

Comparative Linguistics as Ethnology: In Search of Indo-Germans in Central Asia, 1770–1830

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On 11 January 1809, the German Orientalist Heinrich Julius von Klaproth (1783–1835) returned to St. Petersburg, suffering from a high fever that had killed his travel companions in the Caucasus mountains. For over a year, Klaproth and his assistants had plodded through “tiefen und mürben Schnee” [deep and unsound snow] to reach remote mountain villages in the provinces stretching between Baku and the Volga-Don line. The Russian Academy of Sciences had engaged them to complete a geographic and ethnographic survey of those northern areas recently brought under Czar Alexander’s control and those further south still being contested militarily. But the twenty-five-year-old Klaproth was most interested in taking linguistic samples of the myriad little-known tongues spoken in Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. He was drawn by the prospect of finding surviving evidence of “Medo-Germans” who he believed had once inhabited the Caucasus or traversed the region during their prehistoric migrations westward into Europe. Klaproth was not disappointed. His memoirs recall encountering speakers of the Ossetian language not far from the Inguri and Terek rivers. To his delight the members of this tribe appeared to use root words similar to those in German and Persian and had curiously blue eyes and blond or red hair.¹ Based on his findings, Klaproth proposed the term *indogermanisch* (Indo-Germanic) in 1823 to designate those tongues and peoples he believed had descended from a common Central Asian homeland or *Urheimat*.²

Julius Klaproth was one in a long line of German Orientalists whose linguistic talents served the Russian Empire. His concern for the prehistoric ties early Germans may have had to the East also exemplifies a key preoccupation of nineteenth-century German Orientalism. Was the cultural starting point of the German nation to be found in Central Asia? How could comparative philology aid in this search? Russian imperial expansion into the Persian and Ottoman Empires provided Klaproth with the opportunity to seek first-hand evidence of Germanic migration across the so-called

“Völkerbrücke aus Asia nach Europa” [bridge of nations from Asia to Europe].³ His research falls within a tradition of German language study that aided colonization of the Russian borderlands. It also suggests the historical significance of philology to early-nineteenth-century German Orientalism and points to an overwhelmingly positive national identification that German scholars cultivated with Central Asia as a possible primordial homeland. Since the publication of Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1978), there have been numerous attempts to identify an “Orient” that was the particular preserve of German scholarship and to characterize the relationship between knowledge and power among Orientalists trained in states without colonies.⁴ This paper suggests that nineteenth-century German language scholars showed a particular concern for Central Asia. Their research facilitated colonial expansion into the region; it also contributed to a new Orientalist definition of German national culture.

This paper takes specific issue with Said’s claim that Germany lacked “a protracted, sustained, national interest” in the East.⁵ The prestige of language study in Germany renders Said’s dismissal a major oversight. Early nineteenth-century Orientalists did in fact create an enduring model of German national origins that embraced the prospect of an Eastern cultural inheritance. This paper highlights the importance of comparative philology to German conceptions of culture, especially to the emergence of an Orientalist form of ethnology that used a historicist search for origins and primordial cultural forms to classify the peoples of Central Asia. Specifically, it examines the ethnological conclusions that followed the invention of the Indo-European language family and subsequent attempts by German Orientalists to discover what they thought to be distant relatives of modern German speakers, peoples who had stayed behind in the supposed Indo-European homeland when the Germanic tribes had migrated westward into Europe.⁶ A particular approach to language studies,

comparative-historical philology rose to prominence in Germany during the first half of the nineteenth century and made the interpretation of words central to a historical definition of cultures and to an ethnological project of establishing genealogical relations among the world's nations.

In exploring the ties between comparative philology and ethnology, we must keep two larger questions in mind. First, why did language emerge as such a powerful metaphor for the representation of national culture in Germany? Words have not always marked national boundaries. But a long and specific process of modernization in Central Europe had prepared the prophets of German nationalism to regard their homeland as a linguistic community. By the late eighteenth century, discussions of words and grammatical structures had become important venues for German national self-definition and for ethnological reflection. The linguistic theory of Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803) contributed to this development by endowing words, and the memories they preserved of German speakers' common descent, with almost mythic powers to create culture and community. Second, this paper examines the role of comparative-historical philologists, and especially of German Orientalists, in revising the traditional biblical framework in which much previous ethnological work had been structured. Comparative philology, as it emerged in the early nineteenth century, enabled a new type of comparative cultural history that rewrote the genealogical table presented in the Old Testament, challenging its monogenetic view of human origins and seeking more scientific models for the emergence of cultural diversity than the story of Genesis. As such, Orientalist research on Central Asian tongues contributed to the formation of scholarly disciplines in nineteenth-century Germany and Russia.

Philology and “Mosaic Ethnology”

Since the writing of the Jewish Bible, and in all the religious traditions that drew on this source, language has been interpreted as an indication of the genealogical relations among human communities. Genesis suggests that Noah's three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, were responsible for spreading the diverse national tongues across the globe, and for centuries researchers tried to align existing languages and peoples with biblical figures. Medieval scholars, for example, compiled lists of the supposed seventy-two world languages and aligned them with the seventy-two descendants of Noah's sons named in Genesis.⁷ Thomas Trautmann has aptly described this tradition of classifying nations and peoples based on the book of Genesis as “Mosaic ethnology,”⁸ and it is within this Christian context that the German relationship to the East existed in the late eighteenth century. Ethnology, the descriptive study of diverse hu-

man communities, has its roots in the linguistic and historical theories of this period, and in a specifically German tradition that is tied to the legacy of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646–1716) and to authors of universal history.⁹

Writing in the political chaos that followed the Thirty Years War, Leibniz recognized the central role of linguistic homogeneity in the formation of nations and was a chief advocate of strengthening the “teutsche Nation” through devotion to the vernacular. As the founder and first president of the learned society that evolved into the Prussian Academy of Sciences, Leibniz proposed compiling a comprehensive historical dictionary of German and its dialects.¹⁰ German, he believed, was equally as ancient as Hebrew and, in a more archaic form, had probably once reigned over much of Asia and Europe.¹¹ Leibniz likewise demonstrated how the study of individual tongues could be used to establish genealogical relationships of historical descent among nations. Words, in his view, were “the oldest monuments of peoples” that “best indicate[d] their origins, kinships and migrations.” He himself classified the world's languages into two “species,” the northern Japhetic family and the Aramaic of the south; he was the first to suspect historical ties between Finnish and Hungarian and to use archaic river and place names in tracing the migrations of peoples, especially the Basques.¹²

The emergence of ethnology as a field in late eighteenth-century Germany was directly inspired by Leibniz's linguistic initiative. In 1713, he had written to Peter the Great encouraging him to survey the many non-European languages found in the expanding Russian Empire. Half a century later, the Göttingen Orientalist and historian August Ludwig Schlözer (1735–1809) undertook to classify the peoples inhabiting the region that stretched from Iceland to Kamtchatka based on the word lists that German scholars had subsequently assembled in the reign of Catherine the Great. His *Allgemeine Nordische Geschichte* (General History of the North, 1771) coined the terms *Ethnographie* and *Völkerkunde* (science of peoples) and explained how Leibniz's proposition “von der Einheit der Sprache und Abkunft auf eine Gleichheit der Sitten und Schicksale ... zu schlüssen” [to infer from uniformities in language and descent... that nations share in the same customs and fate] made possible a new *Völkerkunde*:

Hierüber aber befrage ich keine Geschicht- oder Reiseschreiber, sondern ich untersuche diese Sprachen selbst aus den von ihnen vorhandenen Sprachlehrer, Wörterbücher, auch Bibelübersetzungen Diese Sprachen klaßificire ich nach Hauptsprachen und Mundarten, und bestimme darnach auch die Völker-Klassen nebst ihren Unterabtheilungen. [In this I consult no history or travel books, rather I examine the languages themselves based on the available

grammars, dictionaries, and Bible translations Then I classify these languages according to the main tongues and vernaculars and determine from them classes of people along with their subdivisions.¹³

On the basis of language, Schlözer believed himself to have identified the five main peoples living west of the Ural mountains (Finns, Latvians, Slavs, Germans, and Samoyeds) and the twenty-two primary linguistic groups of the Asian north.

Schlözer's work is significant for the priority it assigned to language in the identification of ethnic groups. He outlined three defining features that helped constitute a *Volk*: geographical proximity, common descent, and membership in a political community; all were "von dem Sprachgebrauch abstrahirt, dessen Eigensinn die Historie so wenig als die Philosophie überwinden kann" [derived from the use of language, whose force neither history nor philosophy can overcome].¹⁴ But Schlözer's view of language was not sufficiently historical to enable him to turn his essentially static or Linnaean system of northern peoples into a historical narrative of common descent. As soon as he integrated linguistic communities into larger historical continuities, Schlözer ceased to regard them on their own terms, characterizing peoples solely based on their position within the progress and development of the human species in its totality.¹⁵ Although he longed to reconstruct a genealogy of peoples that led from Adam and the Old Testament to the current inhabitants of the north, Schlözer feared that the necessary "Mittelglieder" [middle links] between languages spoken by followers of Noah's sons and his own subjects could never be recovered.¹⁶ Until the nineteenth century, etymology was largely a speculative science. Comparativists lacked adequate tools for bridging the historical distance between recorded languages and those prehistoric tongues alluded to in the Jewish Bible.

Most eighteenth-century scholars with knowledge of non-European languages tended to be biblical philologists who learned Arabic, Syriac, and Aramaic in an effort to interpret scripture critically and historically. Schlözer's mentor in Göttingen, the Orientalist Johann David Michaelis (1717–91), for example, built his career interpreting the Old Testament as a historical product of the ancient nation of Israel. He hoped to "de-Orientalize" contemporary Christianity by excerpting universally valid elements of the faith from what was otherwise a culturally specific product of the Hebrews.¹⁷ His *Dissertation on the Influence of Opinions on Language, and of Language on Opinions* (1759), the winning entry in a contest hosted by the Prussian Academy of Sciences, is filled with examples of how the truths of divine revelation could be separated from the historical and social context in which scripture was written by identifying how nationally specific aspects of the biblical languages might have altered the message of God. Michaelis cau-

tioned that some exegetes had perpetuated mistakes found in scripture because they falsely assumed that "the Hebrew people had never spoke a word but was inspired, or [that] the prophets writing in that language, had not been obliged to make use of popular expressions." The *Dissertation* suggested how the study of historical languages could rectify this problem.

Thus, for Michaelis, the linguistic conventions of Oriental tongues distorted religious truth, as seen, for example, in stories involving the term *celestial manna*. Both the Arabs and the Hebrews claimed that the substance miraculously supplied as food to the children of Israel during their progress through the wilderness came from heaven, or "fell." Scripture associates manna with dew. And, Michaelis feared, the fact that the substance was "no more than a gum exuding from plants" was obscured when Moses made use of Israelite expressions that wrongly held that dew "came from above," not from the earth. According to Michaelis, "The Jews in Jesus' time went still farther, making this error a handle to disparage the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves."¹⁸ Recognizing errors in the metaphors associated with dew in Arabic and Hebrew and subsequently transferred to manna would confirm Christ's claim that the bread Moses gave his children did not come from heaven.

Pietist theologians, including the mystic Johann Georg Hamann (1730–88), assumed all ancient poetry, not only religious texts, contained a hidden symbolism and vestiges of divine revelation. Hamann set alternative expectations for interpreting "Oriental" languages that drew on the traditions of the kabala and on arguments neo-pietists launched against the rationalist theology of Christian Wolff (1679–1754).¹⁹ In critical opposition to Michaelis, he insisted that the word of God had been symbolic and magical. For Hamann, God was "der Poet am Anfange der Tage" [the poet at the beginning of days].²⁰ The creative power of the word had been the medium through which God had created the world and all living creatures; the same word, as revealed in the gospel, had the force to redeem the spiritual life of man. History, creation, and the natural world therefore presented themselves in the secret, symbolic language of the divine. For Hamann, all peoples, not just the chosen few, had equal claim to spiritual truth. In his view, "Poesie ist die Muttersprache des menschlichen Geschlechts" [Poetry is the mother tongue of the human race].²¹ As the oldest languages for which evidence supposedly existed, however, Oriental tongues were the most poetic and spiritually symbolic and thus promised to bring Hamann closer to divine truth. He studied Arabic, Hebrew, Chaldean, Aramaic, and some Armenian, Turkish, and Tibetan to apprehend better the literary and magical qualities of the oldest form of divine revelation. Hamann passed this mystical regard for ancient Eastern

texts to the early Romantics, who expected to find in them sources for rejuvenating the spiritual life of a disenchanted present.

Hamann's most celebrated disciple, the East Prussian theologian Johann Gottfried Herder, proclaimed language to be a human invention and grafted an ethnological imperative onto the study of archaic words. National tongues, for Herder, expressed the soul or spirit of those who spoke them, rather than the divine word of God. Following Hamann, he rejected the Enlightenment's focus on how linguistic signs furthered knowledge, denying that words were transparent vehicles of communication and cognition. For Herder, semiotics, the study of words and signification, was no longer a tool for perfecting communication and cognition, as it had been for John Locke or Étienne de Condillac. Rather, in his view, the study of national sign systems aimed at an "Entzierferung der Menschlichen Seele aus ihrer Sprache" [deciphering the human soul out of language].²² Herder's *Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache* (Essay on the Origin of Language, 1772) asserted that language did not mirror a preexisting metaphysical or empirical reality. Rather, it was the historical product of particular human communities. Herder located the act of linguistic signification in the soul of the *Volk*, suggesting that individual national tongues actually expressed the character of a specific people.²³ In his view, language had no external referent other than the subjectivity of speakers; it represented the mode of consciousness through which particular linguistic communities experienced the world and gave voice to their inner life.

Language was an agent of historical transformation in Herder's linguistic theory, an independent force that helped determine the character of a people, as well as how that people exercised their powers of reason and reflection. He considered each national tongue to be a living organism with its own independent trajectory of historical growth. It had its own internal laws of change, undergoing in its lifetime three developmental stages akin to childhood, youth, and old age. A language's own inner principles of growth defined in a determinate way the possible forms in which a nation could articulate and realize its inner essence. Herder portrayed each national language as the "Schatzkammer" [treasure chest] or "Behältniß" [receptacle] for the "Gedankenschatz eines ganzen Volks" [entire collection of a people's thoughts].²⁴ Through the centuries, each generation of speakers had borrowed and selected its defining ideas from the national treasure trove, altered them, and deposited new and refined traditions back into the mother tongue. The store of linguistic forms received by a community set the possibilities for how its life force was expressed at any given moment in time.

This perspective provided German philologists with a

new template for applying comparative language studies to the classification of human communities. First, language was confirmed as the privileged medium through which national groups were formed and that gave expression to their inner essence. Because words were constitutive of culture and community, ethnographers had to base their characterizations of national groups primarily on an interpretation of language and its cultural expressions. Second, the study of culture and community had to be historical and concerned with origins. Reconstructing a nation's cultural starting point was necessary to comprehend fully the progressive unfolding of its identity. The original cultural forms with which a nation came into existence set the parameters for its further development, so that the relations between existing nations could only be understood with reference to their cultural starting points in antiquity. Permeating this genealogical concern for language was, finally, a religious sensibility that turned to the East as the site of a divine revelation that antedated the word of God as it had been transmitted in Judeo-Christian tradition.

Herder himself outlined an ambitious philological project upon which nineteenth-century scholars with better understandings of grammar and etymology later embarked. He remarked on the difficult yet rewarding task of the "Philolog der Nation" [national philologist], who interpreted the history of words themselves for their greatest possible ramifications.²⁵ In his *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (Ideas on the History of the Philosophy of Mankind, 1785–7), Herder specifically raised the expectation that "another Leibniz" would emerge to complete the ethnographic project that comparative philologists such as Schlözer had begun. Language was the means to develop the humanity of the species. Therefore, "die Gegeneinanderstellung verschiedener cultivirter Sprachen mit den verschiedenen Revolutionen ihrer Völker würde ein wandelbares Gemälde der mannichfaltigen Fortbildung des menschlichen Geistes zeigen" [a comparison of different cultivated languages with the different revolutions of their peoples would reveal ... a changing landscape of the manifold development of the human spirit].²⁶ At the end of the eighteenth century, the philologists of the nation – most of classical training – still lacked the technical skills and linguistic materials necessary to complete what Herder envisioned as an "allgemeinen Physiognomik der Völker aus ihren Sprachen" [general physiognomy of nations based on their languages].²⁷ General theories on the origin of language were highly speculative in the absence of adequate data from actual languages, and despite the broad historical orientation of eighteenth-century linguistics, methods for establishing genealogical relations among languages were largely deficient.²⁸ Comparative philology and the work of Sir

William Jones promised to resolve these problems.

Before Babel: India and the German *Urheimat*

Speculation on the likely location of the Garden of Eden had long encouraged Europeans to turn east in their search for origins. The philosophical cultural histories of late Enlightenment scholars such as Herder presumed Central Asia, specifically the region around Kashmir, to be the cradle of humanity and by extension the ultimate point of origin of all Europeans.²⁹ The German connection to Central Asia could not be confirmed by concrete historical or linguistic evidence, however. In the late eighteenth century, genealogies of language aimed primarily at identifying the relative progress with which individual idioms allowed for the exercise of reason and not at reconstructing the history of human communities. Even those scholars with a historical interest in language, such as the preeminent German comparativist Johann Christoph Adelung (1732–1806), had to conclude that “Noah’s Arche ist mir eine verschlossene Burg, und Babylons Schutt bleibt vor mir völlig in seiner Ruhe” [Noah’s Ark is a sealed bastion, and the ruins of Babylon lie quietly before me].³⁰ The gap between languages of historical record and the time of Babel was impassable without methods for reconstructing prehistoric linguistic states. Late-eighteenth-century comparativists could trace the actual ancestry of modern Germans only as far east and “back in time” as Iran.

As the lingua franca of South and Central Asia and the language in which East India Company officials were trained, Persian was well known to European scholars, and its connections to German were readily apparent.³¹ Scholars intrigued by possible German ties to the East thus focused on the similarities between their mother tongue and Persian, drawing on a tradition of language comparison that dated to the sixteenth century and relied primarily on lexical items.³² Similar-sounding words in German and Persian (such as *Bruder* and *barâdar*) could be shown to have equivalent meanings (in this case, “brother”), from which the researcher could conclude that the two languages were related. This approach to comparative linguistics invested instances of lexical convergence with genealogical significance but without sophisticated mechanisms for tracing lineage or linking such ties to affinities in the collective consciousness of speakers. Words were regarded as one-dimensional tags or external signposts delineating the boundaries between linguistic communities and bearing the imprint of historical encounter. They revealed little about the inner life or spirit of the people that spoke them and invited little speculation about national character.

Published in the year of his death, Adelung’s *Aelteste Geschichte der Deutschen* (Ancient History of the Germans,

1806) explored the German-Persian connection. Even at this late date, the comparativist concluded that similarities between the root syllables of the two tongues were so compelling that they could not be explained by borrowing or mixing but only by “eine ursprüngliche Abstammung” [an original derivation] of the languages and peoples from each other.³³ In his view, the Goths had enjoyed a “langen Aufenthalt” [long sojourn] on the Black Sea, from where they had penetrated parts of Iran and lived in close proximity with its inhabitants. These tribes adopted so much of the local language that, according to Adelung, German must be seen as “einem, obgleich sehr ausgearteten Abkömmling des Parsi, der *Ursprache* der südlichen Provinzen” [a very deteriorated descendant of Parsi, the original language of the southern provinces].³⁴ Notably, Adelung refused to pinpoint the exact location in Asia from which the Goths had swept into Persia, leaving open the question of the ultimate origins of Germans and humankind. He recognized the great age of Sanskrit, but neglected to connect it directly to German, grouping ancient Indic together with such unrelated languages as Hebrew, Syrian, and Turkish.³⁵ Adelung later speculated that the cradle of civilization where “die ehrwürdigen Anherrn aller ... Völker und Sprachen” [the honorable ancestors of all ... peoples and languages] once resided likely lay somewhere in the eastern part of Kashmir, near Tibet. This region he described as an Asian “Paradies” [paradise] akin to the Garden of Eden: the first human couple was at home here, and the most simple monosyllabic languages from which all others derived flourished in its protective embrace.³⁶ But Adelung could not connect Persian to the language of Adam.

A better understanding of how to reconstruct the archaic states of a language as a basis for determining the proximity of linguistic groups enabled Sir William Jones to see connections between Sanskrit, or ancient Indic, Slavic, German, and the classical European tongues in 1786. His “discovery” of the Indo-European language family is often depicted as a decisive break from speculative biblical narrative, but his realization that Persian was related to ancient Indic initially did little more than bring European scholars closer to Eden and push European ancestry deeper into Asia. In his Presidential Address to the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Jones observed that Sanskrit bore to Greek and Latin “a stronger affinity both in the roots of verbs and in the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong indeed that no philologist could examine them all three, without believing them to have sprung from some common source.”³⁷ These words inaugurated modern, scientific philological discourse. Jones demonstrated the greater reliability of grammatical rather than lexical comparisons, and identified most major branches of what became known as the

Indo-European language family; he also suspected the existence of a common mother tongue, more ancient than Sanskrit itself, that has now been reconstructed as Proto-Indo-European.

But in its eighteenth-century form, the Indo-European thesis was little more than an attempt to practice Mosaic ethnology. Jones was reluctant to consider himself a linguist per se and never questioned the pre-modern assumption that language was a perfectible instrument of knowledge and not an object of study itself. His comparisons were intended to show the common origin of what were believed to be the five main Asian peoples (Persians, Chaldeans, Turks, Indians, and Chinese) and ultimately to recover the lost common language of Noah and Adam. For this reason he included the unrelated languages of Egypt, China, Japan, Java, and Burma, as well as those of the Incas and Aztecs, in the same family as Sanskrit. Indeed, it was the possibility raised by the mythologist Jacob Bryant that Greeks and Indians were related to Egyptians as common descendants of Ham (not Japheth) that allowed Jones to see ties across the family. He never intended to separate Indo-European and Semitic languages and only inadvertently discovered that Sanskrit bore no resemblance in words or structures to Arabic.³⁸ Nevertheless, Jones's approach to etymology and historical grammar opened a new avenue for reconstructing the early history of languages and peoples that could theoretically reach back to Babel while challenging the genealogical table of the Pentateuch on purely linguistic authority.

Herder and Hamann were seminal figures in the transfer of Indian studies from Britain to Germany. In the last decade of the eighteenth century, Georg Foster (1754–94) and Friedrich Majer (1772–1818) published the first German renditions of the Sanskrit works Jones had translated into English. Fascinated by the religious and philosophical teachings of the Brahmans, especially as found in the mythology of the *Law Book of Manu*, these two introduced Herder, J. W. von Goethe, and Friedrich Schiller to the *Sakuntala*. Herder's commentaries on the drama set the template for the mythical image of India that fascinated the Romantics.³⁹ He and Hamann introduced a new generation to the notion that the first languages and human communities had developed in India, awakening in them intellectual expectations greater and more enduring than those of their British colleagues.⁴⁰

The eager reception of comparative philology in Germany and its rapid decline across the Channel can be attributed to more than the sobering effects of Britain's colonial encounter. Differing conceptions of language and its perceived role in molding human communities attracted German scholars to Indian texts, as did a romantic longing for their spiritual content. Hans Aarsleff has argued that the legacy of language theorist

Horne Tooke rendered British scholars indifferent to the comparative-historical techniques introduced by Jones. Until 1830 British scholars persisted in regarding language as a reflection of the rational structures of the human mind. On the Continent, by contrast, Condillac's efforts to link the "génie" [genius] of national tongues to the character of their speakers reinforced a long tradition by which German scholars had defined their fatherland in linguistic terms.⁴¹ Herder in turn strengthened existing associations between language and nationality by asserting that words stood not for ideas in the minds of men but for the particular mode of consciousness with which speakers reflected on and constituted the empirical world.

During the upsurge of national sentiment that followed Napoleon's defeat of Prussia in 1806, a younger generation of German Orientalists embarked on a program of national self-definition that translated the notion of the Indo-European language family into a search for the nation's formative cultural origins in the East. Friedrich Schlegel's essay *Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier* (On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians, 1808), which drew heavily on Jones's discourses, lent this project a religious overtone. Previous work in comparative Indian, Greek, and Germanic mythology had led Schlegel to expect he would find evidence of a primordial religion (*Urreligion*) in India whose principles would reconcile apparent deviations in later accounts of the divine. In 1802, he had traveled to Paris where he was introduced to Persian by Antoine-Léonard de Chézy and received private lessons in Sanskrit from Alexander Hamilton. Ultimately, however, the pantheism of Indian philosophy failed to satisfy Schlegel's expectations for religious awakening. He broke off his Sanskrit studies and converted to Catholicism less than a decade after he had begun.⁴² Nevertheless, for a brief period of time, India stood as the site of "highest Romanticism" for Schlegel, which, when combined with the new prospect that German speakers might have particularly close ties to the language of paradise, was an irresistible attraction. For Schlegel not only revered India as the original source of religious inspiration. He suspected India to be the most likely *Urheimat* of Germans in Asia and offered evidence in his work that the earliest German speakers had migrated westward from this land.

The narrative of German descent from India that Schlegel elaborated in "On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians" followed traditional biblical notions of the emergence of cultural difference. By this account, German speakers and related linguistic groups originated from a sacred homeland in the East that had also been the site of the "ursprüngliche Offenbarung" [first revelation]. Humanity had experienced its first religious awakening and been introduced to the idea of the true God in a terrestrial Indian paradise. Sanskrit, in

Schlegel's analysis, was the oldest descendant, the most proximate historical language of the lost *Ursprache* or divine first language of revelation.⁴³ At the same time, Schlegel drew on affinities in language, mythology, law, and architecture to conclude that "die größten Reiche und vornehmsten Nationen" [the greatest empires and most noble nations] of antiquity, including the Egyptians and Hebrews, were "Colonien" [colonies] founded by Indian priests. He distinguished the first Germans as one of several "abgestammten Nationen" [descended nations] or emigrant groups, also including the Persians, who had left Asia during a period of religious strife and civil war that followed disagreement over the meaning of God's word.⁴⁴ In his analysis, the Germanic tribes had left Turkestan along the Gihon for the north side of the Caspian Sea, from where they crossed the Caucasus and headed north into Scandinavia.

Schlegel, however, altered the Christian narrative of Asian descent by claiming only one people to have been witness to God's word. In 1808 he opposed those populations whose languages pointed to a "gemeinschaftliche Abstammung" [common descent] from Sanskrit from those for whom "keine ursprüngliche Verwandtschaft" [no original kinship] could be determined. In his view, Latin, Greek, Persian, and German could all be "aus dem Indischen sich ableiten und nach ihrer Zusammensetzung erklären lassen" [derived from Indic and understood based on its composition]. He founded this assumption initially on the affinity of root words common to them all, such as the names for mother, father, brother, and sister, but extended his analysis into their "innerste Struktur und Grammatik" [innermost structure and grammar].⁴⁵ Specifically, Schlegel discerned in the above languages a "Gleichheit des Principis, alle Verhältnisse und Nebenbestimmungen der Bedeutung nicht durch angehängte Partikeln oder Hülfsverba, sondern durch *Flexion* d.h. durch ihre Modification der Wurzel zu erkennen" [shared principle by which all relationships and subtleties of meaning are signified not by appended particles or helping verbs, but rather by *inflection*, that is by modification to the root]. Those languages that derived from Sanskrit were united by their common use of changes to the roots of words to signify grammatical functions such as number or tense. In his analysis, Sanskrit and its cognates were "organisch" [organic] and flexional; the root was a "lebendiger Keim" [living seed] that expressed its grammatical function through "innre Veränderung" [inner change].⁴⁶

The conglomeration of languages to which Schlegel attributed Indian origins was set apart from a more varied second group, including Chinese, Hebrew, Arabic, and American Indian languages, that had a "durchaus entgegengesetzte Grammatik" [diametrically opposed grammar]. He characterized these lesser tongues as

"mechanisch" [mechanical] rather than "organic," because they made use "statt der Flexion nur *Affixā*" [only of affixes rather than inflection] and expressed grammatical relationships with the help of a "hinzugefügtes Wort" [added word].⁴⁷ This second group supposedly evolved from the languages of primitive "Urbewohner" [natives] who lived in areas outside of India and had not been privileged to the word of God, developing their speech instead from simple cries and sounds found in nature. These "wilderer Völker" [wilder peoples], in his view, tended to be "für sich isoliert" [isolated unto themselves] and "nicht kultiviert" [uncultivated], and had contributed little to the "moralische Entwicklung" [moral development] of humanity.⁴⁸ Significantly, he believed the first Germans had left India in search of the holy mountain Meru, celebrated in ancient legend, and were drawn towards Scandinavia by "ein wunderbarer Begriff von der hohen Würde und Herrlichkeit des Nordens" [a wonderful notion of the great dignity and splendor of the north].⁴⁹

With a tantalizing reference that further research into Indian antiquity was "für unsre vaterländische Geschichte sehr wichtig" [very important for the history of our fatherland], Schlegel invited scholars with more directly nationalist concerns to turn eastward.⁵⁰ His work initially had a mixed reception during the Napoleonic period due to his accepting employment at the Austrian imperial court, the symbol of reactionary politics.⁵¹ But it found a host of welcoming readers among Bavarians, including Franz Bopp (1791–1867), Othmar Frank (1770–1840), and the poet-Orientalist Friedrich Rückert (1788–1866). Rückert, in particular, followed Schlegel in associating India jointly with the origins of the German nation and with a Golden Age before Babel in which the divine had been revealed in language. The celebrated author of the patriotic *Fiery Sonnets* (1814) reworked Schlegel's expectations of finding religious revival in the East into salvationist national narratives that promised the resurrection of spiritual harmony as the basis of German national unity. This fusion of Christian and national narratives resulted in an enduring conception of German national culture that anticipated a kind of millenarian fulfillment in which German speakers resurrected Babel and emerged as a people chosen by God.

Despite Schlegel, it was fairly quickly established that Sanskrit was not the primordial mother from which all Indo-Germanic languages had descended. More precise methods for comparing tongues allowed his successor, the Berlin Indologist Franz Bopp, to hypothesize the existence of a more ancient common tongue outside of India, now known as Proto-Indo-European, from which Sanskrit and other related languages had evolved independently. Bopp showed comparativists that they could construct a genealogy of languages by identifying and

relating affinities in the “Sprachorganismus” [linguistic organism] of each, an internal mechanism of growth that evolved over time and space.⁵² Borrowing terminology from botany and comparative anatomy, Bopp characterized languages as “organische Naturkörper... die nach bestimmten Gesetzen sich bilden, ein inneres Lebensprinzip in sich tragend sich entwickeln, und nach und nach absterben” [organic, natural bodies that evolve and develop according to set laws, carrying within themselves an inner life principle and gradually dying out].⁵³ Bopp held Sanskrit to be the oldest, most perfect of the Indo-European languages for which evidence was extant, but he postulated the existence of an earlier mother tongue from which the historically documented “sister” languages derived.

His foundational work, *On the Conjugation System of Sanskrit* (1816), demonstrated how similarities in the verb conjugation patterns of Greek, Latin, German, and Persian could be used to prove that the languages in question were related and of shared historical origin. Specifically, Bopp argued that for “allen den Sprachen, die von dem Sanskrit, oder mit ihm von einer gemeinschaftlichen Mutter abstammen, keine Verhältnißbestimmung durch eine Flexion ausgedrückt werde, die ihnen nicht mit jener Ursprache gemein sey” [all languages that descend from Sanskrit or with it from a common mother, no grammatical relationship is expressed through an inflection not shared with this original language].⁵⁴ He showed, in other words, that the root form of the verb in Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, German, and Persian underwent a similar series of modifications or inflections when conjugated in a sentence. The truly organic way in which Indo-European verbs inflected was not, according to Bopp, replicated in other language families such as Semitic or Chinese.⁵⁵ Such incongruence in their grammatical structures suggested that there had been no time before Babel when humanity had lived together in mutual understanding and no eastern paradise from which all of the world’s nations had emerged.⁵⁶

By denying the historical existence of one universal human language, Bopp substantially undermined the biblical account of the monogenetic origins of humanity. Sanskrit could no longer be thought of as heir to the divine first language; it was reduced to being merely the closest relative of the common ancestor of the existing Indo-European tongues. Bopp’s work likewise sparked a search for the exact geographical location of the Indo-European homeland in Asia by denying that any one of the presumed *Ursprachen* (Sanskrit, Avestan, ancient Greek, or Hebrew) was actually the most ancient mother tongue. Philologists who followed Bopp postulated an original diversity of languages and nations and began to replace biblical notions of the emergence of cultural difference with secular linguistic genealogies. The first language of the German nation shifted from

being Sanskrit, the presumed heir to the divine *Ursprache*, to the common, secular mother tongue of only those languages more narrowly related to it. At the same time, preconceptions of the universal language’s grammatical perfection, intellectual dexterity, and universal cultural significance were transferred to the inflectional forms typical of German and the Indo-European language family. Those characteristics that had been associated with the divine *Ursprache* continued to be linked to Sanskrit and archaic forms of related languages such as Gothic, and soon assumed their place in arguments for the cultural superiority of their respective nations.

German Orientalists in the Russian Empire

By the 1820s German Orientalists had set out to scour the East for evidence of the “true” Indo-European homeland that supposedly lay to the north and west of India. The Caucasus Mountains and beyond them Central Asia became the focus of intensive German fieldwork sponsored by the Russian Academy of Sciences, which had a strategic interest in mapping the linguistic and ethnographic landscape of the empire’s borderlands. German Orientalists were enticed to the Russian Empire by the possibility of a salary and by the prospect of tracing the westward path taken by Indo-Germans. Scholars such as Christian Martin Frähn, Bernhard Dorn, Isaac Jacob Schmidt, and Julius Klaproth struggled to sort out the linguistic affiliations of the Caucasian tribes and the nomadic peoples of the Central Asian steppes, debating which aspects of their speech were Turkish and which Indo-European.⁵⁷ In so doing, they began to see a correlation between language and the likely physical characteristics of ethnic groups, and began revising the narrative structure of Mosaic ethnology.

In the early nineteenth century the German states were not particularly amenable to pursuing Oriental studies. Colonial powers, such as England and France, were far better equipped to stock their national libraries with manuscript collections and rare reference works. Thus, the Arabist and scholar of Hebrew Heinrich Ewald regretted that Germany still suffered from a “traurigen Mangel an Stoff und Hülfsmiten” [dismal lack of material and resources] in the first volume of the *Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* (Journal for the Study of the Levant, 1837).⁵⁸ Aspiring German scholars regularly made pilgrimages to colonial metropolises, where the royal library in Paris or London’s East India Company offered more vibrant intellectual communities. While increasing substantially in the 1820s, the number of university posts available to Orientalists was also limited. The Prussian statesman Wilhelm von Humboldt had established the first chair in Indology for the Romantic and classically trained philologist August Wilhelm Schlegel in Bonn in 1818. In 1826 alone, im-

portant university positions went to Friedrich Rückert in Erlangen, the Indologist Peter von Bohlen in Königsberg, and to Othmar Frank at the newly founded Ludwig-Maximilian University in Munich. This raised the number of salaried scholars in Oriental languages and literature to a half-dozen. At a time when prominent Germanists, such as Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, still served as librarians, the institutionalization of Oriental studies was notable, but hardly sufficient for what was becoming an internationally recognized group of scholars.

Meanwhile, the imperial ambitions of the Russian czars created a demand for language specialists which Germans readily filled. In the early nineteenth century, Russia was progressively pushing its southernmost border through the Caucasus, annexing territory from Persia and the Ottoman Empire, and exploring the steppes of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. German linguists, such as Julius Klaproth, were invaluable aids in this process. Klaproth had taught himself Chinese while attending the Joachimsthaler Gymnasium in Berlin. His knowledge of the language so attracted the Russian statesman Jan Potocki that he appointed Klaproth professor of Asian languages and literature in St Petersburg in 1804. From 1805 to 1807 Klaproth accompanied a Russian diplomatic mission through Mongolia to the Chinese border, where he studied local languages and collected manuscripts that were eventually sold to the Berlin Academy. The return trip took Klaproth through Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and the Lake Baikal region. One year later he was dispatched on the ill-fated mission to the Caucasus mountains.⁵⁹ Klaproth subsequently helped author an influential plea by the future minister of education, Sergei Uvarov, for the establishment of an Asian academy in Russia, developing for the purpose a detailed series of courses on Oriental languages and literature.⁶⁰ For his services the German scholar was made a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences and was knighted into the order of Vladimir.⁶¹

The development of Oriental studies during the reign of Czar Alexander I (1801–25) was part of a larger project to Europeanize Russia and generally relied on foreign scholars.⁶² The recognized founder of the modern discipline was the Arabist Christian Martin Frähn (1782–1851), a German scholar enticed to enter Russian service by the cultural spoils of its wars. Frähn had studied theology and Oriental languages in Rostock, where he habilitated in 1806 under O. G. Tychsel with an interpretation of the prophet Nahum. Here he also held lectures on Arabic grammar and numismatics. In 1807 Frähn assumed one of the first Russian professorships of Oriental literature in Kasan, with the title of privy councillor. The Arabist applied his talents to writing early histories of Russia and the eastern Arabic empire. After Tychsel's death in 1817, Frähn was offered

the open post in Rostock, which he intended to accept. But en route to Germany he stopped in St. Petersburg to catalogue coins in possession of the Academy of Science and remained indefinitely. The czar named Frähn a member of Academy of Sciences and its head librarian; he also became the director of the affiliated Asian Museum and an honorary librarian of the royal collection. For German scholars interested in the linguistic history of Asia, Russian colonial activity produced a wealth of source material. In Frähn's words,

Ses dernières campagnes contre les Persans et les Turcs ont été illustrées encore par une série de conquêtes dans le domaine de la science; ses généraux n'ont pas seulement rapporté, comme trophées de leurs brillantes victoires, des bouches à feu et des drapeaux ennemis, mais encore des bibliothèques entières de manuscrits; et de même que précédemment notre mission religieuse à Pekin et nos savants voyageurs avaient, par des moyens pacifiques, recueilli une immense quantité de précieux ouvrages littéraires chinois et mongols. [Their last campaigns against the Persians and Turks were once again honored by a series of conquests in the realm of science; their generals not only brought back guns and enemy flags as trophies of their brilliant victories, but also entire libraries of manuscripts; and as before our religious mission in Peking and our traveling scholars have using peaceful means acquired immense quantities of precious Chinese and Mongolian literary works.]⁶³

The German states could offer no such advantages to their fledgling Orientalists.⁶⁴

Frähn brought other German Orientalists to Russia, including Bernhard Dorn (1805–81), who had a specific interest in Indo-Germanic tongues. After studying theology and philology in Saxony, the native Bavarian spent several years perusing Iranian manuscripts in London. In 1827, his research led him to conclude that German and Persian were like two rivers in which “ein Blut fließt” [one blood flows]; they either “aus einer gemeinschaftlichen Quelle ausströmen, also ursprünglich Eins waren, oder aber aus anderen von jener Urquelle herkommenden Flüssen ihr beiderseitiges Entstehen und Dasein erhalten” [pour forth from a common source, that is were originally one, or they mutually arise and receive their life from rivers that stem from this original source].⁶⁵ These similarities convinced Dorn, as they did Klaproth, that the Caucasus “mitten in seinen Armen ein Volk hält, in welchem vielleicht einst dasselbe Blut floss als in uns” [held in their arms a people in whom perhaps the same blood flows as in us].⁶⁶ Dorn accepted a position as professor of Oriental languages at the University of Charkow in 1829, building a career in Russia that was dedicated to studying Persian, the Pashtun dialect of Afghanistan, and Caucasian tongues.⁶⁷ In 1835 he joined the Institute for Oriental

Languages established by the Russian foreign ministry in St. Petersburg, later replacing Frähn as the director of both the Asian Museum and the Academy library. His major works included multivolume histories of the peoples bordering the Caspian Sea and those inhabiting the Caucasus, regions he visited in the early 1860s.

While Dorn and Klapproth conducted fieldwork searching for Indo-Germans in the Caucasus, other German Orientalists sought to identify tribes in the eastern reaches of Central Asia. The debate between Klapproth and his rival, Isaac Jacob Schmidt (1779–1847), over the ethnic affiliations of the ancient Uighurs, inhabitants of Chinese Turkestan, for example, was part of an attempt to discover how far the Indo-European language family extended into Tibet, Mongolia, and western China. It was clear that Indo-Germans had migrated to the furthest reaches of Western Europe, but what was their relationship to the ancient inhabitants of the Eurasian plateaus? Schmidt was the leading early nineteenth-century scholar on the Mongolian and Tibetan languages, publishing in the course of the 1830s grammars of both, a Mongolian dictionary, and an extended work on the religion and literature of the two peoples. His interest in the region was varied, emanating in part from a practical desire to further Russian trade and industry by documenting the customs and traditions of Russia's neighbors.⁶⁸ Schmidt was also intrigued by the origins of the tribal migrations which had reshaped the ethnic landscape of Europe in the early medieval period. He explained in 1824:

Solche im Innern Asiens erregte Völkerbewegungen haben ohnstreitig lange vor unserer Zeitrechnung ihre Wirkungen bis tief in Europa erstreckt und wahrscheinlich diesen unsern Erdtheil bevölkert, aber wir kennen weder die alte Geschichte desselben, noch des grössten Theils von Asien; ja wir kennen die Geschichte der Völkerzüge vom vierten Jahrhundert an allein in ihren Wirkungen, nicht aber in ihrer Ursache. [Such national movements aroused in inner Asia without a doubt extended their influence deep into Europe long before our time and probably populated our part of the earth, but we know neither the ancient history of the same nor of the largest part of Asia; really we know the history of the tribal migrations of the fourth century only in their effects, not in their cause.]⁶⁹

Born the son of a salesman in Amsterdam, Schmidt received his only formal education from the Moravian Brethren in Neuwied between 1785 and 1791. When his father was compelled for financial reasons to take a post as a civil servant in Java in 1798, the nineteen-year-old son was sent to Sarepta on the Volga River to fill a post in the trade business of the Brethren. In neighboring regions Schmidt learned Kalmuck, a Mongolian language spoken by Buddhists. From 1804 to 1806 he re-

sided with various nomadic tribes, learning their languages and customs, and traveled across the steppes stretching between the Volga, the Don, and the Caucasus mountains. Schmidt remained in Russia working in the trade offices of the Moravian Brethren in Moscow and St. Petersburg. As the head of the Russian Bible Society, he translated the New Testament and other religious works into Kalmuck and Mongolian; in 1843 he published the first Tibetan book in Europe, *Der Weise und der Thor* (The Wise Man and the Fool), in original and German translation. The University of Rostock bestowed a doctorate on him in 1827 and Schmidt was eventually accepted into the St. Petersburg Academy of Science before philological diligence made him blind in both eyes in 1842.

Schmidt's research was concerned with establishing the nature of the cultural connections between ancient India, China, and the mountainous regions that lie between them. He likely came to these languages in an effort to learn more about the religious teachings of ancient India. According to Schmidt, "die Mittelasiatischen Völker die treuen Verwahrer" [the central Asian people, the true guardians] had preserved aspects of otherwise extinct "alte Glaubenslehre" [ancient religious teachings] that had once been widespread in "Hindustan."⁷⁰ Schmidt and the few German Sinologists of the period believed that India had exerted extensive influence on the development of Chinese culture through a shared history in the Himalayan Mountains. He regarded the Chinese people as "ursprünglich vielleicht nichts mehr ..., als eine aus Vermischung indischen und hochasiatischen Geblüts entsprossene Bastardnation" [originally perhaps nothing more ..., than a bastard nation arising from a mix of Indian and high-Asian blood]. The inhabitants of India and their *Bildung*, he asserted, were "weit älter" [far older] than those of China, who "zuverlässig keiner anderen Nation in dem Grade, als den Indiern zu verdanken" [certainly had no other nation to thank in the same degree as the Indians] for their early development.⁷¹

The belief that the inhabitants of Central Asia had ties to Sanskrit-speaking India led to the classification of certain languages as "Indo-Chinesisch." While they testified to the degree that Indian cultural influence extended eastwards, these languages also marked the limits of Indo-Germanic expansion in Asia. The rubric of Indo-Chinese included such languages as Burmese, Siamese, and Annamese, which, according to the Sinologist Wilhelm Schott (1807–89), both demonstrated a "geistige verwandtschaft mit dem chinesischen" [spiritual kinship with Chinese] and had a "starke versetzung mit wörtern vom sanskritstamme" [were permeated with words from the Sanskrit family]. While none of these was considered to be a "verbindendes mittelglied" [connecting link] between the Chinese and Indian language

families, which contemporary linguists now distinguish from each other as respectively isolationist and inflectional, their coexistence “seit undenklicher Zeit in einem Lande das gewissermassen zwischen Vorderindien und Südchina” [from time immemorial in a land that stretches from anterior India to southern China] seemed to point to substantial cultural ties between speakers of Chinese and early Indo-European languages.⁷²

Despite these connections, German research on Chinese languages was scant in the first half of the nineteenth century and reflects a reluctance to identify early German speakers with the Eastern civilization. When Schott lamented in the mid-1820s that “in unserem Vaterland noch sehr wenig in diesem Geiete geleistet ist” [in this area very little has been achieved in our fatherland] and “noch zum Theil die abenteuerlichsten und verkehrtesten Ansichten von den Tschinesen ... im Schwange gehen” [in part the most adventurous and perverted views of the Chinese ... still circulate],⁷³ he was not mistaken. Schott and Carl Friedrich Neumann (1807–89), a Sinologist at the University of Munich, were two of only three German philologists who specialized in the language. Schott hoped that Chinese might one day be held “ungefähr in gleichem ansehen” [approximately in the same regard] as Sanskrit was for the study of Indian languages and Arabic was for Islamic history, given its importance in the far east and its ties to Annamese, Korean, and Japanese.⁷⁴ However, his immersion in the Chinese language was not equal to the standards of fellow philologists. Schott’s sources for learning Chinese were, according to Klaproth, inadequate: a three-year acquaintance with two native speakers in Europe whom Klaproth derided as “zwei ganz gemeine Kerle, aus Dörfern im Regierungsbezirke von Canton ..., von denen der eine als Koch gedient hat, und dass sie sich einem Speculanten verdrungen hatten, um sich in Europa, wie wilde Thiere, für Geld sehen zu lassen” [two common fellows from villages in the administrative district of Canton ..., one of whom worked as a cook, both of whom had forced themselves on a prospector in order to show themselves for money like wild animals in Europe].⁷⁵

The negative associations with the study of Chinese in Germany suggest that the German national identification with the East, while it extended to the Central Asian peoples who had supposedly sparked the tribal migrations, broke down at the Chinese border. Not being an inflectional language, Chinese was not so amenable to the techniques of comparative-historical philology as Indo-European tongues and was quickly stigmatized as a primitive, underdeveloped language. Friedrich Schlegel believed Chinese to be of the lowest rank in the hierarchy of affixional languages;⁷⁶ Jacob Grimm thought primordial speech would have resembled Chinese, while more advanced tongues had devel-

oped inflections and richer syntax;⁷⁷ Wilhelm von Humboldt counted Chinese among the “weniger vollkommenen Sprachbaues” [less perfected languages], the one most distinct from Sanskrit.⁷⁸ C. F. Neumann feared that Chinese speakers had never reached a crucial third stage in evolution of writing; they “haben ... nie das Wort in seine einfachen Elemente aufgelöst oder zersetzt; sie sind nie zu dem vollkommensten Medium der Darstellung, zu der Buchstabenschrift vorgerückt” [never broke down or dissolved the word into its simplest elements; they never progressed to the most perfect medium of representation, to the letter alphabet].⁷⁹

Nevertheless, when C. M. Frähn invited Schott to accept a position at the university of St. Petersburg in 1840, he opted to remain in Berlin. Schott’s decision reflects the partial development of Oriental studies in Germany and the limits of Russia’s scholarly attractions. In the early 1820s, Schott had hoped to train in Paris under the Sinologist Jean Pierre Abel Rémusat (1788–1832). Financial considerations compelled him to restrict his travels to Berlin, where he was hired to catalogue Chinese books at the royal library. In 1838 Schott was made professor for Chinese, Tartar, and East Asian languages and no longer felt a compunction to venture abroad. By mid-century, newly acquired reference materials and library collections had made language acquisition less laborious for German Orientalists; publishers in Bonn, Berlin, and Munich had acquired the Sanskrit type necessary to print affordable editions of Indian works.⁸⁰ Russia, by contrast, had become less attractive. German scholars active there found it “unumgänglich nothwendig” [absolutely necessary] to publish in Germany due, in Klaproth’s words, to the “Schwierigkeit, ein in Rußland gedrucktes Werk in der übrigen Welt zu verbreiten” [difficulty of circulating a book published in Russia in the rest of the world].⁸¹ The technical acumen of the comparative methods introduced by Bopp and Jacob Grimm had rendered German scholars the recognized authorities in the European study of language. Thus, when the Indologist Friedrich Max Müller took an Oxford chair in Sanskrit in 1851, he was struck by the paltry state of Oriental studies in England.⁸² Yet he remained abroad until his death in 1900, drawn, as were many German Orientalists, by the lure of manuscripts and archival sources.

In Search of Indo-Germans: Julius Klaproth

By way of an extended conclusion, this paper returns to the ethnographic speculations of Julius Klaproth because they mark an interesting moment in the transformation of biblical ethnology. Historians of the discipline have regularly undervalued Klaproth’s contributions to the early history of Indo-European linguistics, because his extensive comparisons of Asian and European languages were based almost exclusively

on the correspondence of root words and meanings, and failed to take account of grammatical structure and inflectional patterns.⁸³ Klaproth's combative personality and the scandals associated with him also distanced him from the profession. In 1811 he was expelled from Russia on accusations of stealing valuable manuscripts from the library; later in Paris he was suspected of espionage.⁸⁴ Despite his maverick status, Julius Klaproth had a founding role in the study of Central and East Asian languages, helping to edit the *Fundgruben des Orients* and the *Journal asiatique*. Upon returning to Prussia, he was appointed professor of Asian languages and literatures in Bonn by Friedrich Wilhelm III, who paid his salary and supported the publication of his works although Klaproth resided in Paris from 1815 until his early death in 1835.

Asia Polyglotta (1823), Klaproth's major work, laid out a comprehensive "Voelker- und Sprach-System Asiens" [system of Asian peoples and languages] that purportedly established the linguistic and historical relationships among more than fifty Asian tongues and offered a new explanation for the dispersal of so-called Indo-Germans. His narrative rejected the story of Babel as an explanation for cultural diversity, but persisted in assigning a pivotal role to the biblical tale of the flood in its conception of human prehistory. In Klaproth's view, similar-sounding words with equivalent meanings could be found in the languages of the most diverse, unrelated peoples. This "allgemeine" [general] linguistic correspondence resulted from the partial survival of remnants from an *Ursprache* that had survived the flood. Of greater interest to Klaproth, however, were similarities among languages of groups whose affinity was also documented through history or physical similarities.⁸⁵

The spread of distinct national tribes and language families across the globe, according to Klaproth, was antediluvian. When high waters covered the earth, certain individuals had found refuge on the mountain peaks of India and America, as well as on Mt. Ararat, and had independently preserved elements of their unique languages. These survivors formed the core of the "Stammvölker" [main tribes], and their languages the basis of the "Stammsprachen" [core languages] from which Klaproth derived thirteen separate language families, naming at the same time the mountain peaks from which their earliest speakers had likely descended. According to Klaproth's scheme, early speakers of Indo-Germanic had migrated into the plains of Europe and into southern Asia from two separate mountain chains, the Himalayas and the Caucasus, a fact that explained the physical differences among the family's speakers. Ancient Indians, he believed, had traveled south from the Himalayas and quickly mixed with "braunen oder negerartigen Urbewohner" [brown or Negro-like natives] who themselves had retreated to the hills of

Malabar. The Goths, on the other hand, left the Himalayas for the north and entered Europe through Scandinavia. The other Germanic tribes (Medo-Germans) had wandered from the Caucasus to the shores of the Caspian Sea, through Persia and into Europe from the south.⁸⁶

This narrative of linguistic dispersal effectively adopted a polygenetic model for the emergence of ethnic groups. Comparative-historical philologists after Bopp downplayed the existence of a universal, first language of revelation, or *Ursprache*, and began to replace biblical notions of the emergence of cultural difference with secular linguistic genealogies. The experience of conducting linguistic research in Central Asia likewise lent a new physical or racial dimension to this ethnology. Klaproth claimed that it was "unsinnig ... das *Deutsche Volk* von den Hindu abzuleiten" [absurd ... to derive the German nation from the Hindu.]⁸⁷ His subsequent relocation of the Indo-Germanic homeland outside of India distinguished "white" Indo-Germans from "black" Indians. What were by 1830 termed "Aryans" did not originate in India but in an Indo-Germanic homeland that lay across the Hindu Kush. Subsequent comparativists concurred with Klaproth's analysis. In an 1840 encyclopedia entry on the Indo-Germanic language family, August Friedrich Pott reported scholarly consensus that the mountainous region that is the source of the Amu-Darya and Syrdarya rivers in Central Asia was the German *Urheimat*.⁸⁸ This distinction made the prospect of an Asian homeland more attractive by disassociating Proto-Germans from the colonial subjects of India, as well as from the mystical visions of the early Romantics and controversial mythologists such as Friedrich Creuzer. It also had the advantage of depicting the first German migrants as a community separate from other speakers of Indo-European languages. The Sinti and Roma, natives of the Punjab region of India, for example, did not hail from an "Aryan" homeland despite certain linguistic affinities.⁸⁹

When Klaproth finally succeeded in finding descendants of early Indo-Germans in the Caucasus mountains, their ethnic identity was confirmed by both language and race. In *Asia Polyglotta*, he cited deviations in "der Bau des Schädels" [the formation of the cranium] as evidence that apparent linguistic similarities were not indications of a shared ethnic affiliation. Linguistic ties could only be confirmed, in his mind, through documentation of the "physische Gleichförmigkeit" [physical uniformity] among the people that spoke them. Thus, when Klaproth braved war and the plague to visit isolated speakers of the Ossetian language in the northern Caucasus, he was convinced that they were the remains of an ancient Medo-German colony. Despite his thesis that the Caucasus was one of the original Indo-German homelands, the majority of local languages are unique

and indigenous; only Ossetian, Armenian, and three Turkish tongues have ties to larger language families. Ossetian, Klaproth recognized, is related to Persian. By his account, its speakers also distinguished themselves “in Sprache und Gesichtsbildung von allen übrigen Kaukasiern” [in language and facial structure from all others inhabitants of the Caucasus], their “physiognomy” resembling “sehr viel Europäisches” [that of Europeans]. The tribe was “gut gebildet” [well-built] and had “blaue Augen und blondes und rotbraunes Haare und Augen ... recht schwarzes Haar aber fast niemals” [blue eyes and blond or red-brown hair ... truly black hair almost never].⁹⁰ This evidence suggested to Klaproth that Ossetian was the lost fifth branch of the Indo-Germanic language family.⁹¹

In 1830, the Bonn Indologist Christian Lassen (1800–76) recommended replacing the designation *Indo-Germanic* with the term *Aryan*. The German word *Arier* was a creation of the 1770s and a translation of Abraham Hyacinthe Anquetil-Duperron’s French term, *Ariens*, which he had derived from ancient Indic and Persian sources. In Lassen’s view, it gave a better sense of the shared origins and subsequent expansion of the people which Klaproth had revered as the “am weitesten verbreitete Stamm in der Welt” [most widely dispersed tribe in the world].⁹² Concerned that other designations were “unhistorisch” [unhistorical], Lassen proposed *Aryan* as the “gemeinschaftliche Name” [common name] for all languages descended from Sanskrit, as well as for the *Volk* that spoke them.⁹³ His suggestions reinforced the theory that India could not have been the primordial German homeland in overtly racialist terms. For Lassen the presence of dark-skinned natives on the continent precluded the possibility of Indian origins. Ancient Aryans, he wrote, always proved to be “das überlegene siegende Geschlecht” [the dominant, victorious race], successfully driving away the “schwächeren, zurückweichenden” [weaker, yielding] natives who lacked equivalent “Kraft” [power]. According to Lassen, the original “schwarzen Urbewohnern” [black natives] of India were “unterliegende Geschlechter” [defeated races] just like “die Australneger ..., wie die rothen Menschen Amerikas” [the Australian Negroes ... and the red men of America]. Aryans distinguished themselves as “weisse Menschen” [white people] and represented for him “das vollkommener organisirte, unternehmendere und schaffendere Volk” [the more perfectly organized, entrepreneurial and creative nation].⁹⁴ They could never have been conquered by an invading people.

The racialization of German Orientalist scholarship has often resulted in its representatives being reduced to harbingers of a fatal *Sonderweg*, or a special path of modernization that culminated in the Aryan theory of the Third Reich.⁹⁵ This view is as tenuous as the notion

that German Orientalism is derivative of a normative French and English model because there was no protracted German national interest in the East. In the early nineteenth century, German research on Central Asia sought to revise a centuries-old tradition of deciphering ethnological relationships from scripture. As comparative-historical philologists reworked the genealogical table of the Old Testament and confirmed the importance of language to the definition of nationality, they placed a new premium on recognizing diversity and acknowledging disparate cultural traditions. The historical ties suspected between Sanskrit and modern German also bound the German definition of nationhood to Orientalist scholarship. Early nineteenth-century philologists located the supposed cultural starting point of their nation in the East and, in so doing, began a tradition of German philosophical, literary, and historical reflection on Iran and Central Asia. This positive national identification with the East also contributed to the formation of new academic disciplines that furthered Russian imperial expansion while earning an international reputation for German Orientalist scholarship.

NOTES

¹Julius Klaproth, *Geographisch-historische Beschreibung des östlichen Kaukasus, zwischen den Flüssen Terek, Aragwi, Kur und dem Kaspischen Meere* (Weimar: Landes-Industrie-Comptoir, 1814), 24.

²In Julius Klaproth, *Asia Polyglotta* (Paris: J. M. Eberhart, 1823). Franz Bopp introduced the term *Indo-European* in his 1857 *Vergleichende Grammatik*, and it was adopted by non-German-speaking linguists; he himself preferred *Indo-Classical* because it recognized the importance of ancient Greek to the family.

³This term was used by Friedrich August Pott in “Indogermanischer Sprachstamm,” in *Allgemeine Encyclopädie der Wissenschaften und Künste von J.S. Ersch und J.G. Gruber*, 2nd ed. (1840), vol. 18, 20. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.

⁴Susanne Zantop, for example, has shown South America to have been the subject of German “colonial fantasies”; Sheldon Pollack and Jonathan Hess have argued that Germans colonized Jews as an “other” internal to Europe; Central European involvement in the failing Ottoman Empire has likewise been depicted as a case of German Orientalism sustaining imperial expansion. Susanne Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies: Conquest, Family, and Nation in Precolonial Germany, 1770–1870*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997); Sheldon Pollack, “Deep Orientalism? Notes on Sanskrit and Power beyond the Raj,” in *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament*, ed. Carol A. Breckenridge and Peter van der Veer (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993); Jonathan

Hess, "Johann David Michaelis and the Colonial Imaginary: Orientalism and the Emergence of Radical Antisemitism in Eighteenth-Century Germany," *Jewish Social Studies* 6:2 (2000); K. E. Flemming, "Orientalism, the Balkans, and Balkan Historiography," *American Historical Review* 105:4 (2000).

⁵Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 19.

⁶August Friedrich Pott speaks to the assumption that contingents of the Germanic tribes might have stayed behind in Central Asia in "Indogermanischer Sprachstamm."

⁷Thomas Trautmann, *Aryans and British India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 55.

⁸Trautmann, *Aryans and British India*, 9.

⁹Han F. Vermeulen, "Frühe Geschichte der Völkerkunde oder Ethnographie in Deutschland, 1771–1791," in *Völkerkunde Tagung 1991*, ed. Mattias S. Laubscher and Bertram Turner (Munich: Akademischer Verlag München, 1994), vol. 1, 332–3.

¹⁰Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, "Unvorgreifliche Gedanken, betreffend die Ausübung und Verbesserung der Deutschen Sprache," in *History of Linguistics: Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century German Linguistics*, ed. Christian Wolff (London: Routledge, 1995), vol. 1, 278.

¹¹Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *New Essays on Human Understanding*, trans. and ed. Peter Remnant and Jonathan Bennett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 286.

¹²Leibniz, *New Essays on Human Understanding*, 285.

¹³August Ludwig Schlözer, *Allgemeine Nordische Geschichte* (Halle: Johann Justinus Gebauer, 1771), 291.

¹⁴August Ludwig Schlözer, *Vorstellung seiner Universal-Historie* (Göttingen, 1772), 103.

¹⁵Schlözer, *Vorstellung seiner Universal-Historie*, 103.

¹⁶Schlözer, *Allgemeine Nordische Geschichte*, 266–85.

¹⁷Jonathan Hess, *Germans, Jews and the Claims of Modernity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 29ff.

¹⁸Johann David Michaelis, *A Dissertation on the Influence of Opinions on Language, and of Language on Opinions* (New York: Ams Press, 1973), 55–6.

¹⁹Frederick Beiser, *The Fate of Reason: German Philosophy from Kant to Fichte* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), 17.

²⁰Johann Georg Hamann, "Aesthetica in Nuce: Eine Rhapsodie in kabbalistischer Prose," in *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Josef Nader (Vienna: Thomas-Morus-Press, 1949), vol. 2, 206.

²¹Hamann, "Aesthetica in Nuce," 197.

²²Johann Gottfried Herder, "Ueber die neue Deutsche Literatur. Erste Sammlung von Fragmenten, 2. Ausgabe," in *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Bernhard Suphan (Hildesheim: Olms, 1967), vol. 2, 13.

²³Kurt Müller-Vollmer, "From Sign to Signification:

The Herder-Humboldt Controversy," in *J. G. Herder: Language, History, and the Enlightenment*, ed. Wulf Koepke (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1990), 12.

²⁴Herder, "Ueber die neue Deutsche Literatur," 12–13.

²⁵Herder, "Ueber die neue Deutsche Literatur," 13.

²⁶Johann Gottfried Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, in *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 8, 364–5.

²⁷Herder, *Ideen*, 365.

²⁸Most research concentrated on the historical connections between the vocabularies and grammatical structures of Latin and the Romance languages, but, even here, etymological evidence of lexical similarities was often obscured by a rigid classification of languages into syntactic types. French, for example, was often mistaken as a derivative of Celtic, not Latin, because of the two languages' mutual reliance on word order, not morphology, to construct meaningful sentences. R. H. Robins, *A Short History of Linguistics* (New York: Longman, 1990), 185–7.

²⁹Jürgen Osterhammel, *Die Entzauberung Asiens: Europa und die asiatischen Reiche im 18. Jahrhundert* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1998), 250.

³⁰Johann Christian Adelung, *Mithridates oder allgemeine Sprachkunde mit dem Vater Unser als Sprachprobe in bey nahe fünfhundert Sprachen und Mundarten* (New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1970), vol. 1, xi. On Adelung see Ulrich Wyss, *Die wilde Philologie: Jacob Grimm und der Historismus* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1979), 96ff.

³¹Osterhammel, *Die Entzauberung Asiens*, 132.

³²For a nineteenth-century account of the history of the comparative scholarship on German and Persian, see Bernhard Dorn, *Ueber die Verwandtschaft des persischen, germanischen und griechisch-lateinischen Sprachstammes* (Hamburg: J. A. Meissner, 1827), 91–135.

³³Johann Christoph Adelung, *Aelteste Geschichte der Deutschen, ihrer Sprache und Litteratur, bis zur Völkerwanderung* (Leipzig, 1806), 349.

³⁴Adelung, *Aelteste Geschichte der Deutschen*, 351.

³⁵See O. Schrader, *Sprachvergleichung und Urgeschichte. Linguistisch-historische Beiträge zur Erforschung des indogermanischen Altertums* (Jena: Hermann Costenoble, 1906), 5.

³⁶Adelung, *Mithridates*, 11.

³⁷Sir William Jones, "The Third Anniversary Discourse on the Hindus," in *A Reader in Nineteenth-Century Historical Indo-European Linguistics*, ed. Winfred Lehmann (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967), 15.

³⁸Trautmann, *Aryans and British India*, 39ff.

³⁹Amos Leslie Willson, *A Mythical Image: The Ideal of India in German Romanticism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1964), 71.

⁴⁰Willson, *A Mythical Image*, 50.

⁴¹Hans Aarsleff, *The Study of Language in England, 1780–1860* (Princeton: Princeton University Press,

1967), 3–5, 139.

⁴²Ernst Behler, “Das Indienbild der deutschen Romantik,” in *Germanisch-Romanische Monatschrift*, ed. Franz Rolf Schröder, vol. 18. (Heidelberg: Winter, 1968), 33ff.

⁴³Friedrich Schlegel, *Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier. Ein Beitrag zur Begründung der Alterthumskunde* (Heidelberg: Mohr und Zimmer, 1808), 66.

⁴⁴Schlegel, *Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier*, 105, 175.

⁴⁵Schlegel, *Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier*, 3–4, 16, 28.

⁴⁶Schlegel, *Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier*, 38, 35, 44.

⁴⁷Schlegel, *Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier*, 44, 41, 50–1, 45.

⁴⁸Friedrich Schlegel, “Vorlesungen über Universalgeschichte,” in *Kritische Ausgabe seiner Werke*, ed. Ernest Behler, vol. 14 (Munich: Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh, 1960), 17–18, 3.

⁴⁹Schlegel, *Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier*, 194.

⁵⁰Schlegel, *Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier*, 195.

⁵¹Konrad Koerner, “Friedrich Schlegel and the Emergence of Historical-Comparative Grammar,” in *Practicing Linguistic Historiography*, Studies in the History of the Language Science 50 (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1989), 285.

⁵²Franz Bopp, *Über das Conjugationssystem der Sanskritsprache in Vergleichung mit jenem der griechischen, lateinischen, persischen und germanischen Sprache. Nebst Episoden des Ramajan und Mahabharat in genauen metrischen Uebersetzungen aus dem Originaltexte und einigen Abschnitten aus den Vedas herausgegeben und mit Vorerinnerungen begleitet von K.J. Windischmann* (Frankfurt am Main: Andreäische Buchhandlung, 1816), 11.

⁵³Franz Bopp, *Vocalismus oder sprachvergleichende Kritiken über Jacob Grimm's deutsche Grammatik und Graff's alt-hochdeutschen Sprachschatz mit Begründung einer neuen Theorie des Ablauts* (Berlin: Nicolaische Buchhandlung, 1836), 1.

⁵⁴Bopp, *Über das Conjugationssystem*, 8–9. Emphasis added.

⁵⁵Bopp, *Über das Conjugationssystem*, 7.

⁵⁶See Bopp's discussion of the relationship between Indo-European and Semitic roots in “Radices Sanscritae,” in *Jahrbücher der Literatur*, vol. 42 (Vienna: Carl Gerold, 1828), 247ff.

⁵⁷Pott, “Indogermanischer Sprachstamm,” 20.

⁵⁸Heinrich Ewald, “Plan dieser Zeitschrift,” *Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 1 (1837): 7.

⁵⁹His account of this trip is published as *Reise in den Kaukasus und nach Georgien unternommen in den Jahren 1807 und 1808 auf Veranstaltung der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu St. Petersburg*, 2 vols. (Berlin, 1812–14). See also Klaproth, *Geographisch-historische Beschreibung des östlichen Kaukasus*.

⁶⁰Sergei Ouvaroff, “Projet d'une Académie Asiatique,” in *Études de philologie et de critique*. 2nd ed. (Paris: Didot Frères, 1845), 1–48.

⁶¹Klaproth published accounts of these travels in *Die russische Gesandtschaft nach China im Jahre 1805* (Leipzig, 1809), and “Bemerkungen über die chinesisch-russische Grenze, gesammelt auf einer Reise an derselben, im Jahre 1806,” *Archiv für asiatische Litteratur* (St. Petersburg, 1810).

⁶²Susan Layton, *Russian Literature and Empire: Conquest of the Caucasus from Pushkin to Tolstoy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 75–7.

⁶³Christian Martin Frähn, *Indications bibliographiques relatives pour la plupart à la littérature historico-géographique des Arabes, des Persans et des Turcs, spécialement destinées à nos employés et voyageurs en Asie* (St. Petersburg: Académie impériale des sciences, 1845), xii.

⁶⁴After Frähn's appointment, Czar Alexander I asked Silvestre de Sacy to recommend scholars to fill two new positions in Arabic and Persian at the Central Pedagogical Institute in St. Petersburg. The two Frenchmen engaged were later instrumental in establishing the Oriental Institute for Translation opened in 1823 by the Asian Department of the Foreign Ministry.

⁶⁵Dorn, *Ueber die Verwandtschaft des persischen*, 12.

⁶⁶Dorn, *Ueber die Verwandtschaft des persischen*, 51.

⁶⁷See the works by Bernhard Dorn, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der kaukasischen Länder* (St. Petersburg, 1841–7) and *Beiträge zur Kenntnis der iranischen Sprache* (St. Petersburg, 1860).

⁶⁸Schmidt described Mongolian as a field “in which not only no one is active, but also in which no one has ever broken ground” and noted the lack of reference materials available in Mongolian and Tibetan, either as published by Europeans or compiled by native speakers. He had to rely on such sources such as a Manchu-Mongolian comparative grammar composed under the Chinese emperor Kanghi, who had done battle with the Mongolians, and a grammar and dictionary published in Calcutta in 1834 by a Hungarian traveler who had learned Tibetan from a lama. See Isaac Jacob Schmidt, *Grammatik der tibetischen Sprache* (Leipzig: Leopold Voss, 1839), ix–x, and *Grammatik der mongolischen Sprache* (St. Petersburg: Kaiserliche Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1831), vii.

⁶⁹Isaac Jacob Schmidt, *Forschungen im Gebiete der älteren religiösen, politischen und literarischen Bildungsgeschichte der Völker Mittel-Asiens, vorzüglich der Mongolen und Tibeter* (Leipzig: Zentralantiquariat der DDR, 1972), 1–2.

⁷⁰Schmidt, *Grammatik der mongolischen Sprache*, vi.

⁷¹Schmidt, *Forschungen*, 28.

⁷²Wilhelm Schott, *Über die sogenannten Indo-Chinesischen Sprachen insonderheit das Siamische* (Berlin: Druckerei der königlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1856), 161.

⁷³Wilhelm Schott, *Werke des tschinesischen Weisen Kung-fu-dsu und seiner Schüler. Zum erstenmal aus der Ursprache ins Deutsche übersetzt und mit Anmerkungen begleitet* (Halle, Rengersche Verlags-Buchhandlung, 1826–32), vol. 1, v–vi.

⁷⁴Wilhelm Schott, *Chinesische Sprachlehre. Zum Gebrauche bei Vorlesungen und zur Selbstunterweisung* (Berlin: Ferdinand Dümmler's Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1857), 1–2. Julius Klaproth likewise studied Japanese with the help of a Chinese-Japanese dictionary after meeting a Japanese language teacher in Russia in 1805–6 at a school created by Catherine II.

⁷⁵Wilhelm Lauterbach, *Dr. Wilhelm Schott's vergebliche Übersetzung des Confucius aus der Ursprache, eine litterarische Betrügerei* (Leipzig: Ponthiue, Michelson and Co., 1828), 11.

⁷⁶Koerner, "Friedrich Schlegel," 280.

⁷⁷Gordon Hewes, "Disputes on the Origin of Language," in *Sprachphilosophie – Philosophy of Language – La philosophie du langage. Ein internationales Handbuch – An International Handbook of Contemporary Research – Manuel international des recherches contemporaines*, ed. Marcelo Dascal, Dietfried Gerhardus, Kuno Lorenz, and Georg Megele (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1992), vol. 2, 936.

⁷⁸Wilhelm von Humboldt, *Über die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaues und ihren Einfluß auf die geistige Entwicklung des Menschengeschlechts*, ed. Donatella Di Cesare (Munich: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1998), 378ff.

⁷⁹Carl Friedrich Neumann, "Sprache und Schrift der Chinesen," in *Asiatische Studien* (Leipzig: Johann Ambrosius Barth, 1837), 4.

⁸⁰That the Societé asiatique in Paris wanted copies of the Sanskrit type that Bopp had made for the Berlin Academy of Sciences in 1824 suggests the relative strength of German Indology on the continent. See Ernst Windisch, *Geschichte der Sanskrit-Philologie und indischen Altertumskunde* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1992), 65, 78.

⁸¹Klaproth, *Reise in den Kaukasus*, vol. 1, v.

⁸²Patricia Casey Sutcliffe, "F. M. Müller and Dwight Whitney as Exporters of Nineteenth-Century German Philology: A Sociological Analysis of the Development of Linguistic Theory" (PhD diss., University of Texas, Austin, December 2000), 93.

⁸³In 1832 August Friedrich Pott criticized Klaproth's comparative charts as "a shabby last resort, ... by which only insufficient, often very misleading conclusions about linguistic relations can be drawn." See his review article "Researches into the origin and affinity of the principal languages of Asia and Europe. By Lieut. Colon. Vans Kennedy," *Jahrbücher für wissenschaftliche Kritik* 8 (July 1832), 61.

⁸⁴See the article on Klaproth in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 8th ed. (1857), vol. 8, 105.

⁸⁵Klaproth, *Asia Polyglotta*, 35, 40.

⁸⁶Klaproth, *Asia Polyglotta*, 42–4.

⁸⁷Klaproth, *Asia Polyglotta*, 43.

⁸⁸Pott, "Indogermanischer Sprachstamm," 19. Contemporary scholars point to the area just north and between the Caspian and Black Seas, and trace Indo-European migration based on the diffusion of the domesticated horse. On the intersection of linguistics and archeology in theories of the Indo-European homeland see Colin Renfrew, *Archaeology and Language: The Puzzle of Indo-European Origins* (London: Pimlico, 1998); J. Mallory, *In Search of the Indo-Europeans: Language, Archaeology, and Myth* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1989); and Katherin Krell, *Modern Indo-European Homeland Hypotheses: A Critical Examination of Linguistic Arguments* (Ottawa: National Library of Canada, 1995).

⁸⁹See August Friedrich Pott, *Die Zigeuner in Europa und Asien. Ethnographisch-linguistische Untersuchung vornehmlich ihrer Herkunft und Sprache*, 2 vols. (Halle: Ed. Heynemann, 1844).

⁹⁰Klaproth, *Reise in den Kaukasus*, vol. 2, 585; Julius Klaproth, *Tableau historique, géographique et politique du Caucase et des provinces limitrophes entre la Russie et la Perse* (Paris: Ponthieu et C., 1827), 70.

⁹¹Contemporary linguists consider Ossetian to be a member of the Northeastern Iranian branch of Indo-European languages.

⁹²Klaproth, *Asia Polyglotta*, 42.

⁹³Christian Lassen, "Über Herrn Professor Bopps grammatisches System der Sanskrit-Sprache," *Indische Bibliothek III*, ed. August Wilhelm Schlegel (Bonn, 1830), 70.

⁹⁴Christian Lassen, *Indische Altertumskunde* (Bonn: H. B. König, 1847), vol. 1, 513–14.

⁹⁵See, for example, Léon Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth: A History of Racist and Nationalist Ideas in Europe*, trans. E. Howard (London: Chatto & Heinemann for Sussex University Press, 1974); and George Mosse, *Towards the Final Solution: A History of European Racism* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1978).