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Syed Akbar Hyder, Bhagavan,Manu (eds.). *Hidden Histories*. New Delhi: Primus Books, 2018. 328 pp. \$64.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-93-8655284-6.

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One can name numerous historians and other scholars who are usually remembered for the one book that marked their career and from which they developed numerous subsequent publications, often giving rise to diverse areas of interest. Gail Minault, on the other hand, is amongst those few historians who are known for publishing two very distinct and different books, both highly original and pathbreaking, both of which have given rise to numerous subsequent publications by her students and other scholars in different fields. Both, *The Khilafat Movement* (1982) and *Secluded Scholars* (1998), have received much acclaim and are recognized as among the most outstanding manuscripts on, respectively, Muslim women writers writing in Urdu in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and on one of the more important political movements of early twentieth-century colonial India. This edited volume under review here is, as the editors inform us, a “celebration of Gail Minault’s legacy at the University of Texas at Austin” (p. xi), where a number of eminent scholars presented papers as a tribute to Minault and contributed to this volume, while others not present added to the collection.

Some of the contributors are Minault’s contemporaries, others her students, allowing us to also observe intergenerational changes to the nature of scholarship. All the contributors pay homage to Minault, linking up their own work with hers, or then taking many leads and diversifying into their own particular interest. Three of the first generation of scholars of Muslim India writing in the 1970s and 1980s, Barbara Metcalf, David Lelyveld, and Francis Robinson, are represented in this collection, as are those from a later generation who have already made a name for themselves, such as Azfar Moin, Syed

Akbar Hyder, and Shahzad Bashir. A number of more recent scholars working on Urdu, Muslims, or women, all themes which engage with Minault’s work, are also among the authors, as are some of her students who work on other, though related, areas. Articles by the doyen of Urdu studies, C. M. Naim, with a “distinctive style of his own” (p. 182)—a phrase which Naim uses for Khwaja Hasan Nizami in this collection—and Sylvia Vatuk, bringing in a particularly interesting piece about education in colonial Madras, complete the thirteen chapters. Three poems by the well-known Urdu poet Ishrat Afreen, paying tribute to Gail Minault, all translated, accompany this volume.

A brief introduction by the co-editors introduces Minault’s work, outlining her contribution and legacy and informing us as to how the other chapters in the book evolve from her work. The first chapter, by Francis Robinson, on Maulana Jamal Mian of the Farangi Mahall family of ulama, is particularly interesting on how Jamal Mian became a Pakistani, of sorts, after Partition. Oddly though, rather than a tribute to Minault, Robinson offers an inadvertent tribute to a much younger scholar, Vazira Zamindar, and her *Long Partition* (2007), citing her book twice but misspelling her name. Nevertheless, Robinson’s chapter is a particularly interesting extension to Zamindar’s *Long Partition*, because he examines how Jamal Mian negotiated “permits, no objection certificates, passports, visas” (p. 21)—Jamal Mian’s “Long Partition,” as Robinson calls it—in East Pakistan rather than in Pakistan’s western wing, a story that has been much retold. The essay is particularly interesting also because it talks about the life of the Muslim elite of north India after Partition, a small, rich, politically important and con-

nected clique who ran Pakistan, a group of “old friends,” as Robinson shows us. (One irritant, which one of the editors, with his knowledge of Urdu poetry should have corrected for, is the hugely incorrect term *shahr-e ashob*, which now needs to be replaced, once and for all, with *shahr-ashob*, although I think many who use either term have not really understood its nuance or context.)

Amber Abbas, in “Belonging and the Beginning of the Past in Pakistan,” while considering “Partition as a process,” fails to mention either Vazira Zamindar’s work, or even Faisal Devji’s *Muslim Zion* (2013), both highly relevant to how a past is imagined, remembered, and reconstructed decades later. By using what she calls “oral history,” Abbas examines and cites the opinions of four old men—two of whom were Pakistani generals—and tries to show how their “narratives reveal diverse views of Pakistan’s history, even among the educated classes” (p. 41). Shahzad Bashir, on the other hand, brings us back from Partition’s edge to the late nineteenth-century world of Urdu fiction and locates and presents a superb examination of Dipti Nazir Ahmad’s novel, *Ibnulvaqt* (1888), with much discussion on the nature of European and Indian civilization and in/civility. While Nazir Ahmad’s other novels are much cited and have been translated, Bashir makes the strong case for scholars working on Muslim north India of the nineteenth century to read and understand *Ibnulvaqt* very much as a social text, allowing us to think “about cultural and political subjectivity in the colonial context” (p. 65).

Azfar Moin’s essay on the Pakistani (now based in Canada) “preacher,” the “self-styled religious leader and educator of Muslim women” (p. 69) Farhat Hashmi of the Al-Huda movement, based on his interviews in Pakistan in 2003 and 2004, is quite outdated and out of sync with academic, social, and cultural material on both “feminist discourse” and the location of dars and, especially, Farhat Hashmi’s contribution in Pakistan two decades later. While Moin purports to “examine the ‘feminist’ discourse of Farhat Hashmi in historical and cultural contexts” (p. 70), he fails at this precisely because so much has changed since 2003, and his references, examples of cultural symbols—such as the television programs he cites—and use of terms such as “secular liberal feminism” or references to the now deceased human rights and feminist lawyer Asma Jahangir, all suggest that he is unfamiliar with Pakistan today. Moin’s diasporic lens fails him, and far more relevant and incisive academic work on Islam, women, feminism, and even on Farhat Hashmi is easily available in and from Pakistan today, especially by Pakistani women scholars.

Both David Lelyveld and Barbara Metcalf return to Muslim women in a colonial context, where Urdu played a critical role in forming identities and subjectivities, interests that were close to Gail Minault. Lelyveld examines how the modern, “enlightened” Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan dealt with the “problem” of women in the social and cultural public sphere he encountered and created, and Metcalf examines the public negotiation of one of the few public women of the nineteenth century, the Begum of Bhopal, both essays dealing with (especially Muslim) women’s education. Both Lelyveld and Metcalf, using, respectively, Sayyid Ahmad and the Begum of Bhopal, expertly link areas of reading, writing, and education with larger questions about women and their location in a Muslim cultural and social context in the late nineteenth century. Sylvia Vatuk adds a particularly interesting essay with regard to nineteenth-century Madras, where a scholarly Muslim family negotiates Western schooling, dealing with what constitutes *ilm* and knowledge for the purpose of finding a job. Since, with a few notable exceptions, much of the scholarship on Muslims in India in the colonial era has been on north Indian, that is, Hindustani, Muslims, Vatuk’s essay about Muslims in the south makes one think further about parallels and dissimilarities in very different cultural contexts. Clearly, far more work is needed on Muslims in colonial India outside of Hindustan.

C. M. Naim narrates the acerbic exchanges between a number of Urdu writers, embroiling many, including Muhammad Ali, the editor-publisher of the influential daily *Hamdard*, the Aligarhist novelist Zafar Omar, and Khwaja Hasan Nizami, in the first quarter of the twentieth century, when “the mighty battle of words raged in Urdu journals of north India for several months” (p.184), a “brouhaha” of verbal warfare, revealing a vibrant, biting, Urdu public sphere. Omar had been the personal secretary of the Begum of Bhopal and acquired much fame writing novels, while Nizami, also a graduate of Aligarh, was an editor and publisher of numerous magazines and periodicals. Naim ends his essay with a reference to Yas Yagana Changezi, “a great but eccentric Muslim poet in Lucknow [who] was accused of writing quatrains that were insulting to the Prophet” (p. 188), who becomes the central character in the essay by Syed Akbar Hyder, in which Changezi, Sadat Hasan Manto, and Mirza Ghalib “refuse[] to cede power to the gatekeepers of literary and cultural canons” (p. 217). Hyder shows how “Yaganah, like Manto, captured Urdu’s populist spirit by writing in a language with a vocabulary accessible to the masses” (p. 203), and hence, because of the “Persianization of Urdu,”

attacked Ghalib, finding fault with his language, whereas Hyder says Yaganah accused Ghalib of “the pretentious Persianization that makes the ghazal experience tedious and contrived” (p. 203). Both Naim and Hyder illuminate the reality of a caustic literary Urdu world, far removed from the niceties of a presumed Lukhnavi *adab* and *tehzeeb*.

Asiya Alam’s piece examines women’s conjugality and education through two Urdu texts from the early 1900s, one written by a woman. Muhammadi Begum wrote *Rafiq-e Arus* based on her father’s advice on how to cope with married life, while *Falsafa-e Izdivaj* was written by Hyderabad-based Syed Ali Asghar Bilgrami when he was eighteen years old, based on Sylvanus Stall’s *What a Husband Ought to Know*, where the author brings in his “Islamic culture and history,” although as Alam argues, Bilgrami’s is an unusual text because of the “absence of any demands of piety in the life of a ‘good’ husband or

wife” (p. 118). Other contributors to the volume include Aarti Bhalodia on female emancipation education in the Gondal state across the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Leah Renold’s intriguing history (and myths) surrounding the land grant to the Banaras Hindu University, and Julie E. Hughes’s contribution on tigers as pets in colonial India and how animals as symbols represented different things to the colonialists and to their subjects.

This diverse collection is a deservedly rich tribute to a scholar who has left her mark on many areas of scholarship on Indian Muslims and Urdu, women and education, and on the many subjectivities formed as a consequence. A different generation is now emerging to take Minault’s work, and that of the first generation, forward. The numerous possibilities and wide variety in the study of South Asian Muslims, and of Urdu, in the colonial era could not be richer.

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