

Acknowledgments

I conducted the research for this book in Basel, Berlin, Bern, Los Angeles, and Zürich between 2009 and 2019.

In Berlin the greatest pleasure was working at the library of the Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO)—despite having to pass under a “pre-Nazi-era” swastika above the early-twentieth-century Mittelhof villa’s main door. In forested Nikolassee, colleagues and I skinny dipped in the ice-cold Schlachtensee on summer lunch breaks but skidded across icy paths in winter, anxious about the wild boars snorting in the blackberry bushes. At the ZMO library I benefited from the rich collection of the Gerhard Höpp archive, which contains key archival and secondary sources revealing the history of Muslims in Weimar and Nazi Germany.

I had the misfortune to take the S-bahn from Nikolassee to the end of the line at Oranienburg on a hot summer day to walk to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. After many bizarre spells of disorientation, I managed to find the library and consult copies of the records of Hugo Marcus’s incarceration—near where inmates were gassed—and located his former barracks (marked only by a numbered stone).

I visited Berlin’s Landesarchiv (State Archive), located in a gigantic, brick, former weapons and munitions factory complex in the far north of the city, to read files on Weimar and Nazi-era Muslim organizations.

Garish Potsdamer Platz’s serenely quiet Staatsbibliothek (State Library)—whose student canteen’s Berliner specialties such as *Eisbein* and wine and beer never failed to intrigue me—was a peaceful place to read through Marcus’s early-twentieth-century philosophical, avant-garde, and pacifist publications. The library also surprised me with a tiny portrait of a young Marcus.

Most important, I attended Friday prayers in a tiny, crumbling, painted jewel, the Ahmadi mosque in Wilmersdorf at Fehrbelliner Platz, which gave me a sense of the intimate space where much of this narrative took place.

My understanding of German converts to Islam has been greatly shaped by accompanying anthropologist Esra Özyürek on her ethnographic journey, which culminated in *Being German, Becoming Muslim: Race, Religion, and Conversion in the New Europe* (Princeton, 2014). How much of her voice and analysis is in this book I cannot really determine. I especially remember the “only in Berlin” scene where the gracious and welcoming participants at a mainly German converts’ gender-segregated Muslim picnic in Tiergarten had to chase dogs away from their prayer mats during prayer while averting their eyes as nude couples made out in the grass. Also in Tiergarten, I read fundamental texts in the gay rights struggle as dust settled at the recently completed library of the expanded Schwules (Gay) Museum, near where prostitutes continue to walk the same streets sex workers have frequented for a century. But I actually had to travel back to California to find all of Marcus’s gay writings published after World War II in *Der Kreis* at the ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives at the USC libraries in Los Angeles.

In Zürich I conducted research mainly at the stately Zentralbibliothek (Central Library), which owns Marcus’s Nachlass (estate), including his private letters exchanged with a kaleidoscopic array of Jews, gays, and Muslims; autobiographical texts; personal documents such as Nazi-issued travel document and Swiss police files; unpublished works, including typewritten or handwritten mosque lectures; copies of published works including his hard-to-find early-twentieth-century homoerotic novella; and private photos with passionate inscriptions pasted into private letters spanning his entire life.

I also visited the Thomas Mann Archives at the new, wind-swept mountain-top campus of the ETH Zürich in a blazing, pink sunset.

I examined Marcus’s police file at Basel’s City Archive, located in the over-the-top, brilliant red, frescoed sixteenth-century Town Hall complex. I was fortunate to visit at the same time as the archive’s extraordinary exhibit, “Magnet Basel,” featuring photocopies of entire personal police dossiers, annotated and contextualized, striking examples of the very type of file I was reading. Documenting a century of migration to the city, curated for the one hundredth anniversary of the Swiss Federal Foreigners’ Police, the exhibit offered moving tales about the lives of migrants ranging from Jews during World War II to Syrian Kurds today.

Staff at the Jüdisches Museum der Schweiz (Basel) revealed further unknown, dramatic stories about German Jewish arrival in the city during World War II.

When I walked to Marcus's surprising final resting place in Basel, I finally realized why the funeral directors had sent me a photo of a strand of trees taken from a distance. May Hugo Hamid Hans Alienus Marcus rest in peace, and forgive me for exposing his private life in this book.

Following Marcus's paper trail also took me to beautiful Bern, the turquoise-green, river-wrapped medieval Swiss capital, to examine Marcus's dossier at the Federal Archive. It was impressive to be able to register myself and order documents online, selecting the date on which I would read the material. And, indeed, when I arrived at the archive on the specified day, the friendly and helpful staff presented the documents as I had ordered and provided a Swiss adapter for plugging in my laptop. To top it off they pointed out the machine dispensing free water and coffee! Incomparable. If only all archives were like this. The sweetened coffee served to offset the depressing impact of holding Marcus's swastika-laced Nazi passport and looking in the eyes of the terrified man in its photograph.

I am especially grateful to individuals who made this research possible. Tireless researcher, former Ahmadi, and all-around fun-loving motorbike and *Fasching* enthusiast Manfred Backhausen first introduced me to Marcus and generously shared Ahmadi archival sources, photographs, and a copy of the Qur'an translation edited by him. At the beginning of my research Gerdien Jonker offered me other Ahmadi sources and uploaded (most of) her collection of the near-complete run of the *Moslemische Revue* to the Ahmadi website. My understanding of Islam in interwar Europe is greatly indebted to conversations especially with Umar Ryad. My knowledge of Goethe's approach to Islam was enlightened by email conversations with Katherina Mommsen. Esra Özyürek and David Motadel read a draft of the entire manuscript. My analysis was greatly improved by the editors and anonymous readers of *New German Critique* and the *American Historical Review*. Much of the material in chapter 2 was originally published in an earlier version as "Protestant Islam in Weimar Germany: Hugo Marcus and 'The Message of the Holy Prophet Muhammad to Europe'" in *New German Critique* 44, no. 2: 163–200. © 2017, New German Critique, Inc. All rights reserved. Republished by permission of the copyright holder and the present publisher, Duke University Press. A prior version of chapter 3 was originally published as "Muslim Encounters with Nazism and the Holocaust: The Ahmadi of Berlin and German-Jewish Convert

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*GERMAN, JEW,
MUSLIM, GAY*



