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Goldziher as a Contemporary of Islamic Reform

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In 1890 Goldziher published at Halle the second volume of his *Muhammedanische Studien*. In the same year, on his 40th birthday, he started writing his diary which he continued until shortly before his death. These works do not have much in common. What Goldziher wrote about Hadith in that second volume may be considered to be the most mature and creative product of his scholarship. The diary, on the contrary, confronts us with an emotional – and sometimes rather unbalanced – inner dialogue which was never intended to be printed. In spite of this dissimilarity, the coincidence, fortuitous as it certainly is, may be apt to put us before a particular question: 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? 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. He was relatively young then, 23 years old; we are thus dealing with two different periods in his life. Let us look at both periods and persuasions a little bit further.[1]

1. Taken in itself Goldziher's analysis of Hadith does not need any comment. In European scholarship his approach found immediate and mostly enthusiastic approval;[2] it has remained influential until today. Even in the Near East his works | met with a respectful reception; in Egypt they were translated into Ara- 38
bic, though with critical remarks and additions, his *Richtungen der islamischen*

1 Some of the points raised in this article have been dealt with in detail by L.I. Conrad in a study published in: I.R. Netton (ed.), *Golden Roads. Migration, Pilgrimage, and Travel in Mediaeval and Modern Islam*, Richmond 1993, 110 ff.: 'The Pilgrim from Pest. Goldziher's study tour in the Near East'. I regret having had no access to this book until my text had already been prepared for publication.

2 Cf. for instance Snouck Hurgronje's reaction in a letter from Batavia dated 5th December 1890 (P.Sj. van Koningsveld, *Scholarship and Friendship in Early Islamwissenschaft. The Letters of C. Snouck Hurgronje to I. Goldziher*, Leiden 1985, 128) and his later appraisal in: *Mohammedanism*, New York-London 1916, 20. Somewhat more reserved is Th. Nöldeke in a letter dated 24th October 1890 (R. Simon, *Ignác Goldziher. His Life and Scholarship as Reflected in his Works and Correspondence*, Leiden 1986, 171 ff.).

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Koranauslegung first,[3] and then the *Vorlesungen*,[4] in a way also the second volume of the *Muhammedanische Studien*. The person who was most instrumental in this was ʿAlī Ḥasan ʿAbdalqādir who taught at the Azhar in the thirties and forties; he seems to have been mainly responsible for the translations,[5] and in his lecture courses he is said to have quoted Goldziher's views about Hadith.

The clash is a posterior development which then was projected back into this period. One of ʿAbdalqādir's students who had attended his courses in 1939, Muṣṭafā al-Sibāʿī, later on claimed to have convinced his teacher of Goldziher's errors by way of a speech which he gave in a students' club. The report seems somewhat exaggerated, for when one year later, in 1940, ʿAbdalqādir published his "Historical Survey of Islamic Law" (*Naẓra ʿāmma fī taʾrīkh al-fiqh al-islāmī*) he still included a lot of the incriminated passages, albeit without mentioning Goldziher's name.[6] Nor did he see any reason for interrupting his work on the two translations which came out in 1944 and 1946. Sibāʿī's furore may have been inspired by the rather harsh discussion about somebody else who, a few years before, had tried to disseminate Goldziher's ideas: Ismāʿīl Aḥmad Sālim; the book Sālim had published[7] was quickly withdrawn from the market, and the author accused of being an atheist.[8] Sibāʿī himself, however, was just 24 years old; his attack cannot have produced a resounding echo. He then elaborated his critique in his thesis which he submitted to al-Azhar in 1949, but his work was not published until 1961 when it appeared under the title "The Role of Prophetic Tradition in Islamic Jurisprudence" (*Al-Sunna wa-makānatuhā fī l-tashrīʿ al-islāmī*). It is in the preface of this book that the story crops up for the first time.[9]

39 Meanwhile the spiritual climate had changed. Muṣṭafā al-Sibāʿī had acquired a certain reputation; originating from an old Syrian family he had become the

3 Partial translation Cairo 1944 under the title *Al-Madhāhib al-islāmiyya fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān*; complete translation by ʿAbdalḥalīm al-Najjār, *Madhāhib al-tafsīr al-islāmī*, Cairo 1955.

4 *Al-ʿAqīda wa-l-sharīʿa fī l-Islām*, Cairo 1946; ²Cairo-Baghdad 1378/1959. The translation was made on the basis of the French version by F. Arin, *Le dogme et la loi en Islam*, Paris 1920.

5 He did the partial translation of the *Richtungen* which was accompanied, in an appendix, by a few critical remarks directed against orientalists in general (cf. L. Gardet, G. Anawati, *Introduction à la théologie musulmane*, Paris 1948, 26, n. 2). The translation of the *Vorlesungen* was done by him together with Muḥammad Yūsuf Mūsā and ʿAbdalʿazīz ʿAbdalḥaqq; here the critical remarks were added by Muḥammad Yūsuf Mūsā as can be judged from the preface.

6 Cf. G.H.A. Juynboll, *The authenticity of the Tradition literature. Discussions in modern Egypt*, Leiden 1969, 36.

7 *Min maṣādir al-taʾrīkh al-islāmī*. Cairo 1936.

8 Cf. Juynboll, 'Ismāʿīl Aḥmad Adham (1911–1940), the Atheist', *JAL* 3 (1972), 54 ff.

9 P. 29 ff.; cf. Juynboll, *Authenticity* 35.

founder of the Muslim Brethren in his country and a professor of Islamic law at Damascus university.[10] His book went through many editions and is read even today. The style of his polemics was pretty rough and unpolished.[11] This is, however, a matter of audience and academic level. There were other scholars, younger than Sibāʿī and writing in languages other than Arabic, who criticised Goldziher with well-founded and far-reaching arguments, e.g. Fuat Sezgin[12] or Mohammad Mustafa Azmi (= al-Aʿẓamī).[13] In Egypt, ʿAlī Ḥasan ʿAbdalqādir could peacefully pursue his career. He was elected dean of the Faculty of Theology at al-Azhar University, and he published, in 1962, Junayd's mystical treatises, an extremely difficult text which demanded high editorial skill and was included in the Gibb Memorial Series.[14] It is possible, though, that his turn to Sufism was also a turn to less delicate subjects,[15] for the famous Hungarian *mustashriq* whose ideas he had tried to propagate remained a target of popular polemics. Even Shaykh Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, a prominent spokesman of moderate Islamic revivalism like Sibāʿī, but now in Egypt, could be accused, as late as 1989, of owing his aberrations to unbelievers like Goldziher.[16]

Sibāʿī had, of course, never read Goldziher himself. In Syria, educated people knew French but not German. But he did not quote Léon Bercher's French translation of the second volume of the *Studien* either which had appeared in 1952.[17] In the Arab context this was of no importance. Ultimately he was not

10 J. Reissner, *Ideologie und Politik der Muslimbrüder Syriens*, Freiburg 1980, 121 ff.; *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World* IV. 71 f.

11 Cf. Juynboll, *Authenticity* 105 ff.

12 *Buhârî'nin kaynakları hakkında araştırmalar*. Istanbul 1956.

13 *Studies in Early Ḥadīth Literature. With a critical edition of some early texts*, Beirut 1968, reprint: Indianapolis 1978; again a PhD thesis, but now submitted to a Western University (Cambridge) and supervised by an "orientalist" (R.B. Serjeant). Like Sezgin, Azmi deals with Goldziher mainly in his introduction (8 ff.), but it is interesting to see that when he argues against him in detail he does so with regard to the same point which had already been raised by Sibāʿī when he was still a student: Goldziher's comments about al-Zuhrī (289 ff. and before).

14 *The Life, Personality and Writings of al-Junayd*, London 1962. (Cf. my review in *Oriens* 20 (1967), 217 ff.)

15 He had been working on the topic for years; cf. his article 'The Doctrine of Al-Junayd. Analytical Study of the Doctrine of Al-Junayd Based on his Letters', *Islamic Quarterly* 1 (1954), 167 ff. and 219 ff.

16 Ashraf b. ʿAbdalmaqṣūd Ibn ʿAbdarraḥīm, *Jināyat al-shaykh Muḥammad al-Ghazālī ʿalā l-ḥadīth wa-ahlihī*, Ismailia 1989, 53 ff.; cf. D. Brown, *Rethinking tradition in modern Islamic thought*, Cambridge 1996, 130.

17 *Etudes sur la tradition islamique*. Paris 1952.

engaged in a discussion with Goldziher, but with ʿAbdalqādir and the current
40 of thinking his | teacher had represented. The title of Sibāʿī's book alludes rather openly to ʿAbdalqādir's *Historical Survey of Islamic Law*; both wrote about law, but where ʿAbdalqādir says *taʾrīkh* Sibāʿī says *sunna*. It was all a question of Muslim identity. The uneasy marriage with Europe was over. ʿAbdalqādir had still belonged to the generation which, like Ṭāhā Ḥusayn or ʿAbdarraḥmān Badawī, had been formed in the liberal intellectual climate of the young Egyptian universities founded under King Fuʾād.[18] Now the entire discourse underwent considerable changes. When, in 1967, Goldziher's *Muhammedanische Studien* came out in an English translation, by S. Stern and C.R. Barber, it had got a new name: "Muslim Studies". Chr. Snouck Hurgronje and H.A.R. Gibb had still called their books "*Mohammedanism*", without any protestations being heard from the Muslim side;[19] Schacht had written about "The Origins of *Muhammadan* Jurisprudence".[20] Now, some years after Sibāʿī's attack, it was a matter of courtesy to avoid the expression in order not to hurt Muslim feelings. As a matter of fact, it was from now onward Schacht's book which attracted a great deal of the furore.[21] He had derived from Goldziher's analysis rigid methodological conclusions and applied them to the churchfather of Sunni jurisprudence, al-Shāfiʿī (whose *Risāla* had not yet been accessible to Goldziher when he wrote his *Muhammedanische Studien*[22]).

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18 Ṭāhā Ḥusayn (1889–1973), though still trained at al-Azhar, had become the first graduate of Cairo University (with a thesis on Maʿarrī!, cf. *EI*² X 95). ʿAbdarraḥmān Badawī was one generation younger. [He died in 2002 at the age of 85; cf. the obituary by R. Rashed in *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 13 (2003), 163 ff.]

19 London-New York 1916 and Oxford 1949 respectively.

20 Oxford 1950.

21 Though in this case there were no translations, and the polemics were quickly supplemented by serious criticism; the best example is the second book written by M.M. Aʿẓamī/Azmi (who now transcribed his name as Azami): *On Schacht's Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*, Riyadh 1985. The debate about Schacht is characterized by the fact that in the meantime English had become the main language medium. Aʿẓamī translated his PhD thesis into Arabic (*Dirāsāt fī l-ḥadīth al-nabawī wa-taʾrīkh tadwīnihī*, Riyadh 1976), but his impact on the Arab world could not compete with Sibāʿī's.

22 Snouck Hurgronje had heard about the two old manuscripts of the *Risāla* preserved in Cairo (obviously the copies written by Rabīʿ b. Sulaimān and by Ibn Jamāʿa) and mentions them in one of his letters to Goldziher (9. Febr. 1886; cf. van Koningsveld, *Scholarship and Friendship* 56); he was still not sure about the authenticity of the text. The book was not printed until 1312/1895 (in Būlāq, under the supervision of Yūsuf Ṣāliḥ Muḥammad al-Jazmāwī). Goldziher saw it during his stay in Cairo in 1896, but he did not have a chance to read it until the end of 1897 (cf. his *Briefwechsel* with Martin Hartmann, ed. L. Hanisch,

II. Goldziher's diary is a separate story. When, long after his death, it was 41
made available to the public in 1978[23] there were people who openly regretted its having been printed without any abridgments.[24] The shock was great; nobody had expected such emotional outbursts from a well-balanced scholar such as Goldziher. The passages we have to deal with for our purpose are emotional, too, but they are so in a positive sense; they reveal unrestrained enthusiasm about the cultural environment which he came to know during his trip to the Near East. There is this famous comment about his stay in Damascus: "I truly entered in those weeks into the spirit of Islam to such an extent that ultimately I became inwardly convinced that I myself was a Muslim and judiciously discovered that this was the only religion which, even in its doctrinal and official formulation, can satisfy philosophical minds. My ideal was to elevate Judaism to a similar rational level. Islam, my experience taught me, was the only religion in which superstition and pagan elements were proscribed, not by rationalism but by the Orthodox doctrine".[25] Or, later on in Cairo: "My way of thinking was completely directed towards Islam; also subjectively I was drawn in this direction by my sympathies. I called my monotheism Islam, and I did not lie when I said that I believed in Muḥammad's prophecies".[26]

We should not forget that all this was written in retrospection, sixteen years after the event. We have, however, an older version of it, namely the notes made by Goldziher during the journey itself. Strangely enough, he did not look them up when he formulated the introductory chapter to his later diary; he relied on his memory, and he did not realize that he was confusing certain details.[27] His notes are sometimes very laconic and rather difficult to interpret.[28] Moreover,

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Wiesbaden 2000, 78 and 84ff.). The first study about it was a thesis written at Leiden: L.J. Graf, *Al-Shāfiʿīs Verhandeling over de Wortelen van den Fiqh*, Leiden-Amsterdam 1934.

23 Ignaz Goldziher, *Tagebuch*. Hrsg. Alexander Scheiber, Leiden 1978.

24 E. Ullendorff in his review in *BSOAS* 42 (1979), 553.

25 *Tagebuch* 59.

26 Ib. 71.

27 This has been shown by the editor of this text: Raphael Patai, *Ignaz Goldziher and his Oriental Diary. A Translation and Psychological Portrait*, Detroit 1987, 65f.

28 The edition is not without mistakes; Patai was not always able to interpret Arabic quotations correctly or to identify the persons mentioned in the text (cf. the article by L.I. Conrad in *JRAS* 1990, 105ff.). Patai was not an Arabist. He was born in Budapest and had heard about Goldziher through the comments of his father; later on he had studied, in 1930–1931, for a short time with C. Brockelmann at Breslau before moving to Jerusalem and finally to the United States (13; cf. also id., *The Jews of Hungary*, Detroit 1996, 394ff.). Rich material about his own biography can be found in his books *Apprentice in Budapest. Memories of a World That Is No More*, Salt Lake City 1988, and *Between Budapest and Jerusalem. The Patai*

they end one month after his arrival in Cairo; he had become very busy when
42 he started attending | classes at al-Azhar.[29] But we can easily see from what we have in hand that when writing out of immediate experience he used less sweeping language. This was not yet the moment of generalization and selective reminiscing but of observation and eager assimilating.

Nevertheless there are enough pertinent remarks where the later overall picture announces itself. Goldziher had always been interested in comparisons between the three monotheistic religions. His eye had been sharpened by the situation in Hungary itself. Only a few years before his trip to the Near East the Jewish community to which he himself belonged had been accorded equal rights with the Christian population; the law was passed by the Parliament on November 25, 1867, shortly after the so-called Compromise ("Ausgleich") which granted Hungary complete internal independence within the Austro-Hungarian Empire.[30] But the Hungarian Jews were deeply split between the Orthodox, the "Guardians of the Faith" (*Wächter des Glaubens*) who followed the direction indicated by Rabbi Ḥātam Sōfēr (= Moses Schreiber, 1762–1839) and his yeshiva at Bratislava, Slovakia,[31] on one side and the Neolog faction on the other. In between there was a third group, the so-called "Status quo congregationists" who tried to avoid the enervating quarrels going on between both factions and with whom Goldziher seems to have felt most at ease.[32] As

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Letters, 1933–1938, Salt Lake City 1992. His "psychological portrait" of Goldziher has been criticized by L.I. Conrad in a second article in the same volume of *JRAS* 1990, 225 ff.

29 Conrad, ib. 111. Conrad had the opportunity to consult the original which is now preserved at the Jewish Theological Seminary at New York. Patai had rather surmised that the last part had got lost in Budapest at the end of the Second World War (*Diary* 26). But this seems quite improbable: it is only true for the annotated and interleaved copies of Goldziher's printed works. The bulk of his library had been acquired by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 1923.

30 Cf. W. Pietsch, *Zwischen Reform und Orthodoxie. Der Eintritt des ungarischen Judentums in die moderne Welt*, Berlin 1999, 80.

31 Until 1918, Slovakia belonged to Hungary. For Ḥātam Sōfēr cf. *Encyclopaedia Judaica* XV 77 ff.

32 *Tagebuch* 22. The best overview of the situation is to be found in Patai, *Jews of Hungary* (see above, n. 28), 312 ff.; for the part played by German Jewry in this process, cf. Pietsch 67 ff. Goldziher's concept of religion as reflected in his *Oriental Diary* has been highlighted by Conrad in *JRAS* 1990, 235 ff.; as far as Judaism is concerned, Conrad (like A. Hourani, *Islam in European thought*, Cambridge 1991, 37) assumes a lasting impact by Abraham Geiger (1810–1874) with whom Goldziher had studied in Berlin (cf. his article in I.R. Netton [ed.], *Golden Roads* [above, n. 1], 123 ff. and 145). It might be worthwhile to check the papers of the Jewish communal archives with regard to Goldziher in this respect; they are, to

a child he had witnessed how, in 1858, a Rabbi who belonged to the reform party (the "Neologs") had been forced to give up his office at | Székesfehérvár/ 43
Stuhlweissenburg where Goldziher was born.[33] To him Judaism was primarily a religion of study, and now he discovered that Islam, too, made "a religious duty of study itself".[34] In this respect, both religions differed from Christianity where "the layman must know nothing of that which belongs to the studies of the priest". He generalized a bit; what he meant by "Christianity" here was the Catholic milieu in Hungary. But this was not his main point anyway; he was simply struck by the unpretentious devotion to learning which he found among his Muslim friends. This is what explains his enthusiasm; he had had the opportunity of meeting Islam in its human reality when he was in his most impressionable years.

Immediate contact with the Islamic world was a rare thing at his time. German orientalists of the 19th century did normally not travel in the Near East; before 1871 the country was too poor (and too fragmented) for that. Nöldeke never went there, nor did Wellhausen.[35] Goldziher, however, belonged to a different tradition. Under the Habsburg monarchy, orientalists had become accustomed to a more practical understanding of their business. Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall (1774–1856) had been trained as a "Sprachknabe", a language boy, in Istanbul, and Alfred von Kremer (1828–1889) had worked for some thirty years in the consular service of the Austrian empire in Alexandria, Cairo, Beirut and elsewhere. Goldziher owed his chance to the pioneering phase of Hungary after 1867; the universities were in need of young talents, and he was sent around in order to learn European methodology, first at Berlin and Leipzig, before his doctorate (which he got at the age of 20) and afterwards at Leiden and Vienna. Finally, when he was already a docent at the University of Budapest, he was offered a scholarship "in order to learn the colloquial language in Syria and Egypt and to get accustomed with Arab bureaucratical methods in the European consulates",[36] and he gladly agreed. But he never

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my knowledge, still preserved. – Goldziher's patron, Baron József Eötvös, the minister of religions (who was also responsible for the educational system) had done everything to conserve or to reestablish unity among the Hungarian Jews. The official schism occured in 1871, with the agreement of the Hungarian government (Pietsch 80); Eötvös died in the same year, shortly before Goldziher left for his journey.

33 *Tagebuch* 22; Pietsch 75.

34 *Diary* 105.

35 The main exception, after 1871, was Eduard Sachau (1845–1930) who taught at the University of Berlin.

36 *Tagebuch* 54.

totally complied with the task he had been given the money for. The consuls did not see much of him; he used to visit his Muslim friends instead and to work with manuscripts in the libraries.[37] One month after his arrival in Damascus he entrusted to his diary: "Still I must learn the colloquial Arabic".[38] He did so in the end,[39] but he impressed his partners by his mastery of the classical
44 language. When the | Egyptian minister of education wanted to converse with him in French, he insisted on using the *fuṣḥā* instead.[40]

This makes us suspect that those who had sent him out were somewhat disappointed when he came back. He had not become the useful specialist they wanted him to be.[41] The same fact, however, gives us the clue for understanding why the Muslims he had met were so fascinated by him. He knew not only their holy language, a literary idiom which they admired but did normally not use when they talked to each other; he was also well versed in their religious and literary tradition: the Quran and its exegesis, Islamic law, poetry and medieval Arabic grammar. He was visibly flattered by his success, and he felt completely at home in this new environment. 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. Orthodox Jews continued to speak Yiddish[42] and wanted any innovation as such to be forbidden;[43] they insisted on the *Shulḥan Arukh*, the famous religious code composed by Joseph Caro in the sixteenth century, remaining the basis of religious and communal life.[44] Compared with them, the Muslims he

37 Ib. 66.

38 *Diary* 125.

39 There is no reason for assuming that he despised the dialects. He knew a lot about them as is attested by his review of W. Spitta's *Grammatik des arabischen Vulgärdialectes von Aegypten*, in ZDMG 35 (1881), 514 ff. (Cf. the article by S. Hopkins in the present volume.)

40 *Tagebuch* 68.

41 Cf. *Tagebuch* 56: "Obzwar officiell entsendet, um mich zu einer Parliermaschine à la Vámbéry herauszubilden, konnte mir diese Aufgabe nicht wichtig genug erscheinen, um mich auf eine solche Spielerei zu concentrieren." For Goldziher's relationship with A. Vámbéry cf. Conrad in JRAS 1990, 243 ff. It is quite possible that, as Conrad surmises (in: Netton, *Golden Roads* [above, n. 1], 126 f.), Eötvös's successor in the ministry had sent him out mainly in order to get some respite for solving the problem of his academic career.

42 Pietsch 71 and 78 f.

43 Ib. 93.

44 Ib. 83; cf. Patai, *Jews of Hungary* 318 and 322. Goldziher's own study *Der Mythos bei den Hebräern* which he published in his youth (Leipzig 1876) was designated to be banned, and the Rabbinic Seminary at Budapest, though not dominated by the Orthodox, later on did not dare appoint him as professor because of this (M. Carmilly-Weinberger in id., *The*

encountered seemed to be, potentially at least, much more cosmopolitan and open-minded. They observed their ritual duties[45] without refusing Europe or the Western world for that; they were proud of their own culture and curious about the progress made outside.

Damascus was best in this respect; the people he had met there were mostly 45
not scholars in the narrow sense of the word but merchants and, in one way or the other, members of the local middle class who were deeply embedded in their tradition and eagerly willing to learn more about it. Egypt was already different; Goldziher complained about the Westernization of its ruling class, and at a certain moment he agitated, as he says, "in the bazaars against the preference given to the Europeans" by the Egyptian government.[46] Worst of all was Constantinople; he despised the town because of its promiscuity. He had learned Turkish, and he understood it; but he never showed any pleasure in using it. To him this language was mainly an idiom of commerce and administration. Turks belonging to the high society did not pray, he noticed.[47] Istanbul looked to him like the "great Jew-town of the Muslims".[48] When he wrote this down he anticipated the repugnance he was going to feel against his superiors at Budapest whom he would have to serve as a communal secretary for thirty years. They were merchants, and they were Neologs, but devoid of any religious interest as it seemed to him.[49] Even Jerusalem left him cold. It is true that he calls it the "Holy City" in his diary, but he does so in English, which gives the expression, in its German context, a rather sarcastic ring.[50] He wanted to emphasize that the town was dominated by English and American mission-

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Rabbinical Seminary of Budapest 1877–1977, New York-Budapest 1986, 21 f.). He remembered being called a "Spinozist" and freethinker already as a schoolboy, because of a treatise on prayer which he had written. This may have been a different case, though, for he had also been pert enough to have it printed, at the age of twelve (*Tagebuch* 22). [Cf. now also L. Conrad, 'Ignaz Goldziher on Ernest Renan. From Orientalist Philology to the Study of Islam', in: Martin Kramer (ed.), *The Jewish Discovery of Islam*, Tel Aviv 1999, 137 ff.]

45 When visiting Leiden Goldziher refused an invitation by the famous R.P.A. Dozy (1820–1883) because Dozy did not serve kosher food (*Tagebuch* 48).

46 The occasion was somewhat unusual: the Viceroy's celebrating the wedding of his daughter (*Tagebuch* 71). European guests were certainly welcome to admire the splendour and progressiveness of the country and its rulers.

47 *Diary* 104.

48 Ib. 96; cf. Conrad in: Netton (ed.), *Golden Roads* 113.

49 When he finally got his professorship in 1905 he is reported to have taken leave from them with a pun on Exodus 31:17 which shows his estrangement quite clearly (Patai, *Jews of Hungary* 395).

50 *Diary* 133.

aries obsessed by the idea of converting the local Jews.[51] These, on the other hand, were in his view "nothing but disgusting people". He did not believe the Jews to form a "people" of their own, as had done Ḥātam Sōfēr and some of his disciples;[52] throughout his life he remained at a distance from political Zionism.[53]

III. But if he was convinced that the Arab world where it was most homogeneous would be able to organically reform itself, where did he then notice signs
46 of this | development? Not in the renewal of language and literature which took place in the *nahḍa*, the "renaissance" initiated by Christian authors and scholars in Beirut. "I must confess that I am unable to like the Christian Arabs", he says in his diary. Again it was the influence of the Protestant missionaries which was not to his taste: "This pietistic rabble makes a depressing impression on the European. It is a false education, a degeneration of the original racy Arabism".[54] What he was looking for was rather a combination of Arabic literature and Islamic religion, and this he only found in Damascus. But 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; Wahhābism was still far away. What he saw at work among cultivated Syrian Muslims seems rather to have been freemasonry. He alludes to it several times, without any sign of indignation or criticism; freemasonry was at his period a common phenomenon among intellectuals of the Ottoman Empire as it was in Europe.[55] It was interconfessional, and Muslim reformers adhered to it, Jamāladdīn al-Afghānī for instance or Muḥammad ʿAbduh.[56]

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51 With deep indignation he described the methods which they used with regard to the Jewish community in Damascus in order to achieve this (*Tagebuch* 61).

52 Pietsch 93.

53 *Diary* 70; cf. J. Pedersen in his preface to J. Somogyi's edition of Goldziher's *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 1, p. viii, and Conrad in *JRAS* 1990, 262 f. He shared, however, with Theodor Herzl his disgust with Jerusalem and its Jewish inhabitants (cf. Herzl's Diary s.a. 1898: *Briefe und Tagebücher*, ed. A. Bein et al., vol. II, Berlin-Frankfurt-Wien 1983, 680 ff.). For a deeper analysis of the development inside Hungarian Judaism cf. Patai, *Jews of Hungary* 328 ff.

54 *Diary* 110; cf. Conrad in: Netton (ed.), *Golden Roads* 114.

55 Cf. J.M. Landau in: *EI²*, *Suppl.* 296 f. s. v. *Farmāsūniyya*; now also Paul Dumont, 'Freemasonry in Turkey. A by-product of Western penetration', in: *European Review* 13 (2005) 481–493; also, extensively though restricted to Iran, H. Azinfar e.a. in: *EIr* X 205 ff. s.v. *Freemasonry*.

56 Cf., in more detail, F. Steppat, 'Eine Bewegung unter den Notablen Syriens 1877–1878', in: W. Voigt (ed.), *Vorträge 17. Deutscher Orientalistentag, ZDMG* Suppl. 1, Wiesbaden 1969. 631 ff. (reprinted in: *Islam als Partner. Islamkundliche Aufsätze 1944–1996*. Beirut 2001,

In Damascus the trend apparently emerged out of enlightened Sufism. This was due to the influence of the famous Amīr ʿAbdalqādir (d. 1300/1883), the former leader of the Algerian resistance who, via France, had come to live in the town since 1855. He was a fervent adherent of Ibn ʿArabī; he edited his *Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*, and he was buried next to him in the mosque built over Ibn ʿArabī's tomb by Sultan Selim in a suburb of Damascus (Ṣāliḥiyya). But he also became a member of the local lodge in 1864.[57] He sent his sons to Europe, to Italy and even to the country against which he had fought, to France; one of them became the grand master of the Syrian lodge, and Goldziher was quite familiar with him.[58] Another case is even | more astonishing. A certain Muṣṭafā al-Sibāʿī, 47
"a venerable Arab", as Goldziher says, with whom he had "concluded a covenant of friendship", probably a distant relative of the revivalist mentioned above,[59] but again a Freemason and a lover of Sufism, owner of an impressive collection of manuscripts,[60] wanted to share with him his admiration for ʿUmar Khayyām, the Persian mystical poet and sceptic whom he had come to know through a French translation.[61] This representative of Syrian Islam and Damascene bourgeoisie was not afraid to have a meal with him during Ramaḍān when the other people were fasting. It is true that he did so secretly, in Goldziher's apartment, not in his own house, and Goldziher, in retrospect, called him "the

150 ff., particularly 162 ff.) and W. Ende, 'Waren Afġānī und ʿAbduh Agnostiker?', ib., 650 ff., particularly 652 f.

57 Landau, ib.

58 *Diary* 123 and 127; *Tagebuch* 59, immediately before his enthusiastic remarks about Islam (see above, n. 25). It was this son, Muḥammad b. ʿAbdalqādir b. Muḥyīddīn (1256/1840–1331/1913) who wrote the biography of his father (*Tuḥfat al-zāʾir fī maʾāthir al-amīr ʿAbdalqādir*); he died in Istanbul and was known as Muḥammad Pasha (cf GAL S 2/887; Kaḥḥāla, *Muʿjam al-muʾallifīn*, Damascus 1376/1957–1381/1961, vol. X, 184: Ziriklī, *Aʿlām*, ³Beirut 1969, VII. 82). For the genealogy and a short history of the family cf. L. Schatkowski Schilcher, *Families in Politics. Damascene Factions and Estates of the 18th and 19th Centuries*. Stuttgart 1985, 215 ff.

59 The Sibāʿīs are found all over Syria. The revivalist was born into a branch of the family who lived at Ḥimṣ (Reissner, *Muslimbrüder* [n. 10, above], 121). The person whom Goldziher met in Damascus originated from there and was inspector of the *awqāf* for the Holy Places at Mecca and Medina (*Tagebuch* 58); he was still alive, at a rather advanced age, in 1914 when Muḥammad Kurd ʿAlī visited Goldziher at Budapest (ib. 282 where, however, Kurd ʿAlī appears as *ʿAlī Kurdī*; cf. EI² V 437 f.).

60 Kaḥḥāla mentions him as the author of a treatise on manuscripts or paleography (*Muʿjam al-muʾallifīn* XII 253 f.); as far as the date of Sibāʿī's death is concerned he does not have any additional information.

61 *Diary* 114 f.; cf. also 120.

arch-hypocrite" for that.[62] But when Goldziher wrote his diary he was still in another mood. Though noting, with certain amusement, that Sibāʿī tried to convert him to his masonic ideas[63] he agreed with him in regarding the *tarāwīḥ* prayers, a wide-spread feature of popular Sufī piety in Ramaḍān,[64] as a mere "comedy".[65] Only at a more advanced age, in his *Tagebuch*,[66] did he assume a different attitude.

Muslim intellectuals, at that time, were in Damascus still under the impact of the riots in July 1860, when, in the wake of quarrels between Druzes and Maronites in southern Lebanon, a Muslim mob had invaded the Christian quarters of the town and massacred part of the population; the Amīr ʿAbdalqādir, by his intervention, had saved some hundreds of human lives at that moment.[67] During Goldziher's visit the Algerian circle had been joined by the young Ṭāhir al-Jazā'irī (1268/1852–1338/1920), a "somber Maghrebi"[68] whose father had come to Damascus some time before the Amīr, in 1846.[69] He introduced Goldziher to his teacher ʿAbdalghanī b. Ṭālib al-Maydānī (1222/1808–1298/1881), a
48 Ḥanafī jurist of pure Damascene | origin.[70] Sufism in the style of Ibn ʿArabī was not particularly to his liking, but he nourished certain sympathies for the Muʿtazilites[71] and, in this respect, partook in the neo-Muʿtazilī movement which developed among Arab thinkers of this period and was duly taken into account by Goldziher in his later work.[72] All through his life he regarded Goldziher as much of a friend as he did Muḥammad ʿAbduh.[73]

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62 *Tagebuch* 60.

63 *Diary* 126.

64 Cf. *EI*² X 222 s. v.

65 *Diary* 123.

66 58.

67 Schatkowsky Schilcher, *Families in Politics* 87 ff.

68 *Diary* 119.

69 Cf. J.H. Escovitz, 'He was the Muḥammad ʿAbduh of Syria. A study of Ṭāhir al-Jazā'irī and his Influence', *IJMES* 18 (1986), 293 ff.; also W. Ende, *Arabische Nation und islamische Geschichte*, Beirut 1977, 60 ff.; Ziriklī III 320.

70 *Tagebuch* 58 (where Ṭāhir al-Jazā'irī seems to be meant by the somewhat mysterious "junge maghrebinische Theologe" mentioned there); *Diary* 124 and 126 (where *ʿAbdalghanī* appears in wrong transcription as *ʿAbd al-Jānī*); Escovitz 294; cf. Kaḥḥāla V 274 f. and Ziriklī IV 159.

71 Escovitz 299 f.

72 *Vorlesungen über den Islam*² 291. English translation by A. and R. Hamori. *Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law*, Princeton 1981, 262; cf. R. Caspar, 'Le renouveau du muʿtazilisme', *MIDEO* 4 (1957), 141 ff.

73 Escovitz 297; cf. Conrad in *JRAS* 1990, 240 f.

IV. And what about Ḥadīth? In the Oriental Diary Ḥadīth is almost totally absent. Syrian scholars did not yet regard it as a vehicle of reform; Jamāladdīn al-Qāsimī who afterwards wrote an influential book in this direction which earned Rashīd Riḍā's praise,[74] was only seven years old when Goldziher visited Damascus.[75] Ṭāhir al-Jazā'irī praised the Mu'tazilites for having "bypassed the nitpicking of the *muḥaddithūn*".[76] In order to get a clearer perspective of the actual situation we therefore have to look at another area: India. Among the Muslims of the subcontinent the adherents of the prophetic tradition had joined up in a movement of reformist character, the Ahl-i Ḥadīth[77] which however, in the seventies of the nineteenth century, came under attack from another reformer who, because of his bold views, quickly won considerable fame among European orientalists: Aḥmad Khan (1817–1898).[78] He thought that the Ahl-i Ḥadīth proceeded from the wrong angle. Reason alone should rather be followed, together with the Qur'ān; Ḥadīth, on the contrary, even as far as it had been preserved in the canonical collections, would always be subject to doubt.[79] Aḥmad Khan had become acquainted with the orientalist approach to Ḥadīth through people like Aloys Sprenger (1813–1893), an Austrian scholar who had lived in India for more than twelve years,[80] or Protestant | 49
missionaries like William Muir (1819–1905) who had made clear to him that only the Scripture (*sola scriptura*) could be a basis for serious religious discussion.[81] Goldziher had probably heard about Aḥmad Khan rather early; later on, in his *Vorlesungen*, lectures which he had been supposed to deliver in America and which were published in 1910, he mentions him as "one of the leaders of the spiritual movement for the reorganisation of Islam", an Islam which "– in the

74 *Qawā'id al-taḥdīth min fann muṣṭalaḥ al-ḥadīth*; Damascus 1935 (and earlier?), with an introduction by Rashīd Riḍā.

75 He lived from 1283/1866 to 1332/1914 (cf. Ziriklī, *A'lām* ^{3}II 131 > Kaḥḥāla III 157 f., XI 220 und XIII 420; Brockelmann, *GAL* S 2/777).

76 Escovitz 299.

77 Cf. *EI*^{2} I 259 f. s. v.

78 Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan 1857–1964*. Oxford 1967, 31 ff.; *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World* I 57 f.

79 Cf. D. Brown, *Rethinking tradition in modern Islamic thought* (above, n. 16), 32 ff.

80 On him now M. Ikram Chagatai in: *Austrian Scholarship in Pakistan. A Symposium dedicated to the memory of Aloys Sprenger*, Islamabad 1997, 9 ff. For Ḥadīth especially cf. A. Sprenger, 'On the Origin of Writing Down Historical Records among the Musulmans', *JRAS* Bengal 25 (1856), 303 ff. and 375 ff.; also the chapter about "Die Sunna" in the introduction to his book *Das Leben und die Lehre des Mohammad*, Berlin 1861–65, xxvii ff.

81 Brown 34 f.; like Sprenger, Muir wrote a biography of Muḥammad, the first one in English as Sprenger's was the first one (according to modern standards) in German.

rationalist form, to be sure, which these men represent – has a right to life amidst the currents of modern civilization".[82]

This gives us the answer to our question. The marriage between East and West had just started, and the Muslims had not yet discovered how uneasy it was. Sir Aḥmad Khan's experiment ultimately failed; in our days only Muʿammar al-Qadhdhāfī thinks that Islam would do better without Ḥadīth or the Sunna.[83] Jamāladdīn al-Afghānī (whom Goldziher had met in Cairo[84]) was among the first to attack the Indian approach from outside.[85] In the long run, the existential roots of the Sunna turned out to be too deep. The entire juridical system was built upon Ḥadīth, which means not only law as we understand it but also matters of communal identity and ritual practice, the so-called *sunna ʿamaliyya*; Rashīd Riḍā never dared touch this sector.[86] Riḍā's teacher Muḥammad ʿAbduh had been even more conservative; he accepted Ḥadīth as a whole, with certain reservations only concerning the *āḥād*, i.e. prophetic traditions which were known by means of one *isnād* alone.[87] Such limited criticism was nothing new.[88] Where ʿAbduh had new ideas, however, he sometimes induced repercussions which were in favour of Ḥadīth. In his *Risāla fī l-tawḥīd* he enhanced the historical role of the Prophet, as a cultural hero as it were. This shift which put the emphasis on earthly and temporal reality instead of preexistential perfection (as expressed in the concept of the *insān al-kāmil*) was inspired by Western historicism, but as a result of it the *sunna nabawiyya* became all the more indispensable, as a symbol of authority and a proof for the clear-sightedness of the founder of the community.

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82 *Vorlesungen* 290 f.; English translation 262. Cf. also his remark in *Richtungen der islamischen Koranauslegung*, Leiden 1920, 319 f. Aziz Ahmad states the close affinity between Ahmad Khan's and Goldziher's position (*Islamic Modernism* 49); when reacting against Muir and Sprenger, however, the Indian reformer could sound rather apologetical (cf. the analysis by Ch.W. Troll, *Sayyid Ahmad Khan. A Reinterpretation of Muslim Theology*, New Delhi 1978, 132 ff.).

83 R. Badry, *Die Entwicklung der Dritten Universaltheorie* (DUT) *Muʿammar al-Qaḏḏāfīs in Theorie und Praxis*, Frankfurt 1986, 201 ff.

84 Conrad in *JRAS* 1990, 241.

85 Cf. Aziz Ahmad, 'Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, Jamāl al-dīn al-Afghānī and Muslim India', *SI* 13 (1960), 55 ff.

86 Brown 41.

87 Ib. 37.

88 The *āḥād* problem was an old topic of *uṣūl al-fiqh*; cf. my *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra* (1–6, Berlin-New York 1991–1997), vol. IV, 651 f. where the beginnings of the discussion about it are briefly described and where further references are given.

This process could, in all its complexity, not have been foreseen by Goldziher in 1873. And although he never lost a keen sociological interest in the success and failure of modern Islam,[89] he could not entirely forget the emotions of his youth. When visiting Cairo again, with a group of Hungarian school-teachers, in 1896, he was disappointed by the development of higher education in the country. He went to see al-Azhar, incognito and accompanied by a single student, and silently listened to a few lecture courses, reminiscing about the past. But he was shocked when, now as an official guest, he was shown around in the Dār al-ʿulūm which had been founded one year before his first trip and, in the meantime, had become a serious competitor to the older institution.[90] The religious education offered there, subsumed under the titele of *diyāna* instead of *tafsīr*, *ḥadīth* or *fiqh* reminded him of the *Fortschrittsjuden*, the "progress Jews" of his own country, and he was not pleased.[91] Fundamentally he never ceased being convinced that he was in tune with the Islamic world. "The adherents of Islam can only raise themselves to a higher level of religious life if they study their religion in a historical way", he said.[92] Just as in his youth, he always imagined the danger to be coming from 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".[93] He did not yet realize that he was standing between the fronts, and the conflict was still a matter of the future.

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89 For more on this topic cf. G. Stauth, 'Frühe Ansätze zu einer Soziologie des Islams: Ignaz Goldziher (1850–1921) und Max Weber (1864–1920)', *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 15 (1990), 38 ff.

90 Cf. *EI*[2] II 131 f. s.v.

91 *Tagebuch* 198 f.

92 'Die Religion des Islams', in: P. Hinneberg, *Die Kultur der Gegenwart* I, Abt. 3 (1906), 142; quoted in J. Waardenburg, *L'Islam dans le miroir de l'Occident*, Paris 1962, 97.

93 Cf. the quotation given in S.D. Goitein, *Goldziher left mikhtāvâw* ("Goldziher as seen through his letters", in Hebrew), in: S. Löwinger and J. Somogyi (eds.), *Goldziher Memorial Volume* I, Budapest 1948, 22.