pietists had been warning that Hegelian Christianity was a subterfuge religion of humanity that, under cover of philosophical articulation of 'absolute religion', gutted the traditional Christian message of Christ the savior.²⁸⁶ In Strauss, they found someone willing, as they saw it, now to be sincere about the fact. Relieved to have their prophecies come true and the devilish Hegelian rivals they'd conjured now show their true color, they fell on Strauss with utter ferocity and made of him a litmus test, through which they worked successfully to transform theological faculties, driving out or underground those of 'suspect' approaches and opinions. One early such pamphlet response to the book by K. A. Eschenmayer was actually entitled, "The Iscariotism of our Time".²⁸⁷ The Tübingen School arose largely out of the processes that had led Strauss to write his book and in the wake of the theological controversies that attended its publication. Eduard Zeller (1814-1908) edited for long the organ of the School (*Theologische Jahrbücher*) and was its organizational spirit as Baur was its intellectual; he eventually became Baur's son-in-law and remained friends throughout life with Strauss.²⁸⁸ He described the *Life of Jesus* as having fallen "like a bomb" in the German theological world of the time, shocking "men of all parties—rationalists as well as supernaturalists and not least the disciples of Schleiermacher and Hegel", all of whom took on "blind trust" their own interpretation of the Gospels.²⁸⁹ As for Baur, he later argued of the *Life of Jesus* that "there is no work in the new theological literature so truly epoch-making as that of Strauss."²⁹⁰ He noted, very much like Zeller, that "one must have oneself lived through the period of Strauss's book to be able to form an idea of the commotion it caused... Strauss's *Life of Jesus* was the burning fuse, through which the already long since accumulating fuel burst into flames."²⁹¹ Baur stressed the way the book led to polarization of theological debate, explicit recognition of fault-lines that had been passed over without being noted as such, but also the conservative deployment of them as authoritarian barriers against the free scientific investigation of the Christian heritage.²⁹²

17.

Why did Strauss's book become such an explosive cultural document? The answer is not as straightforward as it may seem. Strauss had left behind his youthful romantic inklings under

and the Plurality of Worlds (Chicago, 1985; orig. 1913-). Alexander Koyré, *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe* (Baltimore, 1957). Amos Funkenstein, *Theology and the Scientific Imagination: From the Middle Ages to the Seventeenth Century* (Princeton, 1986). Steven Shapin, *The Scientific Revolution* (Chicago, 1996), 135-55.

²⁸⁵ See Strauss, *Das Leben Jesu*, Preface to Second Volume, VII-VIII.

²⁸⁶ See Toews, *Hegelianism*, 242-3, 227-8.

²⁸⁷ Eschenmayer was actually a professor of philosophy and medicine at Tübingen. See Strauss, *Das Leben Jesu*, Preface to V. 2, VI-VII and Baur, *Kirchengeschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 366.

²⁸⁸ See Horton Harris, *The Tübingen School* (Oxford, 1975), 55-77.

²⁸⁹ Cited in *ibid*, 63.

²⁹⁰ Baur, *Kirchengeschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 379.

²⁹¹ *Ibid*, 363.

²⁹² See *ibid*, 380-2.

Baur's tutelage in favor of a scientific theology; and, it was in search of such truly scientific Christianity that he and his Tübingen friends had turned to Hegel. Strauss wrote his *Life of Jesus* altogether in the service of Scientific Christianity and affirmed in the preface to the first volume the purpose of his critical reading of the Gospel narratives to be nothing less than the philosophical salvation of the fundamental ideas of the Christian faith:

The inner core of the Christian faith the author knows to be completely independent of his critical investigations. Christ's supernatural birth, his miracle, his resurrection and ascension, remain eternal truths, even as much as their reality as historical facts are to be questioned. Only the certainty of this can give our critique dignity and peace, and differentiate it from that of the naturalists of the previous century, who meant to overturn alongside historical fact also religious truth and were thus necessarily driven to frivolous behavior.²⁹³

His critique, Strauss said, would proceed with "cold-bloodedness", precisely because he knew it would not damage but rather rehabilitate Christian faith.²⁹⁴ Well, there was a new departure here: elucidating the inner truth of Christianity now *required* destroying the historicity of Christian canon, more precisely, demonstrating the mythical character of the Gospel narratives of Jesus Christ. Even this statement needs explanation to be properly understood. The Hegelian conception of science as the ultimate guarantor of religion and of Christianity as the 'absolute religion' was of course nothing new. And, as Strauss made clear in the first volume and Baur as well as contemporary commentators have all reiterated, the application of mythical analysis to especially the Old Testament but also to the New was *not* something new at the time.²⁹⁵ What *was* striking about the *Life of Jesus*, the peaceable cold-bloodedness of its critical destruction of the historical veracity of the Gospels, derived from the radical idea that the truth of Christianity resided in the fact that the narratives of Christ were myths, not true historically. They were true as myth *because* they were and could not be true historically: it was another way of saying that the scientific reconstruction of the Christian heritage could not simply be elucidation of it, for science first demonstrated Christianity for what it *actually* was and without which it could not be understood in its true guise.

Strauss's great innovation was the synthesis of Higher Criticism, i.e. the critical historical approach to documentary sources à la philological scholarship, with Hegelian analysis. Wilhelm Vatke (1806-1882), his friend from the 1831 Berlin sojourn he'd made to learn Hegelian philosophy first hand, was pioneering a like synthesis but in application—wisely as will become clear—to the Old Testament. Vatke's *The Religion of the Old Testament* appeared in the same

²⁹³ Strauss, *Das Leben Jesu*, Preface to V. I, VII.

²⁹⁴ See *ibid*, Preface to V. 1, VII-VIII

²⁹⁵ See *ibid*, 27-50. See Baur, *Kirchengeschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 379: "Even its mythical view is not new, for one had already long before Strauss accepted [the notion of] myths not only in the Old, but also in the new Testament." See Reventlow, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, V. 4, 251: to the same effect: "The enormous furor that *Das Leben Jesu* produced at its first appearance, is, at first glance, difficult to understand from our contemporary standpoint, since methodologically and content-wise he offered nothing stunningly new in his investigations of the Gospels. The mythological critical method had been developed before Strauss, and both Old and New Testament materials had been probed using this approach."

year as *The Life of Jesus* and nearly also ruined his academic prospects.²⁹⁶ Strauss's own synthesis of historical criticism and dialectical critique was highly motivated and radical. He had grown increasingly dissatisfied and impatient with those on the Hegelian Right, especially Marheineke but even the more nuanced Rosenkranz, who rested content with deducing the Gospel narratives of Christ from the Hegelian dialectical reading of the dogmas founded on them. As Strauss put it, where the Church had "deduced the truth of ecclesiastical concepts of Christ from the correctness of evangelical history", these Hegelians derived "the correctness of the history from the truth of the concepts."²⁹⁷ To them, all the traditional claims of the Incarnation and its miracles were historically necessary and so must have *actually* happened: Hegelian philosophy merely showed the universal meaning of the historically particular, the form of the content. But, Strauss argued against first Schleiermacher, then equally these Hegelian accounts, that their philosophically derived conceptions of Christ as an ideal archetype—i.e. whether in terms of religious and moral perfection or divine self-consciousness—simply could not be embodied by any actual human being, and so they had not even asked about the historical Jesus. More, that, unlike the ecclesiastical understandings of Christ, whose meaning resided in the claim to adequately represent Jesus, the archetypal conception of Christ was essentially indifferent to Jesus and was forced to confront the orthodox narrative of his life on an accommodationist basis.²⁹⁸ Their account only required that the archetype become somehow, at some point historically available. Strauss came, hence, full circle to argue the Gospel narratives of Jesus were not historically true, but, more important, that there was an absolute contradiction between the ecclesiastical and Hegelian conception of Christ.²⁹⁹ If the traditional notion of Jesus Christ were right, if he were the singular God-man and an actual miraculous incarnation, then it had to be said that *he* was the sole savior and that all history revolved about him. Then, it could not be said that we were all Christ immanently and on the path to becoming Christ fully; or, that he was the figuration of universal human self-consciousness in which God completed himself through History. Christ was a myth about Jesus, true and necessary only as such: a historical-empirical, yet inadequately understood figuration of the Historical-Philosophical divinization of humanity.

In Strauss's reading, accordingly, the Hegelian dialectic *required* Christ to be a myth: science could not accommodate religion; only in surpassing religion, could science vindicate it in reconstruction. The mythical analysis Strauss applied to the Gospels was itself a marker of how far historical criticism's deployment of the notion of 'myth' had shifted since the latter half of the eighteenth century. Mythical analysis of the Bible had first been pioneered with respect to the Old Testament, particularly Genesis, precisely so as to *preserve the authenticity and historicity* of its narratives against charges from 'naturalists' calling them essentially fabrications. In this, as in so many other cases, Herder proved the leading spirit. In his reading of the early chapters of Genesis under the title, *The Oldest Document of Humankind*, he analyzed them as the earliest record of human history: poetry being the language of the childhood of humankind, as the poetic expression of humanity's experience of divine creation, God's first

²⁹⁶ See Wilhelm Vatke, *Die Religion des Alten Testaments nach den kanonischen Büchern entwickelt* (Berlin, 1835). On Vatke's career and thought, see Reventlow, *The History of Biblical Interpretation*, V. 4, 262-76. On his friendship with Strauss before the publication of *Das Leben Jesu*, see Toews, *Hegelianism*, 256, 271.

²⁹⁷ Strauss, *Das Leben Jesu*, V. 2, 732.

²⁹⁸ See *ibid.*, 714-20, 729-34.

²⁹⁹ See *ibid.*, 734-8.

revelation.³⁰⁰ In the same period, J. G. Eichhorn (1753-1827) and then his student Johann Gabler (1753-1826) adapted discussions of mythology in Classical Philology in the same direction as Herder: the mytho-poetic mode of expression and understanding of the Oriental childhood of humanity was characterized by its as yet inadequate capacity for linguistic abstraction, by its confusion of actuality and meaning, of events and the emotional experience of them. The task of the biblical critic was thus to reconstruct the authentic historical event from the mythological mode of its presentation in the text. For example, in his early work on Genesis, Eichhorn was taken aback not by the story of the serpent in the Garden of Eden, which was plausible enough, but rather the conversation between the snake and Eve, which clearly represented the externalization and personalization of internal human thoughts.³⁰¹ It was *this kind* of mythological analysis, reading biblical narratives as containing much emotionalized, spiritualized reporting of natural, historical events, that came eventually to be applied with abandon by rationalists, like H. E. G. Paulus (1761-1851), to the New Testament to ferret out the ‘reality’ behind its miraculous stories and trajectory.³⁰²

But, by the time of Strauss’s *Life of Jesus*, the mythological critique of biblical narratives was in the process of being radically transformed. Again, it was the Old Testament that had the honor of being the first target of the new criticism. But, if the Herderian idea of mythos as pre-analytic poetic identity of event and experience, actuality and meaning, was long applied by critics in the hopes of reconstructing the authentic history from its confused expression, the work of theologians like W. M. L. de Wette (1780-1849) and Vatke moved in the exact opposite direction. They argued that Old Testament narratives were of dubious and highly compromised value as far as their historicity (actuality) was concerned, but that they remained of inimitable value in the understanding they provided of the mentality and cultural spirit of the people by whom and the time in which they were composed.³⁰³

This was the conception of myth that Strauss now used to characterize the Evangelic account of the life of Jesus in the New Testament. Strauss did not at all deny the historical Jesus, or that he’d led a messianic movement and been martyred.³⁰⁴ But, the Gospel narratives Strauss painted as a collective mythical construction of his career by the early Christian community: a ‘usable history’ accumulated to vindicate and keep alive the movement associated with him in the aftermath of and in response to his crucifixion. Almost fifteen hundred pages of text tracked the New Testament story of Jesus from his supernatural birth to resurrection and ascension. For

³⁰⁰ See Reventlow, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, V. 4, 197-9. Maurice Olender, *The Languages of Paradise: Race, Religion and Philology in the Nineteenth Century*, 32-6. Herder, *Älteste Urkunde des Menschengeschlechts: Eine nach Jahrhunderten enthüllte heiliger Schrift*, 1 & 2 in *Herders Sämmtliche Werke*, Bernhard Suphan (ed.), V. 6-7 (Berlin, 1883-4), 193-512, 1-172 respectively.

³⁰¹ See Reventlow, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, V. 4, 213-18.

³⁰² See on Paulus, *ibid*, 206-10. Also, Baur, *Kirchengeschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 99-104. As Baur repeated again and again in this connection about rationalist criticism of the New Testament, that the attempt to explain away the miracles in the Gospels as misreported—mythologized—natural events reflected a time period in which belief in miracles could no longer be mustered and so some mediating formula with what were clearly purported miracles in Scripture had to be found. One still thus had to break through the psychological barrier of moving from a rationalizing (accommodative) to a historicizing perspective. See esp. 103-4.

³⁰³ See Reventlow, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, V. 4, 234-8, 267-9.

³⁰⁴ Reventlow argues that one should really still see Strauss within the rationalist mythological tradition, since he certainly did not deny the existence and basic outline of Jesus’s life (even though he was not concerned with them). See *ibid*, 258-62. What is missing from this argument is that while the rationalists were above all interested in saving the historicity of the Gospels, behind their mythical formation, Strauss in dubbing them mythical was seeking precisely to destroy their historicity.

virtually every episode recounted, Strauss juxtaposed a traditional orthodox reading of it with a rationalist one, but then essentially rejected both in favor of the ‘mythical’ explanation. In every case, the traditionalist reading essentially accepted the historicity of the Gospel narratives and did its best to reconcile them with one another; the rationalist reading also accepted the historicity of the narratives but did its utmost to reconstruct the alleged ‘actual events’ behind the supernatural ‘re-telling’ of them.

Strauss argued, by contrast, that the whole miraculous trajectory of Jesus Christ in the Gospels corresponded essentially not to the ‘facts’ of his life, but had been crafted in line with Old Testament narratives and expectations of patriarchs, prophets and the coming messiah: the story of the martyred Jesus had been set through these molds to prove that he was that messiah.³⁰⁵ In the chapter on the alleged miracles worked by Jesus, the accounts of which he takes apart with palpable glee, this structural ploy has its most damaging redolence. For instance, in the case of Jesus’s water miracles, the traditionalists proudly recounted how Jesus walked on water and speculated on how he was thus simultaneously flesh but not flesh.³⁰⁶ Paulus used philological legerdemain to argue that the text had to be read as saying not that Jesus walked on water, but that he walked on a raised bank on the edge of the water; or, maybe he had been wading through shallow water and was taken to have been walking on water.³⁰⁷ The traditionalist line of interpretation, Strauss said again and again, smacked of—one could not say which the more appropriate designation—a “raving (*schwärmerisch*)” or “childish” mindset.³⁰⁸ As for the rationalist take, its sheer inventiveness led inevitably to almost comical absurdity once the full context of the stories and their different iterations in the four Gospels were laid bare. As Strauss noted, Paulus contended that the question in the case of the all the miracles of Jesus was, “whether the possibility of a not altogether exact mode of expression on the part of the writer or a deviation in the course of nature be more probable.” But, that was the exactly wrong question to ask. The right one was, “whether it be more probable that the author expressed himself in exactly (or rather absurdly), or that he wanted to recount a deviation from the course of nature.”³⁰⁹ The crucial question, that is, was the *intention and state of mind* of the writer. And, the real referent, in this regard, where Jesus’s water miracles were concerned, was Moses’s parting of the sea and comparable such Old Testament stories, to which he had to be proven equal and superior, irrespective of whatever now occluded memories of his life, if any, may have been deployed and transformed to this end.³¹⁰

After the creative destruction he’d promised was completed and the Gospels now recast as a collective myth of Jesus become Christ, Strauss turned in the last chapter to demonstrate that it was the myth itself that mattered, that its ideas and content, i.e. dogma, though pitched in the guise of a singular, miraculous happening, had already arrived in this contradictory form at the philosophical truth. And, by the critical display and resolution of the contradiction, this truth had now come fully to itself. Hence, at the outset of his scientific rehabilitation of the myth of Christ—as *opposed to the life of Jesus*—he noted that it’s true that the critic who returned after his work of critical destruction “to rescue still the dogma” of religion was likely to be seen as doing so out of “accommodation of the faith.” But, that was not the case. It was rather, Strauss

³⁰⁵ See particularly the discussion in Baur, *Kirchengeschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 360-2.

³⁰⁶ Strauss, *Das Leben Jesu*, V. 2, 181.

³⁰⁷ See *ibid*, 182-3.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid*, 175, 181.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid*, 183-4.

³¹⁰ See *ibid*, 179-80, 189-91.

said, that he did not belong to the “naturalists” and “free-spirit” of the previous century: his “critique” was rooted “in the spirit of the nineteenth century”, “filled with respect for every religion, and namely conscious in itself of the content of the highest religion, Christianity, as identical with that of the highest philosophical truth.”³¹¹ The contradiction in Christian historical consciousness, namely, its irreality, had been made clear; now, it was the nonetheless identity of its content with philosophy that had to be foregrounded.

But, along the way, in all the talk of historical actuality, a fundamental shift had taken place: the Hegelian rehabilitation and reconstruction Strauss was able to offer was different and far more radical than anything in even the early Hegel. The latter had emphasized the contradictions in traditional Christian consciousness, which individualized, localized and reified what were moments in the progression of the Absolute. But, this Absolute Spirit that returned to itself in knowledge, i.e. in universal human self-consciousness, still came to fruition in the self, in individual consciousness. For Strauss, though, the Absolute could not be realized—*actualized*—in any single individual, Christ or otherwise: its subject, the only possible one and what Christ was figuration of, was the human species as a whole that realized itself through History and was the real, self-actualizing referent of universal self-consciousness. Christian dogma was thus really an inadequately realized conception of the divinity of humanity:

This is the key to all Christology, that as the subject of the predicate, which the Church embodies in Christ, is to be set instead of an individual an idea, but a real not a Kantian unreal one. In an individual, thought of as a God-man, the properties and functions, which Church doctrine attribute to Christ, contradict one another: in the idea of the species they accord with one another. Humankind is the union of the two natures, God become human, infinity externalized through finitude, and the finite Spirit’s recollecting of its infinity; it is the child of the visible mother and the invisible father: Spirit and nature; it is the miracle worker: in so far as in the course of human history Spirit comes ever more completely to master nature, which as against him is reduced to the powerless material of his activity; it is the immaculate: in so far as the train of its development is beyond reproach, impurity attaching always only to the individual, but overcome (*aufgehoben*) in the species and its history; it is the dying, resurrected and ascended to heaven: in so far as in the negation of its natural character an always higher spiritual life, out of the overcoming of its finitude as personal, national and worldly spirit its oneness with the infinite spirit of heaven emerges forth.³¹²

It was thus the self-consciousness of humanity that was the negation of the negation: the negation of its individuality, its materiality towards its spirituality, the participation of the individual in the “divine-human life of the species.”³¹³ The Left Hegelian ‘religion of humanity’ had been born; but, it took some heart-ache before it became clear that it was not quite to take the mantle of ‘religion’ and of ‘Christianity’ with it; that its future was not that of ‘scientific theology’ but the panning of any such as oxymoron; that it was to be a ‘religion of science’ against ‘religion’.

18.

³¹¹ Ibid, 687

³¹² Ibid, 734-5

³¹³ Ibid, 735

The root cause of the shocked and swift reaction to Strauss's *Life of Jesus* was clearly its explicit attempt to go beyond accommodation of traditional Christian teaching. Otherwise, the critical reaction to the text itself was and remained puzzling. Strauss himself had thought he was only drawing and elaborating on the two advanced sciences of his time: critical historical theology and Hegelian philosophy.³¹⁴ As Baur later argued and Reventlow has recently reiterated, Strauss had in fact not been a methodological innovator: calling some part or aspect of the Old or New Testament 'myth' was not in itself taboo and mythological analysis had already become a staple of the critical theological reading of the Christian canon by the time of Strauss's unsettling work.³¹⁵ The explanation was thus reduced to questions of extent and tone and the fact that the Gospels had been the subject-matter. Baur, for his part, went for a psychological explanation and drew on metaphors of honesty. Strauss's, he said, represented the revelatory concentration of the religious and theological consciousness of its time: he "allowed the age so to speak to behold its own image in a mirror he held up to it."³¹⁶ But, the age was stunned and alienated by what it saw in itself, and the result was a reactionary, authoritarian backlash. Baur was here of course putting himself and his allies self-righteously in the right, which indicates retrospectively how the situation had shifted. Scholarly accommodation was now openly disdained on all sides, but since no longer to be taken for granted, it came paradoxically to be demanded more strenuously under a regime of general suspicion. One should not exaggerate; no one was burnt. The time was long gone of even a century ago, exactly a century, when Johann Lorenz Schmidt's naturalistic translation of Scripture, the Wertheimer Bible of 1735, led to his arrest by the Holy Roman Empire and official proceedings, which he only escaped because his underage patrons graciously provided him the opportunity to abscond.³¹⁷ On the other hand, it bears noting that, *unlike* Schmidt, Strauss had no pedagogical pretensions: in the preface to the first volume, he made clear the work was only for scholars and specialists and tried to ward off the general public from its contents.³¹⁸ And, when he came in the final pages of the concluding volume to the question he'd found increasingly vexing as not only a theologian but one who had also been a preacher, namely, that of the apposite relationship between advanced Hegelian theologian and the traditionalist Christian masses, he could not quite see how accommodation was yet to be overcome in this sphere and gave only equivocal answers.³¹⁹

But that remaining gesture at accommodation, if gesture it still was, did not do the trick. The German academic establishment that had learned to boast righteously of its toleration of free inquiry moved nonetheless decisively against him. Strauss not only lost his teaching position at Tübingen as a result of the book, he became for a time *persona non grata* in the German theological world. His own friends and allies, whether out of caution or conviction, refused to take a full public stand in support of his stance or to do much to reassure him privately. Baur complained, as he was to do for the rest of his life, of the pure "negativity" of Strauss's historical critique, against which he was to define his own "positive" approach.³²⁰ Vatke could not agree

³¹⁴ See Toews, *Hegelianism*, 269.

³¹⁵ See note 292 above.

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Baur, *Die Kirchengeschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 380.

³¹⁷ See Sheehan, *The Enlightenment Bible*, 121-131.

³¹⁸ Strauss, *Das Leben Jesu*, Preface to V. 1, VIII.

³¹⁹ See *ibid.*, V. 2, 738-744.

³²⁰ See Baur, *Die Tübingen Schule* (Tübingen, 1858), 56, 57, on the "positive results" of the School, which Baur defended against the constant attack of the conservatives that the school's mission was the dissolution of the Christian tradition. By contrast, "negative" and "negativity" were Baur's mantras when speaking of Strauss's work and results. See Baur, *Die Kirchengeschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 378, 394, 395, 404.

that the new mythological analysis, appropriate for the Old Testament, might with equal legitimacy be applied to the narratives of the New.³²¹ At first, Strauss responded to his opponents and did his utmost to legitimate his own Hegelian humanism cum criticism against every other Hegelian brand.³²² By the middle of 1838, however, a growing feeling of abandonment and isolation had unbalanced his sense of himself as the true representative of his age. He tried awkwardly to crawl back to some middle position between accommodation and non-accommodation without losing face for doing so: in the third edition of the *Life of Jesus* and in another tract on *The Transitory and the Permanent Aspects of Christianity*, he made serious concessions that put the focus again on the historical Jesus and his relative uniqueness vs. the mythical one. He now even admitted the possibility of the authenticity of the Gospel of John and the possibility of personal immortality.³²³ These self-reversals and attempts at compromise went hand in hand with a last impassioned bid to secure a position in a theological faculty, and, at first, with seeming success: in early 1839, Strauss's candidacy at Zürich was finally approved by the theological faculty, in conjunction with the reformist program of its liberal government. But, it was only a respite for, here too, he was made immediately into a lightning rod and the pretense of theological debate dissipated as those opposed to liberal reform mobilized the populace against the appointment. He had to be retired at half salary before even assuming the position. The Zürich experience had a decisive, radicalizing impact on Strauss: his trenchant voice returned in the course of it but was laced henceforth with such increasing contempt towards his opponents that the episode must be viewed as having turned ultimately into one of mutual rejection.³²⁴

Strauss's experience of this 'dialectic of accommodation'—attempted sincerity, flanked by accommodation but as leading to its stupendous, self-affirming failure—was one he shared with the other principal figures who constituted Left Hegelian humanism at the this time. It convinced him, as it did them, of the hopelessness of religious reform from within the established institutions and hierarchies of Church, State and Academy.³²⁵ Namely, it made clear the task of 'science' was not to rescue traditional religion from itself, but definitively to oppose and overcome it, just as State and Academy were only to be made adequate to their concept by purging them of the impact of the Church. By the time of the publication of his critique of Christian dogma in 1840, revealingly entitled, *The Christian Faith in Its Historical Development and Battle with Modern Science*, Strauss's handling of traditional Christian belief had shifted radically in tone. The earlier emphasis on the inherent truth of Christian doctrine understood as a mythical construction of human divinity awaiting philosophical reconstruction yielded here to what became the paradigmatic reading of it in Left Hegelian anthropological critique as ideology, i.e. as humanity's self-consciousness of itself in alienated, objectified form.³²⁶

³²¹ See Toews, *Hegelianism*, 270.

³²² See *ibid*, 273-4. Strauss, *Streitschriften zur Vertheidigung meiner Schrift über das Leben Jesu und zur Charakteristik der gegenwärtigen Theologie* (Tübingen, 1837). The third and last treatise was the one where Strauss famously divided the Hegelian school into Left, Center and Right and left himself as the sole 'Left Hegelian'.

³²³ See Toews, *Hegelianism*, 276-8. Strauss, "Vergängliches und Bleibendes im Christenthum", in *Der Freihafen: Galerie von Unterhaltungsbildern aus den Kreisen der Literatur, Gesellschaft und Wissenschaft* 1, no. 3 (1838): 1-48.

³²⁴ See Toews, *Hegelianism*, 278-81.

³²⁵ See *ibid*, 312-20 and 330-343 for comparable breaks on the part of Bauer and Feuerbach in the face of accommodationist coercion.

³²⁶ See *ibid*, 282-7. Strauss, *Die christliche Glaubenslehre in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung und im Kampfe mit der modernen Wissenschaft dargestellt*, V. 1, 2 (Tübingen, 140-1).

The religion of humanity was not to be also Christian religion, but to supersede it. Now, I imagine self-professed Christians and humanists all breathing a sigh of relief to hear of this moment of clarification in which Strauss conclusively disavowed the Christian mantle. But, it's important not to lose sight of the fact that the important intellectual work had already all been done in the *Life of Jesus*. Hence, if Baur complained of the “pure negativity” of Strauss's Gospel criticism and Reventlow agrees the title of the text is a misnomer, since it in fact wants nothing to say about the historical Jesus,³²⁷ then it bears emphasizing that relative indifference to the historical Jesus and proof of the Gospels as a collective myth of Christ was the *positive aspect* of the work for its author. For, the Historical truth of Christ could only be vindicated to the extent it could be proven he was not historically true but a myth, anticipating as such in inadequate individualized, historicized form universal human divinity and self-consciousness. In the final pages of the first edition of the work, Strauss thus repeatedly juxtaposed traditional Christianity's “historical”, “empirical” and “sensuous” understanding of the truth, which was “myth” with the “philosophical” and “spiritual” grasp of it as a “universal happening”, i.e. as History.³²⁸ In his post-Christian Left Hegelianism, the positive celebration of Christian dogma as immature, anticipatory understanding of human divinity was turned, now that its historical moment had allegedly passed, into a critique of its ideological function.

If we turn now to Baur and the consolidation of the science of religion in the *Tübingen Schule*, we encounter a very different break with accommodationism: this one, for all it had in common with Strauss's critical methodology and his historicist, teleological understanding of religious development, instituted a quite distinct *wissenschaftlich* tradition with respect to the Christian heritage and ‘religion’. Strauss's reading of the Gospels decisively shifted the critical focus from the relative historical veracity of the narratives to the scene of their historical production and its broader meaning for History. The historical reception of Jesus became now itself the primary problem, rather than something to be brushed up to divulge the actual history behind it and/or the pure nuggets within it. Strauss projected Christ as a collective mythology of the collective self-understanding of the human species. He was an inherently constructed mythological archetype, because in him the history of humanity was told as the history of a singular individual. The ‘scientific’ resolution of the Christian narrative as a historical contradiction that could only exist as myth was meant to effect the ultimate translation of it from the historical to the Historical realm. The problem was no one believed that this ‘Scientific Christianity’, which made the Christian narrative into contradiction cum myth awaiting philosophical reconstruction cum adequacy, was still Christianity. And, Strauss himself agreed soon enough that this Christianity was at present an ideology which ‘science’ had to unmask. By contrast, the legacy of Baur and the Tübingen Schule was precisely the pioneering and consolidation of a ‘scientific Christianity’, one, namely, which explicitly moved beyond the accommodation of traditional Christian claims and prerogatives.

As noted, Baur himself acknowledged Strauss as the figure who had decisively problematized and broken with accommodation, at great personal cost and at the cost of repressive backlash and polarization.³²⁹ At the same time, Baur asseverated throughout that not

³²⁷ See note 317 above and Reventlow, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, V. 4, 252.

³²⁸ Strauss, *Das Leben Jesu*, V. 2, 737.

³²⁹ See Baur, *Kirchengeschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 380-2. Baur noted that even August Neander, a mediating Schleiermacherian theologian whose own life of Jesus, in response to Strauss's, had made him well-known had advised the Prussian government not to ban the book but then nonetheless gloated when Strauss's appointment at Zurich was sabotaged.

only his critical historical methodology (which had of course greatly influenced Strauss) but also his much more positive agenda of historical research predated the seminal work of his student, and was also quite distinct from it.³³⁰ Hence, on the crucial question of accommodation, one can, following Baur himself, certainly agree with the conservative historian of the Tübingen Schule, Horton Harris, in his claim that: “The beginning of the Tübingen School may be dated from the appearance of Strauss’s *Life of Jesus* in 1835. It may at first sight seem strange that a School whose head was Baur should begin with Strauss, but this fact must be emphasized: The Tübingen School begins with Strauss and not Baur.”³³¹ But it is equally important to emphasize that the Baur and Tübingen paradigm of post-accommodationism was *not* the equivalent of Strauss’s. What was comparable was that, in the work of Baur and the theologians cum historians who became associated with his school, there was a like shift in focus from the search for the historical and/or pure core of Christianity’s sacred narrative to critical analysis of the *historical production of the Christian canon*, the *historical* reception of Jesus. What was different was that, unlike Strauss, Baur was interested in the historical establishment of the traditional Christian narrative not to mark it as myth, making it thus available for philosophical appropriation. Rather, Baur sought through close philological and literary/historical reading of the canon to demonstrate it as the key to understanding the development of Christianity in its first two centuries, from the apostolic through the post-apostolic period, ending ultimately in the establishment of the first Catholic Church.³³² The New Testament canon in its extant, standardized and homogenized form itself represented, Baur argued, the outcome and the seal of this *dynamic* process.

The task with respect to the canon in its received form was not contemporary accommodation by pruning or idealized philosophical translation but, *historicizing* it, that is, by close analysis of the divergent motivations and evidence within the Christian corpus—called *tendency critique*³³³—to *dissolve* it to expose the process of its historical formation. The canonical consolidation of the Christian corpus, rather than taken at face value, was thus revealed

³³⁰ See for his description of his own work and that of the *Tübingen Schule* (he really only described himself under the heading, in contrast to Strauss!) *ibid*, 395-99. He said that his standpoint was the only one that could legitimately, on a critical basis, be taken as moving beyond that of Strauss and namely because it sought to answer the critical questions Strauss should have. See *ibid*, 399.

³³¹ Horton Harris, *The Tübingen School*, 2.

³³² This historiographic task and timeline was not simply Baur’s, but became the defining, collective goal of the members of the *Tübingen Schule*. To the extent Strauss did not quite participate in this historiographic endeavor, he was not a member of the school. Moreover, the School represented a diversity of perspectives within its collective paradigm and one can refer to three comprehensive Histories of Early Christianity along these lines: Albert Schweigler, *Das Nachapostolische Zeitalter in den Hauptmomenten seiner Entwicklung* (Tübingen, 1846), which was quite radical in viewing St. Paul and not Christ as having provided the true impetus for what could be called ‘Christian’ development and history. And, *Albrecht Ritschl, Die Entstehung der altkatholischen Kirche* (Bonn, 1850), which moved in a much more conservative direction, sought to reaffirm Paul as the interpreter of Christ, increasingly to reconcile the Apostles so far as possible and to drive ‘Jewish Christianity’ outside the realm of any true ‘Christian’ development. Baur sought ironically to reconcile the views in the school as much as possible, particularly as lack of institutionalization and a bad press placed it always near dissolution. His comprehensive summation of the period came in Baur, *The Church History of the First Three Centuries* (Edinburgh, 1878; orig. 1853).

³³³ See for Baur’s defense of ‘tendency critique’ against conservative attacks on it as a negative attack on the Christian tradition, Baur, *Die Tübingen Schule*, 17-21. Baur’s argumentative strategy was the familiar one that his work and that of the school represented nothing more than the logical outcome of “historical criticism”, which had certainly not been invented by the school. But that all attacks on the school could never hit their mark unless they went after the principle of ‘historical criticism’ itself.

as a provisional stabilization, a point of equilibrium forged not least through concealment of its historicity, of the historical conflicts and contradictions that had been brought into tense union within it. Hence, the whole Hegelian schema of development through contradiction played out in a radically different manner in Baur vs. Strauss: for the latter, the whole traditional Christian narrative was a *contradictio in adjecto*, i.e. a myth in preparation of its modern philosophical resolution. For the former, by contrast, the contradictions through which early Christianity had emerged and been institutionalized as a religion were also the engine of its modern denouement. Christian history was painted in the fateful, teleological nimbus of Tübingen historicism as a series of necessary historical equilibria of these contradictions—each representing some progress with respect to the previous—that, however, became transparent in their historical march only in its critical theology and subject to ultimate resolution only at its time and through it.

19.

Admittedly, this has not always been the way in which the Baur/Tübingen relationship to Strauss has been understood. A good deal of the literature on Baur and his school has focused on exactly what kind of Christian he was, or whether he was any Christian at all and unlike Strauss simply never came to proper realization of the fact that he was not.³³⁴ As Harris reports the early conservative theological reaction to the Tübingen perspective (and in fact essentially sums up his own standpoint therein): in the “initial period the name of Tübingen was coupled not primarily with Baur, but was rather synonymous with Strauss, with Baur being regarded as a close second and even more dangerous in that, unlike Strauss, he did not openly confess his atheism.”³³⁵ An author who has written widely on Strauss and the Tübingen School, Harris’s basic interpretive take on Baur is to cast him as an ‘accommodationist Strauss’.³³⁶ Hence, he eventually concludes that Baur was fundamentally an atheist, when this is understood as rejection of “the transcendent personal God of traditional Christianity, the Creator of the world” (capable of miracles).³³⁷ Harris’s attempts to counter Baur’s insistence on a ‘purely historical’ account of Christian development lead him to curious byways, like a bid to establish historical criteria for the verifiability of the Bible’s miracle stories.³³⁸ But, my aim in citing Harris is not a dismissive one; his penchant for rejoining the theological battles of the mid nineteenth century notwithstanding, his account of Baur is skillful and of great interest. Above all, it makes clear that as a practicing theologian of the Tübingen faculty, Baur found it necessary, often in self-righteous garb, to be equivocal and tread with caution, not to take at any moment more than what

³³⁴ See for instance the diametrically opposed views of Wolfgang Geiger, *Spekulation und Kritik, die Geschichtstheologie Ferdinand Christian Baur* (Munich, 1964) vs. Peter C. Hodgson, *The Formation of Historical Theology: A Study of Ferdinand Christian Baur* (New York, 1966). Geiger presented Baur as essentially dismantling the Christian tradition by way of a rationalist standard; Hodgson presented Baur by contrast as a sincere Christian though not a traditional one. As we’ll see presently, Harris took Geiger’s side on Baur’s “atheism”.

³³⁵ Harris, *The Tübingen School*, 3. Ewald became the biggest thorn, over time, for the Tübingen School, perhaps even more so than reactionaries like Hegstenberg whose opposition was expected. See *ibid*, 45-8. For an overview of Ewald’s conservative historicism, see Reventlow, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, V. 4, 298-303. For Baur’s critique, see Baur, *Die Tübingen Schule*, 119-68. He painted him as an accommodationist historian.

³³⁶ See, accordingly, Horton Harris, *David Friedrich Strauss and His Theology* (Cambridge, 1973).

³³⁷ Horton Harris, *The Tübingen School*, 161. It is of course an altogether prohibitive definition of “atheism”, even for Harris’s lexical barometer of usage “within Christian circles.” See *ibid*, 162, 160-167.

³³⁸ See *ibid*, 179-80. As Baur already suggested in his work, an immanent understanding of the ‘historical’ and the ‘physical’ rendered the idea of ‘miracle’, if conceived as ‘extra-historical’ and ‘extra-physical’, an oxymoron: the occurrence of something that could not occur.

the time was willing to give.³³⁹ Yes, Baur complained persistently of the accommodationism of nineteenth-century theology, from the rationalists to Schleiermacher to his bitter rival, Ewald. The break with accommodationism, in whose vanguard he placed himself, *was* for him the major fault-line of contemporary theological development.³⁴⁰ But, turn simply to the preaching in Baur's sermons—the pedagogical dilemma the early Strauss himself had admitted was a circle he did not know how to square—and you are confronted with the still open question of how to reconcile his orthodox sounding declamations with his historicist theology.³⁴¹

The weight of the pressure to acknowledge Orthodoxy and conform can be gauged from even the briefest assessment of the career of Baur's students and those who became associated with the Tübingen School. Adolf Hilgenfeld (1823-1907), who became known for his work on the background and implications of the Gnostic moment in early Christianity, proved that stubbornness at least paid off when he finally in 1890 acceded to a full professorship in Jena at the age of 67!³⁴² Zeller's call to the University of Bern in 1847, in the aftermath of the Swiss canton's coming under radical rule, awakened a storm of controversy comparable to that which had engulfed Strauss's appointment. Though the battle on his behalf was this time won decisively, Zeller felt uncomfortable with the position in which the expectations equally of his supporters and enemies placed him. Hankering to return to Germany, he accepted the next year a call to Marburg, though he was compelled ultimately, very much in line with his own inclinations, to shift to the Philosophical faculty.³⁴³ Albert Schweigler's (1819-1857) two-

³³⁹ His handling of the Strauss affair is generally proffered as exhibit A. See Harris, *The Tübingen School*, 27-9. Toews, *Hegelianism*, 270-1. Later, in his history of the Church in the nineteenth century, he said that he'd sat out the Strauss debate, first, because it was nothing new to him, the work having emerged in his "immediate proximity". But, also because he had not delved into the material of the Gospels as yet and had not arrived at his mature position, which was the distinction between the broad (though adapted) historicity of the Synoptics vs. the ideal (fabricated) character of John. Hence, he could not defend something he had not himself fully studied. This seems of course like more equivocation. It's important to bear in mind though that what he emphasized here about his own "positive" results vs. Strauss's "negativism", he'd said from the beginning to Strauss himself and was the position he maintained throughout. See again *ibid*, 270-1 and Baur, *Kirchengeschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 396-7, 394.

³⁴⁰ See *ibid*, 380-1, 396, 404. He spoke in the last page of the ever great clarity for "unbiased eyes" of the "irreconcilable conflict" the attempt to draw out the dynamic spirit of historical development exposed between "modern science and the old faith". For the other side, as well, he noted in *ibid*, 396, matters had now become polarized into a "critical unbelieving" stance on the one side and a "Churchly right-thinking" one on the other.

³⁴¹ See Harris, *The Tübingen School*, 177-9.

³⁴² See *ibid*, 113-26. Despite his lowly academic position for most of his career, Hilgenfeld was one of the most important critical theological voices of his time and had his hand in almost every important issue or fight to emerge in his time. See for instance, Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus* (Chicago, 1998), 167-8 for his prominent role in the heated debates about the role of Jewish apocalypticism in the rise of Christianity, his highlighting of which ruffled the feathers of Jewish and Protestant scholars equally. Hilgenfeld and Baur were constantly at loggerheads, because Hilgenfeld was committed to the theological world and refused to play second fiddle to Baur. However, the actual disagreement, as Baur repeatedly sought to emphasize, was not so great as for instance with Ritschl where the same dynamic was also transparent. See, for instance, Baur, *Die Tübingen Schule*, 49-53. See on this point also, Harris, *The Tübingen School*, 242-5.

³⁴³ See *ibid*, 55-77. Ironically, both the most radical and, less surprisingly, the most conservative Tübingen members found their way to theological careers though of quite different kinds! Conservatives had already written the epitaph of the School, during Baur's life-time by talking of the dissolution of the school, in the wake of irreconcilable polarization of its 'right' and 'left' wings, represented by Gustav Volkmar and Albert Ritschl. It was precisely in response to this diagnosis that Baur wrote his summative pamphlet on *Die Tübingen Schule*. See *ibid*, 1-82, esp. 46-7. Volkmar eventually found a position at Zürich and, unlike Strauss's earlier experience, eventually became a full Professor. His ideas about the Gospels as really being about Paul and not Jesus were deemed simply crazy by most observers and used to tar the Tübingen perspective. Ritschl, on the other hand, the so-called

volume *Post-Apostolic Age* was the single most comprehensive compendium of the Tübingen perspective and he became in the early 1840's also the editor of the school's more topical journal, *Jahrbücher der Gegenwart*. But, unable to achieve any theological position, he eked out instead a call to Tübingen's Philosophical faculty for Roman literature and history during the revolutionary heyday of 1848.³⁴⁴ Karl Reinhold Köstlin (1819-1894), a mediating figure both in personal and intellectual terms within the Tübingen context, was actually appointed an assistant professor in the theological faculty, working closely with Baur, but, despairing eventually of a full professorship, he shifted in 1858 to the Philosophical faculty to work on aesthetics.³⁴⁵ Karl Christian Planck (1819-1880), who first focused the school on the relationship between Jesus and the apostles and so the historical basis of his initial reception, was never able to move beyond positions at the secondary level and in lower seminaries and spent most of his later life elaborating his own esoteric philosophy.³⁴⁶ The move of the three Swabians, Zeller, Schweigler and Köstlin to the Philosophical faculty essentially ended their theological careers. It underlines the fact that while Old Testament scholars could continue their work as Orientalists in shifting to the Philosophical faculty, as Ewald and Wellhausen famously did for distinct political and personal reasons, the option was not generally available to New Testament researchers.³⁴⁷

The pressures brought to bear by the theological establishment on the self-avowed “historical critical”³⁴⁸ reconstruction of the Christian corpus and heritage were ineluctable and did succeed in preventing the institutionalization of the Tübingen School. But, even acknowledging the probable impact on Baur himself, it is altogether misleading to cast him on this basis an ‘accommodationist Strauss’. And, I mean by this not simply the distasteful aspect of a conservative argument that insinuates hypocrisy in the case of a scholar said to have yielded to coercion exercised by those whose point of view one champions. Rather, to understand what united Baur and Strauss, but by the same token separated their respective methodologies, we have to make sense of the former's repeated juxtaposition of Tübingen's “positive results” as

‘apostate’ of the school, eventually moved towards an ever more conservative historiographic position and then essentially left the critical historical endeavor to busy himself with elaborating dogmatic theology. He became thereby the dominant theologian of his generation at Göttingen. Barth pictured him as in fact the culmination of the Protestant thought of the nineteenth century, as a theology of man, rather than a theology of Christ. Ritschl's theology he painted as one that saw salvation in the trust bestowed by Christ allowing us to fulfill our duties—place and position—in life and to succeed at them. After Barth was done with him, one could easily imagine Ritschl—the high-sounding Kantian language included—as no more than a highfaluting televangelist. See Barth, *Protestant Thought from Rousseau to Ritschl*, 390-7. On his dominant theological position, see also Reventlow, *The History of Biblical Interpretation*, V. 4, 335.

³⁴⁴ See Harris, *The Tübingen School*, 78-88. See also note 329 above.

³⁴⁵ See *ibid*, 96-100.

³⁴⁶ See *ibid*, 89-95.

³⁴⁷ For Wellhausen's move from the Theological Faculty at Greifswald to Semitic philology at Halle, Marburg and finally Göttingen, see Reventlow, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, V. 4, 312-4. For Ewald's move from the Philosophical Faculty at Göttingen to the Philosophical Faculty at Tübingen (He could not accept the rescinding of the Hanoverian constitution), then to the Theological Faculty there and then back to the Philosophical Faculty at Göttingen, after which, because of his vituperative shenanigans, he was not allowed to rejoin the Theological Faculty, see *ibid*, 288-9. The placement of the critical study of the Old Testament in the Philosophical Faculty in Göttingen was in any case a tradition that went back to Eichhorn and Michaelis.

³⁴⁸ Baur, “Über Zweck und Veranlassung des Römerbriefs und damit zusammenhängenden Verhältnisse der römische Gemeinde. Eine historisch-kritische Untersuchung” (1936) in *idem*, Klaus Scholder (ed.), *Ausgewählte Werke in Einzelausgaben*, V. 1 (Stuttgart, 1963), 147-266. Reventlow suggests that this was the first time the term “historical critical” was used. See Reventlow, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, V. 4, 278-9.

against the latter.³⁴⁹ As Baur suggested in his late defense of the Tübingen School, in response to more conservative writers busy writing its epitaph, both traditionalist and critical theologians had come to understand the differences between them did not reside in whether this or that miracle was real or possible. The question was whether the whole Gospel narrative and conception of Jesus Christ was that of a miracle outside the course of history, breaking into and determining it supernaturally from beginning to end, or, whether it reflected a process no more or less historical than any other and to be judged in its extraordinary character and ramifications only on this basis. Both sides knew that “miracle and history add up to a contradiction”: the Tübingen Schule chose decisively to approach Christianity from a purely historical standpoint.³⁵⁰ On this, Baur and Strauss were as one.

But, Baur’s formulation of the principles guiding the “critical historical” methodology already allow us to peer through the gap between them: first, historical judgment was to be unprejudiced by “dogmatic assumptions” and unbound to “traditional opinions”. Second, historical truth was to be derived solely through what could be proved from “available sources”, which were to be treated as *historical* sources rather than stretched to provide “labored mediations, half conceptions [and] precarious, trivial information.” Finally, all ascertained historical facts and details were to be understood from the universal standpoint of general historical development, i.e. as encompassing the dynamic confrontation of ideas that made and hence pushed beyond their historical context.³⁵¹ For Strauss, the historicity of the Christian sources derived from their allegedly containing an immature philosophy, i.e. from the paradox of their imagining themselves historical, which they could not be. For Baur, *the* Christian canon was a *historical source*: each of its components, historically understood, was a key to the inner motivations of its author, his attitude towards the religious and political conflicts, the party dynamics of his time and thus the purpose for which the piece was written. Together—the components gauged in terms of their “tendency” vis-à-vis one another—the canon emerged as a map of the historical development of the Christian movement in its first centuries: not only of the fundamental divergences within it but also of the continuous attempts at mediation and consolidation, of which canonization itself represented the great exemplar and initial seal.³⁵² Miraculous canonicity was thus to yield to the inner development of the Christian idea as a historical phenomenon in a dynamic context.

The ‘positive’ element in this schema was, on the one hand, the Schleiermacherian vision that viewed not just the Gospel account of Jesus Christ but all History as a sacred process and measured, therefore, the salvational potential of Christianity in terms not of a miraculous break but rather its fateful role in the ultimate fulfillment of History. As Baur put it, the Tübingen School was unwilling to follow traditional Christianity in substituting miracle for history, but, if grasped historically, it remained altogether in a position “to acknowledge in Christianity a supernatural character and the working in it of a divine principle, that is of not merely finite causes but an all-encompassing one above all finitude and a causality founding an essentially new series of phenomena.”³⁵³ Hence, Baur invoked Schleiermacher directly on miracles to say that if they were conceived in the latter’s sense (the historical grasped as divine) then Tübingen

³⁴⁹ Baur, *Die Tübingen Schule*, 56-7.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 58-9, 13-15

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 55-6, 7-11.

³⁵² *Ibid.*, 18-21.

³⁵³ *Ibid.*, 16.

admitted them.³⁵⁴ On the other hand, Baur's positive schema referred to his distinct appropriation of Hegel, which moved decisively beyond Schleiermacher's holism (the 'One in All') to reconstruct the unfolding of History as a dialectical process: in the case of the pivotal role within it of the Christian movement as the "absolute religion", this meant the ever changing and progressing dialectic between Jewish vs. Pauline Christianity, i.e. between the particularistic vs. the universal, the aristocratic vs. the egalitarian, until 'nationality' and 'religion' achieved their proper telos.³⁵⁵ A Schleiermacherian type conception of history as driven by and towards universal religious consciousness was synthesized with a Hegelian dialectic in which 'religion' moved progressively from the particular/national to the universal and, with 'nationality', from the aristocratic to the egalitarian principle.³⁵⁶

20.

³⁵⁴ See *ibid*, 15.

³⁵⁵ The first decisive step in this progression was of course the Protestant Revolution: Catholicism, "the whole clerical hierarchy of the Middle Ages" could be traced back to those "theocratic institutions and aristocratic forms" that were characteristic of the Jewish principle. The idea of the bishop as the head of each community went back to the Jewish Messiah conception of Christ as the head of the Church. See *ibid*, 72. The Catholic ideal of religious conquest too was a Jewish theocratic phenomenon. See *ibid*, 73. And, Christian historical development meant the ever renewed confrontation of the Jewish by the universalist principle: "So dominant however on this side the influence which Jewish Christianity exercised on the development of the Catholic Church, as little is the part thereby to be underestimated which belongs to Paulinism in the historical development of the Christian Church. Just as Christian universalism established itself for the universal Christian consciousness in the first instance thereby that it contradicted dogmatically and destroyed in its roots the aristocratic claims of Jewish particularism, so remained reserved to it for all the future of the Church, always again to intervene with the same sharpness and decisiveness, just as often as hierarchical Catholicism [threatened to] overwhelm evangelical Christianity and damage in its inner core the Ur-Christian consciousness. In all cases of this sort, when Jewish particularism wanted to raise its head hierarchically or dogmatically in the Christian Church, one could always return to the same simple basic truth: that the Apostle Paul, in order to show above all that there was no difference before God between Jew and heathen, highlighted above all the difference between the divine and the human, the infinite distance between the one and the other, in such manner, that humanity could in the consciousness of its need for salvation only hold itself as subject and abandoned to the mercy of God and so that all boasts of an advantage before God could only be seen as vain idiocy." See *ibid*, 73-4. The second decisive step in this direction was, as we'll see presently, critical historicism itself, which exposed the historical development towards the ideal and so defeated the naturalization and essentialization of all past homogenizations with the Jewish principle.

³⁵⁶ Alongside the question of exactly what kind of Christianity Baur espoused, the other scholarly puzzle about him has been focused on the exact philosophical underpinning of his work, namely, the distinct philosophical phases he seemed to have moved through in his theological career: from an early Schelling/Schleiermacher trajectory to a loudly proclaimed middle Hegelian phase to a final ethical idealism (often referred to as a return to Kant or Enlightenment rationalism). See Harris, *The Tübingen School*, 157-80. However, by the time of his 'middle' Hegelian period, Baur had arrived at his mature position synthesizing Schleiermacher's universal religious historicism as a Hegelian dialectic of universality and nationality. In his final so-called 'ethical' phase, Baur essentially moved with his time: the Romantic orgy of celebrating Christ as the God-man—divine/infinite self-consciousness of finite humanity—was over: the more subdued 'Kantian' glorification of Christ as a moral archetype became dominant in the latter half of the nineteenth century. See note so and so above. As I'll make clear below, this shift effected at points a crucial alteration in Baur's reading and historicization of the Christian corpus. However, I agree with Reventlow that Baur did not somehow thereby relinquish his earlier work and methodology to become a Kantian! See Reventlow, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, V. 4, 284. His mature position—from the beginning a distinct philosophical synthesis—remained essentially unchanged. A point underscored by the fact that, in his late defense of the Tübingen School I have been citing, Baur's glorification of the moral Christ and of Christianity as *thus* the "absolute religion" was put front and center, but Schleiermacher was cited in discussing History as a sacral process, Hegel in discussing it as a dialectical one, i.e. precisely the elements he had appropriated from each thinker. See Baur, *Die Tübingen Schule*, 15, 16, 30.

In positioning the critical program of the Tübingen School historically, Baur adopted the defensive strategy vis-à-vis conservative critics of reading it—as he did Strauss—as simply the culmination, i.e. the conscious, explicit, honest realization of Protestant theological historicism practiced since the Enlightenment and its application of critical philology to Scripture.³⁵⁷ Nor was this simply a defensive strategy: he clearly envisioned Tübingen theology as a fateful historical pivot in the teleological denouement he assigned to Christian—universal—History. However, for our purposes, it is important to highlight what *was* new and different in Tübingen’s theological historicism. The whole rationalist tradition of Protestant theological scholarship that took hold during the Enlightenment was predicated on the figure of an ‘ideal redactor’: the critical theologian who stood on the enlightened end of History and gleaned the pure moral message at the heart of Christianity from the historically contingent aspects of Scripture in which it was ‘clothed’. This mission of purifying the wheat from the chaff went then hand in hand with a further, second task: the critical philological parsing of the canon to establish and authenticate the historical record within it. These two tasks were explicitly marked out and theorized by Kant in his treatise on religion. According to Kant, what the Holy Scripture of every “historical (revealed) faith”—which is to say every “ecclesiastical faith” as against the one universal, moral religion—required above all was a “Scriptural Interpreter”.³⁵⁸ For, this figure had the crucial exegetical task of reading Scripture in the light of the pure religion of reason (morality) to make it conform so far as possible to this yardstick. Only this hermeneutic possibility marked out a given corpus as ‘religious’. Kant did not deny that such a rationalizing hermeneutics could lead to “forced” readings, but he argued that this did not imply any dishonesty, first, because these symbolic readings of Scripture intended to vindicate not the literal meaning but a moral essence. And so, even more, because all Scriptures had become subject to the progressively moralizing re-readings of their adherents over time, which suggested the moral light had been—if in the unconscious guise of ritual worship and homage to deity—present all along and could thus be returned to them without undue violence to the text.³⁵⁹ Kant cast beside the Scriptural Interpreter a second figure he said explicitly was subordinate to the latter, namely, the “Scriptural Scholar”, whose task was to ground and stabilize the ecclesiastical faith of a people by documenting and authenticating it as a historical revelation.³⁶⁰ Kant said that, as a basically empirical-doctrinal rather than moral operator, the Scriptural Scholar could accomplish little more than ascertain that nothing made his historically studied faith ineligible from a moral standpoint. But, he strongly insinuated what Scriptural Scholarship in fact demonstrated were the historical contingencies that characterized the trajectory of any ecclesiastical faith; for instance, the circumstances that had led the first Christian generations to graft and exegetically adapt the patriarchal, ritualistic and worldly Jewish Scriptures to the broadly moral message of the New Testament.³⁶¹ By contrast, it was left to the Scriptural Interpreter to examine, for example, how Jesus’s statement in *Matthews 5:17* that he had come not to abolish but to fulfill the Jewish Law was to be understood.³⁶²

In Kant’s thinking, the relation between all historical faiths (ecclesiastical and contingent) versus the pure religion of morality (universal and rational) was predicated on and analogous to

³⁵⁷ See *ibid*, 18-9.

³⁵⁸ See Kant, *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft*, 117, 128.

³⁵⁹ See *ibid*, 125-8.

³⁶⁰ See *ibid*, 128-31.

³⁶¹ See *ibid*, 190-5.

³⁶² See *ibid*, 186.

the relation between sensuous human nature versus the autonomy of moral legislation. The ethical commonwealth that was the purpose of religion, namely, the morally fulfilled Church that *was* the Kingdom of God was, for Kant the ideal, the “invisible Church” at which every historical, visible Church aimed but which none, because of the limitations imposed by sensuous human nature, would ever be able except by divine grace fully to realize. It is at this point that Kant makes his famous comment about the difficulty of making anything straight out of the “crooked timber” of humanity.³⁶³ Human weakness bred the need for an empirical guarantee of salvation, so historical faiths began with statutory revelations and emphasized external worship of and obeisance to deity above the sempiternal inner revelation of moral conduct and conscience, the sole true saving power. Hence, no actual Church could be organized on a purely moral basis without historical revelation and the statutory authority founded thereon.³⁶⁴ But, just as the passions had to be subordinated to the autonomy of moral maxims and, virtuous as such, became the fount of evil when incorporated, because of human frailty, corruption or wickedness, into our maxims as a principle of self-love.³⁶⁵ Just as much ecclesiastical faith had to be understood as the vehicle of moral religion and committed evil when it was substituted for it.³⁶⁶ Kant even hoped that unlike the passions—an inextricable part of human nature that could only be mastered—that, by divine grace, all ecclesiastical faiths would eventually be turned into the universal ethical Church, the Kingdom of God.³⁶⁷ The rationalist version of theological historicism, theorized by Kant, clearly juxtaposed historically contingent Scripture and pure religion and left it to the ideal redactor—the Scriptural Interpreter—to glean the latter out of the former.

Both Schleiermacher and Hegel, however, moved decisively beyond such retrospective rationalism. The historical and the ideal were not opposed quantities in their thinking, for both viewed History as progressing immanently towards teleological fulfillment. Hence, the development of positive (historical) religions—an oxymoron in Kant for whom there was only one, eternal religion—became the subject of their critical analysis and prescription. Still, irrespective of whether this development was then cognized in terms of holistic expansion (Schleiermacher) or dialectical overcoming (Hegel), the resulting religious historicism remained one generally abstracted from historical record and experience. Historical religions were philosophically reduced to principles variously representing ‘religion’, all as aspects of a Historical march arriving at Christianity, the absolute religion equal to its concept. Much the same process occurred with Christianity: it was gauged in terms of its philosophically relevant concept—‘self-conscious so self-purifying religion’ or ‘human self-consciousness of its divinity’—while the corruption or contradiction of its ‘irrelevant’ historical appurtenances made it subject to the Historical purification or elucidation that culminated in the critic’s own work. In

³⁶³ See *ibid*, 114-15.

³⁶⁴ See *ibid*, 117-23.

³⁶⁵ See *ibid*, 28-41. What Kant meant by “wickedness”, which he preferred to call “the *perversity* of the heart”, was essentially utilitarianism: acting and judging action in line with external consequences rather than inner motivations and the self-deception that the call of responsibility was met thereby. See *ibid*, 39-40.

³⁶⁶ See *ibid*, 147-55, 175-8, 196-217. In this connection, Kant noted that if he was asked which period of the history of the Christian Church was best, he would without any hesitation say the present, because after all the depredations of the past, the true moral meaning of religion, namely, Christianity was finally being publicly understood and cultivated. See *ibid*, 152.

³⁶⁷ See *ibid*, 132-42. A running theme of Kant’s treatise was that we have to let go of the chimera of fore-knowledge of salvation and turn instead to the continuous task of moral reform, meaning also reform of the Church, only through which we might put our *trust* in God that he will forgive us our sins and hasten his kingdom.

fact, Strauss's mythological critique of the Gospels, far from repudiating, actually drove this mode of analysis to its logical conclusion. For, according to Strauss, the Christian narrative had to be absolutely divorced from the historical experience and record that had given rise to it, for its philosophical, Historical meaning to emerge.

In the tradition of religious historicism we are investigating, it was really Baur's work and that of his students that made the first serious attempt to collapse the historical and Historical planes, the philologically scrutable historical record and the philosophically scrutable one of ideal progression: the two planes became thus—*pace* Schleiermacher, Hegel and Strauss—not just substantively but epistemologically one and the same.³⁶⁸ The story remained that of religions, i.e. Christianity, becoming 'religion'. But, the ideal development was now to be read out of the dialectical conflicts and dynamism *documented* within historical experience. And, the philological medium of this ideal development, the Christian canon as historical construction, was thus to be equally the instrument of its ultimate progress and fulfillment. Namely, ultimate religious progress was not any longer to be a question of overcoming the corruption of religious consciousness or the contradiction in the form of religious knowledge. It was rather a critical unraveling of the Christian canon that demonstrated the dialectical struggle within it towards the ideal, which simultaneously elucidated the necessity and successive progress of earlier equilibria, but that ultimately revealed itself as the only now historically possible and available means of achieving 'religion'. Hence, as Baur put it, the idea of Christianity as being in the miracle of Christ from beginning to eschatological end of one piece, without opposition or change, and that of the canon as immaculate and uniform—"the absolute miraculous origin and the canon as tradition, negating every true and actual development"—these were the "true Catholic principles."³⁶⁹ Protestantism had broken through the legitimation in this fashion of the all too worldly and materialist entrenchment of the Christian idea in Catholic tradition, refusing to accept it as the ideal.³⁷⁰ It had moved only gradually and equivocally to apply this same principle to the canon, but the evermore serious, critical parsing of the canon revealed itself thereby as the advancing realization of the Protestant conception of history as against the Catholic.³⁷¹

We can thus call Baur's scholarly standpoint a 'documentary Hegelianism'. As to its content, as noted earlier, one can distinguish three broad strains of critical Protestant historicism in the nineteenth century, each divided according to its attitude to the Jewish origins of Christianity and the character of the latter's historicist overcoming of the former. The first school presented Christianity as the culmination and resolution of dynamic contradictions (ethical monotheism vs. legalism, universalism vs. nationalism) within the Jewish tradition. This critical tradition may even be called the most prevalent and institutionally dominant one in the critical theology of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. It had an illustrious trajectory from Vatke's racy Hegelian and Ewald's comforting conservative version of it to the much more ground-breaking and radical work of Kuenen, Julius Wellhausen (1844-1918), Bernhard Duhm

³⁶⁸ Cf. Reventlow, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, V. 4, 277. Reventlow acknowledges Baur's textualist cum idealist historicism, warning, however, against its inherent infeasibility.

³⁶⁹ Baur, *Die Tübingen Schule*, 45. See also, *ibid*, 57-8.

³⁷⁰ See *ibid*, 10, 45.

³⁷¹ Baur was here deflecting conservative Protestant criticism of the Tübingen Schule's "dissolution of the canon" by calling it, via the usual defensive strategy of critical theologians, Catholic in essence. See *ibid*, 16-21, 43-45.

(1847-1928) and Adolf von Harnack (1851-1930).³⁷² This tradition depended on good part on the idea that the ancient Hebrews and Israelites, if not the modern Jews, were capable, in fact particularly so, of dynamic development. Hence, in a lecture in 1872, given before the Royal Academy of Göttingen, Ewald specifically took to task the idea that the Oriental mind was static, conservative and, unlike the Western, not liable to evolutionary and progressive development.³⁷³ On the other hand, this affidavit on behalf of the ancient Orient did not prevent him from using ‘Jew’ and ‘Jewish’ with free abandon as an expletive for Christian thinkers and thought he did not like.³⁷⁴

The second tradition, that of Baur and the *Tübingen Schule*, focused the scene of dynamic development on the Apostolic and post-Apostolic period itself and posited a dialectical conflict between Jewish and Pauline Christianity. This struggle had been reconciled, homogenized and reified in the course of the canonization of the New Testament which was precisely the same process as that of the formation of the Catholic Church. The critical unraveling of this dialectical process revealed Christian history as a graduated development towards the realization of the universal Pauline ideal. And, by exposing all earlier step-wise reconciliations with the Jewish principle that had been canonized and traditionalized into the essence of Christianity, it was itself the decisive step in this teleological sacral History.

Finally, there was the Protestant historicist tradition that stressed non-Jewish cultural sources as responsible for a genuine ‘Christian’ turn: whether it was Hellenistic universalism (as with Bauer or Max Müller (1823-1900)), the institutions and realities of the Roman Empire itself (as with Renan)³⁷⁵ or in fact an Oriental Gnostic syncretism of most likely Persian lineage (as with Wilhelm Bousset (1865-1920)),³⁷⁶ something called ‘Christianity’ as a going concern only became possible when its Jewish sources were inseminated or displaced by non-Jewish ones.³⁷⁷ This tradition tended to be the favorites of non-theologians and was the last to be institutionalized—through the History of Religions School—in the Wilhelmine period. All the same, the idea of development by dynamic contradiction became a centerpiece of all these

³⁷² I’ll have more to say of Wellhausen. But see on him and Duhm in general, Reventlow, *The History of Biblical Interpretation*, V. 4., 311-25, 326-334. On Harnack, see his famous pamphlet, Adolf von Harnack, *What is Christianity? (Das Wesen des Christentums)* (Gloucester, 1978; orig. 1899-1900).

³⁷³ See Ignaz Goldziher, “The Spanish Arabs and Islam: The Place of the Spanish Arabs in the Evolution of Islam as Compared with the Eastern Arabs”, First Installment in idem, Joseph Desomogyi (ed.), *Gesammelte Schriften*, V. 1 (Hildesheim, 1967), 380. Goldziher was anxious as we’ll see to extend Ewald’s indignation about the incapacity of ancient Orientals for developments also to modern ones, see *ibid*, 381-3.

³⁷⁴ He referred to Baur as being neither a Christian nor one of the better heathens, but “one of the literary Jews, this present-day pest of our poor Germany”, cited in Harris, *The Tübingen School*, 46. Nor did he keep his ‘Jewish slurs’ only for Protestant scholars he disagreed with. In his first presidential address to the *Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft*, rather disturbed by the increasing competence and self-confidence of Jewish scholars, he referred to “the repeated and harmful conceits of the new Jews”. Actually, this was something of a back-handed compliment in terms of Ewald’s overall thinking, since he thought the idea of ‘new Jews’ post-Christianity to be an oxymoron. We’ll revisit this episode briefly in the next chapter. The slur is cited and its repercussion for the DMG discussed in Ismar Schorsch, “Converging Cognates: the Intersection of Jewish and Islamic Studies in Nineteenth Century Germany” in *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*, Vol. 55 (2010), 25, 24-7.

³⁷⁵

³⁷⁶

³⁷⁷ By contrast, one sees that Baur, for instance, saw the principles of hierarchy and aristocracy vs. egalitarianism and universality as themselves universal and cross-cultural in character. Hence, he argued that these dialectical divisions through which Christianity emerged out of Judaism were equally active in the Roman Empire in the Patrician/Plebian divide. The situation in other words was analogous with, “parallel” to the development of the Roman state. See Baur, *Die Tübingen Schule*, 75-78.

traditions, whether the conflict was located first and foremost within the History of Israel (as in the first tradition), or whether it was between universal principles (as in the second), or between distinct cultural or even racial capacities (as in the third). It is thus interesting to read Ewald, the great enemy of the Tübingen perspective, describe the dynamic historical character of what he called the age of the “Hagiography”.³⁷⁸ This was the post-exilic period of the Second Temple, when the alleged contradictions within Israel—national prerogatives now forced into the ground of the universal religious but without capacity for imposing themselves, the ethical, prophetic demands of the latter sanctified and reified instead—had reached their crescendo.³⁷⁹ These contradictions, Ewald described as the dynamic hand of Providence:

Such difficult inner oppositions and dark contradictions build up in each momentous step forward in the great development of human history: for each progress of this kind is in the first instance the life giving seed of a new universal formation and frame, which through the conditions and necessities of the reigning formation is as yet held back until it can build its inner strength to the point of being able in the right manner to raise itself above this.³⁸⁰

21.

As for the actual content of Tübingen scholarship, it began decisively with Baur’s work on the Pauline Epistles.³⁸¹ Those Pauline Epistles in which Baur detected the presumptive raging conflict between the Jewish Christian and the Pauline universalist principle as transparently developed and reflected, he took to be authentic. These were the Epistles to the Corinthians 1 and 2, Galatians, Romans. The rest of the Epistles, Baur interpreted as representing different tendencies within the ongoing conflict of the Christian movement. Most of the fabricated Epistles he took to be attempts at mediation of one kind or another. For instance, the Pastoral Epistles he took as consolidating the hierarchical organization of the Church, whereas these institutions were starkly missing in the other Epistles. By contrast, Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon showed Gnostic influences foreign to Paul.³⁸² Outside the Pauline Epistles, however, the relationship between fabrication and mediation was much more complex and most often reversed. The discussion of the Tübingen School eventually moved to the Gospels and, here, except for Volkmar, all the participants diverged from Strauss in stressing the core historicity of the Synoptics (minus all miraculous claims and depictions). The question was not thus their alleged mythological character and formation but their respective ideological motivated redactions. Baur believed Mathew, the most ‘Jewish’ Gospel, had been the original, while Mark was a hollowing out of it and Luke, a decisive move in the Pauline direction. Others in the school, like Ritschl, supported the Marcan hypothesis. There was a great deal of diversity on this question as in most others within the Tübingen ranks.³⁸³

³⁷⁸ Ewald, *Geschichte des Volkes Israels, V. 4: Geschichte Ezra’s und der Heiligherrschaft in Israel bis Christus* (Göttingen, 1864).

³⁷⁹ The reader can easily recall our discussion of Kuenen here! See *ibid*, 70-86,

³⁸⁰ *Ibid*, 74.

³⁸¹ Baur, “Die Christuspartei in der korinthischen Gemeinde, der Gegensatz des petrinischen und paulinischen Christenthums in der ältesten Kirche, der Apostel Petrus in Rom”. (1831) in *idem, Ausgewählte Werke*, 1-146.

³⁸² Harris, 182-6, 197

³⁸³ See *ibid*, 209-13, 226-9, 232-6.

On the other hand, Baur viewed other ‘fabrications’ like the Clementine Homilies and Acts as in fact pushing in surreptitious manner towards either a Jewish or Pauline side: the Clementine Homilies presented St. Peter as fighting Simon the Magician, which Baur interpreted as a clear Jewish Christian effort, Simon being code for St. Paul. In Acts, by contrast, St. Paul was equalized to and reconciled with St. Peter, which represented a consolidation of the gains made in the Pauline direction within the movement.³⁸⁴ Finally, the relationship between ‘fabrication’ and mediation was completely reversed in the case of the Gospel of John and the Apocalypse (Revelations) also attributed to John. In this case, Baur viewed Revelations as in fact an authentic work, but a Jewish Christian work utterly hateful of the heathen. By contrast, he argued that the Gospel of John was a fabrication, but that it represented the philosophical and ideal high point of the canon, one expressly committed to overcoming Jewish prejudice and exclusivism.³⁸⁵ That leads us to a crucial point: unlike the whole rationalist tradition and its mythological reading, in Baur’s critical historicism, textual authenticity and ideal content were distinctly divorced from one another. What mattered was the tendency and motivation of texts, for *this* was the real stuff of History, while the respective historical adequacy of textual representations could only be reconstructed on a critical philological basis and within a total understanding of Historical development.

The crucial diversity of views in the school had to do with the way in which the trajectory and precise dynamics of Early Christianity moving towards the consolidation of the Catholic Church was envisioned. On this question, there were two opposite poles between which the discussion was centered. On the one hand, Schwegeler argued that Jesus had been in fact no more than a Jewish Messiah and his initial group of discipline no more than a Jewish messianic sect. He saw Jewish Christianity as essentially the same thing as Ebionitism, namely a Jewish Christian sect which viewed Jesus as having been only the Jewish Messiah. The real impetus towards a new Christian religion had come from St. Paul. The Pauline impact had gradually and by way of numerous half-steps moved the Christian movement towards a truly new, universal standpoint.³⁸⁶ Much of Schwegeler’s concrete work was focused on tracing the historical development of what would become defining features of the faith: he saw the Roman Church as the seat of the institutional articulation of the Church, and the Church in Asia Minor as the locus of the elaboration of the *logos* and the triune God.³⁸⁷ Within the school itself, Schwegeler’s idea of Christianity as the work of St. Paul found no other adherents except Volkmar, and his ideas on this score were quite eccentric—Paul as the real subject of the Synoptics—and nothing with which Schwegeler’s would have ever agreed. Rather, Planck suggested a distinction between the teaching of Jesus, which did continue to be essentially the Jewish one and his moral capacity and life which, in sinking his own will into the divine will, proffered the true measure of religious fulfillment. St. Paul had been an interpreter of Jesus’s concrete life as the fulfillment of the universal, divine ideal and sought to bring it to consciousness.³⁸⁸

Ritschl essentially adopted Planck’s distinction between Jesus’s teaching and Jesus’s being and saw Paul as having formulated the divine ideal and perfect righteousness at work in

³⁸⁴ See *ibid*, 184-5, 195-6.

³⁸⁵ See Baur, *Die Tübingen Schule*, 51, 68-70, 167-8.

³⁸⁶ See Schwegeler, *Das nachapostolische Zeitalter*, V. 1 (Tübingen, 1846), 113-56. Baur, *Die Tübingen Schule*, 21-2.

³⁸⁷ Harris, *The Tübingen School*, 205-7.

³⁸⁸ See Baur, *Die Tübingen Schule*, 22-3. In his later work, Planck, however, also went on to argue that Paul had misinterpreted Christ’s moral message of full devotion to God by turning faith in him into the source of salvation. See Harris, *The Tübingen School*, 217-8.

Christ. What, from the start distinguished his work and made it the opposing pole in the school to that of Schwegler's was that he wanted to reconcile the Apostle Paul so far as possible with the others rather than to envision an intractable conflict. Hence, he painted Jewish Christianity, a la Ebionitism, as a dead-end with no capacity for forward movement. By direct contrast to Schwegler, he saw the progress of Christianity as having taken place within Pauline Christianity as it gradually enveloped within itself a world as yet alien to its principles.³⁸⁹ Meanwhile, the contribution of Köstlin to the debate was that he took serious issue with the idea that Jewish Christianity could somehow be equated with Ebionitism. What such a proposition missed was that Jewish Christianity was open to and involved in a dialectical development within the Christian movement in a way in which a sectarian development like Ebionitism was not.³⁹⁰ Jewish Christianity, in other words, was always dialectically positioned against the Pauline and vice versa. This notion of always dialectical movement through forward reconciliation provided Baur, in turn, with the means of synthesizing the various voices within the School and to present himself as standing at its center.

Baur concurred with Köstlin and, against Ritschl, vociferously emphasized the capacity of Jewish Christianity for further development.³⁹¹ He argued that the very fact that Jesus's disciples came to believe in his resurrection was proof that they were simply unwilling to see in him just a messiah whose martyrdom had proven him false. Rather, he *had to be* the messiah, and this was already a Christian conviction.³⁹² On the other hand, he agreed with Ritschl that St. Paul could not be diametrically opposed to the other Apostles; namely, he in turn also had to be dialectically positioned vis-à-vis Jewish Christianity. Besides all that St. Paul and the other Apostles agreed with, the opposition of Devil and Christ and the worlds and the *Parousia*, "Judaism cut even deeper into Pauline Christianity".³⁹³ Namely, Paul got rid of Jewish law, but not the transactional perspective regnant in it, for the idea of Christ's sacrificial salvation was merely a transfiguration of the Old Testament idea; moreover, Paul, for all his emphasis on faith, did not in fact undermine the importance and value of works. Where he vehemently disagreed with Ritschl though was with his suggestion that the difference between St. Paul and the other Apostles on the question of Jewish practices—that the latter merely sought to retain these for those born as Jews while the former did not—was not such a huge rift. Baur argued instead that *this*, the insistence on universalism was what Paul had brought to the table, and without this insistence Christianity would've never been consolidated.³⁹⁴ The take-away conclusion accordingly was that Pauline universalism had allowed Christianity to consolidate itself as the "absolute religion" it was meant to be, but that its promise was not within the Pauline form of Christianity as it existed in the Apostle's life-time but in the teleological ideal that can be drawn from it in retrospect.

Baur and the Tübingen School's driving historiographic schema of an ongoing heated conflict between Jewish and Pauline Christianity through the first two centuries of Christian history, before the increasing consolidation of the Church at the end of the second, was thoroughly criticized on the merits and was for the most part displaced as a viable thesis from the

³⁸⁹ See Baur, *Die Tübingen Schule*, 26-7, 63.

³⁹⁰ See *ibid*, 24-5.

³⁹¹ See *ibid*, 70-3.

³⁹² See *ibid*, 33-4.

³⁹³ *Ibid*, 37.

³⁹⁴ See *ibid*, 65-70, 73-4.

theological scholarship of the turn of the twentieth century.³⁹⁵ There has been a return to it in some quarters again of late. Jewish scholars seem always to have had something of a soft spot for Baur because of his insistence on the continued, developmental impact of the Jewish tradition within Christianity, one constantly fighting to ‘raise its head’ in new forms. All the same, though Baur envisioned the Jewish element in Christianity as a historical, one might even say providential, necessity, which kept, consolidated and expanded the movement the only way this could have been done at its time.³⁹⁶ He also decisively viewed it as the element that had to be teleologically overcome! Nothing makes this clearer than the almost arbitrariness with which he could on the one hand fundamentally change his mind about matters, but assign the ‘Jewish element’ the short end of the stick regardless, even when what it was now made negatively responsible for was what he had previously championed. For instance, during the heyday of his Romantic phase, when he was still glorifying Christ as the God-man, he explained this incarnation and introduction of the divine consciousness into humanity as having been the product of Christ’s own self-conscious representation of it. Others would have never understood the presence of the divine consciousness in him, had he not himself been self-consciously aware of it.³⁹⁷ But, when the Romantic party of the God-man as incarnated infinite consciousness faded, Baur now wanted to see Christ as the purveyor of pure moral relations and perfection. Now, his status as messiah and as a figure of divine proportions was something that had to be explained. Well, Baur now decided that Christ had taken on this role because it was the only way his moral message could have become Historically active: he played into a Jewish schema to make himself viable. In other words, the same thing that had been glorified beforehand as the self-guarantee of divine consciousness now became a Jewish holdover.³⁹⁸

In concluding this section on the *Tübingen Schule*, let us look at what was particularly innovative about Baur’s critical historical methodology. Namely, to go the heart of the matter, it was above all his re-orientation of the problematic relationship between textual authenticity and historicity, which was eventually adapted by Abraham Geiger at the apex of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* tradition and eventually introduced in paradigmatic fashion by Goldizher into *Islamwissenschaft*. Does the question of the authenticity of a canonical/historical document, and whether it is what it purports to be, exhaust the problematic of its historical value and historicity? Or, does the obsession with an all-encompassing, foundational authenticity and originality illuminate for us instead the traditionalist mentality that precisely invited canonical forgery? From the latter standpoint, the forgeries emerge as of equal historical value as the authentic in allowing us—*this being their historicity*—an understanding of such traditionalist consciousness and of historical development under its guise?

³⁹⁵ On this point see Reventlow, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, V. 4, 280-1.

³⁹⁶ See Baur, *Die Tübingen Schule*, 73-77. On Heschel’s general appreciation of Baur and the *Tübingen Schule* for their basic acknowledgment of the Jewish impact on Christian history, see idem, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, 111-126. Heschel sees Ritschl’s break with Tübingen as a motivated severing of Jewish from Christian history. See also, for instance, Daniel Boyarin, *A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity* (Berkeley, 1994), 1-12; particularly 11-12. Boyarin, in re-reading Paul through the prism of Jewish identity, specifically acknowledged the impact on him of Baur’s universalist interpretation of Paul. He has also essentially returned to talk of Jewish vs. Pauline Christianity. In any case, Boyarin is not party to the long prevalent Christian view (see note 392 above) of a lasting and significant Jewish Christian vein as “untenable”.

³⁹⁷ See Baur, *Die christliche Gnosis oder die christliche Religionsphilosophie in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung*, 717.

³⁹⁸ See Baur, *Die Tübingen Schule*, 29-32; Harris, *The Tübingen School*, 173-5.

To review the argument, we saw that both Hegel and Schleiermacher approached Christianity as the ‘absolute religion’, but did so by translating the traditional Christian narrative and dogma into a philosophical vocabulary of Historical development (whether of polemically or dialectically climbing spiritual self-consciousness). Neither questioned the historical *bona fides* of the Gospel narrative but purported instead to capture its true Historical meaning—what was in fact miraculous about it, what was in fact the meaning of the resurrection—while all the same accommodating traditional Christian history within their philosophical Christian History. Strauss’s post-accommodationist coup resided, by contrast, in the argument that the ideal, Historical element in the Gospel narrative depended ineluctably on the fact it was *not* and could *not* be historically true. Hence, Left Hegelian humanism and the humanist historicism it inspired came to pit Christian historicity and Historicity against one another and thus to focus on religious narrative as representing not historical reality but rather alienated Humanity. Meanwhile, the Kantian branded rationalist criticism of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century was, on the other hand, committed to proving the historicity—the all too historicity—of extant religious traditions. The dominant personae of rationalist criticism remained those Kant had delineated: the moral interpreter, which is to say the ideal redactor on the one hand, the authenticator of traditional religious narrative on the other. Both these personae proved themselves crucial to the rationalist endeavor, mutually grounding one another’s work. For, just as the body was the instrument of moral action and its heterogeneous demands only prevented from perverting the autonomy of moral maxims, historical religions and history had to be understood as vessels of the one and only moral religion and prevented from establishing themselves as shrines in their own right. Accordingly, the task of the historical critic was to reveal the ordinary history underlying religious narrative, while the ideal redactor reconstructed allegorically as much as philologically the moral elements and capacity that were the source of the one universal revelation within it.

Semler, the first great historicist cum rationalist theologian, had already essentially established in the eighteenth century the distinction Baur and the Tübingen cohort later made so much of between a Jewish and a more ideal universal Christianity. It was he who also first suggested that the Scriptures encompassed a process of moral and spiritual progress. Much in the canon (especially in the Old Testament) had been *adapted* to earlier, less mature moral capacities, he argued, hence the Christian canon constituted a historical text that was *not* to be sacralized into a homogenous unity but critically analyzed and redacted by the individual in terms of the moral education it envisaged and inculcated.³⁹⁹ Nonetheless, if he left it to the private individual to cultivate the ideal, moral elements in the Christianity, the public practice and understanding of it he avowed untouched to the historical Church, to which he bid obedience. Hence, to the surprise (and chagrin) of many, he accepted and wrote in defense of Woellner’s restrictive 1788 Edict on Religion.⁴⁰⁰ To go from the paradigmatic ‘ideal redactor’ of the eighteenth century to its paradigmatic ‘historical critic’, Eichhorn’s criticism of the Old Testament achieved its cultural cachet not simply because of his willingness to treat Scripture as ‘mythologized’ history—he was soon outstripped both in radicalness and methodologically on this front.⁴⁰¹ His influence derived more generally from his consuming commitment to locating the historically authentic and original in the Christian corpus; hence, also for his attempt to work back toward the earliest, most authentic manuscript version of the Old Testament, beyond the

³⁹⁹ See Reventlow, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, V. 4, 185-90.

⁴⁰⁰ See *ibid.*, 178-81.

⁴⁰¹ See *ibid.*, 211-228.

available Masoretic redaction. But, just as Semler had noted the inherent limitations of moral redaction Eichhorn admitted the inescapable boundaries to his goal of historical authentication.⁴⁰² It was H. E. G. Paulus, in turn, who arrived at the paradigmatic formulation of rationalist biblical criticism, namely, by bringing Semler's and Eichhorn's prerogatives together to make of the Kantian religio-critical personae and the tensions between the two one. Paulus also made a fundamental distinction between the Jewish and the more ideal features of early Christianity. Further, he proffered the basic Tübingen principle that the later the dating of a canonical Christian text, the more spiritually and morally ideal it was bound to be. But, it was also Paulus who never tired of concocting far-fetched 'natural' explanations for all the miraculous and transcendental phenomena in the Gospels.⁴⁰³

Baur's methodological approach to the question of the authenticity and historicity of the canonical Christian texts differed equally from the humanists and the rationalists. His tack was neither, a la the humanists, to attack their authenticity and historicity so as to salvage their alienated Humanity from its ideological blinders. Nor was it, a la the rationalists, to demonstrate (and so domesticate) what *was* historically authentic about them in order to keep it in its proper subservient place. Baur's subject, rather, was the motivated character of historical representation within the canon and in the canonical format itself. The canonical texts told the story of the dynamic conflicts within the Early Christian movement and their provisional reconciliation, i.e. canonization. The different parties dramatized the Christian gospel in their own terms and according to their own interests; what's more, they appropriated the Apostolic Age, impersonating and characterizing the Apostles to elaborate their particular vision of the Christian movement. The homogenization of these tendencies within a canon represented thus the consolidation of Christianity as a truly universal religion, but one within an as yet pre-critical and authoritarian traditionalist framework. *Pace* rationalist criticism, then, Baur's reading projected the motivated representations in the Christian canon as the latter's most deeply historical feature. The task was not that of salvaging the historical truth of Christian narrative by ferreting out the alleged ordinary reality beneath its transcendental trajectory, a 'method' which amounted to little than second-order fabrication; nor then, for that matter, was the task that of bracketing what was historical about Christianity from its ideal moral message. The aim of the critical historical approach was rather to reconstruct the historical movement towards the ideal within the textual history of the Christian canon, from its formation through to its critical historicist unraveling.

Pace humanist criticism, however, Baur's purpose in attacking the authenticity of many of the canonical Christian texts was *not* to deprive them of historicity, in order then to handicap them as expressions of an immature, alienated Humanity. For Baur, rather, the canonical texts he judged forged and inauthentic bore as much potential historical weight as those he deemed authentic, for their actual historicity and Historicity were of a piece: they testified, as much as

⁴⁰² On Eichhorn's scholarly influence on classical philology, see Grafton, *Defenders of the Text*, 233-7. This was of course a two way street: Reventlow argues that Eichhorn borrowed much of his own methodology from classicists at Göttingen. See Reventlow, *op. cit.*, 211-2.

⁴⁰³ See *ibid*, 204-10. Heschel, Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus, 142-3. And, especially, Baur, *Kirchengeschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 99-104. Baur's critique of Paulus's rationalist criticism was quite vehement and derisive, lacking in this regard Strauss's good humor about the absurd lengths the author had to go in order to salvage the alleged ordinary natural truths of biblical narrative. Baur called Paulus's rationalist synthesis, "in fact the most curious (*merkwürdigste*) theological phenomenon of our time". *Ibid*, 100-1. And, he reasoned its extraordinary oddity derived from a mediating consciousness that perfectly reflected the character of the time, in which supernatural phenomena could no longer be swallowed but one could not as yet let go of the Biblical text as literal truth and so sought to vindicate it by making its narrative into the absurdly ordinary.

and even more than their ‘authentic’ counterparts, to the reality of a pre-critical traditionalist mentality and the means of historical development within it. This is a point conveniently missing from the neo-Orthodox critique of Baur from his own time on and one which has not been all that well appreciated since. Baur’s slashing attacks on the canon have remained the well-placed meme, while not enough attention has been paid to the fact, for example, that though he evaluated the Gospel of John a forgery, he also championed it as the high point of Christian thought within the canon.⁴⁰⁴

For centuries, the focus of the Early Modern philological enterprise had remained squarely on historical authenticity⁴⁰⁵ and the methodology of authenticating texts. And, we owe many of the scholarly triumphs of this era to precisely this focus. As Grafton has argued, this focus of Early Modern humanists and philologists placed them within a tradition that reached back to Antiquity itself. But, Grafton has also pointed to an amazing, ironic but ultimately not so surprising further historical phenomenon in this regard. Namely, the traditional philological obsession with authentication went in fact hand in hand with traditions of forgery: the same Annus of Viterbo (c. 1432-1502), for example, whose rules of criticism were widely acknowledged by the great humanists of the Early Modern world had also been one of the most notorious, ambitious and far-reaching forgers of the era.⁴⁰⁶ In a world in which authentic antiquity and the foundational basis of a tradition count for so much, it is inevitable that forgery will emerge as a primary means of making history, namely, by reading present prerogatives back into the foundational. At one point in his exposition, noting the fact that the art of forgery, to be at all viable, required an immense amount of historico-philological knowledge, as much that is as the art of discovery (authentication), Grafton wryly remarked that, “Nothing ages so quickly as one period’s convincing version of a still earlier period.”⁴⁰⁷ Perhaps this was a semi-melancholic observation on the fact that in the game of forgery and discovery, the triumph was bound ultimately always to go to the latter, but, for us, reflecting on the remark within the historicist context of the nineteenth century, it has a different meaning than the one envisioned by Grafton. For, what its metaphor of ‘datedness’ suggests in that context is the historical wheels already turning under the Early Modern philological enterprise: by the middle decades of the nineteenth century, the fundamental means of making history through ‘history’ was no longer foundational forgery but criticism that envisaged immanent teleological historical progress as a Historical process. In this critical historicist milieu, it was the insight that forgeries were as historically significant and illuminating as their authentic counterparts in understanding the course of historical development, particularly in traditionalist, foundationalist contexts where they constituted a primary vehicle of the latter, that Baur and *Tübingen Schule* bequeathed as a legacy to *Wissenschaft des Judentums* and within it ultimately to *Islamwissenschaft*.

⁴⁰⁴ See Baur, *Die Tübingen Schule*, 53, 168.

⁴⁰⁵ By the way, as Grafton demonstrates, Eichhorn’s methodology of ‘mythological’ explanation had already been well anticipated and known by Scaliger and others, scholars who, in the encounter with the fabulous in ancient texts, considered that they “clothed real events in mythical form”. Grafton, *Defenders of the Text*, 77.

⁴⁰⁶ See Grafton, “Traditions of Invention and Inventions of Tradition in Renaissance Italy: Annus of Viterbo” in *ibid*, 76-103.

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid*, 93.

V. *Wissenschaft des Judentums*: Competitive Historicism vs. Jewish Orientalism

22.

I have now suggested one philosophico-theological trajectory for the advent of the ‘science of religion’ in nineteenth-century Europe. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the philosophical cum theological project of identifying and historicizing ‘religion’ had broken in two: the triumphalist story of the world’s religions ending through Christianity at the universal consciousness of ‘religion’ had bifurcated into a humanist ‘religion of science’ on the one hand, a Protestant ‘science of religion’ on the other. But, that was only half the story. For, other competitors and claimants to the throne of ‘religion’ were already on the horizon and coming at this very time into their own, above all, *Wissenschaft des Judentums* (the scientific study of Judaism) that substituted the Jewish as against the Christian heritage as the ideal medium and *telos* of religious development. This scene of theological cum historicist competition was—it is true—increasingly obscured over the last century by post-historicist, ‘existentialist’ conceptions of Judaism, by post-assimilationist critiques of Jewish assimilation and by the debates about Zionism that attended both.⁴⁰⁸ But, in the last few decades, the complex trajectory of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, the impact of its inter-confessional context and its implications for the same have been ever more searchingly probed and documented.⁴⁰⁹

I start thus with the most telling datum about the context and character of this Jewish historicism: the almost *incredulity* (and truculence) of Protestant thinkers and theologians in having to confront *this* competitor.⁴¹⁰ Consider that the links between Strauss, the original Left Hegelian humanist, the *Tübingen Schule* and its critical historicist Protestantism were so many and so entangled that the divergent tendencies have continued to be mistaken for one another. By contrast, virtually *every schema* within critical Protestant theology was in large part defined by the particular way it presented Christianity as having historically overcome or ultimately theologically overcoming Judaism. Critical Protestant theology was, put simply, a historicist Christian supersessionism. Now, imagine such Protestant scholars having to confront in exactly those they projected as the animating Other of Historical providence, those hence allegedly already overcome or on the verge of total spiritual extinction, instead a *Jewish historicist supersessionism*: one whose general strategy was to claim a purified monotheism as the end of

⁴⁰⁸ See, for instance, David N. Myers, *Resisting History: Historicism and Its Discontents in German-Jewish Thought* (Princeton, 2003) and Gerschom Scholem, “The Science of Judaism—Then and Now” in idem, trans. Michael A. Meyers, *The Messianic Idea in History and Other Essays on Jewish Spirituality* (New York, 1971), 304–313. Scholem’s critique of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* as liable, in its assimilationist and apologetic agenda, to a total undermining of Judaism has become the synecdoche of the view it represents. I have not relied directly on him, however, to show that one need not read his critique as *the* ‘Zionist’ perspective on the matter. Zionism, I would like thus to show, has been capable of criticizing the *Wissenschaft* tradition from two opposing sides, i.e. as being ‘traditional’ as well as ‘assimilation’. Since the first possibility has usually not been emphasized, that will be the one highlighted below. My reasoning in stressing these two different vantage points will become clear shortly.

⁴⁰⁹ In this vein, while reframing matters on some key issues, I have relied particularly on the work of Ismar Schorsch, *From Text to Context: The Turn to History in Modern Judaism* (Hanover, 1994). Susannah Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus* (Chicago, 1998). Christian Wiese, *Challenging Colonial Discourse: Jewish Studies and Protestant Theology in Wilhelmine Germany* (Leiden, 2005).

⁴¹⁰ See, in this regard, the Christian theological reception of Geiger’s competitive historicist work in Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, 186–228. There was also a great deal of polite dismissal.

Historical (religious) development, one that accordingly branded Christianity a degeneration into paganism and blamed, for good measure, much of what had to be reformed in Judaism on the impact of Christian persecution. In this section, then, we will explore the complex manner in which Jewish identity and heritage were re-defined as they came to be cast within the nineteenth-century European discourse of religion, culture and nationality: we will encounter the Jewish people projected as the subjects of universal history and Judaism proffered as the universal religion (as ‘religion’).

In considering Jewish historicism, I am struck by a complicated set of emotions, by feelings of irony, justice but likewise tragedy: irony, because the scholarly practitioners of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* essentially appropriated the critical philological and historicist methodologies pioneered by Protestant philosophers and theologians, but to simultaneously historicize and idealize the Jewish (in contradistinction to the Christian) heritage. Justice, because Jews and Judaism, relegated by Christian thinkers to the anti-principle in purportedly Universal (Christian) History, emerged now to speak in their own name and not only proved capable of making universal claims as grandiose as those made against them. These claims, if marked noxious, could not so easily be disposed of on the level of argument and introduced a competitive inter-confessional discourse vis-à-vis Christian counterparts. Finally, tragedy, because if Jewish historicism came, at its most self-confident, to project the Jewish heritage and Judaism as the true subjects of Historical vindication and so the Jews as the true representatives of modern European civilization, equations of Jewry and modernist universalism became also the handiwork of anti-Semites and laid the groundwork for what would eventually become an annihilative response.⁴¹¹ But, notwithstanding all of their anti-Jewish polemics, we should not haphazardly confuse the Protestant historicist supersessionists with these latter anti-Semites: they mostly competed with Jewish counterparts for the universal mantle of Modernity; they did not cede it. And, in utter irritation, they accused Jewish historicism, with no sense of irony, of being tantamount to Jewish hatred for Christianity, the conclusion being that Jews proved themselves thus again as the in fact authors of anti-Semitism.⁴¹²

⁴¹¹ The basic arguments about the inherent modernity of the Jews, whether they are indicted or celebrated for it, have not really changed a great deal. The idea of the Jews as outsiders bearing an abstract relationship to society, making them paradigmatic and so good at being in a modern world that represented the universalization of such abstraction has a long lineage. In this lineage, some of the very things that had seemed to make the Jews especially unmodern in the Enlightenment and the early nineteenth century, such as Jewish ‘legalism’ and ‘reification’, were refigured by the turn of the twentieth century in the other direction. This process went hand in hand with the solidification of negative critiques of ‘Modernity’ in these terms as against the earlier struggles for its supposed Romantic idealist soul. See for late nineteenth century Volkish associations of Jews with the problematic character of Modernity, George L. Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology: Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich* (New York, 1964), 38-9, 44-5, 57-8. Werner Sombart, *The Jews and Modern Capitalism* (Kitchener, 2001; orig. 1911) first demonstrated the intellectual and historical possibilities of such arguments for modern social thought. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, 1983), 101-109 made the Jewish situation paradigmatic of the position of all specialized minorities in the pre-modern period with rather tragic advantages in the national era. Yuri Slezkine, *The Jewish Century* (Princeton, 2004), interestingly both relies on such arguments about the Jews, while also critically tracking their consequences in historical development to produce thereby a history of the Twentieth Century. See especially *ibid*, 1-60. His starting point is Gellnerian though he moves on from there to suggest that ‘nationality’ had not parted with the tribal fantasy, fantasy though it was.

⁴¹² See especially Franz Delitzsch, *Christentum und jüdische Presse* (Erlangen, 1882). Delitzsch was his life-long involved in the Christian mission to the Jews; he was actually quite sympathetic to the concrete plight of Jews and sought to portray Jewish history in a positive light—the ‘Golden Age’ Sephardic schema comes from him! However, he was completely alarmed by the phenomenon of Jewish competitive historicism and the new Jewish self-confidence that Judaism was to play the role of ‘religion’. He repeatedly warned that this kind of attitude to

The most immediate conclusion available in connection with the Protestant incredulity attending Jewish competition may be that for many nineteenth-century Europeans toleration of Jews was predicated on their playing dead. But, this *incredulity* interestingly cannot be solely parsed and located in terms of the history of anti-Semitism. For, there are contemporary scholars—and *precisely those most vehemently opposed* to presumed ‘Christian hegemony’ and ‘Christian imperialism’—who share it. For these scholars have argued, namely, that the very concept of ‘religion’ is an *inherently Christian* one, and that attempts to dress up non-Christian traditions, *ergo* the Jewish one, in the mantle of ‘religion’ implicate, viewed from the outside, Christian hegemony, from the inside, compromising (self-destructive) assimilation. Hence, the Jewish historicist bid to idealize Judaism as ‘religion’ must, from the standpoint of this perspective, appear as *ipso facto* lacking in legitimacy. And, before we outline the complex byways through which *Wissenschaft des Judentums* sought to universalize Jews and the Jewish heritage, it will prove useful to explore a bit further this particular interpretive strategy, as it remains historically indicative on a number of levels.

We have to return briefly to our discussion on the advent of our trans-historical, trans-cultural notion of ‘religion’. There I argued that this concept was first pioneered as a Protestant theological historicism and Christian triumphalism, developed within the nineteenth-century European discourse that defined religion, culture and nationality in terms of one another. It is virtually a truism for scholars who likewise trace the advent of ‘religion’ to the modern milieu—however much their explanations of its historical emergence and meaning may, as I’ve suggested, differ from mine—that they view it as *tailor-made* for the Christian tradition. Hence, Sheehan has argued that even bids at religious pluralism in early nineteenth-century Germany could work only to throw further suspicion on Jews. For, they were predicated on celebration of the virtues of spirituality and inwardness, by contrast to external human behavior, as the essence of all religion: “But this effort to define the essence of religion as “interiority” was *not* religiously neutral. Indeed, it was prejudicial against the Jews, seen by Christians as the most fanatical connoisseurs of external trappings.”⁴¹³ Likewise, Assad has emphasized that the anthropological attempt to define ‘religion’ as an authoritative set of beliefs about the inscrutable facts of life was based on “the assumption that belief is a distinctive mental state characteristic of all religions”, although only one candidate actually fits this assumption: “It is preeminently the Christian church that has occupied itself with identifying, cultivating, and testing belief as a verbalizable inner condition of true religion.”⁴¹⁴

But, other contemporary authors have taken such suggestions in a quite different direction to argue not simply that the modern idea of ‘religion’ was founded along essentially Christian—to be frank, Protestant—parameters, but that ‘religion’ is nothing modern but instead the original creation of Christianity itself: that ‘Christianity’ was uniquely founded as ‘religion’, serving as the archetypal religion (as well as the only one ever really capable of the concept). For ‘religion’, in other words, we should in fact always read ‘Christianity’. Daniel Dubuisson has for instance argued that if ‘religion’ as a universal category is basically glossed as a “distinct

Christianity sparked anti-Semitism. This response demonstrates quite clearly the emotional parameters within which Protestant/Jewish competitive historicism played out in the nineteenth century: for *particularly* someone sympathetic to Jews like Delitzsch, anti-Semitism was wrong; but Christian supersession was par for the course and any serious questioning of it sparked and confirmed anti-Semitic attitudes. See also Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, 194-7 for the Geiger-Delitzsch exchange.

⁴¹³ Sheehan, *The Enlightenment Bible*, 236.

⁴¹⁴ Assad, *Genealogies of Religion*, 48.

domain” of life devoted to the sacral and transcendental, a domain subject to theologization and as such to its own rites and personnel, then this allegedly universal human domain was created by Christianity and has no structural counterpart outside of it.⁴¹⁵ The three concepts, ‘Christianity’, the ‘West’ and ‘religion’ were essentially co-equivalent and the universal claims made on behalf of the latter represented the hegemonic and imperialist endeavors of the first two.⁴¹⁶ Dubuisson, hence, began his inquiry with two rhetorical questions he answered emphatically in the affirmative:

As the legitimate daughter of Christianity, is religion not rather an element wholly unique to Western civilization, one of its most original creations? [Having already noted it was “a concept born of Christian apologetics in the first centuries of our era”.]

Should we not, moreover, go somewhat farther and ask whether religion is not effectively the West’s most characteristic concept, around which it has established and developed its identity, while at the same time defining its way of conceiving humankind and the world?⁴¹⁷

The Western hegemony of religion led, a la Dubuisson, inevitably to what he called the “religion effect”: the forcing of other cultures to reinvent their own traditions as religions, his example for which was ‘Hinduism’ as essentially the product of British imperialism.⁴¹⁸ And, the ‘religion effect’ led to the French author’s most damning conclusions:

The West not only conceived of the idea of religion, it has constrained other cultures to speak of their own religions by inventing them for them. Religion is not only the central concept of Western civilization, it is the West itself in the process of thinking the world dominated by it, by its categories of thought.⁴¹⁹

For the West’s procedure has always remained the same: find its own image elsewhere, in order not to have to renounce what it thinks are universal categories (which are precisely those on which its own structure rests), but always in another, less perfect form, in order not to be obliged to renounce its hegemonist objectives.⁴²⁰

Dubuisson’s account stopped short of any in depth analysis either of the alleged original Christian constitution of ‘religion’ or of the non-Western traditions said to have been mangled in its light, resting satisfied instead with non-stop repetition of his claim.⁴²¹ But, in recent work,

⁴¹⁵ Daniel Dubuisson, *The Western Construction of Religion: Myths, Knowledge and Ideology* (Baltimore, 2003; orig. 1998), 24, 27, 28. See more generally, *ibid*, 12-29.

⁴¹⁶ “The close, almost incestuous relationship, that unites religion and the West, to the point of making them inseparable...” *Ibid*, 89.

⁴¹⁷ *Ibid*, 9.

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid*, 92.

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid*, 93.

⁴²⁰ *Ibid*, 94.

⁴²¹ The list of page numbers would be endless, so I’ll say, see *ibid*, *passim*. Dubuisson’s dream is of what he calls a “cosmographic” level of description of “cosmographic formations”, which is to say a capacity for comprehensive description of civilizations without embalming and becoming embalmed in their respective modes of framing (i.e. the Western one of ‘religion’). He cites Dilthey, see *ibid*, 208, and it’s clear he’s become embalmed in Dilthey type

Daniel Boyarin has sought to move beyond such rhetorical flourishes to give philological teeth to the idea that ‘Christianity’ and ‘religion’ must be understood as mutually constitutive historical categories and phenomena. Judging non-Christian traditions, i.e. the Jewish one, as religion is to do so by the standard of Christianity, namely, what they cannot and do not want to be. Boyarin’s starting-point is the philological demonstration that ‘Judaism’ was not in the ancient world and was never used to mean ‘religion’, which is to say, what this presumed ‘universal category’ is supposed everywhere to pick out: a community of faith, a ‘Church’ founded and organized on the basis of common beliefs and practices. Rather, Judaism, like the panoply of other traditions in its pre-Christian context, referred essentially to ethno-traditional ways and loyalties, while the thus ‘Judaizing’—‘Judaism’ then was the substantive of this action verb—were allowed to subscribe to all manner of diverse ‘beliefs’ about the sacral and supernatural. It was Christianity that first conceived of itself as a community of faith. And, not only that, one way in which Apostolic Christianity consolidated itself as such was to posit ‘Judaism’ as the alternative false religion, i.e. as a false body of *doxa* as against the True: ‘Christianity’. The martyred Father of the Church, Ignatius, defined and defended ‘Christianity’ by warning against those who *espoused* ‘Judaism’: a reference actually not at all to Jews but to Jewish Christian tendencies in the nascent Church that stressed the authority of written Scripture on a par with the teaching of Christ. Boyarin concludes that not only was ‘Judaism’ as religion first created by Christianity and for invidious purposes, but that today’s reigning pronouncements about the value of ‘religious diversity’ remain in fact vindications of Christianity, curtailing the existence and elaboration of non-Christian traditions.⁴²²

I am not in a position to make any arguments about the character of early Christianity. However, there are a few observations I would like to make about the interpretive strategy, conflating ‘Christianity’ and ‘religion’, which may also serve the broader discussion of Jewish assimilation that will continue dogging us in this section. First, it seems to me that the equation of ‘Christianity’ and ‘religion’ rests on a homogenizing attitude towards the Christian tradition that does not take into account the radical historical discontinuities within it and, consequently, reads it essentially through a Protestant lens. For, whatever the developments in early Christian movement—and it was this ‘original Christianity’ to which the Reformation sought to return—clearly the Catholic Church was eventually synthesized with Roman imperial traditions. And, ‘Christianity’ thus became the center of the respective Christendoms and the numerous Christian imperial formations of the Medieval and Early Modern period, which, as Islamicists reiterated, should be compared (though not equated) with the Islamdoms and Islamic imperial counterparts of the same period.⁴²³ Second, the very usage of the term ‘religion (*religio*)’ in the medieval Catholic context, which referred first to monastic orders and then the other orders with special vows and a religious discipline, makes clear ‘religion’ was *not* conceived in this context as a

aporias: dreaming of a view from nowhere while simultaneously demonstrating and establishing that there is no such thing. See for Dubuisson’s ‘cosmographic thinking’, *ibid*, 194-213.

⁴²² Boyarin Berkeley Talk (ask for permission to cite...)

⁴²³ See, for instance, C. H. Becker, *Christianity and Islam* (New York, 1909; orig. 1907), 64-77; Martin Hartmann, “Islampolitik” in *Koloniale Rundschau* (1914), 580-604, particularly 580-1: “For the believing Muslim the Oikoumene breaks down into the Land of Islam (*dar al’islam*) and the Land of War (*dar alharb*)... This is the same total view which reigned by us in the Medieval period: Christendom and partes infidelium”. See also, Snouck Hurgronje, *Mohammedanism: Lectures on Its Origin, Its Religious and Political Growth, and Its Present State* (New York, 1916), 121-2: “In the attitude of Islam towards other religions there is hardly one feature that has not its counterpart in the practice of Christian states during the Middle Ages”. These lectures were given as part of the American Lectures on the History of Religions (1914).

‘universal human domain’, much less one localized in the individual. It encompassed instead a society that had to separate itself from ordinary human society to be able to serve God.⁴²⁴ The individualization and privatization of religion as ‘conscience’ began in the Reformation, but the idea of ‘religion’ as voluntaristic faith, universal and capable of universal community just because private, individual and purified of all public, political rule, was the product of the Protestant historicist tradition outlined thus far. Finally, the historical discontinuities highlighted in Christian history bring me to a broader point about cross-cultural and inter-confessional encounter. One may disagree with the Reformist bid to cast the Jewish heritage as ‘religion’, but the attempt (à la Dubuisson) to delegitimize it *a priori* as a succumbing to ‘Christian imperialism’ distasteful is problematic. The question to ask is whether thinking ‘Judaism’ as ‘religion’ involved a shift in the cultural context and understanding of not only the first but both concepts. If so, then the demonization of ‘assimilation’ in Dubuisson comes much more to seem a museumifying death sentence delivered in the satisfying but stultifying language of cultural autochthony.

23.

Ismar Schorsch, who is really as much the champion as the historian of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, has repeatedly referred to it as the “Westernization” of the Jewish tradition: “One way of understanding *Wissenschaft des Judentums* is as a collective act of translation, a sustained effort to cast the history, literature, and institutions of Judaism in Western categories.”⁴²⁵ Amos Funkenstein, examining developments in Jewish history and historical self-understanding from commanding height, acknowledged that the European-type critical historical consciousness *Wissenschaft* scholars introduced with respect to the Jewish heritage constituted a revolutionary transformation.⁴²⁶ But, he emphatically disagreed that this “radical historicization of Judaism” constituted a break with “collective” Jewish memory, tradition and identity.⁴²⁷ For, if *Wissenschaft* critical scholarship generally ‘discovered’ the essence of Judaism and its history to be tantamount to “liberal bourgeois ideology”, i.e. ethical-rational monotheism, democratic openness to change, etc.; then this just proved its cultural embeddedness: that it was a reflection of the cultural needs of the nineteenth-century European Jewish milieu, which, as all others, elaborated its heritage to meet its circumstances.⁴²⁸ What emerges from these two assessments, which in fact stress different sides of the same, coin is that *Wissenschaft des Judentums* must be located in the dialectical tension between the categories ‘Jewish’ and ‘European’:⁴²⁹ not only the desire to be both, but a complex back and forth struggle as to how one *might be* both, even Historically destined for one another. To capture the particularity of this European Jewish predicament, I refer back to the earlier discussion of Protestant thinkers attempting to chart a critical course beyond accommodation of traditional Christian claims. Jewish critical scholarship had to contend with two opposed accommodations: one towards the traditional Jewish, the other towards the demands and expectations of the national and Christian society at large. Another way of putting this point is to say that *Wissenschaft* scholarship sought not simply to

⁴²⁴ See on this point, Assad, *Genealogies of Religion*, 39, note 22. The *religious* orders thus stood as the paradoxical mirror opposite of the Church, an admission that it was not and *could not* be a voluntaristic community of faith.

⁴²⁵ Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 154, 158, 177, 182.

⁴²⁶ Amos Funkenstein, *Perceptions of Jewish History*, 14-15.

⁴²⁷ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁴²⁸ *Ibid.*, 20. See also, *ibid.*, 254, note 64.

⁴²⁹ More appropriate than ‘Western’ in this context.

accommodate but to *think through* Jewish Emancipation, namely, at a time when the ground of Emancipation was itself progressively shifting from civil rights and obligations to national belonging and cultural integration.⁴³⁰

Exactly how *Wissenschaft des Judentums* shifted away from traditional Jewish understandings, but proposed to create thereby an autonomous—critical and free—‘European Jewish’ path is best summed up by Funkenstein:

In the consciousness of the Jews until the nineteenth century, what made them unique among the nations of the world was their difference from others: they alone had been given the revealed law, they alone are bound to observe all its precepts. Their difference secured their existence, the “eternity of Israel.” While other nations are subject to the laws and contingencies of nature, “Israel has no guiding star”...in the nineteenth century, this consciousness had been turned upside down; for the generations of gradually emancipated and secularized Jews, the uniqueness of Israel came to mean its *universality*.⁴³¹

However, the bulk of commentators, Zionists and/or post-historicists foremost, have disagreed that this project of the universalization of Jewish history and heritage at all succeeded in overcoming its double-bind accommodation, not to mention achieving an autonomous stance. Arthur Herzberg, for instance, argued that the whole *Wissenschaft* tradition, both its Reform and its more national Conservative wing, must be viewed as species of traditional diasporic Jewish accommodationism and thus as “not really break[ing] the inherited molds of Jewish history.”⁴³² For Herzberg, what was new about Modernity and the modern nation-state was its homogenous character, its demand for self-identical individuals, citizens without divided personalities and loyalties. That made Jewish Emancipation a logical if not exactly appetizing imperative for it. But, facing Emancipation, Herzberg contended, the proponents of both Reform and Conservative Judaism played the inherited Jewish “defensive” game: they translated the Jewish heritage into the most up-to-date schema of the host gentile society—whether it was now to be a pure ‘religion’ or a uniquely ‘spiritual nationality’—while maintaining the sense of Jewish difference on the inside. The really radical Jews were instead those who saw Emancipation and the liberal nation-state as a messianic opportunity and thoroughly assimilated with good conscience.⁴³³ European anti-Semitism proved them wrong as individuals, but they were vindicated by Zionism as a second-order Jewish assimilation on the national level.⁴³⁴

⁴³⁰ Funkenstein noted this shift from rights to national belonging, but he seemed want to see in it less a historical transformation than a “confusion” between “emancipation and assimilation”. See *ibid*, 221-1.

⁴³¹ Funkenstein, *Perceptions of Jewish History*, 20.

⁴³² Arthur Herzberg, *The Zionist Idea: A Historical Analysis and Reader* (New York, 1959), 24.

⁴³³ See *ibid*, 22-32.

⁴³⁴ See *ibid*, 20-22. Herzberg argued that “messianic” Zionist, the “secularization of the messianic ideal”, the end of Exile and Jewry’s coming to join the rest of humanity and distinguish itself only by living out shared ideals; that this Zionist ideology had played the largest role in the creation of the state of Israel. See *ibid*, 18, 80-81. But, he concluded that it had not quite succeeded in allowing Israeli citizens to “no longer have to live out any unique dualities.” *Ibid*, 92. Namely, all along, “messianic” Zionist had developed in dialectic tension with a “defensive” version of diasporic lineage that continued to stress Jewish difference, whether in negative terms as unending anti-Semitic hatred or positively as unabating affirmation of Jewish chosenness. With the creation of Israel, not only had the Diaspora not ended nor showed any signs of doing so, the problematic of Jewish difference had actually become more resonant. See *ibid*, 72-3, 92-100. It is uncanny how in the intervening half-century the situation has virtually

Funkenstein, for his part, moved in the opposite direction from Herzberg. If, for Herzberg, the innovations of nineteenth-century Reform and Conservative scholarship were still of the traditional Jewish pattern—defensive, middling, half-hearted—Funkenstein was put off by what he took to be the glaring tendentiousness of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. He was completely against the idea that it represented any break with Jewish tradition, and he had nothing but respect for its “enormous achievements...in surveying the existing sources of Jewish history and securing them philologically”.⁴³⁵ But, he was struck by the presentist utilitarianism of its historicist schemas, by all “its historical arguments employed only for tactical purposes”, by its conclusions about Jewish history that at times stretched it to ridiculousness to deliver it for present political expediency (the Pharisees as good republicans, as the first reformers, etc.)⁴³⁶ Ultimately, he found it mostly ineffectual, saying it was “astonishing to realize how marginal the role of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* was even within the reform movement.”⁴³⁷ The “outside pressure” of the modern nation-state had driven the reform process and imposed the confessionalization of Judaism on European Jews, and, what’s more, many of them had been all too happy and eager to pay this price and assimilate in order to integrate into the broader national society.⁴³⁸ Yes, what *Wissenschaft* scholars really dreamt of was to form a creative sub-culture, to be both of but also different from their European societies. But, the truth of the matter was that eventually most “Jews of Western Europe”, not only the Reformed and Conservative, but even the neo-Orthodox stopped believing they were still in Exile: religion became for them a “private matter” and they thoroughly identified themselves with their respective states. “As such, they did not want to have an open-ended, independent history, but only a past.”⁴³⁹ *Wissenschaft des Judentums* thus encompassed in this context a kind of post-facto “apologetic or antiquarian” servicing of a ghost.⁴⁴⁰

So, here we have two disparate assessments of the universalization project of nineteenth-century Jewish historicist scholarship. For Herzberg, it was not universal enough (still traditional, still split between inner and outer) and, ultimately, it was not universal in the right way (the Jewish nation amongst all others). For Funkenstein, it was all too universal, a shallow, politically expedient essentialization of Jewish tradition that could not do justice to the sense of difference he took to be at the heart of it and on which his own comparative perspective was focused.⁴⁴¹ One author wrote from a distinctly post-assimilationist, Zionist perspective about the present possibilities of the Jewish people. The other sought from a comprehensive standpoint to theorize the sense of difference in the Jewish heritage. I lack both the capacity and the intention to adjudicate between the two, but I want to suggest that neither is quite in a position to do historical justice to the tradition of *Wissenschaft* scholarship. I follow Schorsch instead in arguing that *Wissenschaft des Judentums* must be viewed as the full cultural and intellectual counterpart of the Emancipation process: that the dilemmas and divisions that attended the legal, social and national integration of German Jews all replicated themselves in the bid to substantiate, locate and project the Jewish heritage in Universal History and *to affirm it not in its*

reversed itself, but on the Zionist level. Zionist ‘difference’ is now the glaring reality and the dream of so many, if it could just be like everyone else.

⁴³⁵ Funkenstein, *Perceptions of Jewish History*, 255.

⁴³⁶ Ibid, 249, 20.

⁴³⁷ Ibid, 249.

⁴³⁸ Ibid, 221-2, 254.

⁴³⁹ Ibid, 248, 257.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid, 255.

⁴⁴¹ See *ibid*, 1-21.

own terms but in this light, addressing non-Jewish as well as Jewish eyes.⁴⁴² If the fundamental fact of modern Jewish history is that of the majority of Jews having stepped out of an enclosed Jewish narrative/history to understand it and themselves from a broader world historical standpoint, then the historicization/universalization of ‘Judaism’ by *Wissenschaft* scholarship must be counted a crucial departure, particularly to the extent ‘Jewish history’ can be said to retain any coherence. In fact, the very dialectical conflicts and diversity that broke German Jewish communities into Reformed, Conservative and neo-Orthodox camps and were fully fought out and mediated through the medium of Jewish scholarship give the lie to the streamlining notion that we have here simply to do with accommodationism, whether of the traditional (Herzberg) or assimilationist (Funkenstein) variety.⁴⁴³

24.

The task now is to provide some sense of European Jewish integration on the communal, but particularly the cultural and intellectual plane. I will then argue that the result was the emergence of quite distinct ‘universal Judaisms’ that developed in a process of dialectical conflict and competition within Jewish scholarship and, inter-confessionally, with Protestant historicism. I begin with Schorsch’s description of the advent of the ‘modern rabbinate’ in the first half of the nineteenth century. His starting point is no less explicit than Funkenstein’s: “Emancipation transmuted Judaism into a religion...”⁴⁴⁴ The granting of civil rights to Jews by the modern European state was predicated on stripping Jewish communities of their separate corporate status and of their capacity to exercise privileged jurisdiction over their members.⁴⁴⁵ The pre-modern Ashkenazi rabbi had been qualified and prized himself primarily as an expert on and administrator of Jewish law. But, within virtually one generation from the end of the eighteenth century, this juridical primacy had in the German context virtually vanished from his job description.⁴⁴⁶ He came now to be conceived, as Abraham Geiger put it, as above all a “*Seelsorger* (pastor; more literally, guardian of souls)”⁴⁴⁷ Zacharias Frankel (1801-1875), Geiger’s rival and the founder of ‘Positive-Historical (i.e. Conservative) Judaism’ essentially agreed. He held the Talmudic tradition sacred but saw the Rabbi’s outstanding role as being that of a teacher of religion. Hence, the synagogue, the locus of religious worship and edification but

⁴⁴² See for instance the greatest exemplar in this regard and written for a general audience, Abraham Geiger, *Judaism and Its History* (New York, 1911; orig. 1865-71, 2 vols.) I’ll have much more to say of this text, but a reader of its preface would immediately note a defiant tone reminiscent of the post-accommodationist one of Strauss: “I am prepared for opposition from some quarters...Irritation cannot affect me...It is high time that Jews should openly declare how they understand events from the very consideration of which comes the difference of the two religions.” Ibid, 5.

⁴⁴³ One of Schorsch’s main aims in his work on *Wissenschaft des Judentums* is to demonstrate its diversity and dialectical development over time, which he interprets as a shift from a radical reformist (Enlightenment) to a more positive, conservative and normative key over time. See Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 176-204, 266-333. However, even when the conservative wing became more dominant, a new ‘Liberal’ wing developed within it! See David Philipson, *The Reform Movement in Judaism* (New York, 1907), 367-8. I also enlist my own experience, coming from an Iranian Jewish background and arriving as a teenager in the States, I did not understand what ‘Reform’ or ‘Conservative’ meant, but though I was witness to radical political differences in my family and all manner of different religious outlooks and levels of observance, I was completely baffled at this idea that they could think there was more than one kind of Jew. To be honest, I still am...

⁴⁴⁴ See Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, Ibid, 15.

⁴⁴⁵ See *ibid*, 9-10.

⁴⁴⁶ See *ibid*, 10-15.

⁴⁴⁷ Cited in *ibid*, 15.

one which the pre-modern rabbi had held as beneath the dignity of his higher, juridical function became now the central arena of Jewish life and of the rabbi's activity.

But, this shift in conceptions of the rabbinic function went hand in hand with a remarkable change in the educational preparation and qualifications that came to be deemed necessary for the office. Rabbinic ordination could no longer suffice. If the rabbi was to act as a religious teacher and guide, then he had to be able to communicate with and inspire his congregants: he had to keep pace as they fast integrated into the German culture and language and, increasingly, at its highest intellectual reaches. By 1830, the Jewish percentage of the student university body was already beginning in some areas to surpass the Jewish percentage of the German population. By 1887, ten percent of Prussian university students were Jews, a number outpacing their percentage in the German population by almost a factor of ten.⁴⁴⁸ Hence, some university education came to be seen as required, and the need for secular education became a rare point of consensus between not just the Reform and Historical factions but also the neo-Orthodox. Though each group assigned very different religious value to such education, the consensus nonetheless sharply marked of German congregations from those to the East.⁴⁴⁹ Meanwhile, from 1828, when the first German rabbi with a doctorate was instituted, the number skyrocketed through the 1830's. By the 1840's, the doctorate had become a marker of the ideal rabbi, indispensable for more prestigious appointments but also used as a kind of substitute stamp of official approval where the government, as in Prussia, refused to recognize and certify the rabbinic office.⁴⁵⁰

However, at the same time that the figure of the German rabbi was being transformed from the leader of a corporate body outside of German society to one of its best educated members, rabbis were contending with a concerted attack on their authority from a wave of anti-clericalism within German Jewish communities. The effective leaders of many congregations were wealthy, liberal, anti-clerical members, like the publisher Moritz Veit (1808-1864) in Berlin. They set the tone for reform, preferred synodal arrangements and, when the office of the chief rabbi fell vacant, on many occasions—most famously in Hamburg and Berlin—they simply put off replacing him, drawing instead on alternative arrangements, like the newly minted position of the university-educated *Prediger* (preacher).⁴⁵¹ Berlin was without a chief rabbi for more than half a century. The attitudes of the German states towards rabbinic leadership, meanwhile, spanned a very wide spectrum: from Bavaria, where some university education as well as a comprehensive set of examinations was required for government certification, on the

⁴⁴⁸ See *ibid*, 162.

⁴⁴⁹ See *ibid*, 18-22. See on this point also especially: Abraham Geiger, "Die Aufgabe der Gegenwart" in *WZJT* 5 (1844), 17-18. Geiger said that in Poland, people started to call any rabbi educated in gymnasium and university a "German rabbi". They could even be told apart from their outward appearance, above all because they shaved. However, Geiger also argued that despite a large degree of German consensus on the need for the inclusion of secular education in the training of the rabbinate, that half-heartedness as to what such education should mean for the religious outlook of rabbis was the order of the day. As he suggested, many people wanted a rabbi who had enough secular education to be able to protect his religious convictions from it.

⁴⁵⁰ See *ibid*, 15-18, 33-4. Reformists dreamt for long of establishing a Jewish theological faculty at a German university, but unsuccessful, the Rabbinic Seminary, on the model of that founded in Breslau in 1854 and headed by Frankel, became the norm.

⁴⁵¹ See *ibid*, 22-3. Preachers could do without rabbinic certification but were also never allowed the institutional power of a rabbi. On the context of the introduction of the preacher phenomenon, see also Abraham Geiger, "Die Aufgabe der Gegenwart", 8-13. Geiger noted here that many of the 'enlightened' seemed bent on giving the Orthodox what they wanted, accepting mediocre Rabbis and not choosing men of the new stamp to fill them as a way of discrediting the office. See *ibid*, 16-17.

one hand, to Prussia, on the other. There, the authorities and anti-clerical Jews, including Leopold Zunz (1794-1886), colluded with one another—the former in order to enervate Jewish communities, the latter in their own sense to strengthen them—to extirpate the rabbinic function from the Jewry law passed in 1847.⁴⁵² In the overall picture of the new rabbi that thus emerges, the juridical leader of the separated corporate body has been replaced by the spiritual director of a confessional community. And, the interlocutor before whom he must now represent it is, even more than the state authorities, German society itself and the critical voices within both the Jewish and Christian components of it.

But, if the task of the modern rabbi was now to teach his congregants the Jewish religion in the idiom and context of German society; if, that is, he had to affirm Judaism and Jewish identity in this light and justify his own solution before skeptical Jewish congregants engaged in this same endeavor and a gentile society thoroughly skeptical of its very possibility. Then, we have here a synecdoche of the cultural integration process that awaited the Jewish heritage if such a rabbinic task was ever to be undertaken in earnest, much less fulfilled. The best example of all that such a process would involve is that of the sixteenth-century Jewish scholar, David Gans (1541-1613). In his most important work, Gans reacted against that of another Jewish Renaissance scholar, Azariah de Rossi (c. 1513-1578). De Rossi had, in the spirit of Renaissance chronology, produced a chronicle integrating Jewish and non-Jewish sources that criticized and tried to correct sacred Hebrew sources by reading them alongside non-Hebrew Jewish and non-Jewish ones on a common historical basis. His work had met with a vehement rabbinic response that attempted to restrict all access to the book. Gans's scholarly response was more interesting. He did not deny the importance of non-Hebrew sources or of the history of the world and his own Bohemian locus reflected in them; he simply demoted them. He divided his own chronicle into two sections: in one, he narrated the sacred history according only to authoritative Jewish sources in Hebrew; in the second, he chronicled the same history and that on which the sacred tradition was silent according to non-Hebrew sources, Jewish and gentile.⁴⁵³ The sacred and profane narratives simply did not speak to each other; where they disagreed, the sacred simply trumped the profane by virtue of its sacred character.

It was precisely against this attitude that the universalization cum historicization of the Jewish heritage in *Wissenschaft des Judentums* militated. Jewish scholars worked consciously to assume custodianship of Jewish history, to wrest it from the anti-Jewish agendas of Christian historians who had thus far had free reign over it.⁴⁵⁴ To do so, they insisted on the right of free inquiry, untroubled by dogmatic considerations.⁴⁵⁵ They drew on the whole panoply of Jewish literature and creativity and not just that of religio-legal consequence—painstakingly making what texts they could find available—in order to arrive at a total understanding of Jewish cultural development. And, they increasingly incorporated Jewish writing outside of Hebrew and non-

⁴⁵² See *ibid*, 32-7. The only time the 'rabbi' was mentioned was to establish that no foreigner could assume the position. Otherwise, the terminology used was that of *Kultusbemate* (religious officials) and *Religionslehrer* (religious teachers). Anti-clerical forces already had a long tradition behind them of glossing the rabbi as no more than a kind of *Kashrut* manager. See *ibid*, 28.

⁴⁵³ See *ibid*, 158-61, 178.

⁴⁵⁴ See *ibid*, 163-4. As Immanuel Wolf suggested, even when Christian scholars did not take an overtly hateful and polemical approach towards Judaism and its literature—and he did not deny the contribution they'd made in the research of it—their purpose was primarily a Christian theological one, which especially neglected Judaism as a historical (i.e. living) phenomenon. See Wolf, "Ueber den Begriff einer Wissenschaft des Judentums" in *Zeitschrift für die Wissenschaft des Judentums* 1, no. 1 (1823), 16.

⁴⁵⁵ See Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 23-26, 168-70.

Jewish texts in order historically to contextualize and explain Jewish developments. Zunz was the great pioneer of the first tendency, Moritz Steinschneider (1816-1907) the outstanding exemplar of the second.⁴⁵⁶ But to historicize the Jewish heritage in this fashion within its total Jewish and numerous cross-cultural contexts and developments was also to *universalize* it. It was to move, to cite Schorsch, “from text to context”: to go from *commentary* on sacred texts, which, in its every iteration historical, nonetheless conceived of itself as a mirror of the eternal and thus ‘traditionalized’ itself, to understanding of the meaning, direction and destiny of Jewish history from its contextual development within human history, making it of consequence for all humanity.⁴⁵⁷

25.

But, the central problem of course was how one was to answer that question: what was the universal meaning of Jewish history? How was it to be affirmed in the light of all human experience and thereby legitimated in its continued existence and development? For, of course, Protestant historicism had also universalized Jewish history! But, this was a negative universalization: the universal meaning of Jewish history was conceptualized as its definitive overcoming, its having been already or its coming ultimately to be overcome. And, historicist consciousness of the fact—i.e. universalization—was to be the fruition of the process. This universalization of Jewish history was, hence, meant as the final nail in its coffin. If it continued to exist, then one had to presume this was as a sign of Christian grace in historicist guise, realizing itself ever anew in the contemplation of historical remnants as being such. Moreover, to return to the starting point of our discussion, the Jewish heritage posed clear challenges to attempts that sought to read it as a universal human project, i.e. to its Historicization. It was embroiled in an ethno-traditional trajectory, it made national claims and it was wedded to a very particular legal system. It seemed to be the very synecdoche of the bygone era when the nineteenth-century differentiation between ‘nationality’ (realization) and ‘religion’ (universal consciousness), not to mention ‘culture’ as the link between them, had not yet been made, when religion was still very literally confused with national and legal prerogatives. As we’ve seen, Universal History had, in Protestant hands, been written *against* the Jews using just such reasoning and terminology. How was Universal History now to vindicate the Jews and Judaism?

It was exactly these kinds of questions and concerns that animated the young Jewish cohort that formed the *Verein für Cultur und Wissenschaft der Juden* (Association for the Culture and Science of Jewry) in late 1819, in the wake of the anti-Semitic Hep Hep riots of the summer.⁴⁵⁸ They would continue to be the beating heart of their disciplinary off-spring,

⁴⁵⁶ See *ibid*, 170-1, 197. On Steinschneider as the great exemplar of the scholarly study of the Jews in inter-cultural context and, in fact, of Jewish inter-cultural history as a ‘history of humanity’ see Franz Rosenthal, “Steinschneider’s Contribution to the Study of Muslim Civilization” in *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research*, Vol. 27 (1958), 67-81. Paul B. Fenton, “Moritz Steinschneider’s Contribution to Judaeo-Arabic Studies” in Reimund Leicht & Gad Freudenthal, *Studies on Steinschneider: Moritz Steinschneider and the Emergence of the Science of Judaism in Nineteenth Century Germany* (Leiden, 2012), 363-82. Zunz was himself however one of the first theoreticians of this second desideratum. See Leopold Zunz, “Grundlinien zur einer künftigen Statistik der Juden”, in *Zeitschrift für die Wissenschaft des Judenthums* 1, no. 3 (1823), 523-532.

⁴⁵⁷ See Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 172-3.

⁴⁵⁸ See on the background to the riots, Uriel Tal, “Young German Intellectuals on Romanticism and Judaism; Spiritual Turbulence in the Early 19th Century”, in Saul Lieberman (ed.), *Salo Wittmayer Baron Jubilee Volume on the Occasion of His Eightieth Birthday*, V. II (New York, 1974), 919-938.

Wissenschaft des Judentums, until the dissipation of the tradition in the twentieth century.⁴⁵⁹ The upsurge in anti-Semitism that had led to the riots clearly put even the partial Emancipation granted Jews in many German states during the Napoleonic era, but decisively not affirmed nor extended at the Congress of Vienna (1815), in jeopardy. The interest of the response of the *Verein* founders to the anti-Semitic upsurge and threat to the Emancipation project is that they interpreted it not as a political or adventitious set-back but as a fundamental, if regressive, challenge to the right of Jews to exist, i.e. be recognized in their full humanity and develop themselves as such.

Equally remarkable and characteristic was their solution: the scientific study of Jewish history and heritage. They pleaded with Jews to embrace the scientific examination of their tradition and history, meaning, to undertake it from a universal standpoint.⁴⁶⁰ Immanuel Wolf concluded the opening essay of the first and only volume of the *Verein*'s journal, *Zeitschrift für die Wissenschaft des Judentums* with this exhortation. Jews, he argued, were now clearly engaged in raising Judaism, in line with its foundational principle, to the level of the "Zeitgeist" of their time, itself a manifestation of the "inexorable progress of the Spirit". But, this could only be done on the basis of a scientific cum universal standpoint, as this was the essential characteristic of their time: The Jews "must raise themselves and their principle to the standpoint of *Wissenschaft*, for this is the standpoint of European life." And, he added, "From this standpoint, the relation of foreignness in which Jews and Judaism have until now stood to the outside world must disappear."⁴⁶¹ But, the conclusion that Jews had to elevate themselves to and affirm their history from a universal standpoint was directly connected to the immediately previous one he had raised, according to which the question of Emancipation was itself a scientific question:

On the relation of the Jews no universal principle has still been found; and should a just decision on this matter ever be arrived at, then this can of course happen in no other than the scientific way. The scientific study of Judaism must decide on the worthiness or unworthiness of the Jews, on their capacity or incapacity to be deemed equal and placed equal to other citizens.⁴⁶²

Well, the *Jewish* scientific study of Judaism *ipso facto* turned the 'science of Emancipation' into purely a rhetorical one. For, if Jews were willing to examine Judaism not internally but within a universal context and to adopt as their own only what could pass universal muster within it, then an exclusionary attitude towards them could only be an attempt to stand in the way of what could not be stopped: the progress of science and Spirit. Silvestre de Sacy, the greatest Arabist of his time, responded to the free copy of the *Verein*'s journal sent to him by Zunz in a supportive if skeptical tone but questioned the speculative use of the term 'Judaism'.⁴⁶³ There was, I presume, a virtuous circle implied in the very notion of the 'Science of Judaism'. Zunz was also from early on convinced that Emancipation was a scientific question, since the verdict on Judaism

⁴⁵⁹ See the lineage drawn by Henri Soussan, "The Science of Judaism from Leopold Zunz to Leopold Lucas", *Center for German-Jewish Studies Research Paper, University of Sussex* (Brighton, 1999), 1-23.

⁴⁶⁰ See on the ubiquity of this thematic Schorsch's essay on the *Verein*, Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 205-32.

⁴⁶¹ Immanuel Wolf, "Ueber den Begriff einer Wissenschaft des Judentums", 24.

⁴⁶² *Ibid.*, 23.

⁴⁶³ See Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 208.

could only be given by in-depth historical study of what was and was not of lasting value in it.⁴⁶⁴ And, Emancipation would only come from gentile scholarly respect for and affirmation of the Jewish experience: “Equality for Jews in mores (*Sitte*) and in life will emerge from the equality given to the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*.”⁴⁶⁵

Zunz never seems to have considered the danger implied in such a criterion and desideratum within a competitive historicist environment. For, in the teleological drama of ‘religion’ as the end of History, there can be only one winner. Judaism had been the perennial loser. But, if Jews were to take the idealizing universalization of their heritage seriously, they would have to project themselves as the winners. And, that entailed showing Christianity could not be pure ‘religion’, that Judaism had a greater capacity for purification in this regard. I will return to this delicate point in the scholarship,⁴⁶⁶ as well as any prospects for Judeo-Christianity and for Judeo-Islam at a later point. In 1819, however, the focus of the members of the *Verein* was simply on establishing the legitimacy of Judaism’s continued survival. Jewish competitive historicism was still a few decades out. Hence, some of the early resonant voices in the *Verein* and in the *Wissenschaft* movement can clearly be seen to conform to Funkenstein’s criticism of the latter, as reflecting Western European Jewish populations who nursed a Jewish past but forfeited any such future.

The complaint, for instance, easily applies to Eduard Gans (1797-1839), the Hegelian legal historian, who was one of the major organizing spirits behind the *Verein* and its only president in the course of its brief duration. In his addresses to the *Verein* (there were besides the initial programmatic ones, three presidential addresses in 1821, 1822 and 1823),⁴⁶⁷ Gans sought to rouse in his limited audience a sense of themselves as the revolutionary elite of their people, who were to be no less than catalysts of the approaching messianic era. But, what Gans meant by this messianic task, read in Hegelian mode, was that the Jewish people would have to be brought into universal History, i.e. develop universal consciousness, and that the Jewish tradition would have to be recast accordingly. Gans criticized the *Haskalah* Jewish thinking, derived from Mendelssohn, that in eighteenth-century Enlightenment fashion worked to universalize and reform Judaism solely from an internal standpoint. Jewish thought would have to move beyond such a negative, individualistic and ultimately arbitrary method to embrace the full belonging of Jews in their respective nations and their full participation in universal human progress.⁴⁶⁸ Only that part of Judaism that had proven universal and consonant with the rational progress of History could be retained. Mosaic monotheism would stay; rabbinism would have to go.⁴⁶⁹ But, in Gans’s Hegelian schema, *everything* that proved rational in the progress of History, namely, that was retained though sublated in ever higher form—Oriental monotheism, Greek liberty, the Roman state, Christian humanism—was objective, universal and thus *reconciled*. In other words, we were all Jews, all Romans and all Christians, because we were all ultimately

⁴⁶⁴ See Ibid, 220-1.

⁴⁶⁵ Leopold Zunz, “Die Jüdische Literatur” in idem, *Zur Geschichte und Literatur* (Berlin, 1845), 21.

⁴⁶⁶ Christian Wiese, *Challenging Colonial Discourse: Jewish Studies and Protestant Theology in Wilhelmine Germany*

⁴⁶⁷ These presidential addresses can be found in S. Rubaschoff, “Erstlinge der Entjudung”, *Der Jüdische Wille* 1 (1918-1919): 36-42, 108-21, 193-203.

⁴⁶⁸ See the addresses of 10/28/1821 and 5/4/1823 in *ibid*, 39-42 and 195-198.

⁴⁶⁹ See Schorsch’s discussion of this point in Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 212-3, 216-7.

Hegelians. Which of these components we decided to make a special commitment to was, Gans argued, a “subjective” matter.⁴⁷⁰ Judaism was thus only a *retrospective* identity.

The *Verein*, though it was able to expand and open a branch also in Hamburg, failed to secure any real financial or moral support from the Jewish community. Nor did it inspire any great intellectual ferment in the short term.⁴⁷¹ In early summer of 1823, Gans learned of the royal ordinance—which came eponymously to be known as *Lex Gans*—that interpreted the 1812 Emancipation edict in a manner as to exclude Jews from university careers or any other touching on the sovereignty of the state. He left Berlin for Paris in Spring 1825, with a stipend from the Prussian government to re-orient himself. The *Verein* de facto disbanded. At the end of 1825, Gans converted to Christianity, in the aftermath of which he became a quite important professor of Law and member of the Hegelian School in Berlin. The conversion his beloved Prussian state and Fatherland had imposed on him he never considered anything but a formal one. He was no doubt helped along towards it by the fact that it was about a ‘subjective’ matter.

But, it did show the Prussian state itself had not achieved the ‘objective’ form of the rational state: that was the imperative ahead and it actually fueled Gans’s optimism about the future.⁴⁷² By contrast, Isaak Markus Jost (1793-1860), the first modern historian of the Jews who made use of source-critical methods, was a thoroughgoing pessimist about his subject; so much so, that his conclusions approached the ‘negative universalization’ of it by Protestant scholarship. But, he remained, nonetheless, a Jew all of his life.⁴⁷³ Jost had been a founding member of the *Verein* but left in 1820; exhortations to the Jews to rethink themselves was in any case never his style. His nine volume, *History of the Israelites From the Maccabees to Our Time* (1815), completed in lightning speed between 1820-28, used instead punishing prose to judge the Jews—‘Israelites’—for not heeding the verdict of History, though also acknowledging the extent to which they were prevented from doing so by vehement persecution.⁴⁷⁴ He too believed that the Mosaic monotheistic faith was the one and only true meaning of Judaism. The Mosaic theocracy he explained in functionalist manner, as necessary to first institute and protect monotheism in a pagan environment.⁴⁷⁵ But, as with the Paris Sanhedrin and as was to become the great motif of Reform historiography, he viewed the Babylonian exile as having consecrated and proved Mosaic monotheism a religion. However, in the Second Temple period, this faith, rather than honored as such, had been reified, legalized, instrumentalized to fanaticize mobs and thus politicized and remade into a new Judaism. This was the work of the Pharisees, they were the originators of the rabbinic spirit that had ruled for thousands of years and still held most of Europe’s Jews under its thumb.⁴⁷⁶

⁴⁷⁰ On the basic religious question of “God, immortality, etc.”, Gans said, “only philosophy can provide us with adequate knowledge, and in accordance with this knowledge everyone may construct his own subjective religion”. Cited in Toews, *Hegelianism*, 130.

⁴⁷¹ See *ibid*, 127-8; Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 206-10 on the institutional development of the *Verein* or lack thereof.

⁴⁷² See Toews, *Hegelianism*, 130-4.

⁴⁷³ Schorsch presented this, citing Jost’s self-declarations, as nothing more than a negative kind of loyalty on his part to his own past, without meaning for the future. See Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 242.

⁴⁷⁴ Isaak Markus Jost, *Geschichte der Israeliten: seit der Zeit der Maccabaer bis auf unsre Tage*, V. 1-9 (Berlin, 1820-8).

⁴⁷⁵ See for the broader context of this functionalist argument which had its roots in Maimonides’s *Guide for the Perplexed*, Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 269

⁴⁷⁶ Jost, *Geschichte der Israeliten*, I, 55-7

He saw the rise of Christianity as an attempt at reform. In 1820, he commented to his teacher that while he had no love for “clerical Christianity” (which he in fact considered to be a Pharisaic Christianity), he could not deny “New Testament Christianity”, since “it is a pure and purged Judaism and our Judaism only a debased Christianity.”⁴⁷⁷ Though this was no doubt an exaggeration—his historical description of Jesus does not show him a fan of his miracles, Incarnation or Resurrection⁴⁷⁸—he did glorify Jesus as someone who had tried to moralize Judaism and who had made inroads amongst the people, even Pharisaic communities outside Jerusalem. This had increasingly raised the ire of the Pharisees, who seeing the ritualistic basis of their own power in ever greater jeopardy, persecuted, entrapped and ultimately, in league with the Sanhedrin, arranged for and provoked his murder by the Roman state. Jost exclaimed in conclusion, “Has the time still not come when the whole Pharisaism of all religious parties might stop.” And, he suggested that the consequent Christian persecution of Jewry made the Pharisaic murder of Jesus a sign for all times that “the spirit of persecution will ultimately turn its own weapons against itself.”⁴⁷⁹ That was the punch in the first volume.

In later volumes, Jost glorified the Sephardic experience as a respite from the rabbinic stranglehold—the glorification part was a hallmark of the whole *Wissenschaft* tradition⁴⁸⁰—and then he unloaded his scorn on the medieval Ashkenazi, ending with the promise of at least something new in the Enlightenment and *Haskalah*. The message again was clear. The rabbinic tradition had been disproved by History. And, Jost’s wasn’t an exhortation to the Jews. It was a challenge that put the onus on them to heed and respond to the lesson of their history, for History had moved beyond the kind of persecution that had solidified and allowed for their separate existence.⁴⁸¹ Jost gave the Jews a great deal of ‘agency’, but more than historians today want to admit, it was a bitter pill. His placement of Jewish in universal history was truly innovative: for one, *pace* Ewald, he showed that the Jews had a gripping post-Christian history and, *pace* Baur, that what was Historical about the Jews was working itself out in Jewish not in Christiana history. Jews were shown as everywhere developing through their contact with other peoples. In fact, most of what had gone wrong in Jewish history Jost traced to what had been adopted from other groups: messianism from the Persians, oral law from Athens, codification from Rome. All the same, his narrative of the rise of Christianity was eerily similar to the ‘negative

⁴⁷⁷ Cited in Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 238

⁴⁷⁸ This was made clear, though indirectly: Jost says that, hard as it was to explain, it was Jesus’s speeches and not his miracles that brought him adherents; but, that this was not the place to talk about why the miracles were ineffectual. He says that Jesus’s followers started to believe that he was the advent of God in human guise, but that the Pharisees decided they had to persecute him because they believed his teachings didn’t conform to what the prophets had divined. In other words, they opposed him for formal reasons not because of the right principle of monotheism! Finally, he says that Jews, who had been drawn to Jesus’s teachings, were, after his murder had caused the first rift, bound to be further dissuaded by the resurrection and by the whole turn of ideas—incarnation, etc.—that made Christianity deviate evermore from its first Jewish form. These were all careful formulations for someone who had made clear he was writing not only for a Jewish but also for a Christian audience. See Jost, *Geschichte der Israeliten*, I, VII-IX; 296, 298.

⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid*, 300.

⁴⁸⁰ See Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 240-1.

⁴⁸¹ Jost clearly viewed persecution as a protection Jews no longer afforded the Jews, a point of view he aired in letters and which he cited as the major reason for his pessimism about the prospects of Jewish survival. See the letter to his teacher cited to this effect in *ibid*, 238.

universalization' of the Ewaldian type.⁴⁸² No *Wissenschaft* scholar went so far as Jost to suggest that the Jews had themselves unleashed the persecution they had experienced.

26.

Gans's overall optimism derived from the fact that he looked at matters from the outside in. He saw Judaism as an already achieved part of History and was willing to bask in it subjectively as such (or shift to other shores if the possibility to do so was not available). He was a European who happened to be a Jew. Jost was a pessimist largely because he looked at matters from the inside out. He saw the Jews as having to step outside of more than two thousand years of Pharisaic history, if they were to survive. He was a Jew who had a foreboding sense of all that was involved in the Jews becoming European. The first author preached European accommodation because it was already Jewish and so no betrayal. The second wanted to break the hold of internal accommodation, because it was now, rather than a bulwark, the sure path to dissolution. For Gans, Judaism was simply a retrospective identity, for Jost, the Jews had only a guaranteed past that they mostly had to break with to still exist. Hence, Gans and Jost can be read as two nightmarish sides of the same Funkenstein coin, amounting to nineteenth-century Western European Jewry having no future, which itself reads as an eerie Holocaust prophecy.

But, there were, from the start, other voices in *Wissenschaft des Judentums* that do not so easily conform to Funkenstein's or Scholem's typology of apologetic self-burial. Wolf's opening essay of the ZWJ, already touched on, is a good example. As Schorsch has argued, in its brief twenty-four pages, Wolf outlined a schema that introduced virtually every major motif of the Reform historiography to come. But, the whole trajectory of the essay was in fact determined by the relationship between Judaism, as a still living idea, which had become so universal as to be proven part of the very essence of humanity, and, Judaism, as the faith of a still living people—"this living witness of antiquity"⁴⁸³—whose historical unity, development and persistence was throughout dialectically driven by this idea. Hence, Wolf's starting point was to say that Judaism was not just a religion: it was the whole social and cultural history of the Jews as a developmental totality; *but* that "it is the religious idea, which grounds and conditions Judaism in all of its formations."⁴⁸⁴ The Jews were thus an *essentially* religious people like no other. The question of course was how this religious idea was to be realized in its full purity (universality). The reader may have guessed from our previous discussions where things are headed.

What was this religious idea? It was the "absolute oneness of all". It was the Tetragrammaton, "which means the living unity of all beings in eternity, the absolute being outside temporal and spatial conditioning."⁴⁸⁵ This idea was revealed to the Jewish people, but humanity was not at a stage then to "grasp it in its universality". It was individualized and personalized, though the Jews thereby understood that as "living, spiritual unity", the divine was incommensurable with the physical world and its sensual representations.⁴⁸⁶ However, in order to maintain and develop the idea, there was no other means at this point but to embody it materially in the Jewish people itself as the Mosaic Theocracy. That is how the Jews became a

⁴⁸² Namely, Christianity, posited as the response to the internal contradictions of Judaism and particularly its sclerotization.

⁴⁸³ Wolf, "Ueber den Begriff einer Wissenschaft des Judenthums", 22.

⁴⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁴⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁴⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 3.

priestly nation, as protectors of the divine idea, “a people of God”.⁴⁸⁷ However, there was of course a contradiction between spiritual universality and its theocratic embodiment, which inadequacy—the engine of dynamic Historical development—first signified itself in the split within the Jewish state. The prophets foresaw that calamity would come if the state maxims were not fully consonant with the religious idea (impossible theocratically of course), but that great bliss would follow for all humanity if the divine idea were universally acknowledged. That in fact set the scene for the next stage of development. The Babylonian exile was the catalyst for the truly momentous turn in Jewish history: through it the Jews came to understand that the religious idea was an inward, spiritual one that survived the loss of its external, political manifestation. Judaism proved itself now a primarily religious identity: “The Jewish people lost its outer independence and found now its inner, characteristic independence, its nationality, only in the religious world characteristic to it.”⁴⁸⁸ Thereon came what would become one of the great motifs of Reform historiography, the affirmation of the Diaspora. For, with the advent of Persian suzerainty, vast numbers of Jews did not return, but no need, for Judaism was now primarily a confession: “Behold the advent of the remarkable event: hundreds of thousands of the people remained in the dispersion and were not reincorporated into the body of the Jewish state; but they maintained everywhere the same idea on which their nationality depended, they remained confessors of Judaism.”⁴⁸⁹ The Second Temple era Wolf read as one of constant encounter: the religious idea had now been completely secured, but became subject to the encounters between the priestly and worldly authorities, those between the political body and the forces outside it, but, most importantly to cross-cultural encounter and, above all, with the Greek principle. For, while universality had been revealed to the Jews as a religious, spiritual principle, the great importance of the Greeks was that they pursued it as knowledge, from the human side.

All of these encounters led to numerous syntheses and even more fragmentation and factionalization, the denouement of which was the other great motif of Reform historiography, the Jewish mission. Through the most universal state, the Roman Empire, the religious idea began passing to the rest of humanity, “in its universality to raise itself to universality”, first through Christianity.⁴⁹⁰ This was the beginning of a new age for all humanity, but the price of the mission for the Jews was the decisive loss of the state, as it had now fulfilled its purpose and the development of the religious idea could proceed without it. But, Jews continued in their devotion to the religious principle and to cultivate unity in its guise. Wolf presented the rabbis of the Talmud as having thereby “domesticated” Jewish law and ritual, anchoring the religion in “family life”, which is “the source and school of morality.”⁴⁹¹ He was not at all disdainful, making the argument that the work of rabbis in drawing a “fence” around the Jewish people with their laws was “what kept Judaism for so long” in the midst of its travails.⁴⁹² Meanwhile, the Jews proved themselves the fount of the other world religion through which the religious idea was becoming universal, Islam. What’s more, Jewish scholars, in their participation in the Arab sciences in Spain, became the interpreters of it to Europe, at a time when it was only beginning to establish its scientific life through what had become the fugitive Greek principle. Hence, the

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid, 4.

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid, 5.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid, 6.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid, 8.

⁴⁹¹ Ibid, 10.

⁴⁹² Ibid, 10-11. Rendered in nationalist format via Graetz, the argument would become a staple of Zionist historiography.

Jews also had a part in the rise of modern Europe. It was only in fact Christian fanaticism and persecution that had driven European Jews so far behind their fence into empty legal scholasticism. But, even then, one of them who forsook the ritual law was the first to formulate the religious idea in its full adequacy and majesty, namely, Spinoza.

The living people of religion and the living religious idea had fallen apart from one another. But, *pace* Jost, Wolf was certain that with the subsidence of persecution, the fuller realization would follow: “Where the external pressure stops, there also the Spirit begins to develop itself freely. The idea strives to free itself from the fixed walls in which it has been confined. It must again reveal itself in accordance with its inner spiritual essence.”⁴⁹³ And so, *pace* Gans, the Historical circle was not complete until the living people of the universal idea came together with the living idea in full development and universality. But how? Wolf had already shown that Judaism was of the worthiest subjects of scientific inquiry as the universal agent of the religious idea, which had proven itself as belonging in its universality to the very “essence of humanity”.⁴⁹⁴ Well, Jews, by undertaking the ‘Science of Judaism’ would arrive at what was most universal and essential about their religious idea and be in a position to realize it anew again as the vanguard of all humanity. By this scientific inquiry, they would most concretely join universal humanity, for “the essence of science is universality” and “should ever a band fasten together all of humanity, it is the band of science, the band of pure rationality, the band of truth.”⁴⁹⁵ The ‘Science of Judaism’ was again its own answer!

26.

The reader may be experiencing some whiplash from all of this ‘universality’! But I have honestly sought to replicate the experience of reading Wolf, where ‘universal’ and ‘universality’ dot every page. The great importance of Wolf’s schema is that it programmatically pinpoints the underlying assumptions that were to animate all *Wissenschaft* historicism and historiography, whether of the Reform or Positive-Historical variety: the Jews were the true subjects of universal history, because Jewish history was the scene of the development, spread and ultimate fulfillment of the universal idea of monotheism (‘religion’). The Jewish historiography that aligned itself particularly with the radical transformation of Jewish practice—already underway in Reform factions in major cities like Berlin and Frankfurt⁴⁹⁶—wielded the major motifs in Wolf’s schema in such a way as to call rabbinic tradition into question, justifying an almost total break with it. Samuel Holdheim (1806-1860), one of the most radical rabbis of his time, emphasized the voluntary Diaspora in the aftermath of the Babylonian exile and the idea of the Jewish mission, in connection with the definitive loss of statehood post-70 C.E., to argue that Judaism was purely ‘religion’. Namely, that it had been progressively purified of national and political claims and made *none* when properly understood in its Historical development. Holdheim suggested the voluntary Diaspora proved Judaism divested of public legal claims, while the confusion of civil law with religious commandment, à la the Talmud, had been the tragic mixed consequence of Christian exclusion and rabbinic usurpation. Hence, he argued that marriage and divorce being civil, not religious matters, that nothing in Judaism gave the rabbis authority over them; that the authority they had exercised was due to the corporate status

⁴⁹³ Ibid, 16.

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid, 15.

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid, 21, 24.

⁴⁹⁶ See Michael Meyer, *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism* (New York, 1988), 122-31.

imposed on Jews; and that nothing now thus stood, from a Jewish perspective, in the way of intermarriage.⁴⁹⁷ Accordingly, Holdheim, alongside the much more moderate and careful rabbi, Levi Herzfeld (1810-1884), sought also to establish a Sadducee—tending Karaite—lineage for true Historical development and Reform in Judaism: the Sadducees were portrayed as having stayed true to the literal meaning of the Bible, while the Pharisaic rabbinites had twisted the Bible to create an ‘oral law’ yielding them all manner of casuistically doled out prerogatives they should not have.⁴⁹⁸

In 1847, Holdheim became the *Prediger* at the Berlin Reform synagogue. Sabbath was on Sunday; no *Shofar* on *Rosh Hashanah*; services were held virtually all in German; men and women sat apart but wore no head-covering and no *Tallith*; women sang in the choir, etc.⁴⁹⁹ The impetus towards such radical transformation of traditional Jewish practice, however, in no sense emanated from *Wissenschaft des Judentums* or even ‘radical’ rabbis like Holdheim. It was the work of the essentially lay activists of the Reform Societies and Associations in Frankfurt, Berlin and Breslau. Their public declarations (Frankfurt, 1843, Berlin and Breslau, 1846) set the German Jewish world alight, much of it in opposition. *Wissenschaft* scholarship and its Jewish historicism also became increasingly divided and polarized in response. Actually, *Wissenschaft* practitioners also mostly reacted negatively to the principles and programs enunciated by these lay movements.⁵⁰⁰ But, the partial agreement on the part of what now emerged as the ‘reform’ wing signified the shift in what had been the reform discipline. The almost total negative response of those of theological expertise, rabbis or not, serves further to highlight the lay character of these movements. As David Philipson said of the Berlin Reform Association, “As at Frankfurt, so at Berlin, the movement for reform had emanated from the people; among the signers of the [Berlin] appeal there is not one theologian by profession...”⁵⁰¹ The changes in the religious service, partly outlined above, were all the work of the Berlin Reform Association, which consulted with reformist rabbis, but approved them for their planned separate services completely on their own initiative.⁵⁰²

Philipson avers that at least some of the changes were adopted “not because a principle was involved, but for aesthetic reasons.”⁵⁰³ There was, for instance, no grand religious reason for taking the *Shofar* out of the service for the New Year. It was rather that these modernist Jews felt self-conscious that blowing a ram’s horn made them look funny and queer in the eyes of the broader society; it thus bred estrangement rather than being religiously or symbolically edifying. Philipson approved: he thought the *Shofar* should be salvaged—through the frame of the requisite aesthetic as well as substantive ‘de-Orientalization’ of Judaism. For instance, in aesthetic terms, “Our Occidental practice is to show respect by the uncovering of the head, as it

⁴⁹⁷ See Céline Trautman-Walker, “Holdheim and Zunz: From the Question of Rabbinic Authority to a New Definition of Ceremonial Laws” in Christian Wiese (ed.), *Redefining Judaism: Comparative Perspectives on Samuel Holdheim (1806-1860)* (Leiden, 2007), 228-240. And Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 322-4. Schorsch’s tone is condemnatory.

⁴⁹⁸ See Katrien de Graef, “Holdheim’s Attitude Towards Karaism as Expounded in the *Ma’Amar Ha-’Ishut*” in Christian Wiese (ed.), *Redefining Judaism*, 109-124. And Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 321-2, 324.

⁴⁹⁹ David Philipson, *The Reform Movement in Judaism*, 346-59.

⁵⁰⁰ The rejection of the highly controversial Frankfurt declaration was, for instance, almost total including even Holdheim. See *ibid.*, 178-80.

⁵⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 330.

⁵⁰² See *ibid.*, 346-7.

⁵⁰³ *Ibid.*, 348.

is the Oriental habit is to keep the head covered.”⁵⁰⁴ But, removal of a rift between ‘Occidental’ behavior outside the synagogue and an ‘Oriental’ one inside was also, according to Philipson, crucial in a substantive sense. Particularly, it was demoralizing to proclaim the equality of woman in general society and then treat her, in ‘Oriental’ manner, as an inferior in the worship of God.⁵⁰⁵

Philipson’s de-Orientalization framing may have emanated, in this instance, mostly from his own later American perspective.⁵⁰⁶ If we go back to *Wissenschaft* scholars, they were actually keen to appropriate the raging European interest in Orientalism to bolster interest in the study of Judaism as an academic field. Wolf, for instance, argued that, in an age, when there was so much scholarly focus on the “Orient, this cradle of human culture”, such attention should also flow to Judaism, “this rich (*saftreich*) and most widely planted fruit of the East.” And, he suggested it was wrongheaded to put so much stock in understanding Persians and Hindus and altogether set aside a subject much closer to home and in no way exhausted.⁵⁰⁷ It was the general project of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* to project their Orientalism, i.e. the study of Judaism and Islam, particularly that of the Jewish heritage in the Islamic context, as an indispensable part of the story of all humanity, even of modern Europe.⁵⁰⁸ Moreover, this scholarly glorification of Jewish Orientalism reflected a broad development in Western European Jewish identity: a self-understanding and self-projection that basked in the cultural achievements of the Sephardim in Muslim Spain and, accordingly, fundamentally transformed Jewish thinking, literature, liturgy and architecture.⁵⁰⁹ Clearly, the Mosque-hybrid that became the dominant form of the modern European synagogue does not evoke ‘de-Orientalization’!⁵¹⁰ Nineteenth-century German Jews were, hence, not simply ‘Germanizing’ but replacing one Jewish Orientalism (that of the East European Ashkenazi) with their conceptions of another (the Sephardic).

However, while Philipson’s de-Orientalization schema does not provide an adequate frame for explaining the ‘aesthetic’ concerns of radical lay reformers, his broaching of this ‘aesthetic’ dimension is itself highly important. It allows us to understand why the radical lay reformers of 1840’s must be understood as representing the culmination of a much broader trend: their proposed changes to Jewish worship and practice were polarizing and partly marginalized

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid, 351.

⁵⁰⁵ See *ibid*, 353-6.

⁵⁰⁶ Philipson’s elaborate explanations, in this connection, of the motivations of the Berlin Reformers are his own, not reports. Earlier in the text, however, he does cite a critic of the initial attempts at ‘aesthetic’ transformation of the service at the ‘Hamburg Temple’, who disparages the equivocal character of the result, by asking about the consistency of a rabbi who “germanizes and de-orientalizes” the language and idiom of the service but keeps his head covered. See *ibid*, 50.

⁵⁰⁷ Wolf, “Ueber den Begriff einer Wissenschaft des Judentums“, 22.

⁵⁰⁸ The greatest scholarly representative and actualization of such a ‘history of humanity’ organized on the basis of Jewish cultural encounter was, as we’ll see below, Moritz Steinschneider.

⁵⁰⁹ See Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 71-92 and *passim*. For an important conceptualization of the phenomenon I’ll discuss further below, see John Efron, “Orientalism and the Jewish Historical Gaze” in Ivan Kalmar and Derek Penslar (eds.), *Orientalism and the Jews* (Waltham, 2005), 8-93.

⁵¹⁰ See Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 79-80. Although, this architectural choice did later come to seem awkward, so much so apparently that the first full scale study of the phenomenon actually argued that Islamic architecture was used as a model because it preceded (and was inferior) to the Gothic, so that Jews were thus marking their own historical position vis-à-vis Christianity. In other words, it was painted as a partly self-hating choice! See Harold Hammer-Schenk, *Synagogen in Deutschland: Geschichte einer Baugattung im 19. Und 20. Jahrhundert (1780-1933)*, 2 vols. (Hamburg, 1981). I have not studied the text as yet and am basing my characterization on the information provided by Schorsch.

them when put into effect, but they were also an attempt to bring to its ‘logical’ conclusion the process that had begun and taken deep root when in 1818 the so-called ‘German synagogue’, the ‘Temple’ was first established at Hamburg.⁵¹¹ Geiger summed up the changes to the religious service at the Hamburg Temple as essentially the institution of a “respectable form”, the introduction of the German idiom as a substantial part of the worship, singing (choir) accompanied by the organ and shortening, plus some modification, of the liturgy.⁵¹² Philipson spelled out all of these changes, i.e. the adoption of the so-called Portuguese pronunciation of Hebrew, but his interpretation closely followed Geiger: none of these changes were proffered at the time as constituting any kind of ideological break with Jewish tradition; rather, Talmudic warrant was sought for every single one. Philipson thus concluded that “the aestheticization of the service was the seeming be-all and end-all of the work of the reformers.”⁵¹³ But, he cited Geiger that this was just the beginning. Geiger argued that what these mostly formal alterations to the religious service on the part of the first generation of reformers showed was a new consciousness: a desire to be a full member of the state and of the larger society, so a new mindfulness of its judgments, but also a desire not to injure traditional Jewish feelings and sensibilities, so not to present oneself as undertaking any radical departure. It attempted, in other words, a kind of double-accommodation. But, it was as such, for Geiger, just the opening gambit of the integration process: Jews were no longer to be ‘tolerated’ but to become full citizens participating in the state and they were to measure themselves by the standard of “universal human *Bildung*”.⁵¹⁴ The end of this process could only be full religious reform, namely, a *Wissenschaft des Judentums* that would unlock, from critical historical perspective and evaluation, the full religious and spiritual meaning, depth and potential of the Jewish tradition, determine the means for achieving it and the practices adequate to it.⁵¹⁵

27.

Hence, by the time Geiger was writing this brief history of Jewish reform in 1844 to gauge “The Task of the Present”, he was no longer willing to rest satisfied with the ‘opening gambit’ and spent a great deal of his energy railing precisely against mere ‘aesthetic’ accommodation of modern forms. This was no longer something progressive but regressive. He said that those who thought they could dress up their old traditional Judaism in modern European clothes and that, ‘making everyone happy’ this way, they were serving the interests of the Jewish religion were fooling themselves. Those who thought that “with a little order in the synagogue, a little choral singing in the religious service, a more or less correct German in the sermon” the job was done, simply did not know Judaism’s ideal religious meaning and end.⁵¹⁶ And, it was idiotic to think that because now one was singing in the synagogue, that what one was singing didn’t matter; whereas, it was the other way around: if the ideal spiritual content and path through the tradition was found, the proper beautiful form would follow accordingly.⁵¹⁷ But, if in 1844 Geiger was fed up with the ‘aesthetic accommodationism’ that thought it could have its

⁵¹¹ See Philipson, *The Reform Movement in Judaism*, 41-51.

⁵¹² Geiger, “Die Aufgabe der Gegenwart”, 10

⁵¹³ Ibid, 45.

⁵¹⁴ Geiger, “Die Aufgabe der Gegenwart”, 4-10, 7.

⁵¹⁵ See *ibid*, 16-28.

⁵¹⁶ Ibid, 29.

⁵¹⁷ See *ibid*, 31-2. “The beautiful spirit can bestow on even a misshapen body a higher charm, dignity and nimbus, but a well-formed body can never do this for a demented spirit, which rather passes on its distortion to the body.” Ibid, 30.

traditional Judaism in modern finery and respectability—this “half-heartedness (*halbheit*)”, he said, was now more dangerous than its opposite—in the 1835 essay that opened his journal, he warned of the opposite kind of ‘aestheticism’. He spoke against the accommodationism of those other Jews who had become so focused on Emancipation, they had lost a sense of its meaning and seemed willing to give up their “religious autonomy” for it. They were so self-conscious and so needed to be thought “enlightened”, they avoided saying anything that might rub any Christian the wrong way. They wanted to root out any Jewish practice that might endanger their one goal (it was easy enough, Geiger noted, if they were that desperate).⁵¹⁸ They too were ignorant of the richness and truth within their own tradition that, gauged in critical historical fashion, destined it for “victory.”⁵¹⁹ Geiger said he didn’t know whether these “Christian-light Jews (*Christeln*)” that had cropped up in so many circles were more “ridiculous or tragic.”⁵²⁰

Both of these kinds of aesthetic accommodation had been around for decades: the one sought to make the Jewish tradition seem as respectable as possible, the other wanted to do away as much as possible with the Jewish tradition to make being Jewish seem respectable. What was so alarming about the Reform Associations of the 1840’s to so many Jews was that, in their programs and declarations, the two kinds of accommodation had seamlessly morphed into one another. They pointedly sought not merely to speak as enlightened individuals or parties, but for the whole Jewish (or rather “Mosaic”) religion and its only possible future. The especially controversial, first declaration of principles by the Frankfurt Society (1843) avowed above all the value of religious sincerity and disclaimed any attempt to secure further political rights through their work. These principles were the acknowledgment of the unlimited developmental possibility of the ‘Mosaic religion’, complete disavowal of the authority of the Talmud both practically and dogmatically and the renunciation of any national Messianic claim. The Society also believed in abolishing circumcision as well as all ritual, dietary laws, though they thought these matters still too sensitive and not pertinent to table as points of principle.⁵²¹ They were, however, publicly known. Geiger himself agreed with these latter points about practice in private, but did not deem it appropriate to publicize his views about circumcision when the firestorm about it broke out.⁵²²

With the Talmudic tradition gone and Mosaic religion defined by its unlimited developmental capacity, the fundamental plank in the lay reform movement became its particular vision of religious sincerity. Namely, religious honesty demanded that there be no difference between the values and behavior upheld outside and inside the synagogue, between the inner and the outer.⁵²³ It is a vision of religious honesty that Philipson himself trumpeted again and again in his history of Reform: his point about erasing the division of the Occidental outside and the Oriental inside was founded on it. What Philipson did not quite appreciate—nor it should be said, sanction—was that, with Mosaic religion reduced to *this* idea of religious sincerity, any difference between ‘aesthetic’ and truly ‘religious’ development within it evaporated. Aesthetic shifts were now also necessarily substantive ones. The work of the Reform Associations was one culmination of the process begun with the Hamburg Temple. That is because, by reading the Jewish heritage in such a way as to make the most complete accommodation to what were called

⁵¹⁸ Geiger, “Das Judentum unserer Zeit und die Bestrebungen in ihm”, in *WZJT* 1 (1835), 9.

⁵¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁵²⁰ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁵²¹ See Philipson, *The Reform Movement in Judaism*, 162-8.

⁵²² See *ibid.*, 182-192.

⁵²³ See *ibid.*, 166. Overcoming this rift was also at the heart of the Berlin declaration. See *ibid.*, 327.

the dictates of ‘culture’ and ‘humanity’—irrespective of Jewish tradition, irrespective even of the Historical attempt to locate these there as teleological secret—into necessary ‘religious’ change, they also moved beyond accommodation. They were apostles of sincerity! But, that is not how most of their Jewish contemporaries saw the matter: to them *such* sincerity was the most abysmal accommodation of all. Theological scholars were generally appalled. Holdheim even argued that the Frankfurt reformers had simply evacuated the plane of Historical development and analysis.⁵²⁴ After all, to say that Mosaic religion was defined by its unlimited capacity for development and then to say that every way in which it had actually developed historically was false was simply a *contradictio in adjecto*. Gabriel Riesser (1806-1863), great champion of Emancipation (and reform) thought the declarations mere reflections of Judeophobia or at best a political ploy.⁵²⁵

As Schorsch has argued, the great polarizing impact of the lay reform activism of the 1840’s derived in large part because of its timing. As noted in our discussion of Protestant historicism, this was a decade in which religious reactionary forces gained the upper hand, which was not without effect on the Jewish situation. Everyone knew that a new Prussian Jewry Law was in the works, and there was great anxiety that the already stalled Emancipation project would now be decisively reversed.⁵²⁶ Philipson also euphemistically points to this context, when noting that if a most prominent aspect of the Berlin declaration was its constant reference to “love for the fatherland”, then this was because this was a time when Jews were still struggling for full Emancipation.⁵²⁷ This was the setting in which the reform-oriented Rabbinical Conferences of Braunschweig (1844), Frankfurt (1845) and Breslau (1846) met. These rabbis sought to regain some authority over the reform process: to institute a more professional spirit amongst themselves; to discuss and give counsel on the various claims and demands being made as to the religious principles and practices of Judaism from a critical theological perspective; to provide a vision and example for further intellectual and organizational development.⁵²⁸ When Zecharias Frankel, who had severely criticized the Braunschweig Conference, came to Frankfurt and told his colleagues at the outset that the only way forward was ‘positive historical Judaism’, they concurred that this was also their viewpoint. Their goal was to arrive at a reasoned uniformity about the controversies in the Jewish community. On the question of whether the use

⁵²⁴ See *ibid*, 180, note 1. See also Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 273-4.

⁵²⁵ See Philipson, *The Reform Movement in Judaism*, 169.

⁵²⁶ See Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 271-3. I cannot endorse Schorsch’s somewhat demonizing description of the work of the Reform Associations as essentially a political response to political anxiety. After the passing of the 1847 Prussian Jewry Law made it at least theoretically possible for independent Jewish congregations to be recognized by the state, the Jewish Reform synagogue in Berlin applied for such a status. Its 1850 application was refused on the basis that it did not articulate a particular confession of faith. The members of the Reform synagogue were flabbergasted. They noted that this was a Christian demand that was being made of them, since Judaism did not encompass any dogma that had to be believed for salvation. Ultimately, Holdheim’s compromise proposal of espousing the monotheistic principle while also objecting to the Christian demand being made of them was sent to the government. Their request was denied. Boyarin would be proud. The episode does not allow for a simple ‘Christian-light’ reading and suggests that this community had not simply abandoned any sense of their Jewish distinctness. See Philipson, *The Reform Movement in Judaism*, 361-4.

⁵²⁷ See *ibid*, 331. Philipson’s immediate reference here was to why the Berlin reformers had decided to keep in their declaration the disavowal of any remnant national Messianic claim, even though they had decided on avoiding the earlier Frankfurt mistake of setting out principles rather than ‘calling’ on the Jewish community to organize itself on a synodal basis for reform. Philipson here decisively pushed back on the ‘political’ interpretation of Reform and affirms the broad religious sincerity of its anti-national universalism. See *ibid*, note 1.

⁵²⁸ On the Conferences, see *ibid*, 197-316.

of Hebrew in the service was obligatory, they all agreed that this was nowhere stipulated in the law. But, on whether it should be considered such on other grounds, they ultimately decided, though closely divided, that retaining it (for instance, in the reading of the Torah) was advised but not absolutely necessary.⁵²⁹ On the question of the nature of the Messianic claim in Judaism, they repositioned the tradition to say that the reference was not to a political-national salvation but to one of universal justice and righteousness.⁵³⁰

Ultimately, however, the Conferences failed in their aim to provide a united, professional path forward. Frankel walked out on the Conference on the third day, when the decision on Hebrew didn't go his way; his stance was that Hebrew should be considered obligatory because it had such a normative status in the eyes of the majority of the people.⁵³¹ Further, the Conferences distinctly kept their distance from the Reform Societies, insisted on their own leadership and refused to sign on to any of their programs or proposals.⁵³² This demonstrated their full religious sincerity: their target was the transformation of the whole of Jewry, not to placate lay liberal factions within it. But, this course of action also inevitably fed isolation and marginalization of those who were the natural constituency of Reform and assured the coming dominance of the more traditional, 'Historical' forces led by Frankel.⁵³³

Then, in the midst of the heated debates set off by the Frankfurt Society with respect to Jewish rituals and, particularly circumcision, came the shocking defection of Zunz from the ranks of Reform.⁵³⁴ Zunz, the great anti-clerical scholar, had inspired a whole generation of Jewish students onto the path of reformist scholarship. The conception of a *Wissenschaft des Judentums* had been *his* idea. He had positioned a Science of Judaism as the answer to, nay as the *prerequisite* of, both Emancipation and religious reform: critical evaluation of Jewish religious and cultural development as a part of all humanity would serve as scholarly *proof* of the case for Emancipation while simultaneously illuminating the internal path such development was to take.⁵³⁵ It was Zunz who first projected *Wissenschaft* as the means of an autonomous Jewish development, i.e. one capable of navigating through the two horns of accommodation: both the 'aestheticism' that wanted to save Jewish tradition by ahistorically reading modern forms into it and the one that believed Jewish tradition had to be ditched if one was to be both Jewish and modern. But, by the middle of the 1840's, he had become disgusted with the Reform trajectory, convinced that both the Reform Societies and the Rabbinic Conferences had abandoned the developmental ground of Jewish tradition and turned into 'Christian-light Jews', bent on

⁵²⁹ See *ibid*, 233-46.

⁵³⁰ See *ibid*, 246-55.

⁵³¹ See *ibid*, 268-71. Frankel ultimately accused the Conference of wanting to phase out Hebrew, but gradually.

⁵³² See, for instance, *ibid*, 341-6. "The rabbis did not for one moment consider the advisability of entering into a special covenant with the Berlin Association..." *Ibid*, 345.

⁵³³ Philipson, as a historian championing the causing of Reform, wants thus to have it both ways. He was proud of the reformist rabbis for keeping the lay reform movements at arms' length but he also then bemoaned the latter's ultimate marginality. See *ibid*, 364-8. Nothing demonstrates this marginality better than the fact that, with the separation of the Berlin Reform synagogue—they still had to financially support to the main community, since their separation was not recognized by the government—eventually 'liberal' and 'conservative' factions sprung up in the chief community.

⁵³⁴ See Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 276-7.

⁵³⁵ See Zunz, *Zur Geschichte und Literatur*, 21. See also Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 151-2, 195, who puts a great deal of weight on Zunz's perspective on this point: "It is no historical accident that in the country of its birth, where *Wissenschaft des Judentums* (the scientific study of Judaism) never gained entry into the university, emancipation would eventually be revoked." But, Zunz's desideratum was certainly not without its tensions within a competitive historicist environment.

exchanging Judaism for Emancipation. But, as we've seen, Geiger had completely molded himself after Zunz's conception of *Wissenschaft* and gone even further, suggesting 'aestheticized' traditionalism and Christian-light Jews were equally blind to the fact that it was modern historical consciousness that vindicated the ideal character of the Jewish tradition as destined for teleological triumph. So what was happening here?

28.

The first, formal, answer would be that the heady conflicts and polarization of the 1840's were especially exacerbated by the fact that all the parties now brandished the accommodationist stick against one other, each believing it alone had graduated to a post-accommodationist stance. The lay reform activists touted religious sincerity and called their co-religionists essentially hypocrites for doing one thing inside and another outside the synagogue.⁵³⁶ Zunz thought the reformists had wholly sullied the meaning of Emancipation by trying to bargain away the Jewish religion for it. For Geiger, anyone who did not understand that modern critical consciousness and Jewish tradition were not alien to but destined for one another was rotting out its substance. Hence, when nineteenth-century European Jews and the *Wissenschaft* tradition are criticized, whether for a secret Judaism or the much more prevalent and sensitive charge of apologetic assimilationism, the weapons brandished remain those forged and wielded at the time.⁵³⁷

The second answer, to come to the subject on which there was so much polarization, would be that, by the middle of the 1840's, 'aesthetics' had become—no longer just for the Orthodox—but for all a *substantive* issue. Another way of saying this is that questions as to the standing of 'tradition' in Jewish development had become paramount. The idea that had served above all else to consolidate *Wissenschaft des Judentums* was that development (i.e. reform) was the *internal* story, potential—even destiny—of the Judaic heritage itself and not at all a case of *external*, 'aesthetic', imposition. That is how its historicization served as 'positive universalization' and pre-paid proof of Emancipation. But, exactly what was internal and what external to Judaism? Who was the subject and what the objective context? What was the medium and what its message? What was creativity and what imposition in this history?

Holdheim, for instance, simply *substituted* History for Jewish tradition, namely, reading the whole rabbinic tradition as a fateful Historical imposition on Judaism from the outside. In his schema, there were essentially two successive Historical tracks. First, the internal Jewish: the Biblical narrative was that of a de-politicization, de-nationalization, so spiritualization of Judaism into universal 'religion', a process sealed by the destruction of the Second Temple. Second, the external worldly: the world was not as yet prepared for Judaism's monotheism (religious universalism) and excluded it: the particularistic and legalistic rabbinic tradition was the mirror reflection, within, of this exclusion imposed on Jews and Judaism. As the world began to catch up with the purification Judaism had already undergone towards religious

⁵³⁶ Reformists referred to a whole class of Jews as "official Jews", who were precisely such hypocrites, publicly affirming rituals while privately disregarding them. They were regarded as the greatest enemies of Reform. See Philipson, *The Reform Movement in Judaism*, 318.

⁵³⁷ Again, should we simply take old battles at face-value and even rejoin them? Historicization seems to me to call for a step beyond this. I refer to the work of a colleague, Heather Ferguson, "Genres of Power: Constructing a Discourse of Decline in Ottoman *Nasihatname*" in *The Journal of Ottoman Studies* 35 (2010), 81-116. She argues that Western historians who found Ottoman narratives of decline in the archives simply took and applied them at face-value rather than considering that, as a discourse, they constituted a positive and prescriptive *act* in the face of challenges. These historians, like those of *Wissenschaft* referred to above, all of course rejoined the battle with their own solutions: 'Westernization', 'Zionism', etc.

universality, it also became free to express what it had first brought into the world. For Zunz, by contrast, the idea of rabbinic tradition as an external imposition was absolute anathema. In his work on the history of the Jewish sermon, he demonstrated each strata of the Jewish religious tradition to have developed organically through commentary on earlier strata: the rabbinic genres of *Halakhah* and *Aggada* had grown accordingly out of the Bible and were themselves extensions of *Midrash*, just as later historical and homiletic literature had risen out of the *Aggada*. But if the whole range of Jewish religious literature was the true medium of Jewish history, Zunz, no fan of rabbinic authority, was loath to view the rabbi as its primary subject. The dynamic scene of this ever organic amplification of the Jewish tradition was the synagogue, the place of collective worship, and the whole of Jewish religious literature was thus no less than the collective creation of the Jewish people: a record of the religious development of the Jewish nation, whereby it continuously reinterpreted and reappropriated its tradition to meet the present needs and challenges of historical encounter.⁵³⁸ For Holdheim, the historicization of Judaism was its affirmative universalization because it proved rabbinic tradition the negative reflex of worldly benightedness, to be disposed of as the world caught up to Jewish universalism. For Zunz, the universalism of Judaism, when historicized, followed from the fact that it was a tradition that recorded and played out the religious development of a people in creative engagement with its world, one thus exemplary of all human history.⁵³⁹

What was truly innovative about Zunz's historicist method of universalizing Judaism was that he transformed what had always been posited as its most debilitating aspects in this connection—Jewish traditionalism and nationality—as in fact positive assets. Jewish tradition was not to be read out of Judaism as reifying, degenerative: it was creative religious development; Jewish nationhood was hence not particularistic: it was exemplary. Frankel's 'Positive Historical Judaism' represented a radicalization of *these* innovations. For, if Holdheim sacralized History, Frankel sacralized the practice of Judaism by the Jewish people.⁵⁴⁰ Religious development corresponded to the manner in which the Jewish tradition was appropriated, renewed and extended in Jewish practice over time, not to any abstract principle said to hold its as yet unbeknownst essence. Therefore, it was not as relevant whether the Law could tolerate doing away with Hebrew in the service altogether; the question was whether the people's religious sentiments and experience would abide it, and the answer was *No!*⁵⁴¹

The writer who raised Frankel's sacralization of the Jewish people to gargantuan proportions and made it into the very principle of Universal History was Heinrich Graetz (1817-1891). Looked at from the outside, the great historian's periodization and thematization of Jewish history did not seem to diverge in any fundamental way from Wolf's or other Reform historicist schemas. The first period, up to the Babylonian exile, was predominantly 'political' in character, the Second Temple period was 'religious' and all the rest up to the present was one of 'growing self-consciousness.'⁵⁴² Moreover, these categories, in their progression clearly made

⁵³⁸ Leopold Zunz, *Die Gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden* (Berlin, 1832). Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 246-8, 308-10.

⁵³⁹ *Ibid*, 172.

⁵⁴⁰ See Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 255-65. He posits an analogue between Frankel's conservatism and Savigny's brand of historical jurisprudence.

⁵⁴¹ See Philipson's summation of Frankel's speeches to the Frankfurt Conference along these lines, including his explanation of his withdrawal: Philipson, *The Reform Movement in Judaism*, 234-5, 240, 268-9. He read the Conference's decision not to regard the inclusion of Hebrew in the service as normative due to extant usage rather than on the basis of legal interpretation as a disavowal of what he meant by 'Positive Historical Judaism'.

⁵⁴² See Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 284, more generally, 279-93, 191-3.

for a Hegelian schema.⁵⁴³ The radical difference though was that, as opposed to Wolf, the Jewish nation in Graetz was not simply the carrier of the divine idea, *it was the divine idea*. But, by the same token it was not merely *the* religious nation, it was the universal nation, which is to say that the Jewish people appeared in Graetz's history of them as the universal subject, i.e. universal *mirror* and agent, of world history. Graetz did not ask of the great personae of world history what they thought as such; he asked what they thought about the Jews, for there lay the answer. More, the Jews were always somehow involved in the momentous junctures of History: Graetz appropriated the Reform idea of the Jewish mission; he saw Jews as instrumental in the formation of Islam; the expulsion of the Jews meant Spanish decline; controversies involving the Jews (the Pfefferkorn-Reuchlin affair) helped spark the Reformation, etc.⁵⁴⁴

But, there was also another kind of appropriation of Zunz's conception of the Judaic literary tradition as the medium and record of Jewish religious development, but one that did *not* view the 'Jewish nation' as its subject, one, namely, that continued to sacralize History instead. I am speaking here of Geiger's reformist schema. There is no doubt that Geiger viewed the Judaic religio-literary heritage, i.e. "tradition",⁵⁴⁵ as the primal scene of ideal 'religious' development and purification, but it was thus one not of the 'Jewish nation' but rather of universal humanity. And, its course was determined not by the organic religious development of the Jewish people, but rather the dialectical struggle of the universal principles of History: the priestly, aristocratic, ritualistic one paradigmatically represented by the Sadducees vs. the spiritual, democratic, moral one of the Pharisees, the ultimate teleological triumph of which would come with the overcoming of traditional by critical historical consciousness.

But another aspect of Zunz's privileging of the Judaic heritage as paradigmatic must also be stressed: it opened the path to viewing it as the ideal heritage, whether inherently so, or as the one intended for idealization, leading to the pure, universal 'religion'. Christianity was demoted and, in the latter Geigerian idealization, a full-scale Jewish historicist supersessionism came to the fore.⁵⁴⁶ Discussing the ever greater emphasis Graetz came to place on the Jewish mission and the distress his unabashed Jewish pride eventually caused touchy German nationalists, Schorsch describes clearly, if still diplomatically, the context from which competitive Jewish historicism emerged:

⁵⁴³ Schorsch, however, prefers to see Graetz as a Humboldtian and Rankean and so ultimately as an anti-Hegelian. He argues that, like them, Graetz's history was non-teleological. It's hard to see though how Graetz's use of the category of 'self-consciousness' to characterize the last stage of Jewish history was anything but teleological and Hegelian to boot. See *ibid*, 286-7. Graetz's difference from Reform teleology was that he viewed the Jewish nation as the ultimate medium of divine realization.

⁵⁴⁴ See *ibid*, 290. The idea of Jewish history as 'mirror' continues to be a healthy research program, though not because of the often insular uses Graetz made of it, but because minorities are the greatest of historical mirrors.

⁵⁴⁵ As we'll see, he used the term to mean precisely not a normative accumulation over time but rather that proven in its purity through critical historical reconstruction. See for one such usage: Geiger, "Das Judentum unserer Zeit und die Bestrebungen in ihm", *WZJT* 1 (1835), 10.

⁵⁴⁶ This new Jewish self-affirmation in universal key, which even sympathizers were bound to view as temerity did not go un-noticed. Most prominently at the time, Heinrich Treitschke (1834-1896) decided to ignore the vast German Jewish exhortation of love for the 'German Fatherland' and zero in instead on Graetz's Jewish supremacy and his 'defamation' of Germany and German greats, like Luther, for their treatment of the Jews: the Jews, Treitschke said, were an alien body within—a tragedy for—Germany. See Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 292-3. See also the essay by George Y. Kohler, "German Spirit and Holy Ghost—Treitschke's Call for Conversion of German Jewry: The Debate Revisited" in *Modern Judaism* 30:2 (2010), 172-195. He stresses the 'religious' over the 'national' aspect of Treitschke's attack on the Jews and argues that the debate set off by it looks differently when the determinant character of the 'religious' over the 'national' question is taken into consideration.

The tragedy of the Jewish predicament was that to make a case for continued group survival inevitably entailed denigrating the faith of the very society into which Jews sought to integrate. Judaism's right to survive could only be established at the expense of Christianity. In formulating his case Graetz was merely not as politic and tactful as the leaders of Reform.⁵⁴⁷

Of course, those undertaking the competitive historicist affirmation of Judaism in the nineteenth century did not view it as a 'tragedy' imposed on them. Like Geiger, they could even believe this was the very meaning of Emancipation, for 'Emancipation' was something other than 'toleration'. Only the deeper historical understanding that fundamentally this was not the case makes the competitive historicist environment retrospectively 'tragic'. Geiger, in any case, did *not* shy away from making clear that Judaism and not Christianity was destined for the universal end of 'religion'. Having appropriated Baur's Schleiermacherian sacralization of History, his dialectical categories and his 'documentary Hegelianism', he turned him on his head.

29.

Abraham Geiger did not believe in *Tefillin* (pre-modern magical thinking). He thought the Jewish dietary laws "inane" and aimed at an exclusionary demarcation that hollowed out true religious feeling. Imagining Hebrew essential to Judaism, he thought, confirmed the idea that it was a 'national religion', namely, that Jews were less than capable of being full members of their respective nations, that Judaism was not the true universal religion that it was. While not speaking out publicly against circumcision and against extant efforts to abolish it, he called it in private a "barbarous bloody act" and hoped it might be eventually replaced by an alternative ceremony.⁵⁴⁸ It is in good part such sentiments that have led the Orthodox and Zionists to malign him as an ultra-ideologue of assimilation, exactly the kind of 'Christian-light Jew' he himself warned about.⁵⁴⁹ At the time, Zunz too came to think him more ideologue than scholar.⁵⁵⁰ For anyone from a traditional Jewish environment, where there is only one normative Judaism⁵⁵¹—but myriad ways of appropriating it, levels of observance, etc.—Geiger's reorientation of Jewish tradition and traditional practice *is* shocking. Such explicit calls for change in religious practice are bound to be seen by many as the subjective and self-indulgent work of those who would do better to have the honesty to openly leave a heritage they can no longer abide, rather than mangling it in order to continue gracing it with their presence.

What this perspective misses however is that religious traditions, like all cultural ones, have always changed, been remade and renewed, to answer the questions, expectations and demands of their time. Only—and this was the key to Geiger's work on the Jewish heritage and

⁵⁴⁷ Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 291.

⁵⁴⁸ See Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, 38. See also on the question of Hebrew, Geiger, "Die Aufgabe der Gegenwart", 8. There, he notes that besides the aim of using the "language of the Fatherland", to which one was closest, rather than a sacral one most no longer understood, the 'aesthetic' motivation of drawing the "external form" of the service nearer to that of Christian co-nationals had also been a motivation in adopting the vernacular in the service. On Geiger and circumcision, see also, Philipson, *The Reform Movement in Judaism*, 188-9.

⁵⁴⁹ See Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, 24.

⁵⁵⁰ See Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 276.

⁵⁵¹ Part of what reformist scholars did was to highlight sectarian developments in the Jewish past and present to cut into the normative status of Rabbinic Judaism, to portray it as one sect amongst many. See *ibid.*, 303-4.

Goldziher's on the Islamic—in the pre-modern context, these traditions often absorbed change by means of a traditionalist consciousness: innovation was constant, but also denounced and not experienced as such. It was 'traditionalized', read back into the origin or proffered as a return to it, made a subject of casuistic or allegorical adaptation, authorized retrospectively by 'consensus' as homogenous with tradition, etc. What was different about Geiger and Goldziher from the more conservative *Wissenschaft* scholars of their time was that they did not rest satisfied with showing the Jewish or Islamic tradition as one of continuous religious development. They demonstrated and critiqued the traditionalist, 'unconscious' character of this development. And, they suggested that only in the modern period, when this traditionalist consciousness gave way to a critical historicist one, would the dialectical tendencies and conflicts driving religious progress be unraveled from their thus far trajectory of reconciling—traditionalizing and ultimately reifying—syntheses towards their ideal *telos*. Geiger and Goldziher both believed that the fullest religious feeling and commitment and the most critical, scientific attitude to religious history were not only not at odds, *they were one and the same thing*.

This conviction of theirs was in turn predicated on and emotionally guaranteed by a theo-teleological historicist schema in which purified 'religion' and historical criticism were, one could say, providentially destined for one another. Geiger viewed his critical historicization of Jewish tradition *not* as the assimilation and adaption of it to modern thought-patterns, but as its ownmost potential for idealization towards its realization as true universal 'religion'. As he put it:

Just as formerly Judaism made Christianity, Muhammadanism and the new philosophy the subject of Critique (Spinoza) (*in Verbindung mit Kritik...gezeugt*), so shall it now prove its full creative capacity, but not in a creation that would be thus estranged from it, but rather in its own realization and revitalization, in spiritual fulfillment of the rightly ascertained idea lying at its core and from there by intervening in the momentous spiritual process that humanity has undertaken. From this standpoint must and shall a genuine Jewish effort come to spread, in order to achieve civil equality, useful knowledge amongst the Jews, to make known to them the preparatory facts [required] for a higher spiritual cooperation, though not stopping just with these. From this standpoint must the effort towards an ennobling religious service be made, seeking in it an adequate expression of a higher, more alive and more religious way of understanding. From it the desire for preaching and religious instruction that aspires in them to the concrete and stimulating development of the practical truth (*Lebenswahrheit*), which belonging fundamentally to Judaism its members should ever more fulfill. That is what the leaders of the people and the scholars must above all work towards, not in a dualistic partitioning of religion and science, not in any arbitrary union of them, but rather in an appropriation and representation of them in their necessary mutual interaction, in their oneness.⁵⁵²

As Geiger further argued here, he wanted Jews not simply to participate as equal individuals in society. He wanted them to do so *as Jews*, as representatives of a Judaism poised to make its mark in the "spiritual life of humanity and its whole culture and particularly towards religious development" in dialogue with non-Jews.⁵⁵³ In other words, Geiger saw the social and political integration of Jews and the cultural integration of Judaism as the means to make the most universal claims on its behalf in the religious realm, namely, *vis-à-vis* Christianity. In

⁵⁵² Abraham Geiger, "Die Aufgabe der Gegenwart", 28-9.

⁵⁵³ See *ibid*, 28.

emphasizing Geiger's competitive historicism contra Christianity, I follow the work of Susannah Heschel. Geiger's coming ever closer to a Jewish historicist supersessionism makes the characterization of him as an arch-assimilationist wholly problematic.⁵⁵⁴ As Heschel says of Geiger, "Jewishness was never depreciated, but, on the contrary, was elevated by him to a position of significance transcending virtually all other elements of Western civilization."⁵⁵⁵ And, she added, "What Geiger sought was not merely a defense of Judaism in the eyes of the Christian world, but a presentation of Judaism as *the* universal religion."⁵⁵⁶

However, as is by now well-known, Geiger appropriated his critical historicist methodology—above all, the notion of the dialectical dynamism within and construction of canonical traditions culminating in an idealizing unraveling—primarily from Baur and the *Tübingen Schule*.⁵⁵⁷ Like that of Baur, Geiger's scholarship inherited the Schleiermacherian legacy of the sacralization of History as a process driven by and towards the purification of 'religion' in its distinct essence and full universality. In fact, as Christian critics already noted at the time, Schleiermacher's impact was particularly transparent in Geiger's case.⁵⁵⁸ Geiger began the opening volume of his *Judaism and Its History* with an exposition on "The Nature of Religion":

[Humanity] is endowed with a double nature: the consciousness of his greatness and eminence, and over against that, the humiliating feeling of his dependence; on the one hand, the impulse to raise himself to that source whence has proceeded his own mental and spiritual faculty which is not self-creative even because it is dependent; and on the other hand, his inability to completely occupy that highest plane. Now, is not this true religion: the consciousness of man's eminence and lowness; the aspiration to perfection, coupled with the conviction that we cannot reach the highest plane; the presentiment of the Highest which must exist as a freely acting will, of the Wisdom whence also our little fragment of wisdom proceeds, of an infinitely ruling Freedom whence also our limited freedom has sprung forth—is not that longing for the higher, that soaring up with all the strength of our soul, the very essence of religion?⁵⁵⁹

This picture of the *human* sense of dependence as suspension between finitude and the capacity to raise oneself in consciousness towards the infinite and exalt in it—and this as the 'essence of religion'—was vintage Schleiermacher. Religion, Geiger said, derived from man's conscious sense of connectedness and holism that made him "feel the desire to associate, to step out of his finiteness and to connect himself with the infinite."⁵⁶⁰ He added that religion was not

⁵⁵⁴ See Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, 62.

⁵⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 49.

⁵⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 105.

⁵⁵⁷ See for Heschel's and Schorsch's respective descriptions of Geiger's appropriation of the Tübingen paradigm, *ibid*, 118, and, Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 319.

⁵⁵⁸ See Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, 206. The famous expositor of the Marcan Hypothesis, H. J. Holtzmann claimed the Schleiermacherian influence showed Geiger's was not a genuinely Jewish point of view. An interesting point, by which standard Christianity would not be genuinely 'Christian', since it was influenced by Judaism. That of course was the whole crux of the debate, as Geiger called Christianity a mangled Judaism. For Geiger's biting response to Holtzmann, see Geiger, *Judaism and Its History* (New York, 1911; orig. v. 1-2, 1864-71), 389-406. He openly acknowledged the influence of both Schleiermacher and Hegel but claimed that what was true in them also echoed voices within the Jewish tradition itself. See *ibid*, 396-7.

⁵⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 20.

⁵⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 24-5.

philosophy, not science, not, that is, any arduous conquest of knowledge by the few: it was a universal—trans-historical and trans-cultural—*human* dimension: “Religion is a common property of humanity, it is a peculiar susceptibility of man, which irresistibly develops itself within him, more or less clearly illuminating him with its truths. Hence, religion has existed from eternity and will exist unto eternity.”⁵⁶¹ That thought in turn brought up what I’ve described as the nineteenth century’s paradigmatic conceptualization of the teleological essence of ‘religion’, namely, as the most universal, because the most individual: “While religion is thus the most individual element which appears to man as his deepest, innermost quality and distinguishes him as an individual in his belief and practice, constituting the inmost motive power of his whole being, it forms, on the other, the bond of all mankind, just because it is something common to all, the connecting link between the several parts, as well as between them and the whole.”⁵⁶² Finally, the reader will not be surprised to hear that religion was subject to progressive clarification and purification towards its essence. Religion, Geiger argued, was the inspiration of all that was higher in humanity and the marker of its true advance:

Religion will become purer, more enlightened, its essence and function will be better understood, and it will always remain in existence, because man’s longing and imperfection will always remain. The more he advances, the more he will feel this distance from the Infinite and Eternal Wisdom; but he will also the more devotedly look up to it, draw from it, bow to it with fervency and humility.⁵⁶³

30.

Well, that was ‘religion’; but, what about the *religions*: what was Judaism’s relationship to this highest dimension of human experience—its connection to the divine—and what its role in its deepening, Historical advance? Geiger’s opening point about Judaism was that it had acted as universal agent in the historical development of religious life: it was “a grand, world historical phenomenon” that, in fulfilling its own “mission”, had “given birth” to kindred religions, Christianity and Islam, that had in turn remarkably transformed the trajectory of a large part of humanity and redounded on Judaism itself.⁵⁶⁴ Judaism, Geiger defined first of all—“such is the first assertion”—as “a *Religion*”.⁵⁶⁵ Having explained his exalted concept and trajectory of ‘religion’ in History, he concluded the first chapter by noting that if Judaism had and continued to do the work of religion, “it is one of the noblest animating forces amongst mankind.”⁵⁶⁶ He noted that a religion that proved itself capable of surviving past a purely national stage “successfully passed the trial of its reliability and truth”: this had been the case with Judaism and served as special Historical testament to its universal potential and mission. But, this was still a mostly formal criterion.⁵⁶⁷ To demonstrate what was original in and fundamental to the Jewish heritage that allowed it to be idealized towards assuming the universal essence of ‘religion’, Geiger compared it with Greek paganism. The Greek Gods were essentially human or reified

⁵⁶¹ Ibid, 25.

⁵⁶² Ibid, 25.

⁵⁶³ Ibid, 23.

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid, 1.

⁵⁶⁵ Ibid, 2.

⁵⁶⁶ Ibid, 23.

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid, 25.

human characteristics and all were ruled by fate, a power defined by its moral and emotional indifference.⁵⁶⁸ Such a religious tradition had little capacity for religious development, and later Greek philosophy did not base itself on but rather bypassed this popular ‘Hellenism’. Contrast the first strivings of Judaic monotheism, which already carries within itself the idea of an absolute ground and oneness, the source of an all-encompassing, loving and moral order.⁵⁶⁹ The Greeks had a genius that allowed them to conceive natural beauty and order, and all humanity has been since beholden to them because of it. But, the Jews were also “endowed with such a genius, a Religious Genius.”⁵⁷⁰ That is the sense in which they were a people of revelation, for they were inspired to the root religious idea of the one, loving and just God, whom one was to emulate and to whom one was accountable.

Hence, in concluding this theme on the universal character of the “divine visions” bestowed on the Jews, he added: “Judaism is a religion of truth, because the view into the essence of things is infallible, beholding the Unchangeable and the Everlasting: That is its everlasting vision.”⁵⁷¹ Hence, having concluded the first volume of the work with an analysis of the rise of Christianity, the loss of Jewish nationality, and the Historical meaning and continuing trajectory of the Jewish mission in the Dispersion, he began the second volume with the same stark declaration with which he’d closed the first: “Judaism had not completed its mission with the end of the its second commonwealth.”⁵⁷² It had completely overcome idolatry and even to large extent the priestly-power within itself—“these eternal truths to which all mankind shall rise”—but the world was not as yet ready for its message. It had had to keep itself in separation and had remained itself not without corruption, “while according to its true calling it shall pour out over all mankind, in love embracing all.”⁵⁷³ The messianic aura surrounding the fall of the Jewish state had proven premature. And, “Judaism, indeed, sent forth a messenger who in course of time made many of its doctrines the common property of mankind; but, soon estranged from the faith that had sent him, he accepted, when he entered into the world and mixed with the heathen, also much of that world, and blended with paganism. The mission of Judaism was not accomplished by that.”⁵⁷⁴ Geiger said he was not going to overlook or downplay the often dark character of the intervening centuries and the spiritual deformations Judaism had undergone as it set upon its course amongst the nations, but he also emphasized that this had never been a history of “decay.”⁵⁷⁵ Judaism’s trajectory through this painful time was akin to that of a plant which, placed in inhospitable conditions, bent and twisted to find the light. In other words, Judaism had persevered in the “call of the spirit directing history” that had gone out to it: “Go out over the whole earth, prove thy power in it, preserve thyself, purify thyself, and win over all mankind.”⁵⁷⁶

The Jewish, not the Christian, heritage was accordingly the privileged one, destined to wear the ideal, universal mantle of ‘religion’, to realize its essence. But, if we try now to describe the immanent and Historical progress of the Jewish tradition towards this end—if, that is, we try to explain what its purification and idealization consisted of—we run headlong into an interpretive dilemma. For, according to Schorsch, the answer to this question would not involve

⁵⁶⁸ See *ibid*, 26-31.

⁵⁶⁹ See *ibid*, 32-38.

⁵⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 46.

⁵⁷¹ *Ibid*, 48.

⁵⁷² *Ibid*, 211; see also, 152-176.

⁵⁷³ *Ibid*, 211.

⁵⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 212.

⁵⁷⁵ *Ibid*, 213.

⁵⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 212.

one Geiger, but rather two: an earlier more ‘negative’, a later more ‘positive’ one. Schorsch has accordingly pointed to the focus on rabbinic exegesis in Geiger’s early scholarship, whose intent may already be gleaned from the title of his extensive 1844 essay on the subject in his journal: “The Relationship of the Natural Meaning of Scripture to Talmudic Scriptural Exegesis”.⁵⁷⁷ Geiger argued that the rabbis of the *Mishnah* had begun the articulation of the Law in a relatively free relationship to Scripture, their work accordingly being as much a continuation as an expounding of the latter. But, progressively within the *Mishnah* itself the need was felt to base the expansion of the Law on Scriptural authority and that in turn led evermore to forced appropriations of Scripture deviating from its literal sense. Eventually, this process went so far that, in the Babylonian *Gemara*, consciousness of the difference between the natural meaning of Scriptural text and its authoritative Talmudic interpretation emerged into the light of the day: while the rights of the former were now also formulaically affirmed, they were not applied. Geiger ended on a dialectical note, wondering what might have happened had this Talmudic self-consciousness been allowed to develop further instead of the Talmudic discussion closed due to external events, and then eventually reified.⁵⁷⁸

Schorsch, however, has interpreted the whole train of this thematic in Geiger’s early scholarship as “the most formidable assault of the century on the validity of rabbinic exegesis.”⁵⁷⁹ He also held that, “the aggressive intent of Geiger’s research is self-evident, namely to discredit the authority of the *halakhic* system.”⁵⁸⁰ For, if rabbinic Scriptural exegesis was truly as arbitrary as Geiger claimed and had demonstrated it to be, then it could be discarded as having failed the standard of reliability of the rabbis themselves. Schorsch thus compared Geiger’s ‘negative’ achievement to Strauss: just as the latter had delegitimized traditional Christianity by prying the Christ of faith from Jesus, Geiger had divided the rabbinic tradition from Biblical authority.⁵⁸¹ According to Schorsch, however, this ‘negative’ Geiger eventually yielded to the much more positive one of his magnum opus, the *Urschrift und Übersetzungen der Bibel*.⁵⁸² If the earlier work had served to bolster the scholarly credentials of the negative Enlightenment program of radical reform, in which rabbinic tradition featured as distortion and deterioration, the tenor of this later work took the high road of analyzing it in terms of its contribution to Jewish and Judaic religious development. The obsession with the literal meaning of the Bible was gone: the Bible was inexhaustible and it was the imperative of each generation to make it truly its own. Moreover, it was the Pharisees—associated with the rabbinic tradition—and not the Sadducees, with their avowed textual rigorism, who were the true heroes of religious progress, for they’d turned Biblical inspiration in a more democratic and spiritual direction beyond priestly prerogative. It was the dialectical struggle and progress that had been encapsulated in the construction of the rabbinic tradition. Schorsch thus concluded, “If the rabbinic research of the young Geiger was fertilized by the work of Strauss, the *Urschrift* bears the impress of Ferdinand Christian Baur.”⁵⁸³

⁵⁷⁷ See Geiger, “Das Verhältnis des natürlichen Schriftsinnes zur thalmudischen Schriftdeutung” in *WZJT* 5 (1844), 53-81, 234-259

⁵⁷⁸ For Geiger’s précis of the argument, see *ibid*, 258-9.

⁵⁷⁹ Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 315.

⁵⁸⁰ *Ibid*, 315.

⁵⁸¹ See *ibid*, 316.

⁵⁸² Abraham Geiger, *Urschrift und Übersetzungen der Bibel in ihrer Abhängigkeit von der innern Entwicklung des Judenthums* (Breslau, 1857).

⁵⁸³ Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 319.

Schorsch's interest here seems to be to suggest that Geiger's later work "yielded a patrimony for Reform drawn, from the ranks of normative Judaism", i.e. that he too had moved in the direction that had led to Conservative Judaism.⁵⁸⁴ It is an interesting thesis; the problem with it is that it simply can't be right. As Heschel has decisively shown, Geiger's championing of the Pharisees over the Sadducees had deep roots. Throughout his career, he emphasized exegesis of Scripture and Tradition that moved beyond the reified letter in order, as inspired by the spiritual progress represented in them, to interpret and fulfill this progress in the present.⁵⁸⁵ Already during the protracted Titkin-affair that had plagued his assumption of his rabbinic office in Breslau, he'd been accused of being a Sadducee-Karaite. But, as he already noted in the opening volume of his journal in 1835, he'd favored the Pharisees as against the Sadducees. As he put it, describing the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes in their respective philosophical-exegetical attitudes, "one wanted either to have the Scriptural letter say what the time said and this is what the Pharisees did, or one held fast to the letter itself and wanted to have the time say, what it said, and this is what the Sadducees did..."⁵⁸⁶ Geiger argued that if there was much about the Pharisees that was unappetizing, including all manner of supernatural conceptions—angels, demons, resurrection, immortality, etc.—and a harshening of the law, the Sadducee rejection of all this was based not on an independent standpoint but rather "rigid immobility". But, if they might look better because of this in retrospect, the sound exegetical principle was that of the Pharisees.⁵⁸⁷ A year later, he wrote a review of "Karaite Literature", in which argued that the Biblical rigorism of the Karaites—the Bible and no other or more authority—had very soon moved away from the enlivening "principle of free exegesis" and embraced a kind of traditionalism much more damaging than the rabbinic: one which posited its own authoritative tradition as the work of a specially authorized class of interpreters going all the way back to Moses—a kind of "Catholic-Jewish clerisy!"—and which, moreover, borrowed heavily from the rabbinic tradition and was much more rigid and ritualistic to boot.⁵⁸⁸ Finally, writing in 1835 of how Christian demonization of the Talmud and Rabbinic literature was not episodic but founded on a fundamental inability to acknowledge its underlying developmental principle, he wrote: "For the principle of tradition, to which the whole Talmudic and Rabbinic literature owes its rise, is nothing other than the principle of persistent perfection and development according to the time, nothing other than the principle, not to be slaves to the letter of the Bible, but to create again and again by its spirit and by that of the spiritual consciousness pervading the

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid, 317. Elsewhere, he'd shown that Geiger explicitly confronted Zunz in the 1840's for abandoning reform in order to give the past a "normative" role. As we'll see, this never changed. See *ibid*, 276-8.

⁵⁸⁵ Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, 37. Heschel herself however did not want to see any large divergence between her views and those of Schorsch. She mostly emphasized what he said about the 'later Geiger'. And, she changed his line about Geiger having established a 'patrimony' for Reform from within 'normative Judaism' to say: "Ismar Schorsch rightly notes" that Geiger's rehabilitation of the Pharisees and the Talmud "provided reform with an authentic basis in history." *Ibid*, 97.

⁵⁸⁶ Geiger, "Die wissenschaftliche Ausbildung des Judentums in den zwei ersten Jahrhunderten des zweiten Jahrtausends bis zum Auftreten des Maimonides", *WZJT* 1 (1835), 36. The three parties (Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes) represented for him the earlier Jewish version of the omnipresent philosophical attitudes of "rationalism, supernaturalism and mysticism." See *ibid*, 35. The Essene exegetical methodology emanating from its philosophical attitude was to leave the letter behind altogether in favor of a higher wisdom than that available to the ordinary man through exegesis.

⁵⁸⁷ See *ibid*, 34-37.

⁵⁸⁸ Geiger, "Karäische Literatur" in *WZJT* 2 (1836), 100-1, 109-113, 116-118.

synagogue.”⁵⁸⁹ In other words, Geiger was not attacking the rabbinic tradition for its arbitrary—what, he instead called ‘free’—exegesis; *quite the opposite*. The problem for him was rather the ahistorical traditionalization that characterized such exegesis: its reconciling and homogenizing maneuvers of reading present innovation into the past. For such traditionalization invited ever greater reification, occluding and impeding spiritual progress.

Hence, in his article on Talmudic exegesis, discussed above, Geiger began his critique of the manner in which the rabbis had sought to authorize their legal innovations by forcing them on Scripture by putting the phenomenon in the context of all sacral History: the awe-inspiring spiritual creativity and originality of the Prophets had been gradually absorbed and incorporated, but, by the same token, dialectically diminished thereby. One now followed their work as tradition but was *ipso facto* less able to follow their example to make tradition truly and originally one’s own:

This is the whole of history, that at first the spiritually higher principle appears in humanity in its immediacy, in its naïve fullness and the struggle consists then in that with the lower, still completely unilluminated principle. The victory comes for that side that must succeed, but still not in that higher clarity in which the spiritual life completely penetrates humanity in its full independence, but only in the time-bound form then utilized by the Spirit to represent and make itself visible, tied to the form in which it at the time of the struggle had been revealed. This form, actually merely the carrier of the idea, frees itself then ever more from that which animates it, which first gives it worth. It becomes itself independent: in the beginning [if] still in transparent fashion, so that the moving and driving element in it shines through, it becomes ever sealed-off, ever darker. And the Spirit comes to be lost to it until it finally prepares for itself a new place in another territory and begins now the fight anew with the of course not savage [there has been progress!] but nonetheless mute (*entgeistert*) form to effect gradually the higher reconciliation of the animating inner and its outer appearance.⁵⁹⁰

The problem with rabbinic exegesis then, to repeat, was that its traditionalization fed reification: instead of historical consciousness of the Spirit struggling to express itself in a higher form—a struggle of which rabbinic innovations were themselves *de facto* instantiations!—the inspired innovation of tradition was instead forced on and equated with earlier forms of revelation. Hence, the very idea of spiritual progress in the tradition was denied. The ultimate damage to spiritual progress was summed up by Geiger in his essay on “The Task of the Present”, which he concluded with a lugubrious historical schema of progressive reification. As the Prophetic time came to a close, the greatest part of the chain of spiritual creativity and freedom they’d demonstrate as the meaning and source of religious life was given over to the reified form of the time. With the codification and reification of the law, another chain of living religion had been discarded and then came the post-Talmudic rabbinic epigones who did not want an inch of anything new beyond that already set in stone.⁵⁹¹ Geiger had already written with bitter derision in this essay of the latter day rabbis: he poured scorn on the claim that they represented the

⁵⁸⁹ Geiger, “Der Kampf christlicher Theologen gegen die bürgerliche Gleichstellung der Juden, namentlich mit Bezug auf Anton Theodor Hartmann” in *WZJT* (1835), 349. This sentence is in part also cited in Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, 83, where I was first alerted to it.

⁵⁹⁰ Geiger, “Geiger, “Das Verhältnis des natürlichen Schriftsinnes zur thalmudischen Schriftdeutung”, 56-7

⁵⁹¹ See Geiger, “Die Aufgabe der Gegenwart”, 34-5.

continuation of the tradition of “Jewish science and scholarship”. He argued they were mostly ignorant even of the rabbinic tradition (not to mention the Bible).⁵⁹² He saw them accordingly as the synecdoche of what the reification of Jewish tradition had led to: bereft of any critical historical sense, they lived in a “long, long present”, in which the very idea of development had become nonsensical, “Moses and the Prophets, the Talmudists and the Geonim and the Rabbis stood all before them as one and spoke, if in somewhat differing tongues and expressions, the very same thing.”⁵⁹³

31.

The remedy for Geiger was clear: *not* a derogation of ‘Tradition’, but a *critical historicization, reconstruction and affirmation of it* that would make visible and available beyond reification the line of spiritual development within it for the present. He’d argued in the very opening pages of his journal in 1835 that the Historical present was riven by two opposing tendencies, a synthetic one that poetically built a totality out of all inherited conceptions (Reason) and a critical one that put destructively to the test all presumptions and representations, speculative and historical (Understanding). But these tendencies were bound to unite and bound to do so on the site of History. For, Tradition⁵⁹⁴ could not be gainsaid: the present could not be made to spring rootless as Athena out of Zeus’s head. Rather, Tradition was the immanent medium of development leading to the present: understanding our development in this way, here continuous, there revolutionary, we built and perfected ourselves as an organ of it. However, our construction out of Tradition had to be a critical historical reconstruction of it, for the tendency of Tradition had been to read all that was added to it in the course of time backwards into the origin, to eternalize itself as one. No wonder that the critical spirit now wanted to discard it all as one rotten bloc, for History had been a scene of development precisely because it had been one of overcoming much that had to be overcome rather than glorified. The task then was to reconstruct critically the line of Historical development and Spiritual progress, for only *this* line deserved the name of Tradition.⁵⁹⁵ As Geiger put it at the end of the essay, it had to become clear that Judaism was something that had developed gradually, that of all that was now held sacred, “much is not Tradition (*Überlieferung*), much is not ascertained through sound exegesis [i.e. the ‘free’, historicist kind], but arisen in the course of time, what the time has within it also again to overcome (*aufzuheben*).”⁵⁹⁶ In the same issue and at that same point in which he was beating back the inability of Christian theologians to understand the Talmud as a source of religious development, he proudly proclaimed that Jewish scholars themselves had persistently understood and made a difference between “Tradition (*Tradition*)” as something living and “Talmud” as merely the consensus instantiation of it.⁵⁹⁷

Of what in concrete historical terms did Geiger’s critical reconstruction of the immanent development within Tradition consist? Tradition constituted a dialectical struggle in which the driving force of spiritual progress was nonetheless also pervasively traditionalized, reified and *canonized*. But, who were its subjects and what was the meaning of the History they had

⁵⁹² Ibid, 24.

⁵⁹³ Ibid, 20.

⁵⁹⁴ I am writing ‘Tradition’; Geiger wrote “History”, but by the close of the essay it was quite clear that he meant by this ‘Tradition’.

⁵⁹⁵ See Geiger, “Das Judentum unserer Zeit und die Bestrebungen in ihm”, 1-3.

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid, 10.

⁵⁹⁷ See Geiger, “Der Kampf christlicher Theologen gegen die bürgerliche Gleichstellung der Juden”, 349.

enacted? In tackling these questions, we are again catapulted to the conclusion he built on clear Baurian ground. And, it was not simply that he interpreted the critical historical unraveling of the dialectical conflicts and tendencies homogenized in Tradition as the making available of its ideal potential for the present, i.e. as the ultimate departure in sacral History. The character of the dialectical Historical struggle he projected, the principles he presented in oppositional embrace, bore the clear imprint of the Tübingen perspective. Geiger's History of course was not a battle between Jewish and Pauline Christianity, but two forces within the Judaic heritage which however also became fully thematized in the Second Temple context: the Sadducean principle was ritualistic, priestly, aristocratic and hierarchical, while the Pharisaic was more spiritual, participatory, democratic and egalitarian.⁵⁹⁸

The difference from Baur here was that Geiger portrayed the Pharisees as not only the more universal/religious but also the more 'national' party.⁵⁹⁹ But, this Pharisaic characteristic was turned into a virtue, 'national' was read as democratic. Geiger's real difference from Baur lay elsewhere, namely, in the fact that he painted on an incomparably larger canvas. The focus of Baur and the *Tübingen Schule* was primarily on the construction of the New Testament canon and the consolidation of the Catholic Church as one and the same process. By contrast, Geiger went back to the pre-exilic period to delineate the background of the Pharisaic and Sadducean divide and its role in a first divergent canonization of the Pentateuch. He viewed these divisions as continuing to play a fundamental role in the constitution of the Biblical text, as it remained long an open one redacted and altered according to perspective in early translations as well as in the Hebrew. That, Geiger argued was why the different versions available to us don't agree (the final Hebrew canon was a Pharisaic redaction in the aftermath of the destruction of the Second Temple).⁶⁰⁰ But, it was in the advent and consolidation of rabbinic tradition that Geiger saw the Pharisaic/Sadducee struggle adjudicated in favor of the former, while oppositionally including and reconciling the principle of the latter. Ultimately though, the Sadducee/Pharisaic conflict involved for Geiger not simply an opposition within Jewish, but the fundamental one in Universal History.⁶⁰¹ Hence, he tried to show that this clash had not only a Jewish denouement—an ongoing one!—but had played a determinative role also in the construction of Christianity and the Christian canon, Judaism's Second Temple offshoot.

As Geiger explained it, the origins of the Sadducee/Pharisaic opposition had their roots in the pre-exilic context of political division between the states of Israel and Judah. Israel, a state mired in a pagan environment became religiously embroiled in a regimen of ceremonial purification focused on temple, priesthood, sacrifice, circumcision, all to demarcate monotheism

⁵⁹⁸ Heschel, while acknowledging the Tübingen impact, did not really want to see Geiger as having mostly turned Baur on his head. As she put it, "Rather than trying to reconstitute Judaism after the model of the dominant religion, Christianity, he presented a radical revision of both Islam and Christianity." See Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, 62. In the Historical sense, of course, in which he presented Christianity as a paganized Pharisaic Judaism, this is true. On the other hand, it was the shift within the trajectory of Protestant theological historicism that made the Tübingen schemata readily available to Geiger and other Jewish scholars for their own competitive idealizing purposes. Namely, as I've already suggested, once the romantic celebration of the Incarnation as 'infinite consciousness' and of Christ as God-man dissipated and the focus shifted to Jesus's moral perfection, Protestant historicism accordingly shifted to grounds Jewish scholars could readily accept and win on. Later in the text, Heschel herself describes Geiger's framing of the Pharisee/Sadducee difference—religious egalitarianism vs. priestly hierarchy—as "classic German Protestantism". See *ibid*, 148.

⁵⁹⁹ See Heschel's discussion in *ibid*, 108.

⁶⁰⁰ See *ibid*, 81-2.

⁶⁰¹ See *ibid*, 105, 154. For instance, Geiger described the Protestant/Catholic divide as paradigmatically a later Pharisee/Sadducee one.

and reject pagan influence. By contrast, the state of Judah, swimming in calmer spiritual waters, focused on strengthening devotion and expanding holiness. These divergent traditions had been essentially reconciled with one another in the course of the Exile, but those who did not accept this reconciliation and insisted on continuing the Israelite traditions became the Samaritans. The Samaritan Pentateuch, Geiger argued, thus represented a divergent encapsulation of the traditions of Israel incorporated and reconciled into the Jewish Bible.⁶⁰² In the Second Temple period, Geiger argued, this dynamic opposition became fully thematized within the Jewish context in the conflict between the Sadducees and the Pharisees. This was, according to Geiger, fundamentally a political struggle with religious consequences: the Sadducees were the priestly, aristocratic party associated with the Hasmonean and Herodian dynasties whose primary concern was to preserve priestly prerogatives over the people and so stressed above all purity, temple ritual and the ineluctability of priestly mediation. Officially in power, but with their social and religious authority seriously challenged, their ethos was a restorationist one.⁶⁰³ The Pharisees on the other hand, Geiger contended, had come to the fore as a populist, national movement during the period of the Maccabean revolts. They were opposed to the politico-religious elite: Geiger envisioned them as the voice of the respectable *Bürgertum*.⁶⁰⁴ The Pharisaic tendency was to argue that the Jewish tradition belonged to the people, not the priests, and that its spiritual message not only allowed but was founded on their full participation. Hence, their concern was holiness as a point of commonality and fellowship rather than demarcation, concentration and mediation.⁶⁰⁵

One of Geiger's greatest interpretive innovations was to move away from the classic definition of the Sadducee/Pharisee difference put forward by Josephus, according to which while the latter were carriers and proponents of the Oral Law, the Sadducees rejected the idea and accepted no authority outside Scripture. Geiger had himself seconded this view in his early work on the Jewish origins of Islam,⁶⁰⁶ but now he argued that the Sadducees had their own Oral Law according to which they instituted all of their ceremonial pre-occupations, for it would have been impossible to do so without one. The difference was not that the Pharisees had, while the Sadducees did not have an Oral Law, but in their respective versions of it.⁶⁰⁷ The Pharisee

⁶⁰² See *ibid*, 93-4.

⁶⁰³ See *ibid*, 83-85, 89, 95, 101.

⁶⁰⁴ See *ibid*, 101. This characterization which, as we've seen, later commentators like Funkenstein saw as thoroughly motivated by contemporary Jewish self-projections and as leading to risible consequences, was more than a Geigerian conceit. It was a common one amongst *Wissenschaft* scholars: Graetz also viewed the Jewish middle-class as the devotees of Hillel. Christian scholars at the time, however, seriously pushed back on this idea and less because they found it risible but because they took it quite seriously and did not want to see the Pharisees as representatives of a *bourgeoisie* living a life at peace with itself. Even Kuenen, a sympathetic reader of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* scholars amongst Christian theologians wanted to see Geiger, whom he called a "master", as having made his greatest error on this point, namely, because the crucial point about Pharisaism was its "insufficiency". See Kuenen, *National Religions and Universal Religions*, 215-8. Protestant historicist scholarship simply could not fathom the Pharisees as innovators; they needed to continue to see them as fanatic legalists, because *religious legalism* was *ipso facto* fanatic, i.e. unrealizable, meaning Christianity was the only way out. On the responses of Christian theologians to Geiger, see Heschel, *op. cit.*, 186-228. By the way, critical Protestants and Jewish reformers were largely agreed when it came to the emotional unsustainability of religious legalism. Jewish reformers, like Geiger, simply believed that a devotional monotheism was the true telos of Judaism and Jewish history, and that circumvention and substitution of the Law by way of faith in a God-man represented no more than retrogression into paganism, itself a sign that the world as much as Judaism was as yet not prepared for the devotional monotheism that could only come as a fully critical one.

⁶⁰⁵ See *ibid*, 83-105

⁶⁰⁶ See Geiger, *Judaism and Islam*, 35.

⁶⁰⁷ See Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, 91-2.

attitude was innovative, appropriating Scripture and tradition for the present in spiritually egalitarian and democratic fashion; the Sadducean attitude was authoritarian, proffering Scripture as absolute authority beyond which one could not go, i.e. to which the present had to be made to conform, and so appropriating it in a literalist manner. That's why the mistake had arisen that there was no Sadducean Oral Law. Geiger's picture of the dialectical competition between the older *Halakhah* of the Sadducees and the younger one of the Pharisees as leading to the formation and ultimate consolidation of the rabbinic tradition brings up once more a Baurian parallel. As we saw, Baur interpreted the whole range and trajectory of the work of the *Tübingen Schule* to suggest that Jewish and Pauline Christianity never appeared in Early (or later) Christian history in pure form, but rather always in varying degrees of reconciled opposition, of dialectically developing equilibria. Geiger made a comparable point in the case of the Pharisees and Sadducees: the Pharisees did not gainsay the role of the temple and the priests, but interpreted it in such a manner as to discount the mediating and hierarchical claims made on their behalf; the Sadducees also changed over time, relinquishing for instance after the destruction of the Second Temple their rejection of resurrection.⁶⁰⁸ In the Tübingen schema, Pauline Christianity had to achieve ultimately the upper hand in its position vis-à-vis Jewish Christianity, if something called Christianity was to move forward. For Geiger, this was true of Pharisaic Judaism: the consolidation of the rabbinic tradition meant its now clear dominance over the Sadducee remnant.⁶⁰⁹ Of course, one could argue that the progressive traditionalizing reification Geiger diagnosed in the rabbinic tradition as sign of the continuing operation of the Sadducee principle, which, as condition of the very triumph of the Pharisaic, made it more and more a subject of authoritarian reification ('forced interpretation' would then be read as the dialectical reconciliation at this stage).

However, in his later work, Geiger increasingly moved away from an interpretation of creeping rigidification in rabbinic tradition as a problematic within Jewish history. Namely, he came more and more to see Judaic development after the Second Temple period as driven no longer by a dialectical struggle between the Pharisaic vs. the Sadducee principles in Jewish history, but by a dialectical struggle between Judaism and Christianity in world history. Christian persecution and the infiltration of Christian ideas into Judaism had led to a reification of rabbinism as means of demarcation and defense.⁶¹⁰ But, in highly complex fashion, the dialectical Historical struggle between Judaism and Christianity remained still a Pharisaism vs. Sadducean one. For, if in the Jewish tradition, the Pharisaic principle had come to assert in rabbinism its dominance over the Sadducean one, the opposite course had transpired in Christianity: there, the older had come ultimately to replace the newer, the Sadducean, the Pharisaic. To the chagrin of Christian scholars, it became the marker of the Geigerian paradigm to say that Jesus had been no more than a Pharisee, and had said nothing new. What's more, Jesus had not even been a particularly enlightened Pharisee, compared for instance to Hillel. His messianic claims and shenanigans had shown an immaturity: the personalization of the idea raised false expectations and thus merely proved the general unpreparedness of the time for its

⁶⁰⁸ See *ibid*, 95, 90.

⁶⁰⁹ See *ibid*, 100-4.

⁶¹⁰ See *ibid*, 164, 181-5. As we've seen, this interpretation of rabbinic self-defense was already in the Wolfian schema, though not spelled out as being contra Christianity. For Geiger's searing critique of Christianity as virtually the other of civilization, see Geiger, *Judaism and Its History*, 154-61, particularly, 157: "The Christian Religion, the Church representing it, has always fought against science..."

true ultimate fulfillment. They also helped provoke Jesus's crucifixion.⁶¹¹ Jesus's messianic mission was thus a Pharisaic one pitched at the Pharisaic Jewish populace; but, it found few takers amongst the "educated and intelligent" middle-class, certainly not in Palestine.⁶¹² It was as a martyred, *fulfilled messiah* that Jesus first started becoming interesting, not to the Palestinian, but rather to the Hellenized Jews around the Empire: that idea morphed, through the Hellenistic philosophical background, into the incarnated *Logos* on one side vs. original sin ('man the sinner') on the other. The logical consequence from there was the abrogation of the Law, salvation through belief in the expiating (martyred-resurrected) *Logos* and mission to the gentiles.⁶¹³ It was Paul who carried through this final step, though this was a mission to the gentiles that was made possible and succeeded because the Jewish message had already been essentially paganized for the purpose.⁶¹⁴ Nonetheless, while the Pharisaic populace did not embrace Christianity, another group of Jews did and definitely determined its character, namely, the Sadducees! After the destruction of the Temple, the Sadducees lost their *raison d'être* within the Jewish tradition and many hence flocked to Christianity, wherein they simply replaced their idea of mediatory role of the priestly class with the Christ, the divine mediator. In Christianity, it was the priestly force that had won out.⁶¹⁵ Geiger's critical unraveling then 'unlocked' the trajectory of a panoply of canons: the rabbinic tradition yielded the ideal possibility of the revival and full critical realization of Pharisaic Judaism. The Christian tradition was proven by contrast a highly compromised, in which the regressive force had won the day and which thus spelled a dead end (though Geiger saw a dialectical nearing of Christianity to Judaism in the Protestant Reformation, which he read as Pharisaic in character).⁶¹⁶

It was an uncanny position Geiger had ended up at: his projection of Judaism as the very telos of modern European civilization, *of History*, demonstrated growing Jewish confidence and self-affirmation beyond mere apologetics, pitched in one of the highest markers of this civilization: critical historical scholarship. But, it was a growing intellectual self-confidence that went hand in hand with growing bitterness, for what had been 'demonstrated' on the scholarly plane found only limited reformist resonance within the contemporary Jewish community and from Christian scholars a mix of irritated polemical dismissal and, more infuriating, polite acknowledgment and praise that was in fact unwillingness to rethink. In the curious ways of history, it was out of such an emotional trajectory—growing Jewish self-confidence and even Jewish devotional fervor hand in hand with growing bitterness—that Ignaz Goldziher founded *Islamwissenschaft*, meaning a teleological idealization of the Islamic heritage.

32.

We are now in a position to begin pivoting from *Wissenschaft des Judentums* to *Islamwissenschaft*, for the latter emerged directly from the former. In Goldziher's thinking and scholarship, the Jewish and Islamic heritages were sister monotheistic traditions, both with the potential for historicist idealization. As a young scholar and up to the middle of his thirties, Goldziher privileged the Jewish heritage as the one slated for the purification of monotheism. But, by the age of forty, he had, because of untoward historical circumstances, definitively

⁶¹¹ See Geiger, *Judaism and Its History*, 130-5, 212.

⁶¹² See *ibid*, 134, 137-9.

⁶¹³ See *ibid*, 139-44.

⁶¹⁴ See *ibid*, 144-51. See also, Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, 117, 151.

⁶¹⁵ See *ibid*, 167, 177.

⁶¹⁶ See *ibid*, 104-5.

shifted his reformist scholarly project from the Jewish to the Islamic heritage, from *Wissenschaft des Judentums* to *Islamwissenschaft*. However, the study of Islamic history and, above all, Jewish history under Islam had already taken deep root within *Wissenschaft des Judentums* before this time. Nonetheless, as Heschel has argued in the case of Geiger and more generally, the burgeoning study of Islamic history within *Wissenschaft des Judentums* remained predominantly a catalyst for Jewish historicism.⁶¹⁷ In other words, it was not Islamic historicism, not as yet *Islamwissenschaft*. Its primary thematics were: 1) the Jewish universal monotheistic mission; 2) much more important from the standpoint of scholarly activity and realization, the idea that Jewish impact on the advent of Islam *and* Jewish religious and cultural co-existence and flourishing in the Islamic context marked the latter a crucial one in the history of humanity. In other words, again, Jewish history—religious agency and cultural development—was now to be pitched in terms of Universal History. But, *Wissenschaft* scholars projected Islamic history for this purpose, in a manner unprecedented within European scholarship, as equal to that of Christian Europe in the history of humanity and in terms of relative tolerance in fact privileged over it.

This is a subject that has garnered increasing attention from scholars over the last decade.⁶¹⁸ My treatment of it here can only be schematic. I will stay with Geiger and briefly discuss his early work on the Jewish contribution to the rise of Islam and the way in which it presented the Early Islamic context, essentially bereft of Christian participation, as a distinct trajectory within the history of humanity. Raising the status of Islam in this fashion actually led eventually to a protracted century-long competition between Jewish and Christian scholars as to which party had exercised the greatest influence on its formation. Drawing some conclusions about the Orientalist achievements of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, I will place them within contemporary scholarly discussions of the meaning and motivations of the Islamophilia that broadly characterized it. I argue that the Jewish experience under Islam, the so-called ‘Jews of Islam’,⁶¹⁹ provided *Wissenschaft* scholars with a model and a precedent for autonomous Jewish integration: the study of Islamic history was used to shine a spotlight on a context in which Jews were given the opportunity to develop themselves religiously and culturally by means of the highest civilization of the time, contributing to it and human progress in remarkable manner in the process. The Jews of Islam, particularly the Sephardim, answered to the problem of double-accommodation. I will finally contrast the cultural context and tendency of *such* study of Islam in *Wissenschaft des Judentums* with that of *Islamwissenschaft* in Goldziher.

Let me return, however, to Geiger. In the closing pages of the first volume of his *Judaism and Its History*, we get one of the most strident expressions of the Jewish mission

⁶¹⁷ See *ibid*, 61. See also her lecture, “Die Wissenschaft des Judentums und der Islam: ein Vorbild für Deutschland im 21. Jahrhundert?” in this spirit, available on-line at: http://www2.hu-berlin.de/kollegium-juedische-studien/pdfs/aktuelles/aktuelles/Heschel_Vortrag.pdf While I agree with the argument that the study of Islam by *Wissenschaft* scholars was broadly merely a means of Jewish historicism, I outline two quite different strains in it, the Jewish missionary (proving Judaism as ‘religion’) vs. the Jewish Orientalist (proving Jewish capacity cultural integration).

⁶¹⁸ See for instance, Martin Kramer (ed.), *The Jewish Discovery of Islam: Studies in Honor of Bernard Lewis* (Tel Aviv, 1999). Ivan Kalmar and Derek Penslar (eds.), *Orientalism and the Jews* (Waltham, 2005). Reimund Leicht & Gad Freudenthal, *Studies on Steinschneider: Moritz Steinschneider and the Emergence of the Science of Judaism in Nineteenth Century Germany*. Ismar Schorsch, “Converging Cognates: the Intersection of Jewish and Islamic Studies in Nineteenth Century Germany” in *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*, Vol. 55 (2010), 3-36.

⁶¹⁹ This is of course the title of Bernard Lewis’s very interesting book on the subject: Lewis, *The Jews of Islam* (Princeton, 1984). I have been told that there is something offensive about the designation, ‘the Jews of Islam’. I do not agree and will happily continue to use the term.

theory, i.e. the Historical explanation of the destruction of the Second Temple and loss of Jewish statehood. Beset now by the most trying and depressing circumstances, by forces intent on vanquishing them, above all Christianity, which Geiger described in totalitarian, almost diabolical terms, the Jews survived and did not lose their sense of purpose.⁶²⁰ In fact, they passed on their monotheism to a new people on the stage of world history, the Arabs, with whom in short time they cooperated to revive and extend the Greek philosophical and scientific tradition. They proved themselves original inventors and contributors to this new civilization that kept science and culture alive in the Middle Ages and they went beyond the Arabs themselves in transmitting this legacy everywhere, namely, back to Europe.⁶²¹ Geiger did not mince words about what Judaism had given to Islam: “Whatever good elements Islam contains, whatever enduring idea appears in it, it has taken over from Judaism.”⁶²² Islam then was Judaism’s world-historical answer to Christianity in a double-sense: not only had Judaism salvaged monotheism through Islam. While Christianity had all but wiped out science and culture in Europe, the Jews, through their cultivation within Islamic civilization had played a pivotal role in reintroducing these to Europe. It was a concluding riposte that bore the deep marks of Geiger’s decades-long meticulous observation of Protestant theological discourse and his eventual decision to lock horns with it in historicist competition.⁶²³ It was proud, defiant and frankly much more unapologetic than apologetic: for “every world of the Talmud” and “every idea of our teachers of the Middle Ages” Geiger said he could not agree with, “I would not cast away a tittle of them.”⁶²⁴ There was also however a stark bitterness in Geiger’s prose about this epic battle.

Let’s go back now from this late work and its pointed appropriation of Islam for Judaism’s epic mission against Christianity to Geiger’s first book, which was precisely on the Jewish background to the formation of Islam. The work in fact made his scholarly reputation, though he never returned to the subject. It was submitted in Latin for a prize essay on the Jewish sources of the Qur’an in 1832. His Professor at Bonn, the great Arabist, Georg Wilhelm Freytag (1788-1861), set the topic, aware Geiger was working on it. Geiger won the prize and the book was published in German the next year as *What Did Muhammad Take from the Jews?*⁶²⁵ This book though was radically different in tone from the later use Geiger made of it to ground his Jewish missionary thematic. There was nowhere in it any programmatic hint about the Historical Jewish goal of missionizing monotheism nor even about the need to understand Jewish history or the clearly momentous Jewish-Muhammad exchange from a world-historical perspective.⁶²⁶ In

⁶²⁰ See Geiger, *Judaism and Its History*, 156-168.

⁶²¹ See *ibid*, 167-72

⁶²² *Ibid*, 169.

⁶²³ We’ve already noted one example of this, namely, Geiger’s essay, “Der Kampf christlicher Theologen gegen die bürgerliche Gleichstellung der Juden” in the first volume of his journal in 1835. Tracking Geiger’s almost watch-dog like monitoring of Christian theological discourse on Judaism and the increasing bitterness his bids to confront it brought him are major and omnipresent themes of Heschel’s book. See for instance, Heschel, Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus, 63-75, 184-5. We’ve already noted such examples also in his *Judaism and Its History*, whose first volume was flanked by a critical appraisal of Strauss and Renan on the life of Jesus and its second volume by a critical reply to Holtzmann’s review of the first volume. See Geiger, *Judaism and Its History*, 179-203, 389-406. See also note 521 above.

⁶²⁴ Geiger, *ibid*, 168.

⁶²⁵ See Abraham Geiger, *Was hat Muhammad aus dem Judentum aufgenommen?* (Bonn, 1833). See also, Heschel, Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus, 29-30. And Moshe Pearlman’s Introduction to a reprint of the turn of the twentieth century translation into English as: Geiger, *Judaism and Islam*, VII-XXXII.

⁶²⁶ I think Heschel has read Geiger’s early work on Islam too much through his later Jewish missionary prism of taking credit for it: see Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, 51, 61-2.

fact, though Jewish interlocutors, even advisors were presented as Muhammad's major sources in the constitution of the Qur'an, Geiger's highly interesting characterization of Muhammad's interaction with the Jewish tribes militated against any conception of the latter as 'religious agents'.

Moreover, Geiger himself was as interested in demarcating official Judaism from the oral and popular Arab Jewish appropriation of the rabbinic tradition that he argued Muhammad loosely adopted and adapted for his purposes, as he was for taking credit for Islam on behalf of Judaism. He noted in the closing paragraph of the book that, after his careful work, not every legend could still be thought of "as a dream of the rabbinical Talmudists" and that "thus for the present we must attribute to some other source everything of which the Jewish origin has not been proved."⁶²⁷ Even for all the mythical legends whose Jewish source could be shown, he was not arguing that this meant they could be "laid upon Judaism":

For, on the one hand, the opinion or legend may originally have had a different signification and it may have reached its present extravagant development in the mouth of the people, and on the other hand, the source itself may have had no obligatory importance, and therefore does not hold the same place with regard to Judaism as the Qur'an holds with regard to Islam. We must distinguish between Judaism and views derived from the Jews; this distinction, however, is unfortunately either from ill-will or ignorance often not made.⁶²⁸

Geiger was of course at this point a young scholar and addressing his work to a European Orientalist public. Analyzing and publishing the subject under the *topos* of the 'Jewish mission' would certainly not have helped to garner for his scholarship the universal praise of Orientalists that did in fact come his way.⁶²⁹ But, that is only half the story. The period in which Geiger was working on the project was precisely the same in which he was vacillating about whether to become a Rabbi or an Orientalist. And, it was in the course of completing it that he finally decided on the former path.⁶³⁰ The work shows us what Geiger might have been like had he become an Orientalist. It proceeds in formulaic manner (as a dissertation is supposed to do), but is charmed by its subject and in many ways 'freer', lacking in the preachy tone that often characterizes Geiger's later scholarship as a Rabbi.

The real subject of the book is simply not the Jewish monotheistic mission. It is an historical examination of religious formation and exchange at a still maturing, lower level of human cultural development. This thematic about low cultural development was as crucial and ubiquitous in the work as that of Muhammad's borrowing from Judaism, for it was used to explain the modus and character of that borrowing. He said "the Jews of that region were amongst the most ignorant, as is shown by the silence of the Talmud concerning them."⁶³¹ He noted that it was clear Muhammad had borrowed Jewish views and narratives orally from Jewish interlocutors and not from Scripture, given all the "mistakes." But, the oral character of transmission "is evident also from the low level of culture to which Muhammad himself and the

⁶²⁷ Geiger, *Judaism and Islam* (Appendix), 160-1.

⁶²⁸ *Ibid.*, 161.

⁶²⁹ See on the quite positive and engaged reception of the book by European Orientalists, Moshe Pearlman in Geiger, *Judaism and Islam*, X-XI.

⁶³⁰ See Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, 30.

⁶³¹ Geiger, *Judaism and Islam*, 6.

Jews of his time and country had attained. The contempt in which the compilers of the Talmud held the Arabian Jews, in spite of their political power, can be attributed only to the ignorance of the latter.”⁶³² Speaking of why Jewish narratives formed the largest part of Muhammad’s borrowing, he argued this was partly because, “draped in the most marvelous garb”, they “lived mostly in the mouth of the people”. And, “partly, because this fairy-tale form appealed to the poetic fancy of Muhammad, and suited the childish level of his contemporaries.”⁶³³ In concluding what had been achieved by the study as well, he noted that besides demonstrating what and how Muhammad had borrowed from Judaism, “the state of culture of the Arabians of that day, and especially of the Arabian Jews, is to some extent made clear...”⁶³⁴ I am not suggesting Geiger was being dismissive of his subject. As he wrote in his diary, he found his close study of the Qur’an fascinating because of all the echoes he found in it of Judaism, “namely, the Judaism that was formed by the rabbis and the fairy-tale whimsicalness of oriental Jews.”⁶³⁵ He was fascinated by this process of religio-cultural transmission and formation at a mostly pre-literate stage: he was fascinated by it as a crucial juncture in the *history of humanity* and one in which Christianity was thankfully mostly absent. What I *am* suggesting is that he was not here identifying with these Arab Jews as Jewish missionaries and representatives of epic Judaism in the way he eventually would.

33.

From the standpoint of later Orientalist and Islamicist scholars, Geiger’s lasting contribution resided in his meticulous, critical philological work, which traced the lines of the rabbinic tradition within the Qur’an and, as Fück emphasized, made certain, unlike later less scrupulous studies, to draw only on strata of rabbinic literature prior to Islam.⁶³⁶ Geiger posited the borrowing of major concepts, like *Jann’atu ‘Adn* (Paradise), *Jahannam* (Hell), *Sakinat* (God’s presence) and *Furqan* (Deliverance).⁶³⁷ He discussed other Qur’anic borrowing from Jewish sources in the areas of the basic conception of monotheism, the narrative and character of Creation, eschatological views and divine judgment, the nature of revelation, angels and demons, prayer and finally attitudes towards moral life.⁶³⁸ For instance, the Qur’an’s famous description of when to begin the fast at daybreak, i.e. when you can discern a white thread from a black thread, Geiger traced to a similar one in the Talmud for the saying of Shema at daybreak, namely, to be said when one can distinguish a blue and a white thread.⁶³⁹ And, the largest part of the text, as already suggested, was pre-occupied with Muhammad’s borrowings of the Biblical narratives from Adam to Solomon, Elijah and beyond.⁶⁴⁰ Here, Geiger argued that Muhammad’s discussions of the Biblical ‘legends’ were for the most part rooted in the rabbinic elaborations of them as orally transmitted. His running concern was all the Prophet’s ‘errors’ and ‘mistakes’.

⁶³² Ibid, 18. Geiger of course did not consider that the ‘silence’ and ‘shunning’ of the Talmud might have been due to the heterodox character of large sections of Arab Jews. This would become an important thesis in later scholarship; see Goitein, *Jews and Arabs*, 49-59. See also, Reuven Firestone, “Jewish Culture in the Formative Period of Islam” in David Biale (ed.), *Cultures of the Jews: A New History* (New York, 2003), 279-81.

⁶³³ Ibid, 73.

⁶³⁴ Ibid, 160.

⁶³⁵ Cited in Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, 30.

⁶³⁶ See Fück, *Die Arabischen Studien in Europa*, 174-5.

⁶³⁷ See for this section, Geiger, *Judaism and Islam*, 30-45.

⁶³⁸ See *ibid*,

⁶³⁹ See *ibid*, 68-9.

⁶⁴⁰ See *ibid*, 75-155.

Muhammad, for instance, Geiger argued, seemed quite confused about the exact character of Jacob's genealogical relationship to Abraham.⁶⁴¹ But Geiger also put emphasis on those cases where he believed Muhammad had clearly adapted Biblical figures to craft precedents for this own mission: he saw this particularly in the case of Noah, made into an admonisher who works no miracles but points to the punishment of God, and Abraham, made into a preacher.⁶⁴²

More important from our historiographic standpoint is Geiger's historical focus in the early part of the book on the dynamics of religious transmission and formation in Muhammad's encounter with the Jews and Jewish tradition. It has to be said that the Prophet Muhammad comes off somewhat better in Geiger's account than his Arab Jewish interlocutors. He is portrayed as a sincere, religious soul bedeviled from all sides as he tries to make out the true revelation of God. The Jews were a real political force in Muhammad's Arabia; moreover, though ignorant in relative terms, their "intellectual superiority" was also clearly manifest, in that they were the carriers and representatives of a complex, sacred tradition that Muhammad himself wanted to represent.⁶⁴³ Altogether aware of both these factors, Muhammad did his utmost to win the Jews to his cause: not least he changed the *Qibla* (direction of prayer) to Jerusalem and instituted the fast of *Ashura* (same as the Day of Atonement).⁶⁴⁴ But, most Jews essentially mocked his efforts and even played jokes on him, which he didn't fully get and turned ultimately into invective against them. When they were told of God's need of a loan (Qur'an II. 246), the Prophet reported they said 'God is poor'. Geiger pointed to Qur'anic *Tafsir* to suggest the Jews had asked rhetorically, so is God poor that he needs a loan; but, this was turned into revelation they'd said God is poor.⁶⁴⁵ Ultimately, the irremediable threat the Jews posed to his mission turned Muhammad against them; but, he nonetheless could also not do fully without them. For, to skeptical Arabs, he cited them as witnesses of the truth of his narratives and the miracles in them, which he himself did not perform, while, on the other hand, he was accused of taking his ideas from them.⁶⁴⁶ Geiger's engaging picture of the harried Muhammad emphasized his "poetic nature",⁶⁴⁷ spoke of his "spiritual capacity and knowledge",⁶⁴⁸ the first in a positive, the second in a negative sense and, in a serious innovation for the Orientalist scholarship of the time, described him movingly as a true religious personality. The dominant European view of the Prophet Muhammad as a deceiver and calculating schemer, Geiger said, was "a sign of persistent prejudice and total misunderstanding of the human heart":

Muhammad seems rather to have been a genuine enthusiast, who was himself convinced of his divine mission, and to whom the union of all religions appeared necessary to the welfare of mankind. He so fully worked himself into this idea in thought, in feeling and in action, that every event seemed to him a divine inspiration. Everything necessary to

⁶⁴¹ See *ibid*, 108-9

⁶⁴² See *ibid*, 87, 99.

⁶⁴³ *Ibid*, 7; see *ibid*, 4-7.

⁶⁴⁴ See *ibid*, 14 and 26, note 1. Both were eventually abrogated.

⁶⁴⁵ See *ibid*, 11-12. It was clear Geiger took, despite himself, a good deal of pleasure in the Jewish mockery he described. He did it with great zest and hilarity. See *ibid*, 8-13.

⁶⁴⁶ See *ibid*, 26-9.

⁶⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 21.

⁶⁴⁸ See Geiger, *Was hat Muhammad aus dem Judenthume aufgenommen*, 200. The English translation has "intellectual power" for *Geistesfähigkeit*, which is of course not incorrect, but spiritual capacity is more appropriate for the context. Geiger is summing up and saying that the level of Muhammad's 'spiritual capacity and knowledge (*Kenntnis*)' has been shown, meaning one positively, the other not so. 'Intellectual power' blurs the distinction.

the attainment of his aim stood out clearly before him, just because this one idea ruled him. He could think of nothing but what fitted in with it, could feel nothing but what harmonized with it, could do nothing but what was demanded by it. There is no question here of design...⁶⁴⁹

This is an oft-discussed passage and rightly so. I hope the reader can recognize the Schleiermacherian notes in it.⁶⁵⁰ But, there is another passage that I find even more illuminating. It discussed whether Muhammad could really have borrowed so freely from Judaism, whether he was not worried about his own lack of originality. It was the only passage of the book that openly criticized Christianity, but by praising Muhammad's borrowing and thus devaluing the obsession with originality, it also subtly undercut the emotional underpinnings of the universal Jewish mission. Muhammad, Geiger said, was a reformer and perfecter of religion: "he desired no peculiarity, no new religion which should oppose all that had gone before; he sought rather to establish one founded on the ancient creeds purified from later changes and additions."⁶⁵¹ Muhammad simply considered himself as having had bestowed on him the one revelation God had dispensed before; 'purified' agreement with earlier Scriptures was his goal:

With regard to Judaism in particular Muhammad found no special difficulty. We have already observed that much in it accorded with the Prophet's poetic spirit, and who can now assert that any objection to an agreement with Judaism would have been raised by Muhammad's contemporaries? In those days people had not reached such a pitch of so-called enlightenment, as to consider the followers of one creed only as in the right, and to regard everything belonging to another belief as worthless; to restrict to Christians the elements common to humanity, and to condemn Judaism as crafty and lifeless.⁶⁵²

This first book of Geiger's on the convergence of Jewish/Islamic history set the scene for what would become a whole lineage of pioneering scholarship within *Wissenschaft des Judentums* and beyond on Jewish history within the Islamic context and more broadly of Arab and Islamic history as a crucial part of the history of humanity. Geiger himself did not return to the subject, but I have focused on him in part because I cannot here do justice to those who devoted their lives to it: scholarly giants like the German Jewish transplants in France, Salomon Munk (1805-1867) and Joseph Derenbourg (1811-1895), who made Medieval Jewish thought within the Islamic milieu scholarly accessible and investigated a host of other topics in Arab and Islamic history.⁶⁵³ Another was Gustav Weil (1808-1889), who did not go to France to become an

⁶⁴⁹ Geiger, *Judaism and Islam*, 25.

⁶⁵⁰ Even today Geiger's picture of the Prophet Muhammad can stand as a corrective to certain recent Zionist historians who've taken to seeing him as an arch-schemer in his dealings with the Jews, who'd planned out what happened with the Jewish tribes of Medina pretty much as it transpired. See, for instance, Norman A. Stillman, *The Jews of Arab Lands: A History and Source Book* (Philadelphia, 1979), 3-21. Stillman's interpretation is on par with the work of the Israeli historian, Moshe Gil, on the Constitution of Medina.

⁶⁵¹ Geiger, *Judaism and Islam*, 23.

⁶⁵² *Ibid*, 25.

⁶⁵³ Both worked extensively on Maimonides. Munk produced a widely acclaimed critical edition of *The Guide for the Perplexed* along with a translation into French. He also proved that Andalusian Jewish writer, Solomon Ibn Gabirol (1021-1058) was in fact the famed Neo-Platonist philosopher known as Avicbron. Derenbourg produced a critical edition of Maimonides's *Commentary on the Mishnah*. See the description of the scholarly activities of the two Jewish Orientalists in Fück, *Die Arabischen Studien in Europa*, 205, 249. Fück here, as throughout his text, treats all Jewish Orientalists and their contributions with great respect and sympathy. On Munk's friendship with H.

academic Orientalist and after many years as the librarian finally became a Professor at Heidelberg in 1861. Weil, alongside the Tyrolian, Aloys Sprenger (1813-1893), may be called the first Islamicist: he attempted— if not able fully to fulfill the aim—the first truly critical source-based study of the life of Muhammad and a multi-volume history of the Caliphate up to the Ottomans.⁶⁵⁴ A fourth was Daniel Chwolson (1819-1911), who wrote on the Sabians and other pre-Islamic topics, converted to Christianity to become Professor for Oriental Languages at St. Petersburg but became a staunch defender of Jews against anti-Semitic propaganda and attacks and in fact wrote a defense on behalf the maligned ‘Semitic nations’.⁶⁵⁵ Finally, already briefly mentioned, was Moritz Steinschneider, the great bibliographer who helped revolutionized the periodization of Jewish history by focusing on the Jewish experience under Islam in its own distinct light.⁶⁵⁶

My primary reason for focusing on Geiger to highlight this lineage within *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, i.e. focusing on Judeo-Islamic studies and the study of Arab and Islamic history more broadly, is that both the character and reception of the young scholar’s work in this area aptly demonstrate something both crucial and ironic. The irony, underwritten by the whole historical context of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, is where it succeeded and where it failed. It essentially *failed* in its primary goal of introducing post-Christian Jewish history as a subject of equal worth—one whose inquiry legitimated and dignified rather than disparaged it—into European universities and scholarship. Protestant historicism, particularly, could not absorb a legitimate post-Christian Jewish history, much less one legitimated on a universal, competitive basis.⁶⁵⁷ But, shorn of the emotional crutch of the Jewish mission and of its competitive historicism, *Wissenschaft* scholars *succeeded* in introducing into European Orientalist scholarship their study of the Judeo-Islamic heritage, as well as Arab and Islamic subject-matter more broadly, as crucial part of the history of humanity. I’ll shortly discuss further what made this possible: the Orientalist scholarship of the mid-nineteenth century was being self-consciously organized on a *philological* basis, which in the German context meant an idealist

L. Fleischer (1801-1888), the founder of the *Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft* (DMG), the greatest Arabist of his generation and the teacher of Goldziher amongst so many of the other leading scholars of the next generation, See Schorsch, “Converging Cognates: the Intersection of Jewish and Islamic Studies”, 12-3.

⁶⁵⁴ Weil also translated *The Thousand and One Nights* into German, a project whose scholarly value was botched when the publisher had it expurgated and popularized for general consumption. See Fück, *Die Arabischen Studien in Europa*, 175-6. On Aloys Sprenger, see *ibid*, 176-9. Sprenger explicitly believed and hoped for the possibility of applying the Tübingen approach to a reconstruction and reform of the Islamic tradition, something, which as we’ll see, was actually undertaken by Goldziher. The fundamental idea of *Islamwissenschaft* thus belongs to him.

⁶⁵⁵ See *ibid*, 195-6. See also for a more personal account of Chwolson’s trajectory and the support H. L. Fleischer provided him in his work, Schorsch, “Converging Cognates: The Intersection of Jewish and Islamic Studies”, 18-20. See also Chwolson, *The Semitic Nations* (Cincinnati, 1874; orig. 1872), 54-5. Chwolson took on the usual argument that the Semites were peoples of Religion while the Aryans were the peoples of Art and Science. The world needed both of them and the synthesis had created civilization, particularly the modern one. Moreover, the sense of humanity and morality belonged primarily to religion and while the world had advanced mightily in the scientific realm, it could do with a lot more of what the Semites added to the equation. He called himself a ‘Semite’ in the pamphlet.

⁶⁵⁶ See on Steinschneider’s bibliographic activity, Rosenthal, “Steinschneider’s Contribution to the Study of Muslim Civilization”, 67-81. Fück, *Die Arabischen Studien in Europa*, 248-9.

⁶⁵⁷ This is the basic thesis of Christian Wiese, *Challenging Colonial Discourse: Jewish Studies and Protestant Theology in Wilhelmine Germany* (Boston, 2005). See his conclusions to this effect in the Epilogue, *ibid*, 427-44. The original study published in German appeared in 1899 as *Wissenschaft des Judentums und protestantische Theologie im Wilhelmine Deutschland: Ein Schrei ins Leere?* (Tübingen, 1999).

one stressing its “cosmopolitan” value but without any great historicist concern or design.⁶⁵⁸ Since, *Wissenschaft* Orientalists stressed episodes in the history of humanity and emphasized the mutual participation of Muslims and Jews in the advance of culture (i.e. literature, Greek science). And, since their primary focus remained on unearthing, editing, contextualizing and translating manuscripts and texts—the bread and butter of the philological Orientalist enterprise at the time—there was an absolute convergence of interests and pursuits between the ‘cosmopolitan’ philologists and *Wissenschaft* Orientalists. As Schorsch has decisively demonstrated, this convergence opened the doors of the *Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft* and its journal to Jewish scholarly participation with an ebullience not replicated in any other recess of German life.⁶⁵⁹ In the last decades of the century, as *Islamwissenschaft* trenchantly historicized the ‘Semitic’ field in Orientalist scholarship, a competition ensued about whether the Jewish or Christian tradition had most influenced the formation of Islam. Wellhausen’s *The Remains of Arab Paganism* (1887) started the controversy by stressing what he posited as ‘Christian’ (individualistic, ascetic, apocalyptic) elements in the Meccan origins of Islam.⁶⁶⁰ Such historicist competition over Islam was one indication of the advent of *Islamwissenschaft*. Muslim readers might be appalled by such a competition between Jewish and Christian scholars about which party had more of a claim on Islam, but, it *was* an improvement to be fought over rather than demonized. Often ignored in homogenized discussions of ‘Semitic philology’ is the irony that *Wissenschaft* Orientalists were able to establish themselves and their work in European society primarily by way not of a Jewish but an Arab-Islamic frame.

34.

But, why were *Wissenschaft* scholars so keen on stressing the Arab and Islamic trajectory and the Jewish part in it as a crucial aspect of the history of humanity? What motivated their

⁶⁵⁸ See Sabine Mangold, *Eine „Weltbürgerliche Wissenschaft“—Die deutsche Orientalistik im 19. Jahrhundert* (Munich, 2004). The title tells a great deal of the story and is taken from a famous footnote of H. L. Fleischer’s in ZDMG, vol. 7 (1853), 275, in which, reviewing the statutes of an Oriental Society formed in Istanbul, he said that the DMG had begun in an inter-confessional, cosmopolitan spirit and that it would now make this commitment an official part of its profile. He wrote the passage in the context of the anger of *Wissenschaft* scholars at the slur directed their way by Ewald during his first presidential address to the DMG. See for a discussion of the episode, Ismar Schorsch, “Converging Cognates: the Intersection of Jewish and Islamic Studies”, 24-7. On the formation of “Orientalistik” as a field independent of the theological study, see Mangold, op. cit., 29-59. On the lacking appetite for historical study on the part of the philologically oriented German Orientalism of the mid nineteenth century and the delegation of the task to historians in fact lacking philological expertise, see *ibid*, 103-108. The exceptions cited are in fact mostly *Wissenschaft* scholars.

⁶⁵⁹ See especially Schorsch, “Converging Cognates: the Intersection of Jewish and Islamic Studies”, 22-36.

⁶⁶⁰ See Wellhausen, *Reste Arabische Heidentums, Gesammelt und Erläutert* (Berlin, 1897; orig. 1887), 230-42. Wellhausen did not deny the Jewish influence on Islam, but he credited what he took to be the unfortunate parts to it, the theocratic and religio-legal ones. The *Hanif*, on the skimpiest evidence, he associated with Christian ascetics in their individualistic piety. His thesis about the apocalyptic—so likely—Christian character of Muhammad’s Meccan preaching became a hallmark of the later scholarship that sought out Christian aspects. See Moshe Pearlman’s Intro in Geiger, *Judaism and Islam*, XXI-XXII. By contrast, his tendentious argument that Muhammad’s individualistic rather than communal notion of moral accountability could only be ‘Christian’ was left behind. He called Christianity the “leaven”, Judaism the “flour” in the formation of Islam and over time more and more flour was added... Wellhausen, op. cit., 242. He also began his discussion of the background to Islam by assuring the reader the peninsula had been on its way to becoming Christian before Islam had intervened. He said Christians were probably the first to write in Arabic and that Christianity had left its impact on the poetic Arab soul. This was not *just* scholarship; it was also competition. Meanwhile, Harnack had already suggested a Jewish Christian sect as the source of Islam already in 1874; see Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, 58.

solicitude for this context and the strain of Islamophilia that runs through it?⁶⁶¹ This is also a question that has increasingly interested scholars of late. One of the first attempts to tackle this question not simply from a political standpoint but that of historical scholarship was Lewis's essay on "The Pro-Islamic Jews".⁶⁶² Lewis couched the matter in an explicitly political context, beginning with Disraeli's pro-Ottoman (anti-Russian) policy and its contemporary reception. He showed that Disraeli's opponents openly attacked him as motivated by anti-Christian—pro-Semitic, pro-Islamic—instincts. He noted that Disraeli's policy was of course driven by his understanding of British interests, but added that the charge was not without basis: Disraeli did revel in pro-Semitism and a pro-Islamic attitude, calling the Jews "Mosaic Arabs".⁶⁶³ Lewis explained Disraeli's racial Semitism as in fact an inverted anti-Semitism absorbed from his European as against Jewish environment: it was "no more than inverted anti-Jewish stereotypes" that he wrapped himself up in the idol of "Jewish power".⁶⁶⁴ But, there was the broader question of his pro-Islamic, pro-Turkish attitude, namely, that one "was not far wrong in speaking of the Jews in 19th century Europe as a pro-Turkish, and more generally, pro-Muslim, element."⁶⁶⁵ This was the phenomenon Lewis set out to explain, but the *mélange* of answers he gave did not themselves really add up except on a *political* level. First, he recited some of the great names in the deep tradition of nineteenth century Jewish scholarship on Arab and Islamic history. But, he then moved on to lavish as much attention on the work of Jewish Turkophiles of the time, most of whose work he admitted was "of limited scholarly value" but had played a powerful stimulative role in Turkish nationalist thinking.⁶⁶⁶ As the essay went on the terms 'pro-Islamic' and 'pro-Turkish' became indistinguishable: "Why then did these Jews and ex-Jews rally to the Islamic and Turkish side, to such an extent that in Europe, though not in Turkey, their pro-Turkish attitude was treated as an acknowledged fact?"⁶⁶⁷ One got the impression that alongside

⁶⁶¹ I am not trying to suggest of *Wissenschaft* scholars that their solicitude of the Islamic milieu or even Islamophilia translated in any immediate or general sense into identification with the present destinies of Arabs and Muslims or anti-imperialist attitudes towards the policies of their own European nation-states. It *did* often do this. But, the evidence on this matter still requires sifting. The opening hypothesis I would offer is that the first generations of *Wissenschaft* scholars, still in the throes of the struggle for Emancipation, tended to be more outspokenly anti-colonialist. Consider that in Wolf's opening introduction to *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, he said that the history of European Jews in the Middle Ages encompassed mostly "a series of experiments" by the enemies of the Jewish people aimed at "crushing and exterminating" it. He added immediately: "Only the history of European greed in the fields of America and Africa has exhibited greater atrocities (*Schandtaten*)."⁶⁶² Wolf, "Ueber den Begriff einer Wissenschaft des Judentums", 13. However, where *Wissenschaft* scholars of the later generations became comfortably integrated into the academic and social life of their nation, as for instance was the case with Joseph Derenbourg's son, Hartwig Derenbourg (1844-1908), the results were different. Hartwig clearly identified with French colonial power and pride in Africa. This can be clearly seen in the lectures he gave at the L'Écoles des haute études (section des sciences religieuses) in 1886 on "La Science des Religions et l'Islamisme" published in *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* XIII (1886), 292-333. Here he argued that learning about the religion of Islam and precisely how to read the Qur'an was essential to French colonial rule and interests in North Africa. Although, it was not really a 'knowledge production' argument: that the French had to know the natives better than they could know themselves. He argued that, by a serious internal understanding of Islam and the Qur'an, the French would be able to win the respect of the local population and exercise greater influence.

⁶⁶² Lewis, "The Pro-Islamic Jews" in idem, *Islam in History: Ideas, Men and Events in the Middle East* (London, 1973), 123-137. The essay was first published in *Judaism* in 1968.

⁶⁶³ Cited in *ibid*, 127.

⁶⁶⁴ *Ibid*, 127.

⁶⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 127.

⁶⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 131.

⁶⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 133-4.

a historical critique of nineteenth-century Jewish Islamophilia, Lewis was simultaneously actually also crafting a long and reliable lineage for Jewish-Turkish friendship.⁶⁶⁸

The critique did come: the romantic picture European Jews conjured of a golden age of equal rights and tolerance in Medieval Islam and especially Muslim Spain was a myth. It *was* better than Christendom: there was contempt and not persecution, but no equal rights. It was, however, a “myth”, “invented by Jews in nineteenth-century Europe as a reproach to Christians—and taken up by Muslims in our own time as a reproach to Jews.”⁶⁶⁹ Still, Lewis mentioned three separate times in succession the Turkish refuge offered to the Jews expelled from Spain as an outstanding grain of truth in it.⁶⁷⁰ As for what explained the myth, Lewis again saw it as a response to anti-Semitism: shocked by the new racial kind of hatred, Jews struck out for imagined far-flung friends by casting themselves as Semitic, Asiatic and Oriental. He then ended on a note of *Wissenschaft* cosmopolitanism, presenting the Jewish tradition as a bridge between the Christian and Islamic. The irony of the initial critique of the motivations of nineteenth century Islamophilia then was that it was itself thoroughly motivated, its subtext being a move from a bogus pro-Semitism, i.e. ‘an inverted anti-Semitism’, to a more ‘well-founded’ Jewish-Turkish friendship.

Mark Cohen, took Lewis’s cue about nineteenth-century Jewish Islamophilia as a self-positioning versus Christian society, but demonstrated that this was not merely a matter of ‘inverted anti-Semitism’; that, in the case of *Wissenschaft* scholars, it provided quite systematic answers to the question of integration. These scholars began with a ‘lachrymose’ conception of Jewish experience under Christian rule, as filled with persecution and mob violence and posed as corrective the Jewish trajectory under Islam, as a kind of “interfaith utopia” of cultural integration and progress. Cohen described the cultural pay-off of Islamophilia as three-fold: first, the positive experience under Islam gave the lie to the idea that the Jews were themselves responsible for the debilities and disasters of their history and cast the blame squarely on the

⁶⁶⁸ It should also be said that Lewis was also exaggerating this lineage, namely, the factuality of this ‘acknowledged fact’ of nineteenth century Jewish Turkophilism. For instance, he cites the famous Turkologist, Arminius Vámbéry (1832-1913), who amongst many other things was also Goldziher’s first teacher, to this effect. But as Lewis Conrad has shown, Vámbéry was anything but an Islamophile, constantly derided Islam and the Asiatics particularly in front of British audiences and seemed ready to see the fall of the Turkish Sultan he’d served. See Lewis Conrad, “The Dervish’s Disciple: On the Personality and Intellectual Milieu of the Young Ignaz Goldziher” in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (1990, no. 2), 243-264. Conrad also tries to demonstrate that Vámbéry was really much more an impresario than any kind of scholar. That’s actually the real point: Vámbéry seemed to have had many different faces for the different people he encountered, so that one should not take the books he published for British audiences as some kind of definitive Vámbéry; but, then, this does not exactly match Lewis’s profile of the Islamophile, Turkophile Jews. The same goes for the young Ignaz Goldziher. On his Oriental Study Trip in 1873-4, Goldziher, as we’ll see, was in love with all things Arab and spoke with urgency about Islamic autonomy, but he had only contempt for the Turks. He wanted to see the petty commercialism of the “decayed Jewish proletariat” and its influence on the Jewish people as having begun through their Turkish residency and encounter and not as being the consequence of the persecution of the Middle Ages. He even hoped the Ottoman Empire would soon go down in defeat. After witnessing a train accident in Shumla and Ottoman soldiers on their way to Arabia: “I saw this Turkish bivouac and asked myself the question: Will these emaciated shadow heroes be able to defy the Russian dragoons? May it be God’s will that they should not be able to do so and that an iron power should break the collar of this fundamentally indolent, deathly-sick state.” Raphael Patai (ed.), *Ignaz Goldziher and His Oriental Diary* (Detroit, 1987), 87-8, 96. But, as we’ll see, as Goldziher came to understand the Islamic cause in an increasingly global context, his mature perspective became rather pro-Ottoman, particularly during WWI where he was an enthusiastic support of the Ottoman Jihad call.

⁶⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 135.

⁶⁷⁰ See *ibid.*, 134, 136, 137.

Christian perpetrators. Second, Jewish thinkers posed themselves thus as the conscience of European modernity, bidding their contemporaries to follow through on its egalitarian promises. Third, they suggested full integration in a truly Enlightened Europe would lead to a ‘Golden Age,’ as it had in the Muslim Spain.⁶⁷¹ If Cohen stressed the external function of Jewish Islamophilia, as projecting to Christian society an ideal and precedent of autonomous Jewish integration as the sole civilized one, Schorsch, as noted, emphasized its internal deployment as a means of Reform. The ‘Sephardic Mystique’ provided broad strata of Western European Jewry with an authoritative alternative Jewish tradition by which legitimately to reshape the look and feel of Judaism away from its Orthodox Ashkenazi moorings. Its assigned message suggested in fact a fundamental shift in attitude: Judaism had to be elaborated in terms of the most advanced thinking and being of its time rather, not in exclusion from them. Hence, it became exemplar not only for a transformed liturgy, but a new architectural, philosophical and literary Judaism.⁶⁷² Jewish Islamophilia, in other words, provided one solution to the problem of double-accommodation.

It is John Efron, whose recent work has most cogently argued that the external and internal functions of Jewish Orientalism and Islamophilia must be viewed within the same frame, as mutually constitutive of one another.⁶⁷³ What *Wissenschaft* Orientalists sought in the study of Islam and the Jews of Islam was an anchor to withstand anxieties—“their desire for Jewish civil equality, their antipathy to Christianity, and their rejection of Orthodox Judaism”—whose borders completely bled into another.⁶⁷⁴ Efron’s underlying argument, if I understand him correctly, is that the anxiety surrounding each of these sentiments was decisively conditioned by its relationship to the others in the trio. This was not only true in the obvious case of the struggle for Emancipation. Rejecting Orthodox Judaism or Christianity as ‘religion’ immediately made one vulnerable to the totalitarian claims of the other to stand for all humanity or all Judaism. Geiger thus even went so far as to view the external enemy, authoritative Christianity (Catholicism), and the internal enemy, authoritative Judaism (Orthodoxy), as being in their hegemonic prerogatives virtually the same thing!⁶⁷⁵ The Sephardic example was so potent because it was taken to answer each node and in each the others: autonomous, Jewish, integrated. As Efron noted, if the Sephardim of the ‘Golden Age’ constituted for Graetz the “ideal Jewish community”, this was because “it was one where particularistic identity was retained and full participation in the social and cultural life of the nation was enjoyed.”⁶⁷⁶ In fact, what the Sephardic ideal did above all was to congeal the Eastern Ashkenazim as *the* foe—and Western European scholars did not shrink from all manner of expletives for these brethren—on all levels: they made Jews look backward in the eyes of European society, they served to substantiate Christian demonization of Judaism and they remained the major internal obstacle to Jewish renewal. Hence, Efron concluded that the Islamophilia of Jewish Orientalists attempted nothing

⁶⁷¹ See Mark R. Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross: the Jews in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1994), 1-14. Cohen went on to explain how the myth of the Islamic inter-faith utopia had subsequently been appropriated by Arab writers to condemn Zionism for all contemporary conflicts between Jews and Arabs. That in turn had led to a ‘neo-lachrymose’ response on the part of Zionist writers and historians striving to expose Islamic history as equally horrendous for Jews as the Christian one: a summation of the present depressing moment on this front.

⁶⁷² See Schorsch, “The Myth of Sephardic Supremacy” in idem, *From Text to Context*, 71-92.

⁶⁷³ See John Efron, “Orientalism and the Jewish Historical Gaze” in Ivan Kalmar and Derek Penslar (eds.), *Orientalism and the Jews*, 80-93.

⁶⁷⁴ Ibid, 81.

⁶⁷⁵ See *ibid*, 84 on this last point.

⁶⁷⁶ Ibid, 86.

less than to reclaim the status and moniker of ‘Orientals’ for Jews as a badge of honor: the referent was changed from the Ashkenazim to the Jews of Islam and the latter constructed as apostles of autonomous cultural integration defeating simultaneously European presumptions about Jews and the Jews that fed them.⁶⁷⁷

The Jewish scholar in the nineteenth century who did more than any other to revolutionize the framing of Jewish history by conceiving it first and foremost in terms not of the monotheistic mission but of cross-cultural encounter and development was Steinschneider. It is true that he would have been appalled at the idea that his scholarship was somehow motivated by the contemporary problematic of Jewish integration: *he* was a scholar and thundered, “I write about the Jews, but not for them, not *pro domo*”.⁶⁷⁸ All the same, as Franz Rosenthal later emphasized, Steinschneider’s pioneering attempt at a true cultural history of Islamic civilization and his especial focus on the Jewish participation within it for this end was throughout “merely a part, if an indispensable one, of his life’s chosen task, the study of Jewish history and, in particular, the study of the contributions Jews had made in the course of history to the intellectual progress of humanity.”⁶⁷⁹ He highlighted further Steinschneider’s repeated assertion that “his investigations (in the Arabic and medieval fields) centered around the relationship of Jewish literature to other medieval literatures, particularly with regard to the sciences.”⁶⁸⁰ Steinschneider went beyond even many of his contemporaries in viewing the Greeks as the “unique source” of all epistemic and cultural progress: he trained his keen bibliographic sensibility on the appropriation and extension of the Hellenistic tradition within the Islamic milieu, the Jewish contribution to the same and to its transmission across confessional borders, namely, to Europe.⁶⁸¹ In the process, Steinschneider reprogrammed Jewish history away from the dominant framing of it at his time as the monotheistic epic, moving from the pre-exilic ‘political’ phase to the ‘religious’ primacy of the Second Temple era to the missionary denouement that was to culminate in ultimate self-consciousness. Steinschneider, by contrast, projected a Jewish history organized on the basis of cultural encounter, namely, three fundamental ones: Hellenistic, Arab/Islamic and modern German/European. The second, ‘Sephardic’ one was when Jews moved beyond the anonymous, collective character of their earlier literature to emerge as authors and individuals representing culturally defined forms.⁶⁸² And, Zunz already said at the time that all three encounters represented in fact different iterations of that between the Jews and the Greek heritage.⁶⁸³

⁶⁷⁷ See *ibid* 93.

⁶⁷⁸ Cited in Rosenthal, “Steinschneider’s Contribution to the Study of Muslim Civilization”, 71.

⁶⁷⁹ *Ibid*, 69. See also *ibid*, 75.

⁶⁸⁰ *Ibid*, 70.

⁶⁸¹ See *ibid*, 78-80. Rosenthal was very much admiring of Steinschneider because he still echoed as his achievement, “The idea of the continuity of Western civilization in Islam through the influence of the Greek heritage.” *Ibid*, 80. As is clear here in Rosenthal’s case, the bid to reclaim the ‘Orient’ in a positive sense had eventually as its counterpart an expansion of the concept of the ‘West’. One *should* call Rosenthal’s appropriation of Islam for the ‘West’ through the Greeks a construction of Western hegemony, but it was altogether *not* an ‘Othering’ one.

⁶⁸² This is an interpretive schema that is still current in contemporary scholarship. See, for instance, Raymond Scheindlin’s description of Saadya as a new kind of Geonic *personality* and author in *idem*, “Merchants and Intellectuals, Rabbis and Poets: Judeo-Arab Culture in the Golden Age of Islam” in David Biale (ed.), *Cultures of the Jews: a New History* (New York, 2001), 336-8. See further on Steinschneider and the “Sephardic”, Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 87, 197-8.

⁶⁸³ See *ibid*, 88.

35.

This Jewish Orientalism—its narration of Jewish cultural encounters as the history of humanity told through the prism of Grecophilia and Islamophilia—was, I would contend, the accomplished public face of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. To highlight its historical and cultural peculiarity, we need only juxtapose it to Goitein’s famous later reformulation of the ‘three encounters’ schema. Goitein also spoke of the three encounters, the Hellenistic, the Arab Muslim and the European (Romanic and German). He spoke particularly of the achievements of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* and of modern German Jewish philosophy. He then cited Steinschneider’s contention that the “German-Jewish” and “the Arab-Jewish symbiosis” had been equally consequential. Here though, he said he had to demur at the “great master”. The character of the Greek and modern German-Western civilization was “essentially at variance with the religious culture of the Jewish people.”⁶⁸⁴ The Jewish cultural encounter and integration with these civilizations then had been a matter of translating and justifying the Jewish heritage in an alien vocabulary. But, the Jewish symbiosis with Islamic civilization had been radically different, for in this case the Jews were elaborating themselves vis-à-vis a religious tradition that was a double and extension of their own. What Goitein was arguing was that the Jews became *more Jewish* in the process of defining themselves within the Medieval Islamic milieu, more Jewish before or since in the course of their symbiotic development amongst other cultures.⁶⁸⁵ The story Goitein unfolded in his work of the mutual constitution and elaboration of the normative traditions of Judaism and Islam in the Medieval period was *not* any longer an aspect of the ‘history of humanity’, the Hebraic/Hellenistic encounter running straight through it. Goitein wrote in many ways through a post-historicist prism about not the universality but the particularity and particular mutuality of Jews and Arabs: the fact too that both developed universal religions he traced to their “national traditions”—here one peers into the historian’s basic assumptions—to their “primitive democracy” that did not recognize inherent differences.⁶⁸⁶ The relationship between the national and universal aspects of the Jewish heritage was here no longer, à la Kuenen, a ‘contradiction’ to be resolved through some Hegelian account of the inner vs. the outer of Judaism nor rolled into a Hebraic/Hellenistic history of humanity.

One way to understand Goldziher’s work, which is to say the first iteration of *Islamwissenschaft*, would be to put it at a middle position between *Wissenschaft des Judentums* and Goitein: Goldziher’s *Islamwissenschaft* was a deeply universalist, historicist, teleological discipline but it focused on the Jewish and Islamic heritages as two mutual monotheistic traditions of ideal potential. In *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, there were two powerful stories: the universal monotheistic mission that reached its critical apex in Geiger’s work and Jewish cultural encounter as the history of humanity, at the core of *Wissenschaft* Orientalism and Islamophilia. As we already saw in Wolf, these two stories were viewed as coming together in the self-conscious *telos* of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* itself. What Goldziher did was essentially to synthesize these two strains, the universal monotheistic and the cultural history of humanity: he unfolded a universal history that was a half-materialist, half-idealist story of the progress of

⁶⁸⁴ Goitein, *Jews and Arabs*, 129-30.

⁶⁸⁵ “Never has Judaism encountered such a close and fructitious symbiosis as that with the medieval civilization of Arab Islam.” Ibid, 130; see *ibid*, 128-30. For Goitein’s structural schematic of the Judeo-Arab and Judeo-Islamic civilization, see *ibid*. 125-211. It has become fashionable to say that Goitein’s real historical account of Jewish/Muslim symbiosis came in the six volumes of his *A Mediterranean Society*, and not the general picture, written to boot for a general American audience, in *Jews and Arabs*. This is of course true, but what has not been appreciated is that it was in *this* work that Goitein laid out the underpinnings of his historical view and work.

⁶⁸⁶ See *ibid*, 34.

monotheism across *all human nations and cultures*. ‘Language’ and pagan religion first emerged out of the nomadic, mythological background of original peoplehood. The monotheistic idea first appeared amongst the Jews and became eventually *prophetically* defined, but not as yet realized. Medieval Judaism and Islam traditionalized, reified and instrumentalized it into an accommodative ideal, to rationalize cultural prerogatives (not least, that of super-national ‘confessional empires’ in Islam). The providential realization of the monotheistic prophecy came with its critical purification as ‘religion’ in Geiger, in *Islamwissenschaft*. The Jewish and Islamic heritages were of course privileged in this regard, but what was now being universalized was *not*, as in *Wissenschaft* scholarship, Judaism but *monotheism*. Hence, Goldziher’s work represented a universalization—a globalization—of the universalizing project of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. It was as such itself the product of a post-integration, post-Reform historical context: Goldziher’s *Islamwissenschaft* encompassed a truly global expansion of the Science of Religion and the Jewish Reform program—nationalism in public life, ‘religion’ (i.e. purified monotheism) the reconciling solution on the individual, universal human level—beyond Protestant and Jewish confines. But, this very expansionist bid marked it the product of a time in which Geigerian Reform (i.e. competitive historicism) evoked a new Jewish intellectual self-confidence, but whose formula of fierce patriotic integration coupled with religious self-idealization had proven unable to resolve the ‘Jewish Question’ either in European society or inside Jewish communities. These failures were to be the essence of Goldziher’s own historical experience and career.

Heschel has influentially spoken of Geiger’s competitive idealization of the Jewish heritage as akin to an anti-colonial struggle against Christian hegemony.⁶⁸⁷ It is a metaphor that aptly captures the Jewish reformer’s appropriation of Protestant historicist methodologies and categories to supplant Christian with Jewish supersessionism. But, what the metaphor does not quite capture about the Jewish situation in the integration and Reform eras demonstrates where matters headed in the succeeding period. First, the colonial metaphor under-estimates the paranoia Jewish competitive historicism was liable to cause. The European colonialist perspective often looked upon colonial subjects as *outside* the perimeters of civilization and so to be brought into the latter and tied to the metropole. The danger here was that of self-forgetting, of playing into native expectations rather than transforming them.⁶⁸⁸ By contrast, the Jews were for the modernist, historicist Protestant imagination the problematic insiders, the enemy on the *inside* that had to be exposed, pushed out, consigned to the past, overcome. If all of History turned on this—in a way that colonial natives eventually surprising even their skeptical masters to become fully and independently like them did not—then one can conjure the uncanny potential of a Jewish supersessionism that turned History on its head.

Clearly, by the closing decades of the nineteenth century, a more paranoid European attitude to Jewry had set in, not of course because of any Geigerian competitive historicism, but because of the growing Jewish integration, success and self-confidence it propounded and signaled. Formerly consigned to the past, the Jews came increasingly to be viewed as imbricated

⁶⁸⁷ See Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, 1-22, esp. 1-3: “The *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, I want to claim is one of the earliest examples of postcolonialist writing.” Ibid, 3. Wiese then took this frame for his own work on the relationship between Protestant and Jewish theological scholarship: Christian Wiese, *Challenging Colonial Discourse: Jewish Studies and Protestant Theology in Wilhelmine Germany*. See also the foreword by Heschel, *ibid*, xiii-xvi and Wiese’s acknowledgment that he saw his work as a continuation of hers, *ibid*, 16-17.

⁶⁸⁸ We can see this in literary representations, for instance, Rudyard Kipling, *The Man Who Would Be King* (orig. 1888) and George Orwell, *Shooting an Elephant* (orig. 1936).

with Modernity, and the Jewish Question was remade into a consideration of them as paradigmatic of what was problematic about it. The default attitude to the Jews in the Enlightenment and the early nineteenth century had been *not* paranoia, but contempt: at this time, it was the *advocates* of the Jews, like the Abbé Gregoire and Dohm, whose *starting point* was Jewish degeneration.⁶⁸⁹ Already by mid-century, as Jews began to flood German universities, perceptions had begun to shift. When in conjunction with the 1847 Prussian Jewry law, the government proposed the possibility of Jews joining the Medical Faculty and the mathematics, natural science, geography and philology fields in the Philosophical, it decided on a course of consultation with *all* Prussian faculties and professors to define as closely as possible the limits of its generosity. A major argument now amongst those who opposed the incorporation of Jewish academics was the prospect of Jewish competition and success. In less than half a century, as Schorsch put it, the position against Emancipation had shifted from Jewish “inferiority to superiority”.⁶⁹⁰ Meanwhile, the Jewish/Protestant competition moved outside of the theological context: in the decade before WWI, two non-Jews, Max Weber and Werner Sombart, debated whether Protestants or Jews had played the largest role in the advent of modern capitalism (and it was not clear whether one wanted to be a winner in this battle!)⁶⁹¹ None of this is meant to suggest that the Protestant Science of Religion somehow went out of business; rather, it was at the height of its institutional power in the decades before WWI.⁶⁹² At the same time, its antithetical relationship to the Jewish tradition took on an increasingly maniacal tone: In the course of the so-called ‘Babel-Bible Controversy’, Friedrich Delitzsch (1850-1922) deployed the new Assyriology not only to call into question the authenticity of the Old Testament but ultimately to call it a fraud perpetrated by the Jews on the Babylonian heritage.⁶⁹³ Meanwhile, the leading voice of the History of Religion School, Wilhelm Bousset now argued that Early Christianity was not in fact a predominantly Jewish product but a result of the incorporation of Jews in an Oriental Gnosticism, its most likely sources Iranian.⁶⁹⁴ It was no longer simply

⁶⁸⁹ See the discussion of this point in Herzberg, *The Zionist Idea*, 27-8.

⁶⁹⁰ See Schorsch *From Text to Context*, 60; also, 51-70.

⁶⁹¹ See Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York, 2001; orig. 1904-5). Werner Sombart, *The Jews and Modern Capitalism* (orig. 1911). See also the discussion of Sombart in Yuri Slezkine, *The Jewish Century*, 53-60. As Slezkine put it, speaking of the turn of the twentieth century context: “The identification of the Jews with the forces that were molding the modern world was one of the few things that most European intellectuals, from the Romantics of the “Northern forests” to the prophets of Reason and the tricolor, could occasionally agree on.” Ibid, 60.

⁶⁹² It is not appreciated widely enough that the so-called ‘History of Religion School (*Religionsgeschichtliche Schule*)’ in Wilhelmine Protestant theology was in initial motivation a thoroughgoing Science of Religion endeavor. Yes, the crisis of historicism was shaking its intellectual foundations from within its own ranks, especially clear in the case of Troeltsch, one of its outstanding members. But, as Herman Gunkel (1862-1932) one of its leading representatives sought to make clear in 1903, the comparative religious interest and explanatory schema of the school was not to be misinterpreted to suggest a syncretic or pluralistic position: “We have from the very beginning understood under the expression ‘the history of religion’ not the history of religions, but rather the history of religion” (i.e. Christianity). Cited in Reventlow, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, V. 4, 336. Cf. Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 259-60.

⁶⁹³ See the somewhat differing treatments of the Babel-Bible controversy in Marchand, *Down from Olympus*, 220-227 and Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 236-251. For more on the character of the controversy, see the Introductory chapter. See also Bill T. Arnold and David B. Weisberg, “A Centenary Review of Friedrich Delitzsch’s “Bibel und Babel” Lectures” in *Journal of Biblical Literature* V. 121, No. 3 (Autumn, 2002), 441-457. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3268155>

⁶⁹⁴ On Bousset, see Reventlow, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, V. 4, 358-72. On Bousset and the ‘Orientalization of Christianity’, i.e. its Hellenistic Jewish environment as a syncretic Persianized one, see

enough to argue the Jewish principle had been or would ultimately be defeated; the Jews had to be excised from History altogether.

I point here finally to Nietzsche, the great thinker of the twentieth century who died at the end of the nineteenth. Nietzsche was certainly right to think himself an anti-anti-Semite, but consider the picture he drew: he diagnosed Christianity as a vast revenge perpetrated by a proud Jewish people on the Romans and Antiquity. The Jews repaid the Romans for their defeat by crystallizing their resentment into a religion of hatred and self-hatred, which they fed their vanquishers. The Romans and the whole world of Antiquity—beautiful but largely dumb and content to interpret mastery as truth and lowliness as false and deceitful—could not withstand this poison and succumbed. This was a great tragedy, but it was as Nietzsche put it a ‘pregnant’ one. For, the Jewish revenge—Christianity and its demonization of the world—also carried within itself a new seed, a negating, critical sense: what Nietzsche dreamed of was a new critical affirmation, an examined, perspectival beauty. In the new world created by this transvaluation, the Jews, whom he admired more than the Germans, this righteous people (i.e. Jews) he said were of the second or third rank; the Jews too would be won for Europe. They would become ‘good Europeans’.⁶⁹⁵ Well, this was heady stuff. One thing it was *not* was contempt. It was a response to Europe’s new age of Anti-Semitism, pogroms in the East, anti-Semitic parties and ‘affairs’ in the West. It was a response to what Hannah Arendt later called ‘political anti-Semitism’, the doctrine that the Jews were somehow the key to Modernity and all that is wrong with it.⁶⁹⁶

But, if the anti-colonial metaphor with respect to Jewish Reform actually underestimates the European paranoia that was in store for Jewry as they made their way into the twentieth century, it by contrast overestimates the ‘resistance’ Jewish Reformists were offering. Any anti-colonial struggle worth its salt dreams of and works toward radical displacement.⁶⁹⁷ In the case of Jewish reformists like Geiger, Goldziher and many others, the matter was altogether complicated by the fact that dreaming the dispossession of Christianity on the religious front was flanked by fierce patriotism propounding integration on the national. In the succeeding generation, fewer and fewer Jews or Jewish intellectuals believed the Reform program could

Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 282-4. Especially on the controversies surrounding Bousset’s attitude towards and treatment of Jewish history, see Christian Wiese, *Challenging Colonial Discourse*, 170-207.

⁶⁹⁵ See Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals* in idem, *On the Genealogy of Morals; Ecce Homo* (New York, 1969; orig. 1887), 15-163. See on Nietzsche’s thoughts on the incapacity of Aryans to spiritually survive oppression, Nietzsche, *The Will to Power* (New York, 1968), 93: “It is quite in order that we possess no religion of oppressed Aryan races, for that is a contradiction: a master race is either on top or it is destroyed.” In these passages, Nietzsche also interestingly contended that it was the Aryans, not the Semites, who were responsible for the priestly power principle as self-glorification of the ruling class; here he rhapsodized not about the beauty but the introduction of the “most fundamental lie”: “*Aryan influence* has corrupted all the world.” Ibid, 92. On Nietzsche’s conception of the ‘good European’, see the discussion in Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist* (Princeton, 1974), 288-9. On the Jews and Germans as priestly nations of a “popular-moral genius”, though the latter of the “fifth rank”, see Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, 53.

⁶⁹⁶ Although, Arendt surprisingly actually thought that the Jews were themselves in good part responsible for this, by having allegedly remained outside of European societies, i.e. as financiers, rather than participating in positive entrepreneurial, professional and political fashion. One wonders exactly what more they could have done and why Arendt didn’t consider that she herself stood as a contradiction to this indictment. See Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York, 1973; orig. 1951), Part I: “Anti-Semitism”, 3-120; on the Jews as remaining in the modern period a ‘state-people’ outside of society and their consequent political immaturity, see *ibid*, 13-28. For a description of the difference she makes between ‘social’ and ‘political’ anti-Semitism, see for instance, *ibid*, 54-5.

⁶⁹⁷ One thinks here of Fanon’s thoughts on decolonization as an inherently violent process. See Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York, 2004; orig. 1961), 1-21.

proffer a solution to the new Jewish Question. In the previous one, *Wissenschaft* thinkers had remained, in the first instance, Jews who queried how to become European on autonomous Jewish terms. Those of the much more integrated post-Reform generation were, on the other hand, primarily Europeans who asked what it meant to be ‘Jewish’ and/or ‘European’. Their searching questioning meanwhile of whither Modernity, Europe, Jewishness, put them at the forefront of European intellectual history and development and made them *intellectually autonomous* in a way the *Wissenschaft* generation never had been. Consider that in Schorsch’s discussion of the intellectual giants of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* he felt compelled in each case to cite, and precisely as a means of adding intellectual stature, the inspiration of contemporary non-Jewish paragons: Zunz (Herder), Frankel (Savigny), Graetz (Humboldt, Ranke), Geiger (Strauss, Baur).⁶⁹⁸ But, one simply would not conceive of undertaking this operation for the stream of Jewish intellectuals from Buber, Freud, and Lukács to Rosenzweig, Benjamin and the Frankfurt School.

Jewish intellectuals were now much more likely to be the ones doing the inspiring. Again, this had to do with their attempts to think through alternative futures rather than the autonomous integration of Jews into existing ideals. Paul Mendes-Flohr has brilliantly shown the serious impact Buber’s Orientalist Jewish mysticism and organicism exercised on a range of post-assimilationist Jewish thinkers, from radicals like Lukács and Ernst Bloch (1885-1977), who interpreted Jewish messianism as a universal social vision, to self-indicting Jews like Walter Rathenau (1867-1922) to the communitarian anarchist Gustav Landauer (1870-1919), who saw his solidarity with Jews and fight against anti-Semitism as of a piece with his struggle on behalf of the working-classes.⁶⁹⁹ What Buber’s Orientalism made available to these Jewish writers who’d left behind Judaism as any religious identity was a means of affirming their Jewishness as a spiritual and aesthetic sensibility: but then the ‘Oriental Jews’ Buber celebrated were precisely *not* the Sephardim, but the Hasidim. What he was offering was not the Oriental Jew as model of integration, but the Oriental Jew as a countervailing spiritual force and sensibility against regnant bourgeois norms. By the Fin-de-Siècle it was Jews like the Zionist Max Nordau (1849-1923) who were decrying European decadence and reading anti-Semitism as a sign of it: *Degeneration*, the title of one of Nordau’s moralizing works, was now an indictment of Europe.⁷⁰⁰ Jewish Reform had not proven altogether capable of renewing itself in the generation.⁷⁰¹ In Goldziher’s diary, there is a small fuming passage from the end of 1899 which tells the story: a scholar Rabbi, Dr. Eduard Neumann, was to give a lecture at Budapest’s Jewish Literary Association. He proposed as possible topics one on Geiger or one on Nietzsche. The Association decided on Nietzsche. It was mere confirmation for Goldziher of where contemporary Jews were headed: “a perfect (*saubere*) Jewish literary society!”⁷⁰²

Islamwissenschaft, as it emerged in Goldziher’s work, belongs thus in crucial ways to a post-integrationist and post-Reform period in European Jewish history. It was one in which Goldziher remained absolutely committed to the promise of Jewish Reform, but precisely as such could be compelled to understand the problematic of religious tradition and critical

⁶⁹⁸ These comparisons have already been noted in the case of Frankel (see note 503), Graetz (see note 506) and Geiger (see note 546). For Zunz cum Herder see Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 248.

⁶⁹⁹ See Paul Mendes-Flohr, “Fin de Siècle Orientalism, the Ostjuden, and the Aesthetics of Jewish Self-Affirmation”, 77-132; for the Jewish intellectual reception of Buber’s work, see especially, 96-109/

⁷⁰⁰ See Max Nordau, *Degeneration* (New York, 1895; orig. 1892).

⁷⁰¹ On this point, of the Reform rabbinic leadership remaining even in the 1870’s the same as those of the turbulent earlier decades, see Michael A. Meyer, *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism*, 191.

⁷⁰² Ignaz Goldziher, *Tagebuch* (Leiden, 1978; orig. 1977), Nov. 3, 1899, p. 224.

modernization in much broader, global fashion. It was one, that is, in which he could come to understand crafting an autonomous Jewish path to mean idealizing the Islamic heritage! Goldziher's *Islamwissenschaft* emerged thus directly from *Wissenschaft des Judentums* but also represented a clear departure from it. It borrowed from it its teleological historicism and its competitiveness on behalf of monotheistic purification. But, it also divorced these conceptions from the problematic of Jewish integration and pitched them instead in a global key. From Protestant historicism, three different competitive historicisms had emerged, critical Protestant, humanist and Jewish reformist. *Islamwissenschaft*, in Goldziher, was predicated on the idea of the Jewish and Islamic heritages as both subject to historicist idealization. Not with Goldziher, though he laid the groundwork for it, but eventually in the scholarship of Goitein, this mutuality was finally made the locus of a different ideal than the competitive one, namely, symbiotic development. But, by then, the Science of Religion was no more.

**Part II. Ignaz Goldziher's Prophetic Scholarship:
The Emergence of *Islamwissenschaft* as a 'Science of Religion'**

Chapter VI. *Islamwissenschaft* as a Shift in Orientalist Scholarship from Philological to Universalist Historicism

1.

I imagine the reader who has now completed Part One may be wondering what exactly happened to my warning in the Introductory Chapter that the Orientalism Debates could not be shirked and my promise that I would not do so. I have now talked at length about the ‘science of religion’ tradition and the various competitive historicist projects, Protestant, Humanist and Reformist Jewish, in terms of which it must be understood. There was in all of this virtually no talk of ‘Orientalism’. But, I have not forgotten my promise. We had, however, to investigate the whole development and range of the ‘science of religion’ tradition before not only to be able to make sense of the universalist monotheist invocation of it by which Goldziher projected Islam as ‘religion’, and so founded *Islamwissenschaft* as a reformist idealization of the Islamic heritage. We had to study this whole European intellectual tradition before we could understand the distinct, Orientalist Philological invocation of it, against whose ethno-philological brand of historicism Goldziher pitched his whole universalist historicist perspective and project. Only in this manner, hence, will I be able in further, forthcoming work to show that the Islamicist involvement in questions of imperialism and colonialism—for such involvement was rife—was grounded on a reformist, modernist debate on the role of ‘religion’ in modern life. In any case, given that such debates eventually led to conflicts about the meaning of modernization itself, we miss essentially the whole theoretical and practical developments in the field by reading its responses in terms of philological essentialism or technocratic servility to Empire. But, this is *Zukunftsmusik*. In this chapter, I discuss the Orientalist context from which Goldziher’s Islamicist work emerged. As I’ll show Orientalism in the nineteenth century became an academic, philological field of scholarship. But, it was not in any sense a homogeneous one, in many ways in fact a fundamentally ambivalent one. The philological framework held together those hoping to fulfill the meticulous project of crafting a comparative grammar for the Semitic languages, which they failed to do, and those who projected a speculative and invidious philological historicism on the distinct roles and trajectories of the Semites and Aryans in History. It was *this* Orientalist Philology that devised a philological historicist brand of the ‘science of religion’. And it was against this philological historicism that Goldziher pitched his own universalist historicism to arrive at a reformist reading, critique and idealization of the Islamic tradition. He proposed thereby nothing less than to displace the Semitic/Aryan distinction as the fundamental one in Orientalist scholarship with a Reformist one between Medieval and Modern.

2.

The Orientalism debates of the last decades were for long mostly comprised of heated polemical exchanges about the essential character of ‘Orientalism’ or ‘Orientalist discourse’. What transpired could not be called discussion. It had much more the feel of the shouting of mantras at the other side: ‘racism’, ‘knowledge’, ‘scholarship’, ‘politics’, ‘imperialism’, ‘humanity’. Both sides, as I’ve argued in the Introduction, kept ‘humanity’ for themselves and shouted ‘politics’ at each other. More recently, there has been a shift not only in the search for a ‘third way’ but in that the focus of scholars on all sides has shifted more towards the *Orientalists* themselves. Who were the Orientalists, these highly characteristic figures of the nineteenth

century, what were they actually up to in their lives and careers? As Marchand puts it of her own work on German Orientalism: “In my case, I focus on the knowledge-making practices of those individuals who counted as ‘orientalists’ in their cultural milieux, namely the men (and they were mostly men) who invested time and effort in actually learning to read and/or speak at least one “oriental” language.”¹ As she adds later in her Introduction, “One of the things I want to know is what it was actually like to be an orientalist?”² This is also a good place for us to begin our inquiry into the Orientalist background of the rise of *Islamwissenschaft* in the closing decades of the nineteenth century.

But, if we turn to the extant literature on who the ‘Orientalists’ actually were living and breathing historical figures, what we run into are descriptions as radically far apart from one another as those in the Orientalism debates as a whole. So, for instance, if we read Said on this question, we are bound to return with the answer that the Orientalist must be understood as something like the evil genius of the nineteenth century and of Western Modernity as such. It is Orientalists who are viewed as having introduced and elaborated the racist discourse of invidious historicism in modern European consciousness, Westerners positioned as standing for ‘humanity’ and its development, the rest not so. And, Said, unlike the generalized perception of his argument, did not at all view Orientalists as mere technocrats of Empire. As I’ve already stressed, his position was much more radical than that. He saw Orientalists as having engaged in a process of discursive dehumanization and conquest of the ‘Orient’ that actually *anticipated* and made culturally and attitudinally possible the imperial conquest that then occurred on the ground.³ On the other hand, if we go to Irwin’s recent text on the European Orientalist tradition that explicitly focuses on the Orientalists themselves and their biographies, we’d likely experience whiplash by the difference in narrative if we did not already know we were swimming in polarized waters. Irwin’s narrative is that of a self-avowed academic Orientalist searching for his brethren across the span of European history. What he found are poor and solitary figures who were driven by a lust for knowledge to try truthfully to learn languages and understand cultures not their own, who were basically ignored and thrown aside by their own societies, and who ended the twentieth century by garnering for their dedication and efforts the scorn, contempt and even hatred of those they studied. It is a melancholy story! Here the Orientalists are liminal figures, step-children wanted by neither parents.⁴

To go then to the characterization Marchand herself arrived at, it certainly has affinities with that of Irwin’s. Her very mode of questioning in asking about the Orientalists themselves as her subject suggested as much: “Why did some well-educated Germans choose this field of study, especially when it was largely unfashionable, and usually unprofitable, to do so? For it was never particularly easy or popular to be an orientalist.”⁵ There are further chapters and sections in her work with titles such as: “The Lonely Orientalists”, “Classics-Envy and its Intellectual Consequences”, “The Glass Half Empty: Orientalism as a Career” and “The Lonely Arabists”. What all of these melancholy notes point to in Marchand’s account of German Orientalism in the nineteenth century is her basic thesis that, after making some heady Romantic noises at the beginning of the century, the Orientalists came essentially to play second-fiddle to

¹ Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, xxi.

² *Ibid*, xxx.

³ See Said, *Orientalism*, 39, 210. See further the discussion in the Introduction where Said is explicitly cited to this effect from these foregoing pages in the notes.

⁴ See the Introduction in Irwin, *Dangerous Knowledge: Orientalism and Its Discontents*, 1-8 and *passim*.

⁵ Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, xxx.

the Classicists for most of the rest of it. The Classicists, with their sure philological scholarship and reconstruction of the ‘exemplary’ Greek society led the path to academic professionalization and institutionalization. They got the cultural respect and ear of the nation while the Orientalists with their Romantic speculations about inter-cultural symbols and the pan-religious universal consciousness were left behind or copied the Classicists to survive. But, this was only the first half of the story. For, by the close of the nineteenth century, the tables seemed to be turning. There was a *Furor Orientalis* in the generation of Orientalists at the turn of twentieth century who furiously made use of the intervening accumulated scholarly and archaeological discoveries to confront German society with how pivotal what they did *was* to its basic cultural self-understanding and future. The new findings they argued showed that the staid assumptions about the Classical and Judeo-Christian foundations of German identity did not hold true and they projected more expansive cultural bases, which however could also be ominously invidious in character, to replace the old with the brave new.⁶

Well, which picture of the Orientalist are we to choose? Were they evil geniuses or ignored step-children whose inner beauty was recognized by none? Or, were they marginalized dreamers who came back eventually to take their revenge as culture warriors? Again, we seem saddled by irreconcilable view-points. However, I would argue to the reader that, in the very range of this series, we have a fundamental clue about who Orientalists were in the nineteenth century or at least who they progressively became. For, the Faustian potential or pretension of the idea of holding the world in one’s hand in discourse, the concrete reality of standing constitutionally outside the common-sensical bounds of ordinary society and the commitment to scholarly knowledge as pivotal to cultural self-understanding and the formation of cultural identity, all represent the dynamics of being an ‘academic’, as the idea and institution became fully established through the course of the nineteenth century. The Orientalist scholar became increasingly and increasingly recognizably an academic by the end of the nineteenth century.

The professionalization of scholarship in the modern era is one of those slippery thematics in contemporary historiography called on whenever one wants to associate some practice of the past with modern rationalized and institutionalized expertise. The range can be bewildering. One can hear talk of professionalization in the seventeenth century. On the other hand, we get accounts like those of scholars supporting Lewis’s position against Said who want to talk about the professionalization of Orientalist scholarship as something that only happened with Goldziher and their own Islamicist tradition at the end of the nineteenth century.⁷ But, we have plenty of evidence that the professionalization and academicization of scholarship was a process that began in the nineteenth century, was already quite recognizable by its second half and that it dovetailed closely with the processes of disciplinary formation that appeared at this same time. The full-scale emergence of the *Festschrift* in Orientalist scholarship in the second half of the nineteenth century provides, as noted in the Introduction, one effective measure of this process. The *Festschrift* can be understood as one of the means and measures of disciplinary formation: *Festschriften* took off at the turn of the twentieth century and were rife for most of the twentieth, namely, in the days of self-confident disciplinary formation and self-confident disciplines. Their lower frequency today may in turn be due to the growing discomfort with

⁶ See, for instance, *ibid*, 53-105, 212-227.

⁷ This, for instance, is the claim made in Lewis I. Conrad, “Ignaz Goldziher on Ernest Renan: From Orientalist Philology to the Study of Islam” in Martin Kramer (ed.), *The Jewish Discovery of Islam; Studies in Honor of Bernard Lewis*, 137-81, especially, 161-3.

disciplinary boundaries and logics. In any case, this is a matter I cannot discuss in further detail here other than to say it deserves greater attention than it has thus far received.

What I can say with confidence is that we can in fact trace the development and definitive establishment of *Islamwissenschaft* in European Orientalist scholarship from tracking the *Festschriften* produced at the time. For example, we can begin with the *Festschrift* for H. L. Fleischer by his students in 1875, a small volume that was almost completely philological in orientation.⁸ We can compare this text to next noteworthy *Festschrift* in the field, the one produced in 1906 for Theodor Nöldeke in honor of his seventieth birthday. This was a massive volume. 86 scholars from thirteen different countries wrote for the volume, namely, for the figure widely viewed as the patriarch of the Orientalist studies of his time.⁹ And, in fact, we see in this volume a disciplinary shift but one not as yet completed: we see ‘Semiticists’ and ‘Islamicists’ still writing under the same roof, just as Islamicists of the second generation came eventually to describe Nöldeke as a ‘transitional’ figure.¹⁰ Finally, we have the *Festschrift* for Goldziher in 1912 in which the shift from the philological to the Islamicist orientation is marked and discussed as such by participants.¹¹ There was in any case nothing of the picturesque in any of these volumes. If anything, the earlier philologically oriented ones were more recondite and inaccessible to the uninitiated.

The formation of Asiatic and Orientalist associations in the early and middle decades of the nineteenth century is often also cited as a measure of growing ‘professionalization’. However, what happened *inside* these respective bodies usually teaches us much more about this process. Consider, for instance the following episode: in his 1893 presidential address to the IX International Congress of Orientalists (ICO) in London (1892), the great Orientalist, Max Müller (1823-1900), had to air and explain before the Congress participants what they of course knew. At the last ICO in Stockholm (1889), a permanent organizing committee had for the first time

⁸ See *Morgenländische Forschungen; Festschrift Herrn Professor Dr. H. L. Fleischer* (Leipzig, 1875).

⁹ See *Orientalische Studien, Theodor Nöldeke zum siebzigsten Geburtstag*, edited by Carl Bezold, Carl (Giessen, 1906)

¹⁰ M. J. De Goeje (1836-1909), the great Arabist and contemporary of Nöldeke, who was chosen to introduce the volumes, addressed his friend as the “absolute master” of “Semitic Philology in the widest sense”. See *ibid.*, v. 1, vi. It was C. H. Becker who described Nöldeke, in memoriam, as a transitional figure between Semitic and Islamic Studies. He said that Nöldeke, despite his developmental history on the production of the Qur’an, had not been able to see the full comparisons between Christian and Muslim historical development. He also noted that Nöldeke was altogether dismissive of Islamic modernism, which contemporary Orientalists no longer agreed with him on, as they, unlike him, had much more of a chance to experience the object of their study first hand and not only out of books. See C. H. Becker, *Islamstudien, II*, 514-22.

¹¹ Two volumes of *Zeitschrift für Assyriology* 26-7 (1912) were turned into a *Festschrift* in honor of Goldziher, to which virtually the whole field of Arab and Islamic studies contributed. In the first, 26th volume, the great Russian Orientalist scholar, W. W. Barthold (1869-1930), argued in concluding his essay on “Die persische Šu’ūbīja und die moderne Wissenschaft”, in fact an altogether Goldziherian title, by noting that Goldziher had shown that Islam was not somehow an ‘Arab’ phenomenon in world history and that in fact it reflected the divergent national aims of the different peoples who used it as a banner for this purpose and for their own development. Further, he said that Goldziher’s work had showed that the Orient was as much subject to progress as the Occident and that there was no difference between the two in this regard. All of the “developments” in Oriental history Goldziher had demonstrated meant that: “the question as to the progress and retrogression also in the history of the Orient does not allow itself to be so easily decided and that between the Orient and the Occident there is no as such opposition in this regard, as is still today so much assumed.”, *ibid.*, 266. There were also two memorial volumes produced in Goldziher’s honor after WWII: *Ignace Goldziher Memorial Volume I & 2*, edited by Löwinger, Scheiber and Somogyi (Budapest), 1948, 58. Unlike the earlier *Festschrift*, these volumes were almost completely bereft of the philological orientation.

been elected but then had run head-long into a series of administrative squabbles with the original founders of the Congresses, who had organized the first ICO in Paris (1873). These gentleman, Müller gestured, had come to presume a proprietary relationship with respect to the ICOs and resented their having become self-managing affairs. They had now split from the ICO and were conducting rival ‘Statuary Congresses’. Müller elaborated the meaning of this division as follows: “

It seemed to many of us simply a case of what is called development by differentiation or growth by fission. There were at former Congresses a number of visitors, most welcome in many respects, but whose tastes and interests differed widely from those of the majority; and though we should never have parted with them of our own free will, many of us feel that we shall be better able to maintain the character of our Congresses, if each party follows its own way...[For] what we chiefly want are *Oriental scholars*, that is to say, men who have proved themselves able to handle their own spade, and who have worked in the sweat of their brow in disinterring the treasures of Oriental literature. We do not wish to exclude mere lovers of Eastern literature, nor travelers, or dragomans, or even intelligent couriers; they are all welcome; but when we speak of Oriental scholars, we mean men who have shown that they are able at least to publish texts that have never been published before, and to translate texts which have never been translated before. Of such I am glad to say we have lost hardly any.¹²

There continued of course to be still serious, non-academic Orientalist scholars even into the twentieth century. One could give the example of gentleman scholars of the old type in the Arabist and good friend and supporter of Goldziher, Count Carlo Landberg (1848-1924) or the great scholar of Early Islam, Leone Caetani (1869-1935), Prince of Teano and Duke of Sermoneta¹³. Meanwhile, the British had always been especially known for their extra-academic Orientalists. But, by the twentieth century Orientalist scholars were predominantly academics and would have as a corps whole-heartedly seconded what C. H. Becker in 1912 told Rudolf Tschudi (1884-1960), his young assistant editor on his new journal, *Der Islam* (1910): “I have in fact always preached to you that the idea of the private scholar (*Privatgelehrtentum*) is not for the long run, and it makes me happy for your own development that you have decided for the academic career.”¹⁴

However, even if we take it as established that in talking of nineteenth century ‘Orientalists’, we are essentially dealing with scholars who are becoming academics in an age of disciplinary formation, the question remains: what did these Orientalists generally do? What characterized their work and ethos? Here too though, if we try to answer these questions for the

¹² *Transactions of the Ninth International Congress of Orientalists, Vol. I.* (Edinburgh, 1893), 5-6.

¹³ On Landberg and Caetani, see Fück, *Die arabischen Studien in Europa*, 307-8, 297-99. Landberg had in fact been greatly inspired by seeing Goldziher’s capacity to interact with native Arab speakers with great facility during the latter’s Oriental trip. They were both in Damascus at the same time. As Goldziher recalled the young Landberg, asking simply to follow him around in his 1890 reconstruction of the trip he wrote for his fortieth year review of his life: “he [Landberg] could not be more astounded, how fluently I could speak with people in their own language. As he confessed to me, the dream of his life henceforth was to bring the matter so far as I had brought it.” Goldziher, *Tagebuch* (Leiden, 1978), 63. Fück said of Landberg that his self-taught method of learning Arabic had clearly hampered his scholarship. Academic Orientalists did not remember the extra-academic lineages of the field fondly.

¹⁴ Becker to Tschudi, 11/5/1912 in in GStA PK, VI. HA, NI C. H. Becker, Nr. 3314.

early and middle part of the nineteenth century, the most recent literature will still send us in opposite directions. For instance, if we turn to Marchand's characterization of what it meant to be a German Orientalist in this period, we get a rather dour answer. The romantic Orientalist dreams and speculations of the turn of the nineteenth century had been marginalized by the Classicists with their hard-headed, positivistic conception of scholarship and their bid thereby painstakingly to reconstruct Greek society in all its autonomy and exemplary status. This was what they had made of 'philology'. The chastened Orientalists, still largely abiding in theological chairs and environments, but they hankered for the scholarly precision, the academic autonomy and the cultural respectability of the Classicists. They envied them and copied their methods. They might hope to reconstruct Oriental societies on the Classicist philological model: the problem was the Orientalists generally had to deal with many Oriental peoples and societies, not to mention the argument for exemplary singularity on the Greek model was hard to come by! The best they could do was to solidify their positivistic scholarly bona fides and believe in and emphasize the newness of their knowledge and that it would eventually pay off.¹⁵

If we turn, however, to Schorsch's interesting new work on "Converging Cognates: the Intersection of Jewish and Islamic Studies in Nineteenth Century Germany", the story we just heard is virtually upended. In this dichotomy at least, we seem to be on familiar ground: the question is which 'cognate' we want to stress, the Hellenistic or the Jewish, the example of Classical Philology or *Wissenschaft des Judentums*? According to Schorsch, under the leadership of H. L. Fleischer, the Orientalist society he helped found in 1845, the *Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft* (DMG) and its journal (ZDMG), Semitic Studies in Germany (which he calls 'Islamic Studies') moved decisively towards the 'universal history of humanity' approach and ideal of the Jewish Orientalist wing of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. As Schorsch shows, Fleischer wielded all of the institutional powers at his disposal and often intervened personally and with great largesse on behalf of Jewish scholars and scholarly talent he respected. But, above all, by making the DMG and the ZDMG a locus of Jewish scholarly participation, he made available to *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, in these fora and under the rubric of *Orientalistik*, an entrée into the German academic establishment and a home within it where it had and remained with no other. The scholarly ideal Fleischer propounded and lived was that of "the open lodge of a cosmopolitan science (*offenen Loge weltbürgerlicher Wissenschaft*)", a cosmopolitan scholarship that would assume a universal human standpoint investigating all languages and confessions but not yielding itself to any one.¹⁶ In other words, for Marchand, mid-century Orientalists could not extricate themselves from cultural diversity to fully implement the Classicist positivist, idealizing focus on one society. On this normative model then they were bound to play second fiddle. By contrast, Schorsch demonstrated mid-century Orientalists, like Fleischer, could in fact identify with the ineluctable cultural pluralism of their field, read it in a universalist spirit, pride themselves on its cosmopolitanism and through it actually overstep confessional barriers.

My task here will not be to choose between an *Orientalistik* on the model of Classical philology or *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. I want to show both what is insightful but on the other hand also misleading about both these standpoints. First, both the Classicists and the Orientalists

¹⁵ See Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 57-123.

¹⁶ See Schorsch, "Converging Cognates: the Intersection of Jewish and Islamic Studies in Nineteenth Century Germany", *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*, V. 55 (2010), 3-36 and 27 for the phrase from Fleischer. See also on this theme, Sabine Mangold, *Eine "Weltbürgerliche Wissenschaft": Die deutsche Orientalistik in 19. Jahrhundert*, 108-115, 176-216. The title of Mangold's book is culled from Fleischer's phrase.

were clearly committed to the Humboldtian conception of scholarship as the cultivation of a universal, holistic and so ideal standpoint above particularity of social and political interests. They both saw their scholarship as committed to the cause of *Bildung*.¹⁷ We get a good sense of this, for instance, from the presidential address of August Dillman (1823-1894) at the fifth ICO in Berlin (1881). Dillman was actually a theologian who had single-handedly revived Ethiopic studies. In his address, he probed the broader meaning of the conferences for scholarship. He said it couldn't be said to have anything to do with actual research, since little actually got done on this front at them. Their real meaning was the "coming together of men from different nations towards a common purpose, in its international character. International, gentlemen, is science in itself; a light that has burst forth in one land, cannot conceal itself, but shines rather from there into the others."¹⁸ He then ran through a history of the Congresses and made this into a synecdoche of the history of modern Orientalism itself. The Congresses had started in Paris and moved to London, St. Petersburg and Florence. The French had led the way in Orientalist scholarship in the first half of the nineteenth century: the interests of the French state and its political connections to Eastern nations had been the great impetus. Then, British colonial administrators and businessmen had been also great researchers who had enriched the knowledge of the Orient with brilliant discoveries. In St. Petersburg the Congress had come into the presence of Asia itself and been amazed by direct experience of so many of its peoples engaged alongside it in common scientific pursuit. In now unified Italy ("Europe's outstretched arms to the Orient"),¹⁹ the Levantine memories of the Italian city-states and the remnants of a common history spoke for themselves and explained the industrious participation of Italians in modern Oriental studies, "the general science of language".

But, why had the Congress come to Germany? Germany had no direct connections to the East, no colonial possessions, "no spot of Eastern earth we can call our own", impelling it to Orientalist scholarship. Early on only love of the Bible had encouraged such studies and then of course into narrow channels. But, after the stimulus provided by the great discoveries of modern French and British scholarship, Germany had itself become a center of the new Orientalist science and attracted students from every corner to study it. What explained the change: "It was singularly and alone the impulsion to research, the thirst for knowledge, the drive to understand that has brought this about."²⁰ There was the German emphasis on education, the number of German universities and the enlightened governments that supported them. But, the scholarly work had *no* direct practical end. There weren't even enough academic positions for everyone so some simply had to be "ornaments of science".²¹ Dillman's speech was a story of progress that started with British and French interests and culminated in German pursuit of scholarship as 'science' for its own sake. In concluding, he stressed the universalist telos of this scholarship: one had to study all of humanity—for, "Europe is not mankind"—to ascertain the laws of historical development and so the plan of providence for man. The true practical meaning of their work, he said, was that it brought those they studied, the Orientals, equally into the realm of joint scientific effort. For, "Human nature is everywhere the same, it only requires some

¹⁷ Given her own point about the Orientalists in the mid-nineteenth century imitating Classicists as best as they could, it's strange to hear Marchand say about them, "in this period [1820-70] orientalists rarely saw themselves as providers of *Bildung*..." Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 104.

¹⁸ *Verhandlungen des fünften internationalen Orientalisten-Congresses, Erster Theil*. A. Asher & Co. Weidmannsche Buchhandlung: Berlin, 1881, 31.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 34.

²⁰ *Ibid*, 35, for also all the phrases to the last citation.

²¹ *Ibid*, 36.

scattered seeds of our cultivation, and this will also bear fruit on foreign ground.” Looking to the indigenous scholars of the colonial delegation from India,²² he applauded the British for having encouraged their scientific cultivation. He said European science would also finally penetrate the collapsing Muslim states, now “in their death throes”, and bring about political transformation there.²³ He ended with an oft-repeated circle metaphor in which the Orient, the starting point of Europe’s culture and its religion, would now receive from it the light of its science. Earlier he had said the international character of the Congresses, representing universality of scholarship, foreground world peace.

Hence, there is truth in both of the respective convergences Marchand and Schorsch point to: Orientalists, like Classical Philologists, adopted the notion their scholarship was aimed at the achievement and articulation of a universal, ideal standpoint. They understood their work in terms of *Bildung*. At the same time, while Orientalist Philology as we’ll presently see had quite intimate connections with the ‘science of religion’, it was generally to be found stressing and idealizing, like the Jewish Orientalists of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, the universality of ‘science’ rather than the universality of ‘religion’. Where both Marchand and Schorsch are somewhat misleading is in the character of the ‘convergences’ they posit and in the overall insinuation that mid-century Orientalist scholarship, which is to say Semitic *and* Indo-European (Aryan) Philology, did not have any fundamental mooring of its own. The general influence and power of Classical Philology’s conception of scholarship, its scholarly methodology and its cultural cache is indisputable. But, that does not mean Orientalists tried their best simply to do for Orientals societies what the Classicists were doing for the Greeks. This, they generally did not try to do. On the other hand, Semitic Philologists’ embrace of the ‘cosmopolitan history of humanity’ model, à la Fleischer, did not entail the formation of ‘Islamic Studies’ on the ‘*Wissenschaft des Judentums*’ pattern. That, with all of its reformist implications, would have to wait for the work of Goldziher. Fleischer cared a great deal about Arabic grammar and lexicography, about Arabic manuscripts and even literature. He cared a good deal less about ‘Islam’ or Islamic history as such.²⁴

But Classical Philology was hardly the only successful or dominant model of Philology in the nineteenth century. It was another conception of Philology that was for long the dominant paradigm or model in nineteenth century Orientalist scholarship, namely, the Philology represented by Franz Bopp’s comparative grammar.²⁵ For the heady ideas of the romantic generation of the ‘Oriental Renaissance’, as Schwab called it, had hardly all been displaced. Rather, William Jones’s first intimations about the affinities he saw between what we now call the Indo-European languages,²⁶ and Friedrich Schlegel’s then philosophical theorization of these links had then been transformed into Bopp’s methodologically exacting and ‘scientifically’ exact framework of comparative grammar. Comparative grammar became one of the greatest sources

²² Such ‘Orientals’ from colonial delegations to the Congresses were an omnipresent aspect of them, just as the ‘Muslim states’ also generally sent official and scholarly delegations

²³ Ibid., 39.

²⁴ See on Fleischer, Fück, *Die arabischen Studien in Europa*, 170-3 and Goldziher, “Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer” in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, B. 48 (Leipzig, 1904), 584-94. Goldziher was a Fleischer student. So was one of Goldziher’s best friends, August Müller who also wrote a glowing memoir of his teacher: Müller, *Memoir of Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer* (Washington, 1892).

²⁵ See on Bopp, Theodor Benfey, *Die Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft und orientalischen Philologie in Deutschland* (Munich, 1869), 370-9, 470-515. Benfey stresses Bopp’s centrality to ‘Oriental Philology’ from a contemporary standpoint.

²⁶ They were also regularly called ‘Indo-Germanic’ and ‘Aryan’ in the nineteenth century.

of pride of nineteenth century European scholarship, arguably even surpassing the achievements of Classical Philology in this regard. When nineteenth century Orientalists said the word Philology, they understood the last word in it to be ‘comparative grammar’. That is why we saw Dillman in the above paragraph describe Orientalist scholarship and philology as “the science of language” *tout court!* Using biological and genealogical metaphors, Bopp described languages as “organisms” that belonged to a larger “organism” or language family. In his work he sought to demonstrate the “physical and mechanical laws”, the rules of transformation whereby the forms in the languages of a family projected as genealogically later could be derived from the earlier and related ones. And, he went further to show how by comparison of the forms in extant languages of a family, the original genealogical parent from which they were all derived could be reconstructed.²⁷ Bopp successfully demonstrated this comparative grammar schema in the case of the several Indo-European languages he considered.

It became essentially the dream and the project of Semitic Philology in the nineteenth century to do the same for the Semitic languages. The problem, however, was that over the course of the nineteenth century comparative grammar simply proved a failed paradigm in Semitic Philology, which nonetheless confidently split itself from the ‘Aryan’ on this basis. Already the great Silvester de Sacy (1758-1838), generally understood as the father of modern European Arab philology, had worked to formulate a fully independent ‘modern’ Arabic grammar, in his case, out of ‘general grammar’ of discourse of Port Royal. But not only did he in fact incorporate the ideas and results of the native tradition of Arabic grammar into his own, when it came to exhibiting the syntactical rules of the language, he did so in a double-format, first giving them on the basis of his general grammar then according to the native tradition.²⁸ Semitic Philology simply could not shake the native grammatical tradition. Efforts were certainly made to create an autonomous grammar on comparative grammatical lines. But, as Fück put it of Fleischer, though he acknowledged Ewald’s attempts at a modern grammar of Arabic on the lines of Bopp’s work, he himself continued, like de Sacy, to depend on the native grammatical tradition as the basis of his own. Hence, though the greatest Arabist of his age, he did not produce a general grammar and moved instead in the direction of a careful, descriptive grammatical observation instead.²⁹ Much the same point can be made about why the Classical Philological methodology of painstaking reconstruction of the Greek’s total way of being never in fact found any great echo amongst Semiticists. Already the *Bibliothèque Orientale* of d’Herbelot (1625-1695) was basically an appropriation of Arab and Turkish compilations.³⁰ And, for those who did, in the age of philological obsession with grammar, work towards historical reconstruction, from Gustav Weil to August Müller (1848-1892), they continued

²⁷ See *ibid.*, 472-77.

²⁸ See Fück, *Die arabischen Studien in Europa*, 141-5. Fück’s interpretation of what he called, in de Sacy, the now first true maturity of European Arab philology is telling. He told the story of how one of de Sacy’s Arab editions and commentaries had made its way even to Syria, been commented on and corrected by a Syrian Christian Arab scholar, himself an authority on the classical prose, and sent back to Europe. It became clear in this first great critical test of the West from the East, a la Fück, that de Sacy actually gave the Arabic prose in question a freer hand and allowed it to be more itself rather than correcting it. Here’s how Fück read the event: “So did European Arabism pass the first ordeal by fire and prove its full right to exist.” *Ibid.*, 149. In philology, Europe had to pass the great test of native judgment and did so by allowing native prose or the native to be more himself! This philological anxiety, we’ll see, was displaced by *Islamwissenschaft*’s reformist critique of native traditions. Philology could theorize the native but never quite overcome his expertise.

²⁹ See *ibid.*, 171, 167.

³⁰ See *ibid.*, 98-104.

mostly to rely on Islamic historiographic traditions. Or, this work was simply left to the ‘historians’.³¹ This only in fact fully changed with the advent of *Islamwissenschaft* and through its critical historicist stance on the Islamic heritage.

In the second half of the nineteenth century then, those Semiticists who had not split off into Assyriology and its heady engagement with deciphering and making sense of the new archaeological findings in this area, namely, the self-avowed Arabists, began to move in ever narrower channels. There were some who tried to do it all and the most innovative at the time tried to move further in a historical direction. The Dutch Orientalist, Reinhart Dozy (1820-1883), besides ongoing involved philological debates with Fleischer, wrote a history of Islamic Spain on the basis of original sources, though his semi-fictionalized presentation and literary accenting made clear this was not Classical Philology.³² Theodor Nöldeke’s (1836-1930) pioneering critical historical reconstruction of the formation of the Qur’an created precedent for the kind of approach Goldziher pressed for all of Islamic history, though he himself never quite graduated from thinking in terms of ‘Semites’.³³ But, many others Semiticist cum Arabists, who came to be considered the ‘establishment’ by the growing number that opposed them, reduced themselves fundamentally to editing manuscripts, unearthing archaeological finds and making fine grammatical points. It was about this group that Georg Jacob (1862-1937), a pivotal, understudied early Islamicist who pioneered Turkish Studies in Germany, wrote to Goldziher about in 1907. He said that for some of their colleagues in Berlin, the mantra is “what is not grammar is swindle”, meanwhile, “actual science is disgusting” to such. He made a point of the fact that their apotheosis of ‘grammar’ had nothing to do with the proper perfection to which the Classical Philologists had brought it, for whom it was aimed precisely at the “understanding of texts” and something “unthinkable without the gift of feeling and critique”. Meanwhile, the reader should know Jacob was the very opposite of a phil-Hellenist.³⁴ He argued further that the reason they tried to do away with and scuttle all actual understanding of texts and content was that they wanted to use ‘grammar’ as a cover to make speculative “pseudo-philosophical” and “spiritualizing” claims about pre-historical origins and relations. He told Goldziher he shouldn’t be surprised that they dismiss his work and Wellhausen’s because they supposedly don’t “know grammar”, but that the situation was “very serious”, for “when such forces dominate, every spiritual work is made impossible”.³⁵

Jacob’s comment here about contemporary Orientalist philologists who dismissed all actual textual content and deployed ‘grammar’ speculatively in its place to make claims about peoples and their relations brings us to the final pivotal point we must consider in understanding the Philological Orientalist background from which and against which Goldziher’s work and

³¹ See *ibid*, 236-9. See also Mangold, *Eine “Weltbürgerliche Wissenschaft”*, 103-8.

³² See Fück, *Die arabischen Studien in Europa*, 181-185. See also Dozy, *Spanish Islam: a History of the Moslems in Spain* (London, 1913).

³³ See Nöldeke, *Geschichte des Qorans* (Göttingen, 1860). See also Becker, “Theodor Nöldeke [In Memoriam]” in *Islamstudien II*, 514-22.

³⁴ See Fück, *Die arabischen Studien in Europa*, 319-22.

³⁵ See Jacob to Goldziher, 5/26/1907, The Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Goldziher Correspondence, tok 19. The claim that Goldziher didn’t know grammar was at least ironic, since everyone was agreed that no Orientalist of his generation had a better grasp of Arabic than Goldziher himself. I have already cited Landberg’s idolization of him on this account. This observation could be further cited *ad nauseam*. Goldziher was himself aware of this irony and noted that those who mocked his Islamicist pre-occupations had to see for themselves that none could actually interact with the Arabs at the ICO’s like he could. See Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 94-5. Goldziher and *Islamwissenschaft* did not dump the exacting philological demands of the previous generation, but swallowed and superseded them.

eventually *Islamwissenschaft* emerged. For, if Philology as ‘comparative grammar’ ended up being mostly a pretension in Semitic Studies, another kind of Philology, a speculative philology, emerged to take the place of the empty content within it. This Philology drew on the posited divergent grammatical features of different language groups to make generally invidious conclusions about the fundamental character of distinct ethno-linguistic groups, peoples, and their Historical role. Speculative philology produced, in other words, a distinct philological historicism. And, as Maurice Oldender has brilliantly shown, this brand of Philology had the most intimate links with the ‘Science of Religion’ tradition and, for all its anti-theological ardor, represented a distinct, influential and striking version of the Christian competitive historicism within it. It was in this wing of the ‘Science of Religion’ tradition that the progress represented by Christianity and its providential purification and perfection was most prominently celebrated as an Indo-European or ‘Aryan’ phenomenon.

Christ remained a central figure in the conceptualization of Indo-European civilization. The new religious sciences attempted to treat all religions in the same way and yet to impose a Christian providential meaning on the new comparative order... The cataloguing of peoples and faiths reflected the belief that history was moving in a Christian direction.³⁶

The thinker who in the nineteenth century became the lodestar for this speculative philology complex, its invidious philological historicism and its providential propounding of Aryan Christianity was Renan.

Again, it would be a mistake to think that the discursive patterns set afloat by the Romantic generation of the ‘Oriental Renaissance’ had simply been discarded or marginalized. Not only had they attained a scientifically legitimate and respectable formulation in Bopp. The essentialist speculations they posed about the character of different language families and ethno-linguistic groupings also became the subject of philological theorizing. A prime example was the distinction Friedrich Schlegel had made as to the fundamental difference between the so-called inflectional vs. agglutinative languages. Inflectional languages, according to Schlegel, were characterized by the fact that their roots assumed their grammatical function vis-à-vis one another (case, tense, number, etc.) by the internal addition of further syllables of no meaning of their own. The roots of agglutinative languages, on the other hand, were related to each other by affixes that stand alone expressed the various possible grammatical operations. This was not a dry observation but one of great romantic resonance: the inflectional languages were said to be ‘organic’ in development, because each root was holistically integrated with the whole and the language could thus develop in an integral, evolutionary manner. Agglutinative languages, by contrast, were ‘artificial’, since their rules were lexically explicit so that they were in that sense ‘complete’: any further addition would have to be at each step artificial and arbitrary. Schlegel said that all languages had to be divided into these groups, but that what was clear was the inflectional status and fecundity of the Indo-European family.³⁷

³⁶ Oldender, *The Languages of Paradise: Race, Religion and Philology in the Nineteenth Century*, 136.

³⁷ See Benfey, *Die Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft und orientalischen Philologie in Deutschland*, 357-69. Eventually a third category of so-called “formless” languages was added to this dichotomy in the nineteenth century. These were syntactically speaking the most debased. Namely, every word was like an independent root in such languages, its significance vis-à-vis others determined by pure juxtaposition. Chinese was the usual example given. See *ibid.*, 366-7.

Renan began his famous *Histoire Général de Langues Sémitique* that had been presented for and won the Volney prize in 1847 by attesting as his task in the work what had become the reigning agenda of Orientalist Philology. He proposed “to do for the Semitic languages what M. Bopp has done for the Indo-European.”³⁸ But, the way he formulated the achievement of Bopp’s to be applied to the Semites was telling: he was, he said, to produce “a systematic grammatical tableau showing the manner in which the Semites came to give by speech a complete expression to thought.” But, then he immediately went on to say that the work was primarily theoretical, that his introduction to Semitic grammar went beyond the level of “comparative grammar” and that these theoretical considerations had come to be special importance in his eyes.³⁹ These ‘theoretical considerations’ were in fact a long, elaborated riff on Schlegel’s distinction between the Aryan, inflectional languages, with their organic, developmental capacity and the others, namely, the Semitic, that lacked this capacity. Renan’s contribution was to plumb the deep and radical ethno-Historical meaning of the Philological distinction. Semitic grammar and language, Renan said, in its essence reflected the immature focus on expression of present, subjective sensations and impressions. Unlike Aryan languages, with their developed syntax, Semitic verb conjugation gave an inadequate sense of tense and mood. All consideration of perspective or the importance of word-order was missing, leaving mere juxtaposition. Semitic sentences were basically run-ons that came to an end not in the ordering of propositional thought, but only because the speaker physiologically ran out of breath. Semitic grammar had no capacity for oratory, namely, to address the world. It was given rather to poetry and then not the narrative or epic kind but the poetry of subjective impression and sentiment. And, unlike Aryan metaphors that were means of further mutual articulation and linguistic idealization, Semitic metaphoric elaboration remained at the base sensual level. Aryan grammar lent itself to philosophical analysis, the Semitic one of poetic subjectivity could only see shadings of the same thing. In rhetoric as in architecture, it was driven to the “Arabesque”.⁴⁰

But, before even coming to this philological essentialization, Renan had already formulated its ethno-Historical meaning in the pages preceding it.⁴¹ What it meant was that Aryans were philologically capable of recognizing multiplicity and different and History capable of development. At an immature level, they had expressed this capacity in mythology: religiously they had been polytheists and pantheists. Always moving in a philosophical direction, they had ultimately in maturity evolved to scientific perception and formulation. The Semites by contrast were *inherently* monotheists. Renan left no doubt that, religiously, this brought them from their immediate infancy to a higher stage than the Aryans, who ultimately adapted it from them.⁴² But, he immediately made clear that this *had not been an achievement*. Monotheism was not a Semitic creation but a byproduct of their always limited horizons

³⁸ Renan, *Histoire Général et Système Comparé des Langues Sémitique* (Paris, 1863 ; orig. 1855), ix.

³⁹ Ibid., ix.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 21. See *ibid*, 18-25 for this train of thought.

⁴¹ It was easy enough to see where Renan was headed simply from his subject headings: “The role of the Semitic race in history: this role is more religious than political...Monotheism summarizes and explains all the characteristics of the Semitic race...The Semites don’t have mythology...The religious intolerance of Semitic peoples...The Semites have neither science nor philosophy; they lack curiosity: Arab philosophy is not a Semitic product...Semitic poetry, essentially subject, without variety...The Semitic spirit lacks sentiment for nuances...The lack of the plastic arts amongst the Semites...They don’t have an epic...The Semitic languages only have one type...” Ibid., 507.

⁴² See *ibid.*, 5-6.

grammatically and geographically: “The desert is monotheistic”.⁴³ In fact, the Semites were, socially, to be defined physiologically in terms of a tribal patriarchy and, psychologically, in terms of anarchic egoism. They lacked any capacity to address and form the world: they were morally abysmal, militarily unwilling and without conception of state formation. As if he needed to spell it out more clearly, Renan averred that, “Accordingly the Semitic race makes itself known almost singularly through its negative characteristics: it has neither mythology, nor epic, nor science, nor philosophy, nor fiction, nor plastic arts, nor civil life; in all, absence of complexity of nuances, of sentiment other than unity. There is no variety in monotheism.”⁴⁴

Actually, in his preface, Renan went so far as to excuse the difficulty of progress in comparative grammatical treatment of Semitic languages on the languages themselves! These “metallic” languages simply had not evolved in any significant matter over time, making their historicization inherently challenging.⁴⁵ The question of the relationship between ‘history’ and ‘philology’ in the nineteenth century continues to be a fraught one. Many thinkers have pointed to the new comparative philology as *the* historicist discipline. Michel Foucault cited Bopp’s comparative grammar, alongside evolutionary biology and political economy’s focus on specialization and production as encompassing the shift in the nineteenth century to the historicist Modern episteme, as against the tabular identity and difference at the heart of the ‘discourse’ oriented Classical one.⁴⁶ As Eric Hobsbawm put it, “Philology was the first science that had evolution at its core.”⁴⁷ By contrast, Olender, having in mind precisely Renan’s philological essentializations, thought philological and historical analysis at cross purposes. The reality is that Philology was a fundamentally historicist discipline, but philological historicism could be and often was an invidious historicism in the nineteenth century. This invidious historicism, à la Renan, assigned different ethno-philological groupings, in essentialist manner, distinct Historical roles in the teleological development of universal humanity. The Aryans were defined by their capacity for development and self-overcoming. What the Semites gave humanity, monotheism, had also sealed their faith, for monotheism lacked a history of its own and it doomed its careers, the Semites, to equally ahistorical status: monotheism could only be adopted and adapted teleologically in the course of History by the Aryans.⁴⁸

It would in fact be difficult to find a more tireless propagandist for historicism in the nineteenth century than Renan himself. Virtually everything he wrote began with a plea on its behalf. As he put it in explaining the *raison d’être* of his book on Ibn Rushd and ‘Arab philosophy’: “The characteristic trait of the nineteenth century is that of having substituted the historical method for the dogmatic method in all the studies related to the human spirit.”⁴⁹ And, he added that the greatest marker and achievement of the historical method had been in its reformulation of the critical attitude: “The great progress of critique has been the substitution of the category of *becoming* for the category of *being*, the conception of the relative for that of the

⁴³ Ibid., 6.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 16. See for this whole train of thought, *ibid*, 1-17. Also, Olender, *Languages of Paradise*, 51-68.

⁴⁵ See *ibid.*, xii-xiii.

⁴⁶ See Foucault, *The Order of Things* (New York, 1994; orig. 1966), 280-302.

⁴⁷ Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution, 1789-1848* (New York, 1962), 337. He also said here that its laws, unlike those of political economy, were “fundamentally historical, or rather evolutionary.”

⁴⁸ See Olender, *Languages of Paradise*, 68-74.

⁴⁹ Renan, *Averroès et l’Averroïsme: Essai Historique* (Paris, 1861), vi.

absolute, movement for that of immobility.”⁵⁰ The point Renan was trying to make was that the meaning and standing of any product of the human spirit could only be judged and evaluated historically, within the context the people and period it came from and relative to the development articulated by them all. Hence, as he put it, it made no difference that Averroisme and Arab philosophy was in no position to make any contribution to contemporary philosophy. Renan said he would affirm that unequivocally himself. The point was what this philosophy meant in its time and place and thus in the march of History. And, what it in fact showed was that ‘Arab philosophy’ was an oxymoron. It had been a medieval importation of Greek thought and even in the Islamic world it had been developed pre-dominantly by non-Arabs.⁵¹ Meanwhile, Renan argued that such negative results were the greatest gifts *philology* and only it was in a position to render the human spirit, for only that could establish what and in whom progress and human development in fact resided. It was in his tract, *The Future of Science*, where Renan provocatively argued that the true philosopher would hence have to be a scholar, that he defined the philologist as a historian of the human spirit whose primary sources and method would be comparative linguistics and religion and whose task would be defining the philologico-religious development of humankind.⁵² Here, Renan explicitly outlined the largely *negative* task of philology in projecting Historical progress, which, with respect to the Semites, he had clearly already made his own. The Semitic contribution to History had been religious but then it was crucial to show that true ‘religion’ had to be rescued from the Semites. Of the benefits of the study of Talmud, he said: “The Talmud is a very curious monument of moral depression and extravagance; but I maintain that no one who has not studied that unique work can form an idea of how far the human intellect may go in its aberration from the paths of common sense.”⁵³ Already here, he added that he was planning a history of ‘Arab philosophy’ but precisely to show the non-sense that there had been Arab philosophizing and thereby to sketch “in a more exact way the map of the Semitic spirit and the Indo-Germanic spirit.”⁵⁴

As I have been suggesting all along, Renan’s ethno-philological division between the Aryans and Semites was heavily predicated on their alleged respective *religious* roles in History and on his understanding of what the providential end of ‘religion’ entailed. Renan too was a ‘scientist of religion’. It was no accident that he chose as his two “pure” exemplars of the Semitic spirit in his *Histoire Général*, “the Hebraic form or Mosaism and the Arab form or Islam”.⁵⁵ Monotheism, a la Renan, was the Semitic spirit, according to Renan, and so this spirit

⁵⁰ Ibid., vi-vii. See also Fück, *Die arabischen Studien in Europa*, 174-6, who discusses Renan in terms of the beginnings of historicism in Arab studies, referring to this text. This passage was first written in Renan, *The Future of Science* (Boston, 1893; orig. 1890), 169. See the note below for further on this text.

⁵¹ See Renan, *Averroès et l’Averroïsme*, v-viii. This was an argument Renan never tired of making. He had already made it in the opening pages of his Volney prize essay: Renan, *Histoire Général et Système Comparé des Langues Sémitique*, 10. And, he’d voiced it in his 1848 work, which he published two years before his death in 1890 and where he noted he intended to write such a work on so-called ‘Arab philosophy’: Renan, *The Future of Science*, 227: “I have no great faith in Arabian philosophy, but if the result [of its investigation] were a mere atom towards the history of the human intellect a thousand well spent lives would not be too much to pay for it.”

⁵² See, for instance, *ibid.*, 119-128, 154-162, 260-73.

⁵³ Ibid, 170. Some pages later, he added that the Jews themselves were now agreed that the Talmud was destined for the dustbin of history, but that that made the historical study of these “precious documents” even more pressing. See *ibid*, 203.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 172.

⁵⁵ Renan, *Histoire Général et Système Comparé des Langues Sémitique*, 14. Renan chose these two and ultimately particularly the Arabs because they had not been ‘perverted’ by interaction with other racial groups. This claim, however, simply points to the way in which so much of what Renan wrote was marked by unresolved paradox

was most characteristically represented by Judaism and Islam. But, the Semites had also been the originators of the other grand monotheism of history, namely Christianity: that monotheism had inseminated the development of the Aryan peoples of Europe and Renan never disputed that this was the great contribution of the Semites to History. Still, on the basis of his principles, how could Renan approve of this Aryan adoption of an inherently alien spirit? And, if monotheism was a superior religion, then did that not mean that the Semites were inherently superior from a religious standpoint? Renan's answer to this question crucially explains what he meant by 'development', for it entailed in his eyes the capacity for self-overcoming.

Semitic monotheism was superior religiously to Aryan paganism but it had *not* been an historical achievement: it was simply the Semitic character and environment itself. Christianity, by contrast, was from its origin to its end a story of overcoming and so of development. It had resulted not from any Semitic development or overcoming but from the self-overcoming of a singular, unique Semite in History, Jesus. Renan's story of Jesus was of a unique individual who had succeeded in overcoming his own Semitic character, his own Judaism and Jewish environment to make monotheism available to all humanity.⁵⁶ Jesus had been exposed to the more 'Aryan' environment of the Galilee and after his attempts at Jewish reform, his return to 'Semitic' Jerusalem had finally made him understand that it was Judaism itself that had to be defeated: "From this moment he is no longer a Jewish reformer; he shows himself a destroyer of Judaism itself."⁵⁷ He essentially abolished the Law and all right of blood: "In other words, Jesus is no longer a Jew."⁵⁸ All the same, the Christianity that remained after Jesus's martyrdom could not but remain a Jewish phenomenon in the hands of his Jewish disciples. Hence, according to Renan, it was only because Christian monotheism answered a need and developmental path for the Aryans themselves, namely, for the Roman Empire, that it was appropriated and adapted as their religion. Without that, Jewish Christians would've themselves soon destroyed it. Catholic Christianity, then, as the universal religion but even in its basic institutional development, Renan read in his 1880 Hibbert Lectures as historically established and set on its course as *the religion of the Roman Empire*:

The unity of the Empire was the condition precedent of any great religious proselytism which should set itself above nationalities in the. In the fourth century the Empire felt this fully: it became Christianity: it saw that Christianity was the religion which it had made without knowing it, the religion bounded by its frontiers, identified with itself, capable of infusing into it a second life. The Church on its side, became completely Roman, and has remained up to our day, as it were, a remnant of the Empire. Throughout all the Middle Ages, the Church is no other than the old Rome.⁵⁹

The point is that Christianity had a history and had become a key to History because it represented the religious advance of the Aryan Roman Empire, *its overcoming of paganism*. As

which presumably gave his prose a sense of profundity in his own time but does not do so in retrospect. Hence, Renan's claim was that ethno-philological differences were inherent and could not be overcome by interracial interaction. But, according to this logic, the measure of his theory should have been not those isolated, 'pure' Semites but those who'd mixed with others and still showed their Semitic colors.

⁵⁶ See Olender, *Languages of Paradise*, 68-79.

⁵⁷ Renan, *Life of Jesus* (Boston, 1910), 240.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 241. See also the discussion in Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, 157.

⁵⁹ Renan, *1880 Hibbert Lectures on the Influence of the Institutions, Thought and Culture of Rome on Christianity and the Development of the Catholic Church* (London, 1885), 19.

Renan put it, if it had not been Christianity, it would have been Mithraism: “I sometimes permit myself to say that, if Christianity had not carried the day, Mithraicism would have become the religion of the world.”⁶⁰ One thing is certain: As Renan reiterated, Christianity would have never become the universal religion of humanity if it had remained in predominantly Jewish hands. They would have destroyed it, “the mother would have killed the child”.⁶¹ Hence, in my tri-partite division of Part One between those Christian historicists who read Christianity as the logical culmination of Judaism, or as the process of the great Historical struggle between Jewish and universal Christianity vs. those who saw it as the triumph of Hellenistic civilization over the Jewish, Renan belonged to the third camp. All the same, as he never tired of reminding his comrades in this camp, Christianity had to be understood as a process of historical overcoming and development, which is to say, of humanization, meaning particularly Aryanization. But, “Christianity at the outset was an exclusively Jewish fact.”⁶² By adopting and humanizing it, the Greco-Roman world had overcome itself and the Semites simultaneously, for such capacity for developmental overcoming was the essential character of the Aryans. Renan’s philological historicism ended thus in a pregnant racist paradox: the Aryans were defined by their capacity for development and movement towards ever greater freedom. As he argued in his famous essay, “What is a Nation?”, in nationality, Aryan Europe overcame even ethnic and philological determination in order to fully to define and determine itself voluntarily and on its own terms. But, such freedom was still a racial characteristic: nationality was only for Europeans. The other peoples could not overcome themselves and were rather defined by their racial character.⁶³

In concluding this section on the Orientalist background to Goldziher’s work and the emergence of *Islamwissenschaft*, I do not want to suggest that Renan’s philological historicism, namely, his invidious version of speculative theology was the only one possible or went unchallenged by others working within the ethno-philological rubric. This was not the case. Max Müller (1823-1900), the great exponent of the new field of ‘comparative mythology’ grew increasingly uncomfortable with the racist overtones and teleology in Renan’s religio-philological schema. This was not because he differed radically from Renan in some of the latter’s basic premises. He too thought the Semites were in fact ‘philologically’ simply much more prone to monotheism. Akin to Renan, he also viewed Christianity, as the universal religion of humanity, to have been the *historical achievement* of Hellenistic civilization. Müller,

⁶⁰ Ibid., 35.

⁶¹ Ibid, 118.

⁶² As Renan tried to clarify matters with his own Aryanist comrades: “Christianity in their opinion is the work of collective humanity; Socrates composed, as it were, the prelude to it, Plato labored at it, Terence and Virgil are already Christians, Seneca still more so. This is true, perfectly true, provided one can grasp the meaning of it. Christianity in reality only became what it is when humanity *adopted* it as the expression of the wants and tendencies by which it had been stirred for ever so long. Christianity, such as it prevails amongst us, contains in fact, elements of every date, of every country. But the important point to bring to light, which is not sufficiently noticed, is that the primitive germ is wholly Jewish, that the apparition of Jesus is simply simultaneous with the Christianity anticipated by the Greco-Roman world... The soil whence Christianity drew its sap, in which it spread its roots is humanity and above all the Greco-Roman world; but the kernel from which it sprang is wholly Jewish.” Renan, *The Future of Science*, 263. This in any case was a wholly internal dialogue and qualification with people Renan admired, like Christian Lassen. Émile Burnouf, the nephew of the great Indo-Europeanist and pioneer of Buddhist Studies, Eugène Burnouf, to whom this text of Renan’s was dedicated, said in his own primer on *La Science des Religions* (1870): “Christianity is a wholly Aryan doctrine, which, as religion, has almost nothing in common with Judaism.” Cited in Olender, *Languages of Paradise*, 171 (note 40).

⁶³ See Renan, “What is a Nation?” in Geoff Eley and Ronald Suny (eds.), *Becoming National: A Reader* (Oxford, 1996), 42-56.

moreover, had been one of the reigning spirits at the International Congresses of Orientalists (ICO) held in London, first in the second such ICO in 1874 and then at the ninth in 1892. He presided over the latter as its president. The London ICO's decidedly stood out from the rest in their insistent adoption of the ethno-philological framing. No other ICO even came close to the trenchant neat categories of the 1874 London ICO that organized the separate sections as follows: 1) the Semitic Section, 2) The Turanian Section (that is, all non-Aryan, non-Semitic languages and peoples of Asia and Europe, including Chinese), 3) The Aryan section, 4) The Hamitic section, 5) The Archaeological section, 6) The Ethnological. And, even the 1892 ICO, by which time such insistent framing could no longer be implemented, retained the earlier categories at the same time the other Congresses were progressively displacing them.⁶⁴ All the same, from the start, Müller fundamentally disagreed with Renan about 'monotheism' as Semitic endowment and ahistoricity. From the Romantic generation, he took the idea of an original, primitive revelation of God to all humanity from which there had then been degeneration.

He in fact developed a stream of thought interestingly first put forward by Moses Mendelsohn.⁶⁵ Mendelsohn had argued that human discourse began with natural signs and that, all of Creation having been intimated by God as divine, such signs, in their metaphoric range, could also become expressions of the divine. The sun, in its fructifying warmth or in the light it shed on all actions, etc. However, in the process of linguistic reification, of signs absorbing and being defined by their metaphors, what had been a metaphor for the divine came to be seen as itself divine. Müller's name for the primitive revelation for all mankind was henotheism: but, from there, he made an ethno-philological distinction. The Semitic languages he claimed were so structured that in their relatively sensual transparency—poverty—the concrete sign for God was generally not confused in its metaphoric function. Semites did not confuse God with his signs. By contrast, the greater capacity for integrated, metaphoric elaboration and abstract definition in Aryan languages meant that linguistic formation here invited mythology. 'Concepts' took on and became their metaphors. The signs of God became Gods. Mythology, Müller argued, was a 'disease' of language.⁶⁶ Hence, Müller decisively agreed with Renan that the 'science of language' was the 'science of religion'. But, he read its task and telos as being virtually the reverse of Renan's conception. The critical task of Philology was to prove that rather than the exclusive patrimony of the Semites, monotheism was the original though unconscious revelation to all mankind and, in Christianity, to be its explicit universal destiny.

As the nineteenth century wore on, Müller in fact became increasingly worried about the anatomization and biologization of his philological categories. He tried increasingly to imagine

⁶⁴ See *Report of the Proceedings of the Second International Congress of Orientalists* (London, 1874). These even at the time speculatively comprehensive and simplified ethno-philological categories—Semitic, Turanian, Aryan, Hamitic—were certainly current in the extant philological circles and literature of Europe. The meaning of 'Turanian' and 'Hamitic' remained a subject of ongoing dispute. It was this simplified range that, through the latter part of the nineteenth century, tended increasingly to anatomization and bio-racialization: a curious brew of generalizations about cranial profile, temperament ('nervous' vs. 'muscular', etc.), social structure and language cum belief collapsed on top of one another. Besides the Aryan and Semitic, the 'Turanian' had come to signify the Ur-nomadic type, the 'Hamitic', mainly over time, the means of explaining the possibility of civilization in black Africa. For the sections of the 1892 ICO in London, see *Transactions of the Ninth International Congress of Orientalists* (London, 1893), Volumes I & II. The sections here were: 1) Indian, 2) Aryan, 3) Semitic: (A) Assyrian & Babylonian, (B) General, 4) Egypt & Africa, 5) Geographical, 6) Archaic Greece and the East, 7) Persia & Turkey, 8) China, Central Asia & the Far East, 9) Australia (and Oceania), 10) Anthropology (and Mythology).

⁶⁵ See Funkenstein, *Perceptions of Jewish History*, 226-7.

⁶⁶ See Max Müller, *Lectures on the Science of Religion* (New York, 1874). Olender, *Languages of Paradise*, 82-92.

philology in ways that would not, like Renan, make it the lever of invidious, essentialized Historical roles but of a common universal history. He never shed the philologically inspired divisions he had projected but he tried to reformulate their explanatory power to suggest the philological divisions of the pre-historic level in fact set the scene for the efficacy of processes of cultural exchange and diffusion in the historical one. In his remarkable 1892 presidential address to the London ICO, he provided an extended review of the momentous contributions over the century of Orientalist scholarship to human knowledge. He argued that the ethno-philological frame was, as an order of explanation, essentially different from that of the bio-racial and in no way reducible to it. He tried to locate the ethno-philological on the side of ‘cultural diffusion’ rather than Darwinian evolution. Müller noted that the first generation of comparative philology had successfully established the genetic relationship between languages, above all in the monumental discovery that the Indian, Iranian, Greek, Latin, Slavonic and Germanic shared a common ethno-linguistic patrimony. Much the same had been shown for the Semitic languages/peoples. All of this, he said, had already worked to erase the traditional boundaries between East and West, but it had also led to the presumption that the distinct ethno-linguistic families had essentially carved out isolated histories of dispersion or cultural formation.

However, relying on the work of Orientalists in the last decades, especially in the booming field of Assyriology, Müller declared the isolationist presumption to have now been proven false. In his historiography of Orientalist philology, he positioned the earlier generation as having focused on *language*. By contrast, the new one had focused especially on *writing* and its transmission. And, the deciphering of the cuneiform scripts had led to the “shock” discovery that a non-Semitic group, the Sumerians, had transmitted the cuneiform script to the Semitic groups in Mesopotamia, which had then moved progressively westward inspiring the scripts of other non-Semitic groups. Meanwhile, it was now equally clear the Greek alphabet had been adapted from the Phoenician alphabet, itself ultimately derived from the Egyptian hieroglyphs. In other words, the new focus on writing revealed a reality of highly transformative inter-ethnic historical interaction and exchange, and orders of politico-cultural dependence that thus served to move philology into not an invidious but a universal Historical space. To stress, finally, that ethno-philological analysis was meant not to divide discount human history, he stressed its ‘religious’ telos, namely, to explain the advent in human history of what he called the ‘Alexandrine era’: universal history when it became conscious and inter-ethnic. It was ‘religion’, his examples were Christianity and Buddhism that had proved hence the great motors of inter-ethnic cultural transmission and synthesis.⁶⁷ We have now seen that Orientalism became an academic philological discipline in the nineteenth century but one of ambivalent trajectory and results. The ‘hard’ scientific agenda of comparative grammar was not realized in Semitic Studies, leaving it with the ideal of *Bildung* but only a bare scholarship to show for its universal claims. Meanwhile, the demand for content was filled by a speculative philology that turned it, in Renan’s work, into a distinct version of the ‘science of religion’. However, the influence of Renan’s ethno-philological dichotomy between the different religio-Historical roles of the Semites and Aryans notwithstanding, his invidious philological historicism caused discomfort even amongst philologists who agreed with many of his premises but became increasingly wary of the advancing biologization of their categories. Hence, Müller tried to re-orient philology to read it as not dividing History, but acting as the prelude to the universal age of ‘religion’ within it. This was the Orientalist setting in which Goldziher began his career. He adopted the

⁶⁷ See Müller, “Inaugural address” in *Transactions of the Ninth International Congress of Orientalists*, V. I, 1-37.

scholarly standards of his meticulous, philologically oriented teachers but in a bid to project critical historical trajectory thereby. He moved not simply to qualify, but to explode philological historicism as a whole by reconceiving its Historical religious trajectory from a universal historicist perspective that left no room for philological divisions. And, as we'll see methodologically in this chapter and substantively in the next, he ultimately applied his critical historicist standpoint to the Islamic heritage to replace the Semitic/Aryan divide as the dominant one in Orientalist scholarship with a Reformist one between the Medieval and Modern.

3.

Goldziher's whole intellectual career was directed against Renan, against namely the prevalence of Renan's ethno-philological mode of framing and historicization in Orientalist scholarship. The crux of this divergence was the 'science of religion'. For Renan, the key to the universalizing telos of 'religion' and the 'science of religion' was a philologically framed historicism. One had to understand that monotheism had *not* been a *historical* achievement of the Semites: it was, in their case, rather a cultural, climactic, linguistic *characteristic*. It was in fact the sign of a cultural deficit marking the limited Semitic encounter with and capacity to recognize natural diversity. Only when monotheism escaped its Semitic bounds in Christianity, that is, only when Christianity passed from its Jewish auspices to become consolidated in the Roman Empire and to become its religion, had the universalist promise of monotheism become a historical possibility. Only in non-Semitic hands and in its post-Semitic dispensation had monotheism signified a cultural achievement and a principle of historical progress rather than a totalizing, ethno-philological marker, as it had remained with the Semitic monotheists and monotheisms, Jews and Arabs, Judaism and Islam. For Goldziher, by direct contrast, critical, purified monotheism was the telos, the universal destiny of the cultural and religious history of all humanity. Just as all peoples were to climb the ladder of civilization from say nomadic to agricultural to state-based and ultimately nation- and science-based societies, they were bound also to climb a coincident ladder of religious progress from mythology to polytheism to traditional monotheist and ultimately critical monotheism. The most that particular peoples could claim for themselves in this universal historical climb was to have innovated and shown a step above to all others. Or, they could claim to be ahead of others on one or both of these ladders, but as the critical teleological task of the 'science of religion' suggested, all later synthesis proving the two ladders one was more valuable than particular innovation.

Goldziher, in his early work on Hebrew mythology, sought to universalize the comparative mythology of his time by moving beyond the then dominant philological schematization of it. The 'Hebrews', he argued, had had a mythology of their own and could not have—any less than any other people—somehow done without the 'mythological stage', especially as this 'stage' was the original starting-point of cultural development for all peoples.⁶⁸ He accordingly subjected the Hebrew Scriptures to a mythological critique and archaeology to prove them the repository of the over-written mythological strata in the Jewish heritage. In his later foundational work on *Islamwissenschaft*, Goldziher continued his universal historicist project by producing a critical reformist construction of the Islamic heritage that projected it in terms of the universal teleological destiny of monotheism. Moving from comparative mythology to the standpoint of comparative religion, Goldziher moved beyond the Jewish reformist

⁶⁸ See Goldziher, *Der Mythos bei den Hebräern und seine Geschichtliche Entwicklung: Untersuchungen zur Mythologie und Religionswissenschaft* (Leipzig, 1876), 1-19.

idealization of Jewish monotheism by reiterating it in a universal key. By his initial openness to the idealization of the Islamic heritage as a complementary monotheistic tradition and by his later scholarly devotion to the same, he advanced a conception of History as the universal progressive purification and realization of monotheism as such. By the same token, he overcame the split between the Jewish reformist idealization of Judaism, on the one hand, and the Jewish Orientalist glorification of Jewish cultural integration under Islam as a pivotal episode in the 'history of humanity' on the other. Adding the idealization of Islam as a desideratum into this mix, he erased the gap between the disparate 'religious' and 'cultural' prerogatives of a singular focus on Jewish history by respectively Jewish Reform and Jewish Orientalism. Ultimately then, Goldziher's questioning of the historical interaction of 'religion' and 'culture', of their world-wide historical development and diffusion as well as of their teleological purification and circumscription to come was universal in scope. It is the course of this questioning in his scholarship that I undertake in this second part of the study.

The first task is to show that, within the context of Orientalist scholarship, Goldziher's work affected above all a shift from philological to universalist historicism. I have tried to capture this shift in the simplest manner possible by saying that Goldziher was his whole life writing against Renan. Namely, this fact holds equally true for his later work that inaugurated *Islamwissenschaft* as for his early work on Hebrew mythology. In fact, the very focus on 'Islam' as the basis of the new Orientalist discipline, as the prism for analysis and understanding of the history of the Middle-East and North Africa, must be understood in *this* sense. *Wissenschaft des Judentums* had highlighted the multivalent Jewish capacity for cultural encounter and integration with the Hellenistic, Islamic and modern European worlds to position Jewish history as a synecdoche of Universal History. The Science of 'Islam' moved in the reverse direction. It approached Islamic history as a paradigm of Universal History. 'Islam' was thereby illuminated as the enveloping and developing outcome of cultural and religious exchange amongst the peoples of the Orient and beyond. Islam namely was now analyzed as the work of peoples of altogether different ethnic and philological backgrounds, Semitic (Arabic, Aramaic, etc.), Indo-European (Persian, Greek, Sanskrit, etc.), Turkish and even Chinese, all of whom could nonetheless be seen as having played a role in the constitution of a common Islamic civilization.

If the proposition that Goldziher's career, both in its early reframing of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* and the later inaugurating of *Islamwissenschaft*, must be understood as one long polemic against Renan has not been generally admitted as such, the unfortunately dynamics of the Orientalism debates are largely to blame. For, as far as Said was concerned, so-called 'Islamic Orientalism' was simply the latest and thus especially backward manifestation of the philologically-ordered Orientalism of the nineteenth century, the latest account of 'Semitic' monotheism. The new focus in Orientalist scholarship on 'Islam' at the end of nineteenth century Said thus saw as simply a turn to one more towering Orientalist generality characteristic of its essentializing and totalizing tendency as a whole.⁶⁹ Meanwhile, Lawrence Conrad's influential recent work on Goldziher has, amongst that of others, led to growing realization that Renan's invidious philological schematization did not remain normative in Orientalist scholarship and that the rise of 'Islamic Studies' involved accordingly the shift to a more broadly historicist rather than philologically-based methodology.⁷⁰ The very title of Conrad's essay,

⁶⁹ See especially, Said, *Orientalism*, pp. 103-05, 278-83.

⁷⁰ See Conrad, "Ignaz Goldziher on Ernest Renan" in *The Jewish Discovery of Islam*, 143-8, 150-4, 157-60, 162-3. Unfortunately Conrad's shifting focus in the conclusion of his essay to 'professionalization' rather than 'universalist

“Ignaz Goldziher on Ernest Renan: from Orientalist Philology to the Study of Islam”, suggests such a shift. Conrad followed Goldziher from his early work on Hebrew mythology through to the memorial essay he wrote in 1892-3 on Renan for the Hungarian Academy of Sciences⁷¹ to argue that the founder of *Islamwissenschaft* had developed a historicist methodology of universal evolution based on Geiger’s reformist criticism and pitched in direct contradistinction to Renan’s philological speculations. Unfortunately, the dynamics of the Orientalist debates have meant that the mere establishment of a decisive move from a prevalent, philologically-ordered Orientalism to the attempt a critical and universalist historicist one in Goldziher’s *Islamwissenschaft* has not been an emotionally satisfying enough rebut to Said. Accordingly, writers like Robert Irwin, drawing on Conrad’s work and its clearly laid out predilections, have appropriated Goldziher’s critique of Renan to argue it showed Renan had been no great Orientalist, that in fact he belonged somewhere next to colonialists like Cromer in the history of Orientalism and that all this demonstrated Said had been a charlatan for making a scholarly no-body like Renan into the high-priest of Orientalist scholarship past and present.⁷² Hence, instead of broader understanding of the shifts in Orientalist scholarship in the course of the nineteenth century, we are instead offered a polemical choice. It’s either Said’s story of ‘Islamic Orientalism’ as Philological Orientalism triumphant or the counter-story of an inchoate Orientalism at the start of the nineteenth century, participated in by adventurers and dilettante intellectuals like Renan, becoming ever more professionalized into a fully positivist and historicist discipline by its end.⁷³

What neither of the sides seems able to swallow is the apparently uncomfortable historical situation for both that Goldziher in fact idealized Renan as a great intellectual and one of the great Orientalists of his time whose thinking had become particularly prevalent in the Orientalist scholarship of its time, functioning like a central dogma within it. And, simultaneously, that he saw it as worthy of his life-work to counter Renan’s perspective, to turn the tide against it in Orientalist scholarship and thus to set the field on a new footing of his own making. In *Mythology Amongst the Hebrews*, Goldziher said all of this rather explicitly. He said of Renan’s “ruling principle”, that ‘Semites have never had mythology’, that it had both because of the striking character of his ethno-psychological schema and the elegant quality of all his prose, “become not only for a great part of the disciplinary world [of comparative mythology] an

historicism’ as the great upshot of the rise of Arab and Islamic Studies shows further the impact of the Orientalism debates. See also Ludmila Hanisch (ed.), *Islamkunde und Islamwissenschaft im deutschen Kaiserreich: der Briefwechsel zwischen Carl Heinrich Becker und Martin Hartmann (1900-1918)* (Leiden, 1992), 11-12. Hanisch, counter-intuitively in the terms of the Orientalism debates, argued that it was the imperialist drive of European states for greater actionable information that consolidated the decisive turn to a historical approach in *Islamwissenschaft*.

⁷¹ See Conrad, “Goldziher on Ernest Renan”, 154-161; for Goldziher’s own account of the memorial essay, see Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 153, 159, 165-6.

⁷² See for instance, Robert Irwin, *Dangerous Knowledge; Orientalism and its Discontents* (New York, 2006), 166-9.

⁷³ The presentist thinking the professionalization story encourages is well represented by Irwin’s historical methodology which is that of unabashed anachronism. Authors and intellectual movements are judged retrospectively in terms of what counts as knowledge today rather than within the context of their own time. Renan was not a “serious” Orientalist because we now know his Arabic was awful and his scholarship shoddy. Nor is Renan somehow singled out in this manner. The Crusades are dismissed from the standpoint of the historiography of Orientalism because they did not lead to any greater interest or familiarity with “Arabic and Islamic high culture.” Ibid, 36. What Medieval Christendom thought about Islam is likewise said to be meaningless because Medieval Christians satisfied themselves with “polemical fantasies” instead of trying “to get their facts right” about it, ergo, there was no serious interest here in Islam worthy of the label ‘Orientalism’. See *ibid*, 36-53, cited phrases from 53. And, then there’s Irwin’s decision to call all Islamic science so much woolly-headed non-sense, “only scientific in the broadest and woolliest sense”, because it was apparently a few centuries behind ours. See *ibid.*, 30-34.

irrevocable scientific dogma—in science too dogmas at times rule the terrain—but to count also for the scholarly and cultivated standing far apart from this science into a veritable axiom in examination of the spiritual characteristics of races.”⁷⁴ So, Goldziher was not placing Renan outside the realm of serious scientific scholarship, quite the opposite. He was not wasting himself on a dilettante. He was taking on what he took to be a dominant schema in the Orientalist and broader scholarly world of his time. As for Goldziher’s personal estimation of Renan, in his *Tagebuch*, this is made rather painfully clear for those who would have no doubt preferred he had adopted their own sneering attitude towards the French intellectual. Noting his acceptance in 1892 to give the memorial lecture on Renan for the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the lecture in which he developed his sharpest critique of “Renan as an Orientalist”, Goldziher still reminisced with awe about the only time he’d had the chance to meet his intellectual rival in person:

I consider myself lucky, during the greatest tribulations of my life, to have come close to so many great men (*so vielen grossen Männern nahe getreten zu sein*). How many have I seen face to face and how many have I heard speak! I think now of the for me unforgettable meeting with Renan, May 1884.”⁷⁵

The task of historical interpretation is not to be discomfited by such reverential expressions of respect and approbation by Goldziher on Renan’s intellectual stature. It is not to try to wriggle out of them by exegetical means.⁷⁶ If we accept and thus actually try to understand them, what they suggest is the attempt by a scholar to displace a whole way of thinking within his field and

⁷⁴ Goldziher, *Der Mythos bei den Hebräern*, 4.

⁷⁵ Goldziher, *Tagebuche*, 153. Conrad in fact cites this line in his essay, interpreted as a *recollection of the past*. See Conrad, “Ignaz Goldziher on Ernest Renan”, 149. He then goes on to cite Goldziher’s other presumably *contemporary* considerations on the memorial lecture to argue they made clear the maturing Orientalist’s attitude towards Renan had “soured considerably” since their meeting in 1884. That passage is cited as follows: “I will begin to assemble the ideas for the lecture. It was very sensible of me to declare from the outset that I could undertake the task only on condition that I limit myself to “Renan as an Orientalist.” It would be wicked for me to offer myself as a sacrifice to the singing of Renan’s praises as a New Testament critic and historian of the rise of Christianity. It will be as useful to attach R. to Le Hir, Quatrèmere, and Burnouf as to celebrate him as a student of Strauss and Bauer. Yes he was such a student, and because of this he disliked the Tübingen [colleagues], *ibid*, 154-5. Conrad performs some exegetical gymnastics to wring a considerable souring of attitude from this passage. He fails to tell the reader that this paragraph supposedly signally a shift in attitude and the above acclamation in the text about Renan as a great man form in fact one paragraph in the *Tagebuch*, with the acclamation as the conclusion.

⁷⁶ Certainly Goldziher does not make matters easy for his would-be resurrectors and champions who would have him as the ‘true face of Orientalism’. Conrad is an honest scholar and, in good conscience, cites and has to explain also this heady paragraph of Goldziher’s, recording his progress on the memorial essay on Renan: “I have begun to write my essay on “Renan as an Orientalist.” The theme is tremendously attractive for me. In two days I have drafted two chapters: a) Renan as a professor, b) R. as a Bible critic. Much remains for me to put pen to paper. The man has the soundest views on *contemporary* Israel. He is the most dangerous anti-Semite, because he is right. The only dangerous one is the one who is right. One cannot match (*beikommen*) him. The pompous phrase is for the moment and for the rabble. Honorable people use no such phrases, and with them one can never refute truths.” *Ibid*, 155. Conrad rightly points here to Goldziher’s embittered judgment of the failure of his own reformist efforts within the Jewish world of his time as responsible for this assessment and ‘agreement’ with Renan. In fact, here too though Goldziher was actually reversing Renan. Reacting to criticism against the anti-Semitic tenor of his pronouncements on the Semites and their less than wonderful capacity for and impact on civilization, Renan tried to evade the pressure by saying that what he said about Jewish history had little to do with contemporary European Jews. By contrast, Goldziher thought Jewish history immaculate and excoriated contemporary Jews for not realizing its true potential, thus desecrating it.

the grand intellectual presence responsible for it with another. What they point to is Goldziher's successful bid to move the Orientalist scholarship of his time from a philologically-ordered to a universalist historicism.

Already in *Mythology amongst the Hebrews*, this ambition and the exact shift in intellectual paradigm it entailed was crystal clear. I will have more to say of this text and its elucidation of Goldziher's early historicist schema in the following section. However, its fundamental critique of Renan's ethno-philological psychology and the historicist alternative it proffered in its place can be captured succinctly enough here. As Goldziher put it, "it is precisely the historical moment that is left out" in the "Renanian ethno-psychological schema." Renan took 'polytheism' and 'monotheism' to be ethnic markers. But, what this idea left out was "that polytheism and monotheism are two developmental stages in the history of religious thought and that the latter does not appear spontaneously without the first developmental stage having preceded it."⁷⁷ In other words, one had to go through polytheism to come eventually to monotheism, just as Goldziher argued in this work that all peoples all first had to go through an original 'mythological' stage before graduating to a 'religious', namely, first, a polytheistic stage. It was this commitment to a universal model of cultural and religious development that underlay the fundamental task Goldziher set himself in *Der Mythos*: to show that the Hebrew heritage, and also the Arab, had at its origin a mythological stage like that of all other peoples that made it subject to the method of comparative mythological analysis developed for the Aryan sphere by Adalbert Kuhn (1812-1881) and Max Müller. The task was "to apply the method of the new mythological research to the Semitic sphere."⁷⁸ The projection of universal developmental stages meant that no people could be denied the original stage from which all had emanated. And, when scholars sought to avoid this conclusion by pointing to the possibility of borrowing as the reason for the similarity of mythical structures across different philological groupings, Goldziher answered:

Mythology is something universal so that one cannot, as a starting point, deny the capacity to form it as such to any race...the correspondence of mythical conceptions and modes of expression results thus from the similarity of the psychological process, which in the case of all races, is the basis of mythological creation, and precisely this similarity of mythical conceptions can accordingly also serve ethno-psychologists as an argument for the thesis as to the psychological similarity of races.⁷⁹

Already in 1876, the year in which *Der Mythos* was published, Goldziher was equally engaged in making clear the broader repercussions of his universal historicist approach for the study of the 'Oriental world' and so for Orientalist scholarship as a whole. In a series on Spanish Islam, he argued a truly universal conception of human historical development threw a new light on the history of the Orient that served directly to counteract and correct European prejudices about the alleged unchanging and stagnant character of the Oriental mind and Oriental societies. The 'prejudices' had of course been given renewed intellectual legitimacy by Renan's invidious, ethno-philological speculations. That was what the new conception sought to displace:

⁷⁷ Goldziher, *Der Mythos bei den Hebräern*, 6.

⁷⁸ Ibid, xi, see also ibid, xvii-xi.

⁷⁹ Ibid., x.

The foremost of [European] prejudices [about the Orient] is the view that the Oriental mind, in contrast with the Occidental, is conservative, that evolution and progress, even mere change, are alien to its historical development, and that throughout millennia it has been fixed in one place from which it can be moved only by revolutions from without... This prejudice concerning the Orient was not restricted by public opinion to the ancient Middle East but also extended to the Middle Ages and modern times of the same area. How frequently have we heard that the Muslim world, until it was affected by European culture, did not develop or modify its spiritualism, and particularly the theory and practice of its religion? This view is maintained in a time when evolution is the recognized principle of all organic existence both in nature and social life, whether this evolution be considered as progressing on the Hegelian or the Darwinian basis, either by finding in the antitheses of objects and ideas the explanation of the necessity of evolution and the upward tendency, or by pointing to the struggle for life as the principle of evolution and the reason for its process. If this is so, it is a philosophical and historical impossibility that a great portion of the Oriental world should have lived its own historical life, created mighty world empires, annihilated flourishing cultures, ideologies based on philosophically sound truths, as well as religions, and implanted them into its own life as its organic constituent—in a word, that it should have performed all these functions belonging to normal historical evolution on a basis that is outside of, nay, in contrast with, the fundamental law of all natural and historical existence.⁸⁰

In the light of a paragraph like the above, it is difficult to see how Said's double thesis about Orientalism, first, that it was founded on an invidious, objectifying distinction with the Orient as an eternal, unchanging Other, second, that it became thereby, through a mirror principle, itself impervious to change, can continue to be seriously maintained. One would have to paint Goldziher as an altogether abnormal and exceptional figure in the history of Orientalist scholarship. As I will suggest in the Conclusion and further in forthcoming work on the development of *Islamwissenschaft*, this, despite his true uniqueness, Goldziher, the widely acknowledged founder of the Islamicist discipline, was *not*. But, Goldziher's own tireless efforts to convince colleagues of the universalist historicist perspective and all it implied bears sufficient witness of his impact. He remained in fact particularly vigilant in the case of secularist colleagues who were tempted by Renan's schema to imagine the Medieval 'religious' interlude in European history a foreign, 'Semitic' importation. He wrote to Martin Hartmann in 1896 on the supposed "religious arrogance" of the Semites and, as always, he saw Renan's influence at work and reasoned his colleague against it:

From a detailed observation of the facts over a number of years, I have come to the truth that one should basically not speak of ethno-psychological attributes of a race. What one has presented as such on the basis of a one-sided examination of a people at a specific point of its history is in the main superficial generalization from not always adequately observed particulars. You [of course] know that Renan has in this way come to assign a monotheistic instinct to the Semites. There is indeed for psychological inquiry no racial character that can be abstracted from the flow of history. The spiritual life a people is

⁸⁰ Goldziher, *The Spanish Arabs and Islam: The Place of the Spanish Arabs in the Evolution of Islam as Compared with the Eastern Arabs*, First Installment in *idem, Joseph Desomogyi (ed.), Gesammelte Schriften*. Vol. 1. (Hildesheim, 1967), 380-1.

grounded not in its race, but in its historical destiny. This provides us the explanation for the psychological characteristics of a people. And just as little as you could ascribe the spiritual drives of the Indians of the Vedic period to the English, just as little will you want to understand the Jews under Roman rule out of the character of Phoenicians. With that also is the question resolved, if we could imagine to ourselves the Buddha emerging in the midst of a Semitic people? Of course I cannot think such a thing; but just as little can I conceive to myself that he might have arisen amongst the Romans or the French. Just as the Hebrew prophets are only to be understood out of the historical course of development of their people, so also the Buddha assumes the specific Brahmanic (not: indo-germanic) antecedents, vis-à-vis which he grew out of his people. With racial drives will neither the prophets nor for that matter the Buddha be explained. Was not Mohammad the exact opposite of all, what the racial drives of his people demanded?⁸¹

In the light of this intervention, one should also look askance at Conrad's claim that the memorial essay of 1893 "marked the final major contribution by Goldziher to the critique of Renan, and in important ways it was a tangent from which he subsequently withdrew."⁸² The aim here unfortunately again seems to be not to allow Renan to loom too large, ironically, not to allow him to be imagined in precisely the way Goldziher treated him, namely, as a standard-bearer of Orientalist scholarship in the nineteenth century. In fact, if the reader will allow me say it one more time, Goldziher was his whole life writing against Renan: he did not stop in 1893 or in 1896. In a number of the seminal turns he gave to the Islamicist field, the imprints of the anti-Renan tentacles he was seeking to introduce into it can easily be detected. This holds true especially for his later focus on the character of the Zoroastrian and Persian relationship with and impact on Islam. And, then, it holds true particularly for his pointed late analysis and critique of Shi'ism, which was often positioned as a kind of 'Aryan Islam' in his time and which he read instead, in quite derogatory fashion, as a kind of place-holder for 'Christianity', i.e. an authoritarian incarnationism, within the Islamic sphere. What he could not say openly about 'Christianity' he said about 'Shi'ism'.

It was Goldziher's famous 1900 lecture, "Islamisme et Parsisme", that first fully broached the question of the impact of Persian civilization and Zoroastrianism on not only the development of Islam in the Abbasid Empire but also, in what was a new departure for the field, on early Islam.⁸³ But, to understand what Goldziher was up to in this lecture, we have to come to it by way, first, of what he had to say of Shi'ism. In his 1910 *Lectures on Islam*,⁸⁴ which functioned as a summative account of his work on and understanding of the new field, Goldziher produced a quite extensive treatment of Shi'ism and presented an essentially polemical stance towards it. Shi'ism, in this account, highlighted the dangers a super-human conception of the office of the Imam in Islam posed to monotheism, the paganism it served as a cover for, and the authoritarianism and absolutism its tendency to incarnationism invited. For those who had ears for it, all of this equally implicated Christianity and was meant to do so. After this critique of Shi'ism, as the authoritarian version of Islam vs. the normative Sunni one, said to be based on

⁸¹ Goldziher to Hartmann, 8/24/96, in "Machen Sie doch unseren Islam nicht gar zu schlecht"; *Der Briefwechsel der Islamwissenschaftler Ignaz Goldziher und Martin Hartmann, 1894-1914*, edited and introduced by Hanisch, Ludmila (Wiesbaden, 2000), 62-3.

⁸² Conrad, "Ignaz Goldziher on Ernest Renan",

⁸³ See Goldziher, "Islamisme et Parsisme", *Gesammelte Schriften*, IV, 232-261.

⁸⁴ Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam* (Heidelberg, 1910).

the consensual scholarly interpretation of tradition, Goldziher moved to confront what he called persistent myths about Shi‘ism in Orientalist scholarship:

- (a) The false view, according to which the difference between Sunni and Shi‘i Islam consists principally of this, that the former recognize besides the Qur’an also the Sunna [usage] of the Prophet as a source of religious belief and life, while the Shi‘i limit themselves to the Qur’an and reject the Sunna.⁸⁵
- b) The mistaken viewpoint, as if the origin and the development of Shi‘ism represent the modifying influence of the ideas of the Iranian peoples who were absorbed into Islam through conquest and missionizing.⁸⁶
- c) The mistaken opinion, that Shi‘ism represents the reaction of spiritual freedom against Semitic fossilization.⁸⁷

Especially the last myth about a dynamic, free-spirited Aryan Islam Goldziher pointed out still had representatives in the field.⁸⁸ The three myths clearly represent a Renanian chain, where the Aryan/Shi‘i Iranian peoples represent challenge against accumulated traditions, so the possibility of innovation and progress, and, the Semitic/Sunni, backward orthodoxy. Goldziher dismantled all three notions. The Shi‘a had *Hadith* collections (documentation of the *Sunna*) of their own, and believed themselves in fact the only ones legitimately abiding by the *Sunna*, as they traced their records of it to the descendants of the prophet rather than his usurping ‘Companions’. Shi‘ism had been, in its original development a fully Arab phenomenon, and only was only later embraced also by Iranians, whose notions of divine kingship perhaps especially predisposed them to it and led them to further develop it. Finally, Shi‘ism, far from a more progressive version of Islam, was in fact a good deal more authoritarian, self-righteous, illiberal and intolerant by comparison to its counterpart. Goldziher then concluded that while Shi‘a Islam could not be referred to as an Iranian innovation, its especial intolerance *did* largely arise from the Persian impact on it:

Even though we had to reject as mistaken the assumption, that the rise of Shi‘ism is to be viewed as the fruit of the development of Iranian influences on Arab Islam, we can nevertheless take, as responsible for Shi‘ism’s religious severity against those of other belief, the Persian influences that made themselves count in a secondary manner in the historical formation of its ideas. The just referenced behavior of Shi‘i jurisprudence against non-Shi‘is brings inexorably to mind the ancient laws established by the Persian religious scriptures, which, though in the case of contemporary Zoroastrians themselves for the most part obsolete, are ascertainable in what we can view to be their Islamic echo: ‘a Zoroastrian must purify himself with Nirang, if he has touched a non-Zoroastrian’. ‘A

⁸⁵ Ibid., 240.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 241.

⁸⁷ Ibid, 242.

⁸⁸ “More recently it has been particularly Carra de Vaux who’s viewed the resistance of the Shi‘a against Sunni Islam as ‘the reaction of free and expansive thought against the narrow and unbending Orthodoxy.’” Ibid, 242. Baron Carra de Vaux (b. 1867) had written the popular, though out of step with the Islamicist scholarship of the time, text: Carra de Vaux, *La mahoméisme; le genie sémetique et le genie arien dans l’Islam* (Paris, 1897). The title says it all.

Zoroastrian should use no nourishment prepared by a non-Zoroastrian; also no butter, also no honey; even on travels not'.⁸⁹

In other words, Shi'ism was not an Aryan phenomenon as such, but it was some of its most negative aspects that were to be traced to 'Aryan', namely, Iranian influences. Now, it was precisely to chronicle the baneful impact of ancient Persian religion and traditions on the development of Islam, especially the unappetizing influences of intolerance from very early on, eventually supplemented and intensified by the theocratic mode of thought, that Goldziher penned his "Islamisme et Parsisme". The lecture comes close at times to being an anti-Persian tract. That, in any case, is the only way in which the author, who is from an Iranian background, can see the matter! Nor was this a passing interest for Goldziher, as the crucial point of the lecture is reiterated in his "The Progress of the Science of Islam in the Last Three Decades (*Die Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten*)", the essay, which as I've pointed out, definitively articulated the emergence of the new discipline, its methodology, its contours. As Goldziher glossed the matter here, Parsism, whose devotees, designated 'Madjus', were present Qur'an, was not only to be understood in terms of its influence on the prophet in eschatological matters. All monotheistic religions were indebted to it for this aspect of their thinking. Rather of its religious tendencies had almost certainly also found their way into early Islam. Hereby, Goldziher concluded: "It is not exactly praiseworthy, that the idea of the "impurity" of the person of the unbeliever—a Persian idea—is a product of this influence; just as on closer examination, in the further development of Islam as well, the drive towards intolerance, towards persecution of those of another belief and towards confessional bickering, presents itself as the fruit of Persian influences, not as the natural consequences of the in religious matters harmless Arabism."⁹⁰

Goldziher did not stop fighting against Renan and his invidious Semitic/Aryan distinction. The modality of his polemics merely changed form. In his later work, he wrote against the idea of a liberatory, Aryan Islam and moved in the reverse direction to blame Iranian influences for the illiberal aspects of Islam. Goldziher's bid at a universalist rather than philological historicism inseminated *Islamwissenschaft*, which came, in one of its essential axes to be defined against Renan, viewing the latter thus as the major methodological opponent to be displaced and so exactly not as charlatanry.⁹¹ And, Goldziher was *not* alone in this regard amongst the pioneering generation of Islamicists. Other Islamicists also positioned the new field, without naming Renan, against philological speculations about the Semitic genius, or against Renan's presumption about Islam being born in the light of history, which served to jettison a critical historical approach. It was *they*, the Islamicists, who believed they had discredited such theories.⁹² Our basic task, in this second part of the study that focuses particularly on

⁸⁹ Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 245.

⁹⁰ Goldziher, "Die Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten", 448.

⁹¹ Goldziher certainly had a sense of such a difference. In his essay on the progress of *Islamwissenschaft*, he began in part by making short shrift of still extant popular misconceptions about Islam in the European public, like that the *Kaaba* was in fact the tomb of the prophet and thus the object of the *Hajj*, or that the Jew had to convert to Christianity before being able then to convert to Islam, or still widespread misunderstandings of the differences between Sunni and Shi'i Islam. But, he then went on to make clear that the methodological transformation represented by *Islamwissenschaft* was of a different order than mere removal of misinformation. See *ibid*, 445-6.

⁹² See Snouck C. Hurgronje, "Islam" in G. H. Bousquet and J. Schacht (eds.) *Selected Works of Snouck C. Hurgronje* (Leiden, 1957), 6-8; see for Becker on the same point, note 91. See also C. H. Becker, "Der Islam als Problem" (1910) in *idem, Islamstudien, I; Vom Werden und Wesen der Islamischen Welt* (Leipzig, 1924), 3-4, 15.

Goldziher's intellectual trajectory, is to analyze the way in which his universalist historicist approach was translated into an account of History as a generalized, teleological process of religio-cultural progress ending in critical, purified monotheism. In the next chapter, we will focus on the specific, reformist historiography of Islam this teleological idea of religio-cultural progress produced. In the remaining sections of this chapter, I discuss, first, the way in which Goldziher's reformist project and teleological monotheistic vision was, in its basic structural outlines, originally iterated with respect to the Jewish heritage and within the context of the study of comparative mythology. Second, I will simply describe, without quite taking up the analysis of the complex dynamics that led to the turn to *Islamwissenschaft*, the subject of the third part of this study, the way in which Goldziher's increasingly Islamicist focus involved a methodological shift from comparative mythology to comparative religion.

4.

How did Goldziher's universalist historicism envision the trajectory of religious progress from mythology to monotheism? Further, what trajectory of cultural progress did this religious teleology rely on and entail? These questions Goldziher set out in his early work to answer first and foremost with respect to the Jewish heritage, work that culminated in the crowning achievement of his early scholarship, *Mythology amongst the Hebrews*. As noted, Goldziher here controverted Renan's assertions about the Semitic monotheistic instinct and incapacity for mythology by arguing that the claim was false in the broadest possible sense: not only were Jews and Arabs not bereft of mythology, but as such they merely partook equally in what was in fact a the original stage in the history of all human cultures. The answers he gave here about the character of 'mythology' and 'religion', how the first graduated to the second, why 'religion' was from the start thus saddled with a cultural baggage that destined it for its proper universalization and ultimate critical self-definition within its own sphere: these answers outlined the underlying, critical historicist and reformist schema that was to guide Goldziher's work through the rest of his intellectual career, including in his eventual turn to the Islamic heritage. It was in this work that Goldziher made clear that he viewed his own critical scholarship as the realization of the call of the Hebrew prophets. He walked quite consciously in the path set out by Baur and Geiger who had also viewed their own critical historicist scholarship as the fulfillment of the promise of their respective religious traditions.

In *Der Mythos*, Goldziher introduced a two-track process of general human development that represented simultaneously an extension and critique of the comparative mythology developed by Max Müller and Adalbert Kuhn. First, he made a distinction between 'nomadic mythology', centered on the night-sky (clouds, lightning, rain) and the protections it offered from the sun, and the 'solar mythology' of settled agricultural societies. He argued essentially in a materialist sense that the first would tend to metamorphose into the second upon a population's eventually embarking on the civilizational advance of agricultural settlement. Accordingly, Goldziher generalized Max Müller's association of 'solar mythology' with 'Aryan mythology' *tout court*. Second, he conjectured that Mythology, though obviously not myths or even myth-making, was itself ultimately transformed and overcome, by coming to constitute Religion on the one hand and cultural/national History on the other.

Goldziher's highly analytic and quite specific understanding of Mythology took it to mean the pre-language schema whereby a people understood and explained the natural world.

‘Schema’ and ‘peoplehood’ were here co-determinative. Before there was language, there was a people/mythology.⁹³ In such a mythological schema, natural forms and processes and social ones of production and reproduction were collapsed into one another by means of a cycle of mythical figures and stories, motored and perpetuated in a genealogical sense, by polyonymy. By way of the polyonymous motor, different mythical figures and stories came to stand, in genealogical cycles, for the same natural *cum* social processes, so that the names of these mythological figures assumed then simultaneously a linguistic and conceptual function. They were of course precisely not concepts as such but functioned by denoting as exact metaphors the underlying world-view of the schema. Ultimately, however, the polyonymous motor faltered. Reification took over and language took on a more fixed form. It became conceptual language as we know it. But, this also meant that the mythical figures and names that had functioned as a drama of natural and social processes increasingly lost their conceptual and appellative function and became individualized and hypostasized, eternalized as Gods subject to worship. Hence, Mythology in one of its lines of development gave way to the new stage of Religion. However, the theological turn was not the sole accompaniment of linguistic stabilization, for with the passing of polyonymy and its cycles of natural *cum* cultural mythology, a ‘people’ became the subject of a new temporal depth, so that what of the mythical figures and materials was not deified came now to constitute the ‘national’ lineage and heritage. Thus, on a second front, Mythology gave birth to History.⁹⁴

Now, in *Der Mythos*, in a manner that was to become highly characteristic of his account of Islamic history and of Islamicist historiography as such, with its mania for ‘influences’, Goldziher placed pivotal emphasis on cross-cultural dynamics as a lever of social, cultural and religious development. He viewed the two momentous transformations cited above, namely, that of agricultural solarization, on the one hand, and that of religiofication and historicization on the other, as having been in the case of Jewish history fundamentally mediated by the encounter of the ancient Hebrews with the surrounding more advanced settled civilizations. As Goldziher painted it, upon subduing the Canaanites and settling in Canaan, the Hebrews, as so often in the collision of nomadic and agricultural populations in human history, came under the overwhelming influence of the culturally vastly superior Canaanites and their even more civilized and powerful neighbors, the Phoenicians. The impact of these two peoples on the ancient Hebrews was especially marked in “the formation of **religion** and **socio-political institutions**”. Not only did the Hebrews absorb into their social practice newly elaborate conceptions of the temple, a priesthood making public offerings, and also sophisticated notions like ‘judgeship’ and ‘kingship’ they had scarcely been in a cultural position previously to possess. But, unable in their new settlement, in the face of their advanced cultural surroundings, to work their own burgeoning solar mythology to the level of an autonomous religion, they merely took on the solar religion already arrived at by the local inhabitants.⁹⁵ In fact, Goldziher

⁹³ See for instance, Goldziher, *Der Mythos bei den Hebräern*, xvi.

⁹⁴ See Goldziher, *Mythos bei den Hebräern*, esp. 61-106, 274-311.

⁹⁵ “...so is it that much more certain that the Hebrews with their entry in Canaan were influenced by the defeated original inhabitants and the mighty neighbors in matters of culture and manners (*Gesittung*), in which the Hebrews just having raised themselves from the nomadic level still occupied an altogether primitive position, and that this influence made itself felt first and foremost in the formation of **religion** and **socio-political institutions**. The Hebrews did not as yet possess so much spiritual power of resistance to develop the solar elements of their own Mythos to the **religion** of an agricultural people, but then that much more powerfully and for the weak Hebrews ineluctably did the Canaanite solar religion, which must have already for a long time developed out of an old

argued that in this environment of general civilizational and religious tutelage, only by managing to transfer certain remnants and characters of their mythological past into the historical realm as ancestors and heroes ranged against the rival Canaanites, namely, in nationalizing them, were the Hebrews able to retain any distinct, now ‘national’, sense of themselves.

Monotheism then, far from ingrained in the Hebrew character, itself represented in its beginnings an innovative articulation of the rising ethos of national difference that preceded it, as manifested and driven further by the establishment of centralized state authority. Monotheism, Goldziher claimed, was first essentially a theocratic development whereby, in line with the concentration of political power, the *one* God of Israel was pitted against the gods of the surrounding peoples as the true God confronting what came to be viewed as false gods. Accordingly, the Hebrew mythological heritage was now reworked into a providential as against merely national history. However, these respective consolidations of the national spirit, both political centralization and the religious crowning it, namely, this theocratic/adversarial monotheism, its rites administered to mutual advantage by a centralized priesthood at the seat of power, sparked also internal division. It alienated the more remote, northern populace of the state who felt themselves increasingly bereft of power, and their religious ceremonies and institutions marginalized. Hence, at a moment of weakness the state was rent in two: the original state of Judea in the south, and the new one of Israel in the north.⁹⁶ The reader should not here or throughout lose sight of the pivotal role of the materialist moment in Goldziher’s explanatory schema: monotheism he saw generally as having been originally an aspect and a product of the process of state-formation.

To Goldziher, though, the pivotal step in Jewish and indeed all *human* history became fully manifest only in the aftermath of this split. It was in the midst of division and brewing defeat and, remarkably, reaching its crescendo and greatest coherence only in the period of the Babylonian exile, that a purer monotheism came to the fore in ‘Prophetic Judaism’. The marker of this singular departure in universal history was the prophetic profession of ‘Yahweh’ as against ‘Elohim’. For Elohim, even in its monotheistic garb that referred its plural form to the majesty of God, bore witness to the polytheistic lineage the Hebrews shared with their neighbors. The call of the Jewish prophets, Goldziher argued, was also a theocratic one, but it represented an altogether new and transcendent idealism. For, it not only made national unity an overriding aim. It set itself directly against the hierarchy and hypocrisy of the priesthood, and railed against the consequent depredations that evinced its complete religious lack of morality and ideals. As crucial, it articulated for the first time an idealistic cosmopolitanism and moral universalism. The prophets accordingly made knowledge and worship of Yahweh not the prerogative of a secretive, priestly elite, but the obligation not only of all the people of Israel, but of all nations. Accordingly, the providential privilege and singularity of the Jewish nation and presumably also its theocratic role was interpreted as a merely transitional one geared to spreading the message of Yahweh to the entire world.⁹⁷ Goldziher honored the Jewish prophets as nationalists but saw them as pioneers of the Jewish mission, which as with the whole reformist wing of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* he made also his own.

Goldziher’s tone in discussing Prophetic Judaism was an utterly reverential one. Speaking of the “Yahweh-conception” as “a single original idea, but in itself sufficient, to

Canaanite solar mythology, push itself on them, and the Hebrews could not take up the fight and succumbed.” Ibid, 291-2.

⁹⁶ See *ibid*, 314-333.

⁹⁷ See *ibid*, 348-369.

guarantee the short history of the Hebrew religion a permanent place in the pages of world history”,⁹⁸ he counted having made it an active element in the spiritual life of the Hebrews “one of the most lasting leaves in the prophets’ wreath of glory (*Ruhmeskranze*)”.⁹⁹ Further, he cautioned that in order to appreciate the inexhaustible richness of the word ‘Yahweh’:

We must with loving soul delve into all that the prophets bring in connection with the expression Yahweh. Shall I translate all that these inspired men said of Yahweh? I would have to interpret the whole of the prophetic literature of the Hebrews into plain German (*verdeutschen*) and nonetheless I would only be allowing through (*hervortreten lassen*) a mere shadow of all the brilliance, which in the discourse of the prophets the countenance of Yahweh radiates.”¹⁰⁰

This precept of the analytic indispensability of a “loving soul” in treating of prophetic discourse points to the deeper sense in which Goldziher identified with the work of the prophets: the prophets sought to purify monotheism and so religion as such by freeing the idea of God from all mythological, namely, pagan and ethnic elements. That meant a spiritual egalitarianism and cosmopolitanism, which also began to sow properly distinct conceptions of ‘religion’ and ‘nationality’. Now, Goldziher stated explicitly that scientific examination aimed as much at a proper differentiation of mythology and religion, in this context, by way of illuminating *analytically* the movement in history from mythology to myth-infused, pagan or polytheistic religion and then towards the adequately religious, i.e. monotheism, which is to say ever purer versions of it. ‘Religion’ had come into the world soaked in the remnants of myth, namely, of ethnic culture and the trajectory of History was to be one in which religion became progressively freed for its universal task while freeing in turn the cultural/national for its proper role. The reader of Part I will have little difficulty seeing Goldziher as a faithful son of the nineteenth century project of the ‘Science of Religion’. What is striking about him is that he synthesized its many traditions, from the critical historicist one of the *Tübingen Schule* and Geiger to the comparative mythology of Max Müller, *and*, that he sought to co-relate and superimpose on one another, though not identify, the two tracks of religious and material cultural progress.

To Goldziher, accordingly, ‘progress’ in history meant the extent to which the ideal elements in its teleological development came to be in a position, intellectually, culturally, socially and politically to take hold of and be realized in society. Hence, the religious ideal, namely, the truly religious, was a prime indicator as well as standard of progress, just as science’s critical historical analytics simultaneously was a signal of the culmination of its course and constituted its end. In other words, again, *the science of myth and religion and true religious feeling pointed, literally, in the same direction and reinforced one another*. This fundamental plank of the ‘Science of Religion’ as to the *religious* task of critical scientific study of humanity’s religious heritage Goldziher put quite boldly in the Introduction to *Der Mythos*. In fact he was never to be so bold again:

It is our sacred (*heilige*) conviction, that not only the scientific interest demands that these studies gain their due place in the scholarly literature, but that this has in an extraordinary manner also meaning for the religious life of the present. For, anyone, who

⁹⁸ Ibid, 348.

⁹⁹ Ibid, 353.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 349.

has come to grasp the true concept of religion, is bound to welcome in such studies a degree of progress towards the highest religious ideal, towards the pure, clouded by nothing gross and pagan **Monotheism**, that makes itself not dependent on tales and ethnic traditions (*Stammestradiationen*), but rather finds, in the climax towards the one living original source of all truth and morality, its center and **exclusive** living element and the inspiration for restless research and self-perfection. And we are imbued by the sense that each stride we make in the correct understanding of the mythical brings us closer to that center. The confusion of the Mythical with the Religious makes religious life centrifugal; it is the task of progress in this realm to empower a centripetal tendency. The insight into this relation of pure Monotheism to the pre-historical parts of the biblical literature is not of today or yesterday; the most ideal[istic] representative of Hebrew Monotheism [Deutero-Isaiah is meant], in whom Yahwism as a harmonious worldview achieved its most exalted florescence, already expressed this relationship clearly enough.¹⁰¹

Now, *Der Mythos bei den Hebräern* made it clear that its focus on sifting the projected historical layers of myth formation and transformation in Biblical literature squarely excluded any attempt at a historicist literary criticism to unearth the factors and issues involved in the redaction of the Biblical text itself.¹⁰² However, Goldziher did allow himself to comment on this matter in relation to Prophetic Judaism's lasting impact on the religious life of the Jews and on their mythological heritage, which is also to say on the eventual redactional compilation of the Biblical text. And, on this matter, he argued that the ultimate product that came to be handed down represented a compromise between the Prophetic and the Clerical traditions in Jewish history. Prophetism, which in fact reached the height of its religious perspicacity (becoming literally prophetic thereby) in the exilic period, became thereby, as Goldziher had it, also exactly ever more amenable to a compromise with priestly elements. That is because the needs and circumstances of the Jewish people, the overriding requisite of national unity in the tumult of impending defeat and exile and hence the reality that such settlement provided the greatest possibility for the prophets' ideals to play an active role in the life of Jewish society, demanded it. Therefore, Goldziher, in line again with the historicist frame of his idealism as set out above, struck anything but a puritanical note in his historical assessment of this compromise. One is immediately reminded of Baur's discussion of St. Paul's compromise and the broader reconciliation of the Jewish and Pauline tendencies that allowed the latter's universalist ethos to be consolidated, though on a necessarily authoritarian, homogenizing, canonical basis. Geiger had of course said much the same thing of the Pharisaic Judaism that had consolidated its innovations but on an uncritical, traditionalist basis. Of this compromise resulting from the "exile catastrophe", and coming into its own during the period of the exile itself, Goldziher explained:

The first stirrings of this movement towards reconciliation (*Ausgleichsrichtung*) emerged already in the final period of the Judean state, under a King, who had equal respect for priests and prophets and allowed himself to be influenced by both in an equal manner in matters of religious worship. And, the stamp of this tendency to balance as between Clericalism (*Priesterthum*) and Prophetism is imprinted on the law-giving book **Deuteronomy** that arose in that time. One cannot term this a defeat of the prophetic

¹⁰¹ Ibid, xxiii-xxiv.

¹⁰² See for instance *ibid*, xix-xxi.

tendency. Ideals are not effectively there, so as to be realized in utter disregard of social and physical barriers; they have triumphed, if they succeed in pervading the intellectual milieu of their former enemy and modifying it in the direction of the ideal.¹⁰³

Baur and Geiger could not have said it better. But, if religious ideals were meaningful not in abstraction from extant social, material and intellectual realities and obstacles, but only when applied in a manner enabling their rethinking and reform, Goldziher analogously never lost sight of the other side of the situational teleology, namely, the cultural and national. For, alongside the ideal religious movement, there was also an ideal cultural one that tended towards national autonomy. Of course, cultural borrowing and exchange, in every possible facet of it (material, institutional, intellectual), including that of ideals, was the stuff of history and a prime dynamic within it. It served once more to highlight this inexorable fact about history that Goldziher, after his discussion of the universal and local historical import of Prophetic Judaism, decided to conclude the book with an account of what the Jews, in intellectual terms, absorbed from their Assyrian overlords during their captivity in Babylon. According to Goldziher, Assyrian civilization, including the growing Iranian impact on it, represented a most advanced one for its time, vastly more sophisticated in material and intellectual matters than the cultural influences (Canaanite, Phoenician) to which the Jews till then had been most subject. Hence, it was from the Assyrians that they took over and made their own the rich and highly developed cosmogony that holds such a prominent place in the Bible. As opposed to Mythology which was a total explanatory framework of practical, productive and re-productive reality that was propelled by and *was* language before there was language, ‘cosmogony’, a la Goldziher, meant instead merely theoretical perspectives on the origins of the world. And, what the Jews adapted in this vein adapted the Assyrians were basically origins theories of a geographical (the Flood), a moral-metaphysical (the Fall from the Garden of Eden) and an anthropological character (the Tower of Babel and the roots of ethno-linguistic diversity). Moreover, the prophets were in this regard, though they hardly staked their religious insight on these theories, merely members of the Jewish populace at large. Namely, they were hardly immune from the attempt to acculturate the impressive and elaborate thinking of the conqueror.¹⁰⁴

However, Goldziher’s discussion of Jewish cosmogonic borrowing from Assyrian civilization was meant to make a broader point about the relationship between cultural borrowing and cultural (national) autonomy, as such also about the nature of cultural progress. Simultaneously, Goldziher was responding to the growing discoveries of the new and explosive discipline of Assyriology, which everyday unearthed new evidence of Biblical unoriginality precisely on such questions of ‘cosmogony’. Hence, Goldziher’s decision to conclude with Jewish assimilation of the culture of the advanced Assyrian civilization was highly strategic and overdetermined. The crucial point Goldziher sought to stress here was that the Hebrew receptivity to Babylonian cosmogony was primed by an in fact internal dynamic: the religious repercussions of the prophetic call for equal communal worship of the one God and so eventually the growing focus on God as the source of all creation had made the Hebrews especially preoccupied with questions of origins and so particularly open to the origins narratives they encountered in Babylon. In other words, it was quite important to Goldziher that the Jews had not been mere copiers in a fit of self-forgetfulness. For, he believed that only the internalization

¹⁰³ The crucial sentence reads, “Ideale sind nicht dazu da, um in ihrer gegen sociale und physische Hindernisse rücksichtslosen Fassung realisirt zu werden”, *Ibid.*, 368.

¹⁰⁴ See Goldziher, *Der Mythos bei den Hebräern*, 377-98.

of alien elements, i.e. acknowledgment of their oppositions, could act as a spur to innovation, self-transformation and self-renewal, and so improvement. By contrast, cultural mimicry and the swallowing whole of the foreign that ignored or displaced one's own cultural context and traditions were, including when a genuine ideal was the object of imitation, regressive rather than progressive. What was needed was autonomous, precisely as against autochthonous¹⁰⁵, development: cultural influences had to be worked through and digested in line with the specific cultural situation, stage and trajectory of a given nation enabling 'reform'.

As Goldziher put it, "it is a historical fact, that the decay of nations begins there, where they, instead of developing the elements and forces situated in their own individuality, with flippant (*leichtfertiger*) abandonment of that most one's own, allow the foreign, even if finer, without resistance to work on them."¹⁰⁶ But, that is not what had happened in the case of the Jewish borrowings from Babylonian cosmogony. In this case, it had been precisely the progress the Jews were making on the religious front that made them that much more open to the advanced civilization they encountered on the cultural front and which they sought to assimilate within their own thinking. *This* was Goldziher's response then to the new Assyriology. Namely, the accumulating proof of Jewish theoretical unoriginality and cultural borrowing was not somehow a blot on Jewish accomplishment. It did not somehow diminish the momentous and universal meaning and telos of Prophetic Judaism and monotheism, quite the opposite. It was a sign of Jewish intellectual vigor and another proof that advances in the religious and cultural fronts moved in tandem and caught up with one another. Hence, the religious and national ideals, adequately conceived, that is, with ultimately a practical understanding of the social and historical requirements of their realization, formed the *telos* of History and provided accordingly the yardstick by which to judge historical and cultural transformations.

5.

In the decade after the publication of *Mythos bei den Hebräern* (1876), Goldziher's work came increasingly, unmistakably, to focus on Islamic history and the history of the Islamic peoples, particularly that of the Arabs. This over time also suggested a shift from 'comparative mythology' to 'comparative religion'. The discipline of comparative mythology, as we've seen, involved the 'archaeological' unearthing of successive historical strata of myth as formed, re-worked and recast in pagan or ethnic modalities, themselves in turn found only as remains in the flattened surface of literary and cultural artifacts. 'Comparative religion', whose background as 'Science of Religion' we studied in Part I was, by contrast, focused on the historico-cultural

¹⁰⁵ Alongside this critique of cultural imitation, there was in *Der Mythos bei den Hebräern* an analogous critique of autochthony or 'originality'. See *ibid*, 390-1. Conrad who rightly highlights the great importance of this critique of originality in Goldziher's work, cites, using the available English translation, this relevant passage of the text which itself came in the context of the question, in the final pages, as to the Hebrews' exilic adaptations: "Has Homer lost his attractiveness since we have subjected him to critical analysis, or the divine Plato forfeited any of his divinity since we have discovered some of the sources of his ideas? For the fact of Originality is not the only criterion of the admirable. Not only that which is cast in one piece from top to toe, is one whole: an alien substance which becomes a civilising agent to that in which it rests, and a patchwork which has turned out a harmonious whole, are not less admirable or perfect. Julius Braun says very justly: "There is another and indeed the highest kind of originality, which is not the beginning but the result of historical growth—the originality of mature age. We have this, when an individual or a nation has gathered up all existing means of culture, and then still possesses power to pass on beyond them and deal freely with all elements received from the past." Conrad, "Ignaz Goldziher on Ernest Renan", 152-3.

¹⁰⁶ Goldziher, *Mythos bei den Hebräern*, 356; see further for Goldziher's account of the Jewish engagement with Assyrian cosmogony, *ibid*, 377-398.

contextualization of religious texts and practices, particularly, until the closing decades of the nineteenth century, the former. Eventually anthropological, participant-observer reports became the rage in and distinctively colored what scholars meant by ‘comparative religion’ but the characteristic methodological stance of such scholarship remained that of literary criticism.¹⁰⁷ The object of comparative religion, accordingly, was canonical heritages, which is also to say the idealization of one such canonical heritage by way of a reformist historicization of its formation. In Part III of this study I will examine exactly how and why Goldziher moved to Islamwissenschaft and from comparative mythology to comparative religion. This intellectual biography will prove crucial in understanding the unity of Goldziher’s life and work and will thereby serve to illuminate *Islamwissenschaft* in its origins and in one of its enduring trajectories and agendas, namely, religious reform.

However, for our present purposes, it should be already clear that the move from analysis of the fundamental transformations within the Mythological era and the mechanism whereby it yielded to the Religious to a focus on all that is historically involved in the move from paganism to monotheism represents a further elaboration rather than displacement of the progressive schema of *Der Mythos*. For, paganism meant religion as determined by the mythological remnant and to study its transformation towards monotheism simultaneously entailed the study of the requirements and implication of the purification of the same. Hence, there was nothing as such foreign Goldziher’s advancing preoccupation with Islam. It was a monotheistic heritage and, more impressive, it was an explicitly universalist monotheism with more than a millennium of human history of wide ethnic reach behind it. In Goldziher’s eyes, Christianity, with its conception of the divinity of Christ, was too muddled by paganism from the outset. But, Islam, like Judaism, belonged to the universal teleology of monotheism in human history. Goldziher had drawn on it as a complementary tradition already during his focus on the idealization of the Jewish heritage both before and within *Der Mythos*. It took the turbulent years of the 1880’s and the growing conviction that he could only gain an audience for his reformist scholarship through focusing his studies on Islam that led Goldziher by 1890 to shift his project of idealization to the Islamic heritage as such. Only then was *Islamwissenschaft* born. But, the study of Islamic history as a complementary monotheistic tradition was as liable to fulfill the progressive, critical task set out by *Der Mythos* even before this shift.¹⁰⁸ And, Goldziher increasingly embraced as such in the 1880’s.

Certainly, the grand distinction between ‘nomadic’ and ‘solar’ mythology, presented as a crucial breakthrough in the field of comparative mythology in *Der Mythos bei den Hebräern*, played little discernible role in Goldziher’s later work. Rather, after *Der Mythos*, Goldziher’s

¹⁰⁷ I will review in the Conclusion to the study the way in which Goldziher’s and Snouck’s co-foundational work in the advent of *Islamwissenschaft* was divided by the second generation of Islamicists along this methodological line, Goldziher covering the literary method of the critical historicization of the canonical heritage, Snouck, the participant observer understanding of lived practices. Despite this division and its overall legitimacy, both scholars had engaged in both methodologies and *Islamwissenschaft* was envisioned by its practitioners as the synthetic appropriation of the two, namely, always the judging of theory against praxis.

¹⁰⁸ *Der Mythos* was greeted with a quite disappointed reception, coinciding with cataclysmic professional setbacks for Goldziher in the Hungarian and Hungarian Jewish context. In the latter case, this publication was itself a major factor used against him. In this sense, Goldziher suffered from his post-accommodationist stance in a way Geiger never did. Only his attendance at the 1883 International Congress of Orientalists in Leiden, his first at any such, that effectively ended his academic isolation. It was also during this period that the shift from the comparative study of mythology to the comparative study of religion became fully discernible. The comparative study of ‘Islam’ thus increasingly displaced in his publications his earlier focus on ‘Arab nationality’ when writing of Islamic topics. For this crucial and turbulent period, see Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 80-96.

concern with nature-worship came generally under the purview of paganism and, specifically, mytho-pagan survivals under the cover of monotheism, a topic that, as in the cult of saints in Islam, a particularly potent example in his mind, he returned to again and again.¹⁰⁹ In fact, in the meantime and into the twentieth century, Müller's 'solar mythology' had suffered such a scholarly eclipse, that association with it had come to seem down-right prejudicial. So much so, that C. H. Becker in his hagiographic memorial essay on Goldziher (1922) sought to rescue the master from any presumable taint by insinuating that Goldziher had himself come to view his first opus as a youthful indiscretion: "The major work of his early period lay however in a completely different field [from that which he eventually inaugurated]. In a hefty volume, which was also translated into English, there appeared, in 1876, *Mythology amongst the Hebrews and Its Historical Development* (Leipzig), a book I am not in a position to pass judgment on, but which played no role in Goldziher's later life, and about which he himself later wanted nothing more to hear (*nichts mehr wissen wollte*). The Goldziher who founded *Islamkunde* made his first appearance in 1884..."¹¹⁰ It is an obfuscation that tells us a good deal about the state of scholarship at the time Becker was writing and the reverential attitude the pioneering generations of Islamicists accorded Goldziher as the founder of the discipline. But, it is no more than that.¹¹¹ For, however Goldziher may be taken ultimately to have revised his conception of mythological dynamics or of linguistic stabilization as the key to religiofication and ethno-historicization, the schema and concerns of *Der Mythos bei den Hebräern* are also that of his later work on the history of Islam and the Islamic peoples. Goldziher, the Islamicist, did no more than attempt to refine and correctly explicate, work out and carry through, the foundational theses met with in his first opus. This involved, first, the idea of universal religious history as moving from mythology to paganism to monotheism and its critical purification. It entailed, second, the idea that the national and religious ideals in their adequate, which is to say, conceptual cum practical clarification and realization are the *telos* of history. Third, the critical historicist analytics of the science of religion and genuine religious intuition and feeling were projected as pointing and regulating in the same direction.

But, if the Goldziherian shift from Renan's philological historicism to the universal reformist one effected in *Der Mythos* remained intact throughout the course of his intellectual career and his turn to the Islamic heritage, we must still articulate what exactly the methodology of comparative religion Goldziher adopted and refined in the course of this turn entailed. This will be our final task in this chapter before moving to Goldziher's reformist reading of Islamic history and the Islamic heritage in the next. To understand what Goldziher's critical historicist methodology in the field of comparative religion, let's begin with Said's statement of it:

¹⁰⁹ See, for instance, his seminal work in this respect, that he eventually enveloped as "Die Heiligenverehrung im Islam" into Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*, v. II. (Halle, 1890), 277-378. In his "Die Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten", he devoted of all the themes he covered in the lecture the greatest space (461-7) to the phenomena of saint-veneration across the Muslim world, namely, as the 'survivals' under Muslim garb of continuing 'national' traditions.

¹¹⁰ Becker, "Ignaz Goldziher", *Islamstudien*, v. II, 505.

¹¹¹ Róbert Simon was the first scholar, coming from a Marxist standpoint, to take *Der Mythos* as a crucial statement of Goldziher's historicist intentions and thus as forming in this sense the ground of his 'early' Islamicist work. Simon emphasized especially the materialist line of argument in this text. It was, by the way, Simon who first posited a great distinction between the 'early' and 'later' Goldziher. In any case, Simon's intent was to demonstrate the great importance of the work as against the attempts of Goldziher's later Islamicist colleagues, a la Becker, to push his work on Hebrew Mythology into the background, so as to divide their inspiration from the gaping failures of the theory of solar mythology'; see Simon, *Ignác Goldziher*, 76-87, esp. 82. Conrad cites Simon to this purpose, but gives wrong pages. See Conrad, "Ignaz Goldziher on Ernest Renan", 174 (note 85).

The Orientalists—from Renan to Goldziher to Macdonald to von Grunebaum, Gibb, and Bernard Lewis—saw Islam, for example, as a “cultural synthesis” (the phrase is P. M. Holt’s) that could be studied apart from economics, sociology, and politics of the Islamic peoples. For Orientalism, Islam had a meaning which, if one were to look for its most succinct formulation, could be found in Renan’s first treatise: in order best to be understood Islam had to be reduced to “tent and tribe”.¹¹²

If one wants to understand what Goldziher was up to in his work, it will usually do to find a quote from Said on the subject and to presume the opposite. Admittedly, this is to pick on Said. But, it serves to show he had not read a word of Goldziher, though this did not constrain him from bandying his name about in a number of lists like the one above. *It is to these lists that I object*, and I adopt the procedure to register that complaint. In any case, it would be difficult to open any work of Goldziher’s without running headlong into a verbatim contradiction of Said’s above characterization of his thinking. On the very first page of his *Lectures on Islam* one can find the following sentence on the great complexity of the etiology, historicity and progressive diversity of ‘religion’, all of which Goldziher had merely learned from critical historicist lineage of the ‘science of religion’ to which he belonged:

I believe that this phenomenon in the spiritual life of mankind is way too complex to allow anyone to be correct in deriving its activity from a singular motive. Religion never appears before us as an abstraction excised from its specific historical conditions; it lives, in lower and higher forms, in positive manifestations differentiated by the diversity of societal conditions.¹¹³

And, then later in the same chapter with respect to Islam specifically:

One has, moreover, in the case of Islam, made responsible for the moral crimes and intellectual backwardness that have their root cause in the circumstances of the race, in an unjust manner, the religion spread amongst the peoples belonging to that race, whose callousness that religion in fact has served to moderate rather than being the cause of it. Also, Islam is no abstraction that can be pried from its (in accordance with the historical periods of its development, the geographical regions of its spread, the ethnic character of its believers) different manifestations and effects.¹¹⁴

The historian then could never account for ‘religion’ in abstraction from broader social and cultural processes. Rather, such study had to ask questions about the capacity of a religion for progress and about religious progress as such that could only be answered in tandem with questions about cultural progress. The two ‘comparative’ tracks had to be measured vis-à-vis one another. What kind of methodological outlook did such historical study entail? In his essay on “The Progress of the Science of Islam in the Last Thirty Years” (1904),¹¹⁵ Goldziher sought

¹¹² Said, *Orientalism*, 105.

¹¹³ Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 1.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 15.

¹¹⁵ Goldziher apparently chose the start date of the ‘progress’ to coincide precisely with his own study trip to the Orient in 1873-4.

to define the groundwork and thus ‘progress’ of the new discipline systematically. And, here, he emphasized that the great advance of *Islamwissenschaft* over the intervening had been fundamentally not only a product of the greater quantitative accumulation of information, but of a methodological nature. The progress had resulted from the introduction of essentially two methodological perspectives from other sciences into the study of Islam:

1. **The Method of Historical Criticism**, that has proven itself vis-à-vis the documents of other religions. In other words: one has come to understand that the traditional evidence (*Zeugnisse*) of the rise and development of Islam are subject to the same historical method of observation that modern science has taught us to apply, for instance, to the literary evidence of Ur-Christianity or to the oldest products of Rabbinical Judaism.

2. The only in the last decade emerging **Comparative Science of Religion**, that has posited, for the rise and growth of the religious conceptions of humanity, universally valid ethno-psychological (*völkerpsychologische*) perspectives, which we have come to make use of in comprehending the complicated phenomena of historical Islam.¹¹⁶

In speaking of the method of ‘historical criticism’, Goldziher made explicit that the methodology used by the Tübingen School to study (and idealize) Christianity and by *Wissenschaft des Judentums* to study (and idealize) Judaism had now been adapted to the study of Islam. The aim of this method was precisely to place religious texts and conceptions and their development in the proper social, historical, cultural and political context, to show the dynamics both of their formation and reception. The same text could come to have a very different meaning and function in different places and times: it meant one thing before and another after its canonization. And, its meaning continued to shift thereafter with changes in the socio-cultural context and ultimately with the advent of critical historical scholarship itself. In his discussion of the second method, that of the comparative science of religion, Goldziher made clear the retention of his universalist historicist approach, developed in his work on Hebrew mythology, in the study of Islam. For, what this methodology tried to show was the way in which one could speak in a universal sense, across all ethnic divergence, of a primitive or (more) advanced religious consciousness. For instance, the same religion could manifest a relatively advanced religious imagination in one ethnic or historical context, but a more primitive one in another.

Both methodological perspectives continued to serve to scuttle the philological approach to the study of cultural and religious development. In the philological approach, ‘religion’ like all cultural phenomena is an outgrowth of a given ethno-linguistic character (genius or essence). Islam then *was* liable to be caricatured as a product of the desert monotheism of the Semites, of ‘tent and tribe’, as Said put it. In the ethno-philological schema, ‘religion’ could only develop within the boundaries of and hardly go beyond the ethnic character of which it was an expression: the only options open to it would be to become more or less of what it always already is. But, such a stance, to maintain itself, would have *a priori* to disallow the perspectives proffered by the two methods referenced by Goldziher: the first, because historical criticism disproved the notion that religions are essentially unchanging, by showing the ways in which they respond to and change in line with social and political transformations and needs. The

¹¹⁶ Goldziher, “Die Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in der letzten drei Jahrzehnten”, 444. The bold phrases correspond to text separated for emphasis in the original. Citations in bold will here always correspond to this apparently favored practice in German editing.

second, because the comparative study of religion demonstrated that religious and cultural ideals and practices were as much subject to exchange and borrowing as social, political and economic ones, so that a religion could develop and advance both internally *and* by assimilation, just as an ethnic group was as such amenable to growth and advance in its religious consciousness.¹¹⁷

Moreover, both methods worked to discredit the philological framework in a clear concrete sense, by discouraging the speculative shenanigans at the heart of its enterprise: it was bad enough to derive monotheism from the nomadic desert conditions of the Semites, actually from the sparseness of the desert itself! But, it was barely more tolerable to decide that because there was no clear term comparable to ‘Conscience’ in Arabic or the languages of other Islamic peoples, that they were basically bereft of the inward moral capacity suggested by that concept, suggesting that Islam was an inherently ritualistic and externalized religion. Here, historical criticism, but especially the comparative science of religion sought to replace tendentious lexical speculation, which was bound to be pursued only so as to confirm prejudices, by bidding the scholar to investigate the maxims and ideals, the psychological attitudes, prescribed by a religion. It was not sufficient simply to study some supposedly ordinary terminology of a religion to determine its potential for inwardness. For, *even if* such potential should not be fully realized in its origins, one had to examine historically further the impact of later socio-cultural developments and injections succeeded in advancing the cause of inwardness and so in effecting the moral progress represented by it.¹¹⁸ Here, we can cite Goldziher on how he believed the new methodological imperatives had served to alter the very mission of the Science of Islam, to forge it as a scientific discipline as such.¹¹⁹

The great **Hadrian Reland**, to whom we owe the first scientific exposition of Islamic institutions, set out as the greatest recommendation for his text-book: he will explain the object of his discussions “*uti docteur in temples et scholis Muhammadicis*”, that is, “**as it is taught in Muhammadan houses of worship (*Gotteshäusern*) and schools.**” We modify, or better said, magnify (*bereichern*) this principle and represent Islam “as it

¹¹⁷ Conrad, “Ignaz Goldziher on Ernest Renan”, 144, makes succinctly many of the same points vis-à-vis the ‘early’ Goldziher; but suggests near the end of his essay that he never explicitly avowed or elaborated this (reformist) methodology of his youth in the Islamicist context, i.e. in his later primarily ‘professional’ prose-style, and that it basically went unheeded here in his own lifetime; see *ibid*, 164-5. The above discussion and Goldziher’s articulation of what the ‘progress’ of the Science of Islam consisted of demonstrate clearly the inadequacy of this view; a matter which will be harped on in a number of different directions in chapter four.

¹¹⁸ See Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 14-20. We will later see more fully how Goldziher develops this theme.

¹¹⁹ When Becker wrote his memorial essay on Goldziher, he immediately credited the latter with the project of the disciplinary formation of the field: “What we today call *Islamwissenschaft* is the work of Goldziher and Snouck Hurgronje. Of course they have antecedents. No one will want to belittle the path-breaking work of de Sacy and Quatremère, these fathers of Islamic history. Thankfully do we recall Hammer-Purgstall and v. Kremer, who in the chaos of the literary-, cultural- and religiohistorical material sought to create a first, even if still quite provisional, order. Happily conscious are we of the tireless work of opening up the sources (*Quellenerschliessung*) and of linguistic sifting that Dozy and de Goeje, that Fleischer and—despite all his weaknesses—Wüstenfeld brought forth. The way to knowledge of the Qur’an and the origins of Islam was brokered by Nöldeke, Sprenger and Wellhausen; but Islamic Studies (*Islamkunde*) is and remains the creation of the two friends Goldziher and Snouck Hurgronje. We stand directly on the shoulders of this generation, and I don’t think that one will judge matters differently even a hundred years from now”. Becker based this estimation on the same methodological transformations cited and represented by Goldziher. As I’ll note in the conclusion, this opening paragraph of Becker’s essay, by itself, summons a re-evaluation of the idea that Goldziher’s *Islamwissenschaft* was something *sui generis*. See Becker, “Ignaz Goldziher”, *Islamstudien*, v. II, 499.

shows itself in its development and its live formation, as it is operative in society and history”.¹²⁰

Note the way in which Goldziher’s striking formulation of the difference between the old and new motto of the discipline pushes aside philology on one axis, but simultaneously deflects any native Muslim perspective that would disavow the great historical development and diversity, which is to say responsiveness, of Islam on another. Goldziher’s methodological animation of Islam then was aimed at rescuing it from hypostatization (both internal and external). Temporalized, ‘Islam’ became a subject of historical development and cultural diversity. But by querying the precise nature of this adaptability and pluralism, the analysis pointed to and was driven by Islam’s capacity and need for further serious change, reform and progress. In other words, Goldziher’s was not only a historicist account but simultaneously a reformist critique of the Islamic heritage. His aim was its reformist idealization. It is to his reformist reading and historiography of the Islamic heritage that we now turn.

¹²⁰ Goldziher, “Die Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten”, 444.

Chapter VII. Goldziher's Reformist Reading of Islam and Islamic History

6.

In 1890, in the aftermath of the most turbulent and difficult decade of his life, which had however culminated in his receiving the Gold Medal at the International Congress of Orientalists the previous year (Stockholm, 1889), Goldziher began his *Tagebuch*. There was growing acclamation from Orientalist colleagues and the perception that he was laying the foundations for a new discipline. But, in the review of his first forty years that opened the *Tagebuch*, Goldziher's mood and tone was not one of triumph but survival. He had survived his having been deprived of the chair in the Hungarian academy promised to him because of the anti-Semitic tenor of Hungarian officialdom and society. He had survived the defeat of his reformist project in the Hungarian Jewish community made a thousand times more humiliating by his continuing subaltern status as its secretary. The study of Islam had been his life-line. The 1890 review of his life was thus not a haphazard exercise. It served to consolidate what had become ultimately an explicit decision to turn the focus of his scholarship and his overall scholarly project to the Islamic heritage. It is this much misunderstood and much maligned text that is the founding document of *Islamwissenschaft*. In it, Goldziher re-read the whole course of his life in terms of what he now saw as having allowed him to survive. He focused on his youth, his revolutionary commitment as he saw it to religious reform and the reform of Judaism. He presented the defeat of his reformist project amongst the Hungarian Jews as no less than a trial from God, a martyrdom. He added a providential glow also to his life-line, the study of Islam. He lavished attention on his Oriental study trip to Damascus and Cairo in 1873-4, whose glorious triumphs had opened the path to him of both an intimate encounter with as well as the cultural and historical study of the Islamic world. The turn to the study of Islam was thus also to be read as something other than haphazard. It too had an aspect of destiny, it was part of his struggle to survive, his martyrdom. It was in the context of such a re-reading and *re-writing* of the course of his life and scholarship that he penned the now oft-cited assessments of his own first live engagement with Islam in Damascus and Cairo. Recalling the intensity and intimacy of this first encounter in Damascus, he wrote:

I in fact ensconced myself so deeply within the Muhammadan spirit during these weeks, that I became ultimately internally convinced of being myself a Muhammadan and discerningly discovered this to be perhaps the one and only religion capable, even in its doctrinal-official formation and formulation, of satisfying philosophical minds. My ideal was thus to raise Judaism to a comparable rational level. Islam, my experience taught me, may be the one and only religion in which superstition and pagan rudiments are scorned not through rationalism, but by orthodox teaching.¹²¹

Writing of his experiences in Cairo, and as the first non-Muslim officially allowed to study at Al-Azhar, Goldziher's memory settled on much the same sentiment:

My way of thinking had come through and through to focus on Islam. My sympathies pulled me also subjectively in that direction. My monotheism I called Islam, and I did

¹²¹ Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 59.

not lie when I said I believe in Muhammad's prophethood. My copy of the Qur'an can bear witness to how inwardly I came to devote myself to Islam. My teachers seriously awaited the moment of my open declaration.¹²²

I have already said that these lines must be understood within the context of Goldziher's 'turn' to *Islamwissenschaft* in the 1880's and definitively so in his 1890 *Tagebuch* review. A full discussion of the dynamics of this turn will occupy us in Part III of this study, and I hope that the above description has whetted the reader's appetite to find out more. However, I begin this chapter with Goldziher's 'recollections' of his experience of Islam during his Oriental trip, because in this chapter I will be introducing the reader to Goldziher's reformist historiography of the Islamic heritage. And, on the face of them, the above citations seem clearly to problematize any such account from the start. For, Goldziher seems simply to have *found* his religious ideal in his living experience of the Muslim world. There is hardly any talk or inkling of a required critique or reform of Islam in these passages! In fact, Goldziher's descriptions of Islam in Damascus and Cairo serve actually also to jeopardize what has already been said about his having formulated his reformist project and its scholarly agenda first and foremost with respect to the Jewish heritage, in the context of his work on comparative mythology. For, in these passages, Goldziher claims that at the very time he was writing *Der Mythos*, during his Oriental trip, his ideal had become to raise Judaism to the religious level he had found in Islam! But, I assure the reader that there is no such jeopardy, for the above citations, understood properly within the context of their writing, bear a great historical irony: they say almost the reverse of what they mean. What they mean historically is that Goldziher was now committed above all to the idealization of the Islamic heritage as the monotheistic tradition worthy of reformist purification. They do not say what one might presume on a literal reading, namely, that Islam does not need any such reform or idealization. They say that Goldziher had now decisively turned from idealizing the Jewish tradition to reforming and idealizing the Islamic tradition. They do not say that his aim was to turn Judaism into Islam. In fact, these passages represent *idealizations*, both in their portrayal of Goldziher's understanding of Islam and its historical trajectory on the one hand, and of the in fact tenor of his vision and experience of Islam in the general period of his trip to the Orient on the other.

Historians are rightly chary of high-handed non-literal readings of text, minus serious historical evidence necessitating such readings. In the case of Goldziher, such evidence is in fact overwhelming. I begin with these passages, because this whole chapter on Goldziher's reformist understanding of Islamic history will serve to underscore they must be read as I suggest. I begin with these passages, because of the potential interpretive havoc they may cause and have caused in understanding his Islamicist work. But, there is direct evidence to show that Goldziher's retrospective lines about 'raising Judaism to a comparable rational level as Islam', namely, the suggestion that Islam came to constitute for him at the time the advanced model driving his ideals of Jewish reform, simply does not conform to the contemporary evidence from his Oriental trip. First, the *Tagebuch*'s hallowed description of Goldziher's experience as a 'virtual Muslim' in Damascus and Cairo, in terms of 'inward conviction', doesn't match his direct reporting of his mind-set at the time in his *Oriental Diary*. In the latter, contemporary account, we get no reverential reveries about Islam but instead a cheeky impudence towards all social interlocutors, including, the frequent expression of the most genuine affection and friendship

¹²² Ibid, 71.

especially for them notwithstanding, Muslim ones. The reverential and righteous self-talk in the *Oriental Diary* is all about Prophetic Judaism, meaning Islam clearly did not at the time constitute for Goldziher the prime vector of his ownmost religio-critical concerns nor then the ideal *basis* for his envisioned reform.¹²³

Next, we need only delve further into *Der Mythos bei den Hebräern* (1876) to see that, at the time of its writing, Goldziher's focus remained on Judaism and specifically on Prophetic Judaism as the starting point of his reformist project. The Jewish and Islamic heritages were here presented as complementary monotheistic traditions worthy of purification, but the Prophetic Jewish departure was held to be of a higher ideal potential in this regard. In fact, the allusions in Goldziher's *Oriental Diary* made clear that he was continuing to think through the work during his 1873-4 trip, just as the conclusive composition and preparation for publication came directly in its aftermath.¹²⁴ In *Der Mythos*, Goldziher projected the Jewish and Muslim conceptions of the one God as, in terms of a fully adequate monotheism, the only ones at all comparable and potentially deserving of a teleological ideality. Still, Goldziher unequivocally favored the Yahweh-idea bequeathed by the Jewish prophets to Judaism as, in conceptual constitution, of a higher sublimity and purity (from paganism) than the Allah-idea at the crux of Muhammad's call to Islam. Here, it was Prophetic Judaism, which was envisioned as the model starting point:

Only the Muhammadan Allah-idea is perhaps capable of competing with the sublimeness of the Yahweh-idea; still the former does not by far occupy (*steht auf*) that height of religious thinking from out of which the Yahweh-concept is conceived... We have called upon the Allah-idea, and this (although etymologically speaking of the same rank as Elohim) can be, not only as to its essence and content, but also as to its history, comparatively placed alongside the Hebraic Yahweh-idea. The notion, as religious terminology, was not unknown to the Arabs before Muhammad. The pre-Islamic, pagan system of Arab theology, its center in the paganism in Mecca, also knew of Allah as divine designation. Yet, with what other content did the preaching of the epileptic peddler of Mecca infuse it! Allah became through the message of the Arab prophet something altogether different. But, also in this respect Yahweh strikes us by its greater grandeur. For while the Muhammadan concept of God—stressing in the first place power and unbounded omnipotence—remains closely linked to the etymological meaning of the word Allah, in the Yahweh-concept of the prophets, the name has become something wholly irrelevant and coincidental, and the content of the same holds its center

¹²³ See Patai, *Ignaz Goldziher and His Oriental Diary*, 98-100, 132-2, 135.

¹²⁴ "The weather was unexpectedly beautiful; not the smallest breeze disturbed the quiet, smooth surface of the sea, and the sky, densely studded with stars, smiled down at me joyfully and self-satisfied, as if it wanted to pay me tribute for the mythological theory into which I worked it up and about which I mused under its very eyes. The old figures of Abraham, Lot, Jacob [as in fact references to natural phenomena] smiled down upon me, as if they would bear me no ill will for having finally let them have their old right with all the moral freedom of which the noble thought is capable, yea, as if they had waited for their rescuer and had found him in me at last. And the people, to whom this rescue of honor is a matter of indifference, will they bear me ill will on account of the affair which I have with the beautiful nocturnal sky of the old Bedouins." *Ibid.*, 101, see also 121. Further, Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 76.

of gravity in a direction running entirely to the other side of the meaning and etymology of the name Yahweh as already formed in an earlier period.¹²⁵

It should be added that in the *Tagebuch* as well Goldziher never stopped pronouncing the universal (messianic) monotheism of the Jewish prophets as his creed, placing it and himself as such above any and all confessional and denominational considerations. In fact, he said that his commitment to Prophetic Judaism had only been further consolidated in his decision to focus his studies on Islam!¹²⁶ However, as I'm suggesting, he also interpolated idealized lines about his experience of Islam to justify his turn now to the Islamic heritage as the means of his reformist project. I am not here in any way trying to deny the life-changing impact of his Oriental trip on Goldziher or the fact that it laid the foundations for his eventual emergence as the founder of *Islamwissenschaft*. In fact, he did become a 'virtual Muslim' in Damascus and Cairo, a participant-observer who passed on to his colleagues the desideratum of studying and taking part in Islam as a living phenomenon. What I am suggesting is that, as opposed to the 'inward conviction' of being a 'Muhammadan', the more likely story of Goldziher's intimate identification with Islam and Muslims during his Oriental trip was that of a *comparative* social and intellectual experience of an analogous, potential pure monotheistic system and society. The balance of the evidence, accordingly leads to the following conclusions, which I ask the reader to take on faith until further elucidation in Part III, so that we may proceed to investigate the intellectual trajectory of Goldziher's scholarship as a move from the reformist idealization of the Jewish to the Islamic heritage. First, Prophetic Judaism remained for Goldziher at least his own most ideal starting point of all further critico-spiritual refinement to come, for the Jewish community sunk in Rabbinic Judaism from the inside, for the whole of humanity, as a light of universal monotheism, from the outside. Second, Islam presented itself to Goldziher from early on and increasingly over time as a comparable and other path to the universal historical goal, provided it be understood that whether it be Judaism or Islam, their histories had for this purpose to become the subject not of any dominant or palliative emulation but precisely of a developmental historicist and reformist critique. Third, it was only the course of his grave frustrations in the Jewish community that convinced him his providential role amongst his fellow Jews was to be more that of a 'martyr' rather than a 'reformer' and that the prime vector of his critical reformist scholarship was meant to be the Islamic heritage. His life-experiences moved him to live out and think through fully the universalist historicist monotheism he had projected from the outset.

In this chapter, I examine the evidence for the other substantive riposte to taking the above cited passages from the *Tagebuch* at face-value, namely, to show that Goldziher arrived in his foundational work on *Islamwissenschaft* at a reformist historiography of the Islamic tradition. That is, precisely because he *did* turn to the idealization of the Islamic heritage, he made it the subject of a reformist critique and historicization, as Baur had done with Christianity and Geiger and himself with Judaism. The reader will see that Goldziher produced a thoroughly developmental account of Islamic history which viewed it as changing and progressing though in a traditionalist, i.e. unconscious and still uncritical manner. He projected a great dichotomy between Muhammad's message in the Qur'an, or originary Islam in general, and Orthodox

¹²⁵ Goldziher, *Mythos bei den Hebräern*, 349-50. See also, 325-330, where Goldziher compared the Hebrews' derivation of the monotheistic Elohim from the pagan Elohim whom they shared with other peoples with the development of the Muhammadan Allah from the pagan Ilah.

¹²⁶ See Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 86-7, also 111.

Islam. I begin the chapter with a discussion of Goldziher's characterization of the rise of Islam precisely *against* traditional Arab tribal ways and mores. Muhammad's call to Islam was a true prophecy and of global significance as an explicitly universal monotheism. But, Goldziher also criticized the toll the historically necessary struggle of consolidating Islam and making it count in the world had taken on its religious spirit. We will see Goldziher criticize what he portrayed as Muhammad's anthropomorphism and Early Islam's shift in emphasis from pious monotheism to the interests of Arab state aggrandizement. Necessity was in the eye of history to be reassessed into critical purity. I will then move to discuss Goldziher's account of Islam's Canonical, which is to say, Orthodox formation, in which ideal elements were absorbed within a traditionalist mentality. Always mindful of the 'materialist' and cultural track, Goldziher associated this traditionalist consolidation of Islam with the triumph of the Medieval-style religio-bureaucratic state in which religious law became deployed, as ideology rather than in a positive manner, to rationalize social and political prerogatives. It was this 'Orthodox Islam', both in its ideal possibilities (its universal, consensual openness and tolerance) and its still debilitating features (its traditionalist homogenization and uncritical accommodationism) that he made the subject of his reformist critique. He particularly threw into relief the so-called "collectivist" or "catholic" ethos of Islamic Orthodoxy, which impelled it to the rationalization of extant social, cultural and religious mores and practices. His great example was the official Islamic sanction of the cult of saints, the veiled inclusion in Orthodoxy of vestigial paganism under the mantle of monotheism.¹²⁷ Finally, he sought thereby to shine a light on the rationalizing and ideological role Islamic jurisprudence had played in the context of Orthodoxy, a critique that would become the beating heart of Islamicist discourse. To this day, authors like Maxime Rodinson, speak of Islam's ideological functions without quite comprehending the lineage to which they belong. In this chapter our focus will be on Goldziher's historiography and critique of the Islamic heritage. In the first chapter of Part III, we will follow Goldziher's engagement with the Islamic modernists of his time and his reformist advocacy against Orthodox Islam's traditionalist and reified universalism of instead a historicist and critical one.

7.

Exactly what historical picture of Islam's rise and growth did Goldziher's application of the critical and comparative methodologies bring to light? Goldziher's universalist historicist schema, as I've noted, was meant precisely to pry 'monotheism' from any singular association with the 'Semites'. Now, we'll see that he saw its rise in the case of Islam and generally as precisely *not* rooted in 'tent and tribe'.¹²⁸ On the Jewish front, we saw that Goldziher projected monotheism to have followed distinct mythological and pagan periods. The only thing remarkable about the Jews before the monotheistic turn had been that they'd borrowed their pagan religion rather than develop it from their own solar mythology. But, Goldziher traced the emergence of monotheism amongst the Hebrews, when it did emerge, explicitly to rising national consciousness and specifically to this consciousness as it manifested itself in a centralized state. Now, as for the origins of Islam, Goldziher argued that the advent of monotheism among the Arabs, anything but an evocation of Arab tribal traditions and mores, had involved a process of cross-cultural amalgamation that meant exactly a protracted struggle

¹²⁷ See Goldziher, "Die Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten", 457-467. Also, Goldziher, *Muhammadan Studien*, V. II, 277-378.

¹²⁸ On Said's dictum that this was the eternal meaning of 'Islam' for Orientalists, see note 45 in the previous chapter.

against these and the pagan cults that sustained them. In this case, Goldziher saw Muhammad's monotheistic intervention as having played a pivotal role in Arab nationalization and state-formation. The means by which monotheism took root in Arab soil, namely Muhammad's military state, had made it a catalyst for the process that gradually over time, victory by victory, but in fact only after the prophet's death and even then with continuing grand divisions, had brought forth a concrete sense of Arab unity and nationality. In either situation, however, whether in the etiological or regulative sense, the infusion of a monotheistic ethos into social practice was, in Goldziher's work, associated with the disruption of purely tribal modes of cultural life and social organization.

This argument about the rise of Islam, which Goldziher, drawing together previous work, rehearsed in a Hungarian publication of 1881,¹²⁹ he brought after much prodding by his friends before the broader world of Orientalist scholarship in the first volume of his *Muhammedanische Studien*. The two volumes of this great work were published in 1888-1890 and came, in retrospect, to be viewed as the founding texts of *Islamwissenschaft*. As Becker put it in his memorial essay, "Because of the difficulties of Goldziher's external life circumstances, it took until the years 1888/90 before the two volumes of the *Muhammedanische Studien* could appear. They are, despite all the brilliant achievements of later years the major creative work of the master, they virtually ushered in a new epoch of Orientalism."¹³⁰ In 1889, Goldziher packed the finished manuscript of the second volume of the work in his suitcase and set out for the VIII International Congress of Orientalists in Stockholm, having chosen a section from the volume's historical study of *Hadith*, the largest part of it, as his lecture to be delivered before the "Muhammadan Section" of the Congress. Unbeknownst to himself, Goldziher (alongside Theodor Nöldeke) was to be awarded the gathering's greatest possible distinction, the Golden Medal, and no less than H.M. King Oskar II, responsible as president of the Congress for conferring the prize, informed Goldziher in a surprise meeting of the honor to be bestowed on him.¹³¹ *Islamwissenschaft* here made its first triumphant public debut. The level of praise

¹²⁹ The work was Goldziher, *Az Iszlám; Tanulmányok a Muhammadán vallás története köréből (Islam; Studies on the history of the Muhammadan Religion)*. Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Könyvkiadó-Hivatala: Budapest, 1881; we'll have more to say of it in Chapter four.

¹³⁰ Becker, "Ignaz Goldziher", *Islamstudien*, v. II, 506. In fact, Goldziher had himself begun the preface to the *Muhammedanische Studien* by referring to these difficulties. The very first sentence recounted that the manuscript of the work and much of the material in it had for years been in his desk because of conditions hardly conducive to the pursuit of serious scholarship, which had forced repeated delays on him. His colleagues would have understood immediately that he was here alluding to the fact that he'd been denied a faculty position in his native Hungary because of his Jewish faith, namely, his unwillingness to abandon it for his profession, and that his subsequent employment as the secretary of the Neolog Jewish congregation of Budapest did not allow sufficient opportunity for or, as Goldziher saw it, militated against the carrying through of his scholarly work. The point though was not only to explain why "only the force exerted on me by loving friends caused me to begin the publication of materials, of whose imminent appearance I, in the preface to the *Zahirites* (Leipzig, 1883), thought with too hasty an assurance I might speak." It was to hint at what his journal, citing this preface verbatim, made explicit, namely, that the 'forced delays' had led to his being partly superseded in publication by the comparable works of Julius Wellhausen and William Robert Smith on Arab antiquity, i.e. pre-Islamic Arabia, which had come to examine the same original sources on the subject. In the preface, he expressed the matter meekly, noting that he'd withdrawn much of his own work in favor of citing these authors, but that because it would have often meant the loss of the context of his discussion, such a course had not always been possible. Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*, I. (Halle, 1888), ix. In his journal, he exclaimed "Had I not under the pressure of the conditions imposed on me by my co-religionists lost all self-assurance, and had to forgo all free leisure, then the pretty discoveries of Robertson Smith and Wellhausen would have had the name Goldziher pinned on them." Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 114.

¹³¹ *Ibid*, 117-120.

showered on the volumes of the *Muhammedanische Studien* testify to the banner ‘Goldziher’ came to provide his Islamicist colleagues with which to confront the philological establishment. This meant both types of philological Orientalism I’ve alluded to, the vast majority of grammatically and linguistically oriented philologists who mostly pored over and edited texts as well as the speculative philologists who sought out some broader, ethno-psychological essence from linguistic structures and genealogies to craft an often invidious type of historicism. These two groups were hardly generally on good terms: pedantry vs. synthesis, scholarship vs. presumption, these were the divisions within which the philological enterprise operated and within which its different camps looked at each other and themselves. Still, the two together kept the enterprise going by providing what was lacking in the other. Goldziher’s critical historicist and religio-comparative reading of Islamic sources exploded this enterprise by fusing scholarship and synthesis, form and content to produce a *Kulturgeschichte* (cultural history)¹³² of Islamic societies that sought to problematize the present in terms of the dialectical tensions of the past. In fact, Goldziher’s own goal was the critical fulfillment of the unrealized promise of this prophetic past.

Goldziher’s account of the rise of Islam serves as an opening demonstration of this teleological as against essentialist history of socio-political, cultural and religious transformation that had had its schematic outline and ‘prophetic’ underlining first defined in *Der Mythos*. First, in order to explain the birth and challenge of Islam, Goldziher drew a crucial distinction between the ideals of *Muruwwa* (pagan Arabia) and *Din* (Islam). The conflict and transition between the two serve not only to highlight again the fundamental importance of the dynamic processes of cross-cultural borrowing and struggle for his vision of historical and cultural progress, but to show definitively that the pre-Islamic culture of the Arabs was in no way proto-Islamic. Goldziher’s conclusions in this instance represented a wave of scholarship including Robertson Smith and Wellhausen. He argued the ancient Arabs had been a disunited/polytheistic group of peoples given to hedonism, and driven above all by *Muruwwa*, or “tribal virtue”, a set of pagan ideals celebrating bravery and heroism in the individual and sanctioning all that would bring glory and fame to the tribe and preserve its honor. But the ideal of *Muruwwa* lacked any broader ethical dimension or moral seriousness. Hence, it was in radical opposition to it and extant Arab cultural practices dominated by it, that Muhammad, relying largely on the *penetrating impact* of and eclectic encounter with Judaism and Christianity, Zoroastrianism too as Goldziher later argued, introduced the ideal of *Din*, of religious and moral duty. Instead of tribal glory and fame as associated with and sanctioned by rival tribal deities, Muhammad demanded charity and submission to the one God: ultimate and inexorable moral judgment and responsibility were in fact the fount for him of his undivided and exact monotheism. Hence, as mediated by the influence of the more advanced post-pagan civilizations of the Near East, the advent of Islam too bore witness to the universal march of history. Against a tribal and pagan Arab reality there came forth a new monotheistic ideal and eventually, alongside it, a more socially and politically unified Arabian nationality, associated, in other words, with a centralized extra-tribal state.¹³³

Second, however, Goldziher in this context as well remained as much an enemy of any mere and reductive assimilation as in *Der Mythos*. Especially in his later *Lectures on Islam* (1910), Goldziher addressed directly the eclectic variety and borrowed status of the sources of Muhammad’s message. He argued that the originality of the synthesis it represented, rather than

¹³² Goldziher’s scholarly inspiration in this regard and the reason he called his work, *Kulturgeschichte*, was Alfred von Kremer (1828-1889). See *ibid.*,

¹³³ See Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*, v. 1, 1-39.

hampered by this fact, derived instead from its given historical and cultural situatedness, its having been just in such a way internalized and propagated as to become concretely comprehensible and effective in the Arabian context of its origin. To put it the other way around, the call to Islam was of such great historical consequence, not only because as a serious practical innovation in the direction of universal monotheism it marked a new historical departure. But, by the same token, the limited cultural horizons Early Islam could only confront and broaden by understanding and implicating itself in terms of, also opened to it the historical possibility of a more perfect spiritual and cultural statement to come. Consider, accordingly, the transition in the following passages:

Before us stands the powerful **historical effect** of the call to Islam; first of all, the effect on the immediate circle to whom Muhammad's message was actually directed. The lack in originality is outweighed by the fact that this teaching, **for the first time**, was through Muhammad with a recruiter's perseverance (*werbender Ausdauer*) proclaimed as the inner interest of **everyone** (*Gesamtheit*) and with self-sacrificing persistence set against the self-satisfied mockery of the masses. For no historical effect had connected itself to the silent protest, to the pious-minded men before Muhammad, who more through their life than through their word had risen against the pagan-Arab way of life. We do not know of what the message of a Khālid b. Sinān consisted, of the prophet, 'whose people allowed him to be lost.' The first historically effective reformer of the Arabs is precisely Muhammad. Therein lies his originality (*Originalität*), notwithstanding the less than original (*ursprünglich*) content of his message.¹³⁴

If we are able to call something in Muhammad's religious creation **original**, actually then it is the negative side of his proclamations. They had to do way with all the barbaric horror of Arab paganism in worship and society, in family life and in world view—with the *jahiliyya*, barbarism, as he in antithesis to Islam designated it.¹³⁵

According to an Islamic tradition that grasps his career correctly, he [Muhammad] is said in the Torah to carry the epithet, "the prophet of struggle and of war." The circumstances of society, to affect which he felt to be the work chosen for him by God, were such that he could not blithely sway himself with the guarantee: 'Allah will fight for you, but you may calmly keep silent.' He had to pass an all too material earthly struggle, so as to provide acknowledgment for his message, and that much more, for its dominion. And

¹³⁴ Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 4.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 12. The German text of the first sentence of this passage reads, "Wenn wir in der religiösen Schöpfung Mohammads etwas **originell** nennen können, so ist es die negative Seite seiner Verkündigungen." The English translation of Goldziher's text, *Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law*, 13, renders it as "If any part of Muhammad's religious achievement may be called original, it is the part of his prophecy directed against the status quo." To my taste, such an English version is frankly more an interpretation than a translation of the above German sentence. In this instance, and there are instances that are not just so innocent, the interpretation I take to be a quite correct one. Nonetheless, it remains tendentious to replace the possibly negative connotations of "negative side" with the obviously positive ones of "against the status quo." As I've already pointed out about this text in Part I, the aim is generally to make Goldziher's prose appear authoritative from a contemporary perspective (the translation is from 1981), but the effect is to denature and dehistoricize it. All of this, as I'll note further, is to make Goldziher into the palatable face of the Islamicist tradition for those seeking to defend it.

this all too material earthly struggle was the legacy he bequeathed to his successors. Peace was to him no advantage.¹³⁶

In these passages, Goldziher positions Muhammad moving between historical cum cultural possibility and necessity. Hence, Goldziher did not moralize about not, on the other hand, look away from the conditions within which early Islam consolidated itself. Muhammad's establishment of Islam meant, a la Goldziher, the creation for the first time in a concrete sense of the ideal of universal monotheism, namely, the promise of a deeper spirituality, undivided moral responsibility and with it genuine social solidarity. But, it came in an Arabian society steeped in tribal loyalties and warfare; *ergo*, it meant and required actual warfare. And, Goldziher remained unblinking about what he took to be the moral, religious and sociopolitical repercussions of this warfare for the early development of Islam and the first Islamic society. First, Nöldeke's classic Mecca/Medina division of the Qur'an's *suras* to argue the great religious fervor of Muhammad's warnings of apocalyptic accountability in the Meccanese revelations had been largely muted as the prophet in Medina turned to directing and ordering the affairs of the community and state. 'Islam', hence, addressed not just the ultimate and earlier dominant concerns of piety and socio-ethical obligation, but became the institutional means of detailing everyday matters (taxes, warfare) of quite worldly character sufficiency. Second, Goldziher believed that the changeover from apocalyptic prophet to scheming statesman of power and war had introduced many an unhappy turn in Muhammad's character. But, third, crucially, he concluded that the transformation had even found its way into Muhammad's revelations and sullied his conception of the one and only God: *Allah*, who so often elsewhere in the Qur'an featured as a God of mercy, appeared in this vein a God of war and could even be portrayed and presumed a schemer of strong cunning against the enemies of Islam!

At the same time, Goldziher made clear such anthropomorphic tendencies in Muhammad's revelations remained nonetheless quite liable to exegetical interpretation from the standpoint of a more ideal and pure monotheism underlying the '*Allah*-concept of God. In this guise, *Allah*'s scheming revealed itself as the self-defeating self-deception of the unbelievers who by their cunning only conned themselves.¹³⁷ Later in the *Lectures*—the third lecture on “dogmatic developments”—Goldziher further conjectured that the tendency of the Qur'anic revelations to shift from opposed standpoints that were not dogmatically formulated but emphasized on the one hand God's deterministic omnipotence over all, on the other, individual free-will as required for genuine moral responsibility, was also to be analyzed in terms of the Mecca/Medina dichotomy. The Meccanese prophet's insistence on inexorable religio-moral choice and consequence had been displaced by the Medinese politician's promotion of the all-determining providential hand of the one God. In all of this, Goldziher eyed a continuity between the prophet's Medinese turn and the establishment of the authoritarian state tradition into the Islamic polity by the Umayyads, who explicitly sanctioned the deterministic point of view as a theological bulwark of extant political authority, namely, in its capacity for branding moral resistance as in fact opposition to the will of God.¹³⁸ Thus, Goldziher diverged definitively from the account of Early Islam in Islamic tradition to argue the advent of the Umayyad caliphate had been not a deviation from the path set out by the prophet and his four 'rightly guided' (*rashidun*) caliphs (successors), but, rather in fact a culmination of the political

¹³⁶ Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 22.

¹³⁷ See *ibid*, 20-25.

¹³⁸ See *ibid*, 89-99.

institutionalization of Islam undertaken by Muhammad from Medina onwards. The Umayyads, Goldziher argued, had been precisely proponents rather than, as the later Islamic appraisal of them suggested, enemies of Islam. It is just that ‘Islam’ signified for them the unified and expanding sovereignty of the Arab race, and so the protection of the Islamic/Arab state from any and all religio-political schism and fragmentation.¹³⁹ In other words, in the necessary historico-cultural course of its original consolidation and development, ‘Islam’, as a universal ethical monotheism countering tribal religion, mores and identity, had brokered and yielded to a unified Arab consciousness and nationality and become accordingly eventually inseparable from the fate of the Arab ‘Islamic’ empire.

Hence, Goldziher viewed the institutionalization, meaning also politicization, of Islam embarked on by Muhammad in Medina as both existentially indispensable but as having also in large part sapped its ethical dimension and saddled it with anthropomorphic vestiges. Nonetheless, the necessity of this Historical course—the reader should here think back to Baur’s altogether comparable explanation of Jesus’s assumption of Messiahship—did the opposite of diminish the awesome world-historical gravity for him of this consolidation of the call to Islam, the *first* socio-historical implementation of universal monotheism. The reader will remember that the Jewish prophets who originated this idea were unable to make of it a practical, ongoing concern.¹⁴⁰ Not only was Goldziher, in the running disputations amongst the Islamicists on the subject, one of those who stressed the universal scope of the prophet’s message even and in fact especially in Mecca.¹⁴¹ As I have already suggested, Islam did not become the primary focus of Goldziher’s scholarship through the 1880’s and decisively thereafter, without also becoming the primary vehicle of articulating his notion of the religious ideal as a teleological process of critical realization culminating History. Goldziher’s characterization of prophetic Islam was thus a case in point of such Historical progress, whose course moved in a constant tension and shift in any historical situation between the original and the exemplary, between, on the one hand, the material and cultural possibilities and prerequisites and, on the other, the religiously prophetic and regulative ideal.

Goldziher’s dialectic affirmation and critique of Muhammad was certainly not read as such by Said: the subject actually provided the sole occasion on which he made a substantive criticism of Goldziher in *Orientalism*. It will again be instructive to conclude our discussion of Goldziher’s account of Early Islam by gauging what this criticism in fact served to reveal about the origins and trajectory of what Said mythologized as the eternalized, ugly designs on Islam of ‘Islamic Orientalism’. Said used Waardenburg’s *L’Islam dans le miroir de l’Occident (Islam in the Mirror of the Occident)* to argue that “Ignaz Goldziher’s appreciation of Islam’s tolerance towards other religions was undercut by his dislike of Muhammad’s anthropomorphisms and Islam’s too-exterior theology and jurisprudence”. That also meant that Said took Goldziher to be, of Waardenburg’s five Orientalist subjects, amongst the four most offensive who had produced not only a “highly tendentious”, but an “even hostile” “vision of Islam”. He was with Snouck, Becker and Macdonald. Only the more tortured, sympathetic soul, Massignon, in fact the hero of Waardenburg’s book for his essentialist phenomenology of Islam, was singled out for his greater sensitivity. But, Said approved of Waardenburg’s mirror metaphor and argued that all

¹³⁹ See *ibid*, 82-9.

¹⁴⁰ Again, Christian universalism’s ‘pagan apotheosis’ disqualified it as such in his eyes.

¹⁴¹ See *ibid*, 25-7.

five Orientalists had each conjured up “Islam as a reflection of his own chosen weakness”.¹⁴² In Goldziher’s case, the ‘chosen weakness’ Said had deriving his ‘hostile vision of Islam’ from was anthropomorphism, namely, the penetration of the transcendent realm by worldly human concerns. Said’s added line about Goldziher’s dislike, besides Muhammad’s anthropomorphisms, of ‘Islam’s too-exterior theology and jurisprudence’, pointed I take it to this same alleged Islamic deficit.

On this note, readers of *Orientalism* will remember Said’s famous attack on the Orientalist penchant for use of the term ‘Muhammadanism’ to refer to ‘Islam’. He took it as further demonstration of the Orientalist inability to allow Islam an internal trajectory of its own: ‘Orientalized’ Islam was less than intelligible in its own terms. There were no worries then that Muslims in no way self-identified as ‘Muhammadan’. For the purpose of adequate cognition, ‘Islam’ had to be rendered into an external frame available and operative only for the Orientalist. ‘Muhammadanism’, which served all but to equate the prophet ‘Muhammad’ and his divine message of ‘Islam’, clearly hearkened to the model of Christ’s eponymous centrality in Christianity. And, the circle was closed. For, this comparative designation had been originally conceived in Medieval Christendom as a ploy to expose Islam as the false prophecy of a false prophet. In other words, the more ‘adequate’ external vocabulary of the Orientalist was at its base a blinkered medievalism.¹⁴³ ‘Muhammadanism’ compared to ‘Christianity’ proved ‘Islam’ a religion of this world. It was not difficult then to locate Goldziher in this circle. He was certainly not chary of the term ‘Muhammadan’, used it casually to speak of Islam in his works and in the *Tagebuch* in addition to employing it for the title of his *magnum opus*. He *did* criticize the kind of anthropomorphism he took the prophet of Islam to have introduced into his vision of God in his later career. Hence, ‘Islam’ *was* for him ‘Muhammadan’ and that *was* the problem.

Again though, it is easy to move in circles when one does not read but more presumes an author. It would be silly to argue that, in using the term ‘Muhammadan’, Goldziher was not often simply following the scholarly conventions of his time. However, interpretively, the situation is again the reverse of that projected by Said for Goldziher used ‘Muhammadanism’ to reverse the conventional valuations of his time. Goldziher did use ‘Muhammadanism’ by comparison to ‘Christianity’, but then his point was to emphasize that Islam was a *prophetic religion*, the work of a self-consciously human prophet who understood himself as a mere messenger of God. Anthropomorphism in Islam was a historical abuse but a historicist necessity that had to be overcome through critical historicist reconstruction. It was not a pagan apotheosis and a regression into paganism as in the case of Christianity. When Goldziher wrote ‘Muhammadanism’, he meant ‘Prophetism’ as against ‘Incarnationism’.

Said might have learned about this from Waardenburg’s own discussion of Goldziher’s critique of Muhammad. Waardenburg did not leave out the manner in which Goldziher had prefaced his criticism of Muhammad in the *Lectures*.¹⁴⁴ There, Goldziher had made clear that, yes, it was true that the historical ‘Muhammad’, vs. the saintly one of tradition, could never provide Islam with a general ethical exemplar. But, the true historical Muhammad was actually a good deal closer to the prophet’s own understanding of himself, his role and accordingly his prophetic intentions than the reverential idealization of him as fount of perfection in which

¹⁴² Said, *Orientalism*, 209-10. Said cited the text as a whole in his way too convenient one-page review and distillation of its content. However, *his gloss* about “Muhammad’s anthropomorphisms”, most pertinent to us here, is no doubt in reference to Waardenburg., *L’Islam dans le miroir de l’Occident*, 43-4.

¹⁴³ See Said, *Orientalism*, 64-73, 280-1.

¹⁴⁴ Waardenburg, *L’Islam dans le miroir de l’Occident*, 43-4.

Islamic tradition had over the centuries increasingly ensconced him. Goldziher took it from the evidence that the prophet had most probably been rather candidly aware of his mortal humanity, namely, the shortcomings it entailed and this precisely *as against* the ideal perfection afforded only by the one and only God revealed through him. In Goldziher's presentation, Muhammad had himself been the first to act towards the prophetic disambiguation of the prophet's person and his message of 'Islam':

[In his conception of himself, Muhammad] is guide (*Wegweiser*), but not exemplar (*Musterbild*); the latter he is only in his hope in God and the last day and in his steady devotion... It is much more the consciousness of his human weaknesses that seems to have been honestly at work in him, and he wants to be understood by his believers as a man with all the defects of the ordinary mortal. His work was greater than his person. He did not feel himself to be a saint, and he does not want to be counted as such.¹⁴⁵

When Goldziher eventually came, as he promised he would, to discuss the later accretion, specifically in Sunni tradition, of reverential notions about Muhammad's sinlessness, he did so in the context of what he took to be the truly unfortunate tendency and development in Shi'a Islam of an authoritarian semi-apotheosis of the Shi'i Imams. Goldziher argued that, amongst the Sunni, the excesses towards the sanctification of the prophets and thus especially of Muhammad, even his transformation in the popular mind into an altogether supernatural figure, were not as grave, essentialist or obligatory as was the case for Shi'i doctrine. The latter's "exaggerations", he thought, threw all the doors open to vestigial paganism. He concluded that what idolizing of Muhammad had eventually crept into Sunni tradition had in part come as a result of competition with Shi'i conceptions, i.e. as a means of maintaining Muhammad's stature and authority. But, if we may now leave Said, Goldziher's discussion of the gap between the prophet's call to Islam and the later reception of his career in Islamic tradition paves the way for an understanding of his account and critique of the post-prophetic formation of Orthodox Islam. For, in this turn, he saw a shift from the literally prophetic, honest, however culturally compromised and naïve, to a subsequent mask of retrospective idealization, meaning often traditionalist accommodation of extant cultural, including pagan, elements under the cover of the religiously ideal. That is what the culminating, critical historicist perspective had to address in order to recover, namely, *realize*, the prophetic ideal.

8.

The focus of the last section was on Goldziher's account of Early Islam. We saw that he viewed as a prophetic religion, one whose importance as the first attempt at full-scale institution of universal monotheism assumed ever greater gravity in Goldziher's scholarship. His account of the rise of Islam furnished also yet another example of his critical methodology: Islam, he presented, not as any epitome of the Semitic mind, but as a revolutionary and progressive attempt, by way of dynamic exchange with and synthesis of penetrating foreign influences, at religio-cultural reform of Arab tribal society and religion (i.e. 'barbarism' cum paganism). And, like all revolutions, it had succeeded only to the extent it had failed: its institutionalization and politicization had thankfully allowed for its survival but, in a dialectically necessary twist, had

¹⁴⁵ Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 20-1.

also served to sap the originally predominant religious motivations within it in favor of the directive of Arab state-formation.

But, if we were to stop with Goldziher's thinking on Early Islam, *pace* Said, we would in fact know very little about Goldziher's overall conception of Islam's historical development, or more consequentially, of the diverse character and means that development had assumed. One would then have little conception of the sense in which Goldziher's work came, *in his own time*, to be viewed as having (alongside that of Snouck's) inaugurated the new discipline of *Islamwissenschaft*. For, it was Goldziher's conception of the formation of Islamic Orthodoxy that would provide the theoretical and discursive starting point for a new discipline. Goldziher argued that a normative ('Orthodox') pattern of development in Islam, continuing to characterize it into his own day, did not become fully formed and established for centuries after the death of Muhammad. It was, namely, not until the aftermath of the Muslim conquests, whereby Islam synthetically appropriated the peoples and heritage of Near Eastern civilization that a normative pattern of Orthodox development and in the same breath a canonical traditional and traditionalism had been consolidated. It must also be said that though Goldziher's approach to this normative pattern was that of a critical reformer, he, for his part, unlike many Islamicist colleagues, insisted that the pattern constituted development and *not* stagnation.

Goldziher on Early Islam may suffice in forcing a rethink of Said on Goldziher. But, to force a rethink of Said on 'Islamic Orientalism', it is necessary to see why prominent Islamicists of the second generation, like C. H. Becker, came to see him as the founder of a new discipline. It was Goldziher's work on the formation and consolidation of *Hadith* that led Becker to claim that the master had thereby opened a new era in Orientalist scholarship. In the juxtaposition of 'Islam' and Arab antiquity, Goldziher, Becker said, had been part of the wave that included Wellhausen and Robertson Smith.¹⁴⁶ His fundamental thesis about the *Hadith* literature in Islam however had been of a different order. Goldziher had argued that precisely the thorough unreliability and anachronism of this literature marked it as the greatest historical resource for the vast transformations 'Islam' underwent as a consequence of the remarkable period of Arab political expansion in the first century A.H. and the great cultural encounters this consequently induced. It was this critical proposition that had opened up the path to a *properly historical conception* of Islam and Muslim societies. Hence, Becker's judged the second volume of the *Muhammedanische Studien* and its methodology of *Hadith* criticism above all as follows:

With this discovery (*Erkenntnis*), the means were for the first time given into our hands, to treat the religious history of Islam in a truly scientific manner. It is not new facts that Goldziher here reveals, it is a wholly new scientific horizon (*Einstellung*), without which, no one following him can any longer approach the examination of Islam. Hence, the incomparable meaning of exactly this work not only in the context of Goldziher's life-work, but all of contemporary Orientalist scholarship (*Orientalistik*) as such. Here we have before us one of those genial historical intuitions which bear their own direct

¹⁴⁶ This work, in focusing on Arab antiquity, had actually been based on the presumption of the identity of ancient Arabs and Hebrews, but, contra Renan, it worked on a historical and historicist basis to paganize this Judeo-Arab antiquity and to make monotheism a matter of religious development. For a critique of this identification of Hebrew and Arab antiquity, see Goitein, *Jews and Arabs*. Goitein though does not relinquish the genealogical metaphor, calling Jews and Arabs 'cousins'.

evidence (*die unmittelbae Evidenz haben*). This book is the basis of all later scientific research of religion in the field of Islam.¹⁴⁷

Goldziher's singular contributions to a new historicist Science of Islam (*Islamwissenschaft*) do not only challenge Said's conception of 'Orientalism'. A host of responses to Said, whether in rebuke or in a bid to save him from his over-generalizations draw on Goldziher, but as a thoroughly *exceptional* figure in his time, a kind of *deus ex machina* of the Age of Empire. Accordingly, to understand Goldziher's pivotal disciplinary role will serve as a new page in both extant scholarship on him and *ipso facto* in the understanding of the emergence and development of the Islamicist field as a whole.¹⁴⁸

Hence, glosses on Goldziher's historiographic place that either figure him as more of the ever Orientalist (imperialist) same, or turn around and for various, often opposed aims focus on him a figure virtually outside the imperially mired Orientalism of his time are misguided. For, it was the historically delineated and differentiated 'Islam' that emanated in his work that was thought by scholarly colleagues and self-avowed disciples to have engendered a new 'scientific' field of study. Hence, let's turn to why Goldziher's critical reading of the *Hadith* literature in Islam was deemed as a key to its historicization and the historicist projects they themselves adopted in its wake. I've explained the sense in which Goldziher's account of Early Islam viewed it as culminating in Umayyad dynastic rule. It was an end, namely, that devolved in fact from the great transformations set in, by ironic necessity, after the *Hijra*: the slackening of the originally predominant religious prerogatives in favor of the politicization and practical institutionalization of Islam that, in Medina, created the first patently Muslim society and made of Islam an ongoing concern.

Of course, the period of roughly the first century A.H. encompassed, beside the last decade of the prophet's life and career, the rule of the *Rashidun* ('rightly-guided') Caliphs as well as the bulk of that of the Umayyads. The Abbasid Caliphate displaced the Umayyad in 750 C.E. (132 A.H.). This initial century of Islamic history corresponded also to the truly remarkable span of political expansion of this first Muslim society, at the close of which, it had amassed one of the great empires of World History stretching from near the borders of China and India to the East, through the Middle-East and North Africa into the Maghreb and Spain to the West. Goldziher's reading of this historical situation and the documentary evidence focused, in the first instance, on its socio-political implications and advanced certain theses in this regard that were to become discursive mantras amongst Islamicists on the subject. First, Goldziher argued that the Arab military elite, emanating from the relatively primitive conditions of the Arabian peninsula, had come in the aftermath of conquest to face the for it unprecedented task of governing the vast territories of the Sassanian Empire and a large part of the Byzantine, encompassing most of the centers of Ancient Near Eastern civilization. For these two empires were the great legatees of this civilization at the time of the rise of Islam and, in ruling them, the Arab conquerors had to confront territories, directed through complex and highly evolved

¹⁴⁷ Becker, "Ignaz Goldziher", *Islamstudien* V. II, 506.

¹⁴⁸ The accounts of those who use Goldziher to rebuke Said (Lawrence Conrad) or to save him despite himself (Zachary Lockman, Hamid Dabashi) will be covered in greater detail in Part III. In this study, our focus will be squarely on Goldziher and the impetus he gave to *Islamwissenschaft*. His full disciplinary reception and place within the field can only be pointed to rather than fully demonstrated. This further project will be carried out in another forthcoming work on the development of the Islamicist field in the Age of Empire and in to the First World War.

administrative and fiscal systems, with not to mention intricate religio-cultural realities and divisions of their own. Second, Goldziher contended that initially and, namely, at the height of Umayyad power, this elite's response to this daunting challenge had tended in the direction of reconciliation with extant practices. What that meant, as laid out explicitly in the detailed works of Wellhausen and Becker on the post-conquest period, was the mere overlaying of an Arab aristocratic stratum on pre-existing arrangements and hierarchies.¹⁴⁹

However, Goldziher emphasized the specifically Umayyad handling of this wholly new social situation *did* for the most part prove itself a stark departure. For the first institutionalization of Islam had involved precisely the prophet's reliance on revealed practical stipulations to meet, under the banner of religion, the rudimentary requirements of social organization in Medina. And, the gestures of for instance the 'righteous' second Caliph, 'Umar, the great conqueror and so-called "founder of the Islamic state"', had involved much the same bid,¹⁵⁰ namely, the will to address the unprecedented practical problems and needs post-conquest under the rubric of 'Islamic' promulgation. As against *this* notion of 'Islamic' governance, the Umayyad focus was squarely and indiscriminately, without any undue concern for formal 'Islamic' imprimatur, on the prerogative of Arab rule, its consolidation and extension. That said, here again, Goldziher came to deviate sharply from the prevalent traditional, juristic—not to mention Shi'i—Islamic conception of the Umayyad rulers as worldly kings devoid of full Islamic legitimacy, even as enemies of Islam who had overtaken it from the inside. Goldziher insisted rather on recovering the Umayyads' understanding of themselves, whereby, they were very much the Muslim rulers of a Muslim empire. Namely, he worked to show that 'Islam' had come for *them* to coincide with and to *mean* essentially Arab sovereignty. They were in fact, analytically speaking, to be seen as having pushed the politicization of Islam to one of its possible socio-logical conclusions. The prophet had already pressed 'Islam' into political service; the Umayyads satisfied themselves in the other direction, reading 'Islam' merely in terms of Arab state sovereignty. Goldziher did not hesitate to count theirs, after the Meccanese and the Medinese, a third historical interpretation and delineation of 'Islam'.¹⁵¹

However, the Umayyad perspective on Islam was, precisely in its own time, a highly contentious one and hardly capable of satisfying the pious circles who sought patently 'Islamic' regulation of the ever pressing and morphing religious, social and political dilemmas with which the new, ineluctably dynamic period of conquest and its aftermath confronted them. According to Goldziher, from quite early on, pious Muslims had looked to the attitudinal model, which is to say the usage or *Sunna*, of the prophet, as reported by his Companions in Medina, as the fount of such properly Islamic guidance for the solution of the inevitable and evolving practical difficulties, once the prophet himself was no longer there to adjudicate them. These reports had been passed on and 'traditionalized' individually (with the chain of transmission) in *Hadith* (or tradition) meaning collections of the same. Hence, the example of the first Islamic generation in Medina, interpreted as the will of the prophet and attested to as such by the *Hadith* traditions passed on, came to be projected by the pious as the means of giving actual form to the Qur'an's generally vague formulations on matters of belief, conduct, social *praxis* and administration. By giving concrete meaning to Qur'anic precepts problematized by different periods and situations,

¹⁴⁹ See Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 39-40. See Wellhausen, Julius, *The Arab Kingdom and Its Fall*. (Beirut, 1963), 270-311; and Becker, *Beiträge zur Geschichte Ägyptens unter dem Islam*. (Straßburg, 1903), 81-113.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 36-7.

¹⁵¹ See *ibid.*, 82-5; also Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*, II, 52-66.

Hadith was thus to identify the essential contours of ‘Islamic society’.¹⁵² What this suggests is what I have repeatedly called a *traditionalist* framework and, in doing so, I am following Goldziher’s own explicit characterization of the matter.¹⁵³ Crucially, it was Goldziher’s critical approach to the traditionalist attitude, adapting the critical historicist reading of it in the ‘science of religion’, that was to become the crux of Islamicist discourse and its developmental dynamics. And, what this critical approach envisioned was a revision of the notion of ‘tradition’ itself. According to this conception of it, ‘traditionalist society’, namely, to import the language of *Der Mythos*, that of the Religio-historical Age versus the cyclical rhythms of the Mythological, did *not* in fact encompass socio-cultural stability over the course of time: ‘stability’ within it constituted rather an abstract value, a matter of consciousness at best regulative and much more likely ideological than a social or cultural fact. ‘Traditionalism’, in this reading of it, amounted accordingly instead more to an *unconscious* dynamism.¹⁵⁴

Hence, the pious who were driven, after the death of the prophet, to search out in ‘Islam’ the solution to every possible issue, sought the same in the attested reports, properly preserved with their chain of transmission, of his authoritative practice and thus everlasting legacy. But, what Goldziher’s critical historicist methodology tried to expose about this prophetic tradition (*Hadith*) was that its literature had in fact to be read as a hidden record of the tumultuous and consequential centuries of social, cultural and political encounter experienced by the first Muslim society following its conquest of the advanced civilizations of the Near East. A panoply of would-be-credible standpoints on all matters, not only the narrowly ‘spiritual’ or ‘ritual’, but also the moral, political, intellectual, practical, even trivial, each vied with one another and, in the will to establish their authority claimed for themselves the sacred and eternal legitimacy of the attested will of the prophet. In other words, what the *Hadith* in fact documented, under the mantle of the prophet Muhammad, was the intellectual, cultural and political struggles in Islamic society had undergone in the crucial formative centuries after his death. But then this literature was thus the key to understanding the historical development of ‘Islam’. Goldziher’s 1910 *Lectures on Islam* (1910) introduced the idea with a poignant moderation, characteristic of his prose in the aftermath of the disappointments that attended the stridency of *Der Mythos*:

We do not want altogether to exclude the possibility that in the *Hadith*-reports available to us in the traditions of later generations, every now and then a kernel of ancient material—if also not directly from the mouth of the Prophet, still however from the eldest generation of Islam’s authorities—has been preserved. But, on the other hand, one can easily gauge that, per the degree of spatial and temporal distance from the source, ever more and more danger existed that one could devise for doctrines—whether they were of only bare theoretical worth or actually called-on for implementation in concrete practice—*Hadith*-type authentications, completely correct in formal terms and traced back till they reached the highest of authorities, the prophet and his companions. Soon enough, the fact came to the fore that every point of view, every party, every representative of any given doctrine gave its thesis this form, and that as a result the most

¹⁵² See Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 35-7; also Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*, 13-19.

¹⁵³ See Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 279-81; see also Goldziher, “The Principles of Law in Islam” in *The Historians’ History of the World*, v. VIII, ed. Henry Smith Williams (New York, 1904), 294-5.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. Pierre Nora’s distinction between memorial and historical consciousness in Nora, *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past* (New York, 1996), 284-300. Again, minus the valuations, we seem to have re-discovered distinctions made about the character of the ‘modern’ in the nineteenth century.

contradictory of teachings came to wear the mantle of such documentation. There is neither in the realm of ritual, nor dogmatics, nor also of juridical relations or for that matter the struggle of political parties, a stance that could not invoke a *Hadith* or a whole family of *Hadiths* in its favor, displaying the outward appearance of correct tradition.¹⁵⁵

In Goldziher's American lecture of a few years earlier, "The Progress of *Islam-Wissenschaft* in the Last Thirty Years" (1904), the point was made in the same manner and the author made clear it went the furthest in elucidating the title of his talk:

We have arrived at the result that the putatively authentic tradition [*Hadith*], far from being able to function as evidence of the early period of Islam, is much more a mirror reflection of the often contending tendencies (*Richtungen*) and movements that came to prominence in different circles in the first three centuries. Hence, the resulting contradictory reports and prescriptions on the same question in religious and political matters. Each doctrinal- and school-stance forged for itself an authority going back till the time of the prophet. Each of the divergent teachings made ready for its defense an authentic appearing saying of the prophet, presented in the most naïve and immediate manner. Orthodox and Free-thinker, Anthropomorphists and Spiritualists, the various ritual divergences: all are able to offer up good traditions in their defense. And, the tradition touching on political history makes for the very same picture.¹⁵⁶

As hinted at in the first of these citations, Goldziher argued that the Muslims of those early centuries could not but soon themselves become aware of what was happening. Their response, dovetailing closely with the rise of Abbasid power in the second century A.H., had been to create the very interesting discipline of *Hadith* criticism, aimed at the historical verification of the truly authentic testimonials of the prophet's *Sunna*, namely, the separation of these from the rife fabrications. Goldziher fondly claimed that this made these Muslims the first in World History to have conceived of the science of literary criticism, though, as with his usual dialectical critique of the 'origin' of all great things, this beginning too he discussed in terms of its still manifest immaturity. To use his own words from the American lecture:

We can assert that the critique, which the science of Orthodox Islam employed on the traditional material handed down to it, **is in general the oldest example of such critical activity in the whole of World Literature.** By our calendar, it is a phenomenon of the VIII-IX centuries and achieves its full bloom in the X century. The Islamic Science deserves the credit for having been the altogether first to grasp the idea of critique...¹⁵⁷

Still, again, the Archimedean point of Goldziher's own critical work on the *Hadith* was precisely to reveal the sense in which this early criticism of Islamic Science was as yet immature, namely, to expose its inadequacy for the purposes of genuine historical understanding. For, Goldziher's critique tried to show that this Islamic critical methodology tended in favor of generally formal criteria of 'correctness' for historical reliability. That it had as its real interest in fact *not* the

¹⁵⁵ Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 41-2.

¹⁵⁶ Goldziher, "Die Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten", in *Gesammelte Schriften*, IV, 451.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 450.

proper *historicization* of tradition, but the certification of formulations that managed, so far as possible, to reconcile and blunt the oppositions of the accumulating diverse and divisive viewpoints (projections). Its actual historical function, in other words, was to render the different parties and authorities onto a uniform and eternalized plane, by a negotiated, generalized inclusiveness to the extent possible.¹⁵⁸ Goldziher's conclusion accordingly was that the advanced critical methods of European scholarship, affording the truly historical perspective, had eventually come (i.e. in his person) to disclose the less than historical concerns of their Islamic progenitor. His own historicist criticism was thus to show the path ahead: “[It has over time become clear] that the critical points of view that come into play in our mature [Western] objective historical criticism are quite other ones, ‘other thoughts other ways’ than that of the Eastern predecessors.”¹⁵⁹ Hence, it was incumbent upon the modern critical study of *Hadith*, that aimed precisely at historicization as against standardization, *not* to take up the emphasis of the earlier criticism on separating the authentic traditions from the merely fabricated, but exactly the reverse: to illuminate the putatively critical, eventually canonical collections of *Hadith* in Islamic scholarship from out of the broader extant mass it had come to mark as unreliable. Its aim, namely, had to be to show thereby the contentious developments in Islam after the prophet and the process whereby these dynamic trajectories were, as Goldziher was apt to put it, ultimately ‘collectivized’¹⁶⁰ and the dynamism itself as such normalized. Its task had to be to account for the formation of Islamic Orthodoxy, meaning likewise, that of a canonical Islamic tradition. Once more, I refer the reader to comparable examples of Baur and Geiger.

9.

However, the increasingly critical historicization of the *Hadith*, and this is why it was to Goldziher at the core of the real progress of *Islamwissenschaft*, did not simply mark the post-conquest ‘religious’ transformation of Islam in the abstract. Rather, as should be clear from such a religio-traditional principle of consolidating authority, its historicization succeeded precisely in that it pointed to the social, cultural and political developments, all of which, to legitimize themselves, put themselves into the mouth of the prophet. In other words, an adequately historicized reading of the *Hadith* and one systematically cross-referenced with a critical reading of further extant sources, like the early historical tradition, served to *unearth* the broader socio-cultural dynamics of early Islamic history from under what became its common language of legitimacy, namely, the ‘documentation’ of the prophet’s will:

One is justified in concluding that the critical insight into the Ur-documents of Islam represents a great progress in our knowledge of its earliest history. It has significance not only for the religious history of Islam, but is also extremely important for the critique of the **historical** tradition...[For] despite the radical-skeptical direction, whose practice it

¹⁵⁸ See Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*, II, 131-152; Goldziher, “Die Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten”, 449-53. also Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 42;

¹⁵⁹ See note 221.

¹⁶⁰ See Goldziher, “Die Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten”, 459. This collectivistic ethos was tellingly referred to by Islamicists as—the term is to be found on the same page above—its “catholic” tendency. See Goldziher’s important essay, “Katholische Tendenz und Partikularismus im Islam” (1913) in *Gesammelte Schriften*, V. (Hildesheim, 1970), 285-312. See also, importantly, his description of his approach to the historicization of *Hadith* in these terms as forming thereby a “unified Church”, meaning, as we will soon see and in a direct comparison in this sense to Jewish history, ‘Orthodoxy’, in Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 123.

makes precisely its duty, its method has proved itself as the means by which to advance a positive developmental history of early Islam.¹⁶¹

Goldziher proposed hence a reading of the canonical *Hadith* literature within the context of the evidentiary corpus as a whole. This literature was *not* to be given to philological reduction and reproduction: its general uselessness for that aim was in fact why it had been ignored and looked down upon by Orientalists till then. Rather, this literature was to be read, as we like to say today to prove our bona fides as historians in taking up documents ‘historically’, *against the literal grain*, so as to conjure the social and cultural realities that produced it and the other literary evidence that attended it.

The legacy then that Goldziher imparted to *Islamwissenschaft* departed decisively from the still prevalent notion today that Orientalist scholarship consisted at best of philological poring over texts oblivious to the lived life of societies and their historical reality. Namely, put bluntly, that it ignored Muslims as living human beings and historical agents.¹⁶² The focus of Goldziher’s ‘*Hadith* historiography’ was in fact on the dynamic rhythms of cross-cultural encounter whereby the ‘Islamic empire’ came over a number of centuries eventually to absorb and make synthetically and seamlessly its own the sophisticated Hellenistic cum Persian civilization of the regions it had conquered. He argued that all of this occurred under the aegis of a conflict-ridden historical transformation of ‘Islam’ that entailed an eventual ‘Orthodox’ consolidation of the latter by way of a traditionalist consciousness meant precisely to mute the transformation that had occurred and to devalue the very notion of such development. Goldziher further argued that the ‘Islamic Empire’ had been fully theorized theocratically as such in *this* process and, for Islamicists, tellingly only on the verge of the eclipse of its in fact political power. This whole discursive course and the idea of the gap between theory and praxis in traditionalist consciousness and reality Goldziher passed on tout court to the Islamicist field.

What then did this reading of the *Hadith* in terms of cultural appropriation and assimilation in the early centuries, which is also to say, the pluralistic and divergent deployment of this adapted cultural heritage by varying extant tendencies and interests, mean substantively for understanding and constructing the history of Islamic beliefs and practices? How did it envision Islam’s developing role and profile in social and political affairs in this crucial ‘formative’ era? And, with this signaling of periodization, what was presumed to be its denouement? Goldziher’s emphasized the emergence and elaboration of three socio-cultural rubrics (forces or movements) as having come in the post-conquest period to make overriding claims on ‘Islam’, all them, by the twelfth century (sixth century A.H.), to an extent reconciled under the sanction of what he called ‘Islamic Orthodoxy’. These were law, dogmatic theology and mysticism respectively. The development, theoretical elaboration and institutionalization of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) was in this regard, with its fundamental link in his treatment to the accumulation and employment of *Hadith*, Goldziher’s general starting-point. And, it is no exaggeration to say that the discourse of *Islamwissenschaft* in its first half century (1880-1930), the period at the center of our concern, revolved ultimately about a certain reading of the history and nature, precise status and function of Islamic law in Islamic societies.

Goldziher’s schema always began with the emphasis that Islamic law (*Shari’a*), fully-formed, applied the compass of divine sanction to all aspects of human life, so not only ritual

¹⁶¹ Goldziher, “Die Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten”, 453.

¹⁶² See, for instance, Hourani, Albert, *Islam in European Thought* (Cambridge, 1991), 38-41, who defends Goldziher and the Islamicist tradition in these terms.

requirements or matters pertaining to ‘religious’ worship in any narrow sense. It included every branch of civil law (family, inheritance, commercial, etc.), criminal law, procedural law, laws governing the constitution of the state, the law of war, and then not only that but dietary laws and laws specifying the (often minute) details of personal conduct and purity. As noted, ‘Islamic law’ had had its beginnings in the Medinese state, from the time of the prophet and the early Caliphate, where the arrangement of practical affairs had been made subject to divine judgment and guidance. In the Umayyad period, as Goldziher argued, the expedient resolution of public affairs without religious pretension was the watchword and the state tended in the process and aftermath of conquest merely to superpose itself on the multiplicity of extant practices. In this context, the care and elaboration of the religious point of view had become the *theoretical* prerogative of pious circles in Medina and elsewhere, who relied on, which is to say expansively proliferated, the *Sunna* of the prophet, in the formulation of *Hadith*, in order to develop the proper ‘Islamic’ perspective on the array of evolving and new circumstances.¹⁶³

But, it was only consequent to this post-conquest period of cultural tumult and encounter, namely, into the Abbasid era and, for Goldziher, chiefly because of it that Islamic jurisprudence had assumed the institutional and methodological forms and the socio-political role—more normative and ideological than positive—that he argued it still retained in his own day. By the middle of the ninth century C.E., there were already clearly formed, divergent schools and systems of legal interpretation and pedagogy. Each (*Madhhab*) had its own explicit program and particular exegetical tradition but remained basically respectful of the Orthodox status of the others; four of these, the Hanafī, Maliki, Shafī‘i and Hanbali survived to the present. Hence, to stress it was a product, the central one, of the process whereby ‘Islam’ had adapted the cultural heritage of Near Eastern civilization, Goldziher never tired of repeating how much the Islamic system of law, far from some untouched outgrowth of the “Arabic spirit”, owed to Roman law: “both in its methodology as also in its specifics”, or “not only in details of its determinations but—what is for the question of still greater consideration—in the principles of its methodology.”¹⁶⁴ However, Goldziher cared even more for his argument that it was with the triumph of the Abbasids over the Umayyad dynasty that Islamic jurisprudence came to enjoy the essential function and awesome status in the affairs of ‘Islamic’ societies and polities it had held thereafter unabated. It was this turn in Islamic history, this move towards religio-legal bureaucratization in the Abbasid Empire, that became the crux of the ‘scientific’ reevaluation of traditionalist Islamic self-understanding proffered Goldziher and his fellow Islamicists.¹⁶⁵

The Abbasids had pretended to uphold the claims of the prophet’s family to rule. In their rise to power, they had moreover made themselves out as champions of the cause of the pious, of the establishment of the divine order (the *Sunna*) against the worldly Umayyads. And, as Caliphs, they did much to cultivate and maintain this “appearance” as it was the basis of their claim: “in this sense, they want to be not only kings, but considered in the first instance as princes of the Church, their Caliphate taken as a Church-state, in whose rule, by contrast to the thinking of the Umayyads, the divine law is to be the sole guiding principle.” Above all, the

¹⁶³ See Becker, *Beiträge zur Geschichte Ägyptens unter dem Islam* (Straßburg, 1903), 82-5; also Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*, II, 52-66.

¹⁶⁴ Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 48. See also, for instance, Goldziher, “Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten”, 455. Goldziher, “The Principles of Law in Islam” in *The Historian’s History of the World*, 296-7. Goldziher, “Fikh” in the *First Encyclopedia of Islam*. E. J. Brill, 1987 (a reprint of the original), 101-2.

¹⁶⁵ See, for instance, Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 112-3; we’ll expand on Goldziher’s reformist response to Islamic jurisprudence and its modernist Islamist critics in Part III.

Abbasids adopted the Persian-Sassanid state ideal and practices that rested on an amalgamation of religious and sovereign authority. Religion became thus the central concern of the state and the dominion of God's law its *telos*. As Goldziher put it, there now came into being "a theocratic regime with **Churchly-Political** [*kirchenpolitischen*] points of view".¹⁶⁶ By which, he meant that, with Abbasid rule, there grew in all parts of the empire a religio-political bureaucracy given to expounding divine regulation for all parts and occasions of life, casuistically and often to absurd proportions, but thus furnishing the *language* within which and in the name of which the state authority and social actors legitimated themselves and their actions. The operation of juristic casuistry was accordingly the rationalizing, ideological bridge between the ideal of the law, on the one hand, social and political praxis on the other. This casuistic elaboration and employment of the law Goldziher acknowledged for the unconscious and veiled dynamism its apologetic function opened to socio-political praxis and, as we'll see, even to the law itself. But, it also constituted the deepest source of Goldziher's critique of the normative Islam, the Orthodox Islam he believed the ineluctable result of such reifying religio-legal system and function. Much more will be said on this theme.

However, Goldziher's critical reading of the *Hadith* literature, namely, the history of their basically tendentious use and the historicization of Islamic development thereby, thematized and demonstrated the evolution not only of the law but also of dogmatic theology. Here, Goldziher began by noting that the Muslim concern and struggle with theological questions and thereby, the exegetical effort to draw the true message from the divine text in all of its complexity and even inscrutability, could be traced back to the generation immediately succeeding the prophet. In the prophet's warnings against and castigation of the disparaging eye that sought the ambiguous and contradictory in prophecy, the theological problematic went, in a negative sense, back even to him. But, what Goldziher wanted above all to stress in this regard was that the emergence of theological questioning in Islam was not simply a matter of intellectual

¹⁶⁶ Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 49; in a note at this point to the English translation of the text, *Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law*, 45 (note d), Conrad writes: "The German text has the word *kirchenpolitisch*, literally "church-political." The present practice among scholars is to avoid the use of such terms as church, clergy, or ecclesiastical when speaking of Islamic religious institutions and persons. These words are of specifically Christian origin and connotation, and their use in connection with Islam would imply a resemblance which, in fact, does not exist. Islam has no ordination, no sacrament, no priesthood, and no separate hierarchic structure concerned with religious affairs. Goldziher was, of course, well aware of this and by using such terms did not mean to convey that there was an Islamic church. The European and Christian paradigm that he had in mind was not the church as an institution, but the states of the church as a political entity, exercising the normal attributes of government, but with a religiously based sovereignty and authority." And, then explaining the decision to translate the term as 'theocratic': "Orientalists have commonly used the term theocracy to denote a state in which, in principle, the ultimate sovereignty belongs to God and the effective sovereign power is exercised by God's representative on earth, administering God's law. In this acceptance of the word, the classical Islamic state of the caliphate was undoubtedly conceived as a theocracy." In fact, however, this line of apologetic exegesis serves more to confuse Goldziher's meaning: he was not simply referring to a 'theocracy' in the loose sense of a state in which the ultimate sovereignty is given to God and earthly authority is the mere representative of it. Under such a reading, for instance, the 'divine right' absolutist monarchies of Early Modern Europe were 'theocracies', though I have as yet to encounter characterizations of James's I rule in England or Scotland or Louis XIV's France as theorized by Bossuet rendered in such terms. Not to mention that even Locke's projected government, cast in terms of its protection of God-given rights might have to be thus called a 'theocracy'. Rather, what Goldziher and the Islamicists had in mind was the function and importance of religious bureaucracies in Islamic polities from the Abbasid period onwards. In terms of the socio-political functions of religious bureaucracies, they meant precisely to compare the Jewish Rabbinical establishment, the Christian priestly hierarchy and the Islamic '*Ulama*' (ergo, 'churchly-political' was exactly what was meant, and Goldziher's own use of 'theocratic' was cast in its terms).

importation. It had arisen initially *not* as a consequence of the intervention of ‘scientific’ view points, of a greater intellectualism and with it the need to size up the faith vis-à-vis sophisticated ideas as to the nature of the world and humankind. Rather, he contended that it had come in response to concrete social and ethical dilemmas: it was a marker of Islam’s living religious development in the context of early social and political developments in Islamic history.¹⁶⁷

The theological dispute as to whether pious works and action as against mere formal acknowledgment was a requisite aspect of the designation of someone as a Muslim, namely, whether the matter admitted of degrees, had been in fact prompted by the impact of the scorn of the pious for the worldly Umayyads. They *had*, even a la Goldziher, conceived of ‘Islam’ mostly as a national-political banner! The pious thus, lest open opposition to the state should endanger the Islamic community as a whole, resigned themselves to Umayyad rule as to Gold’s will, and laid their hopes in eschatological relief. However, another party, that of the *Murj’ites* (namely, ‘those who defer’) emerged to criticize the circles of the pious, who would thus arrogate divine judgment to themselves: avowal of membership in the Muslim community sufficed for—made each equal in—the same. The decision as to one’s fitness, the weighing of one’s actions, *as* a Muslim belonged rightly solely to God.¹⁶⁸

But, the question on which, according to Goldziher, naïve Orthodox belief was for the first time subjected to explicit and principled theological critique was that of the freedom of the will. And, in this now fundamental reevaluation as well (and here was where Goldziher especially made the point) not broadly intellectual motivations had been decisive but in this case rather a deepening piety, namely, the growing moral inability to reconcile divine justice with a world pre-determined in advance. The deepening of religious sentiment, a greater internalization and spiritualization of the Muslim faith, had come to take root in the *Hadith*, fed no doubt further by inter-religious encounters with non-Muslim interlocutors post-conquest and the opportunities afforded thereby for contemplation.¹⁶⁹ In the *Qadarite* movement, it evinced itself in a bid to uphold the moral autonomy of human beings as a projected requirement for the justice of the divine sentence to be passed on them (i.e. to circumscribe *Qadar*, the ‘assignment of fate’). Nonetheless, mythological traditions that, characteristic of naïve belief, could only figure God’s omnipotence in maximalist terms had continued to accumulate in the Muslim populace and so in the *Hadith*. And, their sway was in fact of such a scope that the *Hadith* became also a repository for attacks on the *Qadarites*, wherein the prophet himself was heard to excoriate them for positing a power—evil as caused by man—outside that of God’s. They were therefore dubbed, in view of Zoroastrianism’s Manichean opposition of benevolent and malevolent principles in the universe, the Magians of Islam. Nor, for that matter, was the Umayyad state’s use of the doctrine of predestination to buttress its rule, precisely in view of the misgivings about it, as a manifestation of the will of God exactly amenable to the *Qadarite* position.¹⁷⁰

Eventually, however, the Islamic world was to confront the intellectual challenge posed by Greek and Hellenistic thought to religious assumptions and the example of Christian dogmatics in this regard. In other words, eventually the attempt was made to codify cum rationalize the Muslim faith into formulas and proofs that would allow it, even reduce it to, the capacity for speculative defense against the trenchant, negative repercussions of Aristotelian philosophy. The designation for this Islamic version of the pretension to ‘religion as philosophy’

¹⁶⁷ See *ibid.*, 89-90.

¹⁶⁸ See *ibid.*, 82-9.

¹⁶⁹ See *ibid.*, 43-8, Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*, II, 153-74.

¹⁷⁰ See Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 94-99.

was *Kalam* ('speech/discourse'). So, if the Aristotelian assertion of an eternal cosmos of universal laws of causation obviated the idea of a personal God, the *Mu'tazila* ('those who seclude themselves'), worked to purify Islamic monotheism of all mythological and materialist elements so as to render its conception of divinity and divine creation philosophically respectable. The *Mu'tazila* were the party that pioneered the tendency towards speculative dogmatics in Islam. However, their every effort to do so, to rationalize monotheism, ran afoul of the naïve Orthodoxy. Their fundamental two-fold program was: first, to demonstrate not only a factually but a categorically just Deity and divine order, requiring the autonomy of human will and, second, to expose all presumed 'divine attributes' of whatever kind as at best anthropomorphic metaphorization of God's absolute unity and oneness. Orthodoxy, on the other hand, all-but insisted it seemed on figuring God in such autocratic and anthropomorphic terms.

Ultimately then, the *Mu'tazila* were an essentially meditative force between unalloyed philosophy on the one hand and unthinking Orthodoxy on the other. Goldziher left little doubt that the *Mu'tazila*'s projected purification of Islam's monotheism met with his approval.¹⁷¹ But, he highlighted at least two aspects of their work which made them, perhaps to an even greater extent than Islamic jurists, the subject of his reformist critique. First, their promotion of doubt and rational inquiry as in fact the point of departure of true belief was certainly a welcome development. But then their reductive elitism, which did not shrink from excluding from the true faith all who did not accede to their specific—at times even individual!—formulations and proofs of it, bred an intolerance Goldziher considered the most noxious to the religious spirit and health of a community. Besides, this rationalist intolerance was not only, considered in itself, more naturally distasteful than simple, unquestioning religious sentiment, it was also more damaging in provoking the latter also to couch its naïve presumptions in evermore intractable language.¹⁷² To Goldziher, the *Mu'tazila*'s philosophical fanaticism thus showed its true face when during a brief period in the Abbasid era, having acquired the support of the Caliph and having managed thus to impose itself from above, it turned to the open persecution of those who rejected it. Second, the dogmatists' cognition and repudiation of the mythological remnants and anthropomorphic excrescence pervading allegedly 'Muslim' conceptions and their attempt to clear 'Islam' from them was of course to the good. But, their way of going about it, the exegetical methodology whereby they tried to read offending ideas out of Qur'anic passages for instance, militated precisely against a critical reading powered by and allowing historicization. In fact, Goldziher viewed such rationalizing exegesis that would reduce complex and variegated religious texts, *more*, Islam's religious tradition as a whole, to a horizontal self-identity as the greatest obstacle to true purification. For, what such purification required was the honest, scientific appraisal proffered by the critical/historical method. Orthodoxy overcame the *Mu'tazila*, but the methods and mien of this party had seeped into the religious thinking and cultural life of Muslim societies, so that schools rose up that now sought to mediate between Orthodoxy and the *Mu'tazila*. Eventually in the work of the Ash'arites, who, during the Seljuq period, were given positions for the propagation of their ideas in the new seats of learning instituted by that dynasty, dogmatic theology came under the cover of Orthodoxy. In the Ash'arite version, namely, it came to be considered its standard-bearer rather than deviation.¹⁷³

The historical development of the law and dogmatic theology, their repercussions for religious feeling and socio-cultural life, ultimately, that is, their connection with 'Medieval' type

¹⁷¹ See *ibid.*, 103-6.

¹⁷² See *ibid.*, 114-119; also Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*, 59.

¹⁷³ See Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 123-8.

polities ideologically grounded in religio-political bureaucracies, managers of the rhetorical means of legitimacy, made them the primary targets of Goldziher's reformist perspective. There was, however, another broad movement in the Muslim experience of the early centuries, also remarkable in its penetration and wielding of the *Hadith* literature and as such also subject to critical historical reconstruction. And, this movement acted, in Goldziher's eyes, as a salubrious counterbalance to reinvigorate earnest religiosity, providing for greater spiritualization and internalization: Sufism or Islamic mysticism. Sufism was here portrayed as having its roots in the ascetic undercurrent that reacted against and rejected the increasing worldliness after Medina. This 'worldliness', taking on ever greater momentum with the riches flowing into Muslim society via imperial conquest, did much, as a bulwark against the ascetic ideals of Islam in its earliest phase and its ever champions thereby thereafter, to impress upon the *Hadith* literature the need for respectful attention to secular matters. This attitude, remarkable in comparative religious perspective, shrank not even from highlighting such worldly cares of even the especially frivolous and sensual variety in the biographies and legends of its holiest men, including the prophet himself. The never silenced ascetic countercurrent, with one eye on the prevalent Christian examples and pullulating its own traditions, cultivated in polemical response absolute, unyielding trust in God and the world to come as against the present.

But, only with the infusion of Gnostic/Neoplatonist ideas from the Hellenistic cultural setting did from this ascetic background a new movement and direction come into being: the Sufi mystic path, a la Neoplatonist conception, figured Creation in all of its parts and aspects as divine emanation, graded solely in terms of consciousness of the fact. The great nemesis of the Sufi adept in the spiritual climb projected was accordingly the ego, which with its reasoned divisions between self and other, past and future, cause and effect, sought to calculate a course, which is to say blindly and necessarily vainly to feel its way, to the maintenance of its particular, separate existence. What the Sufis taught was instead embrace of the sign of the divine in the human heart, namely love: the forgoing of self-blighted existence so as to approach consciousness of the divine climaxing in divine consciousness. In their ecstatic pantheism, Goldziher conjectured the Sufi mystics also borrowed much from Indian/Buddhist examples, not only in corresponding fundamental ideals but in fact especially in terms of organizational principles: the Sufis were constituted into distinct orders with the exercise of various disciplines for the initiate of nearing the divine (trance-inducing recitation, dance, etc.). Their proposed hierarchies of consciousness were here reflected in social hierarchies of master and disciple.

The intuitive knowledge/praxis Sufism proffered made it of course the natural enemy of the overwrought reductive formulas of the theologians. But, what in fact especially marked mysticism vis-à-vis the other developing elaborations of 'Islam' was an essentially allegorical style of reading and interpreting 'Islamic' texts and guidelines that proposed to assimilate the law's obligations as predominantly propaedeutic discipline for the required elevation of one's consciousness towards the divine. In this vein, not only did Neoplatonist notions penetrate the broader *Hadith* literature, Sufism developed its own peculiar body of *Hadith* and esoteric, 'gnostic' lore. In a number of its myriad branches, the Sufi movement even went so far as to declare the legal 'methodology' of self-overcoming as adequate or necessary only for the beginner. This suggested that for the elaboration of its 'true meaning' in the holistic vision of the master the demarcation made law and, in a move towards all-encompassing tolerance, all confessional demarcation as such could only be branded a hindrance. However, to the extent such antinomian tendencies were kept in check, the law was appropriated by Sufis as a means of drawing near to God within one's person as against a rhetorical instrument of legitimate public

transaction. In the work of Ghazali (1058-1111 C.E.),¹⁷⁴ again in the Seljuq period, Sufism was also brought under the umbrella of Orthodoxy.

In fact, when Goldziher came to discuss sectarianism in Islam, he emphasized again and again, with respect to this expansive Orthodoxy that arrived at its normative form with Ghazali, the generally political origins and character, so limited scope, of persistent religious schism in the Islamic context. The political dissension of early Islam wherein certain parties—the *Kharijites* and the *Shi'a* in their eventually numerous iterations—questioned and rejected the constitution and legitimacy of the state was over time, given the fact of religiously grounded societies and polities, spiritualized, making of these groups self-standing sects. They stood, with somewhat distinct theological and legal attitudes, outside the Orthodox consensus. Therein though was the lesson that basically only the political tendencies which endangered the state had had the gates of Orthodoxy definitively barred to them. Even here, Goldziher, with an eye on reformist prospects for the future, underscored the later attempts in the modern era made at reconciliation in this sphere as well. Islam had remained a living universal religion, not like Christianity a dogmatically defined one that could only develop through repeated heresy.

10.

The narrative of the previous section charts a clear trajectory. It starts from a description of the transformation of Islam underwent in the aftermath of conquest of the centers and expanse of Near Eastern civilization. It discusses the Muslim encounter with the latter's Hellenistic cum Persian cultural heritage, the *divergent* and *dynamic* assimilation of this heritage and the multi-pronged deployment of *Hadith* to this end. It then moves continually from these conflicting claims to legitimacy to the incorporation of these diverse tendencies within an expansive Orthodoxy as yet, in the initial centuries, in the process of formation. This move in fact mirrors one in Goldziher's own prose. The canonization of Islamic tradition and the formation of Orthodoxy, in other words, Goldziher painted as going hand in hand. One finds accordingly in his thinking a parallel: the process of reconciliation in the early science of *Hadith* criticism eventually yielded the officially 'reliable' *Hadith* collections. And, the evolving accommodations over the course of the first half-millennium of Islamic history allowed the great, often polarized religio-cultural movements and so authors and wielders of *Hadith* to gather, when not overtly politically dissident, under the cover of 'Islamic Orthodoxy'. This Orthodoxy had *as such* assumed its full normative, accommodationist and tolerant form with Ghazali. It had gathered under its cover of consensus the fundamental, ideal requirements of religious life though in an as yet uncritical, traditionalist, unconscious, homogenized form that did not allow for their realization. This concept of 'Orthodoxy' became ever more pronounced in Goldziher's narrative in accounting for the Islamic community's response to the cultural and religious challenges of the post-conquest period. And, what he stressed hereby was the amazing absorptive and synthetic capacity Islam had displayed in this process. But, of course, the very

¹⁷⁴ Ghazali was the real intellectual hero of the *Vorlesungen*, and one for all the Islamicists who worked under Goldziher's direct influence. He in fact came to form in Goldziher's thinking, as we'll have further occasion to discuss, that ideal high point of the Islamic heritage from which it was to be critically reformed and purified, corresponding as such to his earlier focus on the Jewish Prophets as the ideal high point for the reform of the Jewish heritage. See *ibid*, 176-85; see also an earlier précis of the *Vorlesungen* in which Ghazali played this same role: Goldziher, "Die Religion des Islams" in *Die Kultur der Gegenwart, Teil I, Abteilung III, I* (Berlin & Leipzig: 1906), 114-5. See also for Goldziher's impact in this vein: *The Selected Works of C. Snouck Hurgronje*, "Islam", 100-3; Becker, "Der Islam im Rahmen einer allgemeinen Kulturgeschichte", *Islamstudien, I*, 38.

posited emergence and development of an ‘Islamic Orthodoxy’ raised the fundamental question of what exactly was meant by it, what means and persons served to constitute it?

In the *Vorlesungen*, this notion of ‘Islamic Orthodoxy’ pointedly made its first appearance in the course of Goldziher’s thematization of what he took to be the most consequential animating principle of legal development in Islam and the reason why Islamic jurisprudence was so key to the trajectory of Islamic civilization as such: *Ijma*’. According to the principle of *Ijma*’, the unanimity of opinion within the Muslim juristic community was equivalent to apodictic legal interpretation. As a principle, it was of course, in the methodological cannon of the *Fiqh*, behind the *Qur’an*, *Hadith* and legal deduction and cited only as a further source and criterion of correct juridical judgment. However, these primary sources and criteria, being themselves essentially hermeneutically open, became ultimately subject to their socio-historical *reception*¹⁷⁵ within the collective consciousness of the community and gave the last word to it. This collective consciousness came accordingly to function as the all-encompassing arbiter not only of legal sanction, but therewith, also of the broader religious and cultural developments in the Islamic world of the post-Qur’anic period. As Goldziher explained the matter:

It is the doctrine of the **infallibility** of the *consensus ecclesiae* that is herein articulated; the Arabic term *idschmā*’ (consensus) has been utilized to capture and signify this fundamental ideal of Islamic Orthodoxy. Its application we are to encounter often in the course of our exposition. It provides the key to understanding the developmental history of Islam in its state, dogmatic and legal relations. What is embraced by the whole Islamic community as true and correct must be reckoned as true and correct. In rejecting the *idschmā*’, one alienates oneself from the orthodox church. That this principle in Islam emerged only in the course of its [further] development, illustrates the fact that one cannot easily derive it from the Qur’an itself.¹⁷⁶

What, however, Goldziher repeatedly emphasized about this apodictic consensus of the Muslim community was its in fact amorphous and situated character: it was determined not in Synods or Councils but developed through an “an almost unconscious *vox populi*, that is to be in its collectivity immune to error”.¹⁷⁷ That is, despite debates in which attempts were made to delimit the *Ijma*’ to a specifically authoritative community, time and place, the only operative definition and demarcation that stuck was the restriction to “the consensus doctrine and opinion of the acknowledged religious scholars of a given period”.¹⁷⁸ That accordingly clearly led to the rethinking of ‘Islam’, however unconsciously, across generations.

One will have perhaps noted that in this principle are contained for Islam the facultative seeds of free movement and developmental capacity. It provides a desired corrective against the tyranny of the dead letter and of personal authority. It has proven itself, at least in the past, as the especially outstanding factor in the adaptive capacity of Islam.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁵ See Goldziher, “Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten”, 457-8.

¹⁷⁶ Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 54.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 55.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 56.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 55.

And, as he put the matter in relation to the progress of Islamic Studies, “We now know, and this knowledge of ours represents one of the most important advances in the field of *Islamkunde*, that the principle of consensus is the key for the understanding of the developmental parameters (*Entwicklungserscheinungen*) of historical Islam.”¹⁸⁰

The role of this collectivist cum facultative and, in unanimity, indubitable authority of the juristic community was accordingly always a historically situated one. It determined the boundaries not only of legal sanction but therewith of ‘Orthodoxy’ as such: it gave *de facto* revision in the course of history legitimacy. This principle was for Goldziher so decisive, and as we’ll see not only for historical Islam but as much for the prospective reform of Islam to come, that he termed Sunni (Orthodox) Islam, as opposed to what he took to be the fundamentally authoritarian Shi‘a variants, an “Ijma‘-church (*Idschmā‘kirche*)”.¹⁸¹ However, the exposition of this collectivist constitutive mechanism of Orthodox legal discourse and the Orthodox community served in fact to throw into ever sharper relief and problematize the question as to the actual social function of Islamic law, of what kind of law it actually was. It was in the response to *this* question that *Islamwissenschaft* as a discourse arrived at its core historiographic distinctions, its disciplinary *logos* in theoretical and practical terms. From a disciplinary standpoint, *Islamwissenschaft* was polemically defined against a constellation of ideas which it coherently linked itself against. It was against speculative philology’s essentialization of Islam as a creation and, from beginning to end manifestation, of the Arab (Semitic) spirit. It replaced the ethno-philological focus on a dichotomy between Aryan and Semitic as the motor of History with a universalist historicist one between the Medieval and Modern. Accordingly, it moved decisively against the missionary Christian essentialist religious distinctions between Islam and Christianity. It wanted further not mere philological acumen in editing manuscripts but a true cultural history of Islamic societies and history. And, the fundamental step it took in this direction was not simply to appropriate indigenous Muslim examples and understandings as the philologically bent still did. It was defined rather by critique of the traditionalist Muslim self-understanding itself bent on reducing ‘Islam’ to a self-identical coherence standing outside of history. It was this traditionalist self-understanding that Goldziher’s account of the unconscious dynamism introduced by *Ijma‘* sought to underscore. And, in the process, *Islamwissenschaft* racked up a yet fifth antagonist to define itself against, namely, the field of comparative jurisprudence in European scholarship of the time.

For, again, the corpus of Islamic law had come to proffer itself as divinely stipulated regulation of every aspect of human life, extending, in Goldziher’s words “to ritual laws in the widest possible sense as much as to the legal relations of social life, to the laws of worship, of the alms tax, of the fast, of pilgrimage, of purity, to the dietary law, religious war, just as much as to the fundamental doctrines of politics and constitutional law, and to the regulation of familial, inheritance law, of the law of property and debt, to penal law and that of court procedure.”¹⁸² And, outside observers and scholars had come accordingly to presume this law, in its all-encompassing elaboration and claims, as the underlying and effective legal order constitutive of the Muslim state and the Muslim family. They presumed shrewd legislators had devised it in the interplay of and to meet the needs of social praxis, a world empire unified under the banner of Islam, its implementation and maintenance a primary care of Muslim authorities in the thirteen centuries thereafter: this body of law had come to be viewed, as Goldziher put it, as

¹⁸⁰ Goldziher, “Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten”, 457-8.

¹⁸¹ See *ibid.*, 226.

¹⁸² Goldziher, “Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten”, 455.

“a Napoleonic Code of Islam.”¹⁸³ However, what critical historical inquiry, according to Goldziher, had come to demonstrate was that *Islamic law’s function had not been that of positive law*. That, from relatively early on, only a small part of this system of law had become a mainstay of social practice: at most its ritual requirements for religious worship and its prescriptions for familial life and even the latter only in the circumscribed central lands of early Islamic penetration. In the other areas, the actual administration of justice had been and continued to be a matter distinct from the theological law: “So you see, that we have here to do not with a living law and that those jurists were and are on the wrong track who, without viewing the character of Islamic law in the light of history and critical examination of the sources, turned dead Codices into data of legal life and employed such [manner of] inquiry as the basis of comparative legal studies.”¹⁸⁴ For, what historical critique in fact revealed about the socio-historical character of Islamic law was its predominant function and status as an *ideal*, as against a positive law. Its role then had been, when *appropriately* understood, which is to say critically *and* with an eye on future reform, that of a regulative *pflichtenlehre* (*doctrine of duties*). The “historical truth” showed that:

what we call Muhammadan law is, at bottom, an **ideal** law, a **theoretical** system, in one word, an academic **school-law**, that reflects the thinking of pious theologians on the make-up of Islamic society, and whose sphere of enforcement pious rulers liked, so far as this was feasible, to widen, but which has been hardly ever in Islam the real practical norm of public life. [One] finds in it much more a *Pflichtenlehre* (**doctrine of duties**) of wholly ideal character and theoretical meaning, elaborated by generations of pious scholars, who wanted to regulate life by the measure of a time considered by them the golden age, whose traditions they propagated and developed. Even the penalties mandated for the transgression of religious laws are often only ideal claims of the pious, dead letters, devised in study rooms, kept alive in the hearts of pious researchers, but neglected and pushed back in life, wherein wholly other measures were actually in effect.¹⁸⁵

11.

Goldziher’s historical analysis of Islamic jurisprudence projected accordingly a divine law revealed, in its origins, prophetically and later extended by ‘testimonial’, which is to say convenient, projections of prophetic tradition to meet a range of practical exigencies. Soon, however, and eventually decisively this law, rather than taking hold of everyday positive expectations, became for the most part reified into an ideal, whose terms nonetheless remained, as we’ve now seen, with *Ijma’* and in line with the unconscious rhythms of traditionalist consciousness, subject to revision over time. It was precisely this shift that led Goldziher assign an epochal role to the transition from the Umayyads to the Abbasids. In the Umayyad period, nascent Islamic juristic elaboration had been made the province of the pious outside the state. With the Abbasids, they were brought back in, but as a kind of mere ideological bureaucracy.

¹⁸³ See the previous note.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, 246. See on that same theme: Goldziher, “Muhammadanisches Recht in Theorie und Wirklichkeit”, *Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Rechtswissenschaft* 8 (1889): 406-23, esp. 407, 409-12, 414-6, 418-20. Goldziher, “Katholische Tendenz und Partikularismus im Islam” in *Gesammelte Schriften* V, 292-5, 303. Goldziher, “Fikh”, *First Encyclopedia of Islam*, 105.

¹⁸⁵ Goldziher, “Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten”, 456.

But, as Goldziher's great emphasis on the development and institutionalization of Islamic law in the Abbasid period should suffice to make clear, the fact that this law did not therein or after come to ground social practice should not lead one to underestimate the overwhelming significance he assigned it in the history of Islamic societies from exactly the Abbasids onwards. The enormous, persistent social status and function of this law had to do with precisely the position it came to assume *as* an ideal. Its singular importance was the role it came to play as an ideal system, as the inescapable ideological discourse in traditional Islamic societies.

To gauge the, in Goldziher's analysis, costly implications of this *ideal discourse* over the course of Islamic history to his own day for social, cultural and religious life, I will here distill the practical meaning and attendant attitude he accordingly imputed to it vis-à-vis the three temporal modalities. In the modal present, in the face of concrete, pressing social and political realities, Islamic law was figured as having been historically inherently apologetic and rhetorical in function and, consequently, casuistic and rationalizing in its operative methodology. It was, in other words, presented as having constituted *the* language of legitimate social behavior and public action. Its thus *acknowledgment* however exactly militated against and vitiated its implementation. In the *Vorlesungen*, the examples Goldziher gave were of the casuistic subterfuges used by Islamic jurists to relax, in view of the needs of the day, proscriptions on the consumption of alcohol or other dietary obligations. And, he with bated contempt pointed to the large body of legal tricks devised by them, for instance, to escape with a freed conscience the impact of oaths and the (legal) obligations incurred therein. The pages of Islamicists were becoming, in turn, rife with the pattern of Islamic polities essentially commandeering Islamic jurists as an ideological bureaucracy convenient to and signing-off in the appropriate language on their every contingent design and purpose. The law as an 'ideal' did not positively decide events, but came after and justified and *accommodated* them.¹⁸⁶

Given his reformist perspective and the teleological trajectory his critical, 'scientific' historiography of Islam projected, Goldziher was not surprisingly highly reproachful of this historically dominant ('Medieval') manifestation and *modus operandi* of law, namely, of 'religious law'. In telling manner, he divided its deleterious tendency in two to highlight its baleful impact, focusing on the one hand on civil, on the other, on religious life. In the civil realm, Goldziher argued, the elaboration of a timeless ideal of essentially rhetorical value often meant the full speculative consideration of virtually impossible, casuistically constructed legal scenarios and, therewith, the erection of over-subtle distinctions and fanciful formulations bearing little reference to the concerns of practical adjudication. He pointed for instance to the serious theoretical discussion and arbitration of potential cases, by Muslim jurists, in the law of inheritance that would simply never obtain. He added, to drive home the absurdity, the incorporation of the categories of superstition within legal discourse, as when one encountered exhaustive juristic disquisitions on the proper legal status of the progeny of marriage between humans and demons (*Jinn*), not exactly a question of sincere legal prosecution.¹⁸⁷ In the religious realm, the consequence was the perversive relegation of the internal, devotional relationship of the pious believer to God and of religious rites as a dutiful personal measure of it to a matter of bureaucratic legal attainment. Religious lawyers from the outside deciding and finessing the conditions in which the requirements of religion and conscience could be said to

¹⁸⁶ See Goldziher, "Muhammadanisches Recht in Theorie und Wirklichkeit", 418-20; See also Snouck's especial stress and perspective on these matters: Snouck, *Muhammadanism; Lectures on Its Origins, Its Religious and Political Growth, and Its Present State* (New York, 1916), 96-113.

¹⁸⁷ See Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 63-9.

have been adequately acknowledged and just so met was almost certainly even more unwelcome to Goldziher than the abysmal socio-political repercussions of such lawyering:

The prevailing of casuistically worked efforts at legal disclosure in religious science served—as I’ve said elsewhere—gradually to stamp the doctrine of Islam with the **character of legalism** (*Juristereit*). ‘Under the influence of this tendency, religious life was itself placed under juristic perspectives, which naturally could be anything but supportive of the strengthening of piety and heartfelt godliness (*Gottinnigkeit*). The devout believer of Islam remains as a result, even in his own consciousness, always under the spell of man-made principle, next to which the word of God, that is for him the means and source of edifying himself, regulates only a tiny part of the observances of life and in fact retreats into the background. Just those people are counted as religious scholars who disclose with the juristic method the ways of activating and managing legality (*die Arten der Betätigung der Gesetzlichkeit*), who in pedantic manner develop and deploy that disclosed in this manner and painstakingly watch over its acknowledgment and maintenance (*seine Festhaltung*). Only on them, not anyhow on the religious philosophers or moralists, not to mention the representatives of the worldly sciences, is bestowed the word attributed to the prophet: ‘The scholars of my community are as the prophets of the people of Israel.’¹⁸⁸

The historical profile of Islamic law vis-à-vis the modal present was thus, in this interpretation of it, a highly ideological one. It meant the rationalization of extant social and political policies and prerogatives via the mostly rhetorical employment and elaboration of an ideal. But, when it came to gauging the position and attitude of this religio-juristic mentality vis-à-vis the modal past appeared, Goldziher presented it as that of a retrospective idealization. Namely, through the operation of *Ijma’*, the apodictic but hard to locate and cognize consensus of the Islamic scholarly community, the content of the ideal represented by Islamic law had been over the course of history ever subject to alteration. Islamic law’s abstract and reified distance from actual practice and even its persistent eternal consciousness of itself in no way precluded such change. They simply rendered it unconscious.

Of course, these caveats served to reiterate that, historically, Islamic consciousness had conceived the *Sunna* as a compendium of the divinely inspired order established and propagated by the prophet and his companions in the first generation of Islam. And, it had viewed this compendium of the divine order as preserved for all to follow in prophetic revelation, but even more concretely in the later chain of avowals of the teachings, attitudes and example of the prophet and his circle in the *Hadith*. This compendium that was Islamic tradition was projected by traditionalist Islamic consciousness as *absolutely valid, immutably so, for all time*. Therein was to be reckoned the divine plan for human conduct in all its facets, the personal, social, political, so that any measure taken in any sense to counter it was marked “innovation” (*Bid‘a*) and castigated as such. Nor did the need recognized early on to allow for extrapolation from or even the interpretive extension of the *Sunna*, in light of the pressing questions raised by its lacunae or vagueness in later and clearly distinct times and social environments, in any sense cloud this commitment to its universal sovereignty. This had been especially the case on those matters on which it spoke resolutely. But, Goldziher argued that, while all of this was generally

¹⁸⁸ Ibid, 69-70.

accepted in theory, “praxis” and “actual life” collided with it at every turn: “The development of living circumstances and the experience in lands and times, which proffered wholly other conditions and brought with themselves wholly other relations than the primitive life and thought of the time of the companions, then also the multifarious foreign antecedents and influences that had to be assimilated and worked through, could not but soon strike a breach in the consistent maintenance of an inflexible Sunna-concept as universal criterion of right and truth.”¹⁸⁹

We’ve seen that, in Goldziher’s account, the *Sunna*, namely, the *Hadith* literature within it in both its multi-headed accretion and eventual consolidation, had *itself* in the first centuries represented a primary vector of much this same process of retrospective ‘Islamicization’: through it, the inescapable cultural modifications and syntheses of the formative centuries had been projected into the prophet’s time and availed of the cover of his authority. But, even taking the *Sunna* as given and so even with the final fixation of its terms in the aftermath of canonization, its cultural pattern of unconscious assimilation, revision and development had been retained. The ‘formative’ period, in this sense, had never come to an end. Rather, it was its pattern of change, of unconscious but dynamic ‘traditionalization’ that had been consolidated moving forward. That is what evinced itself in the enduring way the *Sunna* as cornerstone of Islamic law had been made a part of *praxis*, namely, as suggested above, in the more rhetorical than positive socio-historical function of this law. Let’s then continue with the last citation from Goldziher:

[In the inexorable contradiction between the demands of *Sunna* and historical reality,] One had to haggle and came soon to fine distinctions, which had the ability to legitimate much bid‘a [innovation] by opening the gates to it amongst the Sunna-faithful. They put forward theories as to the circumstances under which a bid‘a could be justified, yes, could even be viewed as good and praiseworthy. The shrewdness of the theologians and casuists found a rich field there in which to busy themselves. And that has remained so up to the very immediate present.¹⁹⁰

We have here of course a programmatic restatement and further elaboration of the rationalizing and accommodating role of Islamic law, outlined above vis-à-vis the tendencies and claims of the present. Goldziher gave as an example, for already the early period, the jurisprudence of the Maliki school of law which recognized public utility and exigency as an additional methodological principle. Traced by Goldziher to Roman law, this principle allowed, at least in the individual case, the relevant propositions of the legal system to be disregarded if this could be shown to be in the interests of the community as a whole. However, in line with the operation of *Ijma’*, the legitimizing work of the *Ulama’* referred to in the last citation could take on a much greater, for the content of the juristic ideal, more reflexive and efficacious meaning. It could serve, that is, to bring what had been *Bid‘a* within the bounds of *Sunna* and thus in subterranean manner to recast the terms of the latter. Again we take up the last citation at the point left off:

The concept of *ijmā’* proved itself in these endeavors [of the theologians and casuists] as a balancing element. If a practice found general tolerance and acceptance over a long period of time, then it became through just this fact finally *Sunna*. For some generations the pious theologians rant and rave about the bid‘a; but over the course of time it

¹⁸⁹ Ibid, 281.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid, 281.

becomes, as an element of *ijmā'*, **tolerated** and ultimately even **required**. It is then viewed as *bid'a* to set oneself against it; who demands the old way is now abused as “innovator” (*mubtadi'*).¹⁹¹

Hence, to the extent legally proscribed but current cultural practices thus succeeded in becoming mainstays of the lives and societies of Muslims, they became subject, by the action and gradual consolidation of *Ijma'*, to movement from the realm of legalistic apology to that of ideal law. They became in a word subject to retrospective idealization. The Sunna-ideal as such retained of course its eternalized, ideal consciousness of itself in the mind. Accordingly, it could be said that cultural practices, in the measure of their staying power, served as much to regulate the content of Islamic law as being themselves actually regulated by it, namely, beholden to it as the principle underlying their longevity.

The singularly paradigmatic and consequential example of this incessant back and forth play between and transition from *Bid'a* to *Sunna* in Islamic history was, to Goldziher, *always* the way in which the practice of saint veneration had over the centuries been gradually incorporated within the confines of Orthodoxy. For, on the one hand, the cult of saints was clearly on the face of it antithetical to Islam's strict monotheistic conception of God as envisioned by not only the prophet but also the ancient *Sunna* accumulated originally around him and initially so dominant: “As there is perhaps no sharper break with the ancient Sunna as that extension of religious worship that falsifies Islam at its core, and which the faithful Sunna-adherent could not but have banished to the realm of *shirk*—the enjoining the one and only God in the company of other divine forces—and branded with sentence of damnation as such.”¹⁹² On the other hand, though, saint veneration was in both the ethnological sense (as national cum pagan remnant) and the psychological (as local rites of supplication and protection), rife in the lands penetrated by Islam. In the lands where Islam had eventually, at least professedly, become the dominant faith, the practice of saint veneration had become largely constitutive of popular religious consciousness.

Initially, of course, the official theology had hardly looked kindly upon such popular rites, and the pious had worked and fulminated against them. But, clearly demonstrative for Goldziher, as the centuries passed, official Islam bowed to what had won general acceptance in the “popular *Ijma'*” and accommodated the veneration of saints within Orthodoxy, making only theological qualifications which excluded any crass expressions of paganism but whose proscription hardly allowed of definition, namely, concrete meaning in *praxis*.¹⁹³ Also highly illustrative in this regard for Goldziher was the fate of what he deemed the “reactionary” puritanical literalists, that is, the *Wahhabis* in the modern period who traced back to the Hanbalite tradition as revived by Ibn Taymiya in the ensuing crisis of the Mongol invasions. For, they fought against any and all the historical accretions underwritten by *Ijma'*, so also the cult of saints, in the name of the original *Sunna*, of which they were thus no doubt more plausible representatives than the Orthodoxy of their time. But, that hardly won them any acclaim from the latter, whose exponents, far from judging them standard-bearers, instead branded their doctrine “heterodox” and abused them as “sectaries”.¹⁹⁴ In other words, for traditional Orthodoxy the historical decisions of *Ijma'* constituted the ultimate standard. This was a favorite

¹⁹¹ Ibid, 282.

¹⁹² Ibid, 289.

¹⁹³ Ibid., 286-9.

¹⁹⁴ Goldziher, “Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten”, 458; also Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 289-91, 294.

theme of Goldziher's: his persistent bid was to portray 'Islam' as constitutionally, if still unconsciously, anti-reactionary or anti-fundamentalist as we would say today.

This "antinomy", as Goldziher put it, of persistent opposition in Islamic history between the 'reactionary' and 'Orthodoxy', was proof enough of the error it would be "to make out the stark unchangeability of Islamic law to be its substantial (*fest*) character". What it in fact suggested was that "for Islam, the door to 'innovations' and reforms is from the point of view of the religious law not closed."¹⁹⁵ Goldziher actually stressed that it was due to this capacity for retrospective change that the cultural forms and techniques of Western modernity—the printing press, insurance, savings banks, government bonds parliamentary governance—had before them the prospect of unharried settlement within Islamic landscapes. They had already either won 'Islamic' credentials from responsible jurists or being in the process of doing so, and they were clearly here to stay so that the consensus effecting their retrospective idealization was merely a matter of time. It was this traditionalist openness to modern forms Goldziher stressed, as much as he simultaneously found it "not a little repulsive" that the means of purely cultural and practical progress should be thus subject to religious trial and require religious vindication for a legitimate place in social life.¹⁹⁶ In other words, even without reform or one should be specific and say especially without reform and so according to the traditional pattern, the trappings of modernity were now embarked on the road from juristic apology to retrospective ideal. Just as the tradition of Sultanic *Kanunname* (law letter) had been for generations swallowed under 'Islamic' guise, modern forms would be likewise 'Islamicized'. Though, as a modernist, Goldziher believed the modern innovations would be even more universal and permanent.¹⁹⁷

We are now in a position to conclude with our temporal schema, namely, our structural paraphrases of the analysis, in Goldziher, of the concrete socio-historical meaning and propensities of Islamic law as an ideal system with respect to the present, past and future. Again, in this narrative, the horizon of Islamic law was with respect to the present one broadly of rhetorical legitimation and of ideological scope. With respect to the past, it was one of retrospective idealization of settled practice. Its horizon vis-à-vis the modal future was gauged by Goldziher, by contrast, in roundly *eschatological* terms: in this direction, there was, it could be said, a 'moment of truth', a recognition of the ideal and otherworldly status of this law. To begin with and especially revealing in this regard, the first attempts at systematic elaboration of the divine law in Medina had, as noted, in fact occurred outside of and in tacit opposition to state power held by the Umayyads. As Goldziher explained, "Already the eldest literature of Islam is full of complaints against the neglect of the religious laws of the 'Ulama' and of the latter's antagonism against the practicing, practical judges, that is, against the people's representative of the living law."¹⁹⁸ To the pious Muslims of those first generations, Umayyad rule was suspect and lacked legitimacy from a religious point of view, not simply, as with the partisans of Ali and his descendants, because conflict with the house of the prophet had first brought it to power. The

¹⁹⁵ Ibid, 283.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, 283..

¹⁹⁷ This was part of Goldziher's perspective that in most Muslim contexts, as we'll see, either 'custom' acted as in fact positive law, or there were developed Muslim states who carried on a double-system of law, one positive, one Islamic (ideal), the former supposedly under the cover of the latter (or as not 'contradictory' to it); that's how he essentially explained the *Kanunname* tradition. See on the 'double-system', Goldziher, "Katholische Tendenz und Partikularismus im Islam", *Gesammelte Schriften V*, 294-5. Goldziher, "Fikh", *The First Encyclopedia of Islam*, 105.

¹⁹⁸ Goldziher, "Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten", 456; see also Goldziher, "Muhammadanisches Recht in Theorie und Wirklichkeit", 409-16.

ensuing bloody crescendos in which this base regime did not spare Islam's holiest sites were also not the crux of the pious axe against the Umayyads but rather, above all, their indifference both politically and personally to the divine law wielded by the religious scholars and the theo-bureaucratic ideal embodied by it.

In this insouciance, the Umayyads trumped all the various states and regimes that were to succeed them in Islamic world and which, on much the Abbasid model, established a lucrative formal acknowledgment of the law. But, the *awareness* and frustration on the part of the pious scholars of the first generations as to the gap between the ideal theoretically demanded by the law and public realities had nonetheless become chronic, persisting into the present. It was crucial then that the reaction of the '*Ulama*' of the earliest generations to this awareness and frustration became also paradigmatic for those that followed. Namely, the pious of that early period, dismayed as they were by Umayyad rule, showed themselves predominantly unwilling to go so far to dare openly to resist in the name of their ideals, not to mention fight against the 'ungodly' power of the state. What God clearly tolerated one could only fall in line with and confront with patience. And, with such thoughts, they were particularly wary of endangering by open rebellion the fate of the Islamic community and polity as a whole. This attitude of grudging acceptance cum legitimation had of course been then honeyed and consolidated by the state's now formal acknowledgment of the jurist's ideal and the further imputation to at least a section of it of the task of couching the less than ideal in ideal terms. This ambivalent legitimation of the theo-bureaucracy had set the course of '*Ulama*' behavior in all later generations as well.

Now, it was as a utopian palliative against these festering frustrations of the pious, as Goldziher put it, that the idea of and hope in the *Mahdi*, the world-redeemer whose eschatological appearance was to set all matters on the right theocratic path, had emerged already in the early period. Eschatology had presented itself to the pious as the means, on at least the emotional plane, of "reconciling the existing facts with their religious feeling".¹⁹⁹ Sent and led aright by God, it was to be the mission of the *Mahdi* to establish definitively the divine order on earth. It was for him to return a world filled with injustice to the state of affairs that had allegedly obtained, as the Sunni's eventually cognized the matter, in the 'golden epoch' of the four 'rightly-guided Caliphs' that had succeeded the prophet at the beginning of Islamic history. This was a period that, notwithstanding the social and political tumult that in fact characterized it, came to be conceived as one in which society had been actually administered by the sacred regulation promulgated for it through God. Relying on Snouck's work in this area, Goldziher argued that, in its original incarnation early-on, this belief and hope in the *Mahdi*, namely, cosmic redemption in the realization and avenging of the divine law, had coincided with an appropriated conviction in the Parousia and messianic trajectory of Christ that thus made its way into Islamic thinking and tradition. Soon, however, new elements had entered the fray that served to distinguish the role of the *Mahdi* from that to be played by Christ's second coming and so to relegate the latter, in this respect, to an accompanying or auxiliary phenomenon. Amongst them was the emergence of a more realistic attitude that looked to the promises and propaganda of subversive groups: these now took to describing their aim as that of vanquishing the 'impious' regime so as to institute a social order governed by divine justice and thereby quicken the advent

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 230.

of the *Mahdi*. Here too the Abbasids were to be the model. In other words, states in waiting were wont opportunistically to cast themselves in this guise.²⁰⁰

For the *Shi'a*, however, eschatology became a more fundamental and all-encompassing aspect of their identity and self-understanding. But, that further demonstrated Goldziher's and the more broadly Islamicist argument about Islamic eschatology as response to the engrained perception of gap between theory and praxis, ideal and reality. For, Shi'i opposition to and frustrations with existing reality were a good deal more radical than mere 'abeyance' of the law: they were committed to the idea of continued prophetic leadership of the Islamic community through the lineage of the prophet. Eventually, a growing spiritualization of their initially essentially political struggles had brought on the notion that certain men in the prophetic lineage, one in each generation, was pre-ordained as infallible, superhuman *Imam*. He was envisioned as empowered by a special knowledge passed from the prophet down this family chain, to exercise, as God's representative on earth, much the same exemplary authority of the prophet over the Islamic community encompassing all: religion, politics, law. From this standpoint of course, the whole course of Islamic history after the prophet was bound to be viewed as an unending anathema of sacrilegious usurpation and murder, a perpetual occasion for bottled-up rage. For the genetically oppositional *Shi'a* then, the *Mahdi* idea became and *a la* Goldziher, was bound to become a core aspect of their religious doctrine and attitudes. The twelfth of the Imams (the 'hidden Imam'), gone into occultation as a child but said to retain all the same a continuous imprint on the course of history, would ultimately return in triumph and mark History as one of providential justice or revenge, with the *Shi'a* getting the last laugh. For Goldziher, it was all further proof that in its emanationist, and when pushed, even incarnationist theories of prophetic leadership, Shi'ism, in a tight series, was inherently authoritarian, opened the door to paganism and was in the final instance a religion of *ressentiment*.²⁰¹

Meanwhile, in the *Sunni* case by contrast, the successive and inevitable disappointments with subversive propaganda upon its coming to be enshrined in power had served, Goldziher said, to render the redemption at the hands of the *Mahdi* an increasingly utopian phenomenon prorogued to a hazy future. It had become accordingly, in this context, over time increasing the province of the popular imagination and embroiled with a mass of mythological flourishes that, though they did not succeed in penetrating the canonico-Orthodox heart of the traditional literature, remained nonetheless quite traceable at its margins. Goldziher emphasized hence that for the *Sunni*, in direct contrast to the *Shi'a*, the eschatological belief in the *Mahdi*, despite its traditional documentation and theological handling (and Goldziher meant to suggest *because* of the embarrassing record of political opportunism this made for), never became a basic dogmatic requirement. However, that caveat was in no way meant to downplay the continued, punctuated practical importance of the rampant popular mythology of the *Mahdi* amongst the *Sunni*. Quite the contrary: Goldziher, in tandem with Snouck, suggested that, throughout Islamic history, when in moments of crisis the apologetic discourse of the present was destabilized, the eschatological horizon thereby opened up anew. Namely, when the gap between the extant reality and the sacred ideal of the law became all too visible and unbridgeable and so served to open up the space of the future as one of eschatological reckoning, then religio-political indignation against the powers was liable to assume the mantle or cause of the *Mahdi*. And, as in

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 230-1; also Goldziher, "Die Religion des Islams", *Die Kultur der Gegenwart, I, III (I)*, 124. Goldziher's work here was explicitly based on Snouck, "Der Mahdi" (1885) in A. J. Wesnick (ed.), *Verspreide Geschriften* (Bonn & Leipzig, 1923-7), 147-179

²⁰¹ See *ibid.*, 232-3.

the Early Islamic period, it spelled essentially always opportunism. To trace this history of eschatological political engagement into the contemporary period, Goldziher simply referenced the in Europe much bandied about *Mahdi* movements of the latter part of the nineteenth century, which, as he put it, had sprung up in reaction to the “growing influence of European states on Islamic territories.”²⁰²

So, according to the temporal schema I have set out, Goldziher’s analysis of what Islamic law as an *ideal-system* meant in practice, namely, its socio-historical role from its formation and consolidation through the Abbasid period and its aftermath up to its present adoption as the subject of Islamicist critique should be read as follows. In the present, the law was casuistically elaborated and, reified into its own thing, served thus predominantly not a system of positive regulation but as the inexorable rhetorical ideal by which any pending social or political course had to be rationalized, legitimated. Towards the past, the law’s *modus operandi* was an unbeknownst to itself activism, whereby what had in any given period attained through the work of *Ijma* ‘the status of consensus was made subject to retrospective idealization as tradition. Finally, the always beckoning distance between the ideal of the law and actual reality made the modal future into the sphere of eschatological restitution. Namely, when crisis widened this distance to a chasm, the space of the future opened up so as to make such restitution a plausible handmaiden for opportunists.

What emerged from this analysis and the idea Goldziher bequeathed to the generations of Islamicists that followed and the broader ‘discourse of *Islamwissenschaft*’ that resulted, was that of an Islamic civilization, society and polity of ‘Medieval’ type. It was one with a universalist, collectivist, “catholic” religio-legal ideal managed by a religio-juridical class or bureaucracy, which by this very token however was in fact highly accommodationist and inclusive of reigning prerogatives and practices. It had namely been highly accommodating and inclusive of local ethnic, by which was meant ‘national’, practices and realities. It had thus historically carved up a highly differentiated and individualized social, cultural and political map, each part of which had to be understood in its own right and the whole of which ‘Islamic world’ required a highly contextualized consideration. Traditionalist Islamic consciousness envisioned one, eternal ‘Islam’ and Islamic identity as trumping all others. Islamicists were to understand the repercussions of such a ‘Medieval’ consciousness that allowed one to speak legitimately of an ‘Islamic civilization’. However, in understanding the implications of this homogeneity cultivated in consciousness, Islamicists were not to transfer it to reality. Quite the opposite, they had to mark all the gaps between traditionalist Muslim consciousness and its practice, between the theory and the reality. If Goldziher never tired of returning to and elaborating the paradigmatic importance for the understanding of Islamic history of the cult of saints, it was because he saw it as the greatest proof of this fundamental diversity in Islam. He read its ubiquity and variety under Islam in terms of the persistence of originary, ethno-national traditions. And, he viewed its incorporation in Islamic Orthodoxy as prime evidence of how such religious and national diversity had been brought under a homogenous, traditional cover.

Where the *law* was concerned, though, saint veneration was not even the most demonstrative case in point. As Goldziher explained in his lecture on the progress of *Islam-Wissenschaft*, not only was what was to become the canonical Islamic law itself in fundamental aspects the product of the assimilation and further development, post-conquest, of the heart of ancient Near Eastern civilization, of the latter’s pre-Islamic heritage and practices including

²⁰² Ibid, 231; Snouck, “Der Mahdi”, 168-9.

Roman Law. The law of Islam, when it was to be extended beyond these ‘core Islamic lands’ of first penetration and expansion, was in many areas of civil and criminal justice merely *superimposed* on the customary rights and practices of the given indigenous population. This was the case in those spheres of family law which for the most part had actually been implemented in the core Islamic region. These areas of only gradual or late Islamicization continued accordingly to adjudicate practical and intimate matters as before, notwithstanding the surface sovereignty of Islamic law. In fact, they received official recognition and toleration under the latter as ‘*Adat* (custom). Here, Goldziher referenced especially the research of European scholars in their respective countries’ colonial enclaves: French scholars amongst the Kabyle people of North Africa underscored the continued functioning in an Islamic society of putatively long-standing ‘Berber’, namely, pre-Islamic and often exactly counter-Islamic, social norms and regulations. And, he especially trumpeted in this regard the work of his Dutch scholarly colleague and partner, Snouck, amongst the Acehnese and the Gayo peoples of Sumatra in the Dutch East Indies.²⁰³

To underscore the great importance of this new research to the progress of *Islamwissenschaft*, Goldziher tellingly compared it to the fundamental change of attitude that roughly earlier had served to recast the field of Arab philology: “Just as Arab philology today, more than even just four decades ago, lays, besides the classical language, much weight on the scientific knowledge of the popular dialects, so has one in the period whose scientific progress forms the subject of this lecture also made the ‘*Adat*, so usual a phenomenon amongst the Muhammadan peoples, evermore the object of research and historical examination. Without knowledge of it the study of living institutions remains wholly inadequate.”²⁰⁴ Moreover, ‘*Adat* as the in fact positive law, functioning under the ‘tolerance’ of Islamic law, was for Goldziher altogether comparable to the ‘double-system’ of law in more developed Muslim states historically. In these, positive systems of law, clearly other than Islamic law (i.e. the *Kanunname* tradition of the Near East) had worked under the still supposedly theoretical underpinnings of the divine law and touted as ‘compatible’ with it.²⁰⁵ Hence, the cult of saints, religiously, and ‘*Adat* and the *Kanunname*, legally, served as primary evidence of what may be called a ‘universalist-traditionalist’ or ‘Medieval’ pattern. In this fundamentally *accommodationist* system, popular and national forms, cultural developments and social and political movements and prerogatives all historically unfurled themselves under the cover of a collective religio-juridical ideal, and could through *Ijma* ‘ even come over the long haul to revise the latter’s contents.

12.

²⁰³ Snouck made his Islamicist treatment of the respective ‘*Adat*-order of these groups into the cornerstone of a projected *Kolonialpolitik* to manage the difficult, ‘Islamic’ landscape of the Dutch Indonesian colony. Snouck’s transformation of *Islamwissenschaft* into a ‘policy science’ to be deployed for the purposes of *Kolonialpolitik* will be referred to in the Conclusion treated in depth in a forthcoming work. In Part III, however, I will underscore that the ‘Goldziher exceptionalism’ practiced by so many of his readers today is rather exploded by the way in which he generously referred to Snouck’s work on *Ijma*’, on the ideal status of Islamic law and on ‘*Adat* as primarily responsible for the ‘progress of *Islamwissenschaft*’.

²⁰⁴ Goldziher, “Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten”, 459

²⁰⁵ See again on the ‘double-system’, Goldziher, “Katholische Tendenz und Partikularismus im Islam”, *Gesammelte Schriften V*, 294-5. Goldziher, “Fikh”, *The First Encyclopedia of Islam*, 105.

I have said repeatedly that the Goldziherian trajectory of Islamic history was a reformist one and have titled this chapter accordingly. I have said that, as with Goldziher's conception of Jewish history, it involved essentially a historicist account, in which the critical, 'scientific' reading of religious texts, traditions and movements constituted not only the methodological means of illuminating the historical process but in fact projecting and *realizing* the latter's end. In this view, critical scholarship, far from tending to extinguish pious emotion, served to purify and amplify it. *It* was put in the position of highlighting *and* instantiating the analytic cum socio-historical conditions of such purely religious sensibility and thus presented as encompassing the path to the realization of prophecy. We are now in a position to make sense of this claim. The most appropriate way of doing so is to follow Goldziher's own lead. I will elucidate his reformist perspective, as he himself did it, namely, via his assessment of the alternative reformist currents active within modern Islam which themselves called for a transformation of the status-quo. I'll show that Goldziher's discussion of contemporary movements within Islam was structured precisely so as in embedded, 'dialectical' manner to telegraph his own reformist position without as in *Der Mythos* making the matter once more dangerously explicit. I will produce such a dialectical, reformist reading of the *Vorlesungen*, and then take-up the matter in the concrete at the beginning of Part III, where we will investigate more closely Goldziher's encounter with and reformist critique of the Islamic modernism of his time.

I begin here by reiterating that Islamic Orthodoxy, in Goldziher's thinking, did not represent a static body of conceptions but was subject to at least retrospective historical change. In concluding the fifth of his *Lectures on Islam* on "Sectarian Systems" and in anticipating the coming, final lecture on "Later Formations", he reiterated that had, in the foregoing, set out those dissident currents that had had an impact on the evolution of Islam up to the point of the definitive establishment of Orthodoxy in Ghazali. But, he immediately stressed why that was not sufficient if one was to understand 'Islam' and Islamic history: "However, after this point of time as well the spirits did not rest in peace. We have now still to grapple with later movements whose effects reach all the way up to the modern period."²⁰⁶ All of these later, patently reformist movements Goldziher considered represented outgrowths of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries and continued to be quite active forces at the turn of the Twentieth century in which he wrote. But, all of them equally, as was clear from Goldziher's exposition, had structural precedents in the earlier 'formative' period of Islamic history.

Of the three reformist or transformational movements principally taken up by Goldziher, I begin here with the *Wahhabis*. *Wahhabism* had its original site in the interior of Arabia, namely in the eponymous teachings of the Eighteenth century theologian of this religion, Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab (d. 1787). In the middle of the Eighteenth century, ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab had allied himself with a local chieftain from the Saud family, namely, he provided the theological underpinning of the family's expansive political claims. Thereafter, with this ideological underpinning front and center, the Saudis subdued the interior of the peninsula, became embroiled in a protracted struggle with Ottoman power in the *Hejaz* and eventually in the aftermath of WWI, came to unify most of the Arabian Peninsula under the banner of 'Saudi Arabia'. The *Wahhabis* had a structural precedent, in their rigid literalism and formalism, their denunciation in absolutist terms of any and all 'innovation', in the earlier Hanbalite movement, to which, through its revival in the work of Ibn Taymiya in the aftermath of the Mongol invasions, they traced themselves. The *Wahhabis*, as Goldziher painted them, were essentially

²⁰⁶ Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 258

enemies of *Ijmā'* and so of Orthodoxy: they hankered after the original conditions and practices of the first generation of Islam, the 'original *Sunna*', as against the subsequent accretions retrospectively read back into it via the historical decisions of *Ijmā'*. Goldziher and his colleagues in many ways publicized, even prized, the 'historical acumen' of these atavistic reformers. For, here were Muslims who themselves *acknowledged* and problematized the role *Ijmā'* had played in legitimating later historical and cultural developments as 'Islamic tradition' and so the gulf between contemporary Orthodoxy and ideals of the original period. *Wahhabi* grievances, namely, served to confirm the Islamicist vision of the in fact always situated and qualified position of 'Islam' in Muslim societies.²⁰⁷ On the other hand, the *Wahhabis'* reactionary urge to turn back the clock to the time of the prophet, their disrespect for the historical process and for the clear evidence of cultural autonomy and progression doomed them in Goldziher's eyes to no more than "sanctimoniousness" and "hypocrisy".²⁰⁸

The second, from my vantage point, archetypally intended reformist movement of modern Islam addressed by Goldziher was that of *Babism* in Shi'i Iran, and the way in which it, only a generation later, led to the emergence of the new *Baha'i* religion. The *Babis*, as Goldziher's exposition made clear,²⁰⁹ also had a glaring structural precedent in Islamic history, namely in the *Isma'ili* movement within and branch of Shi'ism. The *Babi-Baha'i* trajectory in Goldziher's narrative served in many ways precisely to confirm the suspicions he, a chapter earlier, had posed about the nature and *telos* of the *Isma'ili* tendency.²¹⁰ The *Isma'ili* movement, as Goldziher envisioned it, had like the mystics taken on the Neo-Platonist emanationism. This had served the Sufis to reveal the ephemeral reality of the self, to overcome thereby its dominant, material-epistemic lure in human life and to effect thus an ever deeper inner, ecstatic relationship with the divine. The *Isma'ilis* had, like the Sufis, also adopted the gnostic, highly metaphorical, "allegorical" mode of exegesis of sacred texts that detected in them hidden layers and chains of meaning pointing the path to the underlying Truth. For the Sufis, in their aim of devotional self-destruction, this had served as the means of combating literal, formal readings on the one end, reductionist, dogmatic ones on the other. But, the *Isma'ilis*, Goldziher argued, had engendered something quite other than the Sufi path. They had married this cast of thought cum practice to the Imam and *Mahdi* theories of the Shi'a. What resulted was a temporalization of the hierarchal emanation(ism) of the cosmos, a theo-evolutionism in which the divine principle (the "world-intellect")²¹¹ was presumed to manifest itself evermore perfectly through a cycle of prophets. This turn gravely exacerbated the already super-human character of the Imams and the *Mahdi* of even the moderate *Shi'a*, though it was hardly singular amongst the latter in this regard. Each prophet was imagined by the *Isma'ilis* as definitive of his time, namely, of the state of divinity and being within it. Each manifestation thus perfected the work of the previous and prepared that of the one to come with the *Mahdi* as the ultimate, most complete emanation of the world spiritual process. Putting to side its 'paganizing' penchant for the evolutionary apotheosis of human prophecy, of the prophetic person, this schema obviously

²⁰⁷ See Goldziher, "Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten", 458; also Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 289-91, 294. .

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 293-4.

²⁰⁹ See *ibid.*, 295-6. This was made explicit in Goldziher, "Die Religion des Islams", *Kultur der Gegenwart, I, III (I)*, 1278.

²¹⁰ See Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 247-55.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, 249.

obviated the fundamental Islamic idea of Muhammad as the bearer of the ultimate message of God to mankind, and so of him as the ‘seal of the prophets’.²¹²

Now, as Goldziher described the *Babis*, they, namely their founder Mirza Muhammad ‘Ali (1820-1850), had emerged out of the *Shaykhi* movement, a new branch of the dominant Twelver form of *Shi’ism* that had come forth at the beginning of the Nineteenth century. *Shi’ism* itself had been imposed as the official religion of the Safavid Empire in Iran from the Sixteenth century on. the *Shaykhis* not only ardently believed in and fanned the eschatological expectations tied to the ‘hidden Imam’. They were prone to the ideas of the more radical *Shi’a* sects in taking the Imams and the *Mahdi* for instantiations of divine attributes and potencies. Cultivated in and by such *Shaykhi* circles, Muhammad ‘Ali came, buoyed by their high expectations of him and generally heady anticipations, to believe himself the *Bab*, the ‘gate’ through which the infallible will of the hidden Imam was to be delivered into the world. Soon, however, he went much further, deciding along now clearly *Isma’ili* lines that he was in fact the awaited *Mahdi*, namely, that he was the incarnation of the world-spirit for our time. He believed it now his task to carry forward the development of Islam, to reveal and fulfill its fateful world historical task. The attitude of Goldziher’s prose to Muhammad ‘Ali, a persecuted martyr not allowed to live beyond his thirtieth year, was clearly sympathetic. For him, the *Bab* had been a true reformer, who had denounced the worldly hypocrisy of the *Mollahs* and the materialism of their ritualistic prescriptions. He had fought thereby not only for sincere religious devotion, but with equal and clearly for himself portentous urgency to establish a “sensible”,²¹³ ethically committed civil life of greater social equity and tolerance, particularly with respect to the condition of women and marriage in his time. Still, grafted on to this enlightened perspective were arcane gnostic notions like numerological reckonings. And, the *Bab* had interpreted Islamic texts and concepts in essentially allegorical fashion to suggest a divine evolutionism of ever still perfection cum realization in the world, meaning as yet further manifestations like his own in the future. It was to be a fateful prognosis for the future of the nascent *Babi* movement.

To turn back to the *Isma’ilis*, Goldziher made no secret of his suspicion that the sect’s ‘Islamic’ profile was little more than a cover: the *Isma’ili* appropriation of Neo-Platonism was not a la Sufism a bid at greater religious inwardness and devotion, its take on the *Shi’i* Imam-theory no merely exaggerated or distorted Messianism. Rather, Goldziher maintained, these familiar conceptions constituted only the hook, the platform whereby the *Isma’ilis* undertook their destructive work of undermining all the positive aspects of Islam, ultimately of supplanting its universal monotheism by a progressive pantheistic incarnationism. ‘Destruction’ was the term Goldziher most closely and persistently associated with the *Isma’ili*.²¹⁴ He highlighted in this connection their heavy reliance on the allegorical mode of exegesis and stressed the grave potency of this favored and most characteristic of gnostic nostrums. It was *not only* a subtle and insidious technique of subversion, whereby the *Isma’ilis* took over Islam from the inside, gutted it of both its contextual as well as ideal meaning, to initiate the believer from one metaphoric level to the next towards something quite the other of the core Islamic message of monotheism. More, Goldziher took the allegorical mode of interpretation to be, in its ultimately anarchic *telos*, the most apposite handmaiden to and as thus feeding the authoritarianism and intolerance he believed inherent in all incarnationism, including the *Isma’ili* variant.

²¹² See *ibid*, 249-50.

²¹³ *Ibid*, 296.

²¹⁴ See note 250; also Goldziher, “Die Religion des Islams”, 126.

Now, to return to *Babism*, there can be little doubt Goldziher's account of the development of this, as he saw it, modern and in ethos modernist restatement of *Isma'ilism* served altogether to confirm his critical charges against the latter. It in any case did not take long: in the succession dispute that followed the martyrdom of the *Bab*, the majority of the community came under the leadership of *Baha' Allah* ('Splendor of God'), who announced himself, rather prematurely in terms of the *Bab's* cyclical reckoning, the new manifestation of the universal spirit, the one projected by the *Bab* to complete his work. In point of fact though, *Baha'* came to supplant not only *Babism* but Islam as such in proclaiming a universal religion which came to be known as *Baha'ism* and which allegorically read and appropriated all other religions as its past and precursors. By crystal contrast to his treatment of the *Bab*, Goldziher's account of *Baha'* was pointedly derisive in tone. He described a man who touted his representations of the divine spirit and sought consequently, stressing secretiveness in general and hinting at an as yet secret knowledge meant only for a select few, to police access to them. Goldziher made a point of the fact that, notwithstanding his preaching of universal humanity and equality, his promotion of the establishment of a universal language for the purpose and like enlightened, tolerant pronouncements on civil relations, *Baha'* espoused "blatantly reactionary" views. On the trenchant question of public authority, *Baha'* had denounced the very notion of liberty and self-government. Goldziher noted in conclusion that after the death of their eponymous prophet, the *Baha'is*, seeking to expand the base of their converts to the world at large, now turned their allegorical machinery on Jewish and Christian texts alongside those of Islam. All the while, they sidelined increasingly the more fantastic gnostic paraphernalia of old to assume the outward cultural forms and ideals of the modern West. They proffered themselves as the religion of modern sensibility to engage all quarters.²¹⁵ It was all meant to suggest that 'tradition' had to become critical and historically self-conscious for its realization, and that its allegorical, evolutionary evisceration led, religiously, instead to a cultish, authoritarian, homogenizing, presentist nightmare. *Isma'ili* evolutionism made the *unconscious* situated dynamism of traditional *Ijma'* into an official stance!

So, the first archetypal reformist movement in modern Islam, the reactionary (not conservative) *Wahhabis* with their literal and formalist mode of exegesis sought to turn back the pages of history to the era of the prophet and so denied the historical process and its inexorable dynamics altogether. The second, the authoritarian (not modernist) *Baha'is*, with their allegorical and anarchic mode of reading, propagated a spiritualist utopianism that led out of Islam and monotheism altogether. Meanwhile, the third characteristic movement of reform discussed by Goldziher was that of the modernist assimilation proffered by the traditionalist and collectivist process of *Ijmā'*. This traditionalist path to Modernity had come, in the usual apologetic cum retrospective manner to affirm, as noted, the use of innovations like the printing press. It was in the midst of absorbing the requisites of modern economic life (insurance, government bonds). And, it appeared now set to underwrite rather than just show the usual required deference towards the modern transformation of political life in Islamic states. On this last thematic, Goldziher gave the example of the religious legitimation of the Constitutional Revolution in Shi'i Iran (1905), with a clear reference to the later like occurrence in Sunni Turkey (1908). This shift too had been grounded by reading back constitutional and

²¹⁵ The feel of Goldziher's exposé of *Baha'ism* reads in retrospect as though he were describing the world's first New Age cult, which is not at all to say he did not take it seriously; as should be clear from the discussion, quite the opposite. See Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 298-305.

parliamentary governance into the Qur'an and *Hadith*.²¹⁶ Goldziher was quite confident that this project of apologetic cum retrospective modernization would continue and gather pace. But, he made clear that as a process of cultural assimilation it constituted in itself no more than the traditional and traditionalist pattern of development in the Islamic world rather than a critical *as such* modernist one. As he put it after discussion of ongoing attempts to avail modern cultural and political forms of proper Islamic provenance: "The examples cited here have been chosen from the modern development of Islamic relations; but the phenomenon announcing itself in them corresponds to the tendency operative also in previous centuries."²¹⁷ Namely, Orthodox modernization through *Ijmā* could not only, like the *Wahhabi* and the *Baha'i* movements be traced back structurally to features and dynamics in Islam's pre-modern past. It was a further instance of what, in the traditional Islamic context, *was* the normative mode of progression.

13.

Now, to understand Goldziher's own reformist perspective and the way in which it was posited vis-à-vis these other active alternatives in the Islamic world of his time, it will prove especially instructive to pursue what, in the closing pages of his *Lectures on Islam*, he had to say on the question of the modern situation and development of Islam in India. India, with its complex, highly diverse ethnographic and religious history and make-up with so many religions living in close quarters and developing, whether syncretically or oppositionally, in terms of one another, Goldziher described as a veritable school for the historian of religion and its comparative study. Not surprisingly then, he found, in critical retrospect and with clear structural intent, all three of the archetypally transformational tendencies in modern Islam, as I have reconstructed them at work in the Indian context. First, there was the *Wahhabi* influence, which, not least through the ideas flowing in and out of the rhythms of the *Hajj* pilgrimage, had made its way to India. Under the leadership of Sayyid Ahmad Brelwi (1786-1831), it had in fact found here an inexhaustible field for combating the rampant pagan infiltration of Muslim beliefs and practices. And, it had climaxed in Brelwi's *Jihad* against the Sikh sect that led to his death. The Sikh religion Goldziher's tentative discussion posited as itself possibly a Muslim-Hindu hybrid aimed initially at the reconciliation of the two.²¹⁸ Second, there was, as Goldziher put it, the newest sectarian phenomenon in Islam, the *Ahmadiya* movement, at the time less than three decades old and another modern incarnationism, reminiscent of *Isma'ilism*, that sought to complete Islam but in fact streamed out of it. Its founder, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835-1908), had let it be known that he was Christ come again *and* the *Mahdi*, that it was given to him to reveal the meaning of Islam for all mankind and to fulfill it by ushering the world towards universal peace.²¹⁹

There was finally, as Goldziher put it, "an altogether modern phase of the development of Islam in India". The impact of expansive European colonization and general encroachment on so many Muslim societies, driven thereby to participate in the outward forms of modern western culture, had come of course to pose a great challenge to the consciousness of Muslim thinkers. The intellectuals had responded by attempting an accommodation between their religious values and practices and the requirements of the new cultural situation. They undertook, namely, to demarcate those fundamental aspects of Islam that would allow it, given the inexorable

²¹⁶ See *ibid*, 284.

²¹⁷ *Ibid*, 285.

²¹⁸ See *ibid*, 307-8.

²¹⁹ See *ibid*, 313-5.

transformations underway, to be divested of invidious cultural baggage carried in its name and made thus applicable to modern socio-cultural conditions. The same step was then deemed simultaneously ineluctable for reformulating ‘Islam’ in manner that would allow for the apologetic defense of its universal applicability. In other words, Islam’s cultural universality, that it too was a religion of *Kultur* had to be established in the face of outside criticism. India had proven the paradigmatic site of this encounter, both in its early experience of foreign intervention and as the birth place of the “Islamic modernism” that followed in its wake and, Goldziher contended was, if gradually, nonetheless surely making its way throughout the Islamic world. Through the work of Sayyid Amir ‘Ali (1849-1928) and Sayyid Ahmad Khan Bahadur (1817-1898) and other, per Goldziher, “awe-inspiring personalities of the Islamic world”, not only had a mass of publications, numerous associations, schools and a Muslim college on the western model (Aligarh 1875) come into being. Devoted to the spread of modern learning and values and an accordingly reformed Islam, this new chapter had nonetheless arrived at its conception of the latter in line with the tradition apologetic cum retrospective trajectory: it proffered an Islam that in the rational and rationalizing pronouncements made about it was quite compatible with modern life. More, when purified of its alleged historical dross to its ‘original core’, it was said to not simply at one, but in fact as having anticipated Modernity!²²⁰

Goldziher’s brief account of an altogether earlier episode in the history of Islam in India proves the most telling entrée into the analysis and articulation of his own reformist stance and positioning. India, Goldziher said, not only was a virtual school for the student of comparative religion (“*vergleichende Religionswissenschaft*”), it had actually served as such a school in the Mughal period (1525-1707). Goldziher called the time of this dynasty’s rule “the heyday of Islamic culture in India”. And, on the subject of the reign of the emperor of this line known by his honorific title, Akbar the Great (1542, ruled 1556-1605), Goldziher pointedly cited Max Müller’s claim that Akbar must be counted the first representative of the comparative science of religion. Akbar, a man of clear religious sensibility, but one in equal measure intellectually open and emotionally sensitive, could not but be intrigued by the religious diversity of his subjects. He was thus led to a search for the deeper impulse underlying the religious sense in order to understand their various outlooks and practices. That in turn inevitably convinced him of the mere relative value of each religion considered in itself. In other words, the Mughal ruler had been the first to conceive of the ‘science of religion’. Ultimately, towards the end of the sixteenth century, he had embarked under the notion of a reform of Islam on the project of an ideal synthesis: to construct the most convincing and satisfying religious system and experience. The resulting eclectic amalgamation Goldziher described as an ethical rationalism anchored in the Sufi ideal of divine oneness and ornamented with Zoroastrian iconography practices. What he stressed about it from the historicist standpoint was two points: first, it could no longer be called Islam. Second, it was essentially a court religion. With Akbar’s passing, it also passed from the scene, and Orthodoxy with little fuss re-attained its official standing.²²¹

The intended though again simply implied lesson²²² of this episode for the reader was clear enough: the scientific, critical, by which Goldziher always also meant religious, telos of the comparative study of religion could *not* be an artificial and ahistorical construction of an ideal religion arrived at by convenient selection from the various alternatives. That is to say,

²²⁰ See *ibid*, 312-3.

²²¹ See *ibid*, 309-12.

²²² a close reading of these Goldziher’s *Vorlesungen* would show, along the lines of our analysis, that not only each section but virtually each of the numerous sub-sections too held out such a lesson of their own

Goldziher was quite a believer in Orthodoxy and *Ijma'* as the proper site and lever, respectively, of genuine religious reform. And, that was not only because a new derivative religious artifice would be at best a sectarian development failing in the consensus carrying with it the collective community and self-consciousness of Islam. More to the point, it was because Orthodoxy, bearing in its construction and evolution the complex traces of the decisions of *Ijma'*, was the very repository of the historical process itself! Only through the critical study of the historical trajectory of *Ijma'* and so its thereby refashioning in the present, meaning also that of Orthodoxy, could the ideal be delineated and the conditions of its realization specified.

Hence, Goldziher championed Orthodoxy as Islam's ownmost locus of reform because of its, from his religio-critical perspective, historical, which is to say providential, content and so because of its projected teleo-historicist inescapability. As I have been arguing, the critical study of the history of *Ijma'* constituted thus the very telos of its trajectory and the means of the purification, the *proper* universalization and so realization of Islam's monotheism. It is with this underlying framework in presumptive view that we must understand Goldziher's decidedly negative reactions to movements of reform that rejected *Ijma'* and were thus sectarian in nature. Be the rejection itself reactionary in ethos and, per Goldziher, inherently hypocritical or be it conceived in 'enlightened', modernist terms, whereupon he projected it as pushing out of Islam altogether, his response remained the same. However, Goldziher's objective of critical engagement with Orthodoxy and *Ijma'* was positioned equally against the traditionalist, 'unconscious' wielding of the latter over the *longue durée* of Islamic history. 'Islamic modernism' had not as yet broken the pattern that had to be broken, the pattern whereby consensus on contemporary practices and requirements was read back into the originary Islamic past and legitimated as an aspect or implication of the foundational texts that thus ever anew constituted 'Islamic tradition'.

Goldziher made this fundamental point about 'reform' clear in his account of 'Islamic modernism', as he called it, in India and elsewhere which, notwithstanding his even overweening praise of its aims and leaders, involved a critique of its apologetic mode of modernization. As he said of its attempt so to formulate 'Islam' as to allow it to be defended against the criticisms of the modern West: "Even though this apologetic activity is accompanied always by the noble effort to cleanse away the chaff from the real kernel, there runs through it the character of a tendentious rationalism [read, rationalization], that cannot always be made to do justice to the demands of historical examination."²²³ And, the concluding statement of his account suggested what he expected and hoped of this movement, "these rationalistic [rationalizing] efforts that have as their aim the reconciliation of Islamic thought and life with the demands of the western culture penetrating them", was a dialectical denouement. The modern scientific, critical learning apologetically legitimated and set in play by such traditional modernization would thus ultimately turn back to transform it towards a critical religio-historical self-conception, namely, 'true reform': "The cultural and educational movements (*Bildungsbestrebungen*) stirring themselves, in intimate contact with the religious life, in various circles of the Islamic world carry in any case the seeds of a new developmental phase of Islam in them, under whose impact perhaps also its theology will work its way to a scientific-historical consideration of its sources."²²⁴

The text's much earlier introduction and discussion of the concept of *Ijma'* also ended with an innocent and implicit, but telling concluding comment that, adequately deciphered,

²²³ Ibid, 312.

²²⁴ Ibid, 313.

telegraphed Goldziher's hopes for the future. Here, he reiterated the primary role *Ijmā'*, the principle of consensus, had historically thus far played in Islam's adaptive capacity and he wondered: "What could its consistent (*konsequent*) application bring about for the future?"²²⁵ It was a theme he often came to near the end or in the conclusion of his programmatic essays:

This great principle [*Ijma'*]—which, if any man fail to realize and rightly appreciate, the development of Islam and Islamite institutions must remain a sealed book to him—was in the process of time defined as the doctrine accepted alike by all the four orthodox schools of thought. This definition of the idea of *Ijmā'* is the result of the self-imposed limitation of the principle itself in practical application. In process of time it was found impossible to verify this general consent by any other method than by confining it to the well-defined sphere of the schools of the law. This free intellectual outlook [then] lost the vital force which might have made it an element of far-seeing and liberal development.²²⁶

In its present and already for a long time now current definition, its [*Ijma'*] meaning is sought not vis-à-vis the actual living circumstances of the Islamic world, but much more in the withered past. The viable reform of Islam hangs in the theological sense to a not small extent on a reframing (*Neugestaltung*) of this concept.²²⁷

In these last two examples, Goldziher clearly suggests that the *Ijma'*, the very source of retrospective and traditionalist renewal in Islamic history, had also in fact come to mean the consensus of the already established Orthodox schools of Muslim jurisprudence. Overcoming this institutional source of stagnation in the principle of consensus would in fact be a starting point of Goldziher's own dialectical engagement with Islamic modernists who wanted precisely to set the wheels of *Ijma'* in motion again. But, as we'll see in Part III, such an expansion of the 'Islamic' consensus socially and thus situationally remained within the confines of the still traditionalist deployment of it only a starting point.

Hence, to go back to the first citation in the above paragraph from the *Lectures*, arguably, *Ijma'* rigorously adhered to or as I have translated the phrase, 'applied with logical consistency', could only mean a self-conscious *Ijma'*. Because, only as self-conscious could the principle of exegetical consensus be invoked logically and consistently: to be, rather than as an in fact mirror of the present reflecting itself onto the originary past instead critically aware of its historical presence. Only as such could it universalize itself *not* by contradicting and overriding past consensus so as to swallow extant cultural norms under the rubric of 'Islam' but to conceive itself via critical historical understanding of the true cultural conditions of, namely, the cultural autonomy required for, realizing the universal monotheism of Islam. In other words, the end was a critical consensus that would no longer allow 'Islam' to be a masquerade of diverse cultural and socio-historical prerogatives. How often since has this core thesis of *Islamwissenschaft*, emerging not least from Goldziher's reformist agenda, of an always culturally and historically placed, thus even epiphenomenal 'Islam', been rediscovered as cutting-edge anthropology or the finger-wagging cudgel of an apparently only contemporary critical historical consciousness.²²⁸

²²⁵ Ibid, 56.

²²⁶ Goldziher, "The Principles of Law in Islam", *The Historians History of the World*, 304.

²²⁷ Goldziher, "Die Katholische Tendenz und Partikularismus im Islam", 312.

²²⁸ One thinks, for example, of the transformational claims made for Geertz, Clifford, *Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia* (New Haven, 1968).

But, the whole aim of Goldziher's reformist project was instead that of burying 'Islam' as a cultural mask. The critical study of its history afforded by modern scientific culture itself was analytically to excise Islam's monotheism, Islam as 'religion', from the cultural and sociopolitical realm. As with the nineteenth century discourse of the 'science of religion' on the proper relationship 'nation', 'culture' and 'religion', *Islamwissenschaft* began with the presumption that the nation was the appropriate locus of cultural and socio-political reality. 'Religion', in its universality and teleology, which for Goldziher is to say 'Islam' as 'religion', had to be grounded in the human soul's individual, inward devotion to God. That was the only means of realizing Islam universally, of forming in it a universal community of God, as against the 'Medieval' universalism that was anything but, whose accommodationism meant immeasurable practical diversity and whose only basis of unity was a debilitating ideological one. Goldziher put the matter simply to his colleague Hartmann: "You know my standpoint: that religion be a private matter is naturally also my wish and my religio-political ideal." And, as always defending autonomous Muslim development²²⁹ here against European pretensions on the question, something he knew something about from personal experience, he added half-sardonically: "if our central European states will take the lead on the matter, perhaps the Turks will emulate them."²³⁰

Goldziher's projected trajectory of Islamic history was accordingly a 'reformist' one precisely in the sense that it was driven by and viewed as ending in this religio-political ideal of a personal God. Prophetic Islam, the monotheism revealed to the prophet in Mecca, with its emphasis on universal apocalyptic judgment, Goldziher considered akin to the same 'prophetic messianic Judaism' he counted his own. Prophetic Islam derived from and represented the ethical standard, the call to human responsibility and inexorable judgment. But, of course, equally inexorable and providential had been the historical, the social and cultural context. The prophet's resorting to the sword to allow for the survival of his burgeoning religious community, the descent due to material necessity into the political realm and his metamorphosis into a politician could not but in turn lead to a corresponding anthropomorphization of the one God. In line with pagan logic and mores, this entailed a presentation of the will of God and human will as in competition with one another and so led to a curbing of the freedom of humanity to conceive of the true divinity of God. Moreover, in the same manner and spirit, it led to a sacralization of essentially practical regulation, setting the stage for the legal reification to come. Hence, in view of this pressing but also spiritually degrading materialist turn, it was in terms of Goldziher's schema more telling than ironic that post-prophetic Islam made its first great historical mark squarely in the political realm. Eventually, in Umayyad rule, it came even to be the other of the pious ratiocination characteristic of Medinese rule. The Arabs had rallied to Islam's cause because of its signal victories on the battle-field and not its spiritual values. Islamic monotheism's overarching immediate historical meaning thus was that of a catalyst for the unity of the Arab nation and the amassing of a great Arab empire. For Umayyads in fact 'Islam' had been most a moniker for the Arab triumph and supremacy their regime represented.

But, it was always the 'theocratic turn' introduced by the Abbasids Goldziher turned to in tracing Islam's longstanding historical profile as a 'Medieval' religio-bureaucratic empire and the universalist cum accommodationist system characteristic of it. It was during the Abbasid period that Islam had become consolidated as a religio-legal order pervaded by a corresponding religio-legal bureaucracy, whose very divergent character testified to the way the legal corpus

²²⁹ This will be the dominant subject of the opening chapter of Part III.

²³⁰ See Goldziher to Becker, 2/19/1910, Hanisch, "*Machen Sie doch unseren Islam nicht gar zu schlecht*", 348.

was in large part established *post facto* to accommodate regnant social and political realities in one locus or another of the polity. This had itself been done by the assimilation of the Hellenistic legal methodology and practice of the period in the traditionalizing format of the *Hadith*. It introduced a legal order that came thereafter to be wielded rhetorically by the religious bureaucracy in the same accommodating and rationalizing spirit. It entailed an ideal law of presumed reified theoretical perfection and inviolability in contravention of actual practice but used to couch and legitimate it. But, historically, in this duality, it had been, as in the traditionalizing formation of *Hadith*, in fact suspended between the retrospective idealization of *Ijmā'* on the one hand and the crisis-driven opportunistic eschatological thematization of the gap between the divine law and reality characteristic of *Mahdi* movements on the other.

The verdict of this critical analysis of Islamic history was then quite clear: by highlighting the predominantly ideal rather than positive character of Islamic law, it sought to demonstrate that this legal order had been at all times, outside its ideological function, essentially a 'doctrine of duties'. That is, honestly appropriated, it was no more than a personal code for realizing one's pious devotion to God. This is in fact the way in which the *Vorlesungen* proceeded throughout their precisely structured course: they searched out the ideal 'religious' element, the 'kernel of truth' in the socio-religious movements that characterized the historical development of 'Islam', while simultaneously providing a critique of their historical limitations or inherent retrogressive dangers on the path towards their ideal purification. Enough has already been said of the prophet's tightrope in this sense. But it applies equally to Goldziher's treatment of the legal, dogmatic, mystical and sectarian developments in Islamic history. He began his discussion of the law by citing the Doctors of Muslim jurisprudence to the effect that the 'divine law' was precisely meant not to bound humanity but to set it free. Then, he of course moved to show how 'freedom' had been turned into casuistic rationalization of worldly affairs that had nothing to do with bringing man closer to God, towards the ideal and so freedom. In moving through the dogmatic deliberations in Islamic history, he welcomed their greater rationality and aim to arrive at a more exalted concept of the one God. He then noted how this very same supposed 'rationality' could turn into reductionism, exclusivism and persecution. He put the greatest emphasis on the mystical turn in Islam. He presented it as having worked to save Islam from the distortions of the first two movements and to reorient religious experience not to the managerial deployment of a reified ideal or in stolid formulations but in genuine religious feeling and devotion. Yet, at the same time, he tried to show how its allegorical readings and antinomianism could in fact, in sectarian development of the *Isma'ili* kind, become the occasion of a backdoor to paganism and authoritarianism.

In all this, there was an ideal high point reached by al-Ghazali, who precisely consolidated Orthodoxy and so kept alive its promise for the future by bringing all these movements into a balance with one another that allowed their respective truths to abide by one another. Al-Ghazali had argued that the 'law' was meant as means of maintaining one's devotion to God, that mystical experience was to be not a usurping of God, but exactly the means of coming nearer to him in ideal feeling and purpose and that dogmatic reasoning had its place in the understanding, but that if it were to come to define religious life it would destroy it. All of this al-Ghazali had achieved within a traditionalist mindset and framework but, looked on from the critical historical standpoint, he made possible and prepared the development of Islam for its ideal end. In this sense, though it has in fact often been seen as an 'officializing' or 'reifying' text that abstracted 'law' and 'dogma' and 'mysticism' from one another, in this reading which shows the great historicist critique and teleological connections between them, the *Vorlesungen*

emerge as the climax of Goldziher religio-scientific scholarship and of his reformist reading of the Islamic heritage. As we turn to consider Goldziher historical practice of Islamicist Reform and the historical conditions that led him to Islamwissenschaft, let's note that Semitic and Aryan have disappeared and we are now instead within the horizon of the shift from the Medieval to the Modern.

Part III: Goldziher's Dialectical Modernism

Chapter VIII. Goldziher's *Islamwissenschaft* as a Reformist Practice

1.

Islamwissenschaft was not, as it emerged in Goldziher's work, merely a reformist and modernist discourse but, as such, a modernist and reformist praxis. In the first two generations of the field, its practitioners generally adopted this agenda, but they deployed in very different ways and for radically different ends that can only be understood contextually and historically. As reformist praxis, *Islamwissenschaft* addressed first and foremost Muslim historical agency and made it the subject of reformist critique. It challenged traditional, traditionalist Muslim self-understanding and pushed for what it argued was required for Muslims to become full subjects of their history. It was accordingly what I have called a subjectifying discourse and praxis. All of these points about Islamicists diagnosing the debilities in native Muslim agency and trying to teach Muslims about their own history bring up what is to say the least a touchy subject. After all, Said's fundamental claim was that Orientalism was an essentialist discourse that robbed its subjects of historical agency. This was what he meant by saying Orientalists *objectified* Orientals into invidious qualities and expectations they could conform to but not change. And, this was the burden of his famous statement that Orientalist discourse literally created the 'Oriental' and the 'Orient' where none had existed before and no others would be allowed to except under those signs.

Said's bid to reclaim the agency of the 'Orientalized' by exploding the epistemic claims of Orientalist discourse and scholarship, by exposing its 'objectivity' as 'objectification', did not come in a vacuum. It was a part of and itself did much to drive forward a whole wave of what I call 'agency historiography' in the humanist scholarship of the last decades. Nor has this wave by any means passed; it continues strong today. For a generation now, a whole host of historians and humanists have understood their work as geared towards rediscovering and *restoring* the agency of all the subaltern of human history: all those written out of history or made into the props of other people's history, all who have been marginalized because of their class, ethnic identity, sex and sexuality, disability, etc. The evidence was now reread and against its elite self-presentation to bring back into it the people, voices and lives elided from it. The past was to be made to tell a story different from the one it had told itself. The number of works in the last generation, which have attested as their aim the restoring the agency of some section of humanity and the human past is so large, it would be gratuitous to cite examples.

In Part One, I cited Talal Asad's argument that the 'agency historiography', notwithstanding its good intentions, was from an intellectual standpoint highly problematic and not fully thought through. This is a trenchant point, which however has largely gone unheeded. Meanwhile, some less than welcome consequences of this prevalent style of historiography have become increasingly manifest. Joel Beinin, in writing a social history of the modern Middle-East, has captured the dangers this historiographic imperative poses to historical understanding:

Many new social historians hoped that examining neglected documentary evidence or reading previously known evidence against the grain would allow them to retrieve the experiences of workers, peasants, African slaves, women, ethnic minorities, etc., speak for them, and restore them to the historical record. This often resulted in an act of

ventriloquism. Subordinate subjects were presented as saying what sympathetic historians thought they would or should say.¹

But, the problem is not only the epistemological one of writing all too fictional histories, giving people in the past roles and voices they themselves did not know they had. More recently, the tail has come to wag the dog. What in the old days used to be called ‘blaming the victim’ has been busy rehabilitating itself under the aegis of ‘restoring agency’. Now, even those who deemed themselves distinctly compromised in their capacity for agency were to be apportioned their respective surplus agency, read, made responsible for the unfortunate experiences they had undergone. Efraim and Inari Karsh have, for instance, written a political history of the modern Middle-East that attempts to take out European imperialism as a fundamental determinant of the histories of the region. Any such emphasis on the actions of Europeans robbed Middle-Easterners of their agency:

However intriguing, [the] presentation of modern Middle-Eastern history as an offshoot of global power politics fails to provide an adequate analytical framework for understanding the struggle for mastery in the region, ignoring as it does the main impetus behind regional developments: the local actors. Twentieth-century Middle Eastern history is essentially the culmination of long-standing *indigenous* trends, passions, and patterns of behavior rather than an externally imposed dictate. Great-power influences, however potent, have played a secondary role, constituting neither the primary force behind the region’s political development nor the main cause of its notorious volatility. Even at the weakest point in their modern history, during the First World War and its immediate wake, Middle Eastern actors were not hapless victims of predatory imperial powers but active participants in the restructuring of their region.²

The inflation of ‘agency’ has been neither haphazard nor limited to politically motivated developments. Bruno Latour, criticizing the fundamental modernist dichotomy between subject and object, has argued for the attribution of agency beyond the human realm. The result has been a conception of agency that could be satisfied by anything subject to Newton’s Third Law, one that of course redounds also to the understanding of human historical agency.³ The Holocaust may be thought the zero limit of this agency inflation and ‘Holocaust revisionism’ the bid to approach it: so-called ‘revisionists’ like David Irving continue tellingly to rail at the Jews as deserving (authors) of what he says did not happen to them.⁴ Meanwhile, Primo Levi has

¹ Joel Beinin, *Workers and Peasants in the Modern Middle-East* (Cambridge, 2001), 2.

² Karsh, Efraim & Karsh, Inari, *Empires of the Sand; the Struggle for Mastery in the Middle-East, 1789-1923* (Cambridge, 1999), 2. See also in this vein, David R. Woodward, *Hell in the Holy Land: World War I in the Middle-East* (Lexington, 2006). The author is responsible for the WWI pages of the BBC. The argument for the primacy of Middle-Eastern forces can also be seen there: http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/wwone/middle_east_06.shtml (first published: 3/31/2002).

³ See Bruno Latour, *The Pasteurization of France* (Cambridge, 1988) 192-211; also more broadly, Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern* (Cambridge, 1993). The absolute concept of agency in the cosmic realm had earlier received its counterpart in the human realm. The famous example is Camus’ reading of absolute freedom as a matter independent of human and historical condition; see Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays* (New York, 1955), 88-91.

⁴ Irving apparently views the Holocaust as a Jewish phantasm of the punishment it deserves. See the interview with David Irving, *The Independent*, 1/15/2009. Pierre Vidal-Naquet discusses such emotional and intellectual dynamics of Holocaust denial in idem, *Assassins of Memory; Essays on the Denial of the Holocaust* (New York,

made clear that the most human thing one can say about the death camps is that they extirpated the conditions of humanity and human agency.⁵ The issue of ‘agency’ as I said is a touchy subject. And, the prevalent historiographic blandishments about ‘restoring agency’ do not do full justice to the concept’s problematic emotional dynamics. Hence, when discussing ‘agency’ and its attribution, we should always ask what kind of ‘agency’ and to what end, rather than assuming the answers will conform to our best hopes for the past and future. Above all, we should believe that in this question, as in most, history will be a better guide than emotionally convenience.

Pace Said’s reductionist simplification of it, the literature of Orientalist scholarship, both in sheer diversity of view-points and change over time, has few rivals as a medium for probing the complexity and stakes of these questions about human agency. For instance, I ask the reader to go back to the philological frame I portrayed in Chapter VI as having dominated Orientalist scholarship for most of the nineteenth century. Orientalist Philology *did* generally aim at the objectification of Oriental natives: they were to be reproduced in grammatical structure of their language or mind, in their speech, in their literary remnants, etc. And, this objectification *did* have invidious purposes in the case of scholars like Renan and were geared towards ‘Othering’, though it is difficult to see how the same could be said for the self-avowed ‘cosmopolitanism’ of Fleischer and Dillman? On the other hand, *because* the native remained a *perfect exemplar and carrier* of the essential grammatical rules to be reconstructed, the speech patterns to be inculcated and the literary traditions to be reconstructed, he remained, in the Philological framework, a vast authority over the work of the Orientalist. Semitic philology was, as noted, in fact never able to dent such native authority in the nineteenth century: it mostly simply appropriated native grammatical and historiographic traditions. If, à la Said, he was deprived the capacity to represent himself, he remained the true essential representative of his culture and society and as such an ineluctable judge of Orientalist accomplishment.

By contrast and again, *pace* Said, European Islamicists were devoted not to the objectification but the *subjectification* of contemporary Muslims. Namely, their analyses prescribed the conditions of Muslims becoming subjects of their history and pushed for them to do so and to eclipse their own respective medieval past. *Such* becoming autonomous managers of their own history, however, Islamicists argued, required a fundamental critique and abandonment of traditional, *traditionalist* Islamic understanding of the Islamic heritage. Traditional Muslims conceived ‘Islam’ as a homogenous heritage, transcendently eternal in its origin. What Islamicist critique sought to demonstrate, however, was a traditionalizing consciousness, an unconscious dynamism, in which cultural and socio-political developments were brought under the ideological cover of Islamic jurisprudence. The latter thus functioned either casuistically as a reified, rhetorical, opportunist medium for rationalizing such developments, while lasting developments were themselves liable to be gradually read back, retrospectively idealized and eternalized into the origin itself. The *subjectification* of Muslims required, accordingly, the shift to a critical, historical consciousness, a self-conscious dynamism

1992), 13-56. Of course, not all ‘Holocaust revisionism’ represented an anti-Semitic reduction ad absurdum of agency inflation. The originator of the genre, Paul Rassinier, was a pacifist who could not imagine peaceful human agency if the Holocaust was real. Hence, he decided it was not. See Paul Rassinier, *Debunking the Genocide Myth: a study of the Nazi Concentration Camps and the Alleged Extermination of European Jewry* (Los Angeles, 1978), 31-3, 109-119.

⁵ See Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz: The Nazi Assault on Humanity* (New York, 1996; orig. 1947), 87-100, 105-6, 121-2, 131-5, 160, 171. The original title of the book is *If This Is a Man*.

in which the function of 'Islam' as an ideological language would be exploded and socio-cultural realities would be realized in their positive development rather than reified in 'Islam'.

This was, put broadly, the Islamicist modernist program of subjectifying Muslims, of making them autonomous agents in the modern world. But, the exact paths which Islamicists prescribed for the implementation of the program diverged radically from one another, both as between different scholars and even over time in the thinking of any single one. Here, I will only point to the extremes of the spectrum, within which we must locate Goldziher's own quite distinct articulation of *Islamwissenschaft* as a reformist practice.⁶ On one extreme of the spectrum, there was Snouck Hurgronje's articulation of Islamicist practice, in which he transformed *Islamwissenschaft*, for the first time, into a 'policy science' and simultaneously as such as an instrument of *Kolonialpolitik*. The colonial state had to understand the difference between Islamic theory and the actual behavior of Muslims, if it was going to make the right policy decisions, i.e. if it was going to make the right alliances on the ground. But, this understanding afforded it by *Islamwissenschaft* pointed in fact to the fundamental progressive role it could play in the traditional Muslim context, that of placing an embargo on the inherently opportunistic political use of the Islamic ideal. By enforcing a kind of privatization on Islam from the outside, the colonial state could provide the space needed for its subjects to rescue sociopolitical and cultural realities, as secular developments, from their Islamic rationalization and arrive at the proper positive consciousness of Modernity.

In his debate with German colleagues on the Ottoman declaration of Jihad in WWI, Snouck went so far as to suggest that, given geo-political circumstances, *only* an enlightened *Kolonialpolitik* would be in a position to ensure the conditions for the needed modernist shift in consciousness. He not only castigated his German Islamicist colleagues for supporting the Jihad call, and assigned all agency and responsibility for it to the Germans rather than the Ottomans. Jihad, always political opportunism, was in any case the opposite of true, i.e. national, political agency. He downplayed any Ottoman agency in the matter and made it a case of German manipulation in the interests of short-sighted national gain. But, his argument was a highly ironic one. He said that it was European rapaciousness that had never left the Ottomans in peace and allowed them the space needed to forego the opportunistic Islamic repertoire. The Ottomans had constantly been forced to Jihad and now Germany was directly instigating them to do so! Snouck's prescription was that European imperialism had to be reconfigured from its nationalist competitions into a moral community committed to the progress of its subjects, though, if this was a possibility, it's not clear why the Ottomans could not then have simply been left alone. Apparently, European imperialists had amicably to divide the whole world between them for it to become safe for progress.⁷ But, Snouck's points about the ineluctability of *Kolonialpolitik* for Muslim progress and the improbability of Ottoman agency in this respect were essentially war-time gambits meant to blunt his German colleagues' bid to impute agency for the Jihad directly to the Ottomans and to argue it could even be considered a modernist agency. Certainly, in 1908, Snouck was utterly ecstatic about the Constitutional Revolution in Ottoman Turkey. He was at the time already heading to Istanbul and arrived the day after the Constitution was

⁶ Further elucidation of the range here described and its historical development must await my forthcoming work on the trajectory of the Islamicist field as whole into the crises it experienced in WWI.

⁷ See C. Snouck Hurgronje, *The Holy War "Made in Germany"* (New York, 1915). This so-called Jihad pamphlet Snouck published against his German colleagues in the heat of the war first appeared as, Snouck Hurgronje, "Heilige Oorlog Made in Germany" in *De Gids*, 79, no. 1 (1915), 115-147.

proclaimed. He raved to colleagues about the atmosphere of this “bloodless revolution” and what the people had achieved in getting rid of Abdulhamid.⁸

If Snouck’s idea of the emptiness of Ottoman agency was a particularly wartime position, so was on the other hand C. H. Becker’s amplification of Ottoman agency and of the very scope of what ‘modernist agency’ could mean, when he came to call the Ottoman Jihad a paradigm of cultural modernization in the face of crisis, which he thought the only kind there ever was. In Becker’s case, we will go in the other direction. For, before the war, he was hardly shy about expressing the basic pedagogic imperative of *Islamwissenschaft*, one which, by juxtaposition to the philological viewpoint, fundamentally called traditional Islamic expertise into question and argued it would have to be completely revamped from a new critical, historicist perspective. For instance, in his review of the XVI Congress of Orientalists in Athens, Becker stridently criticized the displays of native philological expertise at the Congresses, which grounded their capacity for scholarly participation within it.⁹ Becker divided his account in two, dealing first with the European scholars at the Congress, and then commenting on the Orientals present. Moving approvingly and indulgently through the work of his European colleagues who, coming from all over Europe, delivered their papers in French, German and English, he eventually came to the Oriental contingent, who were predominantly Egyptian and included a Turkish novelist.

The Oriental presence was in fact a fixture of the Congresses, and they were mostly, as in the case of Dillman’s presidential address in Berlin reviewed in Part II, warmly received.¹⁰ Becker’s condescending and impatient tone in addressing them was one invocation of the new Islamicist challenging of native Muslim expertise: “If Orientals sometimes do not grasp the point and sense of Orientalist lectures, the reverse is also occasionally the case.”¹¹ Becker granted that the Orientals were capable of masterful displays of eloquence in their respective languages. The refined Oriental was a perfect philological specimen; in the old days that might have sufficed for Orientalist expertise. But Becker wondered what these linguistic flourishes, for that was their sole value, had to do with the growth of scholarly knowledge and expertise. And there was a more sinister side to these exhibitions: they allowed the Orientals participating to imagine themselves as ‘scholars’ on a par with the Europeans. It made it that much more difficult to make it understood to Orientals that they had many years of learning ahead of them to equal European standards. Again, *pace* Said, *Islamwissenschaft* stepped into competition with natives in a way philology could not and did not do, and it did so for the purpose of modernist subjectification, not absencing objectification. To effect the necessary modernist ‘reform’, however, the epistemic gap between European scholars and the Orientals, their disciplinary subjects and projected students, had to be clearly marked out:

It must be the task of future Congresses to aid in the education of the Orient by way of an absolute censorship. The practice thus far, of taking any Oriental who announces himself as such to be a born Orientalist, and granting him unlimited freedom of discourse,

⁸ Snouck stayed for two months and wrote an extended treatment of his experiences in the Dutch journal *De Gids*. See his comments to Carl Bezold: Snouck to Bezold, 8/23/1908, in *Minor German Correspondences of C. Snouck Hurgronje: from libraries in France, Germany, Sweden and the Netherlands* (Leiden, 1987), 98-9. His Dutch article on his experiences is Snouck, “Jong-Turkije, Herinneringen uit Stambol, 25 Juli bis 23 September 1908”, *De Gids* 1 (1909). It is briefly discussed in Becker, “Islam”, *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* v. 5 (1912), 585.

⁹ Becker, C. H. “Der 16. Internationale Orientalisten-Kongreß zu Athen”, *Der Islam* 3 (1912): pp. 292-294.

¹⁰ See Part II, section 2.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 293.

destroys more in a few days than the laborious educational effort of our colleagues in the Egyptian University might build up in a year.¹²

But, the competitive rivalry that drove Becker to seek definitively to deny expertise to native Muslim scholars did not imply a challenge to native Muslim agency in the cause of reform. It was precisely in the case of those Muslims who *were* capable of modernist agency that Becker sought to make Islamicist epistemic expertise clear, for only this could function as a spur to Muslim reform. For example, in a pre-war essay on “Islam and the Colonization of Africa”, prepared for a French audience, Becker projected a division within the Muslim world between those ready for modernist transformation by internal adaptation of European culture and those whose progress, to the extent possible, was to be the work of the colonial state. He drew essentially on an extant dichotomy within German civil society more broadly, between a *Kolonialpolitik* for the German colonial role in black Africa versus a *Kulturpolitik* for the ‘developing’ states in the East and South. The Ottomans, he said, were already moving towards the modernist shift in consciousness, in the face of still great trials, by cultural processes. They were to be encouraged in this task. Sub-Saharan Africa was a different story: here, it was best to police and manage, but not seek uselessly to prevent, a traditional-type Islamicization of these territories. One could here make deals with Islamic representatives on the traditionalist, i.e. ideological and rationalizing basis. But, this was not to shun the progressive task of the colonial state, since it would at least catapult black Africans from the primitive to the medieval world!¹³

However, in his support of the Ottoman Jihad call during the war and in his emotional debate with Snouck in its wake, Becker moved in a completely new direction and defend the Jihad on the basis of a new definition of ‘modernist agency’ that undermined the whole progressive historicism on which Islamicist discourse and practice had initially been built.¹⁴ For Becker, the Ottoman Jihad constituted a rethinking of traditional vocabularies and identities for survival of crisis in the present—the very meaning of what it meant to be ‘modern’ in a pluralistic world bereft of historicist verities, as proffered by Germany’s own example. Hence, what Snouck saw as his German Islamicist colleagues’ propagation of the reactionary notion of Jihad for short term interests, came to represent for Becker the epitome of the conscious dynamism the Islamicists had always called for in the reform of Muslim societies. If Snouck saw the German move as not only a betrayal of their own scholarship but a sign of the moral madness that had led to and sustained the war, Becker saw now a Modernity in which all would have to make their way, if they were to survive, by innovating on the basis of their distinct cultural reservoirs.¹⁵ This had been the lesson and path of German modernization and the

¹² Ibid., p. 294.

¹³ See C. H. Becker, “Der Islam und der Kolonisierung Afrikas” and “Ist der Islam eine Gefahr für unsere Kolonien?” in *Islamstudien II*, 156-210.

¹⁴ The Jihad debate has until now essentially been treated under the rubric of the ‘politicization’ of Islamicist scholarship, whether as such or in war-time, as something good or much more often as something bad. See the exchange in these terms first between Peter Heine, “C. Snouck Hurgronje versus C. H. Becker. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der angewandten Orientalistik” in *Die Welt des Islams*, v. 23/24 (1984), 378-487; and, Hanisch, “Gelehrtenelbstverständnis, wissenschaftliche Rationalität und politische “Emotionen”: Ein Nachtrag” in *Die Welt des Islams*, v. 32, Nr. 1 (1992), 107-23; more recently, Wolfgang G. Schwanitz, “Djihad ‘made in Germany’: Der Streit um den Heiligen Krieg (1914-1915),” in *Sozial Geschichte* 18, no. 2 (2003): 7-34 and Gottfried Hagen, “German Heralds of Holy War: Orientalists and Applied Oriental Studies” in *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 24:2 (2004), 145-262.

¹⁵ The heated polemics on the war, before they turned into a war of pamphlets in the Jihad debate, can be found in: Becker to Snouck, 9/17/1914, 10/8/1914, 10/13/1914, 10/26/1914, 12/29/1914 in University of Leiden Oriental

Ottomans were doing the same. The *Sonderweg* became, in this scenario, in fact a model of pluralist modernization.¹⁶ The new kind of agency, Becker could impute to Ottomans as capable of a distinct modernity of their own was on display in his 1916 essay on “The Turkish Cultural Problematic (*Das türkische Bildungsproblem*)”. He acknowledged here that irrespective of any direct, systematic German or European involvement, a new modernizing but as such basically differential synthesis of Turkey’s Islamic cultural heritage with modern European culture would all the same occur: “More than all pedagogic consultation, will historical development [itself] educate the Orient, and so will, notwithstanding all quarrels in individual cases, the already noted free play of forces be in the ultimate analysis decisive”.¹⁷

From Snouck’s picture of an Ottoman agency blotted out by European political rapaciousness to Becker’s picture of an Ottoman *Sonderweg*, the range of the conceptions of what ‘modern autonomy and agency’ amounted to were diverse and subject to fundamental transformation. Perhaps nothing better sums this up than the fact that when it came the future fate of the Ottoman polity in the ‘era of WWI’, one could find Islamicists backing every live option on the table: protectorate status (Snouck during the war), Ottoman liberalism (Snouck before the war), Pan-Turkic nation-state (Martin Hartmann), modern Islamic state (Becker during the war).¹⁸ Goldziher’s *Islamwissenschaft* remained throughout an anti-imperialist, modernist and reformist practice. But, it was never something *sui generis*, though it was altogether distinct in its own right. Rather, it must be understood and analyzed within the complex of questions and the complex range of positions on the nature of ‘modern agency’ discussed in this prologue. My task in this chapter is to articulate the fundamental character and dynamics of this reformist practice.

By placing it within its *Islamicist context*, we are vouchered a three-fold starting-point. First, Goldziher was committed to a progressive historicism, like Snouck’s, in which the critical task was to recover sociopolitical and cultural developments from under the ideological rationalizations of Islamic jurisprudence and the retrospective traditionalizations and idealizations of the Islamic heritage. These developments belonged, rightly cognized, within the realm of national life while ‘Islam’ belonged properly within the devotional, that of ‘religion’ itself. Goldziher’s projected privatization of Islam was different from Snouck’s, however, in that it was *religiously* motivated. Second, by direct contrast to Snouck, Goldziher believed that the reform, purifying and idealization of Islam could only occur as an internal, synthetic process. For this process encompassed nothing less than the dialectical unfolding of the Islamic tradition itself, ending in its critical purification. This critical telos of the tradition from the *inside* was the only path to true reform and it absolutely required Muslim political autonomy. Third,

Collections (ULOC), Or. 8952, Letters to Snouck Hurgronje, A: 149-5. From around 1908-9, Becker began to type a good deal of his correspondence, so that copies of them have also been preserved in his own Nachlass; hence, most, though not all of the above letters can be found there. Meanwhile, Snouck’s often quite extended and animated exchange with Becker on the war is also there, in Snouck to Becker, 9/19/1914, 10/11/1914, 10/15/1914, 10/20/1914, 10/28/1914, 11/3/1914, 11/9/1914, 12/8/1914 in Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz (GStA PK), VI. HA, Nachlass C. H. Becker, Nr. 4227. Snouck and Goldziher, were, meanwhile, carrying on comparable though less strained discussions about the war, i.e. who was responsible for the great destruction and damage to civilized values it had brought on: those on the Allied side, especially the Serbians and Russians (Goldziher) or all the ‘great’ powers, certainly the Germans (Snouck): Snouck to Goldziher, 10/4/1914, 10/14/1914, 11/6/1914, 11/27/1914, in P. Sj. Van Koningsveld (ed.), *Scholarship and Friendship in Early Islamwissenschaft; The Letters of C. Snouck Hurgronje to I. Goldziher* (Leiden, 1985), 413- 423.

¹⁶ See Becker, “Der türkische Staatsgedanke (1916)”, *Islamstudien II*, 361.

¹⁷ Becker, *Islamstudien II*, 381, 377-384.

¹⁸ For Martin Hartmann’s position, see idem, “Islampolitik” in *Koloniale Rundschau* (1914), 580-604.

Goldziher's reformist perspective differed radically from that of all of his Islamicist colleagues because, for him, the relationship between European Modernity and Islam was *not* a one-way street. In claiming Islamicist expertise over traditional Muslims, Goldziher's tone never even approached the contemptuous one Becker's sense of rivalry could evoke. If Becker wanted the Orientals to know that the day of their expertise from the philologically framed Orientalism of the past was over, Goldziher relied on his capacity to interact with Orientals at the ICO's as a trump card against the philologically obsessed establishment. They could see for themselves that "amongst all the high and mighty Orientalists of the best stamp, no one could speak with the Orientals like Snouck [his fellow inaugurator of the Islamicist program], Landberg [his devotee from Damascus]—and I [Goldziher himself]."¹⁹ Goldziher's aim was thus ultimately the incorporation of Muslim scholars and Islamic scholarship into the critical historicist orbit of *Islamwissenschaft*, which is to say the critical methodologies and perspectives of European Modernity. But, in many ways, this was because he believed Muslims had as much or more to give humanity and Europe by this modernist appropriation. It was they who held a universal monotheistic heritage that, through critical purification, was destined to be 'religion', namely, the universal faith of humankind. And, since this purification could only happen through the critical reconstruction of the Islamic heritage, *Muslims were more important subjects of History and protagonists of its teleological process than Europeans.*

2.

The best way of demonstrating Goldziher's own dialectical engagement with Islamic Modernity is to begin with portrayals of his work that would deny such a thing. The denial can come from quite opposite extremes. For instance, we get insinuations to this effect in Bernard Lewis's introduction to the new English translation of Goldziher's *Lectures on Islam* (1910) rendered in English as *Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law* (1981). After a brief account of the genesis of the work,²⁰ of Goldziher's scholarly background and the tortuous course of his professional career, impacted as it was by anti-Semitism in Hungary and his refusal to leave it, Lewis tried to place the lectures in their historical context. But his aim in doing so was to explain why the translation had had to shift certain elements in the tone and style of the original to heed contemporary sensibilities. This he clearly thought worth the effort, as he considered the text still the classic introduction to and presentation of the field: 'As a guide to Muslim faith, law, doctrine and devotion, at once comprehensive and documented, Goldziher's lectures remain without equal.'²¹ The translation's text was thus to 'update' the text, to show it still fully adequate though in need of a minor beauty treatment in view of changing scholarly fashion. Lewis though made it clear he preferred also the looks of the older treatment and that he found the need to bow to the new fashion distasteful, if necessary:

¹⁹ Ibid, 113.

²⁰ The work started out as a series of lectures Goldziher was commissioned by the Society for Lectures on the History of Religion to deliver in the US. However, as Lewis rightly pointed out, not only due to the ill-health he cited but also because he was thoroughly dissatisfied with the English translations of his lectures, he decided to abandon the American trip at the last minute and instead simply to publish them in his original German. Subsequently, when the lectures eventually also appeared in English using the translation he disapproved of, Goldziher asked the publishers to remove the work, which is how it happened that, despite their wide circulation, reputation and translation into many other languages, the lectures lacked a reliable English version until the one under Lewis's auspices by Andras and Ruth Hamori. Goldziher, *Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law*, vii-viii.

²¹ Ibid, xii.

[Besides “being a product of its time” because of matters, “mostly of detail”, on which Goldziher must be corrected in view of later research,] the book also reflects in a number of ways the very different political and intellectual world of its time. Unlike the modern Western writer on Islamic or other Asian and African topics, Goldziher and his contemporaries had no need to take thought of a possible Muslim reader, but addressed themselves exclusively to a Western audience. Along with virtually all Western writers up to and including his time, he ascribes the authorship of the Qur’an to Muhammad, and cites and discusses it accordingly. For the Muslim, to whom the Qur’an is of divine authorship, this is sacrilege or blasphemy, and the Muslim custom is invariably to cite God as the author and to introduce a Qur’anic quotation with the words, “God said.” Modern orientalist scholarship has adopted an intermediate position, and cites the Qur’an as itself: “the Qur’an says.” This has two advantages. It avoids shocking Muslim sensitivity, without committing the writer to a Muslim theological position. It also avoids confusion with Muslim tradition concerning the sayings of the Prophet (Hadith), which in Muslim practice is cited with the formula, “Muhammad said.” Goldziher’s unself-conscious reference to Muhammad’s authorship of the Qur’an is paralleled by his calm and open discussion of another subject that has since become sensitive and delicate—the pre-Islamic and foreign influences in the Qur’an and Hadith. From a strictly Muslim point of view, to speak of foreign influence in Qur’an and Hadith is to speak of foreign influences on God, and is self-evidently absurd and blasphemous. Modern orientalists, while for the most part not accepting Muslim doctrines, have taken care to avoid offending Muslim feelings, and this has made their discussion of such topics cautious and sometimes insincere. To modern readers, therefore, accustomed to this kind of delicacy, Goldziher’s language, though normal in the early years of this century, may come as a surprise. But these are in reality trivial matters, involving little more than conventions of expression. Of much greater significance is his [Goldziher’s] profoundly sympathetic attitude to Muslim beliefs and achievements. If he lacks the anxious propitiation of writers of our time, he also is free—and this is surely far more important—from both the condemnation and condescension with which most of contemporaries in Europe treated the Muslims, their scriptures, their religion, and their civilization.²²

No great hermeneutic acumen is required to see these passages are marked by a basic dichotomy between the exclusively “Western audience” of the past, with its “unself-conscious”, “calm and open discussion” on one side and the present need to avoid “shocking Muslim sensibility”, and the resulting “sensitive”, “delicate”, “cautious”, “insincere” and “anxious propitiation” on the other. They show Lewis not even coy nostalgia and pining for the days—when there had been “no need to take thought of a possible Muslim reader”. They, moreover, showcase Lewis’s trademark penchant for presenting ‘Islam’ and ‘Muslim’ in a univocal sense, without which his radical dichotomy between ‘Muslims’ and ‘Westerners’ would falter. In the above paragraph, “the Muslim”, “Muslim sensitivity”, “a Muslim theological position”, “a strictly Muslim point of view”, “Muslim doctrines” and “the Muslims” all work to suggest that to be ‘Muslim’ is to be offended by Goldziher’s critical exposition, and that a Muslim not so offended would be less of one. All of this though is rather ironic where Goldziher is concerned. It was after all Goldziher himself who had, in his *Tagebuch*, intimated that, when in Cairo, “I did

²² Ibid, x-xi.

not lie when I said I believe in Muhammad's prophethood".²³ It was Goldziher, whom as I will further demonstrate in this part of the study, made *Islamwissenschaft* the vehicle of his critical cum messianic monotheistic scholarship and read back this Islamicist turn back into his Oriental trip. It was Goldziher who believed History was the scene of the providential realization of 'prophecy' and thought not only Islam capable of it but its critical historicization as the very enacting of it. Lewis's projections, by contrast, kill *in utero* the very telos of Goldziher's work and of the *Vorlesungen* themselves, namely, the idea that the ultimately true Muslim would be one who would comprehend the Islamic heritage in his critical historicist manner. Lewis's polite insult contradicts Goldziher in making an accomplice of him. And, the starting point of the insult, let us take note, was Lewis's claim that Goldziher wrote for an exclusively Western audience and in no way conceived a Muslim readership for his work.

However, it is not only the essentialist perspective on Islam that has served to obscure Goldziher's 'dialectical' engagement with Islamic Modernity and with Islamic modernism. On the opposite end, attempts to identify his work and motivations *tout court* with some version of the indigenous Muslim reform of his time also miss the character of his own Islamicist reformist praxis. Josef van Ess's interesting essay on "Goldziher as a Contemporary of Islamic Reform" is a case in point and thus helps us pinpoint what Goldziher meant by critical reform and what his dialectical modernism entailed.²⁴ In this recent essay, van Ess set out to resolve a singular puzzle: "Why is it that Goldziher's image in the Islamic world is so bad whereas the view which he himself had of Islam was overall so positive?" What prompted the puzzle and served as its first clue was the now equal availability of Goldziher's monumental work of *Hadith* criticism, his *Muhammedanische Studien*, "the most mature and creative product of his scholarship", and the *Tagebuch*, "an emotional—and sometimes rather unbalanced—inner dialogue which was never intended to be printed."

For when Muslims in our days refer to Goldziher as the archetype of the "Orientalist", this epithet not being an especially flattering expression in their discourse, they mainly think of what he said about Hadith in the aforementioned volume, whereas his own impression of Islam—unrestricted praise as it turns out—comes to the fore in the introductory section of the diary where he describes his stay in Damascus and Cairo.²⁵

Van Ess's approach to his proposed puzzle was also to place Goldziher's person and scholarship within their proper historical context. Unlike Lewis, however, his choice of contextualization was to place Goldziher, personally and intellectually, in the budding era of Islamic reform, a period from the foundation of the Islamic modernist Aligarh College in India in the latter half of the nineteenth century to Egypt's so-called 'liberal age' in the first half of the twentieth. Van Ess clearly views this period as one in which Orthodoxy was being progressively compromised by Europe's growing cultural penetration and political direction of events, and the rising generation of Muslim reformers were still flush in the 'discovery of Europe' and the throes of effecting some *modus vivendi* and lasting synthesis between it and their Islamic heritage. As he put it near

²³ See note 192 above.

²⁴ Joseph van Ess, "Goldziher as a Contemporary of Islamic Reform" in Eva Apor and István Ormos (eds.), *Goldziher Memorial Conference* (Budapest, 2005), 37-50.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 37. The reader will no doubt recall these now famous passages of the *Tagebuch* from earlier in our discussion. They will be brought to the fore again in the next section.

the end of the essay: “The marriage between East and West had just started, and the Muslims had not yet discovered how uneasy it was.”²⁶

In placing Goldziher in this cultural setting, van Ess began by noting the openness, in the first decades of the twentieth century, to Goldziher’s ideas, namely, his critical historicization of *Hadith*, at even the great seat of Islamic learning at Cairo’s al-Azhar, where he had himself been granted the privilege of studying during the Oriental trip of his twenties. Van Ess’s point in making the observation though was to juxtapose how radically altered the atmosphere was to become in the second half of the twentieth century. Heavy now with a revivalist backlash, precisely the same critical lines of thought became the subject not only of scholarly but an uncompromising cultural attack meant to bolster “Muslim identity” against Western Orientalist encroachment and distortion: “The uneasy marriage with Europe was over.”²⁷ Thus, having suggested how the course (and end) of the ‘Age of Islamic Reform’ had impacted Goldziher’s reception amongst Muslim scholars, the essay moved to consider the sense in which he, now sullied Orientalist, had himself belonged to it. Van Ess argued Goldziher’s sweeping praise of Islam in the recounting of his Damascene and Cairene experiences in the *Tagebuch* must be understood in terms of what he as young religious reformer found during his sojourn in the Orient. Goldziher’s enthusiasm, van Ess thus suggested, resulted from the positive contrast his direct encounter with the Islamic milieu provided as against the difficult prospects he knew he faced in the attempt to reform his own Jewish community in Hungary. The Jews in Hungary had in 1867 been granted equal rights with the general Christian population. Yet, already by 1871, two years before Goldziher’s departure for his Oriental trip, the community had officially split into Orthodox and Conservative (Neolog) communities, the former refusing to accept the dominance of the latter. Given his breathtakingly warm reception in Muslim contexts, it was no surprise that, “coming from the complicated world of Hungarian Jewry, he immediately recognized how much greater a chance the Muslims had to develop into a healthy and uncontaminated modernity.”²⁸

What Goldziher allegedly found, particularly in Damascus, that so convinced him of the great potential of Muslims for integral reform was a serious and learned religiosity that went hand in hand with open-minded, cosmopolitan inquisitiveness as against blinkered, dogmatic Orthodoxy. Looking in historical retrospect, what Goldziher, van Ess said, had in fact found was, partly, a prevalent freemasonry on the part of the intellectual elite in league with Sufi mystical ecumenicalism, partly, the burgeoning neo-Mu‘tazilite rationalism that came to pervade the Islamic modernism of his generation.²⁹ This was the reason Goldziher later ended up being so out of place and branded another ‘Orientalist’: he “drew the dividing line between backwardness and reform in a way different from latter-day revivalism. He did not think in terms of Puritanism; Wahhabism was still far away”.³⁰ In other words, finding himself in the midst of a faltering Orthodoxy, Goldziher did not foresee the ‘religious reform’ he understood in a modernist sense might be hijacked by a reactionary revivalism in the other direction. The threat to his reformist ideal *he* saw was not any internal puritanical backlash but instead a crass Westernization at the hands of European economic and political imperialism, the processes he saw first-hand at work in Egypt and fought explicitly in his time there and after.

²⁶ Ibid, 49.

²⁷ Ibid, 40.

²⁸ Ibid, 44.

²⁹ See *ibid*, 46-8.

³⁰ Ibid, 46.

In this picture then we are to understand Goldziher's glowing appraisal of Islam in the *Tagebuch* as a sign he'd *joined* 'the Age of Islamic Reform' upon having, as a young man, personally participated in the cultural atmosphere out of which it grew. There was of course still the question of how Goldziher's path-breaking *Muhammedanische Studien* and its critical historicization of *Hadith* was to be squared with his statements in the *Tagebuch*. For van Ess, this was not a great difficulty and could be read out of the tendencies of Islamic modernism of the period. Islamic modernists, like Sayyid Ahmad Khan, emphasized and defended the Qur'an as the ultimate, revealed word of God by in turn demoting the Hadith to a subject of some historical doubt and reconstruction. Goldziher thereby emerged on a par with the Muslim reformers of his age, pitched against Orthodoxy on the one hand, Imperialism and Westernization on the other. Of course, the story, the story had not ended happily and the seeds of its denouement had already been detectable in the earlier period: even at the height of the Reform era, the historicization of the *Hadith* had been an altogether difficult proposition to swallow. Van Ess cited the example of no less a reformist figure than the great Muhammad 'Abduh, who, precisely in adopting the European historicist thematic of turning the Prophet into a culture hero, had made the veracity of the *Hadith* that much more indispensable. Hence, the complex process that would eventually transplant Goldziher from the vanguard of Islamic modernism into a litmus test of Muslim belonging was already underway during his lifetime. Goldziher could not have known this. And, though in later days—now a world-renowned scholar—he assumed a more official voice for and about Islam, he had continued to fathom himself a partisan of Muslim reformers and to fret the imminent demise of their progress by way of soul-destroying, "self-denying" imitation of the West:

Although he never lost a keen sociological interest in the success and failure of modern Islam, he could not entirely forget the emotions of his youth... Fundamentally he never ceased being convinced that he was in tune with the Islamic world... Just as in his youth, he always imagined the danger to be coming from the outside. In a letter to S. A. Poznanski which he wrote in 1921, shortly before his death, he complained about the "self-denying modernism" which had befallen Islam; this was the reason why he doubted "their understanding for the things which they should be taught." He did not yet realize that he was standing between the fronts, and the conflict was still a matter of the future.³¹

Van Ess's conclusion: as a partisan of indigenous, autonomous reform, Goldziher did not contemplate that he could become an emblem of the Europeanization he had consistently fought against. Two points immediately present themselves in this connection and will prove decisive for what I aim to show the reader in this concluding part of the study. The first is a theme that recurs in otherwise quite distinct discussions and understandings of Goldziher, namely, the idea of him as an ebullient young religious reformer. In the version just recounted, he rallies to the cause of Islamic reform *in lieu* of awkward hopes for the same vis-à-vis his Jewish brethren. In his later days, the young reformer is eventually replaced by a scholar, (in van Ess) more staid and official if at bottom still 'reformist', (in Conrad) newly and paradigmatically professional, (in Róbert Simon) even officializing in his conception and depiction of Islam.³² The second point

³¹ Ibid, 50.

³² Mention has already been made of Conrad's professionalization thesis; Róbert Simon's 'late Marxist' (Budapest, 1986) account of Goldziher comes in a long (more than 150 page) introduction to a selection of the latter's correspondence with Nöldeke translated into English, which, besides providing an overview of seven of his major

has to do with van Ess's use of a quote from Goldziher that fills the second set of dots in the last citation and, sufficiently probed, serves to problematize the idea of any one-to-one equation of Goldziher and the Muslim reformers of his time. The quote is from the last line of Goldziher's essay "Die Religion des Islams", a kind of précis of what in expanded form would become the *Lectures on Islam*. It reads in van Ess's rendering: "The adherents of Islam can only raise themselves to a higher level of religious life if they study their religion [in fact, the original reads, "the documents of their religion"] in a historical way."³³ This line in the final paragraph of van Ess's essay, alongside the letter to Poznanski about what the Muslims should be taught, breathe a pedagogic attitude indicating that, properly understood, Goldziher's critical aim targeted not merely self-destructive Westernization, but equally the *corpus* of contemporary Islamic reform.

3.

Perhaps the best means of developing a palpable sense of Goldziher's critical—dialectical—engagement in Islamic reform and modernism is to describe exactly where positions, like those of Lewis and van Ess that see no such engagement go wrong. In Lewis's case, what must foremost be questioned is his own wistful longing projected onto Goldziher, of a time when one had the privilege of writing for an exclusively Western audience and so openly and honestly without the need to palliate 'Muslim' response. There are few Orientalists in the nineteenth century for whom the presumption of any such 'privilege' would be more inapt. Not only did Goldziher develop deep friendships in the Orient with Muslims, like himself, devoted to inquiry, friendships whose memory he kept and cultivated as the fondest of his life.³⁴ Not only did he, unlike many others, develop relations with Orientals at the Orientalist Congresses and considered their always warm reception of him a weapon in his favor. Not only did he come to be beloved and esteemed by Muslim intellectuals more broadly, who called him, as one did at the 1883 Leiden Orientalist Congress, equal to a Sheikh of Islam. Not only, finally, did his house in Budapest become a way station for Muslim thinkers and personalities travelling to Europe, as when a student of a friend from Damascus or a great personality like the Druze leader, Shakib Arslan, called on him in Hungary so as to be able to see, using now a common moniker, "the Sheikh of 'milal wa nihâl (sects and creeds)" for themselves.³⁵ For all that these sentimental relations point to, the exact character of Goldziher's solicitous attitude towards Muslim opinions is far better illuminated by the final brief section of his "The Progress of *Islamwissenschaft* in the Last Thirty Years".

works and the distinct phases of scholarship they are in the analysis to be divided into, discussed in conjunction with one another, i.e. historically, Goldziher's place in the field of Islamic Studies, in European intellectual history more broadly, and, personally, as a Hungarian Jewish scholar. See Simon, Róbert, *Ignác Goldziher, His Life and Scholarship as Reflected in his Works and Correspondence* (Budapest, 1986). I will have more to say about Conrad's and Simon's perspectives in the sections that follow.

³³ Van Ess, "Goldziher as a Contemporary of Islamic Reform", *Goldziher Memorial Conference*, 50. The quote is again from, Ignaz Goldziher, "Die Religion des Islams" in Paul Hinnenberg, *Die Kultur der Gegenwart, Teil I, Abteilung III, I, Die Orientalischen Religionen*, 132.

³⁴ See Patai, *Oriental Diary*, 114-28, Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 57-8, 63, 67-71, 282.

³⁵ See *ibid.*, 94-5, 113, 282, 308-9. The 'student of a friend' was Muḥammad Kurd 'Ali (1876-1953) and the friend from Damascus in this case, Tahir al-Jaza'iri (1851-1920). The fullest, though speculative account of this relationship is in Conrad, Lawrence, "The Pilgrim from Pest: Goldziher's Study Tour to the Near East (1873-1874)" in Ian Richard Netton (ed.), *Golden Roads; Migration, Pilgrimage and Travel in Medieval and Modern Islam* (Surrey, 1993), 134-5. Al-Jaza'iri is also the neo-Mu'tazilite source in Damascus referred to by van Ess in describing the intellectual scene there at the time of Goldziher's Oriental trip. See note 28 above.

In closing this seminal essay, of which we've already had much to say, he began by observing he'd be remiss if, in describing the well-springs of the revolutionary development of *Islamwissenschaft* in the last decades, he left out a source that alongside the innovations of methodology and perspective had been and continued to be of "immeasurable" help to the advancement of the field: "I am thinking here of **the important documents of the Islamic science of religion** put at our disposal by the activities of the presses in the Orient itself".³⁶ What Goldziher was pointing to was the fact that the presses of Egypt, Turkey, India and Persia had begun, over the last decades of the nineteenth century, to publish and make for the first time widely available to Western scholars lithograph versions of treasures of the Islamic tradition. Amongst these, he cited various *Hadith* collections, indispensable works from al-Ghazali and Tabari and others, on the basis of which alone, the critical science of Islam could get off the ground. Earlier in this essay, Goldziher had, as we've seen, marked the Islamic science of *Hadith* criticism as the first instance of a science of textual criticism in "all of world-literature". He had there also included the pregnant proviso that the "mature" and "objective" methodologies of contemporary European "historical criticism" were quite other than those of the "Eastern predecessors".³⁷ Now, in the closing lines of the essay, acknowledging the recent easy accessibility of so many monuments of the Islamic heritage as "having been a powerful factor in the progress of a more grounded and specialized knowledge as to the historical development of the doctrine and institutions of Islam", he concluded with this appeal for the future:

The hope now is the scholars of the East would want in return also to draw benefit from our scientific methods, so as they, to whom we owe gratitude for so much amazing material, would, through competent collaboration in our efforts, also contribute to the advance of the scientific investigations of their own past and present.³⁸

Here again Goldziher allows us to kill two birds with the same stone. His solicitation of Muslim participation in European scholarship is the virtual opposite of branding any such 'un-Islamic' as Lewis's schema would have us do. But, Goldziher's crediting of the publications of the 'Muslim presses', as they were then called, for providing the textual foundations of *Islamwissenschaft* and so of the German Orientalist scholarship of which he was a part, suggests thus also a counter-thesis to Said's apologetic dismissal of German Orientalism. According to Said, this body of scholarship can be digested within his framework, meaning, safely ignored as a half-ethereal, half-pedantic mass, because, despite lacking the overt connection with a national imperial project of its own, it was parasitic on the textual and other sources appropriated by French and British imperialism. It allegedly thus represented no more than an 'authoritative' reworking of the prerogatives and epistemics of the same.³⁹ Goldziher, on the other hand, saw

³⁶ Goldziher, "Die Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten", *Gesammelte Schriften*, IV, 468.

³⁷ Ibid, 450.

³⁸ Ibid, 469.

³⁹ Said's strange dalliance with German Orientalism is at *Orientalism*, 18-19. It was first a playful, *faux* apology: "Any work that seeks to provide an understanding of academic Orientalism and pays little attention to scholars like Steinthal, Müller, Becker, Goldziher, Brockelmann, Nöldeke—to mention only a handful—needs to be reproached, and I freely reproach myself." From there, he moved to a scene from Eliot's *Middlemarch* to display the 'authority' assumed by 'German scholarship', especially German Orientalist scholarship, already before the middle of the nineteenth century. There was a clear note of derision about his references, targeting it as simultaneously ethereal and pedantic. Next, it turned out that while the German focus was essentially "scholarly" and on the "classical"

Muslims themselves as having provided the sources for Islamicist scholarly advance, while he hoped they would in turn become a part of the modernist, critical scholarship on Islam.

There was, in the very knowing locutions of “we”, “our” science, “our” method, “our” historical criticism that peppered Goldziher’s 1904 address to his Euro-American colleagues implied an appeal to the ‘Eastern colleagues’ that they become subjects and not only objects of this European science of Islam. The essay meant to effect the very consolidation of the new Islamicist discipline was suggesting that it could be as much an Islamic as an Islamicist science. Thanking the Eastern scholars in the name of the Western colleagues for their material contributions, calling on them in turn to learn from and take advantage of the European methodologies and achievements⁴⁰, this whole course played out a reciprocity and mutual scene, within which, the two scholarly traditions (European and Islamic) might eventually meet and be unified. This was, moreover no small synthesis, no mere matter of inter-cultural rapprochement, but the promise of a scientifically critical monotheism and such no less than the providential key to the future of humankind.

Hence, far from enjoying the now sadly vanished prerogative of being able to discourse about Muslims without having to worry about them as an audience, Goldziher tried instead to make his European colleagues see Muslim scholars were *listening*, thinking and responding. This became clear, for instance, in his *Die Richtungen Der Islamische Koranauslegung (The Paradigms of Islamic Qur’an Interpretation)*,⁴¹ when the text turned to a description of the Islamic modernism of Egypt and the paradigm of Qur’anic commentary associated with it. Goldziher had personal knowledge of this movement though its first guiding spirit, Sayyid Jamal ad-Din “al-Afghani” (1839-1897), an old friend and fellow political agitator from his Cairo days whom he’d met a second time during the latter’s ‘Paris exile’. Goldziher argued that Afghani’s

Orient, always ethereal as against the “actual” one of the British and French, that it had been physically and metaphysically predicated on French and British looting. Finally, German Orientalism’s especial “intellectual authority over the Orient”, shared with Anglo-French and later American Orientalism, was associated with a “serious, perhaps ponderous style of expertise” that as usual amounted to a moralization of power. The transitions here remind one exactly of what Said blamed the Orientalists of, except he was not planning to conquer anyone. It was like his depiction of his Orientalist foes to dismiss a whole century of scholarship with a passage from a novel. In fact, Said’s whole ugly duckling treatment of German Orientalism is akin to how he said Orientalists took care of Orientals who did not behave as the Orientals that they were, namely, as exceptions that metaphysically prove the case. Here was one more sign the narrative structure of *Orientalism* was that of revenge, a doing to the Orientalists what it was said they had done to the Orientals.

⁴⁰ In fact, Goldziher had just, in the paragraph before the above cited last sentence of the essay, given measured voice to the usually fulsome complaints of European scholars about the editing and appended commentary of the Eastern lithographs, but to exculpate this as a small price for the great service rendered.

⁴¹ Goldziher’s last major work, it emerged out of a series of lectures on the topic in the University of Upsala in 1913. See Goldziher, Ignaz. *Die Richtungen der Islamische Koranauslegung* (Leiden, 1920), ix. ‘*Richtungen*’ is literally ‘directions’, and is used figuratively to mean ‘schools’ or ‘movements’; the broad aim of this text was to show the hermeneutical invocation and use of the Qur’an as an always historical matter. For instance, in the first centuries, running he portrayed it as having run paralleled and been conditioned by the same forces and divergences responsible for the construction and deployment of *Hadith* and so subject to the same historical, historicist criticism. Goldziher here demonstrated the Qur’an to have literally shown up differently for the major rival intellectual movements and tendencies in Islamic history, each arriving through its own schematic concerns at its own Qur’an. My use of ‘paradigms’ for ‘richtungen’ is meant to convey some of this flavor; especially, as the concept ‘paradigm’, now generally unmoored from Kuhn’s technical use of it, has, in academic parlance, veered towards ‘socio-historically conditioned schema’, akin to what Goldziher was after. The only proviso would be that Goldziher did not at all subscribe to the epistemological skepticism generally associated with ‘paradigms’, in Hegelian fashion, believed the historical schemas to be (providentially) directed towards historical self-consciousness of themselves, marking their progress as their truth and *telos*.

“energetic fight” against the ruling theology and calls for “theological renewal”, namely, “the religio-theological note of his intellectual work”, had been, in the broader public, drowned out by his political struggle against European imperialism and advocacy of ‘Pan-Islamist’ defense for this same purpose. Hence, Goldziher emphasized in his critique, the circle that had eventually crystallized around Afghani’s ‘student’, Muhammad ‘Abduh (1849-1905), in Egypt, to draw out the theological direction for which the teacher had been the first impetus and which thereafter had been consolidated in the student’s Qur’anic commentary.⁴²

Consider two highly indicative passages from *Die Richtungen* on the matter precisely of ‘Muslim’ scholars as students of and respondents to modern European culture. In the first, Goldziher, in introducing Afghani and ‘Abduh, presented them as having consolidated their belief in autonomous Islamic reform and their indigenous cultural self-identification, because it cried for deepening and defense, precisely through their extensive interaction with and absorption of European culture during their Parisian exile. Goldziher’s tone and vocabulary showed how much he approved of such work. In the second, Goldziher noted the way in which ‘Abduh’s Qur’anic commentary was elaborated in correspondence with intellectual trends in modern European culture. This culture accordingly was thus being made the standard of enlightened rationality by which alone a correct exegesis of the Qur’an might be arrived at:

During their exile in Europe, the teacher and student continued their agitating activities through journalistic instruments, which set as their goal the liberation of the Islamic peoples from all foreign rule and simultaneously the Renaissance of Islam using its own means. Islam has at its disposal, without the mimicking of European culture, the spiritual wherewithal to rejuvenate itself and to compete with every other religion. Indeed, they arrived at this consciousness anew especially through the experiences afforded them by their European interaction, to which they gave themselves in the most thorough way. Well-known is the since its time (1883) much remarked on polemic of Dschemāl al-dīn’ with **Ernest Renan** in the columns of the *Journal des Débats*. The part of the former in it had as its goal defense of the honor of Islam and its cultural capacity against the French academic’s opposing conviction. ‘Abduh himself was active jointly with his teacher as editor of the in the year 1884 in Paris published periodical paper “al-‘Urwat al-wuthqā” (“The indissoluble bond”), which was intended, despite the external obstacles, to spread their political ideas aimed at the emancipation of the Islamic peoples from foreign patronizing and oppression (*Vergewaltigung*) throughout the Islamic Orient.⁴³

This *Tafsir* [‘Abduh’s Qur’an commentary] strives further always to do justice to the principle that “a religion, full of idiotic fables (*churāfāt*), and enlightened reason (*al-‘aql al-mustanīr*) cannot cohabit a single brain”. Hence, objects of the first kind are not possible in the Qur’an, which, if correctly explained, cannot possibly contradict enlightened reason. The latter ‘Abduh comprehends in a completely modern sense. He is in fact saturated through and through by the ideas he’s absorbed within himself through his intellectual interaction in Europe or from its literature thereafter. It is not without a piquant effect, that the Muftī cites in his exegetical lectures (on [Sura] 4, v. 17) **Herbert Spencer**, with whom he also undertook personal discussions; that (on Sura 2) in explaining the ban on usury he adduces **Tolstoy**, and in his exegesis of the *sūrat al-‘aṣr*

⁴² See *ibid*, 321-2.

⁴³ *Ibid*, 323.

[Sura 103] the “conventional lies” (*al-akādīb al’urfijja*) of my friend in youth and fellow-countryman, **Max Nordau**, all probably via the French translation of these works. Nothing modern is strange to him or to those who associate themselves with his teaching.⁴⁴

Moreover, Goldziher emphasized how, in countering the widening scope of Christian missionary activity in Egypt after the “English occupation”, ‘Abduh’s school had come to deploy the biblical criticism of Christian theology itself, to juxtapose the latter’s self-avowed skepticism as to large parts of the biblical corpus with the indisputable authenticity of the Qur’an: “‘Abduh and his people have been altogether initiated into the course of Western theological studies and rely on it in the justification and interpretation of Muhammad’s accusation that the biblical texts found in the hands of the “book-possessors” [the people of the book] are not the authentic works of the prophets and apostles.”⁴⁵

4.

So much then for the idea that Goldziher harbored little sense of a ‘Muslim’ audience, or that he might have appreciated or approved of any such blithe ignorance. Let’s now examine van Ess’s hypothesis, on the opposing side, that Goldziher must be seen essentially on a par with the Muslim reformers of his time: stationed between anti-Orthodoxy and anti-imperialism, thinking of himself as such and little aware of the Wahhabist backlash in the making. If this is right, then Goldziher must be seen as having suffered the historical misfortune of being part of a whole Age of Reform that came to be deemed one of principally capitulation, leading him to be relegated, alongside it, to an emblem of the European encroachment he had fought against. What is, however, wrong with this thesis is its failure to recognize the complexity, the dialectical nature, of Goldziher’s stance towards and ‘participation in’ the Islamic modernism he encountered. For, this was an encounter which involved part enthusiastic support and agreement in the midst of an overall critique. That is, far from having to view Goldziher’s engagement with Muslim reform as belonging to a now discarded Muslim past of tragic or ironic aftermath, one should from the historical standpoint rather consider his own vision of the matter. Goldziher identified *not* with the Islamic world or its nascent modernism in their contemporary incarnation, but rather with Islam’s and Islamic modernism’s possible ideal future. This future, a purified monotheism ultimately not just Muslims or Jews but all of humanity, he was, however naively, certain would one day arrive.

Take the trenchant question of Wahhabism in its relation to the Age of Reform. To start, the claim that Wahhabism or in fact its resonance already in the reformist period itself was simply not on Goldziher’s radar is demonstrably mistaken. First, he and the Islamists after him were from early on fascinated by the Wahhabist movement. As we’ve seen Goldziher, regularly discussed the movement as one perfectly placed to highlight the fundamental importance of *Ijma* ‘ (consensus) in Islamic history, namely, the dynamic elaboration of Islamic Orthodoxy that

⁴⁴ Ibid, 355.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 342-3. Later, he again noted, this time with clear disapproval, how manifestly ready the ‘Abduh school was, “for its rationalistic purposes also to make use of the Islamic prejudice of Thora- and Evangelical-falsification on the part of Jews and Christians”. What Goldziher found distasteful here was a one-sided historical criticism directed at marginalizing from Muslim tradition those parts of it said to be of biblical lineage but now deemed offensive from a modern scientific standpoint. The problematic idea in question here was that of the common descent of all humankind from Adam, which was, in view of the difficulties it posed vis-à-vis modern biological theory, declared of Hebraic origin and thus not necessarily incumbent on Muslims, *ibid*, 359.

made and 'Islamic history' more broadly developmental processes. The Wahhabis were clearly reactionaries who sought to return Islamic society to the original *Sunna* of the seventh century as allegedly contained in the Qur'an and *Hadith* and these sources alone. Yet, they were nonetheless considered a heterodox phenomenon by Islamic Orthodoxy, their sense of the *Sunna* as superseded by the *Ijma'*, thus proving that 'reactionary' and 'Orthodoxy' did *not* mean the same thing in the Islamic context.

Second, however, Goldziher was quite aware that the Wahhabis' anti-Orthodoxy and willingness to challenge the *Ijma'* as it stood at the time made them more than mere reactionaries. Namely, it allowed them in fact a positive cachet and reformist role even amongst Islamic modernists or rather the most, religiously-speaking, serious amongst them. These modernists sought, by citing and drawing on Ibn Taymiya, the inspiration of the Wahhabis, to position their own attempts at a more modern and liberal conception of Islam itself as a conservative purification of the accumulated abuses of Orthodoxy. It was his understanding of the importance of this influence on the Islamic modernism of Egypt that led Goldziher quite deliberately to characterize the movement there as '*Kultur-Wahhabismus*'.⁴⁶ Goldziher's thinking here paralleled Snouck's characterization in his 'American' lectures for the *American Committee for Lectures on the History of Religions*, entitled *Mohammedanism*. Snouck compared contemporary reformist developments in Islam to the European precedent with respect to Catholicism: he mused that Islamic Catholicism (Orthodoxy) was also countered by both a "conservative Protestantism" (the Wahhabis, its most formidable contemporary offshoot) and a "liberal Protestantism" (Islamic modernism). His qualification of the thesis was also one he and Goldziher shared, though with differing valuations: the traditionalizing dynamism of *Ijma'* made Islamic Catholicity a good deal more resilient than its European Christian variety.⁴⁷

To understand the precise balance of enthusiasm and criticism in Goldziher's account of the Islamic modernist program(s), we must again stay with his focus on *Ijma'*. For, while Goldziher saw this principle as the foundational source that made possible and the underlying motor that had driven the dynamic development of properly 'Islamic' ideas and institutions in the past, he also stressed how, historically, it had come to constitute an equally powerful instrument religio-theological and cultural stagnation in Islamic history. For many centuries now, it had become a crucial part of the consensus that, in the investigation of all the diverse branches of religious life, which is to say of all aspects of human life as juristically represented, nothing had been left to later generations of Muslims but *Taqlid* (emulation): as Goldziher derisively put it, the "parroting" of the juristic authorities of the early centuries on all such questions. What was meant by these early authorities was of course the methodologies, practices and conclusions built up in their name in the remaining four Orthodox *Madhahib*, each with its own distinct rites and legal *corpus*. *Ijma'*, in other words, had come also to mean derogation of independent expounding of the law, as in 'formative Islam', by way of the autonomous study of the root sources, the Qur'an and the *Hadith*. The 'the doors of independent ascertainment' (*Ijtihad*), open supposedly only to the early authoritative period, had been conclusively closed, leaving juristic interpretation the monopoly of the self-styled remnants in the Orthodox schools law.⁴⁸

Both the Wahhabis and the Islamic modernists equally opposed the Orthodox presumption in favor of *Taqlid* and as such fought for revision of the *Ijma'*, in the belief the

⁴⁶ Ibid, 321.

⁴⁷ See Hurgronje, Snouck C. *Mohammedanism; Lectures on Its Origin, Its Religious and Political Growth, and Its Present State* (New York, 1916), 81-85.

⁴⁸ Goldziher, *Die Richtungen der Islamische Koranauslegung*, 328-9. Add other reference.

doors of *Ijtihad* remained always open and so through renewed practice of the same. Goldziher himself unabashedly supported Islamic modernists, when they proposed and undertook *Ijtihad* to interpret Islam in light of and so as to meet the challenges posed by modern transformations to Muslim societies. Where he broadly differed with the Islamic modernists and his account turned to critique had to do with his conviction that *their* attempt to renovate the *Ijma* ‘ as yet still proceeded in the traditionalist (unconscious) fashion, as against his prospective historicist (self-conscious) one. The Wahhabis countered the extant consensus so as to be able to read reactionary ideas into the original sources, the Qur’an and the *Hadith*, the modernists, so as to read modern liberal ideas into them. The point, as Goldziher saw it, was ultimately to reorient critically *Ijma* ‘ itself, from the past to the future, from traditional to historical consciousness: to historicize properly the past, meaning precisely Islam’s revealed and holy documents themselves, so as thereby to realize the *prophetic* meaning contained in them.⁴⁹

This specific balance of support cum critique is clearly visible in Goldziher’s account of Islamic modernism in *Die Richtungen*. But then he did not simply lump all Muslim modernists into the same camp. Rather, he distinguished between variants differing widely, as he saw it, in motivation, methodology and basic program. Accordingly, the balance he struck did not apply to each and level out in the same way. In this text, he divided his focus between first the Islamic modernism of India, next that of Egypt, and he juxtaposed the two not only regionally but also logically as two distinct models of modernist reform. Indian modernism he introduced and dealt with somewhat summarily. It was, namely, the Qur’an commentary of Abduh’ that was taken as the exemplar of ‘modernist exegesis’ and made the crux of the chapter.⁵⁰ The Indian modernist variant, the first one active historically, he glossed as primarily a “cultural movement (*Kulturbewegung*)”, driven to bolster the cultural capacity and image of Islam. This Islamic modernism sought of course not merely to defend Islam against those who would besmirch it as unfit for, or unable to survive, the stringent demands of modern society and culture, but, a good deal more, to demonstrate it the most rational confession most relevant to the civilized present and future, a modernist gem awaiting delivery from an age-old crust of dirt and distortion diffusing its light. Goldziher read this ‘cultural drive’ as proceeding under the sign and influence of overpowering European intervention, as an attempt primarily to idealize Islam in European eyes.

The Islamic modernism of Egypt, however, he presented by explicit contrast as emanating not from at bottom cultural anxieties but as rather itself a religio-theological standpoint. The Egyptian modernists, as much as their Indian counterparts, vehemently opposed and fought the abuses of Orthodoxy as responsible for the decadence that had befallen Islam and Islamic societies. But, they did so because these abuses were proven as such not less than civilized or “**anti-Kultur (*Kulturfeindlich*)**”, but “**anti-Islamic (*Islamfeindlich*)**”.⁵¹ The reform of Islam, they accordingly believed, was to be undertaken from within, namely, from an

⁴⁹ In other words, understanding these sacred texts in their full historical *development* meant the consciousness that both their *creation* and *ever-reception* were as inherently historical matters always continuous with one another. It involved, namely, a critical consciousness as the telos of such development, whose task was to reconstruct it as part of a History tending towards the adequate definition and clarification of ‘religion’ and ‘nationality’, and the proper division of their respective spheres, the ‘individual’ and ‘society’.

⁵⁰ Goldziher tried in part to explain and apologize for this choice by noting that Sayyid Aḥmad Khan’s Qur’an commentary was composed in Urdu and thus was not accessible to him. However, his juxtaposition of ‘Indian’ vs. ‘Egyptian’ modernism made clear that the choice of ‘Abduh’s *Tafsir* had not been an accidental one. Rather, he considered the latter the much more serious author from a religious and hence critical standpoint. See *ibid*, 320.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, 321.

indigenous (Arab), Islamic perspective rather than in a bid to satisfy Europeans or European culture. Moreover, the autonomous consciousness of their own values allowed them a selective, critical approach to European modernity, a capacity to appreciate its manifest advances while maintaining an awareness of potential defects. It was not difficult to tell from Goldziher's prose which movement he approved of more! Besides these two variants, one could further read a third into Goldziher's prose in its brief introduction of Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani, who, while counted a chief inspiration of the Egyptian movement, was seen as more embroiled in its overtly political side. Afghani, namely, had been the great champion of the anti-imperialism that set itself against the crisis of sovereignty in the Muslim world—Muslim states unable, if still decrepitly extant, to withstand European exploitation—and promoted Muslim consciousness and solidarity as the required response.⁵²

As for the respective programs of the modernist schools, the Indian reformers in Goldziher's account were like all who would later follow in their focus on the juristic reification and stagnation of Islam as the cause of its present religio-cultural degeneracy, which infecting Muslim society thereby, blocked their proper, mutual development. What they took to have happened was that social and political regulations and scientific conceptions formulated in an earlier stage of human cultural development had come, very much in contravention of the 'spirit of Islam', to be equated with 'Islam' as such. Thus eternalized, they had led to its fossilization and the stultification at hand. Of course, the point being made was that the 'spirit of Islam' was an inherently progressive one. And, accordingly—Goldziher cited especially Sayyid Amir 'Ali (1849-1928) here—not only did Indian modernists work in their assertion of a thoroughly rationalistic Islam openly to revive and champion Mu'tazilite theology. They were also prepared to impute to the latter, altogether ahistorically and as supposedly having made further explicit the original spirit of the faith, the notion of legal evolutionism: the idea that the 'divine law' was no static eternal matter but meant itself to evolve with changing historical circumstances in line with the cultural progress foreordained by providence.⁵³ The proposition itself was of course read back exegetically into the Qur'an as reflecting the inner truth of Muhammad's prophecy, the true 'Islam'.

Two broad tendencies thus characterized above all the general direction of Indian modernism. First was the need to see the Qur'an as not only the fount of an inherently progressive outlook, but, by ahistorical and apologetic means, as itself a singularly progressive text within its immediate cultural environment and, even still, in anticipating the cultural progress to come. Goldziher picked on, especially, Sayyid Ahmad Khan's conjecture that, all 'appearances' inside and outside the text to the contrary notwithstanding, Muhammad was, in an alleged ban on the institution of slavery prevalent amongst the Arabs, the first spiritual leader to have outright fought the barbarity. Second, having thus committed to the apologetic idealization

⁵² Mawlana Abu'l-Kalam Azad, a leading intellectual of the Khilafat movement amongst Indian Muslims, which, a generation after Sayyid Ahmad Khan's British accommodationism, sought and reflected a reorientation politically towards the pan-Islamist ideas of Afghani, and who had himself thus come under the influence of the latter and Abduh', proffered a classification of the Islamic Reform of the era much akin to Goldziher's. He distinguished between three types. First, there was the "westernized modernism" of the first generation, which he contemned "servile imitation", amongst which he counted the early Indian modernists, including Sayyid Ahmad Khan. Second, there was the movement for "political reform" in whose ranks Afghani was prominent. And, finally, there was that demanding "religious reform", in which grouping, he, like Goldziher, placed Abduh' and to which he considered himself to belong. See Ahmad, Aziz, "Sayyid Ahmad Khān, Jamāl al-dīn al-Afghānī and Muslim India" in *Studia Islamica*, No. 13 (1960), 73-4.

⁵³ See *ibid.*, 311-316

of the Qur'an, was the Indian modernists' willingness to ride roughshod over the rest of the traditional literature of Islam, even crucially the 'critical' collections of *Hadith* as open to suspicion, much less the biographies and histories, which they likened to fables and legends. The attempt to draw religious understanding from all of this was said to be akin to trying to do so from *The Thousand and One Nights!*⁵⁴

All of this naturally posed a radical challenge to the Ijma' and professed an inherently dynamic sense of the latter in attempting to renew it. But, how little sympathy, *pace* Van Ess, Goldziher had for *such* revision of the Ijma' as featured in the Islamic modernism of India can be gleaned easily enough from the exact contrast he drew in moving from it to introduce the Islamic modernism of Egypt. After having designated the former a primarily "cultural movement" in thrall to Europe, he noted the facetiousness of the Indian as opposed to Egyptian, approach to theological points of view, of which, as he put it, "they conveniently dispose (*bequem abfinden*) and with which they deal in a light-hearted manner of little scruple."⁵⁵ Goldziher's insinuation was manifestly that no conscientious, devout Muslim could quite take the games of the Indians seriously. Again, what stands out is the difference of his own historicization of the *Hadith* literature in the *Muhammedanische Studien*, that aimed to proffer this corpus, as much as the Qur'an, as a shining light reflecting and constituting the religio-cultural development, reception and growth, of Islam, rather than at its dismissal as a mass of fabrications.⁵⁶

Moving to the more promising, theologically-oriented Islamic modernism of Egypt, of which *Die Richtungen* considered Muhammad 'Abduh the major architect, it had obviously been subsequent to the Indian movement, but Goldziher made a point of not being able to detect any direct influence on it from the latter. For, the Egyptian modernists, he stressed, were themselves much more wont, in their challenge to Orthodoxy, to cite and rely on the authorities and figures of the Islamic past itself. Namely, the Egyptian school was adamant that *their* bid to 'reform' Islam was precisely that, one which came from the inside and made the most proper use of Islamic theology's own fundamental methodologies and sources. Furthermore, the Egyptian modernists were full of pride in and committed to defense of both their Muslim and Oriental individuality, with an emphasis on the Arabic basis of Islam and a sense of shame in the sacrifice of either to the "reckless and unprincipled aping of the European way".⁵⁷ In other words, the modern world was here welcomed as the opportunity of a theological renaissance, which, via an independent, novel rereading of the *Sunna* in the light of the new conditions and possibilities, would allow the religious universality and finality of Islam, but so also the local indigenous identity of its adherents, to shine forth anew.

It was by reference to this mood that Goldziher tried to prove "Kultur-Wahhabismus" as against "bridge-theology" the more appropriate designation for the Egyptian movement. The Egyptians like the Indians had of course zeroed in on the juristic reification of Islam as the object of their reform. But, their approach was not to mangle the Muslim canon in favor of its renegades and an exegetical idealization of the revelation. Rather, they proposed to undertake *Ijtihad* (an independent study) on the traditional sources, the Qur'an and the *Hadith*. And, by

⁵⁴ See *ibid*, 316-7.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 321.

⁵⁶ Conrad makes very much the same point in his earlier essay, "The Pilgrim From Pest" on Goldziher's Oriental study trip. What must be added to his analysis is that Goldziher's historicization of the *Hadith* thus constituted an aspect of his *own* reformist project. See Conrad, Lawrence I. "The Pilgrim From Pest: Goldziher's Study Tour to the Near East (1873-4)" in *Golden Roads; Migration, Pilgrimage and Travel in Medieval and Modern Islam*, 139.

⁵⁷ Goldziher, *Die Richtungen der Islamische Koranauslegung*, 321.

thus refusing the strictures of the contemporary *Ijma'* in favor of emulation, to allow precisely a new reading and so consensus, one of an inherently more dynamic sense, to emerge outside of the stultified frameworks and conclusions of the four Orthodox schools of Islamic jurisprudence. For, it was the Orthodox *Madhāhib*-schools' transformation of the divine law into a business, their casuistic buying and selling of 'good conscience', that had so corrupted Islam and so damaged Islamic society, whereas the welfare of the Muslim community was in fact the highest imprimatur of the law! One may note the extent to which large parts of Goldziher's 'description' of the complaints of the 'Abduh school about Orthodox jurisprudence mirrored almost exactly his own commentary and ideas on the subject in previous works:

They [the Egyptian reformists] find, in agreement with Ghazālī, who had expressed the very same thought already eight hundred years ago, the key to the explanation of the indisputable reigning decadence in the fact of the fossilization of the four Orthodox rites with their alone-redeeming science: the *fiqh* with its approach to the law as built up in the *Madhāhib* schools—based on antiquated long overtaken circumstances, in no way to be incorporated within the sphere of religion and irreconcilable even between one another—and its useless casuistry... The arbitrary school wisdom of the four Imams and what the later generations of *Fuqaha* spun around it must be rejected as inadequate to the correct Islam and no longer at all passing in our time. The overwhelming part of this *Madhāhib*-science basically concerns itself with the normalization of circumstances, which change according to time and place and are as such subject to alteration, i.e. with the rules of commercial and economic relations. This cannot be stopped up by religious ordinance, or for all the future established in static form. The *Madhāhib* with their divergent determinations amongst one another have introduced division within Islam, which requires for its bloom much more unity.⁵⁸

The solution, the reformist program of the 'Abduh school, was, as already indicated by the tenor of these complaints, a new reading of the *Sunna*, to effect a division between, on the one hand, the civil and political concerns of Islamic law as subject in their dynamism to progress and, on the other, the more properly religious, i.e. personal, ethical, devotional and so absolute aspects of it. It was still left to the '*Ulama*', that is, if they proved themselves capable of it, to arbitrate where the demarcation was to be drawn and which revisions were required by new conditions. The proposal thus was for a great conference of Islamic scholars from across the globe that through religious scholarship on the traditional sources, *undertaken in unison*, would issue provisions cognizant of present circumstances and needs allowing Muslim societies and states to thrive once more. However, all of this, instituting an avowedly dynamic sense in the *Ijma'* was grounded on the understanding that the paramount imprimatur on the welfare of the community in these sources allowed for the circumvention of the literal text of their particular stipulations when necessary, in view of the larger principle underlying these. Goldziher called it a "not to be under-estimated concession".

⁵⁸ Ibid, 326. In another place, when reporting on the Egyptian reformists' fulmination against the casuistic tricks developed in the Orthodox schools to overcome the avowed stipulations of the law, Goldziher interjected by and by his own position about such things having never had anything to do with the positive legal practices in Islamic societies. Again the fundamental point was that Islamic law had come to function primarily as a reified ideal used ideologically, the idea that became constitutive of Islamicist discourse as a whole. See *ibid*, 331.

In *this* Islamic modernism, Goldziher saw the authoritative impact of al-Ghazali at work: the Islamic modernists of Egypt could rely on him in their insistence on not only the permissibility but the obligation of *Ijtihad* in each generation, but also in their sequestering of the religious sphere proper, as one of personal devotion, from the socio-cultural affairs of the world. Of course, the weight of the same authority, Goldziher approvingly noted, was equally behind them when they professed ‘religion’ as a sincere internal understanding of, and relationship to, the one God. Al-Ghazali was behind them when they insisted that this was the spirit in which the practice of Islam’s laws and rituals were to be undertaken as against a mere external, i.e. superstitious, obedience to formal rites handed down the generations, a ‘faithfulness’ left at the almost animal level!⁵⁹ But then this was only *one* side of the coin. On the other side was the Egyptian reformists’ unequivocal claim that their idea of a dynamic *Ijma*’, powered by fresh *Ijtihad* and measured in terms of societal adequacy, emanated directly from the *Sunna* itself as the only possible *correct* interpretation of it.

In other words, the Egyptian modernists were determined to view *their* modernization as a conservative theology that would erase the false, irrational, abusive adaptations—*innovation* (*Bid’a*)—of the intervening centuries and return Islam to its original sources. And, in all this talk of the need to re-establish the pristine original *Sunna* of the prophet so as to revive the true Islam from the nightmare of the “*Madhāb*-business” and from amongst the since accumulated superstitious refuse about it, Goldziher heard, rhetorically at least, the unmistakable voice of Ibn Taymiya, the puritanical inspiration behind Wahhabism. Ibn Taymiya had also proclaimed *Ijtihad* an indelible aspect of the Islamic legacy intended to defend its authenticity. Nowhere was this puritanical impact on the ‘Abduh School, Goldziher thought, clearer than in its fulmination against the saint cults, popular amongst ordinary Muslims throughout and tolerated by Orthodoxy, but which they harangued as an inveterately anti-Islamic outrage against true monotheism. He, however, also reminded the reader that Ibn Taymiya would have been anything but sympathetic to the Egyptian reformists’ tack of reading modern socio-cultural prerequisites into the *Sunna*.⁶⁰ Altogether accordingly, he summed up the balancing act of the Egyptian modernists thus: “So then this theological modernism stands under the influence of three factors: that of the ultra-**conservative** tendency of Ibn Taymiya, that of the **ethical** religious conception of Ghazālī and that of the requirements of **progressive** development.”⁶¹

When Goldziher did ultimately embark on his systematic analysis of ‘Abduh’s Qur’an commentary, the putative object of this final chapter of *Die Richtungen*, it was naturally to demonstrate the same conservative appropriation of ethical and modernist reform at work. ‘Abduh’s *Tafsir*, he argued, went in fact markedly further than past Orthodox writers in its emphasis on the absolute perfection and integrity of the revealed text, so in the rhetorical and narrative sense as well as and as inseparable from the substantive. The Qur’an, one might say, was made here a locus of the principle of sufficient reason, with nothing arbitrary, all impeccably and fully determined as possible and incapable of being other than what it was.⁶² In fact, ‘Abduh’s method of holding the Qur’an the bulwark of modernity and reform would be, at least

⁵⁹ See *ibid*, 326-330, 340-344, 364-70.

⁶⁰ See *ibid*, 334-340. In the *Vorlesungen*, Goldziher noted Ibn Taymiya, coming in the aftermath of the crisis of the Mongol invasions, had been so vociferous against the ‘abuses’ of Orthodoxy as to have been branded a heterodox thinker and tried as such, dying ultimately in jail. His piety, however, had been increasingly appreciated by later generations. See Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 290.

⁶¹ Goldziher, *Die Richtungen der Islamische Koranauslegung*, 342.

⁶² See *ibid*, 344-8.

as it appears in Goldziher, immediately recognizable to any reader familiar with Galileo's apologetic strategy in his famous "Letter to the Grand Duchess Christina".⁶³ Namely, its driving idea was that the revealed word of God, in its perfection, was not possibly in any way false or irrational, could not 'lie'. This idea was then supplemented with a further crucial one that there was, besides the revelation of the word, a second revelatory discourse, that of God's creation. Goldziher showed that the Islamic heritage in fact acknowledged creation as a second revelation. The rest followed simply, as the two revelatory sources had of course to be the same, incapable of contradicting one another. The upshot was that, whereas the meaning of the revealed word was often of a recondite nature, it had to be interpreted as to its true sense by way of the knowledge secured of the other revelatory mechanism, the natural and human universe, through the demonstrative reasoning and achievements of natural and social science.⁶⁴

This was the spirit in which 'Abduh was said to read the Qur'an as not only spurring the believer to the systematic scientific examination of nature and society but as actually *anticipating* the results of the modern natural and social sciences and the socio-cultural standards and mores of modern civilization. Some of the modernists, Goldziher said, went quite farther to explicate the Qur'an as holding directly all modern knowledge within itself. There were, on the other hand, others, associated with 'Abduh, who were not at all bashful about the process being proposed, arguing explicitly that as in the past Hellenistic thought had been read into the Qur'an, now modern thought would have to be read into it.⁶⁵ 'Abduh himself interpreted the Qur'an as having anticipated or completely at one with the modern cognition of socio-historical laws. For instance, the expression '*Sunnat Allah* (God's custom or practice)' was said to be referring to such laws; the coming of the electrical age was divined in the Qur'an's use of thunder and lightning as metaphors; the Darwinian struggle was moralistically appropriated as the triumph of the virtuous; and, the affirmation of monogamy and gender equality was apologetically rescued from what 'appear' to be their opposites.⁶⁶

There were however leading passages in which 'Abduh, more circumspect, reiterated that the Qur'an's discussions of the divine creation had as their purpose after all neither to expound scientific theories nor to introduce criteria for deciding between them. Instead, their specific aim was to alert the individual, by proffering the beauties and perfections and creation, to the knowledge and understanding of their God, the creator. *This*, Goldziher, again quite clearly, dubbing it a "much more original" standpoint, thought much more salutary.⁶⁷ Overall though he judged 'Abduh's *Tafsir* a "*Tendenzexegese*", a tendentious exegesis, not even as much in the

⁶³ See Maurice A. Finocchiaro (ed.), *The Galileo Affair: A Documentary History* (Berkeley, 1989), 87-118, esp. 92-98. Martin Hartmann, altogether *pace* Goldziher, liked to see this stratagem as the ultimate meaning of the Two Truths of Ibn Rushd (Averroes, 1126-1198); i.e. of the sincere 'scientist' however still having or striving "hypocritically" to sustain his work within the framework and discourse of Islam. See Martin Hartmann, "Die Ecole Supérieure des Lettres in Algier und die Medresas Algeriens auf dem XIV. Orientalkongress" in *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*, v. 19 (1905-6), 358-60.

⁶⁴ Goldziher, *Die Richtungen der Islamische Koranauslegung*, 353.

⁶⁵ See *ibid.*, 348-9, 356.

⁶⁶ Goldziher, for instance, used a favorite *Hadith* of his for purposes of historical illustration—cf. Goldziher, "Die Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten", *Gesammelte Schriften*, IV, 452-3—one, counter-disputed by other *Hadith*, which rejected the contagion theory of disease as a superstitious abrogation essentially of the omnipotence of the divine prerogative, to show how ahistorical modernist exegesis, as he saw it, could become; the *Hadith* in question instructed those who found themselves in a place of pestilence to stay put rather than flee, and those not there to stay away; the modernists, he noted, now wanted to read this an anticipating a sanitation ordinance *a la* modern hygiene. See Goldziher, *Die Richtungen der Islamischen Koranauslegung*, 357-8.

⁶⁷ See *ibid.*, 351, 358-9.

attempt to establish the harmony of the Qur'an and modern culture as in its deployment of revelation against the projected internal enemies of Islam. To this end, Qur'anic passages, quite remote to the sense in which they were deployed, were turned to upbraid the advocates of emulation, as against reasoning, and the devotees of saint veneration who were said by this exegesis to be defying the one God of true monotheism by worshipping competitors to him.⁶⁸

5.

In sum, Goldziher welcomed the Egyptian modernists' struggle against the juristic reification, corruption and alienation of Islam in Orthodoxy and their avowal of a dynamic *Ijma'*, but *not* their insistence on reading this in the traditional pattern, conservatively and apologetically, into the immaculate 'original' Muslim sources. Their like maneuvering of the latter towards modernity killed the historical sense, whereas, what was needed for the historicist purification on the horizon, as Goldziher saw it, was precisely a critical, self-conscious appropriation of these very sources, a scientific study of their historical constitution and reception that would reveal their dialectical development and thus religio-teleological meaning. Nor, for that matter, was Goldziher, as can be read from the tenor of his writings, ever well-disposed to dogmatic enmity or impositions against the prevalent and jealously safe-guarded saint-cults, which he thought altogether useless. For, these practices, which for him were definitive of definitive of popular religion and constituted a very large focus of his scholarship, he interpreted as essentially remnants of paganized myths, namely, of the 'national culture' of peoples. The cult of saints, in other words, had their own indispensability and would find their ultimate, true manifestation only with the historical development and elevation of *religious* and *national* life, as these came critically to find their proper, respective spheres.⁶⁹ We get a rather explicit idea of the kind of Muslim reform Goldziher wanted from an 1898 letter to Martin Hartmann. The latter asked whether Goldziher could help him, amongst other things, locate a recent article by Georg Schweinfurt (1836-1925) entitled "*Die Wiedergeburt Ägyptens im Lichte des aufgeklärten Islams* (The Rebirth of Egypt in the Light of Enlightened Islam)", for a lecture he was preparing to give a general audience on Islam. Goldziher replied in the negative and affixed a curt unabashed and programmatic critique of the so-called 'enlightened Muslims' of

⁶⁸ See *ibid.*, 365, 364-70.

⁶⁹ See *ibid.*, 336-8. For the saint cults as 'national survivals', see Goldziher, "Die Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten", *Gesammelte Schriften, IV*, 461-7. See especially his very enthusiastic review of a work of Ali Mubarak's: Goldziher, "Alī Mubārak's *al-Khitat al-Jadīda*" (originally, 1890), *Gesammelte Schriften, II* (Hildesheim: 1968), 383-4. Ali Mubarak was, as Goldziher here introduced him, the greatest administrator and intellectual associated with government modernization and reform, especially in the realm of education, under the Khedive Isma'il. This work of Mubarak's encompassed an expansive statistical, historical, cultural, religious and biographical survey of all the noteworthy places of Egypt, especially Cairo and Alexandria. Goldziher made a special point of and praised the author's detailed description of the extensive saint-cults of Egypt, which, as he took it, "the people" were "unwilling to forfeit to Islam". They in fact had gone to the length of duplicating the same saint in distinct places of old worship rather than lose these. He further noted that the author, who had done so much to unearth the "*Kulturgeschichtliche* (cultural/historical)" heritage of his land, was of course, as a modernist and reformer, aware of the abusive and superstitious associations of such saint veneration and thus approached them with the proper objectivity, but that, all the same, he could not but in recounting the saint stories be at times overtaken by sympathy for them. The book itself is Ali Mubarak, *Al-Khiṭaṭ al-tawfīqīyah al-jadīdah li-Miṣr al-Qāhīrah wa-mudūnihā wa-bilādihā al-qadīmah wa-al-shahī*, Volumes 1-20 (Bulaq, AH 1304-1306 [1886-89]). Altogether more comprehensively, there is of course Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien, II*, "Die Heiligenverehrung im Islam (Saint Veneration in Islam)", 277-378.

Cairo.⁷⁰ The critique is so programmatic in fact that I will start here with a number of qualifications to prevent the misunderstandings to which its immediate reproduction might lead.

First, it has to be said that the target, taken in the general and unclear in the letter, was almost certainly *not* ‘Abduh, his rationalist theology nor what was to become his ‘school’. The letter’s sardonic designation of these pretenders to Enlightenment as, in quotes, ‘the pure brethren’ (a translation of *Ikhwan al-Safa*) is itself quite suggestive. This was the name of a secret, Isma‘ili akin, organization in Abbasid Basra in the tenth century C.E. which developed an esoteric, Neo-Platonist synthesis of encyclopedic scope of the Hellenistic and Muslim ‘scientific’ heritage of its time and was a subject of Goldziher own scholarship. What the use of the name suggests is that he had in mind, in his critical aside, more specifically the Sufi, Freemasonic synthesis prevalent amongst the ‘sophisticated’ (heterodox) Muslim elite attuned to the new age and its European mores and ideas. This was a phenomenon in Cairo as much as in Damascus, where Goldziher testified to it personally in the *Oriental Diary* of his study trip. Afghani and ‘Abduh had also at certain points been freemasons, who seem at times to have encompassed most of the politically involved.⁷¹ In any case, the contempt in the letter matches the much more

⁷⁰ See Hartmann to Goldziher, 3/19/1898 and Goldziher to Hartmann, 3/21/1898 in Hanisch, “*Machen Sie doch unseren Islam nicht gar so schlecht*”, 93-4. Schweinfurth was mainly a botanist and ethnologist known for his travels in and work on North-East to Central Africa. His article can be found in: Georg Schweinfurth, “Die Wiedergeburt Ägyptens im Lichte eines aufgeklärten Islams”, *Berliner Rundschau*, 7/10/1895.

⁷¹ See Goldziher, “Über die Benennung der ”Ikhwan al-safa“”, *Der Islam* 1 (1910): 22-26. On the question of the historico-cultural role and meaning of Freemasonry in the modern transformation of the Middle-East, a still rather neglected subject in English language scholarship and, locally, with books still being written on it as a Jewish conspiracy, see for the above context, Keddie, Nikki. *Sayyid Jamāl ad-Dīn “al-Afghānī”*, 92-123; and Van Ess, “Goldziher as a Contemporary of Islamic Reform”, Goldziher Memorial Conference, 46-7. In the *Oriental Diary*, the Damascene Muṣṭafa al-Siba’i is the consummate representative of this synthesis of Freemasonry and Sufism amongst the Arab social elite of the city. In the *Tagebuch*, Goldziher represents him as, notwithstanding his “free-thinking” views, which he did not hide as having been the inspector of the “pious foundations” (i.e. *Awqāf*) for Mecca and Medina and as a generally influential man of extensive reputation in the scholarly and cultivated circles of the city. In the *Oriental Diary*, he’s introduced upon meeting as “a venerable Arab...esrtwhile high administrative official, now rich property owner and bibliophile”, with whom Goldziher “concluded a covenant of friendship”; Siba’i opened his house and his library of manuscripts to Goldziher and, besides clearly spreading his name throughout Damascene ‘society’, did his best to initiate him into Sufism and Freemasonry. At one point, we find him eating surreptitiously with Goldziher during Ramadan, which the “arch-hypocrite”, as Goldziher dubbed him recalling this occasion, did not want to advertise! Both the *Oriental Diary* and the *Tagebuch* exude an air of amused affection for him; see Patai, *Oriental Diary*, 114-8, 120, 121-2, 126; see also Conrad’s corrections to Patai’s notes in the *Oriental Diary*, Conrad, Lawrence I. “The Near East Study Tour of Ignaz Goldziher”, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, (1990) no. 1, 116 (his corrections to pp. 116:21 and 117:10 of the *Oriental Diary* should be in reference to Siba’i and not as he has it there to Dhahabi); see also Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 56, 58. Even more, “the famous [Amir] ‘Abd al-Qadir” (1808-1883), as the *Oriental Diary* had him, the leader of the resistance to the French invasion of Algeria who, ultimately defeated and exiled, had eventually come to Damascus to retire, had become a member of the local Freemason lodge. One of his sons—Muḥammad (1840-1913), as we find in the *Tagebuch*, where he is presented further as continuing the political activities of his father, was at the time in fact the grand master of the Syrian lodge. It was a “secret” Goldziher was let in on, as he then put it, during his stay in Damascus. He met the sons at a dinner at the house of Muḥammad, to which he was invited; he judged: “the sons of the great man are tainted by European culture; they lived for several months in France and Italy [their father had sent them there].” In the *Tagebuch*, the son Muḥammad is “a half-cultured Europeanized (*europäisch halb-gebildeter*) gentleman”, master of the Freemason lodge”, though still capable of making Goldziher at least happy by deciding Damascus the greatest city of the world; in the *Oriental Diary*, he clearly cared that “I think left the best impression” with this group. He judged their father later in the *Tagebuch*—where he called father and sons “the lions of Damascus”—as altogether self-conscious that he formed one of the main attractions of the city. See Patai, *Oriental*

subtle version aimed, as we've seen, at the 'cultural movement', i.e. 'aping', of the Islamic modernists in India.

Second, it must be kept in mind that, on the one hand, Goldziher had throughout only scorn for the new 'Europeanized' Egypt and Cairo. He had personally experienced and despised it during his 1873-4 study trip, as it had raised its head under the Khedive Isma'il (r. 1863-1879) and he hated that much more as he wrote in 1898, now that it was under British occupation. Nonetheless, he remained in his scholarship quite enthusiastic about certain of those associated with and leading the new Egypt's official attempts at modernist reform and selectively the reforms themselves, depending on whether he read them as synthetic and progressive or imposed and aped from Europe.⁷² Hence, there was his extremely positive assessment of the institutional and literary work of Ali Mubarak (1823-1893), the greatest intellectual of the period, who held in his long career many government portfolios, was education minister more than once, *and* who manifestly understood Modernity and modernization as requiring an internal cultural synthesis. As Goldziher clearly saw the matter, it was his 'native consciousness' that had been awakened by modern transformation. Goldziher praised Mubarak's 1870 founding of the "Public Library", now known as the Egyptian National Library and Archives, where had himself worked during his study trip in Cairo, and for which, with its veritable treasure trove of Arabic manuscripts, he said Mubarak could not be thanked enough. He noted also the latter's founding, under Isma'il, of the *Dar al 'Ulum* (a teacher training college), "whose professors could call the members of the VII. and VIII. Congresses of Orientalists [Vienna (1886), Stockholm (1889)] their colleagues." Namely, they had been official participants at both.⁷³ And, he was then especially full of praise

Diary, 123, 128-9 Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 59, also Van Ess, "Goldziher as a Contemporary of Islamic Reform, *Goldziher Memorial Conference*, 46-7.

⁷² On Goldziher's hatred of the 'European Egypt' below; see Patai, *Oriental Diary*, 141-2, 144, 147-9; Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 65-7, 71-2. On his critique of the Europe-inspired educational reforms of the Swiss inspector-general of Egypt's schools under Isma'il, Dor Bey, delivered in a Hungarian publication directly before his Oriental trip, where he saw the whole reform effort from Muhammad Ali onwards as a case of mere European imitation as against a desperately needed organic effort attuned to the traditions of the country and the character of its institutions, see the précis of this Hungarian work in Heller, *Bibliographie des Oeuvres de Ignace Goldziher*, 21-2, no. 33 (1873) and the discussion in Conrad, Lewis I, "The Pilgrim from Pest", *Golden Roads*, 133. Heller's summary also makes clear Goldziher was asking for a new focus on primary education and a teacher training seminar for the same. This was the very thing Ali Mubarak had just recently instituted. Hence, his article ended on the hopeful note that there was now already a sense of the need for a more organic development, so presumably with reference to what was now underway. On the other hand, when he provided the section "Universitäts-Moschee el-Azhar", a few years later, at the request of his friend George Ebers (1837-1898), for the latter's George Ebers, *Ägypten in Bild und Wort, Vol. II* (Stuttgart and Leipzig, 1880), 71-89, he was also clearly positive about the reforms introduced in the institutional operation of Al-Azhar. These included a new examination system regulating the placing and promotion of faculty; Goldziher also referred cryptically to the rector(s) willing to fight for reform in a more substantive sense. He also, interestingly, explicitly defended the "great statesman" Muhammad Ali (r. 1805-1848) from the charge that, in bringing all the charitable foundations (*Awqaf*) dedicated to the financial sustenance of Al-Azhar under the direction of the state, he had somehow robbed it of their proceeds. He noted instead that the move had in fact put the institution, above and beyond such proceeds, under guaranteed and seamless state financing, and thus constituted a stratagem, in the traditional pattern, on the part of the shrewd Muhammad Ali, by making Al-Azhar thus clearly beholden to the state, to assure himself of the quiescence of its '*Ulama*' with regards his reform program; see *ibid.*, 85-6.

⁷³ Goldziher, "Alī Mubārak's *al-Khitat al-Jadīda*" (originally, 1890), *Gesammelte Schriften, II*, 381. The *Dar al 'Ulum* (The Abode of Science) was originally conceived as a teacher training college that would further train the graduates of the traditional Muslim education of Al-Azhar to become teachers in the new governmental educational system. When Goldziher visited it in a return trip to Cairo in 1896, at the head of a group of Hungarian school teachers, he was greatly disappointed with the then incarnation and direction of the school, and the "futile" thought

for the direct object of his review, Mubarak's new twenty volume work on Egypt, which he presented as an encyclopedic natural, social, economic, historico-cultural, religious and human survey of the land as minutely implanted in its very topography, and lauded it not only for richness of detail and information but its overall tendency. First, as was generally the case in his discussion of Islamic modernists, whatever his misgivings about them, Goldziher saw in it an exemplum of that breaking down of barriers between scholarship in East and West he deemed essential for future human progress. Mubarak, he made a special point, had made serious use of European Orientalist scholarship for the exposition of Arab-Islamic but especially in his welcome novel focus on pre-Islamic Egypt. In turn, he repeatedly recommended what, in his *Tagebuch*, he called "this tremendous work" to Western colleagues. Second, more specifically, he viewed the author as expanding the intellectual horizons of his fellow Egyptian Muslims, making them aware not only of their Islamic but their broader cultural and national heritage.⁷⁴

Third, and most crucially, it must be added that Goldziher considered 'Abduh, as a comrade of Afghani, very much like the latter, a friend, whose general conclusions as to the need for religious, cultural-national and political autonomy he completely shared and whose anti-imperialist struggle against "the English domination of Muslims" he understood it as his own. 'Abduh's support, as he understood it for the 'Urabi movement (1879-1882) and his general struggle against the foreign direction of Egyptian affairs and for internal autonomy, leading to his Parisian exile, Goldziher liked casually to trumpet even in contexts where, as opposed to *Die Richtungen*, 'Abduh was only tangentially related to the subject at hand.⁷⁵ It is telling, in any

of the educational authorities to make of such incoherence a competition for Al-Azhar. In other words, the synthetic task had been supplanted. Of course, they started with Islamic jurisprudence, but just for show, on their way to the modern. As he put it, "it is truly shocking to see how these neo-Muhammadan schoolmen, whose every other word is 'Pedagogics', overlook the standpoint that modern knowledge must be integrated with their own history": no sense that Spain had once been a part of the Muslim world, its geography taught as if in Romania. When last he was in Cairo, the maps were at least in Arabic text; now everything was in French and English, and the newest thing was to teach English, which they crammed and hammered into the students. Later, he visited an exclusive primary school, an expensive boarding school for the wealthy elite, where the education, satisfying the most modern of demands, was truly excellent and solid, but where religion had been made a matter of mere rote. It was the same spirit that, as he put it, reigned in the "progress Jews" in Europe, his own Jewish experience again his reference. However, when he'd earlier been at the *Dar al 'Ulum*, wallowing in these depressing thoughts, by clear counterpoint, he'd been suddenly "deeply moved" as he came across the portrait of "my friend", Ali Mubarak, who had passed away three years ago. The founder of the institution Goldziher clearly believed had wanted something quite different from what he was now witnessing. Mubarak was interestingly the only great intellectual personage mentioned in the *Tagebuch*, in its recollection of the time in Cairo, with whom, although he met him, Goldziher did not have an extensive connection during his residence there. They must have eventually drawn closer together, not least through Goldziher's hearty reception of Mubarak's work. See Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 67, 188-9.

⁷⁴ For the details of Goldziher on Mubarak, see *ibid*, 380-5 and further note 280 and... for the quoted phrase, Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 122. It was written in 1890, the same time as his review of his life and in reference to his redaction for publication of the second volume of the *Muhammedanische Studien*, which he perfected, as he put it, using this book amongst others.

⁷⁵ See *ibid*, 108, where, in Paris in 1884, during a 'recuperation trip' advised by doctors in order to avoid, after the successive deaths of his sister and mother and especially given his plummeting capacity to deal with his professional frustrations, an oncoming nervous breakdown, Goldziher met the old comrades from Cairo. He said in the *Tagebuch*, he wanted to "refer to the adventure that the joyous reunion with my Afghan friend, Jamāl ad-Din, and his exiled comrades [i.e. 'Abduh] afforded me". The cited phrase and casual reference to 'Abduh is from Goldziher, "Le Monothéisme dans la Vie Religieuse des Musulmans" (originally, 1887), *Gesammelte Schriften, II*, 181. The point here was about 'Abduh, the name, being in fact a shortened abbreviation of 'Abdallah, meaning essentially 'servant of God', the common abbreviation being the result of a theological scruple against using the august name of the one God as part of the name of a mortal, even if only to mark his servitude. The example, coming at the end of

case, that Goldziher explicitly did not draw ‘Abduh into his general critique of Islamic modernism until his last publication after the latter had passed away, and that when he did do so, it was precisely by way of a strict division between this friend’s ‘theological modernism’, as worthy of serious consideration, and the more frivolous ‘cultural modernism’ of the India.⁷⁶

What these building qualifications testifies to of course is that what I’ve dubbed Goldziher’s ‘dialectical’ engagement with Islamic modernism was itself a specimen of what had through his career become the famous ‘Goldziherian’ style. Developed fully only after the disappointing reception of *Mythos* and the immediate period of professional debacle that followed, it was one wherein the teleological progression was not, as in *Mythos*, made explicit from the outset, but rather developed immanently and dialectically. Social, political, cultural, national and religious forces were put in a state of historical play and exactly probed as to their ‘truth kernel’ (teleological potential). Did they harbor within themselves anything progressive, of ultimate promise? What were their historico-cultural limitations or did they in themselves represent a limitation of the latter kind? The historicist dynamic and thus reformist intent accordingly only announced itself in the structural movement of the text through the tendencies discussed, in the lessons learned at each historico-cultural stage identified. For instance, Islam, as a universal monotheism, was capable of further purification; Christianity, an incarnationism, an inherently pagan remnant, was not. The religio-bureaucratic consensus of Islamic Orthodoxy had succeeded, in the person of al-Ghazali, of bringing under one umbrella the religious elements required for an ultimate purification. The balancing of jurisprudence, dogmatics and mysticism made possible the emergence of that religious idealism and sincerity in both the conception of God and his worship required for an ultimate purification. However, because of its socio-historical, ‘Medieval’ limitations, Orthodoxy had in the bureaucratic cum rhetorical accommodation and reified, ideological veiling of all cultural developments, denied itself a fully independent cognition and made of the sacred a worldly affair, leading to both cultural degeneration and religious degradation.

Finally, as to the required reform, the work and telos of modern critical, scientific culture, there was a progressive hierarchy here as well: from reactionary Wahhabism, Isma‘ili-type variants (Babism, Sufi Freemasonry, etc.), to the cultural modernism of India, the theological modernism of Egypt... In other words, Goldziher’s ‘dialectical’ engagement with Islamic

the essay, was made the occasion of a small introductory interlude on Afghani as a polemicist against Renan and ‘Abduh’s nationalist activism, Parisian exile and now anti-imperialist journalistic activity.

⁷⁶ More direct evidence of this last claim will be provided shortly. Goldziher’s broad critique of Islamic modernism came already in Goldziher, “Die Religion of Islams”, *Die Kultur of Gegenwart, Part I, Div. 3:1*, 131-2. Here, it was explicitly directed at Indian modernism. This tract, proffering a skeleton of the *Vorlesungen* to come, it is quite interesting that the Islamic modernism section of the former was essentially carried over into the latter in expanded form as one of its final sections, while ‘Abduh’s voice was newly (deliberately) placed in its last chapter’s earlier discussion of *Ijma*’ as making and having made legal and theological development very much possible in Islam. In other words, ‘Abduh was classed with the theological attempt at modernization, by way of a renewed consensus, as thus falling within this traditional pattern of retrospective idealization; see Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 312-3, 282-5. Interestingly, Conrad, who provided the expanded—updating—notes to the new English translation of the *Vorlesungen*, took Goldziher’s decision to focus his discussion of Islamic modernism on India and his statement near the end of it, that the developments appearing first here were only gradually beginning to affect other parts of the Muslim world, as a slight to the modernist movements in the Middle-East and North Africa. Hence, he appended here a long list of works on these movements, which, as Conrad had it, had been thus “summarily dismissed” by the author. Rather than any attempted ‘dismissal’, by not including ‘Abduh in the section and by later downplaying the Indian influence in the further diffusion of the modernist temperament, Goldziher was in his own way paying them a compliment; Goldziher, *Introduction to Islam Law and Theology*, 263, note u.

reformers and modernists was itself a model of the teleological historicism he offered them as encompassing the ultimate, true meaning of ‘reform’. I am now ready to divulge Goldziher’s thoughts to Hartmann, whose contemptuous remarks about the “enlightened” Muslims of Egypt are no doubt directed at the more lower level self-avowed Enlighteners and cultural modernists, not ‘Abduh, but the crux of whose critique and prescription encompass all of the Islamic modernism of his time:

Schweinfurth’s article on “The rebirth of Egypt in the Light of Enlightened Islam” is completely unknown to me. I must say that enlightened Islam, as one understands this there in Egypt, is not something to which I am very sympathetic. Al-Fārābi and Averroes and all those who’ve measured their Islamic conviction by the philosophical science of their time represent enlightened Islam. The “pure brethren” of today are not worth very much. They lead not to the perfection but the incoherence (*Inconception*) of Islam. I would love a Muhammadan Hegelian or Tübinger; the modern Muslimoids in Cairo damage the historical consciousness through the frivolity and brutality with which they encounter their tradition.⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Goldziher to Hartmann, 3/21/1898, Hanisch, “*Machen Sie doch unseren Islam nicht gar zu schlecht*”, 94. Here we see Goldziher clearly acknowledge all that he owed to the Tübingen School and its ‘Hegelian Christianity’ in the derivation of his own historicist approach to ‘religion’. As Goldziher put it in the *Tagebuch*, it was only when, in Berlin (1868), during his first year of university studies, he had a chance to study the Tübingen authors, Strauss and Baur, as well as Hegelian philosophy, that he learned to understand Geiger, his already inspiration by then, correctly. The *Tagebuch*’s earlier references to Geiger make clear the statement should be understood thus: Goldziher had already two to three years before Berlin been exposed to the writings of Geiger and other Jewish reformists from the last decades, and their ‘ethical Judaism’—as against the ‘legalist Judaism’ of the Rabbinic tradition—had, already before his university studies, worked seriously to transform his religious temperament. They had made Judaism, as he put it, an altogether living concern for him, the very “pulse beat of my life”. But, it was the encounter with the Tübingen theology in Berlin that made him understand that, behind and driving Geiger’s ethical emphasis and his critical approach to Jewish traditional sources was a historicist methodology encompassing a critical teleology. In any case, that this was the sense in which Geiger’s universalistic ethics and critical methodology had to be elucidated and applied. see Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 28-9, 33, 39. Conrad is the author who has done the most to stress and illuminate the transformative impact of Geiger, and Reform Judaism more broadly, on Goldziher’s intellectual formation; in that, he has interjected a signal insight into the literature: his quite interesting discussions of the Geiger-Goldziher connection are at especially: Conrad, “The Pilgrim from Pest”, *Golden Roads*, 123-132 and Conrad, “Ignaz Goldziher on Ernest Renan: From Orientalist Philology to the Study of Islam”, *The Jewish Discovery of Islam*, 142-47. What is missing from Conrad’s account is that he stresses in Geiger, ethical universalism and a rationalist and ethical Kantianism, without saying anything about the Hegelian dimension of the Tübingen influence. For instance, he described Geiger’s and so Goldziher’s methodology as follows: “religious texts were not the truth themselves, but were the sources from which such truths could be extracted through careful study. And as this investigation was to be a strictly rationalist one, the system of values that emerged was necessarily in complete accord with reason and science”; see Conrad, “Pilgrim from Pest”, 124, 132. What’s missing in this version of Geiger’s critical methodology, which has it as rather process-oriented and akin to a post-facto mechanical rationalization, is anything remotely Hegelian, nothing of the providential historicism and critical teleology found in Goldziher. Further, in this vein, while Conrad is no doubt right that Goldziher followed Geiger’s lead in the latter’s “rejection of the messianic doctrine of the Return”, that is, the eschatological return of the ‘people’ of Israel to the land of Israel, he still called his own Judaism, a prophetically inspired “messianic Judaism”. What he meant by this was the historicist *telos* of a universal devotional monotheism. Hence, Goldziher very much belonged to that romantic reformist strain in nineteenth century Jewish intellectual history, which believed in the Jewish mission and reckoned the Jewish people had lost—*was to sacrifice*—its nationality, in the providential mission of becoming the universal conscience of mankind driving it towards this end. See Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 111. During his Oriental trip, in describing his arrival in Jerusalem, he said he had already come to see it as “the old city of the old ideals”, “the residence of my ancestors”. He despised it for its “poverty of spirit”, “bottomless lack of

I conclude this section on Goldziher's take on Islamic modernism with two citations from Goldziher. In the first, we see the extent to which he could meld his own voice and perspective with that of 'Abduh and the Egyptian modernists. In concluding *Die Richtungen*, he gave over its last paragraph, first a line cited from 'Abduh, then a last line of his own, to a paraphrase of their diagnosis of the ills plaguing Islam and their society that might have come out of his own mouth. In the second, we see his general critique of Islamic modernism and articulation of the true meaning of modernist religious reform, which took in, despite being here targeted at the Indians, all Islamic modernists, including those of Egypt:

['Abduh:] 'Were an Enlightener to show how these people [the religious officials and aficionados who put themselves above the superstitious masses and then directly underwrite their ignorant appropriation of religion] make as their own the wishes of the princes and the powerful, the notables and the rich; how they author books for them, issue laws and subtle circumventions of it, all while barring people access to the Qur'an and to the Sunna and shackling them to their own books; so then it would become clear to the reader of such explanations how these people have squandered their religion, and that this is the reason why God has delivered sovereignty from them to those, against whom there is no headway.' The political fall of Islam is thus a consequence of the corrupt behavior of the official teachers of religion and their wrongful conception and stupid handling of the same.⁷⁸

It is easy to see that the tradition of Islam must, in this work of modernization, undergo a good deal of reinterpretation and adjustment not liable to justification before historical critique. This new "Mu'tazila"—as one calls it—has also exercised a considerable influence on the religious thought-world of the Muhammadans outside India. Is it as yet admittedly far from having won the Ijma' for itself, it carries within itself all the same the seeds of a new developmental phase of Islam. Of course, to a higher level of religious life, the believers of Islam, whose total number today exceeds 200 million, will only be able to elevate themselves by way of the historical examination of the documents of their religion.⁷⁹

6.

ideas" and "denominational swindle", for its having become the very synecdoche of 'religious swindle' as against idealism. Nonetheless, coming upon it, he envisioned the purified Zion of the future: "when I saw Zion the first time in my life with my own eyes, there awoke in me something entirely different from the deep contempt with which I relate to Pharisaism. I did not think of the priests and Levites who carried on their absurd formalism in the high and mighty butcher's stall of Jerusalem, nor of the petty Jew-dealers of the outer courts, nor of the scribes who laid down in the halls the foundations for those religious fabrications whose evil spirit continued to haunt the Middle-Ages—I thought of the calumniated, persecuted prophetism of the Hebrew past, of the prophetism of the future, of the new Jerusalem that, "liberated" and rebuilt by spirit and thought, will become the place of pilgrimage of all those who, with a free mind, erect a new Zion for the Jehovah of freedom that embraces the whole of mankind." Patai, *Oriental Diary*, 131-2. Note that Goldziher was not at this point seeing the Pharisees in Geigerian fashion, so that we should also not simply confuse him with a Geigerian standpoint as Conrad does. His notion of the Jews as a mythological people, who through processes of state-formation arrive at monotheism, before it actually becomes of a prophetic character among them, has not counterpart in Geiger.

⁷⁸ Goldziher, *Die Richtungen der Islamische Koranauslegung*, 370.

⁷⁹ Goldziher, "Die Religion des Islams", *Die Kultur der Gegenwart, Part I, Div. 3:1*, 131-2.

Hence, it should now be readily clear that if one may still say with Van Ess that Goldziher saw and identified with the Islamic Reform of his time, as caught between a sclerotic Orthodoxy, on the one hand, and the struggle to stave off imperialist deracination, on the other. That, nonetheless, *pace* his account, he was altogether, born of his own personal stake, aware of the complex position and possibilities of the then ‘reform’, and thus viewed Muslim reformist comrades as also equally poised between the reactionary, puritanical Wahhabis, on the one side, and the frivolous ‘cultural modernists’, on the other. His own stance was *not* in the middle, i.e. with the Egyptians, but committed to the overcoming of the distinction, via the critical historicism that would break through the ‘traditionalist (un)consciousness’ blinding all.

Goldziher’s dialectical engagement with Islamic modernity was, however, never merely one conducted through scholarship. We can track it rather on the basis also of more personal, bi-lateral encounter. We have seen Goldziher’s point of view, with all its good wishes, a culturally pedagogic one, but we should also consider how matters might have looked from the standpoint of the Muslim reformist interlocutor. And, one personal relationship and encounter in Goldziher’s life and career particularly stands out in this regard, namely, his friendship with Jamal ad-Din Afghan. It is ironic then that in the recent upsurge of scholarly interest in Goldziher, for which Lewis Conrad is largely responsible, it is *this* relationship that has been pushed to the margins. Conrad and van Ess, for instance, have both certainly sought to emphasize the influence on Goldziher as a young reformer and scholar of the personal relationships he developed during Oriental study trip. Van Ess has argued that it was because Goldziher found enough kindred spirits on the Muslim side that he became convinced of the especially promising prospect of modernist religious reform in this context. Conrad has argued that the whole trip should be viewed as a pilgrimage (*Hajj*) in large part actually motivated and ultimately constituted by such reformist hopes and then experiences.

To substantiate these claims, both have turned for an exemplary Muslim reformist interlocutor in this sense to Ṭahir al-Jaza’iri (1851-1920). He was a very close friend of Goldziher’s during his Damascus stay, who, then virtually the same young age as him was thereafter to assume a great reputation as representing in Damascus that self-consciously Arab, rationalist revival of Islam associated with ‘Abduh in Egypt. Conrad has further focused for this purpose, for a Cairene counterpart, on his encounter with Shaykh Muhammad al-‘Abbasi al-Mahdi (1827-1897). Having been appointed the rector of al-Azhar in 1871, and already the Grand Mufti of Egypt from the amazingly young age of twenty-one, al-‘Abbasi clearly sanctioned the implementation of the government’s program for reform of the institutional operations of this grandest of Islamic universities. And, it was, upon the earnest recommendation and request of Riyad Pasha, the Minister of Education, under *his* express ‘protection’ that Goldziher was allowed, at the beginning of 1874, to partake of the studies there.

⁸⁰

The problem with these historiographic choices is that their projection of reformist encounter is almost altogether retrospective, based on the eventual reputations of these figures as established by the secondary literature. For instance, there is nothing in the contemporary account of the *Oriental Diary*, the retrospective one of the *Tagebuch*, or Goldziher’s scholarship

⁸⁰ Conrad’s treatments of al-Jaza’iri and al-‘Abbasi follow one another in Conrad, “The Dervish’s Disciple: On the Personality and Intellectual Milieu of the Young Ignaz Goldziher”, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1990), no. 2: 240-2. The same accounts, qualified and expanded upon, are carried over into Conrad, “The Pilgrim from Pest”, *Golden Roads*, 134-6; see also Conrad, “The Near East Study Tour Diary of Ignaz Goldziher”, 117, 124-6; for van Ess on the Goldziher-al-Jaza’ir relationship, see van Ess, “Goldziher as a Contemporary of Islamic Reform”, 46-8.

so far as is known, that would in any way suggest al-Jaza'iri occupied, in his mind, the position of a reformist character or comrade. In fact, the “Shaykh Ṭāhir” of the *Oriental Diary*, as can easily be made out from the entries, was one of Goldziher’s closest friends in Damascus. But, in the 1890 recounting of his days Damascene bliss in the *Tagebuch*, curiously, but given the officializing tone of this memoir, perhaps indicatively, the then still quite modest al-Jaza'iri was the only one of the intimate friends of that time not addressed explicitly. Instead, Goldziher referred to him here merely as “the young Maghrebite theologian”.⁸¹ As for Shaykh al-‘Abbasi in Cairo, Goldziher’s most salient notion about him—it was the one detail he repeated in almost every context in which his ‘Azhar protector’ was the subject—was the, as it turns out, quite incorrect scoop (rumor) that the “honorable erudite aged man” was the son of a Rabbi who had converted to Islam.⁸² As for the idea of the al-Azhar rector as a reformist interlocutor on the Muslim side, Goldziher’s prose did associate the Shaykh with the government’s institutional reform of the university, but, what further evidence one could draw from it to an explicit religious reformist program appears rather shaky and in fact vaguely contra-indicative. Goldziher claimed that al-‘Abbasi’s appointment as al-Azhar rector had come in the wake of the dismissal of his more controversial predecessor in the position, Shaykh Mustafa al-‘Arusi, due to the ire the latter’s pronouncements on matters having to do with the *Code Napoléon* had provoked amongst the ‘*Ulama*’. Goldziher talked about the rector’s wealth, instead of his mindset.⁸³

⁸¹ He was called this in view of the fact that his parents were Algerian transplants who had moved to Damascus in advance of Amr ‘Abd al-Qadir, the leader of the Algerian resistance to the French invasion, who, in the years after his defeat and exile, ultimately made this his place of retirement. Al-Jaza'iri appeared in name in the *Tagebuch*, like in the *Oriental Diary* as “Shaykh Ṭāhir”, only in 1914, when Goldziher, upon the occasion of the visit to him of a student of this old friend, remembered him especially fondly as a “Muslim friend of my youth” with whom he had more than forty years ago spent “such useful evenings”. See Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 58, 282.

⁸² Goldziher’s memories of al-‘Abbasi were confined to the few times he allowed himself publicly and privately to write about his al-Azhar experience. Goldziher made a solemn promise to the Azhar Shaykhs that “mocking” or publishing something akin to an insider exposé of the goings-on in the greatest of Islamic universities in the European press was the furthest thing from his mind, that his intentions were purely and sincerely religio-scholarly ones. See Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 69-70.

⁸³ Al-‘Abbasi is generally briefly taken up in Goldziher’s prose either in the private descriptions of his momentous admittance into al-Azhar or in the public scholarly overviews of the scholarly, politico-cultural and religious life of the institution; see for the private accounts: Patai, *Oriental Diary*, 150-3, (150), Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 68-71, (69-70); for the public: Ebers, “Universitäts-Moschee el-Azhar”, *Ägypten in Bild und Wort, Vol. II*, 71-90, (85), and, most extensively, the Hungarian publication, Goldziher, *Az Iszlám; Tanulmányok a Muhammadán vallás története köréből* (Budapest, 1881), 299-340, (313-4). My account is taken directly from the diaries and especially Goldziher’s contribution to the Ebers volumes. The Rabbi story appears in all of the publications from Goldziher here cited except the *Oriental Diary*; it is effectively exposed as a rumor by Conrad, “The Near East Study Tour Diary of Ignaz Goldziher”, 122-3. On Goldziher’s ‘reformist’ encounter with al-‘Abbasi, Conrad writes that the young Orientalist met in the Mufti, “a modern reformer clearly inspired by the *Code Napoléon*.” He cites, amongst others, Goldziher for this statement, though it would be difficult to cull any such evidence from him. See Conrad, “The Pilgrim from Pest”, 136. Alongside the literature cited by Conrad, one might also consider: Rudolph Peters, “Muḥammad al-‘Abbāsī al-Mahdī (D. 1897), Grand Muftī of Egypt, and His ‘al-Fatāwā al-Mahdiyya”, *Islamic Law and Society*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1994), 66-82. Peters, on the basis of al-‘Abbasi’s collected judgments, argues against the idea of him as a decided advocate of religious reform. He argues that precisely the government’s institutional reforms, representing essentially greater bureaucratization and regularization of which al-‘Abbāsī was an instrument, militated against any tendency towards substantive religious reform, working instead rather to inculcate the more effective dispensation of the authoritative interpretations of the official Hanafi school of Islamic law.

Conrad did not leave out Afghani but dealt with him only in essentially equivocal sentences: “In Cairo Goldziher spent much time discussing modernization and religious reform with Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī (AD 1839-1897), but his attention was primarily directed not to an individual, but to the institution of al-Azhar...”⁸⁴ In the pivotal instance of the two thinkers’ mutual opposition to Renan and his invidious ethno-philology, Conrad goes even further to downplay that this might have been a medium and a fruit of a ‘reformist encounter’ between the two. Goldziher’s critique of Renan was aired at length in *Der Mythos* (1876). Afghan’s came in the form of a public debate with Renan in the *Journal des Débats* in 1883 that achieved great notoriety and has continued to do so. But, Conrad suggests Goldziher took little interest in the Afghani-Renan debate, at least not until he came to write his 1893 Memorial Essay on Renan for the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.⁸⁵

If Renan was impressed by Goldziher’s challenges [in *Mythos*] to his theories, this did not move him from his central thesis that Semitic peoples were morally and intellectually inferior and had no contribution to make to philosophy and the exact sciences, i.e. the fields most closely identified with modernity in Europe. At the Sorbonne on 29 March 1883 he delivered his famous lecture “L’islamisme et la Science,” in which he argued this position in detail, and the publication of this paper the following day in the *Journal des débats* immediately provoked a critique from Goldziher’s old friend Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, who was in Paris at the time, and a reply from Renan. This renowned exchange has frequently been discussed by others, and here it will suffice to note that while Goldziher was eventually to express his approval of al-Afghānī’s criticisms of Renan, earlier he does not seem to have been moved by the debate. He certainly agreed with al-Afghānī’s arguments that Islam is superior to Christianity and that British colonialism in India was to be deplored, but he probably would have argued that these were not the central points to be made in a reply to Renan.⁸⁶

Conrad here seem so anxious to make Goldziher the great respondent to Afghani that he ends up not doing justice to what *was* in fact a great reformist encounter between these two thinkers.⁸⁷ The passage of the *Tagebuch* where Goldziher describes the start of his friendship with Afghani in Cairo reads as follows:

To the most original figures amongst my friends belonged a man who has since made much be said of him as an anti-English agitator, exile, journalist and polemicist against Renan. He was the Afghan Abd-al-Dschakâl. The encounter with him came one evening in a coffeehouse in Abdīn-street, where our Afghan presided every evening over a group

⁸⁴ Conrad, “The Pilgrim from Pest”, *Golden Roads*, 135; essentially the same sentence earlier in Conrad, “The Dervish’s Disciple”, 241.

⁸⁵ See Conrad, “Ignaz Goldziher on Ernest Renan”, *The Jewish Discovery of Islam*, 144-5, 149, 174 (note 80); for Conrad’s discussion of Goldziher’s Memorial Essay on Renan, see *ibid*, 154-161. The suggestion as to 1874 discussions between Goldziher and Afghani on Renan comes first in Conrad, “The Pilgrim from Pest”, 144, 158 (note 161).

⁸⁶ Conrad, “Ignaz Goldziher on Ernest Renan”, *The Jewish Discovery of Islam*, 149.

⁸⁷ Conrad sums up the *Tagebuch*’s descriptions of Afghani in a note thus: “[recounting the time in Cairo] he calls him ‘the Afghan Abd-al-Dschakâl’ and characterizes him as ‘an anti-English agitator, exile, journalist, and polemicist against Renan’...[on the later meeting in Paris] ‘my Afghan friend Dschelâl al-Dīn and his exiled companions’”, *Ibid*, 172 (note 46).

of young Azhar students and demonstrated to them all manner of radical (*freisinnige*) things. Slurping a narghile at a table of the coffeehouse, I was invited into this society and found myself there so much at home, that every evening I now went for an hour amongst these heretics. Under the most remarkable circumstances, I was able, in the year 1883 [in fact 1884], to meet the friend again in Paris, where he carried on philosophical conversations with my wife and allowed himself to learn about European culture from her. I intend, upon a fortuitous occasion, to devote a particular chapter to the history of my encounters with the Afghan.⁸⁸

In 1884, when Goldziher was in Paris, having taken the advice of doctors, to take time off after the painful deaths of his sister and mother and the strain of his professional life to avoid a nervous breakdown, he highlighted here also the memory of the “adventure” of his “joyous reunion” with Afghani and his exiled comrades.⁸⁹ Goldziher never did fulfill his intention of, at some point, narrating specifically his own personal history with Afghani. But, it seems he decided instead, after the latter’s death, to write the entry for him in the first edition of the *Encyclopedia of Islam* (*EI*¹).⁹⁰ The quite detailed article, written clearly after 1910, described Afghani as follows:

[He was] one of the most remarkable figures in the Muslim world in the xixth century. He was—in the opinion of E. G. Browne—at once **philosopher, author, orator and journalist**, but above all he was a politician regarded by his opponents as a dangerous agitator. He exercised great influence on the liberationist and constitutional movements, which have arisen in Muhammadan countries in the last few decades. He agitated for their liberation from European influence and exploitation, for the introduction of liberal institutions, for the union of all the Islāmic states (including Shī‘a Persia) under a single caliphate and the creation of a powerful Muslim Empire capable of resisting European intervention.⁹¹

Goldziher’s clearly sympathetic prose portrayed Afghani’s restless political agitation as having played an essentially revolutionary role in awakening the Muslim world to the need for political and cultural autonomy both internally, with respect to autocracy and reactionary religious Orthodoxy, and externally, with respect to European imperialism and condescension. Nikki Keddie’s later thesis, that it was for just such ‘progressive’ purposes that Afghani propagated Islamic identity and unity, i.e. instrumentally as a lever of socio-cultural solidarity, was thus also, in part, anticipated by the piece. Surveying Afghani’s years in Egypt before the ‘Urabi revolt, Goldziher read their *telos* in terms of the latter: “In politics also he influenced

⁸⁸ Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 68. See also *ibid*, 71, where, profiling his eventually unbelievably busy daily routine in Cairo—going, as he put it, “from paradise to paradise”—i.e. as filled with his studies at al-Azhar, at the Khedival library, many meetings, much socializing and various outings, he again confirmed that he continued to reserve an hour every evening for “the heretic Dschelāl ad-din”. Goldziher went on his recuperation trip around Europe and to Paris after the ritual mourning period for his mother had come to an end; since, from later data in the *Tagebuch*, his mother’s death is dated at May 4 after his sister’s death in Jan. 1884, the trip must have been in 1884 rather than 1883; see *ibid*, 101-2, 108.

⁸⁹ See note 286.

⁹⁰ *E.J. Brill’s First Encyclopedia of Islam, 1913-1936, Vol. II*. E. J. Brill. Leiden, 1987, 1008-11 (This is a photomechanical reprint of *EI*¹).

⁹¹ *Ibid*, 1008.

those around him in the direction of a nationalist revival and liberal constitutional institutions; his activity was not without influence on the nationalist movement which came to a head in 1882 and led to the bombardment of Alexandria, the battle of Tell el-Kebīr and the English occupation”. He added as postscript that already in 1879, before the climactic denouement, Afghani was, because his “political activities were as inconvenient to the English representative as his regeneration of philosophical studies had been irritating to conservative circles at the Azhar”, deported, through the machinations of the former, to India.

As in *Die Richtungen*, here also Goldziher emphasized Afghani’s trail-blazing political journalism with ‘Abduh in Paris, whose impact he characterized thus: “it exercised great influence on the awakening of liberationist anti-English views in Muslim circles and may be considered the first literary harbinger of the nationalist movements in the Muhammadan territories of England, which were gradually strengthened by it.” Finally, Goldziher saw his protagonist as having been almost singularly influential in provoking the 1891-2 Tobacco Protest in Persia, against the government’s 1890 Tobacco Concession to British interests. Afghani, he explained, successfully pitched his fulmination against Nasser al-Din Shah’s regime in an ‘Islamic’ register, castigating the government’s abuses, injustices and the sell-out of the country as anti-Islamic and as giving succor to the ‘enemies of Islam’. In this manner, he succeeded in inciting the local religious dignitaries to resist the authorities “in the name of religion”. Goldziher, accordingly, viewed him here as having set the stage for the Constitutional movement to come and delineated the “murder” of the Shah by a disciple of Afghani as part of the same.⁹² The ultimate image projected by the article was of Afghani drawing the forces of the future to the good cause by his tongue and pen while fighting to the end the endless intrigues to which this made him subject.

Further, it cannot actually be said that Goldziher paid little attention to the 1883 Afghani-Renan debate, at least not until he came to write his Memorial Essay on Renan. The reality is that this exchange quickly became for Goldziher the identifying marker for his fellow anti-Renan Muslim comrade thereafter. Afghani contra Renan became so engrained in his mind that the mention of one naturally brought up the other and their polemics. Hence, one can trace Goldziher’s references, private and public, to the 1883 polemic all the way from the 1880’s to the end of his career. We find them in an article for a French audience in *Revue de l’Histoire des Religions*, “Le monothéisme dans la vie religieuse des Musulmans (Monotheism in the Religious Life of Muslims)” (1887); in the *Tagebuch* (1890); in the Memorial Essay on Renan (1893); in the Afghani entry for *EI*¹, where he again contended that the latter had in the debate defended Islam from Renan’s allegation that it posed a barrier to scientific inquiry (after 1910); in *Die Richtungen*, by way of discussion of the more robust Islamic modernism of Egypt (1920).⁹³ In fact, Goldziher so clearly relished mentioning the 1883 exchange that one is tempted to speculate he saw in it some manner of personal triumph. Still in the midst of writing the explicitly and fervently anti-Renan *Der Mythos* during his Oriental trip, perhaps it was he

⁹² All the above citations are from *ibid*, 1009-1010. Cf. Keddie, *Sayyid Jamāl ad-Dīn “al-Afghānī”*, 124-8, 151-6, 219-228, 335-355, 404-9, 421-3. Keddie’s generally more sober, considered assessments of Afghani’s immediate political influence tell a less heroic story than Goldziher’s.

⁹³ In the *Tagebuch*, describing his 1884 time in Paris, Goldziher recalled he’d tried to see “great names”, of whom he said he wanted only to name Renan, whom he saw two times and also—without a break in the sentence—to point to the adventure of meeting Afghani and the friends from Egypt.

who had first apprised Afghani of Renan and his ideas in Cairo and that he viewed his friend's public refutation of Renan as their conversations having borne fruit.⁹⁴

It can also not be said that if Goldziher agreed with Afghani that Islam represented an advance over Christianity or that British imperialism was to be opposed, that these would not have been the central points he would have made against Renan. For, these points constituted nothing less than the major conclusions to be derived from Goldziher's historicist methodology, which he felt constrained from saying in so many words himself. Hence, instead of beside the point, Goldziher's characterization of Afghani's standpoint in the 1883 debate represents in part a projection onto the latter of his own deep-seated views. He was happy to be able to put them in Afghani's mouth. Islam as an advance over Christianity and the struggle against imperialism: let us take up these two crucial points in Goldziher reformist practice.

7.

We can begin with Goldziher's own insistent *teleological* commitment to the superiority of Islam over Christianity and of political, national autonomy over Western imperialism. I hope I do not need to reiterate at this point Goldziher's promotion of a 'purified monotheism', a reformed Judaism or Islam, as the providential telos of human history. Christianity, in all of this, though remained for him the incarnationist pagan remnant. Only in Goldziher's diaries, the *Oriental Diary* and the *Tagebuch*, is this historicist contrast drawn with an emotional intensity and vehemence that make clear they were at the very core of his thinking and scholarship. A picturesque example comes from the *Tagebuch*'s recounting of his interaction in Damascus with the Eastern Catholic clerisy. Presented near the end of his first week in the city to the local archbishop, Monsignor Makarius, the *Oriental Diary* brashly describes how he, like so many others, instantly fell in love with him and his great knowledge of Arab philology and literature. Goldziher reported the Monsignor's saying in amazement: "It is a miracle...that from the west comes to us a man who knows our language better than we ourselves"; and, that "one would almost think that nature is playing a deceptive game with your face, which shows the years of a youth, while your soul has drawn in much knowledge without your body, thank God, having come to harm."⁹⁵

Of course, as was manifest from the context and not least the archbishop's reproving him for taking his lodgings not in the Christian quarter but amongst the Muslims, the prelate's praise was largely predicated on the presumption that Goldziher was Christian. Goldziher did not disabuse him of it but there was, in *Oriental Diary*, much muttering under his breath and repeated references to the Damascus blood libel of 1840.⁹⁶ Still, Goldziher could not help but be

⁹⁴ Already before the 1883 Afghani-Renan polemic, for instance, in his 1880 contribution to Ebers' illustrated volumes on Egypt, "Notizen über die Universitäts-Moschee al-Azhar", Goldziher had taken to defending Islam vociferously against those who charged it was fundamentally antithetical to scientific activity and scholarship. Hence, commenting here on the life of scholarship at al-Azhar, he wrote: "Certainly, those who reproach Islam for being unfavorable to science do not know it or do it an injustice, for science is in the understanding of Muhammadans a fundamental component of belief and of the more noble nature of humanity. 'Men are', says the line of Muhammadan tradition, 'either students or teachers. What does not belong to either category is a good for nothing maggot'. In fact, Muhammadans consider science so altogether inseparable from their belief that in the history of the Arabs, the pre-Islamic period is dubbed 'the epoch of ignorance'". Ebers, *Ägypten in Bild und Wort*, Vol. II, 79.

⁹⁵ Patai, *Oriental Diary*, 118.

⁹⁶ To the archbishop's reproach, Goldziher merely responded that his living amongst the Muslims had a scientific purpose behind it; see Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 60. In the *Oriental Diary*, he put it this way: "I answered him diplomatically, and the colleague of P. Thomas, who was supposedly consumed by the Jews, was satisfied with my

flattered by and to like his admirer⁹⁷ and made it a habit to visit the prelate's seat two to three times a week and in fact received visitations in return! However, remembering this relationship after more than fifteen years in the *Tagebuch*, its upshot for him was that, as he put it, he came away with more love for Islam from his time in the archbishop's office than amongst the Muslims themselves. For here, above the Cathedra of the "prince of the Church" in this room, there were three pictures hanging, one of the Pope Pius IX, one of Mary, with the caption 'Umm Allah (the mother of God)' and a third of Jesus, with the caption 'Ibn Allah (the son of God)'. This is how Goldziher characterized the impact on him in retrospect:

Although having gotten used to this pagan terminology in Europe, I was all day long internally in turmoil over these words in a Semitic language, in which Jews and Muhammadans have proclaimed to the world the most energetic protests against this paganism, against such blasphemy. Would it not have been a blessing, if the ancestors of this archbishop had been brought under the Qur'an so as to overcome paganism? In so far, it became in my interaction with the Syriac-Greek [Eastern Catholic] clerisy daily clearer, that Islam has meant a powerful progress over Christianity.⁹⁸

answer." For this and other references to the Damascus affair, Patai, *Oriental Diary*, 113, and, in meeting the Jewish community in Damascus, 118, 120-1.

⁹⁷ As always, this was put forth altogether brashly in the *Oriental Diary*, in an officializing tone, the praise of higher-up outsiders vindicating him in his local struggles, in the *Tagebuch*: "The archbishop is enamored of me. He fills the whole Syrian Christendom with my fame. He thinks I should mount a cathedra in Damascus to revive Arabic literature. The Christian purple bearer in his highest own person visited the poor Jew boy the day before yesterday. If he but knew that I am a Jew and that I belong to the abominable tribe whose members devoured the P. Thomas in the year 1840. He is a kind old man; may God forgive him his naïveté, his French, and his Arabic language scholarship, but, above all his views of Arabic grammar and vocabulary, his excursus about the French language, etc." Ibid, 120-1. "Our consul, Bertrand, a Levantine, presented me to the archbishop of the Unitarians [Eastern Catholics], Makarius, a fanatical but very scholarly aged man..." Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 60.

⁹⁸ Ibid, 60. See also *ibid*, 179-80. The examples could be multiplied indefinitely. And, much the same sentiment dominates the *Oriental Diary*; it is most illuminatingly expressed in a lamentation Goldziher here wrote in Arabic after visiting the Church of the Holy Sepulcher addressed to the Church and so to Christ himself. In Conrad's correction of Patai's translation of it, it reads: "O Church of the Resurrection, what is it that has rendered you so remote from being a place frequented by the adherents of monotheism, and brought you so close to being a place frequented by the worshippers of idols? Your people kiss stones and prostrate themselves before them and before the places which they allege mark where human feet passed. May you be kept safe from them and from their actions, for Gold has nothing to do with what they in their ignorance, do." Goldziher was here referring to the Stations of the Cross as having been made into pagan-like objects of worship. Conrad, "The Near East Study Tour Diary of Ignaz Goldziher", 119-20. The one denunciation of Christianity in Goldziher's diaries with a truly hysterical edge comes in fact a page after the text just cited from the *Tagebuch*. It was prompted by the fact that, despite his attempts to establish relations also with the Jews of Damascus, his repeated avowals to them that he was Jewish and his many visits to the Jewish quarter, here he was given a reserved and cautious reception. Goldziher's explanation for this was that the Damascene Jews, witnessing his extensive contact with the Christian hierarchy, suspected him of being in fact a convert and a Christian missionary. The venomous outburst followed from this and from the fact that, as Goldziher saw it, the whole pressure of European diplomacy on the Ottoman regime to allow for greater religious freedom seems to have come down to this: that the Jews now had, even on their high holy days, to tolerate Christian missionary evangelizing and propaganda, written in Hebrew, posted on their synagogues. Let them dare to tear them down, he said, and the whole machinery of European diplomacy would go up in arms against the Sultan for countenancing such 'infamy'! So, he fulminated, "the believers of Jehovah" were to be lured to the confession of "Christianity, the religion of the most revolting hatred and odious iniquity", the same Christianity that had brought down the blood libel of 1840 on their heads. He thus excused the "brave Jews of Damascus" for rejecting him as possibly a missionary, and, in the heated terms he in the *Tagebuch* generally reserved for what he took to be the wrongs done to him by his fellow Hungarian Jews, addressed them thus: "You [Damascene Jews]

Again, what Goldziher shared with Afghani⁹⁹, the idea that Islamic monotheism represented a great advance over Christian incarnationism, was not for him a ‘side issue’. It was probably more *the central point* for him than his Muslim friend, as it was definitive of his historicist scholarly efforts to push History, via a reformed Judaism and Islam, towards the destination of ‘purified’ monotheism.

As for the second idea Goldziher shared with his friend, the need for political and cultural autonomy and the fight against Western imperialism, this *was* Afghani’s forte. Most telling in this regard too are the avowals of Goldziher’s diaries, namely, what they had to say about his own personal experiences of what he dubbed the ‘European Orient’ or Cairo. The general attitude of both diaries is quite constant on this question. But there is, nonetheless, a clear and interesting shift here from the *Oriental Diary*, which in fact covers only the first month of Goldziher’s time in Cairo and that suddenly rather sparsely, to the *Tagebuch*, which retrospectively fills in crucial gaps for that first month but also, now as our only source, the other four of his stay in the city.¹⁰⁰ This shift rather reflects Goldziher’s life-long equivocal

have every reason, in hearing the word ‘missionary’ to be filled with hatred and horror. They want to lure into this disgraceful religion, which came up with the miserable Christian blood libel, which puts its best to the rack, the believers of the one and only Jehovah [and this] in Muhammadans lands. It is an impudence, of which only the most disgraceful of all religions, i.e. Christianity, is capable. It has no brains (*Stirne*) to become conscious of the impudence that constitutes its historical character. The brain of a whore, this is the brain of Christianity. Poor Damascene Jews! Hate only this impudent low-life, if the burden that weighs down on you allows you still the energy to hate!” Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 61. All this rage, it seems, however, was intended less to excuse the Damascene Jews than himself for having clearly spent so much more time with the Damascene Christians than them. In any case, Goldziher was always extremely willing to work with and learn from Christian theologians; and, in fact, the very paragraph after the one cited above in the text was devoted to his interaction with a Maronite priest, whom he described as a very great scholar of Muslim jurisprudence, from whom, he admitted, he’d learned an enormous amount. See *ibid*, 60. The outburst was, as we’ll see, the occasion both of Goldziher’s competitive historicist and of his life experiences.

⁹⁹ On Afghani’s evocation of it see Keddie, *Sayyid Jamāl ad-Dīn “al-Afghānī”*, 178.

¹⁰⁰ Goldziher refers in the *Tagebuch* to his *Oriental Diary* for the rest of the period in Cairo, so the question is, of course, what happened to it. There is a dispute between Patai and Conrad on this point. The former claims the ‘second half’ of the diary was lost in WWII, after Goldziher’s library—excluding manuscripts deposited in a cave that was, however, destroyed—was sold to the newly founded Hebrew University. Conrad says that the original folio of the work seems complete and undisturbed and that all that was lost in the war were Goldziher’s inter-leaved copies of his books, not his manuscripts. He thinks Goldziher reference in the *Tagebuch* to his diary is in fact to his *Arabisches Notizbuch*, to which he also himself refers in the *Oriental Diary* for more details at one point. On the face of it this is plausible. The *Oriental Diary* becomes so abbreviated eventually that it seems quite possible Goldziher could’ve simply switched to the *Notizbuch* altogether. But, in the *Tagebuch*, in describing a crucial episode during his time in Cairo, where Goldziher, pretending to be a Muslim, ardently and sincerely prays in a Mosque during Friday prayers like an ordinary Muslim, he says that the “adventure” formed a “special chapter” of his *Tagebuch*. The reference seems to be to something more substantial than would fit in the *Notizbuch*, and if it’s the latter he meant, it’s not quite clear why he would now refer to it as his diary? As for why we don’t have this *Notizbuch*, Conrad speculates that it’s because of all it contained about al-Azhar and that Goldziher had made a solemn promise to the Shaykhs, good for all time, that he would not make a public show of his opportunity to study there. Goldziher, he says, as he had done at other times, probably consigned the book to the flames. This conjecture is also not satisfactory. First, the *Oriental Diary* covers, though rather scantily, his first ten days at al-Azhar. Second, it seems unreasonable that Goldziher would refer his family and future audience to a “special chapter” of his diary if he’d already gotten rid of it or meant to do so. Third, it does not make sense that Goldziher would destroy the *Notizbuch*, which bore information on his whole trip and à la Conrad contained also this ‘special chapter’ which had nothing to do with al-Azhar and which he was happy to discuss in the *Tagebuch*, but keep those sections of the *Oriental Diary* that in fact have revealing things about al-Azhar within them intact. The upshot is that from

disposition towards Europeanized Egypt, including especially occupied Egypt: he saw it, on the one hand, as on the edge of a precipice all but lost, on the other, took the part of those reformists and nationalists who would drive it back within its proper historical trajectory. His first day in Cairo, having been just more than two weeks past in what he judged the genuinely Muslim milieu of Damascus, instantiated the first appraisal:

The first impression which the gas-lit Cairo made on me was not a favorable one. I despise the European Orient, and what else is Cairo, after all? I love that which is original and abominate the botched-up copy. Oh, if I could see again the dark bazaars of Damascus, could stumble after my heart's desire over sleeping dogs, and flee from this gas-lit Orient, where Europe has spoiled everything healthy and tanned the honest Arab sins morally to death after the French example!¹⁰¹

The remaining parts of the *Oriental Diary* merely elaborated on the sentiment. There were two poems, written on his tenth and thirteenth days in Cairo respectively, in the first of which, Goldziher sneeringly differentiated himself from the, as he saw it, kowtowing Europeanizing elite of Cairo—"rotten brood of Mameluks". In the second, he bemoaned that Egypt and its people, with their three and a half millennia career in world-history, were, in bowing now before petty exported French fashions, on the verge of being forever decimated.¹⁰²

the internal evidence available thus far, it is simply not possible to know what happened; see Patai, *Oriental Diary*, 26; also Conrad, "The Near East Study Tour Diary of Ignaz Goldziher", 11-3.

¹⁰¹ Patai, *Oriental Diary*, 144.

¹⁰² The text of the two poems in Patai's translation read as follows:

At night

Shall I creep before you like a worm, Rotten brood of Mameluks,

Shall I smell your filth, Bow down to you like a toady?

Shall I lick your spittle, Sing the Praises of your scabs, Stick into the trouser pocket My filth of beautiful cadences?

Shall I, like you, push forward, Crawling slave of the vassals, Hang on the old nail My regiment of ideals.

No, the sacrifice would be too great,

I suckled a different milk from the wet nurse, From what you suckled you monsters.

So I must stick to the shabby program. (12/20/1874)

I see men become prostitutes here, Worshipful they sink before a Pharaoh's feet

And bow down before Mammon's vain idol

And delight in the sweetness of Pharaoh's spittle

Unscrupulous French shrewd foxes Lead the Pharaoh with their leash;

With the finest new boot wax they besmear Muhammad's people for the glory of France,

Which blinds this good, weak people With the vain luster of insipid external things

Whereby the good old kernel expires,

Never again to yield that fruit which made this people Achieve victory for three and a half millennia

To the admiration of the entire world. (12/23/1874) Ibid, 147-9.

Already on his second day on Egyptian soil, in Ismailia, the half-way station on the then still brand-new Suez Canal, Goldziher already made clear what he thought of the droves of Europeans coming to occupy the upper-class of Egypt: "Two observations force themselves again and again on my mind in Ismailia, observations which, ever since I came into the Orient, I have tested repeatedly at every step: (1) that the European in the Orient represents the class of the worst kinds of rascals, who were spit out by European society and that here only the Muhammadan represents the class of decent men; (2) that this European element which escaped the gallows behaves with an arrogance with which the modest, albeit indigenous, Muhammadan cannot compete. As in Port Said, so here as well, the Europeans occupy the nicer, more spacious quarter, while the Muhammadans are crowded into a kind of ghetto... As against the quite satisfactory church, one could point only to a miserable, half-ruined mosque looking more like a barrack, and

I should preface the turn to and in the *Tagebuch* by saying that, as a thinker who staked his whole life on his intellectual and religious sincerity, Goldziher did not generally surprise one in his judgments. That goes for his reported impressions of his travel. Goldziher was always going to dislike ‘Christian (Protestant) Beirut’ and he did.¹⁰³ He was always going to love ‘Muslim Damascus’ and he did. He was always going to despise Jerusalem as ‘Religion Inc.’ and he did. And, he was also bound to hate ‘European Egypt’ and, in the *Oriental Diary*, that is exactly what happened. In all of this then, it is arguable that only Goldziher’s Cairene experiences served genuinely to break the tendency of his predispositions and this precisely not by changing them, but in according them a new outlet, direction and focus. Where the *Oriental Diary* lets off and the *Tagebuch* picks up, we see Goldziher now meeting, as he understood them, unabashed radical reformers or convinced nationalists, whose oppositional, anti-imperialist circles he joined and whose partisans he sought to become. Whether he agreed only with this or that part of their thinking, he identified with them in a new way: no longer, as thus far on the trip, working merely either to impress them or to study them and with them but into whose stream of *history-making* ideas he did his best to interject his own. In the early part of his Oriental trip, reflected in the *Oriental Diary*, he was still predominantly, privately pre-occupied with his thoughts of Jewish reform and scholarly efforts in this direction. As he came increasingly in the midst of an Islamic setting he clearly believed of *complementary* interest and prospect with respect to his reformist program, the atmosphere of the *Oriental Diary* leaves little doubt he thought he was as yet alone aware of the full future potential of this milieu.¹⁰⁴ It was only after landing in Egypt, with the already well-formed thundering premonition that all such hopes for *it*

the minaret, not unlike the Tower of Pisa, rose in front of me likewise as a question mark; Can a ruling religion in normal social circumstances and standing on the level of human estimation sink back into such a zero? Poverty and beggary all around. The Muhammadan rarely has the opportunity to have dealings with the foreigner...and thus he has no object for fleecing on which he could enrich himself. But here in Ismailia there does not seem to be the soil on which the arrogance of the French and the Italians could prosper. They will not prevail in the struggle for existence, and God willing, they will reach the beggar’s staff. Let my...Napoleons not become a blessing for them!” Also, Goldziher, just at this time, no longer had sufficient funds to keep up with his fellow European travelers, so that, having had, on the very day of the above observations, to put up at a very shabby hotel in Ismailia, and the next day to buy a third-class train ticket to Cairo, he now tasted personally the clear condescension of the “stupid Europeans”. He fulminated on the train, “I despise you, stupid rabble of the higher class!”. See Ibid, 140-3.

¹⁰³ Goldziher spent most of his time in Beirut with the Arab Protestant circles around the American Syrian Protestant College. And, he was anything but impressed by the manifestations of what was to become famous as *al-Nahda*, or the (Arab cultural) “awakening” associated with these groups and Arab Christians in the Levant more generally. He admitted straight-out in the *Oriental Diary*, “I must confess that I am unable to like the Christian Arabs.” And, though he immediately acknowledged that this new breed of Arab Protestant scholars and those around them each spoke two to three European languages with such immaculate fluency, giving the lie to the idea Arabs lacked any such linguistic capacity, he nonetheless continued: “Nevertheless, this pietistic rabble makes a depressing impression on the European. It is a false education, a degeneration of the original racy Arabism; only a raw vandalism could undertake to amalgamate this noble element with a national Germanic contrived consciousness, and in this manner to kill a natural product which, even if it had no historic mission, surely had the right to exist. To this is added the worst degree of fanaticism.” Ibid, 110.

¹⁰⁴ Hence, the *Oriental Diary* is dominated early, but into the Cairo period, by a basic distinction Goldziher drew amongst the Muslims he encountered on his trip, between the falsely Europeanized Frenchified Arab/Ottoman or Egyptian elite whom he thoroughly despised, and the ‘innocent’, namely, sincere but unsophisticated, meaning also not as yet critical, Muslims. It was the soulful, ignorant but noble, ordinary Muslims whom he loved. Even the learned, scholarly ones who were his best friends, whom he still liked to portray as naïve and as yet altogether simple. It is this distinction that exploded in Cairo. See Ibid, 89-90, 91-2, 103-6, 115-6, 126-7. The attitude in both its parts was of course an aspect of the always singular voice and brashness of the *Oriental Diary* as a whole. The distinction does not exist at all in the *Tagebuch*.

were in the process of being strangled, that he actually ultimately found live historical subjects about him fighting historical battles comparable to his own.

One can in fact trace the shift in question within the *Tagebuch*'s own discussion of the time in Cairo. Goldziher began it by saying the first few days in Cairo seemed a "loud veto" against the idea of continuing here (in the residence of the Mamluks) what he'd started in Damascus (the city of the Umayyads). Having gotten by train to Cairo, he had been led by the gas-lit street where he was let off to a European Hotel, "across from the Opera House, where, with Italian singers and ballerinas, European civilization was to be pasted on top of the Muhammadan state. It was the Cairo of Isma'īl Pasha. The first impressions shattered all my longing after an untarnished Muhammadan essence to the ground. I thought I must despair of drawing deeper within Islam here."¹⁰⁵ But, a page later, matters had begun to turn around. It was not merely a matter of the amazing coup of having attained permission to study at al-Azhar. Rather, he was again interacting with and supported by "highly intelligent" Muslim scholars and littérateurs, and a wealthy Cairo magnate who opened his heart and his house to him. *And*, he was becoming a fixture in two Muslim intellectual circles he industriously visited.

We've already cited the *Tagebuch* on Goldziher's daily participation in the group formed around Afghani, with its liberal, radical tendencies with respect to al-Azhar. But, he came to be as much a part of another group that congregated about the former secretary in the Ministry of Education, Salih al-Magdī, whom he described as belonging to that current in Muslim Egyptian intellectual life, which did not recognize intellectual and political structures as requiring basic reform, but which "strove after a re-organization of relations on a national-Arab and Muhammadan basis and through thick and thin scorned Europeanization." Al-Magdī had been forced to yield his own position in the Education Ministry to a Swiss import, Victor Edouard Dor (Dor Bey), and the unsatisfied and oppositional met regularly in his house to discuss their nationalist grievances. As Goldziher put it, "the adherents of this movement had had for some time to give way to the European Reform-swindlers, who took it upon themselves, without any understanding for the traditions of the people, to import at high ransom the foreign culture." As for his own relation to this circle, he said, "with my frequent visits I could now come to learn the outstanding scholars of the national party. I myself belonged to them and made it as my duty to contribute my small line (*Schärfllein*) to their convictions." He added, "In the Bazaar as well I agitated in the way of national culture and had once to endure not a small horror because of it"¹⁰⁶ Hence, the very same passage of the *Tagebuch* on Cairo, in which Goldziher claimed that in the midst of his time there he called his monotheism Islam and was internally altogether inclined towards it, continued:

During the celebrations put on by the Viceroy [Khedive] on the occasion of the marriage of his daughter, I agitated in the Bazaars against the privileges of the Europeans [i.e. the Capitulations]; in Sālīh al-Magdī's circle, I tabled *Kulturhistorische* (historico-cultural) theories on the neo-Muhammadan indigenous culture and its development in opposition to the ruling European contagion. What 'Urābī and his colonels a decade later rattled with their sabers, with that I harangued the circles in which I moved. I refused to take

¹⁰⁵ Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 65-6.

¹⁰⁶ All the above citations appear on Ibid, 67. Goldziher also met Ali Mubarak for the first time in al-Magdī's house.

part in festivities with Europeans. If they wanted to invite me with the Shaykhs, that way I'd show up, and so on and so forth.¹⁰⁷

Hence, autonomous development, national culture and anti-imperialism were also not 'side issues', but formed rather the other fundamental guiding light of Goldziher's historicist methodology. Anti-imperialism was the condition of national culture and of autonomous development. From the evidence available, it was precisely on the basis of *these Kulturhistorische* pre-occupations that Goldziher encountered, first in Cairo, reformists 'on the other side', namely, also an anti-imperialist Muslim reformer like Afghani.

Goldziher's early and late fascination with and focus on Afghani is thus quite understandable: the reformist Muslim friend showed himself increasingly, through his charismatic and itinerant political activism across the world, and after his polemical exchange with Renan, a man of international reputation and of world-historical importance. And, he shared, as Goldziher took it, two of the essential conclusions of his *Kulturhistorische* program: first, that genuine modernist transformation could only be understood in terms of autonomous political and cultural development. That meant a fervent opposition to imperialist infiltration and exploitation. Second, he too viewed Islam as not only capable of revival in this sense, which is say *renewed from the inside*, but that, the true kernel of monotheism in its heritage, missing in Christianity, would form when reformed the ultimate religion of humanity. That is not all they could be said to have shared. Both also had a comparable sense of the inestimable importance of the *Ijma* 'as having served to sustain Islam historically. They both insisted all reform appeal to and be channeled through *it*, to challenge Orthodoxy from the inside. Both, that is, clearly opposed all sectarianism.¹⁰⁸

Nonetheless, in asserting comparable conclusions, it is of the essence to remember that the two thinkers arrived at them, to the extent that they can be characterized as agreeing, from altogether distinct, even diametrically opposed, perspectives. Afghani has been seen as a political theorist caught between religious Orthodoxy (as a source of socio-moral authority and solidarity) and the demands and opportunities of modern scientific society (needed for self-defense but as also allowing for spiritual and material progress)¹⁰⁹ Goldziher saw him as equally challenging the prevalent autocracy of the Muslim states of his time. But, what the great Muslim reviver of philosophy wanted was reconciliation, the projection of true Orthodoxy in light of modern social and scientific mores. Goldziher has often also been approached in the same way, as caught between his Jewish tradition and science. However, it is essential to understand that Goldziher was never in any way caught between his religious tradition and his critical science. Nor did he presume any inherent tension between religious tradition and Orthodoxy and the critical historical point of view in need of his reconciliation and overcoming. Rather, he believed that only the critical scientific examination of religious tradition and Orthodoxy would render them genuinely and teleologically 'religious' and accord them thus full emotional sincerity and depth.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, 71.

¹⁰⁸ I have already made this point about Goldziher in the previous chapter; for Afghani, see the discussion in Ahmad, "Sayyid Ahmad Khān, Jamāl al-dīn al-Afghānī and Muslim India", 63; Keddie, *Sayyid Jamāl ad-Dīn "al-Afghānī"*, 180.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 160-7.

¹¹⁰ See Peter Haber, *Zwischen jüdischer Tradition und Wissenschaft* (Cologne, 2006). For a like 'caught between religion and science' treatment, see Hanisch, "Machen Sie doch unserer Islam nicht gar zu schlecht", XV-XVI.

Thus far, we have essentially viewed Afghan through the eyes of his Islamicist friend, namely, in the areas of their agreement as well as in Goldziher's critique of his reformist counterpart's traditionalist, retrospective reading of Modernity into Orthodox tradition. But, of course, Afghani had his own perspective on and path to these points of 'agreement', which not only did not necessarily conform to Goldziher's projections onto him, but have been certainly as *historically consequential* as Goldziher's. As Nikki Keddie has noted, in sifting through the complex web of positions Afghani assumed with respect to quite disparate audiences, besides expedience, a deeper underlying logic: an evolutionary, functional conception of 'religion', which viewed it as having, in the early stages of any properly *human* development, played the fundamentally civilizing role, inculcating upon the populace, through prophecy and revelation, the *mentalité* required for morally responsible co-existence and social solidarity. It was this that had then made possible that philosophical reflection on the part of an intellectual elite that constituted the opening to the path of spiritual perfection as well as scientific, technical and material progress.

Hence, Afghani focused on the socio-cultural instrumentality of 'religion', namely, of Islam. The belief in divine judgment was guarantor of the moral responsibility of all, including the social elite. The belief in the especial nobility of human kind and particularly of one's own confessional community promoted the achievement of the same. And, the belief in life in this world as a learning station in preparation for a better world to come mediated the upright, purposeful overcoming of the trials of mundane existence. Afghani thus argued that Islam's authoritative institution of such idealistic premises and attitudes served to gear the self to matters larger and worthier than itself and thus to coordinate the social solidarity and autonomy providing for the genuinely idealistic pursuits of philosophy and science.¹¹¹ However, as evidenced by the position he pursued in his 1883 response to Renan, if Afghani tended to view religion, from an evolutionary perspective, as having provided the socio-cultural basis for the development of philosophical and scientific inquiry, he equally considered its authoritarianism when such inquires sought to take the lead as having posed the greatest possible impediment to them. In the Islamic sphere, such authoritarianism had all but crushed them.

In other words, Goldziher¹¹² and almost the general mindset about the 1883 debate that took Afghani to have written, first and foremost to 'defend the honor of Islam' and its altogether compatibility with science against Renan's attack had gotten it wrong. Keddie has demonstrated conclusively that he did no such thing. Actually, on this point, he agreed with Renan and inveighed against Islam as having been, in league with despotism, the primary factor in the scientific and cultural backwardness of the regions in which it was the dominant religion. Such was the inherent though ironically equivocal conflict between religion and science, that while the social efficacy of religion made the growth of philosophy and science possible, they had to gain and maintain the upper hand if they were not to be destroyed by it! In fact, the only sense in which Afghani 'defended' Islam against Renan was to argue that, in its sempiternal enmity to philosophy cum science, it was *no different* from any other religion, including Christianity. The only difference had been that, in Europe, the Reformation of Christianity had afforded

¹¹¹ See especially the discussion in Keddie, *Sayyid Jamāl ad-Dīn "al-Afghānī"*, 161-165, 171-81. As Keddie shows, Afghani was wont to use 'religion' and 'nationality' at times interchangeably, even to prioritize the latter, as the proper agent of socio-cultural solidarity. He did so especially in settings, like in India, where the anti-imperialist imprimatur meant the cooperation of local Muslims with the indigenous non-Muslim population. See for instance, *ibid*, 157-60, 166-7.

¹¹² Conrad simply followed Goldziher in his characterizations of Afghani.

philosophy and civilization the leading position in this struggle, and Afghani said he hoped for a like Reform of Islam. Afghani's major dispute with Renan involved then not as much the latter's denigration of Islam as his attendant racist argument that the so-called flourishing of 'Arab Science' in the early Islamic centuries had been in fact a Hellenic and Persian phenomenon, which had supposedly succumbed once the Arab religion, Islam, and eventually the non-Aryan Turks, won the day.¹¹³

Consider then how poles apart Afghani's and Goldziher's positions were on the nexus, 'Islam' and 'science'. Afghani appropriated Islam primarily as an instrument of socio-cultural solidarity at the *origin* of civilization, philosophy and science that, for continued progress, had, however, to be as much as possible subjected to these. Goldziher crowned a critical Islamic monotheism as the scientific *telos* of human civilization as such. These two divergent interpretations of Islam, Afghani's essentially 'socio-cultural' vs. Goldziher's primarily 'teleo-religious' one, have continued, in their difference, to define the contours and the question of what one may permissibly dub 'Islamic Modernity': was one to privilege Islam and its traditions as a locus of social, political, cultural and historical progress as Afghani did? Was Islam culture? Or, did precisely the ultimate emancipation and autonomy of the cultural sphere from the language of Islam and Islam's elevation, as Goldziher saw it, to a 'pure' 'religious' realm constitute progress in this sense? Was Islam as culture only a masking of culture? The question was to come to a head within *Islamwissenschaft* itself, in the first fundamental debate that divided the field before the public at large, on the properly 'scholarly' stand on the Ottoman Jihad declaration in WWI. Was 'Jihad' a reified, opportunistic mask of political prerogatives? Or, was it part of a cultural tradition that could be appropriated self-consciously to survive crisis in the present, which was what 'cultural identity' in fact meant? Hence, the dialectical attitude of Islamicists with respect to Islamic modernity was not to be, notwithstanding its pedagogic predispositions, a one-sided matter, leading, in the midst of WWI, to a split in the field itself.

¹¹³ Ibid, 189-99.

Chapter IX. Goldziher's Turn to *Islamwissenschaft*

8.

I have described Goldziher's scholarly trajectory in terms of the carrying over of his teleological critique of the Jewish monotheistic heritage to a comparable characterization of Islamic history. It was the application of this critical historicist standpoint to the Islamic heritage, the making of it into another subject of the project of historicist idealization encompassed by the 'science of religion' that founded and grounded *Islamwissenschaft*. In making the argument, I showed that, *pace* Said's account of 'Islamic Orientalism', *Islamwissenschaft* was not an atavistic restatement of the invidious Semitic/Aryan divide in Orientalist scholarship. The fundamental dividing line in its discourse was a universalist one between medieval theocracy and the modernist, critical demarcation or purification, which is to say, *reform* of Islam as 'religion'. By the same token, we have seen that *Islamwissenschaft* did *not* a theologocentric account of Islamic history and societies; exactly the opposite. As against essentializing Muslim societies through the prism of Islam, it sought precisely to recover autonomous sociopolitical and cultural developments from ideological rationalization or ultimately traditionalized through Islam, which is to say, Islamic jurisprudence. Only by exposing 'Islam' as ideology was 'Islam' to be purified as 'religion'.

I have also sought to show that the aim of Islamicist practice, in the reformist agenda Goldziher bequeathed to it, remained complex and changing, but that its aim was *not* to objectify but rather to subjectify Muslim natives. *Islamwissenschaft* challenged traditional, traditionalist Muslim self-understanding and struck a pedagogic pose with respect to Muslims because it sought to approach them as historical subjects. In its epistemic rivalry with Muslims, it sought to establish what achieving full autonomy over the Islamic heritage would involve. Goldziher's own reformist attitude towards Muslims gave the field not only its discursive moorings but also first established its trajectory as a modernist, reformist practice. Goldziher was precisely not exceptional in *this* sense: his modernist, pedagogic stance with respect to Muslims was also a carry-over of his modernist, pedagogic stance towards his own Jewish heritage and community. What did make Goldziher stand out amongst his colleagues is that he approached Islam from the pedagogic and reformist standpoint precisely because he believed the Islamic heritage held within it, in line with the parameters of the 'science of religion' a teleological, ideal potential essentially missing in 'Christian Europe'. 'Islam' could be 'religion' in a way that 'Christianity' simply could not. And, this potential, to be realized only through the *internal* critical reconstruction of the Islamic heritage required, in Goldziher's eyes, political autonomy, just as the telos of History, as he projected it, towards national *and* religious fulfillment in their mutually defined spheres, likewise entailed a decided anti-imperialist stance.

I have accordingly made clear that for Goldziher and as was to be the case in *Islamwissenschaft* generally, the epistemic discourse and expertise of the field was never divided from its modernist, reformist practice and potential. Goldziher's *Islamwissenschaft* was a reformist discipline and, in his own life, he never knew of a gap between his scholarship and his own emotional and historical experience. I have sought to establish this point primarily through Goldziher's scholarship, but what has of course been missing is the account of how his scholarly career and project and his life *did* crucially dovetail with one another. I have not told the reader why and how Goldziher moved his reformist project from the Jewish to the Islamic heritage. But, this shift that founded the discipline of *Islamwissenschaft* was essentially the result of

Goldziher's life experiences in the two communities, the Hungarian Jewish and national community, he remained committed to and could not forsake but which both essentially rejected his conceptions of and prescriptions for them. Islamwissenschaft thus was the consequence of Goldziher's Hungarian tragedy, his 'martyrdom' as he called it. This chapter is about Goldziher's 'martyrdom' and the manner in which led him to turn to *Islamwissenschaft*: given that, as I will show, Goldziher conceptualized and consolidated his 'martyrdom' and '*Islamwissenschaft*' at the same moment and in the same breath, the chapter seeks to answer the question as to what this all too human turn to *Islamwissenschaft* did and did not mean for the character of the new field Goldziher helped establish.

Róbert Simon rightly began his exposition of Goldziher's scholarship with the thought that his work was completely bound-up and inextricable from his biography. With great historical acumen, he said Goldziher's life was "paradigmatic".¹¹⁴ But, this 'paradigmatic' character of Goldziher's life has most persistently been approached in terms of a life caught in between different imperatives or traditions. Peter Haber's biography of Goldziher is entitled, *Zwischen jüdischer Tradition und Wissenschaft (Between Jewish Tradition and Science)*. We are to see Goldziher as caught between a traditional Jewish environment and his commitment to critical science in European society.¹¹⁵ Marchand has, alternatively, seen Goldziher as a philo-Semite in between the Jewish and Islamic traditions, a "man between two laws".¹¹⁶ In the case of those like Haber, who see a division between Goldziher's Jewish religiosity and religiosity in

¹¹⁴ By saying that Goldziher's life was 'paradigmatic', Simon himself sought primarily to understand it, from a Marxist standpoint, within the Hungarian developmental situation in the nineteenth century. Hence, he meant by the remark that Goldziher's life and work encapsulated the unequal development of Western and Eastern Europe: the attempts, doomed and generally meeting with a tragic fate, at liberal bourgeois progress in the backward "Hungary of the nobility." See Simon, *Ignác Goldziher; His Life and Correspondence as Reflected in his Works and Correspondence*, 11-13, 68 (note 6), 78. It was Simon who, in filling out the historical contours and implications of *this* line of thought, first argued a major distinction between the young reformist Goldziher and the older more official or 'resigned' one. He saw this transformation, as following, not as others have seen it, in terms of the defeat of Goldziher's reformist cum nationalist efforts by his fellow Hungarian Jews, but as his resigned response to the evermore manifest absurdity of such efforts in the context of the increasingly anti-Semitic, "Christian-national" turn in Hungary from the last decades of the nineteenth century onwards (the Tiszaeszlár blood-libel of 1882-3, etc.) As for the endless fulminations in the *Tagebuch*, in which Goldziher put the blame for his reformist setbacks squarely on his own Jewish community and establishment, Simon preferred to read this as his having made a "scapegoat" out of them. *Ibid*, 56 and see more generally, *ibid*, 47-9, 55-62, 75 (bottom of note 15), 96-99, 107-8. I will here be arguing that Goldziher never abandoned his reformist project as not only Simon, but Conrad following him, has argued.

¹¹⁵ See Peter Haber, *Zwischen jüdischer Tradition und Wissenschaft (Cologne)*, 2006. This biography essentially works through Goldziher's 'three' diaries, namely, the *Oriental Diary*, the *Tagebuch*'s 1890 retrospective retelling of his life up to that point, and its chronological entries after that point to the end of his life. The missing focus on Goldziher's scholarship is filled up with social theory, in whose terms, Goldziher is portrayed as a 'marginal Jew', who, in attempting awkwardly to hold on simultaneously to his Jewish tradition and his critical scientific standing, was alienated both from his Jewish milieu without also being able to find a place in Hungarian society. The aim is thus to show the *aporias* of any properly 'Jewish' assimilation into the Hungarian public, so presumably the lack of pluralism in nineteenth century European modernity. Goldziher's own historicist perspective on his experiences, equating the reactionary Hungarian Jews and gentiles equally, is not considered; nor, that he himself was an opponent of pluralism in *this* sense. For a like 'caught between religion and science' treatment, see Hanisch, "*Machen Sie doch unserem Islam nicht gar zu schlecht*", XV-XVI, where it is said that Goldziher began to focus his critical work on Islam as opposed to Judaism because this 'wrenching' task was easier done on a comparable but foreign religion to his own. But, a division between religious emotion and cold science is bound to miss the fundamental trajectory both of Goldziher's life and work.

¹¹⁶ See Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 323-332.

general and his critical scholarship, I will, to begin with, simply reiterate one of the larger points of this study: within the ‘science of religion’ tradition of scholarship, in which Goldziher represented one apex, such a division between religious heritage and religiosity precisely did not exist. That is because, in such scholarship, true religiosity was viewed as a critical religiosity arrived at by the historicist examination of ‘religious tradition’. Accordingly, critical historical scholarship was viewed as the internal telos of religious tradition itself, the means of its fulfillment. In Goldziher, as well, the monotheistic religious traditions were, as he saw it, to achieve their full emotional sincerity and depth only through their critical historicization and reconstruction. For, only in this manner could they arrive at their teleological idealization.

As for the characterization of Goldziher as a philo-Semite, in between Judaism and Islam, I have already suggested what may be misleading about it, as Goldziher’s project must be understood in its universalist historicist trajectory and telos. Goldziher was able and willing to turn his reformist project from the Jewish to the Islamic heritage, *because* he viewed the purification of monotheism as a universalist teleological commitment and project. Goldziher turned to *Islamwissenschaft* as a refuge: he turned to the critical reformist reconstruction of the Islamic heritage because he deemed as a comparable monotheistic tradition comparable to Judaism and worthy of such idealization. And, he ‘converted’ his scholarly project to it, because he felt his rejection he’d tasted from the Hungarian Jewish and national community left him no choice but to continue his universalist reformist plans in this vein. The larger story of this chapter then is that we must see Goldziher, in his critical religiosity, if anything, as not caught between but attempting painfully to move ‘beyond’ what he viewed as his reactionary conservative fellow Hungarian Jews, on one side, the reactionary anti-Semitic broader Hungarian society on the other, both akin to one another in what had to be religiously *and* culturally displaced. This was what Goldziher called his martyrdom and as a response to which he founded *Islamwissenschaft*.¹¹⁷

If the chapter departs from the others by seeking to understand and account for Goldziher scholarly trajectory by reading it through that of his life, one of its basic story lines reiterates a theme visited in the last chapter. There I argued that Goldziher’s establishment of *Islamwissenschaft* as a reformist modernist practice can only be understood within the context of the divergent and shifting conceptions of the same in the Islamicist field as a whole. As with his reformist scholarship and practice, so with his scholarship and life, this chapter moves against accounts of Goldziher that seek to read him essentially out of his Islamicist milieu as an *exceptional* figure and which deploy especially his biography to do so. The reasons for wanting

¹¹⁷ Goldziher, in calling the rejections he faced ‘martyrdom, came to view his fate in nothing less than a providential guise: he saw his having to work for the Jewish community he sought to reform as what he saw as a subaltern, because he could not secure an academic position in Budapest without converting, as in fact a trial of God, the heroic struggle of a ‘martyrdom’. It was a term he used again and again to describe the experience of his life in his journal. His only recourse and salvation was the continuation of his scientific research, that, in its undertaking and results, was for him *always* the means of religious purification: “There remains to me *one* means towards self-elevation: science, only in self-less devotion to which I could be allowed that satisfaction which I require.” And, as this framework of his life became exactly ironclad in his self-appraisal of 1890, he decided a few sentences later, no doubt in light of his Golden Medal of 1889mthat as of that moment he was still on his feet, he was still fighting the fight: “I have overcome the most dreadful crises with the perseverance of a martyr, I have bid defiance to the obstacles and scruples, the negative powers and the Satanic forces, that with their brazen pressure weighed down on my spiritual life—I can say this: like a hero; I have elevated and fortified myself in lonely nights, that my study lamp kept alive, against the devils, that sneeringly surround me all day, to nip at me with burning pincers and to fill my brain with stinking fumes.” Ibid, 90-1, other examples of Goldziher referring to his martyrdom are 33, 104, 136, 205, 206, 237.

to see Goldziher as an exceptional figure are complex and often in fact feature polemical opponents who nonetheless have their respective reasons for locating him historically in this way. If one sees *Islamwissenschaft* as a primarily ‘imperialist’ discipline, for instance, then one has somehow to explain how the founder of the discipline could have been so anti-imperialist in temperament.¹¹⁸ On the other hand, if one wanted to save the establishment of the Islamicist discipline from the taint of the imperialist context of its founding, then one could also shepherd Goldziher largely out of an Islamicist milieu in the ‘Age of Empire’ in which questions of Empire *were* pressing. One could then describe his accomplishment in the establishment of the field as that of having introduced a greater *professionalization* in Orientalist scholarship, hence, in the distancing of such pressing concerns.¹¹⁹ Again, on the other hand, if one wanted to see Orientalism as essentially overridden by its imperialist milieu, then you might want to see Goldziher as an exceptional figure within this context and so on.¹²⁰ I argue instead that

¹¹⁸ Ludmila Hanisch has described *Islamwissenschaft* as an imperialist discipline, but for quite opposed reasons than Said. The latter viewed Orientalism as a racial philological discourse that anticipated European imperialism and made it morally possible by dehumanizing the Oriental. Hanisch saw *Islamwissenschaft* as a move away from a mostly removed philological Orientalism in the bid to provide concrete, operational information needed by imperialist states in their encounter with the Muslim world. She saw it, in other words, as essentially a technocratic discipline. As she put it in the introduction to her 1992 collection of the Becker-Hartmann correspondence, Hanisch, *Islamkunde und Islamwissenschaft im Deutschen Kaiserreich*, 11-12: “In the European lands, whose expansionist drive had given to Oriental studies a not negligible impetus and whose overseas contacts had considerably added to the material to be worked through, the idea was well-established at the end of the [nineteenth] century, that a purely philological investigation of the Orient could not cover the epistemic needs of a colonial power. With justification then, the rise of *Islamkunde* (Islamic Studies) or *Islamwissenschaft*, as striving for a *kulturhistorische* research of the Islamic world embracing the [various] linguistic lineages, has been seen as a reaction to this gathering sense.” Hanisch further noted here that there was for *Islamwissenschaft*, in Goldziher’s eyes, besides this imprimatur of informed colonial governance that of filling in the gaps in one’s—Europe’s—own historical and cultural self-understanding. Next, in the introduction to her 2000 collection of the Goldziher-Hartmann correspondence, Hanisch sought essentially to consolidate these two vectors, that of a reliable conception of native conditions and of an adequate European self-consciousness, as both aspects of the professed civilizing mission through which European imperialist expansion was justified. Alleging the theological imperatives for Orientalist study to have been in the ‘age of secularization’ pushed to the background, here too she remarked: “First shortly before the turn of the [twentieth] century, as the colonial lands no longer viewed their overseas engagement as a temporary adventure, did the need arise of a comprehensive knowledge of the colonial territories with Muslim inhabitants. The scientific investigation of the Orient underwent an expansion vis-à-vis a historico-cultural consideration of the lands of Asia and North Africa that went down in the history of the field as *Islamwissenschaft* or *Islamkunde*.” The still focus on ‘Islam’ as the dominant prism for this work, notwithstanding the “secularizing tendencies” of the time, Hanisch took to follow from not theological interests but focus on the socio-historical impact and power of religion. As for how Goldziher and Hartmann, both living in polities without great overseas colonies of predominantly Muslim population, could come to be at the center of a new field preoccupied with the reigning conditions of the same, Hanisch argued they’d participated equally, if obliquely: they were “prophets” ignored at home, in the broader European civilizing effort. That is how they had given wings, in Hungary and Germany respectively, to a discipline whose “extrication from the philological investigation of the Orient is to be ascribed to the realization that an ‘imperial responsibility’ cannot be satisfied through knowledge of language and literature alone.” See Hanisch, “*Machen Sie doch unseren Islam nicht gar zu schlecht*”, X-XII. Much of this description of *Islamwissenschaft* as following from ‘imperial responsibility’ and its purported civilizing imperative is basically extrapolated from Hanisch’s more studied understanding of Hartmann and applied to Goldziher.

¹¹⁹ See Conrad, “Ignaz Goldziher on Ernest Renan”, *The Jewish Discovery of Islam*.

¹²⁰ See for such ‘Goldziher exceptionalism’, Hamid Dabashi’s Introduction to the new re-issue of the English translation of the *Muhammedanische Studien*, “Ignaz Goldziher and the Question Concerning Orientalism” in Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, ix-xciii, esp. lxi-lxv. Dabashi essentially follows the lead of Conrad’s Goldziher-work but as redirected in an apologetic pro-Said format. For the absorption of ‘Goldziher exceptionalism’ into the more

Goldziher very much belonged within his Islamicist milieu and that his divergent standpoint within it can only be understood within its context.

9.

When Goldziher's *Tagebuch* first appeared in 1978, with its, as it fell on the delicate ears of contemporary Orientalists, 'high-strung', 'emotional', 'fulminating', 'intoxicated', 'unbalanced', 'incensed' and 'vituperative' characterizations and prose, there was real disquiet. Many could not believe that *this* should have been the character of a figure with such a pivotal standing in the history of Orientalist scholarship.¹²¹ It was no doubt this atmosphere that set the stage for the appearance in 1987 of Raphael Patai's character-assassination of Goldziher, in the extended "Psychological Portrait" of the latter he affixed to his translation of the *Oriental Diary*. Here, Goldziher was analyzed as a "passionate", "obsessed genius" who, unable to cope with the strain of his experiences, became, as an adult, a "permanently depressed", "embittered", increasingly "paranoid" man of deepening "misanthropy", with an "oversensitive, tortured mind". All of this left him a near "split-personality" between, on the one hand, his super-rational scholarship, on the other, a "pathetic" or "more nearly pathological than pathetic" emotional existence, which gained him his reputation in Hungarian Jewish circles as a "*roshe*, an evil man".¹²²

The basic story here was that Goldziher, from the beginning a misadjusted intellect, incapable of reconciling his rational thought-process with his overwhelming, live emotions and relations, was left emotionally crushed when the dream of a Professorship at the University of Budapest promised him failed, because of entrenched Hungarian anti-Semitism, to materialize. Thereafter, he was basically a borderline case, to cite the kind of psychology Patai was practicing. He came more and more to vent his rage at his fellow Hungarian Jews about him, whose great 'crime' had been actually to salvage a livelihood for him as the secretary of the Neolog conservative Jewish congregation of Budapest. This occupation though he denigrated as a 'slavery', as the bane of his existence for thirty years, from 1876 to 1905, when he was finally appointed professor. He described it as having brought him many times to the edge of a nervous breakdown. But, in fact, he might have, after the first ten years, left again and again and again

general literature, see, Zachary Lockman, *Contending Visions of the Middle-East; The History and Politics of Orientalism*, 81, which also cites Conrad, but also sees Goldziher as a fish out of the imperialist sea.

¹²¹ Edward Ullendorff parodied his disbelief, wishing "he had remained in the pre-diary state of *jāhiliyyah*. The impact of the human disappointment, upon studying this well-nigh unrelieved flow of obloquy, was overwhelming and traumatic." Writing quite separate reviews, 'respectable' scholars like Ullendorff and G. M. Wickens registered their utter disappointment and shock equally. Wickens conjectured that the journal provided material more for the clinical psychologist than the Islamicist. It was very hard to see the masterful and majestic Goldziher of the foundational texts of Islamic Studies descend here into an endless loop of moralizing virulent sensitivity and malicious recrimination, all of it, whether out of gnawing self-doubt or towering self-pity, ubiquitously and grandiloquently self-indulgent. They also arrived broadly the same conclusion: best would have been if the journal had not been made available to general view (i.e. not published) and handed over to a competent biographer to 'contextualize' and "distill" (Wickens) for the public at large. The taste of these scholars for the suppression and management of the historical record suggests the happily official account of the Orientalist hero they sought. See Ullendorff, Edward, Review of *Tagebuch: Ignaz Goldziher* (ed. Alexander Scheiber). *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 24 (1979), 553-55, Wickens, G. M., Review of *Tagebuch*, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 100 (1980), 34-6

¹²² See Patai, *Oriental Diary*, 13-79, and for these phrases endlessly modulating the text, just for instance, 31, 32, 35, 36, 50, 51, 54, 71, 78. The apparent designation of Goldziher as a *roshe* was from an anecdote from Patai's father, whom we later learn Patai felt had been slandered by Goldziher.

for professorships at the greatest universities of the world, but he refused to do, because well he was a lunatic.¹²³ Much of Patai's prose here dripped with invective and the vindictive spirit was not even exactly hidden.¹²⁴ The "Psychological Portrait" was less a 'study' of Goldziher, than a mining of his diaries for damaging information and insinuations. The fact that a self-avowed scion of the Hungarian Jewish community, like Patai, could not, after all that had happened since the death of Goldziher in 1921, let matters rest and allow latter's prose to speak for itself, which clearly did a pretty good job of 'incriminating' him on its own. If he felt the need to use the opportunity for a full-fledged 'payback', this is itself something of a proof that the struggles that animate Goldziher's *Tagebuch* were *not*, as alleged, 'in his head' or due to his 'paranoia'.¹²⁵

The ideological animus that drives Patai focuses on Goldziher's Reformism vs. the Zionism of his own family.¹²⁶ Despite his overtly anti-Zionist stance, this was not a question that especially exercised Goldziher. But, as this is an ineluctable question in understanding Goldziher's position and placing him historically, I will review his stance on 'Zionism'. As the outline and discussion of *Der Mythos* already suggested, he viewed 'Zionism' essentially as the genuine and developmentally healthy political expression of the 'Jewish nation' in the *past*.¹²⁷

¹²³ See *ibid*, 18-9, 29-37, 50-4, 71-4.

¹²⁴ Patai's admitted starting-point for his portrayal were a few demonizing 'anecdotes' (see note 22) about Goldziher told him by his father, who, however, "could in no way vouch for their authenticity". In the final pages of the piece, he made a special point of the disdain Goldziher had shown for a local Jewish journal, in order to show his hatred for all things Hungarian Jewish. The informed reader following the citation would know the founder and editor of the same was none other than Patai's father. See *ibid*, 14, 77.

¹²⁵ This is the starting-point of Conrad's essay "The Dervish's Disciple", which was clearly positioned as a reply to Patai; having shown the reformist scruples at the heart of Goldziher's conflicts with the Hungarian Jewish community, Conrad then moved on here to suggest that at least certain of Goldziher's accusations and fulminations in the *Tagebuch*, namely, those against his early mentor, Arminius Vámbéry (1832-1913), were essentially accurate in substance. And, in fact, unlike the later positioning of Goldziher as against Said, Conrad here cited Said on the tendentious, invidious, politicized Orientalism of the West to argue that Goldziher provided a precise contrast to these currents dominant in the cultural context of the nineteenth century, while Vámbéry was the very embodiment of them. See Conrad, "The Dervish's Disciple", 227-243. This later became Dabashi's position versus Conrad's.

¹²⁶ See *ibid*, 40, 68-70.

¹²⁷ He even exactly thought that the drive towards the development of a unitary 'national' state and that towards monotheism, in Jewish Antiquity, were fundamentally linked, the latter following upon the former. Something, in this connection, must also be said about Louis Massignon's well-known, though rightly generally dismissed, conjecture about Goldziher's avowed Zionism that came in his In Memoriam introduction to the bibliography of Goldziher's works by the latter's student, Bernard Heller (1871-1943). Noting here Goldziher's unabated opposition to Renan's thesis about the inherent inferiority of the Semitic languages and his hope instead precisely for their modern development, Massignon came to affix the Zionist label to him by way of a reading of *Der Mythos*, which he saw as instantiating the tendency of "Spiritual Zionism" made current by Ahad Ha'am (1856-1927). As was characteristic of his interpretive reaching, Massignon here took it that Goldziher's way of striking a definitive blow at Renan in *Der Mythos* had been, precisely by applying the critical methodology of biblical criticism to the sacred text, namely, by the thereby destruction of its historical authenticity and exposé of it as mythology, to have exactly thus showcased the glorious national creativity of the Jewish people in its production. As he put it, "the most radical hypercriticism put in the service of a national rehabilitation." See Heller, *Bibliographie des Oeuvres de Ignace Goldziher*, XV-XVI. What is altogether confused about this rendering of *Der Mythos* is its misapprehension of the fundamental *developmental role* of the "national idea" in its narrative. That is, when Goldziher came, in *Der Mythos*, to discuss what he took to be the rise of 'national consciousness' amongst the Hebrews, after their settlement in Palestine, it was precisely so as to analyze the radically transformative impact of this on their mythological heritage. It was seen as having played an essential role in instigating two evolutionary processes: first, that of the 'historicization' of mythology, namely the translation of part of its repertoire into national cum historical ancestors and heroes. This, Goldziher argued, became the means whereby the burgeoning Hebrew nation worked to mark itself off from the surrounding peoples from whom it had precisely borrowed so much. Second was the

gradual development in conjunction with the rise of a unitary state and a proper national sense of the *monotheistic idea*, by virtue of which the Jews became a world-historical people. As he explained: “Political fragmentation accordingly supports Polytheism in religion, whereas state-unity and centralization helps the development of Monotheism to breakthrough.” Goldziher, *Der Mythos bei den Hebräern*, 324. In other words, it is simply a misunderstanding of what Goldziher meant by ‘mythology’ to suggest his aim was to show that *that’s* what the Old Testament consisted of. He sought actually to demonstrate the layers of historical development in the text, as the oldest mythological heritage came eventually to be appropriated as both ‘history’ and pagan religion, and the latter was then eventually transformed in a monotheistic direction.

So, yes, he wanted to show, *pace* Renan, that the Jews had mythology; but that only went to show they were in this regard no different from any other people in history. Goldziher, however, had further aims: by focusing precisely on the *progressive* efficacy of ‘national consciousness’ in Jewish religio-historical development, he targeted repeatedly those bent on the notion that the one God of the Jews was inherently a ‘national God’: this was the way in which he tried to highlight the universalist, Prophetic stage as the highest point of the Jewish tradition, that which his critical, teleological purification it accordingly recovered as its proper site. Goldziher thus described the development of Monotheism amongst the Jews as having been ‘theocratic’: he used the term in almost the opposite manner from which he eventually applied it to Islamic history, to mean the thorough mixture of the religious and national realms. Hence, as associated with the unitary reigns of the Jewish Kings, David and Solomon, monotheism, in its initial iterations, *had been* a matter of national exclusivism, of the one true God of the Jews standing against the false Gods of the others. But, then the successive line of Jewish Prophets had come to the fore eventually altogether to re-interpret and redirect the theocratic idea in a cosmopolitan sense: in the monotheism of the Prophets, the one and only God was that equally to all peoples and the ultimate salvation was to encompass all humankind. And, if the Jewish nation continued, in the Prophetic schema, to be still privileged, that was only to the extent of its awareness of monotheism as the universal faith and of its universalist religio-ethical mission in this regard: making this known was to be its messianic destiny. Therefore, it was not at all the ‘mythological creativity’ of the Jewish people, but the universalist turn given by the Prophets to the ‘theocratic idea’ of Monotheism and by the world-historical calling they assigned to the Jewish people that was at the climax of *Der Mythos*.

Finally, if Goldziher emphasized the Prophets’ cultural and political nationalism as strongly as their religious universalism, this was precisely because it was in this dual sense that they constituted the primary and ultimate historical subjects of his *Kulturhistorische* program. However, he had clearly come to consider the world-historical process and so providence to have decided on the universalist religio-ethical role of the Jews, as foreseen for them by the Prophets. This universal Jewish role was to be reconstructed and fulfilled by critical historical science, but as such in direct counterpoint to a Jewish nationalism. This is clearly attested by Goldziher’s comments in *Der Mythos*, as much as by his own consummate Hungarian nationalism. For instance, he began his discussion here of the rise of the ‘national idea’ amongst the Hebrews with the observation that the pre-requisite and *sine qua non* of any ‘national history’, properly so-called, was circumscribed territorial settlement. The national cum historical sense required rising above the nomadic stage. Later, he made a telling comment, in this regard, on the break-up of the unitary Jewish state:

“Nationality is most intimately attached to political community. The abstract concept of nationality becomes illusory, when it is not on the back of a unitary state by which it comes to be a concrete phenomenon. The consciousness of national unity is weakened, but at the least altered, if state and nation do not develop into a singular concept. For that reason, we see also, on the one hand, in the separated sectional states of a divided nation the struggle for a unitary state inflamed, if the national consciousness is awakened within them from sleep, and, on the other, inversely, in states, that involve a union of different peoples, the certainly altogether justified attempt by the strongest, so also ruling nationality of the state, to impose its own consciousness on the weaker and thereby to create a unitary communal sense.” Ibid, 334-5; see also for this discussion, *ibid*, 274-8, 281-2, 301-10, 314-332, 334-5, 356, 361-9.

To return to Massignon, amazingly, when later on, in 1912, Goldziher confided to him that he was part of a movement in Jewish thought at the service of a “personal God”, the French intellectual here concluded that that meant the Jewish thinker had moved from the nationalist unmasking of *Der Mythos* to more conservative religious pre-occupations. Given the explicit and explicitly attested religiosity of *Der Mythos*—see *ibid*, XXIII-XXIV, 348-9—the last conclusion in itself suggests Massignon had not himself actually read the book, but was basing his conjectures on his discussions of it with Goldziher’s friends, Snouck and Victor Rosen (1848-1908), to whom he attributed his views. Heller, Goldziher’s favorite student tried to convince Massignon that he was wrong; that the aim in *Mythos* had not only been to showcase Hebrew mythology, which only meant the Jews were like any other

But, in line with the reformist conception of the ‘Jewish mission’, Goldziher envisaged as having been sacrificed in the adoption of the universal, prophetic mission of the Jewish people in the religio-ethical education of mankind, marking a return to it in the present as merely regressive. In any case, Goldziher continued to be proud of and to point to the friendship from his youth with Max Nordau (1849-1923), the co-founder with Herzl of the World Zionist Organization, and was on closest terms with another thinker of Zionist connections, A. S. Yahuda (1877-1951), a Jewish Arabist, himself an ‘Oriental’, born in Jerusalem and from a Sephardic Baghdadi family.¹²⁸

Patai’s overwrought and malicious prose, ironic since this is what he castigated Goldziher for, can serve us for the purposes again of historical placement. It is further evidence of the extent to which Goldziher had, in his thinking, misjudged the direction of History. Goldziher had cultivated *Tagebuch* during his life almost certainly, as can be seen from passages to this effect, as serving the cause on his behalf of a posthumous vindication. Upon its publication, however, it set-off a train of events that threatened almost altogether to destroy his reputation. I refer to the Patai interlude to point to our own historiographic position. Today, thanks largely to Conrad’s initial work,¹²⁹ Goldziher has been ‘rehabilitated’ and now all sides in the Orientalist debates, perhaps a first, honor him. Hamid Dabashi’s 2008 “Ignaz Goldziher and the Question Concerning Orientalism”, which took up a good deal of Conrad’s work but in the form of an apology for Said, was also positioned explicitly, in an anti-Zionist register, against Patai.¹³⁰ Hence, Patai’s character assassination has been sidelined and so has the question of Zionism, a rare feat in the annals of Zionism. Goldziher’s Jewish reformist background has also become the generally understood starting point of understanding his life, though it will be the work of this study to show that this was the case also for his work, not simply his early work on the Jewish heritage but also that on the Islamic.

people, but to demonstrate the way in which the Jewish Prophets had overcome mythology, after its eventual transformation into pagan religion, by the proper re-appropriation of the religious realm as Monotheism. And, he emphasized that Goldziher’s devotion to the personal God had been just as much manifest in *Der Mythos* as to the day he died...but, without avail; Massignon affixed Heller’s objections as counterpoint to his own in the notes. See Heller, *Bibliographie des Oeuvres de Ignace Goldziher*, XVI-XVII.

¹²⁸ In the *Tagebuch*, commenting on their mutual time in the resort-island of Sylt together and, figuratively, on their divergent ideological standpoints, Goldziher applauded the “brave Dr. Yahuda” for availing himself of his company there and “faithfully” staying with him for the duration, though “his condition indicated a different cure [spa treatment], yes, might have even energetically shunned this shoreline”; adding that “There are still faithful people as well. This Asiatic is one of them.” And, it was Goldziher who was responsible for Yahuda’s receiving a professorship at the University of Madrid in 1914. When the Spanish government officially relayed to him the University’s request that he recommend someone, he asked Yahuda if he was interested in the position, quipping half-seriously, “I hold Yahuda to be the providentially pre-destined Sephardic candidate”, and that “the crime of 1492 is thus in 1914 to be through the path of science atoned for.” Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 248, 276. This was, in itself, also a witty but altogether telling reply to Zionism, namely, that ‘scientific progress’, instantiated in the Jewish mission, constituted the real solution to the ‘Jewish Question’.

¹²⁹ Conrad produced, to begin with, cool-tempered effective replies to Patai’s work in a tandem of essays in two successive issues of the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*: first, in “The Near East Study Tour Diary of Ignaz Goldziher”, where he produced emendations of Patai’s translations and notes for the recently published *Oriental Diary* and showed Patai’s work to be, both with regards to Arabic and Islamic subject-matter, of amateurish quality; next, in “The Dervish’s Disciple: On the Personality and Intellectual Milieu of the Young Ignaz Goldziher” he provided a subtle but extensive and pointed critique of Patai’s narrative in the “Psychological Portrait”.

¹³⁰ As already mentioned, this essay formed Dabashi’s introduction to a new edition of the English, Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*; for the positioning against Patai, see here xxiii-xlix.

We are, however, still left with the task of how to read, explain and understand the *Tagebuch*, the book which Goldziher believed would explain him to the world but has had to be ‘bracketed’ and heavily contextualized in order to reestablish his standing after the initial damage done by its publication and that of Patai’s in its wake. Conrad’s tack has been to try to qualify the *Tagebuch*, namely, Goldziher’s review of his life in 1890 at the age of 40 and the journal that he then continued on this basis to the end of his life, as consisting of in fact a concatenation of texts. First, he argued that it served Goldziher merely as an emotional outlet for letting off steam, that *pace* Patai’s reliance on it to paint him as a maniacal genius, it showed he had the capacity to moderate his temper to face emotional crisis. Second, there was another, overlapping with the first, which provided the context of and so helped explain all the exacerbated emotion. This part of the text reviewed the whole host of Goldziher’s Hungarian tribulations, his omnipresent battles with anti-Semitism, on the one side, his Jewish Reformist struggles with and ‘defeat’ at the hand of the Jewish Rabbinical establishment on the other. Third, finally, with his neglect at home and the bitter remnants and memories of his attempts at Jewish Reform always in his mind, Goldziher relayed his professional triumphs and collegial relations within the orbit of Arab-Islamic studies.¹³¹ In what follows, I will seek to read the *Tagebuch* in a more coherent manner, namely, as the crucial text which in fact consolidated Goldziher’s turn to *Islamwissenschaft*, which recorded simultaneously his ‘martyrdom’ and his Islamicist refuge and which thus should be read as an in fact founding text of the discipline.

10.

Of course one *can* read the *Tagebuch* as a concatenation of texts: every text is such. And, in this text especially, one could note an emotional outburst here, there an episode on anti-Semitism or the cause of Jewish Reform, there again, a description of Goldziher’s scholarly experiences, influences, output and reception. However, this splintering of the text into subject-matters in fact buries much of the point of the *Tagebuch*, its meaning and *telos*. For, exactly the parts of Goldziher that had been sundered apart by his life-experiences, setbacks and struggles were to be redeemed by the *Tagebuch*. That meant emotional sincerity and freedom of his youth that he took as the voice of providence itself, which, however, after the dismal reception of *Der Mythos* and his concomitant struggles with the Hungarian Jewish community, he filtered into the mere structure and implicit *telos* of his works. It meant his unending commitment to a ‘purified’, universal Monotheism and its pursuit through ‘scientific reform’ of his own Jewish heritage, which, however, after the increasingly hostile reception of it, as juxtaposed with the enthusiastic one of his comparative work on Islam, he decided to continue by making the Islamic heritage the primary vehicle of it. It meant his broad comparative, universalist interest in religio-cultural history, meaning at first *also* Islamic history, which, however, he was compelled by his circumstances to forgo to make his work, through predominant focus on the Islamic heritage, at least count amongst fellow Orientalist scholars inspired by it. All of these *compromises*, it was the task of the *Tagebuch*, in whose pages at least the original parts (sincerity, Jewish Reform, universalist ‘religion’ and monotheism) were brought into holistic relation again, to *justify*. It was the task of the *Tagebuch* to show they were a part of his *unflagging* devotion to the furthering of his religio-scientific ideals.

Hence, the *Tagebuch* must be viewed as a martyriology. To begin with, Goldziher was *not* happy about any of these compromises. He might have, as originally promised, been able in

¹³¹ See, for instance, Conrad, “The Dervish’s Disciple”, 230-1.

the 1870's to become a Professor at the University of Budapest. He might have succeeded in attaining a Professorship at the new Rabbinical Seminary opened in Budapest in 1877. He had been given, already in his first year as Secretary of the Neolog Jewish Congregation in Budapest, every reason to expect this, before his Reformist activism and *Mythos* finally caught up with him.¹³² Had any of these things happened, Goldziher might have established some social basis for pursuing his original program. But, they did not materialize. He was left the Secretary of the Conservative Jewish community, so that when he began the section of the *Tagebuch* that described his coming to be installed in the position, the first line read: "Consummatum est! so might I have called out on January 1, 1976."¹³³

However self-indulgent or self-important viewed from the outside, there is no need to think Goldziher crazy. His position as secretary, whatever its trappings, was that of a dependent, subaltern bureaucrat. And, it is in fact all too easy to imagine his superiors disoriented, discomfited and roiled by the Reformist pretensions and pronouncements of a subordinate employee who was of a manifestly higher intellectual standing than themselves. Consequently, Goldziher was subjected to all manner of indignities to put him back in his place. One should not doubt his obsessive and indignant references to these in the *Tagebuch*.¹³⁴ Goldziher's response to all this was essentially a staying tactic: he resolved to continue with his scientific work and so the furthering of the cause of universalist religious reform, and *never* wavered. But, this he could do only by assimilating the isolated and dependent social situation he was now reduced to projecting it from as nothing less than a providential trial, a 'martyrdom', which he sincerely hoped, by persisting in his religio-scientific scholarship and so staying true and committed to his ideals, he would be requited for. He waited his life-long virtually for God cum History to put the pieces of his life together again.¹³⁵ Any easy evacuation of the premises, any simply leaving and

¹³² These events are discussed in Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 74-79, 87-89. Goldziher was, in the plans for the Rabbinical Seminary, initially not only designated a prospective Professor, he was, again, already in 1876, made a part of its organizing committee. There, he apparently, if one is to trust his own lines, made a great deal of noise about the Seminary's being built on an altogether corrupt basis, i.e. not on Reformist lines. It is this activity that might have set-off the 'Mythos' affair in which his mytho-historical treatment of the Old Testament was branded as "heresy". That, in any case, is how he saw it. As he put it, the Hungarian Jewish community had until 1877—the book had come out the year before—not even registered the book's existence.

¹³³ Ibid, 80. "Consummatum est!" (It is completed) are Christ's last words on the cross in John 19:30.

¹³⁴ See, for instance, *ibid*, 98-9, for a meticulously recorded litany of public putdowns. Here's Patai's bit of Babbity on Wahrmann, 'Goldziher's torturer': "Wahrmann was a graduate of the University of Budapest, a founder of several industries, a leading banker, a fighter for Jewish emancipation (achieved in Hungary in 1867), and the first Jewish representative in the Hungarian parliament. In addition, unlike many other leaders of the congregation, he was also a man of letters; in fact, he was an important writer. Under his leadership the institutions of the congregation were greatly expanded, and, with his great perseverance and strong will, he rendered considerable services to both his country and its Jews." Patai, *Oriental Diary*, 32; it may be true, but he also clearly couldn't stomach someone with higher pretensions than his own.

¹³⁵ Perhaps the most damning and disgusting of Patai's accusations is that Goldziher, the emotional maniac, fell in love with his daughter-in-law Maria Freudenberg (1890-1918). He came, after her marriage to his son, Karl, to explain in his *Tagebuch* that *this* is why he'd had to stay and not leave Hungary! This had been the reward for his 'martyrdom', to fall in love with his own daughter in law! In fact, Goldziher, who did love his daughter-in-law and who did think of her as the 'resolution' for his 'martyrdom' did not do so because as an old man, still an emotional maniac, he couldn't control his feelings enough to put the proper boundaries between himself and his own daughter-in-law. Should one actually read all of the *Tagebuch* entries about her, which are always glowing and have a life-changing aura to them, they are in the context of the 'couple' and Maria constantly visits 'them', Goldziher and his wife. And when she dies, he calls out in his diary to his son, "Oh, my beloved Karl", does not bemoan his fate as a lover. The reason why Goldziher had such strong feelings and love for Maria are not hard to find. She was the 'answer' because she finally brought the torn pieces of his life together again. She herself was an Orientalist, who

going abroad, would have been nothing other than a ‘betrayal’, of his Hungarian nationalism as much as his religious sincerity. No matter the difficulties, he had to persevere in his patriotism and in religious reform, the two mutually constitutive cornerstones of his religio-cultural ideal. He had to stay.

The decision to stay elicits in turn the question of Goldziher’s increasingly decisive turn to Islamic scholarship, *Islamwissenschaft*. This is a process one can witness in his scholarly output and pre-occupations as it gains speed throughout the 1880’s, namely, in tandem with the enthusiastic reception of his Islam-work, in fact its altogether pleading encouragement on the part of colleagues, like Snouck, who would make a school of it. From the middle of the decade, he had to face up to the crisis of his life: the successive deaths of his sister and mother, which coincided with mounting frustrations at work and drove him to the edge of a nervous breakdown. After that came the run-up and finally active commitment to the publication of the *Muhammedanische Studien*. Goldziher in the *Tagebuch* presented himself as having decided that his available time and audience now required him to forgo his comparative religio-cultural studies and to focus altogether on his Arab philology and especially on the Islamic heritage. This decision was, despite his grievous fears to the contrary, almost immediately and amazingly rewarded and crowned in the Gold Medal he received at the VIII IOC in 1889 from King Oscar II in Stockholm.¹³⁶

The ‘Islamic turn’, it has been argued, represented essentially the abandonment, the defeat of Goldziher’s broad-based project of religious reform, aimed, on a comparative and universalist basis, at the purification and modernization of the Jewish faith. Conrad has seen in this the transition thereafter to a more limited and ‘professional’ focus on Arab and Islamic subject-matter.¹³⁷ But, this is *not* the way in which the *Tagebuch* presented the matter. Rather,

could actually, in the Hungarian context to boot, appreciate his ‘greatness’ as an Islamicist, who could simultaneously restore to him a Jewish legacy. Through her, the riven parts of his life kept together by the record of the *Tagebuch* came back together again; and, for once, his scholarship, i.e. ‘martyrdom’, which had clearly served to make life for his family, who served his ‘martyrdom’ with him, difficult in the Hungarian Jewish context, had actually done him good. One of the first things he noted was that he was so happy to have close family ties again and to get out of the isolation... See Patai, *Oriental Diary*, 50-3; Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 277-9, 311-12.

¹³⁶ See Goldziher, *Tagebuch*,

¹³⁷ What allegedly finally made him decide that his Reform struggles were in the present Hungarian Jewish and his own circumscribed context “futile” was the embarrassing reception of a series of lectures he gave in Budapest in the winter of 1887-8 on “The Essence and Development of Judaism”. Conrad, “Ignaz Goldziher on Ernst Renan”, 153-4. Conrad might have added that the disappointment of these lectures at this crucial juncture coincided with a time in which Goldziher’s to-be Islamicist colleagues had discovered just exhorting him towards the publication of his *Muhammedanische Studien* would not do. They virtually took it out of his hands, found their own publisher, all to prevent him from sitting on it any longer. He called it, in quotes, “the pressure of the good friends”; Snouck and Victor Rosen pushed him in conversations at the VII IOC in Vienna (1886); Snouck wrote him a “rough” letter in the fall of 1887 that pushed him finally to send the manuscript to the publisher. When he did nothing and was happy about the publisher’s not moving forward, his good friend August Müller (1848-1892) changed publishers and made the final arrangements. Conrad notes that the text was published at “insistence of his close friends”, but there is virtually no sense in his essay of the crucial role of Snouck and the Snouck-Goldziher relationship, probably because ‘Goldziher-exceptionalism’ would be dealt a blow by such umbilical links to a colonialist. See *ibid*, 164; Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 114-5. On the lectures themselves, see *ibid*, 111-2. These were a course of six lectures. The attendance, initially strong, dropped-off so precipitously by the end that Goldziher decided it would simply be mockery to give the final lecture. His explanation for the failure was that he’d refused to dumb anything down, to succumb to being amusing, but had kept his exposition at the scholarly level. In return, his opponents had added to his ‘heresies’ that he was also a ‘bad speaker’, while the more average audience had been disappointed in the lack of a ‘practical’ message. His conclusion was that this was the last time he “threw pearl before swine”, especially, he added, as the

there, his meteoric Islamicist success is characterized as the achievement of the missing social base thus consolidating his ‘martyrdom’, namely, allowing him to continue his reformist struggle without ‘going under’. Goldziher, as we’ll see, made it rather clear that this meant from hence the Islamic heritage and literature were to form the primary vehicle, the narrowed frame of his critical reformist project. In the 1890 review, he even describes his wife, Laura Mittler (1854-1925), whom he married in 1878, as the other ‘resource’ that had made it possible for him to continue his struggle through the critical years of the 1880’s. Everything was turned and measured in terms of the struggle. His scientific friends and teachers he called his only “sanctuary”. He reiterated that his “science” had remained and continued to remain his only weapon against the odious Jewish establishment for which he worked, his only means of maintaining his purity and his connection to his youth and past. And, this thought brought him to contemplate the dependent, ‘subaltern’, context of his religio-scientific scholarship. He was caught in the contradiction that, while his critical religious work towards the ideal was altogether ignored, his bureaucratic work for the self-same establishment constituted the basis of his family’s livelihood. The result was the most heroic and one of the saddest passages of the *Tagebuch*. The contradiction was his ‘martyrdom’; in 1890 though he was brandishing *Islamwissenschaft* as his means of surviving and continuing to wage the struggle:

This contradiction is the driving force of my spiritual life, the great problem, in whose resolution, I will either rise to a greater state of purity or will be altogether swamped and spiritually go under. The struggle against this problem forms the external frame of my life. It is in this moment pretty well decided, that I have not fallen to the swamp. I have overcome the most dreadful crises with the perseverance of a martyr, I have bid defiance to the obstacles and scruples, the negative powers and the Satanic forces, that with their brazen pressure weighed down on my spiritual life—I can say this: like a hero; I have elevated and fortified myself in lonely nights, that my study lamp kept alive, against the devils that sneeringly surround me all day, to nip at me with burning pincers and to fill my brain with stinking fumes. But, before the threshold of my study, this whole decade and a half, the mistletoe stood guard. What they always hung over me, and it was horrible and humiliating, I, by it, traveled in a direct line on the parallel path of my higher life-tasks.¹³⁸

Besides the diction, so troubling to later Orientalists, the passage makes clear Goldziher did not believe he had succumbed in his fight or that the “struggle” and the “higher life-tasks” had been left only as bitter memories of the past. In fact, the *Tagebuch* must be seen as having been written, by Goldziher, primarily to *consecrate* his ‘Islamic turn’, to consolidate it as his means of persevering in his ideals, in his ‘martyrdom’. One of the interesting things about Goldziher in this connection is that he was himself a ‘traditionalizer’ when it came to his own life, though he critiqued the traditionalist cultural attitude in its ‘medieval’ Jewish and Islamic manifestations. Namely, within the course of his life, Goldziher regularly read back later turns and decision into his youth, which he considered sacred territory. He also retrospectively idealized his eventual decision to focus his reformist project on Islam by an idealized account of

swine did not even want to profit from his lectures. We will come to probe the broader meaning of this failure, but it clearly served further to underline the seriously tense relationship of Goldziher to the Jewish community at large.

¹³⁸ Ibid, 90-1, and 83, for the earlier comment about his foreign scientific associations as his “sanctuary”.

his encounter with Islam during his Oriental trip.¹³⁹ It was as if the bitter confrontation with the Jewish establishment had been his providential fate, his whole life, from the start, driven towards it. Again, the *Tagebuch* turned virtually everything positive in Goldziher's life, not only his past, but, sadly, also his family, into fodder, a 'resource', for his 'martyrdom'. In any case, it is perhaps not surprising that Goldziher was so good at diagnosing 'retrospective idealization' in the Muslim tradition. He was a less-than-conscious master of it in his own life.

11.

What I wish to demonstrate, through the *Tagebuch*, is twofold. The broader point to be elucidated is that Goldziher's 'Islamic turn' encompassed not the relinquishing, but precisely the continuation, of his Reformist scholarship. The great irony of the subsequent Orientalist alarm about this text then is that, in the aftermath of Goldziher's Gold Medal in 1889, the *Tagebuch* is the document in which *Islamwissenschaft* as a reformist modernist discipline was consolidated. Second, it is important to understand the way in which Goldziher's 1890 retrospective read this fateful transference, of which *it was the representation*, back into especially his Oriental study trip. This must be done by juxtaposing its narrative of these events to the rather distinct one of the *Oriental Diary*. The second task proves propaedeutic to the first, so, I will begin there. We will thus move through initially the processes that led to his government funded Oriental trip in 1873-4, for they were fateful ones that determined the whole trajectory of his later life and work.

It is well-known that Goldziher had as his mentor at the University of Budapest the notorious Turkologist and polyglot, Arminius Vámbéry (1832-1913). Goldziher had matriculated as a 'special student' at the age of fifteen before and then simultaneously with his gymnasium studies.¹⁴⁰ It was the latter and another of his teachers, also a Jewish convert, Moriz Ballagi (1815-1891), who had brought him to the attention of the liberal writer and statesman (and early advocate of Jewish Emancipation), Baron Joseph Eötvös (1813-71), who had become, in the aftermath of the 1867 *Ausgleich*, the Hungarian Education Minister.¹⁴¹ Eötvös took an immediate liking to Goldziher and his already extensive and articulate ambitions: he surprised Goldziher by asking straight-off about his prospective study-program and the latter, as he recalled it, had improvised his then ideal of Oriental studies by stressing the importance of "researching the institutions of humanity in religious and political life in their historical development."¹⁴² The minister decided, it seems right then and there, to groom Goldziher for a chair to be created for Semitic Literature at the university. It was at his direction that Goldziher was sent to Germany for his Ph.D. in order to prepare for this. To Goldziher, Eötvös was always

¹³⁹ See on this point, Chapter VI.

¹⁴⁰ Vámbéry's life reads like Romantic fiction of an especially adventurous type. He was from a meager Jewish Orthodox background, born congenitally lame, and was early apprenticed to a dressmaker. He would however become a tutor at the Ottoman court, eventually a professor at the University of Budapest, a long-time advisor to the Turkish Sultan (Abdul Hamid) and a British secret agent. He converted first to Christianity, then to Islam, traveled as a dervish throughout Central Asia, on whose peoples and languages he became supposedly an 'expert'. His greatest achievement seems to have been his facility with languages and his capacity to divine what the different audiences he moved in wanted to hear. He is also famous in the annals of Zionism for having played the role of intermediary between Herzl and the Turkish Sultan. Goldziher idealized Vámbéry in his youth but perhaps not surprisingly, given his great sincerity, eventually came to despise his old teacher as a wile opportunist. On some of Goldziher's impressions, see Goldziher, *Tagebuche*, pp. 29-30, 226-7. On a decidedly anti-Goldziher version of their relations, see Patai, *Ignaz Goldziher and His Oriental Diary*, pp. 37-45.

¹⁴¹ Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 25-34.

¹⁴² *Ibid*, 34.

the most beloved figure, who had not only opened every door for him, but who, in all his interaction with him, treated him with human love and encouragement.

Hence, Goldziher went to Berlin and then eventually decided on a move to Leipzig to earn his Ph.D. with the great Arabist we have already met in Part II, H. L. Fleischer who was eventually to become as famous for his students as for the grammatical precision of his work on Arab philology. Goldziher acquired his Ph.D. in two years, at the age of twenty. This was in part at Eötvös's behest, who, keeping abreast of all the details of Goldziher's progress, not least through the brilliant reports that reached him, wanted him habilitated immediately and installed as a *Privatdozent* at Budapest University, on the way to assuming the Professorship of Semitic Literature. But, his *Habilitation* request already ran into sustained opposition from the faculty: on the part of some, this was because of animus to his associations with Vámbéry. Goldziher himself thought this justifiable at the time he wrote the *Tagebuch*. The excuse was brought up that he was too young. But, the primary reason for the opposition of the faculty, as became clear over time, was entrenched anti-Semitism: Goldziher would have been the first Jewish *Privatdozent* in the philosophical faculty. Waiting for the confrontation between the Minister and the faculty to be resolved, Goldziher went back to Leipzig to continue his studies. At this point (Feb. 1871), Eötvös sadly died. Goldziher had ammunition for seeing the hand of providence in his 'trial'. It had already been decided beforehand that Goldziher was next to go to Leiden, to study also at the great seat of Dutch Orientalism. Returning home, the faculty, he now found, probably, he thought, in deference to the Minister's death, had dropped its objections. He was to be a *Privatdozent*, his stipend was retained, which he used in the meantime to continue his studies in Vienna, and began his lectures at the university in the spring semester of 1872.¹⁴³

All the same, by this point, Goldziher's prospects, notwithstanding the semi-official promises made to him by Eötvös, were already altogether up in the air. At the beginning of 1872, there was yet another changeover at the head of the Culture Ministry and August Trefort (1817-1888) was appointed to the office. Even during Eötvös's tenure, the anti-Semitic tendencies within the bureaucracy under him had tried to act as a check on his designs. Goldziher, for instance, had been forced to petition the Minister to step in personally so that the funds for his prospective university studies might be relayed to him.¹⁴⁴ During the *Habilitation* fight, with his father increasingly worried that the clamor was all geared towards pushing him towards conversion, which he took simply to be the condition of any promised professorship, Goldziher went to take leave of the Minister before departing again for Leipzig. It was the last time Goldziher was to see him. Eötvös received him as warmly as always and tried to reassure him, saying that if the faculty continued to refuse him that he would simply go over their heads and *appoint* him a *Privatdozent*. His fears only further stoked by the future repercussions for him of any such unilateralism, Goldziher entrusted to the Minister his own and his family's serious anxieties as to whether the idea of a Jew as a university professor was no more than a phantom. He had to think seriously, he said, of a more humble sphere for his life to be in a position to support himself and his family.

Eötvös stopped him with a stern and indignant reprimand and had for him the expostulation, whether he and his family did not know they lived in a free state in which all citizens had the same rights; whether the Jews were bent on forcing themselves to believe they were surrounded by the Middle-Ages; that the state was not about to have just wasted its money on him, and that he was not to lower his sights. Eötvös said he would be personally responsible

¹⁴³ See *ibid*, 36-51.

¹⁴⁴ See *ibid*, 35

for Goldziher's prospects and he was to tell his parents he had the brightest future in front of him.¹⁴⁵ He'd already by then, as he put it, found that Eötvös "was as a rock projecting out of a sea of limitedness and wickedness, a high vantage-ground, an oasis in a desert of medieval barbarity and decorated brutality."¹⁴⁶ The liking of the two for each other is easy to understand: each moved the other to his favorite stance, the heroic. Trefort, the new Culture Minister, on the other hand, had seemingly neither the power nor the inclination to pick any great fight on Goldziher's behalf. In 1873, there was much talk of opening an Oriental Academy in the form of an Oriental Seminar besides the university. That, given his inimitable qualifications, would have no doubt raised Goldziher's chances of a position. It was, in this context, in which the new Minister bid Goldziher to prepare himself for a trip to the Orient, namely to Syria and Egypt, where his "mission" was to acquire the local Arabic dialects of these lands and to learn the conventions of consular Arabic.

Eventually, however, Goldziher came to believe, from the train of events, with reason, that something altogether other had been at play in this proposition. At this same time, Trefort had had his hands full with a professor of the theological faculty, Peter Hatala (1832-1918), who, in his insistent disavowals of the doctrine of 'papal infallibility', had made himself unacceptable to the Catholic hierarchy. Hatala, however, had come in the process to garner the support of much of the university faculty, so much so, that he had been chosen the Rector of the university, which of course had done nothing to moderate his position. According to Goldziher, to avoid a confrontation, it was decided that it sufficed simply to move Hatala from the theological to the philosophical faculty, which meant installing him, regardless of his missing qualifications, in the new chair for Semitic Philology promised to Goldziher. The Oriental trip, he consequently came to think, had been mostly a means to remove him from the scene so as to complete the transfer without any added raucous.¹⁴⁷

Eötvös's promises to Goldziher, however, had been apparently made too explicit to disavow as such. With him gone though, they were also no longer practicable. Upon Goldziher's return, Trefort, in no way denied the promised position and himself referred to Hatala's appointment as that of a "comedian", not to be taken seriously. Goldziher was simply to put his fate in the Minister's hands and his position would materialize soon enough. Trefort's motivations are not easily legible from Goldziher's account. Was his waiting strategy meant in fact somehow to find a way eventually to needle the young Jewish scholar into the faculty? Or, was he counting on Goldziher's manifest talents and his growing scholarly reputation and connections to produce other opportunities, thus disposing of the matter? But, Goldziher forced the Minister's hand. For, not only had he turned down, for instance, already during his time in Egypt, Riyad Pasha's offer to him of an "influential position" in the Egyptian Education Ministry. When his teachers abroad 'saw', as he put it, that he'd been "betrayed" by the Minister, Fleischer and Ebers especially worked hard to find something suitable for him: in the Austrian Education Ministry, the vacant directorship of the Khedival Library in Egypt, etc.

All the time, however, it is almost certain Goldziher's hope in all this, his complaints and the prompting of alternative offers, was that the story of how he'd been treated would, with enough currency, bring to bear outside pressure on the Hungarians to keep their word. This half-

¹⁴⁵ See *ibid*, 46-7.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 46.

¹⁴⁷ See *ibid*, 54,75-6. Goldziher emphasized, both in recalling the offer of the trip and the aftermath of his return, that when he'd had his departing-meeting with Trefort to formally accept the proposal and take his leave, Hatala had come out of the Minister's office as he'd entered.

worked. Eventually, word of the matter, according to his retrospectively pieced-together account, reached Austria and the Hungarian foreign minister, Count Andrásy (1823-1890), took Trefort to account and told him to resolve the matter. That's how Goldziher explained the setting for the, depending on one's point of view, manipulative game then played with him or definitive denouement inherent within the situation. No doubt it was both and a demonstration of how little he at that point as yet understood of such things. For, now, Trefort urgently bid him to his office and told him how sorry he was that Goldziher was thinking of moving abroad. When Goldziher made it clear *he* did not want to go abroad, rather, that others concerned about his treatment and welfare were pushing him in this direction—he conveniently 'happened' to have their letters with him to prove this—Trefort asked what would make him happy.

Hearing that Goldziher of course simply wanted the professorship promised to him, the Minister told him this was now the easiest thing: all he had to do was to petition the Ministry formally and directly for the position. Asked about the requisite sanction of the university faculty, Trefort told him the whole thing was now a mere formality: his appointment would come in 2-3 weeks. Of course, the petition, handed in, found its way to the faculty, who irate about being thus supposedly side-stepped, were in fact 'gracious' enough not to depose Goldziher of any of his privileges, merely re-asserting their authority by refusing the petition *a liminie*. Trefort then declared that his hands were tied, that he could not impose anything on the faculty and blamed Vámbéry. It, in any case, did not escape Goldziher that during the faculty debates his mentor had not said a word in his defense. Even after this, Trefort claimed that the promise to Goldziher had not been rescinded, that he would stay true to it. It was in the aftermath of this debacle that Goldziher decided to take up the position of the Secretary of the Neolog Jewish Community. He was promised that he could continue his scholarship, was valued for this, no doubt with an eye towards the Rabbinical Seminary on the horizon. Goldziher in fact saw the encouragement of Trefort in the Jewish community's heavy recruitment of him for the position. In any case, it is easy to speak of Goldziher's 'paranoia' without noting that, if even half of his account is true, he had learned the hard way to look into the underside of motivations.¹⁴⁸

12.

With this idea of the background and denouement of the Oriental study trip in the *Tagebuch*, we can proceed to examine the pattern and perspective from within which it was here recollected and represented, by juxtaposition to the manner the same was, as unfolding, assimilated in *Oriental Diary*. A good beginning is an oft-cited passage of the *Tagebuch*, where, having reached Damascus in the account, Goldziher used the occasion of his arrival to contrast most sharply the purpose for which he was putatively sent on the trip by the Hungarians—to learn the local Arabic dialects of Syria and Egypt and the conventions of consular Arabic—with

¹⁴⁸ See *ibid*, 68, 74-6, 77-8, 81. On *ibid*, 78, Goldziher declared that he had not told anybody of this episode for twelve years thereafter, and then only an intimate friend. This is in itself interesting, since Goldziher constantly complained and appealed to other people about his situation. The implication here is that this experience was so beyond the pale that actively publicizing it could not but have had the effect of compromising what remained of his future academic prospects in Hungary for good; this, in any case, is the insinuation of the text. The *Tagebuch* is itself murky on the ins and outs of exactly what happened here; and, it seems, Goldziher had himself worked thereafter to piece together, clearly mostly from hearsay, what details he could. In any case, he is thus far our only source for it. But, the way in which Goldziher's, as I've interpreted it, attempt to make noise about what had happened and bring pressure to bear on his own behalf was made here to back-fire on him did have an appreciable impact on his personality. It contributed to a certain shell-shocked cautiousness and emotional irreparability in his 'Hungarian' relations, though he ultimately persevered and 'succeeded' in precisely this fashion.

those he had set himself in undertaking it. The task he retrospectively said he had set himself sounded in fact like a prospectus for the *Islamwissenschaft* he, with the indispensable collaboration of Snouck, was just as he wrote in the process of establishing:

After my arrival in the fetching city of the Umayyad Khalifs, I did not waste long in taking charge of my aims. Although officially sent, so as to make of me a talking language-machine (*Parliermaschine*) *a la* Vámbéry, the task could not appear to me of enough importance as to concentrate me on such games. I set myself higher goals, the same as those Snouck set himself 12 years later in Mecca. I resolved to plant myself within Islam and its science, to be myself a member of the Muhammadan republic of scholars, to come to know the driving forces that had over the course of the centuries formed from the Judazied Meccanese cult the powerful world religion of Islam. Then, I wanted also to study the influence of this system on the society and its morals. This double goal could only be achieved through intercourse with scholars and with people from the crowd (*Volke*), in Mosques, in bazaars, and in the shops. In all these places I was a welcomed daily guest. I put aside also the favorite sport of Oriental scholars, the search after manuscripts. For that I had no money at my disposal. To observe the human beings, ideas and institution was what I wanted, not the capture of yellowed paper.¹⁴⁹

It is a truly alluring passage. Not only does it make a mockery of ideas today synonymous, in the minds of many, with ‘Orientalism’ as such, it works within itself as much to give the lie to ‘Goldziher-exceptionalism’. Hence, let’s take note of those features of it we will keep coming back to: there was the reference to Snouck’s 1885 more than five month stay as a ‘Muslim student’ in Mecca. Namely, Goldziher here identified the aims of his own study trip, retrospectively, with those of Snouck’s later one. And, there was of course the description of these aims themselves: the double-goal of investigating the historical development of scientific cum scholarly Islam, on the one hand, but then its actual standing and profile in social and popular practice, on the other. And, it all had to be done by one knowledgeable and savvy enough to be able to synthesize participation and observation in both realms. Now, as the *Oriental Diary* is itself ample evidence, Goldziher had, during his sojourn in the Near East, exactly the kinds of experiences liable retrospectively to be read in the way he, in the *Tagebuch*, represented them. What is more doubtful, however, is that he started out his voyage resolved on what is in fact a mission-statement for the, as he wrote, emergent discipline of *Islamwissenschaft*. Namely, we would then have to believe Goldziher went to the Orient to have precisely the experiences he did have, in the terms described. Mention has already been made of Goldziher’s tendency to reflect out of the moment: in the *Oriental Diary* itself we see this constantly. There is awful homesickness and foreboding about leaving family and fatherland in the opening stages of his trip. But then, in taking leave of his new Damascene friends, he commented that he had “wished nothing more ardently than to leave Europe”, for he had “suspected” such friendships, the likes of which did not exist in Europe, were waiting for him in the Orient.¹⁵⁰ More generally, however, Goldziher was wont to project his whole life in terms of the way it was, at any given point, disposed towards his projected ideals.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, 56.

¹⁵⁰ Patai, *Oriental Diary*, 128; see also, for the earlier part, especially the opening pages, 83-4: “how often I hear in me the punishing voice of the wrathful conscience: you should not have gone!” This is a lingering mood in the text until Goldziher reaches Damascus; there, though, he wishes he could stay forever...ibid, 120.

To see how quite distinct, accordingly, the atmospheres of the *Oriental Diary* and the *Tagebuch* are, we can begin by noting that the programmatic assertions of the latter about Islamicist scholarship make no appearance in the former. What programmatic statements are made come exclusively in relation to Goldziher's reformist ideals for Judaism. But, further, the scorn with which Goldziher dismissed the tasks he was officially sent to the Near East to fulfill, which he juxtaposed to his own higher mission, are nowhere to be found in his contemporary account. Of course, Goldziher was talented enough as to be able to learn the local dialects and consular conventions of Arabic without this having in any way to dominate his attention. However, he also in no way disavowed this as the 'purpose' of his trip. The *Oriental Diary*, the reader should now, was an almost paradigmatically dismissive text: it featured an, in its solipsistic brashness, all but comical sense of superiority,¹⁵¹ on the one hand, a gushy idealism, on the other. And both were umbilically linked to the young author's mode of self-idealization, by which he never failed to impress, always proved himself and his sincerity in the mirror of his ideals and so was above everything and everyone extant. But, in *this* document, one finds, if one looks for it, Goldziher quietly making the arrangements, as per the official requirements of him, to receive, in Damascus and Cairo, lessons on the colloquial Arabic, and in Cairo, its consular conventions.¹⁵²

This official task of his forms the subject of a number of telling comments and outbursts in the *Oriental Diary*. On his last night in Beirut, predictably dejected by the city's American Protestant and European accoutrements, he, now was thankfully finally headed to Damascus and wrote: "My highest goal now is the acquisition of the Syrian colloquial Arabic; and since, as I see, the European society of Beirut prevents me from achieving this colloquial goal of mine, I am impelled to penetrate into the interior of Syria, into the old, noble Damascus".¹⁵³ Or, in Damascus, after attending a party whereat people as usual grilled him about Hungary and Europe and wanted to talk about this more than about Arab culture and literature, he wrote: "As always, I was examined about my homeland and about Europe. Oh, boring stuff! Still I must learn the colloquial Arabic".¹⁵⁴ Or, on the way to Cairo, increasingly now contemptuous of the Europeans in the Orient, their condescension towards the native Muslims, and coming, due to lack of further funds to travel with them in first class, to taste the same attitude towards himself, he felt the need retroactively to blurt out in the diary: "I despise you, stupid rabble of the higher class!". In the moment, to deflect their derision, he said: "I gave as an explanation that my studies indicated to me that I should come in close contact with the low Arab populace and I did not lie". Taking up a conversation in Arabic with a group of Shi'ites on the train, "I amused myself with the good fellows and forgot thereby the sneering remarks which my European travel companions of higher class made about me."¹⁵⁵

Apparently, in the moments Goldziher felt in some way discomfited during his time in the Arab Near East, he was prone to recall, like a badge, that he had 'official' reasons for being there, namely, none other than those of the Hungarian Culture Ministry. Even in the *Tagebuch*, a few pages after the above paragraph's repudiation of this Ministerial purpose of his trip,

¹⁵¹ I have been reminded in reading the *Oriental Diary* of the inimitable title character of John Kennedy Toole's *A Confederacy of Dunces* (Baton Rouge, 1980), though of course with the very large difference in hilarity that Goldziher was an altogether publicly impressive rather than publicly gross character.

¹⁵² See *ibid*, 118, 145, 147.

¹⁵³ *Ibid*, 111.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 125. Of the next night's party, it was the same: "always only the irksome examination about Hungary".

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 142f.

something like this pattern holds up, when, in recounting the initially awkward moments of his meeting with the Damascene Archbishop, he noted that the prelate insisted on speaking with him in classical Arabic and did not “grasp that I was making a particular study of the Patois”.¹⁵⁶ Hence, there is no need to read back the supercilious grandeur and disdain of the *Tagebuch* with respect to the Hungarian expectations of his Oriental trip into his contemporary experience of the same. For, he showed himself, at that point, altogether respectful of these. And, by that token, though Goldziher’s interactions and focus in the Arab Near East were naturally and altogether driven by his scientific comparative interests in Arab and Islamic subjects, there is no evidence of his having conceived *a priori* a defined ‘higher mission’ other than his official one, as he in fact recoiled to the latter when necessary.

We can now, on this basis, return to take note of the explicitly—paradigmatically—Islamicist features of the above cited paragraph of the *Tagebuch*. What stands out again, in this regard, is of course the one-to-one correspondence Goldziher here suggested between the goals of his own 1873–4 Oriental study trip and Snouck’s 1885 stay in Mecca. For, though the sense of this has been today generally lost, Snouck’s Mecca sojourn became almost immediately and for still a generation after Snouck and Goldziher were gone as famous, and in fact a good deal more famous, than Goldziher’s Near Eastern one. This was not least because Snouck’s trip formed the basis of his *Mekka*, the two-volume work that solidified his reputation, whereas Goldziher’s was never made the subject of a general publication.¹⁵⁷ Two generations of Islamicists were dazzled by what Snouck had done, namely, the fact that he had not, as the usual, disguised himself externally as a Muslim so as to partake in the *Hajj*. He had rather given proof of his capacity for Muslim scholarship and formally of his Muslim identity and, needless to say, had continued to do so in his daily comportment. He had studied for five months in the city as a ‘Muslim student’ like any other such, with of course the ulterior motive of observing while participating.¹⁵⁸

Goldziher’s clear desire here in the *Tagebuch*, five years after Snouck’s time in Mecca, to read his own Oriental trip as having anticipated it, is itself perhaps the highest testament to the immediate great resonance and impact of his friend’s venture. As for the ‘double-goal’ by which Goldziher linked his and Snouck’s Oriental experiences, it is quite interesting and telling that one finds an almost exact version of the same in Becker’s memorial essay on Goldziher for his journal, *Der Islam*, devoted to celebrating him, along Snouck, as the founder of *Islamwissenschaft*. But, Becker in fact here exactly divided the respective contributions of Goldziher and Snouck to the establishment of the new discipline in terms of the ‘double-goal’ the former proposed. Becker noted Goldziher’s own ‘live’ experiences of the Orient during his early study trip and his then many relationships with Oriental scholars and thorough knowledge of the literature. But, *his* achievement, he said, centered on having drawn out of the massive documentary record of the Islamic heritage an outline of the religio-intellectual historical development of Islam, in its *Kulturhistorische* diversity and directionality.

Snouck, on the other hand, who of course also knew the literature but, as a practicing colonial administrator precisely treated this as the ‘historical background’ and lacked the

¹⁵⁶ Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 56. He also noted on *ibid*, 66 that in Cairo he made, *first*, the arrangements to learn the consular Arabic, so to fulfill the task given him, but also that the whole thing took him only three days.

¹⁵⁷ See Snouck, *Mekka* (Hagg, 1888-9).

¹⁵⁸ On the legendary status assumed by Snouck’s Mecca trip in the Islamicist field of the first generations, see Georges-Henri Bousquet and Joseph Schacht’s still utterly awe-struck discussion of it in the introductory essay (in French) to their edited volume, *Selected Works of C. Snouck Hurgronje* (Leiden, 1957), XI-XXI, esp. XIV-XVI. The Mecca trip also looms large in Waardenburg’s biographical introduction to Snouck’s thought; see Waardenburg, *L’Islam dans le Miroir de l’Occident*, 19-20.

possibility of tracing developments through texts, he imputed much more the sense of “living Islam”: Islam as it in fact functioned and was practiced in a given socio-political context. Becker was here of course referring to Snouck’s thesis that the accommodative character of Islamic Law, its always ideal cum opportunistic and so less-than positive deployment in the sociopolitical arena must form the cornerstone of *Kolonialpolitik* in such contexts. In Becker’s thinking, the intellectual *bona fides* of *Islamwissenschaft* as a discipline rested on just this, that the ‘historical’ analyses of Goldziher and the ‘living’ ones of Snouck had come to much the same conclusions.¹⁵⁹ Hence, we see the Goldziher of 1890 retrospectively position, in the *Tagebuch*, his own Oriental stay, to discover the double-goal in it of not only the historicization of ‘High Islam’ but the assessment of its ‘live’ standing and function in society. He positioned it, namely, as having anticipated also what Islamicist scholarship already then and increasingly thereafter associated with Snouck. The double-goal meant reading Islamic theory against the grain through the living practice of Muslims, by means not only of the historicization of Islam as a canonical heritage but equally in participant observation, the two methodologies in fact stipulating and completing one another. In any case, minus the retroactive transmutation of effect into intention, Goldziher’s experiences, especially for instance at Al-Azhar, did serve as the model and spur for what Snouck undertook in 1885.

13.

Goldziher in 1890 sought, precisely in conclusively establishing his new Islamicist focus, to read the whole methodological and now solidifying program of the new discipline, into his Oriental study trip, as if he’d undertaken it expressly to found *Islamwissenschaft*! Later interpreters have tended to follow in these footsteps. Conrad, for instance, interested in identifying the reformist Goldziher rather exclusively with the young Goldziher, has gone even further than this and suggested the study trip to the Near East was essentially the climax of Goldziher’s reformist period. He has drawn on passages from the *Tagebuch* to argue the trip must be understood as having been embarked on as a ‘reformist pilgrimage’. He has thus read it as a mirror of Goldziher’s intention, during his travels, to encounter, interact and engage with reformist thinkers, comparable to himself, on the Muslim side, who likewise were working to appropriate their heritage anew in the modern context.¹⁶⁰ I have already argued, however, that the *Oriental Diary* does not attest to any such cross-religious, cross-cultural reformist etiology for the study trip. The evidence does not show the ‘higher purpose’, Goldziher ascribed to his trip in the *Tagebuch*, to have been to engage with Muslim reformers comparable to himself. When such reformist encounters did in fact occur, they did so in Cairo, by way of mutual opposition to the ‘mindless’, superficial and deracinating of Egypt, which had so dejected

¹⁵⁹ See Becker, *Islamstudien*, II, 502-3.

¹⁶⁰ For instance: “The area [“the Near East of the late 1860’s and early 1870’s”] produced a number of signs that there were in Muslim ranks advocates of reform who sought changes in some ways similar to what Goldziher himself strove for in Hungarian Judaism. Goldziher was not ignorant of this. It was thus with great excitement that he set out on his journey, and his mounting anticipation and increasingly fervent sense of purpose are directly attested in numerous passages in the *Oriental Diary* as he makes his way from Pest to the heartland of the Arab-Islamic world.” Conrad, “The Pilgrim from Pest”, 133-4. Or further: “It is this common ground—shared difficulties, shared challenges, shared opportunities—that inspired Goldziher, and it is in his spiritually motivated quest for inspiration from and contacts with Muslims confronting similar problems that the study tour may be seen as an act of pilgrimage...As *hajj*, then, Goldziher’s study tour comprised not a mere search for ammunition for the Haskalah, but rather a quest for inspiration and enlightenment among colleagues who were the practicing exponents of a faith he deemed of universal worth and relevance”. Ibid, 137.

Goldziher in his first days there. These were the exchanges, quite unplanned but sufficient to turn dejection to activism, which became the basis of Goldziher's eventual 'dialectical' engagement with Islamic modernism. Even these exchanges, however, supplemented with his near-term thereafter published attitudes,¹⁶¹ can only be read out of the retrospective glance and purposes of the *Tagebuch*.

To get, however, a full sense of the rather different air of the *Oriental Diary*, in this regard, I begin by noting that in this early document as well of course, Goldziher's great respect for Islam was altogether evident. Here too, Islam was already then clearly the other monotheistic faith worthy he believed of the name. On the way to the Quarantine in Istanbul, on his last day on the Black Sea aboard the *Vulcan*, he had begun to interact with a group of 'ordinary' Rumelian pilgrims. They were to be in his proximity, and often, company through the Quarantine and until he reached Beirut. Having engaged them initially in a "theological conversation", Goldziher's acknowledged his profession of the one and only God, the first part of the Islamic Shahada: 'there is no God but Allah'. This profession had however involved him in a disputation with one about whether this sufficed for being counted a "true believer". The same person was later especially to disapprove of the growing intimate relations between him and most of the other pilgrims. Having then after the discussion stayed to watch the group pray, he noted in his diary the "overpowering impression" on his mind of the prayer-leader as he "called out his monotheistic confession into the endless sea. It seemed as if this young Muslim with his sonorous voice represented the fast and unshakable faith combating the storms of the world."¹⁶²

At the same time, however, the *Oriental Diary* we possess is suffused by a distinction, first elaborated with respect to these same Rumelian pilgrims, which shows the Goldziher within its pages who clearly considered himself as yet rather singular in his awareness of the great modernist and reformist potential of Islam. We can easily decipher his own reformist terms from the *Oriental Diary*, his universalist critico-teleological projection of a purified monotheism that would comparatively include Islam. But, the distinction serves to highlight the lack of any sense,

¹⁶¹ See, for instance, Simon's brief account of the almost immediate appraisal of the 'Urabi uprising in 1881, which Goldziher wrote for a Hungarian journal. Here, Simon writes, Goldziher saw, as standing behind the Pan-Islamist tendencies within this movement, essentially the goal of "Arabic national independence and unity" and this as opposing Turkish as much as European hegemony. So, he continued: "In this case the movement, led by the National Party, the al-Ḥizb al-waṭanī, united every layer of society which turned against the Khedive Ismā'īl, who served the European interests, and demanded that Egypt should be for the Egyptians. (At that point Goldziher took pains to show how numerous and diverse the layers of society were, united in the movement of independence. It comprised the reformers with European-type education who wanted to utilize, together with their own countrymen, the Europeans' achievements in an Egyptian fashion; the conservative Muslims who lined up behind the Al-Azhar and demanded the restoration of a state based on Islamic traditions; and finally, the Arabic nationalistic groups which rejected Pan-Islamism as serving the interest of the Ottoman empire). In the course of the analysis Goldziher emphasized that Pan-Islamism could have been combined with national demands in Egypt only because of the 75 years of *de facto* independence, whereas in every other country it was the adversary of national independence." Simon, *Ignác Goldziher*, 47f.

¹⁶² He continued, quoting first in Latin, Horace, and then, in Hebrew, the Psalms: "I saw:

The honest man, convinced of his purpose,
...neither the south wind, the turbulent ruler of the restless Adriatic,
nor the great hand of thundering Jove shakes him from his firm resolve...

I heard "the voice of the Lord upon the waters, the God of glory thundereth, even the Lord upon many waters, the voice of the Lord in strength, the voice of the Lord in majesty." Patai, *Oriental Diary*, 90-1.

at this point, on Goldziher's part, of the 'other terms' of indigenous Muslims themselves that he encountered only in Cairo and engaged with thereafter. It is on board the *Juno*, traveling from Istanbul down the Mediterranean to Beirut, that we see this distinction come into full view. Here, Goldziher's circle of daily interaction expanded beyond the thus far European travelers and Rumelian pilgrims to include now also an Ottoman Pasha and his retinue on board, the whole company headed like him to Damascus where this Pasha was to assume the governorship. Meanwhile, he continued to be in close contact with the Rumelian *Hajjis*, some of the original group from the *Vulcan* who were now on the lower deck of the *Juno*. The differences in his interaction with and experience of these two groups led him to make a distinction, one that lingered in the *Oriental Diary*, between what he saw as the ignorant, naïve but then sincere and noble pilgrims, on the one hand, the vacuously Europeanized, empty-headed and irreligious Ottoman elite on the other:

I spent a jolly evening in the company of his pasha-sonship and perhaps laid the ground for closer contact in Damascus which could be useful to me. These people have just invited me to join their company in Damascus, which for the time being I neither accepted nor refused. In general, these people are of an unprecedented narrowness; they speak a few words of French, and therewith they imagine themselves to be in the possession of the highest measure of worldly education. Islam does not exist for them; they eat and drink whatever is being put before them, and I never saw them pray. How does their frivolous behavior contrast with the dumb, soulful fervor of my *hājīs*? Of the latter some are on the lower deck of the *Juno*. I was received by them with loud shouts of welcome and fervent joy. When I left, they asked me to repeat my visit every morning and evening since it was not possible for them to come to me. I agreed, and shall indeed faithfully keep my promise. I value and love these noble, ignorant people. Their ignorance constitutes their charter to my heart. I can see that scholarship alone does not make a man noble.¹⁶³

This distinction between the corrupted Europeanized elite of the Near East versus its sincere but still naïve ordinary people is one which Goldziher, in the *Oriental Diary*, took with him into his early experience of Egypt. However, it must be noted that Goldziher, until at least the anti-European partisanship of Cairo, tended to extend this formula even to the Muslim scholarly figures, who, educated in the indigenous and Islamic traditions, were his best friends in Damascus. On the *Juno*, he also met Muhammad al-Dhahabi, a scholarly cloth-merchant from a family clearly proud of its ancestral associations with Islamic scholarship, whose brother was, in Damascus, a preacher, and, in Goldziher's words, "considered a phenomenon in the Hanafite *fiqh* [jurisprudence]".¹⁶⁴ Dhahabi's shop-stand was to be one of Goldziher's main entrées into Damascene society and its branch of the 'Muslim republic of scholars'. They began to have serious and extended running discussions on Arab and Islamic subjects. Goldziher found his new friend steeped in the scholarly heritage of Islam, which he took as proof of the advantages reaped from Judaism's and Islam's institution of religious study as the religious duty of all, namely, in preventing the epistemic consecration of a priesthood as in Christianity. Goldziher admitted Dhahabi's extended knowledge of the Islamic heritage well-exceeded that which might be expected of any ordinary layman, but he almost instinctively supplemented this and his

¹⁶³ Ibid, 104.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid, 120.

genuine value for him by then emphasizing his still naïveté. In terms of its idealizing self-talk, the Damascene infused *Oriental Diary* is solipsistic and Goldziher in Damascus views himself as yet alone in his reformist modernism, wedged between traditional sincerity and European corruption:

My Dhahabī now has seen more than the uppermost surface of his religious literature; he shows himself to me as a thorough student of the Qur'an, the tradition, as well as part of the later poetry. Still, one can see on him brightly the Asian paintbrush of simplicity. Yesterday he said to me, e.g., among other things, that in the house of a private person in Constantinople he had seen a Qur'an commentary of twenty-five volumes written by a scholar for a province [of the Chinese Empire], on the borders of Russia (Muskov), and added that five hundred years ago (when this work was written) this province was supposed to be one of the richest in the world in Muhammadans. He could not grasp that in my country there was not a single Muslim to be found. Another day I shall note down something about his, for me, delightful philosophy of history.¹⁶⁵

Perhaps, one can see Goldziher's inclination, in the *Oriental Diary*, for this distinction and formula best when it can be manifestly seen not exactly to fit the circumstances; that is what we get in his first impressions of a Damascene figure we've already encountered, Mustafa Sba'i, the "venerable Arab", former high official, now wealthy member of the cultivated classes, a Sufi and Freemason, who opened his house and library to the young Hungarian scholar. Sba'i, having begun a conversation on Persian poets, greatly then surprised and impressed Goldziher by presenting him with a French translation of the *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam (whom the "cynical Sufi" thus especially loved): "No small matter: a French book in the house of a Muslim." (Is it too much to say that, having liked him and decided him a 'Muslim', he was impressed by the French book?) In any case, the discussion moved to Sufism and esoteric interpretation, then to Arabic literature; at which point, Sba'i tried to impress Goldziher with his treasure trove of manuscripts, "which he believed were *unica* [only copies]. The poor man does not know what our European libraries contain by way of manuscripts"; so that, Goldziher then left Sba'i "completely dumbfounded" by rattling off to him a number of these same manuscripts that he knew from his work at various European libraries, noting some had even already become the subject of scholarly treatises: He then continued: "He owns a calligraphically remarkable copy of the Koran which he not only showed to me with great pleasure but placed in my hand—the impure, unbelieving—for examination. How he explained to me the beauties of his copy with the fervor of happiness on his lips, while he sat on the floor with the legs folded under him! It was all too naïve!"¹⁶⁶ How much bluster there was in all of this though we find out twelve days later: "I diligently frequented Sba'i and the booksellers. From the former I got, among other things, a manuscript which no European had seen before me and which I studied the whole week, the results of which I want to sum up in a study 'On the Literary History of the Shi'a'."¹⁶⁷ However, lest the reader begin to foment ideas, it should be said that very few people in the *Oriental Diary* (and there was no distinction in this regard between 'Orientals' and 'Europeans') escaped this kind of brash (self-idealizing) treatment; perhaps the most telling case would be that of (the to-be) Count Carlo Landberg (1848-1924), a Swedish Orientalist (private scholar), one of

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, 105.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid, 116.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, 120.

the most famous Arabists of Goldziher's generation, eventually one of Goldziher's best friends and greatest supporters—Goldziher stayed for extended visits in the Count's castle in Tutzing (in Bavaria) and Landberg, for his many trips to the Near East, stayed with Goldziher on the way there—he was, moreover, perhaps the person most responsible for Goldziher's Gold Medal at the Stockholm ICO; now, when the young Landberg arrived in Damascus at the same time Goldziher was there, he was soon dumbfounded by the latter's facility in Arabic vis-à-vis the native population and basically attached himself to Goldziher, asked him to teach him what he could and to take him along on his outings; here was Goldziher's assessment of this future great friend and fellow scholar: "Yesterday there arrived in Damascus a, to me, mysterious Swede, Dr. Landberg, domiciled in Paris, 'not accepting any employment, living only for science,' and probably having much money, to learn classical Arabic. Knowledge of these things he has, for the time being, precious little. God give him success, for apart from God nobody can help him."¹⁶⁸ What all of this, in any case, suggests is that one will look in vain within the *Oriental Diary* for any self-described Reformist 'encounters', 'camaraderie' or 'partisanship', and that one essentially has to leave the equally solipsistic as idealistic purview of this text to project, from the *Tagebuch*, such of the above, in Cairo.

This conclusion, in turn, however, serves to elicit the question of Goldziher's very deep and lasting Damascene friendships with his young Muslim scholarly counterparts; namely, because one need in no way use the solipsistic/idealistic turn and persona of the *Oriental Diary* to detract from this, especially as, in the farewell from them (the only truly moving and 'human' scene of the text), especial witness is borne to it by the same; here, what the (especially contemporary) evidence available allows us most safely to say of these genuinely intimate relationships is that they involved the young Jewish scholar's constant (and successful) desire to impress his Muslim scholarly friends into becoming as one with them, his bid to partake, so far as possible, in their world, concerns and arguments, to learn from them about all of this, while storing the same comparatively vis-à-vis his own critical religio-scientific scholarship. It is then at least telling that, more than a month into his trip, now in Damascus, and noting, on yet another occasion of it, how often he was asked by Muslims in the Near East why, refusing Islam, he insisted on such (manifestly thorough) study of it, the reply he jotted down in his diary came not in the form of any cross-Reformist disputation but was a throw-away line suggesting precisely he did not as yet have a sense of any such interlocutors: "As in every place, so here [at Sba'i's] too I had to meet the question: 'why should one study the literature of a religion which one stubbornly rejects?' etc. This rabble certainly has no understanding of scholarship and the objective pursuit of it."¹⁶⁹ In other words, the participant-observer of Damascus (and one made so, on the ground, more by the synthesis of his equally indelible need to impress and intellectual interests—hence, the human intimacy of his relationships—than by any premeditated program) was turned only in Cairo and vis-à-vis mutual opposition to and agitation against 'European infiltration' into also a partisan. If we now only move to the *Tagebuch* to see how all such matters stand there, what an altogether different set of pre-occupations and distinctions await us; for the above distinction of the *Oriental Diary* between the naïve and sincere people vs. the corrupt, Europeanized elite is

¹⁶⁸ Ibid, 127. Contrast the extended description in the *Tagebuch*, where Goldziher noted that Landberg had put on a bit too much scholarly air at the beginning but had then been earnest enough to want to learn from him as much as he could; had in fact told him already there that the dream of his life now was simply to reach the point Goldziher was already at. See Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 63. For Goldziher's hint at Landberg's role in the awarding of the Gold Medal to him, see *ibid*, 104. For Goldziher's stays at Tutzing, *ibid*, 175-82, 192-5.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, 116.

essentially absent here: so that, if in the contemporary account, his friend, the scholarly cloth-merchant, Dhahabi is said to have broached a conversation with him, because he'd learned from the Rumelian pilgrims "that I could speak Arabic and was versed in matters Islamic";¹⁷⁰ and, if he precisely here juxtaposed both with the despicable Pashaic company; in the *Tagebuch*, Goldziher now decided Dhahabi had sought him out, on board the *Juno*, because he'd been impressed and allured by his especially close interaction with the Pasha (i.e. the Damascene governor) and his retinue. And, if in the earlier narrative, he'd said, after noting the fanfare of the new governor's entry into Damascus the day after his own, nothing more about him; in retrospect, he touted how important and useful the favor—already garnered beforehand on the *Juno*—of the new governor and the men about him, the "great and powerful" of Damascus, had been to his standing and what he'd been able to achieve in the city; and, emphasized how often he'd been invited to and been present at the governor's palace for the Ramadan festivities.¹⁷¹ (Accordingly, in the *Tagebuch*'s account of Cairo as well, we see Goldziher make a point of his having been fêted and prized by the wealthy and cultivated of the city; while, on the other hand, the Europeanized elite here are, in its discussion, no longer juxtaposed to the naïve, honest people, but rather confronted—Goldziher joining them—by the organized indigenous, Muslim Reformist and nationalist opposition). As always in the *Tagebuch*, then, it was all an exercise in casting his now 'martyrdom', here, in highlighting how differently—this made the paradigmatic case of it—he was treated by the 'high and mighty', social and cultural elites abroad vs. by Hungarian and Hungarian Jewish society at home.

14.

Having thus far set out the quite distinct concerns and mind-sets of the *Oriental Diary* and the *Tagebuch* in social terms (Goldziher cast, in the first, in-between the superficial Europeanized elite vs. the sincere but as yet sheltered traditional Muslim populace; in the second, in-between Jewish/Hungarian neglect at home, Muslim/scholarly acclaim abroad); and on the question of the locus of Reform (in Goldziher himself, or, as no doubt emerging out of the Cairene experience itself, as equally within the native Muslim population); we are now in a position to inquire as to where each of these texts stood vis-à-vis Goldziher's Reformist religious ideals (and the way in which the same thus impacted and so is be read out of their respective, contemporary and retrospective, narrations of his Oriental sojourn). Conrad, in not only fusing the two diaries, but wanting to view the *Oriental Diary* as probably the high point of Goldziher's Reformist period (that is, as testifying in action to his then universalist impetus of cross-religious scholarly engagement on Reform), has taken the passages dotted through this text, wherein Goldziher often in the most passionate and enthusiastic terms pronounces his Jewish Reformist ideals, as indicative of the higher Reformist purpose of his trip; namely, by presuming them to have been provoked by his destination of and proximity to the Arab Muslim Near East, in anticipation (or fulfillment) of the encounter with Muslim Reformist counterparts; hence, picking-up the first passage cited from him above where we left it off: "his mounting anticipation and increasingly fervent sense of purpose are directly attested in numerous passages in the *Oriental Diary* as he makes his way from Pest to the heart of the Arab-Islamic world. He speaks of his 'noblest plans' for his homeland, of the 'noble spirit which held sway and dwelt in me' as he recalled his Bar Mitzvah sermon back in Székesfehérvár, of how his thoughts 'have risen to a higher degree of intensity', all of which indicate a clear connection between his attitudes toward

¹⁷⁰ Ibid, 104.

¹⁷¹ See *ibid*, 113; Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 57-8.

the situation back home and his current journey to the Arab East.”¹⁷² In fact, however, close reading of the *Oriental Diary* is liable to show that Goldziher’s Jewish Reform-talk and his direct/engrossed experience of the ‘Arab centers’ of the Near East (Damascus and Cairo) are precisely contra-indicated; namely, when traveling towards these official Arab focal points of his trip, in European company, in Quarantine, ‘alone’, commenting on his experience of Istanbul or Jerusalem, which is to say, at the points where his terms of reference remain Hungarian and precisely primarily Jewish, Goldziher’s religious Reform-talk blooms; but, in the vicinity of his Arab destinations and within them, altogether absorbed by his social interactions and the description of them, it comes to a halt; hence, there is a good deal on the way to Damascus, virtually none there;¹⁷³ again, a good deal in Jerusalem, but nothing more in the (in any case increasingly sparse) passages on Egypt/Cairo. Now, again, none of this is meant to suggest that Goldziher had little Reformist interest in or sense of Islam; numerous brief notes, comments or exchanges make clear that he did; that, he judged its various traditions and practices (as with those of his own Jewish heritage) in terms of his monotheistic ideals (i.e. as equally/comparatively meant for the same). Hence, in Istanbul, on the dancing dervishes, he wrote: “I also saw the dancing dervishes and again became disgusted with this pious swindle. How they jumped and howled and exhibited their miserable God-swindle to the curious public, and all this in the name of Allāh the all-merciful and the all-compassionate.”¹⁷⁴ Then, in Damascus, there were a group of disparaging offhand remarks about the rituals associated with Ramadan, where he described the festivities he was taken to witness in the streets as “the great Muhammadan Ramaḍān swindle”, later spoke of the “all-consuming throat of the Ramaḍān religion” and of the “comedy of the *Ṣalāt al-tarāwīḥ* [an optional, ritually slightly distinctive extra prayer, during only Ramaḍān, usually added to the canonical five as a gesture of piety].”¹⁷⁵ And, we need only recall Goldziher’s disputation with the Rumelian pilgrims about whether he was a ‘believer’, to imagine the great probability he diplomatically suggested his own Reform-directed standpoint (on whatever religious or social issue at hand) vis-à-vis his Muslim scholarly friends in Damascus and even, to an extent, at Al-Azhar;¹⁷⁶ and, that the *Oriental Diary*’s great

¹⁷² Conrad, “The Pilgrim from Pest”, 134.

¹⁷³ It is in fact telling that the only exception, for Damascus, has to do with the burial of a Jewish Hungarian acquaintance of Goldziher, a military physician in the city, with whom he’d planned on going to Jerusalem; having succumbed to typhus, the Damascene Rabbis apparently raised a good deal of fuss about the funeral arrangements, presumably because this Dr. Lederer was a lax Jew and they were uncertain of his status (as Goldziher put it in the *Tagebuch*, because of his low standing vis-à-vis the “Pharasaic Laws”). Goldziher, it seems, had had to do a lot of special pleading and this led to one of his furious fulminations in the contemporary account against Rabbinism: “One best becomes acquainted with the meanness of his religious rabble at the rites in which the true kernel of religion should be mirrored and come to life. And precisely on such occasions does the God-damned rabbinism divest itself of all shame in the most reprehensible manner. O’ if I only could choke it...Patai, *Oriental Diary*, 127; also, Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 64.

¹⁷⁴ Patai, *Oriental Diary*, 98.

¹⁷⁵ See respectively, *ibid*, 119, 124, 123.

¹⁷⁶ See, for instance, Conrad’s interesting and suggestive explanation of a cryptic line in the *Oriental Diary*, jotted down in its altogether abbreviated—more reminder than—description of the circumstances of Goldziher’s gaining entry into Al-Azhar (the whole matter is handled in one-third of a page, with more phrases than sentences). Conrad takes it, from *his* reading of the context, that in this his in fact first meeting with the rector of Al-Azhar, Al-‘Abbasi, of whom we’ve already said a good deal, Goldziher had participated in a discussion of sensitive questions about theological rationalism within the Muslim tradition; namely, by citing an author whose texts were used at Al-Azhar, who had in his work sought to suppress Mu‘tazilite views but who could be shown, nonetheless, to have remained under their influence. What he got for this, however, presuming Conrad is right about the reasons for this, were

disdain for the irreligious, Europeanized elite of the Near East (whether Ottoman or Cairene), is only legible from within Goldziher's broader Reform agenda. At the same time, however, nothing in any of this—so, nothing within the *Oriental Diary*—adds up to a 'reformist pilgrimage', a search for or encounter with Muslim Reformist counterparts: the evidence this text confronts us with, instead, is that of an altogether focus on Jewish Reform with, simultaneously, a comparative 'scientific' interest in Islam, i.e. its critical projection in the same sense.

Hence, if we are, in Goldziher's contemporary account of his time in the Orient, reduced to ascertaining his comparative Reformist perspective on Islam from a set of offhand remarks and exchanges, his thoughts on Jewish Reform come, by contrast, in the form of often extended deliberations that leave no doubt that this, at the time, constituted the framework within which he sought to elaborate his religio-scientific ideals. It will do to cite in full the most extended and exemplary of these passages, namely, that which described his experience of Yom Kippur in Istanbul on Oct. 1, 1873; first, because it is an almost perfect précis of his Reformist program at the time, i.e. of his critical scholarship and emotional idealism converging on his Jewish heritage and its intellectually and in feeling deadened present, but also because it has often been badly misinterpreted and taken for the opposite of what Goldziher's third-person positioning of himself in the episode was meant to do, namely, furnish proof of sincerity in the mirror of the self, hence, self-affirmation, even, self-congratulation; (in this sense, this entry furnishes the key to understanding the mindset, purpose and persona of the *Oriental Diary* as such):

Today was the Day of Atonement. Whom did I have to conciliate? Did I have to weep for sins, for transgressions? Have I lost my hold on myself in order to throw myself at the cold breast of the synagogue and to see in her the mother who was to offer me consolation in misery, atonement for desultoriness, a foothold in faltering, and a support in stumbling? Nothing of all that! Ever since I came from the heady ideals which I had attributed to the synagogue to a sobering up along the scientific road, ever since I cannot think of rabbinism without adding an *Écrasez l'infâme*; ever since I walked the road of history of religion and exegesis and was nourished by the ideal of a religion which, without serving as a background to the cynical raw stuff which is called Synagogue or Church, is yet not identical with the hazy 'cult of genius'; ever since that time the Jewish house of prayer has always more disgusted than edified me, because I detest in it the most cunning power of idol worship.

And, nevertheless, it pulled me today to Hasköy, to the house of prayer of the Sephardim; and nevertheless, it did not annoy me to climb over mountains and hills, on miserable pavements, to appear in the community that I detest, that I hate with all the fire and enthusiasm of my heart; and still, I have never before shed such hot tears as today in the midst of the community, in the Jewish synagogue. I cried bitterly, I lamented; as I recited mechanically the sins as prescribed for me, I howled as I bothered 'Our Father and King' with the likewise prescribed requests; I felt elevated as I kissed the Tora, whose legends and myths I mercilessly analyze, whose roster of authors I dare construe with certainty, whose formation as to year and day I make bold to fix with proud assurance. Am I weak or mad? A hypocrite I am not, for my tears flowed too endlessly salty against my will, this much I can say. Explain it, friends; I cannot.

"fanatical remarks about unbelievers" reading such texts; see *ibid*, 150; Conrad's reading, however, is highly exegetical. See Conrad, "The Near East Study Tour Diary of Ignaz Goldziher", 123-4.

But then again I was driven off against my will when I heard the reader snorting away at the story of the burned sons of Aaron—away, away, far away from these vulgar rooms, again over mountains and hill, to Pera. For the synagogue made merry over my tears, laughed at my emotions, jeered at my convulsion—this idol’s synagogue, this fasting, godless one, does not deserve my sympathy. They laughed at the stranger who brought his better heart to their infamous horde because he honors the most holy of all days, which symbolizes the idealization of the dust, the contempt for the flesh, the spiritualization of matter. He finds this idea in their inane songs, in their senseless customs; he grasps the little kernel of spirit which hides in this mud; he identifies his own self with the day of renunciation and disembodiment; he cries honestly, bitterly; he loves with the noble ones of the time; he feels unhappy in the flesh; he cries about it; he trembles as he speaks, ‘Father-King, we have sinned before You’; he shakes as he grasps the power of the word ‘sins’—and this synagogue of the Sephardim, which he had held higher than it deserved, laughs at him! Away, away from the impure! Here you can no longer stand it.

I went to Pera, to a German place, not to a German beer hall but to a German-Jewish house of prayer. They were preparing for the great *Unetanne tokef* tragedy. I hear the trumpet of the world judgment, I cry again, I tremble and shake, and again the laughter of the neighbors wounds me. Away, away from this chaffers’ cave, I cannot bear it; from moment to moment it becomes more waste, more empty, more devilish. Away and home! Here I open up the second Isaiah and read in it his sermon about fasting. Here I am not ridiculed: here is the Temple I seek.

With whom did I have to reconcile myself? I believe, most of all with the still-echoing inclinations to reconciliation with the shaky rabbinism. I have not reconciled myself with it; the last note of the shofar this year is a battle cry for me to fight this Amalek of mankind, fight it to annihilation. War against the evil spirit of hypocrisy, the immoral sanctimoniousness, the soul-killing Siddur and Mahzor religion; fight for the religion of ideals, for the liberation from the dust, from the chains of the flesh! I shall never forget this Day of Atonement.¹⁷⁷

In a sense, it is amazing that this utterly defiant, affirmatory and *heroic* text, with all of its rhetorical casting, turns and flourishes; in which, the mature Goldziher, sobered up by the scientific path (as made explicit, having by historical study discovered the true ideal of religion) goes into the house of the enemy, the Synagogue of the Rabbis; where, the same man who ‘mercilessly’ analyzes the Jewish scriptures, whose human authorship and development out of mythology he ascertains, that *this man* finds himself uncontrollably crying and howling as he addresses God and kisses the same scriptures; with the rhetorical ‘Explain it, friends; I cannot’, when he has just given the explanation, when the whole piece is that explanation: that he is neither ‘weak’ nor ‘mad’; that the outpouring of emotion against his will *proves* that it is *he* who is not the hypocrite; that it is precisely *he*, the man of critical understanding, science and scholarship for whom the Jewish scriptures are *alive*, for whom they have emotional and so ideal meaning, while the men of the Synagogue, supposedly the bulwarks of the Jewish traditions, are dead to them and laugh at his emotional response to them; that *he* had gone into the Synagogue of the Rabbis to show and represent the true kernel of the Jewish traditions and practices it was

¹⁷⁷ Patai, *Oriental Diary*, 98-101.

supposed to be a temple to and to serve, to manifest the yearning meaning of the Day of Atonement, of ‘sin’, in the aspiration towards the ideal; but, the Synagogue—it did not matter whether Sephardic or Ashkenazi, ‘Oriental’ or ‘European’—ridiculed him, for it made the Jewish traditions into a reified idol to which, and to whose custodians, the Rabbis, it makes the people bow down, as pagans bow down to their Gods and their custodians; that *he* had thus proven himself again in the experience anew that there was no reconciliation with this ‘Amalek of mankind’, that there was only a fight to the death, and that it was to be fought in the scholar’s study; it is then, to say it again, amazing that *this* text has been read as proof of Goldziher’s ‘tortured psyche’, as evidence—the ‘Explain it, friends; I cannot’ presumably a tortured cry—of a man caught irrevocably between his (modern) scientific reasoning on the one hand, and his (traditional) religious sentiments and commitments on the other!¹⁷⁸ It was this same text that formed the basis of Patai’s ‘psychological portrait’ of Goldziher’s personality as one essentially split between the cool, scientific rationality of the analyses in his scholarship, and a manic emotionality, that, out of all proportion to his experiential stimuli swung him wildly between love and hate, and over which he exercised no control. (One should be frank about the fact that, Patai, especially in light of the malice with which he elaborated this characterization, was here essentially falling back on the widespread anti-Semitic trope in the nineteenth century of the effete, neurotic intellectual Jew, unmoored in social reality and responsibility; and that, the putative ‘Zionist’ underpinnings of his criticisms only go to show how certain strains of Zionism have sadly been wont to swallow a part of the anti-Semitic patrimony in proffering ‘Zionism’ as a solution to them;¹⁷⁹ vis-à-vis Goldziher though, Patai’s ‘critique’ can only be ironic, for, as the Yom Kippur text above *in fact* shows, his own critique of extant Jewish reality and its still ‘Medieval mode’ centered on the idea that the Jewish heritage, presently reified and deadened into an idol, was, in the modern world, in terms of the ideals within it, to be made teleologically subject to practical/emotional realization.)

15.

Now, with this sense of Goldziher’s Jewish Reformist pre-occupations during the Oriental trip—and, next to the above text from Istanbul, there were comparable extended passages of much the same content and emotional valence in Jerusalem—it is certainly bewildering to move to the *Tagebuch*’s characterization of his religious mindset at the time. Namely, in the two now most famous and much quoted passages in the *Tagebuch* from Damascus and Cairo; in which, as we’ve already seen in the full citation of them in the last chapter,¹⁸⁰ Goldziher, in Damascus, spoke of having become so absorbed in the Muslim spirit as to have come to think himself a Muslim; that, thereby, he’d smartly discovered Islam as the only religion capable in its very doctrinal-official forms and formulations to satisfy philosophical minds; that it had, therein, become his ideal to raise Judaism to the same rational level, as his experience had shown him Islam was the only religion in which superstition and pagan remnants were scorned not by rationalism but by the Orthodox doctrine; then, in Cairo, adding he’d

¹⁷⁸ See, for instance, Haber, *Zwischen Jüdischer Tradition und Wissenschaft*, 135-8, which uses the episode to bear out its title; see also note

¹⁷⁹ See Patai, *Oriental Diary*, 71-78; in Patai’s case, though, his Zionism seems to have simply boiled down to Babbitry; as in such lines about the effete Goldziher’s disdain for his bureaucratic ‘slavery to the Jews’: “A man without Goldziher’s intense scholarly drive, and more important, with a thicker skin, could have found at least some measure of satisfaction in occupying the influential position of the de facto manager of the largest Jewish congregation in the world.” Ibid, 30.

¹⁸⁰ See notes 191-2 above.

become so personally attracted to Islam as to now call his own monotheism by this name; and that he did not lie when he said he believed in the prophethood of Muhammad. It is bewildering not only because this description does not fit with the *Oriental Diary*, or with Goldziher's other publications of the time; for instance, *Mythos*, where, as we've seen, he compared the 'Yahweh' and 'Allāh' concepts of God as the only ones worthy of the moniker 'monotheism', but put 'Yahweh' a good deal ahead on the monotheistic path, because, as the virtual creation and singular appropriation of Prophetic Judaism, it had specifically been raised above all pagan remnants, whereas Muhammad's appropriation of 'Allāh' from the Arab heathen tradition continued (namely, in the still emphasis on his especial power) to bear the traces of the pagan past (this was, as we've also seen, a point which Goldziher carried through the rest of his scholarship, where, he took Mohammad's use of 'Allāh' for state-purposes in Medina to have led to the re-entry of pagan themes, so that, for instance, the prophet could present God in terms of 'calculating power'). Besides this, these passages can be bewildering because they are so clearly *idealizations* (in fact, understanding them as such is what will allow us to make proper historical sense of them); for, the informed reader of Goldziher (and the present one, who has read the previous chapter), will know that these passages of the *Tagebuch* do not even exactly fit Goldziher's own Islamicist scholarship, and are, on the face of them, altogether out of step with his own projection of Islamic history. We've namely seen Goldziher associate 'Islamic Orthodoxy' altogether with the deliberative voice of the *Ijma'* and its developing/extant (even if for centuries until the modern period, stagnant) sense of the Islamic heritage (so much so that groups, like the reactionary Wahhabis, who promote a return to the so-called original *Sunna* could come to be deemed heretics); but, then, that precisely through the *Ijma'* official Islam had come, over the centuries, to accommodate, even retroactively swallow and idealize, all manner of social and cultural realities; so, most paradigmatically—it constituted a very large part of Goldziher's work—the compromises Orthodoxy had come to strike with all manner of pagan 'survivals' that under the veil of 'saint veneration'—*a la* the losing battles against the same earlier in Islamic history—had been thus enveloped within the moniker 'Islam' and monotheism. The reader will understand what I mean by 'bewilderment' in witnessing the exegetical gymnastics Conrad, for instance, has to undertake in attempting to square these passages of the *Tagebuch* with what he knows of Goldziher's thought (and Islamic history in its terms):

By this [the suggestion at the end of the Damascus passage that Islamic Orthodoxy itself and not rationalism scorned pagan vestiges] he [Goldziher] means that whereas superstitious and pagan elements had penetrated the doctrine and praxis of Judaism, and so could now only be eliminated through rationalist reform arising from sources external to the structures responsible for upholding that doctrine and praxis, Islam has from the first limited and defined the ways in which pagan elements are accommodated, so that when they have entered the faith, they have done so in an 'Islamized' form rather than as 'raw' intrusions potentially destructive to the essence and spirit of Islam. Whether or not this formulation accurately describes the syncretic dynamic at issue is, of course, an entirely different matter.¹⁸¹

It is difficult to believe Goldziher meant any such thing, for then he would have been essentially praising Islam for its hypocrisy and it is hard to imagine that this was the 'rational level' to

¹⁸¹ This passage is from a note in Conrad, "The Pilgrim from Pest", 157 (note 139).

which he intended also to raise Judaism. Rather, the most apposite way of reading these passages of the *Tagebuch*, historically, is neither as a characterization of Goldziher's past experience in the Orient, nor as a description of his present Islamicist scholarship, but as a declaration, in 1890, that the Islamic heritage now formed for him the primary vehicle of his Reformist program, that *he was now idealizing Islam*; that he was hence to project forward the ideal high-point in *its* heritage, comparable to that of Prophetic Judaism in the Jewish one and, on the basis of which, his *Tagebuch* characterization would be the right one (Judaism had lost itself by losing him!) And, he found exactly this ultimately in his understanding of al-Ghazali, whose re-orientation of Islamic law and dogma in terms of personal devotion to God, and whose balancing of law, dogma and mysticism he took to have allowed Orthodoxy to solidify in such a tolerant manner as that the true kernel within each and so within the tradition had thus been kept alive on the path to their critical purification in the Modern; accordingly, the celebration of al-Ghazali as the highest and last point yet climbed in Islamic Orthodoxy, in these terms, in the *Vorlesungen*, are what mark this text as the climactic point of Goldziher *Islamwissenschaft*.

The reader should be allowed one last taste of the discrepancy in aims and dispositions suggested here between Goldziher's two famous journals; after the above characterizations of the *Tagebuch* vis-à-vis the author's tendencies during his time in the Near East, here is the last entry of the *Oriental Diary*; it comes as Goldziher has already been attending Al-Azhar for one week:

Azhar with the analectic Shaykh al-Mahfūz al-Maghribī. After the lecture the professor approached me with a very friendly *marhaban* [welcome] and invited me to a little conversation. He explained to me that the Jews are the most contemptible people of the world and that the Christians are closer to Islam; he thought he paid me a compliment thereby. You missed the mark, good Shaykh! As I hear, this Shaykh is supposed to be very strong in polemics (*jadāl*). It is remarkable that he took leave of me with the words with which he had received me: *Allāh yuhdīnā wa 'iyyāka 'alā 'l-sirāṭi 'l-mustaqīm wal-tarīq al-hudā* [May Allāh lead us and you on the straight path and on the right road]. During the conversation he often expressed the hope that God would lead me to Islam, which I, of course, did not reject. I have prepared for myself for such occasions a treasury of equivocal phrases with which I manage very well. Thus, e.g.: *wa 'llāh yahdī man yashā* [And God leads whom He wants], or: *al-haqq sikkah nāfidhah mush masdūdh, yafūt fihā man yahdāhu Allāh* [Truth is an open road which is not closed; he whom God leads to it will enter it]. Or again: *Allāh yuzhir al-haqq bi-qalbi man yashā ihdā'ihī* [God reveals the truth in the heart of him whom He wants to lead].¹⁸²

The last event of note to be discussed in connection with the Oriental trip—in the *Tagebuch*, Goldziher positioned it as the close of this chapter of his life, in many ways as the close of the chapter of his beloved 'youth'—came in Cairo, vis-à-vis his ardent wish to participate in Friday-prayers, so as “with the thousands of believers to bend my knee before Allāh and calling out my 'Allāh akbar' to sink with them in the dust before One all-powerful.” This, of course, not being a Muslim, he could not do openly; hence, with the help of a friend, he decided to disguise himself as an Arab and participate in the prayers incognito; he pulled it off and said in the *Tagebuch*, that robbing his forehead to the ground in the middle of the thousands in the mosque, he had never been “more devout, truly devout” than during these prayers.¹⁸³ Here, he said that

¹⁸² Patai, *Oriental Diary*, 153.

¹⁸³ Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 72.

the episode constituted a “special chapter” of his diary; but the *Oriental Diary* stops a month into Cairo, and whether we’ve lost the rest or whether Goldziher had stopped formally journaling and was referring to another piece of writing here, it remains unclear. In any case, it would have been wonderful to see this event from the, or a, contemporary perspective; in itself, this event bears witness to how serious and respectful Goldziher was, already at that point, towards Islam’s monotheism; for, he would not have, for all the world, participated in anything other than—in its at least ideal kernel, as he understood this—monotheistic worship (i.e. Judaism or Islam); that is the point, ‘scientific objectivity’ meant ‘religiously projective’, and Goldziher would have thought the idea, that he experience (anything akin to) pagan practice so as to describe it objectively, pure abomination. Hence, when he was eventually chosen a Dean at Budapest University in 1917, it gave him fits that he had, as part of his position, to attend Church services, or as he put it, “the Gnostic-Neoplatonist, anti-monotheistic Church services of the rulers”; and, resigned himself to it—he had to note in his diary that he did not believe this way of easing his conscience was a “sophism”!—only in the thought that refusal would feed anti-Semitism and the old idea that Jews were accordingly incapable of state-service.¹⁸⁴ Hence, one should not doubt that the episode constituted for Goldziher a genuine ‘religious experience’—the added flourishes are almost pleading in this sense; but as, in any case, Goldziher did not become a Muslim, one is bound to think of it as further participant-observation in comparative monotheism. Nonetheless, it cannot be denied that there is something ominous about this episode in the way in which it is positioned within the *Tagebuch*; Goldziher was told afterwards to avoid the mosque henceforth, and fearing even that he might be found out, this sense of trespass (or, being made to feel he’d trespassed) had a clear impact on his mood; he remained in Cairo for two months after this episode, but it was the end of the Cairene experience for him (it was the last thing he wanted to remember). And, within a line, the era of his troubles began; he received a note that his father was badly sick and that the family’s economic situation was in disarray; Vámbéry wrote him to suggest his academic situation had changed; having lost apparently his earlier carefree joy because of the mosque episode, he decided to leave, and before doing so, received news that Hatala had received the position promised to him; his father died a few days after he arrived back in Budapest.¹⁸⁵ The mosque adventure is one of the last truly joyous episodes in the *Tagebuch*; the next is the Gold Medal in Stockholm in 1889; then, especially the occasion of Maria Freudenberg coming into his family as his daughter-in-law. With his father gone, his ‘youth’ over, Goldziher’s life-trajectory, in any case, always that of an eternal son, moved ever more precipitously towards his ‘martyrdom’.

16.

Enough has been said to show that the *Tagebuch*’s desire to read Goldziher’s ‘Islamicist turn’ backward into his Oriental trip should not be taken at face value; that his 1890 review of his life, and hence its retrospective readings, themselves constituted the final consolidating/consecrating act in Goldziher’s mounting decision to exchange the Islamic for the Jewish heritage as the focus of his Reformist scholarship. We now must of course inquire as to the historical and personal levers in Goldziher’s life that in fact set-off this process, capped in the *Tagebuch*; and, accordingly, both the (religious) meaning he himself associated with his Islamicist turn and so *Islamwissenschaft* (i.e. as a Reformist discipline); and the way in which his Reformist (historicist/modernist) scholarship on Islam connected him to a burgeoning Islamicist

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, 303.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, 72-3.

field that appropriated his work and came to celebrate him at its head (as, naturally, will be especially elaborated on in the chapters to come). From the *Tagebuch* and surrounding evidence, we can see essentially two vectors, through the 1880's, whose convergence in Goldziher's life worked to produce the translation to Islam and which in fact came exactly to complement one another in this regard. The first had to do with the reception of Goldziher's scholarship; namely, starting in the early 1880's, Goldziher's growing scholarship on Islam began to gain an audience amongst colleagues abroad, foremost amongst them Snouck, but soon also stalwarts of the field, like Nöldeke and De Goeje, or his eventually most intimate friend until his untimely death August Müller (1848-1892), also the Russian, Victor Rosen (1849-1908)—both of the last two, former Fleischer students—or simply, the old Arabist friend, Landberg; these (except the last) to be Islamicist colleagues of Goldziher—namely, after his Islamicist work helped to redefine the Arab philological establishment in these terms—essentially put the somewhat broken Goldziher, who could not have done without it, on their shoulders, touted him, and not only learned from him in their work, but, again as especially engineered by Snouck, actively built or allowed a new discipline to form around his scholarship. Hence, there is a very real sense in which *Islamwissenschaft* arose, not because of the promotion of it on Goldziher's part, but rather because his scholarship, which his closest friends had (from abroad) to plead and beg him into publishing, served as the flag under which a growing group of Orientalist colleagues, first and foremost Snouck, came to challenge the philological definition and dominance of the field (without Snouck's initial and then persistent interventions it is not possible to know what would have become of Goldziher); the most important moments in this process of the 1880's were the VI ICO in Leiden (1883) and the VII ICO in Vienna (1886). The second vector in question had to do with Goldziher's personal crisis in the mid 1880's, as his professional situation became more difficult for him under the new presidency of the Congregation under Moritz Wahrmann, but really because of the death of his sister and mother in succession in 1884. Whereas the first vector increasingly gave Goldziher a new social basis for his scholarship—as focused on Islam—abroad; the second vector worked increasingly to loosen his ties to his direct Hungarian and Hungarian Jewish relationships accumulated thus far over his lifetime; the result was what can accordingly be termed a conversion experience to *Islamwissenschaft*—with the usual 'last glances' associated with the same to boot!—in which Goldziher's focus shifted to the Islamic heritage as the locus of his Reformist science.

The first process, the foreign colleagues' encouragement—at the critical juncture after the mid-1880's, that it had become a good deal more is borne out by Goldziher's own wish to characterize it as the "coercion of the friends"—promotion and appropriation of his work, is built into the very structure of the *Tagebuch*'s narrative. Namely, Goldziher sectioned the years 1876-1883, from the beginning of his bureaucratic work for the Hungarian (Neolog) Jewish community to his attendance of the VI ICO in Leiden as a distinct chapter of his life, that is, as defined by his academic isolation: the disappointing reception of *Mythos* (1876) came early-on in this period, after which he felt in the wilderness; but, during this period as well, he met and married his wife, Laura Mittler, which allowed him, as he characterized it, to establish a family and home life that allowed him to continue his Reformist struggles vis-à-vis the Hungarian Jewish establishment in earnest and from an upright standing; he also now developed the working methodology he was to follow unabated until 1905 when he finally received 'his' position after Hatala's retirement, whereby, he would study during the year and write up his

works during his six weeks of vacation every year.¹⁸⁶ Hence, he very much persisted in his scholarship as the means of his Reform agenda (and now distinctly personal) struggle. But, exactly, as he put it, when he came in the *Tagebuch* to describe the end of this period vis-à-vis his decision to attend the Leiden ICO, he'd tried to get used to the idea that "my scientific activity was to have only individual meaning *for me myself*, as escape from the humiliation of my dishonored life." (It was earlier in this section that, as discussed above, he'd described the religious meaning of this personal 'escape', i.e. his scholarship as the means of maintaining his purity and staying on the Reform path in the midst of the thus contradiction that his livelihood now depended on those he was fighting against.) But, outside of the persistence in his personal struggle, Goldziher's sense of scholarly humiliation was real; he prefaced his account of how he'd come to go to the Leiden Congress with the explanation that till then he'd tried to avoid these international scholarly gatherings because he felt "shame", in quotes, was written on his forehead, and that he could not give himself the privilege of being in the same room with men for whom scholarship was their "noble life-profession."¹⁸⁷ However self-pitying the tone, that, after his defeats vis-à-vis the Hungarian Culture Ministry, then vis-à-vis the new Budapest Rabbinical Seminary and given the paltry reception of *Mythos*, Goldziher felt he could not show his face to people, in whose eyes just a few years earlier he'd been a most promising student and scholar, is understandable.

The factor which, above all else, changed this dynamic was the beginning of his correspondence and relationship with Snouck. At that point, still a young scholar (of just over 25) with a position in the Dutch Colonial Office, Snouck started the correspondence and the friendship with Goldziher that lasted all their life. In his first, brief but highly admiring letter—Goldziher would have no doubt eventually appreciated this even more as Snouck was not given to admiration—Snouck told Goldziher immediately that though they did not personally know each other, he was beholden to him; that the study of the history of Islam was his highest interest, but also that his official position in the Colonial office—his task of introducing prospective civil servants and legal officials of the Dutch "East Indian" colonies to the basics of the study of Islam—pushed him in this direction; and, that naturally that had sent him scouring for Goldziher's scattered publications on the subject and had never been more stimulated or learned more than from these. (He'd no doubt come to know of Goldziher from De Goeje and Hotsuma (whom Goldziher knew from his Leiden days), and whom, he said in the first line of the letter, he'd often heard speak in the most friendly way of him.) He sent along his own recent Dutch publications that had appeared in Indonesian journals and dealt in part with the historical study of *Fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence).¹⁸⁸ Already, in the aftermath of *Mythos*, Goldziher had himself increasingly changed his focus from Comparative Mythology to Comparative Religion; and had accordingly begun to write not only, as especially thus far, on Arab but more and more on Islamic subject-matters.¹⁸⁹ In his reply to Snouck's first letter, Goldziher had told him (to his great excitement as we can see from his second letter) that he was actually working on a book—published in 1884 as *Die Zâhiriten; Ihr Lehrsystem und ihre Geschichte* (*The Zâhirîs; Their*

¹⁸⁶ See *ibid*, 86-93.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid*, p. 94.

¹⁸⁸ See Snouck to Goldziher 02/13/1883 in *Scholarship and Friendship in Early Islamwissenschaft; The Letters of C. Snouck Hurgronje to I. Goldziher*, 1.

¹⁸⁹ See Heller, *Bibliographie des Oeuvres de Ignace Goldziher*, 25-37 for the publication of these years; also, Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 92-3.

Doctrinal System and Their History)¹⁹⁰—that dealt with the development of this no longer extant school of Islamic law (and theology) in early Islamic history. However, already in 1881, he'd published in Hungarian, his very large tome, *Az Iszlám*—the English translation of the full-title: *Islam; Studies on the History of the Muhammadan Religion*—which served as an early compendium: 1) of his then understanding of key junctures in early Islamic history and the development of Islam (first, what would become the initial volume of the *Muhammadenische Studien*, here, as the explicitly anti-Renan “The Religion of the Desert and Islam”; second, the study of the development of *Hadith*, expanded into the second volume of the latter); 2) but also of the attempt to comprehend the broader social and cultural appropriation of Islam—hence, now the first appearance of his full ‘higher’ double-purpose cited vis-à-vis the Oriental trip—in the study of the history of saint veneration in Islam (translated into the last section of the second volume of the *Muhammadenische Studien*), on Islam and architecture, and on the university experience in Islam (where he made use of his Azhar experience); finally, a 40 page section devoted to countering the prejudices against Islam in the European scholarship on it. The work must accordingly, in retrospect, be seen as an early précis not only of the *Muhammadenische Studien* almost a decade later, but of Goldziher’s life-work to come.¹⁹¹ Snouck in fact concluded his first letter to Goldziher by telling him how excited he was to have read the abstract of this work and how much he regretted not knowing Hungarian and not having the time to learn it; he earnestly begged him for a translation (knowledge of this book seems to have been what had moved Snouck to write).

As Snouck wrote later in his *In Memoriam* of Goldziher, the study of Islamic law and its history (i.e. of ‘Islamic history’ as such) was generally looked down upon in the philologically-centered Orientalist scholarship of the time; accordingly, Goldziher’s encouragement of his work in this vein had proven decisive for his course as a scholar:

I made the acquaintance of Goldziher through correspondence. No letter of an Orientalist has ever delighted me so much as the first one I received from him. My first steps on the field of the history of the Muhammadan law met with little encouragement from my teachers: they emphatically advised me against making for that direction any further. The study of the *fiqh*, which had constituted the basis of the scientific education of all Muslims scholars for ages, and had influenced their thought and writing more than anything else was discreditable among Western Orientalists... Then, however, I received from an older colleague, who already had a reputation, an enthusiastic encouragement, that made me overcome every hesitation. Like an older brother, he cordially shook my hand from the distance, and adjured me to accept battle together against the prevailing prejudice. Since that time, a good forty years ago, we remained in uninterrupted correspondence and were informed continually about the ins and outs of each other’s work. The first letters I received from Budapest awakened in me the desire for a personal

¹⁹⁰ Goldziher, *Die Zâhiriten; Ihr Lehrsystem und ihre Geschichte*. Schulze: Leipzig, 1884. See Snouck’s response in Snouck to Goldziher, 2/26/1883 in *Scholarship and Friendship in Early Islamwissenschaft; The Letters of C. Snouck Hurgronje to I. Goldziher*, 2.

¹⁹¹ See note 176; Heller gives a long description of the content in French, which conforms to the same detailed abstract at the end of the Hungarian publication. At the time, Goldziher’s as yet very good friend, Wilhelm Bacher, had given a four page report on the book’s contents in the ZDMG, 36, 720-4, which is how, as we’ll presently see, Snouck had come to know about it; see Fück, *Die Arabischen Studien in Europa*, 229.

meeting with the man, to whom, in defining the direction of my studies, I owe more than to anyone else.¹⁹²

If Goldziher's intellectual support—more, the sense already from the above paragraph and in fact early-on that they were hence to be a team—helped conclusively decide Snouck to follow the path of his own interests; it was Snouck who, alternatively, worked at every turn to end Goldziher's Hungarian isolation: in only his third letter to Goldziher, he invited him to the VI ICO in Leiden (Sept. 1883) and noted how much he wanted to meet and get to know him personally.¹⁹³ As Goldziher noted in the *Tagebuch*, not only Snouck, but De Goeje and others also wrote him letters asking if he'd come; and that what had ultimately made up his mind to go had been both to be able to visit with his wife this scene of his industrious (and happy) youth, but also because he felt the need to meet Snouck with whom, as he put it, he felt a great "scientific affinity (*wissenschaftlicher Wahlverwandtschaft*)."¹⁹⁴ The Congress had a transformative effect on Goldziher, at least enough of one, that, despite the still lack of an academic position, he came to feel his academic isolation was now over (closing, in the *Tagebuch*, the chapter from 1876-1883). Meeting old friends or acquaintances, he was from the start treated with acclaim; his wife now could for the first time see him as a respected and beloved figure in the eyes of great scholars, and not only as one caught in an infernal struggle; this did him a great deal of good. Those at the Congress who would, alongside him, move in the Islamicist direction treated him especially as one of the foremost scholars of the field: he was made, accordingly, the vice-president of the newly coined 'Arabic and the Literatures of Islam' sub-section of the broader Semitic field (or as it was informally henceforth referred to, the 'Muhammadan section').¹⁹⁵ Here, he also delivered a lecture on his forthcoming *Die Zâhiriten* (the enthusiastic reception was no doubt what in fact made it forthcoming):¹⁹⁶ the way, Goldziher in this work, dealt with the legal speculations and disputations leading to the development of this no-longer extant school of Islamic law in early Islamic history—that is the point, no one would have exactly seen the point in such a thing—broke new ground; that's because Islamic law was wont, in the contemporary European intellectual consciousness of it, to be appropriated either under the guise of comparative law or as extant/effective law in Muslim lands European infiltrators or occupiers should know about (when not popularly or also as simply a mass of barbarism); Goldziher, however, proffered not a static body of regulations, but rather made the history of, and the disputations surrounding, this school of law into a key prism for the understanding of the development of Islamic thought ('science' and theology) within its broader *Kulturhistorische* setting. In Leiden, he also met very happily not only Snouck, but drew close to August Müller, who was to be until his untimely death in 1892 in fact his best friend (and from early-on with

¹⁹² See the English translation of this section of his *In Memoriam* of Goldziher quoted in the preface to *Scholarship and Friendship in Early Islamwissenschaft; The Letters of C. Snouck Hurgronje to I. Goldziher*, XIII-XIV.

¹⁹³ See Snouck to Goldziher 04/22/1883, *ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

¹⁹⁴ For Goldziher's whole account of the Leiden Congress, from the invitations to his experience at the Congress and his sense of its larger meaning for his life, see Goldziher, *Tagebuche*, pp. 94-96.

¹⁹⁵ See note 8 above.

¹⁹⁶ In the *Tagebuch*, made the interesting mistake of thinking that *Die Zâhiriten* was published in 1883 rather than 1884 and that *its success* had led, for instance, to a scholar, like Snouck, wanting to begin a correspondence with him; the order is rather, as we've seen, the reverse; it was in large part the successful reception of Goldziher's lecture on the contents of the book in Leiden that set the stage for its success upon publication. See *ibid.*, 93.

him on the Islamicist path),¹⁹⁷ and Nöldeke, with whom he from that point on started a thereafter life-long correspondence and friendship.¹⁹⁸ He was now again, in his own mind, an international scholar.

However, the decisive moment for the breakthrough of *Islamwissenschaft* came not in Leiden, but in the next ICO in Vienna (1886). Here, Goldziher, as he described it, felt a good deal more push-back in his bid to push the field (of Arab philology) in the ‘Islamicist’ direction (i.e. as inquiring in to the historical development of ‘Islamic’ thought vis-à-vis its socio-cultural context and role). He believed David Heinrich Müller (1846-1912) the agent of this diplomatic but explicit opposition at the Congress; D. H. Müller was himself a Jewish scholar from Galicia, who had moved from study at Rabbinical Seminaries to the University of Vienna (he’d studied there under the himself still quite young Sachau), and just the year before the 1886 Congress had been named to the professorship of Semitic languages at Vienna (the difference in their trajectories must have in any case seriously grated on Goldziher, who wanted to see in him the essence of the cunning of ‘Polish Jews’: Hungary’s ‘Eastern European’ neighborhood was the repository of Goldziher’s frustrated slurs, which came generally against other Jews). Goldziher remembered during his student days, when he’d also stayed a stint at the Vienna library, D. H. Müller had then looked up to him; but, his general sense was that, after his troubles, he now could not let go of looking down at him.¹⁹⁹ Fact or fancy, Müller at the Congress started to voice regret (in such diplomatic terms to Goldziher himself) that someone of his abilities had now reduced himself to the study of Islamic law; insinuated that he was by such maneuvers himself in part responsible for his situation; and made clear that while such “one-sided” *Fiqh* work could be divided up between him and Snouck, that it could not exactly, as Goldziher reported it, be “absorbed within the realm of genuine scientific efforts (i.e. Inscriptions, comparative grammatical forms, pre-historic hypotheses)” and so could not have, in quotes, “any interest for us” or thus be thought binding on the general direction of scholarly work; *Die Zâhiriten* was cited as the proof of all this. Goldziher then enumerated a list of slights, like that his lecture,

¹⁹⁷ See his August Müller, *Islam im Morgen- und Abendland, V. I & II*. (Berlin, 1885-7). Fück treats this work as an anticipatory but still (the work of socio-political historical synthesis just beginning) pre-mature work of the burgeoning Islamic Studies. See Fück, *Die Arabischen Studien in Europa*, 236-9.

¹⁹⁸ On Nöldeke as a kind of intermediary figure between the philological and historical method, see Becker’s memorial of him, Becker, “Theodor Nöldeke” in *Islamstudien, II*, 514-522; for a highly appreciative understanding of him as the scholar who in his person, and with a keen critical and skeptical eye, kept the diverging cosmos of Arab studies (philological and historical) centered about him, see Fück, *Die Arabischen Studien in Europa*, 217-220. Nöldeke generally disliked ‘religion’ as such, which he associated with the East, associating the rational spirit of the West with the Greeks. Bemoaning Said’s use of this, Conrad tries to excise him from the field with the claim: Nöldeke’s fiery Prussian nationalism and openly bigoted attitude toward non-European peoples were a source of constant embarrassment to his colleagues, and the ‘Nöldeke problem’ comes up repeatedly in correspondence among them.” He produces no evidence to this effect, and I have not yet encountered any; certainly, as one can read from Becker’s memorial, he was believed, in these views, to represent the ‘older generation’ before *Islamwissenschaft* proper; however, the tone was never that of a ‘Nöldeke problem’; he was an altogether revered and beloved figure, especially as he debated such things constantly including and especially with Geiger and Goldziher. See Conrad, “Ignaz Goldziher on Ernst Renan”, 179 (note 173); also Said, *Orientalism*, 209.

¹⁹⁹ See Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 51; for a quite sympathetic appraisal of D. H. Müller, see Fück, *Die Arabischen Studien in Europa*, 255-7; it turned out that in his philologically-based, quite broad speculations, like that the Prophetic texts bore within them the origins of the poetics of ‘choral response’ or that Hammurabi’s code had to be seen as having been the foundation of the Mosaic Law, Müller did not find much success; in this sense, his own career in a sense bears witness ultimately to the rise of the historicist discipline of *Islamwissenschaft*. Their relationship seems only to have become more acrimonious with now Goldziher’s greater success vs. Müller’s ‘disappointments’; see, for instance, Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 260-1.

announced well ahead of the Congress, was not printed in the program; that he was left out of events (it was “forgotten” to invite him to the dinner with Alfred von Kremer, one of his scholarly idols), etc. It was at this point that the “coercion of the friends” began; first, Snouck and Rosen made clear during the Congress that even his work on pre-Islamic (pagan) Arabia was being outstripped by the recent work of the British Orientalist Robertson Smith (1846-1894);²⁰⁰ that he simply could not tarry any longer with the publication of his Islam scholarship, and no doubt in view of the atmosphere of the Congress, implied a now or never scenario. Goldziher heeded the message to the extent of now committing himself to completion of the work soon to be published as the *Muhammedanische Studien*; but, he was, as he recalled, terrified of the shortcomings of his work, completely unconvinced of the “solidity” and “neutrality” of his conclusions; he sat on the manuscript. A “tough” letter from Snouck, and the publication now, in 1877, of the work of the German biblical scholar (and ultimately himself one of the mainstays of comparative religion and *Islamwissenschaft*), Julius Wellhausen (1844-1918), also on pagan Arabia, finally decided him on sending the work to the publisher;²⁰¹ who, however, showed no urgency, which Goldziher admitted he’d been only too happy about; after eight months, finally now his friend August Müller stepped in, simply took over, found another publisher and forced Goldziher’s hand. Now, with little choice left, remembering the torture of the corrections, he said he felt, with each batch sent in, he was “expediting my literary death-sentence”; and, until the work appeared, he was an absolute wreck, filled with the most dismal premonitions, literally seeing about him his coming future: the disappointed friends, the, in quotes, “pressure-wielding ones”, falling away from him, the ridicule or happy condescension of the others. No such shock, however, awaited him this time; this was, of course, in large part due to the merits of his work: his colleagues were simply amazed by the diversity and depth of his use of the resources; however, it also had to do with the fact that he now had a group around him virtually devoted to his success (i.e. associating the reception of their own work with the same); the same group, in the midst of this now visible disciplinary dynamic, was there to celebrate the bestowal of his Gold Medal at the Stockholm ICO in 1889 (to which he took with him the completed manuscript of the second volume of the *Muhammedanische Studien*).²⁰²

17.

The second broad process of the 1880’s, that of Goldziher’s growing break with the relationships he’d amassed in the Hungarian and the Hungarian Jewish contexts of his life thus far, so with both as such in the concrete sense (in favor of his own persistent modernist ideological/projective appropriation of them), we’ve in a sense already encountered and dealt with, i.e. at least in terms of the underlying dynamics it involved: ‘anti-Semitism and the counter-productive effect of Goldziher’s attempt to fight back’ in the general Hungarian case, ‘subaltern Reform’ in that of the Hungarian Jewish one. To conclude this section, we need only

²⁰⁰ The work being referred to here was Smith, Robertson, *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia*. Black: London, 1903 (originally 1885); this was actually a new edition with notes added by Goldziher.

²⁰¹ The work was: Julius Wellhausen, *Reste Arabische Heidentumes* (Berlin, 1897; orig. 1887). Wellhausen became well-known for his application of the historico-critical methodology to the Old Testament; he, like Goldziher, moved the comparison of Arabs and Jews—a matter which drove his scholarship—from the realm of ‘comparative Semitics’ to that of ‘comparative religion’, in terms of the move out of paganism (i.e. as against the ‘monotheistic instinct’). Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 114.

²⁰² See Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 114-20; Goldziher was altogether relieved by the reception; but, he still had to ask his friends whether all the acclaim was real, or exaggerated out of pity for his professional situation, so that they’d reassure him.

see how these dynamics led to a crisis in Goldziher's life in the mid-1880's, and the way in which his growing Islamicist reputation and base—his not only fundamental intellectual influence but virtual appropriation by scholars like Snouck because of it—converged with this crisis to produce the 'Islamic turn', meaning the (in the *Tagebuch* consecrated and naturalized) decision to make the Islamic heritage, in place of the Jewish, now the primary locus of his Reformist scholarship. As misunderstandings of Goldziher's self-conscious turn to *Islamwissenschaft* have generally been based on the misreading of its etiology in the *Tagebuch*, we will resort here mostly to the citation of key telling passages from the latter to carry through the argument. The cause of the great crisis in Goldziher's life in the mid-1880's is not a mystery and had to do with the string of deaths in his family that in fact, as he looked back in 1890, stretched from 1884 to 1889. His sister became badly sick and by the end having been transformed in personality by the long illness, died in January 1884; his mom then died a few months later in May 1884; his original family were now all gone and this represented a decisive break with his (to Goldziher, always all-important) 'youth', making no doubt possible a degree of re-orientation in his relations to it. This was the fundamental crisis, but even after its never altogether (until Maria Freudenberg) happy resolution, the norm now was 'martyrdom'; Goldziher was very close to his brother-in-law and became very much enamored of his new wife, Emma Löffler, who gave all of herself to his sister's children and took them as her own. (Goldziher altogether identified with such devoted sacrificial women; no wonder he could not get enough of English literature.)²⁰³ He remembered Emma as the very embodiment of feminine perfection; but, she also died after two years with his family; and, in fact, he returned from his triumphant Gold Medal at Stockholm in 1889 only to watch his brother-in-law also die.

In these years, he broke away decisively from Vámbéry, his supposed link to Hungarian officialdom; he recalled this now in the most positive way, and was almost certainly right that it only did him good. (Vámbéry, an inherent double-dealer and so charlatan—notwithstanding the desperate desire of the twentieth century to see something radical/abysmal and uncanny about this in the spiced-up concept of the 'spy'—could not in any case sustain relationships indefinitely and was not a character with any coat-tails.) Much more painful and scarring, during this same time, he came also to break with Wilhelm Bacher (1850-1913), a Jewish scholar with whom he'd attended university in Budapest, who'd been from the time he was seventeen virtually his best friend, and whom he'd tried to convince of his 'path' (he'd wanted to believe they were marching on it together); but, who, he now considered, in 1890, had, unlike himself, remained merely the 'scholar' rather than a revolutionary and hence allowed his earnestness to become a tool of the establishment. Bacher, in many ways as talented a scholar as Goldziher, though clearly not as ambitious, had become from the start (1877) a Professor at the new Rabbinical Seminary in Budapest; and, outside Goldziher's immediate accusations vis-à-vis their 1888 break—amongst other things that the literary journal founded by Bacher (to which he was also a contributor) wrote an altogether mournful obituary of Trefort (the Culture Minister) and had then become involved in the same kind of confessional hectoring that had quashed his own chance of a position at the Rabbinical Seminary—it seems the strain of the fact that one of them could now only fulminate about this latter institution (and the Jewish Neolog community as such), while the other was becoming ever more one of its leading personalities (eventually the Seminary's director) became eventually difficult to sustain; the break still raw and Goldziher, in the 1890 review, clearly utterly anguished about it, over time, he came sadly merely to despise his former

²⁰³ See *ibid.*, 92.

friend.²⁰⁴ (On the other hand, throughout the tumult and for the rest of their lives, Goldziher continued to stay on the most intimate terms with Samuel Kohn (1841-1920), none other than the Chief Rabbi in Budapest, who essentially acted as an older brother toward him, probably in that he felt responsible for him—he'd done the most to convince Goldziher to assume his hated bureaucratic post—and had an understanding of his sincerity and the difficult path he'd put himself on; Kohn's tack seems to have been, while countering his claims, to allow Goldziher to speak his piece about the Jewish establishment and Reform, and simply to be there for him and his family in difficult and unmanageable moments; as Goldziher put it, their great differences and the fact that Kohn was officially at the heart of the establishment he fought—he admitted mostly in his head: “only in word and writing”—was overcome by the Chief Rabbi's “personal human virtues.”)²⁰⁵ The soon-death of his mother and sister in 1884 coincided with the now, in the aftermath of the Tiszaeszlár blood libel in 1883, presidency of Moritz Wahrmann, which, as already noted, was that of man who, a tycoon and politician with cultural pretensions of his own, could not stomach a subordinate like Goldziher thinking he was higher than him and made it a practice to try to put him ‘in his place’. The full-blown crisis came in 1884, when, in the aftermath of these deaths, he found it next to impossible now to manage the strains associated with his situation (and path) and was close to a nervous breakdown; on the advice of doctors, he was allowed an extended break from work—this is when he went to Paris, met Renan and saw Afghani and the Cairo friends again—but it did him no good and in fact made him feel even more aggravated upon return. What saved him again was his ‘science’; the promises and prescriptions of his Bar Mitzvah—“You must raise yourself up”—rang out for him once more and he found his way back to himself by finding his way back to God and the service to him, i.e. his scholarship (that he had thus, on the edge of the abyss, discovered anew his ‘path’ and returned to it was of course proof of the mercy of God and that he had not, even in this time, turned away from him).²⁰⁶ But, this is where his burgeoning Islamicist base came in; for, having, by 1886, begun his ‘life-work’ anew, coming to himself again, he now clearly made a serious assessment of his situation and what it did and did not allow for, if he was to continue. It was at this *juncture* that he decided that if his work had, in its use of sources, been of altogether comparative and universal scope, involving in-depth reliance on “what was in any way connected with Ethnology, Pre-History, Biblical Theology, the Science of Religion, Oriental Cultural History and related fields”, that now he had unfortunately to make a “self-limitation and concentration” a “duty” for himself and to forgo the continued systematic study of all of the above disciplines; meaning, he had, for his sources, to rely mainly on those of Arab philology and history and on Islam. It was the concentration on these sources and the problems brought up by the correspondence with Snouck that helped now bring out, for him, the “picture of the developmental history of Islam” in new outlines and the “life of the Muhammadan peoples and their relationship to doctrine” in ever sharper light (i.e. the double-purpose again, or to be taken as *now* explicit).

18.

Now, to read Conrad, what all of this ‘concentration’ involved was essentially an abandonment by Goldziher of his Reform program and critique, this, as—the crisis of 1884-6 not mentioned—decisively correlated with the failure of a series of lectures on Jewish reform he

²⁰⁴ See *ibid* , 105-7, 32-3.

²⁰⁵ See especially *ibid* , 79-80. Note again, there was here no past-tense in the fighting...

²⁰⁶ See *ibid* , 107-9.

delivered in 1887-88 that decided him thereafter on a more ‘professional’ focus on Arab-Islamic studies that was, as the reception of the *Muhammedanische Studien* proved, to be his legacy:

Late in this series of essays on ethnic genius, the research agenda underlying Goldziher’s ongoing critique was seriously undermined by his continuing professional difficulties in Budapest. Though his scholarship was respected and his burgeoning international reputation admired, his impassioned advocacy of Jewish reform and campaigning for the agenda of the Haskalah were generally not well received. A decisive moment arose in the winter of 1887-8, when he prepared a series of six lectures on the subject of “The Essence and Evolution of Judaism,” in which he argued forcefully for the views of Geiger on the modernization of the faith. Accusing the prevailing rabbinic structures of betraying the Prophetic ideal, he advocated a comprehensive reform aimed at the fusion of a pristine Judaism with strictly rational and scientific thinking. These lectures were a colossal failure... The fact that his inability to reach his co-religionists on a topic of immediate should lead him to abandon his plans for his broad-ranging research agenda illustrates how committed he had been to a Geigerian perspective and the idea that comparative historical research was a path to the discovery of truths of universal and contemporary relevance. As Goldziher was in any case an insecure man constantly in need of recognition and approval, it may also be that the embarrassment he suffered at this time convinced him that it was futile to try to pursue such ambitious plans under the exceedingly negative conditions of his current employment, which contrasted drastically to the warm and engaging reception his ideas on religious reform had received among Muslim intellectuals in Damascus and Cairo... In any case, a few years later he identified this troubled period as the time when he decided to abandon his other studies and concentrate on Arabic philology and history and the study of Islam.²⁰⁷

And, on the meaning, reception and legacy of the *Muhammedanische Studien* and Goldziher’s other Arab-Islamic work vis-à-vis this burgeoning field:

Thought too little is as yet known to comment in detail, I would at least suggest that this had a major impact on the professionalization of the study of Arabic and Islamic culture and history. Work of the sort undertaken by Goldziher required a full mastery of the Arabic language, detailed reading in and command of a vast array of sources, and a well thought-out critical methodology to bring to bear on the evidence. His example could only be followed by those with a systematic university training and continuous access to specialized library resources on a large scale; this may well have been a factor in the decline of the role played by such types as gentleman scholars, colonial administrators, adventurers, and missionaries, who by the time of Goldziher’s death in 1921 had to a considerable extent been displaced by a new general of professional academics legitimated by quite different structures of learning and authority.²⁰⁸

Now, let’s read Goldziher’s description of the meaning of his now ‘concentration’ on Arab and Islamic subject-matter, emerging out of his crisis period, and so of the *Muhammedanische Studien* that was to be its first great triumphant fruit:

²⁰⁷ Conrad, “Ignaz Goldziher on Ernst Renan”, 153-4.

²⁰⁸ Ibid, 163.

Both of the volumes of my *Muhammedanische Studien* also arose in this time period [that of the overcoming of his crisis]. They show, how I was, during these years, drawn ever deeper into grasping those problems that occupied me already in my earliest youth... The unbelievably raw relationship—unworthy of any moral society—in which I stand vis-à-vis the representatives of the Jewish power and the Jewish essence disgusted me utterly from any participation in the fraudulent efforts that commonly run under the flag of ‘the Science of Judaism’; but with the innermost threads of my soul I hung on to the religious studies. The more they pressed down on me, the more my spirit arose against the thought: to be the same before my conscience what these people are. So I worked out the religious system and the historical conception of development, which I since my youth carry in my spirit, in ever more solid outlines. All things in any way contradictory, prompted in me by earlier sentimental moments, were cut loose, and there developed in me pure and genuine the system of thought, whose truths my repulsion from the people of lies, whose slave and outcast I was, made into a duty for me. My house was now in a higher sense Jewish and both of my children I raised in religion with prophets and psalms, all lies banished from their education and thrown aside. While I thus erected to the actually God-believing Messianic Judaism a temple in my house, the pious of men of Moravia [Goldziher’s slur for the leading figures of the Rabbinical Seminary in Budapest] did not stop pursuing my calumniation and denunciation on ever-wider basis. When my children someday read these lines, they will not believe with their own eyes when they experience that their father, who prayed with them to God, who taught them to love, who spurred them onto the Hebrew scriptures to impassion them for the good and the Godly, was at the same time branded ‘a danger for Judaism’ and that there was not a one that would take such talk to task.²⁰⁹

The passage virtually says it all: his horrendous relationship to the Jewish establishment turned him away from further participation in the ‘Science of Judaism’, but that he hung on with all of his being to ‘religious studies’ (i.e. ‘the Science of Islam’); that not only did the *Muhammedanische Studien* not represent some manner of ‘professional break’, being instead an attempt to understand in evermore fundamental terms the religious problems Goldziher felt he’d been confronting from the start; that it was *now* (i.e. vis-à-vis Islam) that he believed he’d worked out his ideas all along as to the ‘religious system’ and ‘historical conception of development’ into a ‘solid system of thought’; finally, that the ‘fight’, far from being over, he now thought he’d taken to an altogether new level: he was now Jewish in a higher sense than he’d ever been before! The whole passage speaks to a translation of his Reform project—one should as such call it a scholarly ‘conversion’—from the thus far primary focus on and elaboration vis-à-vis the Jewish heritage to the Islamic one.

In terms of this picture then, of Goldziher’s exchange of the Jewish for the Islamic tradition as the privileged vehicle of his Reformist religio-science—i.e. of his *conversion to Islamwissenschaft* as mediated by growing alienation from the Hungarian Jewish context juxtaposed to the adoring and importunate pressure of his ‘Islamicist’ colleagues, like Snouck, who were thus the in fact levers in the rise of the new discipline—the 1887-8 lectures in Budapest on “The Essence and Evolution of Judaism” and their dismal failure cannot be taken to

²⁰⁹ Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 110-11.

have been the ‘decisive moment’; rather, starting in the Winter of 1887, at a time when Goldziher had already (in the Fall),²¹⁰ sent the manuscript of the first volume of the *Muhammedanische Studien*, vis-à-vis ‘the coercion of the friends’, to the (first) publishers, one should understand these lectures as a ‘last glance’ and last attempt, and the first of the series of events—next the 1889 Gold Medal and then the *Tagebuch* itself—that served to *consolidate* the turn to Islam. In any case, the fact that Goldziher decided, as he proudly diagnosed as the cause of their failure, to pitch his lectures, irrespective of the general audience, at a high scholarly level—his journalism for *Pester Lloyd*, as also many other publications meant for a broader public, suggest he was more than capable of such an other key—shows in itself he was by this point as interested in demonstrating he was ‘above’ the Jewish community in Budapest as in still trying to ‘reach’ them.²¹¹ Here, we can cite three passages from the *Tagebuch*, each of which succinctly captures a distinct aspect of Goldziher’s Islamicist rendering of his Jewish reform program; in the first, comes his sincere acknowledgment that what people—as he could already see in the immediate reception and as was to remain the case—had found most innovative about his work, namely, his historicization of *Hadith* in the second volume of the *Muhammedanische Studien*, involved in fact a transference of what he’d learned from Geiger’s methodologies vis-à-vis Jewish religious sources onto the Islamic literary tradition; in the second, one will note that Goldziher’s 1890 condemnation of the Jewish Rabbinical establishment in the *Tagebuch* reads virtually out of his Islamicist critique of the role Islamic jurists and jurisprudence came, in line with the development of ‘Orthodoxy’, to assume in Muslim societies; in the third, writing on the new year’s eve of 1894, Goldziher, in melancholy fashion, inveighs against the contemporary practitioners of the contemporary ‘Science of Judaism’ who forced him to translate his Reformist scholarship from the Jewish to the Islamic literature, i.e. to the ‘Science of Islam’. We start then with Goldziher’s 1890 commentary on the immediate reception of his work on the *Hadith* in the second volume of the *Muhammedanische Studien*:

[Despite the stylistic irregularities, due to his nerve-wracked situation after the death of his brother-law and his untoward working regimen in general], people have taken up the contents and results of my new volume with undivided support and have in fact declared the method of my Hadith-studies as called upon to place the examination of this part of the religious source-literature under new points of view. I must honor the truth and admit to any, who read these lines that I was impelled to this method through the assiduously pursued study, in my earliest youth, of the works of the late lamented Abraham Geiger. I got accustomed to viewing the religious sources of Jewish doctrine via Geiger’s guidelines and the mode of understanding grounded by this immortal man has become a mainstay of my spiritual life. Since that time, I could not but also judge the documents of Islam in this way, as I thereby set these same in relation to the spiritual tendencies, to the forces struggling with one another, whose result ultimately was the unified Church. But the documents themselves arose out of these oppositions and within the same and to observe their emergence in the sense of this mode of inquiry was the task of my Hadith studies. In them, Cultural and politico-historical examinations have therefore had an

²¹⁰ See *ibid*, 114.

²¹¹ See note 405. A French abstract of these essays, published in Hungarian, can be found in Heller, *Bibliographie des Oeuvres de Ignace Goldziher*, 71-2 (#379); the abstract does read much like that of Goldziher’s other scholarly works, if anything more philosophical (just as it argued that the philosophical and scientific conception of religion had to become the lynchpin of its practice).

outstanding part. And, through the coalescence of cultural and literary-philosophical interests my studies on Hadith attained harmonious form. This mode of understanding I owe to the works of Geiger, whose spirit has been active in me for many years.²¹²

But, if Goldziher acknowledged openly to posterity that his renowned Islamicist work on the historical development of *Hadith* (namely, on the centuries long, gradual emergence and consolidation of ‘Orthodoxy’) represented a further working out of the Geigerian methodology he’d appropriated first vis-à-vis his Reformist conception of and scholarship on Jewish history; conversely, the way in which Goldziher in 1890 excoriated what he called ‘Congress Judaism’, i.e. the Conservative Neolog Rabbinical establishment, whose absolute “irreligion” he said was altogether inherent in and sanctioned by the Rabbis’ quite lucrative understanding of their profession, had its exact counterpart in the hardly hidden judgments, in his now Islamicist work, on the eventual (and still extant) societal role of Islamic jurists; that is, those, whose casuistic appropriation of the law, Goldziher said, had turned it, outside of all (and as causing grave damage to any) truly ‘religious’ conceptions and values, into a reified/ideological discourse ‘covering’ the management of socio-political affairs and as redounding to their own ‘religio-bureaucratic’ authority:

The theory, in which this perfidious clerical conception (*Pfaffenauffassung*) [of the Congress Rabbis] has found its formulation, is in short as follows:

1. We are not called-on to believe in the Jewish religion or to teach it.
2. We are called on to administer certain functions that via the prejudices of men can only be delivered of in the [Rabbi’s] habit, for good payment.
3. As the Congress rabble has put together the doctrine, that one must *assert* as standing on a ‘Mosaic-Rabbinic’ *basis*, without applying even just the most fundamental points of this basis in life, indeed, all the same if one daily and hourly in action and inaction kicks the Pentateuch and the Rabbinical law around—so must the Rabbis represent this ‘standpoint’ with their *lips*. Inwardly, one may think, what one likes.
4. This, then, is precisely liberalism; the freedom to make a lie of the most sacred things and to pursue the lie as a profession.
5. On the other hand, the ‘standpoint’ is best safeguarded, if one makes it into an official duty, to cry foul and murder against any decent man who has the audacity to fight the theses discussed under 3. and 4., to brand him as dangerous, where possible to declare him also *mad*.
6. The Rabbi is the executive organ of the counterfeit and the lie, of blasphemy and hypocrisy. He is in the worst sense of the word, a comedian.²¹³

Clearly, one here gets, in Goldziher’s denunciation of Neolog Rabbinism—i.e. as having turned Jewish doctrine and law into a reified mass, divorced from actual practice in life, but its abstract acknowledgment managed as a profession—much of the substance of his Islamicist critique of the ‘religio-bureaucratic’ deployment of Islamic law discussed in the last chapter. But, besides his manifest acknowledgment that the historico-critical methodology, now celebrated through his

²¹² Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 122-3. ‘Unified Church’ in Goldziher’s comparative understanding of Jewish, Christian and Islamic historical development meant a ‘religio-bureaucratic Orthodoxy’ and implied in itself a historicist critique, i.e. of the ‘Medieval’.

²¹³ *Ibid*, 84.

Hadith-work in—as—*Islamwissenschaft*, derived from the founder of Jewish Reform; and, inversely, that his abuse of Rabbinism was by 1890 already part and parcel of his now critique of Islamic jurisprudence; we find Goldziher, on the eve of 1894, altogether conscious of this coalescence, musing mournfully (on the occasion of having sent out a Jewish studies related article for publication) that it was important he be every so often reminded the religio-scientific scholarship he now elaborated vis-à-vis the Islamic heritage had originated on Jewish ground; on which note he then turned to lash out at the contemporary purveyors of the ‘Science of Judaism’ as more betrayers rather than representatives of the cause of ‘religion’, who had thus forced him to focus on Islam for his religious/reformist scholarship and, to his great chagrin, accordingly robbed the Jewish heritage of one of its greatest Reformist advocates, namely himself:

[With respect to such occasional Jewish studies related work], I feel I have, from time to time, to think about the fact that my studies were built up out of a Jewish starting point. The Jewish literature would possess in me one of its most enthusiastic supporters, if the cultivation of the same were so pure and honorable, as its documents. Never has an ideal scripture had such crooked representatives and cultivators, as the modern researches of the Jewish literature in our time are. Guttersnipes, advertisers, money-hypocrites, men of lies, are the representatives of literary researches, in whose documents the fact of martyrdom, of the love of God, of contempt for the world and love for the truth is in an eternally exemplary and rousing way objectively developed. What a destiny! It is a real happiness, that you at least despise the Bible and have left the prophets to the side! This sacred ground would have been profaned through the breath of your mouth, soiled if those truths were to be tossed about in your impure brains. For me the info-cram of the Middle-Ages is from that time when the idealism of our noble ancestors had to make do with the narrowness of the ghettos and clothed itself in tasteless flourishes. The tastelessness you’ve inherited, the idealism is hateful to you; even the flourishes are for your shallow heads unattainable. That is the happiness of our medieval literature, that you are too ignorant and too lazy, too egoistical and too money hungry, so as to trouble yourself with things through which you would never be trumpeted about as great men in the newspapers. You are Jewish scholars who yap after good and showy reviews from evangelical missionaries. A good word from ‘Strack’ is your goal and for that you expend a thousand good words on ‘Strack’ and as all the people from that Mission-crowd (*Missionvolk*) are always called. Your society I shunned as I turned myself to the Muhammadans. It cost me a great sacrifice, but to live and strive with you, is after all not for everyone.²¹⁴

What the reader gets in the course of all these extended passages, is not only some of the highest pyrotechnics of the *Tagebuch*—now that Goldziher has been ‘rehabilitated’ and the aim no longer to show he *was* mad, generally shushed and pushed into the background; but, a clear sense, first, that the ‘Islamicist turn’ constituted *not* Goldziher’s abandonment of his religio-scientific (i.e. Reformist) scholarship/program but instead—though never an altogether happy solution—a continuation and deepening of the same through a now almost exclusive engagement with the developmental history of Islam and ‘Islamic society’, i.e. as against the earlier pursuit of it vis-à-vis primarily ‘the essence and evolution of Judaism’ as comparatively supplemented by

²¹⁴ Ibid, 167-8.

(especially also) Arab and Islamic subject-matter. Second, that it was, hence, this historicist, modernist and reformist impetus in Goldziher's Islamicist work—if transplanted, much more socio-historically articulated than ever before—which worked both, on the one hand, to constitute '*Islamwissenschaft*' as an autonomous discipline (and remained, though never univocally, a mainstay of its discourse until at least the war); but which also served, on the other, to define his particularly and especially '*Islamfreundlich*' (Islam-friendly)—in fact, with its monotheistic teleological purposes, though this was never made explicit, Islam-partisan—stance and standing in the field vis-à-vis his colleagues (i.e. as consistently and influentially representing the line that 'Islam' did not represent any antithesis of 'Modernity' and modern development, and that what obstacles its extant institutions/practices did pose in this regard were precisely *historical* and *developmental* in nature).²¹⁵ We will have further opportunity to demonstrate this last point, its contours and repercussions, in coming in later chapters to set Goldziher's thinking within the broader discourse of *Islamwissenschaft*. For now, we can bring this line of discussion to an end by way of two conclusions, each corresponding to and serving to render one of the two points outlined in this paragraph historiographically explicit; the first, as reiterating what has been achieved thus far, the second, as a point of departure for what will be further elaborated on in the next chapter and others to come. So, if Goldziher cannot be said to have put his Reformist scholarship to the side in turning to *Islamwissenschaft*, interpretations that would read his contributions to it in terms of a growing 'professionalism', when this is understood as proper scholarly distance from explicit questions of *praxis*—i.e. as thus a salubrious development in and suggesting a high road out of the Imperialist Era, after which Goldziher's full modernist program could then be re-appropriated in safer climes—are not wholly tenable.²¹⁶ But, if the attempt, by those who continue to identify with the Islamicist tradition, to tout Goldziher as the unsullied face and starting-point of the field in the 'Age of Empire' itself turns him into a kind of *deus ex machina* (and if, as the progression of Conrad's own Goldziher scholarship seems to show, no trope other than 'professionalism' seems quite to

²¹⁵ In other words, meaning that 'Islam' was subject to internal reform, and that 'reform' had to be precisely autonomous in this sense. As we'll see, Becker, for instance, was wont to take this stance, while Snouck and Hartmann believed 'religious reform' had to have—not merely also, but altogether—an extra-religious etiology; which, however, did not necessarily prejudice questions of political or even (as projected via spokespersonship) cultural autonomy as such; i.e. if Snouck's 'nationalist' imperative (as necessary to compel religious reform) could mean, and came to mean especially during the war, 'colonization' or 'European lordship', Hartmann was more likely—i.e. for the Arab Near East—to identify or project an indigenous nationalist pressure on what he took to be the 'Islamic menace' to modernization, meaning an indigenous force pushing religious reform from the outside; but, Hartmann's elaboration of this point could also lead to complex vacillations; so, his passionate championing of Arab nationalism went in fact hand in hand with the idea, before the war, that an international take-over of the Ottoman Empire would at least be justified so as to break the power of 'political Islam'; then, during the war, he became, in the guise of a pan-Turkic nationalist, the most ardent supporter of Ottoman Turkey. The lesson of all this is that a tendency to 'essentialize Islam' need not coincide with one to essentialize the 'native', and that in fact the need to *bring the native to himself and his proper development*, and save him from the clutches of Islam, *could* become the occasion of imperial prerogatives; in other words, modernist secularists have been wont to essentialize 'religion', and 'Muslim' secularist nationalists have been little different in this regard, though of course bound to interpret this in terms of what's been generalized here as Hartmann's 'nationalist stance' rather than Snouck's. The picture will be elaborated in its full complexity in the chapters to come.

²¹⁶ Much the same, in this light, goes for Conrad's repeated assertions that if Goldziher's historical approach to Arab-Islamic subject-matter appears "perfectly conventional" today, it was revolutionary in its own time; certainly, Goldziher's historicist and teleological monotheism/nationalism is exceedingly interesting, but 'conventional' is not necessarily the apposite term for it. See Conrad, "Ignaz Goldziher on Ernst Renan", 162; Conrad, "The Pilgrim from Pest", 146.

do for this purpose); Hamid Dabashi, on the other side, has taken-up Conrad on this ‘professionalism’ theme but, not surprisingly, so as to argue that, notwithstanding all of Goldziher’s relative excellence (or pioneering exceptionalism) in this sense, he precisely because of it continued to be an ‘Orientalist’ in Said’s sense; namely, Goldziher was allegedly not ‘invested’ in the results of his surgical—‘professional’—analyses of Islam, in a way simply not available to a ‘Muslim’ undertaking the same; and, that this was what produced the ‘blind spot’ of his scholarship (and that of all the other professionally excellent Orientalists after him), i.e. that in turning Islam in to an epistemic object, they objectified it:

The principle insights of Orientalists (and, as such, covering their blind spot) into Islam was fundamentally rooted in the fact that their best they were not invested in it, while the worst of them were heavily invested in producing a particular knowledge of Islam and Muslims compatible with European colonial interests. At their best, such European Orientalists as Goldziher had nothing at stake in the historical outcome of Islamic history, nor did they in any shape or form share the fate of Muslims. The reason that Goldziher could place a discussion of Islamic law next to one of Islamic mysticism and then compare the result to Islamic philosophy, followed by a discussion of Islamic sects, and thus come up with quite crucial insights about all of them, is that he was neither a Muslim jurist, nor a mystic, nor a philosopher, nor did he (except for an emotive affinity with Sunni Orthodoxy) have anything but a scholarly interest in varied sectarian divisions within Islam. The knowledge that he thus produced was in its very epistemic foundations different from the one produced by Muslims themselves—jurists, mystics, theologians, philosophers, historians of ideas, etc., scholars who would put their neck on the line for what they wrote. Goldziher had no such stake in the matter—and thus his ability to have a surgeon’s point of view over what amounts to the unconscious body of a patient, and thus, in turn, both the insights and the blindness of Orientalism that Goldziher best represented and practiced.²¹⁷

As we saw in the last chapter, the *Vorlesungen*—the clear target here—was anything but involved in a reified discussion of ‘Islamic law’, ‘Islamic philosophy’, ‘Islamic mysticism’ and then ‘Islamic sects’ as dissected parts of a cadaver, but rather attempted to understand the gradual historical development and consolidation of ‘Islamic Orthodoxy’ through the divisions between and within these tendencies; and, thereby, simultaneously to identify the ‘truth kernels’ in each as against their either historical limitations or retrogressive dangers, so as to look ahead, especially vis-à-vis the high-point reached in this regard by al-Ghazali, towards the further purification, i.e. ideal/teleological development, of this same Orthodox balance; so that, the last section of the *Vorlesungen*, ‘Later Developments’, which Dabashi does not allude to here, was meant precisely to show that Islam was a ‘live body’, to outline its extant tendencies of development in terms of the movements—truths/historical limitations and dangers—already assayed and, by implicit or concluding commentary, to point to Goldziher’s own Reformist vision of the required ‘purification’ to come. But, to make all of this licit in terms of the discussion of ‘professionalism’, and besides the fact that a notion like ‘putting one’s neck on the line’—as all spokespersonship—is relative and historical (no doubt especially when coming from an American professor in New York), Goldziher’s clear continuation (in avowed aim and follow-

²¹⁷ Dabashi in Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, xix.

through) of his Reformist program through his Islamicist scholarship, his ‘turning to the Muhammadans’, suggests that he had a deep personal, *praxis*-oriented—historicist/teleological—stake in projecting, precisely as an always believing Jew, the *telos* of a universal purified monotheism by way of the historical development of Islam (whether now those on the Jewish, Muslim or human side find this deluded or simply wrong).

19.

But, to come thus to the second and final point from above, if Goldziher’s Reformist persistence—as constitutive of ‘*Islamwissenschaft*’—serves to problematize the concept of ‘professionalization’, and should lead us to reorient it historically away from the uses made of it by both advocates or detractors of the Islamicist tradition, this is precisely because of the way in which it illuminates his umbilical personal and discursive links to his Islamicist colleagues—foremost amongst them Snouck—and works thus to showcase the inadequacies of what I’ve termed ‘Goldziher exceptionalism’ (i.e. the reading him out of the broader Islamicist context that made his Islamicist scholarship in fact possible by rallying about the same as its cause and, *thereby*, made him into the towering figure that he became). Consider that if Conrad, in his earlier essay, “The Pilgrim from Pest”—the one where, as we’ve seen, Goldziher’s Oriental study trip was characterized as a kind of Reform pilgrimage (a *Hajj*)—was wont to read this episode climactically also as a *Hijra*, i.e. as having determinatively set the stage for his later *Haskalah*-oriented focus on and reading of Arab and Islamic history (whereby this definitive impetus and imprint was then examined in a number of his later Islamicist works);²¹⁸ in the later essay, “Ignaz Goldziher on Ernst Renan”, where Said’s *Orientalism* was the primary target, Goldziher’s early Reformist work was mined as a critique of Renan contra Said; but then, while acknowledging that, in his Islamicist work as well, Goldziher applied the same critical methodology from the Tübingen School and Geiger as in his earlier critique, this was here then elaborated in a minimalist sense as meaning essentially simply ‘proper historical contextualization’.²¹⁹ Both these essays, however, decided Goldziher’s methodology in his Islamicist scholarship, as the later one put it, if “perfectly conventional now”, nonetheless, “a completely novel departure in the late nineteenth century”, which was not altogether grasped by his fellow colleagues; in other words, Goldziher’s Islamicist work was not to be placed within the academic context of its time, for what in fact guaranteed its success there was not its substance and tendency but its vast erudition. In the later “Ignaz Goldziher on Ernst Renan”, this ‘triumph by erudition’ was then, however, made the occasion of a silver lining via the ‘professionalism’ theme; for, it was now explained that even if Geiger’s methodology was not completely unprecedented amongst other Orientalists and ‘Islamicists’ and had been appropriated in restricted settings, i.e. by Nöldeke in his *Geschichte des Qorâns (The History of the Qur’an)*, what actually set Goldziher’s work apart and explained, for instance, the breath-taking reception of the *Muhammedanische Studien* was that the latter “encompassed the entire vast range of Arab-Islamic literary culture—historical texts, poetry, *adab*, proverb collections,

²¹⁸ Conrad, “The Pilgrim from Pest” in *Golden Roads*, 138-142.

²¹⁹ “The method he espoused, and which he was the first to apply systematically to the study of Islam on such a broad-ranging scale, viewed texts not as depositories of mere facts that research should ferret out and line up one after another, but as sources in which one could discern the stages of transformation through which a community based on a common religious vision had passed as it struggled to come to terms with a host of new situations and problems. By careful and critical analysis of these sources, one could extrapolate important new insights on such processes of development not only in religious thought, but in literature, social perceptions, and politics as well.” Conrad, “Goldziher on Ernst Renan” in *The Jewish Discovery of Islam*, 162.

Qur'anic exegesis, doctrinal works, *fiqh*, *Hadith*, biographical dictionaries, and so forth—and from them laid out an incredibly rich vista of historical experience that not only had not been known before, but even had not been sought.”²²⁰ Such a wealth of learning, as the norm of scholarship, could only be pursued and appropriated in a ‘professional’ and ‘academic’ setting. And, Conrad here also added the new idea that if contemporary colleagues did not entirely grasp the underlying systematic background of Goldziher’s Islamicist scholarship, that he was himself to blame; because, due to a “failure of nerve” on his part (i.e. presumably as deriving from his ‘Reformist defeats’), he, in the later Islamicist works published in German—as against the earlier and preparatory ones in Hungarian—made no attempt to make the methodological implications of his analysis explicit, leading to texts that bore an essentially ‘professional’ or competent cast, which is then of course why they were approached in that fashion; in other words, the ‘professional’ ethos was also Goldziher’s own garb of self-defense, which is why his full modernist stance and early notion of the comparative historical study of the Middle-East had to await a generation to be re-discovered:

It was to a large extent Goldziher’s own fault that while his works were immediately mined and quoted for specific points, his broader vision for the study of the history of the Middle-East, Judaism, and Islam was not appreciated and pursued until attention was drawn to it long after his death by Joseph Schacht (1902-69). It is therefore necessary to draw a clear distinction between the influence of Goldziher in terms of the specific knowledge and conclusions imparted in his German works, which have been appreciated and built upon since his own lifetime, and the broader methodological insights implicit in these works, but mainly spelled out in his Hungarian contributions and therefore of far more recent impact on scholarship.²²¹

In other words, to read the ‘later’ Conrad, both the disastrous failure of Goldziher’s Reform advocacy vis-à-vis his fellow Hungarian Jews, as well as the even more pressing need then not to be seen as seriously running afoul of contemporary Orientalist conventions, mediated a change from a more ‘Reformist’ to a more ‘professional’ Goldziher, encompassing the true meaning of his ‘Islamicist turn’ and of the founding of *Islamwissenschaft* (i.e. his legacy, within his own life, consisted of the ‘professionalism’ his later work helped institute in Orientalist and Islamicist scholarship, while the methodological tendencies of his earlier work have only been recovered rather recently).

With this schema, one can hardly be surprised then that Conrad would render Goldziher’s intimate links to Islamicist colleagues in terms of his generous ‘collegiality’ (i.e. as one, who, essentially out of his element, nonetheless, cultivated ‘professional’ friendships with scholars who had little sympathy for or understanding of his point of view); the description of Goldziher’s relationship with Snouck is most telling in this regard: “A bitter critic of Westernization and Western influence in the Near East, he nevertheless held in very high regard such scholars as Christian Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936), who held a post in the colonial administration of the Dutch East Indies and regarded Islam as a political opponent to be disposed of on the way to the assimilation of Asia to Western civilization.”²²² Now, it is not that Conrad’s use of Goldziher’s

²²⁰ Ibid, 162-3.

²²¹ Ibid, 165.

²²² Ibid, 166-7. See also Conrad, “The Dervish’s Disciple”, 249. The Nöldeke-Goldziher friendship was Conrad’s other major example in this sense.

biography to historicize *Islamwissenschaft* in terms of ‘professionalization’—i.e. to characterize his contribution to and standing vis-à-vis the new field in this sense—is wholly bereft of insight; it is absolutely true that Goldziher, after *Mythos*, in his ‘publications of record’ in mainly German, no longer stated explicitly the *conclusions* he drew from his religio-critical methodology; i.e. that his Islamicist scholarship was working towards a purified/teleological monotheism one now had to read from the commentary and the developmental structure of his disquisitions, for it was, in this context, never again asserted as such; and that does give a subterranean, as I’ve termed it, ‘dialectical’, tendency to Goldziher’s Islamicist works (representing a sad but productive mix of caution and maturity). On the other hand, Conrad’s use of the ‘professionalism’ trope to suggest an essential discursive and methodological disconnect between Goldziher and his colleagues, that, when turned around to characterize his legacy to Arab-Islamic studies could then be positioned against Said’s collapsing of the epistemic realm and that of *praxis*, is tendentious to the extreme. It is, for instance, not only that Goldziher came to be viewed as having opened up a new field of inquiry, namely *Islamwissenschaft*, precisely because of his historicizing (and historicist), post-philological methodology; we’ve cited Becker’s memorial essay on Goldziher to this effect already a number of times;²²³ nor is it only that Goldziher himself clearly viewed and described what he called ‘the progress of *Islamwissenschaft*’ in the same way (and which was not the ‘progress of Goldziher’, but the progress of an autonomous field with its own discourse, in which he was engaged with his colleagues). It is that much of the way in which Conrad historicizes the rise of *Islamwissenschaft* in “Ignaz Goldziher on Ernst Renan” is wont to collapse before, for instance, a simple citation from the *Tagebuch*; namely, in Goldziher’s recollection of his first face-to-face meeting with Snouck at the Leiden ICO in 1883 (to which, he admitted, he’d in part decided to go as to be able, as per the young Dutch scholar’s request, to meet with him):

In the most intimate way the Congress united me with Snouck Hurgronje, who carried the whole of the gigantic train of his later achievements in his spirit. We understood almost instinctively we were to undertake joint research in the Muhammadan field; it became

²²³ Somewhat mind-bogglingly Conrad actually cites Becker memorial essay to opposite effect by referring to Becker’s comment about Goldziher’s “reverential fear of hypothesis”; but, Becker’s essay makes amply clear that he did not mean by this characterization, ‘methodological opaqueness’—the Goldziherian methodology was, after all, exactly what he was celebrating!—but rather an unwillingness on Goldziher’s part to assert generalized/provisional conclusions going beyond the evidence presented; what he was in fact complaining about was that Goldziher, while basing his work on the idea that Islam’s historical development—its becoming a mighty world religion and civilization—was altogether determined and marked by its absorption and further synthesis of the ‘Hellenistic’ civilization of Antiquity, was, all the same, not amenable to saying further, like himself, that ‘Islamic civilization’—i.e. what he called the ‘problem of Islam’—thus, for all essential purposes, represented an Arabized continuation of late Antiquity. See *ibid*, 165; Becker, *Islamstudien*, II, 508. Equally ‘surprising’—this time, in fact simply ironic—is that Conrad, who relies extensively on Róbert Simon’s characterization of Goldziher’s intellectual development and may have been influenced by his characterization of a split between the young historicist scholar vs. the later more officializing one (this elaborated, a good deal more unconvincingly than Conrad’s ‘reformist’/‘professional’ split, vis-à-vis growing Hungarian anti-Semitism, as against Goldziher’s experiences vis-à-vis the Hungarian Jewish community), takes little note of Simon’s idea that if Goldziher was forced by Hungarian developments to forgo his historicist methodology and to resign himself to writing officializing/structural/ahistorical descriptions of Islam as a ‘religion’ (acting thereby as a transition point to a long lasting decrepit incarnation of the Islamicist field in the decades to come), it was in the next generation, precisely his colleagues, Snouck and Becker who continued his historicist methodology and researches! See Simon, *Ignác Goldziher*, 126-31.

clear after detailed discussions in already the first days, that we had independently from one another developed in the course of our studies the same critical principles.²²⁴

But, the Goldziher-Snouck partnership is not the matter simply of a (still early) avowal; the evidence for it consumes the life of both scholars. An especially telling example is that when Goldziher, in his 1904 American lecture at the St. Louis World Fair “*Die Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten* (The Progress of Islamwissenschaft in the Last Thirty Years)” —covered in the last chapter at great length—came to describe the signal recent advances thus constitutive of an autonomous ‘Science of Islam’, amongst them what has thus far most concerned us: 1) the intellectual and cultural development of Islam historically vis-à-vis a critical reading of the *Hadith*, 2) the idea that Islamic law had come to function not as ‘positive law’ but an ideal to be acknowledged, 3) the crucial role of the collectivist or ‘catholic’ principle (*Ijma’*) as in fact defining (or idealizing) from the present backwards what constituted ‘Orthodox’ Islam, 4) but then also as the corollary to the first three, the breathtaking diversity of what came under the heading of ‘Islam’, speaking to the reified/accommodationist tendency of Islamic Orthodoxy and jurisprudence vis-à-vis local circumstances and practice; of these four, he, no doubt altogether generously but also indicatively, attributed the last three especially to Snouck (apparently retaining only the first part for himself).²²⁵ Just as, for that matter, Joseph Schacht, the great projected redeemer of Goldziher’s original modernist vision and methodology, was in fact a student altogether *not* of the latter but of Snouck’s.²²⁶ To put all of this in perspective, Róbert Simon was certainly right when he called Goldziher’s a ‘paradigmatic life’; for it, very much understood in light of his thinking, can provide an important prism for understanding the course of the nineteenth century and its denouement in the Great War; we will have more to say of this soon and throughout this study. But, the meaning of that biography simply was not that Goldziher was forced into the position of rendering the service, in the founding of ‘Arab-Islamic studies’, of helping (i.e. in the very ‘Age of Empire’) to ‘professionalize’ Orientalist scholarship, while his underlying modernist stance and vision, dividing him from his colleagues, was only to be recovered much later. Rather, it was exactly that modernist and Reformist vision that mediated his personal and discursive links, exchanges and arguments with his Islamicist colleagues, especially Snouck; and this, even if his notion of the proper definition/distinction of ‘religion’ (privatized faith) and ‘nationality’ (positive consciousness) as the *telos* of History was altogether ‘religious’ in motivation, while Snouck’s ‘secular’; and, even if his idea of the march there was predicated upon political and cultural autonomy (i.e. of the ‘Muslim native’), while the pacifist/colonialist Snouck saw the same, certainly for the Dutch East Indies, as the task of colonialism; so, even if *Islamwissenschaft* was from the start, in one of its incarnations anti-imperialist, in the other directly intended and

²²⁴ Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 95.

²²⁵ See Goldziher, “Die Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaften in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten”, *Gesammelte Schriften*, IV, 456-7, 460; no other scholar was featured in such an extended manner in the essay.

²²⁶ “From 1925 onward, Schacht pursued two main activities during his vacations and breaks. One was to visit Leiden as often as possible to study with the man he considered to be the greatest expert in Islamic Studies in Europe, Christian Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936). The other was to spend as much time as he could in the Middle East and North Africa.” Wakin, Jeanette, “Remembering Joseph Schacht (1902-1969)”. ILSP, Harvard Law School, Occasional Publications 4 (2003), 3. Or see for that matter the Schacht’s manifestly reverential introduction with Bousquet to *Selected Works of Snouck C. Hurgronje*, V-XXI, part of the reason for whose publication was said to be to “pay homage to the master”.

applied for the purposes of *Kolonialpolitik*; and finally, even if that is not convenient for the image contemporary scions of the Islamicist tradition would like to propagate about it.

Conclusion

What we today call the Science of Islam (*Islamwissenschaft*) is the work of Goldziher and Snouck Hurgronje...the evermore powerfully developing **Islamic Studies** (*Islamkunde*), as its own discipline, is and remains the creation of the two friends Goldziher and Snouck Hurgronje...what is decisive [in this regard] is the **mode of questioning** introduced by him [Goldziher] and Snouck Hurgronje. Islam as its own unified cultural whole must be understood from within itself, from its religiously characterized points of departure. Only to those, who have grasped the central meaning of the *Fiqh* [Islamic Jurisprudence] and of Mysticism, is the path open to an understanding of the Islamic World in the Medieval period and in the present. Indeed, exactly this last is important. Islam is today still something endlessly alive, changeable and has been this always. In order to understand that, it was necessary to intercept the laws of becoming from scholasticism and to discover live development where inflexible dogma and unchanging form seemed the given. It was first with this discovery that *Islamkunde* was born as its own discipline. From here the whole scholarly circle (*Kulturkreis*) received its light, while even such outstanding works like those of E. G. Browne brought home to us Persian Islam, but then only the Persian. Without the connection with Goldziher and Snouck Hurgronje there would never have arisen, from such, a discipline in its own right.

*C. H. Becker, in his memorial for Ignaz Goldziher, 1922*¹

1.

We can date the rise of *Islamwissenschaft* in the broader European Orientalist scholarship of the nineteenth-century in a number of ways. Reference for this purpose is often made to the Gold Medal awarded to Goldziher for his work, at the VIII International Congress of Orientalists in Stockholm (1889), by (the president of the Congress) King Oscar II himself. There is the seminal lecture, for the discipline, delivered by Goldziher at the St. Louis World Fair's Congress of Arts and Sciences in 1904, entitled "The Progress of *Islam-Wissenschaft* in the Last Thirty Years". Here Goldziher laid out the radical methodological cum discursive transformations *and* new documentary sources that had over the last three decades produced an essentially autonomous new field of inquiry—that would give us a date three-quarters into the nineteenth

¹ C. H. Becker, "Ignaz Goldziher" in *Islamstudien; Vom Werden und Wesen der Islamischen Welt, II*, 499-500. The reader might have noted that I translate '*Islamwissenschaft*' as the 'Science of Islam', and '*Islamkunde*' as 'Islamic Studies'. This is only partly because an attempt has been made—we will investigate and analyze it in due course—to make a substantive distinction between *Islamwissenschaft* and *Islamkunde*. Mainly, it is to stress the German tradition which continued for long to have a more generous conception of 'science'. Here then, one would for instance be completely right to compare and contrast *Islamwissenschaft* (the 'Science of Islam') with its earlier counterpart in the nineteenth century, *Wissenschaft des Judentums* (the 'Science of Judaism'). We will in fact see Ignaz Goldziher move from the one to create the other.

century.² I have now said a great deal about this paper. Alternatively, one could point to the formal decision, at the VI ICO in Leiden (1883), to designate what had until now been known as the ‘Modern Semitic’ sub-section of the ‘Semitic’ field—if that is anyone even took the trouble to make such a demarcation—as instead ‘Arabic and the Literature of Islam’, or as it came to be informally dubbed by its participants, the ‘Muhammadan’ sub-section. Eventually, it would become a separate section of its own.³ Whichever method we use, however, we will find Goldziher at the center of it: he was acknowledged by colleagues in the first instance, he himself conceptualized and periodized *Islamwissenschaft* as a discipline in the second, and, tellingly, the 1883 Leiden ICO was the first he ever attended and the one by which his scholarly isolation ended and he became a driving force in the Orientalist scholarship of his time.

I began this study by seeking to illuminate the pivotal role of the ‘science of religion’ tradition in nineteenth-century European scholarship. I argued that this tradition made possible the historicist idealization of religious traditions and by the introduction of critical historical methodologies, the ‘science of religion’ became a competitive space in which scholars projected ‘purified’ humanist, Christian and Jewish ends as the ultimate telos of History. The fundamental thesis of the study has been that *Islamwissenschaft* emerged in Goldziher’s scholarship precisely as such a ‘science of religion’. Namely, Goldziher’s scholarship aimed at the reformist reconstruction and idealization of the Islamic heritage. In his Islamicist work, ‘Islam’ competitively joined ‘Christianity’ and ‘Judaism’ as meant providentially, by a historicist teleology that is, to be ‘religion’, the universal faith of humanity. In this conclusion, I will not say more on the rise of *Islamwissenschaft* as a ‘science of religion’. Rather, I will pivot to argue, as the third part of the study increasingly emphasized, that Goldziher’s Islamicist scholarship should not be viewed in a vacuum, as ‘exceptional’ or some manner of *deus ex machina*. Goldziher must be understood within the complex of the Islamicist field he founded and his ‘uniqueness’ sought and explained in these terms. By explicitly placing Goldziher in this context, this conclusion will thus set the ground for forthcoming work which will track the development of the Islamicist field as a whole in its first generations, namely, into the so-called Jihad debate that split the discipline during WWI.⁴

Here, I will begin first by suggesting some landmarks in the institutionalization of Islamicist field in its first decades. But, my primary focus will be on the yin-yang relationship between Goldziher and the other ‘founder’ of *Islamwissenschaft* highlighted by Becker in In Memoriam cited above, namely, Snouck. As we’ve seen, Goldziher translated or ‘converted’ his critical religio-scholarly program for Jewish reform to the Islamic heritage. This program moved decisively against the dominant philological framework within nineteenth century European scholarship. *Pace* Said, Goldziher’s scholarship and the advent of Islamicist discourse involved

² See Goldziher, “Die Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten” in *Gesammelte Schriften* IV, 443-469.

³ See *Actes du Sixième Congrès International des Orientalistes, Première Partie* (Leiden, 1884), 23. See for this common designation, Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 94-5. The change is altogether clear by the XII IOC in Rome (1899), where the separate section is dubbed ‘The Muslim World’. See *Actes du Douzième Congrès des Orientalistes, Rome 1899, Tome Première* (Florence, 1901), XXX. Cf. Said, *Orientalism*, 261-2. Said takes Robert Needham Cust’s review of the achievements of the first ten ICO’s at the eleventh in Paris (1897) as the basis of his brief mention of the Congresses. Cust tellingly refers to the ‘Semitic-Islamic’ sub-section as the ‘Modern Semitic’ and denigrates it as altogether backward. Said simply accepts Cust’s depreciation of the work of the ‘Modern Semitic’ section at face-value, while at the same time engaging in a critique of this same frame. He does not consider that Cust was in fact unhappy with the Islamicist turn. He himself was an active missionary.

⁴ See the beginning of Part III for a preview of the character and dynamics of this debate.

a radical displacement of the Semitic/Aryan distinction in favor of another dichotomy, the historicist one between Medieval and Modern. At the heart of the distinction Goldziher made between the Medieval and Modern was a reformist critique of Islamic law, carried over from that of Jewish law, which focused on the alleged gap between its theory and praxis. Islamic law was said to have come to function in Muslim societies as an ideological corpus and vocabulary and not as positive law. Large areas of Islamic law, in other words, were not practiced. Rather, as an abstract ideal, mostly honored in the breach, this law masked social and cultural developments: it functioned as an ideological language for rationalizing them. Modernist reform meant the critico-historicist rescue of the social and cultural for the positive realm of the nation. It meant the equal critico-historicist demarcation of 'religion' for the personal and devotional. It was thus ultimately the religious and devotional act of bringing 'religion' into its proper sphere, projected as the truly universal one, and creation thereby of a 'purified monotheism' that drove Goldziher's scholarship. But, Goldziher's scholarly partner, Snouck, shared this imperative on the privatization of Islamic law, but from the standpoint of a convinced secularist.

If Goldziher and Snouck shared much of the same modernist and reformist Islamicist discourse, though from distinct religious and secularist perspectives, they also diverged radically in the political and cultural implications they drew from it for the Europeans and Muslims of their day. For Goldziher, the reformist change he envisioned could only come through a cultural transformation from inside Muslim societies. Hence, he was a convinced anti-imperialist and viewed Muslim political autonomy as a pre-requisite of the move towards, respectively, cultural autonomy and religious idealism. On the other hand, Snouck, a Dutch colonial administrator as much as an Orientalist, turned *Islamwissenschaft's* reformist discourse to the purposes of *Kolonialpolitik*. And, he transformed the discipline thereby into the 'policy science' it has remained since. According to Snouck, the colonial state had to understand the difference between theory and behavior if it was going to make the right policy decisions, i.e. if it was going to make the right alliances on the ground. But such understanding betokened the much broader task entrusted to it, the modernizing one of acting as a barrier to the politically opportunistic use of the Islamic ideal, to enable a positive consciousness within its subjects.

If Goldziher's and Snouck's post-philological Islamicist discourse, deployed for divergent anti-imperialist and imperialist ends, serves to explode many contemporary misconceptions about the history and dynamics of early *Islamwissenschaft* and Orientalist scholarship at the turn of the twentieth century, so does the very different paradigms of scholarly methodology for which each became exemplary in the field. Goldziher worked predominantly through the critical historical placement of texts, Snouck through participant observation of extant Muslim societies. Hence, we will come, in this Conclusion, to review the Goldziher-Snouck relationship as paradigmatic of the history of the Islamicist discipline that must yet be written. The two shared a modernist, reformist, subjectifying standpoint and discourse, but one saw 'reform' as inherently internally driven, the other as benefiting from external correction. One deployed *Islamwissenschaft's* modernist discourse from an anti-imperialist standpoint, the other for the purposes of *Kolonialpolitik*. One focused on the critical historicization of textual canons to chart their formation and necessary idealization, the other on the participation observation of Muslim practice to chart its opportunistic deviations from 'Islam' as ideology. I will end by suggesting the different universe of research on Islamicist scholarship review of this paradigmatic relationship can lead us.

An institutional history of German Orientalism, it has been claimed, would show that *Islamwissenschaft* was something of a phantom discipline. It mostly did not exist.⁵ Namely, if one started counting university chairs in the discipline in the early twentieth century, one would return mostly empty handed. Certainly, the very founders of the discipline, Goldziher and Snouck, never had chairs in *Islamwissenschaft*. Martin Hartmann in Germany who was the great early advocate of the field there never achieved a chair and the first such went to C. H. Becker in 1907-8 and that at the Hamburg *Kolonialinstitut*. But, counting chairs is not necessarily the best method for tracking the institutional development of a new discipline. There are more sensitive measures.

One crucial such measure is the gradual development of an independent Islamic section at the Orientalist Congresses. This process began in the last two decades of the nineteenth century and was all but completed by the end of the first decade of the twentieth. This means of tracking institutional development is clearly more time-sensitive, since it is dependent on the self-identification of scholars, rather than the case of university chairs, where one must convince everyone else and society at large, a process that, depending on the historical context, can take a very long time. I will all too briefly point to this development at the ICO's. I look here at the gradual establishment and designation of an 'Islam' or 'Muslim' as opposed to merely 'Semitic' section in the ICO's. This change or in fact expansion, since it resulted from the division of the Semitic section, reflected a gradual and complex process of transformation in the categorical conceptualization and organization of the Congresses.

In the original 1873 Paris Congress, there was an Assyriology section (cuneiform inscriptions, Assyrian, Babylonian, Nineveh, Susa), a Semitic archaeology section and a Semitic Studies section (Phoenician, Hebrew, Aramaic, Syriac, Arabic). The organization of the Congress was predominantly ethno-philological: Buddhist studies was sandwiched between Indian and Dravidian studies respectively notwithstanding the focus of the Congress on Japan and China. In fact, atypically for the Congresses to follow, East Asia (China to an extent, but especially Japan) was here the center of attention: the first five days of the Congress were to be spent on these topics, the next five on all the rest. 'Arabic' was of only scant concern in the proceedings of the Congress, and what there was of it had mostly to do with pre-Islamic Arabia (the Himyarite kingdom of Yemen) and Arab science as a Medieval conduit. There was no sense whatsoever of 'Islam' as a subject worthy of study. In fact, the word was barely mentioned.⁶ I have already mentioned, in Part II, that the British Congresses (London, 1874, 1892) stayed the longest with the ethno-philological frame and that the first ICO in London was virtually unique in the history of the Congresses in the reductionist frame it adopted in this regard. Its categories again were: 1) the Semitic Section, 2) The Turanian Section (that is, all non-Aryan, non-Semitic languages/peoples of Asia and Europe, including Chinese...), 3) The Aryan section, 4) The Hamitic section, 5) The Archaeological section, 6) The Ethnological section.

In the Third ICO in St. Petersburg (1876), by contrast, the organization was predominantly geographical cum political. The first four sections comprised 'Asiatic Russia': 1) Siberia—West and East, 2) Central Asia within Russian borders, 3) Caucasus—including Crimea and other European territories of Russia with 'Asiatic populations', 4) Trans-caucasus—Georgia and Ancient Armenia. The next three were: 5) Oriental Turkestan, Tibet, Mongolia and Manchuria, Korea, China, Japan, 6) India on the two sides of the Ganges, Afghanistan, Persia

⁵ See for instance, Ursula Woköck, *German Orientalism: the Study of the Middle-East and Islam from 1800 to 1945* (London, 2009).

⁶ See *Congrès International des Orientalistes*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1874-6).

and the Indo-Chinese Archipelago, 7) Turkey as comprising Arabia and Egypt.⁷ The subsequent Congresses generally combined these two frameworks, sometimes rather awkwardly: the ethno-philological lens comprised most often the core, the geographical cum political what could not easily be housed elsewhere. Outside the St. Petersburg ICO, however, the Semitic section was a staple of the Congresses and its development thus especially telling. In the fifth ICO in Berlin (1881), it was described as consisting of Ancient Semitic, Cuneiform studies and Modern Semitic.⁸

In the sixth ICO in Leiden (1883), however, a signal division had already developed: the Semitic section was broken up into two sections, that of Semitic A. Arabic and the literatures of Islam and Semitic B. other Semitic languages (Cuneiform texts and documents). This was the first Congress attended by Goldziher who would become a regular participant thereafter: here, he presented a chapter from his new book on the Zahirites. By this point, Arabic had become a matter of serious philological concern in the Congresses, and the study of topics in ‘Islamic history’ was beginning to come into its own.⁹ Already, as is clear from Goldziher’s diary and other correspondence, those inside the Semitic A. subsection referred to themselves as the ‘Muhammadan’ section. The Leiden classification, namely, division of the Semitic section, was continued for some time thereafter; we find it virtually unchanged at the eighth ICO in Stockholm (1889); this is where Goldziher (and Nöldeke) received the Gold Medal for their work from the general Congress. Arab-Islamic studies was quite clearly the focus of the Congress at large, and, as noted, the birth of *Islamwissenschaft* is often, not surprisingly, dated back to this symbolic triumph.¹⁰

By the twelfth ICO in Rome (1899), ten years later, there was a further clear break: one Semitic section divided into 1) Semitic Languages in General and 2) Assyriology, and a completely separate section designated ‘The Muslim World’.¹¹ At the thirteenth ICO in Hamburg, one section was given to ‘General Semitology’, another to ‘Islam’. Finally, at the fourteenth ICO in Algiers (1905), we have one section devoted to ‘Semitic languages’ and another to ‘Muslim languages (Arabic, Persian, Turkish)’.¹² There is also an altogether separate section for ‘Muslim Art’. Clearly, by this point, the ‘ethno-philological’ frame was no longer merely juxtaposed with the ‘geographical cum political’ but had been instead synthesized with it. In other words, Islamic studies was conducted in the historical space opened up by ‘Islam’, a space in which peoples and languages from different ethno-philological groupings, speaking Arabic, Persian or Turkish, had nonetheless, through historical and cultural processes, constituted an Islamic history.

The shift in the categories of the ICO’s is a decisive means, but hardly the only one, of tracking the institutional development of *Islamwissenschaft*. I have already spoken in the second part of this study of how the replacement of the philological in favor of the Islamicist frame can be located in the *Festschriften* produced from the second half of the nineteenth to the middle of the twentieth century. I pointed to a progression in this regard from the *Festschrift* prepared for Fleischer, which was virtually wholly philological in orientation, to the one for Nöldeke, in

⁷ See *Travaux de la Troisième Session de Congrès International des Orientalistes, St. Pétersburg, 1876*, 2 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1879). The first volume was in Russian, the second in French and English.

⁸ See *Verhandlungen des fünften Internationalen Orientalisten-Congresses*, 2 vols. (Berlin, 1881-2).

⁹ See *Actes du Sixième Congrès International des Orientalistes*, 4 vols. (Leiden, 1884-5).

¹⁰ See *Actes du Huitième Congrès International des Orientalistes*, 2 vols. (Leiden, 1891-3).

¹¹ See *Actes du Douzième Congrès des Orientalistes, Rome 1899*, 3 vols. (Florence, 1901-2).

¹² See *Actes du XIVe Congrès des Orientalistes, Alger 1905*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1906-8).

which the burgeoning Islamicist and established Semiticist field shared the same forum. While those produced for Goldziher, moving increasingly in the Islamicist direction during the one in his lifetime, were virtually emptied of philological moorings in the memorial volumes devoted to him after his death. But, there are still other ways of tracking the early institutional consolidation of *Islamwissenschaft*. There was the great project of organizing and realizing the first *Encyclopedia of Islam*. Here too it was Goldziher that became the great advocate of the undertaking and its first official director, though the task of actually organizing it and the public relations required, not least to sell it to governments in terms of imperial responsibility, soon led him to entrust it in Dutch hands, where in any case the work was to be published.¹³ Finally, one can

¹³ Here, I will simply speak of Goldziher's relationship to the project and leave the important story of the project itself to another occasion. 'Imperial responsibility' and expertise was certainly one way Islamicists tried to sell their new discipline to the European public at large. Hence, in a brief 1897 report in the *Österreichische Monatsschrift für den Orient*, entitled "Real-Encyclopädie des Islam", Goldziher apprised the Austrian public of the decision of the XI International Congress of Orientalists (IOC) in Paris that same year to back the "Muhammadan Section's" project of a collaborative Encyclopedia of Islam and its formation of a permanent committee, made up of a representative scholar each from nine European countries, for the establishment of the necessary parameters and funds. Having been chosen the director of the committee, Goldziher here pleaded the desperate need of not only scholars, but especially the public at large, for such a work that might take stock of the great progress in knowledge, understanding and methodology since the last such comparable compilation, d'Herbelot's *Bibliothèque Orientale*, published in 1695, which though clearly reflecting the altogether immaturity of the Orientalism of its time and by now altogether unreliable and outdated, was still being used in the literature of the day as a reference. And, he stressed, in selling it, that it would not only be a collaborative international project serving "scientific" interests, but very much "practical" ones as well. Namely, it would "in comprehensive articles, provide exact information on the present state, on the institutions, cultural conditions, administration, statistics and so on of those Muhammadan peoples under the government of European states, and restrict itself not to the *past* of Islam, but apply itself in outstanding fashion also to its *present*." Interestingly, noting here that a great number of competent scholars had already proclaimed themselves ready to participate, Goldziher added with telling ambiguity, "amongst them Orientalists living in the Orient itself". In concluding, he highlighted that the committee in question was responsible not only for the literary direction of the undertaking but also for procuring the necessary funds and relayed the committee's conviction that the requisite financial support had to come not only from the public and scientific bodies but also from European governments, namely, those with Muslim subjects. The officials of such states would of course especially benefit from the Encyclopedia as a "reliable source of information on historical and actual conditions and facts." See Goldziher, "Real-Encyclopädie des Islam", *Gesammelte Schriften IV*, 130-32. No doubt, Goldziher's distaste for such publicity work and the lines of thought it enjoined played its part, though loss of time for his own scholarship has to be thought paramount, in his decision to relinquish his directorship of the committee to the Dutch scholar Martijn Theodoor Houtsma (1851-1943), who was to be thereafter the major editor to bring the project to completion. Hence, in the XII IOC in Rome (1899), in a report to his section, 'The Muslim World', of which he'd been elected one of the presidents, Goldziher reiterated once more to his colleague the absolute necessity of the Encyclopedia project for the discipline to make available and anchor its knowledge within the public at large and garner its support, now minus any 'imperial responsibility' clauses. But, he announced simultaneously his decision to forgo the honor accorded him of directing the project and the hand-over of the same to Houtsma, citing besides the weight of his professional duties, his great distance from the place of publication, Leiden, and the difficulties accordingly of carrying out the required massive correspondence with colleagues. See *Actes du Douzième Congrès des Orientalistes, Rome 1899, Tome Première*, CLXXVIII-CLXXXII. As for his scorn for this kind of public relations, even in the First World War, and though showing himself no less an effusive patriot than most other European academics, when he was now regularly and queried by journalists and officials for his comments on the prospects of the new relations with the Ottoman allies and of Islam in the present, he resolved not altogether successfully against the pressure to stay away from this "publicitary swindle". Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 290. He was not opposed to a broad-based public engagement with Oriental matters, states. But, he thought it had to be 'scientifically' prepared and led, as he remarked had happened in Germany. In Hungary, he fumed, the idea had before been laughed at. Now, it was all being improvised, without plan or system fruitlessly as part of the war fever and propaganda. He took note with satisfaction of the fact that a good deal of the German Islam-publicity cited his Islam-friendly scholarship, and this essentially captures his moderately less irked disposition towards it. In other

point to the emergence of the so-called ‘Islam-journals’ in the decade before WWI: first, *Revue du Monde Musulman* (1906), then Becker’s *Der Islam* (1910), then *The Moslem World* (), then the Russian *Mir Islama* (1912) and then *Die Welt des Islams* (1913), the organ of the newly founded *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Islamkunde*. The phenomenon was well-noted at the time, and Georg Kampffmeyer (1864-1936) opened the pages of *Die Welt des Islams* by reviewing the development and pointing to what he took to be its larger meaning of a new discipline committed to engagement in the affairs of society.¹⁴ To conclude this brief review of the early institutional consolidation of the Islamicist discipline, I will simply observe that, in certain historical matters, a retrospective standpoint is the opposite of misleading. The triumph of the Islamicist framework can be gauged from the fact that it was ultimately definitively institutionalized and came to form the fundamental prism through which the histories of the Middle-East and North-Africa have since been understood. In the present as well, when we teach our students the survey ‘Introduction to Middle-Eastern History’, what we teach is still the history of the Middle-East from the rise of Islam to the present.

3.

I have repeatedly referred to *Islamwissenschaft* in this study as a historicist, reformist, modernist, subjectifying discourse and *praxis*. My focus, in elucidating these adjectives, has been of course on what they serve to illuminate about Goldziher’s pioneering Islamicist scholarship. But, though in an often diametrically opposed sense, these adjectives apply equally to Snouck as if he and Goldziher formed two sides of the same coin. I have already noted that, already in their lifetimes, both were acknowledged as co-founders of the new Islamicist discipline.¹⁵ Goldziher, as we have seen, emerged out of the reformist Jewish tradition of Geiger, as carried forward by Steinthal. He was, in these terms, a ‘scientific’ adherent and, increasingly quietly, a scientific apostle of ‘Prophetic Monotheism’, as forming, when critically purified and personalized, the providential faith of humankind. And, he remained to the end of his days intensely devoted to what his scholarship recovered and projected as the ideal high-point of the Jewish tradition: the ‘Messianic Judaism’, i.e. universalist monotheism, of the Jewish prophets. The rampant anti-Semitism in the Hungarian public and academy tragically shaped his

words, his reaction was partly a matter of ideological coherence, but partly his still altogether checkered relations with the Hungarian public. Having been shown by a student an article in a Hungarian newspaper, whose war-correspondent, in an interview with the rector of the newly-established university in Istanbul, Ahmed Salah al-din, had been told by the latter that there was only one professor they dreamed of recruiting, ““your great countryman, Ignaz Goldziher, the best expositor of the spirit of Islam””; he commented sardonically that through the detour of Constantinople he would finally also be discovered in Hungary; *Ibid*, 289. See also *ibid*, 283-4, 288-92.

¹⁴ See Kampffmeyer, G., “Plane Perspicere”, *Die Welt des Islams* 1 (1913): pp. 1-6

¹⁵ For this claim, I would return the reader to C. H. Becker’s breath-takingly glowing memorial of Goldziher (1850-1921)—i.e. the sample which opened this chapter—published originally in his journal, *Der Islam*; see *ibid*, 499-513, esp. 499-503. Becker wrote a number of such memorials of the Arabists and Islamicists of his time for his journal—so, for instance, also those of Theodor Nöldeke (1836-1930), Julius Wellhausen (1844-1918) and Martin Hartmann (1851-1919)—which remain of immense importance for an understanding of the development of *Islamwissenschaft* from a ‘disciplinary’ perspective. This is so not only because Becker was the greatest German Islamicist of his generation and so can provide us with the requisite contemporary self-perception of the new field as to its direction and history. But, because Becker was quite consciously a synthesizer and a synthesizer of the Goldziher-Snouck tradition as foundational of *Islamwissenschaft*. It is arguable that he, more successfully than any other scholar, assumed the ‘voice of the field’ and wrote for it in the years before WWI. In fact, it was his abilities in this direction that groomed him for his later position as the Prussian Minister of Culture in Weimar. The just mentioned memorial essays can be found as a collection in *ibid*, 450-522.

life. As well as becoming materially dependent on, his reformist scholarship and agitation also put him at cataclysmic odds with, the Hungarian Jewish community; this, to the point that he came to view his double mission (the Hungarian national and the Jewish reformist) as his ‘martyrdom’, which he accordingly refused, despite eventually incessant opportunities of the most stately variety, to abandon. It was ironically a martyrdom and struggle, which was only sustained through the timely great friendship, support, and championing of Orientalist colleagues abroad, namely, future fellow Islamicists like Snouck.

Goldziher’s as much ‘conversion’ to, as constitution of, *Islamwissenschaft* in the 1880’s, consecrated first fully as the ‘martyrdom’ in his *Tagebuch*’s review of the first forty years of his life in 1890, I have demonstrated as a bid to continue his reformist program, from out of the Judaic, in a now Islamicist context and as applied to the Islamic heritage. Goldziher was, very much within his own lifetime, taken as the reigning intellectual spirit behind *Islamwissenschaft*. What’s more, he was beloved and revered not only by fellow European Islamicists but also by many reformist Muslim scholars of his time. Over the course of the twentieth century, however, with changed religio-cultural circumstances, his reputation receded amongst the latter. But, it plummeted to something of a low amongst Orientalists in the 1980’s after the posthumous publication of his fulminating, no holds barred *Tagebuch* ‘martyriology’ and his brash and, in its own way, equally self-crowning *Oriental Diary* from his study trip as a young scholar to the Near East in 1873-4. By contrast, over the last twenty years and very much in line with the contours and needs of the ‘Orientalism’ debates, he has been rehabilitated. He is again not only touted as the undisputed founder of ‘Islamic Studies’ but has come, in an interesting manner, to be viewed on both ‘sides’ in the debate and in rather *deus ex machina* terms as an exceptional, even heroic figure.

On the other side of the equation, we have a seemingly very different kind of figure and scholar, Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, or as he was universally known amongst colleagues, Snouck. Snouck was heir to the long tradition of Dutch Orientalism—especially at the University of Leiden, from Thomas Erpenius (1584-1624) and Jakob Golius (1596-1667) to Reinhart Dozy (1820-1883) and Michael Jan de Goeje (1836-1909)—that was, on Arabic and Islamic subject matters, considered as storied and stellar as any in Europe. The Dutch quite consciously cultivated this image. Still remarkable about Snouck is that he came, through the course of his career, to amass a string of monikers that ring today altogether paradoxical when embodied in the same person. He was known as an ‘exacting scholar’, an ‘intellectual and disciplinary innovator’, a ‘fearsome polemicist’, a ‘self-possessed, adept incognito participant-observer and researcher’, a ‘savvy organizer and administrator’, an ‘ardent Dutch nationalist’, a ‘Dutch colonialist and colonist’, ‘an expert counselor to the colonial government in the process of native subjugation’, a ‘fearless colonial agent’, an ‘independent and implacable policy analyst and advisor’, a ‘social democrat and egalitarian’, a ‘champion of native education and thereby equality’, a ‘pacifist’. It is a heady composite, and its ‘fantastical’ or ‘utopian’ aspects, as some saw it, was not lost on those who found themselves on Snouck’s wrong side.

Certainly, it is true that history since has come and still continues to run as like a mirror and trial of the ‘contradictions’ in the synthesis struck by Snouck, but that actually goes to show these ‘contradictions’ were themselves historical. How was a ‘colonialist’ and counselor in native subjugation also a ‘pacifist’? How was a ‘social democrat’, a believer in ‘native equality’, even miscegenation, also a face of the nationalist imperatives of Dutch imperialism? They were the contradictions that first manifested themselves in fullest light in the First World War. But, by the same token, the above ‘synthesis’, carved out of Snouck’s life, career, scholarship,

demonstrates how much he had been, alongside the other Islamicists of roughly the same generation, Goldziher and Martin Hartmann, a creature of the nineteenth century. Namely, what underlay the above composite persona, what made it possible and whole, was a universalist historicism,¹⁶ progressivism, even utopianism, a self-sure, practical idealism: that was what made the always definitive collaboration of Snouck and Goldziher, despite their systematic and premonitory differences, possible.

4.

One can certainly tell an ‘origin’ story about the rise of *Islamwissenschaft* in terms of these yin-yang differences between Snouck and Goldziher. The stories in the first generations of Islamicists themselves did so. There were even polar differences between the two in matters of style and temperament. But, much more, the respective teleological, methodological and practical perspectives and attitudes each tended to and became known for must be understood as articulations of two sides of the same discursive—disciplinary—matrix. These were two sides that suggested the contours of the field, its possibilities for further development as well as for divergence and dispersion. In terms of temperament, Goldziher was always, as a scholar, a very charming interlocutor. In his youth, he allowed the private brashness that underlay this to come out in his scholarly work of record, meant for an international audience, in the form of bold statements and judgments setting forth the broader reformist aims and purposes of his critical endeavors. After the crushing defeats and setbacks in the second half of his twenties, however, the brash self-idealization gave way, on the inside, to martyriological struggle. And, on the outside, Goldziher became, as a scholar, the very picture of collegiality and caution; so much so, that his broader designs now had to be read out of the immanent, ‘dialectical’ structure, disposition and commentary of his texts. This was the Goldziher his Islamicist colleagues came to know: the one who had literally to be goaded into publication by them, the one they helped fashion, save and revered. In a word, Goldziher’s enmities were always personal (i.e. mostly Jewish), never professional. Snouck, on the other hand, was the opposite: his enmities were always professional, never personal. His capacity for caustic wit and asperity in print, with respect to even colleagues who were ‘friends’ or ‘allies’ was notorious in the field. The Jihad episode with Becker was no exception but a further instantiation of this rule. Snouck tellingly elaborated some of his most important work in—sometimes savage—polemical formats. And, his students fondly recalled his regal bearing, stature and impatience. In his reverential memorial to Goldziher, too, Snouck lightly faulted his scholarly partner for his over-generosity and over-magnanimity vis-à-vis colleagues.¹⁷

This divergence in personal orientation, however, was again only the beginning. So, on the question of the underlying motivations of the work of the two scholars, the *telos* out of which each thought, the critical historicist imperative, in both, was clearly driven by and drove at the privatization and personalization of ‘religion’, thus-defined. But, Snouck’s reason for championing this end was primarily political, that of a secularist and positivist nationalism.

¹⁶ I use ‘historicism’ in a loose sense to identify the broad nineteenth century tendency to believe in a universal History moving towards a *telos*, whether positivistically or idealistically rendered.

¹⁷ Snouck published his In Memoriam of Goldziher in *De Gids* in 1921; it can be found in his collection of papers: Snouck Hurgronje, “Ignaz Goldziher” in *Verspreide Geschriften, Vol VI* (Bonn & Leipzig, 1924), 455-63. The text is in Dutch; relevant passages are translated and discussed in P. Sj. Van Koningsveld (ed.), *Scholarship and Friendship in Early Islamwissenschaft; The Letters of C. Snouck Hurgronje to Ignaz Goldziher* (Leiden, 1985), XIII-XIV; and J. D. J. Waardenburg, *L’Islam dans le Miroir de l’Occident* (’S-Gravenhage, 1961), 16.

Goldziher's, on the other hand, was primarily religious, that of the 'scientific' *cum* providential purification and thematization of the properly 'religious'—universal and devotional—sphere as demarcated from the public one belonging to nationality. This division between a secularist, political reasoning and imperative as against a religious, internalist one would become eventually an especially trenchant one in the field.

In the first two generations of *Islamwissenschaft*, which form the focus of this study, the division revolved about the relationship between Islam and modernization. In the concrete, it often manifested itself in terms of a decision as to the relative significance of the then gathering movements of Islamic modernism: the pressing question here was the requisite modernization of the Muslim world: how was one to judge the role of the Muslims themselves in this process? The secularists were wont to point to the ongoing social and political changes engulfing Muslim societies as the real and proper engine of modernist cultural transformation, to which contemporary, traditional Islam as an essentially 'Medieval reality' would simply have to acclimate itself or be forced to do so. 'Islamic Reform' was thus a subsidiary phenomenon: 'Islam' as a public discourse had to be exposed as having been always false and jettisoned: the secularist standpoint was prone, as secularists, whether European or native, have been in general, to the essentialization of religion. On the other side was the standpoint which, acknowledging 'Islam' as the still privileged language of cultural self-understanding in Muslim societies, looked to religious reform, namely, the then ascendant movements of Islamic Reform, as signaling a key process, however as yet inadequately critical, in the 'internalization' of Modernity. The 'internalist' focus on religious change suggested cultural modernization to be a necessarily indigenous dynamic.¹⁸ Snouck stressed as the modernist, reformist mechanism the political forces penetrating Muslim societies from the outside. Goldziher believed that true reform and modernization could only come through the critical historicization and purification of the Islamic tradition, which had such idealization as its telos and bore the larger message for History and humanity of purified monotheism.

This 'teleological' distinction between Snouck and Goldziher, of the secularist/political vs. the religious/internalist, crucial as we must in retrospect view it to the discourse of *Islamwissenschaft* and its understanding, was, however, little explicitly theorized within the field itself in the first Islamicist generations. In fact, at this time, it saw the full light of day only as part of the Jihad polemics of Snouck and Becker in WWI. By contrast, the field made a paradigmatic memory of another projected difference between Goldziher and Snouck, a 'methodological' one or, put more appositely, one as between the divergent *modus operandi* for

¹⁸ What I've called here the secularist/political vs. internalist/religious divide would eventually, bursting through the earlier, common problematic of modernization, become a much larger one in the field. What now, in the later phase, could bring the sides together was the idea that Islam had some 'essence', whether historical (in a negative, reactionary sense as inherently 'medieval') or phenomenological and existential (in a positive, experiential one). This divide, for instance, was the basic one that structured J. D. J. Waardenburg's review of arguably *the* five major figures in the field in terms of distinct Islamicist paths forged—Goldziher, Snouck, Becker, D. B. Macdonald and Louis Massignon—in his *L'Islam dans le Miroir de l'Occident* ('S-Gravenhage, 1961). Waardenburg championed the 'internalist' standpoint through Massignon, this now meaning 'the phenomenological search for the essence of Islam as a unitary experience', against the critical historicist or missionary pre-occupations of the earlier period. This 'internalist essentialism' is the key to understanding the title of the text. Meanwhile, Marshall Hodgson's posthumously arranged and published three volume compendium, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization* (Chicago, 1974), still in some ways the 'last word', can be seen, as the title here too suggests, as a sustained attempt at the synthesis of the two sides of this later version of the divide. In other words, the essentialist attitude to Islam was not the theologocentric legacy of the Islamicist past: it represented a shift in the twentieth century, both in positive and derogatory uses of the idea of 'essence'.

which they respectively became known. This difference was, namely, not an either/or: it testified instead to the fundamental nature of their ‘partnership’, the way in which the working methodology associated with each called for that of the other as mutually constitutive necessary halves of one disciplinary project. Goldziher’s reputation in the field was as that of the pre-eminent and inimitable textual researcher: he literally bewildered his colleagues with the textual scope and depth of his monographs and essays. And, he drew on the range of genres and vast textual sources in the Islamic and Arab literary traditions with purpose. By locating the diverse and divergent religious, cultural and political tendencies and movements for which they served as *historical* evidence, he wrote an intellectual history tracking the development of the Islamic heritage, its canonical formation and ongoing ‘Islamic Orthodoxy’ as a long and dynamic process with an as yet further crucial reformist aftermath to come. Snouck’s pivotal standing in the field, by contrast, was as that of the awe-inspiring, born participant-observer and ethnographer, with the uncanny capacity to live literally—incognito—the lives of the subjects he simultaneously studied. What Snouck thus did was to observe and research how the whole Islamic canon of theories, practices and institutions unearthed in Goldziher’s ‘textual’ histories actually *functioned* when viewed on the ground in distinct, ‘living’ contemporary Muslim societies and milieus.

The two works of Goldziher’s and Snouck’s that respectively made their monumental reputations, sustained them long after and are in turn to be viewed as the founding public documents of *Islamwissenschaft* are perfectly demonstrative of these equal parts distinct and complementary research regimens of the two authors. The two volumes of Goldziher’s *Muhammedanische Studien* published in 1888-9—Becker reported the consensus in characterizing them in his Memorial as “epoch-making”¹⁹—described the broader parameters of Islamicist history under their three headings. In the first, Goldziher elaborated the emergence of Islam in the Arabian peninsula as a response to and reaction against ‘Arab’ tribal traditions and analyzed the vicissitudes of its connections thereafter with Arab nationality. Second, most famously, he worked to historicize the *Hadith* literature, the body of sayings and usages attributed to the prophet Muhammad, strictly regulated by chains of *bona fides* and of crucial weight in the Islamic heritage. This literature, even the ‘critically’ amassed authoritative collections, he argued, embodied in fact the contentious historical process whereby ‘Islam’ had come in the early centuries, under the cloak of the prophet, to ingest, synthesize and press further the panoply of the Near Eastern civilization it had swallowed, and of which it became thereafter, the major representative. Finally, third, he assessed how the high monotheistic tradition of official Islam had come eventually to accommodate the popular local traditions of saint veneration, to bring thus such vestigial pagan practices under the veneer of the one and only God.

On the other side were the two volumes of Snouck’s *Mekka*, also published in 1888-9. Here, Snouck dealt with the development of Mecca and its function and significance as a cosmopolitan and irradiating focal point of Muslim religious and scholarly life, but not solely from the historical standpoint. In fact, he produced also a fine-grained report of the contemporary life-cycle of the city, analyzing its everyday experiences, practices and institutions and that of its pilgrims, especially the Muslims there from the Netherlands East Indies (NEI). This observational detail and commentary was itself the fruit of Snouck’s own more than five month sojourn in Mecca in 1885 as a Muslim student, his Muslim alter-ego, ‘Abd al-Ghaffar.

¹⁹ C. H. Becker, “Ignaz Goldziher” in *Islamstudien*, II, 506.

That is, Snouck, did not, as per the usual, ‘disguise’ himself as a Muslim for the pilgrimage—he did not actually get a chance to participate in the *Hajj*—but rather simply assumed a Muslim identity and behaved as one for the duration of his stay in the city.²⁰

When looked at closely, then, the distinct ‘textual’ and ‘observational’ *modus operandi* of Goldziher and Snouck revealed themselves as mirror aspects of a continuous methodology: that of analyzing the distinction between Islamic theory and Muslim practice, of reading the first against the grain through the second. Thus, Goldziher attempted to show how all Islamic ‘theory’, its official collectivist unity as much as its in fact great diversity, had been formed in the cauldron of historical *praxis* and continued to be read anew in the light of it. It was a fact both made possible and obscured by the traditionalist penchant of any contending faction of the same theory, thus far in the historical process, to naturalize itself, to read itself backwards as original Islam. That is what Becker meant in the passage above about *Islamwissenschaft*’s ‘wresting the laws of development from scholasticism’. But, if Goldziher’s tendency was always to project Islamic theory, by way of critique of its as yet traditionalist self-interpretation, as formed and informed by historical context, Snouck moved in the opposite direction.

Snouck’s focus was on the primacy of social *praxis* in determining the social meaning and function of given Islamic theory. Hence, a key to the distinct ethnographies he produced of the Javanese, the Acehnese and the Gayo, the Muslim peoples he experienced firsthand in the NEI, was his general thesis about the nature of Islamic law. He argued that the absolute sovereignty and jurisdiction claimed by Islamic jurisprudence over every facet of life, looked upon on the ground and from the perspective of social *praxis*, was revealed thereby as in fact an ideal as against a positive law, one which recognized and yielded in the most crucial matters to the *Adat*, the local customs of the given people. In other words, what was practiced under the dignity of ‘Islamic law’ in the NEI was in fact often simply local custom. A major thesis of *Islamwissenschaft*, in its first generation, was that this ‘double-system’ of law had been the norm in most post-Abbasid Muslim milieus, including quite advanced ones, where in fact separate positive legal codifications—i.e. *Kanunname*—functioned under ideological ‘Islamic’ blessing. Thus, the idea of the divergent but equally necessary and complementary working regimens of Goldziher and Snouck opened onto especially weighty matters. Both viewed Islamic law essentially as for the most part an ideological discourse, an ideal honored in the breach, deployed to rationalize extant sociopolitical and cultural prerogatives. Both viewed Islamic reform, hence, in terms of the critical historicist explosion of this ideological function, but, as already suggested, from quite distinct teleological standpoints.

It bears saying, however, that there is irony in the division made in the field between the ‘textual’ Goldziher and the ‘participant-observer’ Snouck. For, it was Goldziher who had himself pioneered and anticipated what Snouck did in Mecca in 1885 more than a decade earlier, during his Oriental study trip of 1873-4, where he had become the first known European non-Muslim to be allowed to attend Al-Azhar University in Cairo. Writing in 1890, in the *Tagebuch*’s, Goldziher showed already a keen awareness of the great standing Snouck’s Mecca trip was to assume in the field and ‘recalled’ that the goals he had set for his own earlier Oriental trip had been the same as Snouck’s for his. They encompassed the double-goal, first, of investigating the historical formation and intellectual development of Islam as a system of thought: “to get to know the driving forces that, over the centuries, built up out of the Judaized Meccanese cult the mighty world religion of Islam”; second, of assessing the role of Islam in

²⁰ The texts in question are Ignaz Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien, I & II*; C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka, I & II*.

social life, at the popular and everyday level: “Then, I wanted also to study the influence of this system on society and its morality”.²¹

This, as we have seen, was a specimen of retrospective reading quite characteristic of Goldziher: his ‘double-goal’ was rather the outcome of his trip and its aftermath, rather than an aspect of its etiology. But, if Goldziher was to become known in the field especially in terms of the first goal, and Snouck the second, there should be no doubt that the former’s early Oriental trip grounded the conceptual unity of the two goals as much as it was clearly the model of the latter’s Mecca trip. Today, one often still runs across the idea that academic Orientalists were essentially ‘philologists’, who thought that by delving into classical texts they could also capture the experience of living and breathing contemporary Muslims—not to mention those of the past. It is said that they could simply not conceive the possibility of a disconnect between ‘text’ and ‘life’, either in the past or the present. The moral of the ‘methodological’ distinction—i.e. precisely unity—between Goldziher and Snouck is that this complaint is an Islamicist one, and goes back more than a century to the founding of *Islamwissenschaft*.²²

There was, however, besides the ‘teleological’ and ‘methodological’, a further, third difference between Goldziher and Snouck, one, as suggested earlier, as to their ‘practical’ attitude, which was as crucial to understanding the emergence of *Islamwissenschaft* and its possibilities of development. This practical difference between the two scholars certainly had interesting connections to the other ones, but stood very much on its own: it involved the question of Islamicist *praxis*, the politics of *Islamwissenschaft*, its ‘expert’ stance towards the political fates of Muslim ‘peoples’, ‘nations’ and ‘states’. In a word, it defined its approach towards ever encroaching European imperialism. ‘Islamicist *praxis*’, I have argued, was throughout a key driver in the development and transformation of the discipline over time.

The historical differences between Goldziher and Snouck as to the political meaning of ‘Islamicist expertise’ in fact set the scene for the account that must still be given of the dynamics of the Islamicist field in its first generations, as it moved into the crisis of WWI. It is on this

²¹ Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, 56-7. On the legendary status assumed by Snouck’s Mecca trip in the Islamicist field of the first generations, we can cite Georges-Henri Bousquet and Joseph Schacht’s still utterly awe-struck discussion of it in the introductory essay (in French) to their edited volume, *Selected Works of C. Snouck Hurgronje* (Leiden, 1957), XI-XXI, esp. XIV-XVI. They even felt they needed to conjecture a kind of “pre-established harmony” between Snouck and Muslim mores to explain his feat. The Mecca trip also looms large in Waardenburg’s biographical introduction to Snouck’s thought; see Waardenburg, *L’Islam dans le Miroir de l’Occident*, 19-20. By contrast, Goldziher’s Oriental trip did not carry any comparable associations or sensations in the field. It did not, that is, quite vie with Goldziher’s reputation amongst his colleagues. Goldziher never directly addressed his path-breaking trip in print and, even on his Al-Azhar experience, the singular and only lasting signifier of the trip in the field, he only published what were tangential studies of ‘Muslim university life and organization in the Egyptian context’. Perhaps one can gauge the altogether hazy impression left behind by the young Goldziher’s Oriental study trip on Islamicist sensibilities by the fact that Waardenburg, in his 1961 study, long before Goldziher’s diaries were eventually published, gets very simple facts about the voyage wrong. For instance, he writes that Goldziher went directly to Cairo in Sep. 1873, stayed there through the end of winter and then circled back through Jerusalem and Damascus, whereas in fact the voyage had proceeded in the exact opposite direction. See *ibid*, 13.

²² Consider, for instance, Becker’s telling memorial of Theodor Nöldeke, whom he reverentially projected as a transitional figure between ‘Semitic philology’ and *Islamwissenschaft*. Here, Becker in fact sought to explain Nöldeke’s general incapacity to see the parallels, in full Islamicist fashion, between Islamic and Christian historical development and his dismissive attitude towards Islamic modernism, via the fact that he’d only known the objects of his study “out of books” and had never established a living relationship with the questions facing “modern Islam”. As he put it of Nöldeke’s skepticism vis-à-vis any real prospects for modernist Islam: “Contemporary Orientalism thinks of course altogether differently; but we younger ones also had the enormous advantage of the personal encounter with the objects of our study.” Becker, “Theodor Nöldeke” in *Islamstudien*, II, 519-20.

basis that I will, in forthcoming work, shift focus to examine the emergence of *Islamwissenschaft* in Germany and its distinct policy orientation in the specific German geo-political context. And, it is on basis of these contradictions and divergences in Islamicist *praxis* in the Age of Empire, which called into question the discipline's historicist and positivist presumptions, that the split within the field I pointed to in the opening section of Part III, namely, the denouement of the Jihad debate during WWI, must be explained. On the other hand, from the historiographic standpoint of the Orientalism debates, the very idea of a fundamental difference between Goldziher and Snouck as to the politics of *Islamwissenschaft* serves in itself to disrupt accounts based on the obviation of such difference. The observation applies accordingly equally to those who would conceptually fold in 'Orientalism' and 'imperialism', as well as those who would begin with an equation of 'Orientalism' and 'pure scholarship', as gaining ever greater historical purchase by progressive professionalization.

To come now to these practical positions of the two scholars: put succinctly, Goldziher was a convinced anti-imperialist, certainly where Muslims and especially where Arabs were concerned. He can be considered the father of what can be called Islamicist *Kulturpolitik*, in that he believed that the cultural modernization of Muslim natives, and the pedagogical role Islamicist critique could play in imparting a critical consciousness to them, presumed political and cultural autonomy on their part. Moreover, Goldziher knew himself and tried to leave a posthumous memory of himself as a champion of Muslim liberation: he was, as he envisioned it, not only a friend but a comrade of Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani in the latter's anti-imperialist agitation. Of course, it must be said Goldziher did not make any great public waves in this direction, especially not outside the safety of the Hungarian language. But, his sympathies for 'liberationist Muslim activists' and the doubts he cast on native collaborators with Empire were, in his official academic prose as well, altogether transparent, as was his belief in the future autonomy of Muslim societies. And, he was, in any case, readily known to all, Muslims and non-Muslims equally, as '*Islamfreundlich*'. On the other side, Snouck's professional and academic career was from the start indelibly linked with the Dutch colonial project, and he was himself, for seventeen years of his life and at the height of his productivity, a colonial official and advisor in the NEI. Snouck was, accordingly, the originator of what can be called Islamicist *Kolonialpolitik*, in that he emphasized the civilizing—more properly, *modernizing*—role European colonization and rule could play in Muslim contexts. If Goldziher viewed Islamic modernization as an inherently internal process, if he viewed Islamic reform as the ownmost possibility of the Islamic tradition itself moving in teleological course towards its critical historicization and purification, he was also absolutely committed to the political autonomy that he believed this process required and the national autonomy he viewed as its end. On the other hand, if Snouck believed that external political forces played the largest role in the modernization of Muslim societies, if he believed that due to them Muslims would progressively be able to recover their social and cultural practices from the Islamic veil over them, he also believed the colonial state could play a progressive role in this regard. The colonial state would lend a helping hand to Muslim modernization by effecting a curb from the outside on the use of 'Islam' as the political and public language. It would impose a privatization on 'Islam' from the outside and thus aid in the displacement of an allegedly inherently opportunistic and ideological 'language of rule', which would then allow for the emergence of a properly positive one.

Of course, one should not presume Snouck's brand of 'modernist imperialism', even in his own case-history, suggested something stable, free of ambivalences, tensions and transformations. It is just these that made the Jihad debate in WWI such a fateful encounter. For

one, Snouck did *not* uniformly represent the idea that ‘modernist imperialism’ was indispensable to the modernization of Muslim societies. He was, for instance, a fervent champion of the Ottoman constitutional revolution of 1908, which he happened to witness firsthand, his travel plans to Istanbul having accidentally coincided with it. Himself overtaken by the rush of emotions, he beamed at the time to correspondents about this ‘bloodless revolution’ of the brave people. Moreover, for the NEI, Snouck demanded a program of seamless integration, full Dutch nationalization and equality, of the native Indonesian peoples. But, perceiving after the Great war that the proponents of this pedagogical imperialism—the so-called ‘ethical’ policy—were being increasingly shut out of the Dutch colonial project, he became in his later years an advocate of native Indonesian independence. However, in the period leading to the Jihad debate, Snouck, increasingly concerned by the threat posed by ‘political’ or ‘opportunistic’ Islam to allegedly native Muslim modernization and certainly the Dutch colonial project, came during WWI, after the Ottoman Jihad declaration, to adopt a unilateral position in the other direction. Namely, he now argued that it was best if the Ottoman Empire, whose ‘liberal revolution’ he had earlier celebrated, would be made the protectorate of some one European power. For, only then would it be allowed enough room and peace (from the incessant rapacity of the self-same European powers!) to be able to dispense with the temptations of political Islam. In a word, during WWI, he was more of the mind that European (ethical) imperialism was indispensable to Muslim modernization.

We can conclude this systematic preview of our discussion of Goldziher and Snouck as co-founders of the Islamicist discipline, on this note, by emphasizing, from the outset, that Snouck was as pivotal to the rise of *Islamwissenschaft* as Goldziher. In logistical terms, he was more pivotal, since without Snouck there almost certainly would never have been a ‘Goldziher’. More than that, Snouck, the ‘pacifist colonist’ with the witty, acidly self-righteous prose, was the true founder of ‘Islamic Studies’ as a foreign policy expertise (a still booming concern). For the first three generations, the Islamicist field maintained a clear memory of this pivotal place: Snouck was the ‘master’ indispensable for understanding the character of Islamic law. But, after WWII, probably because his very visible colonialist profile and prerogatives appeared now as unmistakable handicaps, he was more and more conveniently forgotten.²³

²³ On the one hand, we can take Georges-Henri Bousquet and Joseph Schacht’s introductory homage to the ‘master’, of which mention has already been made, in their edited volume, *Selected Works of C. Snouck Hurgronje*. In putting forth the volume, these two important Islamicists of the ‘third generation’ very clearly viewed Snouck’s expositions on Islamic jurisprudence as anything but dated, in fact as providing still the pivotal cornerstone for the proper understanding of its social history and function. On the other hand, one might then contrast that perspective to the use made by Conrad of Snouck in his essay on Goldziher as the founder of ‘Islamic Studies’: Lawrence I. Conrad, “Ignaz Goldziher on Ernest Renan”, 137-180. Here Snouck is deployed, in a somewhat throw-away line, bunched in with other names, merely to demonstrate Goldziher’s great capacity for collegiality, given that he could maintain such close personal ties to and hold in such high regard a scholar with whom he clearly disagreed on fundamental religio-political matters. Outside of the distortion where the umbilical nature of the Goldziher-Snouck relationships is concerned, what a drastic re-wiring of history such positioning involves is perhaps best demonstrated by the fact that Conrad wants to see the great Joseph Schacht (1902-1969), the same person from the above ‘Snouck introduction’, as the true heir of Goldziher in ‘Islamic Studies’, whereas Schacht himself so very clearly viewed himself as an heir of Snouck. See esp. *ibid.*, 165-7. See also, Jeanette Wakin, “Remembering Joseph Schacht (1902-1969)” in *Islam Legal Studies Program, Harvard Law School, Occasional Papers* 4 (2003), 1-32; esp 3, where visiting him in Leiden every chance he got, Schacht is said to have considered Snouck in 1925, “the greatest expert in Islamic Studies in Europe”.

5.

However, one thing should by now be clear: this paradigmatic discussion of Goldziher's and Snouck's ideas and lineages is oriented towards an understanding of them *not* as individual scholars and actors but, as should be clear from this systematic review, as *disciplinary* innovators, meaning discursively, practically and institutionally. Hence, I come back again to the idea of the rise of *Islamwissenschaft* as a historicist, modernist and reformist and subjectifying discourse and *praxis*. Namely, I am arguing that Goldziher and Snouck, viewed in terms of one another, can only be understood within the context of the new discipline of *Islamwissenschaft* their equally systematic discursive and practical agreements and disagreements forged at the end of the nineteenth century out of the prevalent philological Orientalism of the time. As I have argued, in a process unmistakable by the close of the first decade of the twentieth century, Islamicists came increasingly to define their work and field against—as an *Aufhebung* of—the philological organization and pre-occupations of the Orientalist establishment. It is crucial to reiterate here that Goldziher's shift from a philological to a universalist historicism was *not* his alone. It was this shift rather which marked the birth of a new Islamicist discipline in Orientalist scholarship. Methodologically, this meant that critical historicist accounts replaced linguistic and speculative decipherment as the overarching purpose of Orientalist scholarship: 'philology' came to be viewed as its indispensable tool rather than its inexorable telos. 'Texts' now had to answer to 'reality', reconstructed historically or in person, but either way 'critically'. At its most substantive, the methodological change meant that 'comparative religion' replaced, in the Islamicist context, 'comparative grammar and linguistics' as the fundamental organizational principle: whether via the byword 'cultural history' or 'sociology', the point became to understand precisely how peoples of vastly different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds all came to interact historically under the orbit of 'Islam' and to constitute the same.

However, these methodological innovations, mostly modified from and with the historicist theology of the 'science of religion' tradition, constitute only one aspect of the change from the philological to the universalist historicist frame. There were other changes which were more unprecedented. The post-accommodationist Protestant scholars of the Tübingen School and Jewish scholars of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* had been, first and foremost, in rivalry with the establishments of their respective religious tradition. And, they became also competitors in the competitive historicist idealization of the 'science of religion'. But, in *Islamwissenschaft*, the epistemic competitions between traditionalist and critical consciousness was to be waged across confessional boundaries and often also across the imperial divide. However Orientalist Philology thought about the Oriental native as a human being and his place in History, epistemologically, he retained his expertise within this frame, being a perfect exemplar of himself. The Islamicist frame, however, involved a radical questioning, historicization and reconstruction of native knowledge. In the case of Goldziher, this challenge to traditional Muslim self-understanding, aimed at the teleological idealization of Islam as 'religion', was waged with great sympathy, one in which Muslims (as Jews or Christians in their respective versions of the 'science of religion') were deemed as the great protagonists of the progress of History. In the case of other Islamicists, however, this scene of competition and intended subjectification remained a thoroughly ambivalent one that could move from assigning Muslims unprecedented heights of modernist agency or whether for circumstantial or other reasons not at all. The attitudinal problems attending critical examination of 'histories not one's own' of course continue to rage to this day. It bears saying though that certainly for Goldziher and even

for Snouck, they did *not*, given their universalist standpoint, view the history of Muslims as not their own.

However, the methodological and attitudinal shifts in the move from philological Orientalism to *Islamwissenschaft* were attended and encompassed by a fundamental *conceptual* one. And, it is this change that is most suited to disrupt ongoing orthodoxies about the nature of Orientalist scholarship as such. To reiterate a point I have made repeatedly, if a major dividing line in the philological Orientalist frame was the essentialist one between the Semitic and Aryan, the fundamental conceptual distinction in *Islamwissenschaft* was the historicist one between the Medieval and the Modern. The Islamicist frame, that is, was founded on the dichotomy between the medieval intersection of religious and political life, on the one hand, and modern (European) positive law, allowing for a proper distinction between national life and private religious life, on the other. The Islamicist discipline was, from the beginning, defined by its encounter with, its historicist account and critique of the development and character of Islamic law. And, from the start and for long, it was a field utterly modernist *in aim as well as in outlook*: whether as anti-imperialist cultural/religious reform from the inside (Goldziher), or political modernization implemented by the colonial state from the outside (Snouck), *Islamwissenschaft* was committed to the cultural transformation and modernization of ‘Islamic’ societies. This it sought to do by advocating a critical historical consciousness with respect to traditionalist native Muslim self-understanding. For, such critical consciousness was to expose Islamic jurisprudence as an ideal and reified law used opportunistically as an ideological language to sanctify cultural and socio-political developments. These latter were to be rescued as such by Islamicist cultural history, thereby precisely demonstrating Islamic law, as public discourse, inadequate equally to cultural (i.e. national) and religious understanding and development.

There is perhaps no other writing that so strikingly captures the new Islamicist constellation first defined by Goldziher and Snouck than Becker’s opening essay to his journal *Der Islam* (1910), entitled “*Der Islam als Problem (Islam as a problem)*”. What Becker said in this seminal essay was that three perspectives on Islamic history thought radically divergent must rather be compared to one another. First, there was the philological perspective on Islamic history, which read it simply in terms of the Arab genius and monotheistic instinct. Second, there was the traditional, ‘medieval’ Christian one, which viewed the Muslim world as simply an Islamic monolith defined by ‘Islam’. But, finally, there was the traditional Muslim understanding of the Islamic heritage as well, which viewed ‘Islam’ as completely determinative of it. What all these perspectives shared in common Becker said was an essentialist standpoint on Islam. And, when he came to answer the primary question he posed in the essay, namely, how one could speak in a critical historical manner of ‘Islam’, this world-historical phenomenon of such breath-taking historical and cultural diversity, he replied as follows. He said that, this ‘problem of Islam’ could only be answered in terms of the idea of an ‘Islamic civilization’, not because this idea in any way served to dispel the historical, social and cultural diversity and divergence piled under its name; it precisely did not do this. But, one could speak coherently of an ‘Islam’ and an ‘Islamic civilization’ because Muslims themselves harbored an essentialized view of its ideal unity. In other words, ‘Islamic civilization’ did not only illuminate the ‘problem of Islam’, it encapsulated the problematic nature of an Islam viewed in homogenous, essentialist in traditionalist Muslim self-understanding. The aim of Islamicist practice in both Goldziher and Snouck was nothing less than to explode *this* ‘Islamic civilization’. For Snouck that was necessary for Muslims to become citizens, for Goldziher, the necessity was much loftier: ‘Islamic civilization’ was destined to yield to Islam as ‘religion’.

We began this study with the ‘science of religion’ tradition and I have sought to show that *Islamwissenschaft* emerged in Goldziher’s scholarship as such a science, aimed at the historicist idealization of Islam, precisely against rather than in line with theologocentric conceptions of it. In moving through the development of Goldziher’s reformist Islamicist practice and in considering him increasingly within the broader Islamicist scholarly discipline which he helped found, the divergent conceptions of ‘Muslim modernization’ within the field and the divergent conceptions of what the European ‘expert’ role was to be in the same have taken center stage. I have emphasized that Islamicist modernist and reformist practice, in its different understandings, whether as *Kulturpolitik* or as *Kolonialpolitik*, whether predicated on native political and cultural autonomy or on the preferability of a modernist or at least progressive imperialism, was integral to the formation and the development of *Islamwissenschaft*. It was a discipline that confronted the problematic of the *modernization* of the Muslim native: of ‘religious reform’, ‘secularization’ and ‘nationalization’ and the exact nature of the relationship between the three. But, I have culled the categories *Kulturpolitik* and *Kolonialpolitik* intentionally from the German context of the era of WWI. For, here they testify to further diversity and complexity *within* German attitudes to Muslim societies which, namely, prescribed a *Kulturpolitik* for the modernizing developing states in the Muslim East and a *Kolonialpolitik* for the black Africans of the German Empire. It was ultimately the fundamental tensions and divergences in Islamicist practice, between its various version of *Kulturpolitik* and *Kolonialpolitik* that brought on the Jihad debate within the field during WWI. ,

The Jihad split in the field showed the extent to which the historicist and progressive moorings of Islamicist discourse and practice had been vitiated by the contradictions in this practice itself. It showed the ways in which the contours of Modernity were themselves redefined in the context of Islamicist scholars’ intellectual and political engagement with Muslims and Muslim societies. Islamicists began with confident critiques of Islamic discourse and Muslim societies and took it upon themselves to advise Muslim modernists on how to achieve autonomy for their cultures and traditions in the contemporary world. But, as the Jihad debate and the world war showed, instead of Muslims being brought into the modern world, ‘Modernity’ itself seemed to be shifting in meaning, to encompass much more the problems faced by the modernizing, ‘developing’ countries. Hence, 'Jihad' went from being read as the paradigmatic antipode of Modernity, the illegitimate intervention of 'religion' into politics, the private into the public, to being read as a cultural tradition dynamically appropriated by the Ottomans in order to form an effective identity to overcome crisis, namely, as the very definition (or redefinition) of Modernity. The Jihad debate will hence be the telos of forthcoming work on the development of the Islamicist field as whole in the era of WWI. I end with it, because it was also one definitive end to the historicist ‘science of religion’ tradition within which *Islamwissenschaft* first emerged in Goldziher’s work.

Bibliography

Archives

Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Nachlass Becker
Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Goldziher Correspondence
Library of Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft, Nachlass Hartmann
Oriental Collections of the University of Leiden, Snouck Correspondence

Texts

- Abrahamian, Ervand. *Iran Between Two Revolutions*. Princeton, NJ, 1982.
— . *The Iranian Mojahedin*. New Haven, CT, 1989.
Abrams, M.H. *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature*. New York, NY, 1971.
Addison, Joseph. *The Spectator*. Oxford, 1965.
Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London, 1991.
Andijar, Gil. *Semites; Race, Religion, Literature*. Stanford, 2008.
Arendt, Hannah. "Part I: Anti-Semitism." In *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 3-120. New York, NY, 1973; orig. 1951.
Asad, Talal. *Genealogies of Religion*.
Auerbach, Erich. *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*. Princeton, NJ, 1953.
Barth, Karl. *Protestant Thought from Rousseau to Ritschl*. New York, NY, 1959; orig. 1952.
Bauer, Bruno. *Christus und die Caesaren. Der Ursprung des Christenthums aus dem römischen Griechenthum*. Berlin, 1879; orig. 1877.
Baur, Ferdinand C. *Die christliche Gnosis: oder, die christliche Religionsphilosophie in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung*. Tübingen, 1835.
— . *Die Tübingen Schule*. Tübingen, 1859.
— . *Kirchengeschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts, in Ausgewählte Werke in Einzelausgaben*. Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1970; orig. 1862.
— . *The Church History of the First Three Centuries*. Edinburgh, 1878; orig. 1853.
— . *Über Zweck und Veranlassung des Römerbriefs und damit zusammenhängenden Verhältnisse der römische Gemeinde. Eine historisch-kritische Untersuchung* (1936) in *idem, Klaus Scholder (ed.), Ausgewählte Werke in Einzelausgaben*. Edited by Klaus Scholder. Vol. 1. Stuttgart, 1963.
Bayat, Asef. *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn*. Stanford, 2007.

- BBC history pages' summary review of the British role in the Middle-East in WWI.* March 31, 2002. http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/wwone/middle_east_06.shtml.
- Becker, C.H. "Becker to Tschudi." In *GStA PK, VI. HA, N1, Nr. 3314*.
- . *Beiträge zur Geschichte Ägyptens unter dem Islam*. Edited by Karl J. Trübner. 1903.
- . *Christianity and Islam*. New York, NY, 1909; orig. 1907.
- Becker, C.H. "Der Islam als Problem (1910)." In *idem, Islamstudien, I; Vom Werden und Wesen der Islamischen Welt*. Leipzig, 1924.
- Becker, C.H. *Ignaz Goldziher*. Vol. II, in *Islamstudien*.
- Becker, C.H. "Theodor Nöldeke [In Memoriam]." *Islamstudien, II* 514-522.
- Beinin, Joel. *Workers and Peasants in the Modern Middle-East*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Berlin, Isaiah. *Essay: Alleged Relativism in Eighteenth Century Thought. The Crooked Timber of Humanity*. New York, NY, 1992; essay from 1980.
- Bezold, Carl, ed. *Orientalische Studien, Theodor Nöldeke zum siebzigsten Geburtstag*. Giessen, 1906.
- Blumenberg, Hans. *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*. Cambridge, MA, 1983; orig. 1966.
- Bopp, Theodor B. *Die Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft und orientalischen Philologie in Deutschland*. Munich, 1869.
- Boyarin, Daniel. *A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity*. Berkeley, CA, 1994.
- Brill, E.J. *E.J. Brill's First Encyclopedia of Islam, 1913-1936*. Vol. II. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1987.
- Buber, Martin. *I and Thou*. New York, NY, 1970; orig. 1923.
- Bürger, Peter. *Theory of the Avant-Garde*. Minneapolis, MN, 1996; orig. 1974.
- Burnouf, Eugène. *La Science des Religions*. 1870.
- Camus. *The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays*. New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1955.
- Cassier, Ernst. *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*. Boston, MA, 1951; orig. 1932.
- Chadwick, Owen. *The Secularization of the European Mind in the Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge, MA, 1975.
- Chatterjee, Partha. *The Nation and its Fragments; Colonial and Post-Colonial Histories*. Delhi, 1995.
- Chwolson. *The Semitic Nations*. Cincinnati, OH, 1874; orig. 1872.
- Clifford, James. *The Predicament of Culture; Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art*. Cambridge, MA, 1988.
- Cohen, Mark R. *Under Crescent and Cross: the Jews in the Middle Ages*. Princeton, NJ, 1994.
- Cohn, Bernard S. *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge; The British in India*. Princeton, NJ, 1996.
- Coleridge, Raymond T. *Biographia Literaria: or, Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions*. Vols. 2,6. London, 1984; orig. 1817.
- Comte, Auguste. *The Catechism of Positive Religion*. London, 1858; orig. 1852.
- Conrad, Joseph. *The Heart of Darkness*. orig. 1899, 1902.
- Conrad, Lawrence I. "Róbert Simon's 'late Marxist'." Thesis, Budapest, 1986.
- Conrad, Lawrence I. "The Dervish's Disciple: On the Personality and Intellectual Milieu of the Young Ignaz Goldziher." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, no. 2 (1990): 240-2.
- Conrad, Lawrence I. "The Near East Study Tour of Ignaz Goldziher." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, no. 1 (1990): 116-117.

- Conrad, Lawrence I. "The Pilgrim from Pest: Goldziher's Study Tour to the Near East (1873-1874)." In *Golden Roads; Migration, Pilgrimage and Travel in Medieval and Modern Islam*, edited by Ian R. Netton. Surrey: Curzon Press, 1993.
- Conrad, Lewis I. "Ignaz Goldziher on Ernest Renan: From Orientalist Philology to the Study of Islam." In *The Jewish Discovery of Islam; Studies in Honor of Bernard Lewis*, edited by Martin Kramer, 137-80. Tel Aviv, 1999.
- Craig, Gordon A. *Germany, 1866-1945*. Oxford, 1978.
- Crouter. "Hegel and Schleiermacher at Berlin: A Many-Sided Debate." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 48, no. 1 (March 1980): 27-29.
- Crouter, Richard. *Introduction to Schleiermacher, On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers*. Cambridge, MA, 1988.
- Dalmia, Vasudha. *Orienteering India; European Knowledge Production in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*. New Delhi, 2003.
- Delitzsch, Franz. *Christentum und jüdische Presse*. Erlangen, 1882.
- Derenbourg, Hartwig. "La Science des Religions et l'Islamisme." In *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions XIII*, 292-333. 1886.
- d'Herbelot. *Bibliothèque Orientale*. 1695.
- Dilthey, Wilhelm. *Leben Schleiermachers, Second Revised Expanded Edition*. Berlin, 1922.
- Dozy. *Spanish Islam: A History of the Moslems in Spain*. London, 1913.
- Dubuisson, Daniel. *The Western Construction of Religion: Myths, Knowledge and Ideology*. Baltimore, MD, 2003.
- Duhem, Pierre. *Medieval Cosmology: Theories of Infinity, Place, Time, Void and the Plurality of Worlds*. Chicago, IL, 1985; orig. 1913.
- Eaton, Richard M. "Islamic History as Global History." In *Islamic and European Expansion: The Forging of a Global Order*, edited by M. Adas, 1-35. Philadelphia, PA, 1993.
- Ebers, George. *Bibliographie des Oeuvres de Ignace Goldziher*. Vol. II. Stuttgart and Leipzig: Edward Hallberger, 1880.
- Ebers, George. *Universitäts-Moschee el-Azhar*. Vol. II, in *Aegypten in Bild und Wort*, 71-90.
- Efraim Karsh, Inari Karsh. *Empires of the Sand; the Struggle for Mastery in the Middle-East, 1789-1923*, 2. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992.
- Efron, John. "Orientalism and the Jewish Historical Gaze." In *Orientalism and the Jews*, edited by Ivan Kalmar & Derek Penslar, 8-93. Waltham, MA, 2005.
- Elias, Norbert. *The Civilizing Process*. Oxford, 1994; orig. 1939.
- Esposito, John. *Islam and Politics*. Syracuse, NY, 1998; orig. 1987.
- Esposito, John. "Political Islam, Beyond the Green Menace." *Current History*, January 1994.
- Ess, Joseph Van. "Goldziher as a Contemporary of Islamic Reform." In *Goldziher Memorial Conference*, edited by Eva Apor & Istvan Ormos, 37-50. Budapest: Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 2005.
- Ewald, Heinrich. *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*. Göttingen, 1864.
- . *Geschichte des Volkes Israels, V. 4: Geschichte Ezra's und der Heiligenherrschaft in Israel bis Christus*. Göttingen, 1864.
- Fenton, Paul B. "Moritz Steinschneider's Contribution to Judaeo-Arabic Studies." In *Reimund Leicht & Gad Freudenthal, Studies on Steinschneider: Moritz Steinschneider and the Emergence of the Science of Judaism in Nineteenth Century Germany*, 363-382. Leiden, 2012.
- Ferguson, Heather. "Genres of Power: Constructing a Discourse of Decline in Ottoman Nasihatname." *The Journal of Ottoman Studies*, no. 35 (2010): 81-116.

- Feuerbach. *Das Wesen des Christentums*. Berlin, 1956; orig. 1841.
- Finocchiaro, Maurice A., ed. *The Galileo Affair: A Documentary History*. Berkeley, CA: University of California, 1989.
- Firestone, Reuven. "Jewish Culture in the Formative Period of Islam." In *Cultures of the Jews: A New History*, edited by David Biale, 279-281. New York, NY, 2003.
- Fleischer, H.L. *Morgenländische Forschungen; Festschrift Herrn*. Leipzig, 1875.
- Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality; An Introduction*. Vol. 1. New York, NY, 1978.
- . *The Order of Things*. New York, NY, 1994; orig. 1966.
- Foucault, Michel. "The Subject and Power." In *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, edited by Hubert Dreyfus & Paul Rabinow, 208-226. Chicago, IL, 1983.
- Freud, Sigmund. "Civilization and Its Discontents." *The Freud Reader*, 1998; orig. 1930: 722-35.
- Freud, Sigmund. "The Future of an Illusion." *The Freud Reader*, 1929: 685-772.
- Fück, Johann. "Die arabischen Studien in Europa bis in den Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts." Leipzig, 1955.
- Funkenstein, Amos. *Perceptions of Jewish History*.
- . *Theology and the Scientific Imagination: From the Middle Ages to the Seventeenth Century*. Princeton, NJ, 1986.
- Fussel, Paul. *The Great War and Modern Memory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975.
- Gadamer, Hans-Georg. *Truth and Method*. New York, NY, 1994; orig. revised edition, 1986.
- Geertz, Clifford. *Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968.
- Geiger, Abraham. "Das Judentum unserer Zeit und die Bestrebungen in ihm." In *WZJT*. 1835.
- Geiger, Abraham. "Das Verhältnis des natürlichen Schriftsinnes zur thalmudischen Schriftdeutung." In *WZJT* 5, 53-81, 234-259. 1844.
- Geiger, Abraham. "Der Kampf christlicher Theologen gegen die bürgerliche Gleichstellung der Juden, namentlich mit Bezug auf Anton Theodor Hartmann." In *WZJT*, 349. 1835.
- Geiger, Abraham. "Die Aufgabe der Gegenwart." In *WZJT* 5, 17-18. 1844.
- Geiger, Abraham. "Die wissenschaftliche Ausbildung des Judentums in den zwei ersten Jahrhunderten des zweiten Jahrtausends bis zum Auftreten des Maimonides." In *WZJT* 1, 36. 1835.
- . *Judaism and Islam*. New York, NY, 1870 orig. 1833.
- . *Judaism and Its History*. 2 vols. New York, NY, 1911; orig. 1865-71.
- Geiger, Abraham. "Karäische Literatur." In *WZJT* 2, 100-101, 109-113, 116-118. 1836.
- . *Urschrift und Übersetzungen der Bibel in ihrer Abhängigkeit von der innern Entwicklung des Judenthums*. Breslau, 1857.
- . *Was hat Muhammad aus dem Judentum aufgenommen?*. Bonn, 1833.
- Geiger, Wolfgang. *Spekulation und Kritik, die Geschichtstheologie Ferdinand Christian Baur's*. Munich, 1964.
- Gellner, Ernest. *Nations and Nationalism*. Ithaca, NY, 1983.
- Goitein, S.D. *A Mediterranean Society*. 6 vols.
- Goitein, S.D. *Jews and Arabs; Their Contacts through the Ages*. New York, NY, 1955.
- Goldziher, Ignaz. *Alī Mubārak's al-Khitat al-Jadīda*. 1890.
- Goldziher, Ignaz. "Az Iszlám; Tanulmányok a Muhammadán vallás története köréből (Islam; Studies on the history of the Muhammadan Religion)." In *Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Könyvkiadó-Hivatala*, 299-340. Budapest, 1881.

- . *Der Mythos bei den Hebräern und seine Geschichtliche Entwicklung: Untersuchungen zur Mythologie und Religionswissenschaft*. Leipzig, 1876.
- Goldziher, Ignaz. "Die Fortschritte der Islam-Wissenschaft in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten." In *Gesammelte Schriften, IV*.
- Goldziher, Ignaz. "Die Religion des Islams." In *Die Kultur der Gegenwart, Teil I, Abteilung III*, edited by Paul Hinneberg & B.G. Teubner. Berlin & Leipzig, 1906.
- . *Die Zâhiriten; Ihr Lehrsystem und ihre Geschichte*. Leipzig: Schulze, 1884.
- Goldziher, Ignaz. "Fikh." In *First Encyclopedia of Islam*. E.J. Brill. 1987 (a reprint of the original).
- . *Gesammelte Schriften, I*.
- . *Gesammelte Schriften, II*. Hildesheim: Georg Olms verlagbuchhandlung, 1968.
- Goldziher, Ignaz. "Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer." In *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie, B. 48*, 584-94. Leipzig, 1904.
- Goldziher, Ignaz. "idem, "Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer." In *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, 584-594. Munich, 1904.
- . *Introduction to Islam Law and Theology*.
- . *Islamisme et Parsisme", Gesammelte Schriften*. Vol. IV.
- Goldziher, Ignaz. "Katholische Tendenz und Partikularismus im Islam." In *Gesammelte Schriften, V*. Georg Olms:, 285-312. Hildesheim, 1970.
- . *Lectures on Islam*. 1910.
- Goldziher, Ignaz. "Muhammadan Public Opinion." Edited by J. Payne and J. Sandgrove. *Journal of Semitic Studies*, no. Spring, 1993 (orig. 1882): 97-133.
- . *Muhammedanische Studien, I*. Halle, 1888.
- . *Muhammedanische Studien, II*. Halle, 1890.
- . *Mythos bei den Hebräern*. 1876.
- Goldziher, Ignaz. *Real-Encykopädie des Islam*. Österreichische Montsschrift für den Orient, 1897.
- . "Tagebuch." Leiden, November 3, 1978; orig. 1977 (Nov. 3, 1899, p. 224).
- Goldziher, Ignaz. *The Principles of Law in Islam*. Vol. VIII, in *The Historians' History of the World*, edited by Willimas H. Smith. New York, NY: The Outlook Company, 1904.
- . *The Spanish Arabs and Islam: The Place of the Spanish Arabs in the Evolution of Islam as Compared with the Eastern Arabs", First Installment in idem, Joseph Desomogyi (ed.), Gesammelte Schriften*. Vol. 1. Hildesheim, 1967.
- Goldziher, Ignaz. "Über die Benennung der "Ichwan al-safa." *Der Islam 1*, 1910: 22-26.
- . *Vorlesungen über den Islam*. Heidelberg, 1910.
- Goldziher, Ignaz. *Die Richtungen der Islamischen Koranauslegung*. Leiden, 1920. Graef, Katrien de. "Holdheim's Attitude Towards Karaism as Expounded in the Ma' Amar Ha-'Ishut." In *Redefining Judaism*, edited by Christian Wiese, 109-124.
- Grafton, Anthony. *Defenders of the Text*. Cambridge, MA, 1991.
- . *Joseph Scaliger; A Study in the History of Classical Scholarship*. Vol. 1. Oxford, 1983.
- . *Scaliger's Chronology: Philology, Astronomy, World History*.
- . *Traditions of Invention and Inventions of Tradition in Renaissance Italy: Annus of Viterbo*.
- Haber, Peter. *Zwischen jüdischer Tradition und Wissenschaft*. Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 2006.
- Hammer-Schenk, Harold. *Synagogen in Deutschland: Geschichte einer Baugattung im 19. Und 20. Jahrhundert (1780-1933)*. 2 vols. Hamburg, 1981.

- Hamori, Andras & Ruth, trans. *Goldziher's Introduction to Islamic law and Theology*. Princeton, NJ, 1981.
- Hanisch, Ludmila, ed. *Goldziher to Hartmann, 8/24/96, in "Machen Sie doch unseren Islam nicht gar zu schlecht"; Der Briefwechsel der Islamwissenschaftler Ignaz Goldziher und Martin Hartmann, 1894-1914*. Wiesbaden, 2000.
- Hanisch, Ludmila, ed. *Islamkunde und Islamwissenschaft im deutschen Kaiserreich: der Briefwechsel zwischen Carl Heinrich Becker und Martin Hartmann (1900-1918)*. Leiden, 1992.
- Hanisch, Ludmilla, ed. *Machen Sie doch unseren Islam nicht gar zu schlecht", Der Breifwechsel der Islamwissenschaftler Ignaz Goldziher und Martin Hartmann 1894-1914*. Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz Verlag, 2000.
- Harnack, Adolf von. *Geschichte der königlich preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin*. Vol. 2. Berlin, 1900.
- . *What is Christianity? (Das Wesen des Christentums)*. Gloucester, 1978; orig. 1899-1900.
- Harris, Horton. *David Friedrich Strauss and His Theology*. Cambridge, MA, 1973.
- . *The Tübingen School*. Oxford, 1975.
- Hartmann, Martin. "Die Ecole Supérieure des Lettres in Algier und die Medersas Algeriens auf dem XIV. Orientalkongress." In *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*, v.19, 358-60. 1905-6.
- Hartmann, Martin. "Die Mekkabahn." *Orientalische Literatur-Zeitung* 2, no. 1 (January 1908): 1-7.
- . *Islampolitik" in Koloniale Rundschau*. 1914.
- . *The Arabic Press of Egypt*. London, 1899.
- Hegel, G.W.F. *Introductory Lectures on Aesthetics*. New York, NY, 1983; orig. 1835.
- . *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion; Lectures of 1827*. Oxford, 2006.
- . *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. Oxford, 1977; orig. 1807.
- Heller. "Bibliographie des Oeuvres de Ignace Goldziher." no. 33 (1873): 21-2.
- Herder. *Älteste Urkunde des Menschengeschlechts: Eine nach Jahrhunderten enthüllte heiliger Schrift, 1 & 2 in Herders Sämmtliche Werke*. Edited by Bernhard Suphan. Vols. 6-7. Berlin, 1883-4.
- . *Philosophical Writings (This Too a Philosophy of History for the Formation of Humanity, 1774)*. Edited by Michal N. Foster. Translated by Michal N. Foster. New York, NY, 2002.
- Herzberg, Arthur. *The Zionist Idea: A Historical Analysis and Reader*. New York, NY, 1959.
- Heschel, Susannah. *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*. Chicago, IL, 1998.
- Heschel, Susannah. *Die Wissenschaft des Judentums und der Islam: ein Vorbild für Deutschland im 21. Jahrhundert?*
- . *The Aryan Jesus: Christian Theologians and the Bible in Nazi Germany*. Princeton, NJ, 2008.
- Hirschkind, Charles. *Ethical Soundscapes: Cassette Sermons and Islamic Counter-Publics*. New York, NY, 2006.
- Hirsh, Michael. "Bernard Lewis Revisited." *The Washington Monthly*, November 2004.
- Hobsbawm. *The Age of Revolution, 1789-1848*. New York, NY, 1962.
- Hodgson, Peter C. *The Formation of Historical Theology: A Study of Ferdinand Christian Baur*. New York, NY, 1966.
- Hourani, Albert. *Islam in European Thought*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.
- Hughes, H. Stuart. *Consciousness and Society; The Reorientation of European Thought, 1890-1930*. Brunswick, 2002; orig. 1958.
- Hume, David. *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*. Indianapolis, IN, 1998; orig. 1779.

- . *Of Refinement in the Arts: Essays Moral, Political, Literary*. London, 1898; orig. 1742.
- . *Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences in Essays*.
- . *Of the Standard of Taste and Other Essays*. New York, 1965.
- Hurgronje, Snouck C. "Der Mahdi." In *Verspreide Geschriften*. Bonn & Leipzig: Kurt Schroeder, 1885.
- Hurgronje, Snouck C. "Islam." In *Selected Works of Snouck C. Hurgronje*, edited by G.H. Bousquet & J. Schact. Leiden, 1957.
- . *Islam und der Phonograph (orig. 1900) in idem, Verspreide geschriften*. Vol. 2. Bonn, 1923.
- . *Michaël Jan de Goeje*. Leiden, 1911.
- . *Mohammedanism; Lectures on Its Origins, Its Religious and Political Growth, and Its Present State*. New York, NY: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1916.
- Hurgronje, Snouck C. "Snouck to Goldziher, 02/13/1883." In *Scholarship and Friendship in Early Islamwissenschaft; The Letters of C. Snouck Hurgronje to I. Goldziher, 1*.
- Hurgronje, Snouck C. "Snouck to Goldziher, 2/26/1883." In *Scholarship and Friendship in Early Islamwissenschaft; The Letters of C. Snouck Hurgronje to I. Goldziher, 2*.
- Hurgronje, Snouck C. "Theodore Nöldeke" in *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*. ZDMG 85, no. 3 (1931): 239-281.
- Irving, David. *The Independent Interview* (January 15, 2009).
- Irwin, Robert. *Dangerous Knowledge; Orientalism and its Discontents*. Woodstock, 2006.
- Jay, Martin. *Songs of Experience: Modern American and European Variations on a Universal Theme*. Berkeley, CA, 2005.
- Joel Beinin, Joe Stork, ed. *On the Modernity, Historical Specificity, and the International Context of Political Islam*.
- Joel Beinin, Joe Stork, ed. *Political Islam: Essays from Middle East Report*. Berkeley, CA, 1997.
- Jost, Isaak M. *Geschichte der Israeliten: seit der Zeit der Maccabaer bis auf unsre Tage*. Vols. 1-9. Berlin, 1820-1828.
- Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Pure Reason*. London, 1929; orig. 1781-7.
- . *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft*. Leipzig, 1922; orig. 1793.
- . *Kritik der Urteilskraft*. Köln, 1995; orig. 1790.
- . *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft, Stück III, zweite Abteilung*.
- Karsh, Karsh &. *Empires of the Sand*.
- Kaufmann, Walter. *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*. Princeton, NJ, 1974.
- Keddie, Nikki. *Iran and the Muslim World: Resistance and Revolution*. New York, NY, 1995.
- . *Sayyid Jamal ad-Din 'al-Afghani': A Political Biography*. Los Angeles, CA, 1992.
- Khalil, As'ad Abu. *Islamic Fundamentalism*. <http://angryarab.net>.
- Khān, Sayyid Aḥmad. "Jamāl al-dīn al-Afghānī and Muslim India." *Studia Islamica*, no. 13 (1960): 73-74.
- Kipling, Rudyard. *The Man Who Would Be King*. orig. 1888.
- Kohler, George Y. "German Spirit and Holy Ghost—Treitschke's Call for Conversion of German Jewry: The Debate Revisited." In *Modern Judaism* 30:2, 172-195. 2010.
- Koyré, Alexander. *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe*. Baltimore, MD, 1957.
- Kramer, Martin. *Ivory Towers on Sand; The Failure of Middle-Eastern Studies in America*. Washington, DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2001.
- . *Rules of Engagement: How Government Can Leverage Academe*. Vol. 2. Washington, DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2011.

- Kramer, Martin, ed. *The Jewish Discovery of Islam: Studies in Honor of Bernard Lewis*. Tel Aviv.
- Kuenen, Abraham. *National Religions and Universal Religions*. London, 1882.
- Kuhn, Thomas S. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago, IL, 1970.
- Lapidus, Ira M. *A History of Islamic Societies*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012.
- Latour, Bruno. *The Pasteurization of France*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988.
- . *We Have Never Been Modern*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993.
- Lepenies, Wolf. *The Seduction of Culture in German History*. Princeton, NJ, 2006.
- Lessing. *Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts*. Orig. 1780. <http://gutenberg.spiegel.de> (accessed 2012).
- Levi, Primo. *Survival in Auschwitz: The Nazi Assault on Humanity*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1996.
- Levi-Strauss, Claude. *The Savage Mind*. Chicago, IL, 1966; orig. 1962.
- Lewis, Bernard. *Race and Color in Islam*. New York, NY, 1971.
- . *Race and Slavery in the Middle East: An History Inquiry*. New York, NY, 1990.
- . *The Assassins: A Radical Sect in Islam*. London, 1967.
- . "The Roots of Muslim Rage." *The Atlantic*, September 1990.
- . *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*. London, 1961.
- . *The Jews of Islam*. Princeton, NJ, 1984.
- . *The Muslim Discovery of Europe*. New York, NY, 1982.
- . "The Question of Orientalism." *The New York Review of Books*, June 24, 1982.
- Lewis, Bernard. "The Pro-Islamic Jews." In *idem, Islam in History: Ideas, Men and Events in the Middle East*, 123-137. London, 1973.
- Lewis, Bernard. "The Question of Orientalism." In *idem, Islam and the West*, 99-118. New York, NY, 1993.
- Lockman, Zachary. *Contending Visions of the Middle-East; The History and Politics of Orientalism*. New York, NY, 2004.
- . *Contending Visions of the Middle-East; The History and Politics of Orientalism*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Löwinger, Scheiber and Somogyi, ed. *Ignace Goldziher Memorial*. Vol. 1 & 2. Budapest, 1948.
- Mahmood, Saba. *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*.
- Maimonide. *Guide for the Perplexed*.
- Mangold, Sabine. *Eine „Weltbürgerliche Wissenschaft“—Die deutsche Orientalistik im 19. Jahrhundert*. Munich, 2004.
- Mann, Thomas. *Reflections of a Nonpolitical Man*. New York, NY, 1983.
- Marchand, Suzanne. *Down from Olympus: Archaeology and Philhellenism in Germany, 1750-1970*. Princeton, NJ, 1996.
- . *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire; Religion, Race, and Scholarship*. New York, NY, 2009.
- Mendelsohn, Moses. *Morning Hours: Lectures on God's Existence*. New York, NY, 2011; orig. 1785.
- Mendes-Flohr, Paul. *Fin de Siècle Orientalism, the Ostjuden, and the Aesthetics of Jewish Self-Affirmation* in *idem, Divided Passions: Jewish Intellectuals and the Experience of Modernity*. Detroit, MI, 1991.
- Metcalf, Thomas R. *Ideologies of the Raj*. New York, NY, 1995.

- Meyer, Michael. *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism*. New York, NY, 1988.
- Mosse, George L. *The Crisis of German Ideology: Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich*. New York, NY, 1964.
- Mubārak, Alī. *Al-Khiṭaṭ al-tawfīqīyah al-jadīdah li-Misr al-Qāhirah wa-muduniḥā wa-bilādihā al-qadīmah wa-al-shahī*. Vols. 1-20. Būlāq: Miṣr, al-Maṭba‘ah al-Kubrā al-Amīriyah, 1886-89.
- Müller. *Inaugural address*. Vol. I, in *Transactions of the Ninth International Congress of Orientalists*, 1-37.
- Müller, Augst. *Islam im Morgen- und Abendland*. Vol. I & II. Berlin: G. Grote, 1885-7.
- . *Memoir of Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer*. Washington, 1892.
- Müller, Max. *Lectures on the Science of Religion*. New York, NY, 1874.
- Myers, David N. *Resisting History: Historicism and Its Discontents in German-Jewish Thought*. Princeton, NJ, 2003.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Genealogy of Morals in idem, On the Genealogy of Morals and Ecce Homo*. New York, NY, 1969; orig. 1887.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. "On the Genealogy of Morals." In *idem, On the Genealogy of Morals; Ecce Homo*, 15-163. New York, NY, 1969; orig. 1887.
- . *The Will to Power*. New York, NY, 1968.
- . *Untimely Meditations*. Cambridge, MA, 1997; orig. 1874.
- Nöldeke. *Geschichte des Qorans*. Göttingen, 1860.
- Nora, Pierre. *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1996.
- Nordau, Max. *Degeneration*. New York, NY, 1895; orig. 1892.
- Olender, Maurice. *The Languages of Paradise: Race, Religion and Philology in the Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge, MA, 1992.
- Orwell, George. *Shooting an Elephant*. orig. 1936.
- Paret, Rudi. *The Study of Arabic and Islam at German Universities; German Orientalists since Theodor Nöldeke*. Wiesbaden, 1968.
- Patai, Raphael, ed. *Ignaz Goldziher and His Oriental Diary*. Detroit, MI, 1987.
- Penslar, Ivan Kalmar & Derek, ed. *Orientalism and the Jews*. Waltham, MA, 2005.
- Peters, Rudolph. "Grand Muftī of Egypt." *Islamic Law and Society* 1, no. 1 (1994): 66-82.
- Peters, Rudolph. "His ‘al-Fatāwā al-Mahdiyya’." *Islamic Law and Society* 1, no. 1 (1994): 66-82.
- Peters, Rudolph. "Muḥammad al-‘Abbāsī al-Mahdī (D. 1897)." *Islamic Law and Society* 1, no. 1 (1994): 66-82.
- Philipson, David. *The Reform Movement in Judaism*. New York, NY, 1907.
- Pinker, Steven. *The Better Angels of Our Nature: The Decline of Violence in History and Its Causes*. London, 2011.
- Première, Tome. "Actes du Douzième Congrès des Orientalistes." Rome, 1899.
- Rassinier, Paul. *Debunking the Genocide Myth: a study of the Nazi Concentration Camps and the Alleged Extermination of European Jewry*. Los Angeles, CA: Noontide Press, c1978.
- Reimarus, Herman S. *Apologie; oder Schutzschrift für die vernünftigen Verehrer Gottes*. Frankfurt, 1972.
- Reimund Leight, Gad Freudenthal. *Studies on Steinschneider: Moritz Steinschneider and the Emergence of the Science of Judaism in Nineteenth Century Germany*.

- Goiten, S.D., ed. "Religion in a Religious Age; Proceedings of Regional Conferences." *Association for Jewish Studies in America held at UCLA and Brandeis University in April, 1873*. Cambridge, 1974.
- Renan. *1880 Hibbert Lectures on the Influence of the Institutions, Thought and Culture of Rome on Christianity and the Development of the Catholic Church*. London, 1885.
- . *Averroès et l'Averroïsme: Essai Historique* . Paris, 1861.
- . *Histoire Général et Système Comparé des Langues Sémitique* . Paris, 1863; orig. 1855.
- . *Life of Jesus*. Boston, MA, 1910.
- . *The Future of Science*. Boston, MA, 1893; orig. 1890.
- Renan. "What is a Nation?" In *Becoming National: A Reader*, edited by Geoff Eley and Ronald Suny, 42-56. Oxford, 1996.
- "Report of the Proceedings of the Second International Congress of Orientalists ." London, 1874.
- Reventlow, Henning. *The History of Biblical Interpretation, V. 4: From the Enlightenment to the Twentieth Century*. Atlanta, GA, 2010; orig. 2001.
- Ringer, Fritz. *The Decline of the German Mandarins: The German Academic Community, 1890-1933*. Hanover, PA, 1990; orig. 1969.
- Ritschl, Albrecht. *Die Entstehung der altkatholischen Kirche*. Bonn, 1850.
- Rodinson, Maxime. *Europe and the Mystique of Islam*. New York, NY, 2006.
- . *Muhammad, xliii*. New York, NY, 1980; orig. 1961.
- Rosenthal, Franz. *Steinschneider's Contribution to the Study of Muslim Civilization*. Vol. 27, in *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research*, 67-81. 1958.
- Rubaschoff, S. *Erstlinge der Entjudung*”, *Der Jüdische Wille*. Vol. 1. 1918-1919.
- Said, Edward. *Covering Islam: How the media and the experts determine how we see the rest of the world*. New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1997.
- . *Culture and Imperialism*. New York, NY, 1993.
- . *Orientalism*. New York, NY, 1978; Afterword, 1994.
- Salaymeh, Lena. *Late Antique and Medieval Islamic Legal Histories: Contextual Change and Comparative (Re)considerations*. Dissertation, Berkeley: University of California, 2012.
- Scheindlin, Raymond. "Merchants and Intellectuals, Rabbis and Poets: Judeo-Arabic Culture in the Golden Age of Islam." In *Cultures of the Jews: A New History*, edited by David Biale, 336-338. New York, NY, 2001.
- Schiller, Friedrich. *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*.
- . *Über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen, in einer Reihe von Briefen, Sämtliche Werke*. Munich, 1962; orig. 1795.
- Schleiermacher, Friedrich. *Briefe bei Gelegenheit der politisch-theologischen Aufgabe und des Sendschreibens jüdischer Hausväter*.
- . *On Religion, Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers*. 3rd. Translated by John Orman. New York, NY, 1958; orig. 1821.
- . *The Christian Faith*. New York, NY, 1999; orig. 1830.
- Schmitt, Carl. *Der Begriff des Politischen*. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1963; orig. essay, 1932.
- Scholem, Gershom. *The Science of Judaism—Then and Now*” in *idem, The Messianic Idea in History and Other Essays on Jewish Spirituality*. Translated by Michael A. Myers. New York, NY, 1971.
- Schorsch, Ismar. *Converging Cognates: the Intersection of Jewish and Islamic Studies in Nineteenth Century Germany*. Vol. 55, in *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*, 3-36. 2010.
- . *From Text to Context: The Turn to History in Modern Judaism*. Hanover, PA, 1994.

- Schorske, Carl E. *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna; Politics and Cultures*. New York, NY, 1980; orig. 1961.
- Schwab, Raymond. *La Renaissance Orientale*. Paris, 1950.
- . *The Oriental Renaissance; Europe's Rediscovery of India and the East*. New York, NY, 1984.
- Schwegler, Albert. *Das Nachapostolische Zeitalter in den Hauptmomenten seiner Entwicklung*. Tübingen, 1846.
- Schweinfurth, Georg. "Die Wiedergeburt Ägyptens im Lichte eines aufgeklärten Islams." *Berliner Rundschau*, 7/10/1895.
- Shapin, Steven. *The Scientific Revolution*. Chicago, IL, 1996.
- Sheehan, Jonathan. *The Enlightenment Bible: Translation, Scholarship, Culture*. Princeton, NJ, 2005.
- Simon, Róbert. *Ignác Goldziher; His Life and Scholarship as Reflected in his Works and Correspondence*.
- Slezkine, Yuri. *The Jewish Century*. Princeton, NJ, 2004.
- Smith, Robertson. *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia*. London: Black, 1903; orig. 1885.
- Sombart, Werner. *The Jews and Modern Capitalism*. Kitchener, 2001; orig. 1911.
- Soussan, Henri. "The Science of Judaism from Leopold Zunz to Leopold Lucas." Center for German-Jewish Studies Research Paper, University of Sussex, Brighton, 1999, 1-23.
- Stern, Fritz. *The Politics of Cultural Despair: A Study in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology*. New York, NY, 1965; orig. 1961.
- Stillman, Norman A. *The Jews of Arab Lands: A History and Source Book*. Philadelphia, PA, 1979.
- Strauss, D.F. *Das Leben Jesu, kritisch bearbeitet*. Vols. 1, 2. Tübingen.
- . *Streitschriften zur Vertheidigung meiner Schrift über das Leben Jesu und zur Charakteristik der gegenwärtigen Theologie*. Tubingen, 1837.
- . *The Old Faith and the New: A Confession*. London, 1873; orig. 1872.
- . *Vergängliches und Bleibendes im Christenthum*", in *Der Freihafen: Galerie von Unterhaltungsbildern aus den Kreisen der Literatur, Gesellschaft und Wissenschaft*. Vols. 1, no. 3. 1838.
- Tal, Uriel. *Christians and Jews in Germany: Religion, Politics, and Ideology in the Second Reich, 1870-1914*. Ithaca, NY, 1975.
- Tal, Uriel. *Young German Intellectuals on Romanticism and Judaism; Spiritual Turbulence in the Early 19th Century*. Vol. II, in *Saló Wittmayer Baron Jubilee Volume on the Occasion of His Eightieth Birthday*, edited by Saul Lieberman, 919-938. New York, NY, 1974.
- Talk, Boyarin Berkeley. (*ask for permission to cite...*).
- Theil, Erster. *Verhandlungen des fünften internationalen Orientalisten-Congresses*. Berlin: A. Asher & Co. Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1881.
- Toews, John E. *Hegelianism: The Path Toward Dialectical Humanism, 1805-1841*. Cambridge, MA, 1980.
- Toole, John K. *A Confederacy of Dunces*.
- Transactions of the Ninth International Congress of Orientalists*. Vol. 1. Edinburgh, 1893.
- Transactions of the Ninth International Congress of Orientalists*. Vol. I & II. London, 1893.
- Trautman-Walker, Céline. "Holdheim and Zunz: From the Question of Rabbinic Authority to a New Definition of Ceremonial Laws." In *Redefining Judaism: Comparative Perspectives on Samuel Holdheim (1806-1860)*, edited by Christian Wiese, 228-240. Leiden, 2007.
- Trilling, Lionel. *Sincerity and Authenticity*. Cambridge, MA, 1971.

- Troeltsch, Ernst. *Die absolutheit des Christentums und die Religionsgeschichte*. Tübingen, 1902.
 —. *The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches*. London, 1931; orig. 1912.
- Ullendorff, Edward. "Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia." Edited by Alexander Scheiber. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (University of London), no. 24 (1979).
- Vatke, Wilhelm. *Die Religion des Alten Testaments nach den kanonischen Büchern entwickelt*. Berlin, 1835.
- Vaux, Carra de. *La mahoméisme; le genie sémetique et le genie aryen dans l'Islam*. Paris, 1897.
- Vidal-Naquet, Pierre. *Assassins of Memory; Essays on the Denial of the Holocaust*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1992.
- Waardenburg, J.D.J. *L'Islam dans le Miroir de l'Occident*.
- Wakin, Jeanette. "Remembering Joseph Schacht (1902-1969)." (ILSP, Harvard Law School, Occasional Publications) 4, no. 3 (2003).
- Wal, Durkje van der. *The First Western Photographer in Mecca, 1884-5*. Amsterdam, 2011.
- Watt, Montgomery. *Ervand Abrahamian, The Iranian Mojahedin*. New Haven, CT, 1989.
- Weber, Max. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. New York, NY, 2001; orig. 1904-5.
- Wellhausen, Julius. *Reste Arabische Heidentumes*. Berlin: G. Reimer, 1897; orig. 1887.
 —. *Reste Arabische Heidentums, Gesammelt und Erläutert*. Berlin, 1897; orig. 1887.
 —. *The Arab Kingdom and Its Fall*. Khayats, 1963.
- Wickens, G.M. "Review of Tagebuch." *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, no. 100 (1980): 34-36.
- Wiese, Christian. *Challenging Colonial Discourse: Jewish Studies and Protestant Theology in Wilhelmine Germany*. Leiden, 2005.
- Williams, Raymond. *Culture and Society, 1780-1950*. New York, NY, 1983.
 —. *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. New York, NY, 1983.
- Wolf. *Ueber den Begriff einer Wissenschaft des Judenthums*.
- Woodward, David R. *Hell in the Holy Land: World War I in the Middle-East*. Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 2006.
- Wordsworth. *Lyrical Ballads*. London, 1992; orig. 1800.
- Zubaida, Sami. *Beyond Islam: A New Understanding of the Middle-East*. New York, NY, 2011.
- Zunz, Leopold. *Die Gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden*. Berlin, 1832.
- Zunz, Leopold. "Die Jüdische Literatur." In *Zur Geschichte und Literatur*, 21. Berlin, 1845.
- Zunz, Leopold. *Grundlinien zur einer künftigen Statistik der Juden*. Vol. 1, in *Zeitschrift für die Wissenschaft des Judenthums*, 523-532. 1823.