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Knowledge-Migrants between South Asia and Europe: The Production of Technical and Scientific Ideas among Students and Scientists, 1919-1945

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in History

by

Marjan Sarwar Wardaki

2019

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2019

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Knowledge-Migrants between South Asia and Europe:
The Production of Technical and Scientific Ideas among Students and Scientists,
1919-1945

by

Marjan Sarwar Wardaki
Doctor of Philosophy in History
University of California, Los Angeles, 2019
Professor Nile Spencer Green, Co-Chair
Professor David Warren Sabean, Co-Chair

My doctoral dissertation, "Knowledge-Migrants between South Asia and Europe: The Production of Technical and Scientific Ideas among Students and Scientists, 1919-1945," analyzes the role of Afghan students and German scientists in producing and exchanging ideas about fine arts, medicine, political ideologies, and science. The main goal of my dissertation is to address, using case studies, what the role of travel and circulation was in producing ideas among Afghans in Germany and Germans in Afghanistan, how ideas emerged, which institutions and practices were involved in producing these ideas, and how these ideas circulated and impacted

the social and intellectual fabric of Europe and South Asia. My dissertation argues that the resultant knowledge among these actors was neither fixed nor systematic, but rather a practical activity that was located in the routines of everyday life. These everyday practices are, in turn, important to examine because they uncover overlapping and shared intellectual, material, and political networks that circulated ideas further afield than just within the respective national bounds of Afghanistan, India, or Germany.

The dissertation of Marjan Sarwar Wardaki is approved.

Ann Goldberg

Sanjay Subrahmanyam

Nile Spencer Green, Committee Co-Chair

David Warren Sabean, Co-Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2019

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NOTES ON TRANSLITERATION

German words have been transcribed according to original spelling as they appear in the sources. The transliteration of Persian words follows a simplified approach of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* Transliteration System. Macrons and underdots have been removed, except when Persian authors, journals, and book titles are referenced in the footnotes and bibliography. The Arabic letter ع has been transliterated as ᶜ and has also been used for well-known names such as Ali, and other names starting with the Arabic "Abd." When necessary, a Persian word is kept in the original German transliteration as recorded in the relevant primary sources. For example, Anwar ᶜAli's dissertations appear as both: Enver Ali and Hafis Enver Ali.

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My graduate studies at UCLA have been a unique experience that would not have been possible without the support of numerous people and institutions.

Particularly important for my intellectual and scholarly development were, first of all, my doctoral committee members. Nile Green tirelessly reviewed and commented on several drafts, and has been a passionate supporter and inspiration from the start. Mentoring by example, he taught me to push myself and reach higher than I thought I could go. Thanks to him, I feel prepared for the rigorous academic years ahead. My other co-chair, David Sabean, encouraged me to find my own disciplined independence while guiding me towards questions, methods, and scholarship that will remain with me long after graduate school. I always appreciated his ability to exude honesty and warmth, and to be rigorous and demanding at the same time. I was honored to have Sanjay Subrahmanyam as a committee member and mentor. I have learned so much from him, but above all he taught me the methods of reflection on one's own craft, which he encouraged me to employ as an intellectual academic, a teacher, and a cook. Finally, I thank Ann Goldberg for her astute reading and thorough comments, and for always coming through for me.

Not officially on my committee, yet an avid supporter, mentor, and friend, I will always be thankful to James Gelvin for encouraging me to pursue a PhD. I am deeply indebted to Margaret Jacob for training me in the European field and for commenting on all chapters. Through invaluable conversations, Caroline Ford helped me conceptualize and bridge the field of European History with South Asian History. Peter Stacey made the combination of two fields institutionally possible when he was the Chair of the European field.

At UCLA, the History Department, the Center for European and Eurasian Studies, and the Asia Institute made the research and writing of this project possible. Hadley Porter worked

miracles to promote the well-being of the grad students. I am also grateful to Eboni Shaw, Kamarin Takahara, Paul Padilla, Andrea Lanter, Jonathan P. Ebueng, Liana Grancea, and Khris Go for offering their advice and support in their many different ways. Both David Myers and Stephen Aron were exceptional Department Chairs, and always promoted an open-door policy. The Program on Central Asia was home for the first initial years of the graduate program, and offered a friendly and productive cohort to discuss and exchange ideas, papers, and learn from one another. I thank Mia Bennett, Naomi Caffee, Andrew Grant, Murat Umut Inan, Domenico Ingenito, Kevan Harris, Sevim Kebeli, Elizabeth Leicester, Cal Margulis, Nick Menzies, Aaron Miller, Rick Miller, Selim Hai Peng, Hannah Reiss, Bonnie Richards, Marc Toutant, Roy Bin Wong, and Shao Xuencheng.

Many fellow graduate students and colleagues at UCLA contributed to this work by attending conference presentations, reading drafts, passing their knowledge down, discussing my projects in coffee shops and seminars, and generally making my time at UCLA memorable: Sophia Amir, Sam Anderson, Zainab Arain, Sebouh Aslanian, Reem Bailony, Grace Ballor, Lucille Benevento, Christopher Brennan, Preston Bride, Scottie Buehler, Soraya de Chadarevian, Peter Chesney, Iris Clever, Arnon Degani, Juan Pablo Morales Garza, Kristen Hillaire Glasgow, Lela Gibson, Hippolyte Goux, Latifeh Hagigi, Joshua Herr, Rafi Hessami, Ryan Hilliard, David Hirsch, Eric Hounshell, Lynn Hunt, Erdem Ilter, Milos Jovanovic, Russell Jacoby, Sam Keeley, Robin Kelley, Vipin Krishna, Vinay Lal, Pauline Lewis, Beyza Lorenz, Fredrick Walter Lorenz, Jonathan McCollum, Adam Mowl, Naveena Naqvi, Minayo Nasiali, Kathryn Norberg, Debora Silverman, Michael O'Sullivan, Daniel Ohanian, Nana Osei-Opare, Ted Porter, Barbara Rabinowitz, Teo Ruiz, Winter Rae Schneider, Eoghan Stafford, Guillermo Ruiz-Stovel, Dong Yan, and Jennifer Zhu.

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This dissertation would not have been possible without the help of a number of individuals and their private collection. May and Rolando Schinasi hosted us in Nice, and May has since read all chapters and supported me throughout this project. Paul Bucherer-Dietschi generously shared photographs and archival materials from his rich library, and spent an entire day showing me the beautiful city of Liestal. Finally, I want to thank the Brishna family for their trust, openness, and support of this dissertation.

My life has forever been enriched by close friends who have accompanied me in this journey: Ceren Abi, Sohaib Baig, Roii Ball, Subah Dayal, Heather Eidenmuller, Ali Nehmé Hamdan, Robert and Nurci Hermes, Lindsay Alissa King, Mejgan Massoumi, Muriel McClendon, Liam O'Mara IV, Marissa Petrou, David Poepoe, Jawan Shir Rasikh, Tasneem Sabri, and Sona Tajiryan.

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much better with this pair close by: Karim Wardaki and Stephanie Taylor (both have offered support, and Stephanie even read my work).

My parents, Aiesha and Mohammed Sarwar, followed me from archive to archive, and provided endless encouragement and support to their grandchildren and to me. My siblings, Omar and Nilofar Sarwar, supplied me with love, music, and much needed fun.

Last but not least I want to thank my three favorite Ahmads: Ahmad Walid, Ahmad Zaki, and Ahmad Noah. Their companionship, encouragement, and love helped see me through this project. What an honor it has been to enjoy your love throughout.

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Introduction

The study of the interwar period offers many exciting ways to examine the history of technology. After all, the period after World War I witnessed a shift to a sustained discourse about the interrelationship between science and technology. In other words, it is not until the early twentieth-century when science was seen as an inherently technical field.[1] For the Afghan state and many other fledgling new twentieth-century nations, science and technology offered a means to address relevant issues about development, education, and public health. With the gradual decline of empires, new nations like Afghanistan were drawing on technology to imagine alternative forms of government. The interwar period offers historians the opportunity to explore science not merely as a practice linked to laboratories, but also highlights instances when technology meant different things to distinct political regimes, was discussed within respective intellectual circles, and more interestingly practiced among everyday lives.

This dissertation explores the role of science and technology over the course of diplomatic relations between Afghanistan and Germany, which resulted in the social and intellectual exchanges of Afghan and German students, scientists, and reformers from 1921 to 1941. Through the process of exchanging technological knowledge between Afghanistan and Germany, these actors, whom I call "knowledge-migrants," were embedded in the process of nation-making.

The work of Michael Adas has examined the ways in which European perceptions of material superiority of their own scientific thought and technological innovation shaped European attitudes toward peoples they encountered overseas. While the meanings of science and technology shifted over the course of European overseas expansion, Adas showed that the

[1] See Erik Schatzberg, *Technology: A Critical History of a Concept* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2018); and Theodore Porter, "How Science Became Technical," *Isis* 100, (2009): 292-309.
[2] Michael Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and Ideologies of Western*

achievements and deployments in the realm of science and technology was accompanied with measuring human worth and accomplishments.[2] Drawing on the influential work of Adas, who himself drew from the work of A.R. Hall and Edwin Layton, this study highlights the important difference between "science" and "technology." For Adas described science as theoretical or even applied as an endeavor aimed at gaining knowledge about the natural environment, while technology functioned as the practical effort or application of exercising control over that environment.[3] In this study, the acquision of science is seen in two ways: First, as gaining knowledge about Afghanistan's agricultural, cartographic, and geomorphic environment, designed to enhance German neo-colonial aspirations, and secondly, the attempt to support the acquisition of science by a new class of Afghan youth. Technology, then, is understood in three ways: First, technology is defined as a field of practical knowledge, in which its acquisition and preservation hinged on the attempt to keep Afghan-German diplomacy intact. Secondly, the desire to expand Afghanistan's technological reach set in motion itinerant Afghans and Germans, who hoped to apply their knowledge in the services of their respective states. Thirdly, technology delineates a process whereby knowledge-migrants rendered new skills and methods into new local contexts, i.e., in art schools, in public health institutions, and in new educational institutions. This process was important, because while showing a moment in which German science and technology was intended to develop the Afghan nation and nurture German neo-colonial activities in the region, this study also shows that knowledge-migrants assigned with state-sponsored tasks ended up developing their own unique professional positions. This, in turn, enabled new modes of expertise, knowledge, and reform.

[2] Michael Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and Ideologies of Western Dominance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015).
[3] *Ibid*.,5.

The subsequent chapters deal with these "knowledge-migrants," because their state-sponsored journeys were aimed to facilitate the transfer of technology and science. The emphasis on knowledge allows me to follow their progress from the beginning of their journeys through different stages of their education and professional development. I am interested in examining what kinds of knowledge they were drawn to, and how they appropriated and transferred it back home. The emphasis on knowledge production is useful because it helps highlight common patterns of exchange among disparate-seeming collaborators beyond the confines of religion, ethnicity, nationality, or behavioral commonalities.[4]

I understand migration not as a linear or sedentary process that merely took shape from one place to another, but as a dialogue or movement that continuously engaged itinerants in new networks as they crossed and uncrossed boundaries. In other words, scholarly studies about Afghans in Germany (and even Muslims in Germany) have described the migrants as plagued by exile, conflict, and displacement, and looking to come to Germany either to claim political asylum or to use their sojourn in Germany as a stepping stone for migration to the United States.[5] This framework ignores Afghans who visited Germany in the interwar period with clear intentions to study but return with their scientific training back to Afghanistan. The process of migration examined in the case of the knowledge-migrants shows the flexible and mobile ability to move from one place to another, with concepts such as *Akademische Freiheit* offering opportunities for the Afghan students and the German scientists alike.

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[4] I am drawing here from the work of the Norwegian anthropologist Fredrik Barth, who understood group loyalities as having formed over time and made relevant to social life. In other words, Barth was looking for something like mechanisms, and not for descriptions of manifest forms (i.e., religion, ethnicity, nationality), see: Fredrik Barth, *Political Leadership Among Swat Pathans* (London: Humanities Press, 1965).

[5] For the Afghan diaspora see: Tina A. Gehrig, *Procedures of Exile: Afghan Experiences of Asylum in Germany* (Ph.D. Dissertation: University of California, Irvine, 2006); and Maliha Zulfacar, *Afghan Immigrants in the USA and Germany: A Comparative Analysis of the Use of Ethnic Social Capital* (Münster: Transaction Publishers, 1998).

The migrants under study here are students and scientists who were expected to return and employ their new knowledge and scientific methods in the services of their respective states. They travelled between Afghanistan and Germany to generate new ideas about the fine arts, education, ethnography, politics, public health, and technology, but in the practice of seeking out knowledge ended up producing ideas beyond the expectations of the Afghan and German states. Knowledge-migrants were not subservient pawns in a diplomatic scheme, since, as chapter one will show, diplomacy between Afghanistan and Germany was itself an uneven and unpredictable process. As new regimes surfaced and diplomatic accord in constant flux, knowledge-migrants acted as cultural mediators, who positioned themselves and their new scientific skills within an ever-changing political context.

My dissertation explores the many diverse and overlapping experiences of knowledge exchange within which migrants were embedded and to which they contributed. I trace the lives, everyday practices, and ideas of a subset of Afghan students as they trained at German technical universities, as well as German scientists researching in Afghanistan, to locate them among ethnically, politically, and religiously diverse networks in South Asia and Europe. I argue that while training in new technological and scientific methods, knowledge-migrants not only planned to refashion the institutions of their home countries, but also applied these methods to engage in anti-colonial movements, discuss the anxieties of modern nation-building in South Asia and Europe, and found new institutions to negotiate an ever-changing political landscape.

The German Foreign Office was aware of Afghanistan's long history of troubled relations with England, which had involved a series of disputes fought over resources, sovereignty, and the North-Western borders, resulting in three Anglo-Afghan wars (1839–1842, 1878–1880, and 1919). In light of previous European imperial enterprise in Afghanistan, the Afghan rulers who

fostered diplomacy with Germany sought to strengthen their technological and infrastructural reach over a de-centralized state. To that end, the Afghan and German states agreed to exchange students, scientists, and technocrats between 1921 to 1941 to carry out various state-sponsored projects, such as studying at German technical universities, researching the geomorphic and topographic character of Afghan lands, or executing infrastructural projects of building dams, hospitals, and schools.

Rather than taking a horizontal approach and studying the relationship between a metropole (i.e., Berlin) and a periphery (i.e., Kabul), I focus on the overlapping set of webs and networks that reach well beyond Afghanistan and Germany. As I will discuss in the methodology section in greater depth, I have adopted a wide framework that encompasses a larger set of actors, contexts, influences, and sources. To accomplish this, I have taken up the notion proposed by Sanjay Subrahmanyam on "connected histories" to show the overlapping processes of knowledge production, blurred boundaries, and the appropriation of technological, scientific, and even political ideas, produced, exchanged, and re-shaped within the imperial context among two disparate states and their knowledge-migrants. I am not suggesting that knowledge-migrants were mobilized and their efforts organized by supra-hegemonic political or neo-colonial practices and policies, but that diplomacy between Afghanistan and Germany was explicitly built on an anti-imperial scheme to destabilize the British Empire. As Afghan and German knowledge-migrants sought to mobilize politically, imagine alternative modes of governance, and contemplate new models of nation-states, they synthesized and circulated ideas and material goods between Europe and South Asia, drawing on, and sometimes building on, diasporic and mercantile networks. Such diasporic experimentations, negotiations, and collaborations, in turn,

created new modes and practices of knowledge that were applicable not just in Afghanistan or Germany, but also throughout South Asia, Europe, and even in the Middle East.

In what follows, I will first situate the study within the relevant historiographies of Afghanistan and Germany by drawing on the most relevant literature that has informed this study. I will point out the usefulness of methodological approaches associated with "new imperial history" and the history of science and empire. Secondly, I will describe the methodology that connects the chapters, and propose a solution to the problem of studying knowledge-migrants from scarce sources, in particular those that studied in Germany.

Situating the Study: Towards a Connected History of South Asia and Europe

Scholars of South Asian and German colonialism and empire have focused on studying official colonies, protectorates, borderlands, and post-colonies.[6] In particular, British imperial histories, which are concerned with a bilateral relationship between the metropole and peripheries (e.g., India), rarely look to Afghanistan in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to study a more comprehensive view of the British Raj.

Afghanistan was never formally colonized, yet represented a sort of "imperial frontier area" for Britain. This term has usually been discussed through a political lens, rather than through social and cultural perspectives. When the study of modern Afghanistan is at the center of discussion, it is mainly from a teleological perspective that emphasizes the ostensible *failure* of a nation-making project, in which German technology tried to play a central role, but the Afghan state failed to adopt it efficiently. In other words, the main focus rests on key Afghan reformers' attempts to modernize the Afghan state and adopt forms of nationalism, yet failed to

[6] Among others, see especially Sebastian Conrad, *German Colonialism: A Short History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); and C.A. Bayly, *Indian Society and the Making of British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

foresee that religious traditionalists in the country could not be compelled by the vision of a modern state.[7] Everyday forms of social interactions and ideas that Afghans developed through interactions abroad, and in this specific case, among German-affiliated students and scientists, have been blended into two opposing viewpoints of the "modern" and the "religious."[8]

My analysis moves beyond the reach of diplomatic histories and into new avenues that previous Afghan-German histories have not attempted. Certainly it is true that knowledge-migrants began their transnational journeys as a result of heightened Afghan-German diplomacy, but their lives and practices took on unpredictable and multiple forms. Diplomatic contact may have set events in motion and enabled the intellectual interchange, but it is the changes and contributions in the lives and practices of the knowledge-migrants and their ideas that are of interest here.

My focus on exploring Afghanistan's interconnectivity with Europe (and Germany in particular) derives in large part from scholarship that studies the global early modern empires from an interconnected framework, breaking with nationalism and historical ethnography that

[7] The "failed-state" rhetoric comes in many forms: some scholars have argued that the state's infrastructural range was not sophisticated enough to reach all corners of a fractured society, and others have argued the in-ward values, kinship and loose authority structure of the Afghan tribes prevented modernization. For the first line of argument see Leon Poullada, *Reform and Rebellion in Afghanistan, 1919-1929: King Amanullah's Failure to Modernize a Tribal Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973); and for the second argument see Robert L. Canfield, *Faction and Conversion in a Plural Society: Religious Alignments in the Hindu Kush* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1973).

[8] Afghan-German diplomacy is discussed in: Ludwig Adamec, *Afghanistan's Foreign Affairs to the Mid-Twentieth Century: Relations with the USSR, Germany, and Britain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967); Francis Nicosia, "'Drang nach Osten' Continued? Germany and Afghanistan during the Weimar Republic," *Journal of Contemporary History* 32, no. 2 (1997); Ǧamrad Ǧamšīd, "Die Beziehung zwischen Deutschland und Afghanistan, 1933-1945" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Humboldt University, Dissertation, 1994); and Dr. Alema, "Die Beziehungen zwischen Afghanistan und Deutschland in den Jahren 1919 bis 1929" (PhD Dissertation, Universität Leipzig, 1994). Note: Dr. Alema is officially known as Dr. Alema, because it is common among some Afghan family not to have a surname.

take "closed 'cultural zones'" as the point of inquiry.[9] A connected framework to study Afghanistan and Germany would focused on the important role of mobile actors, their fluid diasporic communities, and the exploration of the interrelationship of modern Afghan history and its global connections to its wider Middle Eastern and South Asian neighbors. Yet, more importantly, I point to the relevance and implications of Afghan events, ideas, and peoples' choices as these intersected with aspects of Germany history.

To best approach a connected history of two disparate nations, I also blend the strengths of Afghan and German historiographies with those found in the historiographies of "new imperial history" and the history of science and empire. This has resulted in replacing the common perception of Afghanistan as economically and geographically isolated with one that shows the important and complex Indo-Afghan kinship and political and trading networks.[10] A new emphasis on an interconnected and circulatory history of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Afghanistan has in fact "de-nationalized" Afghan history, and stressed the role of cross-cultural ideas and networks that have shaped the course of twentieth-century Afghan history.[11] New studies have blurred the lines of the perceived divide between the modern and the

[9] Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Connected Histories: Notes Towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia," *Modern Asian Studies* 31, no.3 (1997): 735-62; and idem., *Explorations in Connected History: From the Tagus to the Ganges* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[10] Robert D. Crews, *Afghan Modern: The History of a Global Nation* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2015); Nile Green, ed., *Afghan History through Afghan Eyes* (Oxford University Press, 2015); Shah Mahmoud Hanifi, *Connecting Histories in Afghanistan: Market Relations and State Formation on a Colonial Frontier* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011); May Schinasi, *Afghanistan at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century: Nationalism and Journalism in Afghanistan: A Study of Seraj ul-Akbhar (1911-1918)* (Naples: Instituto Universitario Orientale, 1979); Christine Noelle-Karimi, "The Abdali Afghans between Multan, Qandahar and Herat in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in *Beyond Swat: History, Society and Economy Along the Afghanistan-Pakistan Frontier*, ed. Benjamin Hopkins and Magnus Marsden (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013); and Magnus Marsden, "From Kabul to Kiev: Afghan Trading Networks across the Former Soviet Union," *Modern Asian Studies* 49, no. 4 (2015).

[11] Robert Nichols, "Afghan Historiography: Classical Study, Conventional Narrative, National Polemic," *History Compass* 3 (2005): 1-16; and Nile Green, "Locating Afghan History," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 45, no. 1 (2013): 132 – 4.

traditional to highlight impetus for reform within "traditional" Islamic circles within Afghanistan.[12]

My dissertation aims to contribute to this growing scholarship by reexamining Afghanistan's social and intellectual linkages with the European world, in particular with interwar Germany. The goal here is to build on these studies and break outside traditional dichotomies of "colonized," and "colonizer" or "Orient" and "Occident," and evaluate instead cases in which Germans and Afghans cooperated, competed, and negotiated the challenges of modernity in the spheres of politics, culture, and intellectual life.

The dissertation is also situated in the growing field of German colonial and imperial histories, in particular it draws inspiration from the work of Suzanne Marchand and Sebastian Conrad, which I put in conversation with their British peers in the *"*new imperial histories.*"* Marchand has argued that the recent turn towards the post-colonial runs the risk of emphasizing merely a small part of a much longer and much more complicated trajectory between Germany and India.[13] She reminded us to consider instances when scholarly endeavors produced "appreciation, dialogue, self-critique, perspectival reorientation, and personal and cultural enrichment."[14] Building on Marchand, Kris Manjapra and Sugata Bose studied intellectual terrains of exchanges, or what they termed "Cosmopolitan Thought Zones," to supplement the commonly assumed bilateral British-India axis, and trace instead the intellectual and social configuration of shared transnational spaces during the peak of anticolonial struggle in South

[12] Senzil Nawid, *Religious Response to Social Change in Afghanistan* (Costa Mesa: Mazda Publishers, 1999); and Fredrik Barth, *Political Leadership*.
[13]Suzanne Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire: Religion, Race, and Scholarship* (Washington: German Historical Institute, 2009).
[14] Marchand, *German Orientalism*, xxv.

Asia.[15] Manjapra suggested frameworks such as "entanglement" as particularly valuable, because it allowed him to capture both the multiplicity of boundaries and claims of differences.[16] Despite power differences, Manjapra did examine mutual implications and transnational feedback loops that developed among discrepant national groups, yet, at a cost that overemphasized the role of the German colonial and neo-colonial intellectuls in shaping Indian revolutionaries and movements in Berlin.[17]

The emphasis on people, their ideas, and their goods stems in large part from the colleagues in British imperial history, who in the early 2000s developed the *"*new imperial history.*"*[18] In the German context scholars such as Sebastian Conrad, David Blackbourn, and Geoff Eley have explored the role of German history within a complex web of "shared histories" (*geteilte Geschichten*).[19] Adopting this concept from the work of Shalini Randerias, who developed the term in 1999, these German historians have sought to redefine the boundaries of a new global history, reconstructing the interaction and interdependence of various cultures and societies.[20] Their goal has been to shed light on the process of sameness (*Gemeinsamkeiten*) and to problematize the demarcation of boundaries (*Abgrenzungen*). These studies have noted that 55 million Europeans emigrated out of Europe between 1815 and 1939, and their intercultural

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[15] Sugata Bose and Kris Manjapra, eds., *Cosmopolitan Thought Zones: South Asia and the Global Circulation of Ideas* (Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).
[16] Kris Manjapra, *Age of Entanglement: German and Indian Intellectuals across Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014).
[17] For this critique, see Jürgen Osterhammel, "Underdogs in Dialogue," *History and Theory* 54 (1): 138-147.
[18] "New Imperial History" developed out of British imperial studies. For foundational studies see: Antoinette Burton, *After the Imperial Turn: Thinking With and Through the Nation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003); and Tony Ballantyne, *Between Colonialism and Diaspora: Sikh Cultural Formations in an Imperial World* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006). "New imperial history" is itself inspired by the work of Frederick Copper and Ann Stoler, eds., *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).
[19] Sebastian Conrad, ed., *Jenseits des Eurozentrismus: postkoloniale Perspektiven in den Geschichts- und Kulturwissenschaften* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2002).
[20] *Ibid*., 17f.

exchanges with the places they migrated to must be accounted for.[21] That means that the history of non-Germans has inherently become part of Germany's own history.

My dissertation builds on these scholars by looking for spaces of contact, but deviates from them by suggesting a view to encompass places where there was no direct British or German imperial rule, like Afghanistan. In this way, I am exposing new spaces that have been overlooked because they do not neatly fit onto European conceptions of terms such as "cosmopolitan," "colonial periphery," and "modern," but whose study offer a deeper understanding of overlapping aims among a wider range of actors. In other words, I still examine these issues within the framework of imperial Britain's desire to encroach on Afghanistan, but the main analysis rests on the ideas, actions, and decisions of the knowledge-migrants themselves.

In the recent growing interest in global histories, the need to explore the role of technology and science in linking Europe to Asia has also caught attention. Owing a great deal to earlier positivist interpretation, which thought of the physical world as operating according to gravity and absolute laws, positivists later reapplied such uniform notions to understand societies and assign fixed categories.[22] Out of this European tradition of writing histories emerged a diffusionist framework that understood innovation, technology, and science as having a

[21] Joanne Miyang Cho, Eric Kurlander and Douglas T. McGetchin, eds., *Transcultural Encounters Between Germany and India: Kindred Spirits in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (New York: Routledge, 2014).
[22] Positivism is associated itself associated with August Comte (1798-1857) for physical world, and it was later reformulated by Durkheim to apply for social settings.

European inception,[23] subsequently moving in an immutable and systematic manner from the West to the rest of the world, and without any local engagement or input.[24]

There seems to be a close correlation between the "new imperial histories" and recent history of science in part because both deal with a conceptual divide and asymmetry between Asia and Europe. The works of Catherine Hall and Kathleen Wilson (themselves influenced by Frederick Cooper and Ann Stoler (and notions such as "imperial formation")) have problematized the core/periphery divide and examined instead ways in which colonial subjects re-shaped not just the far-flung territories of the empire, but more centrally, in the social spaces of "domestic" Victorian imperial culture itself.[25] To rectify this divide, particularly in the realm of knowledge production, historians of science have broadened their scope to incorporate a wider source base. Typically reliant on merely textual sources and monuments (those inherent in literate and settled cultures), recent historians of science have drawn from "unorthodox" sources that included palm-leaf manuscripts or meteorite witness accounts.[26] This flexible method has shed light on multiple ways in which science was practiced, especially as it was embedded in everyday routines and practices. As I will show, I will be taking the lead from these scholars by expanding my heuristic framework to encompass textual and non-textual sources.

In the case of studying the relationship between Afghanistan and Germany, where there seems to be a clear intention to bring German industry and technology to Afghanistan, the first

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[23] This view is thoroughly critiqued by Kapil Raj, "Beyond Postcolonialism… and Postpositivism: Circulation and the Global History of Science," *Isis* 104, no. 2 (2013).
[24] This is thoroughly critiqued in David Arnold, "Europe, Technology, and Colonialism in the 20th Century," *History and Technology* 21, no. 1 (2005): 85-106.
[25] Copper and Stoler, eds., *Tensions of Empire*.
[26] For discussion of palm-leaf manuscripts, see Sujit Sivasundaram, "Science and the Global: On Methods, Questions, and Theory," *Isis* 101, (2010): 146-158; and for reading of witness accounts alongside a European natural philosophers, see Elizabeth Green Musselman, "Indigenous Knowledge and Contact Zones: The Case of the Cold Bokkeveld Meteorite, Cape Colony, 1838," *Itinerario* 33, no. 1 (2009).

inclination would be to frame the project within a diffusionist model, where developmental knowledge poured into Afghanistan to assist the latter with the process of nation-building. However, as I explain in each of the chapters, the inclusion of Persian artistic, cartographic, and textual materials, when read alongside German sources, do not support a diffusionist model.

Structuring subsequent chapters around knowledge-migrants helps challenge the idea that they were simple vessels of diplomatic exchange, carrying information, goods, and technology between Afghanistan and Germany. Rather, they were agents that mediated between two societies, and while doing so, consciously reshaped discussions about art, public health, technology, and education. Even when their preferred political régime was replaced by new régimes, and diplomatic relations had become uncertain, knowledge-migrants continued to develop meaningful scientific and technological exchanges. The emphasis on knowledge-migrants and their practices as they relate to networks help show that scientific and technological exchange between Afghanistan and Germany was not necessarily grounded in the political or material histories stemming from modernization frameworks, but that exchange was embedded in practical activities located in the routines of everyday life where knowledge was in constant flux and mutable in new local and social contexts.[27] To accomplish these aims, I will now turn to discussing the sources and methods by which I plan to study these knowledge-migrants.

"Webs of Empire": Sources and Methodology

The study of Afghan-German knowledge-migrants poses considerable problems for the interested scholar due to the paucity of source materials. Aside from Emil Trinkler, the subject studied in chapter four, who published widely as well as donated his personal archive to the Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography, the lives and practices of other knowledge-migrants

[27] James A. Secord, "Knowledge in Transit," *ISIS* 95, no. 4 (2004).

are much more difficult to examine and chart out because they have not left any significant body of writing behind. What does exist comes in the form of abundant European sources, mainly in German state archives, but also in Afghan state newspapers and state publications. While the German sources chart out in a detailed manner the various agreements stemming from Afghan-German diplomacy from 1921- 1941, there are two problems caused by working merely with European sources: First, they give the appearance that German goods, reforms, science, and technology were transferred to Afghanistan, where they were adopted in detail and without any attempt on the part of its Afghan recipients to interpret new knowledge through the lens of local social and cultural values. Secondly, these sources treat knowledge-migrants in Germany as isolated and as rarely having any meaningful exchanges beyond their own confines, especially with other religious, social, and political groups. Such views take bounded groups as fundamental units of analysis and tend to homogenize the knowledge-migrants that passed along these diplomatic routes. This framework has the potential to leave out daily intellectual interactions and exchanges that took shape between peoples across certain confined categories, perhaps at spiritual, educational, or recreational centers.

Rather than purely relying on official sources, I have addressed these shortcomings by interweaving different sets of sources with special attention paid to highlighting the specific contexts in which they emerged. In other words, I draw from official sources to chart out the larger contours of Afghan-German diplomacy and possible locations where knowledge-exchange could have taken shape but supplement with sources either produced by the knowledge-migrants themselves or at the universities and other centers that they visited.

This means that I first re-read official state documents in the form of Afghan and German state sources to chart out where students were sent, how both states understood the role of

education, which goods moved between Afghanistan and Germany, and how (structurally/state-wide) the transfer of ideas and goods was mediated. Working with these sources also means re-reading them for latent tensions and anxieties stemming from cultural interchange between Afghans and Germans. Once these large-scale developments have been established, I supplement sources produced by knowledge-migrants themselves, which include documents from the institutions they visited, their letters and memoirs, their dissertations or publications, and their paintings to discuss what kinds of specific ideas and knowledge-related practices they developed, exchanged, and then transformed into their own localities. More specifically, each of the chapters traces out a specific knowledge-migrant (i.e., student, scientist, or ethnographer) and follows his process of seeking out "useful" knowledge and applying and rendering newly acquired information or skills to local settings.

Specifically, I adopt two methods to study these knowledge-migrants: First, prosopography developed within the discipline of sociology, and secondly, drawing on recent history of empire that rely on network analysis around the “webs of empire” model. The first method studies knowledge-migrants insofar as they belong to a group. My method of prosopography deviates from conventional approaches in so much as it does not deal with quantitative data, but re-reads abundant official state documents for their qualitative value to chart out places of knowledge production or cross-cultural exchanges (e.g. intermarriages). By following the multidirectional trajectories of these actors, I highlight *not* national borders but “contact zones,” where ethnically, politically, and religiously diverse circles created new modes and practices of knowledge.

Secondly, I describe intellectual and social exchanges mediated by knowledge-migrants within an imperial framework that Tony Ballantyne has defined as the "webs of empire." I situate

Afghan-German knowledge-migrants within this "interwoven, overlapping, but occasionally independent sets of webs," and therefore expose "contact zones" or linkages among larger sets of people who jointly contemplated alternative models to empire. In other words, Afghanistan in the early twentieth-century would transition from an "imperial frontier" to a central locus that attracted and developed various networks. This heuristic framework allows each of the chapters to take into account diplomatic structures that were not fixed, but dependent on webs or networks produced by the agents themselves. By way of case studies, each of the chapters will show that knowledge-migrants did not forfeit their abilities to work around state decrees and treaties even as their academic or research agendas were funded by these states.

The first chapter will be the only chapter that places the framework of state-making at its core and its point of inquiry to show the global implication of Afghan-German internationalism and to point out the relevance of a "webs of empire" framework. More importantly, by laying out the salient features of Afghan-German internationalism and showing how actors and their institutions mediated the exchange, this chapter will act as a foundation, allowing subsequent chapters to stand independently as case studies.

In chapter two, I will examine the arrival of Afghan students to German technical universities from 1921-1935. The emphasis will be on the first waves of students, who hoped to train in the technical fields, and applied their scientific and technical skills to turbulent political changes. In particular, I will showcase the life of ᶜAbd al-Ghaffur Brishna (1907-1974), who studied lithography and painting, and later channeled his German-trained expertise and artistic methods into rediscovering Afghanistan's artistic scene to define a *longue dureé* pre-Islamic heritage. Brishna will be juxtaposed to students who studied in the technical fields, such as ᶜAbd al-Rahim Khan (b. 1909), a student of microbiology.

In the third chapter, I will examine a different kind of Afghan student, who studied in Germany during the Nazi regime. He was representative of a new generation of Afghans who gravitated towards studying the human sciences, a clear shift from the previous students in the Weimar period, who were trained in technical fields. New disciplinary trainings indicated a shift for the Afghan state from a focus on solving immediate practical issues towards creating a class of Afghan thinkers and intellectuals, who could eventually produce ideas more abstractly and holistically concerning the ways in which societal transformations should be employed to support existing Afghan local culture. The case study examined in chapter three will trace the life of ᶜAli Ahmad Fofolzay (1916-1976), who arrived at the University of Jena in 1937 to study philosophy and pedagogy.

While the previous two chapters will focus on Afghan knowledge-migrants in Germany, the last chapter will trace the explorations of German geographer, Emil Trinkler (1896-1931), who traveled to Afghanistan and neighboring regions to research the mineral compositions and topography of Afghanistan. The institution studied in the first chapter (*Deutsch-Afghanischer Compagnie, A.G.* (DACOM)) hired Trinkler, and in many ways this chapter will return back to examining the role of scientists (rather than diplomats) between the diplomatic task for which they were hired for and their actual ethnographic fieldwork on the ground.

In contrasts to Emil Trinkler, who died in 1931, the chapters examining Brishna and Fofolzay can take a wider historical lens and examine the relationship between their earlier student years in Germany and their subsequent professional lives in Afghanistan. Both Brishna and Fofolzay remained politically and professionally embedded in Afghan intellectual circles up until their deaths in the early 1970s. The decades of the 1960s and 1970s were marked by a series of political and social movements that began with a constitutional monarchy in 1964 and

ended with a communist republic in 1978. This would ideally require that the work of each of these knowledge-migrants be studied within the new contexts of these later historical developments in Afghanistan. For the scope of this dissertation, I am engaging with the periods of the 1960s and 1970s as a way to trace out how Brishna and Fofolzay reflected on, rendered, or implemented their earlier training in Germany.

Cohesively, this study engages with a range of historical actors, whose activities and practices have been neglected because they do not fit within an elite conceptualization of building a state. By producing a variety of different scientific and technical ideas and applying these in their own local settings, I show the crucial role of ordinary knowledge-migrants in the process of building, destabilizing, and imagining a state. Read cohesively, the chapters will highlight a selective engagement and employment of any given technological and scientific ideas, and these may very well be a combination of Afghan tradition and German modernity that was used to enrich Afghanistan's modernism.[28]

[28] I borrow the term "modernism" from Wali Ahmadi to delineate an array of different modes and possiblities, see Wali Ahmadi, *Persian Literature in Afghanistan: Anomalous Visions of History and Forms* (New York: Routledge, 2008).

Chapter One: The Deep Roots of Afghan-German Internationalism, 1904-1941

Introduction

> Afghanistan has sent a special diplomatic mission to Europe to proclaim the absolute sovereignty of Afghanistan...By this action, Afghanistan announces to the world that it is free from the British domination [sic] which for fifty years prevented its free action and development.
>
> *The Modern Review*, July 1921

1919 marked an important turning point in both Afghan and German history: In German history it marked the end of formal colonial rule, and in Afghan history it was the beginning of a sovereign state with its own independent institutions and foreign policy. Historians dealing with Afghan-German diplomacy have adopted this logic of periodization and understood diplomacy between these two states as coming to its fullest after 1919.[29]

There were many foundational moments that predated the creation of formal diplomacy, and these foundations are especially important to show the interconnected web and framework that undergirds this study. The first contact between an Afghan sovereign and the German state took shape in the context of British consolidation over India after 1858. The British state had enacted the Indian Arms Act in 1878, hoping to regulate the manufacture, sale, possession, and trade of arms in the subcontinent. Its main goal, as David Arnold wrote, was to "limit India's ability to mine and work metals that might sustain it in future wars and rebellions," especially in ore-rich places like Rajasthan.[30] Recently, Robert Crews even linked various illegal

[29] Ǧamšīd, "Die Beziehung zwischen Deutschland und Afghanistan"; and Dr. Alema, "Die Beziehungen zwischen Afghanistan und Deutschland."
[30] David Arnold, *Science, Technology and Medicine in Colonial India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 100-101.

manufactures, traders, and consumers to an interconnected global clandestine arms "matrix" that stretched the period from 1880 to 1920.[31]

Although not as large scale as after 1919, German exchanges with Afghanistan prior to 1919 laid down an important foundation. A central case involved the Afghan Amir, ᶜAbd al-Rahman Khan (r. 1880-1901), who facilitated the purchase of Krupps canons. The Amir had a new compound with a foundry built, called the *māshīn khānah*, which literally translates to "machine house."[32] The earlier director in charge of this foundry was previously E.T. Pack, a British official, whom the Amir replaced with Dr. Gottlieb Fleischer (d. 1905), a German engineer of Krupp Steelworks in the city of Essen.[33] Fleischer directed the *māshīn khānah*, which was mainly responsible for manufacturing and trading arms and ammunition, until his mysterious murder at the Indo-Afghan border.[34] British surveillance gradually tightened over the circulation and import of ammunition and guns, and the importation of guns and ammunition from Germany caused British officials to frequently search German-educated Afghan students passing via Bombay back to Afghanistan. From sources consulted at the British Library's India Office and Records, surveillance of German-made weaponry was conducted well into the reign

[31] Robert Crews, "Trafficking in Evil? The Global Arms Trade and the Politics of Disorder," in *Global Muslims in Age of Steam and Print*, eds. James Gelvin and Nile Green (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 126.
[32] The role of the *māshīn khānah* morphed from functioning as an artillery foundry to housing the state printing press (Maṭbaᶜ-i Māshīn Khānah) under the rule of Aman Allah, and later during Nadir Shah it also manufactured coins.
[33] For primary documents see AAmt: R 17585: "Gotthold Fleischer, German of Saxonoy and Kordon, 1898"; and for secondary see George Grassmuck, Ludwig Adamec, and Frances H. Irwin, eds., *Afghanistan: Some New Approaches* (Ann Arbor: Center for Near Eastern and North African Studies, University of Michigan, 1969), 208.
[34] Ludwig Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan* (Lanham Md : The Scarecrow Press, 2012), 162.

of Nadir Shah (r. 1929-1933). At that point British officials even made Afghanistan's request to enter into the League of Nations contingent on the former's compliance with an arms deal.[35]

These kinds of struggles over maintaining an independent foreign policy encapsulated some of the principal dynamics of modern Afghan history. Above all the early twentieth-century Afghan states were caught between the tension of integrating Western powers and technologies to help "modernize" their states, and to limit the involvement of European influence so as not to threaten Afghan sovereignty. To show the Afghan states' responses to solving these tensions, this chapter uses Afghan-German diplomacy as a lens to study the wider nexus of interconnected dynamics that involved Soviet Russia, the British Raj, and Indian nationalists.

The main aim of this study, is to challenge the narrow model of a top-down state-building, and show the autonomous unfolding of technological and scientific ideas about the fine arts, education, politics, public health, and ethnography among Afghan-German actors. Therefore, to reconstruct the larger geopolitical context of Afghan-German policy as set out in this chapter may appear counterintuitive. This chapter will not simply reproduce another top-down model of Afghan and German nation-building, but rather challenge commonly held assumptions about why Afghan-German diplomacy was short-lived – to some perhaps "meaningless" – and also to show the extent that this diplomacy offers a lens through which the role of Afghan and German actors, studied in the subsequent chapters, can be juxtaposed against the institutional and geopolitical forces that brought them into circulation.[36] To that end, this chapter charts the rough contours in which the Afghan state sought to tighten its control over its territories and exercise control over its administrative, legal, and educational institutions. Then,

[35] See the following in the British documents: Mss Eur F111/287: 1899; and IOR/L/MIL/7/12391: 1907-1914: Collection 269/139 Supply of arms and ammunition to the Amir of Afghanistan.
[36] This is especially perceived as such by Thomas Hughes, "The German Mission to Afghanistan, 1915-1916," *German Studies Review* 25 (2002); Adamec, *Afghanistan's Foreign Affairs*, 24; and Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton University Press, 1975), 434.

subsequent chapters will highlight how each of the actors, i.e., students, reformers, and scientists engaged with these structures through their own training and education.

While this study deals extensively with British surveillance records, the British imperial apparatus are not at the center of analysis nor are perceived as hegemonic supra-structures. Instead, the goal is to reconstruct the global implications of Afghan-German diplomacy by re-reading the diplomacy through a wider global context of interwar politics, in particular the emergence of revolutionary nationalisms in South Asia and interwar Europe. More importantly, my aim is to show that the roughly twenty-year diplomacy between the Afghan and German states speaks to what were at the time concerns among a wider collection of nationalists and anti-imperial activists in the interwar period. In other words, I connect the infrastructural developments of Afghan-German diplomacy to wider developments in world politics (i.e., the Russo-Japanese War, the Khilafat movement, British colonialism in India, and Germany's interest in the Middle East and South Asia), and suggest the need to examine Afghan-German diplomacy after 1921 from an earlier context that emerged in the years leading up to the First World War.

To accomplish these goals, this chapter is built on three interrelated themes: First, I situate German neo-colonial practices within a longer history of developing a political and economic plan to advance in the Middle East and South Asia. This plan took shape in the years leading up to the First World War. This chapter refers to German "neo-colonialism" as a set of practices (employed domestically and abroad) geared towards developing a friendly policy in Afghanistan and its neighboring region and designed to further enhance the political, economic, and scientific position of the German state and implemented through sending and receiving Afghan-German knowledge-migrants. The German state drew on a wide-range of professional

specialists beyond diplomats and army officials, and included archeologists, ethnographers, and geographers to maximize its geo-political ambitions.

The second section shifts to discuss the simultaneous arrival of Indians in Afghanistan to find revolutionary solutions to their own imperial problems at two historic junctions. First, Indian revolutionaries accompanied the German mission to Afghanistan in 1914/15. The second Indian movement to Afghanistan took place in the context of the Ottoman Empire's dissolution and the subsequent Khilafat movement contesting the dissolution. The political undertakings of Indian nationalists in Afghanistan and the slow yet mounting economic imperialism of the British Raj on the subcontinent informed and shaped the Afghan state's own interaction with Germany after 1921. In other words, Afghan state patronage for the Indian nationalist cause exposed Afghans to varied forms of nationalist visions and forms of political mobility. This exposure was significant, because in light of its involvement with Indian experience of European imperialism, the Afghan government approached the German state through a cautious "checks-and-balance" attitude. For instance, as I will explain in more depth, the Afghan government limited the Germans' abilities to borrow money in Kabul, thereby creating a system where the Afghan state could avoid a substantial economic dependence on the German state.

To show this last point, the concluding third theme will hone in on the nature of Afghan-German diplomacy, to show that German presence in the Afghan state was guided and systematically mediated by Afghan law-makers, state actors, and in some cases Indian bankers. This is important to note, because as much as German technology pouring in from Germany was seen as a valued commodity with the potential to keep the country independent, neither the Aman Allah nor the Nadir regimes were prepared to replace the threat of a British imperial influences with a German one.

Reading these three themes together, this chapter argues that to understand early twentieth-century Afghan-German diplomacy, one must move beyond the two respective nations and frame the discussion within an interconnected global framework.

Historiography

Much of the existing historiography has neglected the interplay between the state and ordinary students and scientists and these international actors, who had a vested interest in seeing the Afghan state remain independent. The commonly studied emphasis on "top-down" modernization is a direct consequence of easily available archival materials from the German state. These materials trace how technology travelled from Germany into various industries in Afghanistan, reflecting the German state's conception of this phenomenon as a fundamentally diffusionist process where new scientific goods and methods moved from Europe to Asia.

The two studies selected for the present discussion are the only dissertations/monographs that deal with this diplomacy in its entirety.[37] These studies frame Afghan-German diplomacy within a "top-down" model, and are emblematic of the general trend of historiographies that replicated the "failed" and "passive" role of Afghan reformers as carriers of this technology by drawing uncritically from these sources and by not consulting materials produced beyond the purview of the Afghan or German states.[38]

In 1994 Ǧamrad Ǧamšīd's dissertation at the Humboldt University of Berlin, entitled "Die Beziehung zwischen Deutschland und Afghanistan, 1933-1945" (The relationship between Germany and Afghanistan, 1933-1945), the authored advocated a "political angle" to studying

[37] Normally, the topic is discussed in a journal article or as a side note, see Nicosia, "'Drang nach Osten' Continued?"; and Hans-Ulrich Seidt, "From Palestine to the Caucasus-Oskar Niedermayer and Germany's Middle Eastern Strategy in 1918," *German Studies Review* 24, no. 1 (2001): 1-18.
[38] See introduction of this study for thorough discussion.

Afghan-German internationalism. However, like most scholars before him, Ǧamšīd's dissertation focused overwhelmingly on German-assisted modernization projects in Afghanistan, through which the German state and its technocrats sought to help Afghanistan build a stronger nation.[39]

In this framework, the Afghan and German states are constructed as two separate, homogenous, and ultimately asymmetrical entities. The German-Afghan "special relationship" or "*Liebesbeziehung*," as both Ǧamšīd and a line of subsequent historians have called it, was cast as mutually beneficial. It offered the potential of an empowered Afghanistan to counteract the imperial influences of Russia and Britain, and Germany to recover from the loss of overseas colonies in the aftermath of the Versailles Treaty. And yet, the asymmetry became clear when the author asserted that the German state was helping a "backward" nation emerge from "traditional feudalism."[40] This line of argument casts Afghanistan as a recipient of technology, which ultimately failed to put German machinery and expertise to good use, citing how traditional religious groups within the decentralized Afghan state-apparatus could not be compelled into the vision of a modern state.[41]

In the same light and same year, the historian known as Dr. Alema submitted her dissertation, titled "Die Beziehungen zwischen Afghanistan und Deutschland in den Jahren 1919 bis 1929" (The Relationship between Afghanistan and Germany in the Years 1919 to 1929), with

[39] Ǧamšīd, "Die Beziehung zwischen Deutschland und Afghanistan," 58.
[40] *Ibid*., 62-64.
[41] As the main introduction discussed, the relationship between traditional Muslim groups and the resultant "failed-state" comes in many forms: some scholars have argued that the state's infrastructural range was not sophisticated enough to reach all corners of society, others have argued the in-ward values, kinship and loose authority structure of the Afghan tribes prevented modernization. For the first line of argument see Poullada, *Reform and Rebellion;* and Canfield, *Faction and Conversion*. For an overall history of this narrative, see: Adamec, *Afghanistan's Foreign Affairs to the Mid-Twentieth Century*; Martin Baraki, *Die Beziehungen zwischen Afghanistan und der Bundesrepubik Deutschland 1945-1978: dargestellt anhand der wichtigsten entwicklungspolitischen Projekte der Bundesrepublik in Afghanistan* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1996); and Thomas Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

a smaller timeline following the period of reforms implemented during Amir Aman Allah's rule (r. 1919 - 1929).[42] Alema's dissertation can be quite useful insofar as it also draws on a limited amount of Persian (secondary) sources, but nevertheless arrived at the same conclusions as Ǧamšīd:

> Amanullah gab deshalb einem Bündnis mit Deutschland den Vorzug. Es war eines der Hauptanliegen Amanullah's, ausländisches Kapital zur Finanzierung des Wirtschaftprogrammes heranzuziehen. In dieser Frage wandte sich seine Regierung an sogenannte "dritte" Mächte, ….Die afghanische Regierung bezeichnete Deutschland als sogenannte "dritte" Macht. Anderseits sah die afghanische Regierung Deutschland als ein Land mit einem hohen Zivilisationsgrad an.[43]
>
> Amanullah gave preference to an Afghan-German alliance. It was his primary concern to draw on foreign capital to finance his economic programs. For these reasons his administration turned to a "third" power,...[and] identified Germany as this "third" power. On the other hand, the Afghan government viewed Germany as a high level of civilization.

Alema closely followed the dissertation of Bruno Seifert, a German teacher employed in Afghanistan by the German Foreign Office from 1923 to 1927.[44] Both accounts characterize Afghanistan's search for a "third" power and its ultimate choice of Germany falling within a wider "Great Game" framework. The latter framework refers to Afghanistan's attempt to navigate its geographic position as a "buffer state" between Soviet Russia and Great Britain.

Reading these two dissertations with the historiography discussed in the introduction of this study suggests that the teleology of modernization casts a long shadow over the history of both Afghanistan and Germany, no more so than during the early twentieth-century, which saw the formation of new nation-states. This is best illustrated in the above-mentioned accounts that explore the histories of diplomatic relations between two states and that study the material

[42] Dr. Alema, "Die Beziehungen zwischen Afghanistan und Deutschland.
[43] *Ibid*., 45.
[44] Bruno Seifert, *Der Anteil Deutschlands an der wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung Afghanistans* (Stuttgart: Ausland und Heimat Verlagaktiengesellschaft, 1929).

production stemming from this diplomacy. The effects of German technology on Afghan society has been a common framework of analysis to interpret the shift from fractured tribal allegiances to a "modern" state in Afghanistan whose infrastructure expanded to encompass an increasingly wide range of its constituents. What is problematic about this framework is that it inevitably ignores the processes through which non-Western models of historical development emerged, assessing them against putatively Western models of state-building. Generally speaking, it neglects the diverse and dynamic manner in which quite different Asian societies engaged with various notions and processes of state-building.

It is tempting to succumb to teleological tropes when comparing two states as different as Germany and Afghanistan, in two ways. First, there is a tendency in Western-dominated historiographies of describing scientific and technological development in a colonized or semi-colonized space through a charged vocabulary of stagnation, decline, and traditionalism.[45] The logic of this vocabulary is to contrast Muslim decline in the modern era to a bygone era of Muslim scientific superiority – what is now commonly referred to as Islam's Golden Age. The second trope – found commonly in comparative histories of science – treats Western science, its methods and practices, as having emerged in the West and only moving beyond Europe by way of colonialism or missionary activities. This trope assumes a unidirectional flow or "diffusion" of scientific expertise that begins in Europe and ends elsewhere.[46] Historians drawing on this notion often employ overly strict periodization schemes and repeat positivist stances that ultimately cast European colonialism as a moral project to spread the bounties of science around the world.[47]

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[45] See among others Bernard Lewis, *Cultures in Conflict: Christians, Muslims, and Jews in the Age of Discovery* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).
[46] For a critique of this scholarship, see Kapil Raj, "Beyond Postcolonialism… and Postpositivism: Circulation and the Global History of Science," *Isis* 104, no. 2 (2013).
[47] This is thoroughly discussed for the case of Egypt and China in Marwa Elshakry, "When Science Became Western: Historiographical Reflections," *Isis* 101, no. 1 (2010): 98-109.

This study, however, draws on a number of these same sources as well as new ones produced by knowledge-migrants, and doing so does not support either of these tropes. It is true that the Afghan state struggled to centralize power over fractured regional forms of rule, strengthen its borders vis-à-vis foreign imperial advances from India, and acquire powerful allies like the German Kaiserreich, Weimar, and subsequently Nazi Germany. The Afghan state called upon German technocrats to train and facilitate the development of technology within various sectors of its economy, but drawing on archival research beyond European languages each of the following chapters will reveal how this process was not as unidirectional as it may at first seem. Rather, the manner in which knowledge and technology re-appeared back to Afghanistan points to a syncretic and multidirectional process through which the Afghan state integrated new reforms from a calculated position. These processes reflected local imperatives and needs much more than a simple diffusionist model of knowledge transfer. As German goods were arriving, so were Afghan raw materials being exported. The Afghan state was empowered by the growing presence and experiences of its Indian migrants (as well as the formerly Ottoman constituents), who were drawn to the new Afghan institutions and reforms (based on Ottoman/Turkish and Indian models), which both the pre- and post-1919 regimes championed as protector of the Islamic state. Especially the encounters with Indian revolutionaries helped the Afghan states develop flexibility, where it selectively identified, engaged, and negotiated with the kinds of ideas that appealed to its own agenda.

Such flexibility was possible in fact because the country was never fully colonized, yet through close proximity and by association with Indian nationalists, the Afghan state understood the threat of imperialism indirectly. Unlike many of the Middle Eastern states that fell under British or French control especially in the context of the Mandate period, Afghanistan in the end

remained sovereign and followed an independent foreign policy. Moreover, in contrast from the Ottoman or Iranian cases, European states had not imposed crippling economic concessions on Afghanistan; rather, as all the subsequent chapters will show European involvement in Afghanistan ought to be described as guided, surveilled, and systematically overseen by Afghan reformers. This in turn, created a system in which foreign experts and technocrats needed to navigate around Afghan or Islamic proscriptions before fully introducing their schemes or reforms.

Section I

German Neo-Colonialism in the Middle East and South Asia in the Pre-WWI Era

Afghanistan's intent to foster a new international order with European powers and Germany at its head had an important precedent in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905). Muslims from across the colonized and semi-colonized world had a vested interest in the outcome of this conflict. It included Afghan intellectuals and important state actors, such as Mahmud Tarzi, who followed and wrote about the course of this war as a way to make sense of their own pressing national questions.

Fortified by a British-Japanese alliance, the war itself involved a struggle between Japan and Russia over the fate of Korea and Manchuria. The Japanese victory had important global consequences, especially in stimulating the colonized and semi-colonized to imagine new ideas of race and progress. In one particular case, the Egyptian popular-science monthly digest, *al-Muqtataf*, described the war as giving "hope to all Easterners who strive to achieve greater accomplishment in their own civilizations."[48] Cemil Aydin has shown that these new ideas often

[48] Cited in Marwa Elshakry, *Reading Darwin in Arabic, 1860-1950* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 91.

drew on anti-Western sentiments in ways that led thinkers to argue that "existing backwardness among Asian societies was not a result of determinist factors, conditioned by race, culture, geography, climate, and religion," but followed from a temporal delay in progress.[49] In other words, the view that Muslims were temporarily delayed in progress pointed at outside forces contributing to this delay and not to innate civilizational or cultural aspects. Relatedly, Renée Worringer has shown that the Japanese victory over a European power was a key factor in defining the characteristics of Asian modernity and in creating a broad category of pan-Asian and pan-Islamic movements as well. Worringer explained, however, that there was not *a* kind of modernity among all Asians, rather, different political directions and realities that each agenda imagined independently.[50] Intellectuals from across the Ottoman Empire and India travelled to Japan to study how the Japanese state successfully formed a model of resistance against Western encroachment, hoping to reproduce Japan's commitment to universal education, a new parliamentary constitution, and the development of scientific learning.[51]

Debates among Muslim intellectuals also pondered the role of Islam and the central question of making Islamic principles compatible with education, state legislation, and changing technology.[52] Many of the actors studied in the subsequent chapters contemplated well into the mid-twentieth-century what it meant to be a Muslim and negotiate concepts of state-building, education, public health, science, and technology. The methods and practices through which they

[49] Cemil Aydin, *The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia: Visions of World Order in Pan-Islamic and Pan-Asian Thought* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 10.
[50] Renée Worringer, *Ottomans Imagining Japan: East, Middle East, and Non-Western Modernity at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).
[51] Elshakry, *Reading Darwin*, 91f; and Kavita Datla, "A Worldly Vernacular: Urdu at Osmania University," *Modern Asian Studies* 43, no. 5 (2009): 1117-1148. For Indian pedagogues see Nile Green, "The Trans-Border Traffic of Afghan Modernism: Afghanistan and the Indian 'Urdusphere,'" *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 53, no. 3 (2011): 479-508.
[52] For a discussion of one of its main publishing organ, al-Manar, see Stéphane A. Dudoignon, ed., *Intellectuals in the Modern Islamic World: Transmission, Transformation, Communication* (London: Routledge, 2006), 17.

sought to solve these questions were not shaped exclusively on a local or national level. Rather, they drew on a diverse range of historic, religious, ethnic and socio-economic influences and collaborators across South Asia, Middle East and Europe.[53]

While the Russo-Japanese war provoked the enthusiasm of the wider Asian world, Germany would come to play a major role for Asians promoting a political strategy of channeling Muslim enthusiasm into concrete anti-British practices. Afghanistan's geographic position between Soviet Russia and the British Raj, as well as its rich mineral deposits would come to play an important part for executing such goals, but first the German Foreign Office needed to establish a more consistent presence in Afghanistan.

Imperial aspirations beyond Europe were displayed not exclusively within official circles but also visibly among the popular media. For example journalist Paul Dehn wrote in the *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung*:

> The German state of the future…must consider one of its permanent objectives…Germany and *Mitteleuropa* must establish themselves in the Near, Middle and Far East… before other countries, Russia from the north, England from the south…take the East for themselves.[54]

The German Foreign Office branded its earliest advances as "peaceful means of expansion," and intended to link the Ottoman Empire with Persia in the nineteenth century.[55] The historians Johannes Glasneck and Inge Kircheisen have characterized the nature of this connection as "eine geplante mitteleuropäische-vorderasiatische Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft" (a joint central European and Middle Eastern economic community) in which a key player was *The*

[53] For a discussion of their infrastructural base see: Bekim Again, Umar Ryad, and Mehdi Sajid, *Muslims in Interwar Europe: A Transcultural Historical Perspective* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).
[54] Journalist Paul Dehn, who wrote in the *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung* was quoted in 1885. See Geoff Eley and Bradley Naranch, eds., *German Colonialism in a Global Age* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 150.
[55] Rashid Armin Katib-Shahidi, "German Foreign Policy towards Iran: The Case of the National Bank of Persia" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Oxford University, 1999).

Deutsche Bank, A.G.[56] The latter played an important role in facilitating this alliance by directly financing large-scale infrastructural projects that included most notably the construction of the Berlin-Baghdad rail-line (built between 1903 – 1940) and Persia's first national bank (f. 1927). These all had as their ultimate objective to establish a port in the Persian Gulf, making trade between Germany and the Middle East more efficient.[57]

Although mainly concerned with the role of the Nazi government in conceptualizing and instrumentalizing Islam (through the employment of religious policies and propaganda), David Motadel has shown that, in contrast to other imperial powers - in particular the British, French, Dutch, and Russian counterparts - Islamic anti-imperialism and pan-Islamism were considered an opportunity, not just in the German colonies but also in the context of Wilhelm II's *Weltpolitik*.[58] Motadel highlighted the explicit language adopted as a result of this new policy to express pro-Muslim sentiments, which became especially clear with such gestures as the Kaiser's 1898 Middle East tour. The latter had paid homage to the medieval Mausoleum of Saladin (d. 1193) in Damascus, where he gave a speech declaring Germany "a friend of the world's 300 million Mohammedans."[59] This friendship was not exclusive to these 300 million Muslims but played out during the course of the period leading up to the First World War among a broad range of ethnicities and religious affiliations.

Seeing the broad, global impact of Japan's victory over Russia beyond the confines of the Middle East, but also in Bengal (as will shortly be discussed), the German Foreign Office began

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[56] Johannes Glasneck and Inge Kircheisen, *Türkei und Afghanistan: Brennpunkte der Orientpolitik im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1968).
[57] Carl Anton Schäfer, *Die Entwicklung der Bagdadbahnpolitik* (Weimar: G.Kiepenheuer, 1916); and Murat Özyüksel, *The Hejaz Railway and the Ottoman Empire: Industrialization, Imperial Germany and the Middle East* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2016).
[58] Quoted in David Motadel, *Islam and Nazi Germanys War* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2017), 18.
[59] *Ibid*.

to see an opportune moment to support various movements that contested the growing presence of the British in Asia. As a result, the German state decided to join the "Muslim cause," reorienting its political and economic positions to achieve that.

With the onset of the First World War, the nature of German involvement in the Middle East and South Asia took on a different character. The German Foreign Office designed what some scholars have called, a "programme for revolution" directed against the British Empire and Imperial Russia.[60] The program's main objective was to employ an assembly of experienced diplomats and military men, and a selection of German technocrats, engineers, and academics overseas in securing long and short-term goals in regions outside of Europe, and more importantly to secure allies in the wake of the First World War against the Entente Powers.[61] The German Foreign Office encouraged, in some cases even funded, experts in Islamic studies to publish academic surveys and dissertations. Since little is known about how Afghanistan factored into this German-developed program, no one has studied how academic surveys and dissertations shaped Germany's own imperial policies. As chapter three shows, these studies became especially important given that the German Foreign Office employed their authors as teachers or legation employees in Kabul.[62]

Throughout their careers, many German colonial actors came to take on a mentorship-role, becoming in some capacity responsible for passing on their neo-colonial expertise and

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[60] Fritz Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War* (New York: Norton, 1967), 115. T. Luedke, *Jihad Made in Germany: Ottoman and German Propaganda and Intelligence Operations in the First World War* (Münster: Lit, 2005); and Heike Liebau, "The German Foreign Office, Indian Emigrants and Propaganda Efforts Among the Sepoys," in *When the War Began We Heard of Several Kings. South Asian Prisoners in World War I Germany*, eds. Fransziska Roy, Heike Liebau & Ravi Ahuja (New Delhi: Social Science Press, 2011).

[61] Jennifer Jenkins, "Fritz Fischer's "Programme for Revolution": Implications for a Global History of Germany in the First World War," *Journal of Contemporary History* 48, no. 2 (2013).

[62] I am referring to the dissertations of Walter Iven, *Das Kulturland Persiens* (PhD Dissertation: Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität, Berlin, 1922); and Joseph Schwager, "Die Entwicklung Afghanistans als Staat und seine zwischenstaatlichen Beziehungen (PhD Dissertation, Tübingen University, 1932).

knowledge at various Oriental centers and institutions. It was quite common for the German Foreign Office to utilize employees who had previously been involved in the German colonial apparatus as merchants, diplomats, and colonial officers. This can be seen, for instance, in the activities of Georg Friedrich Knapp, director of the Deutsche Bank. Knapp oversaw the construction of the Berlin-Baghdad Railway, mentoring his student, Karl Helfferich all the while. The latter then served as the State Secretary of the Reich Treasury in 1915. Max Sering, another of Knapp's students, later became a professor at the *Landwirschatfliche Hochshule zu Berlin* until the German Foreign Office commissioned him to assess German-occupied territories in Africa, and make expert recommendations to the German Foreign Office in regards to future conquests.[63] Chapter four will discuss the common link between German academics and the German Foreign Office using the case study of German diplomats and experts in Afghanistan like Oskar von Niedermayer. The latter adopted a mentorship-role of his own when he took on the student, Emil Trinkler, who later conducted an expedition to Afghanistan in 1923. The fact that these recruits came from previous colonial ventures demonstrates again that colonial pursuits in the Middle East and South Asia did not differ much in Weimar Germany from the imperial activities of the previous era, highlighting continuities in the various roles that diplomats and political financiers fulfilled from one period into the next.

The new policies played out domestically in two important ways: First, the German Foreign Office supported the message of building an inclusive infrastructure that would support the growing Muslim population and its mobility and propaganda against imperial encroachment. Secondly, German soldiers captured British Muslim soldiers stationed in Africa, India, and the

[63] For more on Max Sering's activities, see Erik Grimmer-Solem, "A Place in the Sun: Rethinking the Political Economy of German Overseas Expansion and Navalism before the Great War," in *New Perspectives on the History of Political Economy*, eds. Robert Fredona et al (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 254.

Tsarist Empire as prisoners of wars, among which were Afghan Hindus and members of an Afghan tribe, the Afridis. According to estimates their numbers totaled approximately 20,000 that were housed at various POW camps outside Berlin.[64] Trained by Ottoman and German officers against the British, these prisoners were eventually re-mobilized to confront their former colonizers.[65]

In other words, the employment of colonial subjects as soldiers and laborers in the First World War was crucial to the Allies' success.[66] From British-Indian records it is clear that Afghan Afridis played a significant role as sepoys as early as 1898, and their desertion/removal from various posts in Punjab, Egypt, and France was quite concerning to the British authorities.[67] This was especially seen in the case of two Afghan Afridi sepoys, ᶜAbd Allah Khan and Azam Khan, whom British authorities discussed and supervised. The pair had been stationed "in the 57th Rifles [Frontier Force] (F.F) and deserted from Suez in 1916."[68] Despite British insistence to "deny" ᶜAbd Allah passage through British India for having deserted his post, ᶜAbd Allah and his German wife, Charlotte Böttcher, found a way to return to Afghanistan.[69]

The German state drew on its Muslim population, and offered the resources of its cities, in particular Berlin, to mobilize revolutionaries. This was possible in light of the fact that Muslim POWs remained in Germany after the war and were joined by other disenfranchised and politically marginalized expats from the former Ottoman Empire, India, and the Soviet Union.

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[64] Kris Manjapra, *Age of Entanglement*, 34.
[65] Gerhard Höpp, *Muslime in der Mark. Als Kriegsgefangene und Internierte in Wünsdorf und Zossen, 1914-1924* (Berlin: Zentrum Moderner Orient/Geisteswissenschaftliche Zentren Berlin e.V., Studien 6, 1997).
[66] This point has recently been argued by Jane Burbank and Fredrick Cooper, "Empires after 1919: Old, New, Transformed," *International Affairs* 95, no. 1 (2019): 81–100.
[67] The IOR holds a series of records about this ethnic group, see in particular: IOR/L/MIL/7/15909: 1898: "Collection 391/54 Treatment of Afridi sepoys of native regiments who deserted during Tirah Expedition."
[68] IOR/L/PS/11/230: Proposal to Grant a Passport of an Afridi."
[69] AAmt: R 45685-90, "Zu Einbürgerung Abdullah, Myriam (Afghanistan)."

As the Muslim presence in Berlin grew, the German Foreign Office encouraged the creation of places of worship, the celebration of religious holidays, formation of clubs and organizations, and the printing of diasporic journals and newspapers. The German state not only authorized the publication of Muslim papers and journals, but also purchased a printing press to ensure the circulation of anti-imperial propaganda. Muslims even founded a Muslim cemetery in Berlin. This inclusive infrastructure attracted many Marxist, pan-Islamists, and other nationalist groups.

As already mentioned, the German state's new friendship was not just with Muslims; rather, strategists in the German Foreign Office openly supported Indian unrest against the British Raj, especially in the light of the *Svadeśi* ("for the native land") movement that called for the boycott of foreign manufactured goods. A result of the 1905 partition of Bengal, the boycott also involved violent plots to target colonial authorities on the ground.[70] When the movement was violently suppressed by British authorities, many of its advocates were dispersed and surfaced in Germany, the US, Japan, and even Afghanistan, where they drew from diasporic networks. Indian fascination with the "three industrial late-developers" turned Berlin, Tokyo, and New York into places that offered nationalists the chance to "loosen the nineteenth century bonds with Great Britain."[71] Manjapra's work touched on Afghanistan only in passing to mention the brief sojourn of Indian nationalists such as Mawlwi Barakat Allah (1854-1927) and Subhas Chandra “Netaji” Bose (1897 – 1945), in Kabul, but did not give the same analytic emphasis to Kabul as he does to "cosmopolitan" hubs within Europe. It is also important to note that Indian activists did turn to these various spaces, of which Afghanistan was also an important one, but

[70] Sumit Sarkar, *The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal* (New Delhi: People’s Publishing House, 1973); and Kris Manjapra, “Knowledgeable Internationalism and the Swadeshi Movement,” *Economic and Political Weekly* 47 (2012): 53-62.
[71] Manjapra, *Age of Entanglement*, 46.

we must be careful not to overstate Germany's role in the course of the independence movement of both Afghans and Indians.

The German Foreign Office actively recruited these South Asia revolutionaries from Paris, London, and San Francisco, and in 1914 set up the Information Bureau for the East (*Nachrichtenstelle für den Orient*) under the leadership of German archeologist and diplomat, Max Freiherr von Oppenheim (1860-1946). The main purpose of this bureau was to encourage these revolutionaries to publish, translate, and circulate seditious literature to Europe and the Middle East and organize anti-colonial propaganda in the languages spoken across the Middle East and South Asia. From research at the British archives, it clear that between 1915 and 1917 British agents on the ground identified the circulation of approximately 129 "additions to [the] catalogue of Indo-German Oriental propaganda pamphlets."[72] Among these files were the diary notes of Hafiz Sayf Allah Khan, a self-proclaimed "British Agent at Kabul," who oversaw the production of Mahmud Tarzi's *Siraj al-Akhbar*.

> A recent issue of Siraj-ul-Akbhar [sic] of Kabul contained some very defamatory passages relating to the British nation and it is reliably reported that, in consequence, His Majesty the Amir sent Mahmud Afghani the following communication: 'Mahmud Tarzi, son of Ghulam Muhammad Tarzi, editor of the newspaper: Be it known to you that in future you should not write such unreliable things against the British, who are the friends of our Government. If you write again [in this manner] you will be turned out of the country without any consideration being shown to you.[73]

The authenticity of this report is not entirely clear, especially given that no other records beyond this one in November of 1917 exist about Hafiz Sayf Allah Khan and other observations he may have made. However, what is clear is that quite contrary to Hafiz Sayf Allah Khan's presumptions, the editor of the *Siraj al-Akhbar* continued to produce "defamatory" remarks well

[72] IOR/L/PS/11/88, P 404/1915: 5 Dec 1914-5 Dec 1917: "The War: German Propaganda among Mohammadans."
[73] *Ibid*., Kabul 7th November 1917.

after November 1917. In fact, Tarzi published two articles: The first, entitled "Khabarhā-yi Durūgh wa Natījah-i ān," ("Fake News and their Results"), was in fact geared towards addressing the "strict" practices of British censorship, and a second one, entitled "Khabarhā-yi Inqilāb-i Hind: Inqilāb dar Madrās," ("News of the Indian Revolution: Revolution in Madras"), which raised awareness of revolutionary activities against the British in the Madras provinces.[74] To appear in control of the revolutionary movements is entirely plausible that British sources softened the actual reach of such "defamatory" circulations.

This section of the chapter has described the earliest German neo-colonial aspirations in the years leading up to the First World War. What has been described were a series of efforts that the German Foreign Office developed in response to global movements, such as the Russo-Japanese war or the *Svadeśi* movement. The goal was to establish a stronger political and economic presence in the Middle East and South Asia, with the explicit intention to channel German resources towards harvesting an anti-British "programme for revolution." This goal was played out domestically through the recruitment of nationalists and revolutionaries. These recruitments became especially important to the German Foreign Office, as the former planned and executed a successful diplomatic mission to Afghanistan in 1914/15.

The German war effort in Afghanistan, 1914/15

To understand why the German Foreign Office needed Indian recruits to carry out a mission to Afghanistan, we must begin with the earliest political missions to and around Afghanistan. The first involved the efforts of Max Freiherr von Oppenheim, the diplomat

[74] *Sirāj al-Akbhār* 8, no. 2 (15 Muharram 1337/29 Mizan 1297/22 October 1918). On p. 12 there's an article "Khabarhā-yi Durūgh va Natījah-i ān" regarding the strictness of British censorship in Hindustan and another on p. 16 entitled "Khabarhā-yi Inqilāb-i Hind: Inqilāb dar Madrās." I thank Robert McChesney for making me aware of these two articles.

involved in setting up the Information Bureau for the East in Berlin. Oppenheim was assigned the task to set up telegraph stations in Persia, Afghanistan, and Turkey in the early 1900s.[75] The route in which these stations were set up not only facilitated communications between Berlin, Kabul, and Tehran, but they also enabled subsequent expeditions to travel along known German-established routes. After all, it is easy to forget that although the early twentieth-century is often characterized as *the* period of faster and more efficient travel, the absence of ports and rail tracks in and around Afghanistan made travel less efficient than elsewhere. In that vein, then, Oppenheim's expedition intended to lay out the earliest infrastructure pertaining to German involvement in Afghanistan.

In fact, it had been these travel routes across which the subsequent mission of Wilhelm Wassmuss, a German diplomat, (or the "German Lawrence" as he is referred to in British accounts) had travelled.[76] The German Foreign Office sent Wassmuss on a mission in September 1914 to foment anti-imperial rebellion among Afghan tribes. Wassmuss oversaw a series of activities, which included the spreading of seditious pamphlets among tribal communities, communicating with the Ghadar headquarters in San Francisco, and raiding British oil installations.[77] The Ghadar party (founded 1913; from *ghadr* meaning "mutiny" or "revolt") was a revolutionary movement founded by Indian expatriate intellectuals in London, Paris, Berlin, and San Francisco, which created transnational networks aimed at to liberating their home from British occupation.

For reasons unknown, Wassmuss never reached Afghanistan and the ploy to spark a violent tribal uprising against the British never yielded any success. This time the German

[75] BArch: R901/80775: "Telefunken/Oppenheim."
[76] Christopher Sykes, *Wassmuss, the "German Lawrence"* (London: Longmans, 1939).
[77] Maia Ramnath, *'The Haj to Utopia': Anti-Colonial Radicalism in the South Asian Diaspora, 1905-1930* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 183.

Foreign Office put the matter in the hands of two Indian expatriates in Berlin: Mahendrap Pratap (1886-1979) and Mawlwi Barakat Allah (1854-1927). Barakat Allah was a key-founding figure of the Ghadar party and a graduate of the Mohammadan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh (India), likewise the alma mater of Pratap. According to Pratap's own memoir the "Chancellor Bethwen [sic] Hollweg" (referring here to the German chancellor Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg (r. 1909-1917) was impressed by Pratap's confidence and assertion "that if that country [i.e.,Afghanistan] was to attack the British in India the British empire should come down tumbling [sic]!"[78] According to Pratap, his confident assertions ensured that the German Foreign office tasked him and Barakat Allah with the formal assignment to organize a delegation to Afghanistan. In 1934 Pratap later noted that as a Hindu he felt strongly drawn to Afghanistan, especially under the subsequent ruler, Amir Amanullah: "In India there was a very widespread and deep sympathy for King Amanullah. It might appear strange to many but the fact remains that while a certain section of the Musalmans was not very friendly to Amanullah Khan, no section of the Hindus was against him."[79] Pratap's observations captured the sentiments of many Indian nationalists in Afghanistan who did not operate and mobilize along religious lines, but joined the country as the latter championed. Such loose agglomerations were possible because many Indians, within the subcontinent as well as abroad, understood their affiliations not along religious, but more by kinship, or in some cases occupational ties, and in many cases along common political and ideological goals.

And so the Indian pair, Pratap and Barakat Allah, organized a tripartite (Indo-Ottoman-German) expedition, which would eventually to be named after its German participants as the Hentig-Niedermayer expedition. With a much smaller goal this time – namely, to reach Kabul –

[78] Mahendra Pratap, *Afghanistan: The Heart of Aryan* (Peping: World Federation, 1934), 16.
[79] *Ibid*., 24.

the German Foreign office hoped that with the inclusion of Indian and Ottoman participants (two entities already strongly represented in Amir Habib Allah's state), the expedition would result in coordinating a massive rebellion from Kabul against the British. To accomplish this, Pratap and Barakat Allah reached out to another Indian activist in Kabul, ᶜUbayd Allah Sindhi (1872-1944), who was a politically-active Deobandi scholar. Sindhi was in Kabul working to set up an international coalition against the British. Especially in the minds of Indo-Muslim intellectuals, Afghanistan represented a specific kind of meaning – not only for never having been formally colonized, but also for having staged successful rebellions, most notably against the Safavid Empire (1501-1722) with the efforts of Afghanistan's founder, Ahmad Shah Durrani (r. 1722-1772). Sindhi had preferred to come to Kabul, rather than to the Frontier Provinces of India, where he would have found stronger Islamic support in opposition to the British. Nevertheless, he was drawn to Kabul for the transnational reforms (based on Ottoman and Indian models), which Amir Habib Allah championed as the protector of the Islamic state.[80]

Equipped with personal letters from the German chancellor as well as Kaiser Wilhelm II addressed to the Amir, the Indo-Ottoman-German delegation hoped to convince the Amir to declare war against the British.[81] In addition to the Indian, Germans, and Ottomans, the expedition also comprised a number of Afridi Pashtuns, who were presumably the same Afghan POWs that had been previously captured by the German state.[82] On the German side, the delegation was comprised of about twenty-three Germans, all of whom had previously served in some military posts in the former overseas colonies in Africa or had been involved in trading companies active in the East.

[80] I thank Sohaib Baig for sharing his Afghanistan seminar paper, entitled "Afghanistan as a Hub for Trans-Imperial Revolutionaries: The Seven-Year Visit of ᶜUbaydullah Sindhi (1872-1944)."
[81] Hughes, "The German Mission to Afghanistan."
[82] IOR/L/PS/11/230: "Proposal to Grant a Passport of an Afridi."

Although this expedition did not secure Amir Habib Allah's support for the German war cause, important developments evolved from this expedition. Historians Ludwig Adamec and Thomas Hughes characterized the outcome of the Hentig-Niedermayer expedition as a "meaningless treaty," the "usual Afghan game of positive neutrality," or quite simply as "embarrassing."[83] At the core of these assessments lay the assumption that the absence of a treaty, or even an Afghan pledge of support, was a result of the Amir's "failure" to acknowledge a cleverly designed and well-intentioned plan to weave Afghanistan into a Pan-Islamic alliance supported by Germany. Hughes's analysis accepted the Amir's ostensible desire to keep his country "closed" to foreigners and maintain the "traditional" and "religious" fanaticism,[84] and left out the important detail that the expedition was arranged by Pratap and Barakat Allah and argued that the German-planned project failed as a result of the Amir's unwillingness to recognize a smart and serious plan.[85]

Rather than trying to surmise what prevented the Amir from pledging neutrality in the First World War, the more important task is to give context to the Amir's strategic position. From letters exchanged with the Turkish Minister of War, Enver Pasha, the Amir expressed great interest in supporting the Ottoman cause, rather than to align with a Western power. In fact, as Ludwig Adamec, who himself drew on the language of "failure," suggested that the Amir was well prepared to stand alongside the Ottomans and attack British India or Tsarist Central Asia in support of their cause.[86] In his reading of Turkish sources, Faiz Ahmed noted British anxiety

[83] Adamec, *Afghanistan's Foreign*, 24; and Dupree, *Afghanistan*, 434.
[84] Hughes, "The German Mission to Afghanistan"; Paul Overby, *Amanullah: The Hard Case of Reform in Afghanistan* (New York: Afghanistan Forum, 1992); and Poullada, *Reform and Rebellion*.
[85] *Ibid*.
[86] Adamec, 83.

over the Amir's "alleged "Turcophilisim.""[87] A footnote in Ahmed's study suggested that the Amir even sent a large sum of money to the Ottoman sultan to support the construction of the Hijaz Railway.[88] Taking these sources into account repositions the Amir away from being shortsighted to being instead a strategic thinker, carefully weighing the risks of getting his state entangled with pressing international affairs, all the while prompting the Ottoman and Indian delegation to continue their activities in Kabul. Amir Habib Allah may have ultimately pursued a policy of non-alignment, but he remained keen on maintaining connections to Indian and Ottoman actors. In turn, these actors would come to fulfill an important role and lay the foundation for the Afghan state's engagement with German technocratic reforms.

Here we can see the important point that German neo-colonial activities and a "programme for revolution" would have limited effects. As much as the German Foreign Office employed a variety of nationalist and revolutionaries in securing a stronger political presence in the Middle East and South Asia, ultimately the Afghan government employed German resources by their own recognizance and selected those resources according to their own imperatives and needs. In other words, it's important not to overemphasize the fact that Germany was the one helping these Asian countries, as it was the Afghans themselves, in this case, who sought that aid and did so for their own strategic reasons.

From Kabul to Tokyo: Indian Political Activism in a Global Imperial Web

While we have seen the process in which the German Foreign Office attempted to support the development of a political infrastructure within Germany, turning to Afghanistan we

[87] Faiz Ahmed, "Rule of Law Experts in Afghanistan: A Socio-Legal History of the First Afghan Constitution and the Indo-Ottoman Nexus in Kabul, 1860-1923" (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 2013), 391.
[88] *Ibid*., 392 footnote 146.

will see a moment in which Indians were mobilizing, especially Indians from the Aligarh and Deoband learning centers. The Mohammadan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh, itself, later hosted political meetings and published journals at its German society.[89]

These mobilizations took shape without the support of the German Foreign Office and in connection to historical events within the subcontinent. The immediate years leading up to WWI and the aftermath of the war brought about the resurgence of multiple different anti-imperial movements and political imaginaries. By the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century, the British imperial state had taken over the German South West Africa, annexed Egypt, was visibly represented in Persia, and along with France had established a strong presence in the Levant.

The Afghan state was in a unique position, because in contrast to the Ottoman or Iranian cases, European states had not imposed crippling economic concessions on Afghanistan; rather, as all the subsequent chapters will show European involvement in Afghanistan ought to be described as guided, surveilled, and systematically overseen by Afghan reformers. This in turn, created a system in which foreign experts and technocrats needed to navigate around Afghan or Islamic proscriptions before fully introducing their modernization schemes or reforms, and it created a place in which the Afghan state welcomed exiled Indian dissenters.

As German technocrats, scientists, and merchants established themselves throughout Afghanistan, exiled Indians were pouring into Afghanistan. These were mainly Muslim Indians, but also a significant number of non-Muslims, who were motivated by economic and political causes. As the historian Claude Markovits has shown, the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 and the fall of the Khanate of Bukhara inspired a large exodus of Shikarpuris (a network/occupational guild of Indian merchants from the Sindh area) out of Central Asia, where they had resided for

[89] Sattar Khairi, "University Education in Germany," *The Aligarh Opinion*, (1932); and idem., *The Journal of the German Society at the Aligarh Muslim University* 1, no.12 (1935).

many years: "Shikarpuris continued to surface in Afghanistan until the early 1930s, often telling harrowing tales of harassment and claiming huge losses of property, which they registered with the authorities [in Kabul], in the naive hope that they would one day get compensation."[90] Many of these same Indians later played an important mediating role for the Afghan-German trading firm, as will later be discussed, but more importantly, the Indian experience with imperialism informed Afghanistan's own engagement with Western powers.

Politically, many of these Indians had arrived to Afghanistan in two contexts: First, with the Hentig-Niedermayer expedition, and secondly in the context of the Khilafat movement (1919-24). The group of Indians accompanying the Hentig-Niedermayer expedition subsequently in 1915 founded the first Indian government in exile, the *Hukumat-i Muaqati-i Hind* (the self-designated Provincial Government of India (PGI)) in Kabul, after their German peers of the delegation left Afghanistan. Pratap appointed himself as president, Barakat Allah as prime Minister, and Sindhi as the administrative and foreign minister. The main goal of the PGI was to supply "Indian militants with propaganda materials, bombs and arms" internationally,[91] and in this way agitation for Indian independence was directly coming from Kabul.[92]

Pratap, himself, would be employed as an Afghan envoy to Japan in November 1922, with the primary intent to foster new alliances and at the same time represent Afghanistan in a Pan-Asiatic Congress held in Nagasaki. The goal of Pratap's sojourn in Japan was to mobilize students against the British and meet Indian revolutionaries. Among Pratap's efforts was to offer complimentary Persian and Sanskrit lessons to Japanese students, and get the Japanese to replace the Chinese-based script with a Siddham script, a script that is not based on symbols, but on a

[90] Claude Markovits, *The Global World of Indian Merchants,* 81.
[91] Dietrich Reetz, *Hijrat: The Flight of the Faithful: A British File on the Exodus of Muslim Peasants from North India to Afghanistan in 1920* (Berlin: Das Arabische Buch, 1995), 31.
[92] Adamec, *Afghanistan's Foreign Affairs*, 41.

segmental writing system derived from Sanskrit.[93] Such ideas were not as far-fetched as one would think, especially given the fact that *shittan* or *bonji*, as the characters are known in Japanese, were first introduced in the early ninth century by Buddhist priests. Despite its ebbs and flows, the script had experienced a period of decline until it was revived during the Edo period (1600 – 1868).

We know about Pratap's activities through British state sources, which detailed his stay and expressed concern about various activities. More importantly these sources monitored Pratap's close interactions with Rash Behari Bose (1885 – 1945), Subhas Chandra "Netaji" Bose (1897 – 1945), and the Japanese nationalist, Mitsuru Tōyama (1855 – 1944). According to these British records these nationalists had not only attended Pratap's lectures but also hosted private events for Pratap on numerous occasions.[94]

The British imperial state had multiple run-ins with all three nationalists and was aware of previous activities geared against the British. For instance, Mitsuru Tōyama was the notable leader of the Gen'yōsha Nationalist Society, an ultranationalist secret society that advocated Pan-Asianism. Tōyama was a key figure in the context of the Russo-Japanese war, and in setting up a martial arts school in 1901 in Siberia and Vladivostok. He had been providing the Japanese army with information against the Russians, and mobilized Manchurian bandits to sever Russian communication lines.[95]

Rash Behari Bose, on the other hand, was hiding in exile for his revolutionary mobilization against British colonial rule in India, and for having planned the assassination of a British official. Bose was imprisoned for his seditious activities but escaped only to re-appear

[93] Mahendrap Pratap, "To the Men of Letters," *Japan* Times, (1922). The excerpt is held at the British Library in a surveillance repot on Pratap, see: IOR/L/P&S/12/1869.
[94] *Ibid*.
[95] Eiko Maruko Siniawer, *Ruffians, Yakuza, Nationalists: The Violent Politics of Modern Japan, 1860–1960* (Cornell University Press, 2015).

back in Kabul. He was taken in by a "Mr. Sobhan" and the latter's German wife, who helped Bose connect with revolutionaries in Japan.[96] It had been the Gen'yōsha Society that took Rash Bihari Bose in and helped facilitate Bose's increasing influence in Japan. He not only convinced the Japanese state to support the Indian nationalist cause, but from 1942-45 Bose commanded Indian troops under the lead of the Japanese Imperial Army in Burma to fight against British and Chinese forces.[97]

The last of Pratap's acquaintances in Japan was Subhas Chandra Bose, often referred to as the leader or "Netaji." He was an Indian nationalist who had joined the Indian National Congress in the late 1920s but abandoned the Congress and Mahatma Gandhi "to raise an army of liberation abroad."[98] It was presumably Pratap, who put him in touch with his Afghan contacts and the German legation in Kabul, who, then, insured his clandestine escape via Kabul to Germany. While in Afghanistan, Bose wrote a speech entitled "The Kabul Thesis," which he gave to his friends to circulate and justify his political motives for aligning himself with the Nazi Party. In Kabul, Bose had received a new Italian passport that helped him escape the ambush plotted by his British assassins in a timely manner.[99]

What the overview of these characters suggests is that nationalist politics was reliant on an interconnected diasporic network deeply reliant on Afghanistan and also connecting the latter with India, Japan, and Germany. Activists mobilized not around common linguistic or religious ties, but around the possibility and potential for a common cause. What can also be said about these characters is that they viewed both Germany and Afghanistan as equally important spaces

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[96] Haron Amin, *Lands Under the Rising Sun: Afghan-japan Relations* (Tokyo: Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in Tokyo, 2007), 22.
[97] *Ibid*.
[98] Sugata Bose, *His Majesty's Opponent: Subhas Chandra Bose and India's Struggle against Empire* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2013), 197.
[99] Bose has reprinted his "Kabul Thesis" in Sugata Bose, *Azad Hind: Subhas Chandra Bose* (Calcutta: Netaji Research Bureau 2007).

of political mobilization. Looking at the ways in which these political actors described both Germany and Afghanistan showed that they were not drawn to one or the other for having "cosmopolitan" qualities or for being industrialized, but for the shifting meaning it represented at different historical junctions.

The second political moment that brought even a larger number of Indians into Afghanistan was the Khilafat Movement. With the end of the First World War, the Treaty of Versailles (1919) dissolved the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire, which also dissolved the hope of Indian Muslims for an Islamic Caliphate. This led a group of Indians in India to pressure the British state to preserve the Ottoman Empire's 1914 boundaries, a movement that is now called the Khilafat Movement (1919-24).[100]

The literature on the Khilafat movement has tended to ascribe Pan-Islamic sentiments to the movement, arguing that Indian Muslims felt threatened by the emergence of other nationalisms within India, thus looked to the restoration of the caliphate in hope of granting them protection.[101] Yet historian Gail Minault challenged this perspective by highlighting the multiplicity of issues around which the Khilafat movement was organized.[102] Similarly, as I have shown with the case study of the Hentig-Niedermayer and the formation of the PGI, participation in both movements transcended loyalties to Islam.

The Khilafat movement took on different forms of protests both within and outside of India, reaching as far as the United States. One form of protest included a call (perpetuated by religious scholars in the Khilafat movement) that encouraged Indian Muslims to sell off their possessions and migrate to Afghanistan. According to various estimates, this form of protest

[100] Gail Minault, *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 1.
[101] Ahmad Aziz, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967); and Wilfred C. Smith, *Modern Islam in India: A Social Analysis* (London: V.Gollancz, 1946).
[102] Minault, *The Khilafat Movement,* 106.

against British policy involved after 1920 between eighteen and fifty thousand Indian *muhajirin* (migrants), and came to be known as the *Hijrat* (emigration).[103] In her work, Minault underemphasized the role of Afghanistan in supporting Indian networks and argued that migration to Afghanistan was "generally disapproved on the grounds that such action could only weaken the Muslim cause in India."[104]

Indian exiles in Afghanistan hosted "the latest of many subcontinental dissidents who had looked toward Afghanistan for decades, not only as a base for staging revolution, but as a refuge for radicals on the run from British authority." Examining the inner workings of radical Indian networks that sent propaganda materials from Europe directly to Afghanistan, Ramnath highlighted the central role of Kabul in offering a place where people could learn to manufacture rifles, and then distribute them back to Punjab.[105] The Afghan state responded to these migrants by sending its finest general, i.e., Muhammad Nadir Khan (later King Nadir Khan, r. 1929-33), to escort the migrants to a remote place called *Jabal-i Siraj* (Mountain of Lanterns).[106]

There are two important features to point out when considering these two political movements parallel to each other: First, that Indian migrants and activists chose to settle in Afghanistan for a variety of reasons that included political and economic motives. Secondly, from British records discussed in this section, it was clear that the British treated Kabul like other major nodal hubs in Berlin and Tokyo.

The question that still remains is what did the Indian presence mean to the Afghan state and its own political agenda? More importantly, how did this peripheral narrative and Indian experience with imperialism inform the Afghan-German interaction? To best address these

[103] For numbers see Nile Green, "The Trans-Border Traffic of Afghan Modernism."
[104] Minault, 106.
[105] This is discussed in Ramnath, *'The Haj to Utopia,'* 184-185; and Seidt, "From Palestine," 4.
[106] Shaukat Usmani, *Historic Trip of a Revolutionary*: *Sojourn in the Soviet Union* (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1977).

questions, I shall begin with a 1989 study authored by an Afghan scholars, Mir Muhammad Sharif Pakrayi. His book, entitled *Hukumat-i Muaqati-i Hind dar Kabul, 1915-22* (The Provincial Indian Government in Kabul, 1915-22), was dedicated to Afghanistan's seventieth anniversary of independence. Ironically, the Parchami faction (the Marxist-inspired People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan) governed the country at the time of this publication, yet, to commemorate the historic anniversary, Pakrayi's surveyed the political activities of PGI. The author traced the origins of the PGI to its initial "battleground" in Berlin before reaching Kabul.[107] In other words, Pakrayi commemorated the history of India's Provincial Government to the Afghan state's own independence. The book took the view that Indian presence in Kabul not only exposed Afghanistan to a wide range of activists, reformers, and different kinds of political outcomes and nationalisms, but more importantly helped set out a lens through which Afghan exchanges with the German state, its technology and subsequent reforms could be understood.

Like India, Afghanistan in the early twentieth-century was struggling to fashion a cohesive society from a highly diverse and multilingual array of cultures and peoples. Afghanistan itself was never formally colonized, nor had large-scale exchanges with European powers, yet through its neighbors' experience with European colonialism Afghanistan was indirectly exposed to such dynamics. And so when the Afghan state officially developed a foreign policy that brought many Europeans to Afghanistan, the latter's interaction with these reformers was shaped by its patronage to the Indian nationalist cause. In other words, early twentieth-century Afghan regimes, as well as students and scientists we meet in the subsequent chapters, drew from Indian reformers and activists to cultivate their country's own national history. More importantly, Afghan regimes seemed to be playing both sides. On the one hand,

[107] Mir Muhammad Sharif Pākrāyi *Hukumati-Muaqati-Hind dar Kābul, 1915-22* (Kābul: Markaz-i Tahqiqāt-i ᶜIlm-i Islāmī, 1989).

the state offered patronage to the Indian revolutionary causes, and in turn took in certain influences and ideas about nation-building. On the other hand, the state drew from German technology where it needed and thought ideal, but curbed the German influence where it could. Such interplay is best seen in the next section, when Afghan-German diplomacy and exchange is examined in more depth.

Section II

The Culmination of Afghan-German Internationalism

In 1919, Amir Aman Allah declared Afghanistan an independent sovereign state and subsequently created an autonomous foreign policy, which the country had previously been unable to follow due to economic and political dependence on the British. As pressure from Britain grew, the Afghan state sought to maximize its independence by launching a policy to promote technological and scientific development, ratify international treaties, and call on various foreign states to send technocrats trained in their particular expertise. They also requested that these states in turn accept and train Afghan students in their specialized areas. Ultimately, this wound up drawing Afghan citizens into new relations with German technocrats, as well as Indian students, who resided in the German capital at the same time.

In the following section of this chapter, I will present a general and comprehensive view as to how various projects were implemented and what kinds of actors mediated the transfer of technology and science between Afghanistan and Germany. In particular, I approach this aim through a study of a case study on the *Deutsch-Afghanischer Compagnie, A.G.* (DACOM) (f. 1923), which fulfilled the important role of facilitating the exchange of goods and tools needed to develop Afghan industry.

Secondly, through the popular visit of the Afghan King to Berlin in February of 1928, I will show how a transitional regime developed while the sitting monarch was away from his capital. This new regime marks an important turning point that changed the parameters of diplomacy between the two countries. The King's 1928 visit lies at the nexus of this change, because not only did it try to cement diplomacy with the countries he visited, but ironically resulted in a coup that ultimately dethroned him. To that end, the first section will outline the general history of a new foreign policy, situating it in a global context. This visit will be concluded with a brief section that will examine the uneven and changing nature of diplomacy after 1933.

From a Shared Space to a Connected Space, 1921-1941

The shift to drawing on German technocrats and expertise must be understood in the context of Amir Aman Allah's desire to curb dependence on British-regulated trade routes and exported goods, but also to support his efforts to expand and centralize the state's control over the country's infrastructure. Immediately following his father's death, Aman Allah steered Afghanistan into the Third Anglo-Afghan War (1919) with the intention to strike the post WWI-weakened British Empire. This brief war proved extremely beneficial for the Amir, who used the British retreat and the August 1919 Treaty of Rawalpindi to announce Afghanistan's independence from all foreign entities and the adoption an autonomous foreign policy.


Figure 1.1. "Talks among Anglo-Afghan Delegation."
Source: Author's Private Collection.

The Afghan representative, Mahmud Tarzi (1865-1933, seated third from right in Figure 1.1), was a key figure in negotiating a sovereign international policy.[108] From the British perspective, the treaty was intended to be temporary and arbitrate relations during a time which the British state described as "uneasy quiet" time following the post-1919 war.[109] The British agreed to temporarily end tribal violence along the Indo-Afghan borders. The Afghan state was negotiating from a position of power, not only because they had been victorious in the Third Anglo-Afghan war, but also because the British understood that "[d]uring the reigns of both Abdur Rahman and Habibullah [r. 1880-1901 and 1901-1919, respectively] the government of India had insisted that its agreements with Afghan rulers were personal rather than dynastic; therefore, Amanullah was in his right in demanding or refusing an agreement with Britain."[110]

[108] Ghulām Muhammad Ghubār, *Afghānistān dar Masīr-i Tārīkh*, 2 vols (Kābul: Nashrat-i Muᶜassasah-i Chāp-i Kutub, 1967), 778.
[109] W.K. Fraser-Tytler, *Afghanistan: A Study of Political Developments in Central And Southern Asia* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 147.
[110] Adamec, *Afghanistan's Foreign Affairs to the Mid-Twentieth Century*, 48.

The British state had hoped that various exchanges and short-term agreements would be followed up with a more permanent treaty and bring Afghanistan back into a British sphere of influence. To negotiate this permanent solution, Sir Henry Dobbs (1871 – 1934) arrived in Kabul only to find that the new Afghan state was moving faster in its international policy than anticipated.[111] By the time of Dobb's arrival, the Afghan state had already signed a treaty in February of 1921 with Soviet Russia. Moreover, in large part due to the arrival of British-exiled Indians, the country had become a transnational breeding ground for anti-imperial sentiments, thus making a British-leaning Afghan state less likely.[112] The British diplomat and later envoy to Afghanistan, William Kerr Fraser-Tytler, described the atmosphere as a place,

> …where a Turkish military mission under Jemal Pasha ostensibly engaged in reorganizing the Afghan army was in fact making every effort to intrigue with the frontier tribes in a manner hostile to Britain, and where Indian revolutionaries, supported by Bolsheviks, had established an advance base.[113]

Fraser-Tytler, who was relaying Dobb's observations from the former's correspondence,[114] was referring here to the arrival of Indians, who came to Afghanistan in the context of the first German expedition to Afghanistan, but also foreign technocrats, army officials, and medical experts whose arrival into Afghanistan had been ratified by a series of treaties signed between Afghanistan and Turkey (March 1921), Iran (June 1921), Italy (1921),

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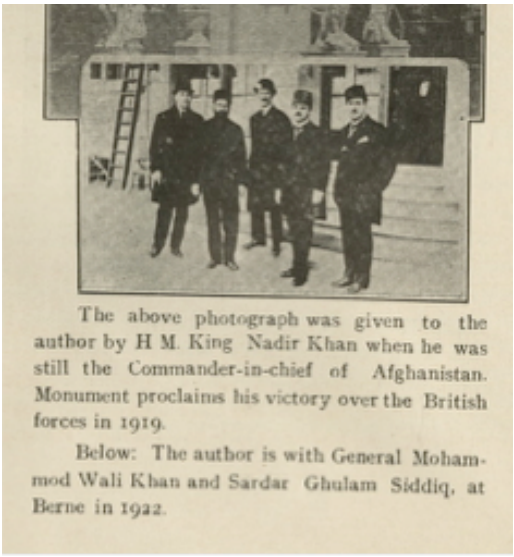
[111] Fraser-Tytler, *Afghanistan*, 50.
[112] The German Foreign Office reported on this treaty, and was keen to highlight in the correspondence that on the Russian side it had been Georgi Wassiljewitsch Tschitscherin, a Marxist revolutionary and Soviet diplomat, who negotiated the treaty with Afghanistan. The report pointed out that he was married to a German woman and therefore would be a reliable advocate for a German-Russian-Iranian axis. See: AAmt: R 77918: " Politische Beziehungen Afghanistan - Russland, 1920 - 1926."
[113] Fraser-Tytler, *Afghanistan*, 199.
[114] For Dobbs' observations, see IOR/L/PS/10/17: 1903-04: "HMG Relations; Proposed Visit of Amir to India-Mr. Dobbs at Kabul, Despatch of Mission to Kabul"; and IOR/L/PS/11/215, P2264/1922: "Afghanistan: Statement by one of the four deserters from the Dobbs Mission in Kabul."

France (1922), Belgium (1923), Germany (1926), and Poland (1928) followed.[115] The delegation responsible for these treaties comprised two of Amir Aman Allah's closest confidants, Muhammad Wali Khan and Ghulam Siddiq Khan (see Figure 1.2). They travelled first to the Soviet Union before swiftly making their way to other European states, negotiating and signing new treaties.[116]


The above photograph was given to the author by H M. King Nadir Khan when he was still the Commander-in-chief of Afghanistan. Monument proclaims his victory over the British forces in 1919.

Below: The author is with General Mohammod Wali Khan and Sardar Ghulam Siddiq, at Berne in 1922.

Figure 1.2: "The First Afghan Delegation in Europe."
Source: Mahendra Pratap, *Afghanistan: The Heart of Aryan*, 1932.

Although the Afghan state was negotiating from a position of flexibility, there were some restrictions as far as trade was concerned. Indeed, although the earlier Afghan Amir ᶜAbd al-Rahman had attempted to purchase ammunition from Germany in 1891, the Afghan state had still needed to deal with the British Raj for importing and exporting most goods vital to its economy. To that end, Aman Allah enacted shortly after his ascension a series of large-scale reforms and programs for developing roads, dams, and youth education. Smaller projects were also under consideration, including the importation of laundry machines. Whereas before Afghan

[115] This meant that foreign envoys arrived in Kabul and likewise the Afghan embassies were established abroad. For the Afghan-German exchange, see: Fritz Grobba, *Männer und Mächte im Orient. 25 Jahre diplomatischer Tätigkeit im Orient* (Berlin: Masterschmidt, 1967).
[116] AAmt: R 77918: "Afghanistan: Politische Beziehung zwischen Afghanistan and Russland."

raw wool was exported and washed in India, the Afghan state was able to decrease dependency on British India with the purchase of a German wash-house, wool press, and a spinning mill set up in Kabul.[117]

No official treaty was signed until 1926, yet from 1921 to 1941 most developments were agreed on at the state level by the two legations (in Berlin and Kabul), the German Foreign Office, and the German Ministry of Finance (*Reichsministerium*).[118] Despite the desire from both states to organize the course of study, in reality, students and scientists developed their own course of study, and as the subsequent chapter will show they were in the position to identify and acquire technological and scientific information that suited their own objectives.

In its formative years, the first projects included the creation of an Afghan legation in Berlin and a German legation in Kabul. The former was created in September of 1922 when Ghulam Siddiq Khan, the envoy in Berlin (1922 to 1925) oversaw the purchase of a villa to house the new legation.[119] Likewise, the German legation in Kabul was established in 1923, symbolically located at the *Bagh-i Babur* (Babur Gardens), where the Hentig-Niedermayer expedition had been hosted and which also housed a "German cemetery."[120]

The period after 1923 saw the start of a close collaborative exchange program that played out between the Afghan legation in Berlin, the German Foreign Office in Berlin, and the German legation in Kabul. Jointly, they handpicked German engineers, physicians, technicians, teachers, and military officials and sent them to Afghanistan. Over 250 German technocrats thus arrived to

[117] Kurt Ziemke, *Als deutscher Gesandter nach Afghanistan* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1939), 171.
[118] Seifert, *Der Anteil Deutschlands*, 6.
[119] Tobias Bringmann, *Handbuch der Diplomatie 1815 – 1963- Auswärtige Missionschefs in Deutschland und deutsche Missionschef im Ausland von Metternich bis Adenauer* (Berlin: DeGruyter Saur, 2001).
[120] Grobba, *Männer und Mächte*, 16.

work and live throughout Afghanistan, taking with them their wives and children.[121] According to one German engineer, Ernst Lebach, accompanying the family on work travel to Kabul was commonly seen as a viable economic strategy to support a family during the severe inflation gripping the economy of Weimar Germany at the time.[122]

Those Germans living in Kabul clustered around a section of the city that was referred to in German records as the newly-built "German colony."[123] Accounts conflict over the actual number of Germans in Afghanistan, but it is safe to estimate that by 1928 the number of Germans in Afghanistan surpassed two-hundred and fifty people, making Afghanistan, after Turkey, the second-largest German presence abroad.[124] Where they resided depended on each technocrat's specific profession, i.e., if they were working on harvesting arable land then the engineer (or *Landwirt*) was most likely settled in Jalalabad, Bagram, or Bamiyan.[125] Conversely, if the visiting Germans lived and worked in Kabul it was likeliest that they were either teachers at the *Amani Oberrealschule* (f. 1924), *das Deutsche Technikum* (f. 1937), or *die deutsche Schule* (f. 1938) for German children,[126] or else employees of the hospital in Kabul.[127]

Likewise, the Afghan Ministry of Education, the Afghan legation, and the German Foreign Office coordinated the training of Afghan youth in more technical sciences. As early as 1919 the German embassy in Iran sent educational materials to Afghanistan in Persian, Turkish,

[121] AAmt: R 67076; R66593a, R 77932, R 65578, R 246 950/6, "Deutsche in Afghanistan 1924-1938."
[122] Ernst Lebach, "Das Leben der Deutschen in Afghanistan," *Der Auslandsdeutsche* (1931).
[123] Obiviously Afghanistan was not a German colony, but the German Foreign Office was still referring to the German-inhabited area in Kabul as such, see AAmt: R 901/28136: "Überwachung des Auswanderung nach Afghanistan, 1924-1938."
[124] Baraki, *Die Beziehungen zwischen Afghanistan und der Bundesrepubik Deutschland,* 42.
[125] GStA PK: I.HA Rep 87 Ministerium für Landwirtschaft, Domänen oder Forsten B No. 7868.
[126] AAmt: 27273: "Auswahl und Vermittlung von Lehrkräften (Deutsche Schulen im Ausland), 1937-1942;"
[127] For hospitals see: *Der neue Orient*, 7. Vol., 1923, No. 5: 180, and AAmt: R 244087: "Ärzte, Apotheker, Pflegepersonal, Zahnärzte, Drogisten, Hebammen."

and English to initiate the exchange of approximately seventy-five young men to Germany.[128] Between 1921 and 1941 roughly one-hundred-seventy-five adolescent boys and young men would travel to Germany.[129] For reasons, which I explain in chapter two, the number of Afghan students at German institutions is not clear. I have therefore consulted university records in Bonn, Berlin, Jena, and Leipzig to determine this number. However, from the German Foreign Office materials it is clear that Afghan students also trained at technical universities in Karlsruhe, Magdeburg, and Munich.[130] Therefore it is safe to surmise that from 1921 to 1941 the number of Afghan students abroad well-surpassed one hundred seventy-five Afghans students.

The selection of specialists, students, and scientists between Germany and Afghanistan was planned at the state level among the two legations and the German Foreign Office. Both states viewed these individuals as important mediators by which information, goods, and technology was moved across these two nodal points for the purposes of developing a stronger Afghan nation, and increasing the German presence in South Asia.

While each of the subsequent chapters will address the specific changes in the spheres of technology, education, and science, in this chapter it is important to know that there were three major, large-scale, developments that resulted from closer Afghan-German diplomacy. These included the development of agriculture (*Ackerbau*), forestry (*Waldwirtschaft*), and stronger transportation system for the export and import of goods and raw materials (*Handelsverkehr*).[131]

Recently, Timonthy Nunan's book *Humanitarian Invasion: Global Development in Cold War Afghanistan* employed the term "development" to explore Afghanistan's place in the Cold

[128] From parallel case in India exchanges were enabled mainly through missionary networks and not through diplomatic channels, see Antoinette Burton, *At the Heart of Empire: Indians and the Colonial Encounter in late-Victorian Britain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 4.
[129] AAmt: R 62998 and 9: "Die Zulassung von Schülern aus Afghanistan zu deutschen Lehranstalten 1921-1927."
[130] This means that their number could be significantly higher.
[131] These three spheres are thoroughly discussed in Seifert, *Der Anteil Deutschlands*.

War context through the lens of a global debate about "the rights and responsibilities associated with post-colonial sovereignty."[132] More specifically, Nunan was pointing to Afghanistan's search for a place in the global order and the different visions of postcolonial statehood and international order. Nunan's work looked to understand how external factors (i.e., Soviet Union, NGOs, and international scene) influenced Afghanistan's development. Like Nunan, I am interested in examining the place of Afghanistan not just within a local framework, but on a much more regional, even global stage. According to Nunan, to Western states Afghanistan's development "promised a manageable postcolonial world, whether one defined by economic growth that neutralized Communist temptation or the formation of an industrial proletariat that could globalize the work begun in Russia."[133]

My use of the term "development" delineates a much more internal process than Nunan's: The language of development bore out of the early twentieth century Afghan state's own efforts to put the expertise of German technocrats to use and to transform the Afghan state into a self-styled modern nation-state. The emphasis on *self-styled* suggests that the model of a modern nation-state was not imposed on Afghanistan by the West or in this case, by Germany, but rather that both distinct Afghan regimes between 1919-1945 carefully and consciously developed a plan that best fit their own vision of what their states should look like.[134] In fact, when the term *millat* or "nation-state" is mentioned in the Persian sources it is often tied with the ways in which the Afghan state envisioned its own developments along the lines of the Ottoman projects but

[132] Timothy Nunan, *Humanitiarian Invasion: Global Development in Cold War Afghanistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 10f.
[133] *Ibid*., 49.
[134] My use of the term development is influenced by the work of Priya Satia, "Developing Iraq: Britain, India and the Redemption of Empire and Technology in the First World War," *Past and Present*, no.197 (2007): 211-55.

with specific Afghan undertones. My reading of the term suggests a much more active participation on the part of the two Afghan states.

This reconceptualization of the term allows me to set out the international infrastructure through which Afghans and Germans moved from one place to another during the interwar period, which will be a crucial parameter for actors in the subsequent chapters. This not only connects the importance of Afghan-German diplomacy to wider global issues of the day, but also allows subsequent chapters to develop the unique sets of actors, their practices for producing knowledge, and more importantly, examines how their ideas circulated globally.

What was the function of German technocrats?

When considering the practical roles of German technocrats, two important points stand out: First, the new diplomatic relationship put in motion a series of reforms that prioritized various practical projects like the construction and maintenance of dams,[135] hospitals[136] and schools,[137] making infertile land arable,[138] and the routing and laying out of new roads.[139] Here we see the targeted implementation of specific reforms to increase returns on the land by investing in different sectors of the economy. The second point emphasizes just how contentious these projects were: Whether it was Emil Trinkler's travel routes (as discussed in chapter four), the course of study for the Afghans in interwar Europe, or various construction projects, each of these developments were carefully monitored by British authorities. This was especially true in

[135] Siemens archive: "Werkarbeitsbuch," Vol. 18043, 1938.
[136] *Der neue Orient* 7, no.8 (1923): 180.
[137] AAmt: R 63256-7: "*Die Aemani/Amani Oberrealschule, 1927-1934*."
[138] GStA PK: I.HA Rep 87 Ministerium für Landwirtschaft, Domänen oder Forsten B No. 7868.
[139] For the Todt agreement, see IOR/R/12/123/ 363/41: "German Agreement of 18 Oct 1937 to supply German Road/Construction Todt Abkommen."

the case of infrastructural projects, undertaken in one case by the Todt Organization in 1937. The British were especially concerned that the:

> [A]greement [to build roads] has been kept entirely secret. It would seem that as far as 1937 the Germans were preparing for an advance through Afghanistan and the A.G. [Afghan government] somewhat naturally were very anxious that we should not know about an agreement which we might reasonably construe as being aimed [sic] against us.[140]

In studying these projects, one might presume that the Afghan state was prepared to utilize German technology and expertise at all costs. In the interest of countering British influence from India, of which the British were clearly aware, the Afghan monarch may have considered offering German technocrats unmediated control over the projects they would implement in his new country. However, viewing the state negotiations and Afghan demands that dealt with German technocrats in Afghanistan suggests a far more ambivalent relationship. The arrival of German engineers symbolized an explicitly nationalistic political culture upon which Afghan-German agreements rested, and it was in this spirit that Afghan proscriptions made it clear that Germans assistance was a temporary solution, meant to last merely until a new generation of fully-trained Afghan technocrats returned from abroad.

Mediated by a Trading Company

What did German assistance to these developments look like? Who were the middle men facilitating these developments? Despite the important roles played by private German companies in Afghanistan that specialized in one particular sphere (i.e., cotton, glass, etc.), larger German firms, most notably Siemens-Stuckertwerke A.G., Krupps-Werke, and A.E.G, were also

[140] *Ibid*.

involved in Afghanistan, offering internships to German-trained Afghan students in Germany.[141] Smaller firms had been operational in Afghanistan since 1921, including among others the trading firm "Hansa," the cotton firm "E. Fabarius," the pelt company "Theodor-Thorer," and various wool and shipping companies. In 1923, these "smaller" firms were all organized under a broad consortium called the *Deutsch-Orientalische-Handelsgesellschaft, A.G*, a trading company.[142] The firm was later renamed *Deutsch-Afghanischer Compagnie, A.G* (DACOM) or *Shirkat-i Tijarat-i Alman Amra-yi Afghanistan* in 1925. It consisted of engineers, merchants, and two notable members: A retired military captain, former member of the Hentig-Niedermayer expedition, and the geographer and geologist, Emil Trinkler, whom DACOM and the German Foreign Office sent to survey Afghanistan for its iron and coal deposits along the northern parts of the Hindu Kush region and for possible oil reservoirs along the western part of the country.

DACOM's role in the development of Afghan technology was not insignificant: The firm was considered an important middleman for the trade of machinery and tools needed for the various projects, even guns to be exported to Afghanistan. Equipped with an investment of 10,000 Goldmark, the main aim of this firm was to import and export anything possible, from small metal tools to large windows (or "*Waren aller Art")*, which were in turn needed for various larger projects agreed upon by diplomatic negotiations.[143] With branches in Kabul, Herat, Jalalabad, and Kandahar, the company negotiated a quasi-monopoly in which the firm received a guarantee on all Afghan government contracts.[144]

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[141] See chapter two for thorough discussion.
[142] AAmt: R 80579-84: ""DACOM" Deutsch-Afghanische Compagnie A.-G., Bremen, 1925-1928."
[143] See the German Foreign Office report by the German legation counselor. See Seifert, *Der Anteil Deutschlands*, 6-7.
[144] May Schinasi, *Kaboul 1773-1948: Naissance et croissance d'une capitale royale* (Napoli Unvi. degli Studi di Napoli L'Orientale: Dipartimento di Studi Asiatici, 2008), 42.

In 1927, a businessman from Bremen and the DACOM director, Eduard Freye, negotiated an exclusive contract for DACOM by which the latter was to function as the main firm to import goods needed for Afghan state-projects, but in exchange could export Afghan raw materials to European markets.[145] These goods included lapis lazuli, Afghan wool called *qaraqul* from sheep, and cotton.[146] According to Freye's memoir, there also seemed to have been a major demand in Europe for sheep casing, which the Afghan government was able to negotiate at a fixed price. This resulted in great losses for DACOM (of £ 12,000 yearly), but the German merchant was willing to accept it for two reasons: First, DACOM desperately wanted to tap into a market, which had previously been successfully run by Italian merchants who brought sheep casings from the Middle East and the Mediterranean. Second, it accepted the poor quality with guaranteed contracts with the Afghan government. Freye thought that these guaranteed contracts, in turn, meant that he would be able to recoup the losses over time, which he ended up doing within a mere two years.[147] Even when struck by the very low quality of the casings, Freye was able to negotiate around it for the sake of keeping the government contracts intact, eventually finding an interested retailer in New York who presumably thought the American market did not distinguish between different qualities of sheep casings.[148]

Before 1925, DACOM contracts were provisional and were extended for a short period at a time. To that end, the firm's leadership was able to take all kinds of measures in order to maintain a steady presence. The most challenging issue for DACOM, in its own view, was finding a *steady* flow of capital. Freye blamed the dominance of Islamic law in the country as a reason for why Afghans could not engage in money-lending or other financial transactions

[145] Ibid.
[146] *Amān-i Afghān* 6, no. 14 (1925).
[147] Eduard Freye, "Lebeserrinnerungen," Stiftung Bibliotheca Afghanica, 12.
[148] *Ibid*.

involving interest. Yet, Freye quickly discovered the important roles played by Hindu merchants in filling this gap. A Hindu merchant, Shanker Dass, provided the firm with monthly "ready cash moneys" at a two percent return.[149]

From Freye's memoir it is clear that he never realized that it was not so much the strict governance of Islamic or traditional provincial laws that governed day-to-day economic affairs, but that the country had a long-standing history of Hindu-Indian involvement in the economic spheres, dating back to the involvement of the Shikarpuris in Kabul. Back during Amir ᶜAbd al-Rahman's regime, these merchants handled the transfer of subsidies between British India and the Afghan government.[150] This chapter discussed before that these merchants had continued to settle in Afghanistan well into the 1930s, and so the influence continued during Nadir Khan's regime.[151] One notable case was the German-educated Hindu, Hokum Chand, who replaced ᶜAbd al-Majid Khan in 1937 as the new director of the Afghan National Bank.

Furthermore, it was not so much Islamic law (*shari ᶜah*) that was the absolute law of the land, rather, it was factional tribal laws that had caused the Afghan state to centralize.[152] In an attempt to centralize and standardized factional laws, the state enacted the first Afghan constitution, *Nizam-nama* (state regulations) in 1923. Comprised of about seventy-three articles (of which the one pertaining to education is discussed in chapter three), the goal was to enumerate the rights of the king, present a bill of rights for Afghan citizens, and outline the duties of state officials and ministers. While Aman Allah established his power as absolute, he also established institutions with the goal that they would evolve into representative government

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[149] *Ibid*., 16.
[150] This is discussed in Shah Mahmud Hanifi, *Connecting Histories in Afghanistan: Market Relations and State Formation on a Colonial Frontier* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011).
[151] Markovits, *The Global World of Indian Merchants,* 81.
[152] For an excellent study of the fluidity and heterogeneity of tribal organization see Barth, *Political Leadership*.

and a constitutional monarchy.[153] These laws were important especially for foreigners, and although they forbad missionary activities, non-Muslims were granted religious freedom, and their daily encounters were regulated thereafter.

This last point became especially important in two notable cases involving Germans. When Charlotte Böttcher's husband, ᶜAbd Allah, died of natural causes, according to Afridi tribal law, Charlotte and her three children became the dependents of ᶜAbd Allah's brother. He decided that he did not want this new obligation, and instead wished to transfer his rights as a guardian to someone else. This issue, of course, played out differently in the documents of the German Foreign Office, who deployed expressions like "selling her off" to scandalize the situation. King Aman Allah intervened and had Böttcher and her children sent back to Germany, with the stipulation that Böttcher was to continue raising the children in the Muslim faith. Böttcher later contested this.[154]

The second incident involved the geographer, Gustav Stratil-Sauer, who over the course of his motorcycle voyage across Afghanistan accidentally killed a tribe member. Tribal law was retributive and called for Stratil-Sauer's death, but once again the King intervened and managed to get the hapless researcher deported to Germany instead, where the University of Leipzig demoted the professor.[155]

Beyond suggesting that the Afghan state was interested in altering its laws to accommodate the growing involvement of foreigners in Afghan society, these codices also suggest that the German community in Afghanistan was actively rooted in Afghan culture and

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[153] Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, 98.
[154] AAmt: R 45685-90, "Zu Einbürgerung Abdullah, Myriam (Afghanistan)."
[155] AAmt: R 77903-5, Bd 1-3, Politische Beziehungen Afghanistans zu Deutschland – Dr. Stratil-Sauer, 1926-1933;" and Universitätsarchiv Leipzig: RA 2066, Blatt 1-102, "Assistent Dr. Stratil-Sauer beim Geograph.Seminar-Unregelmäßigkeiten bei Verwaltung von Seminargeldern, 1931-1938"; Rep.01/08/250: "Fall Stratil-Sauer, 1934."

society, to the extent that their everyday interactions – and some more intimate ones as well – needed to be addressed legally. This also suggests that to the Afghan state German technocrats were not just purveyors of hardware, but a gateway to maintaining Afghan independence. Although these new decrees were designed to regulate more banal legal matters, another purpose of course, was also to keep Afghan-German relations smooth for long enough, until the Afghan engineers-in training returned from Germany to replace their German guests.

The Not-So-Grand European Tour of King Aman Allah

The state's message for the students to return was most frequently emphasized during King Aman Allah's addresses to the Afghan students at the Technical University of Berlin, the Oriental Seminar, and the Islamic Institute of Berlin.[156] 1928 was the zenith of Afghan-German diplomacy, and it was at this moment when the Afghan king, Aman Allah, embarked on a world tour, moving through Egypt, Italy, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Great Britain, Poland, Russia, and Turkey.[157]

[156] *Āzādi-yi Sharq (Festausgabe)* 8, (1928): 29.
[157] Ehsan Ullah d'Afghanistan, *Le voyage d'Amān Ullāh: Roi d'Afghanistan*, CEREDAF, 2005).

Figure 1.3: " Hindenburg and Amanullah Watching a Military Review," Berlin, Döberitz, February 25, 1928.
Source: Stiftung Bibliotheca Afghanica, CH-4416 Bubendorf, 2013.

Figure 1.4: "Supplementary Photograph on a Pack of Cigarettes," Berlin, February 22, 1928.
Source: Stiftung Bibliotheca Afghanica, CH-4416 Bubendorf, 2013.

From images shown above, it was clear that the state visit attracted the interest of a wide array of Germans. The visit became the topic of commercial, literary, and popular materials. This was the first time since the German *Kaiserreich* that a foreign monarch had come to visit, and hence the state visit generated interest from the German population, religious centers (both Hindu and Muslim), media, and even poets and artists. This explains a series of written exchanges (to the German Foreign Office, regional archives in Berlin and the Islamic Institute of Berlin), inviting the king to examine various products – for instance, the bike firm *Adam Opel: Fahrräder-und Motowagen-Fabrik* wanted the King to view its bikes.[158]

The goal of this visit was to further cement diplomatic relations, but as the *Aman-i Afghan* state newspaper suggested, it was also "to seek out better means for living and welfare of

[158] Landesarchiv Berlin: A Pr.Br.Rep. 030 - Polizeipräsidium Berlin, " Besuch des Königs und der Königin von Afghanistan, 1928."

the hitherto brightly-shining independent state," as it was advertised in state-propaganda.[159] This aim was reflected in the itinerary developed for the King by the Afghan legation and the German Foreign Office working in tandem, which notably included visits to large German firms like Siemens-Stuckertwerke, Krupps-Werke, and A.E.G (all of which had a noteworthy presence in Afghanistan), but also the Technical University of Berlin, the Oriental Seminar, and the Islamic Institute of Berlin, which many of the Afghan state's visiting students frequented during their time in Germany.[160] At the Technical University, Aman Allah received an honorary doctoral degree in engineering, which was presumably at the counsel of professor and chief engineers Walter Harten and E. Kirst, who had previously taught at the university but were now involved in numerous construction projects throughout Afghanistan. The King's visit also yielded one purchase from the German aircraft manufacturer *Junker Flugzeugwerken*, which launched its first trip from Berlin to Kabul in 1928:

> Ein solches Geschenk läge zugleich in deutschem Interesse, da es eine ausgezeichnete Propaganda für die deutsche Industrie, besonders aber für deutsche Flugzeuge sein würde, und da es die von deutscher Seite erstrebte Schaffung eines Luftverkehrsraumes zwischen Angora, Teheran und Kabul erleichtern wurde.[161]
>
> Such gift is equally reflective of German interest, given it will be a means of propaganda for the German industry, and in particular for German airplanes, and this would contribute to the German efforts in creating a space for air travel between Angora, Tehran, and Kabul.

Ironically, while the visit attempted to foster deeper relations, the absence of a sitting king in Afghanistan gave rise to political unrest. Presumably British backed tribes circulated pamphlets depicting the King as a disloyal Muslim.[162] It must also be stressed that this was not

[159] *Amān-i Afghān* 1, no. 28 (1927).
[160] AAmt: R 77942: Band 1, 1927 - 1928: "Besuchsreise des Königs von Afghanistan nach Deutschland."
[161] Ibid.
[162] Fayz Muhammad Katib Hazarah, *Kabul under Siege*, trans. R.D. McChesney (Princeton: Markus Wiender Publishers, 1999).

the first time a revolt had taken shape, and the Khost rebellion in 1924 was also a response to the new *Nizam-nama*. This time the coup, which was staged by a "commoner," by the name of Habib Allah Kalakani (1891-1929), derogatorily referred to among Afghan nationals (as well as in historical accounts of the time) as the son of a water carrier (*Bacha-yi Saqaw*), was successful.[163] Joined by an alliance of tribes, Kalakani defeated Aman Allah, and the latter was forced out. The Junker airplanes proved extremely useful to the royal household, who used them to escape to Rome in December of 1928 (Figure 1.5 and 1.6).[164]

[163] Angela Parvanta, "Bachcha-yi Saqqa' – Afghan Robin Hood or Bandit? Khalil-Allah Khalili's Revision of the Events of 1929," in *Proceedings of the Third European Conference or Iranian Studies, Pt. 2, Medieval and Modern Persian Studies*, ed. Charles Melville (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 1999).
[164] Rothe, Walter, "Die Flucht der afghanischen Königsfamilie aus Kabul im Flugzeug," *Fliegerkalendar* (1937).

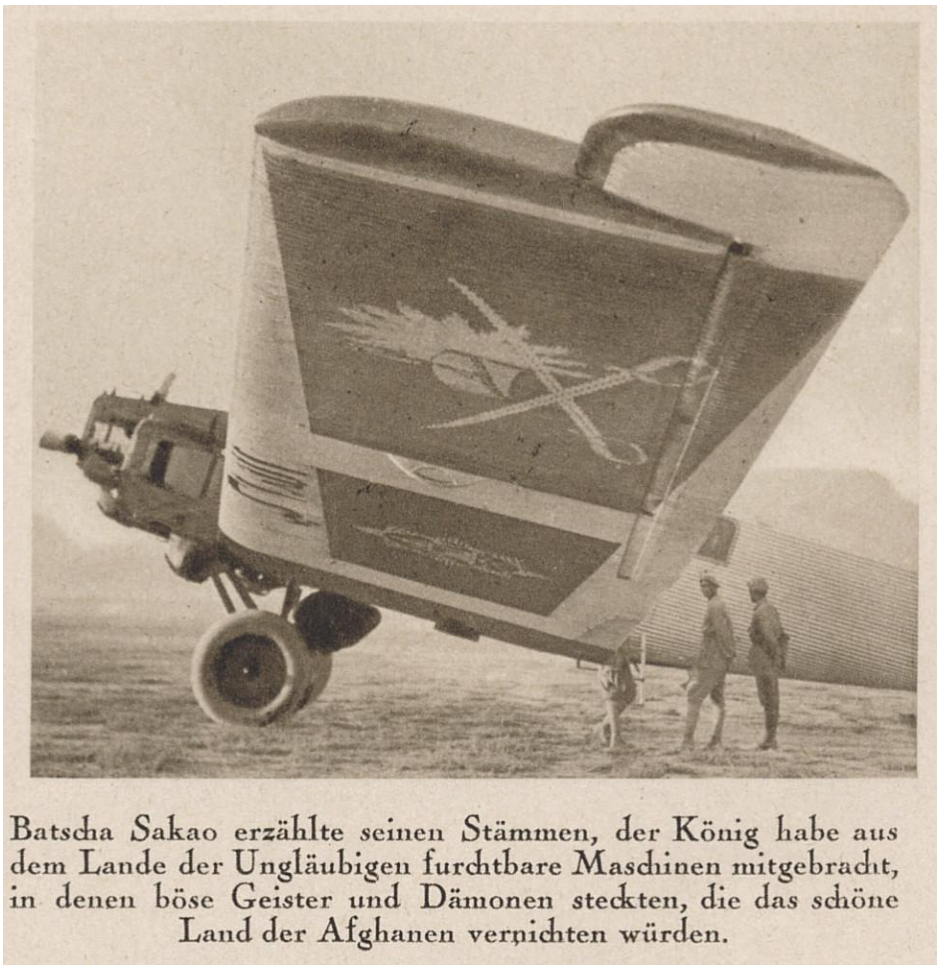

Figure 1.5: Walter Rothe, "Escape to Kandahar," Berlin, 1929.
Source: *UHU*, Vol. 5, no. 5, February 1930, pp. 76 and 79.
I thank Paul Bucherer-Dietschi from the Stiftung Bibliotheca Afghanica for sharing this image with me.

Figure 1.6: Walter Rothe, "Escape to Kandahar," Berlin, 1929.
Source: *UHU*, Vol. 5, no. 5, February 1930, pp. 76 and 79.
I thank Paul Bucherer-Dietschi from the Stiftung Bibliotheca Afghanica for sharing this image with me.

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In the context of the 1929 coup, many Germans, including teachers, engineers, and DACOM employees all fled, only to return after nine months when the rebellion was controlled and put down by one of Aman Allah's former generals, Mohammed Nadir Shah. The latter restored order, and crowned himself King (r. 1929-1933). The new King adopted a much more neutral position towards Germany, encouraging Italians, French, and even the British to partake equally in the modernization project in his country.[165] Suddenly, individuals, such as Eduard Freye, no longer had the Amir's ear.[166]

Dissatisfaction with the new regime was acutely felt among the early generations of German-educated students and teachers, whose new expertise was no longer so highly sought-

[165] For dynastic histories of Nadir Shah's rule see Mohammed ᶜAli, *Progressive Afghanistan* (Lahore: Punjab Educational Electric Press, 1933); and idem., *A Cultural History of Afghanistan* (Kabul, 1964).
[166] Stiftung Bibliotheca Afghanica, "Eduard Freye's Lebeserrinnerungen," 45.

after in Kabul, rather distrusted. Disaffected students of the German Amani High School and newly-returned graduates from German universities soon began gathering at a café next to the Amani School, run by a Mrs. Singh, the Hungarian wife of a Hindu-Afghan former student. The café offered a place for the former and current students to collectively reconsider their roles in a society no longer exclusively committed to relations with the German state.

To make matters worse, on June 6th, 1933 the *Berliner Tageblatt*, reported the death of the new Afghan envoy to Berlin.[167] This news was in many ways problematic because the envoy was *Sardar* Muhammad ᶜAziz Khan, brother of the new king Nadir Shah, sent in 1932 to replace the previous envoy in Berlin. ᶜAziz Khan was murdered just outside the Afghan embassy near the *Tiergarten*. According to Gestapo records, the assassin, a young German-educated Afghan man named Sayyid Kamal, openly confessed to the murder and claimed that the new king "had sold Afghanistan to the British."[168]

Far from an isolated incident, the year 1933 saw multiple initiatives among German-educated Afghans to contest the dynastic change from the pro-German Aman Allah to the more neutral Nadir Shah family. They quickly turned to assassination, the most notable being the murder of British officials at the British legation in Kabul, and King Nadir Shah himself during a state visit to a graduation ceremony at the Amani High School. Following these assassinations, the Afghan state rounded up and imprisoned Amani teachers, students, and visitors of Mrs. Singh's café en masse.[169]

Written testimonies and translations of Sayyid Kamal's diary strongly suggest that the ousted "pro-German" Aman Allah and his supporters in exile remained in close contact with

[167] ZMO: 1.21.62, "Ermordung des afghanischen Gesandten," *Berliner Tageblatt* 62, no. 260 (1933).
[168] *Ibid*.
[169] Diana Nasher, *Töchterland, die Geschichte meiner deutsch-afghanischen Familie* (München: Heyne, 2011).

current and former German-educated students and educators, and that they were perhaps exploiting this Kabul-based recreational and educational network to organize a return to power.[170] From the curriculum vitae sections of Afghan dissertations analyzed in subsequent chapters, it is clear that Afghan students in Germany left their studies in Germany for an interval following the King's ousting to help bring him back. Aman Allah himself drew on his popularity with the German state, the German people, and the pro-German Afghan students to weaken the new Afghan government from abroad in order to oust the sitting government and reclaim the throne.[171] The former king was also in personal communication with the German Foreign Office in order to ensure the pardoning of the assassin in Berlin.[172] Aman Allah even mobilized a revolutionary *Partie National Afghan, Section de Turquie* based in Istanbul to write to the German Foreign Office in praise of Kamal's "national heroism."[173]

> Saïd Kamal ne peut pas être qualifié de criminel. Il n'a pas tué pour tuer. Il n'a pas tiré contre une personne... il a tiré contre le crime et pour la droit. Le geste de Saïd Kamal constitue un symbole. C'est le patriotisme pur contre la tyrannie et l'esclavage forcée. Et voi avez vu que Nadir, lui même, au nom de même idéal a été tué par un autre étudiant.[174]
>
> Saïd Kamal cannot be described as a criminal. He did not kill to kill. He did not shoot against a person... he fired against the crime and for the right (cause). Saïd Kamal's act is a symbolic one, one of pure patriotism against tyranny and forced slavery. And you have seen that Nadir himself, was killed by another student of the same ideal.

By the time of Kamal's court proceedings in 1935, a new German regime had come to power in Berlin. This new administration was itself desperately trying to foster trust with a new sitting Afghan government, which likely factored into the decision of the NSDAP's

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[170] AA: R 46637, Rechtssachen, Bd. 2, Nr.24, "Übersetztung der Notizen im Notizbuch, 1934."
[171] *Ibid*.
[172] Aman Allah's plot to return back to Afghanistan did not go unnoticed among British officials, see IOR/PS/12/1658: Sep 1933-Feb. 1934: "Kabul legation murders; discovery of a widespread plot against the Afghan government."
[173] AAmt R 46638: Rechtssachen: "Gnadengesucht für den afghanischen Staatsanhörigen Sayyid Kamal, Brief Partie National Afghan, Section de Turquie an den Justizminister des Reiches," July 14th, 1934.
[174] *Ibid*.

Auslandsorganization (Nazi Foreign Office) not to pardon Kamal as a gesture of good will. The German Foreign Office received regular telegrams expressing Afghan "pressure" and "scrutiny" towards the new Nazi régime, and the German envoy in Kabul was requesting a quick decision on Kamal's trial.[175]

The British authorities followed Kamal's trial very closely: They assured Afghan authorities that as long as the German state sent the usurper off, the British would guarantee that Kamal would be delivered to the Afghan state via Quetta. Here in Quetta, a British-controlled city, the British felt Kamal's chances to request *Habeas Corpus* could best be avoided. In other words, the British were concerned that while in British detention, Kamal could report an unlawful detention at the hand of the British, and a court in a British-controlled city was more likely to deny Sayyid Kamal's *Habeas Corpus* request.

Ultimately, it was too risky for the German Foreign Office to take chances on such intricate matters, especially in light of fostering new ties to the new Afghan regime, and Kamal was executed on January of 1935 in Germany.[176] Aman Allah's efforts to dethrone the sitting government in Kabul ultimately failed. It did so for a variety of reasons, but in large part it collapsed because the rise of the German Nazi party fostered a shift in strategic thinking toward Afghanistan's new government and replaced earlier loyalties to Aman Allah's dynastic line. German state interest in Afghanistan henceforth took on a more scientific and intellectual

[175] AAmt: R 46638: "Verhandlungen mit Afghanistan, 1934-1936;" and see the diary of the German envoy, Kurt Ziemke, *Als deutscher Gesandter nach Afghanistan* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1939).
[176] IOR/PS/12/1658: Sep. 1933 - Feb. 1934: "Afghanistan: Kabul Legation murder: Discovery of Widespread plot against the Afghan government."

character, exemplified in an expedition of German explorers to the Hindukush in 1935 led by anthropologist and medical doctor Dr. Albert Herrlich and philologist Dr. William Lenz.[177]

By this point, it is worth noting two surprising shifts in the story of Afghan-German relations. For the first time, Afghan students came to study not only in more technical fields, but also in the social sciences and humanities. The dissertation of ʿAli Ahmad Fofolzay offers an example of this new shift and will be discussed in chapter three. In addition, official sources from 1933-1945 suggest a changing attitude towards intermarriages between German women and Afghan men. Afghans married to German women during the Third Reich were now placed in favorable positions to mediate between the economic, educational, and diplomatic matters of the two states.[178] This contrasts sharply with the Weimar policies against such unions, and may reflect the growing significance of Aryanism as a discourse in both German and Afghan politics.

Germans would remain in Afghanistan under the early years of King Zahir Shah (r. 1933-1973), who once again pledged a neutral position for his state in the context of the Second World War, yet he assured the safe repatriation of the majority of Germans from Kabul in 1941. Whereas German technocrats and their respective families left, women who had wed Afghan students while the latter had been in Germany ultimately remained in Afghanistan.

Conclusion

An important thread that connects the various aspects of this chapter has been to show how the process of German technical assistance to Afghanistan was indeed uneven and did not merely involve Afghan and German characters. What I have done differently (from comparative

[177] Arnold Scheibe, *Deutsche im Hindukusch: Bericht der Deutschen Hindukusch-Expedition 1935 der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft* (Berlin: Siegismund, 1937).
[178] BArch: R 43-II/1422: "Staaten in Asien (außer China und Japan), Bd. 5, Besuch des afghanischen Wirtschaftsminister Abdul Medjid 1939-1943."

studies perhaps most strongly seen in Kris Manjapra's work, which too dealt with German interest in India) is that I have re-shifted the focal point of analysis away from Germany to showing how the Afghan state actually envisioned the role of German technology and science. I have explained that the German state had geopolitical and neo-colonial aspirations in Afghanistan and India, and that those aims prompted the German Foreign Office to support a revolutionary infrastructure that drew on a wide range of ideological currents in Berlin. European centers like Berlin are too often described as "cosmopolitan," and while I appreciate a study that shows the vibrant exchange emanating out of centers in which the influence of itinerants are factored in,[179] or studies showing that not all interwar movements and activism headed towards the triumph of territorial nationalism, the sole emphasis on European centers represents only a small part of a grander view.

Here is where it useful to view the exchange of technology and science through the framework in which Afghans themselves engaged with both German technical, and scientific ideas, and Indian political ideas. It is important to remember that Afghanistan's relationship with German technology was not about replacing old Muslim institutions with more modern ones. Rather, when looking ahead to subsequent chapters it will become clear that the lines between what was considered "modern" and "traditional" were not always as detached, but often intertwined. In other words, the state made provisions to identify which specific kinds of knowledge best complimented their statehood. It is for these reasons, then, that both Afghan states relied on knowledge-migrants to constructed their own professional trajectories, and adopt new technologies and scientific methods only to blend, render, and transform these ideas into

[179] See for recent excellent example Christopher Goscha, *The Penguin History of Modern Vietnam* (London: Allen Lane, 2016). However the emphasis is still rested on Europe: see Marc Matera, *Black London: The Imperial Metropolis and Decolonization in the Twentieth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015); and Michael Goebel, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis: Interwar Paris and the Seed of Third-World Nationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

recovering and reinventing new traditions and institutions. It is to this theme that the next chapters turn.

Chapter Two: Crossing Intellectual Boundaries: The Lives of the First Afghan Students in Germany, 1921-1935

Introduction

According to a police record, one "Professor Dahl" had achieved some fame for his work on the poison gas first used by the Germans at the Second Battle of Ypres in April 2015, and served as a director of the *Farbwerke Bayer & Company*. In 1925 Dahl was giving a lecture at the *Deutsche Gerberschule zu Freiburg*, a tannery school, when the Afghan student Mohammad ᶜUmar Khan approached him. ᶜUmar Khan was less interested in the keynote speech than in obtaining Dahl's secret recipe for his famous poison gas. He explained to the doctor that such knowledge would help make him a valuable asset to the Afghan state, and that his interests intersected with that of his state's efforts to curtail British colonial interest. He continued that this would "help [his] country defeat the British."[180] ᶜUmar Khan did not obtain the secret recipe. Instead his request was taken up by the Freiburg police, who took the student into custody. The arrest resulted in an exchange of letters between the German Foreign Office and the Afghan embassy in Berlin, followed by quick release of the student. From the short files of the German Foreign Office, it is not entirely clear why he was so quickly released.[181]

As was examined in the previous chapter, the movement of ᶜUmar Khan and other Afghan students to Germany was put into motion through the official declaration of independence, which the Afghan state announced during the ascension of Amir Aman Allah in 1919. Students such as ᶜUmar Khan were part of a group of approximately one hundred seventy-five Afghan youth who studied at technical schools across Germany in the interwar period. This exchange was enabled through a series of new educational reforms and platforms designed by

[180] AAmt: R 77956: "Verhaftung v. Student Mohammed Omer Khan, 1925."
[181] *Ibid*.

the newly-founded Afghan Ministry of Education. The aim of these educational exchanges was to train students in a wide range of specialized areas, hoping that the students would return with familiarity in the technical, medical, and military fields, and thus be able to replace the foreigners then in service to the Afghan state service as educators, engineers, physicians, and technicians. In that same vein, then, ʿUmar Khan's encounter with German technological information highlights the students' attempt to identify and acquire practical information for the Afghan state, and to make this information available upon their expected return.

This chapter retraces the experiences and social practices of these itinerant students, the networks of which they were part, and the knowledge they produced at various German institutions, in order to understand how their scientific and technological training over the course of their formatives years impacted their later lives as they returned to Afghanistan or worked in India (in many cases). To that end, this chapter asks what was the educational context that gave rise to the studies abroad? What did the Afghan and German states demand in return for funding these exchange programs? How did these students in Germany themselves understand their paths to knowledge production? More importantly, how did these knowledge-migrants move new ideas back to South Asian subcontinent, and to what kinds of ideas were they drawn? Finally, can the histories of Afghan youth at German educational centers tell us more about the intertwined history of South Asian intellectual encounters with the German technologies and sciences?

As the previous chapter showed, the historiography about the twenty-year exchange between Afghanistan and Germany has merely examined the diplomatic and economic angle, and does not address the intimate tripartite alliance (among ordinary Afghans, Germans and Indians) as well as the above-mentioned questions. Little is known about the roles played by mobile Afghans, who were educated abroad in the 1920s and 1930s and later maintained

different kinds of ties between their home and the places they studied. A few landmark studies in modern Afghan history merely highlighted the students' restricted activities and their inabilities to create successful experiences abroad.[182] The existing consideration of Afghan students' histories and their politicization has their "short political life" begin only in the aftermath of a 1965 confrontation with the police during which the students requested entry to a parliamentary hearing in Kabul.[183] Even with such a limited horizon, their mobilization has been reduced to strife between "secular students" and "traditional clerics." According to this line of argument, the latter resisted the "modern" demands made by the former.[184]

A perceived dichotomy between the secular and the traditional cuts thematically across much of the historiography on modern Afghanistan. This is because it has been taken as the only plausible explanation to a conventionally asked question: Why did the early twentieth-century Afghan state fail to modernize the country and its institutions? Such arguments imply a teleological bifurcation between the modern and the traditional, famously seen in modernization theories, and is connected to various turning points in Afghan history, such as the rise of the Hizb-i Islami campus study groups (the Islamic Party) in the 1970s or the emergence of the Taliban in 1996.[185] This form of analysis is problematic because it neglects cross-border and transregional actors, the circulation of ideas, and networks that were neither "modern" nor "traditional" yet contribute to our understanding of the multiple ideological currents outside Kabul and shaped century Afghanistan in the early part of twentieth.

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[182] Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1959), 242.
[183] Louis Dupree and Linette Albert, *Afghanistan in the 1970s* (New York: Praeger, 1974), 172.
[184] *Ibid*., 170.
[185] For the onset of Hizb-i Islami see: David Edwards, "Summoning Muslims: Print, Politics, and Religious Ideology in Afghanistan," *Journal of Asian Studies* 52, no. 3 (1993): 609-628.

Recent contributions in German studies have examined intercultural exchanges between Germans and Asians by searching for a deeper history that treats contact with non-Germans as an integral part of German history.[186] These scholars have discussed the deep dependence of Indian students on German political infrastructures.[187] Additional work has been done on Iranian students in Berlin, funded by diasporic Iranian institutes.[188] These intellectual encounters, in turn, demonstrate that technological information and ideas did not travel in a linear or bilateral way (meaning merely via diplomatic routes between Afghanistan and Germany). As shall be explained in more depth, using case studies about Afghan students, new artistic and technological information was produced and absorbed outside the boundaries of diplomatic proscriptions and very much through a *selective* engagement with technology on the parts of the students. Furthermore, students from a wide range of economic, national, religious, and social caste merged together to discuss and collaborate on global anti-imperial agendas.

A systematic examination of Afghan students in Germany has not been undertaken for two main reasons. First, it has been assumed that the histories of Afghan students in Germany could easily be woven into the history of German institutions that represented the *Kulturpolitik* (cultural and educational policy) of the German Foreign Office. It was the aim of this policy to spread German information, language, and technology in Asia by first educating Asian students.[189] Little has been studied about individual experiences, because these aforementioned

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[186] Joanne Miyang Cho, Eric Kurlander and Douglas T. McGetchin, eds., *Transcultural Encounters Between Germany and India: Kindred Spirits in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (New York: Routledge, 2014).

[187] Both merits and problems with this approach were discussed in the previous chapter; see Kris Manjapra, *Age of Entanglement: German and Indian Intellectuals across Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014).

[188] Bahman Nirumand and Gabriele Yonan, *Iraner in Berlin* (Berlin: Die Ausländerbeauftragte des Senats, 1994).

[189] Roswitha Günther, *Das Deutsche Institut für Ausländer an der Universität Berlin in der Zeit von 1922 bis 1945: ein Beitrag zur Erforschung des Lehrgebiets Deutsch als Fremdsprache* (Berlin: Humboldt-

studies assumed Afghans – like their Indian, Japanese, and Egyptian counterparts – merely represented statistical figures at German institutions. Second, the paucity of available sources dealing with the interwar social activities and lives of Afghan students, both abroad and back home, presents considerable obstacles to the interested scholar. The students rarely left memoirs; however, what can be found in overwhelming quantities are Afghan state records (in the form of state-sponsored newspapers such as the *Aman-i Afghan* or its successor *Anis*, as well as educational pamphlets published by the Afghan Ministry of Education), and German diplomatic memoranda and correspondence, which describe in great depth, and in well-organized manner, the structural parameters of German-Afghan diplomacy and modernization projects.

As this chapter will demonstrate, these official state sources can still be quite useful for two key reasons: First, because of the nature of the detailed and careful surveillance of the young Afghans and their Indian peers, these sources trace out the general contours of the two states' exchange program, and more importantly how the states themselves understood the roles of its students in maintaining friendly relations. Next, these sources can be read as indicative of Afghan and German socio-political and cultural anxieties born of interchange between divergent cultures. Indeed, the records reveal a pair of paradoxes. On the one hand, Afghan and German state records indicate that students kept to themselves and rarely had meaningful exchanges outside their own ethnic communities. This fact makes the intense level of concern over intermarriages and social interchanges difficult to explain, and seems to run counter to the narrative in individual files held on "troublemakers."[190] State sources also suggest that the students held to their diplomatically-determined educational programs, studying that for which

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Universität zu Berlin, 1988); and Holger Impekoven, *Die Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung und das Ausländerstudium in Deutschland 1925-1945: von der "geräuschlosen Propaganda" zur Ausbildung der "geistigen Wehr" des "Neuen Europa* (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2013).

[190] The file held on ᶜUmar Mohammad Khan is an example of these kinds of files, see AAmt: R 77956: "Verhaftung v. Student Mohammed Omer Khan, 1925.

the Afghan state paid. And yet diasporic newspapers, university records, and a handful of student memoirs indicate that Afghan, Indian, and Tatar students had numerous points of contact beyond their prescribed studies, and that a few individuals – such as ʿAbd al-Ghaffur Brishna – broke with the required fields of study entirely.

This chapter is built upon the interplay of official sources and outside materials such as dissertations, diasporic journals, paintings, and memoirs. It focuses on two interrelated themes. The first is to locate the students within the institutional and diplomatic context of the Afghan-German educational exchange program. The second theme is to explore the many diverse and overlapping experiences and practices in which the students were embedded. These themes will be examined through the social and biographical experiences of the first Afghan students in interwar Germany, in particular as their encounters took shape at various transcultural institutions and among politically active peers.

This chapter is organized into three parts. In the first part, I will lay out the context and the process by which the Afghan Ministry of Education sent its youth abroad, as well as the process through which the German Foreign Office encouraged and enabled the movement of Afghans to Germany. While I do not wish to advocate a state-centered view for examining the mobility of ordinary students, it is important to set up the geopolitical parameters within which the mobility of these students was shaped. The global context of this mobility highlights the Afghan state's quest for independence and explains British surveillance of this technological development. Also, by examining the Afghan and German states' expectations of these student exchange programs, we can then begin to understand the ways in which Afghan students engaged and in some instances even negotiated around proscribed norms and German state regulations. In addition, focusing on the process by which the Afghan Ministry of Education

selected its youth and envisioned the guidelines of its own educational platform, helps challenge the simple view that Afghan reformers were passive recipients of German technological modernism.[191] What emerges, instead, is that Afghan pedagogues and reformers engaged with European educational programs through a selective and conscious process that mirrored their own local ideals of statehood.

The second and third parts of this chapter introduce the sources drawn from university and matriculation records, diasporic newspapers, dissertations, and artistic representations, as well as a specific case study to describe the social milieu within which Afghan students moved in Germany. This examination will complicate the frequently one-sided and goal-centered view of Afghan and German state sources. Through a prosopographical method that positions Afghan students at various educational, recreational, and religious spaces in interwar Germany, it becomes evident that their encounters were not restrictive or guided, but rather mediated by individual interest and engagement among an ethnically and religiously diverse set of collaborators, which included Indian students. In the second section of this chapter I will examine four dissertations (in the fields of microbiology and chemistry) to show the multiplicity by which Afghan students engaged with and practiced German technical knowledge. A concluding case study makes up the third section and involves the examination of an art student, [c]Abd al-Ghaffur Brishna, who reworked disparate artistic fragments into his own vision of what he considered modern Afghan national art.

In this chapter, I argue that despite diplomatically-determined proscriptions, Afghan students were attentive and creative in shaping the course of their technical education. On the one hand, students' selection of their technological education reflected the interest of the Afghan state and the latter's desire to place returnees in its civil service. On the other hand, the

[191] Ǧamšīd, *Die Beziehung zwischen Deutschland und Afghanistan*.

production of this type of technical knowledge emerged among students and on their own terms. Charting their studies and the information they engaged with challenges the notion that German technology diffused into Afghan modernism unchanged or occurred in a linear fashion. What is important is not merely the travel process of people moving from Afghanistan to Germany on diplomatic missions, but rather heterogeneous forms of exchanges and negotiations around artistic, biological, political, and technological flows of information. Together, these students' stories and varied encounters tell us about the process of state-building in Afghanistan but much more besides: they provide a lens through which to view the connected history of some of the scientific and social transformations of the early twentieth century South Asia and Europe. Each student's experience provides a glimpse into a different history -- that of the fine arts, of public health, of education, and so on. And when tracing their later lives back home, we can see through them the emergence of a new class of politically-minded technocrats, poised to change Afghanistan itself.

Section I

The Afghan Ministry of Education and the Exchange Programs Abroad

The ascension of Amir Aman Allah in 1919 created a functionally independent state, breaking with the previous British hegemony. This required Afghanistan to forge new treaties and alliances abroad, and to consider its path to modernity through the formation of a Ministry of Education, and the invitation of Europeans into Afghanistan, which in turn led an array of programs aimed at modernization. This, however, did not mean that European models were adopted by the Afghan state to the finest detail, and neither did it mean that European technocrats were able to act on their own recognizance – they could not. The Afghan Ministry of

Education ensured that the goal of its programs was to serve Afghan needs, not merely to reproduce and replicate European knowledge and norms.

When viewing the Afghan Ministry's engagement with European educational curricula from a comparative angle to those of its counterpart in Iran, i.e., the Persian university, Dar al-Funun, founded in 1851 by the Qajar state, we can see that the latter was influenced by European Enlightenment ideals. Scholars have shown that foreign educators at this institution enjoyed greater freedom to change the curriculum without much oversight from the Persian state. The patrons of the Dar al-Funun sought to promote the rise of secularism by introducing Iranian society to Western cultural and intellectual innovations.[192] In contrast, the Afghan Ministry hired and trained local Afghan superintendents to proctor and evaluate matriculation exams for foreign secondary schools. A more fitting model for the new Afghan educational institutions was India's first vernacular university, Osmania University (f. 1918) in Hyderabad, which, as Kavita Datla has shown, developed Urdu (rather than English) as its medium of instruction.

The Afghan state limited the influence of European pedagogues by involving the Ministry in all aspects of youth education, including supervising the translation of foreign textbooks and the development of disciplines that fit local needs and requirements. Unlike the Dar al-Funun, the Afghan Ministry hired and trained local Afghan superintendents to proctor and evaluate matriculation exams for secondary schools.[193] The relationship between the Afghan and European pedagogues involved Afghan reformers' careful and conscious efforts to adapt foreign curricula by taking them through multiple layers of inspection and evaluation and making changes to reflect Afghan imperatives. One useful example of this conscious direction is the

[192] See Maryam Ekhtiar, *The Dar al-Funun: Educational Reform and Cultural Development in Qajar Iran* (Dissertation: New York University, 1994); Maryam Ekhtiar, 'Nasir Al-din Shah and the Dar Al-Funun: The Evolution of an Institution,' *Iranian Studies* 34, no. 1-4 (2001).
[193] This is thoroughly discussed in chapter three of this dissertation.

process by which the Ministry selected students for study abroad. This was in no way random – the state both divided students along social and professional lines, and determined countries of study based upon the perceived strengths of each host. The goal in this should be obvious: to bring back the information that the Afghan state determined was in its best interests, to be combined there into a distinctly Afghan vision of modernism.

The Social Class and the Selection of Students

In September 1921 the state-sponsored newspaper, *Aman-i Afghan*, announced that a handful of graduates from the Royal Military College of Kabul (Madrasa-yi Harbiyya-yi Sirajiyya), founded in 1904-6, and the Habibiyya College, founded in 1904, had been selected to receive a fully-funded tertiary education in Turkey and France.[194] These two were the first secondary schools in Kabul, founded as part of earlier educational reforms undertaken by Aman Allah's father, Amir Habib Allah (r. 1901-1919), who relied predominately on the assistance of Indian and Ottoman pedagogues in contrast to the Germans favored by his son. The Royal Military College of Kabul trained the children of Afghan nobility and elites, grounding them in Quranic study, arithmetic, mensuration, geometry, and military logistics. The military school was divided into different levels according to the pupils' social background, with the children of prominent tribal chieftains in a lower section relative to the children of royal elites who trained in an upper section.[195] Habibiyya College, too, accepted initially only children with higher social

[194] *Amān-i Afghān* 2, no.18 (1922): 4.
[195] See detailed account of the subdivisions in Yahia Baiza, *Education in Afghanistan: Developments, Influences, and Legacies Since 1901* (London: Routledge, 2013), 51.

status and steeped them in the general fields of mathematics, geography, calisthenics, and for the first time introduced students to foreign languages such as Urdu and English.[196]

Afghan decisions about where to send students continued to have a socio-economic dimension. Since the earliest students were mostly drawn from the first two secondary schools (the Royal Military College of Kabul and the Habibiyya College), the students sent to France or Turkey came predominantly from elite families. Some of these students – who included in their ranks the future King, Mohammad Nadir Khan (r. 1929-1933) – trained at the military cadet schools of *Saint Cyr* or *Le Lycée Michelet*, but the majority of them studied medicine.[197] Each time a group of Afghan students were sent off, the *Aman-i Afghan* announced the students' names (possibly with their titles) and that of their fathers. From these titles we learn that the sons of *sardars* (chief or noblemen), *hajis* (persons who had successfully completed a pilgrimage), or *wazirs* (minsters) were sent to France. France received a large number of students: fifty-two between 1921 and 1927.[198] Also among these early students were the Amir's son, *Shahzada* (Prince) Hidayat Allah, and the former's younger uncle, *Shahzada* ʿAbd al-Majid Khan.[199] The two princes had previously trained at the upper level of the Royal Military College of Kabul.[200] On the other hand, the children sent to Germany in the subsequent two months included those of small landowners (*malik-i zamin*) and merchants (*tajir*).[201] Although the students came

[196] The Afghan Ministry of Education added additional specialized subjects, for an overview of these see Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan*, 184.
[197] "Les élèves étrangers dans les lycées," *Revue universitaire* 30, (1921); Louis-Frédéric Rouquette, "Les Jeunes Afghan du lycée Michelet," *Journal*, (April 1923). The background information provided about the students in these two journal articles match up with the personal archive held by May Schinasi. See Collection May Schinasi, "Série Groupes, Photo No. G 48, Kaboul 1922."
[198] IOR/L/PS/10/1015/ 1: 1921-1928: Afghanistan: Education of Afghan Youths in Europe and Turkey.
[199] *Amān-i Afghān* 2, no.18 (1922): 3.
[200] Ahmad Allah Khan Karīmi, "Maʿārif dar Afghānistān," *Sālnāma-yi Kābul*, (1938/9); and Baiza, *Education in Afghanistan*, 51.
[201] *Amān-i Afghān* 4, no. 22 (1924): 6; and AAmt: R 62999: "Die Zulassung von Schülern aus Afghanistan zu deutschen Lehranstalten, 1921-1927," 65-91.

predominately from Muslim middle class or poor families, among them were also Hindu students, who later assumed important roles.[202] Afghan Hindu youth had previously been educated at the newly founded School for Hindu Peoples (*Maktab-i Ahl-i Hunud*) and transferred into secondary schools with their Muslim peers.[203]

This educational division along socio-economic lines was not unique to Afghanistan and should be seen as a local significance intended to be enshrined within the series' of reforms across the Middle East that some scholars have called "defensive developmentalism." This term refers to a variety of distinct programs which first began in the late eighteenth century in the Ottoman Empire and spread to Egypt and Persia, with the intention of better equipping Middle Eastern states against internal and external threats. These reforms first targeted the sphere of building and supporting a standing army.[204] Institutions in the Ottoman Empire like the Imperial School of Military Science (*Maktab-i Funun-i Harbiye-i Shahanah*) were founded in 1831 for the sole purpose of training highborn children of governors and notables.[205] Initially the Ottomans were influenced by British techniques, but by the end of the nineteenth century the Imperial School was looking to a German general, Colmar Freiherr von der Goltz, commonly referred to in the Middle East as "von der Goltz Pasha", to help reorganize Ottoman military institutions.[206]

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[202] Aside from pointing out their Muslim or Hindu faiths, neither the German nor the Afghan state sources provide any further information about the ethnic makeup of the students.
[203] *Muᶜarrif-i Maᶜārif*, (Kābul: Maṭbaᶜ-i Māshīn Khānah, 1919), 4.
[204] James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East: A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 73-76.
[205] For a thorough examination of Ottoman military expansion, see Kalid Mahmud Fahmi, *Pasha's Men: Mehmed Ali, His Army and the Making of Modern Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
[206] Glen Swanson, "War, Technology, and Society in the Ottoman Empire from the Reign of Abdühlhamit II to 1913: Mahmud Şevket and the German Military Mission," in *War, Technology and Society in the Middle East*, ed. Vernon Parry and Malcolm Yapp (London: Oxford University Press, 1975).

As in the later Afghan case, the first Egyptian students were drawn from elite military schools in Egypt and sent to France as part of the state's *Nizam-i Jadid* (New Order) to train in the French military schools. Here in Egypt, too,

> from the Pasha's standpoint, the Mission's real objective was certainly not to encourage the penetration of Western ideas among his subjects, but to create the nucleus of a group of hand-picked and loyal servants capable of contributing more effectively to carrying out his ambition of transforming the estate along Western lines.[207]

Marwa Elshakry has characterized the "view that education in the sciences could be a powerful agent of reform" as a kind of utopian zeal commonly shared by reformers at the end of nineteenth century and early twentieth century.[208] For that reason, one ought to resist constructing the Afghan path to educational reform from the conventional lens of isolation or the dichotomy between modernity and tradition and more through the framework of an "Age of Education." Benjamin Fortna described the "comprehensive plan[s] for all levels of education" as they swept through France, Japan, Ottoman Empire, and Russia.[209]

But while it is useful to place the Afghan example within the context of a larger global effort to revamp the education sphere, it is important not to de-emphasize the local context and the multiplicity of educational reforms. Whereas the subsequent chapter highlights that, in fact, the patterns for educational reform overlapped in both Afghanistan and Germany, highlighting a global uniformity of state-projected modernization efforts. Indeed, the challenges faced by landlocked and isolated Afghanistan make it a distinct project, and the state's reforms were not simply diffused from Europe or mere mimicry of Ottoman endeavors. One way to see both the

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[207] A. Silvera, "The First Egyptian Student Mission to France under Muhammad ʿAli," *Middle Eastern Studies* 16, no. 2 (1980): 17. For a revisionist work, see Ian Coller, *Arab France: Islam and the Making of Modern Europe, 1798-1831* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).
[208] Elshakry, *Reading Darwin in Arabic*, 20.
[209] Benjamin Fortna, *Imperial Classroom: Islam, the State, and Education in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 28.

overlaps and the distinctiveness is through an examination of the decision-making process regarding the selection of study-abroad.

Strategic Calculation in the Identification of Destined Countries

The Afghan Ministry of Education hoped that a new class of well-trained citizens would return to Afghanistan and drive positive change. To facilitate the development of a system to identify host countries and curricula, the Ministry formed a small delegation comprised of Faiz Mohammad Khan, Habib Allah Khan, Sultan Ahmad Khan (translator), and led by Mohammad Ghulam Wali Khan (the envoy to Russia and later attaché to Berlin), to travel across Europe and explore options for exchange programs. The delegation reached Berlin in April of 1921 and left with a stack of educational pamphlets in the languages with which Afghan students were most familiar (English, Turkish, and Persian), to be distributed among elite families to prepare students for education in Turkey, Germany, France, and Russia.[210] These made up the early destinations for the program, and starting in 1928 Afghan girls were sent to study in Turkey, [211] and by early 1933 the Afghan state was sending its youth to Japan.[212] In 1938, when the state developed an interest in expanding its air force, aircraft were purchased from Italy and some students sent to study there.[213]

On the one hand, socio-economic factors determined the destinations of these students, and on the other hand each destination represented a key piece of a larger puzzle and a specific set of abilities for the modernizing Afghan state. Particularly in military matters, and in part

[210] AAmt: R 62999: "Die Zulassung von Schülern aus Afghanistan zu deutschen Lehranstalten, 1921-1927," 7.
[211] Hafizullah Emadi, *Dynamics of Political Development in Afghanistan: The British, Russian and American* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 22.
[212] Amin, *Afghan-Japan Relations*, 27.
[213] IOR/L/PS/10/1015/1:1921-1928: Afghanistan: Education of Afghan Youths in Europe and Turkey.

because the Turkish state helped to subsidize the exchanges, Turkey was the most popular destination for Afghan students. Due to its long historical ties to the former Ottoman Empire, the Afghan government selected Turkish officers to train Afghan youth both at home and abroad. A key player in this process was the Iraq-born Ottoman officer, Mahmud Sami, who had founded and subsequently directed the Royal Military College in Kabul, which had trained Amir Aman Allah and many others.[214] Military ties between the two states outlasted the fall of the Ottoman Empire, and Fakhri Pasha, the Turkish Republic's first ambassador to Afghanistan, later replaced Sami and oversaw the military training of young Afghans.[215] Military officers of the new Turkish Republic would largely pick up where the late Ottomans had left off, and continued to make their way to Afghanistan as teachers of the new class of cadets.[216]

The role of German education was to supply Afghan youth with training in technology. More specifically, German technical education represented at this conjuncture an opportunity to help "raise the *useful arts* above the world of grubby artisans… and turn middle-class male engineers into the principle avatars of technology."[217] The state of Amir Aman Allah understood technology to introduce young men into a new field of study with the calculated outcome that ensured the preservation of political independence. The exchange of scientific and technological information between Afghanistan and Germany involved sending Afghan youth to study at

[214] Adamec, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, 58; and Baiza, *Education in Afghanistan,* 51. For a primary document on the training of Afghan youth see: Mahmud Sami, *Jughrāfīyā-yi ᶜAskarī* (Kābul: Maṭbaᶜ-i Maktab-i Funūn-i Ḥarbīyah, 1302 (1903).
[215] "Of Afghan Students Abroad," *The Times of India (1861-current);* Oct 11, 1928; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Times of India*: 11.
[216] Faiz Ahmed, *Afghanistan Rising: Islamic Law and Statecraft between the Ottoman and British Empires* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2017), 83-85.
[217] I am drawing from the work of Erik Schatzberg, "*Technik* Comes to America," *Technology and Culture*, 47 (2006).

German technical institutions and inviting German educators to come to Afghanistan.[218] In other words, these programs were set up to have foreign technocrats work in Afghanistan, until the students were ready to return with their new skills. The training of Afghan students was highly politicized and carried geo-political implications. The training served to create a new class of educated technocrats, who would bring back not only new technological expertise, but also new social ties. The German state, in turn, hoped that these social ties would incorporate a greater dependence on German industries and machinery over a period of time.

Scientific research activities in Afghanistan have conventionally been dated to the establishment of the Kabul University Research Center in 1963.[219] However, much earlier-circulated Ministry pamphlets grant us insight into how the early twentieth-century Afghan regime understood the role of *ᶜilm* (knowledge). In a 1919 pamphlet entitled *Muᶜarrif-i Maᶜārif* each chapter involved an overview of wide-ranging topics (such as *tarz-i noshtan* (style of writing), *jasusi* (espionage), and *hifz al-saha* (hygiene)).[220] A chapter on *alam-i shams* (the world's light) calculated the distance of the earth to the sun, and the time it would take a ball as opposed to a train to travel back and forth. These Ministry pamphlets included wide-ranging topics, yet they had one important feature in common: The teaching of these basic scientific concepts was tied to one's love for his homeland (*ᶜishq-i watan*). Each chapter carefully analyzed a particular skill and then reminded its audience of the Afghan state's effort to introduce scientific and technological changes and maintain sovereignty.[221]

To further ensure that both students and their families understood the roles that these

[218] André Fleury, *La penetration allemande au Moyen-Orient 1919-1939: le cas de la Turquie, de l'Iran et de l'Afghanistan* (Leiden: A.W.Sijthoff, 1977).
[219] Ma ᶜārif-i Afghānistān, *Ma ᶜārif-i Afghānistān dar Panjāh Sāl-i Akhīr: Nashrīyah-ʾi Vizārat-i Maᶜārif bi-Munāsabat-i Panjāhumīn Sālgarh-ʾi Istirdād-i Istiqlāl-i Kishvar* (Kābul: Da Pūhanī Maṭbaᶜa, 1347 (1968)).
[220] *Muᶜarrif-i Maᶜārif*.
[221] *Ibid*.

students had to play in the development and independence of their homeland, the Ministry organized festive public gatherings on the occasion of their departures to Europe. These gatherings were attended by notables, state officials, and the families of the students.[222] From Afghan newspapers can be learned that such occasions were rich in political symbolism, with terms like independence (*istiqlal*) and progress (*taraqqi*) used to remind the students that it was "their duty to return with these skills and help Afghanistan maintain its independence."[223] Expressions of patriotic virtue of this sort can help us to understand the policy, common both to the Afghan legation and the German Foreign Office, of banning intermarriages – that way the students could more easily be counted on to return home after their course of study was concluded. Interestingly, diasporic newspapers published in Berlin by Arab, Indian, and Iranian counterparts echoed similar presumptions about the codependency of technology and political sovereignty. As will be analyzed in the following examination of this literature, diasporic newspapers looked to Afghanistan and its sovereign, Aman Allah, to solve their imperial problems at home and measure their own technological growth alongside that of Afghanistan's.[224]

In that same vein, the Afghan students' search for knowledge was celebrated on an international scale: Indian counterparts looked to Afghan students as avatars of a new kind of knowledge, which the former understood as a gateway to political independence. This became especially clear when students travelled via Bombay to board a steamship such as the *SS Kaisar-i-Hind*.[225] They stayed in Bombay briefly before splitting up to travel to Constantinople, Rome, Paris, or Berlin. During their stay in Bombay, Indian youth groups threw elaborate parties to

[222] *Āzād-yi Sharq* 8, no. 1 (1928).
[223] *Amān-i Afghān* 2, no.18 (1922): 13.
[224] See section below in this chapter on "Social and Political Spaces of Encounters for Afghans."
[225] This was a commonly taken route to Europe. See AAmt: R 62998f, "Die Zulassung von Schülern aus Afghanistan zu deutschen Lehranstalten 1921-1927".

honor the students and "[h]oped that the young Afghan boys and girls would touch India eleven years hence en route to Afghanistan. [The organizer of the event] could not at present say what India would be eleven years hence. Possibly, she would have approximated Afghanistan, a free country."[226] Such sentiments demonstrate the watchful Indian attentiveness to the intellectual developments in neighboring Afghanistan, as well as the link between youth education and the maintenance of "a free country." These sentiments were not out of place for Indians, especially given the emphasis of the previous chapter, which looked at the long history of Indo-Afghan political collaboration and its crystallization during the PGI and *Hijrat* movements.[227] Through such expressions of patriotism in Afghanistan and political support in India, Afghan students were framed as heroes. It did not seem to matter whether in fact the students were able to thrive and flourish in their new course of education, but what mattered was that they had the uniform goal to influence the technical development at home and strengthen their political independence in the face of British encroachment.

This explains why Britain was a noteworthy absence in these destinations, showcasing the Afghan state's political objectives. This was a shift from earlier approaches to Afghan education, when an Indian pedagogue had (re)designed Afghanistan's schools and drawn predominantly from British educational models.[228] For Afghans, who had studied at the Deoband Muslim seminary in India, or the Indians themselves (whose numbers in British schools reached 1000 in 1909), British institutions offered the most desirable destination for study.[229] However,

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[226] IOR/L/PS/10/1015/1: "Afghanistan: Education of Afghan Youths to Europe & Turkey, 1921-1928."
[227] See Chapter 1 in this dissertation for detailed discussion on Indo-Afghan historic exchanges. For secondary sources see also: Minault, *The Khilafat Movement*; Ramnath, *'The Haj to Utopia'*; and Green, "The Trans-Border Traffic of Afghan Modernism."
[228] This will be discussed in the next chapter.
[229] See Barbara Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982); and Shompa Lahiri, *Indians in Britain: Anglo-Indian Encounters, Race and Identity, 1880-1930* (London: Routledge, 2013), 5-8.

with the new regime of Amir Aman Allah, the Afghan state intended to decrease its otherwise long tradition of financial and political dependence on Britain. These exchanges were, after all, meant to address British encroachment on Afghan sovereignty.

It was not merely maneuvers around imperial encroachment that deterred Afghans from studying at British institutions. Another consideration involved the cost of studying in Britain, which was beyond what the Afghan state was able to cover, unless the families of the young men helped offset the costs. By 1928, Britain hosted a bare handful of young Afghan students, among them the children of government officials such as ᶜAbd Allah Tarzi, the son of Mahmud Tarzi, who trained at the police academies in Oxford and later in Birmingham.[230] Few families in Afghanistan had the resources of the Tarzi clan, and so study in Britain remained out of reach.

This significant absence did not go unnoticed among British official circles:

> [It] will be interesting to learn what becomes of the students sent to Germany and France in 1922, some of whom seem to have had five years or more abroad.….Its most probable result, as in Egypt and Turkey, as well as in India, if the policy is pursued, would seem to be the creation of a politically minded class expecting a larger share in the conduct of public affairs than an autocracy generally allows. Western trained Afghans will be difficult to assimilate just yet in the Afghan policy if the number increases. The policy which H.M. Minister was instructed by His Majesty's Government in F.O. despatch of 1st January 1923 to follow was one of encouraging the Amir to foster education at home, if possible with instructors of British bias.[231]

This observation suggests that the movement of Afghan students to other European states was keenly observed among British official intelligence, resulting in worrisome exchanges between the British Legation in Kabul and the Secretary of State in India. This surveillance was quite comprehensively documented between 1921-1928. The information that it provides ranges from the most basic (students' names and familial background) to intricate networks and possible

[230] IOR/L/PS/10/1015/2 Part 2: "1926-1930: Afghanistan: Training in UK of Afghan police students." Mahmud Tarzi (1865-1933) was a reformer, intellectual and King Aman Allah's father-in-law.
[231] IOR/L/PS/10/1015/1 Part 1: "1921-1928: Afghanistan: Education of Afghan Youths in Europe and Turkey," 9.

alliances among disparate-seeming collaborators.[232] Especially the Afghans in France and Germany seemed to cause unease:

> Those now in Germany can hardly be expected to resist the anti-British virus, and in view of the present trend of French policy in the East it is to be feared that those studying in Paris will succumb to similar influences…The question therefore whether in order to counteract the probable establishment in this country of an official class hostile to British interests an attempt should be made to induce His Majesty the Amir to send a proportion of such students to England, becomes one of practical urgency.[233]

This virus was referring to public meeting spaces, where foreign students frequently met and began widespread political alliances. The consistency of these records seems at first unclear: a discussion about Egyptian students in Paris quickly turned to the matter of Afghan and Indian collaboration in Paris. "Such a person [the Indian Marxist in question] would always be more faithful to the Pathan state than to British allegiance."[234] These wide-ranging themes and often-perplexing twists and turns highlighted deep anxieties on the part of the British officials and more importantly, illustrated the symbolic meaning associated with Afghan students' travels abroad.

What all these diverse observations had in common is that they were compiled through the employment of informants, who were placed at these popular public places where Muslim students gathered. In one notable case an informant surveilled "the Soufflet café in Paris." The desired outcome was of course to conclude that: "My informant is of the opinion that the students are not particularly interested in politics; they spend most of their time in pleasure. They do not care for serious study and do not trouble to develop themselves intellectually."[235]

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[232] IOR: L/P&J/12/219: "Afghans in Paris," 1924, 2-3.
[233] IOR/L/PS/10/1015/1:1921-1928: "Afghanistan: Education of Afghan Youths in Europe and Turkey," July 1922.
[234] The term "Pathan" is an exonym for the Afghan people. For an overview of the term see: Green, ed., *Afghan History Through Afghan Eyes*.
[235] IOR/L/PS/10/1015/1:1921-1928: "Afghanistan: Education of Afghan Youths in Europe and Turkey," 1924, 3.

This is an indication that the British informants identified popular gathering places to observe the development of Afghan and Indian political mobility and potential engagement with existing Marxists groups in Paris. More importantly, these lengthy measures and the anxieties emergent from these surveillances were indicative of the social position of Afghan students abroad: These students had the potential to be mediators. Not only were they assigned with the task of circulating new technological information back to their home state, but because the Afghan Ministry explicitly curtailed British educational influences, they were also in the position to mediate political influences they encountered abroad. Interestingly, the British surveillance records remain silent about the political participation of Afghans in Germany, which was presumably tied to the fact that the German police treated anti-British radical groups and their meeting agendas with great sympathy, as this chapter will later discuss.[236]

The absence of Afghans at British educational institutions was deliberate and kept the Afghan Ministry of Education closely involved in the selection of the chosen destinations for these exchange programs. The Afghan state intended not only to fulfill its practical needs, but also to maximize the military and political independence of Afghan foreign policy with respect to the British Empire.[237] As I have shown, the Ministry determined the destination of these exchange programs based on which states' expertise they wished to borrow. While the Turkish influence in Afghanistan was primarily military, the nature of German involvement in Afghanistan was technocratic or pedagogical. Germany was a leading global technical supplier, with physical representation of such companies as Siemens and AEG in Kabul.[238]

[236] IOR: L/PJ/12/223: "List of Indian agitators to be removed from Germany," 1924; and Ali Raza and Benjamin Zachariah, "To Take Arms Across a Sea of Trouble," *Itineraio* 36, no.3 (2012).
[237] See Sayyid Qasim Rishtia, "Education in Afghanistan," *Afghanistan* 1, no. 1 (1946): 20f.
[238] BArch: NS 9/291: "Palästina, Syrien, Persien, Afghanistan: Deutsche Firmen im Ausland."

The students returning from each destination were expected to fill various roles in the state's industrial duties. For the students in Germany these tasks were technocratic and included the execution of practical tasks such as building a dam or organizing and running a hospital.[239] To understand this important distinction between the students in France or Turkey vis-à-vis the students in Germany, let us now turn to the first student waves in interwar Germany.

Who Were the Students Sent to Germany?

In addition to the class basis for the earliest students which can be gathered from Afghan sources, the official German records tells us that these boys ranged from early to late adolescence – from ages thirteen to twenty-two – but with a large gap in between. Students aged between nineteen and twenty-two had completed their secondary schooling at the two Kabul institutions mentioned previously. Those between thirteen and fifteen had been home-schooled or educated at the mosque prior to being sent to Germany for secondary schooling.[240]

Over the course of the 1920s, a number of additional secondary schools were founded in Kabul. The German-founded, *Ämani Oberrealschule* or *Maktab-i Amani*, in 1924 was one of the many European-styled secondary schools. The school's program introduced students to an advanced German-style curriculum with the addition of classical Perso-Islamic study.[241] In turn, the completion of matriculation exams determined which of its graduates were sent to Germany for tertiary education. This exposure to European-styled secondary schools had the subsequent result that later generations in Europe had a better linguistic and curricular familiarity with German or French, and transitioned more easily into advanced studies in Europe. Still, as the following section will demonstrate, the German Foreign Office went through immense efforts to

[239] *Amān-i Afghān* 4, no.1 (1924): 6.
[240] Baiza, *Education in Afghanistan*, 198.
[241] AAmt: R 63256-7: "*Die Aemani/Amani Oberrealschule, 1927-1934*."

organize and manage the daily affairs of these students, and I argue this was an important distinction that set Afghan students apart from other Asian students in Germany.

German Foreign Office and the Education of Asian Students

In the same manner that the Afghan state founded the Ministry of Education to oversee and direct (among other things) the educational experience of Afghan youth, the German Foreign Office funded the creation of various educational institutions which collectively oversaw and promoted the arrival of foreign students at German technical schools. 1921 may have been the first time that a large numbers of Afghan students came to study in Germany, but not the first time the German Foreign Office had encounters with foreign students. Since the late nineteenth century, the number of foreign students at German schools had increased steadily, at its highest average numbering 8000 in 1914.[242] The outbreak of the First World War resulted in a large downturn of student arrivals, though Dutch, Turkish, and Indian students still came to Germany during the war. The war never closed down the foreign educational system, and only one year after the war ended the numbers of foreign students again began to climb. These increased steadily, and by 1925 there were 7,098 foreign students (of which 4442 were at universities and the remaining 2656 at technical schools).[243]

Why did the overall numbers rise so quickly? Why did students come to study in Germany? Students from Asia in particular found education in Germany appealing for two reasons. First, because of the outcomes of the Versailles Treaty, Germany no longer possessed colonies and hence was an attractive alternative to say Britain or France, who did. Therefore, German education attracted predominately students from colonized areas, giving rise to a space

[242] Johannes Bapt Aufhauser, *Asiens Studierende an westliche Hochschulen* (München: M. Hueber), 1933.
[243] Günther, *Das Deutsche Institut für Ausländer*, 16.

where anti-colonial and pan-Asian sentiments could easily be cultivated. As will be further discussed, this was coupled with an infrastructural support that the German Foreign Office offered to anti-imperialist networks. Second, education in Germany was, in the context of the 1921/1922 inflation and the foreign exchange rate, fairly cheap in comparison to other countries in continental Europe.[244] As a result, many foreign students were in the position to rent apartments and, more importantly, purchase books for their personal libraries at home.[245]

With the students having arrived in Germany, we can begin to examine the crucial role of the German Foreign Office. In the midst of the weakened interwar German economy, educational centers and institutions were no longer in position to fund expensive overseas research projects, especially archeological excavations or research trips to the Orient. Suzanne Marchand has described this shift in Oriental studies in her *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire: Religion, Race, and Scholarship*.[246] As a result of this shift, the German Foreign Office assumed the costs of fostering and maintaining cultural and intellectual links to the Orient, and Oriental studies became woven into their administrative purview of the German Foreign Office. As a result, the Foreign Office encouraged, in some cases even funded, experts in Islamic studies to publish academic surveys and dissertations.[247]

The German Foreign Office further established its new role through the creation of various domestic institutes that were responsible for different aspects of foreign education. The

[244] In 1929, 151 government-sponsored Japanese students studied in Germany, as opposed to 34 in Great Britain and the United States combined, and 29 in France. See Reto Hofmann, *The Fascist Effect: Japan and Italy, 1915–1952* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015), 157.
[245] See Katō Tetsurō, "Personal Contacts in Japanese-German Cultural Relations during the 1920s and Early 1930s," in *Japanese-German Relations, 1895-1945: War, Diplomacy, and Public Opinion*, eds. Christian W. Sprang and Rolf-Harald Wippich (London: Routledge, 2006), 125. The exchange rate reached a historic low, as a result of inflation which themselves were a result of German unable to pay repatriations.
[246] Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 479.
[247] For examples on Afghanistan see: Schwager, "Die Entwicklung Afghanistans"; and Iven, "Das Kulturland Persiens."

Academic Exchange Service (*Akademische Austauschsdienst*), founded in 1924, was in charge of facilitating the exchange of academics between Germany and other countries, and above all to promote the study of different cultures and peoples for German academics.[248] A year later, the German state funded the creation of the Alexander-von-Humboldt-Stiftung, which was tasked with carefully selecting and identifying "gifted" as well as "German-inclined" ("*begabt und deutschfreundlich"*) students from across the world to receive fellowships for their studies in Germany.[249] As will be examined shortly, some key Afghan figures were recipients of this fellowship.

Other institutes and offices with similar objectives were brought together under the umbrella of the Foreign Office's new *Kulturpolitik*.[250] The policy's goal was to publicize and expand the influence of German art and literature abroad, and encourage the spread and exportation of German education, language, and the technical information. By the early onset of the 1920s the number of foreign students in Berlin alone had risen to 2460, which was its highest number yet; and like the early Afghans, most of these students arrived in Germany without formal language training.[251] To bring them up to speed, the Prussian Ministry of Culture and Education funded the creation of the German Institute for Foreigners at the University of Berlin (*Deutsches Institut für Ausländer an der Universität Berlin*), offering language courses for foreign students and visiting academics. This institute was spearheaded and directed by Karl Remme, the pedagogue who was originally responsible for supervising Egyptian students at the

[248] Günther, *Das Deutsche Institut für Ausländer*, 22; and Max Lederer, "The Deutsches Auslands-Institut," *Quarterly Journal of Current Acquisitions* 3, no. 4 (1946).
[249] In 1931 the Academic Exchange Service (Akademische Austauschsdienst (AAD)) and the Alexander-von-Humboldt-Stiftung were merged into the German Academic Exchange Service (Deutschen Akadmeischen Austauschsdienst (DAAD)).
[250] Günther, *Das Deutsche Institut für Ausländer*, 18ff.
[251] *Ibid*., 27.

University of Berlin. Remme believed that the sole responsibility of this institute was to promote the "academic relationship to foreign countries."[252]

Given the recent scholarly interest in the interwar's *Kulturpolitik* and the policies' engagement with foreign students, one might question why Afghan students have not sufficiently been examined. Especially if, indeed the diplomatic relationship between the Afghan and the German state were of such key importance, as the previous chapter has argued, one would expect that Afghan students and their participation at these institutes to have been addressed. For example, Holger Impekoven examined the Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung between 1925 and 1945, which gave out the majority of scholarships to foreign students. His footnotes, along with German state records, show that these included fellowships granted to Afghan students.[253] Impekoven's book, *Die Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung und das Ausländerstudium in Deutschland 1925-1945: von der "geräuschlosen Propaganda" zur Ausbildung der "geistigen Wehr" des "Neuen Europa*," argued that the institute worked intimately with the German Foreign Office to connect science with its political aspirations in Asia.

As such, the institute regularly met with the German Foreign Office to determine, not a merit-based receipt of fellowship, but to identify regions from which students should be welcomed. Impekoven traces the continuation of this policy throughout both Weimar and Nazi eras. Like many other Western scholars, Impekoven was predominately concerned with the institutional capacity of these centers, and approached the recipients of these fellowships, namely Afghans, Indians, and Japanese students, as numbers at various German institutions, rather than as specific case studies on their own merit. Certainly, Impekoven must be praised for joining the line of recent historians' for his departure from a "relatively narrow focus on Germany's place in

[252] Karl Remme, "Die Hochschulen Deutschlands," *Ausgabe für Ausländer* (Berlin: Verlag des Akademisches Auskunftsamts, 1926).
[253] Impekoven, *Die Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung*, 223f and 326f.

continental Europe, centered on the overall importance of the Holocaust and the German *Sonderweg*," towards recognizing the need to place German history within a complex web of 'shared histories' (*geteilte Geschichten*).[254]

However, the focus on institutional histories and the assumption that institutions governed every aspect of foreign students' lives tells us little about the implications of unique encounters that took shape outside these institutions, and/or among disparate-seeming collaborators. The histories of Afghan students cannot be reduced to the histories of the institutions, nor merely generalized into the histories of other Asian students. By examining Afghan students in interwar Germany, we are not only able to highlight the unique relationship that the German Foreign Office developed towards the Afghan students, but also uncover heterogeneous experiences among Afghans as students, political activists, artists, and professional adults. The following section gives an overview of the available Foreign Office records about the Afghan students, before turning to the dissertations of the Afghan students themselves.

Political Milieu in Germany and the "Special" Relationship to the Afghan Students

Between 1921 and 1927, approximately one hundred seventy-five Afghan students, between the ages of thirteen to nineteen, came to study at German schools. Once they were in Germany, the older students were taken in as apprentices at various German technical factories (such as Siemens-Stuckertwerke), attended university lectures during the morning, and at night attended German language training at the German Institute for Foreigners at the University of Berlin. The older students stayed with German families or with "land-ladies," who rented spaces to foreign students. As the number of students increased, the Afghan legation purchased a five-

[254] Conrad, ed., *Jenseits des Eurozentrismus*.

bedroom complex, which some of these "land-ladies" had formerly used as a boarding school in Berlin. This ensured that the young Afghans remained together, received collective instruction, and – most importantly – were uniformly surveilled by the German Foreign Office and the Afghan legation.[255] Their days were filled with curricular activities, with a small lunch break in which an Afghan cook prepared meals, and in the afternoon the curriculum was resumed. The students followed the regional academic calendar, which meant that during school holidays they were sent on long excursions.

The German Foreign Office maintained regular progress reports about the students and the curricula by which they were being schooled. These included the names of the students' fathers and their occupations, what the supposed path of study ought to be, and the impressions collected from their private tutors and teachers. Such impressions categorized students within the ones who were "gifted" (*begabt*) or "dependable" (*zuverlässig*), and those who were "withdrawn" (*verschlossen*), "superficial" (*oberflächlich)* or simply "lazy" (*faul*).[256] The purpose of these classifications was to divide the students into two bifurcated courses (*Kursus I* or *II*). The specifics of the curricula is not clear, but what we know is that the curricula of both courses were in accordance of the Prussian Ministry of Education's standard for secondary education, with the slight modification that French and Latin were omitted and replaced with Persian.[257] Such adjustments were necessary for Afghan students to maintain immersion in their native language, which was important given that they were expected to return home and transition seamlessly.

[255] AAmt: R 62998f, "Die Zulassung von Schülern aus Afghanistan zu deutschen Lehranstalten 1921-1927.
[256] AAmt: R 62998f, 65 – 85.
[257] *Ibid*., 88.

The German Foreign Office relied on academic institutes to help foreign students transition into German curricula and provided an infrastructural network of support, that is true. Nevertheless, from official state files ranging from 1920 to 1927 we know that where Afghan students were concerned the German Foreign Office treated matters in-house. Such treatment included, for example, working out special curricular changes, which were tailored for the newly arrived Afghan youth, or scheduling and funding physician visits at the Afghan boarding school.[258] The German Foreign Office was also directly involved in communicating with other German bureaucracies in getting special inquires approved. For example, in an internal letter, the German Foreign Office communicated with the Prussian Minister of Agriculture to grant an Afghan of Turkic descent, Murat Afandi Farsand-i ᶜAbd al-Wahab,[259] admission to the Agricultural University of Berlin: "Da an einer deutschen Ausbildung vom Studenten aus diesen Gebieten ein politisches Interesse entsteht, wird das Gesuch des Murad Efendi ergebenst befürwortet." ("Since the education of students from this region is tied to German political interests, we will welcome and approve the request made by Murad Efendi ogli-Abd-al Wahab.") Al-Wahab began his attendance at the Agricultural University of Berlin in the 1921/22 winter semester, with the premise, of course, that "[e]r beabsichtigt später in seine Heimat bezw. nach Afghanistan zurückzukehren" ("was intending to later return to his home country, namely to Afghanistan").[260]

[258] *Ibid*., 51.
[259] He appears in the German records as: Murad Efendi ogli-Abd-al Wahab (Murad Efendi son of ᶜAbd al-Wahab). Rather than using the Turkish transliteration of Murat Efendioğlu Abdülvahap, I have used the Persian IJMES Transliteration style. See, AAmt: R 62998f, 24.
[260] *Ibid*.

The German Foreign Office reports can be divided, according to external contingency, into two sets by date, one ranging from 1921-1927 and another from 1927-1945.[261] These records included individual progress reports, and copies of what was shared with the Afghan legation in Berlin, with other German embassies (mostly in Russia, India, and Iran), and with the Prussian Ministry of Education. In addition to such a comprehensive master file, there are also individual files kept on students who required additional surveillance, such as the student mentioned in the introduction, Mohammad ʿUmar Khan. They included other students who had gone on strikes to contest class placements, petitions for intermarriages with German women, and specific incidents involving the German police. Such meticulous records indicate the degree to which the Foreign Office was involved, not only in overseeing the body of Afghan students, but also in the process of making constant necessary adjustments, as needed, which will be discussed shortly.

Among surveillance records about the Afghans in Germany, there are occasionally papers that seem unrelated to the curricula, such as reimbursement receipts for tea ceremonies regularly hosted and funded by the German Foreign Office. These gatherings were for a committee, comprised of academics and Orientalists, called the *Deutsch-Orientalischer Zusammenarbeit*. In one notable case such a gathering was attended by a handful of prominent academics and political activists. These included Eugen Mittwoch, who was director of the Institute for Oriental Studies at the University of Berlin (*Seminar für Orientalische Sprachen zu Berlin*), a Jewish Orientalist scholar, and a German advocate of *holy war* by Muslims against the British.[262] Another attendee, who was previously mentioned, was Dr. Karl Remme, professor at University

[261] The second set of records on Afghan students range from 1927-1945 has suffered wartime damages and no longer exists.
[262] Eugen Mittwoch, *Deutschland, die Türkei und der heilige Krieg* (Berlin: Verlag Kameradshcaft, 1915), 4.

of Berlin involved in immersing foreign students into German education, as well as the director of the German Institute for Foreigners at the University of Berlin. Copies of Remme's books and surveys were given out to new students as a way of introducing them to German secondary schools, German geography, and the cultural history of Germany's schools.[263] Finally, among the foreign participants were Mohammad Edib Khan, the new Afghan *chargé d'affaires*, and E. Shakib Arslan, president of the *Orientklub*, *e.V.* in Berlin.[264]

The *Orientklub* had grown out of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), a political organization founded in 1889 in the Ottoman Empire with the aim of creating a more centralized and secular Ottoman state. The CUP was instrumental in what came to be called the Young Turk Revolution in 1908, but with the fall of the Ottoman Empire after the First World War, Enver Paşa and other leaders in the movement went into exile. One of Enver Paşa's partners in the triumvirate, which had ruled the Ottoman state in its last years, Talat Paşa, went into exile in Moscow, where he founded the "Islamic International" (commonly known as the Union of Islamic Revolutionary Societies (*Islam Ihtilal Cemiyetleri Ittihadi*)).[265] It was this transnational society which Arslan first joined, later becoming president of a German offshoot, the *Orientklub*, *e.V*. The club hosted Muslims of African and Asian descent who supported its political aim to create "a decentralized organization consisting of regional cells spanning the entire Islamic

[263] Karl Remme, "Die Hochschulen Deutschlands," *Ausgabe für Ausländer* (Berlin: Verlag des Akademisches Auskunftsamts, 192?).
[264] On Shakib Arslan see: William Cleveland, *Islam Against the West: Shakib Arslan and the Campaign for Islamic Nationalism* (Austin: University of Texas, 1985); and Reem Bailony, *Transnational Rebellion: The Syrian Revolt of 1925-1927* (PhD Dissertation, UCLA, 2015).
[265] Stanford Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, Vol. 2. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

world, each with its own strategy but operating within a general framework and with an overarching goal: the freedom and self-government of Islamic lands."[266]

In the particular meeting mentioned above, the German Foreign Office gathered these academics and political activists to create a report on the matter of Afghan students in Germany. The goal was, firstly, "to initiate the process of institutionalizing the placement and advancement of these Afghan [students]" at German technical institutions.[267] This process took shape in different ways, as we have already seen, and included interventions on behalf of specific Afghan students when necessary. A second goal was the realizing of special experts, which in turn could further secure Germany's geopolitical presence in the region:

> Dieses im Herzen Asiens gelegene, vom kulturhistorischen Standpunkte hochinteressante Land, ist in naher Zukunft dazu bestimmt, Europa mit Indien zu verbinden. Die Eisenbahn Turkestans führen bis nach Kuschka an der Russisch-Afghanischen Grenzen. Die Eisenbahnen Indiens endet in Peshawa, unweit der Indisch-Afghanischen Grenze. Es ist das Bestreben der Afghanischen Regierung, diese 2 Punkte durch möglichst schnelle Verkehrsmittel zu verbinden. Zwischen Kabul und Kuschka ist seit kurzem eine gut funktionierende drahtlose telegraphische Verbind eingerichtet.. .. Es ist nun für Deutschland wichtig, daß diese Studenten hier so erzogen werden, daß sie bei ihrer Rückkehr in ihre Heimat dort als Pioniere für deutsche Kultur auftreten können. [268]
>
> Situated in the heart of Asia is a country of immense cultural and historic interest, and destined to link Europe with India in the near future. The railroads of Turkestan lead us to Kushka of the Russian-Afghan frontier. The railroad in India ends in Peshawar, which is not too far from the Indo-Afghan frontier. It is the goal of the Afghan state to link these two nodal points together. Since not too long ago a useful telegraph line between Kabul and Kushka has been established…Now it is of utmost importance for Germany the students are raised in Germany so that upon their return to their homeland they can function as pioneers of German culture.

The report continued by covering two themes: first, what in particular were Afghanistan's "treasures", and second, how to make those treasures available to Germans and to spread

[266] Raja Adal, "Constructing Transnational Islam: The East-West Network of Shakib Arslan," in *Intellectuals in the Modern Islamic World: Transmission, Transformation, Communication*, ed. Stéphane A. Dudoignon (London: Routledge, 2006), 181.
[267] AAmt: R 62998f, 28.
[268] *Ibid*.

German influence in the country?

> Es verfügt unschätzbare Wasserkräfte; es ist außerordentlich reich an Metallen, so an Gold im Flußsande des Amu-Darja und des Kunner-Flusses und in den Gold-Bergwerken von Kundahar, an Kupfer und Kupferoxyden, an Eisen und Kohle, an Edelsteinen und Halbedelsteinen…Nördlich von Kabul sind Petroleumfelder entdeckt worden. Alle diese Schätze harren des Ingenieurs, um zum Nutzen Afghanistan versetzt zu werden. [269]
>
> It [the country] possesses inestimable means of harnessing hydraulic energy; it is exceptionally rich in metals, rich in gold especially in the sands of the Amu Darya and the Kunar River and the gold mountains of Kandahar, copper and cuprite, iron and coal, precious and semi-precious gems….[and] north of Kabul lie fields of petroleum. These treasures await the excavation of engineers, of course, to be used for the purpose of the Afghan country itself.

The engineers referenced here were, of course, initially the German technocrats, later to be replaced by the German-educated students themselves. It was hoped that these students would be able to secure ties both to Afghan industry and German, which would help to entrench a German presence. The students were seen as potential evangelists for German expertise and industry in their homeland, thus ensuring that Afghanistan's rich natural resources could be exploited.

The development of these Afghan students and the German state's economic and political involvement in the region were codependent. This codependence is best illustrated when we look at the involvement of the German electrical engineering company, Siemens-Stuckert, A.G. The older students, who first arrived in Germany, received a tailored twelve to twenty-four months internship program at this company.[270] Each student was required to maintain daily diaries (*Werkarbeitsbuch*), and from sample diaries found at the Siemens archive in Berlin we know that these diaries functioned as a way of maintaining oversight over the students' progress.[271] The interns' supervisors were required to sign off on their daily activities and the hours they worked,

[269] *Ibid*.
[270] AAmt: R 62998f, 44; and for an overview of detailed technical training see: Siemens archive: Werkstudenten," Vol. 12818, 1923-1944.
[271] Siemens archive: "Werkarbeitsbuch," Vol. 18043, 1938.

to explain why students went on strikes, and to review the drawings they studied, what advice they received, and what mishaps they faced during each experimentation or examination. The company made their internship programs lucrative to foreign students by exempting the latter from paying the training fee. The German Foreign Office or the Afghan Legation presumably covered this fee.

Siemens' influence was not limited to training Afghan youth in Germany, but in Afghanistan the company began to occupy a greater presence as well. Early in the 1920s, the company had won the bids to build hydraulic water plants at the two rivers in Wardak and Pul-i-Ghomri.[272] The company barely finished these two projects before all Germans were expelled from Afghanistan in the wake of the Second World War.[273]

When Afghan students entered the age for higher education, they were spread across Germany at various technical universities, or entered into an upper division secondary course for Afghan students (*Oberrealschulkursus für Afghanische Schüler)*. The latter was a specially-designed course which offered additional preparatory instruction for students to pass the matriculation exams. The ones advancing past the exams entered higher education as part of an educational concept called academic mobility (*akademische Freiheit*). In theory, this concept referred to the students' abilities to attend at least one term at an educational institution to which they have been admitted, but upon completion of this one term were encouraged to venture out to other cities throughout Germany to find a program of study that best fit their desired expertise.[274]

Once the students entered higher education in their specific fields of interest, the Foreign Office and the Afghan Legation exercised less direct control over them. A large number of these

[272] Siemens archive: "Wasserkraftanlage Wardack"; Vol 11796, No 3139, 1936; and "Siemens Wasserkraft-Anlagen- Hydroelectric Plants- Centrales Hidroelectricas," Vol. 16585, 1950.
[273] The expulsion is thoroughly discussed in chapter one.
[274] For more on how the concept of "academic mobility" was viewed among students, see Mahdi Ali Mirza, *Welcome Each Rebuff* (Bombay: Times of India Press, 1950).

students studied at the Humboldt University or the Technical High School of Berlin, and subsequent waves of students spread throughout Germany. From matriculation records for both of those institutions the following can be gathered: they studied mostly mining and civil engineering.[275] In many cases they audited courses (*Gastzuhörer*). These technical choices reflected the need of their Afghan state and its development goals. In contrast, Indian students in interwar Germany often studied philosophy, whereas Japanese students majored predominately in the natural sciences or in economics.[276] Perhaps unsurprisingly, the number of Iranian students in Germany was relatively low (and most were children of diplomats), but we know that in an attempt to reshape a new secular Persian identity the Iranian state fostered close relations to France, and many of its students studied medicine there.[277]

What this chapter has thus far attempted to do is sketch out the general contours of the students' technical education in Germany. These contours have involved an examination of diplomatically-determined stipulations, and the training of Afghans in Germany in return for the involvement of German technocrats in the modernization scheme of the Afghan state. Reading the official state sources at face value we could run the danger of adopting the peculiar impression that Afghans rarely had meaningful exchanges outside their own ethnic community, and that they largely abided by the diplomatically-set path of the technical fields, studying what the Afghan state paid for, which happened to be in mechanical engineering, chemistry, mining, and civil engineering. Even when these earlier Afghans were in fact studying in these fields, their dissertations reflect a much more complicated intellectual trajectory, one that reveals their own

[275] See AAmt: R 62998f, 65 – 85; and matriculation records from the Technische Hochschule zu Berlin from 1923 to 1929, and Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität records from 1924-1938.
[276] For India see: Kris Manjapra, *Age of Entanglement*; and for Japan see Katō, "Personal Contacts in Japanese-German Cultural Relations."
[277] Mehrzad Bouroujerdi, ""The West" in the Eyes of the Iranian Intellectuals of the Interwar Years (1919-1939): *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East* 26, no. 3 (2006).

engagement with technology on their own terms. Political memoranda and diplomatic correspondence did not originate to address such trajectories, including questions about how Afghan students engaged with technology on an individual basis, and most importantly how Afghan students in Germany might have absorbed radical and virulent fascist formulations as they were interacting with German, Indian, or Tatar students. The next section turns to address these questions.

Section II

Afghan Students' Intellectual Milieu in Germany

From diasporic newspapers, university records, and student memoirs (these include those written by Afghan as well as Indians), we are able to locate Afghans outside the confines of their Berlin boarding school, and instead at various Muslim and non-Muslim social, political, and intellectual milieus in Germany. Through such prosopographical exercise and the supplementation of non-official sources, we learn that Afghans and their Indian, Iranian, and Tatar counterparts had numerous points of encounter, and that few individuals, such as ᶜAbd al-Ghaffur Brishna, even studied outside the required fields. The view of the isolated and inward Afghan student no longer holds up, and seems more convincing. Especially given the recent scholarship's emphasis on the multiplicity of organized interest groups and revitalized political activists organizations,[278] it seems plausible that Afghans too, influenced by the organizational qualities of clubs in Germany, drew on these newly acquired skills. Like for the Afghans, for many of these organizations the purpose was to use these skills in an attempt to return back to their respective home:

[278] Paul Fritzsche, *German Into Nazis* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998).

> In the tumultuous years at the end of the Weimar era, when an aggressive authoritarian form of modernity took hold of the masses, this "religious market" was put to the test. It was not only the Indian Muslims in Berlin; the Arab, Afghan, and Tatar Muslims were also focused on reforming their homelands and making them politically independent. Islam was assigned very different roles in that process.[279]

I will begin this section by first tracing out the student's intellectual context at the respective technical institutions in which they studied before addressing the religious community which they joined. From 1921 to 1935 an overwhelming number of Afghan students studied mainly in the technical fields. From dissertations published by Afghans we know that these were principally in the practical or functional fields. Looking to the four dissertations under examination here, two of them were produced at the Technical University of Berlin (*Technische Univeristät zu Berlin*) and two at the Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität (later renamed to *Humboldt Universität*.[280]

The first dissertation is by Anwar ᶜAli, who initially appeared in his university matriculation records as a twenty-three year old in 1923. From the age of eight to nineteen he was educated at the Habibiyya College, and subsequently taken into state service for minting money at the state's *māshīn khānah*. Excelling in his role as a civil servant, the Afghan state funded his further education to Germany. He started with language courses and supplementary courses at the University of Berlin. Later, in October 1929, he received a merit-based scholarship from the Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung.[281] With this grant he studied chemistry at the Technical University of Berlin (*Technische Hochschule zu Berlin*),[282] where he also submitted his 1932 dissertation entitled "Die Herstellung von Sprengstoffen möglichst großer Wirkung aus

[279] Again et al., *Muslims in Interwar Europe*.
[280] We can find these dissertations across German technical universities; the chapter here only draws on these three cases.
[281] AAmt: R64212: Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung an Ausländer, 1929.
[282] Technische Hochschule zu Berlin Matriculation Records, "Ahad, Akram, Ali, Asim, Aslam, Din, Gul, Thahir," 1923-1928.

den Kondensationen des Anilins mit Chlorhydrinen" ("The Production of Explosives Through the Use of Condensed Aniline and Chlorohydrin").[283] ᶜAli was later promoted to Professor (*Habilitation*) when he submitted his 1941 post-doctoral thesis entitled "Beitrag zur Kenntnis der Zusammensetzung und der Umwandlungsmöglichkeiten von Kohlenwasserstoffen der Fischer-Tropsch-Synthese" ("The Study of Composite Transformations Among Hydrocarbon Exploration of the Fischer-Tropsch Process").[284]

The completion of ᶜAli's post-doctoral thesis coincided with the expulsion of all German technocrats and teachers from Afghanistan in 1941. Although the new Afghan regime mistrusted German-affiliated students and academics, the former invited ᶜAli back to fill some of the vacant teaching position of the *Maktab-i Nijat* (renamed from *Maktab-i Amani)*. The journey back to Afghanistan was not as smooth as both the Afghan state and ᶜAli had envisioned. The German Foreign Office denied ᶜAli's repeated requests to leave Germany, citing that since "he has written a dissertation on explosive substances, such knowledge would potentially have fatal consequences at the hands of the British."[285] Here we can see another instance where technical education becomes politicized; this time not to maintain independence, but to apply new knowledge in the context of the Second World War's geopolitics. Eventually, ᶜAli and his German wife, Thea ᶜAli (born Zobeley), a nurse, were able to return back to Afghanistan, where

[283] Hafis Enver Ali, "Die Herstellung von Sprengstoffen möglichst großer Wirkung aus den Kondensationen des Anilins mit Chlorhydrinen" (PhD Dissertation, Technische Hochschule zu Berlin, 1933).
[284] Enver Ali, "Beitrag zur Kenntnis der Zusammensetzung und der Umwandlungsmöglichkeiten von Kohlenwasserstoffen der Fischer-Tropsch-Synthese" ("Post-Doctoral Dissertation, Technische Hochschule zu Berlin, 1941"). Note: Anwar ᶜAli's name appeared differently in each of his work.
[285] BArch: NS/5/VI/35759: "Mittlerer Osten: Afghanistan – Paß- u. Einreisebestimmungen (incl. Germans leaving Afghanistan in 1941."

Thea ᶜAli worked as the head nurse in the Kabul Women's Hospital, and Anwar ᶜAli taught chemistry at the *Maktab-i Amani*.[286]

Another Afghan student, ᶜAbd al-Rahim Khan, originally born in the Khanate of Qalat in 1909, was educated at an unknown elementary school in Kabul until he was sent as a twelve year old to Berlin in April 1922. His family was presumably among the Afghans who had been exiled to this princely state during the reign of ᶜAbd al- Rahman Khan. He belonged to the group of younger students who stayed at the boarding school until he was old enough for higher education. Eventually, he attended the specially designed upper level high school course, which was approved by the Prussian Ministry of Education to serve Afghan students who needed to be brought up to speed. Rahim's 1938 dissertation was submitted in the field of microbiology at the Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität and entitled "Fluorescensmikorsophische Untersuchungen über das Wachstum von Tuberkelbakterien in synthetischen Nährlösungen" ("The Microscopic Fluorescence Examination and the Growth of Tubercle Bacteria in Synthetic Nutrient Solutions.")[287]

Through the use of a fluorescence microscope, Khan studied the growth of tubercle bacteria. He built on German and French biologists, Robert Koch and Louis Pasteur, who were considered founding fathers of bacteriology and microbiology (respectively), but also established the guidelines for a postulate that linked pathogenic bacteria to understanding and controlling the various diseases they were studying.[288] In fact, it was in Berlin at the Institute for Physiology,

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[286] May Schinasi, "Who's Who Personal Collection: "Ali, Thea née Zobeley, born abt. 1901/2, Nurse."
[287] Abdul Rahim, "Fluorescensmikorsophische Untersuchungen über das Wachstum von Tuberkelbakterien in synthetischen Nährlösunge*n*" (Med. PhD Dissertation: Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Berlin, 1939).
[288] Andrew Mendelsohn, "Bacteriology and Microbiology," in *The Oxford Companion to the History of Modern Science*, ed. John Heilbron (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 75-77; and Andrew Mendelsohn, "'Like All That Lives': Biology, Medicine and Bacteria in the Age of Pasteur and Koch," *History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences* 24, (2002): 3-35.

when Robert Koch first presented about his identification of the tuberculosis pathogens in 1882.[289]

Since Koch, other microbiologists have suggested an array of other different mediums (or environments) that scientists used to grow and control bacteria, and Rahim's dissertation situated himself within this line of scientists by offering a *different* medium, namely, one that he developed through an amalgamation of meat-bouillon infused with other synthetic chemicals.[290] Rahim's experimentation showed two things: first, that this medium best controlled the tubercle bacteria, and secondly and more interestingly, he attempted to break with the long line of prominent European bacteriologists. He did so by problematizing the irregularity and unpredictability of potato flour (*Kartoffelmehl*) commonly used as a medium to grow and control tubercle bacteria.[291]

It is important to note that Rahim's circle at the Berlin Hygiene Institute was predominately made up of military and naval doctors who were interested in formulating questions about racial hygiene.[292] Rahim was among the rare cases in his focus testing the tubercle bacteria. Even his fellow Afghan peer, Ghulam Faruq Khan, who entered the institute a year later, studied the Di-Bacteria, a bacterium unrelated to the tubercle bacteria.[293]

The tubercle bacteria have not been sufficiently historicized in the histories of South Asia before 1945, possibly because of many stigmas attached to discussing the disease, but also with

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[289] Christoph Gradmann, "Robert Koch and the Pressures of Scientific Research: Tuberculosis and Tuberculin," *Medical History* 45 (2001).
[290] Rahim, *Fluorescensmikorsophische Untersuchungen über das Wachstum von Tuberkelbakterien*,15.
[291] *Ibid*., 6.
[292] Paul Weindling, *Epidemics and Genocide in Eastern Europe, 1890-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 230.
[293] Gulam Faruqk, *Der fluorescenzmikroskopische Nachweis der Di-Bakterien* (Med. PhD Dissertation: Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Berlin, 1940).

the signficant rise of this pathogen in the aftermath of the decolonization period.[294] The Scandinavian-led International Tuberculosis Campaign tested thirty-seven million children and adolescence worldwide for tuberculosis.[295] After Poland and Germany, India came in third place with a total of four million people affected. The World Health Organization (WHO) most aggressively fought tuberculosis. WHO was an organization with roots back in 1851, and later in 1947 merged with other existing health organizations under WHO. One of the organization's many techniques involved the implementation of controversial vaccines, called BCG.[296] Under [c]Abd al-Rahim Khan, the Afghan Health Ministry later adopted the BCG vaccine to treat over 120,000 cases with tuberculosis at the Tuberculosis Institute in Afghanistan.[297]

What was the value of Rahim dissertation or how was this dissertation reflective of his social and cultural context of early twentieth century Afghanistan? Understanding the media needed for bacteria to thrive was a groundbreaking way for reducing the number of microbes. Furthermore, understanding how these microbes metabolized nutrients could help fight various pathogens. Removing the bacteria nutrients from places where bacteria could thrive, especially in hospitals, ponds, sewers, and even graveyards equated to reducing the bacteria's ability to repopulate, and become potentially pathogenic, or even worse, airborne. For Rahim, the choice to test tubercle bacteria in particular is interesting, but not especially surprising, and reflected a conscious effort to place his education at the service of the Afghan state. What Rahim did from 1938 to 1955 is not clear, but what we do know is that he returned to Afghanistan, where he

[294] There are a few rare exceptions that involve Central Asia, see Paula Michaels, *Curative Powers: Medicine and Empire in Stalin's Central Asia* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003); and Erin Koch, *Free Market Tuberculosis: Managing Epidemics in Post-Soviet Georgia* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2013). I thank Hanna Reiss for pointing out these two references.
[295] Niels Brimnes, "Vikings against Tuberculosis: The International Tuberculosis Campaign in India, 1948-1951," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 18, no. 2 (2007): 407.
[296] Idem, "BCG Vaccination and WHO's Global Strategy for Tuberculosis Control 1948-1983," *Social Science & Medicine* 67, (2001).
[297] "B.C.G Campaign," *Kabul Times* 1, no. 85 (1962): 2.

served as the president of the Malaria Institute of Afghanistan in 1955,[298] and in the early 1960s as the Minister of Public Health. Throughout his career he worked closely with WHO and many other regional counterparts, in particular with one Professor "Dr. Gopala Krishnan", to control the spread of smallpox and malaria.[299] Rahim also opened new training schools, called Vaccine Preparation Departments in Kabul, which trained new medical students in bacteriology and immunization.[300]

There are striking similarities among all of these disparate seeming dissertations. For one, each of the dissertations under review here tested their hypothesis or stated aim and engaged with state-of-the-art research for the time. They did so by offering a set of experimentation that offered new insight into their respective topics. Secondly, all of these Afghan students stated in the curriculum vitae section of their dissertation that, rather than opting to remain amid the material comfort and vibrant intellectual community of interwar Berlin, they had made the very political decision to return to Afghanistan to help the cause of their deposed King (Aman Allah) in 1929. Reading these two points in connection we understand the following about the nature of these dissertations: That collectively these students embodied the expression of patriotic virtue that first hosted the symbolic ceremonies and sent them off. In other words, these students continued on to produce a kind of knowledge that they thought was useful to the practice of statecraft in the fledgling Afghan polity. The fact that they were representing the interest of their own state should not construct them as subservient pawns; on the contrary, we should see them as cultural mediators, who were concerned with the eventual practicality and usefulness of their studies, and hence, mediated in their positions as students and professional technocrats between Germany and Afghanistan. The new emergent class bought into their Afghan state's project of

[298] "Anti-Smallpox Week Launched By Public Health Ministry," *Kabul Times* 2, no. 83 (1963): 4.
[299] *Ibid*.
[300] "Attendants for Vaccine Department: Training School Opened," *Kabul* Times 1, no. 115 (1962): 2.

rebuilding, but very much so on their own terms. These terms manifested through forms of resistance in regards to imposed curricula (as we will see from Brishna), marrying German women and moving back to Afghanistan with them, and joining the social and political circles that best fit their ideals.

This included their visits to religious spaces. The first place where Afghans collaborated with other foreign and German students was the Islamic Community of Berlin, founded by two Indian-Marxist brothers in 1922.[301] Approximately 1800 Muslims from forty different nations visited the center, and although a place of prayer, the mosque quickly turned into a site of political activity.[302] While Berlin was home to other Muslim institutions and mosques as well, such as the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community,[303] from sources it is clear that Afghans attended the Islamic Institute of Berlin.[304] This institute offered Muslims in Berlin and neighboring regions a space in which public conversations enabled Muslims from disparate socio-cultural, political, and linguistic communities to "solve problems together."[305] Prayer sessions regularly turned to debates on global political developments, and students engaged in anti-British and pan-Islamic rhetoric. This brings us to the final section of this chapter, which examines the social and political spaces that Afghans visited during their time in Germany.

Social and Political Spaces of Encounters for Afghans

[301] Heike Liebau, "The Kheiri Brothers and the Question of World Order after World War I," *Orient Bulletin: History and Cultures in Asia, the Middle East and Africa* (2007): 3-4.
[302] Gerhard Höpp, "Zwischen Moschee und Demonstration: Muslime in Berlin, 1922-1930," *Moslemische Revue* 10 (1990): 135-146.
[303] Gerdien Jonker, "In Search of Religious Modernity: Conversion to Islam in Interwar Berlin," in *Muslims in Interwar Europe: A Transcultural Historical Perspective*, eds. Bekim Again et al, *Muslims in Interwar*.
[304] See *Mitteilungen des Bundes der Asienkämpfer* 6, no. 7 (1924): also interesting in this issue is the reoccurring fight between the Afghan lecturer at the Oriental Studies at the University of Berlin and the Editor, Hans H. Mulzer.
[305] Sugata Bose and Kris Manjapra, *Cosmopolitan Thought Zones*.

From publications associated with the Islamic Community of Berlin we know that participants looked to Afghanistan and its sovereign, Aman Allah, to solve their imperial problems at home.[306] It was this very institute that King Aman Allah came to visit and addressed the students during his grand European tour in 1928. His visit sparked popular interest in Germany, resulting in a gathering of German bystanders who wanted to greet the first monarch to visit Weimar Germany, and reenactments in popular plays. Through help from their "Afghan friends," even the Hindustani Association, a Hindu student group in Berlin, invited Aman Allah to their club meetings.[307]

Institutional religious spaces were important to daily Muslim life in Berlin, allowing collaborators from various religious backgrounds to come together. Beginning in WWI, the German state authorized the publication of Muslim newspapers, and purchased the first printing press for Muslim diasporic pamphlets.[308] These diasporic Muslim journals and newspaper were published in various languages, including German, Arabic, Persian, English, and Turkish, and were circulated at cafes around Berlin, and smuggled as far as India, Turkey, Afghanistan, Egypt, and even the United States.[309] Before reaching the printing press these topics were initially discussed at the Islamic Community of Berlin.[310]

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[306] Since 1921 publications of this sort include: *Azadi-yi Sharq* by an Iranian, Abdurrahman Seif; *Liwa-el Islam* by a Turk, Ilias Bragon, *El-Islah* by an Indian, Barakat Allah, and *The Cresent* and *The Muslim Standard* published by an Afghan, Wali Khan.

[307] "Letter from Verein der Inder in Zentral-Europe, E.V. to His Majesty King Amanullah Khan of Afghanistan, 1928," in *Welcome Each Rebuff*, authored by Mahdi Ali Mirza (Bombay: The Times of India Press, 1950).

[308] Gerhard Höpp, *Arabische und islamische Periodika in Berlin und Brandenburg 1915-1945: geschichtlicher Abriss und Bibliographie* (Berlin: Das Arabische Buch, 1994); idem., "Arabische und islamische *Periodika* in Deutschland: Initiatoren und Ziele (1915-1929)," *Moslemische Revue* 3, (1990): 150-155; idem 4, (1991): 224-232; and idem 1, (1992): 49-58.

[309] Umar Ryad and Götz Nordbruch, eds., *Transnational Islam in Interwar Europe* (London: Palgave Macmillan, 2014), 28.

[310] David Motadel, "The Making of Muslim Communities in Western Europe, 1914-1939," in *Transnational Islam in Interwar Europe*.

In what ways did Afghans participate in the organizational and infrastructural culture they found in Weimar Germany? More importantly, how did the Muslim infrastructure impact the course of Afghan politics? For the Afghans in Berlin the Islamic Community offered distinct benefits. First, it fostered the kinds of transcultural connections that facilitated the publication of their own journals, such as *The Crescent*, *The Muslim World,* and *The Muslim Standard*.[311] Like its Iranian (*Azadi-yi Sharq*) or Egyptian (*Die ägyptische Flagge*) counterparts, the language of the Afghan newspapers strongly equated the implementation of agriculture, tree watering, and founding of universities with the preservation of political independence.[312] A special 1928 issues of the *Azadi-yi Sharq* honored the visit of King Aman Allah to Berlin and discussed the significance of close collaborations between Afghanistan and Iran, and even painted the *padshah* (King) in the style of Persian royal court painting (Figure 2.1).

[311] *The Crescent*'s homonym was founded in Britain in 1893 by William Quiliam, *The Muslim World* with its homonym ran from London, which was published by the Islamic Information Bureau from 1921-1923. See rd Höpp, *Arabische und islamische Periodika in Berlin und Brandenburg 1915-1945*.

[312] See *Āzād-yi Sharq* 8, no. 1 (1928): 29-31; and "Die Gründung der ägyptischen Universität," *Die ägyptische Flagge* 1, no.1 (1926).

Figure 2.1: Special Issue of "*Azadi-yi Sharq* in honor of King Amanullah's visit to Berlin," 1928.

Unlike many contemporaneous Egyptian or Iranian newspapers, however, the Afghan newspapers only had a small publication circle, because its editor, Mohammad Wali Khan, not only had various encounters with law enforcers, but also his interests were quite temporary, eventually even taking a radical turn. He later transitioned from publishing to giving English lectures at the Oriental Studies at the University of Berlin, and then to advocating the racial cleansing of non-Aryans. (In one particular letter he congratulated Adolf Hitler on his eastern

conquests and pledged his support for "*Grosser Deutschland*" with his "hope and trust that [sic] erstwhile Jewish centre Prague will be purged of all undesirable mischievous elements.")[313]

Although Wali Khan had a falling out with members of the Islamic Community of Berlin, for many Afghan students the institute continued to offer an important space. It provided other services, which included private Islamic instruction for new converts as well as marriage ceremonies (*nikah*). For Anna Wernecke and Elif Khan (an Afghan student), the Islamic Community of Berlin offered a place where restrictions on intermarriages could be disregarded – though not without consequence. In October 1926, the local Imam, Mirza Hassan, wed the pair, with the result that the German Foreign Office stripped Anna of her German citizenship and fined Mirza Hassan sixty-seven Reichsmark.[314] While diplomatic arrangements placed many restrictions on matters such as inter-racial marriages, the Islamic Community of Berlin offered Afghans a place where Muslims and their partners could come together without needing to "assimilate" and where the identifying makers of being German or Muslim were temporarily resolved. Despite techniques to scare German women and warn them of Afghan customs and norms, Wernecke and other German women travelled with their Afghan spouses to Afghanistan. As educators, teachers, translators, or entrepreneurs, the new converts accommodated Islam to their German identities and carved themselves respectable spaces both inside and outside Kabul.

As I have discussed in the previous chapter, in 1929 things had grown considerably more complex for German-educated Afghans both in Germany as well as in Afghanistan, and it was to that end that the institute offered students a platform to discuss their grievances. Indeed, the regime change had left Sayyid Kamal and many of the German-educated peers unemployed, and their skills no longer sought-after. It was in this context that many of the Aman Allah-educated

[313] ZMO: 07.02.058, "Antisemitischer Brief an das Auswärtige Amt, Muhammad Wali Khan, 1939."
[314] BArch: R 901/28136: "Überwachung des Auswanderung nach Afghanistan, 1924-1938."

Afghan students returned to Germany, including ᶜAbd al-Rahim Khan, ᶜAbd al-Ghaffur Brishna, and Anwar ᶜAli.[315] From Sayyid Kamal's personal diary, we know that he visited the Islamic Community of Berlin, and it was presumably here where he fostered ties with students from Turkey, Rome, and Paris.[316] During these upheavals, Afghan secondary schools were closed for a short period and were only reopened when the state reestablished a secure hold over their administration. Even then, in an attempt to send a symbolic message to Aman Allah's followers, the German-founded school was renamed the *Nijat High School* (meaning redemption/salvation).

Section III:

Afghan History-Writing through the Formative Years of ᶜAbd al-Ghaffur Brishna

Depending on the Afghan students' political inclinations, encounters in Germany took shape either at the Islamic Community or a local restaurant in Berlin, *Taᶜm Khana-yi Hindu* (Hindu Eatery), founded by an Afghan-Hindu man. ᶜAbd al-Ghaffur and his circle of friends did not appear to have visited the mosque; instead, from Brishna's memoir it is suggestive that he spent his leisure time at this local Indian restaurant.

Brishna had arrived in Germany in 1922 with the large group of younger students (*khord salah*) intending to train in engineering, but unlike his peers he decided not to pursue the "useful arts" and studied instead art and painting. After multiple exchanges and appeals, during which the Afghan legation warned him that a "career in painting could not feed him," the legation finally approved Brishna's curriculum in painting (*nakhashi*), under the precondition that he also

[315] This information was provided by Anwar ᶜAli and ᶜAbd al-Rahim Khan in the CV portion of their dissertations, and by ᶜAbd al-Ghaffur Brishna in his memoir, see ᶜAbd al-Ghaffūr Brishnā, *Khātiraha-yi ᶜAbd al-Ghaffūr Brishnā, 1959-60* (Brishna Private Collection, Karlsruhe).

[316] During Sayyid Kamal's trial, the German Foreign Office received a letter from the *Partie National Afghan, Section de Turquie* seeking clemency for Kamal. See AAmt: R 46638: Rechtssachen Bd. 3, Nr.24, "Verhandlungen mit Afghanistan in Auslieferung," 1934-5.

incorporate a "useful" component.[317] To that end, Brishna studied lithography as well as painting and art, which later resulted in positions as director of the Kabul School of Fine Arts (*Maktab-i Sanaᶜ i-yi Nafisa*) from 1930 to 1939, and from 1938-1943 the director of the Afghan state's printing house (*māshīn khānah*).[318] These positions allowed Brishna, unlike his technically-minded peers, to survive the turbulent political changes in Afghanistan and negotiate the new demands imposed by the Musahiban ruling family (of Nadir Shah).

The involvement of the Afghan Ministry was organized and arranged by the Afghan legation in Berlin, and together they set Brishna on his course of study in painting and lithography. Training began with a short stint at a small arts and craft school in Berlin's infamous *Prinz-Albrecht Strasse 8*, followed by an education at the Prussian Academy of Arts (*Akademische Hochschule für die bildenden Künste*) in Berlin, where he studied under the German artists Otto Bartning (1883-1959) and the famous German expressionist painter, Max Liebermann (1847-1935).[319] It was here that he first encountered European avant-garde paintings, but his artistic development shifted significantly when the Afghan authorities in Berlin decided to send him to the School of Arts and Crafts (*Kunstgewerbeschule Barmen/Elberfeld*) in the western German town of Barmen. Here he came to find the paintings of his subsequent teacher Ludwig Fahrenkrog (1867-1952) much more captivating. Fahrenkrog was a German nationalist painter associated with neo-paganism and romantic landscapes, whose unconventional work with bold and contrasting colors would have complex effects on Brishna.

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[317] Brishnā, *Khātiraha-yi*, 41-47.

[318] Previously in the chapter, I mentioned that the *māshīn khānah* was a place where money was minted. Under the new Afghan Ministry of Education the *māshīn khānah* became the state's editorial organ, where local newspapers, annual publications, school books, and anything pertaining to the state's publication was printed.

[319] In 1933 the German Secret Service Police (Gestapo) turned this small art school located on the *Prinz-Albrecht Strasse 8* into its main headquarter. For more on the "topography of terror," see: Brian Ladd, *The Ghosts of Berlin: Confronting German History in the Urban Landscape* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 155.

In Barmen, he also met Lisette Marguerite Neufeind, and shortly after petitioned the German Foreign Office to lift the ban on intermarriage with the guarantee that he and Neufeind would not permanently remain in Germany.[320] In a letter Brishna sent to the German Foreign Office he stated that he had been promised to run the *māshīn khānah* once he returned to Afghanistan. The *māshīn khānah* had served different purposes under different rulers, but under the Aman Allah regime it housed the state's printing press (*Maṭbaᶜa-'yi Māshīn Khānah*).[321]

Both the Afghan and the German state had explicitly banned intermarriages between Afghan students and German women, since the goal of these educational programs was to encourage the students to return home with newly-acquired skills and replace the European reformers working in Afghanistan. Although Brishna and Neufeind eventually did return to Afghanistan, it is not clear whether the German Foreign Office and the Afghan authorities in Berlin had made approval of their marriage contingent on their departure from Germany, or because Brishna had heard of the news that King Aman Allah had been deposed.

To consider his engagement with German artistic representation, one may run the risk of reducing Brishna's art to little more than pastiches or imitations of European art, and contend that his paintings in his own Afghan setting were merely diffusionist representations lacking in originality. This is especially true, since much of the recent intellectual and visual histories of Asia have turned away from Europe to highlight the production of controversial artistic

[320] The German Foreign Office banned intermarriages among Afghan students and German women, and therefore monitored the itinerancy of Germans going to Afghanistan, see the files held at the Bundesarchiv (hereafter BArch). Bundesarchiv: R 901/28136: "Überwachung des Auswanderung nach Afghanistan", 1924 – 1938. Brishna's letter sent to the German Foreign Office was kept in these same files that monitored German émigrés, see in particular "Überwachung des Auswanderung nach Afghanistan: Anschrift an das Auswärtige Amt, 3. Sep, 1928."

[321] The role of the *māshīn khānah* morphed from functioning as an artillery foundry to housing the state printing press (*Maṭbaᶜ-i Māshīn Khānah*) under the rule of Aman Allah, and later during Nadir Shah it also manufactured coins. For a history of the *māshīn khānah* as a place of minting money, see Shah M. Hanifi, *Connecting Histories in Afghanistan*, 115 – 120.

expressions at home, or have replaced the nation-centered history with a more complex "genealogy of the South Asian Muslim artistic self and the emergence of global and public Muslim subjectivity," Brishna nevertheless did travel to the West to bring back new techniques for his nation-in-the-making with a purpose that is difficult to ignore.[322] And yet, reading his depictions of the everyday such as the Afghan ethnic groups, Afghan landscapes, the bazaar, his own self-portrait, and several of his writings as primary sources reveal a unique virtuosity and wide-ranging interest in his own complex milieu, which cannot be reduced to the modernizing agenda of his patrons in the Afghan Ministry of Education or the Berlin Academy of Arts.

To examine the link between Brishna's student years and his vision for the Afghan fine arts, this section of the chapter asks the following questions: What role did earlier influences and his education in Germany play in shaping Brishna's later artistic production, both among his visual and textual representations of fine arts? And what was the intellectual context within which these influences emerged? Partha Mitter's influential work has reminded us of both the problematic yet important use of the term *influences*:

> [I]t becomes difficult to ascribe influences in a way that does not automatically presume the inferiority of the borrower….The inability to see influence in terms other than plagiarism stems from the fact that colonial (and post-colonial) art criticism is unable to detach itself from the values of imperialism, anchored in power relations.[323]

[322] These include exciting new work by Alicia Volk, *In Pursuit of Universalism: Yorozu Tetsugoro and Japanese Modern Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010); Iftikhar Dadi, *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 4; and Nile Green, "The Afghan Discovery of Buddha: Civilizational History and the Nationalizing of Afghan Antiquity, c. 1930-1960," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 49, no. 1 (2017): 47 – 70, which explores Afghanistan's artistic link with French archeology.

[323] Partha Mitter, *Art and Nationalism in Colonial India: Occidental Orientations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 6.

Yet building on Mitter's work means going beyond the general assumption that the borrower must be inferior and showing "other more historically interesting aspects of cultural encounters."[324] The stark relevance of his work to this chapter is illustrated in his analysis of the wave of cultural nationalism and the search for cultural authenticity. By examining a moment of exchange between Afghans and Germans that goes beyond collective European stereotypes and cultural hegemony, this section of this chapter seeks to examine how and why Brishna borrowed (not copied) German artistic styles. I am interested in analyzing how Brishna transformed Western stylistic influences into a new form and meaning, all the while keeping in mind that exchanges of ideas do not always involve "domination and dependence nor do they represent a loss of self."[325]

To take it even further, the term *influences* is herein understood not in the conventional sense to mean external factors that acted on Brishna, but rather is meant to convey a set of practices that Brishna himself developed as he painted, thought, and acted as a participant of the culture he visited.[326] Reading these earlier influences, which include both the ones that did and did not shape him, against the context of the history of fine arts in Afghanistan, accounts for what changed upon his eventual return to Afghanistan, but also shows how Brishna's selectivity shaped the Afghan arts over the course of his life-long career as the director of the Kabul School of Fine Arts, and later an art historian.[327]

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[324] *Ibid*, 4.
[325] Partha Mitter, *The Triumph of Modernism: India's Artists and the Avant-guard, 1922-47* (London: Reaktion Books, 2007), 8-10.
[326] I am drawing from Norton Wise's conceptualization of the term "influence," see: Norton Wise, "Kultur als Ressource: Die Rhetorik des Einflusses und die Kommunikationsprobleme zwischen Natur – und Humanwissenschaftlern," in *Wissenschaftsfeinde? "Science Wars" und die Provokation der Wissenschaftforschung*, edited by Michael Scharping (Münster: Westfälisches Dampfboot, 2001).
[327] For the "conscious, albeit selective, use of tradition in the appropriation of modernity," see Wali Ahmadi, *Modern Persian Literature*, 21.

This complex view described in this article emerges when one considers his painting as a source. None of his paintings are like the other, such that at times it seems astonishing that the same person would have chosen to engage with such a variety of different subjects and themes. Yet an intriguing continuity can also be found in his oeuvre. His work is at once modern and traditional, urging the reader to break with common habits of binary categories like East/West, German/Afghan, Islamic/pre-Islamic, and Muslim/Christian. In the same vein, Brishna's art – and perhaps Brishna himself – can be read as performing a mediating role, depicting ideas and elements that do not fit easily into national classifications.

When contextualizing his student years, two important features seem to have attributed to his unique artistic development. First, a striking resemblance can be seen between Brishna's earlier paintings and that of his master, Ludwig Fahrenkrog; and second, a religious theme runs through not only through his paintings, but also through his short stories and articles. Brishna's memoir describes a fascination with Fahrenkrog's paintings, including his self-portraits, for their depiction of the human anatomy. He seemed particularly intrigued with his teacher's ability to paint something so inherently "evil and dark as the figure of the Satan (*iblis*)" in the most "romantic" and flattering way.[328]

For his part, Brishna's paintings display a similar emphasis on combining dark and bold colors with something that was not frightening. This is best illustrated in a 1927 painting, which Brishna produced while at the *Akademie für graphische Künste und Buchgewerbe* in Leipzig (Figure 2.3).[329] At this time, he had already left Barmen, where Fahrenkrog taught. Viewing this painting alongside one of Fahrenkrog's (Figure 2.2) show striking connections in thematic content as well as technique technique. Given that Brishna's painting is depicted through a

[328] Brishnā, *Khātiraha-yi*, 61.
[329] For Brishna's matriculation records in Leipzig, see Archiv d. Staatliche Akademie für graphische Künste und Buchgewerbe: "1927-29 Matrikel Zensur Abdul Ghafur."

photograph, it is not clear whether Brishna, like Fahrenkrog, painted in black and white or if there indeed were various colors involved. The latter is more plausible given that Brishna was holding a color palette. Both painters made use of similar brush strokes, which emanated away from the main subject in the paintings, and accentuated the centrality of the figures. Both scenes convey a religious message: In Brishna's example the toga-like robes and the reference to the ocean may be connected to a sort of blessing or baptism.

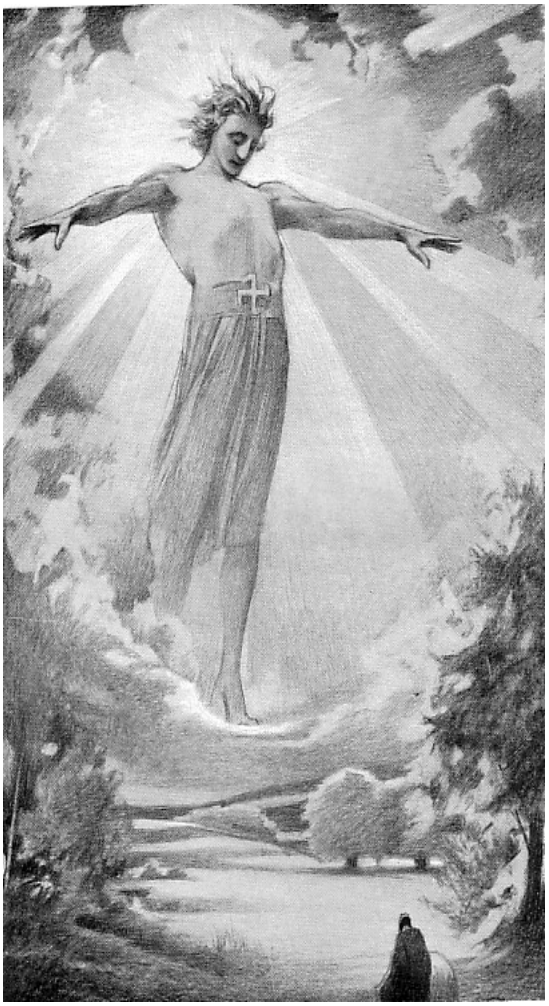

Figure 2.2: Ludwig Fahrenkrog, "God through the Years," Date and Place Unknown.
Source: Galleria d'arte Thule

Figure 2.3: ᶜAbd al-Ghaffūr Brishnā, "Fahrenkrog's *Influence* on Brishna," Leipzig, 1927
Source: Brishnā Nachlass

Both paintings also experiment with contrasting depictions of scale. Fahrenkrog's painting featured an oversized Christ-like figure ascending from the skies, and wearing around his belt a *manji* sign (or *Hackenkreuz*), which is a reference to the pagan Germanic emblem of the god of adventure, Donner (Thor). Such contrast in scale was likewise a common pattern in Brishna's, especially when Brishna depicted the Buddha (Figure 2.4 and Figure 2.5).

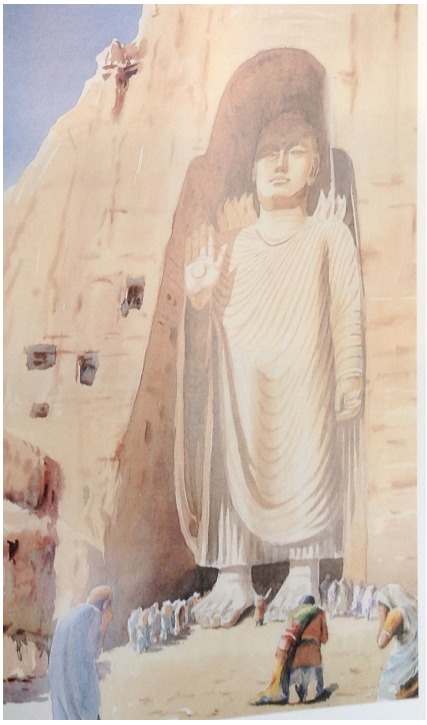

Figure 2.4: ᶜAbd al-Ghaffūr Brishnā. "Der grosse Buddha in vor-islamische Zeit," 1960s
Source: Abdullah und Habib Breshna and Roland Steffan. *Buddhas und Menschen in Bamiyan: Begleitschrift zur Ausstellung "Der Bazaar von Kabul – Schnittpunkte der Kulturen* (Völkerkundemuseum Gallen: 2001).

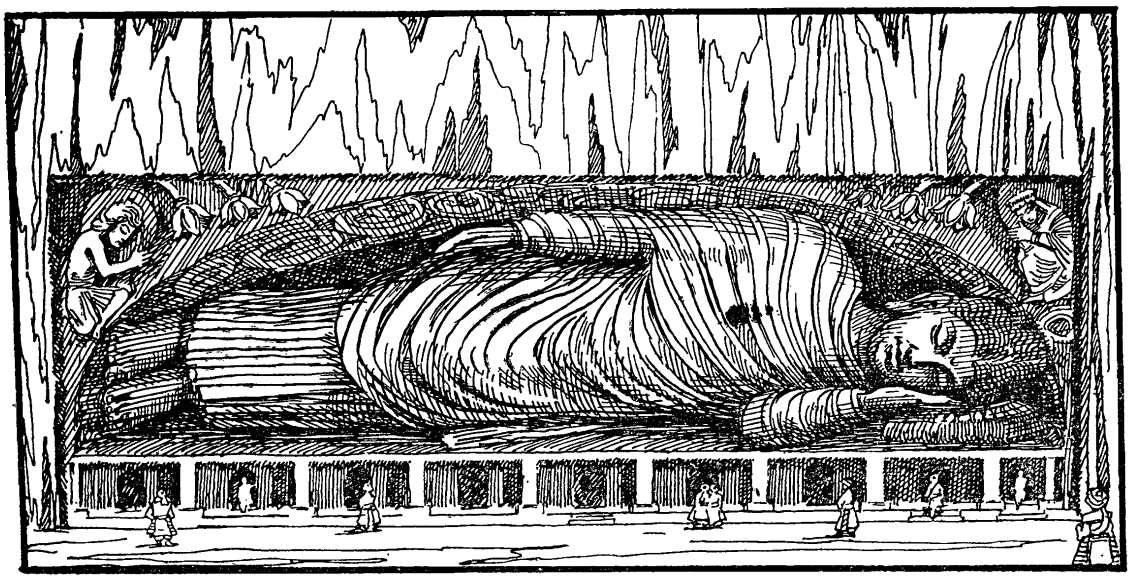

Figure 2.5: ᶜAbd al-Ghaffūr Brishnā. “Der ruhende Buddha von Bamiyan, 1972. Source: Ibid

These stark similarities between Fahrenkrog and Brishna should not be reduced to a simplistic master-teacher relationship, if only for the fact that he had several teachers during his time in Germany. Rather his artistic education took place within a wider context that led Brishna to find inspiration in Fahrenkrog’s work specifically. It is within this wider context that Brishna ultimately developed a distinctive style of his own. Clearly he was not interested in simply learning the latest and most avant-garde techniques or styles, because in his own words he struggled to develop an appreciation for the “it” artistic scene of Berlin’s circle of German impressionists. In fact, he very much dismissed Max Liebermann’s efforts for merely showing up when necessary, and leaving his teaching duties to fellow professors such as Otto Bartning and a "*Herr Fischer*." Still more, he juxtaposed his experience with Liebermann to a more positive one working under Fahrenkrog in Barman, whose charms and landscape so reminded him of his “homeland” (*vatan*) that he was finally able, in his own words, to be "happy."

It was in this artistic context that Brishna developed a style of his own. For the first time in Barmen, Brishna wrote that he developed an understanding and appreciation for the wider

history of Western art. His teacher, Fahrenkrog, is not a well-studied figure, especially since much of the literature on late nineteenth and early twentieth century German art has focused on how "modern" impressionist painters experimented with the unstable pace of culture in post - 1918 Weimar Germany. To contextualize Fahrenkrog's influence on Brishna necessitates tracing the teacher's own influences, which according to Brishna came directly from the Swiss painter, Arnold Böcklin (1827-1901). "[Fahrenkrog's] artistic style was in the techniques of Max Klinger [and Anselm] Feuerbach and in certain images in the methods of Arnold Böcklin, the famous German painter." (*Sabk-i u dar naqqashi ba shiva-yi Max Klinger – [Anselm] Feuerbach va dar bazi tasavir ba ravish-i Arnold Böcklin naqqashan-i mahruf-i Alman bud)*. These figures may have been well known for Brishna, but they remain unknown figures, in part, because they do not fit neatly into the teleological frameworks that chart the binary progressions of art history from pre-modern to modern through Wilhelmine Germany (1890 – 1918) and the Nazi period (1933 – 1945).

Indeed, like their counterparts in Afghanistan and India, German artists and intellectuals responded to Germany's rapid modernization in multiple ways between the 1871 period and the subsequent downfall of the German empire in 1918. One of these responses was to incorporate romantic and *völkish* ideals into the visual arts, especially so in a period where artists felt it was difficult to make their voices heard. As Suzanne Marchand pointed out, the artistic voice of Böcklin expressed a desire to return to classical antiquity and these voices:

> [F]ormally created a sense of intense irreality by combining naturalistic exactitude and implausible characters, poses, or colours, by dwarfing figures in vast, spiritualized landscapes, and by erasing all modern elements, such as roads, houses, or figures in contemporary dress…Böcklin created the feel of primeval isolation and religious intensity.

Böcklin was among the first German painters who drew from the full range of different available

genres and canvases (rather than the works of his contemporaries), and imprinted his own response to the same anxieties that troubled his fellow artists at the turn of the twentieth century.

Brishna's oeuvre likewise demonstrates an ambitious use of different media and styles. This can be seen across his writings, his photographs, and his paintings. To begin with his photographs, there is on the one hand an emphasis on the somber anxieties of the interwar period, while on the other hand, a lively student exploring Weimar Germany. This is best illustrated in the following set of photographs (Figure 2.6 and 2.7).

Figure 2.6: ᶜAbd al-Ghaffūr Brishnā. "Self-Portrait," late 1920s.
Source: Brishnā Nachlass

Figure 2.7: ᶜAbd al-Ghaffūr Brishnā. "Cigarette Photograph" late 1920s.
Source: Brishnā Nachlass

These two representations attest to the variety of poses and styles of his personal photograph collection. The first self-drawing (Figure 2.6) is a powerful assertion of control on the part of its author. In this case Brishna created an opportunity to subtly remind his audience that he was watching them as they watched him. With a controlled yet uncomfortable gaze in his mid-1920s self-portrait, ᶜAbd al-Ghaffur Brishna depicted himself appearing confused or unsettled, perhaps alluding to the divided self-perception of the migrant, or perhaps even prompting his viewers to rethink the strict assessment of categories within which Asian migrants were perceived.

Brishna toyed with European expectations of the Oriental Other. While many paintings of Eastern subjects often depicted the "Other male" with an earring, this accessory was in no way part of the everyday costume for an Afghan male, regardless of the level of society he belonged to. To that end, the oversized earring suggested perhaps a kind of experimentation with different forms of representation, even a different gender. Another interpretation might suggest that

Brishna was linking his own body and self-image to the figure of the Buddha, who was commonly portrayed with an earring. Figure 2.8 shows Brishna's own 1972 rendition of the Buddha.

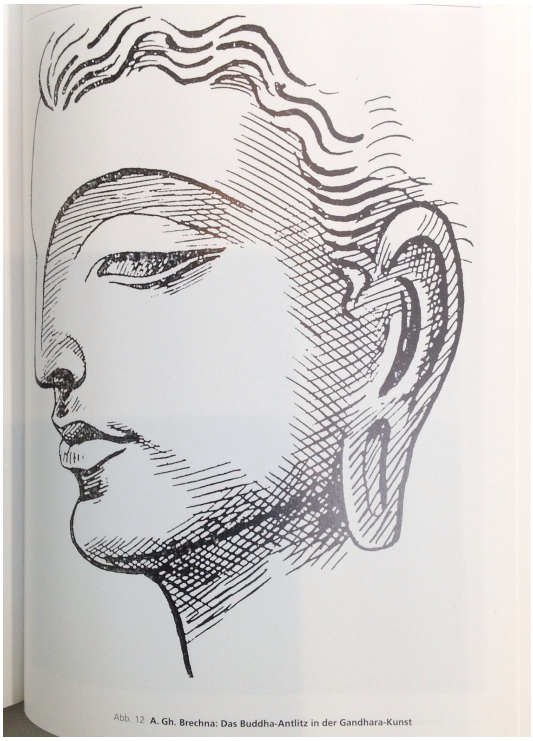

Figure 2.8: ᶜAbd al-Ghaffūr Brishnā. "Das Buddha-Antlitz in der Gandhara-Kunst," 1972. Source: Abdullah und Habib Breshna and Roland Steffan. *Buddhas und Menschen.*

Comparison between this drawing and his own self-portrait demonstrates a sense of continuity and consistency in his emphasis on accessories through the use of an earring. Entitled "The Facial Features of the Buddha in the Gandhara style" (*Das Buddha-Antlitz in der Gandhara-Kunst*), this piece was painted in 1972, a mere two years before his death. The painting shows the Buddha's elongated earlobe likely referring to the absence of a previously worn earring. This raises an intriguing question: Was his artistic focus on the earring part of a larger attempt to re-read Afghan cultural and historical practices, and if so why was he connecting such a re-reading to ancient Buddhist customs? If such re-discovery was in fact the case, this once again speaks to his desire to control the narrative through which his own body,

culture, and history was to be read. Perhaps the earring allowed Brishna to disrupt frameworks that categorized him neatly alongside his Muslim or other politically-engaged peers studying in the German diaspora, and he identified instead with a different set of categories and themes. Among them was the theme of ancient customs that are not viewed or identified immediately as "Afghan" but have at different junctures been part of its history.

Religious elements featured in Brishna's paintings in the form of various renditions of the Buddha and landscapes featuring the Buddha's resting place in Bamiyan, and his historic writings connected Afghanistan's fine arts to its pre-Islamic history. The return to ancient themes served two purposes for Brishna. First, this allowed him to extend a narrative of Afghanistan's history beyond the onset of Islam and back to the much earlier Buddhist and Greco-Roman past. And second, doing so allowed Brishna to allude to themes and drawing methods from his former teacher, Ludwig Fahrenkrog, and others working similar territory in German art.

Brishna can be positioned among a series of influential Afghan intellectuals, who starting in the mid-1930s began to emphasize ancient Indians, Iranians, and Greeks passing through Afghanistan as a way to search for a deeper Aryan literary and artistic national culture. The rich symbolism was echoed across educational pamphlets, the naming of the national airline *Ariana*, and of course in new projects of history writings as will be shortly discussed. As an example, the first Afghan Historical Society published the journal, *Aryana* (in both Persian and Pashto), which brought together this host of intellectuals, giving them platform to celebrate the antiquity of their nation. A painting depicting this theme accompanied a 1972 essay entitled "A Glance at the History of fine arts in Afghanistan."[330] Here, Brishna asserted that the birth of the fine arts was not in the 1924 founding of the Kabul School of Fine Arts (*Maktab-i Sana'i-yi Nafisa*), but in the

[330] ᶜAbd al-Ghaffūr Brishnā, trans. by Maliha Fazil Zafar, "A Glance at the History of Fine Arts in Afghanistan," *Afghanistan* 25, no. 3 (1972): 11 – 22.

onset of the Kushan Empire (30-375 AD). This view set him apart from his contemporaries, for some of whom the onset of the fine arts in Afghanistan only took on institutional shape in the period after the 1960s.

And again, by alluding to these themes, Brishna was able to draw on the methods of his former German teacher, Ludwig Fahrenkrog, and by extension that of Arnold Böcklin, because these figures specifically encouraged him to move among a multiplicity of available resources and options. This meant that, like in the earlier self-portrait which he drew in Germany, Brishna did not want to be boxed into predictable representations, and instead encouraged his audiences to negotiate a host of differently-inspired genres, media, and even historical references as they encountered his work.

Figure 2.9: ᶜAbd al-Ghaffūr Brishnā. "In der Werkstatt des Agesilaos," 1967.
Source: Abdullah und Habib Breshna and Roland Steffan. *Buddhas und Menschen in Bamiyan: Begleitschrift zur Ausstellung "Der Bazaar von Kabul – Schnittpunkte der Kulturen* (Völkerkundemuseum Gallen: 2001).

The freedom to draw from a variety of different styles and even historical periods is best featured in his 1967 painting entitled “In Agesilaos' Atelier” (*In der Werkstatt des Agesilaos*), which attempted to depict the rich availability and range that came together, in Brishna's view, in Afghanistan's fine arts. Interestingly, the subject matter recalled for Brishna a master-disciple relationship and featured a noticeable amalgamation of different components and styles of the sort that Brishna was prompting his own students to recognize. Given the slight resemblance between the master’s face and a younger Brishna, it is possible that this image is another example of self-portraiture. If this is in fact the case, his audience may be privy to another example where Brishna was working to control a narrative of sorts. In this instance, he was styling himself as an ancient master, who was embedding his teaching style across various historic media and themes.

The strong references to Greek influences were visible in the clothing style of the master, but also in the reference to Greek sculptural tradition. Battle scenes or mythological figures were typical for the Greek sculptural tradition, yet from the plate on which the student seemed to be carving, there is a clear absence of such scenes. This might suggest that Brishna was reworking his understanding of what Greek sculptures ought to emphasize, namely, in this case the portrayal of everyday lay peoples, in lieu of mythological deities. After all, such selective choosing was in line with the methods of his student years in Germany.

Along with Greek influences, Brishna also introduced Buddhist elements through the use of a Buddhist head and a bust. The head of the Buddha was originally found accidentally in 1912, and had been part of the Hadda monastery. The monastery, located in eastern Afghanistan, was considered one of the largest monasteries in the region. The other Buddhist feature involved the torso behind the master and was referring to a 1936 excavated goddess at a Buddhist

monastery in a medieval region called Fondukistan (north of Kabul). The site, excavated by Joseph Hackin and his team of the *Délégation archéologique française en Afghanistan* (DAFA) in 1936, predates the seventh century AD.

By mixing layers of historic pasts in one single painting, Brishna was supporting Afghan state-supported intellectual associations (like the *Anjuman-i Adabi-yi Afghanistan* or *Anjuman-i Tarikh-i Afghanistan*), to reconsider Afghanistan as having existed long before the onset of Islam. Brishna never explicitly critiqued the implicit relationship between Afghanistan's fine arts and the onset of Islam but treated it with ambivalence. On the one hand, he critiqued the halting progress of art during the reigns of the Mughals and the pillage of South Asian cities, and on the other hand, he challenged the claim that the (Muslim) Afghan Amir, ᶜAbd al-Rahman Khan (r. 1880- 1901), had deformed the standing Buddha's face in his rage against the Shiᶜi Hazaras (an ethnic Afghan group). In his 1940 rendition of "the Big Buddha's Facial Structure" (*Der Gesichtsaufbau des grossen Buddhas*) Brishna challenged this by offering a new theory, arguing:

> … everyone says that the orthodox people, probably the Moslems had cut the faces to disfigure the Buddhas. But in my opinion this was done by the artists at the time [it was constructed]. Otherwise, had it been cut because of religious fanaticism, without any doubt the cut would not look so clean and arranged standing at a height of more than fifty meters. But instead, the cut would look like the Buddha's feet which was destroyed by Auwrang Zayb [sic], son of Shah-e-Jahan, with a cannon, during his march to Balkh. It seems that this clean vertical cut was done very carefully by the expert builders and the upper part of his lips, nose, cheeks and forehead up to the top of its head was build with bricks and then covered by clay from the back. Since this part of the face was not cut like the other parts of the Buddha's body from the mountain; but built from bricks with the inside empty, it might have been ruined by time or easily destroyed from the back.[331]

Whatever the validity of Brishna's claims, it is intriguing to note his impulse to "sell" the idea of a pre-Islamic history. By clearing Muslim Afghan rulers of any accusations against desecrating the Buddha and previously drawing a rendition of the Buddha's reconstructed face

[331] Brishnā, "A Glance."

(Figure 2.10), Brishna was in a sense softening the sense of a "break" with the pre-Islamic past in Afghanistan.

Figure 2.10: ʿAbd al-Ghaffūr Brishnā. “Der Gesichtsaufbau des grossen Buddhas,” 1940. Source: Abdullah und Habib Breshna and Roland Steffan. *Buddhas und Menschen in Bamiyan: Begleitschrift zur Ausstellung “Der Bazaar von Kabul – Schnittpunkte der Kulturen* (Völkerkundemuseum Gallen: 2001).

This grants the reader in many ways an opportunity to understand Brishna mediating a new historical practice, and re-drawing multiple boundaries of the Afghan artistic past, and consciously tying his art to various intellectual institutions collected under the nation's umbrella. Here it is useful to remember the work of Tapati Guha-Thakurta on the role of institutions as an

emblem of the nation's self-discovery and self-definition as both relevant for how Brishna understood Afghan institutions and the role of his own art within those institutions. Similar to Guha-Thakurta's analysis, which historicizes the role of national institutions in connecting their specific agendas to museums and to India's material culture, Brishna thematically linked his art with various archeological discoveries ongoing in Afghanistan. By doing this, he was supporting the efforts of the Afghan Ministry of Education, which in turn had a nationalist agenda in sponsoring and encouraging the creation of Afghan cultural institutions (such as the National Museum (f. 1931), the Kabul Literary Society (f. 1931), and the Afghan Historical Society (f. 1942).[332]

For Brishna, history not only offered themes to be represented visually, but also as a form of artistic hypothesis (perhaps even much more in line with his technocratic peers in Berlin who formulated hypothesis and tested these in their laboratories). More importantly, like many of his Bengali contemporaries he believed the process through which cultural authenticity was achieved passed through material objects and archeology. As Partha Mitter has shown "[t]his 'objectification' of the past was sanctified by archeology," a process where *Svadeśi* artists tied their oeuvre to archeological excavations in hopes of smoothing out any perceived breaks, and tying their national aspirations to classical pasts.[333]

Ultimately, what can be said about Brishna with great certainty is that he selected from whom he learned and was influenced, first in Berlin, then in Barmen, and finally in Leipzig. During his student years, he seemed mostly drawn to the work of painters who sought a return to ancient past in search of solutions to the myriad crises facing artists in the *fin de siècle* period.

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[332] For discussion of the Indian national art institutions, see Tapati Guha-Thakurta, *Monuments, Objects, Histories: Institutions of Art in Colonial and Post-Colonial India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).
[333] Mitter, *Art and Nationalism in Colonial India,* 240f.

After all, and as a parallel, Raja Adal has reminded us in his study of art education in late nineteenth century Egypt, that both Japanese and Egyptian educators were not always concerned with resistance but with constant reflection and creation.[334] Brishna created by following the conventions of *völkish* romantic paintings, only to later depart from them on his own terms. He re-discovered and subverted the dichotomy between the modern and traditional, and blurred the implicit boundaries to reflect his own imperatives and own local choices. With time, he became his own master.

Conclusion

The variety of experiences among Afghans during the interwar period has been overlooked, because scholars have measured the top-down modernization resultant from Afghan-German internationalism and viewed the experiences of students as minimal or non-existent. A bilateral emphasis on Afghan-German internationalism has not fully accounted for the encounters that Afghan students made at transcultural spaces where they met, collaborated, and negotiated the limitations of modernity.

To address these shortcomings, I have drawn from a prosopographical method to study individuals insofar as they belong to a group, which in this chapter has connected them to academic, Islamic, and recreational spaces where they became connected to other Asians. In 1971 Lawrence Stone defined prosopography as the "investigation of the common background characteristics of a group of actors in history by means of a collective study of their lives. The method employed is to establish a universe to be studied and then to ask a set of uniform

[334] Raja Adal, "Aesthetics and the End of the Mimetic Moment: The Introduction of Art Education in Modern Japan and Egyptian Schools," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 58, no. 4 (2016): 1002.

questions."[335] The danger is that by asking common sets of questions about the Afghan students' socio-economic positions, fields of study, or political identities we run into the risk of looking for descriptions of manifest forms, rather than variables that were in constant flux and change.[336] This means that there is the tendency to take bounded groups as fundamental units of analysis and to homogenize our perpetrators, which, in turn, leave out daily cultural interactions and exchanges that took shape between peoples across certain confined categories.[337]

The prosopographical method used in this chapter borrowed from Stone in so far as it identified common patterns of diplomatic arrangements that gave birth to the exchange programs, and identified the Afghan and German states' demands in return for funding these programs. Here, I have identified "ideal types" that the Afghan state selected for these study programs in Germany.[338] Similarly, the challenges of locating the students' perspectives in the sources have led me to identify common spaces at mosques, restaurants, research institutes, and art academies as well as common patterns of social mobility among a larger set of Asian students. This has mainly been done to test the hypothesis that Afghan students did not remain isolated and aloof as official state documents have contended. My method of prosopography has deviated from conventional approaches in so much as it did not deal with statistical data, but rather engaged with the abundant official state documents to chart out the places where technological information was produced and exchanged among everyday "knowledge-migrants."[339]

The goal of this chapter has not been to neglect the model of state and nation-building dominant with the historiography of Afghanistan and replace it with a focus away from the nation

[335] Lawrence Stone, "Prosopography," *Daedalus* 100, no. 1 (1971): 46.
[336] Barth, *Political Leadership Among Swat Pathans.*
[337] Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity Without Groups* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004).
[338] T.F. Carney, "Prosopography: Payoff and Pitfalls," *Phoenix* 27, no. 2 (1973): 157.
[339] This term has been defined in the introduction of the dissertation.

or the political aims inherent in state-building. Rather, this chapter constructed a history of non-diplomatic actors who played crucial roles in the process of state-building, yet also embodied contradictory fears about national decline. This has allowed for the construction of a political history through the examination of social and cultural actors who were themselves in constant flux and did not adopt German technical knowledge without alteration. This chapter has revealed forms of representations that were created by Afghans themselves through interaction with other Muslims and non-Muslims, independent of Afghan-German state diplomacy.

Chapter Three: An Afghan Student in Nazi Germany: The Life of ᶜAli Ahmad Fofolzay, 1900-1960:

Introduction

The previous chapter looked at the lives of Afghan students in technical fields and their experiences at their respective institutions in Germany from 1921-1935. This chapter examines the experience and intellectual activity of a different kind of Afghan student, ᶜAli Ahmad Fofolzay (1916-1976), during his student years at the University of Jena from 1937 to 1941.[340] His doctoral dissertation in the fields of pedagogy, history, and philosophy provides a lens into studying a type of knowledge-migrant who was less inclined by training to the practical and technical sciences and more to an education in the human sciences. What such an alternative meant for Fofolzay, who upon his return to Afghanistan served as the Minister of Education from 1955-63, is the theme to which this chapter turns.

The contrast to the previous generation of technocratically-oriented Afghan youth is important. I have discussed in the previous chapter that these earlier students had an important role of mediating technical and scientific information between Afghanistan and Germany during an era when the Afghan state was intimately connected to the Weimar state and was also looking to expand its industries. They had access to many privileges, because diplomacy between Afghanistan and Germany was unconstrained and at its strongest during these earlier waves of student exchanges. I have shown that the fledgling new Afghan state and the German neo-colonial state *attempted* to stipulate the course of student exchanges, make special accommodations during the students' time abroad, and through diplomatic arrangements sought to create an infrastructural environment designed to facilitate the efficient transfer of science and

[340] In 1974 he was named ambassador to Japan, and was replaced by Saᶜad Allah Ghausy in 1976. I have not found records for Popal/Fofolzay after 1976, and neither does *The Kabul Times* mention him after this date.

technology. As the chapter showed, these earlier Afghan students, quite aware of their own potential and importance in the process of strengthening and maintaining an independent Afghan state, took advantage of special privileges, and thence bent and negotiated their ways around specific bans (i.e., intermarriages or determining the course of study).

In his earlier years, when ᶜAli Ahmad Fofolzay attended the German-founded *Maktab-i Amani*, he may have been a byproduct of a diplomatic relationship, but by the time of his arrival in 1937 former diplomatic loyalties had been replaced by onset of new régimes in both Afghanistan and Germany. During his student years in Jena, diplomatic relations between the Musahiban in Afghanistan (1929-1973) and the Nazi régime in Germany (1933-1945) stagnated and he did not have the infrastructural support or the guarantee that he could professionally function in the services of the Afghan state. Moreover, with the imprisonment of German-educated students in 1933, Fofolzay's training at a German institution did not carry the same meaning it had in the previous régime. In other words, the pro-German régime had been ousted, and many German-educated students were struggling to find employment in the new state of Nadir Khan.

Despite diplomatic complications, a close reading of his dissertation in conversation with his later writing from 1971 still reveal a great deal about the transfer of intangible and abstract ideas between Europe and Asia. This chapter will show that the transfer of ideas via Germany to Afghanistan cannot simply be structured around a linear or diffusionist framework. Rather, like his peers' technological orientation, Fofolzay's intellectual formation highlights the mediating and transcultural nature that connected his small circle of teachers in Jena with Fofolzay's contemporary intellectual milieu of Kabul.

This first section will consider the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century educational movement, called *Reformpädagogik* in Germany, and its counterpart *taraqqi dar taᶜlim va tarbiyat* in Afghanistan. Each of these reform movements will prefigure the birth of the German pedagogical plan, called the *Jena-Plan* (f. 1927) and the founding of the *Maktab-i Amani*. A second section will turn to a close reading of Fofolzay's 1941 dissertation, with a particular interest in tracing his own reading of the plan, but also the intellectual network of Nationalist Socialist theorists and Indian theosophists that clustered around Jena during the time that Fofolzay was studying there. This section will show what elements of German knowledge a young Afghan pedagogue selectively chose to apply, and ultimately how his selection reflected a specific educational pattern taking shape among Afghan intellectuals at the same time. The final section will introduce a later writing of Fofolzay's (or Popal then), entitled "Maᶜārif dar gharb-i Almān," (Education in Western Germany) which he published in the *Ministry of Education Newsletter* towards the end of his career. The goal of examining this later article is to connect his earlier student years at Jena to his later professional years, and to understand which of the theoretical ideas he actually put in practice.

Afghan history is often contextualized under the reigns of its different sovereigns, and the advantage of studying knowledge-migrants as opposed to towering political figures is that, for example, this particular figure's education began under one period (at the height of German-Afghan diplomacy) and evolved considerably during a later period, which means tracing the lives of knowledge-migrants helps us to bridge two separately-studied periods. Building on the seminal work of Detlev Peukert's *Weimar Republic: The Crisis of Classical Modernity*, this chapter views scientific ideas about education and their proponents as part of an interconnected, conjoined, yet locally-specific network that spans separately-studied periods as well as disparate-

seeming places (i.e., Afghanistan and Germany).[341] In this way, I am going going beyond the sorts of political and constitutional interpretations that underlie the standard bifurcations seen within each periodization (e.g., traditional and modern, democratic and authoritarian), to adopt a social and historical approach that accounts for long-term continuities in both places. By focusing on pedagogues like Fofolzay (and the ones he engaged with like Peter Petersen, Ernst Krieck, Venkatesh Narayan Sharma, and Ahmad Allah Khan Karimi), and the intellectual network of which those actors were part of, I am revealing important overlaps in educational reform that have always existed between Afghanistan and Germany, which were carried on regardless of the state's ideological orientation.

Section I

Common Patterns of Educational Reform in the Early Twentieth Century

To provide some necessary context, this section will discuss salient features of the German *Reformpädagogik* (educational reforms), and its Afghan counterpart of *taraqqi dar ta*^{c}*lim va tarbyat* (progress in the spheres of pedagogy and training) in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. While examining each of these independently-steered movements, I will position the birth of the *Jena-Plan* and the founding of the *Maktab-i Amani* within these patterns of educational reform in early twentieth century Afghanistan and Germany.

Reformpädagogik and the Leading up to the *Jena-Plan*

The Weimar period has often been associated with an intense period of experimentation, especially in the sphere of educational reform. Many studies have established the impression that

[341] Detlev Peukert, *The Weimar Republic: The Crisis of Classical Modernity* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993).

the educational realm witnessed a "secularization" of education.[342] Post-WWI Germany was hardly unique in facing a need for serious reform, although the consequences of the First World War and its outcome did weigh on the minds of German pedagogical theorists, and important steps towards reform took shape during the German *Kaiserreich* (1871-1918). Jeff Bowersox has outlined three impetuses to reform which prompted German intellectuals to explore new directions. In the midst of the anti-Catholic *Kulturkampf* (ca. 1872-1878), education came to be regarded increasingly as a tool by which to produce a "body of patriotic, loyal citizens respectful to the existing social and political order."[343] To that end, the German state funded a series of reforms that further promoted Germany's entrance into the age of industry and commerce. One way in which changes were articulated was among an influential and international circle of educators collected under the umbrella of *Reformpädagogik* (pedagogical reform).

Influenced by the ideas of the Swiss pedagogue known for his educational plans that derived from *Romanticism*, Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827), who himself was influenced by Jean-Jacques Rousseau's idea of returning to nature, *Reformpädagogik* placed the child at the center of its reform, and believed changes to emanate from the need's of the child (*von Kinde aus*).[344] The goal was to ease the child more smoothly into his eventual responsibility as a kind of social "team-player." Despite being different in variation and proposed methods, *Reformpädagogik* brought together a wide range of educators who were united in their critique of modern industrial society and mechanistic teaching methods. These reformers borrowed from Rousseau the idea to return to nature, which meant literally removing the child from the accelerated forms of learning in the cities. In their view, pedagogy needed to initially accept

[342] For a critique of this, see Perry Myers, *German Visions of India, 1871-1918: Commandeering the holy Ganges during the Kaiserreich* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).
[343] Jeff Bowersox, *Raising Germans in the Age of Empire: Youth and Colonial Culture, 1871-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 58.
[344] See, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Émile, ou de l'Éducation* (Paris: Garnier, 1762).

individuality and the unique abilities of each student, but unlike Rousseau, who wanted to prolong the individual's phase as a child, the movement of *Reformpädagogik* strived to suppress or rid the child of playful tendencies and build him/her into a responsible member of its respective community.[345]

The profusion of ideas about the centrality of the child and childhood sprang from a large and complex web of intellectual exchanges, drawing in ideas from far outside the German-speaking milieu. In fact, one of the earliest voices for reform came from across the Atlantic, from an American philosopher of education John Dewey (1859-1952) a professor at Columbia University who has sometimes been called the "father of progressive education."[346] While German reformers drew their plans mainly from the field of psychology, Dewey drew both from functional psychology and from pragmatic moral philosophy. Dewey believed that education instilled civic virtues in the social classes so that a democratic society could thrive. This view motivated Dewey to lay out the foundation for progressive education in the United States, which he outlined in his book, *The School and Society* (1899). A few intellectuals in the Leipzig circles of Wilhelmine Germany first introduced this book to a German audience.[347]

It must be stated, however, that while *Reformpädagogik* was inspired by Dewey to develop ideas that centered on the child, scholars have too often equated a child-centered approach with Dewey's term "progressive education." Dewey himself was critical of such an approach, arguing that it uncritically followed the impulses and uninformed interests of the child.

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[345] Jeff Bowersox, "Classroom Colonialism: Race, Pedagogy, and Patriotism in Imperial Germany," in *German Colonialism In A Global Age*, eds. Geoff Eley and Bradley Naranch (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 173.
[346] Marjorie Lamberti, *The Politics of Education: Teachers and School Reform in Weimar Germany* (New York: Berghahn, 2004), 30.
[347] John Dewey, *The School and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1899); and idem, *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* (New York: The Free Press, 1916).

He suggested instead that new reforms ought to integrate the educational subject matter with the talents and interests of the learner.[348]

Peter Petersen's *Jena-Plan* 1923-1927

In 1923 at the same time that the *Maktab-i Amani* was founded, Petersen became head of the Department of Education at the University of Jena. He was still in his early years of tenure at Jena, when he began to work on an ambitious new approach to education which could meet the needs not only of the German state but could also be transported to and implemented by other countries.

Both *Reformpädagogik* and John Dewey were important precursors to the development of Petersen's *Jena-Plan*. John Dewey influenced Petersen and many of Petersen's contemporaries with his commitment to the idea of the community. In Jena, Petersen and his cohort were searching for an educational platform that combined the notion of community with a social space for the child to grow into his/her *Volk*. To accomplish this, Petersen was keen to look for international influences, even inviting foreign graduate students and lecturers to study or teach at Jena.[349] In the opening section of his dissertation, Fofolzay noted that his advisor Petersen had assigned the topic to him. Jena, itself, had a history of scholars, who had been experimenting and testing the boundaries of the child's mind. In one notable case, it was Wilhelm Thierry Preyer (1841-1897), the British physiologist, who was professor of physiology at Jena and one of the earliest scholars interested in "child science." He was known for *Seele des Kindes* (1882) (the Soul of the Child), which not only engaged with Darwin's *Expressions of Emotions*

[348] This was recently emphasized by a collection of American and German scholars, who work on John Dewey, see Larry A. Hickman, Stefan Neubert, and Kersten Reich, eds., *John Dewey Between Pragmatism and Constructivism* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2009), 10.
[349] This has been established by looking at the list of people who studied under Petersen.

(1872), but also worked with empirical observations and experimentations from his "baby diary," which he kept from the birth of his own child.[350]

Along with Dewey's emphasis on the community, Petersen also turned to the Italian Montessori-style curriculum, developed by Petersen's contemporary, Maria Artemisia Montessori (1870-1952). The Montessori model of education granted the child a substantial amount of personal freedom by teaching an academic curriculum through simulation of sensory and practical explorations. Petersen was drawn to the idea of placing the needs of the child at the center, but critiqued it for not sufficiently preparing the child for a life in his respective *Gemeinschaft* (collective community).[351]

The *Jena-Plan* was first unveiled at the Fourth Meeting of the New Education Fellowship in Locarno, Switzerland, in 1927.[352] As explained there, his approach centered on the child, with the underlying presumption that only with conjoined efforts from parents and the wider community could the child be raised as an inherent part of the *Volk*:

> Schulen nach dem Jena-Plan sind in erster Linie Familienschulen, d.h. obwohl öffentliche Staatsschulen, so verstehen wir sie in ihrem Sinn und tiefsten Gehalt als Einrichtungen, um die Familienerziehungen zu ergänzen, fortzuführen und enger und enger mit dem gesamten Kulturleben zu verbinden, damit die junge Generation organisch in ihr Volkstum hineinwachse.[353]
>
> According to the Jena-Plan, schools are primarily family institutions, which means although they belong to state institutions, we understand them in their logic and deep matter as establishments that complement (or build on) the upbringing of the family and connect the child closer to the collective cultural life, so that the child can organically grow into its nation.

[350] Sally Shuttleworth, *The Mind of the Child: Child Development in Literature, Science, and Medicine 1840-1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 229.
[351] Peter Petersen, *Der kleine Jena-Plan einer freien allgemeinen Volksschule: kleiner Jena-Plan* (Berlin: Verlag von Julius Belz, 1936), 43.
[352] "The New Era in Home and School," *New Education Fellowship* 39-41, (1958): 70.
[353] Peter Petersen, *Der kleine Jena-Plan*, 7.

The basic structure of the *Jena-Plan* foresaw an interdisciplinary core curriculum mixed with electives in more specialized disciplines and combined with student parties, games, and free play (to build social camaraderie) and round-table discussions, debates, and oral reports (to build public/political skills). The plan argued that each person was unique and had the right to her/his own distinct identity, irrespective of national origin, religion, and other extra-communal affiliations, and that society should be geared towards respecting and encouraging the essential dignity of the individual.

Through its link with *Reformpädagogik*, the *Jena-Plan* may have emerged in the context of envisioning new educational models to address Germany's education after the Versailles Treaty, but in its attributes the plan was not distinctively German. Instead, it was consciously designed and understood as the product of continuous transcultural exchanges and encounters, giving it a flexible nature, which would later be exploited by Fofolzay and most notably Petersen's Eastern European and Indian students.

Taraqqi dar Taʿlim va Tarbiyat and the Leading up to the *Maktab-i Amani*

Whereas the German educational reform movement took root in the German *Kaiserreich* but urgently only after 1919, the Afghan movement for creating a united system of schooling across the country had already taken shape during the reign of its major proponent, Amir Habib Allah. In Afghan history, periodization has contrasted Amir Habib Allah's rule with his son's "secular" and more "enlightened" régime, ignoring the fact that Habib Allah's rule instituted important projects that eventually enabled the exchanges of Afghan and German educational ideas. His plans for reform first took shape during his grand tour throughout the Ottoman Empire and India.

The Amir invited Dr. ᶜAbd al-Ghani, an Indian educator and reformer, whom the Amir had met in Lahore, when Ghani was still the principle of the Islamia College. Habib Allah urged Ghani to model the Afghan curriculum around what he identified as the most useful components of the Mohammadan Anglo-Oriental College, founded in India in 1875, and which he had visited. It is not clear whether the Amir also visited the leading theological academy in India, *Dar ul-ᶜUlum* of Deoband, but by the central role Habib Allah placed on theology, as well as the ideal to train all men in ways to promote the spiritual well-being of the nation and a pious Muslim culture, it is clear that he wished Afghanistan's educational institutions to be lined up along the *Dar ul-ᶜUlum* of Deoband.[354]

Ghani's task of reform included first planning out a schooling system for Kabul, then, after a trial period, transporting this model to large provincial towns in subsequent years.[355] Indians like Dr. Ghani were drawn to Afghanistan because "by serving Afghanistan [he] would help the Indian Muslims in an effective manner in their struggle of independence."[356] Reading Ghani's assertion in the context of Indian immigration to Afghanistan, as discussed in the first chapter, points at the interconnected "webs of empire" model that involves the Amir's collaboration with Indian reformers within the context of troubled Anglo-Afghan relations. Ghani was not unique in his predisposition towards Afghanistan - indeed a wide range of reformers, revolutionaries, diplomats, and students all poured in from Germany and India (with links to the US and Japan), and all of whom viewed Afghanistan's state project for independence through their own experiences with colonialism.

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[354] Barbara Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India*.
[355] Abdul Ghani and Abdul Jaleel Najfi, *A Brief Political History of Afghanistan* (Lahore: Najaf Publishers, 1989).
[356] *Ibid*.

The plan developed by ᶜAbd al-Ghani in 1904 reflected two important elements important to the Afghan Amir. First, the educational institutions that were founded had to mirror the demands of the Afghan state, and were designed to meet the rapidly growing military and bureaucratic régime. Secondly, the Afghan Amir was invested in fostering regional connections to wider Islamic institutions in India and the Ottoman Empire. This not only left Ottoman and Indian teachers in charge of teaching the new curriculum,[357] but also involved the frequent translation of publications from India, the Ottoman Empire, and Iran.[358]

With help from ᶜAbd al-Ghani, the city of Kabul was divided up into forty different school districts, each of which had a lower primary branch school. There were twenty advanced primary schools scattered about the city, all of which were built around local mosques. In addition, the city boasted five middle schools and two high schools. These reforms included the establishment of the first primary school in 1903 (*Bayt al-ᶜUlum-i Mubarakah-yi Habibiya*), a military school in 1909 (*Sirajiyah* School of Military Techniques), a college in 1903 (*Habibiyya* School), and in 1912 a vocational training school for teachers (the *Dar al-Muᶜalimin*). For the first time a foreign language, namely English, was also introduced, but to avoid "[raising] before the ordinary Afghan mind a host of anti-Islamic possibilities," this was an optional elective available to students.[359] As the previous chapter showed, the Royal Military College of Kabul (*Madrasa-yi Harbi-yi Sirajiya*), founded in 1904-6, and the *Habibiyya* schools, founded in 1904, were the first secondary schools in Afghanistan. Many of the students who were later sent abroad were first drawn from one of these two secondary schools.

[357] Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan*, 18; Rishtia, "Education in Afghanistan": 20.
[358] Green, "The Trans-Border Traffic of Afghan Modernism."
[359] "The Beginnings of Educational Reforms in Kabul," *Educational Times* June 1, (1907).

It was in the same period that Ghani and Amir Habib Allah agreed to lay out plans for training Afghan youth abroad in Europe and Japan for study in law and medicine. As I have shown, the program for Europe did not emerge until the rule of his son, Amir Aman Allah, who after 1921 selected academically successful students from across these same institutions created by his father. But following the work of Barbara Metcalf, it is clear that Afghan students had already been studying abroad at the Deobandi school for decades, most notably sent by Amir Habib Allah.

Like his father, Aman Allah was invested in developing and supervising the country's educational programs, giving them "high priority by expanding … modern education into a national education system."[360] Under Aman Allah the state increased its spending cost on education (third after the ministry of defense and spending set aside for the royal house).[361] With an increased budget, the period under Aman Allah witnessed the creation of girls' schools, vocational and occupational schools, and the founding of primary and secondary schools throughout the country.[362] The two new European schools included the French-founded *Maktab-i Amaniya* (*Lycee Amaniya*) in 1923 and the German-founded *Maktab-i Amani* (*Ämani Oberrealschule*), which included primary and secondary education. With the founding of the *Maktab-i Amani* in 1924 – which was named for its founder and supporter, Amir Aman Allah – students began to be sent to Germany from among its highest achieving students, determined by standard matriculation exams. By 1928, the *Maktab-i Amani* and its French counterpart each had 300 students.[363]

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[360] Baiza, *Education in Afghanistan*, 74.
[361] See Ghubār*, Afghānistān dar Māsir-i Tārīkh*, 793; and according to Baiza, his state allocated a total of fifteen million to the Ministry of education per year, see Baiza, *Education in Afghanistan,* 89.
[362] For a list see Ghubār, *Afghānistān dar Māsir-i Tārīkh*, Karimi, "Ma'ārif dar Afghānistān"; and Baiza, *Education in Afghanistan*.
[363] *Āzādi-yi Sharq (Festausgabe)* 8, (1928): 20.

The arrival of the German teacher and reformer, Dr. Walter Iven, and his cohort of German educators mark the beginning of an intersected and interconnected goal to reform the educational sphere in both Afghanistan and Germany. While the creation of the *Maktab-i Amani* certainly had both political and social implications, the presence of German teachers in Afghanistan was intended to bolster the political position of the Weimar state in South Asia. It is to the joint efforts of Afghans and Germans to create and run the school that this chapter now turns.

Maktab-i Amani, a German curriculum?

In 1929 ᶜAli Ahmad Fofolzay first attended and later took his matriculation exams in 1929. The school is an example of the earliest attempt to experiment with European ideas and weave these into the Afghan curriculum. Founded in 1924, the school shared many characteristics with the German middle school system (*Realschulen*), especially in its practical component that offered experimental labs. The nature of its curriculum was also heavily focused on the natural sciences and chemistry. However, unlike the traditional *Realschulen* in Germany, the *Maktab-i Amani* omitted Latin as a mandatory language requirement, with German as the main foreign language.[364] The main goal of this school was to provide students with a general secondary education, but also to provide sufficient training to smooth their transition into higher education in Germany. Despite being associated with the German *Realschulen*, its capacity to offer the final matriculation exams (or *Abitur*), and to help transition students into German higher education, rather than into a vocational profession, the *Maktab-i Amani* mirrored much closely a *Gymnasium*-styled German secondary school especially in its structure to offer

[364] In Prussian school system the prefix of *Ober-* was added in 1882 to distinguish between the two different kinds of *Realschulen*: both taught components of the natural sciences and chemistry, but while the first (Realgymnasium) included Latin as a required language, the second form did not.

bifurcated specializations in the upper courses (i.e., a philosophically-oriented and scientific emphasis).

A more fitting regional comparison for the *Maktab-i Amani* would be its Indian counterpart, the Mohammadan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh, not least due to the similar modernizing zeal of their founders, but for its attempt to prepare Indian and Afghan youth for promoting reforms in an ever-changing political context. Aligarh's founder, Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817-1898), worked with a British principal, Theodore Beck, in the same manner that Amir Aman Allah, sponsor of the *Maktab-i Amani*, worked closely with the German principal, Dr. Walter Iven. For both institutions, the goal was to connect their institutions to the changing cultural and political configurations of a new global era. In other words, in both cases, we find a process in which the young population was woven into a progressive education while all along maintaining a reconciled relationship between religion and science.

Yet there were important key differences, too, between Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Amir Aman Allah especially in the ways they understood the function of education. Ahmad Khan's plan for Aligarh was to create a space that acted as a kind of intermediary between the elite colonizer's education and elite Muslims in India, or a kind of "elite and modern Muslim space."[365] The Afghan Amir, on the other hand, was less concerned with the creation of "a united phalanx" or with the decline of a Muslim identity within a kind of multiconfessional state as David Lelyveld has shown with Aligarh. Ahmad Khan's school operated within a colonial framework within the British Raj, whereas the Afghan school had practical and independent goals in mind. The Afghan state's objective was to train a class of young technocrats and reformers, who would be equipped to deal with questions pertaining to the technical, economic,

[365] David Lelyveld, *Aligarh's First Generation: Muslim Solidarity in British India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003), 347.

and political growth of the state. The final objective of such training was always one of maintaining, rather than building, an independent Afghanistan. To that end, and as I have shown in the first chapter, the Aman Allah state was prepared to draw on Muslims and non-Muslims alike to develop a useful body of technocrats in furtherance of that independence. Many of these non-Muslim actors not least the ones who returned from German technical schools such as Hokum Chand, an Afghan Hindu who replaced ᶜAbd al-Majid Khan as the director of the *Bank-i Mili* (the Afghan National Bank) in 1937, but were key actors that either initiated the contact between the Afghan and German state or facilitated the exchange.[366]

It is through building a framework from multiple sources for the purpose of securing an independent Afghan polity that the creation and management of the German-founded *Maktab-i Amani* must be understood. A key German figure was Dr. Walter Iven (born in 1881), who was in charge of communicating between the Prussian Ministry of Education and the Afghan Ministry of Education. Orientalists like Iven were employed by the German Foreign Office to foster new colonial objectives during a time when the German state had lost its overseas colonial territories. These academics and orientalists were first sponsored by the German Foreign Office to write dissertations about the "Orient," and then employed in places that aligned with their cultural and linguistic expertise and the political aims postulated by the German Foreign Office. Walter Iven's doctoral dissertation, entitled "The Cultural Land of Persia" (*Das Kulturland Persiens*), was a survey of Persia's topography, language, and cultural components, and like his French counterpart in Afghanistan, Lucien Tenébre who founded the *Lycée Amaniya* or *Maktab-i Amaniya*, Iven had widely travelled throughout the region and was well versed in Persian.[367]

[366] May Schinasi Collection Série Groupes, G.48; and see R 62998&9: "Die Zulassung von Schülern aus Afghanistan zu deutschen Lehranstalten, 1921-1927, 77.
[367] Iven, "Das Kulturland Persiens."

Throughout Iven's career in Afghanistan he managed to navigate the educational needs set out by the Amir and the Afghan Ministry of Education. This process was best illustrated during the initial development of curriculum, which he also designed in Persian. From internal exchanges at the German Foreign Office, it is clear that there were multiple versions drafted for the school, but the final version kept at the Foreign Office mirrored the desire of the Afghan Ministry of Education to train students in accordance with the priorities set out by both societies. The German Foreign Office remarked that Iven's fluency in Persian had helped him draft up an educational platform that resulted in a successful outcome, outbidding the Turkish counterpart's pedagogical platform for founding and running new secondary schools.[368]

The latest 1922 version shows that Walter Iven drafted his educational plan for the *Maktab-i Amani* in Persian, and most importantly combined a German curriculum with a classical Perso-Islamic study in order to secure the approval of the Afghan Ministry of Education. The first component included a *Gymnasium*-style curriculum, which ensured a smooth transition for young Afghans into the Prussian higher educational system once they arrived in Germany, and the second component ensured that the curriculum continued to ground students in regional histories and Persian vernacular traditions. The latter criteria was important to the Afghan Ministry of Education, for whom the intended goal of these exchange programs was nevertheless to involve students and their technical expertise in the eventual running of various industries. Another important selling point according to Iven's plan was that instruction was equally divided between German and Afghan teachers. While the former was in charge of

[368] On matters pertaining to curricula changes the Afghan Ministry of Culture and Education was advised by a Turkish envoy, who had formerly worked with Abdul Hamid on establishing a pedagogical plan. See Afghan Ministry of Education publications, among them*: Maᶜārif-i Afghānistān dar Panjāh Sāl-i Akhīr,* 1968; Tasīs-i Makātib-i Mastūrāt 2, no. 23 (1920): 48-54; and *Niẓāmnāma-'i Vizārat Jalīlīa-'i Maᶜārif-i Afghānistān* (Kābul: Maṭbaᶜ-i Vizārat -i Jalīlīa-'i Maᶜārif-*i*, 1923). Thanks to Dr. Yahia Baiza for sharing this document with me.

instructing in the technical fields as well as foreign languages, the latter was responsible for teaching the Persian language and literature, Asian history, and Islamic doctrine. Unlike the French school in Kabul, where a special Parisian commissioner arrived to proctor the French *Baccalaureate* exams, Iven hired local Afghan superintendents to proctor the matriculation exams.[369]

Iven's efforts to tailor his curriculum alongside local needs is indicative of the Afghan Ministry of Education desire to weave foreign pedagogues into the wider Afghan institutional fabric. To work as a teacher and reformer in Kabul, Iven needed to navigate around the Ministry's institutional checks and balances. Unlike other schools in the region that were managed by Europeans, especially the Iranian Dar al-Funun, which was concerned "primarily with the intention of promoting Western knowledge,"[370] *Maktab-i Amani* (and by extension the Afghan Ministry of Education) approached the introduction of foreign education through different sets of priorities.

The system of "checks and balances" is most visible when examining a set of Ministry publications. In 1924 the Ministry developed eighteen bureaus, which were internally divided up into different branches. Each branch was responsible for a specific task force, i.e., to oversee the development of new disciplines, the management of educational institutions to meet state regulations and needs, and even the inspection of cultural artifacts before displaying these at the National Museum of Kabul. Two specific bureaus were set up to oversee the selection and translation of foreign textbooks, and another to work directly with foreign teachers in making

[369] For the French process of establishing a high school in Kabul see, F. Benoit, "Modern Education in Afghanistan Under King Amanullah," *The Visvabharati Quarterly* 7, no. 1 (1929): 3.
[370] Maryam Ekhtiar, *The Dar al-Funun: Educational Reform and Cultural Development in Qajar Iran* (Dissertation: New York University, 1994); Maryam Ekhtiar, "Nasir Al-din Shah and the Dar Al-Funun: The Evolution of an Institution," *Iranian Studies* 34, no. 1-4 (2001); and Dār al-Fonūn," *Encyclopaedia Iranica,* Vol. 6.

their proposed curricula changes in line with the visions supported at the Afghan Ministry of Education.[371] The ministry also housed its own printing press, which was responsible for the publication of yearly reports and propaganda pamphlets updating the Afghan public on educational matters.

The Ministry's activities suggests that the relationship between the European modernizing team and the Afghan reformers was not a one-sided one in which the Afghans were on the receiving end of the learning process. Rather, the ministry put foreign professionals such as Iven and his French counterpart and their ideas for reform through multiple layers of inspection and evaluation. The end result mirrored a much more Afghan-tailored curriculum, with the benefit of extracting the specialties that the German teachers brought with them.

Temporary Interruption of Diplomatic and Educational Exchanges

Historians have suggested that educational reforms stagnated under Aman Allah's successor, Muhammad Nadir Khan (r. 1929-1933). The historiography of elite reformers like King Aman Allah generally assume that their banishment in the 1929 régime change brought educational development to a temporary halt, since traditional religious institutions were not ready to adapt to the needs of a modern state.[372] As a result of Aman Allah's exile, it is true that many schools initially closed, including girls' schools and the *Maktab-i Amani*, and thenceforth many European reformers and Aman Allah followers were exiled. The aftermath of the coup also saw the growth of religious influences and associations such as the *Jamᶜat-i Mullah-ha* (Association of Muslim Theologians) and the 1931 *Jamᶜat -i ᶜUlama* (Association of Islamic

[371] *Niẓāmnāma-'i Vizārat Jalīlīa-'i Maᶜārif-i Afghānistān*, 1302 (1923).
[372] See Poullada, *Reform and Rebellion*; Adamec, *Afghanistan's Foreign Affairs*; Baraki, *Die Beziehungen zwischen Afghanistan und der Bundesrepubik Deutschland 1945-1978;* and Ǧamšīd, *Die Beziehung zwischen Deutschland und Afghanistan*.

Scholars).[373] With the support of the state, these associations fostered new ties to India, Egypt, and Syria, which in turn strengthened a Hanifi curriculum at Afghan madrasas. This was especially true for the newly-minted School of Islamic Law in Kabul.[374]

Simply because there was a gradual influence of Islamic education, this did not mean that the Musahiban régime was not invested in secular education overall. In many ways, the period after 1933 saw the new ruling family drawing on the educational infrastructures that their predecessor had drawn up and using them in ways to create a centralizing governing body not least over the capital but throughout the provinces as well.[375] As the subsequent chapter will show, during his tenure as Aman Allah's general, Nadir Shah himself was in charge of touring and surveying Afghan provinces and collected during these tours ethnographic and cartographic information which he later used during his own rule.

What did, however, change with the onset of the Musahiban régime was that over the course of the German Third Reich fewer Afghan students chose to study in Germany, and while the previous generation had overwhelmingly focused on technical fields, those who still came opted for a study in the human sciences.

This shift may suggest that, as the German training increasingly became a tool for radical politics as manifested in the 1933 student assassinations, the new régime adopted a much more neutral position towards Germany. After the king's own assassination, *Maktab-i Amani* was closed down for a short period and was only reopened when the Afghan state reestablished a secure foothold. Even then, in an attempt to send a symbolic message to Aman Allah's followers, the German-founded school was renamed the *Nijat Oberrealschule*.

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[373] Ghubār, *Afghānistān dar Masīr-i Tārīkh,* 54-5, and 84; and Baiza, *Education in Afghanistan*, 101.
[374] Rishtia, "Education in Afghanistan," 22.
[375] Kircheisen, *Türkei und Afghanistan*, 171.

The word *nijat* (or redemption/salvation) implied that any resonance or connotation with the Aman Allah era had been eradicated and was beyond salvage.[376] In this context, German-educated and German-affiliated Afghans were beginning to contemplate their new roles in a changing society, making it possible to surmise that the shift in the meaning of German knowledge could perhaps be linked to these political changes. Presumably, this was a result from the uncertain politicization of German education, that we see the shift away from training technocrats concerned with practical issues towards creating a class of thinkers and intellectuals who could produce ideas more abstractly and holistically, as historians, philosophers, and government reformers. Whereas during the Aman Allah régime, German technical expertise and knowledge (and by extension the technically-trained Afghan returnees) were visibly governing every aspect of daily Afghan technology, the new régime acted to support a new kind of study abroad. This new approach may have had less visible results and was not as large in quantity, but still allowed the returnees to think abstractly about, and pursue, ways in which societal transformations could be employed to support existing Afghan culture, rather than facilitating European involvement in Afghan affairs. Here is where Fofolzay's dissertation and subsequent reforms become a window into the intangible and abstract exchange of ideas between Germany and Afghanistan.

Section II

[c]Ali Ahmad Fofolzay and His Engagement with the *Jena-Plan*

A close reading of Fofolzay's 1941 dissertation can tease out his engagement with the different plans and educational methods encountered over the course of his own training, in

[376] AA: R 63256-7; the same was also true for the French found school, Amānīya School was renamed to Licêe Istiqlal (signaling independence).

particular elements of the *Jena-Plan*. The assertion made by Fofolzay that his dissertation topic was given to him by his mentor, Peter Petersen, could lead us to question how much his study was, in fact, no more than a reproduction of the various influences picked up at Jena. I argue, instead, that analysis of his dissertation is still a meaningful exercise, because beyond reflecting the influences that shaped him at Jena, it also points at Fofolzay's own understanding and desire to reconceptualize Afghan history by broadening the scope of available sources (*Quellen*) from which new educational reforms in Afghanistan could be drawn from. In what follows, I will first analyze the dissertation for the influences that shaped it through his immediate circle at Jena, and then I will analyze a shift in Fofolzay's philosophical orientation through his later writings.

[c]Ali Ahmad Fofolzay was born in Kabul in 1916 to a family of small landowners. Regardless of a given family's social status, it was common in Afghan households to either homeschool children for the first few years or to send them to local Islamic madrasas. The latter were typically attached to a mosque and included four stages of study: primary, secondary, professional, and higher, before they were transferred over to the new secondary schools founded under the two Afghan régimes from 1901 to 1929.[377] Fofolzay entered the new German *Maktab-i Amani* as a second grader, and as all students in the upper grades were required, he needed to opt for one of the two orientations and he chose the emphasis on philosophy rather than the technical orientation.[378]

Upon graduation in 1937, Fofolzay travelled to Austria, but eventually came to the University of Jena, where he studied pedagogy with an emphasis on history and philosophy.[379] It is not clear why he was in Austria and why he ended up in Jena. Keeping the previous chapter's

[377] Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan*, 185.
[378] AA: R 63256-7: "Die Aemani/Amānī Oberrealschule, 1927-1934."
[379] It is not clear why he travelled to Austria, and no paper trail of his time or education there can be found..

discussion about the involvement of the Afghan legation in mind, it is plausible that the legation in Berlin and the German Foreign Office worked closely in situating Fofolzay in his field of study.

After his completion of degrees at Jena, Fofolzay returned to Afghanistan in the midst of the outbreak of the Second World War. Yet again, the Afghan state pledged neutrality during the War, but guaranteed the safe expulsion of the German community from Afghanistan, including that of Walter Iven. Depleted of German technocrats and educators, the Afghan state presumably needed to overcome its distrust of German-educated Afghan adolescents, and called upon Afghans in Germany to quickly finish their studies and return with their acquired expertise and knowledge. Many of these returnees were barely adults. From sources held at the German Federal Archives, it is clear that the German Foreign Office carefully vetted these students before issuing them the necessary papers for their return to Afghanistan.[380]

A year after the completion of his dissertation, Fofolzay replaced the expelled Walter Iven as the new director of the *Nijat Oberrealschule* and remained in that post until 1946. During these more uncertain times, German pedagogical ideas would come from knowledge-migrants such as Fofolzay and the previous actors we have studied.

Analysis of Fofolzay's Dissertation

Recently scholars have studied the writings of Iranian students, who typically tended to train in the medical fields in France.[381] Nile Green has conducted a close reading of the diary of

[380] The German Foreign Office vetted Afghan students for possible collaboration with the Allied forces, see BArch: NS/5/VI/35759: "Mittlerer Osten: Afghanistan – Paß- u. Einreisebestimmungen (incl. Germans leaving Afghanistan in 1941).
[381] Mehrzad Boroujerdi, ""The West" in the Eyes of the Iranian Intellectuals of the Interwar Years (1919-1939)," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 26, no. 3 (2006): 394.

Mirza Salih, a Persian student who arrived in London in a much earlier period in 1815.[382] The Indian student, Mahdi Ali Mirza, detailed his close encounters with revolutionary and interwar Berlin through the publication of his diary.[383] Unlike their Indian or Iranian peers, and with exception of the technical dissertations analyzed in the previous chapter, Afghan students left few writings behind. To that end, ᶜAli Ahmad Fofolzay's dissertation is a rare find, and an opportunity to study the production of knowledge among Afghan knowledge-migrants.

Entitled "Das Afghanische Schulwesen der Gegenwart: Darstellung und Reformvorschläge" ("The Current Educational System in Afghanistan: An Account and Proposal for Reform") it provides insight into how a foreign student articulated the course of his own education.[384] Since it is not a travel account, but rather a systematic distillation of what he had learned while studying at Jena, his dissertation can be read for the insight it provides on the processes of knowledge production between an Afghan knowledge-migrant and a German institution. More importantly, the dissertation is analyzed here for the specific aspects of the *Jena-Plan* that he chose to analyze and render into Afghan curricula changes.

The dissertation itself is divided into two sections: The first section is made up of three chapters and aimed at surveying the historical trajectory of education in Afghanistan. In particular, he traced the role of pedagogy in Afghanistan over the course of its history and transcultural exchange with Brahman, Avestan, Greek, and Muslim influences and the position of education within each of these religions. Among the Muslim influences he also analyzed the educational reforms undertaken by the two Afghan Amirs, Habib Allah and Aman Allah.

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[382] Nile Green, *The Love of Strangers: What Six Muslim Students Learned in Jane Austen's London* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016).
[383] Mahdi Ali Mirza, *Welcome Each Rebuff*.
[384] I am thankful to May Schinasi for first drawing my attention to Fofolzay's dissertation, see ᶜAli Ahmad Fofolzay, "Das afghanische Schulwesen der Gegenwart: Darstellung und Reformvorschläge," (Dissertation: Universität Jena, 1941).

The second section of his dissertation is made up of a larger chapter with five different element pertaining to education and are discussed in relation to Fofolzay's proposed reforms pertaining to these spheres, i.e., school organization, teacher training, school hygiene, youth groups, and women's education. Importantly, while he discussed his proposed reforms within each of these categories, he frequently drew from his earlier discussions in section one to explain how these new pedagogical ideas, themselves an amalgamation of Krieck's, Petersen's, and Sharma's ideas, would resemble earlier educational reforms in Afghanistan. In other words, he reduced the potentiality for the reader to consider the *Jena-Plan* and its implementation in a new cultural setting, by showing that the *Jena-Plan* itself emerged from transcultural exchange between its founder and the intellectual network that Jena had fostered.

A Web of Intellectual Networks and Influences

The network of influences that shaped Fofolzay's early formative years in Germany can roughly be categorized in two different forms: the immediate Jena-circle, which included Petersen, the founder of the *Jena-Plan*, and the international cohort that either passed through Jena, most notably Petersen's close collaborators Ernst Krieck, a Nazi theoretical scientist, and the Indian theosophist, Venkatesh Narayan Sharma (1897 – 1986).

In the recent years, scholars have studied Petersen, his cohort, and his students' attraction to Nazi racial ideas. Several historians have drawn attention to the Jena circle's obsession with *Ahnentafel* (a type of genealogical numbering system) and anthropomorphic measurements.[385] Certainly, it is true that with the rise of the Nazis, Petersen's influence as chair in Jena increased

[385] Torsten Schwann, "Dem Nationalsozialismus gefolt und gescheitert? Zur Verortung der Jenaplan-Pädagogik im polykratischen NS-Erziehungenssystem," in *Jahrbuch für historische Bildungsforschung* 9 (2003).

and so did the number of dissertations that he mentored. It is also true that Petersen used his contacts in the Nazi government to publicize and expand on his *Jena-Plan*.

Similarly, especially the Indian and Iran historiographies have emphasized the importance of the term "Aryanism" in the construction of Iranian and Indian ethnic and national identities, but also in the process in which the term was politicized or used to radicalize specific sectarian or pseudo-nationalist groups.[386] No Western study has studied the process by which Afghan intellectuals engaged with Nazi racial theories, and to that end, the first exciting impetus would be to study Fofolzay's dissertation for its covert engagement with racial or ethnic theories. Especially given Fofolzay's ethnic classification as a Pashtun, it might seem informative to understand he might have wanted educational reforms to be employed through an explicitly racial discourse. After all, Pashtuns were the ruling elite class, and some of them were known to have originated from ancient Ariana, claiming heritage back to the Indo-Europeans. The focus on racial discourse, however, may simplify Fofolzay's work: He did not seem to engage with the literature on race or even ethnicity (*qawm*), nor did he cite his references in a manner to help him come to terms with the multiplicity of ethnic groups found in Afghanistan. Reading Fofolzay's dissertation within the context of other dissertations mentored by Petersen, it is clear that Fofolzay's work was noticeably less concerned with racial purity or the preservation of ethnicities.[387] For one, while he accepted that any proposed changes must take into account

[386] For overview of various uses of the term, see David Motadel, "Iran and the Aryan Myth," in *Perceptions of Iran: History, Myths and Nationalism from Medieval Persia to the Islamic Republic*, ed. Ali M. Ansari (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013), 119-145; Vasant Kaiwar and Sucheta Mazumdar, eds., *Antinomies of Modernity: Essays on Race, Orient, and Nation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003); Jennifer Jenkins, "Iran and the Nazi New Order, 1933-1941," *Iranian Studies* 49, no. 5 (2016): 727-751; and Kamran Scot Aghaie and Afshin Marashi, eds., *Rethinking Iranian Nationalism and Modernity* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2015).

[387] Some of these student included: Prashila Devi, "Wandlungen in der Schulhygenie seit 1900: Wege zur pädagogischen Lösung der hygienischen Fragen in der Schule," (Dissertation: Universität Jena, 1937);

Afghanistan's position as a "Nationalitätenstaat" (state of many nations, i.e., a multicultural disposition composed of different linguistic and ethnic groups), the main theme of his dissertation dealt with marrying the *Jena-Plan* with his proposed reforms.

In that sense, then, the aim in this chapter is not to contribute to the controversial link between the birth of the social scientific disciplines in the German academia and Afghanistan's Aryan heritage.[388] Positioning the study of an Afghan scholar and reformer in conversation with Indian or Iranian parallel studies would simplify German-Afghan intellectual connectivity to merely a kind of "countermodernity." Afshin Matin-Asgari has described the German-Iranian intellectual exchange as "countermodernity," because according to his assessment both entities were neither located in the "modern" West (i.e., France and England) nor in the "non-modern" Orient. He has described the intellectual circle that developed in interwar Berlin as having had a "negative or ambivalent stance toward modernity."[389]

The actors analyzed in this study do not fit into any of these two camps. This was especially the case for the Afghan students, who were certainly concerned with their own roles in the fledgling new modern world, but a key element connecting all of them was their ability to identify ideas from a range of avenues, and rendering these to their immediate artistic, scientific, and ethnographic needs. Their ideas were neither modern nor traditional, but syncretic, emerging through contact and exchange with collaborators from outside their own behavioral, nationalist, and religious camps. To that end, here in this case as well, I find that Fofolzay's study cannot be

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and Christoph Carstensen, *Der Volkserzieher: eine historische-kritische Untersuchung über die Volkserzieherbewegung Wilhelm Schwaners* (Würzburg: K.Triltsch, 1941).

[388] Sheldon Pollock, "Deep Orientalism? Notes on Sanskrit and Power Beyond the Raj," in *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament: Perspectives on South Asia*, ed. Carol A. Breckenridge and Peter van der Veer (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1990).

[389] Afshin Matin-Asgari, "The Berlin Circle: Iranian Nationalism Meets German Countermodernity," in *Rethinking Iranian Nationalism and Modernity*, ed. Kamran Scot Aghaie and Afshin Marashi (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2015), 49.

clustered in within strict binary categories (German counter-modernist vs. Asian nationalist, modern vs. non-modern). In fact, the *Jena-Plan* itself was comprised of "vielen Teilen der europäischen und außereuropäischen Erziehungswelt" (different elements of European and extra-European educational platforms).[390] The ideas found in Fofolzay's dissertation may not fit within a specific Iranian or Indian *zeitgeist*, but it does not have to, after all, especially if his syncretic ideas shed light on a moment in which a specific German institution was able to conjoin the interests of disparate-thinking intellectuals.

The better question to ask of Fofolzay's dissertation is: With what elements of the *Jena-Plan* did Fofolzay engage? And, in what ways are the elements of the *Jena-Plan* connected to the work of Karimi, Sharma, and Krieck, and what do these connections reveal? And finally, what is the conceptual thread that links all of these different influences?

Turning now to the dissertation, there are two important categories that thematically cut across Fofolzay's dissertation: the concept of *Boden* (soil/ground), which he took from Krieck, and the idea of *Gemeinschaft* (community), which as we know its correlation with the child's education developed by Petersen.

The category of *Boden* or *Bodenständigkeit* (rooted or grounded in the soil) as it is sometimes referred to, symbolized for Fofolzay many different things, which included more significantly the role of the state as well as a foundation upon which modern changes could start building on. Cited for having applied the concept of *Bodenständigkeit* (rooted or grounded in the soil) in the realm of educational philosophy, Ernst Krieck (1882-1947) was a Nationalist Socialist philosopher and pedagogue and famous for his work on *Eine Nationalpolitische Erziehung*.[391] His ideas are often read in an ambivalent manner as being both in conversation

[390] Fofolzay, "Das afghanische Schulwesen," 51.
[391] Ernst Krieck, *Eine Nationalpolitische Erziehung* (Leipzig: Armanan Verlag, 1941).

with, and in opposition to, those of Martin Heidegger's (1889-1972), especially as they overlapped in a "grand metaphysical vision of German destiny based on the notion of a singularly German form of autochthony or rootedness in the earth: *Bodenständigkeit*."[392] For both Krieck and Heidegger, the concept meant that Germans were tied to their indigenous landscape, but also to their native tongue, and rootedness in their history.[393]

Krieck, himself, had joined the Nazi party in 1932, and held various posts at the University of Heidelberg. Krieck shared many common ideas with Heidegger and Petersen, one of which was the same emphasis on *Volk* ("*gleiche Betonung der Realität "Volk"*") and the *Volk's* relation to blood and soil ("*mitsamt von dessen Beziehungen auf Blut und Boden*").[394] It must be reiterated that Krieck, like Heidegger and Petersen, was not an anti-modernist; rather, all three vocally challenged the conventional division of research into separate "fields" (i.e., natural sciences and human sciences). Heidegger himself maintained that university training no longer yielded the measures of self-reflection, self-limitation, or self-administration, and instead isolated the individual because the latter was trained within his/her own specific field as a "specialist."[395] The emphasis on the the self meant that the university fostered the university trainee in an isolated state and building on Heidegger Krieck proposed changes in an rectoral speech:

> a new philosophy [which] would establish a unified goal for all scientific work across the boundaries of the academic disciplines - the achieving a total worldview out of the interweaving of individual details...In this way, the university will be able to fulfill its

[392] *Ibid*., "Völkische Erziehung aus Blut und Boden," *Internationale Zeitschrift für Erziehung* 3 (1933-34).
[393] Charles Bambach, *Heidegger's Roots: Nietzsche, National Socialism, and the Great Greeks* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), xix-xx; and see original primary source in Krieck, "Völkische Erziehung aus Blut und Boden."
[394] Robert Döpp, *Jenaplan-Pädagogik im Nationalsozialismus: ein Beitrag zum Ende der Eindeutigkeit* (LIT Verlag Münster, 2003), 239.
[395] Bambach, *Heidegger's Roots*, 95.

task of national-political education.[396]

Petersen subsequently built on Kriecks idea to weave university education into a national-political fabric and applied the concept to organically grow the child into a nation. The pair began to collaborate in 1929, jointly presenting at conferences, seminars, and guest lectures at the University of Jena. It was through this Jena circle that Fofolzay was first introduced to Krieck and his work.

The language in which Fofolzay articulated his own ideas was strongly shaped by Krieck's conceptualization of the term "*Boden*." First, the term delineated for Fofolzay a royal idea, which after 1900s in Afghanistan came to mean a monarchical rule that could be passed on to heirs ("seinem Sohne Habibullah Chan...den Boden geebnet.")[397] The idea of dynastic rule of the land and passing it down generationally meant regular new rulers with new sets of educational priorities and Fofolzay discussed each of these reforms in three categories (i.e.,"die erste Schulbewegung (1901)," "die zweite Schulbewegung (1919)," "die dritte Schulbewegung (1930)"). Each of these reform movements were undertaken by different Afghan rulers

He described these reforms as "*selbstständige Bewegungen*" ("independent reforms") yet "*parallel entwickelt*" (developed in tandem), which suggested that each was made up of its own particular aims and goals, but developed in response to previous reform. Keep in mind, he was very much a byproduct of the second reform movement under Aman Allah, but would function as a professional and pedagogue in the third phase. In the subsequent sections I will examine the relevance of his position vis-à-vis these stages.

[396] Ernst Krieck, *Die Erneuerung der Universität* (Frankfurt: Bechhold, 1933), 9.
[397] Fofolzay, "Das afghanische Schulwesen," 18.

Drawing on Krieck's central call for a "*totaler Erziehungsstaat*" ("an absolute or totalitarian state of pedagogy"),[398] Fofolzay combined his version of an ideal state with Petersen's formulation of a *Gemeinschaft:*

> Denn der Staat ist eine notwendige Organisation, die im Volke und aus dem Volke entsteht, die als oberste „Einheitsveranstaltung" die Rechte der völkischen Gemeinschaft nach außen und nach innen mit der Hilfe und der Macht des eigenenen Volk, ein Ziel, eine gemeinsame weltanschauliche Grundlage hat, gibt es doch Staaten, die von verschiedenen Parteien zusammengefügt und von bekannten parteipolitischen Zwistigkeiten geplagt sind. Solche Uneinigkeiten sind besonders auf dem Gebiete der Erziehung sehr gefährlich und zersetzend. Die Erziehungswissenschaft von heute verlangt darum eine vollkommene Gerichtheit des planmäßigen Schulwesens auf das *Volk*. Hier sollen und müssen nicht Parteien und Straßenpolitiker für das Schulwesen maßgebend sein, sondern die Notwendigkeiten, die Bedürfnisse und die Interessen *der Gemeinschaft und des Volkes*.[399]

> The state is a necessary organization that arises from the people. This organization is the supreme "united organization" of the rights of the national community emanate outwardly and inwardly and gives with the help and power of its own people, a goal, a common ideological basis. There are, after all, states that have been joined by different parties and are plagued by well-known party-political quarrels. Such disagreements are very dangerous and corrosive, especially in the field of education. The educational science of today therefore demands a complete fairness of the proposed education of the people. Parties and street politicians should not be the deciding factors for the school system, but the needs, requirements, and interests of the community and the people.

Here Fofolzay adopts Krieck's conceptualization of a kind of state that had successfully eradicated the insular-operating bureaucratic hierarchies and, in Fofolzay's view replaced it with a system that slowly raised the child into a functioning member of the *Volk*. The child would be positioned within a larger chain or "*Kette*" that involved the state, the parents' involvement (*Familienerziehungen*), and the community (Gemeinschaft).[400]

It was at this point that Fofolzay intersected the ideas of both Krieck and Petersen. The latter's model believed that the state, the school, the community, and the child's family must all

[398] Ernst Krieck, *Eine Nationalpolitische Erziehung*.
[399] Fofolzay, "Das afghanische Schulwesen," 21.
[400] *Ibid*., 34.

be intertwined in sharing responsibility for the child's education, carving – in a sense – a common space, and grooming the child to become part of the *Volk*. These two concepts, *Gemeinschaft* and *Volk*, informed the basis of the *Jena-Plan*, and hence Fofolzay's dissertation.

For Petersen, *Gemeinschaft* was comprised of three interconnected structures. He drew, firstly, from the organizational comprehensiveness of the term, preventing the individual from falling into isolation as well as developing self-supported interests (*Einzelinteressen*). Here he increasingly positioned himself in opposition to Enlightenment ideas, for Petersen believed individual freedom and self-reflected rationalism could prevent the child from developing into an integral part of the *Gemeinschaft*. In other words, while the individual was too concerned with her/his self-reflections, the process would prevent them from thinking of their role in the community. Petersen believed that such concern would not fully develop the human's subjectivity. For Petersen, the individual's desire to function and to be equal to his/her community (*Gemeinschaftswillen*) emanated from within or *Innerlichkeit*.[401] These two requirements needed to work in conjunction in order to fulfill an important aspect for the child's education. The third way in which Petersen defined *Gemeinschaft* was for its potential to rid the community of its rifts: "Gelingt diese Erziehung zur Gemeinschaft hin, dann fallen die trennended Klüfte zwischen den Klassen der Bevölkerung hinweg" (When education yields a successful community, then the divisive rift between the classes of the population will vanish.) [402] In other words, Petersen believed that the structural model of *Gemeinschaft* helped eradicate social classes capable of a social revolution.[403]

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[401] Peter Petersen, *Zur Heimat- und Volkskunde in Volkserziehung und Unterricht* (Weimar: Böhlau, 1926).
[402] *Ibid*., "Gemeinschaft und freies Menschentum ... Eine Kritik der Begaubungsschulen," in *Das neue Reich* 6, (1919).
[403] *Ibid*., *Der Jena-Plan einer freien allgemeinen Volkschule* (Langensalza: Beltz, 1932.

After having outlined the influences that shaped him, in particular through his mentorship with Petersen and his reading of Krieck, Fofolzay turned towards the question of implementation. It is here that we can pose the question to what extent his dissertation is a mere adaption of the *Jena-Plan*, rather than reflecting his own local milieu.

To Fofolzay the entire point of his work was to accomplish what his Ottoman and Japanese peers had attempted, namely to appropriate Western knowledge through a process of transmission, negotiation, and reformulation:

> Zu einer glücklichen Aneignung ist vor allem die richtige Grundlage zu schaffen. Japan und die Türkei wahlten außerdem aus der Mannigfaltigkeit der europäischen Zivilisation sorgfältig aus, wofür sie das eigene Volk zum Maßtab machten. Alles wurde vor dem "Import" unter die scharfe japanische bzw. türkische Lupe genommen. Die verantwortlichen, mit einem psychologischen Blick veranlagten Leiter kannten andererseits die "seelische Tragfähigkeit" ihres Volkes.[404]
>
> For the attainment of a happy appropriation is the necessary foundation necessary. Japan and Turkey therefore selected carefully from the diversity of European civilization, and considered their own people the benchmark of change. All "import" was sharply subjected to a Japanese and Turkish lens. The responsible leaders had a psychological awareness of the "emotional capacity" of their own people.

To translate the Jena reforms to an Afghan project, he proposed his second reading of *Boden*, namely as a foundation of the soil ("*Grundlage des Bodens*") to be located in a vernacular education: He proposed his version of the reform to have the basic aim of strengthening the role of practical pedagogy (or *Ta^{c}lim va Tarbiyat* as he referred to it) while recognizing the centrality of the child and conditioning and training the latter's mind.[405] In other words, the implementation of educational practice was geared towards developing the child's mind and recognizing the elements that would harm reason. To implement this one would look no further than

[404] Fofolzay, "Das afghanische Schulwesen," 18-21.
[405] *Ibid*., 23-24.

Afghanistan's vernacular syncretism, which drew from both Indian philosophy and Islamic principles:

> Nach meiner Meinung sind diese in der indischen Philosophie, im indischen Geist, und auch - im Islam zu suchen. Wie bekannt, sahen auch die Inder in dem Verstand den Allmächtigen. Übung des Gedächtnisses durch Auswendiglernen der schweren und schwersten vedischen Texte war das Hauptziel. Auch bei uns finden wir diese Gedächtnisübungen, vor allem bei den Mollas. Kaum hat jemand sich darüber Gedanken gemacht, warum die schlauen Lehrer die schweren arabischen Grammatiktext in poetischer Form zum Lehrstoff machten.[406]
>
> In my assessment these are to be found in Indian philosophy, in the Indian spirit, but also - in Islam. Both Indians and Muslims sought to find reason in the almighty. The goal was to exercise the mind through acts of memorizing the dense and difficult Vedic texts. Supported by the Mullahs, such practices are commonly found in our society. Hardly anyone ever doubts why the clever teachers assigned dense Arabic grammar texts in poetic form.

In this assertion, Fofolzay closely echoed the work of Venkatesh Narayan Sharma (1897 – 1986) and Ahmad Allah Khan Karimi (dates unknown). The theosophist, Sharma, came into contact with Fofolzay when the former taught at Jena during Petersen's tenure as a department head. Sharma and Petersen soon began to collaborate - they even published a journal article together. In his introduction to Sharma's *Indische Erziehung* (Indian Pedagogy), Petersen emphasized the rarity of Sharma's work, for there "exist[s] in the European languages no monograph, which provides us with a comprehensive image of the Indian pedagogy, in other words of the nationalistic Indian pedagogy, which has not been adopted from the institutional pedagogy of Europe."[407] For Sharma himself the book's basic aim was to survey the course of Indian history from the ancient Vedic period to the conquest of the Muslims but with the role of the family at the center of analysis within each of these periods. Sharma also taught Sanskrit at the *Odenwaldschule* (close to Darmstadt), which was visited by more than thirty revolutionary

[406] Fofolzay, "Das afghanische Schulwesen," 24
[407] Venkatesh Narayana Sharma, *Indische Erziehung* (Weimar: Böhlau, 1936), Introduction.

Indians by 1934.[408] With the help of his wife, Ellen Sharma-Teichmüller, the pair later opened and ran a branch of the *Odenwaldschule* in India.[409]

There still remains the question: Why was Fofolzay drawing on an Indian theosophist to construct the general parameters of Afghan curriculum. Certainly, this could be tied to his local Jena context that may have influenced Fofolzay: German thinkers at Jena saw Asian religious and philosophical ideas as mirroring their own search for a deeper national identity.[410] The search for a deeper national identify was most clearly seen in the movement of the *Reformpädagogik*, which experimented with different paradigms and organizational qualities. Amidst these experimentations, some were drawn to Buddhist movements or other "fringe" religion of theosophy for inspiration.[411]

Theosophists, including its founder, a Russian émigré, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (or Madam Blavatsky) (1831-1891), and an American officer, Henry Steel Olcott (1831-1902), drew from Hinduism and Buddhism to emphasize esoteric mysticism in achieving God's knowledge. Many theosophists, most notably Annie Besant (1874-1933), a British socialist and women's right activists, were searching for a new moral world order. Her writings encapsulated both an anti-colonial and anti-clerical universalism, which historians, like Peter van der Veer, have studied carried its own contradictions.[412] These contradictions included the ability to conjoin incongruent ideological currents, such as socialism and theosophy, and the ability to form

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[408] Heiner Barz, *Handbuch Bildungsreform und Reformpädagogik* (Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2017); and Dennis Shirley, *The Politics of Progressive Education: The Odenwaldschule in Nazi Germany* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), 82.
[409] Ellen Sharma-Teichmüller, "Unsere Odenwaldschule in Indien," in *Die Idee einer Schule im Spiegel der Zeit. Festschrift für Paul Geheeb zum 80.Geburtstag und zum 40 jährigen Bestehen der Odenwaldschule,* ed. Eva Cassirer et al. (Heidelberg: Lambert Schneider Verlag, 1953).
[410] Marchand, *German Orientalism,* 4.
[411] Myers, *German Visions of India*, 14.
[412] Peter van der Veer, *Imperial Encounters: Religion and Modernity in India and Britain* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001).

common "political grounds of both secularism and theosophy, especially considered within the intersecting discourses of religious dissent, decolonization, and evolutionary science."[413]

Thesosophy was flexible enough to position itself within different ideological currents. Fofolzay, by drawing on the work of Sharma, adopted Sharma's historical timeline for India to Afghanistan's, thence, situating Afghan history through a much longer *longue durée*. The category that allowed him to show this longer sense of historical narrative was through the concept of the family:

> Die Familie ist eine solche Zelleinheit, auf der das Schicksal des Volkes ruht. Wo die Familie zugrunde geht, da existiert auch das Volk nicht mehr. Von da nimmt die Erziehung ihren Anfang, dort stecken die ersten eindrucksvollsten und formenden geistigen Entwicklungsströmungen.[414]
>
> A family is a cell unit, upon which the nation's fate rests. When the family perishes, so will the Volk cease to exist. Education starts here (i.e., the cell's core/family). There we are to find the first waves of impressive and formative intellectual developments.

Behind Fofolzay's adoption of Sharma's historical chronology lie two important points: First, by relating his own ability to reconceptualize Afghanistan's historical and educational patterns with those of India meant he was positioning himself with a group of Afghan intellectuals for whom the course of Afghan history pre-dated Islam. Secondly, knowing well enough that he needed to return to Afghanistan, he was reading German information through a strategic lens, and was perhaps even in line with his technically-oriented peers who shaped education to fit their own changing political atmosphere. In fact, although he stated that he was disconnected from Persian sources, he referenced the court historian and educational reformer, Ahmad Allah Khan Karimi. Karimi was part of a group of writers in Afghanistan who in the 1930s and 40s were supported by the Musahiban regime (Nadir Khan's dynasty) to explore

[413] Gauri Viswanathan, *Outside the Fold: Conversion, Modernity, and Belief* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001), 186.
[414] Fofolzay, "Das afghanische Schulwesen," 33.

Afghanistan's pre-Islamic and ancient history. He copiously wrote for the monarch's ruling family and belonged to the newly minted *Anjuman-i Tarikh-i Afghanistan* (Afghan Historical Society), founded in 1942.[415] Karimi and his contemporaries were part of a new cultural current, drawing from ancient Indian, Iranian, and Greek influences that had passed through Afghanistan as a way to search for a deeper Aryan literary and artistic national culture. Robert Crews has pointed out that in some ways this reflected Afghanistan's desire not to be overshadowed by its Iranian neighbor.[416]

Such endeavors were also reflected in the French excavations of Buddhist artifacts. I have described earlier that nominally the Afghan Ministry was in charge of evaluating these artifacts before they were displayed at the Kabul Museum. Institutionally, the Ministry of Education played an important role in funding various intellectual associations and printing their publications. These included the *Anjuman-i Adabi-yi Afghanistan* (Afghan Literary Society) in 1931, which had the goal to "study and clarify Afghan historical heritage."[417] Whereas before history-writing was a courtly practice, with the onset of such associations historiography turned into a professional career.

Fofolzay reinterpreted the intellectual milieu of 1930s Afghanistan to contextualize and understand a German plan. The experience of having to accommodate German educational techniques to Afghan needs also echoed the same sort of intellectual carefulness and rendering that I have described with the establishment of the *Maktab-i Amani*, but with other knowledge-migrants such as Brishna. Fofolzay's vision was realized by drawing equally upon 1930s Afghan intellectuals and the curriculum by which the *Maktab-i Amani* was managed, fitting the ideas

[415] Following Hashim Khan's retirement in 1946, Karimi drafted up a constitution for Afghanistan. Ahmad Allah Khan Karīmi, "The Constitution of Afghanistan," in *Afghanistan* 1, no. 1 (1946): 3-8.
[416] Robert D. Crews, *Afghan Modern: The History of a Global Nation* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2015), 162.
[417] Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan*, 348.

into his own cultural context rather than merely identifying them as western knowledge and appropriating them to their finest detail. It was through such efforts that we can see Fofolzay interestingly comparing his own efforts as a reformer with that of the Ottoman and Japanese appropriation of Western knowledge, since both nations selectively employed it through a process of transmission, negotiation, and reformulation. Fofolzay was therefore self-aware in his own active engagement with German ideas, though not in an especially nationalist or anti-imperialist way.

The Application of German Ideas in Practical Terms

It was with the above-discussed dissertation that Fofolzay returned to Afghanistan, where he immediately assumed the role of director of the *Maktab-i Nijat*. He remained at this post until 1946 when he assumed the role of director of Education, Psychology, and Pedagogy at the Teachers Training College (1946-49) in Kabul, and finally Director-General of Education (1949-51). Eventually, he became Minister of Education for the state, serving from 1955-63, but finished his career as an ambassador to Bonn (1964-66), and during these professional appointments also committed himself to a life-long intellectual endeavor of tracing the international development of educational patterns across the globe.[418] While in Bonn, he wrote to the *Institut für Politische Wissenschaft* in Aachen (Germany), which was a post-WWII educational project funded by the US with the goal to quickly rebuilt Aachen's prominence as an important Germany educational center. In particular, he seemed to be interested in inquiring about the working methods ("die Arbeitsmethode des Institutes"), and sent them his own

[418] Ludwig Adamec noted that as he visited the US, Asia, Europe, and published a number of accounts and articles that were in turn widely read in Turkey and Afghanistan; see Ludwig Adamec, *A Biographical Dictionary of Contemporary Afghanistan* (Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt, 1987).

publications.[419] The correspondence with this institute yielded a paper entitled "Maᶜarif dar Gharb-i Alman," which surveyed, or rather reflected on, the pre-war development of education in war-torn West Germany.[420] It is not clear why and when he changed his last name from Fofolzay to Popal, but his later publication appeared under that name.

Much in line with his dissertation, he was contemplating the interconnection of educational reforms with Germany, but applying these considerations to what can be learned in the Afghan educational context. On the surface his article looks aligned to his German dissertation, with the visible difference that the article was written in Persian. But whereas the dissertation surveyed, along Jena lines, the implementation of elementary, secondary and vocational schools, hygiene, cinema, and youth groups with a quasi-nationalist character, this later work shows us how Fofolzay subsequently put his ideas into practice, and what other influences he had since taken in (more on this momentarily). His understanding of the earlier period, in fact, seemed to blend the German and Afghan experiences of nation-building, seemingly shifting between "Afghan" and "German" interchangeably. His main argument was that, as a result of the Second World War, German education had been restored to pre-WWI conditions, and had lost is centrality and unity (*yaganagi*),[421] and it was now up to West Germany to utilize the international support on offer and weave the teacher, the books, and the child back into an interconnected chain of knowledge transfer.[422]

What is important to keep in mind about his later article (written in 1971) was that he was now writing exactly thirty years after the completion of his dissertation on the same topic, but no

[419] Thanks to archivist Peter Bohl at the Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg for electronically sending me this exchange: LBD: Q 1/30 Bü 881, "Korrespondenz mit diplomatischen Vertretungen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland im Ausland sowie mit ausländischen diplomatischen Vertretungen, überwiegend in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland A-K," 1965-1966.
[420] ᶜAli Ahmad Popal, "Maᶜārif dar Gharb-i Almān," *Ministry of Education Newsletter* (1971).
[421] *Ibid*., 8.
[422] *Ibid*., 17.

longer approaching the topic as a doctoral student, but as a professional with experience. As a doctor of philosophy, reformer, and historian he had been actively working in the professional field of education, and ample opportunity to test his theories and ideas. In other words, he now possessed more practical experience and knowledge than when he was writing his 1941 "Das afghanische Schulwesen der Gegenwart: Darstellung und Reformvorschläge."

The philosophy that undergirded his 1971 proposal was certainly influenced by some Jena ideas (i.e., the connection of the child to other phenomena that he called *Kette* or his support for an absolute state of pedagogy), but at the center of his discussion was now "pragmatism," as developed by Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, and John Dewey. It must be stressed that although Popal was using the term in the manner that especially Dewey engaged with, Popal did not cite or reference Dewey or the other scholars. Pragmatism was, of course, a view that rejected the dualistic epistemology and metaphysics of modern philosophy (and often posited Dewey in opposition to Hegel's absolute spirit) and proposed an approach that viewed knowledge as arising from human adaption to his/her environment.[423]

Most recently, Marwa Elshakry has shown that many Arab thinkers emphasized rationalism and pragmatism to reconcile modern scientific knowledge with religious text while also shedding light on the contentious relationship between science and Western religions.[424] However, unlike prominent Muslim thinkers, such as ᶜAbduh, or even Fofolzay's earlier writing, pragmatism or *Falsafa-i Tarbiyat-i Aslaat-i 'Amal*, as Popal called it, was employed in slightly different context. He was less concerned with the role of religion, but instead employed pragmatisms to delineate an educational philosophy that developing states adopted (again using Afghanistan and Germany interchangeably) for the practical task of "develop[ing] and train[ing]

[423] James Livingston, *Pragmatism and the Political Economy of Cultural Evolution* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 191.
[424] Elshakry, *Reading Darwin in Arabic,* 165-173.

the minds of the students," ("*ma^{c}arif va tarbiyat-i hamana ankishaf bakhshidan va tarbiyat-i afkar-i shagirdan hast"*).[425] At the center was still the child ("*von Kinde aus*"), which he advocated must be viewed for his/her unique qualities and that these qualities needed to be praised and teaching needed to be adjusted to each of these varied qualities.[426] However, the main shift away from his dissertation was that he was moving away from *Volk* and *Volkgemeinschaft* as it was employed by his Jena-circle, but considered Volk in the context and relevance of the economy. In other words, the *Volk*, the child's mind, and the practical task of pedagogy (*Ta^{c}lim va Tarbiya*) were still important to Popal, but these spheres needed to have a specific function, namely that they needed to be made relevant for both the German and Afghan economies. The intimate link between education and economic development, to Fofolzay, was the new medium through which education should be discussed.

He tied the economic well-being of the state and the child's mind to the framework of pragmatism, because the child's growth meant the growth of the economy (*ankhishaf-i iqitsadi*).[427] In his use of the concept, he advocated an educational system that adopted practical measures to raise well-trained individuals who could be employed in forestry, mining, construction, wood, leather and clothing, chemistry, health services, design (*tadbir-i mansil*), and other industrial needs (*sana^{c}ti*).

Popal's writing may on the surface show the shifting winds towards American modernism, but given that he wrote chronologically so close to the 1979 Soviet invasion raises questions as to what extent Popal's reading of pragmatism could reflected a Marxist inception in Afghanistan. As I have noted, Popal did not really mention Dewey by name, but merely

[425] Popal, "Ma^{c}ārif dar Gharb-i Almān," 1.
[426] *Ibid*., 4-5.
[427] *Ibid*., 3.

suggested that he was borrowing the term from an American experimentation with educational curriculum. It seems entirely plausible that Popal may have been drawing from Dewey's former graduate student, Sidney Hook (1901-1989), who unlike his mentor made the term compatible with Marxism. In fact, Hook believed that these two ideological currents had emanated from a common stream. Drawing on Marx's famous declaration in the *Theses of Feuerbach* that any dispute over truth "is not a question of theory but a *practical* question," Hook argued Marxism had the same intellectual implications as the experimental method of inquiry defended by American pragmatists since Charles Pierce and John Dewey.[428]

This is an important point to raise because the arrival of Marxism is typically seen as a phenomena imposed by European powers onto Afghan circles, rather than a home-grown phenomena reworked by Afghans themselves. Popal's 1971 writing was inevitably shaped by the political and social ideologies of the Cold War. Afghans dealt with the Cold War through a same duality is reflected also in Popal's article: This was, after all, a period in which Afghan students were trained in both Soviet Russia and in the US, and in which American buildings were erected while guns were purchased from Soviet Russia.

The examination of Fofolzay's (Popal's) life has helped show the transculturality and flexibility by which ideas formed at different stages among Afghan scholars. What this chapter has attempted to do is problematize the notion of having a center (i.e., Jena) and periphery (Kabul), and show that knowledge-migrants and the institutions they visited were often much more connected intellectually to one another and to other ideological currents than might first appear. Fofolzay's dissertation may therefore be situated within a history of the training of a new generation of Afghan reformers, historians, and philosophers who hoped to function politically in

[428] Christopher Phelps, "Foreword to the Morningside Edition of *From Hegel to Marx*," in *From Hegel to Marx: Studies in the Intellectual Development of Karl Marx* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), xi.

a much more interconnected world, and he – like his earlier peers – was invested in the interpretation and transformation of ideas.

Chapter Four: Circulation and Research in Transcultural Spaces: The Scientist as a Traveler, 1919-1945

Introduction

In May of 1924 Gustav Stratil-Sauer (1894-1975), a professor at the Institute of Geography at the University of Leipzig, began his yearlong motorcycle journey from Leipzig to Kabul. He had been inspired by the travel accounts that his former professor, then privy-councilor Geheimrat Bolz had lectured on after he had returned from Sumatra. Bolz's lecture had spoken about his encounters with mystical mazes, vibrant colors, and a showdown between a man and a Bengal tiger ("*ein Kampf zwischen Urmensch und dem Königstiger*.")[429] In hopes of finding similar imaginative and Orientalizing encounters, Stratil-Sauer ventured forth via Turkey, thence into Iran, and finally into Afghanistan. En route to Kabul, the hapless geographer found himself in disagreement with local Afghans, which resulted in him accidentally killing an Afghan tribal member. Although he quickly fled the scene, by the time he arrived at the German legation in Kabul, the Afghan police already had a warrant out for his arrest.[430] Luckily for Stratil-Sauer, the German Foreign Office and the Afghan sovereign, King Aman Allah, managed to get the researcher safely deported back to Germany. The geographer's excursions resulted in a few sensationalized publications about Afghanistan and the Iranian city of Mashhad, but his career ended when he was caught embezzling money from the University of Leipzig.[431]

As I have discussed in the first chapter, Afghan-German state involvement in regulating the presence of foreigners in Afghanistan suggested that German knowledge-migrants were actively participating in Afghan culture and society to the extent that their everyday interactions

[429] Gustav Stratil-Sauer, *Fahrt und Fessel: Mit dem Motorrad von Leipzig nach Afghanistan* (Berlin: August Scherl, 1927), 11.
[430] Grobba, *Männer und Mächte,* 27; and UL: Rep. 01/03/070: "Akten, Angelegenheiten gegen Stratil-Sauer in Afghanistan, 1925."
[431] UL: RA 2066: Blatt 1-102, "Assistent Dr. Stratil-Sauer beim Geograph. Seminar-Unregelmäßigkeiten bei Verwaltung von Seminargeldern, 1931-1938."

– and more so intimate ones as well – needed to be addressed legally and centrally by the Afghan government in Kabul. Different kinds of Afghans and Germans travelled between Afghanistan and Germany, including merchants, teachers, and technocrats. Most importantly for the purposes of this chapter, academics and explorers arrived with different research priorities and scientific methods, suggesting that not all knowledge-migrants were following the mission of furthering the neo-colonial goals of the German Foreign Office. This is especially important in light of the fact that they were all employed by the Foreign Office. That means also (quite luckily for us) that our analysis is not limited to the kinds of popularized accounts produced by the likes of Gustav Stratil-Sauer, for whom his subject of analysis was a means of exploiting the basic curiosity of a less-informed German audience to his own profit.

To highlight heterogeneous encounters that made up the intellectual fabric of Afghan-German exchange, this chapter examines the scientific practices that were developed, exchanged, and negotiated between one particular German scientist, Emil Trinkler (1896 – 1931), and the Afghan elements (i.e., actors and Persian sources) that undergird his intellectual network. Trinkler was a German geographer and geologist who worked for the *Deutsch-Afghanische Compagnie, A.G.*, the trading company discussed in chapter one. With financial support from the German Foreign Office, the firm provided Trinkler with equipment, local Afghan guides, connections to the Afghan state, and (most importantly for the purpose of this chapter) written sources and maps. Thus equipped Trinkler needed to maintain a steady flow of resources in order to successfully traverse by foot from Afghanistan's eastern border (modern day Turkmenistan) to its western edge. From 1923 to 1924 he took this route to survey the country for its iron and coal deposits, especially along the northern parts of the Hindu Kush region, and for oil reserves along the western part of the country.[432]

[432] Dr. Alema, *Die Beziehungen zwischen Afghanistan und Deutschland in den Jahren 1919 bis 1929*, 62.

Unlike the long line of previous German cartographers and geographers, who were employed in the services of the British East India Company and subsequently under the British Raj for surveying the same region, Trinkler's resultant oeuvre was primarily intended to be used for keeping the doors open for the involvement of the German Foreign Office (and its associated firms like DACOM) in Afghanistan. In other words, the knowledge that Trinkler produced may have still been in conversation (or rather competition) with British sources on the region, but it was intended for Germany's own interwar geopolitical aims. To accomplish his task, Trinkler had to develop methods to work closely with the Afghan state, which meant having access to a network of Afghan guides and a small yet significant corpus of state-produced agricultural, cartographic, and geomorphic reports. By learning how to adjust his research methods and his corporal habits to those promoted by his local guides, he in turn created an opportunity to develop a convincing voice about the region. Indeed, he highlighted his own adaptability as part of his claim to authoritative knowledge.

This chapter examines Trinkler's expedition to Afghanistan, reading it through his own engagement with different modes of scientific knowledge about Afghanistan. The main aim of this chapter is to consider how different modes of ethnographic and scientific knowledge interacted, overlapped, and diverged. I argue that by treating Trinkler's practices as a historical text, one can begin to tease out the material and social network involved in generating more holistic knowledge about German ethnographic research on Afghanistan.

Unlike the previous chapters, which for lack of available source materials, relied on the interplay of state and non-state archival sources, this chapter is unique in that it is predominately built on different genres of archival materials produced by Emil Trinkler himself. His work about Afghanistan is not read for the validity of his claims, but rather to help shed light on *processes* that reveal overlapping and diverging systems of knowledge production. The first set of

Trinkler's work to be examined is his ethnographic account entitled *Quer durch Afghanistan nach Indien*" (*Through the Heart of Afghanistan*), an account published immediately after his expedition in 1925. Trinkler's ethnography is perhaps the most important source to give a glimpse into his research practices, the path he selected to traverse, the process of collecting field notes, the resources used, and the role of his guides in facilitating his expedition.

Unlike modern assumptions that intertwine ethnography and scientific fields such as geography and anthropology, Trinkler drew a separate conceptual line between his "loose diaries" (referring to his ethnography), and his subsequent "scientific" publications. This chapter reads his first set of accounts in conversation with the second set, which will be the sources that Trinkler delineated as "scientific" publications and included his publication entitled *Afghanistan: eine landeskundliche Studie: auf Grund des vorhandenen Materials und eigener Beobachtung* (*Afghanistan: A Geographic Study of the Country, based on the Existing Material and Own Observations*). In addition to this study, other "scientific" essays were published through the *Geographischen Gesellschaft in München* (Geographical Institute of Munich), all of which were constructed from the same year-long journey across northern Afghanistan and based on the "loose pages" of his ethnography. The scientific publications involve less analysis of "Land und Leute" (people and country) than geomorphological measurements of mountain peaks. It is these specific kinds of sources that this chapter will read for their wider social and intellectual connections to British and Persian cartographies.

Lastly, the chapter will refer to Trinkler's miscellaneous source materials, which will include his hand-drawn maps and aquarelles, and I will also consult a set of letter exchanges between Trinkler and his mentor, Sven Hedin (1865 – 1952). Hedin was a Swedish Asia explorer and geographer, whose published popular travelogues Trinkler read at an early age. His research

was widely concerned with river basins each of them he connected in its entirely from the Ottoman Empire (later Turkey) across to Japan.[433]

After a brief consideration of the historiography and methodology, the chapter is organized in two sections. The first section interweaves archival research with a contextual background that situates Trinkler's expedition in the relation to earlier cartographic practices in Afghanistan (done both by Afghans and Europeans). To that end, I will offer an overview of the cartographic practices depicting Afghanistan's boundaries, with a particular interest in analyzing the 1898 map, entitled "Proclamation of ᶜAbd al-Rahman Khan," to point towards a possibly deeper sociocultural, historical, and political conceptualization through which early Afghan rulers viewed their territories. After a brief overview of these cartographic traditions, I will analyze Trinkler's prior theoretical training in anthropology and ethnography at two formative institutions, the Ludwig-Maximilians-University of Munich and the University of Hamburg. By contextualizing the institutions that shaped Trinkler during his student years, the chapter aims at understanding the relationship between his earlier training in anthropology, the role of the two institutions, with the nature of his knowledge.

The section is built on a close reading of Trinkler's work to give clues about possible intersections with other modes of knowledge. In particular, I draw attention to the ambiguous manner in which Trinkler engaged with his local guides, and also his engagement with contemporary Persian cartographic texts. By reading Trinkler's writing for clues it gives about other local forms of knowledge and practices, the chapter engages in some way with the problem posed in the introduction, i.e., what methods allow us to work with copious European sources, and how much we can extract about indigenous actors and their voices by using these sources.

[433] For a selective choice of his writings, see: Sven Hedin, *Trans-Himalaya: Discoveries and Adventures in Tibet* (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1904); idem., *Scientific Results of a Journey in Central Asia 1899-1902: Racial Types of Western and Central Asia* (Stockholm: Lithographic Inst. of the General Staff of the Swedish Army, 1904).

Historiography and Methodology

The field of anthropology emerged in the late nineteenth century in Europe, and more recent scholars have explored the field's close connection to European imperialism.[434] This has been especially relevant for the development of anthropology in Germany, which has been linked to the desire to establish imperial legitimacy by employing racial-anthropological theories later to be exploited by the Nazis.[435] Among these studies has been the attempt to show a somewhat *irregular* development of the German sciences, and more recently Andrew Zimmermann has argued that "it was above all in Germany that [anthropology] functioned as a antihumanist worldview, and it was in Germany that this anthropological antihumanism had some of its most important far-fetching effects."[436] Zimmerman showed the importance of the field as a German national discipline with roots in the popular culture but also studied German anthropology's encounter with a nascent global culture. His work reminds us of two important caveats. First, an overemphasis on Germany's imperial path could flatten out important variations in the development of anthropology in Germany especially at regional ethnographic centers. Secondly, studying well-known elite characters and their roles in developing Germany's imperial society ignores marginal actors, for whom anthropology was less a national project and more tied to Germany's regional inclinations. As Glenn Penny's work has shown, many middle-tiered ethnographers in the German provinces struggled to legitimize or secure funding for their centers, and to these ends, their efforts, exhibitions, and intellectual practices were not as much

[434] John H. Zammito, *Kant, Herder, and the Birth of Anthropology* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2002); and Helen L. Tilley, *Ordering Africa: Anthropology, European Imperialism and the Politics of Knowledge* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011).
[435] Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wippermann, eds., *The Racial State: Germany, 1933-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 23 – 28.
[436] Andrew Zimmerman, *Anthropology and Antihumanism in Imperial Germany* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 1.

part of a uniform German nationalist or colonial discourse as they were tailored to specific regional agendas.[437]

This chapter draws from Zimmerman, Penny, and the recent work of a cluster of German historians who authored *Von Käfern, Märkten und Menschen: Kolonialismus und Wissen in der Moderne*, to examine on the one hand a less-well known and less-studied German anthropologist (i.e., Emil Trinkler) and his "provincial" circle of ethnographers. The assumption of provincialism came despite Trinkler being a German state employee, whose one-year employment was aimed to strengthen the state's political, economic, and cultural position in Afghanistan and neighboring regions.[438] Trinkler is a unique case study because he was both a less-well known ethnographer, yet like his famous counterparts (i.e., the towering figures of Adolf Bastian and Rudolf Virchow) was just as important to the wider neo-colonial agenda of the German state.

Trinkler may have had access to resources supported by the German Foreign Office and DACOM, but in practice his research in the field reflected a mobile and collaborative scientific network that was in constant flux and required negotiation on his part. In other words, he was dependent on the relationships he developed and the resources he found over the course of his one-year long fieldwork. By arguing that Trinkler's research practices were fluid and depended on everyday forms of exchange and negotiation, I show that ethnographic and geomorphic knowledge about Afghanistan could only emerge when Trinkler learned to maintain steady relations with his contacts and to allow himself to be shaped by local modes of knowledge.

In the introductory chapter, I proposed the framework of "webs of empire" to study knowledge-migrants and in no other chapter is the spatiality of this framework better tested than

[437] Glenn Penny, *Objects of Culture: Ethnology and Ethnographic Museums in Imperial Germany* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010).
[438] Rebekka Habermas and Alexandra Przyrembel, eds., *Von Käfern, Märkten und Menschen: Kolonialismus und Wissen in der Moderne* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013).

in this particular one. And in the previous chapter I showed that production of knowledge occurred among knowledge-migrants at various nodal points, hence, the "webs of empire" framework was employed as an analytic concept that helped connect and bridge a wide-spread intellectual and social webs. This chapter deals with a smaller physical space that spans from Afghanistan's western border in Kushka to its eastern border of Peshawar. Trinkler's practices, which he developed with help from his Afghan guides and Afghan sources, are examined for their mutability to new social settings.

The use of "space" as an analytic framework does not equate to finite or predefined territorial traits designed merely to enhance German neo-political policies. Rather, by asking how different sources conceptualized space, what practices were involved, and how different modalities interacted (i.e., that of Trinkler's and that of the Afghans), this chapter aims to disrupt rigid meanings of space. Amy Mills and Timur Hammond recently reminded us that spaces are not ontological subjects that are static objects of analysis, but ontogenetic "as unfolding and changing - produced through ongoing social processes."[439]

Section I

Earliest Forms of Map-Making in and about Afghanistan:

Space as an analytic framework features little in Afghan historiography. As the field is still developing, however, we can see the ever-changing nature of space. This is reflected in the flexibility by which these territories were delineated by Afghan rulers themselves. In one particular case, a map was produced by an Afghan Amir, ᶜAbd al-Rahman Khan (r. 1880-1901), who is typically associated with accepting the terms stipulated by the British and Russian

[439] Timur Hammond and Amy Mills, "The Interdisciplinary Spatial Turn and the Discipline of Geography in Middle East Studies," in *Middle East Studies for the New Millennium: Infrastructures of Knowledge*, eds. Seteney Khalid Shami and Cynthia Miller-Idriss (New York: New York University Press, 2017), 153.

Empires and therefore the territorial integrity stipulated by the latter powers. Colonial cartographies depicted Afghanistan through the framework of the Great Game, which positioned the country as a kind of buffer-state separating British and Russian spheres of influence.

The Amir's rule began roughly around the time as the conclusion of the Second Anglo-Afghan war and was preceded by the rule of Afghan Amir, Yaqub Khan (r. Feb. - Oct. 1879). With the ratification of the Treaty of Gandamak in 1879, the British government hoped to establish peace and friendship with Yaqub Khan. When the British suspected the latter of conspiracy, he was driven out, and both the British and Russian Empires instated Yaqub Khan's cousin, ᶜAbd al-Rahman Khan as the new ruler. The imperial powers believed that he could be trusted to keep his territory as a "buffer state," which meant keeping peaceful relations along the North-West Frontier Provinces and controlling a territory that did not extent much beyond Qandahar and Kabul.

Given their desire to help him consolidate control and maintain his power over the above-mentioned territories, ᶜAbd al-Rahman Khan received a significant amount of economic assistance in the form of subsidies from British India. Recently scholars have revisited his rule, especially in the context of the undefined nature of Anglo-Afghan relations after the Second Anglo-Afghan war. Francesca Fuoli's excellent study engaged with existing approaches by proposing a reconsideration of ᶜAbd al-Rahman Khan's role in the process of the Afghan Boundary Commission (1884 - 1887). Normally perceived as uninvolved and passive, the Afghan Boundary Commission (hereafter ABC) has been viewed as a joint attempt involving merely the British and Russian powers to devise the northern border of Afghanistan. Fuoli argued that the Amir recognized British agenda of using "boundary marking ...[as] occasion for increasing British interference in Afghan affairs." She showed that the Amir responded to ABC by changing the administrative organization of his rule, appointing new figures, and assigning

new responsibilities to administrators already in place. In the process he managed to expand his territory over new regions (Fuoli's case study involved the Amir's position and rule in Maimana in northwestern Afghanistan).[440]

Fuoli, who read mostly British state sources, would have found the use of the 1898 Afghan state-map supportive of her argument. Although initially unpublished, the map was entitled *Fīrmān-i ᶜAbd al-Rahman Khan* ("The Proclamation of ᶜAbd al-Rahman Khan"), and was drafted to introduce his constituents to their immediate surroundings.[441] From David Edwards's book we know that the Amir had many pamphlets published as a way to both lecture and discipline his constituents.[442] Originally produced on a large canvas and later reprinted in the Lord Curzon's diary and travel memoir (Viceroy of India), Edwards believed that the proclamation to have been read out loud at bazaars and mosques of major principal towns and posted in villages.

[440] Francesca Fuoli, "Incorporating North-Western Afghanistan into the British Empire: Experiments in Indirect Rule through the Making of an Imperial Frontier, 1884-87," *Afghanistan* 1, no. 1 (2018): 4-25.
[441] ᶜAbd al-Raḥmān Khān, "Fīrmān-i ᶜAbd al-Raḥmān Khān," *Afghanistan Digital Library,* 1316 (1898); http://afghanistandl.nyu.edu/search/?start=0&sort=title.sort&q=map+of+afghanistan.
[442] David Edwards, *Heroes of Age: Moral Fault Lines on the Afghan Frontier* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 78-88.

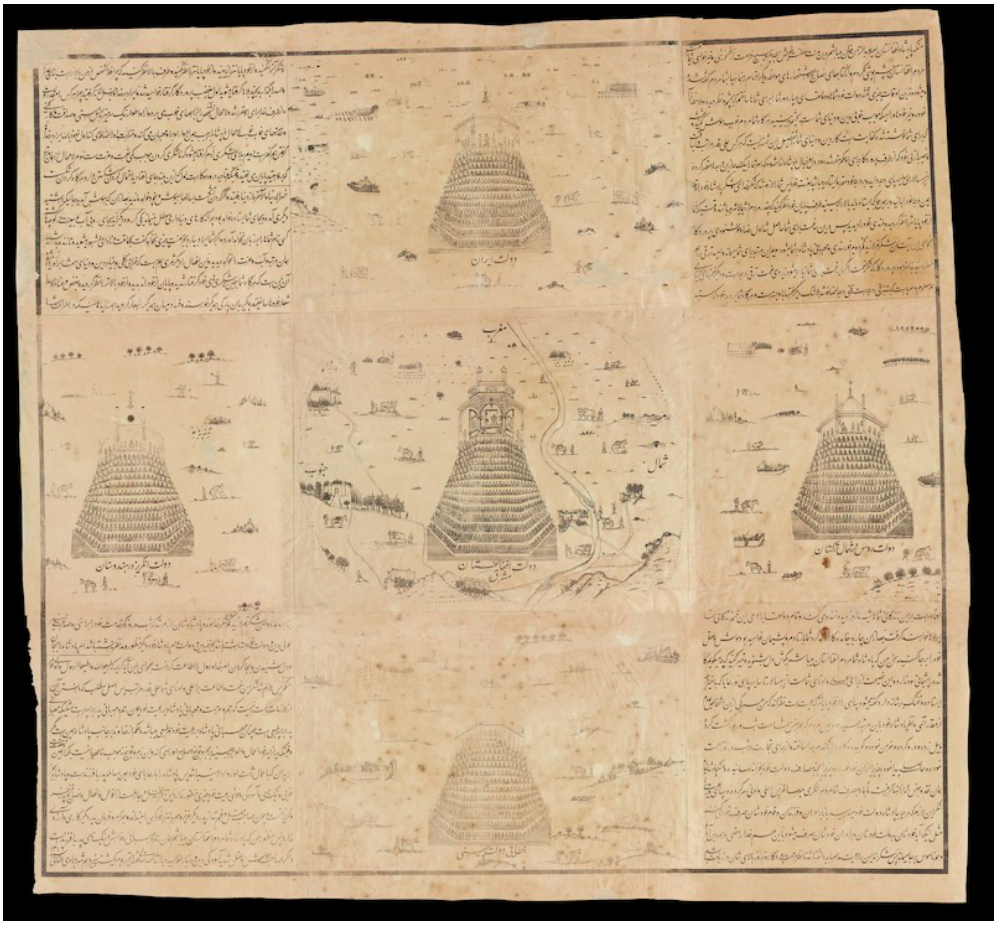

Figure 5.1: "Fīrmān-i ᶜAbd al-Raḥmān Khān," 1898.
Source: *Afghanistan Digital Library*.

Rather than being an actual representation of scale, the map is a compilation of schematic diagrams of the four neighboring states surrounding Afghanistan, with four large textual sections at the outer corners of the map. At the center of the map is a depiction of the Afghan state labeled as *Dawlat-i Afghanistan.* To the right of Afghanistan is a diagram of the country's northern neighbor, i.e.,the state of Russia east of Turkestan (*Dawlat-i Russ dar sharq-i Turkestan*) with a large river, presumably the Panj River, acting as a dividing border between Afghanistan and Russia. Above Afghanistan is a representation of its western neighbor Iran (Dawlat-i Iran), while left of Afghanistan is British India *(Dawlat-i Angristan dar Hindustan*)

demarcated as its southern neighbor. Lastly, below Afghanistan is its eastern neighbor, China (*Khitai Dawlat-i Chini*).[443]

With one important visual difference, which I shall discuss below, for the most part all the governments are depicted analogously. For instance, every government is symbolized in a pyramidal hierarchy: at the top of the strata is a small group of people, presumably the ruling class. It is clear that they are rulers, because each *dawlat* has only one person sitting on the throne. With the exception of the Afghan Amir, who is portrayed solely occupying the entire first strata, while standing beside each of the other rulers are advisors positioned on the same level. Below the ruling/advising class, each *dawlat* features three to four rows of court members (seated either on chairs or on the floor). Approximately around the middle of the strata begins the military class (occupying the last four or five rows) with the majority of them holding rifles or musket with fixed bayonets.

Early modern European maps exhibited an interest in providing an ethnographic view onto the places they represented and often depicted people and countryside through their unique customs and traditions.[444] In ᶜAbd al-Rahman Khan's proclamation the map does not reveal an explicit interest in the depictions of actual scale and furthermore transcends rigid nationalist, ethnic, or religious demarcations. Laymen across around each diagram have no visual differences among themselves, suggesting that the Amir was not concerned with ruling a territory separated by ethnic, national, or religious markers. To the Amir, the only marker differentiating his power vis-à-vis his four contemporaries is that he viewed his government as one ruled by an absolute and divine-mandated right. Laymen, who are portrayed with no visible physical differences from

[443] It is not entirely clear why China is referred to in this way. The term *Khitaī* is a Mongolian name that resonates with the early Chinese kingdom (the Khitai) that the Mongols subsequently conquered. It is plausible that the term was adopted from Dungan Chinese (Muslim Chinese) who had fled to Afghanistan since the 19th century.

[444] Laura Hostetler, *Qing Colonial Enterprise: Ethnography and Cartography in Early Modern China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 12-13.

each other, are not displayed as part of the hierarchy, but arbitrarily scattered around the diagrams of each five governments. They are depicted either with their animals (a horse, cow, or donkey), plowing, or carrying wheat.

From the opening sentences of the speech we learn that the purpose of this map was to help visualize and be mindful (*hoosh konnet*) of the organization of the Afghan state in relation to its neighboring régimes. In his speech the Amir further connected the production of this map to a divine-inspired desire to assign each member of the court with set positions determined by the king ("*parwardigar baray-i u hokum muqarrar shoda va dil va khial-i padshah andachta*"). The majority of the text involves a shifting tone between outlining the merciful nature of the Amir (*mehrabani padshah*), and the dangers that his constituents could face if they neglected their duties and exhibited ungrateful tendencies (*nashokri*). The text concludes with a reminder that it was in the Amir's trust to collect taxes in the form of surplus (*hasil*) reaped from farmers and merchants (presumably referring to the laymen depicted around the governments), which he planned on spending for the military.

Recent scholars have developed new interpretative approaches to the history of Islamic cartography.[445] Taking lead from these scholars, the importance of ᶜAbd al-Rahman Khan's map takes several forms. The first importance is in the spatial equality in which the Afghan state is portrayed vis-à-vis its neighbors. From the identical sizes of each five diagrams, the viewer would presume that the Afghan state was not functioning as a buffer state but as an equally sovereign territory. This is especially striking given that India, which was under direct British rule, has been been giving the exact definition: *Dawlat-i Angristan dar Hindustan* (the English government in India). Here in the map the Afghan ruler claimed sovereignty and aspired to a larger territory than had been stipulated by Anglo-Russian treaties.

[445] Karen C. Pinto. *Medieval Islamic Maps: An Exploration* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2016), 5.

Secondly, and perhaps to appease British-Russian stipulations, the Amir accepted the Panj River as a demarcation of the Russo-Afghan border. The region of Badaskhan, which had nominally been ruled under autonomous Ismaili Uzbeks, had by 1859 became a tributary to Kabul. The British-Russian Accord of 1895 separated the provinces of Badakhshan along this river into an Afghan Badakhshan and a Russian Badakhshan. By adopting the Panj River as a defining marker for the Russo-Afghan border, the Amir was both recognizing the Anglo-Russian agreement, yet also envisioning his own rule and expansion to exceed well beyond Kabul and Qandahar into parts of Badakhshan.

Quite in line with most Asian maps in its time and before, there is an emphasis on a large amount of text and pictures/figures. It is worth pursuing a comparative analysis of different kinds of map styles that were generated during this period and among subsequent Afghan rulers, which reflect different scientific methods and epistemologies. Also important is the need to further examine if, and how, cartographic representations transitioned from a state-produced activity to one produced by the intellectual elites at the *Anjuman-i Adabi-yi Afghanistan* or *Anjuman-i Tarikh-i Afghanistan*.

European Maps of Afghanistan

The period from 1850 to 1940 saw a surge in European travelers, who took advantage of new modes of travel, especially through new networks of rail and steamship.[446] In Afghanistan, these earliest cartographic practices among British and Russian explorer emerged in the context of the "Great Game." The Imperial Russian Geographical Society at St. Petersburg relied especially on the Russian explorers Nikolaj Severcov (1827 – 1885) and Ivan Mushketov (1850 – 1902), whose maps Trinkler himself used. The British maps were generated for the purpose of

[446] For an overview of the different periods in which Europeans travelled to Central Asia, see Nile Green, ed., *Writing Travel in Central Asian History* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2016).

the central engineering agency responsible for mapping, surveying, and consolidating new territories of the British East Indian Company. This agency was called the *Survey of India* (f. 1767). From the *Records of the Geological Survey of India* (1868 -1887), it is clear that Afghanistan as a subject of the survey was woven into the study of India, with a particular interest in mapping its coal, lapis lazuli, and other mineral deposits.[447]

Little is known about Russian practices of producing maps prior to the Cold War,[448] but what is clear from recent studies is that the *Survey*'s expeditions were led by British lieutenants, who in turn hired Germans and European Jesuits to map the territories. This put Germans and Jesuits in touch with locals. For instance, Thomas George Montgomerie, a lieutenant of the Great Trigonometrical Survey of India, led three British expeditions between 1868 and 1875. Kapil Raj studied these expeditions and showed that he relied heavily on local agents, mostly Indians to collected data about the northeastern part of Afghanistan.[449] Some of Montgomerie's findings were later published in the *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*.[450]

The first known German explorer hired by the East India Company in 1783 was Georg Forster (1757-1794), a naturalist and ethnographer. His two-volume *Journey from Bengal to England through the Northern part of India, Kashmire, Afghanistan, and Persia, and into Russia by the Caspian Sea* was the result of his journey through the places listed in his title. Yet, this was not the first expedition he had conducted for the Company; he had previously accompanied James Cook in his voyage in the Pacific. Forster's account was important for many reasons: He is

[447] Geological Survey of India, *Content and Index of the First Thirty Volumes of the Records of the Geological Survey of India, 1868-1897* (Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, 1890).
[448] An excellent exception is Nunan, *Humanitarian Invasion*, 2016.
[449] Kapil Raj, *Relocating Modern Science: Circulation and the Construction of Knowledge in South Asia and Europe, 1650 – 1900* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 188.
[450] T.G. Montgomerie, "Reports of "The Mirza" Exploration from Caubul to Kashgar, *The Royal Geographical Society of London*, 41 (1871).

typically credited for inciting a political revolution in Mainz, but more importantly his translations made unfamiliar places available to a German-speaking audience.[451]

Not until the arrival of Trinkler did Germans begin to produce maps about Afghanistan for their own geopolitical aims. Until then, when German academics and institutions produced cartographic or ethnographic essays about Afghanistan, it was either for the British East India Company, as was the case with Georg Forster, or as translation of British accounts. For instance, in 1891 the Geographic Institute in Weimar published an account entitled *Afghanistan in seiner Bedeutung für den Völkerverkehr: mit besonderer Berücksichtigung englischer und russischer Quellen dargestellt* (*Afghanistan's Importance in the Cultural Exchange: with a Particular Consideration for English and Russian Sources*), in which its author Albrecht Harnisch, relied mainly on Russian and English sources. It was due to such reliance that Harnish's account was mostly limited to reproducing the course of the two Anglo-Afghan wars (1839-1842; 1878-1880). The close interconnectivity between German travelers and British sources continued well into 1921, even though by this point a significant number of German diplomats had already travelled to Afghanistan. For reasons unknown, Trinkler's most important acquaintances, Oskar von Niedermayer (1885-1948), published under the pen name of Hajji Mirza Hussein his own English travel account, entitled "Every-day life in Afghanistan."[452] While the images and text belong to him, the maps produced in his account belong to the work of others, such as the explorer and cartographer, Albert Hoit Bumstead (1875-1940).

Whereas before 1923 Germans produced maps through British employment or by reproducing British maps, Trinkler engaged with British maps as way of correcting or

[451] Jürgen Goldstein, *Georg Forster: Voyager, Naturalist, Revolutionary* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019).
[452] Haji Mirza Hussein, "Every-day Life in Afghanistan," *The National Geographic Magazine*, 1921.

supplementing these accounts.[453] He even travelled to the Royal Geographical Society headquarters in London, where he researched these British sources.[454] Trinkler later departed from these maps, by entering territories demarcated by British sources as "unsurveyed territory," and he filled in the information by drawing on Afghan sources. Before turning to his research method, the next part examines Trinkler's matriculation records and extrapolating from these records further insight into his professors and how his educational background may have informed his later fieldwork and scientific research about Afghanistan.

Section II

The Twentieth Century "Provincial" Intellectual Circle of Munich

Emil Trinkler was born in 1896 in Bremen to a family that owned a small import-export business dealing predominately with raw tobacco.[455] According to his curriculum vitae it was at an early age that he developed an interest in Asia, leading him to learn Persian and Tibetan by checking out grammar books at local libraries.[456] He developed his interest in languages through the work of the Swedish explorer and geographer Sven Hedin (1865 – 1952), and explained furthermore that:

> Wenn man also Wissenschaftler und besonders also Geograph fremde Länder bereist, muß man unbedingt die Landessprache beherrschen. Ohne Kenntnisse der Sprache wird einem das betreffende Volk stets ein Rätsel bleiben. Schon als Schulknabe habe ich dieses gesagt, und da ich schon damals ahnte, daß mich einmal mein Weg nach Asien führen würde, hatte ich mir von der Bibliothek meiner Heimatstadt eine persische Grammatik geholt und triebmit großem Eifer das Studium dieser Sprache. Ich vernachlässigte das Französische, das mir nie sehr lag![457]

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[453] He noted on different occasions that the British map failed him ("Die englische Karte verläßt und hier ganz, denn die Teng-i-Asau nicht angegeben ist") or he needed to depart from the information.
[454] IOR/ P 3871/1925: "Dr. Emil Trinkler's request to work in the Royal Geographical Society's Library."
[455] IfL 271/12: "Reisepass Trinklers," 1923.
[456] IfL 271/15: "Lebenslauf Trinkler," no date.
[457] Emil Trinkler, *Quer durch Afghanistan nach Indien* (Berlin: K. Vowinckel Verlag, 1925), 51.

> When a scientist, especially a geographer, travels to foreign countries he must know the native language. The respective country will remain a riddle to him without such linguistic knowledge. I have thought so since I have been a schoolboy, and suspected then that my route lead to Asia, so I would borrow a Persian grammar book from my local library, which I studied with great enthusiasm. I neglected French, which never appealed to me.

Although he aspired to a career in Oriental Studies from an early age, his route to the Ludwig-Maximilians-University of Munich was far from smooth. Unlike many of his peers, who had a clear academic trajectory beginning at an elite humanistic *Gymnasium*, then transitioning to prestigious universities, Trinkler's obligations to his family's business interrupted his academic preparation. Upon completion of the *Oberprimareife* exam (which, unlike the *Abitur*, was usually a diploma attained at a less prestigious high school) he worked at the tobacco firm until he was conscripted into the German army during WWI.[458] The death of his father ended his one-year military service, but also prompted Trinkler to sell the family firm and petition the Prussian Ministry of Education to retake the state matriculation exam.

This was the first step towards certifying his acceptance to the Ludwig-Maximilians-University of Munich. He entered the university with the intent to train in geology and geography, which was housed in the Faculty of Philosophy under the supervision of the field founder, Professor Erich von Drygalski, a geophysicist and polar scientist.[459] Von Drygalski had previously led state-funded expeditions, notably his German South Polar expedition to Antarctica starting in 1901.[460] He would later teach a seminar on the physical geographies of the Ottoman Empire.

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[458] IfL 271/15: "Lebenslauf Trinklers," date unknown.
[459] IfL 271/11: "Kollegienbuch für Herrn Studierenden der Geologie (Geographie) Dr. Emil Trinkler," 1919 – 1923.
[460] In a 1921 speech at the University of Munich Drygalski outlined the duty of the students (*Aufgabe unserer Kommilitonen*) to figure out Germany's post 1919 position. Interestingly, he advocated for the concept of *Lebensraum* as a form of solution, but not in a way to highlight a peculiar German national political culture, but to reconceptualize Germany's ties to other nations ("andere Völker"). For the speech

Trinkler's matriculation records at the University of Munich and Hamburg give insight into the theoretical and practical dimensions of his university training, but also shed light on why he chose to train at less prestigious institutions and not the Seminar of Oriental Studies in Berlin. The latter was nevertheless a leading institute in linguistic training, and although his own predisposition towards languages, Trinkler decided on a slightly different kind of Oriental training.

This choice requires a look into his matriculation records: His courses were all part of the Faculty of Philosophy, which was also called the department of cultural sciences and archeology (*Fakultät für Kulturwissenschaften und Altertumskunde*). This institute encompassed the study of anthropology, archeology, geography, and natural and prehistoric history (*Natur – und Urgeschichte*). The wide-reaching inclusion of these fields was also reflected in Trinkler's own courses, which included among other subjects the study of ancient history, the Iron Ages, ancient Turkic languages, anthropology, history of India and the Ottoman Empire, Turkish II, and petrography and crystallography.[461]

Unlike in the US or England *Anthropologie* in Germany did not mean cultural anthropology, but rather physical anthropology, which meant it was a systematic study of the origin of human species and therefore connected with the study that classified human physical forms. To that end, in the early twentieth century it was common for a student of geography and geology to also train in anthropology as part of their degree. This meant that the geographer in training trained in the cultural, social, and historical aspects of human behaviors, and in most cases possessed the necessary linguistic skills to communicate with the indigenous population. And it was through these requirements that Trinkler extensively trained in Oriental Studies, to

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see Erich von Drygalski, "Der Einfluß der Landesnatur auf die Entwicklung der Völker," Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität Speech, 1921.

[461] IfL 271/13: "Kollegienbücher und 1 Ausweiskarte der Universität München," 1919-1923.

which the chapter now turns.

Trinkler's Training in Oriental Studies

The University of Munich established its chair in physical anthropology in 1889 when the school hired Johannes Ranke (1836-1916), an anthropologist and doctor of medicine. One of Trinkler's teachers was Ferdinand Birkner (1836-1944), who was initially hired as Ranke's assistant then replaced Ranke as chair. For Birkner, managing the field was a life-long struggle to legitimize anthropology "alongside the traditional disciplines in the natural sciences….[and] to fashion [anthropology] as an independent and respected field of study with a strong line of state support."[462] This attempt to increase anthropology's legitimacy was common to most of Trinkler's teachers.

His matriculation records show that while the University of Munich seemed to have grounded Trinkler in the theoretical training of the anthropology and general histories of the Orient, the University of Hamburg offered Trinkler a deeper scientific training in Oriental Studies. At the time of Trinkler's university education (1919 – 1923), Oriental Studies did not exist as a discipline at the University of Munich. Oriental Studies at the University of Munich was not founded until Süssheim's students, Franz Babinger (1891 – 1967), a prominent and foremost German historian of the Ottoman and Safavid Empires, was hired in 1921.[463] To that end, Trinkler needed to look elsewhere for Oriental Studies, which took him to the University of Hamburg from 1919 – 1920. And it was at Hamburg that Trinkler was grounded in more specialized courses, such as Turkish textual studies (*Schriftlehre*) and conversational practices,

[462] Andrew D. Evans, *Anthropology at War: World War I and the Science of Race in Germany* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 21.
[463] Ali Anooshahr, "Franz Babinger and the Legacy of "German Counter-Revolution in Early Modern Iranian Historiography," in *Rethinking Iranian Nationalism and Modernity*, eds., Kamran Scot Aghaie and Afshin Marashi (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014).

which were both taught by a Turkish-born professor, Nedjati Bey. Among other courses at Hamburg, he took various seminars in the histories of Islamic religious thought and ethnology.[464]

In 1912 the University of Munich had hired the German historian and Orientalist, Karl Süssheim (1878 – 1947), who taught in irregular intervals a wide range of courses pertaining to the broad category of "*morgenländische* and *orientalische Sprachen"* (Oriental Languages).[465] His courses were not in high demand; however, with the shifting nature of German foreign policy during the First World War, Süssheim's courses became important to German consulate members, legal experts, and diplomats.[466] Among them was Oskar von Niedermayer, the prominent German General that had led the Indo-German-Turkish mission to Afghanistan in 1914. However, the training of these political actors was not merely to teach them basic linguistic and practical skills; rather, those at the university in Munich were trained in classical texts as well. For instance, Niedermayer not only learned Persian while a student of Süssheim's, but attended his course on the literature of the Persian poet Hafiz-i Shirazi (1315 – 1390). Trinkler, too, would later study in the Persian literary tradition by taking Süssheim's course on Sa^{c}di's *Gulistan* ("Lektüre und Erklärungen des pers. Rosengarten").[467]

Many scholars of Germany have discussed the particular varieties among Oriental institutes in Germany, and these scholars often conjure Berlin's Seminar for Oriental Studies with other regional institutes. The Seminar for Oriental Studies was typically linked to the Prussian Ministry of Culture and for training diplomats, soldiers, and government officials in Oriental languages. In other words, the kinds of training coming out of the Seminar for Oriental

[464] IfL: 271/14: "Hamburgische Universität Anmeldebuch für Herrn stud. Emil Trinkler Wintersemester 1919/20."
[465] From Süssheim's diary it is clear that he was closely linked to contemporary politics in the Middle East, and was in close contact with the Ottoman Young Turks but also the Union of Islamic Revolutionary Societies (*Islam Ihtilal Cemiyetleri Ittihadi*). See Barbara Flemming and Jan Schmidt, *The Diary of Karl Süssheim: (1878-1947), Orientalist Between Munich and Istanbul* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2002).
[466] Flemming and Schmidt, *The Diary of Karl Süssheim*, 63 – 70.
[467] IfL 271/13: "Kollegienbücher und 1 Ausweiskarte der Universität München," 1919-1923.

Studies grounded students in the basic practical skills required for colonial service. The emphasis on languages as a practical, rather than scientific field, meant, as Andrew Zimmerman has shown, that "there was no attempt to connect these language studies to the comparative, historical linguistics pursued in universities."[468] Although the Ludwig-Maximilians-University of Munich, too, trained a handful of important political actors, for the most part both the university in Munich and the Colonial Institute of Hamburg, which Trinkler attended, positioned themselves much more scientifically in the Oriental Studies. Yet the process of legitimizing their institutions entailed a long and complicated effort, which involved finding funding and support. The methods that Trinkler's teachers in both institutions employed to increase their institutes' legitimacy involved tying the resources of each of their cities into their scientific projects.

This is best seen in the efforts of one of Trinkler's teachers, Lucien Sherman (dates unknown) at Munich and Georg Thilenius (1868-1937) at Hamburg. The local government of Munich had hired Lucien Sherman in 1907 as the new director of one of Germany's oldest ethnological museums. The museum was founded in 1868 as mainly a place to showcase the royal collection of Munich's princes. Sherman replaced the museum's two directors, Moritz Wagner (1813 – 1887), a geographer and collector of artifacts, and subsequently Max Buchner (1846 – 1921), a seasoned Africanist, both of whom had pursued the methods of showcasing the ethnological museum to the relatively small "scientific community" of Munich.[469] This method had neglected to attract and involve Munich's artistically oriented population.[470]

The city hired Sherman because he was a well-respected scholar among the academic circles in and outside of Munich. He had completed a doctoral degree and *Habilitation*,

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[468] Andrew Zimmerman, "Ruling Africa: Science as Sovereignty in the German Colonial Empire and its Aftermath," in *German Colonialism in a Global Age*, eds., Bradley Naranch and Geoff Eley (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 102.
[469] Penny, *Objects of Culture,* 155.
[470] Wolfang J. Smolka, *Völkerkunde in München: Voraussetzungen, Möglichkeiten und Entwicklungslinien ihrer Institutionalisierung ca. 1850–1933* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1994), 89-92.

specializing in Indian and Buddhist art.[471] It was to these ends, that Sherman also taught at the University of Munich, where he met Trinkler and taught the "*Einführung ins Völkerkunde"* (Introduction to Ethnology), *Völkerkunde vom Britischen Hinterindien"* (Ethnology of British India), and "Das heutige Indien" (Contemporary India).[472]

At both the museum and university Sherman was expected to find methods that would attract the interest of a wider community of Munich to the museum's exhibitions. Lucien found support among the royal family, in particular *Prinzessin* Therese von Bayern, who herself was an avid traveler of Latin America. By refashioning the collection's visibility and displaying some of the museum's non-European and "exotic" collections throughout the city of Munich, Sherman took the exhibitions to the people rather than waiting for the people to visit the museum. He also drew on the skills of local Munich artists for new projects.[473]

Like Lucien Sherman, Trinkler's anthropology professor at Hamburg, Georg Thilenius, too, had developed a method which drew on his particular abilities as ethnographer to respond to the needs of the city of Hamburg. Prior to the loss of German colonies, the University of Hamburg was called *Das Kolonialinstiut* (the Colonial Institute),[474] where Thilenius "sought to make anthropology relevant to colonialism by claiming that it would help administrators utilize and improve indigenous labor."[475] What really mattered for Thilenius was to highlight the city's standing as a cultural capital (*Kulturstadt*). In 1907 the German *Reichstag* funded the creation of a university chair for colonial studies. Thilenius convinced close friends in the German Senate that a single professorship might not be sufficient to use and link Hamburg's other academic

[471] Penny, *Objects of Culture,* 229, footnote 138.
[472] IfL 271/13: "Kollegienbücher und 1 Ausweiskarte der Universität München."
[473] Smolka, *Völkerkunde in München,* 90.
[474] Jens Ruppenthal, *Kolonialismus als "Wissenschaft und Technik": das Hamburgische Kolonialinstitut 1908 bis 1919* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2007).
[475] Zimmerman, *Anthropology and Antihumanism*, 241.

resources (such as the Institute for Tropical Diseases) to the city.[476] Thilenius justified the need for a museum (Museum of Ethnology in Hamburg), which would house artifacts collected from Thilenius' own expeditions and travels throughout the Pacific. He insisted that he did not wish to replace Berlin as the central location for studying other cultures, but advocated instead for "a gradual decentralization of the colonial artifacts."[477]

The relevance of Trinkler's time at Munich and Hamburg becomes important for the purposes of this chapter in the following manner. The Colonial Institute of Hamburg was more than just a scientific center, and rather appropriately has been termed as a *Zentralstelle*. It was a kind of a central bureau for organizing, storing, and disseminating knowledge and resources to ethnographers and Orientalists abroad, and as such the institute became increasingly useful for training and supplying its students and scholars for all manners of colonial careers.[478] The city's economic ascent in the eighteenth century was tied to an expanding overseas trade, featuring the maritime firms and business enterprises between Germany and the Africa, Americas, Middle East, and the Pacific. It was to these ends that individuals like Georg Thilenius pushed the Colonial Institute to function in that capacity, and all the while link itself to the resources that the city was offering. This focus connected the institute not just the basics of Oriental training, but involved them with various firms within and outside of Germany.

This was important for Trinkler's study, because he came into the academic world already with experience in trade and industry through having managed his family's tobacco firm. The institute's insistence on giving students a much more well-rounded Oriental training reached beyond showing students how to collect artifacts, speak the language, and draw maps. For

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[476] *Ibid*.
[477] Rainer Buschmann, *Anthropology's Global Histories: The Ethnographic Frontier in German New Guinea, 1870-1935* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2009), 58f.
[478] Sara Pugrach, *Africa in Translation: A History of Colonial Linguistics in Germany and Beyond, 1814-1945* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012), 119.

Trinkler, this institute offered a comprehensive theoretical training, which ultimately, as I will show, became an important foundation. This training ensured that Trinkler was a good candidate for the Afghan-German trading firm, and had also prepared him to develop, maintain, and engage with Afghan contacts in and outside the government.

Section III

Trinkler's Scientific Practices in the "Webs of Empire" Network

Well after his own studies had been completed, Oskar von Niedermayer still passed through the University of Munich, where he regularly held lectures. It was during one of these visits that Trinkler met Niedermayer, who suggested to Trinkler that Pashto should be part of his coursework.[479] Trinkler was fond of his relationship with Niedermayer not only because the latter was "einer unserer besten Kenner Afghanestans," (one of our foremost experts on Afghanistan),[480] but also because the diplomat secured the former his first research expedition in 1923 to Afghanistan. Niedermayer used his connections in Afghanistan to employ Trinkler as the scientist for the *Deutsch-Afghanische Compagnie, A.G.* Although the exact parameters of Trinkler's involvement remain unknown from archival material stemming from the *Compagnie* and the German Foreign Office, what the sources do mention is that he was hired to survey the country for its precious artifacts. Such aims would explain why Trinkler walked rather than rode in caravans or cars through the mountains, because thereby many mountainous areas would be easier to access. Trinkler had access to horses, local Afghan guides, British and Persian maps, and on one occasion the Amir even arranged a daylong excursion to Bamiyan. According to Trinkler, in Bamiyan he set out to investigate the coal and iron deposits in the Hindu Kush

[479] IfL 271115/150: "Lebenslauf Trinklers."
[480] *Ibid*.

districts of *Siah Gird* specifically for the Afghan government, and not DACOM.[481] In his letter exchange to Sven Hedin, Trinkler noted that the Afghanistan expedition stood out from other subsequent voyages to Asia, because the former was supported by the joint efforts of the German Foreign Office, the *Compagnie*, and the Aman Allah government. He noted to Hedin that, in contrast, he was struggling to fund his upcoming 1927/8 Tibet Expedition, which he later managed through help from Hedin, who presumably had contacted the Geographic Society of Munich.[482]

Figure 5.2: Emil Trinkler, "Hand-Drawn Map of the Course Travelled by Emil Trinkler," 1923.
Source: Emil Trinkler. *Quer durch Afghanistan nach Indien*, 1925.

And so Trinkler's year-long expedition began, and when looking at the sources stemming from this journey, two important themes stand out: The first is Trinkler's ambivalent position

[481] Trinkler, *Quer durch* Afghanistan, (1925), 127-138.
[482] IfL 273-296: "Briefe an Sven Hedin," 1919-1926.

towards his guides, and second, the information his readers learn about a commonly-marginalized province of Afghanistan, Badakhshan.

Trinkler's guides, who initially appeared as his servants ("*meine Diener*"), seemed to fulfill the basic duties of freshening up Trinkler's bed, fetching bread, and preparing his meals. Over time, we learn more about them: "Gul Mohammad", "Juma", and "Mesjidi Khan", as he called them, were local Afghans that the Afghan-German trading company had hired to assist Trinkler with his passage from Herat to Peshawar.

Throughout his travel account, and as the chronology of the journey become clearer, Trinkler begins to unpack different layers of skill-sets, in particularly, the ability to drain blood from a sickened horse:

> Abends ging ich noch einmal zu den Tieren hinaus. Sie standen aneinandergedrängt im Hofe. Gul Mohammed rieb gerade die wunden Stellen des kranken Packpferdes mit rohem Eiweiß ein. Er machte ein betrübtes Gesicht; hatte er doch gerade auf das weiße Pferd seine größten Hoffnungen gesetzt. Als auch am folgenden Tage keine Besserung im Befinden des Pferdes eintrat, versuchte er es mit einer Radikalkur. Er entnahm dem Tiere Blut aus den Nüstern. Seltsamerweise bewirkte diese Kur Wunder: den als wir nach Kabul kamen, war das weiße Pferd tatsächlich das muntereste von allen. [483]
>
> At night I went back out to check on the animals. Huddled together tightly they stood in the courtyard. Gul Mohammed was rubbing the wounded area of the sickened packhorse with raw egg white. He made a saddened face, especially since he had placed much hope on this white horse. Over the course of the next days the horse did not improve, so he tried a radical cure. He drained blood from the horse's nostrils. Strangely, this cure brought about wonders, because as we arrived in Kabul, the white horse was among the animated of all.

Despite Trinkler's astonishment, his relationship to his guides seemed dismissive and paradoxical. He was deeply reliant on these guides, but he critiqued Afghans for having lower work ethics, especially in contrast to their Indian counterparts. He remarked on this stark difference especially in the manner in which Afghan merchants conducted business at the bazaar:

[483] *Ibid*., 83.

> Während die Inder für die Waren Reklame machen und den Vorübergehenden anrufen, sitzen die Afghanen ruhig in ihren Ständen, trinkern Tee und rauchen die Wasserpfeife. Manchmal sah es fast so aus, als ob ihnen Kundenbesuch gar nicht genehm ware; wurden sie doch dadurch in ihrer Ruhe und in ihrem beschaulichen Dasein gestört.[484]
>
> While the Indian was advertising for his goods by calling the passersby, the Afghans were merely seated in their booths, drank tee, and smoked their water pipes. At times, it appeared as though they disliked the customers; were disturbed in their peace and their deep thoughts.

Such observations are commonly seen throughout his travel text. It is clear that Trinkler credited little knowledge or expertise to the guides. He criticized them for not knowing how to properly work with modern equipment, i.e., to develop his roll of film. For such lack of ability, Trinkler was convinced that he needed to be in charge of prescribing the process in which fieldwork was to be conducted systematically. While his helpful guides prepared his meal, he collected the day's data and compiled notes:

> Abend für Abend wiederholt sich dasselbe Bild…Während das Abendessen zubereitet wird, arbeite ich, auf meinen Feldbetter liegend, die Beobachtugen des Tages aus, mache meteorologisch Beobachtungen, etikettiere und verpacke die gesammelten Gesteinsproben und schreibe Tagebuch."[485]
>
> I repeated the same image evening after evening...While my supper was being prepared, I would work, lying on my cot, thinking through the observations collected that day, I made meteorological observations, labeled and packaged the collected rock samples and wrote the diary.

[484] Trinkler, *Quer durch Afghanistan,* (1925), 103.
[485] *Ibid*., 62.

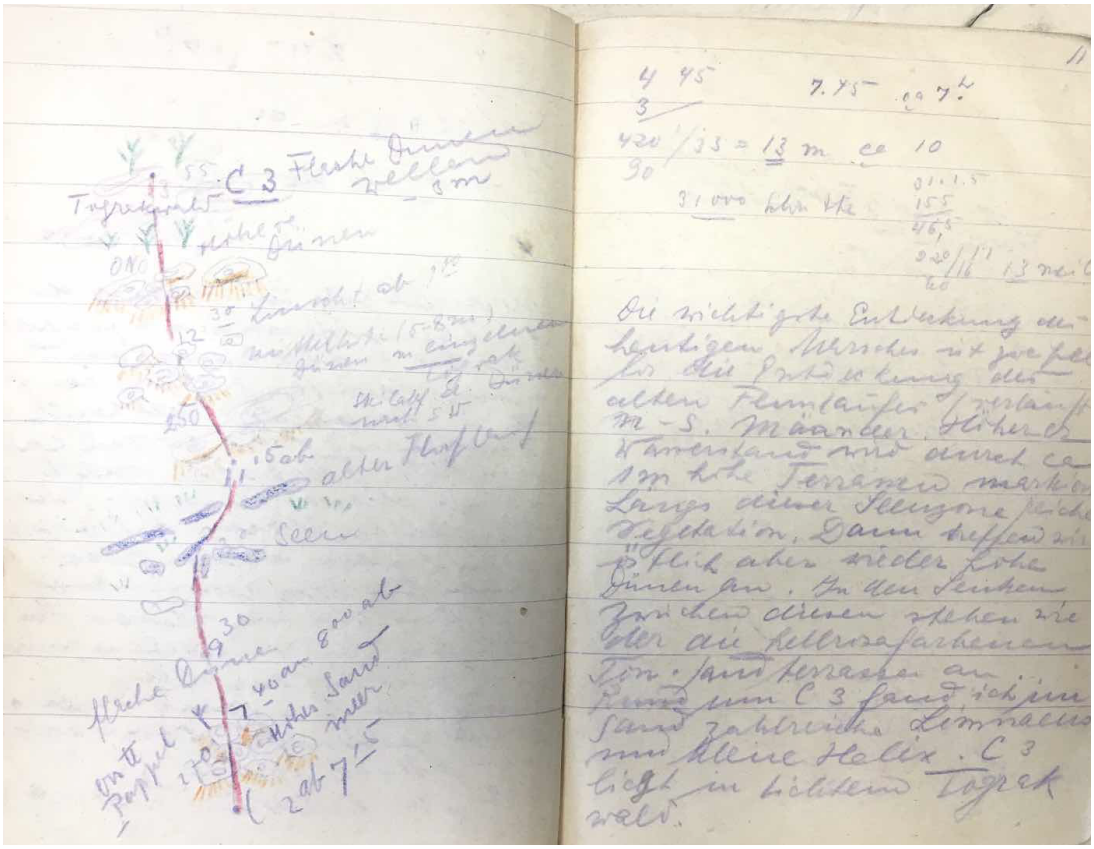

Figure 5.3: "An Excerpt of Trinkler's Diary," 1923.
Source: IfL 272/98a: Petrographische Beschreibungen von Trinkler in Afghanistan."

For him, this meant travelling and observing by day, and conducting write-ups (Figure 5.3) and rest during the free hours of the evening. Trinkler quickly realized that conducting research in this manner did not conform to the conception of research promoted by his guides. His guides regularly woke him in the night, appearing ready and equipped to begin the next hike. What his guides seem to know was that the risk of oversleeping equated with encountering difficult weather conditions, or worse, not being able to fetch food for Trinkler's team and the horses. He quickly realized that he needed to rely on his guides, who knew how to move through the perils of an unpredictable environment and had a better sense of the relationship between time and travel across a set space.

It was through this realization that over the course of his travel writings, he softened the tone when describing his guides: "Das Aufstehen fiel uns immer schwer, und wenn nicht Mesjidi Khan gewesen wäre, so hätten wir sicher manchen Morgen verschlafen."[486] ("Waking up was still hard for us, and had it not been for Mesjidi Khan we would have overslept many mornings.") The contradiction in how he understood his guides continued throughout much of the travel account, and he never wrote that he understood the guides in a different light, or that he viewed them as his peers. However, what can be seen is that he began to mention different layers of skills, which were obviously crucial for Trinkler to arrive at his scientific findings.

Persian Sources in Trinkler's Scientific Finding

Trinkler may have had a dismissive or ambivalent stance towards his guides, but he approached Persian sources from a slightly different position. The subject of the analysis concerned the northeastern province of Afghanistan, Badakhshan. Although an important region that connected Afghanistan to eastern Tajikistan and to western China, and a source of precious gemstones, scholarly work on Badakhshan has been understudied. As I have already noted in this chapter, Badakhshan became caught up in the Great Game context, and as a result was surveyed by Russian and British ethnographers. Recently, Daniel Beben has critiqued these colonial projects for inaccurately describing Badakhshan as pristine, inaccessible to outsiders, and preserved for its antique cultural and religious traditions. His work explores the complex history of Badakhshan through its deep historical interconnection with Eurasia.[487]

The province itself partially borders the Pamir Mountains, specifically the Hindu Kush, which emanate out of the Pamir Mountain Range and touch on Badakhshan. The region is host to

[486] *Ibid*., 58.
[487] Daniel Beben, "The Legendary Biographies of Nāṣir-i Khusraw: Memory and Textualization in Early Modern Persian Ismā'īlism" (PhD Dissertation, Indiana University, 2015), 106.

many mountain glaciers and glacial lakes. However, from the limited European scholarship, the emphasis seems to be on the region's geomorphic formation of rocks and mountains or the excavation of precious gems such as lapis lazuli. This is best seen in the work of the British naval officer John Wood (1812-1871), who was the travel companion of the British explorer and diplomat, Alexander Burnes (1805-1841).[488]

In the attempt to centralize the Afghan state and extend the state's reach into fragmented provinces, the Aman Allah régime developed a committee that was responsible for surveying and collecting useful data for the implementation of its administrative and legal codices known as the *Nizam-nama* (state regulations). One example of such state-sponsored surveys was the 1923 *Rāhnamā-yi Qataghān va Badakhshān: yaᶜnī mulakhkhaṣ-i safar'nāmah-i sanah-i 1301 H.Sh. sipah'sālār-i ghāzī sardār Muḥammad Nādir Khān vazīr-i ḥarbiyah* (*Travel Guides to Qataghan and Badakhshan: That is the Specifics of the 1301/1922 Travelogue of Generalissimo Mohammad Nadir Khan, Minister of Defense*). As the title suggests, the account had emerged as a result of Nadir Khan's (1883 – 1933) travels in those two provinces, but it was edited by the Afghan author and journalist, Burhan al-Din Khan Kushkaki (1894-1953). The latter was one of Amir Aman Allah's finest generals (and later successor), and while he was normally stationed along the Indo-Afghan border, from the author's introduction we learn that the Afghan state had also appointed him as the head of the reform committee responsible for Badakhshan and Qataghan (*wazir-i harbia-yi ghazi sipa' salar-i dawalt-i Afghani va ba tanzimat-i hayat-i Qataghan va Badakshan*).[489] This assignment had tasked him with traveling and surveying the

[488] John Wood, *A Personal Narrative of a Journey to the Source of the River Oxus by the Route of the Indus, Kabul, and Badakhshan: in the Years 1836, 1837 and 1838* (London: John Murray, 1841).
[489] Burhān al-Dīn Kushkakī, ed., *Rāhnamā-yi Qaṭaghan va Badakhshān: yaᶜni Mulakhkhas-i Safarnāmah-i Sanah-i 1301 H.Sh. Sipah'Sālār-i Ghāzī Sardār Muhammad Nādir Khān Vazīr-i Ḥarbiyah* (Kābul: Vizārat-i Harbiyah, 1302 (1923)), 6.

Afghan province of Badakhshan with the aim to slowly introduce and implement new civil reforms pertaining to citizenship, education, marriage, and property in the countryside.

The knowledge collected from these Afghan state expeditions was presumably used to tailor the implementation of a policy to the specific characteristics of each provinces, but more importantly these surveys would allow the Afghan state to understand how the natural habitat of provinces could best be woven into the state apparatus. In fact, the editor prefaced his findings with an extensive overview of Amir Aman Allah's policy for *tanzimat va istiqlal* (reform and independence) in relation to its adoption from "different sides" (presumably referring here to each of the Afghan geographic fragments that began to subscribe to the fledgling new state's reform schemes).[490] More specifically, the reports suggested that after an eleven-month period of compiling this report, the Afghan government had carefully studied it and was now able to solve problems facing this province.[491] The author also stipulated that the Afghan government had compared these with other reports they had already collected, and had been given supplementary materials and images from other actors that the government had sent off previous to, or in conjunction with, this expedition.

For the purposes of this chapter, I will only focus on the importance of the report vis-à-vis its natural ability for producing vegetation. As already discussed, much of Western scholarship focuses on the ability of northern provinces connected to the Hindu Kush to provide precious minerals, which yet needed to be exploited had the province been more hospitable to foreigners. In contrast to such accounts, Kushkaki's *Rāhnamā-yi Qataghān va Badakhshān* surveys the two provinces for their abilities to retain and channel water, as well as its ability to connect the region to the Pamir Mountains. He gave exact locations and descriptions of the different rivers flowing from the Pamir Mountains into the Amu Darya (or Oxus River), as well

[490] *Ibid*., 5.
[491] *Ibid*., 7.

as how they were formed (i.e., through melting of glaciers, rainfall, or bifurcation of large rivers into small streams). More importantly, Kushkaki outlined the different ways in which inhabitants of each of provinces circumnavigated these rivers by building bridges for ease of transportation and developed methods for subsistence farming.

Trinkler presumably came across this report at the counsel of the Afghan government, or was perhaps told about it by either his guides or the inhabitants of Qataghan/Badakhshan as he was passing through. The former is more likely, especially since the Afghan state would have a vested interest in comparing their source with Trinkler's assessments. To Trinkler, the use of this source was important because it allowed him to comment on a region that had previously been delineated in British sources as "*Vermerk* 'Unsurveyed.'" Trinkler's engagement with these regions shed new light on the formation of the mountains, the rivers, and the settlements:

> Nunmehr gewinnen wir einen Einblick in den Verlauf der Gebirge und Flüsse wie auch einen Bild von den wichtigsten Siedlungen, die sich in den Hochtälern dieser Gebirgswelt befinden....Jede größere Ortschaft wird eingehend gewürdigt unter besonderer Berücksichtigunge von Ackerbau, Viehzucht, Gewerbe, Kleidung, Nahrung, Bewaffnung und Handel.[492]
>
> Now we acquire insight into the progression of the mountain range and the rivers, as well as the important sites of settlements, which are located in the high valleys of this mountainous world. Each larger town is recognized in depth for its cultivation of land, cattle breeding, industry, clothing, nourishment, armament, and trade.

From the rest of Trinkler's account, one does not learn much about the precise agricultural practices that local people in Badakhshan or Qataghan drew from to connect their habitat to different industries. However, the *Rāhnamā-yi Qataghān va Badakhshān* shed light on ways the inhabitants worked with the environment. *Zira^{c}t* (agriculture or cultivation) in Badakhshan and Qataghan was done through a process called *lalmi*, a rain-fed farming practice

[492] Emil Trinkler, "Aus dem westlichen Teil des afghanischen Hindukusch," *Petermanns Geographische Mitteilungen,* Vol. 71(1925).

that relied, in this case, on snow. While in the valley the residents seemed to have developed practices by which they could channel water from shallow rivers, farmers in the hills of both provinces preferred the rain-fed method. According to Trinkler, this method yielded barley, wheat, legumes, and some fruit crops.[493] Trinkler concluded by suggesting that we no longer needed to rely on John Wood's work to understand the unknown provinces of Qataghan and Badakhshan.

Trinkler's Impact on the German Hindukush Expedition, 1935

Although Emil Trinkler died in 1931, his work and research methods continued to shape subsequent German expeditions. This can be seen in particular in the 1935 German Hindu Kush Expedition led by anthropologist and medical doctor Dr. Albert Herrlich, philologist Dr. William Lenz, and Professor Arnold Scheibe of the University of Halle.[494] The expedition's main goal was to survey the Hindu Kush area, of which Badakhshan and Nuristan (northwest of Afghanistan- below Badakhshan) were formed out of its mountain range, for a survey of its agricultural and botanical composition ("Agrarbotanisch").

Aside from the difference that Trinkler, as a German scientist, was unaccompanied by other Germans, the three scholars of this expedition were accompanied by German linguistic experts (*Sprachforscher*), Dr. Wolfgang Lentz, botanist, Dr. Gerhard Kerstan, and two agronomists, Dr. Werner Roemer and Dr. Klaus von Rosenstiel. Structurally, the expedition emulated the general make up of Trinkler's. First, a consortium of different sources supported this expedition. While the main benefactor was the German Research Group (*die Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* (DFG)), the German Foreign Office, the *NS Auslandsorganization*, and

[493] *Ibid*.
[494] Arnold Scheibe, *Deutsche im Hindukusch: Bericht der Deutschen Hindukusch-Expedition 1935 der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft* (Berlin: Siegismund, 1937).

Afghan government were all involved in contributing to the success of this expedition. For instance, the Afghan state furnished the members of the expedition with guides, in the form of a small army. Led by General Bahadur Khan, a native of Nuristan, the general was responsible for leading the army and ensuring that the members travelled safely during their expedition. According to the author, Arnold Scheibe, his real value was that he was very "knowledgeable" and helped the expedition "identify the different linguistic dialects."[495]

Secondly, in both Trinkler and the Hindukush Expedition, the German Foreign Office hoped that the scientific findings would be tied to the German state's aim to repair relations with Afghanistan. Keep in mind that by 1935 Sayyid Kamal and other German-educated students had already assassinated the Afghan government's attaché and other officials. The German government had executed Kamal a month before the expedition left from Munich to Kabul in February of 1935, and meanwhile the German attaché, Kurt Ziemke, noted in this letters to the German Foreign Office that the Afghan government would continue to view him, and by extension the German state, as pro-Aman Allah ("Amanullah sympathisiert"), until the death penalty was to be finalized.[496]

The central insight in this chapter about the Hindukush Expedition comes from the extent to which it was shaped by Trinkler. As I have explained before, much of the European scholarship on specific northern regions of Afghanistan remained scarce, and when the British did pass through their surveys were concerned with the production of mineral deposits and precious stones. Trinkler insistence on the rich agricultural vegetation found in the two main parts of the Hindu Kush areas (i.e., Badakhshan and Qataghan) put in motion the German Hindukush Expedition.

[495] Scheibe, *Deutsche im Hindukusch*, 12.
[496] AAmt: R 46637: "Briefe Ziemke's aus Kabul über das Todesurteil," 1934.

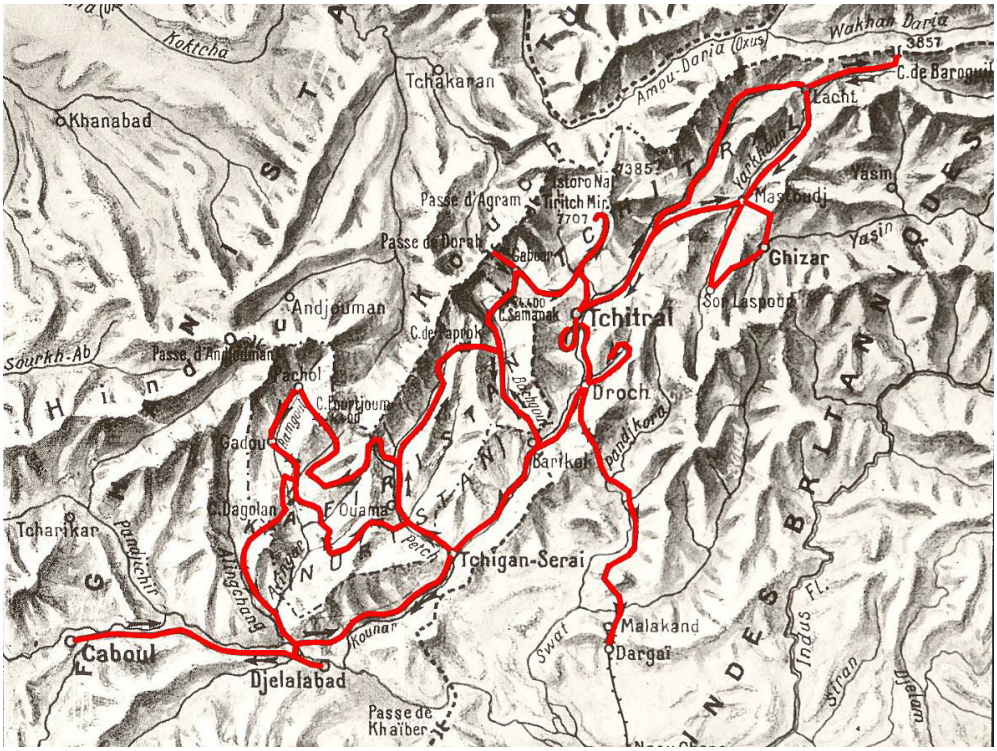

Figure 5.4: "Route of the Deutsche Hindukush Expedition," 1935.
Source: Stiftung Bibliotheca Afghanica, CH-4416 Bubendorf, 2018.

The Expedition was focused on three areas: Nuristan, Badakhshan, and the Chitral district (neighboring Kunar, Badakhshan and Nuristan) to examine "in erster Linie...Wild- und Kulturflora...vor allem in der Sammlung von Sämereien, Reisern, Stecklingsmaterial usw." (primarily...wild and cultivated florae...especially in the collection of seeds, rice, plant cutting, etc.).[497] As a result of this expedition, the botanist was able to collect over 4,000 different seed samples and wildflowers, many of which were later destroyed in the Second World War.

[497] Arnold Scheibe, "Zusammenfassender Bericht der Deutsche Hindukusch-Expedition 1935," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Auslandsbeziehungen* 4, no. 9-10 (1954).

Conclusion

In 1993 Sheldon Pollock suggested that one way to consider Orientalist knowledge was through the possibility that it was multidirectional. Rather than actually being multidirectional, his analysis can mostly be considered two-directional, and in other words an alternative way in which Orientalism could be understood. Edward Said and his followers understood the discourse of power as the process in which "Othering" served the purposes of colonization and domination in the Middle East and Asia. Said remained rather silent about the German case, and Pollock, looking to find an alternative by suggesting that German Orientalism was an internal process tied to the national political culture. He argued that nineteenth and twentieth-century German Indology ideologically paved the way for the discourse of National Socialism.[498]

I have shown that Trinkler was very much a byproduct of German Oriental Studies, and like Pollock I have suggested the importance of widening the conceptual framework when examining such phenomena as "Orientalism" to include not just a commonly assumed bi-axis (i.e., Britain and India). However, I argue that nowhere in Trinkler's writing can we find the attempt to use his subjects of analysis to shed light on an inward process. Of course, Trinkler's premature accident and death in 1931 does not allow us to further investigate a possible positionality within a Nationalist Socialist political culture. However, according to Pollock many German Orientalist scholars expressed themselves prior to 1933 about their allegiances, suggesting that if Trinkler had been one of them, we would easily be able to see such tendencies in his writings.

Furthermore, the question of Trinkler's research is not about whether he would have succumbed to a Nationalist Socialist discourse, but rather why his research was interestingly

[498] Sheldon Pollock, "Deep Orientalism? Notes on Sanskrit and Power Beyond the Raj," in *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament: Perspectives on South Asia*, eds. Carol A. Beckenridge and Peter van der Veer (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993).

different from his contemporaries. Here, I think, one aspect of Pollock's argument is useful, namely to point at a multidirectional flow of Oriental knowledge, and not just a two-way alternative. Trinkler embodied this multidirectionality because the mode of knowledge that he produced did not merely serve one master (i.e., the German neo-colonial state). Rather, Trinkler's knowledge served multiple masters that included the Afghan state, DACOM, and the scholarly community. This meant it was no longer enough for Trinkler to travel abroad and merely collect artifacts, but just as the Colonial Institute of Hamburg developed links to the German and foreign diplomats and merchants, German academics and ethnographers needed to establish closer ties with their guides and the channels that were supporting them, not just through the German state but also in placed that they were researching.

Trinkler's own role in facilitating a better understanding of Afghanistan's cartographic and geomorphic position was much more complicated. On the one hand, he needed to engage in the industrial aspects of the trading firm, DACOM, which had hired him. This involved surveying the country for its mineral composition, which in its basic parameters was not any different from previous British accounts surveying Afghanistan for precious raw materials. His Afghan acquaintances, on the other hand, not only supplied him with necessary paperwork and authorizations, for instance, when British or Russian authorities did not allow him to pass, but his contacts walked him through inhospitable terrains, healed his horse when he could not, and organized private excursions to Bamiyan. In return, Trinkler followed their lead, trusted their insights, and engaged with Persian sources, which as we saw set him apart from previous researchers in the area and helped him develop a new stance and insight into important provinces.

This is not to say that he did not buy into Lucien Sherman's and Georg Thilenius's impetuses to collect artifacts that would offer German viewers insight into an aspect of his

expedition.[499] In fact, his training at these institutions very much informed his ability to navigate and utilize the resources that was made available to him. Having seen his research unfolding over the course of the year allows us to understand why he did not select the prestigious Seminar for Oriental Languages as a place to train, because it was not enough to be grounded in linguistic skills, when the practical aspects of negotiation, reading classical texts, constructing maps, was an important process of Trinkler's scientific knowledge production.

[499] These can be viewed at the Trinkler exhibition held at the Übersee Museum in Bremen.

Conclusion

This dissertation has examined a history of Afghan and German knowledge-migrants in the early twentieth century, who took advantage of newly established diplomatic relations between the Afghan and the German states to travel and research in the two countries. This study examined the lives of students and the production of their ideas, then traced their ideas to their destinations as they transformed their theoretical knowledge into practice. They produced ideas in the fine arts, ethnography, medicine, political ideologies, and science at various technical and scientific institutions, which they then circulated and rendered to create professional careers for themselves and to employ this knowledge to understand their own roles in an ever-changing political and industrial society.

The actors that this dissertation has examined began their courses of study as students, either by having been sent by the Afghan state to train in the new technical and scientific fields, or in the case of the German Emil Trinkler, by training for fieldwork in Afghanistan. I have called them "knowledge-migrants," because they began their journeys with the explicit intent to produce knowledge, sponsored by a joint Afghan or German state-effort to foster close diplomacy. However, these actors ended up facilitating the transfer of technology and science between Afghanistan and Germany on their own terms and continued even when diplomacy had ceased. I have also used the concept of migration to describe a process which is typically associated with exile, conflict, and displacement. The process of migration found in this study signals the flexible and mobile ability to move from one place to another, with *Akademische Freiheit* offering such opportunities for the Afghan students and Trinkler alike. Through such experiences, I have shown that knowledge-migrants were linked in global "webs of empire,"

which drew them to collaborate beyond the confines of religion, ethnicity, nationality, or behavioral commonalities.

The roughly twenty-year diplomatic relationship between Afghanistan and Germany produced a large body of archival material on both the Afghan and German state level, which can be considered both a problem and a blessing. Structurally, these sources have allowed me to chart out the importance of institutional spaces as "contact zones" (i.e., diasporic mosques, technical universities, fine arts schools, the field itself for the ethnographer, and laboratories). Such sources help show the importance of these "contact zones" for the fledgling states, the role of knowledge-migrants in transferring technology and science between Afghanistan and Germany, and the manner in which science was discussed in the context of neo-colonialism. However, what these sources do not tell us is how knowledge migrants deviated from state-proposed educational plans, how they themselves envisioned the purpose of their education/research, and how specifically the process of rendering knowledge was played out on the field, and in laboratories and other educational centers.

To examine how knowledge-migrants understood the importance of their own practical expertise in the process of state-building, I have read official sources for their discrepancies and latent anxieties, where collaboration and exchange among a wider range of knowledge-migrants could have taken shape outside the control of the states. Once I identified these discrepancies, the next step was to chart out other local spaces, which led me to institutional sources (i.e., university records and regional archives) and personal sources. Here at the institutional level I was able to locate sources produced by the knowledge-migrants themselves, and these have not only included texts that are conventionally used in intellectual studies (such as major intellectual studies or essays), but also paintings, dissertations, photographs, and newspaper clips.

The framework of "webs of empire" that I have applied in this study derived in large part from the third level of source materials - British state documents. They offered insight into how technological development within Afghanistan was viewed on an international level, more specifcally by the British. The details and surveillance by which the British documented these suggested to me that I cannot tell a story about Afghan-German diplomacy without tying the implications of this diplomacy to the larger imperial story in that region. In fact, even the knowledge migrants themselves discussed their own production of knowledge as explicitly designed to maintain the independence of their state. This last point suggests that the ordinary knowledge-migrants were a crucial element of the process of state-building. For instance, when a few Afghan soldiers deserted their post in the British Army, the implications contributed to the German neo-colonial policy. While some captured Afridi Afghans in Germany were re-mobilized to fight against the British in the First World War, other Afridis were secretly transferred to Göttingen, where their languages were studied. [500]

Despite the essential overlap in practice and knowledge-production, there are important variations among the actors in this study. While Afghan itinerancy to Germany involved of individuals in their youth looking to acquire knowledge as students, the German countermovement involved adults like Emil Trinkler, teachers, and technocrats who had already completed their studies and were looking to develop a professional career. Especially for Trinkler this meant that he was presumably less likely to be taught by the subjects that he was examining, and hence took on an ambivalent position towards the guides, who understood their own local geographies much better than he did. Among the students, too, I have shown important variations. The first generation that I traced (from 1921-1933) relied on the steady support from

[500] See Ravi Ahuja, "The Corrosiveness of Comparison: Reverberation of Indian Wartime Experiences in German Prison Camps (1915-1919)," in *The World in World Wars: Experience, Perceptions and Perspectives from Africa and Asia*, ed. by Heike Liebau et al (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 152.

both governments in the form of special curricula to fit their needs, arranged medical visits, and above all guarantees to find employment once they returned from Germany. After 1933, as a result of new regimes in both Afghanistan and Germany, many of these guarantees fell away, and this meant that only a few Afghan students were willing to continue to study in Germany. This was explored in chapter three, which examined Fofolzay's years at Jena. Nevertheless, the course of his education did not seem to be affected by the lack of better Afghan-German diplomatic relationships and thus loftier promises. Fofolzay, instead, learned to rely on the intellectual network that Jena University had fostered over the years with scholars across Europe and beyond. Like the previous generation, he identified the specific kinds of knowledge that helped him articulate and render a specific vision for an Afghan kind of modernism.

What this study has attempted to do is move away from modernization theories, stagnation, and a failed-state rhetoric to emphasize a history of shared scientific and technological practices, not only among Afghans and Germans, but Indian, Ottoman, and Japanese knowledge-migrants. Emphasizing commonalities is difficult to manage, especially in light of studies that too often equate Europe or "European-like" centers as the hubs for "cosmopolitan" kinship, trade, or political networks. An important thread that connects the various case studies has been showing that the process of German technical assistance to Afghanistan was uneven and in some cases irrelevant to the actual production of knowledge. As technology and science were exchanged, especially from Germany to Afghanistan, it was not as asymmetrical as one would presume. Germany may have been a much more industrially developed state, but both the Afghan state and the Afghan knowledge-migrants were determined to maintain ideas that were inherently Afghan. The process by which knowledge was rendered was important, because as information about technology and science was exchanged among

different knowledge-migrants, the priority was not so much about replacing old ideas but with fashioning more modern ones to accompany the old. What each of the chapters has shown was that there was a much more blurred line between categories of "modern" vs. "traditional." What each of the chapters has shown was that there was a much more blurred line between categories of "modern" vs. "traditional." Knowledge-migrants were least likely to find inspiration in the latest and most fashionable artistic methods and styles, but naturally gravitated towards spaces and educational centers where they joined contemporaries who were contemplating their own responses to a new interconnected global world order.

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AAmt: Auswärtiges Amt (German Foreign Office), Berlin
BArch: Bundesarchiv/Lichterfelde (Berlin) (Federal Archives/Berlin), Berlin
GStA PK: Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz (Secret State Archives Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation), Berlin
IfL: Leibniz-Institute für Länderkunde, Leipzig
IOR: British Library India Office and Records, London
HU: Universitätsarchiv der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Berlin
LA: Landesarchiv Berlin, Berlin
LBD: Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg
League of Nations, Geneva
May Schinasi Personal Archive, Nice
Siemens Archive, Berlin
Stiftung Bibliotheca Afghanica, Liesthal
TU: Universitätsarchiv Technische Hochschule zu Berlin, Berlin
UL: Universitätsarchiv Leipzig
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