

## Indology: The Origins of Racism in the Humanities

Review of Pascale Rabault-F Feuerhahn, *Archives of Origins: Sanskrit, Philology, Anthropology in 19th Century Germany*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2013.

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“Mich ekelt vor jeder Theorie, die nicht historisch ist.”

—F. Schlegel, Letter to A. W. Schlegel, March 6, 1798<sup>1</sup>

“Zum Historiker in jedem Fach gehörten erstlich Fleiß und Treue und Ordnung wie die eines Linné; schon dieses ist selten.”

—F. Schlegel, Letter to A. W. Schlegel, August 26, 1791<sup>2</sup>

“Assurément, la recherche sur le caractère essentiel et l’origine des races, est une des plus intéressantes qui puissent exercer la sagacité du philosophe, de l’historien, et du naturaliste.”

—A. W. Schlegel, “De l’Origine des Hindous”<sup>3</sup>

“Man sollte es bei diesem geglückten Versuch am untauglichen Objekt bewenden lassen und nicht fürderhin gegen diese alten Gelehrten vorgehen.”

—Friedrich Wilhelm, review of *Quellenstudien zu Friedrich Schlegels Übersetzungen aus dem Sanskrit*<sup>4</sup>

## Introduction

*Archives of Origins* traces the establishment and expansion of Sanskrit studies in Wilhelmine-era Germany.<sup>5</sup> Rich in archival materials, it is a valuable reference work for scholars of nineteenth-century German Indology.<sup>6</sup> In the first part, titled “Sanskrit and Philological

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<sup>1</sup> “I am disgusted by every theory that is not historical” (F. Schlegel 1985 [1798]: 97).

<sup>2</sup> “To the historian in every discipline belongs, first, the hardwork and dedication and systematicity of a Linné [Carl Linnaeus]; even this is already rare” (Walzel 1890: 15).

<sup>3</sup> “Assuredly, research into the essential character and the origin of the races is one of the most interesting which can exercise the sagacity of the philosopher, of the historian, and of the naturalist.” (A. W. Schlegel 1834: 417). All quotations of Schlegel from Edward P. Butler’s translation “On the Origin of the Hindus” forthcoming in a compendium of racism in Indology.

<sup>4</sup> “One should let matters lie with this fortuitous experiment on an unsuitable object [the reference is to Schlegel’s analysis of language in *Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier*] and not keep processing against these old scholars” (Wilhelm 1966: 412).

<sup>5</sup> *Archives of Origins* is a translation of the French original (Rabault-F Feuerhahn 2008). It adds a “Bibliographical Update” (325–27) but is otherwise identical. The translation by Dominique Bach and Richard Willet is merely adequate rather than polished. Among minor errors, I found “discriminating” for “discriminatory” and “Reform” for “Reformation.”

<sup>6</sup> I use the term in the same sense as Adhuri and Bagchee (2018), that is, “to distinguish the history, development, and practice of this discipline from South Asian studies in other countries. This distinction is justified both in terms of linguistic usage (German scholars have used the term *deutsche Indologie* to characterize their specific approach to Indian studies) and historical application (German Indology has a distinct history and traditions, and unique concerns that set it apart from other forms of research into India).” R-F does not define the term. Objections such as those in Franco (2016) appear to me irrelevant and perverse or, worse, dangerously misleading.

Tradition in Germany,” Rabault-Feuerhahn (hereafter R-F) traces the beginnings of Sanskrit studies in Germany, focusing on Friedrich Schlegel, Franz Bopp, A. W. Schlegel, and Schlegel’s student Christian Lassen. In the second, “The Hegemony of Comparativism,” she focuses on Vedic studies in Germany, especially as they engendered a search for characteristically “Indo-European” forms of religiosity, myth, and historical development. Here her primary interlocutors are August Schleicher, Adalbert Kuhn, Friedrich Max Müller, and Rudolf von Roth.

In the third, “The Challenges of Anthropology,” R-F addresses the emergence of a science of race from Indology. Tying the interest in the “Aryan” concept to wider developments in German politics and society (the Franco-Prussian War, Bismarck’s anti-Catholic policies, and the rise of German nationalism), she argues that Indology underwent a dramatic transformation in the 1870s. “Until then, the ‘anthropological’ interest of Indologists had consisted in curiosity towards the routes taken by the development of the human mind. This resulted in an ‘ethnographic’ approach that consisted in gathering all traces of its activity” (173). Now, however, as “Indo-European comparativism [...] gradually [became] more clearly invested with a quest for identity,” “its paradigms—the correspondence between kinship of language and kinship of people as well as the notion of an ‘Indo-Germanic’ people—[began] to penetrate new scientific milieus” (173–74).

R-F argues that the primary protagonists in this phase—and, in her view, the real villains of the piece—were not Indologists, but “anthropologists” such as August Pictet, Theodor Pösche, and Karl Penka.<sup>7</sup> In her view, “Once they were adopted by specialists in physical anthropology, the terms coined by Indologists and comparativists underwent important semantic changes” (193). Whereas “philologists [had] designated the speakers of Indian and Iranian languages as ‘Aryans’,” “anthropologists specialised in racial typologies restrained its usage, to apply the term only to a fraction of the ‘Indo-Germanic people’”

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<sup>7</sup> See 192–94, especially 194 (“such anthropologists as Pösche and Penka”). Despite his impeccable credentials (he studied in Geneva, Paris, Berlin, London, and Edinburgh, and was later professor of philosophical aesthetics at the Academy of Geneva), Pictet is never once referred to as a linguist. Neither does R-F mention the fact that, in contrast with A. W. Schlegel, Pictet correctly identified the Celtic languages’ place within the “Indo-European” family. The contemporary view of Pictet, moreover, was as a philologist, not an ethnologist (see, for example, the review of his *Les Origines Indo-Européennes* in *The Anthropological Review*: “M. Pictet is one of the oldest and most successful workers in the field of Aryan philology”; 1863: 235). And although R-F tries to separate Pictet from a tradition of Romantic thinking about language (see 134, 170, and 266), “Pictet was a dedicated champion of German Romanticism and idealist philosophy. Like French, English, and Russian Romantics since the beginning of the century, he made a journey to Germany, where he became acquainted with A. W. Schlegel (with whom he maintained an important correspondence over the course of many years), Goethe, Hegel, Schleiermacher, and Schelling” (Gasparov 2013: 18). “True to his profession of Romantic versatility, Pictet established himself as a person of many interests and vocations. But first and foremost, *he was an accomplished Indo-Europeanist*. Pictet’s Indo-European studies naturally led to his intimate acquaintance with Sanskrit and Vedic poetry. [...] Pictet represented the first, Romantic generation of historical linguists, for whom the history of language went hand in hand with the history of the material and spiritual being of the people who spoke it” (ibid., 19; italics added). Indeed, Gasparov locates Pictet’s “magnum opus [...] the two-volume *Origines indo-européennes: Essai de paléontologie linguistique* (1859–63) [...]” within “the tradition of Friedrich Schlegel and Jakob Grimm, to reconstruct the whole world of the proto-Indo-European” (ibid.). R-F’s division of Indology into an initial strictly scientific, linguistic phase and a later racist and anthropological phase is thus untenable on historical, scientific, and *biographic* grounds.

(193). This “racial use,” moreover, did not have its source in the Indologists’ writings, being “borrowed [instead] from [Arthur de Gobineau’s] *Essai sur l’inégalité des races humaines* (1853–1855)” (193–94).

R-F, however, argues that this foray into racism remained a brief and characteristically German aberration. From the 1870s on, French scholars such as “Bréal used the opportunity provided by the transfer of comparative grammar to France to contribute a number of correctives.” In her view, “the transfer of comparative grammar from Germany to France [thus] bore the mark of the refusal of the specific character of German investigations on Indo-European languages” (217). Whereas German scholars had “systematically established” a “link [...] between comparative grammar and Indology” (217), “in France, as early as the 1870s Indo-European comparativism was dissociated from any ethnographic or cultural perspective and only envisaged from a linguistic aspect” (220). Following Abel Bergaigne’s death (1888), “Sanskrit and comparative grammar were separated at the Sorbonne,” an event “hailed as ‘the definitive emancipation [of Sanskrit studies] from Indology’ and its ‘bondage’ to comparative grammar” (222). Around the same time, “the situation of Indology in Germany” likewise underwent a rapid transformation (224). Geldner and Pischel joined Bergaigne in “abandoning comparativism.” They argued, “the Veda did not reflect the ‘mind’ of the ‘Indo-European people’ but only that of the ‘Indian people’, which should be acknowledged in its individuality” (229).

The brief conclusion summarizes the results of the inquiry. R-F finds that, as “scholars [...] imbued with the nationalistic climate of their time” (263), German Indologists had contributed to racial discourse, but rejects any suggestion of an essential connection between comparative philology and anthropology. In her view, the Indologists’ foray into racism was “a true adventure, in the whole polysemy of this term” (264), explainable as a result of their unfortunate flirtation with “recognition and public legitimacy” (268). But it was only once “the notion of ‘Indo-European’ people [...] attracted general attention [...] and [...] comparatist paradigms [spread] to larger audiences, [that] it [‘Indo-European’] took on a racial dimension that Indologists generally rejected, most of them advocating a culturalist approach to language rather than a biological one” (268). Her conclusion is expectably optimistic. Whereas “there is an anthropological dimension in all forms of philology so long as they contemplate the men and culture that produced the texts they are examining” (270), “in a perspective of *mise-en-abyme*,” the Indologists’ legacy challenges us to recognize “the powers and legitimate goals of the philological enterprise, as well as their limits” (271).

### **The Influence of Comparative Anatomy**

*Archives of Origins* is erudite and densely argued. R-F’s knowledge of the primary sources is impressive. As several reviewers (Chang 2015, Ducœur 2010, Gaulin 2010, Haag 2009, Maillet 2010, Mangold 2008, Marchand 2010, McGetchin 2009, Messaoudi 2010, Rocher 2009, and Trautmann-Waller 2010) have noted, her work contributes to our understanding of the complex interactions that shaped German Indology. Her central thesis, however—that the development of comparative philology preceded anthropology—is historically inaccurate.

As Koerner (1989: 55) has shown, comparative anatomy was already well established in the nineteenth century as the comparative study of languages was getting underway. Nineteenth-century comparative linguistics exhibited a “‘parasite’ tendency”<sup>8</sup> in that it borrowed its principal concepts from the natural sciences, especially “botany [...], biology, and [...] comparative anatomy.”<sup>9</sup> Koerner (1989: 87) notes: “There is general agreement that 19th-century linguistics, at least until the 1880s, was imbued with naturalist conceptions, both about the nature of language in general and about its mechanism and evolution.” “The technical vocabulary of the period as well as the concepts and methodological principles advocated by the majority of linguists [...] were clearly marked by the natural sciences of the late 18th to the mid-19th century, particularly botany, comparative anatomy, geology, and evolution theory. This impact of the ‘Zeitgeist’ of the period can be seen not only in the terminological kit of the 19th-century linguist; compare terms such as ‘analysis’, ‘assimilation’, ‘dissimilation’, ‘stem’, ‘root’, ‘growth’, ‘decay’, even the term ‘linguistics’ itself, which appears to be modeled after ‘physics’, ‘mathematics’, etc., but also in the tendency to conceive of language as an ‘organism’ [...] consisting of ‘structure(s)’ (a term figuring in the title of Bopp’s comparative work of 1820 but already used by F. Schlegel in his 1808 book), and in the claim that the development of language follows strict ‘physical’ laws” (ibid.).

Koerner (1995: 51) provides conclusive evidence that, in the early nineteenth century, as “linguists were groping to develop the study of language as a discipline apart from the various traditional subjects under which it had played a subordinate role,” they reached for “botany, chemistry, biology, comparative anatomy, in particular, in the form of paleontology and osteology, and geology”. Franz Bopp, “the acknowledged founder of comparative linguistics” (ibid.), for instance, wrote, “languages must be regarded as organic natural bodies that grow according to specific laws, evolve carrying an inner life principle within themselves, and gradually die out [...]. Grammar in the higher, scientific sense should be a history or natural description of the language; [and] in particular, it must trace, in a natural historical manner, the laws according to which its development or decline or rebirth from a previous destruction occurred. Grammar, however, does not

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<sup>8</sup> See Koerner (1989: 55): “19th century work in linguistic science is especially characterized by what I have called (Koerner 1980) a ‘parasite’ tendency. Linguistics in the past century, trying to become as ‘scientific’ and rigorous as those disciplines that had already achieved wide acceptance as a field of science, borrowed terms as well as principles of analysis from these dominant fields of research. Thus, from about 1800 onwards, if not somewhat earlier (cf. Salmon 1975), botany (in particular Linnaen taxonomy), biology, and especially comparative anatomy (represented by Cuvier, Blumenbach, and others) began offering models of analysis which the generation of Bopp, Rask and Grimm tried to imitate in their treatment of language. In the mid-19th century geology (cf. the work of Lyell) and (largely Lamarckian) evolution theory played an important role in contemporary theorizing, Schleicher being the most conspicuous and influential representative of the period. Toward the end of the 19th century, when linguistics began to free itself of conceptions supplied by the natural sciences, sociology, psychology, and political economy began exerting their influence on linguistic thinking (cf. Paul’s *Prinzipien*, first published in 1880, which, curiously enough, had little impact on the neogrammarian practice of analyzing ‘dead’ languages).”

<sup>9</sup> Koerner is cited according to the two-volume edition of his collected articles *Practising Linguistic Historiography: Selected Essays* (Koerner 1989) and *Professing Linguistic Historiography* (Koerner 1995). I have also referred to the earlier version of “The Natural Science Impact on Theory Formation in 19th and 20th Century Linguistics” in Koerner (1993). Because of the number of articles, I refrain from using *a*, *b*, etc. to distinguish entries. The pagination indicates which article is meant. Where this is unclear or where it was necessary for some reason to specify the article, I have done so.

have an independent and purely scientific value when it merely sets itself the task of blazing a path to a perfected understanding of the intent of the authors, who have written in the language, or when, for this purpose, it collects and orders all the commonplace and rare forms that can be found [...]” (Bopp 1827b: 251–53).<sup>10</sup>

Bopp also contrasted the traditional understanding of grammar with a scientific understanding, writing, “For a scientific treatment and natural description of the German language, there is need not only of a critical illumination of the older dialects, but we must also consider related languages from prehistory although they appear more foreign and use them to clarify the German forms” (ibid., 253). Koerner (1989: 197) remarks: “Bopp, like Grimm and most of their contemporaries, shunned theory and only from time to time made a statement of a general nature. It is clear, however, that these founding fathers of comparative-historical linguistics were concerned with establishing the study of language as an independent discipline and that they were, in doing so, advocating a model for scientific research inspired by the natural sciences, in particular botany and comparative anatomy, especially in the form of osteology and paleontology.”

Bopp was not alone in borrowing the terminology of the natural sciences.<sup>11</sup> As Koerner notes, colleagues such as Georg Friedrich Benecke (1762–1844), Jacob Grimm (1785–1863), and August Schleicher (1821–1868) all called for the study of linguistics to be placed on natural scientific foundations.<sup>12</sup> More important is his observation regarding comparative anatomy’s role: “The work of comparative anatomists like Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752–1840) in Göttingen (e.g., Blumenbach 1805) and, especially, Georges Cuvier (1769–1832) in Paris received particular attention among early 19th-century language scholars. Post-revolutionary France in general not only produced considerable advances in science but attracted the best minds of Europe, particularly Germany, in part also because France at the turn of the century did not exercise the mind control that characterized most of the other states at the time” (1995: 57).

In Koerner’s view, “the *locus classicus* of an explicit reference to Comparative Anatomy in the history of linguistics” (ibid., 58) is F. Schlegel’s *Ueber die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier* (1808).<sup>13</sup> In this work, widely considered the foundational text for the modern study of languages, Schlegel noted: “The decisive point, however, that will illuminate everything here is the inner structure of the languages or comparative grammar, which will provide us entirely new insights into the genealogy of languages the way comparative anatomy has

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<sup>10</sup> Cp. Bopp (1827a: v–vii): “Such a plan, which aims more at scientifically penetrating the inner organism of language than at merely listing what is necessary to understand the author’s meaning or enabling someone to write the language, must naturally have an essential influence on the method, and requires me, among other things, to create a general theory of case-formation.” (All translations of Bopp mine.)

<sup>11</sup> Koerner (1989: 296) collects several examples: “At the beginning of the foreword (p. III), Bopp characteristically formulates his aim in terms of an understanding of linguistics as a discipline analogous to the natural sciences: *My aim in this book is a comparative description, encompassing every related element, of the organism of the languages mentioned in the title, an investigation into their physical and mechanical laws and into the origin of the forms that indicate their grammatical relationships.* Furthermore, Bopp speaks in the same foreword of *systematic language comparison and language anatomy* (p. VI), of *organism and mechanism* (p. VIII) and of a *physics or physiology* of language (p. XIV). Under *physical laws* he understands what were later called ‘sound laws’; by *mechanical laws* he meant his odd theory of the relative weight of syllables and vowels” (all italics in original).

<sup>12</sup> See Koerner (1989: 248–49 and 251–52). On Grimm more closely, see Koerner 1989: 303–24; and, on Schleicher, Koerner 1989: 325–76 and 185–90.

<sup>13</sup> On the foundational status of this work see Koerner (1989: 269–90; see especially 273–75).

cast light on higher natural history” (F. Schlegel 1808: 28).<sup>14</sup> Koerner (1995: 58) argues, “this in fact programmatic statement was not simply a metaphor that presented itself quite independently of the natural sciences.” Rather, it “was the result of Schlegel’s acquaintance with the work of George Cuvier (1769–1832) and whatever the educated classes in Paris knew about his work and the findings of other scientists of the day.”<sup>15</sup> He notes that Schlegel not only drew “important conclusions for the study of language from the ‘creative analogy’ that he perceives between Comparative Anatomy and Comparative Linguistics, namely, that earlier stages of linguistic forms, and of languages, can be reconstructed” (ibid., 59); but also explicitly referred to the creation of “a genuinely historical genealogical tree, a true developmental history of language” (F. Schlegel 1808: 84).

Schlegel’s influence on the history of the comparative study of languages requires no restatement.<sup>16</sup> Reents (2017: 322) considers Schlegel to be “alongside [Friedrich A.] Wolf the founder of a specifically modern philology.” Endres (2017: 220) summarizes Schlegel’s specific contribution to the study of language as follows: “Schlegel thus wishes to construct the relationship of languages on the model of comparative anatomy as a *natural* kinship and trace it back to a principle—according to the standards of the nineteenth century—of law (in this, he likely had in mind Georges Cuvier’s founding of comparative anatomy whose name, however, he first mentions one and a half decades after publication of the *Indier* essay, see 15.2, XX). Thereby, Schlegel brings linguistic discourse into proximity with the biological discourse of his time, indeed, he practically ‘biologizes’ it inasmuch as he links the understanding of the history of language—and of the cultural products brought forth with its help—to the understanding of its genealogical relationships of descent. For ‘Schlegel knew quite well: the constitution of historicity in the sphere of

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<sup>14</sup> All translations of Schlegel mine. Although it has been traditional since Benfey (1869: 363) to attribute it to Schlegel, he was not the first to use the term *vergleichende Grammatik*. Struc-Oppenberg (1980: 425, n. 44) argues that A. W. Schlegel used it before him in his review of Bernhardt’s *Sprachlehre* of 1801–1803 (A. W. Schlegel 1803: 203) and Timpanaro (1977: xxx) has established that Johann Severin Vater used both *vergleichende Grammatik* (Vater 1805: 15–16) and related terms like *vergleichende Sprachlehre* and *vergleichendes Sprachstudium* (Vater 1801: 259).

<sup>15</sup> On Schlegel’s knowledge of the biological and anatomical sciences of the day, see Koerner (1989: 276). Koerner decisively establishes that Schlegel knew Cuvier. Struc-Oppenberg likewise notes “the influence of nineteenth-century biology.” She refers us to the fact that “in his ‘Oriental Notebooks’ Schlegel mentioned Cuvier’s work on fossils explicitly and in the third chapter he referred to ‘vergleichende Anatomie’” (Struc-Oppenberg 1980: 425–26). See also Struc-Oppenberg (1975: lxix, n. 2) for her mention of Schlegel’s intervention with Cuvier, then secretary of the Paris Academy of the Sciences, on Fichte’s behalf and Dierkes (2006: xxxi, n. 59), who cites Körner as noting that Schlegel sought a position using a “handwritten letter of recommendation from Cuvier.” See also the remark in his second set of philosophical fragments from 1802 (F. Schlegel 1963: 437): “La Place, Berthollet, Cuvier von d[en] jetzigen zur Methode. *Pascal, Fenelon, Malebranche* von d[en] alten” (Schlegel’s italics).

<sup>16</sup> But see Koerner (1989: 286–87): “More than a ‘philologischer Anreger’ (Klin 1967), Schlegel paved the way for a comparative linguistics based on grammatical structure rather than on lexical items or phonetic similarity. At the same time, he replaced the traditional (and mostly fruitless) discussion about the origin of language by an historical investigation of attested languages, and he provided the first impetus to the study of language types. In a general way we may regard Friedrich Schlegel’s work—‘one of the venerable documents of modern linguistic science’ as W. F. Twaddell (1943: 151) called it some 135 years later—as having fostered three lines of 19th-century research, namely, Comparative Linguistics (Bopp), Historical Linguistics (Grimm), and Typological Linguistics (Humboldt). They were united by August Schleicher two generations later in a positivistic framework that all subsequent generations of historical-comparative (Indo-European) linguists adopted, and which dominated the discipline until the 1920s.”

grammar took place in accordance with the same model as in the science of living beings' (Foucault 1971, 342)."

Abreu's researches (2003), moreover, establish, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that racial—or, as R-F would say anthropological—questions took priority over linguistic ones for Schlegel.<sup>17</sup> In the face of the textual evidence, the thesis that anthropology emerged as an unfortunate side-effect of Schlegel's linguistic interests can scarcely be maintained.<sup>18</sup> R-F does not cite this work, but already Römer (1985) had noted Schlegel's assumption of "two primordial peoples" on the basis of language (families) and his "apocalyptic" conception, and argued that with his "glorification of organic languages" he had a "great influence on the ethnography of the nineteenth century with its colonial and racist tendencies" (*ibid.*, 106). R-F cites this work, but—as with all other inconvenient sources—she relegates it to the margins of her book.<sup>19</sup> I will therefore not trace F. Schlegel's racial interests further. Instead, I turn to his brother A. W. Schlegel, the acknowledged founder of German Indology (Franco 2016), and show that the influence of comparative anatomy was no less on him. If anything, he was an even greater adherent of Soemmering's and Blumenbach's racial theories of than F. Schlegel.<sup>20</sup>

### **The Inheritance from Race**

Koerner's research casts substantial doubt on R-F's thesis that the concept of a "family" was first developed to describe language families and only later extended to ethnic or racial groups. Indeed, if we remember that the use of "family" to describe language

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<sup>17</sup> Given this article's significance, I have translated it in full as "The School of Prejudice: Friedrich Schlegel's Language Comparison and Contemporary Comparative Anatomy in Germany." The text is forthcoming in an edited volume on Indology as race science.

<sup>18</sup> Abreu (2003: 111), for instance, traces Schlegel's interest in a racial and cultural hierarchy (with the Germans, naturally, at the apex) back to 1804–1806. He notes: "Already in the Cologne *Philosophische Vorlesungen*, he [Schlegel] writes that the peoples of Indian descent have a 'divine' and 'artful' language, whereas the others have a 'savage' language, which merely imitates sound (XIII, 30, 56). These distinctions are to be attributed to the fact that the 'divine spirit' originally revealed itself only to the humans of Indian stock; only they possess 'spirit.' In contrast, all the others do not possess anything more than 'reason' (XIII, 34). In his *Universalgeschichte*, Schlegel concludes that, although they differ from and are not related with each other, the 'savage' languages, which emerge from 'animal cries,' nonetheless possess a single 'grammar, since human reason, when left to itself, tends to follow one and the same rule' (XIV, 14), that is, it 'imitates [the rule].' The polygenetic hypotheses of physical anthropology are thus finally transported into a psychologizing plane (spirit and creativity versus imitation) and, extending beyond the Europe–Africa contrast, which Schlegel nonetheless retains for a physical comparison, encompass almost the entire world population." For the sources, see Schlegel (1960 and 1964b).

<sup>19</sup> See 184, n. 37, 185, n. 39, 186, n. 65, and 193, n. 69.

<sup>20</sup> For Soemmering's influence on F. Schlegel, see my translation of Abreu, "The School of Prejudice" cited earlier. Schlegel's relationship to Blumenbach remains uninvestigated, although as Soemmering's teacher and his brother's mentor he could hardly have been unaware of him. Endres (2017: 119) argues that Schlegel's notion of "Bildungstrieb" ("urge toward culture" or "urge for (self)development") is indebted to Blumenbach: "One of the most prominent representatives of epigenesis as understood at the time, Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, had formulated the concept in the term 'Bildungstrieb', which designates the notion of a self-organization of natural organisms—specifically in contrast to an external principle of organization like that in a (mechanical) artifact. Schlegel cites the term 'Bildungstrieb' introduced by Blumenbach verbatim in his critique of [Goethe's] *Meister*, when he traces Wilhelm's course of development back to his "infinite urge for development."

groups is, in the end, only a “creative analogy” (Koerner 1995: 12), her account of the emergence of the notion of racial families (supposedly arising from Friedrich Max Müller’s “transposition” of the terms “Aryan” and “Indo-European” “from the linguistic to the cultural plane, making the ‘Aryan’ family essential, to the point of speaking of a ‘race’”) appears scarcely credible.

R-F clarifies that Müller “understood this racial kinship from a strictly intellectual viewpoint, only in terms of ‘spiritual flesh and blood’ (161), but even spiritual flesh and blood is flesh and blood: the metaphor only works (and the restriction is necessary) because the physical domain is primary. R-F asserts that “hardly ten years after the articles by August Schleicher ‘On the Value of Comparing Languages’ (1846) and Adalbert Kuhn ‘On the Most Ancient History of Indo-Germanic Peoples’ (1849), the idea that there was an ancestral people at the origin of the German lineage that could be accessible through comparative grammar, had become one of the discipline’s obvious facts” (184). But the notion of a common ancestral people is a cornerstone of F. Schlegel’s 1808 text; it already occurs in A. W. Schlegel’s 1805 essay “*Considérations sur la civilisation en général et sur l’origine et la décadence des religions*” (A. W. Schlegel 1846 [1805]), whereas an interest in the topic of migration occurs as early as his Göttingen dissertation (A. W. Schlegel 1788).

Likewise, when R-F asserts that “The methods initiated by Schleicher and Kuhn consisted in using comparative grammar as one would an archaeological instrument, going back through the various stages of language until one could reconstitute the remnants of the age-old ‘Indo- Germanic’ stage. The Swiss Adolphe Pictet, who had been introduced to Sanskrit by A. W. Schlegel, then adopted these methods and called them ‘linguistic palaeontology’” (184), she overlooks a crucial fact. Pictet’s paleontological metaphor only works because the classificatory scheme—grouping languages into families—was originally borrowed from a biological domain. Pictet is, so to speak, only returning to its origin what, by derivation, was alienated from it.<sup>21</sup>

Before Pictet, A. W. Schlegel had himself taken a paleontological approach in his “*De l’Origine des Hindous*” (1834);<sup>22</sup> only his approach was straightforward rather than metaphorical, using physical attributes to identify language families rather than language to infer a people. Citing Blumenbach’s classification of humankind into five races by skull type,<sup>23</sup> Schlegel wrote: “He [Blumenbach] places Hindus in the race that I designated

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<sup>21</sup> As Gould (1996: 402–403) notes, Blumenbach’s racial classification, often cited as the forerunner of all modern racial theories, “did not arise from Blumenbach’s observations or theorizing, but only represents, as Blumenbach readily admits, the classification adopted and promoted by his guru Carolus Linnaeus in the founding document of taxonomy, the *Systema naturae* of 1758.” Via Schlegel, this biological classification entered Indology to unfold its inevitable effects. An argument could be made that figures such as Pictet, now rejected as marginal to the discipline, understood Schlegel better than the Indologists. Indeed, Pictet was a careful reader of A. W. Schlegel and, as noted, maintained a correspondence with him.

<sup>22</sup> “*De l’Origine des Hindous*” was originally read before the Royal Society of Literature on November 20, 1833. It was published in 1834 in *Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature of the United Kingdom*, vol. 2, part 2, 405–446 and subsequently reprinted in 1835, 1838, and 1842 (in the *Bibliothèque universelle des sciences, belles-lettres et arts*, Geneva and Paris; *Nouvelles annales des voyages et des sciences géographiques*, Paris; and *Essais littéraires et historiques*, Bonn). Whatever else we can say about this text, it had a wide circulation. R-F incorrectly attributes the text to 1842.

<sup>23</sup> “It is Blumenbach, the Nestor of our naturalists, who conducted the most probing and scientific investigations into these varieties in the human species and who, at the same time, was most circumspect in

before, which he names Caucasian [...]. The denomination could appear arbitrary but that does not matter, *given that the classification is accurate. The great naturalist's decision is wholly confirmed by the results of research into the affiliation among languages, about which I will soon speak*" (ibid., 422; my italics).<sup>24</sup>

Contrary to R-F's thesis, race clearly had priority over language for Schlegel.<sup>25</sup> Four pages later, in the chapter titled "L'Analyse comparée des Langues appliquée à l'Histoire" ("The comparative analysis of language applied to history"), Schlegel finally turned to language. He introduced the topic thus: "We have defined the race of the Hindus: we have seen that, though placed at the end of the line, they belong to that which one is justified in calling the most noble, since it has been illustrated in history more than all the others taken together, by the perfections of the social order; by the useful inventions, and the scientific discoveries; finally, by the intellectual productions which bear the seal of genius, in philosophy, poetry, rhetoric, and the fine arts. We shall now determine the family of peoples of which they form an integral part, letting ourselves be guided in this inquiry by the comparative study of languages. One can say that this study, treated methodically, is an entirely new science; and it is presumably for this reason that it has not yet been accorded by all the world its just value" (ibid., 426–27).<sup>26</sup>

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stating his results. Blumenbach rightly takes the skull's structure and dimensions, as well as its placement on the neck's vertebrae, to be the basis for distinctions among the races. For it is evident that the skull's form, which hardens only gradually in the embryo and newborn infant, is determined by the brain's development, this material organ of thought. The osseous part of the head in turn determines the figure, position and proportions of the fleshy parts. Now, the face is the visible site of humanity: it is in the face that the activity of all intellectual faculties finds expression. It is, as Cicero rightly remarked, the distinctive character of man and that which, even in his external appearance, places him at an infinite distance from all animal species. Blumenbach was first to gather a rich collection of skulls coming from all parts of the world and many nations. By combining the skull's form with other physiological differences, he divided humankind into five principal races." (A. W. Schlegel 1834: 421–22)

<sup>24</sup> On Blumenbach's place within a German tradition of biological thinking, see the account in Zammito (2018). See also the essays in Eigen and Larrimore (2006).

<sup>25</sup> Schlegel admitted as much. Noting that he excluded from consideration "newly arrived colonists [and] intruders," he wrote: "In today's India we can see peoples that *are racially entirely distinct from the Hindus*" (A. W. Schlegel 1834: 406; italics added). A few pages later, he again emphasized the priority of race, writing: "I now turn to the genealogical side of the question [...]: what race of men does this nation belong to? And to which family of peoples? Races are recognizable by physical characteristics that are universal or more or less predominant among a large group of men and which are so regular that they are passed on from one generation to another. Families of peoples are recognizable as languages are, proving a community of one origin. Though one race can contain several such families of peoples it is impossible that the members of one family belong to different races" (ibid., 415). R-F cites this passage, but completely overlooks its significance. In her view, it is evidence that "A. W. Schlegel posed the hypothesis that the kinship of languages made it possible to conclude that there was a common ethnic origin" (186), when, in fact, Schlegel invoked the notion of a language family to *absolutize* the distinction between races.

<sup>26</sup> Like his brother, A. W. Schlegel distinguished the new "'science' of language" to be established from traditional "etymology." The latter "is notorious as a futile science, arbitrary in its methods, ambiguous, uncertain or flagrantly erroneous in its results that, even if they are to be certain would appear only as pointless trifles" (1834: 427). In contrast, he sought to place the "comparative analysis of languages" on a natural scientific and, more precisely, *natural historical* foundation.

R-F inexplicably overlooks this crucial text.<sup>27</sup> A careful reading, moreover, shows that the topic of language appears quite late.<sup>28</sup> In both the introduction and the conclusion, Schlegel makes it abundantly clear that the purpose of these investigations was anthropological and ethnographic.<sup>29</sup> His reference to the comparative study of languages as “an entirely new science” in the previous quotation suggests an awareness of founding a new field of inquiry. From his explicit comments and from the structure of the essay, there can be no doubt that, rather than philology being the model for anthropology, as R-F claims, Schlegel was looking to the work of his mentor and teacher Blumenbach in forging this new science.

Blumenbach’s influence on Schlegel is well attested. Paulin (2016: 33) refers to the influence of “the ‘German Buffon’, the great comparative anatomist Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, with his ‘vital energy,’” on Schlegel, “whose work on fossils and crania Schlegel was later to cite (and whose laudatio he was to write in Latin for the university in Bonn).” If we remember that Blumenbach was lecturing on comparative anatomy as early as 1785 (see Dougherty 2006: 103), a full ten years before Georges Cuvier began working at the Jardin des Plantes, and that Schlegel himself attended Göttingen University from 1786, there can be no doubt that the debt in Indology ran rather from comparative anatomy to comparative philology.<sup>30</sup>

In the late 1700s, systems of racial classification, emerging from Linnaen taxonomy, were the only theoretical frameworks capable of enabling the specifically modern approach to language.<sup>31</sup> As Paulin (2016: 474) notes, “It is not by chance that Schlegel in three separate lecture series and elsewhere uses the image of the comparative anatomist,

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<sup>27</sup> There are only four references to the essay in *Archives* (at 109, n. 32, 125, 186, and 186, n. 44). All occur in the context of the Romantic search for a primordial language and homeland. Only the fourth mentions race, but, as noted, it is incorrectly glossed.

<sup>28</sup> “De l’Origine des Hindous” contains nine chapters: Définition du Nom de Hindou (405–06), Anciennes Migrations des Peuples (406–09), Examen de la Tradition Nationale des Hindous (409–15), Diversité des Races Humaines (415–19), Caractère Physiologique des Hindous (419–22), Sauvages Indigènes de l’Inde (423–26), L’Analyse comparée des Langues appliquée à l’Histoire (426–34), Revue des Langues affiliées au Sanscrit (435–44), and Résultats (444–46). Only the last two are concerned with language.

<sup>29</sup> See A. W. Schlegel (1834: 444 and 446).

<sup>30</sup> R-F does not mention the Blumenbach–Schlegel connection. She notes that “In the first half of the 19th century, German anthropology had been dominated by the research led by Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, a professor of medicine at Göttingen” and adds that “after his [Blumenbach’s] death, German anthropology took various directions,” listing Theodor Waitz, Rudolf Virchow, Wilhelm Wundt, and Ernst Haeckel (191), but Schlegel was no less a student of Blumenbach’s. His comparative study of languages can justly be regarded as a fifth direction of inquiry that Blumenbach’s anthropology inspired, since it likewise sought to validate his theories about human classification (see A. W. Schlegel 1834: 422, cited earlier).

<sup>31</sup> On the emergence of “comparative linguistics” or the new “science of language” (*vergleichende Sprachwissenschaft*) see Koerner (1989: 233–44), especially *ibid.*, 235: “The coinage of new terminology suggests a desire to establish a new field of study; it does not necessarily mean that these neologisms in fact produce the field as an autonomous discipline at once. In fact, it took the joint efforts of two generations of researchers to establish the study of language on firm grounds. Although there are indications that the first generation of historical or historical-comparative linguists (e.g., Bopp, Rask, Grimm, and others) realized that they were moving in directions that separated them from much of the literature-oriented philological tradition, they made no attempt to divorce themselves from it openly. Indeed, while perhaps extending the usual meaning of the term, they regarded themselves as ‘philologists’. As a result, although the term ‘Sprachwissenschaft’ had been available to these scholars from the beginning, they do not seem to have made significant use of it.”

reconstructing and restoring on the basis of archaeological and scientific evidence the ‘antediluvian origins’ of humankind, or through fragmentary inscriptions finding hints of languages now lost (Etruscan, Pelasgian) that might lead us back to the ‘Ursprache’.”<sup>32</sup> “Hence the need for all those documents, all the study of human striving, the ‘theory of the earth’, the diversity of human types (‘Racen’ in Schlegel’s and his contemporaries’ terminology: he follows Blumenbach’s division of humanity into five ‘racial types’); not out of any mere antiquarian interest, although Schlegel is not one to despise old humanist scholarship as mere ‘archaeology’” (ibid.).<sup>33</sup> In fact, Paulin is of the view that “the later

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<sup>32</sup> Paulin (2016: 474, n. 256) cites three sources: “Einleitung in die alte Weltgeschichte,” 37; *Geschichte der Deutschen Sprache und Poesie*, 30f.; ‘Griechen und Römer’, 17. He adds: “his [Schlegel’s] *Indische Bibliothek* also quotes Alexander von Humboldt. I, i, 35. Cf. also the later fragment, ‘Ueber historische und geographische Bestimmungen der Zoologie’, *SW*, VIII, 334–36.” There is no source called “Einleitung in die alte Weltgeschichte” in either Paulin’s bibliography or Böcking’s edition of Schlegel’s collected works (A. W. Schlegel 1846–47) (though this only partially contains the lectures). Possibly Paulin means the untranscribed lecture he elsewhere cites as “‘Einleitung in die allgemeine Weltgeschichte’, SLUB Dresden, Mscr. Dresd. e. 90.” “Griechen and Römer” refers to the unpublished lecture he cites as “‘Geschichte der Griechen und Römer’ (first 1822–23), unpublished, SLUB Dresden, Mscr. Dresd.” *Geschichte der Deutschen Sprache und Poesie* is published in the Körner edition (A. W. Schlegel 1913) and there we read: “We return to the path of historical research. The concept of a comparative grammar and etymology—*anatomia comparata*. Genius of the newer physiologists, in the classification of the extinct species, according to isolated fragments. Could the etymologist achieve as much for extinct languages? Certainly, if he had characteristic remnants of them and not just bare words and names” (30–31; italicized text in Antiqua in original). The last-named text (“Ueber historische und geographische Bestimmungen der Zoologie”) contains an encomium of Cuvier, whose influence through his lectures and a personal gift of his book Schlegel acknowledges. Then he notes: “There is already a doubled zoology: that of the present and of prehistory. Since Linné and Buffon, the first has gained immeasurably in size due to the discovery of countless previously unknown species and scientific depth due to the incorporation of physiology and comparative anatomy. The second is a completely new science: one could say, a triumph of the human intellect, where restorative criticism has achieved wonders” (A. W. Schlegel 1971: 335). The fragment is undated, but must have been written sometime after 1832 since Schlegel mentions Cuvier’s death (1832) and attending his lectures in 1831–32. The “new science” Schlegel envisions is either a binary or a subfield of comparative linguistics (cp. A. W. Schlegel 1834: 427: “the comparative study of languages [...] is an entirely new science”). It addresses similar questions (“Historically, however, it is certain that many species hostile or at least detrimental to man were startled and driven back by the increasing cultivation of land [...] On the other hand, animals tamed for various purposes accompanied the peoples on their wanderings. It is thus important for the zoologist to know how different the climates were, to which they grew accustomed, and which mutations followed as a result”) and uses “historical,” that is, linguistic and ethnographic data, to reconstruct prehistoric genealogies (using anthropological clues like land-clearing, farming, domestication, and mass migration). Schlegel argues (1971: 336) that it can “quite fittingly be titled name historical and geographical zoology.” Whatever their relationship—whether coordinate or in a subordinate relationship—this passage speaks for comparative linguistics itself as a kind of historical and geographical zoology, since, extending beyond philology’s traditional domain, it addressed questions pertaining to man’s entire being—physical, cultural, anthropological, and moral. Timpanaro (1977: xxxvi) calls Schlegel’s approach to language a “linguistic zoology.”

<sup>33</sup> For the sources, see A. W. Schlegel, “Einleitung in die allgemeine Weltgeschichte,” 68 (source as in previous citation) and “Vorlesungen über Theorie und Geschichte der bildenden Künste [Berlin 1827],” 307 (in A. W. Schlegel 2007: 289–348). The latter reads: “Likewise, Blumenbach’s service in distinguishing the different human races according to skull-formation cannot go unmentioned. If the debate turns to language, we must question world history and cultural history and they will decide in favor of the voice that spread from the northeast of Asia, from the Ganges through all of Europe. It appears that nature undertook several attempts at forming/cultivating [*bilden*] the human race; the facial formation of the Negro with his lowered brow and outthrust jaws is manifestly closer to the formation of animals than that of the Europeans [is]. The cultural condition always corresponds to external appearance as well; thus, for example, among

essay, *De l'Origine des Hindous* (1834, republished in 1838 and 1842) rehearsed essentially what he had to say on etymology in 1818 or what he was telling his Bonn students about geography, movement, settlement, 'Raçe'. What was new in 1834 were some words in season for 'celtomanes', who happened to be in France, and their 'chimères celtiques'" (ibid., 487–88).

Likewise, when R-F alleges that, "in his association of the terms 'paleontology' and 'linguistic', Pictet showed that analysing a language made it possible to go back in time just as much as analysing bones. Seeking to justify this comparison, he established a true analogy between two scientific subjects" (185), she overlooks the fact that Pictet had a predecessor in Schlegel. Pictet did not invent the "palaeontological" metaphor. Before him, A. W. Schlegel (1834: 430) wrote: "If it is true [...] that nothing casts greater light on the hidden origin of peoples than the comparison of languages, and this is an evident truth; [then] I dare to affirm that this discovery, reserved for our time, forms an epoch in research into antiquity, and even into the primitive history of the human race. Who could have imagined in advance that one would find on the banks of the Ganges an ancient language, revealing again, by its characteristic traits, a common origin with the idioms spoken on the borders of the Arctic Ocean, in Scandinavia and in Iceland? *This discovery can be compared to another of the same importance, made recently in natural history: I speak of the anatomy of animal species, no longer existing, which pertain to another epoch of the terrestrial creation, and that one calls antediluvian, on the supposition that they perished in a violent catastrophe of our globe*" (italics added).<sup>34</sup>

When Pictet in 1859 wrote: "It [the study of etymology] is in this respect exactly like paleontology, when, with the aid of fossilized bones, it permits not only the reconstruction of an animal, but makes us aware of its habits, of its manner of motion, of nourishment, etc. For words last as long as bones; and, just as a tooth contains implicitly a part of the history of an animal, an isolated word can put us on the track of the entire series of ideas which were attached to it at the time of its formation. The name, thus, of *linguistic paleontology* would suit perfectly the science which we have in view; for it takes as its goal to

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the Chinese, whose highly developed culture nonetheless never ascended beyond mechanical skill and was never borne by the rocking of a free imagination" (ibid., 307).

<sup>34</sup> This one text thus already contains all of the elements that R-F attributes to the "'anthropological extension' of philology" (Malamoud's expression in the preface): the racial division of Indian history, assigning the Hindus to the white or "Caucasian" race, the idea of an Aryan invasion or migration, the idea that German was most closely related with Sanskrit, using the beauty and perfection of Sanskrit to assert the superiority of German over other European languages, the idea of a common *Urvolk*, the search for its homeland, and a description of the mental and physical features of this *Volk*. Contrary to R-F's claim that things only became problematic once "the notion of 'Indo-European' people became uncontrollable" (268), it reveals that linguistics and anthropology were always intertwined. In the nineteenth century, language was synonymous with race. The image of the Indologists as "pernickety micrologists totally out of touch with the world, infinitely putting forward etymologies and patiently expanding treasures of erudition in order to establish what there was to be learnt from a manuscript" (263) is seductive, but entirely without basis. Likewise, when R-F (195) claims that Indologists rejected the racial use of "Aryan" (basing this on Müller's celebrated statement [in Müller 1888: 120]), she overlooks the fact that they had done more than anyone to facilitate the association. In truth, they attacked popularizers such as Penka only because they saw them as a threat to their own authority. In truth, the problem was not that the use of "Aryan" was getting out of hand, but that it was getting into the *wrong* hands. Indology's subsequent history reveals that the Indologists gladly played the "Aryan" card as long as the benefits accrued to them alone. See Junginger (1999, 2003, 2004, and 2008) and Nanko (2003).

make to live again, in a certain fashion, the facts, the things and the ideas of a world buried in the darkness of the past” (Pictet 1859: 7; Pictet’s italics) he only provided the name of the science; not, however, the idea of the science itself or the terms of comparison that made it possible.

Schlegel’s philology was a “linguistic paleontology” *avant la lettre*; indeed, he himself explicitly invoked the comparison with paleontological research, albeit the term *paleontology* is lacking.<sup>35</sup> Thus he wrote: “Through all of time fossilized bones have been found, but without attracting attention; sometimes childish stories have been attached to them; when they have been striking for their colossal size, they have passed in popular opinion for the skeletons of giants. But as soon as the observing eye of the scientific spirit was directed there, the discoveries multiplied, and became sufficient to determine the anatomical characteristics which at the same time bring together and distinguish the lost species from the species most analogous among those which still exist. The art was taught of reconstructing the entire body by means of a few scattered members; of tracing upon the very skeleton the exterior contour of the animal; of making thus portraits of originals which belonged to another age of the world, and of resuscitating, not only for science, but for the imagination, an annihilated creation. Likewise, certain isolated and superficial resemblances have long been noted between languages of which no historical link is known. But this was confined to a fruitless wonderment or, if an attempt was made to explain this phenomenon, false hypotheses were advanced. The knowledge of Sanskrit put an end to this groping. This language, cultivated to the highest point and fixed in a remote antiquity, belonging to a nation of southern Asia, placed outside the scope of our ancient history; this language, I say, offered on the surface such coincidences with all the other already known languages of the same family, as to provoke a deeper examination. One learned to discern disguised analogies from superficial dissimilarities; to discover them especially in those fine portions of the structure of the languages which resemble the branches of the veins and the nerves in the animal body. [...] The comparative analysis of languages must also [like ‘everyday grammar’] commence from grammar, and not from vocabulary. But this is a grammar of a superior order; it must become historical, so far as this is possible, in following the inverse order of time; it must distinguish in the changes which have occurred within the same language in diverse epochs the accidental perturbations of the laws of an organic development. The knowledge of these laws, and the analogy of the languages, furnish it the means to return to an epoch anterior to written documents, of divining a more pristine ancient type, and of approaching thus the

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<sup>35</sup> This contradicts not only R-F’s thesis, but also the earlier account in Arvidsson (2006). Arvidsson (*ibid.*, 54–55) states: “This method of tracing the origins of the Indo-Europeans was further developed by the Swiss Adolphe Pictet (1799–1875) into an entire field of research that he named *linguistic paleontology*, since its material consists of ‘remnants from the ancient language of our race, that are like fossils from a vanished world.’” Arvidsson appears unaware of Schlegel’s essay on the origin of the Hindus. It is not mentioned in his bibliography. Likewise, when he notes that, “With the help of these words, Pictet claims to be able to describe in detail ‘the primitive Aryans’ (where ‘primitive’ means ‘original’ and ‘uncorrupted’). Pictet knows, for example, how the Aryans were dressed, what kind of utensils they used, and that they were a beautiful and virtuous master race that lived in Pamir and stood on the threshold of becoming a true cultural people” (*ibid.*, 55), he overlooks that the idea of the Aryans as “a beautiful and virtuous master race” is only intelligible in the context of Schlegel’s earlier theologically inspired notion of “a fully finished German cultural nation [descending] from the roof of the world” (Abreu 2003: 113).

primitive identity of the languages issuing from a common stem” (A. W. Schlegel 1834: 430–31).<sup>36</sup>

As this passage shows, Schlegel formulated his “comparative study” or “comparative science” or “comparative analysis” of languages (he uses all three terms) independently of Pictet, on strict analogy with paleontology. Not only did he refer to “fossils” before Pictet; he was also the first to formulate the idea of a “historical” science that would enable the reconstruction of the lost ancestral language (and *mutatis mutandis* its associated culture) from which the remaining members of the “Indo-Germanic” family allegedly derived.<sup>37</sup> Pictet himself acknowledged the debt to the “great authorities” (*hautes autorités*) in the field, Schlegel and Lassen, noting that his hypothesis (about the location of the homeland of the Aryans) “accorded essentially” with their conjectures, albeit having “the advantage of greater precision” (Pictet 1859: 53; “*hautes autorités*” occurs on 62).

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<sup>36</sup> Compare Pictet’s comments: “To recompose piece by piece, and by the analysis of often enigmatic words, the whole life of a prehistoric people, is a laborious work full of arid details; [...] When the field of facts has been further explored, and only then, we can try to revive the past in animated pictures of the spirit of the ancient ages, just as paleontology has sought to trace us some scenes from the antediluvian world” (Pictet 1859: vii); “As with the naturalist who studies the antediluvian reigns, it is with scattered debris that the edifice of a lost civilization must be reconstructed, and we must expect many gaps and uncertainties of more than one kind. [...] The materials of this research are increasing from day to day, the least well-known among the Aryan languages are explored with redoubled zeal, the primitive traditions are interrogated and scrutinized everywhere in a spirit of philosophical criticism which promises to bring forth new lights” (ibid., 10); “As one cannot admit, in effect, aside from some exceptions easy to recognize, that there was transmission from India to Europe, or the converse, all verbal coincidence well established implies necessarily a common origin, and, in bringing together with care all the data of this kind, one can come to reconstruct a very rich vocabulary even of the primitive idiom of the family. In this prehistoric vocabulary [...] everything cannot have equal certitude, and each of its elements must be submitted to a scrupulous examination [...] This is a labor a bit dry, but necessary to the same degree as that of the patient study of fossilized remains in order to reconstruct antediluvian fauna” (ibid., 15); and: “On one side, debris more or less enigmatic; on the other, facts imperfectly known! [...] It is here, above all, that we walk in the footsteps of paleontology, when, with the aid of mineral layers, fossilized plants, and scraps of petrified bones, it seeks to make live again before our eyes the living tableaux of antediluvian nature. If, in spite of these obstacles, one arrives at some certain results, we must appreciate the power of an instrument of investigation which permits us to penetrate thus into the darkness of the past. It is as a result of this long and laborious study of detail, of these researches, a bit dry in themselves, into the debris of the ancient language of our race, which are like fossils of a vanished world, that I am able, furthermore, to summarize the results in an overview” (ibid., 148).

<sup>37</sup> On the origins of the term, see Shapiro (1981) and Koerner (1989: 149–78). See especially ibid., 168–69: “In the development of ‘Aryan’ in the sense of ‘Indo-European’ it appears that the Norwegian-born Indo-Iranist and pupil of August Wilhelm Schlegel (1767–1845) at Bonn, Christian Lassen (1800–1876), played a seminal role. In a detailed footnote to a polemic against Bopp’s ‘System der Sanskritsprache’, Lassen made a deliberate transfer of the term from its original, restricted application to the entire language family, with a prominent position among the European branches assigned to the Germanic group. This was based, ironically enough, on an etymological misreading of a classical text: ‘Die Inder und die Altpersischen Völker nannten sich mit demselben Namen, dem der Arier, der auch bei den kriegerischen Deutschen seiner ehrenden Bedeutung nicht unwürdig erscheint: Tacit. Germ. X L I I I: Ceterum Arii [*recte*: Harii] super vires, quibus enumeratos paulo ante populos antecedunt, truces, insitae feritati arte et tempore lenociantur . . . (Lassen 1830, p. 71 note).’ Pictet in 1837 and Pott in 1840 refer to Lassen’s proposal, though Pott did not approve of the expansion of the original application, whereas Pictet, especially in his *Les Origines indo-européennes* (1859–63), adopted the suggested usage. It is on the authority of Pictet that Max Müller began promoting the special use of ‘Aryan’ in the sense of “Indo-European” from the first volume of his *Lectures on the Science of Language* (1861) onwards (cf. Müller 1875; 1888).”

## **The Attempted Rehabilitation of Indology**

In *The Aryan Myth* (1971), Léon Poliakov famously claimed that “the division of the European population into Aryans and Semites was originally based on a confusion about the nature of men (races) and their culture (languages)” (Poliakov 1996 [1971]: 2). He argued that, mediated via comparative philology and Indology, German strivings for nationhood and the Enlightenment’s anthropological discourse had led to the Holocaust. With *Archives*, R-F has provided the anti-Poliakov, apologetic response. Although she does not cite Poliakov, her book clearly has him in view: “The core of the questioning is the link from Indological philology to anthropology. In the discriminating [*sic*], lethal uses that have been made of the terms ‘Aryan’ and ‘Indo-Germanic’, what is at stake is indeed the collusion of linguistic and racial typologies” (23). Not only does R-F argue, against Poliakov, that “the link between Indological philology and anthropology does not necessarily take on the aspect one would expect. When it is reduced to some kind of collusion between language and race classifications, then the diversity of Indological philological practice disappears” (24); she has also undertaken the most extensive rehabilitation of Indology since Margarete Dierks’s tendentious biography of the Nazi Indologist Jakob Wilhelm Hauer (Dierks 1986). Seeking to exonerate Indology of Poliakov’s charge that “the confusion between language and blood [is] a permanent feature of German history” (Poliakov 1996: 7) by displacing its anthropological interests several decades forward, R-F has produced what can, at best, be described as a carefully curated account of German Indology in the period 1800–1890.<sup>38</sup>

R-F’s thesis, however, does not work. She only succeeds in creating the impression that anthropological concerns were absent or, at least, only in the background in the beginning of Indology because she deals with the evidence selectively.<sup>39</sup> As we saw, she

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<sup>38</sup> R-F ends her book before 1930s Germany, a decision Chang (2015: 461–62) rightly criticizes. Malamoud (2013: 11) notes: “Pascale Rabault-Feuerhahn does not linger on this; it is not her intention” and adds: “All this goes beyond the time frame and domain set by Pascale Rabault-Feuerhahn, who precisely warns us against the temptation of retrospective readings: what makes sense in a given situation is not necessarily a forewarning sign of what is to come.” But this only provokes the question of what R-F’s intention is. Even if her aim was purely to analyze “how an academic discipline was constructed,” the themes she addresses have resonances beyond the 1880s. Not every historian who takes the long view provokes “determinist readings” (23).

<sup>39</sup> Compare Benes’s (2008: 89) more objective account of Klaproth: “In *Asia Polyglotta*, Klaproth cited patterns in ‘the formation of the cranium’ as evidence that apparent lexical convergences were not indications of shared ethnic ties; linguistic affinities could only be confirmed, in his mind, through ‘physical uniformity.’ The Ossetes, he reported, distinguished themselves ‘in language and facial structure from all others in the Caucasus.’ The tribe was a ‘well-built people’ whose ‘physiognomy’ resembled ‘that of Europeans’; the members had ‘blue eyes and blond or red-brown hair ... truly back hair almost never.’ This suggested to Klaproth that Ossetian was the lost fifth branch of the Indo-Germanic language family” with R-F’s two citations: “This journal, then recently founded by the sinologist Julius Klaproth in Weimar and modelled on *Asiatic Researches*, aimed to provide an area devoted to Oriental research in a large sense, not specifically linked to theological issues” and “The term ‘Indo-Germanic’ was used for the first time by Conrad Malte-Brun in the second volume of his *Précis de la géographie universelle*, published in Paris in 1810; it was made popular under its German form (*indogermanisch*) by the linguist Julius Klaproth who used it in his book entitled *Asia Polyglotta* (1823)” (44 and 66, n. 132). Compare also Benes’s (2008: 202–203) account of A. W. Schlegel’s and Christian Lassen’s racial interests with R-F’s scant remarks quoted earlier: “In an article ‘On the Origin of the Hindous’ (1834), August Wilhelm Schlegel proposed that the Indian ‘nation’

elides several key texts—not only F. Schlegel’s *Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier* and A. W. Schlegel’s “De l’Origine des Hindous” but also Lassen’s *Indische Alterthumskunde*.<sup>40</sup> She also does not address any of the critical literature on the subject—most surprisingly, Poliakov himself, whose *The Aryan Myth* is mentioned only in the bibliography. I already noted the other significant omissions from her work, including Römer, Arvidsson, and Benes. Key topics like the emergence of comparative linguistics from comparative anatomy, its dependence on an organic metaphor, its self-conscious imitation of (the methods of) the natural sciences, and the Indologists’ own anthropological interests are not addressed.

In a lesser scholar, these omissions could be attributed to an unfamiliarity either with intellectual-historical contexts or with the sources or with the methods and evidentiary standards of critical scholarship. In a scholar of R-F’s rank, they raise questions about a work that claims to be as concerned with comprehensivity and objectivity as *Archives*.<sup>41</sup>

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was a compilation of two ‘distinct races’ (*races différentes*). Indigenous Indians had been ‘black savages’; they were badly armed and lived ‘in vast primitive forests.’ Those Indians with ties to Indo-European speakers were members of ‘the white race’ and had introduced the natives to the ‘first rudiments of civilization.’ The relocation of the Aryan homeland outside of India enabled this distinction. Christian Lassen’s *Indian Antiquities* (1847) expanded this two-race theory of India with a more detailed study of the ‘original ethnographic conditions of India.’ The ‘sharp contrast in the physical appearance of the two races’ derived from the fact that ‘old inhabitants distinct from the Aryans’ once inhabited the continent. These natives had a ‘very black skin color with curly almost wooly hair and their own non-Sanskrit language.’ They belonged to what Lassen termed ‘the black Asian race,’ a ‘raw, wild,’ and ‘uncivilized stock.’ Since the Aryan invasions, this ‘black race’ had numbered among the ‘defeated races,’ like ‘the Australian Negroes ... and the red men of America.’ Aryan Indians, by contrast, were ‘a more lightly colored people’ with a ‘physiognomy different from the neighbors.’ Their ‘corporal structure and facial expressions’ proved them members of the ‘Caucasian race.’ According to Lassen, the Aryans represented ‘the more perfectly organized, entrepreneurial and creative nation.’ They always proved to be ‘the dominant, victorious race,’ successfully driving away the ‘weaker, yielding’ natives. Lassen defined the cultural and spiritual proclivities of Aryans in relation to speakers of Semitic tongues. In his view, Aryans and Semites were members of the same race; they shared a ‘higher capacity for self-reliant cultivation’ and had lived in close proximity in antiquity. Yet Lassen insisted that language revealed an ‘original spiritual gift’ that Aryans only shared with other members of the language family. A ‘genius instilled at creation’ had endowed them with ‘higher provisions from which sprouted everything great they accomplished.’ This meant for Lassen that Aryans had ‘surpassed all others’ in the discovery of the practical arts, in instituting laws, civil society, and the state, and in perfecting the fine arts and sciences. ‘In their ceaseless activity,’ he concluded, the Aryans ‘envelop the external world and the realm of the spirit; their aspiration is to dominate the entire globe.’”

<sup>40</sup> For R-F’s comments on Lassen’s “*opus magnum*” *Indische Alterthumskunde*, see 92–94 and 97–98. She notes that Lassen planned to classify “all the peoples of India [...] into two main branches or ‘lines’ (*Stämme*): the ‘Aryans’ (*Arier*) and the ‘Dravidian peoples’ (*Dravida-Nishāda Völker*)” and adds that “This typology of peoples was not neutral” (97), but mentions neither his interest in using Indian studies to concretize the existence of an “Indo-Germanic” people nor Lassen’s crucial role in engendering the concept of a “Semitic” race. See the previous note.

<sup>41</sup> See 263: “For these various reasons, it is necessary to look dispassionately at this issue. However, what could seem obvious from the viewpoint of scientific history requires some courage in a context where, precisely, debates have remained turbulent and continue to divide Indologists themselves. It is indeed difficult to reach a decision on such a subject without being criticised one way or another”; and 263–64: “This work has endeavoured to replace 19th century German Indology in its context, to follow its consensual developments as well as those that were subject to debates or that gave rise to the most destructive appropriations, and to pay attention to the motivations expressed by Indologists themselves. A line of approach has thus been provided, that can come up with a new way to consider this discipline, a way other than the two poles mentioned above.”

For all its claims to trace the emergence of linguistic comparativism,<sup>42</sup> *Archives* does not actually shed light on it because of its ignorance of its sources in nineteenth-century biological science.

R-F's claim that "the time gap between the development of linguistic comparativism (as early as the first decades of the 19th century) and that of physical anthropology (in the second half of the 19th century) shows that one cannot prejudge the intentions of linguistic comparativism actors. It also brings to mind that we are dealing with two disciplines in the process of formation, whose still-unstable definitions gave rise to large debates on a European scale" (23–24) is erroneous. First, as we saw, no time gap exists. Linguistic and anthropological concerns were intertwined in the Schlegel brothers' work. If anything, anthropological concerns had priority, since, as Abreu has shown, F. Schlegel invoked the distinction between inflected and non-inflected languages only in order to make a distinction between two orders of humans—in Timpanaro's words, "the one group 'divine'; the other [...] 'feral' [...] a kind of Manichean, potentially racist, mysticism which splits the human species into two" (1977: xxxiv–xxxv). Likewise, we saw that his brother August Schlegel only turned to language to validate his preexisting racial prejudices.<sup>43</sup> Second, as Foucault was the first to note, "the constitution of historicity in

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<sup>42</sup> The following passage is key: "Linguistic comparativism, especially at the beginning, aimed to establish the kinship uniting different languages, and to mark out the boundaries of the linguistic family thus reconstructed. [...] [T]he classificatory approach constituted a point in common between linguistic comparativism and anthropology, which was mainly concerned about drawing up the typology and genealogy of human groups. While anthropologists based themselves on physical criteria, some of them envisaged the already-established linguistic classifications as a decisive criterion to confirm or even guide the delimitation of racial groups" (23).

<sup>43</sup> We already saw that Schlegel's purpose in "De l'Origine des Hindous" was to confirm Blumenbach's racial classification by language (A. W. Schlegel 1834: 422). This passage alone suffices to refute R-F's thesis. But had she probed deeper, the aesthetic motivation behind Schlegel's interest in proving Hindus members of the "Caucasian" race would have become clear. In his 1827 lectures Schlegel mentioned that Winckelmann "is wrong when he speaks of Chinese eyes in the Egyptian statues" and then he added: "Blumenbach appears to be better informed, when, in the skulls of a few noble Egyptians, whom he received as mummies for investigation, he recognized a relationship with the Indians" (A. W. Schlegel 2007: 324). Knödler comments: "See Johan Friedrich Blumenbach's treatise *Über die ägyptischen Mumien* in his *Beiträgen zur Naturgeschichte*, vol. 2, p. 45–144. In section XVII (*Dreyerley Nationalphysiognomie unter den alten Ägyptern*, p. 130–39) Blumenbach introduces the 'Ethiopian form,' the 'more Hindulike form,' and the one that 'appears similar to the Berbers.' According to Blumenbach the Hindulike physiognomy characterizes itself by 'a long, slender nose, through narrowly opening, long drawn eyelids, which run outwards from the nose bridge to the temples, and alert ears' (p. 134). Blumenbach criticizes Winckelmann's contrary views in several places and of others, who find the physiognomy of the Egyptians 'similar to the *Chinese*—a comparison that, to me, remains absolutely incomprehensible' (p. 138). For, as Blumenbach continues, 'the Egyptians stand between the Caucasian and Ethiopian [race]; whereas they differ more from the Mongolian [race], to which the Chinese belong, than from any of the remaining [races]' (p. 139). See also Schlegel's remark concerning this in his review of Winckelmann's *Werken*, p. 93 (Böcking VI, p. 356f.): 'The skulls of the common mummies betray a completely different stock than that of the richly bejeweled [ones]. Presumably, the population of the country was of two kinds: the people from Ethiopian [stock]; the castes of the priests and warriors or the nobles from Asian, presumably Indian blood'" (A. W. Schlegel 2016: 862). See also Knödler's comments to 292, 28–32 and 307, 13–15 (in A. W. Schlegel 2016: 383 and 852): Schlegel was well informed about the anatomical science of his day (for example, Camper 1792 and Blumenbach 1798) and took strong positions on questions of aesthetic superiority. Unsurprisingly, his "linguistic" classification of the Hindus among the "Caucasian" race in the 1834 essay was rooted primarily in aesthetic considerations: "one can very well [...] form a fair idea of the [Hindu] national physiognomy, without having been to the country [...]. The face of an oval shape, the forehead high and dominating the

the sphere of grammar took place in accordance with the same model as in the science of living beings” (Foucault 1994 [1970]: 280). Far from a relationship of temporal succession, linguistics and anthropology are co-constitutive of a new “historical” understanding of man. The idea of a linguistic science independent of an anthropology is therefore chimerical.<sup>44</sup> Third, the order is precisely the reverse: physical anthropology, as it emerged with Blumenbach and Soemmering, first gave rise to ideas of language comparison and classification.<sup>45</sup> Fourth, contrary to R-F’s thesis that, “Indologists and comparative philologists had already started to react in the 1870s” against “the hegemonic pretensions of physical anthropology,” which were found to be “intrusive and embarrassing for specialists in comparative grammar” (195), the biological and anatomical approach dominated well into the 1880s, as the following comment by Oldenberg (1886: 399) illustrates: “The boundaries between hymns existing alongside each other were repeatedly forgotten and masses of these hymns were welded into

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lower parts; the cheekbones effaced by the cheeks; the eyes placed horizontally, large, though veiled by thick eyelids, and mostly well split; a nose prominent and often aquiline, of which the ridge is well marked, the nostrils close together and widening little, the opening of the nostrils turned downwards; the two rows of teeth placed vertically the one above the other; the mouth small, delicately traced, and lined by lips moderately swollen; the chin rounded; finally, the hair black, long, silky, and wavy, but not frizzy; in men of a virile age, a thick beard which, if it is not cut, grows to a great length; add to this a slender waist, especially among the women, a fine proportion between the height of the legs and thighs and the part of the body between the shoulders and the hips; hands and feet of a remarkable elegance: *such are the traits which place the Hindus incontestably in the race of men to which belong the Persians, the Arabs, the inhabitants of anterior Asia and of Europe; such are the traits which, on the other hand, separate them from their neighbors to the north, the east, and the south; the Tibetans, the Mongols, the Bagoans, the Siamese, and the Chinese, finally the Malay and the other tribes which populate the Indian archipelago and Oceania*” (A. W. Schlegel 1834: 420; italics added).

<sup>44</sup> This was also the understanding of anthropology’s practitioners. Compare, for instance, the following comments by Adolf Bastian: “In place of craniology, which could be applied to the savage peoples, philology with all its auxiliary branches now enters” (1868: 23–24); “Linguistics remains of little significance as regards classification in the case of the true savage peoples. Theoretically, however, its study is urgently to be recommended here, since among the savages, the cryptograms of ethnology, all mental operations are most transparent and the greatest prospect exists of penetrating their core. In contrast, the division [of the peoples] can draw little support from philology, since the uncivilized savage peoples typically break up into as many dialects as there are families or tribes, and one has to limit oneself to registering the individual dialects, whose census can only rarely be subsumed under larger unities” (ibid., 25); “The ethnographers cannot value philology’s significance highly enough, but it lies in the genetic development, in the formation of language step by step along with national character, not in the constant petrification that one hoped to fossilize the vital flow of speech to. Languages change constantly, with and without the commingling of nationalities, although most variously in the latter case. As an original product of nature, language bears within itself the local character of the race just like the skulls and the overall appearance and then it may, in the entirety of its structure, be as different among the Negroes from the European and Asian [languages] as the anatomy of insects [is different] from vertebrates, to retain an analogy chosen by Steinthal” (ibid., 204); and “As the gaps in craniological division could no longer be concealed, philology entered with its hopeful consolation, with all the weight of the significant research results, which it had just recently gained in the field of language comparison. Ethnology joyfully greeted this valuable confederate, whom it will likely owe valuable assistance in the future also, but for a division appropriate to nature, it may not rely on foreign support, but must learn to stand on its own feet” (ibid., 235). For Bastian at least, anthropology and linguistics were connate sciences; the burning question was of their relative priority. Similar comments occur in the inaugural issue of the *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* (Bastian 1869).

<sup>45</sup> Little work exists on A. W. Schlegel’s racial interests. The typical approach (for example, in Mix and Strobel 2010 and Rocher and Rocher 2013), has been to see him as a consummate European, world-citizen, intellectual, founder of Indology, and a literary and aesthetic critic. A major reconsideration of Schlegel must now get underway.

seeming unities; expressions that were modern, smooth, and easy of comprehension replaced the rare phrases and archaic word forms—often the most valuable monuments for the researcher, whom they assist in understanding the history of the language the way, from fossil remains, a natural scientist reads the history of an organic life.”

R-F’s central thesis that racial anthropology arose as an unfortunate consequence—and unintended byproduct—of a strictly scientific comparative linguistics is not only false; the debt actually ran the other way. Rather than comparative linguistics giving rise to anthropology, the former borrowed its methods and ideas of science from comparative anatomy, botany, and paleontology. Comparative linguistics developed as an adjunct to racial anthropology: its founders were acquainted with and approvingly cited Soemmering’s, Meiners’s, and Blumenbach’s racial theories.<sup>46</sup> Both Schlegel brothers were personally acquainted with the leading theoreticians of race of the day; A. W. Schlegel called Blumenbach one of “only *two thinking men*” in Göttingen (the other was the physicist Georg Christoph Lichtenberg); “the rest” allegedly being “just *fungi growing on the walls of the university library*” (A. W. Schlegel 2016: 200; italics in original).<sup>47</sup>

The new science’s distinguishing characteristic was not its attention to “history” (as though previous generations had been ignorant of language’s temporal quality), but its insistence on language as specifically a man-made creation or invention.<sup>48</sup> The emphasis on the “historical” analysis of language (now considered the sole “scientific” approach) was therefore tantamount to calling for an “anthropological” contemplation of language, that is, a consideration of language as it both engenders and is engendered by human

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<sup>46</sup> As Koerner notes, biological thinking was omnipresent in Schlegel’s circle. He cites the publication “in 28 installments, of Augustin Pyramus de Candolle’s (1778–1841) *Plantarum historia succulentarum; ou, Histoire des plantes grasses* [...] George Cuvier’s (1769–1832) *Leçons d’anatomie comparée* [...] and [...] Jean Baptiste de Lamarck[s] (1744–1829) *Système des animaux sans vertèbres*” between the years 1799–1805” (1977: ix) as influences on Schlegel’s “new philology” (ibid., vi). But he does not connect Schlegel’s interest in the biological sciences with his nationalism. Newer studies (Tzoref-Ashkenazi 2004, 2006; Dusche 2013), however, foreground the role of Schlegel’s nationalism in his ideas. My research indicates that Schlegel programmatically turned to biology and history to carve a new understanding of human history that enabled Germans to claim linguistic and cultural superiority in an echo of earlier *ordre naturel* debates (see Koerner 1995: 3–26 and Koerner 1999; and see also Lommel 1930 on Schlegel’s derivation of aesthetic value judgments from linguistic features *proper to German* to evaluate other languages).

<sup>47</sup> Secondhand report from Schlegel’s Bonn lectures (“Die Vorlesungen des Herrn Professors A. W. Schlegel,” *Der Freimüthige oder Berlinische Zeitung für gebildete, unbefangene Leser*, no. 17, January 31, 1803; reprinted in A. W. Schlegel 2016: 199–201).

<sup>48</sup> In the nineteenth century, the term *historical* is primarily opposed to *philosophical*. The latter implies an attitude that begins from metaphysical truths and rational principles rather than the results of the burgeoning natural sciences, including biological, anthropological, and ethnological researches. Insofar as the former are assigned to the natural sciences, *historical* comes to mean the human domain more narrowly. Factors that affect human development (climate, geography, physiognomy, etc.) and those that are affected by human development (language, culture, historical development) are likewise to be studied by and as “history.” Everything is now regarded as either a human artifact or its conditioning factor. The characteristic feature of nineteenth-century history is not so much the development of historical writing (which still remains underdeveloped), but its reaction against all forms of transcendence (which does not prevent it from being a theology). For this changed understanding of “history” see F. Schlegel (1836–1837), now available as vols. 12–13 of the *KFSÄ* (Schlegel 1964a and 1964b) and for “history” as “the aim of philology” see Körner (1928: 19).

developments.<sup>49</sup> The idea that one can “analyse, in the light of the institutional and discursive data, how an academic discipline was constructed” (23) without attention to its underlying philosophical contexts is fundamentally erroneous. As I have argued, in the nineteenth century, linguistics and anthropology were not separate fields of inquiry. Rather, they were originally united in the concept of “history.”<sup>50</sup>

*Archives* not only obscures this original unity as Indology’s founders *explicitly conceived and developed* it;<sup>51</sup> it also prevents a critical reevaluation of the humanities as they developed in the Enlightenment—a development that, far from neutral, but holds the key to the great genocides of the twentieth century. Rather than vainly seeking to absolve nineteenth-century Indology of its complicity and to reestablish an unproblematic science in its

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<sup>49</sup> The primary criticism Schlegel leveled against eighteenth-century philosophy is that it lacked “circumspection.” In his view, it had failed to “profit” from all “the important discoveries made already in its time in geography and ethnography”; it “preferred to build systems in the air rather than to engage in the laborious career of natural observations, and historical and philological studies.” This is why it had not advanced “a single step” in “penetrat[ing] further into an unknown antiquity” (A. W. Schlegel 1834: 417). After Schlegel, the humanities—in the form of comparative philology and Indology—take precisely this empirical, historicist turn. See Adluri and Bagchee (2014).

<sup>50</sup> To understand the real origins of the new science of language, we must return to the complex of methods, ideologies, and inquiries emerging in Göttingen under the name of the “Göttingen historical school”—at this time, the real nexus of a new historical understanding of man that will, in time, give rise not only to nineteenth-century comparative linguistics but also its coordinate, nineteenth-century racial anthropology. For individual participants in this debate, see Boockmann and Wellenreuther (1987) and especially the first article for an overview.

<sup>51</sup> An important source for this is Schlegel’s “oriental notebooks,” which contain sketches for what ultimately became *Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier*. Now accessible in the *KFSÄ* (F. Schlegel 2002), they shed exemplary light on Schlegel’s motivations in developing his linguistic theories. On fragment 10 (“Die Hauptfrage bleibt noch über die *Scythen* und *Cimmerier* d[er] alten”; 2002: 4) Struc-Oppenberg (2002: 151–52) comments: “In formulating his ‘main questions’ Schlegel always keeps in view the relationships of descent and kinship, which he seeks to illuminate through the investigations into language mentioned above in (3).” Her comment on fragment 3 reads as follows: “Attempts to present the nations of the known world in a specific hierarchy within a system run through the first of Schlegel’s two oriental notebooks like a leitmotif of problem constellations that Schlegel hoped to bring closer to a resolution with his linguistic investigations.” See also her more general comment in the introduction: “In terms of their content, these manuscripts are not concerned with just India in particular or the Orient in general; rather, they occasionally encompass the remaining world regions as well. The period referenced is just as indeterminate and extends all the way to prehistoric epochs. As little does Schlegel limit himself to languages, grammatical structures, etymologies, or literature and philosophy, as the title of his *Indien* book may cause us to suppose. In relationship to this work, the oriental notebooks have a much broader remit. Already in 1799 Schlegel had emphasized in his well-known philosophical fragment [1382], ‘The four elements of humanity are p [poetry], f [philosophy, mor[al], relig[ion]...’ Accordingly, he concerned himself not only with literature and philosophy but also always with morals, that is, his understanding of ethics and customs, justice and law, and is always interested in religion and, in close relationship with it, in mythology. Not mentioned in the title of his Indian work, but consistently present in the third book of *Historische Ideen* are historical aspects, e.g., of the migrations of the peoples. Schlegel’s historical interest does not by any means exhaust itself with political history; where it appears useful to his language classificatory or comparative aims, he also draws on ideas, concepts, and methods of natural historical studies, be it from comparative anatomy, archaeology, geology, anthropology, paleontology, or geography—usually disciplines that would wait decades for their first university professorships. This occurs both for the sake of making a convincing argument and because of the research methods applied there and to be carried over [into language classification]” (Struc-Oppenberg 2002: x–xi).

original “rigour and simplicity,”<sup>52</sup> we should seek to understand what this “century of history” (not coincidentally, also “the century of genocides”) has to teach us. It may be that we shall find that all our humanities are shot through with the same doubling of perspective characteristic of A. W. Schlegel, that is to say that, beneath the interest in fine arts, *belles-lettres*, classical languages, and poetry, lies a pervasive racism. As the malformed discipline par excellence, Indology serves as the perfect index—but only an index—of this.

## Conclusion

Such a lengthy criticism of R-F’s work would not have been necessary were greater issues—ethical and philosophical—not at stake. By adopting categories from the natural sciences, the humanities have sought to legitimize and justify themselves. Tragically, this has crippled them in three ways. As a “science,” Indology has failed to provide either objective criteria for its investigations, or a clarification of its methods, or a logical argument for its conclusions. As a discipline in the humanities, it has failed to provide a reliable, objective history in either the Rankean sense of restricting oneself to documents alone or in the Burckhardtian sense of providing pedagogy. The histories of texts as important as the Mahābhārata provided by the Indologists proved to be so many fictions (Adluri and Bagchee 2014). Finally, Indology has also betrayed the humanities by failing to cultivate ethical values and aesthetic appreciation of texts and to enable the education or formation (*Bildung*) of all members of society. While claiming to be a “historical-critical” discipline, Indology has failed to provide an honest and critical assessment of its own history, above all its role in fostering the nascent discourses of race and nationalism (Wilhelm 1961; Rocher 1995). Indologists have indulged in a false and self-serving dichotomy between the professor-expert and the most ignorant layman. But surely, the argument for a doctor should be more than that, unlike the layman, he knows cold weather is not the cause of the flu. Above all, Indology has failed to provide a coherent episteme, to correct for its prejudices, and to demonstrate its value to humanity. Some of these issues were raised—honestly, if inadequately—by Said in his classic *Orientalism* (2014 [1978]). I suggest we begin there and make the critique more pointed and accurate. Marchand, et al. have not answered the critique; they have merely dodged it by taking refuge in the fact that Said “left the Germans out of his analysis” (Marchand 2009: xviii), that he imposed “a totalizing, global view” on “European-oriental relations” (ibid., xxv), etc. But neither Marchand nor, as I have shown, R-F has examined the work of the Indologists themselves. Their analyses of the German scholars’ “scientific” contributions are based, for the most part, on the Indologists’ own self-assessments or the equally gratuitous praise of their successors.<sup>53</sup> Marchand critiques “those who have followed

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<sup>52</sup> Malamoud’s words, quoted from the preface: “In this nebula of interests, in this compulsive fervour concerning origins, one thing remained solid if approached with rigour and simplicity: the branch of linguistics that the comparative grammar of Indo-European languages represented.” (Malamoud 2013: 10). No less than R-F, Malamoud seeks to hold on to the postulate of an unproblematic, timeless science devoid of all complexity and historical nuance (cp. Malamoud 1993). Hence the collective act of forgetting, the elision of primary sources, the convenient focus of the investigation, and the temporal contraction.

<sup>53</sup> R-F refers several times to Indology’s scientific “achievements” (for example, on pp. 22 and 26, see also p. 118: “philological and linguistic achievements”). Problematically, these assessments are based on the Indologists’ own claims. Thus, on p. 49 she notes that Franz Bopp (1791–1867) put “great care” into his

Said's lead and adopted the Foucauldian tactic" for "analyzing only the surfaces of the texts they study," but herself acknowledges that she "was not trained as an expert in any part of it [the field of oriental studies]" (ibid., xxi and xxix). Yet, without an accurate assessment of the Indologists' scientific achievements, every "contextualization" remains superficial and contributes to the very Germanism that Schlegel sought to promote. The only form in which Indology is possible now is as a critique, above all of outdated notions of scientificity and "disciplinarity." R-F's work, if Marchand really thinks it means "At last [...] we are getting beyond the subtlety-destroying, individuality-denying, anti-intellectual Saidian presumption that all European utterances about the 'Orient' are equally uncomprehending and pernicious—or uncomprehending and pernicious in exactly the same way" (2010: 230–31), should give us pause. Go on with what? How? And in whose name? The discipline must first reckon with its epistemological and ethical shortcomings, its responsibility for creating and perpetuating a painful logic of othering, and demonstrate how it wishes to rectify and rethink its place in humanities. Without such a statement, "getting beyond" has all the blindness and horror of "make America great again."

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publications, but her source is Bopp's letter describing his achievements to Friedrich Schlegel! Likewise, her observation that Roth fulfilled his task "with great competency in his quality as a Swabian very much aware of the realities of the rural world" (ibid., 121) merely paraphrases Garbe's hagiographic entry on Roth in Garbe 1907. These examples illustrate the problems with relying on the Indologists' self-serving accounts. A critical history of Indology must first subject their scientific pretensions to examination.

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