

'The development of the linguistic theory of universal history with especial reference to C.C.J. Bunsen, 1830-1880's'.

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## SUMMARY

The German idealists' philosophy of universal history, which emerged from the long tradition of Judeo-Christian 'theology of history' in the late Eighteenth Century, was continued in the work of C.C.J. Bunsen. Bunsen's aim was to unite revelation, suitably interpreted, with reason, to form a theory of universal history both spiritual and factually plausible. For this purpose he took a deep interest in the leading sciences of man of the first half of the Nineteenth Century: the expanded historical and cultural knowledge resulting from the Oriental Renaissance. He especially relied on the science of language developed by Indo-European linguists under the philosophical definitions of Wilhelm von Humboldt. Of necessity he had to collaborate with young professional scholars to whom he also acted as patron, the most outstanding examples being the Egyptologist Carl Richard Lepsius and the Indo-European linguist Friedrich Max Müller. They in turn were deeply influenced by Bunsen's viewpoints. The theory of universal history which resulted in the 1840's and 1850's proved only just factually plausible; it was also highly Eurocentric and its ambiguous use of linguistic-based classifications in human history could imply a racial interpretation. However Bunsen's spiritual frame of reference, and his genuine religious universalism and egalitarianism prevented any racial interpretation from operating freely. After Bunsen's death, in the 1860's, Lepsius and Müller unwittingly undermined the coherent balance of spiritual-

factual universal history for scholarly reasons. They extracted and expounded the Hamitic, Turanian and 'Aryan' linguistic classifications in 'scientific' form, although always with Bunsen's theory in the background. When, in the next two decades, scientific materialism destroyed the possibility of Bunsen's spiritual perspectives entirely, as well as many of his factual arguments, Lepsius and Müller found that Hamitic, Turanian and 'Aryan' were being transformed into much more concrete, indeed racial concepts. Their different reactions to the new atmosphere demonstrate the degree of contribution that linguistic universal history made to the ideology of race. Unconsciously Lepsius' linguistic Hamitic theory already shared the assumptions of the racial use of the term. His scholarly formulation of Hamitic in 1880, which threw out almost all references to universal history, would be the basis of the theory of superior, almost white Hamitic tribes dominating the African Negro, a theory which continued until the 1950's. Müller reacted much more strongly against scientific materialism as a whole, and rejected the transformed concepts Turanian and 'Aryan', invoking against them the old philosophy of universal history and their old ambiguous linguistic-based meanings. Müller's commitment to Bunsen's philosophy served only to destroy his scholarly credibility, for his definitions and his linguistics itself were now outdated. His fight against the physical and political applications of his linguistic Turanian and

'Aryan' classifications proved ineffectual, for he was never able to clarify the extra-linguistic ambiguities of his own understanding of these terms, ambiguities which at the end of the Nineteenth Century could only be defined in racial, rather than in Bunsen's spiritual, terms of reference.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LINGUISTIC THEORY  
OF UNIVERSAL HISTORY WITH ESPECIAL REFERENCE  
TO C.C.J. BUNSEN, 1830-1880's

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ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used in the footnotes of this work for the sake of convenience.

- Bunsen (I,II) Francis Bunsen, Memoirs of Baron Bunsen Second edition, abridged and corrected, 2 vols, London, 1869.
- Bunsen (Nippold) (I,II,III) Friedrich Nippold, C.C.J. Freiherr von Bunsen. Aus seinen Briefen und nach eigener Erinnerung geschildert von seiner Witwe. Deutsche Ausgabe, durch neue Mittheilungen vermehrte... 3 Bde, Leipzig, 1868-71.
- Egypt (I,II,III,IV,V) C.C.J. Bunsen, Egypt's Place in Universal History, (trans. C.H. Cottrell) 5 vols, London, 1848-67.
- God in History (I,II,III) C.C.J. Bunsen, God in History, (trans. S. Winkworth) 3 vols, London, 1868-70.
- Outlines (I,II) C.C.J. Bunsen, Outlines of the Philosophy of Universal History, forming vols 3 and 4 of his Christianity and Mankind, 7 vols, London, 1854.
- Lepsius Georg Ebers, Richard Lepsius: Ein Lebensbild, Leipzig, 1885.
- Nubische Grammatik Carl Richard Lepsius, Nubische Grammatik, mit einer Einleitung über die Völker und Sprachen Afrika's, Berlin, 1880.
- Standard Alphabet Carl Richard Lepsius, Standard Alphabet for reducing unwritten languages and foreign graphic systems to a uniform orthography in European letters, second edition, London and Berlin, 1863.

- Müller (I,II) G.M. Müller, The Life and Letters of the Rt. Hon. Friedrich Max Müller, 2 vols, London, 1902.
- Chips (I,II,III,IV) F.M. Müller, Chips from a German Workshop, vols I and II, second edition, London, 1868, vols III and IV, original edition, London, 1870 and 1875.
- 'Comparative Mythology' F.M. Müller, Comparative Mythology: an essay [reprinted from 'Oxford Essays' of 1856] edited, with additional notes... by A. Smythe Palmer, London and New York, 1909.
- Science of Language (I,II) F.M. Müller, Lectures on the Science of Language First Series, Third edition, London, 1862. Second Series, original edition, London, 1864.
- kAWB, Abhandlungen/Bericht/Monatsberichte/Sitzungsberichte Königliche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, Abhandlungen/Bericht/Monatsberichte/Sitzungsberichte.



## INTRODUCTION

In Berlin in the winter of 1815-16 the young Christian Carl Josias Bunsen submitted an outline of his life goals to the historian Barthold Niebuhr. The 25 year old Bunsen aimed even then at constructing a philosophy of universal history, at tracing the laws which regulated the grand sweep of human historical development. This aim was to be partially fulfilled many years later in the works of Bunsen's last two decades, Egypt's Place in Universal History, Outlines of the Philosophy of Universal History, God in History. Right up to his death he hoped to produce a final synthesis of universal history. The idea which thus dominated his thinking lifelong, which shaped all his researches, which influenced his activities and opinions in all spheres was certainly not unique. On the simplest level elements from similar theories of Herder, Lessing, Schelling and Hegel can easily be identified in Bunsen's theory of universal history. But the consistency and self-consciousness of Bunsen's aim went deeper than any question of piecemeal borrowing. His universal history was a serious continuation of the idealist philosophers' tradition, not an imitation at second hand.

The universal history of the German Enlightenment was based on centuries of development of the Judeo-Christian philosophy of history in Europe. It was distinguished by the belief that events are neither simply factual or random, nor cyclic - as ancient societies had believed - but in some way ordered and meaningful. Initially the definition of meaning or purpose behind

events was provided by religious belief. All events were thought to be moving toward a spiritual goal: the Messianic hope of the Jews, the expectation of future judgement and salvation of the Christians. So strong was this transcendent purpose at the end and the centre of events, at least in the early Christian era, that the history of secular events was entirely subordinated to the history of religious salvation. Deprived of the awaited immediate attainment of the spiritual goal, mediaeval Christian theologians eventually brought secular events more clearly into view, and combined them with the total history of salvation. Secular history shared the progression toward an ultimately spiritual goal: secular and religious history together formed the totality, 'Universal History'. The central religious text, the Bible, provided the framework for secular history also. A move away from such a strongly unified religious-secular order in history was begun only in the century of the Enlightenment. For Vico religious Providence was still active in secular history, but in a purely secular fashion. That secular history reflects Providence but follows a natural, secular logic characterized the 'universal history' of the German idealists also. Herder's desire

'... jedes geschichtliche Phänomen als Naturerzeugnis und letzten Endes damit auch aus göttlichem Grunde hervorgegangen zu verstehen ...',<sup>1</sup>

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1. Friedrich Meinecke, Die Entstehung des Historismus, München, 1959, p. 419.

transposed the meaningfulness and order of the history of salvation decisively into the whole of human history. The radical logic of Voltaire who attempted to discard religious Providence, replacing it with a frankly secular idea of progress, was as yet foreign to German philosophy.<sup>2</sup> Educated in the shadow of the great idealist philosophers, purely secular progress was quite foreign to Bunsen as well. For him too history consisted of the dialogue of God with Man, the Infinite and its Finite expression. However Bunsen's universal history did have certain unique characteristics. These resulted from his particular experiences and interests, and the circumstances of the final publication of his theory several decades after the climax of German Enlightenment thought.

Bunsen's education, even at one time his vocation, was closer to theology than philosophy or history. But theology for him meant the union of two separate approaches to religious truth. On the one hand there was his deeply personal experience of religion, built on a family background of individual Protestant piety. Neither simple reductive rationalism nor formal state religion were reconcilable with such an immediate religious belief, which saw Christianity as the centre of all human experience. On the other hand there was the effect of German Enlightenment thought: this produced in Bunsen an

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2. On the development of the Judeo-Christian idea of history and universal history see Karl Löwith, Meaning in History, Chicago, 1949 and Arno Borst, Der Tumbau von Babel, Stuttgart, 4 vols (in 6), 1957-63 especially vol. IV, p. 2034ff.

unassailable faith in reason: in nature, in man, in history. The combination of the two resulted in a spiritual rationalism. Reason was linked with the nature of God Himself; a rational order in creation was the means of God's revelation to man:

'... God does reveal Himself in the history of the world. God's Eternal Being in itself remains unchanged. But that which discovers itself in History and in Nature as the plastic and motive force, is nothing else than the Divine, only with the difference of the Finite and the Infinite. From this postulate, it necessarily follows that such a revelation will take place in accordance with the laws of reason; above all, in accordance with those laws whose essence and aim is ethical. For God and Law are one and the same, so soon as we acknowledge Him to be the principle of Order in the universe; the harmonizing element of its discord, the inspirer of its progressive likeness to Himself, the Supreme source of all blessedness'.<sup>3</sup>

If revelation takes place through the laws of reason then even the central Christian experience must be brought within the rational compass. Conversely, the events of the rational world take on at the same time a spiritual significance. The mutual reconciliation of revelation and reason, without compromising the force of either, was perhaps Bunsen's most fundamental concern.

The medium by which he thought to reconcile spiritual and factual truth was suggested to him by probably the most outstanding scholarly event of his age, the

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3. God in History I, p. 7. Note that George L. Mosse, Toward the Final Solution, A History of European Racism, New York, 1978, finds the foundations of racist ideology at the point of fusion of Enlightenment rationalism and Pietist inner spiritual preoccupations at the turn of the Nineteenth century (see Chapter I). It is precisely this type of mixture which Bunsen's personality and work represent.

'oriental Renaissance'. Breaking upon the Continent just at the turn of the Nineteenth century, reaching its height in Romantic form in the first three decades of the century, the European rediscovery of the antiquity of the East, particularly that of India, spawned important new disciplines. Leading and enabling research into a new wealth of information about the East - historical, cultural, religious - was the crucial factor of linguistic knowledge. Linguistics itself as a science takes its origins from the rediscovery of the ancient north Indian language Sanskrit and the similarities immediately obvious between it and many modern European languages.<sup>4</sup> To Bunsen, a student of classical philology and history, unusually gifted in languages, the oriental Renaissance and the new German 'comparative philology' developing from it represented the outstanding scientific achievement of his day, and one with crucial significance for universal history. For the philosophy of language which dominated the oriental Renaissance and thereby early linguistics itself was a continuation of the German Enlightenment, a Romantic deepening of its spiritual side. The linguistic philosophy of the Schlegels and above all of Wilhelm von Humboldt produced a profound idealist psychological analysis of the interrelationship between man and his language. An intrinsic quality of man, language

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4. On the oriental Renaissance see Raymond Schwab, La Renaissance orientale, Paris 1950; René Gérard, L'Orient et la Pensée Romantique Allemande, Paris, 1963; Edward W. Said, Orientalism, London, 1978 especially Chapter 2 section 2.

from its origins was both concrete and spiritual. Its outer form reflected an inner human reality of which it was at once a product, and an ongoing causal factor. Language - an inalienable part of the human definition, both concrete and spiritual, now 'scientifically' investigated and ordered by comparative philology - became Bunsen's key to uniting revelation and reason, and to tracing the path of God in history.

The factor which ultimately determined the appearance of Bunsen's universal history was of a different, more mundane order. His intellectual goals evolved in the shadow of a not altogether voluntary diplomatic and political career. Public duties swallowed most of the time and energy which he had once wanted to devote to intellectual research. Until the retirement of his last few years the structuring of God's pattern in history remained a youthful aim unlikely to be easily fulfilled. However Bunsen never gave up his aim. His solution to the curtailment of his own research opportunities was patronage of, and collaboration with a number of promising young professional scholars. The two outstanding figures in this regard, Carl Richard Lepsius and Friedrich Max Müller, forged lasting personal relationships with Bunsen based on similar intellectual and religious backgrounds, enthusiasm for Bunsen's grand ideal, and gratitude for his considerable sponsorship of their public careers. They provided much of the required factual backbone for universal history: Lepsius for Egyptian history and language, Müller for Indo-European and other language studies. The first three

chapters deal with the intellectual and biographical background leading to the publication of Bunsen's universal history in the late 1840's and 1850's, and examine the structure that resulted from the collaboration of Bunsen, Lepsius and Müller.

As Bunsen published his universal-historical works, however, the very scholars who had helped to construct them were beginning to disassociate themselves from them. Thanks to Bunsen, Lepsius was the sole reputable public representative of Egyptology in Germany, and could convincingly, on his own merits, claim the title of the regenerator of European Egyptology overall. Thanks to Bunsen, Müller was installed in the heart of an essentially ignorant, at times hostile English academic environment, and, again on his own merits, was a brilliant Sanskrit scholar of some international repute. Both knew the concrete problems perhaps too easily overcome by Bunsen's synthesis of reason and revelation. Though they never rejected the patron to whom they owed so much, though they never repudiated the ideal of universal history which they too shared, they were no longer so certain that its attainment was possible, nor that Bunsen had achieved it. Both were concerned to build their own professional prestige and consolidate the reputation of their chosen subject areas. By the mid-1850's, even as Bunsen's works were published, they tactfully withdrew from any further public collaboration with him. Especially after Bunsen's death in 1860 they concentrated on their own fields. Chapter IV deals with this process of withdrawal

and specialization, tracing the qualifications and readjustments made to Lepsius' Egyptology and Müller's linguistics made during the 1860's. Nevertheless, the concepts 'Hamitic', 'Turanian'; and 'Aryan' which they had originally helped Bunsen to define, were maintained, indeed extended during this decade. Even the background of Bunsen's universal history was continued, at times quite openly, and on a conscious theological basis.

The difficulties of 'Hamitic', 'Turanian' and 'Aryan' were first made clear in the 1870's and 1880's. In this period linguistics and Egyptology developed to a degree of sophistication and specialization unknown in Bunsen's day and antithetical towards the wide scope of the early oriental Renaissance. At the same time the theological basis of universal history suffered a fatal blow. The impact of materialist thought, in the shape of the Darwinian hypothesis, and the adoption of the new materialism by important new sciences of man - anthropology, archaeology - destroyed the factual credibility of the old theological framework of history, and brought in its wake great dangers. The balance of revelation and reason in the progressive structure of universal history was destroyed. Bunsen's Christian-centrism had naturally been transposed into the secular sphere of history: his structure proclaimed the predominance of the (Christian) cultures and languages of Europe, especially the (Protestant) 'Germanic' cultures and languages, at least in the modern world. Once the theological foundations



were suppressed by the materialism of the 1870's, his universal history became simply Eurocentric. Definitions of 'Hamitic', 'Turanian' and 'Aryan' all took on the aura of types of linguistic, cultural or historical superiority or inferiority. Bunsen's philosophy of language too was shattered. Language became irrelevant as a cultural phenomenon in itself for the new materialism unless it was linked with physical correlates. 'Hamitic', 'Turanian' and 'Aryan' became materialized into physical stereotypes of skin colour, skull-shape or hair-type. At the same time the more and more rarified area of professional linguistics itself often questioned even the original basis of such concepts.

Thus the decade of the 1870's and the 1880's pulled apart Bunsen's synthesis of revelation and reason by means of language, and forced Lepsius and Müller, most of whose work had been built on Bunsen's synthesis, to clarify their views. Chapter V examines the crisis felt by both and how they attempted to restore again Bunsen's balance. In different ways neither was successful. They never recaptured the spiritual rationalism of Bunsen's universal history, nor its plausibility. The one leaned toward the dangerous direction of Eurocentric racial stereotypes; the other emphasized anti-materialism to the point where his work became outdated and irrelevant. The responses of both have subsequently been misunderstood. For the unique motivations of Bunsen, which remained in later, more difficult times, those of Lepsius and Müller as well, have not yet been understood.

CHAPTER I

THE INTELLECTUAL BACKGROUND

In the first decades of the Nineteenth Century, when Bunsen would begin to put together his theory of universal history, European conceptions of man, his place in the world and his history were still dominated by traditional perspectives inherited from a number of ancient cultures, and expressed in the Bible, 'de Quelle alle Weltweisheit'. Human history began with the date of Creation, traditionally set around 4,000 B.C. Its early outlines were depicted in the Old Testament. Mankind was literally descended from Adam and Eve. There had been a unified Urvolk speaking a unified Ursprache in the Urheimat of mankind, probably somewhere in central Asia, before the destruction of man by the Flood, his re-establishment and expansion, and his separation into peoples at the Tower of Babel. God has continued to direct man's fate since that time.<sup>1</sup>

Since the Renaissance, classical sources had been infiltrating and rounding out this picture. Gradually the hold of religious doctrine on the natural

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1. Phrase quoted from Kraus, op.cit., p. 74. On orthodox Biblical chronology see Francis C. Haber, The Age of the World. Moses to Darwin, Baltimore, 1966, Introduction, pp. 1-35. On the complex and ancient history of ideas of origins - of man himself, and of his language/s - see Borst, op.cit., especially the summation with references in Vol. IV, pp. 1940-1964, and on the specific background to Bunsen's time span, vol. III/2, sections 5 and 6. In this work the succinct German expressions Urvolk, Ursprache, Urheimat will be used in preference to the more cumbersome English 'primeval, or original people', 'primeval, or original language' 'primeval, or original country or homeland'.

sciences was being considerably loosened. By the early decades of the Nineteenth Century geology would shake itself almost entirely free from the Biblical notion of the age of the earth and the manner of creation of the physical world. As far as religious doctrine pertained to man himself, significant modifications were also beginning to be made to the literal traditional framework at the beginning of the Eighteenth Century, the product of the secularization of thought, the development of a sense of relativity and individuality in human experience. The Biblical text itself was beginning to be subjected to scholarly analysis. Its Divine origin was denied: its inconsistencies and repetitions pointed out. Suggestions of the - rather simplistically conceived - natural origins of man, language and culture were put forward.<sup>2</sup>

Yet neither the scientific revolution nor Enlightenment rationalism brought about an immediate, complete break away from the theological view of the world and of man. Even in geology up to the 1840's a truce was in force, a harmonization between the scientific history of the earth and the Biblical history of man. As long as it was removed from his geological province, Charles

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2. On geology and science see Haber, op.cit., especially Chapters III and IV, and Charles Coulston Gillispie, Genesis and Geology, Harper Torchbooks, 1959. On the rise of 'Historism' see Meinecke, op.cit.; on Biblical critique see Kraus, op.cit., Chapters 3-6 inclusive; on Eighteenth Century rationalist speculations see, for example, Lord Monboddo in Borst, op.cit., vol. II/2, pp. 1413-4. Linguistic theories are discussed further below.

Lyell would accept the existence of the Biblical Flood: it had probably occurred in a limited form in the very localized area of primitive human habitation. The leading science of the day would go no further against the religious framework: human Creation and experience were still dominated by religious perspectives.<sup>3</sup> However, since - especially on the European Continent - the Enlightenment and Biblical Critique had revealed the literal implausibility of the Biblical account of man, the old 'theology of history' was no longer viable per se. Toward the end of the Eighteenth Century the German idealist philosophers produced a unique reworking of the religious framework for man: a philosophy of Universal History, which Bunsen would continue into the middle of the Nineteenth Century.

Reacting against both simplistic rationalism and literal orthodoxy, the idealist philosophers conceived of the Creation of man as a transposition by God of a reflection of Himself, the Absolute, into the Finite. Man, in the Finite, was equipped in himself to strive to regain the Absolute. He possessed certain gifts or potentialities which had to be developed and were developed freely by him alone: those qualities which define him as man - reason, the capacity for language, and a spirituality, the Absolute in him. From these origins he had himself gradually developed all languages, all social organizations,

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3. On Lyell see Gillispie, *op.cit.*, p. 128ff. For a late example of the serious nature of this harmonization see Alfred Maury, 'Les Nouvelles Théories sur le Déluge', *Revue des deux mondes*, 1. août, 1860, pp. 634-667.

all civilizations. The idealists were clearly deeply influenced by the German Pietist revival of the end of the Seventeenth Century, which had insisted on the almost mystical, inner, subjective nature of religious belief and its demonstration in the unfolding of human experience in history, both as an inner dynamic, and an outer, observable process.<sup>4</sup> For these German philosophers the history of man was not that account set out in the Bible, in stories of miraculous intervention by God. History was the process of development of man's basic gifts in manifold ways, and in itself the demonstration of the truth of religion. God worked in and through history, progressively, as man tried to regain the Absolute in the Finite, to realize God's Kingdom on Earth. History was conceived metaphorically, as Lessing's 'education of the human race', or Herder and Hegel's divisions of human experience into the Ages of Childhood, Adolescence and Maturity of Humanity. In this scheme the Bible as a whole still held the centre-stage: it was the repository of the basic Judeo-Christian experience, which, through its remarkable nature, had proved itself to be the purest or highest manifestation of the Absolute in the Finite, the clearest demonstration of the progress of human history and religion.<sup>5</sup>

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4. On Pietism and its influence see Gerhard Kaiser, Pietismus und Patriotismus in literarischen Deutschland, Wiesbaden, 1961, Chapter I on Pietism itself and Chapter II on Pietism and History.
5. On Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-81) see Karl Barth, Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century. Its Background and History, London, 1972, chapter 6. On Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) see ibid., chapter 8 and Meinecke, op.cit., p. 392ff. for the stages of

This interpretation of Biblical truth, of the meaning of history and of religion, allowed the infusion of almost all rational knowledge about the human past and present without breaking the link with the Divine. It even produced a deeper appreciation of human cultures in the past. Thus C.G. Heyne, a classical scholar who was Herder's friend and incidentally Bunsen's teacher at Göttingen, pioneered a new interpretation of mythology. It was neither religious allegory nor a form of historical reminiscence, but a product of the primitive 'Kinderwelt' of mankind. At that primitive time language itself was limited in its ability to convey human thought, especially thought in the abstract, thought striving to express the Absolute in man. Language could only do so indirectly, poetically; this had produced a confusion of mythology in the primitive 'aetas mythica', and was still to be seen in Greek mythology.<sup>6</sup> If the idealists thus broke the grip of literal orthodoxy on the human experience in

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division in history. The development of man through language in Herder's view is discussed further below. On Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) see Barth, op.cit., chapter 10 and Johannes Hoffmeister (ed.), G.W.F. Hegel, Lectures on the Philosophy of World History. Introduction: Reason in History (trans H.B. Nisbet), Cambridge University Press, 1975, p. 129ff. for the divisions of history and Löwith, op.cit., chapter III, pp. 52-59.

6. On earlier views of mythology see Jan de Vries, Forschungsgeschichte der Mythologie, München, 1961 Sections I-V inclusive; on Christian Gottlob Heyne (1729-1812) see Fritz Strich, Die Mythologie in der deutschen Literatur von Klopstock bis Wagner, 2 vols, Bern und München, 1910 (unveränderte reprographischer Nachdruck, Tübingen, 1970), vol. I, Chapter 2, p. 106ff. (also includes Heyne's relationship to Herder) and Wolfgang Bopp, 'Görres und der Mythos', Tübingen, Phil.Diss. von 1974, p. 16ff.

history, by a wider and at the same time more spiritual interpretation of it, they never questioned the special and exalted nature of humanity. Man's relationship, even partial identity, with the Divine was at the heart of their philosophy of universal history.

In the last decades of the Eighteenth Century the idealists' philosophy of history found a more precise focus for the Age of Childhood of the human race than the generally accepted but vague Asiatic Urheimat of the Bible, as a result of the European rediscovery of the antiquity of the East. The rise of Orientalism, or the 'Oriental Renaissance', can be dated with some precision to the work of Anquetil du Perron, the translator of the ancient Persian Avesta, and of Sir William Jones and the English Asiatick Society of Bengal. Its core was the learning of the ancient Persian and especially the ancient north Indian literary language, Sanskrit, and, through this linguistic knowledge, the translation and publication of ancient texts. These ancient cultures, which had clearly developed quite outside the Judeo-Christian framework of history, had a huge impact on European thought. Their rediscovery particularly affected the philosophy of universal history, which had not previously suspected their existence. Because of their imprecise and highly-exaggerated antiquity, and their eastern location, they were almost immediately interpreted as the embodiment of the Age of Childhood of the human

race.<sup>7</sup>

For Herder the primitive East was still a general concept. He searched for primitive revelation, expressed in Heyne's 'sermo mythicus', throughout Egypt, Chaldea, Phoenicia, India, China and Tibet, before going on to reaffirm the traditional centrality of Judeo-Christianity. For him, Hebrew poetic 'myth' in the Old Testament was still the closest form of all to primitive revelation, and was carried on even more authentically into Christianity.<sup>8</sup> However, by the beginning of the Nineteenth Century the primitive East was becoming very specifically associated with ancient India and Sanskrit literature. In Germany the 'Symbolic school' of mythological interpretation, whose chief representatives were Joseph Görres and Friedrich Creuzer, followed Herder's search for primitive revelation but now identified India as the original centre of that revelation. On the European Continent a mood of Romantic Indomania predominated, especially surrounding the Sanskrit language. The language was first taught outside India in Paris, from 1803, initially by a member of the English Asiatic Society of Bengal. By 1815 a Chair had been founded for the teaching of Sanskrit at the Collège de France. Its first incumbent, Léonard de

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7. On the 'Oriental Renaissance' in detail see Schwab, op.cit., from whom the term has been borrowed, and Gérard, op.cit., pp. 71-83 especially.

8. On Herder's use of the ancient East see ibid., pp. 3-67. Strich, op.cit., pp. 115-143, and on the role of Hebrew poetry especially Kraus, op.cit., pp. 114-132.



Chézy, expressed in his Inaugural Address the exalted expectations of the day:

'... Philosophie, métaphysique, grammaire, théologie, astronomie, mathématiques, jurisprudence, morale, poésie; des traités de toutes ces sciences cultivées chez les Indiens dans un temps où l'Europe entière étoit plongée dans les plus profondes ténèbres de l'ignorance, vont s'offrir en foule a vos regards avides, faire naître de votre part les recherches les plus savantes: et qui sait s'il n'est pas donné à quelqu'un de vous, Messieurs, d'y apporter cet esprit subtil et observateur, qui par des rapprochements ingénieux, peut jeter le plus grand jour sur l'histoire de l'homme et nous retracer l'origine de nos connoissances',<sup>9</sup>

When the Sanskrit language began to be investigated in some little depth it proved to have important repercussions for the study of language in general. Before the Oriental Renaissance Europe's detailed investigation of language had been confined to the well-worked but severely limited tradition of classical philology. During the Eighteenth Century a growing amount of information was being gathered about the living languages of

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9. Quoted from Antoine Léonard de Chézy, Discours prononcé au Collège Royal de France à l'ouverture du cours de langue et de littérature Sanskrite, Paris, 1815, pp. 7-8. On the 'Symbolic school' see Strich, op.cit., vol. II, pp. 318-339; Gérard, op.cit., pp. 173-194; Henri Pinard de la Boullaye, L'Étude comparée des Religions, vol. I, Son Histoire dans le monde occidental, Paris, 1922, pp. 260-267; and the original work of Joseph Görres, Mythengeschichte der asiatischen Welt, 2 vols Heidelberg, 1810, and of Carl Ritter, Die Vorhalle europäischer Völkergeschichten vor Herodotus..., Berlin, 1820. On Indomania see Gérard, op.cit., p. 75ff. and Schwab, op.cit., p. 58ff. and p. 219ff. Note that although the English produced the basic material and knowledge for the Continent's Indomania, and dominated the field until the Napoleonic era, England never experienced the Romantic Indomania of the Continent, particularly not in its German depth.

Europe and other continents, however the technique to deal with such information did not yet exist. Word lists, geographical grouping and crude, etymologically-based similarities formed the contents of the huge collections of Peter Simon Pallas (Linguarum totius orbis vocabularia comparativa) and of Johann Christoph Adelung (Mithridates, oder Allgemeine Sprachenkunde...). The idea of Hebrew as the Ursprache, and the separation of languages at the Tower of Babel, still held sway.<sup>10</sup> The ancient Indian language revolutionized the study of language. Sir William Jones himself pointed out that the language had clear grammatical affinities with the great classical and modern European languages:

'The Sanskrit language, whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either, yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs, and in the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong indeed, that no philologer could examine them all three without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists'.<sup>11</sup>

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10. See Peter Simon Pallas, Linguarum totius orbis vocabularia comparativa, 2 vols, St Petersburg, 1786-89 and Johann Christoph Adelung, Mithridates; oder Allgemeine Sprachenkunde..., 4 vols, 1806-1817. On early linguistic studies and their methods see Otto Jespersen, Language, its Nature, development and Origin, London, 1922, pp. 21-26; Georges Mounin, Histoire de la Linguistique dès origines au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, Paris, 1967, Chapter III, pp. 116-151; Vilhelm Thomsen, Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft bis zum Ausgang des 19. Jahrhunderts (trans H. Pollak), Halle, 1927, pp. 30-42; Hans Arens, Sprachwissenschaft..., 2 vols, Athenäum Fischer Taschenbuch, Frankfurt, 1974, vol. I, sections I, II, III.
11. Quoted from S.N. Mukherjee, Sir William Jones: A Study in Eighteenth-Century British Attitudes to India, Cambridge, 1968, p. 95, from Jones' third Anniversary Discourse to the Asiatick Society of Bengal, 1786. Also on Jones (1746-1794) see Thomas A. Sebeok (ed.), Portraits of Linguists..., 2 vols, Bloomington, 1966, vol. I, pp. 1-57.

During the period of tremendous enthusiasm for ancient India and Sanskrit literature which ensued from Jones' work, the structure and affinities of the Sanskrit language became the focus around which much of the already extant linguistic information could be grouped: either languages were similar to Sanskrit in grammatical structure, or dissimilar.

Up to the 1820's the study of the Sanskrit language and its affinities was still conceived within the universalistic context of the study of the ancient east in general. Sir William Jones had made his linguistic remarks in the course of an overall comparative investigation of ancient cultures, which encompassed mythological, philosophical, religious and artistic parallels.<sup>12</sup> Friedrich Schlegel, too, had been drawn to the study of Sanskrit by the universal-historical perspectives of Romantic Indomania in the first decade of the Nineteenth Century. By the period of his famous treatise Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier (1808) he had already backed away from the full flood of Romantic enthusiasm, having discovered the degeneration of later Persian and Indian religions. Yet in the course of his general discussion on ancient Indian culture he developed further the linguistic hints thrown out by Jones and the members of the Asiatick Society. Schlegel entirely rejected etymological or geographical grouping with regard to

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12. See Mukherjee, op.cit., p. 97ff.; Schwab, op.cit., pp. 232-239 and Gérard, op.cit., see p. 192 stress the general and universal aspect of the researches of this period.

the Indian language, relying instead upon the structural similarities suggested by Jones, and the idea of a historical link between the Indian and the European languages. The structure of these languages was characterized by the use of grammatical inflections:

'Das Prinzip... ist immer noch dasselbe, dass nämlich die Nebenbestimmung der Bedeutung nach der Zeit und andern Verhältnissen nicht durch besondere Worte oder von aussen angehängte Partikeln geschieht, sondern durch innere Modifikation der Wurzel'.

With Jones, and then Friedrich Schlegel's concept of 'comparative grammar', language studies acquired a new and much more precise method, open for general use. At the same time the two scholars' remarks were made with regard to one specific group, the Indo-European, which they had thus defined for the first time.<sup>13</sup>

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13. Quotation from Arens, *op.cit.*, I, p. 162, and see also pp. 160-169 *passim*. On Friedrich Schlegel's (1772-1829) linguistic work see further Theodor Benfey, Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft und orientalischen Philologie in Deutschland..., München, 1869, pp. 357-369. On Schlegel's Romantic Indomania see Gérard, *op.cit.*, pp. 84-128 and Schwab, *op.cit.*, p. 74ff. The term 'Indo-European' is generally used by modern linguistics to describe the well-accepted grouping of Indo-Iranian, most modern and classical European and several now extinct Eurasiatic languages: see Antoine Meillet and Marcel Cohen, Les Langues du Monde, Paris, (1924) new edition, 1952, pp. 5-80 and Holger Pedersen, The Discovery of Language, Midland Books, Bloomington and London, 1967, sections I-IV inclusive. The term was not used consistently in the Nineteenth Century, especially during the early years of linguistics. There were several variants - 'Sanskritic', 'Indo-Germanic' (especially favoured by German scholars) 'Germanic' and so on - depending on the individual scholar's own preference. See for a chronological treatment of this Gustav Meyer, 'Von Wem stammt die Bezeichnung Indogermanen?' Indogermanische Forschungen, II, 1892, pp. 125-130; Leo Meyer, 'Über den Ursprung der Namen Indogermanen, Semiten und Ugrofinnen', Göttingische gelehrte Nachrichten, October, 1901, pp. 448-459; Hans Siegert, 'Zur Geschichte der Begriffe, "Arier" und "arisch" ', Wörter und Sachen, vol. 22 (n.s. vol. 4), 1941/2, pp. 73-99.

The context of this early definition of an inflected Indo-European group of languages must be carefully understood. A whole tradition of rationalist Enlightenment investigation of language had insisted on the mechanical nature of language. It had logical and universal laws, as an agreed system of communication. It originated from simple syllables or roots, themselves the reflection of purely natural, external phenomena in sound; these roots had then been combined in a simple, mechanical fashion to produce all known languages.<sup>14</sup> The opposite view was taken by the orthodox: language had been granted to man, fully formed, by God. The German idealists combined and philosophically transformed these rather crude accounts. Herder's definition of the origin of language referred it to an inner need of man, individually, connected irrevocably both to man's reason and to the stimuli of the outside world:

'... so ist die Genesis der Sprache ein so inneres Dringnis, wie der Drang des Embryos zur Geburt bei dem Moment seiner Reife. Die ganz Natur stürmt auf den Menschen, um seine Kräfte, um seine Sinne zu entwickeln, bis er Mensch sei. Und wie von diesem Zustande die Sprache anfängt, so ist die ganze Kette von Zuständen in der menschlichen Seele von der Art, dass jeder die Sprache fortbildet...' <sup>15</sup>

In this Herder was building on the work of the early

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14. See Arens, *op.cit.*, I, pp. 88-93 and p. 106ff. and Benfey, *op.cit.*, pp. 281-312 on rationalist theories of the nature and origin of language from Charles de Brosses, et al., and on 'universal' or 'general' grammar.
15. From Herder's *Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache*, 1772, reprinted in his *Sprachphilosophische Schriften* (ausgewählt... von E. Heintzel), Hamburg, 1960, p. 58.

Eighteenth Century philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, who had also discussed the close interconnection between language and human reason, and had as well been one of the earliest students of large-scale linguistic relationships. Herder strengthened Leibniz's suggestions and applied them to a group, rather than an individual, experience:

'Ich würde also die Sprache als das Werkzeug, den Inhalt und die Form Menschlicher Gedanken ansehen und fragen:...

... Wenn man nun... sich ein Volk gedenkt, das sich seine Sprache bildet: was muss dies wieder der Sprache für Natur geben, dass sie ein Werkzeug ihrer Organen, ein Inhalt ihrer Gedankenwelt, und eine Form ihrer Art zu bezeichnen, kurz, dass sie eine Nationalsprache werde?...

... Was muss es der Denkart für Form geben, dass sie sich in, mit und durch eine Sprache bildet, da wir jetzt durch das Sprechen Denken lernen? Und wie kann man also die populäre Denkart des gemeinen Mannes in seiner Sprache, sowohl der Materie, als der Bildung aufsuchen?...

... Wiefern hat auch die Sprache der Deutschen eine Harmonie mit ihrer Denkart?...<sup>16</sup>

Herder had no clear answers to such questions, but, after the rediscovery of Sanskrit, the creation of a method of 'comparative grammar' for grouping and the definition of the Indo-European group, the field of linguistics would be dominated for half a century or more by German scholars with a vague correlation between group psychology and language form in mind. When Friedrich Schlegel defined inflection as an inner 'organic' process of transformation, he meant it as a blow against the

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16. Quoted from Arens, *op.cit.*, I, pp. 121-2; see also the general section on Herder in *ibid.*, pp. 119-129 and on Leibniz (1646-1716) pp. 94-104.

rationalist view of language as a mechanical process of combination of roots. The Indo-European languages, at least, demonstrated the far more lofty state of language - and man, or some men - in primitive times:

'... Beim Indischen... muss man zugeben, dass die Struktur der Sprache durchaus organisch gebildet, durch Flexionen oder innre Veränderungen und Umbiegungen der Wurzellaute in allen seinen Bedeutungen ramifiziert, nicht bloss mechanisch durch angehängte Worte und Partikeln zusammengesetzt sei, wo denn die Wurzel selbst eigentlich unverändert und unfruchtbar bleibt...'

The other, mechanical or 'agglutinative', form of language was conceived by him as quite different from 'organic' inflection, and certainly inferior to it. Schlegel wanted to find some spiritual or even physical continuity between the various Indo-European languages and peoples: here, in 1819, was the origin of the idea of 'Aryan'.<sup>17</sup> Friedrich Schlegel's brother, August Wilhelm von Schlegel, who became more permanently committed to Indian studies - he was the first incumbent of the first German Chair of Sanskrit, at Bonn, from 1818 - expanded his

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17. Quotation from ibid., p. 163 (from Friedrich Schlegel's Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier) and see p. 164 Schlegel's division of languages into two types, inflected and 'agglutinative' (the term which would be used by Wilhelm von Humboldt to describe a grammar system of simple combination by addition of basic roots). On the 'Aryan' (at first spelt 'Arian') concept see Siegert, op.cit. It was put forward in Friedrich Schlegel's article in the Wiener Jahrbücher der Literatur, 8, 1819: 'Über J.G. Rhode: Über den unserer Geschichte und die letzte Revolution der Erde, 1819' reprinted in the Kritische Friedrich-Schlegel-Ausgabe (Hrsg. E. Behler), vol. VIII, München, 1975, pp. 474-528, see especially p. 514ff. on the unified Aryan 'Stamm'.

brother's grammatical typology into a three-fold division:

'... die Sprachen ohne irgendwelche grammatische Struktur, die Sprachen die Affixe verwenden, und die flektierenden Sprachen...'

At the same time he too shared the assumption of a special link between the peoples speaking the same form of language, especially (still in the mood of Romantic Indomania) between the ancient Eastern and the modern Western Indo-Europeans.<sup>18</sup>

The great exponent of the idealist philosophy of language, and a brilliant innovator in the field, was Wilhelm von Humboldt. He and his brother were perhaps the last great humanist scholars in the Renaissance mould, commanding wide knowledge and practical experience in politics, literature, ethnology, geology, history and the natural sciences. Wilhelm von Humboldt's philosophy of language was produced toward the end of his life, based on a huge range of linguistic experience, not only with the usual European languages and of course with Sanskrit, but also with languages of the far-flung corners of the world: America and Oceania. His greatest work on the philosophy of language was the introduction to his Über die Kawi-Sprache auf der Insel-Jawa: 'Über die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaues und ihren Einfluss auf die geistige Entwicklung des Menschengeschlechts'. The origins of language were again described idealistically, and universalistically, as proceeding from an inner human

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18. Quotation from Arens, *op.cit.*, I, p. 187, and see also on A.W. von Schlegel (1767-1845) pp. 187-191; and Gérard, *op.cit.*, pp. 129-148; Benfey, *op.cit.*, p. 379ff.



urge, expressed outwardly in sound and modified by social intercourse. However Humboldt expanded Herder's brilliant but occasional insights into a whole psycho-analysis of linguistic function. Language has the basic, universal aim of expressing thought. At the same time thought is imprisoned, dominated and shaped by the form of its only medium of expression, language. Language is thus the vital and inescapable intermediary between human individuals and the world; a communication system which itself shapes the thoughts which can be communicated:

'Die Sprache ist das bildende Organ des Gedanken. Die intellectuelle Thätigkeit, durchaus geistig, durchaus innerlich und gewissermassen spurlos vorübergehend, wird durch den Laut in der Rede äusserlich und wahrnehmbar für die Sinne. Sie und die Sprache sind daher Eins und unzertrennlich von einander. Sie ist aber auch in sich an die Nothwendigkeit geknüpft, eine Verbindung mit dem Sprachlaute einzugehen; das Denken kann sonst nicht zur Deutlichkeit gelangen, die Vorstellung nicht zum Begriff werden...' 19

On the basis of this universal psychology of language, Humboldt recognized the importance of different forms of language. True to the primacy of grammatical description (morphology) stimulated by Sanskrit and the Indo-European group, Humboldt classified three or four main

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19. Wilhelm von Humboldt, Über die Kawi-Sprache auf der Insel Java, nebst einer Einleitung über die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaues, 3 vols, Berlin, 1836-39; the Introduction reprinted in Wilhelm von Humboldt, Werke in Fünf Bänden (Hrsg Andreas Flitner und Klaus Giel), III, Schriften zur Sprachphilosophie, pp. 368-756, quotation from p. 426. On the linguistic work of Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835) see Sebeok, Portraits of Linguists, I, pp. 71-120; Arens, op.cit., I, pp. 170-175, pp. 179-187, pp. 203-218; Benfey, op.cit., pp. 515-556.

structural types. Language could be a series of simple object words, or 'roots', without the ability to denote grammatical relationships other than by word-order in the sentence: this was called the 'isolating' type, A.W. von Schlegel's non-grammatical category. A language could use simple roots in combination, while the word-order in the sentence became more fixed. Some roots would take on a grammatical function, expressing time, degree, relationship, either simply by appending them to another root (agglutination) or by infusing them into the middle of another root (incorporation). Eventually such roots would lose most of their independent meaning, however the 'joints' within or between root and additive were still clear. Both of these were varieties of Schlegel's 'affix' languages. Finally, a language could be composed of complex words in themselves already stylized into a fixed unity between root and additive. Such unities functioned in themselves grammatically and semantically; root and affix could not be pulled apart. This was inflected form. For Humboldt none of these forms existed in their purity in the present day; they were abstract typologies upon which variants had been built, but were nevertheless valid for general classification. With Herder he saw such linguistic types as the product of, and continuing creative controlling mechanism over, social groups:

'In den Sprachen also sind, da dieselben immer eine nationale Form haben, die Nationen, als

solche, eigentlich und unmittelbar  
schöpferisch'.<sup>20</sup>

Humboldt's inextricable interconnection between language and thought, both individually and in terms of human social groups, involved a central, unresolved, and potentially dangerous difficulty: his definitions were ambiguous and circular. It could not - by definition - be decided whether language was simply the product of a certain social group's thought, or whether that thought itself was to be referred back to the social group's language. Language and thought were so intertwined that they became intercausal, neither element being the initial one. The whole language-thought interconnection became almost mysterious, dependent upon a vaguely defined creative 'Spirit' residing in man individually and in social groups, and in language: 'Die Sprachen als eine Arbeit des Geistes...':

'... Die unzertrennliche Verbindung des Gedanken, der Stimmwerkzeuge und des Gehörs zur Sprache liegt unabänderlich in der ursprünglichen, nicht weiter zu erklärenden Einrichtung der menschlichen Natur'.<sup>21</sup>

In what could the mysterious creative Spirit lie, if not in man, society and language at the same time? Yet the only way to gauge the creative Spirit was by observing

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20. Quoted from 'Über die Verschiedenheit...' in Werke III, p. 410. On the abstract classification of linguistic types see, as well as 'Über die Verschiedenheit...' (see especially pp. 488-500), the essay 'Über das Entstehen der grammatischen Formen...' (1822), in ibid., pp. 31-63.

21. Quoted from 'Über die Verschiedenheit...', p. 426; see on the circularity of Humboldt's concepts George Steiner, After Babel, New York and London, 1975, p. 78ff.

it in groups of men, in their language and their culture. Cause and effect were one, on this spiritual plane. Humboldt never rid himself of this ambiguity, and, following him, the science of linguistics which would begin to emerge in the first half of the century, dominated by German scholars, would not clarify it either. Outside language studies early Nineteenth Century ethnologists, much impressed by the deep, psychological interconnection between language and social groups, had already found a solution to Humboldt's circular definition of 'Spirit'. James Cowles Prichard and Robert Gordon Latham, who produced a synthesis of physical and linguistic classifications, saw language groups as virtually equivalent to physical race. The mysterious Spirit could perhaps be defined biologically:

'Nearly the whole continent of Asia and Europe is divided between four great classes of languages; and in this instance history affords reason to conclude, with great probability, that the affinities of language really mark out as many races or great families of nations...

... If we take into account the immense extent of the countries over which these [Indo-European] nations were spread... we cannot refer their affinity of speech to any circumstances accidental and necessarily of restricted and merely local influence. It must have been the result of a gradual deviation of one common language into a multitude of diverging dialects; and the conclusion that is forced upon us, when we take all the conditions of the problem into consideration, is that the nations themselves descended from one original people, and consequently, that the varieties of complexion, and other physical characters discovered among them, are the effects of variation from an originally common type'.<sup>22</sup>

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22. From J.C. Prichard, 'On the Relations of Ethnology to other branches of knowledge', Journal of the Ethnological Society, I, pp. 319-321 (lecture delivered 1847).

Right from the beginning of the 'science of linguistics', therefore, there was a confusion between language type, cultural achievement and, potentially, physical type as well, although for linguistics proper the physical factor did not feature at all clearly.

This confusion reinforced the evaluation which the Romantic Orientalists had already begun to make: the superiority of the Indo-European languages as evinced in and proved by their cultural achievements. Even in the midst of his universalistic philosophy of language Humboldt too shared this view:

'Dass ein vorhandener Sprachstamm oder auch nur eine einzelne Sprache eines solchen durchaus und in allen Punkten mit der vollkommenen Sprachform übereinstimme, lässt sich nicht erwarten und findet sich wenigstens nicht in dem Kreise unserer Erfahrung. Die Sanskritischen Sprachen aber nähern sich dieser Form am meisten und sich zugleich die, an welchen sich die geistige Bildung des Menschengeschlechts in der längsten Reihe der Fortschritte am glücklichsten entwickelt hat. Sie können sie mithin als einen festen Vergleichungspunkt für alle übrigen betrachten'.

For this philosopher, for whom every language had its peculiar excellence, who shied away from finding a simplistic progress in linguistic type from primitive to complex, or 'isolating' to 'inflected', the Indo-European languages - and cultures - were still the high-point of human achievement.<sup>23</sup> This ethnocentric assumption would dominate the early years of the science of linguistics.

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23. Quoted from 'Über die Verschiedenheit...', p. 653.

Linguistics as a field on its own began to emerge, contemporaneously with Humboldt's philosophy of language, during the 1820's, as part of a period of reaction to the enthusiastic generalizations of Romantic Orientalism. The well-trained classical scholars led the way. The anti-symbolist Gottfried Hermann and the leading Greek scholar Carl Otfried Müller did not so much reject the vast universal-historical perspectives offered for myth, religion, culture and, of course, language by the ancient East, as demand that they be investigated by more precise scholarship. C.O. Müller provided a meticulous and yet sensitive model with his own work on Greek myth, religion and ancient dialects and half-mythical peoples like the Etruscans.<sup>24</sup> His work fell in with a feature of the Romantic movement: the rediscovery and republication of ancient European texts, fables, epics like the Nibelungenlied and the Anglo-Saxon Beowulf, in a scholarly, philological manner. Amidst the movement toward more specific, detailed studies of individual languages of the past and their texts, linguistics in general was born.<sup>25</sup>

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24. For the work of the anti-Symbolists and of Carl Otfried Müller see Boullaye, op.cit., pp. 267-276, Gérard, op.cit., pp. 195-198, de Vries, op.cit., p. 188ff., Strich, op.cit., II, p. 339ff., and see Johann Heinrich Voss, Antisymbolik, 2 vols, Stuttgart, 1824-6 and Gottfried Hermann, Über das Wesen und Behandlung der Mythologie, Leipzig, 1819.
25. On the Romantic movement's publication of national legends and so on see Strich, op.cit., II, p. 231ff. and Boullaye, op.cit., -. 306ff. Jespersen, op.cit., p. 64, makes a distinction between 'philology', the study of texts by means of language, and 'linguistics' proper, the study of language in its own right. Linguistics in this sense was only just emerging out of philology in the first half of the century.

Indo-European studies had already led the way to the emergence of linguistics and would continue to set the pace and the method for all language study. In general the field expanded spectacularly during the first half of the Nineteenth Century, following the paths blazed by predominantly German Indo-Europeanists.<sup>26</sup> From the 1820's numbers of Chairs of Sanskrit, Persian and other ancient Oriental Studies were founded all over Europe, and particularly in Germany. A.W. von Schlegel's Chair at Bonn became the centre of a huge programme of Indological publications, scholarly and popular, assisted and continued by Christian Lassen. Persian studies, somewhat neglected after Anquetil du Perron, were taken up again by the great general Orientalist Eugène Burnouf, in Paris, although he was equally at home with Sanskrit. The brothers Grimm dealt with Germanic languages and their texts. Other Indo-European studies lagged somewhat behind, but gradually historical and comparative discussions of the Romance, the Slavic and even the Celtic languages appeared. Little-known Greek and Italic dialects were beginning to be investigated from early archaeological materials. All these studies still

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26. The overwhelmingly German nature of Indo-European and general linguistics during the first half of the century was well recognized by contemporaries (see James Darmesteter, *Essais Orientaux*, Paris, 1883, the essay 'De la part de la France dans les grandes découvertes de l'orientalisme moderne', p.3), as well as being the judgement of Twentieth century scholars: See Antoine Meillet, 'Ce que la linguistique doit aux savants allemands', *Linguistique historique et linguistique générale*, Paris, 2 vols, 1921-38, vol II, pp. 152-159.

retained some measure of generality: they were still 'philological', interested as much in the ancient texts and cultures as the languages through which these were revealed. Their results led as much to a sense of Indo-European religious, mythological and cultural community, as to an understanding of the interconnection between Indo-European languages in themselves.<sup>27</sup>

However they provided the background information for a refinement of technique attuned to the peculiarities of the Indo-European languages, which became the basis of linguistics proper. The key figures here were Franz Bopp, Rasmus Rask and Jacob Grimm, and the main focus of linguistic study was historical and morphological: the phenomenon of grammatical inflection, its origin and growth. After only four years of Sanskrit study, Bopp produced his first essay in 'comparative grammar', 'Über das Conjugationssystem der Sanskritsprache in Vergleichung mit jenem der griechischen, lateinischen, persischen und germanischen Sprache' (1816). This work, which still bore the hallmarks of Romantic Orientalism, concentrated on Friedrich Schlegel's method of linguistic comparison of inflection throughout the whole Indo-European group, beginning with the most ancient Sanskrit.

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27. On early Nineteenth century Indology, and the uneven state of knowledge into the other branches of Indo-European studies see Benfey, op.cit., (mostly on German scholars), Pedersen, op.cit., and on Eugène Burnouf, (1801-1852) see Jules Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, 'Notice sur les travaux de M. Eugène Burnouf', which appeared originally in the Journal des Savants, 1852 and was appended to Burnouf's Introduction à l'histoire du Bouddhisme Indien, 2nd edition, Paris, 1876, pp. vii-xxxi.



At this point Bopp was still hampered by Schlegel's definition of inner, 'organic' inflection, a rather inadequate knowledge of Sanskrit and only a very limited knowledge of other Indo-European dialects. However he continued his comparative investigation of inflection during the 1820's and 1830's as Indo-European studies expanded around him, and the results, embodied in the two editions of his lifework, the Vergleichende Grammatik des Sanskrit, Zend, Griechischen, Lateinischen, Litauischen, Altslawischen, Gotischen und Deutschen (First edition, 1833-52, Second edition, 1857-61) were vital for linguistics. The Indo-European group was still definable for Bopp by the feature of grammatical inflection, but he offered a concrete, historical description of the origin of inflection, through agglutination, and phonetic modification from original monosyllabic roots.<sup>28</sup> Even before the Vergleichende Grammatik started to appear, the Dane Rasmus Rask saw that, between languages already similar in grammatical structure, etymological similarities could be regularised, and their slightly different forms explained by a sound shift law. This concept was taken over and applied for the Germanic group by Jacob Grimm in his second edition

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28. On Franz Bopp (1791-1867) and his linguistics work see the section in Sebeok, Portraits of Linguists, I, pp. 200-250; in Arens, op.cit., I, pp. 175-179, 218-227; the excellent and lengthy analyses of Benfey, op.cit., p. 370ff. and p. 419ff.; Jespersen, op.cit., pp. 47-55. Note that Nineteenth Century linguists often referred to the Avesta old Persian as the 'Zend' language due to a misunderstanding stemming from Anquetil du Perron (see Meillet and Cohen, op.cit., pp. 26-7).

of the Deutsche Grammatik<sup>29</sup> (1822-37). The agglutinative theory of inflection and early phonological discussions were joined closely together from the 1830's in the search for common Indo-European monosyllabic roots and the tracing of their modifications in various dialects, exemplified by August Friedrich Pott's Etymologische Forschungen auf dem Gebiete der Indo-Germanischen Sprachen (1833-36, and subsequent editions).<sup>30</sup>

For all this technical progress Indo-European linguistics had not yet freed itself from assumptions inherited from earlier Romantic Orientalism. The antiquity of Sanskrit ran as an unchallenged tenet throughout all the work of Bopp and Pott. Tremendous stress was placed on the most ancient form of Sanskrit - the language of the mythical Rig Veda, to which all the Indian religious traditions referred. The project on which Bunsen's protégé Max Müller would begin in the 1840's, the collation and publication of a definitive edition of the Rig Veda from the several manuscripts available, was

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29. On Rasmus Rask (1787-1832) see the section in Sebeok, Portraits of Linguists, I, pp. 179-199; Holger Pedersen's introduction to Rask's Ausgewählte Abhandlungen... (Hrsg. Louis Hjelmslev), Bd I, Kopenhagen, 1932, pp. XIII-LXIII; Thomsen, op.cit., p. 45ff.; Jespersen, op.cit., pp. 36-40. On Jacob Grimm (1785-1863) see the section in Sebeok, Portraits of Linguists, I, pp. 120-179 (including a section from Benfey's Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft...); Arens, op.cit., I, pp. 194-203; Jespersen, op.cit., pp. 40-47; Birgit Beneš, 'Wilhelm von Humboldt, Jacob Grimm, August Schleicher. Ein Vergleich ihrer Sprachauffassungen', Basel, Phil. Diss. von 1957, Winterthur, 1958, pp. 41-80; on Grimm and his brother Wilhelm's work on German mythology and folk-tales see Strich, op.cit., II, p. 249ff., and pp. 384-400.
30. On Pott, who essentially belongs to another, second generation of Indo-European linguists, see Chapter IV below.

considered one of high priority for the whole Indo-European field. The isolation of common Indo-European monosyllabic roots, or common elements of Indo-European vocabulary, all converged, in the minds of most early Indo-European scholars, on the original Indo-European Ursprache, and with it, by the idealist philosophy of language, on the Indo-European Urvolk. Because of the apparent antiquity of the Indo-European languages of the east, and because an eastern origin for mankind in general had long been assumed, the Urvolk and Ursprache were strongly associated with the general area and the characteristics of the Indo-Iranian members of the group. During the 1830's, when Bopp and Pott were publishing their rather technical works, other orientalist linguists - Adolphe Pictet in particular - began to speculate on the nature of proto-Indo-European society, on the basis of vocabulary similarities throughout the Indo-European group. This technique of linguistic palaeontology would be pushed to its furthest limits by Pictet in his Les Origines Indo-Européennes, ou les Aryas Primitifs (1859-63), to produce a romanticized version of the pastoral life of the Indo-European Urvolk in a golden haze.<sup>31</sup> The leading mainstream Indo-European

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31. See Adolphe Pictet, De l'affinité des langues celtiques avec le Sanscrit, Paris, 1837, especially pp. 172-6; the work used the term 'Indo-European' quite consistently until the last notes, p. 170ff., where the term 'Arian' was adopted from the work of Lassen (see also Siegert, op.cit.); see also Pictet's Les origines Indo-Europeennes..., deuxième édition, revue et augmentée, 3 vols, Paris, 1877 (originally 2 vols, Paris, 1859-63); see, for a less sophisticated approach to linguistic palaeontology, F.W. Eichhoff, Vergleichung der Sprachen von Europa und Indien, (trans J.H. Kaltschmidt), Leipzig, 1840 (originally Parallèle des Langues de l'Europe et de l'Inde, Paris, 1836).

scholars were too busy with technical and textual work to indulge in such idealizations, but the assumption was nevertheless commonly made that such a time and such a people had actually existed:

'So hatte demnach schon vor der Sprachtrennung das Sanskritvolk mit dem meisten ihm verwandten zusammen den Begriff, den Glauben und die Verehrung eines Gottes, welche sich aus der Anschauung und Verehrung des Himmels entwickelt hatten...'

By the 1860's, August Schleicher, perhaps the most outstanding Indo-European linguist of the century after Bopp, would apply the detailed technical results of Indo-European morphological and phonological studies to the project of scientifically reconstructing the presumed Indo-European Ursprache.<sup>32</sup>

Indo-European linguistics, with all its technical progress and expansion in knowledge, was considered one of the great scientific achievements of the first half of the Nineteenth Century. Bopp's revised use of the concept 'organic', as applying to languages of natural grammatical growth, and his definition of three quite separate morphological types, set the outlines for all other language studies:

'Wir wollen mit A.W. von Schlegel drei Klassen aufstellen und dieselben so unterscheiden: Erstens, Sprachen mit einsilbigen Wurzeln, ohne Fähigkeit zur Zusammensetzung und daher ohne Organismus, ohne Grammatik. Hierher gehört das Chinesische, wo alles noch nackte Wurzel ist und die Kategorien und Nebenverhältnisse der Hauptsache nach nur aus der Stellung der Wurzeln im Satze erkannt werden können.

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32. Theodor Benfey, Indien..., Leipzig, 1840, p. 159. On Benfey and Schleicher, see Chapter IV below.

Zweitens, Sprachen mit einsilbiger Wurzel, die der Zusammensetzung fähig sind und fast einzig auf diesem Wege ihren Organismus, ihre Grammatik gewinnen. Das Hauptprinzip der Wortschöpfung in dieser Klasse scheint mir in der Verbindung von Verbal- und Pronominalwurzeln zu liegen, die zusammen gleichsam Seele und Leib darstellen. Zu dieser Klasse gehört die sanskritische Sprachfamilie und ausserdem alle übrigen Sprachen, sofern sie nicht unter 1. und 3. begriffen sind und in einem Zustande sich erhalten haben, der eine Zurückführung der Wortformen auf ihre einfachsten Elemente möglich macht. Drittens, Sprachen mit zweisilbigen Verbalwurzeln und drei notwendigen Konsonanten als einzigen Trägern der Grundbedeutung. Diese Klasse begreift bloss die semitischen Sprachen und erzeugt ihre grammatischen Formen nicht bloss durch Zusammensetzung wie die zweite, sondern auch durch blosse innere Modifikation der Wurzeln'.<sup>33</sup>

The most advanced linguistic studies after Indo-European were those devoted to the Semitic languages. Indeed research on Arabic, Hebrew, Aramaic and Syrian<sup>34</sup> had a far longer history than on any European language;

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33. Quoted from Arens, op.cit., I, pp. 223-4; note that Bopp's second category for Indo-European inflection also encompasses what the Schlegels and Humboldt called 'agglutination', the combination of monosyllabic roots. This led to much confusion: thus Bopp's attempt to prove that Malay-Polynesian was related to Indo-European: Über die Verwandtschaft der Malayischen, Polynesischen Sprachen mit den Indo-Europäischen, Berlin, 1841. On the strength of the concept of language as a self-creating organism ('organic' growth) in this period see Wilbur Alan Benware, 'A History of the Research on Indo-European Vocalism from Rasmus Rask to August Schleicher, 1811-1868', Ph.D. Dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1971.
34. The term 'Semitic', coming from Genesis (the sons of Noah) was first coined by A.L. Schlözer in a work, Von den Chaldäern, of 1781 (see Sabatino Moscati, The Semites in Ancient History, Cardiff, 1959, pp. 15-16) for these languages. For the modern view of Semitic see Sabatino Moscati, (ed.) An Introduction to the Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages, Wiesbaden, 1964.

it had begun with the consolidation of Christianity in Europe and had experienced a renaissance from the Sixteenth Century triggered by renewed interest in the quality and originality of the Biblical text. Since theological interests motivated most of the research, Hebrew was the central concern, but the other languages too were studied, and the possibility of a relationship between all these very similar languages was already suggested in the Seventeenth Century. By the end of the Eighteenth Century, however, Semitic studies suffered a certain staleness due to the continuing hold of exegetic purposes over the direction of any detailed research. At this point Orientalism stepped in. The work of Silvestre de Sacy best represents the wide-ranging historical, religious and linguistic stream of publications which ensued, yet in an indiscriminate way, spread over eastern Indo-European and Semitic languages and texts alike. By the 1840's, as Indo-European studies forged ahead, Semitic studies too were changing. Phoenician had been added to the group; Gesenius attempted a grammatical and historical overview of the Hebrew language; Heinrich Ewald tried a comparative treatment of Semitic idioms. These first attempts were all still dominated by the centrality of Hebrew as the most ancient, probably the original Semitic language. There had been no rediscovery of an unknown and far more ancient Semitic language, on a par with the position of Sanskrit, to give any perspective on the group

as a whole.<sup>35</sup>

Nevertheless the work of Ernest Renan, especially his Histoire Générale des Langues Sémitiques (1855 and subsequent editions) represented a valiant attempt to transfer the comparative historical morphology and the individual detailed analyses of Indo-European linguistics to the Semitic group. The actual linguistic comparison of the Semitic idioms never appeared, but an introductory treatment of the nature and history of Semitic languages and peoples identified the unique characteristics of the group, without regard for theological interests:

'Les consonnes déterminent à elles seules le sens des mots, et seules aussi sont exprimées par l'écriture'.<sup>36</sup>

'...dans l'état actuel des langues sémitiques, toutes les racines verbales sont trilitères... Mais les racines trilitères elles-mêmes ne sont pas le dernier degré auquel il soit donné d'atteindre...'

On est... amené à se représenter chaque racine sémitique comme essentiellement composée de deux lettres radicales, aux-quelles s'est ajoutée plus tard une troisième, qui

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35. On Semitic studies see Kraus, op.cit., Chapters 1-7 inclusive; Johann Fück, Die arabischen Studien in Europa, Leipzig, 1955; Werner Strothmann, Die Anfänge des syrischen Studien in Europa, Wiesbaden, 1971. On Antoine Isaac Silvestre de Sacy (1758-1838) see Henri Dehérain, Orientalistes et antiquaires. Silvestre de Sacy. Ses contemporains et ses disciples, Paris, 1938 and Saïd, op.cit., p. 123ff. On the beginning of Phoenician studies see F. de Saulcy, 'De l'histoire et de l'état actuel des études phéniciennes', Revue des deux mondes, décembre, 1846, pp. 1054-1072.
36. Quoted from Ernest Renan, Histoire générale et système comparée des langues sémitiques, Third edition, Paris, 1863, reprinted in his Oeuvres Complètes, VIII, Paris, 1958, p. 158 (original edition, Paris, 1855). On Ernest Renan (1823-92) see René Dussaud, L'Oeuvre scientifique d'Ernest Renan, Paris, 1951 and Saïd, op.cit., Chapter II, section II, pp. 123-148.

ne fait que modifier par des nuances le sens principal...' 37

In the spirit of Bopp's Indo-European linguistics, Renan stood against Ewald's (theologically motivated) tendency still to unite Semitic and Indo-European at some very ancient time. He insisted that the two forms of inflected language were quite distinct, and indeed, as Humboldt had also suggested, that Semitic inflection was inferior to that of the Indo-European languages. As he tried to analyze the characteristics of the group as a whole, Renan also made the ambiguous and circular identification between language type and culture, so strongly, indeed, as to verge on a physical extension of the meaning of Semitic, and, incidentally, Indo-European:

'En toute chose, on le voit, la race sémitique nous apparaît comme une race incomplète, par sa simplicité même. Elle est, si j'ose le dire, à la famille indo-européenne ce que la grisaille est à la peinture, ce que le plainchant est à la musique moderne...  
... L'unité et la simplicité, qui distinguent la race sémitique, se retrouvent dans les langues sémitiques elles-mêmes. L'abstraction leur est inconnue; la métaphysique, impossible. La langue[est] le moule nécessaire des opérations intellectuelles d'un peuple...' 38

Beyond Indo-European and Semitic linguistics,

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37. Renan, Histoire générale..., p. 223.

38. Ibid., pp. 156-7, and see, on the nature of Semitic inflection and its relationship to Indo-European inflection, p. 221ff. and pp. 536-589. For the views of H.G. Ewald (1803-1875) see Ewald's Abhandlung über den Zusammenhang des nordischen (Türkischen), mittelländischen, semitischen und koptischen Sprachstammes, Göttingen, 1861 (Abhandlungen der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, 10).



Europe's knowledge of other languages was at best still at the stage of collection and description. In the case of languages surrounding Europe itself, or languages which had been known for some time by missionary and European trading contacts, some of the stimulus of the Oriental Renaissance and of the advance of Indo-European technique did filter through. The greatest problems with regard to these languages stemmed from inadequate knowledge, and from the fact that the categories and techniques of the new linguistics, developed for a closely-knit geneological group of the inflected grammatical type, were simply inappropriate for groups or individual languages which could not conform to that type.

Although Herder had dethroned the civilization of China from its commanding position in the Eighteenth Century because of its seeming lack of spirituality, the Oriental Renaissance and Indo-European linguistics still had some stimulating effect on Chinese studies. For two hundred years previously they had been the province of Christian missionaries, predominantly Jesuits. However, in 1814 a Chair of Chinese language and literature was founded for Abel Rémusat at the Collège de France and he and his pupil and successor Stanislas Julien initiated the usual stream of translations of religious texts and grammatical treatises on the language.<sup>39</sup> Rémusat set

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39. On Herder's attitude to China see Gérard, op.cit., pp. 26-9. On Abel Rémusat (1788-1832) see the Nouvelle Biographie Générale (ed. Hoefer), vol.41, Paris, 1862, pp. 967-975.

out to counter the prejudices of two hundred years about the language: to disprove the missionary view of a monosyllabic, grammar-less and absolutely static language, almost arbitrary in its composition and therefore very difficult to learn. He found himself facing a revival of the old interpretation, in the new form imposed by Indo-European linguistics. Wilhelm von Humboldt eagerly characterized the Chinese as the paradigm of the 'isolating' type, a language of pure monosyllables, absolutely no grammar and almost unaltering continuity. Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century views had seen the simplicity of Chinese as a reflection of an early, if not the primitive stage of all human language, and this connection was covertly made by most Indo-European linguists since it tied in well with Bopp's historical agglutinative theory of inflection - though not with his definition of completely separate morphological types. Although Rémusat fought this interpretation with an emphasis on coherent historical explanation of how the Chinese language had attained its present form, although he pointed out the differences between the archaic language of the ancient texts and the more modern dialects, and although he asserted that the 'isolated monosyllables' of Chinese did not prevent combinations or strict grammatical procedures, the Indo-European and older view of Chinese pertained until at least the middle of the Nineteenth Century.<sup>40</sup> Only from

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40. See Rémusat's Lettre... sur l'état et les progrès de la littérature Chinoise en Europe..., Paris, 1822, and the preface to his Éléments de la grammaire

the 1860's would the first studies of Chinese phonetics begin to indicate the extreme decaying process through which the language had gone. The difficulties posed by Chinese myth and chronology were equally insoluble until a firm basis of texts, a historical depth in linguistic understanding, and some archaeological or cross-cultural method of dating, had been established. Even the new Chinese scholars tended at first to concentrate on China's relationship with other cultures, particularly the Indian, rather than on tackling the indigenous culture on its own confused ground. Assumptions from the mood of Romantic Orientalism - the 'Symbolic' assumption of a primitive monotheism beneath all the confusions of Chinese myth and legend - would continue for some time.<sup>41</sup>

The methods of Indo-European linguistics both revitalized and dominated study into languages closer to Europe itself: the group now known as the Finno-Ugrian languages. Finnish and Hungarian, the two most obvious and most independent non-inflected languages in

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chinoise, Nouvelle édition... augmentée, Paris, 1857, and the debate between Rémusat and Wilhelm von Humboldt on the pure monosyllabism of Chinese in Wilhelm von Humboldt's Lettre à M. Abel Rémusat sur la nature des formes grammaticales en général, et sur le génie de la langue chinoise en particulier (with observations by Rémusat), Paris, 1827. See also K.F. Neumann, 'Die Sinologen und ihre Werke', Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft I, 1847, pp. 91-128 and pp. 217-237. On earlier views of the nature of Chinese see also Meillet and Cohen, op.cit., p. 525.

41. For what was known about Chinese and theories current up to 1869 see Benfey, op.cit., p. 760 ff. and on Chinese religion see Boullaye, op.cit., pp. 308-9. Almost all of Rémusat's and Julien's translations were related to Chinese Buddhism or other Indo-Chinese religious links.

Europe, had been investigated for their linguistic peculiarities since the Renaissance. A connection between the two languages had been postulated by Leibniz in 1710, and throughout the Eighteenth Century Swedish, Finnish, German and Hungarian scholars continued to elaborate the Finno-Ugrian connection and to extend it gradually to other languages. On the Finnish side, the Lappic and Samoyed were gradually brought in; on the Hungarian side, the many Turkic loan words in the language resulted in the suggestion of a Turkic-Hungarian link. These early studies used the typical pre-Indo-European linguistic technique of crude word comparisons and collections. However as early as 1799 Sámuel Gyarmathi demonstrated the Finno-Ugrian relationship in strictly structural terms. Nevertheless the word-comparison method continued to be used, and to produce further and further 'relationships' for the Finno-Ugrian languages throughout Asia and Asia Minor. With Julius Heinrich Klaproth's investigations into the morass of Caucasian languages and with his Asia Polyglotta collection of 1823, a mass of new languages became established as related to the Finno-Ugrian, the whole being termed 'Uralic': not only the languages of the Caucasus, but Japanese, Korean, Eskimo, Aleutian and the Dravidian languages of India were added.<sup>42</sup>

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42. On the Finno-Ugrian group and some of the early research into it see Peter Hajdu, Finno-Ugrian Languages and Peoples (trans and adapted by G.F. Cushing), London, 1975 and Aulis J. Joki, Uralier und Indogermanen. Die älteren Berührungen zwischen den uralischen und indogermanischen Sprachen, Helsinki, 1973, pp. 3-19; on Sámuel Gyarmathi (1751-1830) see Sebeok, Portraits of Linguists, I,

The real knowledge on which such attributions were based was negligible and the technique entirely inadequate. Very few individual studies had been made of the exotic languages of the far east or the far north, places where the first Europeans had often not yet even set foot. The Caucasian languages still defy analysis and grouping today. Investigation into the Turkish and Mongolian languages was only just beginning in the first half of the Nineteenth Century, and even the Finno-Ugric core had only been sketchily researched. The outstanding pioneer in this field was Matthias Alexander Castrén, who, in the spirit of Indo-European linguistics, provided the first grammars of several scarcely-known languages, and information about their cultures and peculiar, shamanistic religious customs, at the same time limiting the linguistic extent of the relationships of Finno-Ugrian. Under the banner of common 'agglutination', he defined a unified 'Altaic' group, conceived historically like the Indo-European and the Semitic groups almost in physical as well as in cultural and linguistic terms:

'Es hat ohne Zweifel eine Zeit gegeben, wo  
Finnen, Türken und Samo jeden noch in

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pp. 58-70; see Julius Klaproth's (1783-1835) *Asia Polyglotta with Sprachatlas*, 2 vols, Paris, 1823-31. Note that 'Finno-Ugrian' means only a rather small group of languages, and that various Nineteenth Century researchers employed various terms for various larger or smaller groups incorporating the 'Finno-Ugrian' but also extending beyond it. There was no standard terminology used: 'Skythic', 'Tataric', 'Finnic', 'Mongolic' and others were all possible, with a range of meanings.

brüderlicher Eintracht neben einander lebten'.<sup>43</sup>

'Mir will es scheinen, als müssten die finnischen, türkischen und samojedischen Völker eine in sich geschlossene Gruppe bilden, welche, so zu sagen, ein verbindendes Mittelglied zwischen der gelben und weissen, der mongolischen und kaukasischen Race ausmacht'.<sup>44</sup>

Although the morphological categories of Bopp held sway over all these language studies in the first half of the Nineteenth Century, the question of their exclusive, separate nature was not universally agreed upon. Certainly some linguists took the hard line that languages or known language groups should be studied in isolation: thus Renan's work on Semitic, or the Indo-Europeanist Otto Böhtlingk's pioneering Über die Sprache der Jakuten (1851), which went even further than Bopp himself to denounce any idea of 'Altaic' or 'Ural-Altaic' relationships until the inadequate knowledge of the time

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43. Quotation from M.A. Castrén's Nordische Reisen und Forschungen, ed. A. Schiefner, vol. 5, Kleinere Schriften, St Petersburg, 1862, from the essay, 'Über die Ursitze des finnischen Volkes' which originally appeared in 1849, p. 116. On Castrén (1813-1852) see the Vorwort to vol. 1 of the Nordische Reisen..., Reiseerinnerungen, St Petersburg, 1853, pp. v-x. On the contemporary state of knowledge into the various languages which might or might not have been related to Castrén's 'Altaic' (= modern, 'Ural-Altaic') group see Benfey, op.cit., pp. 741-760. For Castrén's work on Shamanism and Finno-Ugrian mythology see his Nordische Reisen..., vol. 5, Kleinere Schriften, 'Allgemeine Übersicht der Götterlehre und der Magie der Finnen während des Heidenthums', which originally appeared in 1838, pp. 225-241 and also the whole of Nordische Reisen..., vol. 3, Finnische Mythologie, St Petersburg, 1853. For a modern view see Mircea Éliade, Shamanism, London, 1964.
44. Castrén, Nordische Reisen..., vol. 5, Kleinere Schriften, 'Über die Ursitze...', p. 109.

should be rectified.<sup>45</sup> However linguists in general still thought in terms of a larger, universal-historical pattern of growth into which various linguistic forms should fit. On the fringes of the science the baron Frédéric d'Eckstein carried on the search of the 'Symbolic school' for primitive revelation and mystical spiritual continuity between East and West into the 1850's, even while trying to incorporate the newest linguistic studies. Indo-Europeans, Semites and other linguistic-cultural groups had still, in his eyes, demonstrably emerged from the primitive Urheimat to populate the earth in primitive times.<sup>46</sup> The excesses of his interpretations of mythological evidence were certainly no longer acceptable to linguistics proper, but Humboldt and, though unwillingly, Bopp himself had provided the theoretical middle ground on which the larger perspectives of universal history and Romantic Orientalism could still be united with the technical progress of linguistics. The agglutination theory of the origin of inflection or Humboldt's

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45. On Renan's view of Semitic see above. See also Otto Böhtlingk, Über die Sprache der Jakuten, St Petersburg, 1851, pp. xxxiv-xxxvi especially.
46. On the Baron Frédéric d'Eckstein (1789-1861) see K.R. Stunkel, 'India and the Idea of a Primitive Revelation in French Neo-Catholic Thought', Journal of Religious History, VIII, 1974-5, pp. 228-239 and Schwab, op.cit., especially p. 277ff. See from d'Eckstein himself 'Du naturalisme dans les hymnes du Vêda', L'Athenaeum Français, IV, 1855, pp. 38-40, 61-64; 'Des origines de la Metallurgie', L'Athenaeum Français, III, 1854, pp. 775-8; 'De quelques légendes brahmaniques qui se rapportent au berceau de l'espèce humaine', Journal asiatique, août-décembre, 1855, pp. 191-221, 297-391, 473-524.

morphological categories - 'isolating', 'incorporating and agglutinative' and 'inflected' - could be generalized into a historical description of the origin and growth of all human languages. These abstract morphological categories had already been closely associated with specific linguistic groups - Chinese (isolating), Finno-Ugrian (agglutinative), Semitic and Indo-European (inflected) - so that an abstract historical growth of types could almost be argued in terms of a concrete historical progression from Chinese to Indo-European. Thus Jacob Grimm described the process in 1851:

'Anfangs entfalten sich, scheint es, die wörter unbehindert in idyllischem behagen, ohne einen andern haft als ihre natürliche vom gefühl angegebne aufeinanderfolge; ihr eindruck war rein und ungesucht, doch zu voll und überladen, so dasz licht und schatten sich nicht recht vertheilen konnten. allmählich aber lässt ein unbewust waltender sprachgeist auf die nebenbegriffe schwächeres gewicht fallen und sie verdünnt und gekürzt der hauptvorstellung als mitbestimmende theile sich anfügen. die flexion entspringt aus dem einwuchs lenkender und bewegender bestimmwörter, die nun wie halb und fast ganz verdeckte triebräder von dem hauptwort, das sie anregten, mitgeschleppt werden, und aus ihrer ursprünglich auch sinnlichen bedeutung in eine abgezogene übergegangen sind, durch die jene nur zuweilen noch schimmert. zuletzt hat sich auch die flexion abgenutzt und zum bloszen ungefühlten zeichen verengt, dann beginnt der eingefügte hebel wieder gelöst und fester bestimmt nochmals äusserlich gesetzt zu werden; die sprache büsst einen theil ihrer elasticität ein, gewinnt aber für den unendlich gesteigerten gedankenreichthum überall masz und regel'.

In a footnote pertaining to the first sentence, Grimm identified the Chinese specifically:

'man könnte sagen dasz die flexionslose



chinesische sprache gewissermaszen in der ersten bildungsperiod verharret sei'.<sup>47</sup>

Against the background of this overall covertly assumed pattern, more specific links between language groups were being discussed, again combining old and new theories. In the early Eighteenth Century Leibniz had suggested the theory of a common ancient European language, the 'Japhetic' or 'Skythic' out of which both modern varieties of European languages, (in modern terminology) Finno-Ugrian and Indo-European, had developed. Rask in 1819 extended the 'Skythic' hypothesis all over Asia and even to north America, although he did not suggest the relationship of 'Skythic' (an extended Finno-Ugrian in his usage) with the Indo-European or with the monosyllabic Chinese type. The whole question of Finno-Ugrian relationships with Indo-European on the one hand, and with monosyllabic languages on the other, was a subject of much debate in the hands of Castrén and other linguists,<sup>48</sup> encouraged by Bopp's own wide definition of the interconnected agglutinative-inflected type. Another line of discussion from the past was the question of the

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47. Jacob Grimm, 'Über den Ursprung der Sprache' (1851) reprinted in Grimm's Kleinere Schriften, I, Berlin, 1864, pp. 255-298, quotations from p. 283. Note that the orthography given here follows that in the text itself.

48. On the 'Skythic' connection see Joki, op.cit., pp. 3-30; and Rasmus Rask, Über das Alter und die Echtheit der Zendsprache...nebst einer Übersicht des gesammten Sprachstammes, trans F.H. von der Hagen, Berlin, 1826, pp. 69-80; see also Castrén's Nordische Reisen..., vol. 4, Ethnologische Vorlesungen..., St Petersburg, 1857, p. 13ff.

connection between Semitic and Indo-European inflection. If Renan denied it, nevertheless Ewald, Genesius and other scholars renewed the old view of the unity of all languages (that is, those known to Europeans) by reducing Semitic triliteral roots to monosyllables comparable with those at the base of Indo-European languages.<sup>49</sup> It is within this general context, the tendency to combine the newly-acquired techniques and specific knowledge of the important new science of the day, linguistics, with the universal-historical perspectives of an earlier period that Bunsen's attempt to construct a linguistic philosophy of universal history should be placed.

However neither the European tradition of universal history, nor the science of linguistics which took its origins from Romantic Orientalism and the definition of the Indo-European group, were truly universal in scope. They were severely limited by a European bias. In the case of whole continents - Africa, America, Australia - Europeans had not yet developed a viable intellectual

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49. See the discussion in Renan's Histoire générale... p. 536ff. and Ewald, Abhandlung über den Zusammenhang... See also Honoré-Joseph Chavée, 'Sur la parallèle des langues sémitiques et des langues indo-européennes', Bulletin de la Société d'Anthropologie, III, 1862, pp. 198-244; John Davies, 'On the Semitic Languages and their relations with the Indo-European Class', Transactions of the Philological Society of London, 1854, pp. 169-198, 238-281; and for a later survey and discussion, James McCurdy, Aryo-Semitic Speech. A Study in linguistic archaeology, London, 1881.

framework within which to fit whatever information they might have. Certainly very little information was as yet available, but the first half of the Nineteenth Century saw a marked expansion of knowledge about these areas, and especially about Africa, alongside the growth of European strategic, missionary and colonial interests. Such knowledge would severely test the Eurasian synthesis of mankind's historical experience. The problems arising from a better knowledge of Africa, past and present, were perhaps the most pressing, for here Europe encountered human groups on several levels, the most obvious being physical, vastly dissimilar to its own experience. The longstanding reaction to this encounter had been disinterest in the indigenous peoples in their own right, the assumption of European superiority, and economic exploitation in the form of the slave trade. At the same time parts of Africa had been somewhat better known to Europe since the days of the Roman Empire, and some knowledge of the African civilization of Egypt had survived through classical reports. All this began to change significantly, contemporaneously with the period of the Oriental Renaissance.

The key to a European reappraisal of Africa, modern and ancient, was linguistic: without linguistic knowledge no understanding of African peoples and cultures would have been possible. A few individual vocabularies had been compiled by missionaries and travellers in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, and the late-

Eighteenth Century anti-slavery agitation in England induced some interest in the country and its peoples for their own sake. By the 1830's, as the British adopted a 'forward policy' of exploration from the West Coast and consolidated their rule at the Cape, word lists and travellers' accounts of manners and customs grew rapidly.<sup>50</sup> Preparation for the great British government-sponsored Niger Expedition (1841-2) included the collation and publication of important Western and Central African Vocabularies under the direction of Edwin Norris - more famous as a pioneer in Assyriology. The French Ethnological Society published various vocabularies of Senegambia as well. Most of the material for these works had been gathered from settlements of liberated slaves on the African coast - for example, Freetown in Sierra Leone, where ex-slaves of the most varied tribal origins were resettled together- or from ex-slaves in the West Indies. John Clarke's Specimens of African Dialects (1848-9) was the most ambitious of such works, giving nearly 300 vocabularies of 60-80 languages gathered from former slaves. From the early 1840's a 'boom' in publications on Africa took hold, lasting well into the 1850's in England. Missionary societies used the popularity of the Niger Expedition to drum up public support and expand operations in West Africa. Under the secretaryship

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50. See P.D. Curtin, The Image of Africa, Madison, 1964, Chapter I and p. 143ff., and Robert Needham Cust, A Sketch of the Modern Languages of Africa, 2 vols, London, 1883, vol. I, p. 23ff.

of Henry Venn - who had a personal interest in the linguistic side of missionary work, the translation of the Bible into native dialects - the Church Missionary Society committed itself to raised standards of linguistic knowledge. Venn appointed a German-trained linguist-missionary, J.F. Schön to accompany the Niger expedition, and this example of linguist-missionaries (predominantly Germans) was followed by many British missionary societies working in West, South and East Africa.<sup>51</sup> Perhaps the most talented of these men was Sigismund Wilhelm Koelle, who succeeded Schön in Freetown, and produced important work on two previously unknown languages, the Vai and the Kanuri. His greatest achievement however was the Polyglotta Africana (1854), again using the informants of Freetown. The Polyglotta contained 200 vocabularies of about 120 languages. 300 terms from each vocabulary were listed, in a system carefully structured to include, as Koelle explained, both basic and potential loan words. The whole was arranged to show etymological similarities and groupings, and was accompanied by an explanation of the geographic location of the idioms and a description of Koelle's informants. For these important works Koelle was deservedly awarded the French Volney Prize for linguistic work.<sup>52</sup>

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51. See Curtin, op.cit., Chapters 8,12,13; on the C.M.S. and individual linguists see Eugene Stock, The History of the Church Missionary Society, 3 vols, London, 1899, particularly vols 1 and 2. See also P.E.H. Hair's introduction to S.E. Koelle's Polyglotta Africana (unaltered reprint of the original edition of London, 1854, Graz, 1963), separately paginated pp.7\*-17\*.

52. See Hair's introduction to the Polyglotta Africana on Koelle (1823-1902) and the Polyglotta itself.

The basic problem which dominated Europe's response to all such information about Africa was how to fit it into the synthesis of Eurasian experience, or whether it could be fitted at all. The question took an ethnological form - the debate between polygenists and monogenists - and ran as an undercurrent to almost all European scholarship about Africa in this period. It is important to note that neither side could conceive of the African Negro's equality with white Europeans in anything but a vague humanitarian sense. Even if the Negro were incorporated into the Eurasian synthesis of universal history, he had played a negligible part in it, and his lack of achievement had something to do with his physical difference from the European type. Koelle's pioneering linguistic groupings on word-comparisons alone were almost unique in that they consistently disregarded physical appearance and strived to establish linguistic relationship on linguistic grounds alone. However in an age dominated by the successes of Indo-European linguistics, with its peculiarly morphological, historical and genetic bias, non-Indo-European linguistic studies stood little chance of evolving independent methods appropriate to their own subject matter, and least of all in Africa. Koelle was criticized for his geographical and word-comparison method.<sup>53</sup> Others

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53. See the attack on Koelle's work in Cust, *op.cit.*, I, pp. 30-33. On the debate between polygenists and monogenists see John S. Haller, *Outcasts from Evolution*, Urbana, Chicago, London, 1971 and Wilhelm Scheidt, 'Der Begriff der Rasse in der Anthropologie', *Archiv für Rassen- und Gesellschaftsbiologie*, XV, 1923/4, pp. 280-306, 383-397; XVI, 1924/5, pp. 178-202, 382-403.

had already begun to suggest larger groupings on comparative grammatical grounds: the affinities of the 'Berber' language of the north with the Semitic type, the similarities of the 'Kaffir' languages of the Cape.<sup>54</sup> Over all this work hung the cloud of the European preoccupation with ethnology when it came to Africa. The leaders in the grouping of African languages were the 'ethnological philologists' Prichard, Latham and Edwin Norris. From a long tradition of physical classifications of the Eighteenth Century a radical distinction had been made between the 'Negroes' of sub-Saharan Africa and the inhabitants of the north, termed 'white' by Linnaeus, or 'Caucasian' by Blumenbach, and thus affiliated with the European or Eurasian physical type. By 1844 Prichard had collated the linguistic evidence available for the northern region, and, particularly impressed by the common agreement about Semitic affinities, suggested that the aboriginal northern languages belonged to an ancient 'Hebraeo-African' group. This group was uncertain in physical type except in a negative sense: they were

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54. For early studies of the north African languages see Cust, op.cit., Chapter IX, and, for example, W.B. Hodgson, 'Translation of a Berber Manuscript...', Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, IV, 1837, pp. 115-129, and Jacob Gräberg, 'Remarks on the Language of the Amazirghs...', Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, III, 1836, pp. 106-130. On early studies of the languages of the south see C.M. Doke, 'The growth of comparative Bantu philology', African Studies, 2, 1943, pp. 41-64, and studies of individual linguistic groups are dealt with in Cust, op.cit., throughout vol. II.

certainly not Negroes. In general the problems of grouping the sub-Saharan languages - for example the relationship of the 'Kaffir' languages to Hottentot, or to the many, mostly unknown languages of the West Coast and the interior - were avoided by referring to them wholesale as 'Negro languages'. This produced much confusion, since physical anthropology was in the process of breaking down the simplistic assumption of uniformity of 'Negro' physical type throughout Africa.<sup>55</sup> The Negro- non-Negro distinction clearly bore little relationship to the linguistic map of Africa as it was known in the early Nineteenth Century; it was far more the product of European ethnocentrism, challenged by a situation far too complex and unexpected for its own ways of thinking.

European dealings with Africa were further complicated by the rediscovery of the antiquity of Egypt. Certainly the Egyptian civilization was in itself no surprise to Europe: it had been attested by the Bible and classical sources. Some speculation had already taken place on the mysterious hieroglyphic writing which

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55. For J.C. Prichard's (1786-1848) grouping of African languages and peoples, see his The Natural History of Man, 3rd edition, London, 1848 and his influential Researches into the Physical History of Man, 5 vols, 3rd edition, 1836-1847, vols II and IV and R.G. Latham, 'On the ethnography of Africa as determined by its languages', Reports of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1844, pp. 79-80 and his 'On the present state and recent progress of Ethnographical Philology. Part I - Africa', Reports of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1847, pp. 154-229. On these and other classification systems see also Curtin, op.cit., Chapter 16 and Cust, op.cit., I, Chapter IV. The 'Kaffir' languages (see the explanation of the name in ibid., II, p. 298) were later named the 'Bantu' group - see Chapter IV below.



perhaps held the key to some esoteric wisdom for the rest of mankind. The Coptic language of the Christian Egyptians had already been identified as at least highly significant for knowledge about Egypt, and had been publicized by Athanasius Kircher in the Seventeenth Century. However all decipherment attempts failed until the second and third decades of the Nineteenth Century. As with European work on modern Africa, European Egyptology owed its origins to an increased political and general interest in Egypt, combined with knowledge of Egyptian culture in the original. By the end of the Eighteenth Century the amount of European travel in and publications on Egypt was accumulating. The key events from which Egyptology grew were the great scholarly and military Napoleonic Expedition to Egypt of 1798-1801, and its monumental product, the Description de l'Égypte (1809-1813), a basic topographical survey of the monuments, with copies of inscriptions and approximate drawings of wall-paintings. The highpoint of the Expedition had been the fortuitous discovery of the trilingual Rosetta Stone, containing a late Ptolemaic decree written in Hieroglyphic characters, repeated in Demotic and then in Greek. It immediately became the focus for decipherment attempts by various linguists orientalist and classical scholars - Étienne Quatremère, de Sacy himself, and the Englishman Thomas Young - who also tried to tackle the inscriptions contained in the Description de l'Égypte, all on the basis of the Greek

Rosetta text and the confused hints thrown out by classical sources.<sup>56</sup> The man who succeeded in the task was Jean François Champollion, a scholar of genius who had prepared himself with a devoted sense of vocation from his earliest youth. His Lettre à M. Dacier... (1822) and his Précis du système hiéroglyphique (1824) immediately outdated all previous attempts at decipherment.

Champollion's decipherment was a masterful stab in the dark. He had little original material to work with: collections of the as yet impenetrable papyri and Egyptian objects were just beginning to arrive in Europe in significant numbers and were locked away in private collections. The copies of Egyptian inscriptions brought back and published in the Description de l'Égypte often contained gross errors, due to the ignorance or the laziness of the European copyists. Most of their copies - and the Rosetta stone itself - dated from the late Graeco-Roman period, when the hieroglyphs had degenerated from their earlier functional and clear state and had been mixed with symbolic and mystical elements. Champollion himself was of necessity steeped

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56. On the early travels, accounts and researches on ancient Egypt and the nature of the hieroglyphs see Erik Iversen, The Myth of Egypt and its Hieroglyphs in European Tradition, Copenhagen, 1961, Leslie Greener, The Discovery of Egypt, London, 1966, and Maurice Pope, The story of Decipherment, London, 1975, Part I. An invaluable sourcebook for the contributions and publications of individuals to the science of Egyptology is Warren R. Dawson and Eric P. Uphill's Who was Who in Egyptology, London, second revised edition, 1972: see for example the entry on Thomas Young (1773-1829).

in second-hand sources as well as in Coptic, and was constantly reworking and rethinking the contradictory clues they contained. Faced with such problems Champollion quite early made two fundamental assumptions: that the language of the hieroglyphs - whose true antiquity he could not as yet fully appreciate - had not substantially altered throughout the history of its use, and that this unchanged ancient language was to be found again in the modern Coptic. Both of these assumptions arose out of earlier theories about ancient Egypt, and both are, literally, false. However they contained sufficient elements of truth to enable Champollion to make a decisive, if limited, breakthrough. On the other hand, they also led to confusion: thus Champollion always transcribed Egyptian texts, whether in hieroglyphic, hieratic or demotic script, directly into Coptic, explaining and even correcting the ancient forms through his knowledge of the modern. As to the nature of the hieroglyphs themselves, he had once (correctly) thought of syllabic signs, but settled on a mixture of alphabetic, ideographic and determinative signs and some 'abbreviations'.<sup>57</sup>

Champollion's decipherment was not greeted with general acclaim. On the contrary, counter-systems of

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57. On Jean François Champollion (1790-1832) see the definitive biography and account of his work, H. Hartleben, Champollion: Sein Leben und sein Werk, 2 vols, Berlin, 1906: on the decipherment and its initial problems see especially vol. I, chapter 7. See also Heinrich Brugsch, Die Aegyptologie, Leipzig, 1891, Introduction, pp. 1-19 on the method of decipherment, and Champollion's own Lettre à M. Dacier..., Paris, 1822.

decipherment from the pens of Marie-Alexandre Lenoir and Goulianoﬀ were tirelessly encouraged by influential men like Klaproth, Quatremère, and Raoul-Rochette for reasons ranging from sheer malice to political intrigue or professional jealousy. In Germany Friedrich August Spohn and his successor and disciple Gustavus Seyffarth also claimed a decipherment system with moderate success, at least at first. English national pride rallied round the claims of Thomas Young to priority in the decipherment.<sup>58</sup> In the confusion of system and counter-system Champollion was only too well aware that the responsibility for further progress in Egyptology lay squarely on his own shoulders. Characteristic of his genius was the fact that his ideas were always in flux, gaining precision and accuracy with experience: the Précis... showed considerable progress over the Lettre of 1822; the Pan théon égyptien (1823) would have been totally transformed after his further researches in Italy and his expedition to Egypt in 1828-9 if he had been granted time and leisure. But Champollion died young, in 1832; before his death he was able to give only a very few lectures from the Chair created from him at the Collège de France in 1831, the first Chair of Egyptology. He left behind volumes of important notes and important works in manuscript - vital texts containing his latest insights which only appeared years later or not at all. Champollion himself

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58. On the early period immediately following the decipherment see Hartleben, op.cit., vol. 2 *passim* and entries on individuals in Dawson and Uphill, op.cit.

had an almost uncanny ability to arrive at the contents of inscriptions even with his only partially accurate materials. No contemporary could rival his talents - not even those who considered themselves his 'pupils' - Charles Lenormant and Niccolo Rosellini amongst others. The difficulty of understanding Champollion's complex, ever-changing ideas, many still in manuscript notes, confused and alienated those not willing to devote themselves wholeheartedly to following through his method to independent conclusions of their own. This explains much of the uncertain aura surrounding Egyptology in the early years just after Champollion's death.<sup>59</sup>

In France a lengthy, difficult hiatus followed Champollion's death. Politically powerful opponents kept his Chair empty and his 'system' in disrepute. In 1838 the Hellenist Jean Letronne took over the chair, but though he had condoned Champollion's decipherment from a distance, he had no understanding of its linguistic bases and lectured on the classical accounts of Egyptian culture. Virtually alone, J.J. Champollion-Figeac kept up a barrage of propaganda on his brother's behalf, unmasking the thief and plagiarizer Salvolini, and editing and publishing several of the precious manuscripts. Although, in Italy, Rosellini maintained the reputation of Champollion's successor until his early death in 1843, he made no great independent

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59. On these difficulties see Hartleben, *op.cit.*, vol.2, passim and for the atmosphere of distrust of the subject in France in the 1830's see Lepsius, p. 76ff.

progress. Egyptology was at a standstill until 1837, although a few exploratory essays appeared and the first organized museum collections outside Champollion's own were being put together by Samuel Birch, in London, and Conradus Leemans, at Leiden.<sup>60</sup> Bunsen himself began his investigations into Egyptology in this difficult period of confusion, and, through his patronage of the young Carl Richard Lepsius, would provide the field with the man who would pick up and continue the thread of original research after Champollion.

Egypt presented the Eurasian synthesis with the problem of a vast, obviously ancient, independent and unified culture - but one which was only partly outside the European experience. In response, early research reflected one basic concern: Egyptologists strove to understand the origins and real antiquity of Egypt, and to connect it somehow with their own scheme of universal-historical development. Chronology and the origins of Egypt took high priority in Champollion's thoughts: it was certainly his aim to reconstruct the Dynastic List of Manetho, inconsistently and fragmentarily reported in various classical sources, through an investigation of monumental sources, and the use of surprise finds like the Turin Papyrus of Kings. Gradually he came to be convinced that the antiquity of

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60. See individual entries in Dawson and Uphill, op.cit.; on the Salvolini episode see Jacques Joseph Champollion-Figeac, (1778-1867) Notice sur les manuscrits autographes de Champollion le jeune, perdus en l'année 1832 et retrouvés en 1840, Paris, 1842. on the immediate post-Champollion period see also Hartleben, op.cit., vol. 2, p. 543ff.

Egypt was very much vaster than had been thought: indeed that it challenged the orthodox chronology for man. By the 1830's this vast antiquity was common knowledge for anyone who dealt with Egypt in a scholarly fashion, and seemed considerably more substantial than the mythical, cyclical chronology of India which had excited such enthusiasm a few decades previously.<sup>61</sup> There were of course numbers of attempts to reconcile Egyptian and Biblical chronology. The strict orthodox view tried to subordinate Egypt completely; Christian scholars like J.C. Prichard preferred to harmonize the claims of both, giving the date of Menes, the first king of Manetho's first Dynasty, at around 2434-2357 B.C. For the philosophy of universal history, which had already broken through so many of the confines of the literal Biblical account of the world, the orthodox chronology was irrelevant, proved by Biblical criticism to be a later and artificial product of Judeo-Christian dogmatism. The preface to August Wilhelm von Schlegel's translation of Prichard's work on Egyptian chronology deplored the harmonistic tendency, calling for

'...das Recht der Geschichtsforschung auf die vollkommenste Autonomie, d.h. dass auf diesem

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61. On the sources for Egyptian chronology in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries see Walter B. Emery, *Archaic Egypt*, Penguin, 1961, p. 21ff. and Sir Alan Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, Oxford University Press, 1972, chapter IV. See for example J.J. Champollion-Figeac's date for the historically-confirmed Sixteenth Dynasty of Manetho in 1830 (2272 B.C.), given in his *Résumé complet de chronologie générale et spéciale...*, Paris, 1830, see pp. 118-19.

Gebiet keine fremdartige Auctorität, wie ehrwürdig sie auch sey, sich eindringen dürfe'. 62

The popular response to ancient Egypt in the 1830's generally accepted without fuss the view that it was the most ancient of all human cultures: indeed an Egyptian version of the previous generation's Indomania was in force for a time. The extraordinary popularity of Sir John Gardner Wilkinson's works, especially the many editions of his Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians, indicate how strongly the wonders of this ancient civilization had caught the public imagination and had been accepted into the Eurasian synthesis regardless of the chronological clash with the Bible:

'What high antiquity does this assign to civilization! The most remote point to which we can see, opens with a nation possessing all the arts of civilised life already matured; and though penetrating so far into the early history of the world, we find that the infancy of the Egyptian state is placed considerably beyond our reach'. 63

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62. Quoted from A.W. von Schlegel's Vorrede to the German edition of J.C. Prichard's An Analysis of the Egyptian Mythology, to which is subjoined A Critical Examination of the Remains of Egyptian Chronology, London, 1819 - trans. L. Haymann, Bonn, 1837 under the title Darstellung der aegyptischen Mythologie..., p. xxxiii. Prichard had set the date of Menes, the first Pharaoh of the First Dynasty at around 2434-2357 B.C. For a later very rigid orthodox attack on Egyptian chronology in the light of Bunsen's own works see the Rev. B.W. Savile's Revelation and Science in Respect to Bunsen's Biblical Researches, London, 1862.
63. Quoted from Sir John Gardner Wilkinson (1797-1875), Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians, 3 vols (second edition), London, 1842, vol. I, p. viii. On the vast contemporary antiquities traffic and the popular fascination with Egypt and Egyptian antiquities see Greener, op.cit., especially Chapter 11 and John A. Wilson, Signs and Wonders upon Pharaoh: A History of American Egyptology, Chicago and London, 1964, Chapter 3.



The problem of Egyptian chronology could be so readily dissolved because European scholars found it relatively easy to incorporate most features of Egyptian culture into the Eurasian synthesis of history despite or even because of it. The origins of Egypt were mentioned in the Genesis Table of the descendents of Noah. The physical appearance of the Egyptians in their wall-paintings did not bely this view - they did not appear to be Negroes, for example; and a closer investigation of the language of the hieroglyphs, or at least of Coptic, proved that it had strong Eurasian affinities, particularly with the Semitic languages.<sup>64</sup> Its culture, myth and religion - seen still through the interpretation of classical Greek scholars, especially Herodotus - seemed the embodiment of ancient, symbolic mythology. Its history seemed uncomplicated, self-contained, and stable. Altogether, Bunsen could promote Egypt to the position of most ancient of human cultures, and even extend the orthodox Biblical chronology, thus appearing in the forefront of current scholarship, while retaining the Eurasian scheme of universal history essentially unaltered.

The rediscovery of ancient Egypt was fortuitous

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64. Eurasian affinities for the Coptic language was the conclusion of C.R. Lepsius as early as 1836 - see Chapter III below - and quickly became the accepted scholarly view: see Theodor Benfey's Über das Verhältniss der aegyptischen Sprache zum semitischen Sprachstamm, Leipzig, 1844. On the issue of the appearance of the ancient Egyptians on the monuments and the racial interpretations of this information see Chapters III and IV below.

for Europe in several ways. On the simplest level, in time and place: the Egypt of Muhammad Ali was wide open to European investigation, with a relatively ordered political climate, and well preserved monuments which were easily accessible on the surface. On an intellectual level, there was initially little in the civilization of Egypt, apart from its antiquity, to disturb the Eurasian synthesis of universal history. There had been a possible disruptive element in the old classical tradition of the origins of Egypt from the south, from 'Ethiopia'. Frédéric Caillaud's travels to Upper Egypt and Nubia had stressed the similarities between the southern 'Ethiopian', or Meroitic monuments and those of Egypt proper. Even Champollion looked to the south for the solution to the question of the origins of Egyptian civilization.<sup>65</sup> By the 1830's however, when Lepsius would revive Egyptology, the conviction of Asiatic origins was already replacing the older view. Lepsius and Bunsen, who shared this Christian, theologically-based assumption, would do much to establish it firmly. That Asiatic origins for the ancient culture of north Africa might seriously aggravate the problems of incorporating the rest of Africa into the Eurasian synthesis,

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65. On the early travellers to the vague 'Ethiopia' of the ancients - south of the historical boundary of ancient Egypt at Aswan, known as Nubia, or, further south still, the Sudan - see P.L. Shinnie, Meroe. A Civilization of the Sudan, London, 1967, especially Chapter I, and see the entry on Caillaud (1787-1869) in Dawson and Uphill, op.cit.; for Champollion's view of the southern origins of Egyptian culture see Hartleben, op.cit., vol. II, pp. 259-60.

might link up with the non-Negro versus Negro distinction which Europe had already structured in Africa, were problems which could not be anticipated by any scholar of the 1830's and 1840's seriously committed to the monogenistic spirit of the Christian philosophy of universal history.

As Bunsen began to publish his philosophy of universal history, armed with the advances of Indo-European linguistics and the extended historical perspective of ancient Egypt, another ancient culture was being rediscovered, one which would prove far less conformable with the framework of universal history in the long run. In the first half of the Nineteenth Century the curious trilingual cuneiform inscriptions of Mesopotamia, which had aroused much interest even earlier, were gradually deciphered. The first of the trilingual cuneiform scripts was revealed to contain the ancient Persian language, although not exactly in its Avestan form, through the efforts of Georg Grotefend, Eugène Burnouf and Henry Rawlinson. The decipherment had been a lengthy process, built on the invaluable earlier work of de Sacy, Rask, Lassen, and many others who had also been involved in early research into the ancient eastern Indo-European languages. However, by 1847, it had been definitely completed. The Old Persian then assisted in the decipherment of the difficult language of the second series of inscriptions, again through the concerted efforts of various scholars -

Grotefend, Rawlinson, Edward Hincks and Edwin Norris, up to about 1855. This second series of inscriptions contained a language - in the modern terminology 'Susian' - whose affinities could not be settled. It was generally referred to as 'Skythic', recalling both Leibniz's and Herodotus' ancient Eurasian 'Skyths'. Both the first and second series of inscriptions were used to decipher the language of the third series of inscriptions, an ancient Semitic language, in a very concentrated period beginning from 1846. At the same time, out of sheer necessity in a land of unidentified mounds and ruins, where the monuments of ancient culture were not accessible on the surface, the first archaeological excavations began, and quickly produced the most unexpectedly spectacular finds. As Hincks and Rawlinson and Jules Oppert gained an ever clearer understanding of the contents and nature of the ancient Semitic (in modern terminology 'Akkadian') cuneiform inscriptions in Europe in the early 1850's, A.H. Layard's digs in the field revealed a wealth of cuneiform inscriptions found in both northern and southern areas of Mesopotamia, including ever further languages or dialects, as well as the wonders of Nineveh.<sup>66</sup>

The revelation of existence of an ancient Semitic and several other cultures in this area was

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66. On early Assyriology and the process of decipherment in considerable detail see the invaluable work of Svend Aage Pallis, The Antiquity of Iraq, A Handbook of Assyriology, Copenhagen, 1956, particularly Chapters II, III, VI.

very inadequately prepared for by the Biblical references to Babylon and the classical references to Assyrians, Medes and Persians. The older framework of a vague 'Chaldea', unspecified in time or extent, simply could not cope with all the evidence pouring in from archaeological sources and all the problems of chronology and relationship posed by the results of decipherment. The true history of one of the ancient areas best known to traditional sources proved far too complex for the older framework to stand unchanged; but in the 1850's and even the 1860's, decipherment was too recent and the finds too new and too many to develop any alternate system of order or sequence. A further complication, over which much resistance took place, was the unusual nature of the ancient Semitic 'Akkadian' language, both in script and in linguistic form. 'Akkadian' was written in a cuneiform script invented, and suited to another form of language entirely - this the early decipherment scholars already suspected. The frighteningly large number of signs were syllabic, and included a definite vowel: all other Semitic languages were written in an alphabet, inherited from the Phoenician, and in general the consonants rather than the vowels formed the important element in the words and the writing system. Furthermore, the 'Akkadian' syllabic signs had polyphonic values, and each sound could be expressed by several homophonic signs. The language as a whole was much decayed from the familiar, very characteristic forms found in the well-

known Semitic languages. Ernest Renan expressed the reaction of a whole generation of Semitic scholars when he attacked the results of the Assyriologists' decipherment in 1859, both in terms of the seeming arbitrary confusion of the deciphered script and in terms of its lack of conformity with all known characteristics of the tightly-knit Semitic group:

'Certes un tel labyrinthe de difficultés devait rendre l'écriture assyrienne presque illisible pour les Assyriens eux-mêmes...

Que si l'on examine la langue sémitique qui résulte des lectures de MM. les assriologues... on éprouve une perplexité non moindre. Les habitudes de la grammaire générale des langues sémitiques y sont souvent violées. Des particularités, qui sont rejetées, dans la grammaire sémitique au troisième ou quatrième plan, sont ici sur le premier; on se trouve sans cesse en présence de formes qui dépayent et de mots qu'on ne reconte pas dans les autres langues sémitiques'.

Renan would only retract his opposition in 1868, and indeed the Assriologists would have to struggle throughout this decade to secure their discovery.<sup>67</sup>

The archaeology and prehistory of Mesopotamia was only just becoming clear in the mid-1850's when most of Bunsen's works on the philosophy of universal

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67. Quotation from Ernest Renan, review of Jules Oppert's Expédition Scientifique en Mesopotamie, vol. II, 1859 in the Journal des Savants, avril, 1859, pp. 245-6 (see all three articles in the series, in ibid., mars, avril, juin, 1859, pp. 165-186, 244-260, 260-368). See Renan's later acceptance of 'Akkadian' Semitic in his 'Sur les formes du verbe sémitique', Mémoires de la Société de Linguistique, I, 1868, pp. 97-110. For the older framework of knowledge about 'Chaldea' see Arnold Heeren, Historical researches into the politics, intercourse and trade of the principal nations of antiquity, Part I, Asiatic Nations, (3 vols) vol. II, Oxford, 1833.

history appeared in print. Bunsen himself tried to take some account of the new discoveries, but showed that he, like the older framework of universal history itself, could not deal with them adequately. For him, Egypt was the oldest human civilization, and its chronological and cultural priority to Mesopotamia - which the new researches were bringing into question - was never in doubt. In this sense his work was to be outdated almost immediately on its appearance. Around him, others like Frédéric d'Eckstein would try again to reconcile the antiquity and complexity of Mesopotamia with the traditional Biblical framework, using the 'Cushite' theory. The 'Cushites', mentioned in the Bible as the founders of Babylon and sons of Ham, were transformed by him into a roving group of civilizers who had emerged from the Asiatic Urheimat and settled all over the middle-east, under various names, etymologically similar (by crudest technique), ranging from the Hindu-'Kush' to the Egyptian reference to their southern neighbours in the land of 'Kush'. Renan himself suggested this 'Cushite' solution to the problem of the un-Semitic nature of the supposedly Semitic language of ancient Mesopotamia.<sup>68</sup> The 'Cushite' theory left as many problems as it settled, since it only dealt with the ancient purported Semites of Mesopotamia and not all the other languages and peoples, neither Semitic nor Indo-

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68. For d'Eckstein's 'Cushite' theory see his 'De quelques légendes brahmaniques...'; Renan proposed the 'Cushite' solution, with some reluctance because of the imprecision of the terminology, in the articles reviewing Oppert's Expédition Scientifique..., of 1859 (see *mars*, pp. 182-3).

European, which were being discovered there, and since it did not clear up the relative chronology of Mesopotamia and Egypt. It would eventually be dissolved by the further progress of Assyriology itself, and especially by the gradual rediscovery of the pre-Semitic Sumerian civilization in the 1870's and 1880's.

By that time the progress of other sciences had already destroyed the Eurasian synthesis of universal history, which had expanded and adapted itself to so much new information in the first half of the century. The harmonization between 'science' and the Biblical time and creation barrier for man broke down just after Bunsen's death, with the rise of scientific materialism - prehistory, the evolutionary theory, cultural anthropology, the first archaeological explorations of Egypt and other middle-east areas, and the continuation of Mesopotamian digs. Bunsen put his synthesis together only just in time to avoid most of these difficulties. He managed to take advantage of a situation of partial knowledge where a combination of old and very undeveloped new information was still possible and plausible. The two disciples who followed and assisted him in his work would be left with the problem of dealing with a new intellectual climate in which such a synthesis was no longer viable in any way.



CHAPTER II

BUNSEN AND HIS INFLUENCE

Christian Carl Josias Bunsen was born on 25th August 1791 at Corbach in the German Principality of Waldeck, the son of his parents' old age and his father's second marriage. The father, Heinrich Christian Bunsen, was a reasonably educated, independent, god-fearing man living on very limited means and so, outwardly at least, the child's prospects in the world were by no means secure. However he inherited from his family environment an independence from concern with rank and fortune, and a corresponding deep-seated Christian faith with Pietistic overtones of stillness and inner experience. Such a faith was reinforced by the 'unflinching rectitude' of the Christianity espoused by his half-sister Christiana. During a short visit around 1798-9 she made such an impression on the young Christian Carl that he would look to her for moral guidance for many years following. The boy was already aware of the marked contrast between his family's pious belief in immanent Providential guidance and the formalism and rationalism common among the Protestant Clergy of the time.<sup>1</sup>

Heinrich Bunsen was concerned to educate his son, particularly since he showed eagerness and aptitude for study. At six he began private lessons, at seven was accepted into the Corbach Gymnasium and thereafter

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1. Bunsen: I, Chapter I. Also for this period W. Schumacher, Waldeckische Briefe, Berlin, 1862 (II, Erinnerungen an C.C.J. Bunsen's Jugendjahre). On the other famous family member, the distantly related chemist, Robert Bunsen (1811-1899) see Neue Deutsche Biographie, Vol. 3, Berlin 1957, pp. 18-20.

advanced rapidly. He was distinguished by a special love of reading and a particular talent for languages - Greek, Latin, Hebrew, French, and some English, Italian, and even Syriac. A university education was the desirable next step for so obviously gifted a student. Given the family background and Christiana's guidance, the choice of the theological faculty was made as a matter of course. Financed by a combination of his father's meagre savings and a small scholarship from the Waldeck ruling family, Christian Carl set out for Marburg on 29th October 1808. Marburg proved unsatisfactory, however: within a year he had taken the decision not to become a clergyman, to renounce his scholarship and to transfer to Göttingen to study with the great classical scholar C.G. Heyne.<sup>2</sup>

It is not completely clear why he made this significant change of plan. Certainly Marburg was a much smaller university, and the wider horizons offered by Göttingen, especially for his linguistic talents, played some part. It is also quite probable that he was dissatisfied with the reigning rationalist school of theological thought, both at Marburg and later at Göttingen. An anecdote relating to the Göttingen years tells of the sensation caused

'.. by Bunsen's suddenly quitting a lecture-room... in indignation at the unworthy manner in which

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2. Wilma Höcker, Der Gesandte Bunsen als Vermittler zwischen Deutschland und England, Göttingen, 1951, pp. 6-7; Bunsen I, pp. 21-3; Bernhard Baehring, Christian Carl Josias von Bunsen, Lebensbild eines deutsch-christlichen Staatsmannes, Leipzig, 1892, pp. 8-9.

the most sacred subjects were treated by a certain dignified teacher of rationalism. The....[lecturer] paused at the interruption produced, and hazarded the remark, that "some one belonging to the Old Testament had possibly slipped in unrecognised;"...'3

Combining both these factors it is possible that already in 1808-9 Bunsen was becoming conscious in himself of a range of interests too wide to be encompassed by an orthodox theological career, yet which was still tied in with spiritual belief.<sup>4</sup>

The first years at Göttingen, from October 1809, were spent under the protection of Heyne. He secured Bunsen a place at the Göttingen Gymnasium teaching Hebrew and Greek, and an important position as tutor to William Backhouse Astor, of the great New York family, who was then continuing his education in Germany. Intellectually too Heyne's classical teaching influenced him. He took on a classical subject for the prize essay on the Athenian Law of Inheritance (De jure hereditario Atheniensium disquisitio philologica) in 1812, and dedicated it to Heyne. The content of the essay fused its classical topic with early Romantic orientalism: instead of following the classical sources, and thus finding the origins of Athenian law in Egypt, Bunsen pointed out the similarities between the Greek and Indian laws of inheritance as codified

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3. Bunsen, I, pp. 56-7.

4. This is the argument of Otrud Maas, 'Das Christentum in der Weltgeschichte. Theologische Vorstellungen bei C.K.J. Bunsen', Dissertation for the Theological Faculty at Kiel, 1968, p. 9. Baehring, op. cit., offers another hint, the threat of the dissolution of the University of Marburg, p. 9; Bunsen I is very vague, pp. 22-3; Höcker has her own explanation, op. cit., pp. 6-7, criticized by Maas, op. cit., pp. 8-12.

in the Laws of Manu. The new ideas of Indo-European linguistic and cultural similarities were obviously already known to him. Further influence from Heyne was to surface in later years, particularly the idea of the 'aetas mythica'. Bunsen summed up his debt to his patron after the latter's death in July 1812:

'Poor and lonely did I arrive in this place. Heyne received me, guided me, bore with me, encouraged me...  
...Should I ever be able to effect anything not unworthy of him at least in scope and intention, to his manes shall it be in gratitude consecrated.'<sup>5</sup>

At Göttingen Bunsen attended a variety of lectures, theological, philological and perhaps even scientific. Teaching duties interrupted the normal flow of student life however. He seemed to prefer discussions with a group of friends, which developed around him into a type of intellectual club. Regular attendance at lectures took second place to the group's readings and discussions on such diverse subjects as Shakespeare, Goethe, Herder, Plato and the New Testament. They also enjoyed travel and its new experiences: in this, as in intellectual pursuits, Bunsen was perhaps the most enthusiastic. He toured Gotha, Weimar and Jena with Arthur Schopenhauer in 1811, and was presented to Goethe. The tutoring position with Astor also significantly broadened his horizons. In 1813 they visited Frankfurt, Würzburg, Munich, Vienna, Milan and the north Italian lakes. Bunsen took the opportunity to attend lectures and meet scholars throughout: in Munich for example he took part in a Persian class and was introduced

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5. Bunsen I, pp. 32-3. See also Bunsen's De jure hereditario Atheniensium disquisitio philologica, Göttingen, 1813.

to Schelling.<sup>6</sup> As the war of liberation against Napoleon came to the fore during 1813 and 1814 the group adopted the patriotic mood of the hour, searching

'...what our usefulness for the nation may be, and how to start upon it worthily and manfully.'<sup>7</sup>

Politically, as well as responding to the fervour of national unity espoused in the writings of Ernst Moritz Arndt, they were also in agreement with the reforming tendencies of Stein:

'On these points we are, I think, agreed, viz.:— That now or never Germany ought to obtain a strong Constitution, sheltered from despotism: That every one should be not merely permitted, but bound to make known, openly and fearlessly, the opinions which he holds conjointly with many worthy and rational men: That in no European country more than among us has a political instinct for the common weal been so long wanting, and is still wanting so far as action goes: That many have bent their necks under a disgraceful servitude, and also oppressed the free spirit in others: That no need is so pressing as to do for Peace what has been done for War.'<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps as a result of such a variety-filled student life the prize essay of 1812 was never worked up into a proper doctoral dissertation, so that Bunsen never formally completed his degree at Göttingen. However the University of Jena awarded him a doctorate on the strength of the essay in early 1813.

Towards the end of 1814 Bunsen and another of

6. See Bunsen I, pp. 27-44.

7. Ibid., p. 43.

8. Ibid., pp. 43-4; Baehring mentions Arndt and Stein as Bunsen's special heroes, op. cit., p. 18; Höcker devotes some space to Bunsen's experience of the war of liberation, op. cit., p. 11ff.

the group, Brandis, travelled to Holland to meet again the much-idealized Christiana and bring her back to her family in Corbach. During the Göttingen years he had not lost his faith but had brought it into the context of his other intellectual pursuits and experiences. The visit to Holland confirmed the influence of Christiana's very pronounced Christian faith over him. Holland too was of interest; indeed the whole experience seemed to help Bunsen in drawing together all his interests and developing coherent goals for the future:

'My journey into Holland last autumn was one of the most agreeable that I ever made. All that this remarkable people possess - land, language, manners, art - is so entirely of one character, and, as it were, out of one mould, that nowhere, perhaps, could the connection of these appearances with one another be more clearly perceived. Thus also is the inner nature and the history of the poetry of this nation a counterpart of their school of painting. In all, the German, or, if you will, the Teutonic character, is worked out into form in a manner more decidedly national than anywhere else. Perhaps I may one day carry out the theme which rests on this example.

This journey has yet more confirmed my decision to become acquainted with the entire Germanic race, and then to proceed with the development of my governing ideas. For this purpose I am about to travel with Brandis to Copenhagen to learn Danish, and, above all, Icelandic.'<sup>9</sup>

The proposed tour to Denmark with Brandis, coinciding with the triumphant end of the war of liberation marked an important moment in Bunsen's life. He took the choice to associate himself with the now leading German state, Prussia, along with his friend. Significant in this regard was a letter from the Prussian historian and statesman B.G. Niebuhr to Brandis, identifying Prussia as

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9. Bunsen I, p. 57.

the true Germany and all who chose to become Prussian citizens as thus, ideally, German citizens.<sup>10</sup> In November Brandis and Bunsen went to Berlin, now the focus of north German cultural and political life. Bunsen visited the great men of the day, particularly the outstanding liberal Professor of Theology at the University of Berlin, Schleiermacher, and of course Niebuhr himself. It was during the winter of 1815-16 that he put before Niebuhr a plan for his future life, a plan to engage in studies toward constructing a philological universal history.

As Bunsen explained it, the plan originated in his classical studies. To make sense of their individual details and to express the general truths they revealed had caused him to take up the higher standpoints of universal history, not only with regard to historical events but also in dealing with 'philological', that is, linguistic, developments. Bunsen followed Herder closely, but infused Herder's universal-historical progress with his own, still very European-centered, linguistic knowledge. There were three main stages of development:

'..die germanischen Völker, das griechisch-römisch Alterthum, und für die erste Abtheilung und Periode der medisch-persisch-indisch Stamm.'

At this time Bunsen distinguished the historical and philological path of development, which he proposed to study in detail, from the purely spiritual path of development ascertainable from the Hebrews to Christianity.

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10. See Bunsen I, p. 60, and Höcker, op. cit., p. 15ff.

Devoting himself to the first of these, he set out a plan of travel and research in Paris, Oxford and eventually Calcutta, with special interest in Sanskrit, Persian and of course classical texts. In some way he probably hoped to secure official support from Prussia, and optimistically saw himself eventually settling down as 'Professor of Universal History' at Berlin.<sup>11</sup>

A step in the right direction was offered by Astor's invitation to Bunsen to join him at Paris in early 1816. However when Astor wanted to proceed immediately to Italy and Bunsen wished to further his studies in Paris, it was agreed that the two friends would meet three months later in Florence. Bunsen threw himself into hard work on Persian under the great orientalist Silvestre de Sacy. He further began on Arabic, and spent his days in concentrated study amongst the French orientalists. During the time in Paris he also met Alexander von Humboldt for the first time. The future seemed bright when he found out that Niebuhr was to be in Rome in the winter negotiating with the Pope as Prussian representative with regard to the new Catholic population under Prussian control. However, no sooner had he arrived in Florence in August than Astor announced his immediate departure for America. Although Astor had promised assistance with the projected Indian voyage Bunsen refused to accompany him. At the age of 25 he found

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11. See Bunsen's 'Entwurf eines Studienplanes, Niebuhr in Berlin in Jahre 1816 eingereicht', in Bunsen (Nippold) I, pp. 86-90, quoted passage from p. 88.



himself continuing Persian studies in Florence with no sure means of support and no sure prospects for the future. A chance meeting with an Englishman who wanted French coaching allowed him to devise a new plan of continuing his studies, awaiting Niebuhr, and travelling with him to Rome.

Niebuhr, who was accompanied by Bunsen's friend Brandis, tried to convince Bunsen that a journey to the East might not be necessary. Certain family financial commitments he had undertaken also began to wear down Bunsen's goal. During the next year an even more pressing obligation was encountered. Bunsen met Frances Waddington, the daughter of a well-connected English gentry family who had come to Italy on tour. By early May 1817 Bunsen was already "almost...a little in love", conducting the family through the Roman sites and conversing in French, German and Italian with Frances. Unlikely as such an alliance might seem, Niebuhr's recommendation and the parents' own experience of Bunsen's personal worth allowed the two to be married on July 1.<sup>12</sup> In October Bunsen announced to Christiana that his plans for India had definitely been given up:

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12. On the Waddington family, Frances, and the circumstances of the marriage see A.J.C. Hare, The Life and Letters of Frances, Baroness Bunsen, New York, 1880, I, Chapters I-IV; Niebuhr's recommendation of Bunsen is quoted I, p. 107: "The talents, abilities and character of Bunsen are a capital more safely to be reckoned upon than any other, however securely invested; and had I a daughter myself, to such a man would I gladly consign her." On this period see also Bunsen I, p. 70ff.

'But my journey to India was only to be a means to an end; and there was nothing grand or praiseworthy in the design to give the best part of my life to an undertaking, which, however it might be useful as a preparation for later undertakings, would absorb all the strength and time I should have to give, both for the beginning and the end. Even though it may sound presumptuous to declare, that I think to attain that object without those means, that I hope to succeed in forming a clear view of the earliest life of the Oriental nations, without crossing the line - yet do I make that declaration without misgiving.'<sup>13</sup>

The influence of Frances and of Niebuhr, each in its own way, was to significantly affect Bunsen. Unusually well-educated and described by Bunsen himself as 'a very earnest Christian of the Church of England', Frances was by all accounts a genuinely ideal Victorian wife. She eventually supplanted Christiana in the role of ideal spiritual arbiter as well as earthly companion. With her, Bunsen renewed his study of the Old and New Testaments on a daily basis, and directly encountered the different viewpoints of High Church Anglicanism. One of the significant problems his wife pointed out to him was the difficulties in both English and German versions of the Bible and the differences in translation from the original between them. Here originated a great project only completed in the last years of Bunsen's life - an improved translation with

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13. Bunsen I, pp. 88-89.

commentary aimed at the pious general reader.<sup>14</sup>

The effect of the English Book of Common Prayer was felt very keenly by Bunsen both in private and in public. Frederick William III of Prussia aimed at bringing together the Lutheran and Reformed Protestants of his realm into one Evangelical Church under a united liturgy. A formal call toward this aim was made on the Tercentenary of the Reformation in 1817. To mark the same occasion, and in the same evangelical spirit, Bunsen wished to unite the German Protestant colony in Rome, despite the absence of a Protestant clergyman. Niebuhr supported the idea, but, since the question of a liturgy was still controversial, preferred that any such meeting be held in Bunsen's house. There, on November 9th, a group of 40-odd Protestants attended a united service which Bunsen had amended and translated from the Anglican daily service. Bunsen spoke to the group of the state of German Protestantism and the great evangelical aim of the future. This occasion marked the beginning of his work toward a united Protestant liturgy, a hymn and prayer book, and toward working out suggestions for the structuring of the new church and its

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14. All available material supports the ideal picture of the Bunsen marriage and the strong influence of Frances on her husband, while at the same time perfectly fitting the Victorian helpmate role. They had 12 children, of whom 10 survived infancy. See Hare, op. cit., throughout and other accounts, for example, F.P. Verney's article 'Bunsen and his Wife', The Contemporary Review, vol. 28, 1876, pp. 948-969. On the religious influence of Frances on Bunsen see Höcker, op. cit., pp. 28-38.

relationship with the State.<sup>15</sup>

Bunsen's relationship with Niebuhr had intellectual, political, and above all career implications. Particularly since the term of residence of Wilhelm von Humboldt in Rome, 1802-8, the Prussian envoy's house had been the centre of a circle of German artists, art-historians and intellectuals attracted to the city by a Romantic love of antiquity and the splendours of "pre-Reformation" Catholicism. This continued under Niebuhr, the historian of ancient Rome; Bunsen, with his classical training, could not but share in the general enthusiasm. A group of art-loving Germans persuaded Niebuhr and Bunsen to contribute to a topographical description of the city's monuments - a project much of which Bunsen was eventually left to complete virtually on his own over a decade after it was first begun, under the title Beschreibung der Stadt Rom (1830-42). Through this project Bunsen became directly involved with the establishment of the Prussian, later German Archaeological Institute in Rome from 1829. He was one of the original founding members and took on the post of General Secretary.<sup>16</sup> Politically, Bunsen was much under Niebuhr's influence

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15. Bunsen I, pp. 90-93; Baehring, op. cit., p. 34; for an analysis of the theological works see Maas, op. cit., p. 142 ff.

16. On German artistic interest in Rome and the founding of the Archaeological Institute see Adolf Michaelis, Geschichte des deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, 1829-1879, Berlin, 1879 and Gerhart Rodenwaldt, Archäologisches Institut des Deutschen Reiches, 1829-1929, Berlin, 1929; see also the Beschreibung der Stadt Rom von E. Platner, C. Bunsen, etc., 3 vols in 5, Stuttgart und Tübingen, 1830-42.

during the latter's years of residence. The idealistic hopes for German unity and constitutionalism which Niebuhr channeled toward Prussia had been dampened in both - though certainly not destroyed in Bunsen. Niebuhr's fear of mass revolution and too-free reforms were adopted in the meantime by Bunsen as well: in the 1820's Bunsen's early, if vague, liberalism was expressed only as a spiritual renovation of the past:

'The times in which we live seem to me most unsatisfactory...What there is of strength and talent, or at least such as is free to display itself, is destructive and decomposing...The disproportion existing between the cultivation of the understanding and that of the moral capabilities is the fundamental evil; and the dissolution of social relations and of their reciprocal regard and recognition is a fact which leaves, humanly speaking, little room for hope. If it is yet time to save anything, my firm conviction is, that the main point everywhere to be striven after is the revival of all that was essential and real...as possessed by our forefathers; or at least the keeping open a possibility of such renovation.'<sup>17</sup>

Niebuhr's most lasting influence on Bunsen was exercised by diverting the planned career of a universal scholar into a completely new direction. At the end of 1817 enquiries to Berlin showed that a Professorship in Prussia would not be an easy matter. At the same time Brandis was forced to leave Rome and his post as Niebuhr's secretary for health reasons. Niebuhr offered the position to Bunsen. After some hesitation he accepted it,

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17. Bunsen I, p. 119; on Niebuhr's political influence on Bunsen see also p. 208ff; Höcker, op. cit., p. 38 ff; and Walther Ulbricht, Bunsen und die deutsche Einheitsbewegung, Leipzig, 1910, pp. 17-18, 36-38.

as a temporary 'means of becoming independent'.<sup>18</sup> The 'means' became a full-time career after Niebuhr's departure in 1823: Bunsen became ever more pressed by his responsibilities first as Chargé d'Affaires and then as Resident Prussian Minister in Rome.

If, from 1818 on, Bunsen's future life was thus vastly altered, his most fundamental characteristics and aims remained the same. As to the first, the unusually attractive quality of Bunsen's personality merits some attention. The high recommendation of Niebuhr, the notice of other important figures, and the circumstances of his marriage all attest the unique, as it were charismatic, power of his physical presence and conversation. Even Heinrich Treitschke, by no means an admirer of Bunsen, stressed 'das stärkste und wirksamste seiner mannigfaltigen Talente, die ganz eigentümliche Kunst belebender und anregender Unterhaltung', and described his magnetic presence in the family house on the Capitol:

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18. Bunsen I, see Bunsen's own account pp. 93-5. Niebuhr was far more decided on Bunsen's future than he was himself:

'Bunsen is a very clear-headed and estimable man. Hardenberg has promised me to appoint him successor to Brandis. I am very glad of it: on my own account, because I like him; for his sake and the State's, because he has a decided talent for public life, and will distinguish himself...'  
(S. Winkworth (ed. and trans.), Barthold Georg Niebuhr, Life and Letters and Selections from minor writings, with Essays on his Character and Influence by the Chevalier Bunsen et. al., 3 vols, 2nd. edition, London, 1852, vol. II, p. 138, letter of 11th April, 1818).

'Der Hausherr, ein bildschöner Mann mit leuchtenden Propheten Augen, wusste aus der Fülle seiner Gedanken und seiner allseitigen Belesenheit jedem Gaste etwas zu bieten...' 19

With regard to Bunsen's personal aims, the universal-history ideal remained as an undercurrent throughout the years in Rome. It even underwent further development: an ever stronger element of religious thought and research was infused into what had once been submitted to Niebuhr as a scholarly plan. Bunsen was now openly concerned with 'the track which God has made' in history by bringing together both secular and spiritual knowledge:

'..in January 1816... I arrived at this conclusion, that as God had caused the conception of Himself to be developed in the mind of man in a twofold manner, - the one through revelation to the Jewish people through their patriarchs, the other through reason in the heathen, - so also must the enquiry and representation of this development be twofold; - and as God had kept these two ways for a length of time independent and separate, so should we....This is now also my firm conviction, that we must not mix them or bring them together forcibly...But herein I erred, that I supposed one might understand heathenism by itself, and that as regards Christianity one needed only so much knowledge as might easily be acquired...

All this had been working in my head almost daily for the last six months...and I see clearly, that without thorough and deep study of the Bible and of Christianity and its history, I can neither accomplish anything good in my other philosophical and historical undertakings, nor

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19. Heinrich von Treitschke, Deutsche Geschichte im Neunzehnten Jahrhundert, 5 vols, Leipzig, 1928, vol. III, p. 403. All sources are agreed on the distinctive qualities of Bunsen's personality, whether they concurred with his ideas or not. See for example two articles from F.D. Maurice both entitled 'Baron Bunsen' in Macmillan's Magazine, vol. III, 1860-61, pp. 372-382 and vol. XVIII, 1868, pp. 144-150.

find for myself tranquillity of spirit, and the means of quenching the thirst for enquiry, and for regulating contemplation. Wherefore I am firmly resolved to undertake this, and see how far the Holy Spirit of God will help me forwards  
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Significant with regard to the more secular side of universal history were the revelations promised by the new science of Egyptology. Unlike most of his contemporaries, Bunsen was quickly convinced of the importance of J.F. Champollion's studies - always with an eye to their relevance to universal history. He had read Thomas Young, and the Lettre à M. Dacier and the Précis as soon as possible after their publication, enjoying the uncommon position of being able to test 'systems' of decipherment at first hand on the Egyptian obelisks of Rome. Champollion himself arrived in the city in 1825, and with others, Bunsen accompanied him around Rome experiencing his uncanny genius for decipherment. The focal points of interest for Bunsen were chronological and linguistic. Most of his spare moments up to the end of the 1830's were spent in piecing together a reliable Egyptian chronology on the basis of the usual classical materials, Manetho, and new findings from Champollion. Characteristically, it was during the period of his greatest diplomatic difficulties that Bunsen began to submerge himself sufficiently in Egyptology as to write up the results of these several years' work.<sup>21</sup>

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20. Bunsen I, pp. 100-101, and see also pp. 158-9.

21. See ibid., pp. 153-5 and the account of Bunsen's interest and progress in Egyptology in Egypt, I, Preface, pp. vii-xvi.



Bunsen's impressive and intellectual personality combined with his official position made his house a central point for German and English visitors to Rome. He entertained the Baron von Stein, Crown Prince Louis of Bavaria, the Baron von Arnim, and Radowitz, on the one hand, Connop Thirwall, the Pusey family, Thomas Arnold, the Hares, Sir Walter Scott and Lord Ashley, on the other. The house was open also to Italian society: both Bunsen and his wife were much attracted by certain artistic and musical elements of Catholic ritual and Italian heritage. After Niebuhr's departure Bunsen also built friendly relationships with French and Russian diplomatic personnel in the city, including Chateaubriand.<sup>22</sup> The drawback in such a peculiarly cosmopolitan lifestyle was Bunsen's isolation from Berlin: he was quite ignorant of the realities and expectations of the government he was supposed to serve. Initially however his uncommon personality and position worked to his advantage in that they brought him to the attention of the King of Prussia.

Frederick William III, accompanied by two of his sons, but not by the Crown Prince, visited Rome and Naples during the winter of 1822-3. Niebuhr and Bunsen undertook the office of antiquarian guides in Rome, the latter with

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22. On the Bunsens' social contacts and very cosmopolitan life in Rome see Bunsen I, chapters III-VI inclusive; the degree of their involvement especially with Italian life is convincingly demonstrated in Hare, I, op. cit., throughout Chapters V-X.

great success. Frederick William had just had published his own 'Agende' setting out a united liturgy for the evangelical church in Prussia. The King's adviser on religious matters, General Witzleben, also accompanied the royal party to Italy. Bunsen's interest in evangelical union and liturgy questions was thus necessarily brought forward: it was at first diplomatically communicated to the King through Niebuhr and Witzleben. However this was not enough for Bunsen, who, at this point, revealed one of his dominant traits - the need to make his opinion known, respectfully, but honestly. He prepared two essays criticizing the King's official 'Agende', and putting forward his own proposals including the English-based liturgy still in use for the Roman colony. He was prepared to throw his diplomatic post to the winds and devote himself to such religious questions. However the surprise announcement of an honour unexpectedly conferred on him by the King - the title of Councillor of Legation - forestalled his plans. Niebuhr applied for leave of absence at the same time and so Bunsen would also have to assume heavier diplomatic responsibilities as Chargé d'Affaires. In the circumstances the direct approach he had planned was not carried out. He did indeed point out criticisms and make suggestions to the King in private conversation over dinner - but in such a way as not to give undue offence. The matter was then left unresolved - though not forgotten.<sup>23</sup>

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23. On the background of German Protestantism and Frederick William III's religious policy see Robert M. Bigler, The Politics of German Protestantism, Berkeley etc., 1972, Chapter I, pp. 3-50; the incident between Bunsen and the King is given in Bunsen's own words in Bunsen I, pp. 132-6; see also Hare, I, pp. op. cit., pp. 197-200.

The incident and its sequel illustrate the nature of Bunsen's relationship with the Royal House of Prussia under both Frederick William III and his son. On the one hand the monarch and his minister developed a special personal bond based on mutual respect, trust and loyalty:

'...the King has never been known to grant a similar favour so suddenly to any person, and the whole of his behaviour has shown from first to last the very strong impression that Charles's personal qualities made upon him.'<sup>24</sup>

On the other hand, although there was much similarity of interest between them, there was also genuine disagreement. In this case Bunsen felt that:

'...the King's Liturgy could only be considered as a provisional and experimental arrangement.'<sup>25</sup>

The King, instead, saw the liturgy as a finished, official product, handed down by his authority. Once Bunsen became aware of such fundamental disagreements, his course of action would consistently be to attempt to dissolve them by convincing the monarch of the correctness of his own proposals: his way would secure the ends agreed on by both. Thus, when summoned to Berlin on other business in 1827, and accorded an outstandingly warm welcome both in public and in private, Bunsen could no longer hide his views. He revealed that his own English-based liturgy was in use at Rome, not that of the King. Frederick William was at first immensely displeased, but after a few days relented. Bunsen put the case so well that the King sanctioned the

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24. Ibid., I, p. 200.

25. Bunsen I, p. 134.

printing of his liturgy and added a preface from his own hand stating that Bunsen's modifications were 'only a development of the general form of public devotion, long since introduced by himself.'<sup>26</sup> This favour to Bunsen was in fact only one of several compromises Frederick William was being forced to make in the light of resistance to his liturgy within Prussia. It is unlikely that Bunsen himself saw his victory in this context: on the contrary it bolstered his confidence that he had the ear of the King. Such a conclusion was over-optimistic. Frederick William's compromise on the liturgy did not mean an alteration in his basic point of view, which was still at odds with that of Bunsen. The King continued his path of creating a centrally-united bureaucratic control over Church and State together. Bunsen's approach to liturgy and organizational questions was far too idealistic to be reconcilable with such political realities.<sup>27</sup>

A more politically experienced and realistic man would have been less sure about his relations with the centre of power in Berlin. Caution was particularly required because

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26. *Ibid.*, p. 188; see *ibid.*, pp. 167-195 for the whole first trip to Berlin and his warm reception there.

27. On Bunsen's over-confidence see Höcker, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-71; on Frederick William III's difficulties with the 'Agende' see Bigler, *op. cit.*, pp. 165-7 and Ernst Rudolf Huber, Deutsche Verfassungsgeschichte seit 1789, Band II, Der Kampf um Einheit und Freiheit 1830 bis 1850, Stuttgart, 1960, pp. 268-275. On the ideal nature of Bunsen's views of liturgy and organization see Maas, *op. cit.*, pp. 135-138, and the ecumenical practise of the Roman colony under his influence, pp. 187-194.

the real reason for the summons to Berlin was to entrust Bunsen with a very delicate task. At the Congress of Vienna Prussia was granted control of the Rhineland provinces and Posen, both strongly Catholic. The Rhineland had for two decades been under the control of the French, and followed the Code Napoléon; Posen contained self-consciously nationalistic Poles aroused by the partitioning of their native country and the conditions suffered by their countrymen under Russian control. At the same time that Frederick William III was attempting to create a united evangelical Protestant state, he promised freedom of religion to all. He even allowed some special privileges to both the major new areas in his realm at a time when promises of reform and constitution were not being honoured. But in the Rhineland he was concerned to maintain tight control from Berlin: he therefore reorganized the administration and education system so that it was completely dominated by Protestants. In Rome Niebuhr achieved what amounted to official Papal recognition of the political dominance of Protestantism in a Bull of 1821. The seeming acquiescence of Rome was not mirrored in the Rhineland itself. There Prussian rule appeared in the light of a systematic Protestant attempt to suppress or even convert the Catholic population. Conflict arose right from 1815 over the question of mixed marriages. The Code Napoléon provided for Civil marriage as well as Church ceremonies, but both Frederick William III and the Roman Catholic Church wished to abolish the first alternative. In cases of mixed faith the Rhineland clergy followed the

strict rule of the Church: no Church ceremony was to be performed unless both the engaged couple promised to bring up their children as Catholics. For the smaller number of Catholics in the older Prussian domains the general rule was that children were to follow the religion of the father. The Bull of 1821 was unclear on the issue. In 1825 Frederick William refused to allow further concessions to the Rhineland and decreed that the general rule of the main Prussian lands was to be extended there as well. This was interpreted by population and clergy alike as yet another attack on the survival of Catholicism, and on their promised religious freedom. The Accession of a new Pope, Leo XII, and the appointment of Ferdinand August Freiherr von Spiegel to the Archbishopric of Köln in 1824 brought two less conciliatory Catholic leaders to the fore and contributed to the awakening of Catholic resistance. The Rhineland clergy refused to obey Frederick William's decree of 1825. To restore order and obedience the king decided to request from Rome a further clarification and direction to Catholic clergy in the spirit of compromise of 1821. Bunsen, Niebuhr's natural successor, with all his cosmopolitanism and tolerance toward Italian society, as well as the trust of the King, seemed especially fit for this difficult assignment.<sup>28</sup>

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28. For the background to the mixed marriages problem see Huber, op. cit., p. 185 ff and Rudolf Lill, Die Beilegung der Kölner Wirren, 1840-42, Düsseldorf, 1962 Section I, p. 13 ff.

After some negotiation a Papal Brief was issued in 1830 to resolve the issue. Where the promise of Catholic upbringing for all children was not given - as it would not be in cases under the Prussian decree where the mother was Catholic - the Curia directed Catholic priests to give 'passive assistance', but not full Church rites. Bunsen saw in this concession a considerable gain for the Protestant government, but the King and his ministers rejected it as insufficient. They wanted a full Church service to be granted in all cases: only then could civil marriage ceremonies be abolished. The Brief was returned to Bunsen in Rome for further renegotiation. After uncertainties and attempts over another four years Bunsen was forced to return to Berlin unsuccessful: the Brief of 1830 stood unaltered in 1834. Meanwhile the government had decided on an alternative plan in case of such failure. Secret negotiations directly with the four Rhineland Bishops were undertaken. The aim was to secure their agreement that if the Brief of 1830 could not be altered in form, the Rhineland clergy in practice should be directed to conform completely with the government decree of 1825. Bunsen took part in the final stages of this alternative plan in Berlin in 1834. He overcame the scruples of Archbishop Spiegel and the two men signed a secret Convention on the carrying out of the Brief according to the government's wishes on 19th June. Bunsen congratulated himself on this achievement.<sup>29</sup>

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29. Huber, op. cit., pp. 194-201; on Bunsen's self-satisfaction with his own part in the affair see Leopold von Ranke, Aus dem Briefwechsel Friedrich Wilhelms IV mit Bunsen, Leipzig, 1873, pp. 22-26.

The complicated clash which followed between State and Church, known as the 'Cologne Conflict' developed for two main reasons. Firstly it became known in the Rhineland and to the Papacy that the German Bishops had signed a secretly negotiated agreement to 'reinterpret' the Papal Brief in line with the requirements of the Protestant government. Secondly, the death of Archbishop Spiegel in August 1835 resulted in the appointment of Archbishop Clemens August von Droste-Vischering, a man of dogmatic Catholic convictions, by no means inclined to compromise. Bunsen's part in deceiving the Papacy after his return to Rome, and his attempts to continue the deception even when the Curia suspected the existence of the Berlin Convention was certainly not laudable, even if it was necessary. On the Prussian government's side lay the mistake of agreeing to the appointment of a man like Droste-Vischering.<sup>30</sup> Bunsen was recalled to Berlin in 1837 to discuss the mounting crisis and was present at the meetings where the Archbishop finally declared his decision to follow the Brief of 1830 to the letter, in both theory and practice: that is to say, to reject the secret Convention of 1834. Bunsen also took part in the Cabinet meeting which resulted in the order to suspend the Archbishop from his position and order him away from Cologne under arrest, in November. The Pope replied with an

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30.. On the complications of the 'Cologne Conflict' to the death of Frederick William III and its resolution under Frederick William IV see Huber, op. cit., p. 201 ff.



Allocution of 10th December denouncing the secret Convention, demanding strict obedience of all clergy to the 1830 Brief and condemning the arrest of Droste-Vischering. All of Bunsen's previous years of diplomacy and his credibility in Rome were thus undone. The Curia refused to recognize or treat with him at all on any question while the Archbishop was still under arrest. On his return to Rome Bunsen's position was thus impossible. He applied for leave of absence from Berlin. On April 29, 1838 the whole family left the city for England, under a cloud of disgrace. Only the personal bond with the King, and a new friendship he had made with the Crown Prince prevented an outright dismissal.<sup>31</sup>

Beneath all the individual complications of the Cologne conflict lay an important political battle. In the vast Catholic populations of Posen and the Rhineland Prussia was faced with a population whose religion was not only not associated with that of the State, but who, on certain half-religious half-legal questions, looked ultimately to Rome, and not to Berlin. Both areas also had independent political traditions. Religious disobedience

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31. The account of Bunsen's activities during the 'Cologne Conflict' is given rather vaguely and only from Bunsen's own point of view on Bunsen I, pp. 259-289, and similarly, although with more documentation in Bunsen (Nippold) I. The standard text on the conflict Heinrich Schrörs, Die Kölner Wirren, Berlin und Bonn, 1927, on the contrary takes a decidedly negative view of all Bunsen's efforts and hopes from 1834-37; Huber, op. cit., p. 201 ff and Höcker, op. cit., pp. 79-86 try to steer between the two extremes. The King's and Crown Prince's attitude on a personal level is given in Ranke, op. cit., pp. 32-38.

and unrest amounted virtually to local political disobedience and unrest: indeed after the Cologne conflict Catholicism became more and more openly politicized. Again as with the case of the Protestant liturgy, Bunsen was probably not fully aware of the political realities behind the conflict, but looked on it as an issue of tolerance or dogmatism on both sides. As always he felt he must state his point of view. Thus in the midst of the tense Berlin conferences in 1837, with the Rhineland split between Catholic population and Protestant control, he insisted on recommending that the law forcing Catholic troops to attend the official Evangelical Protestant service regularly, be publically changed. He argued the matter personally with the King despite the latter's obvious displeasure, and won him over to an unofficial agreement. The law however was not changed: Frederick William would not publically compromise with Catholic demands at a moment of extreme Catholic-Protestant, Church-State confrontation.<sup>32</sup> Genuine personal religious commitment combined with a tolerant cosmopolitanism had helped to secure Bunsen's public position and special relationship with the monarchy: the same qualities led to his virtual failure and near downfall. He had tried to find a reasonable middle-ground:

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32. See Bunsen I, pp. 270-275, and the text of the 'Denkschrift über die Katholischen Angelegenheiten in den westlichen Provinzen Preussens', 25 August, 1837 in Bunsen (Nippold) I, pp. 556-579.

yet had found it undercut by the practical and political manoeuvres of Church and State. After 1837-8 both Catholics and Protestants joined to attack him. He drew from such an embittering experience conclusions about the destructiveness of Jesuit Dogmatism on the one hand, and of unbending State Protestantism on the other. It was to have a liberalizing influence on his earlier views on organization and State-Church relationships, while creating an intense distrust of Roman Catholicism.<sup>33</sup>

Characteristically, during the times of greatest diplomatic tension Bunsen turned again to his personal intellectual goals: while he waited for permission to take leave of absence Bunsen began to write up the results of more than a decade's work on Egyptian chronology. On the way to England he discussed the work with Schelling in Munich and visited the Egyptian collection in Leyden. With the promise of like-minded friends awaiting him Bunsen could forget his official disgrace and plunge again into the world of Christian, universal-historical scholarship:

'I feel as if it were impossible to part again from these pursuits. My friends in England are very impatient of my delay. The University of Oxford intends for me the honour of a degree, as soon as I shall arrive, of Doctor of Laws... and

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33. This is the interpretation of Maas, *op. cit.*, p. 14 ff following the opinion of a contemporary and friend of Bunsen, Heinrich Gelzer, in *Bunsen als Staatsmann und Schriftsteller*, Gotha, 1861, p. 10 ff. Höcker argues that Bunsen was never happy with the delicate task of negotiating with Rome, right from 1827; certainly by 1837 he was openly wishing to resign responsibility for it even before he returned from Berlin: see *Bunsen*, I, pp. 268-9, and Höcker, *op. cit.*, p. 60 and p. 82.

in London I have three invitations to friendly houses in which to take up my abode...Arnold has dedicated to me his 'Roman History', with the frankness of an Englishman and the effusion of a friend; - so they write to me, for I have not seen the volume. Pusey will have me to live in his house in London...So does everything present itself, according to all appearance, in a most friendly aspect; - but who knows the future?'<sup>34</sup>

Bunsen's visit to England from August 1838 to October 1839 was a remarkable and busy time, indeed a 'climax in life to him'.<sup>35</sup> Friendships from the past with the Arnolds, the Puseys, and Lord Ashley, were renewed, and new friendships formed with political, intellectual and church figures including Gladstone, J.H. Newman, J.C. Prichard, Macaulay, Sir Robert Peel. He mingled freely in London Society, spoke to Missionary groups, roamed the countryside, visited Oxford where he was conferred an honorary degree, and busied himself with a few semi-official public-relations projects for the Prussian government. Above all he experienced English public life and the parliamentary system at work. Its effect on him was tremendous:

'I wish you could form an idea of what I felt. I saw for the first time man, the member of a true Germanic State, in his highest, his proper place, defending the highest interests of humanity with the wonderful power of speech - wrestling (as the entire vigorous man instinctively wishes), but with the arm of the Spirit, boldly grasping at, or tenaciously holding fast power, in the presence of his fellow-citizens, submitting to the public conscience the judgment of his cause and of his own uprightness. I saw before me, the Empire of the world governed, and the rest of the world controlled and judged, by this assembly: I had the feeling that had I been born in England I

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34. Bunsen I, p. 291.

35. Ibid., p. 324, and for the whole visit, Chapter VIII.

would rather be dead than not sit among them and speak among them. I thought of my own country, and was thankful that I could thank God for being a German, and being myself. But I felt also that we are all children on this field in comparison with the English: how much they, with their discipline of mind, body, and heart, can effect even with but moderate genius, and even with talent alone! I drank in every word from the lips of the speakers, even those I disliked... I feel like Antaeus, the stronger for having touched the soil of my mother-land; for such I call and feel it - doubly blessed in having two moral parents as well as two natural ones.'<sup>36</sup>

Amidst the joys of the English visit he did not however forget Germany, and particularly not the Crown Prince. Bunsen and the younger Frederick William had been brought together by mutual interest in art and Roman monuments many years before, after Frederick William III and the two younger sons returned from their Roman tour full of praise for Bunsen. A friendship grew between them once they met in the balmy Berlin days of 1827, and deepened when the Crown Prince visited Rome in 1828. The later Frederick William IV was highly educated, a lover of art and science, deeply religious with a bent toward Pietism, and imbued with a high consciousness of his position and his continuity with the German past. Politically he detested anything which resembled what he called the 'ideas of 1789', and sought to counter their advance by a renewal of a truly united German Christian state. His model for this was the Holy Roman Empire. The great fault with him lay in the impossibility of translating the high-flown ideals dominating his thought into any consistent practise, or in

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36. Ibid., pp. 309-10. On his semi-official business for the government see Höcker, op. cit., pp. 87-90.

bringing him to realistically see the concrete exigencies of the day. With his own naive idealism, his education, his universal-historical interests, vague German loyalties, and strong Christian belief, Bunsen's character harmonized with many sides of the Prince's personality. By the crisis of 1837-8, a sound personal relationship of trust and mutual respect had developed. In the midst of the Church-State conflict they corresponded and agreed on the ideal state of things: 'Die Regeneration der Welt in conservativem Sinne, der aber die wahrhaft freie Entwicklung begünstigen und fördern soll...'<sup>37</sup> Of course the Crown Prince supported Bunsen during the crisis; the latter in return kept up a correspondence with the Prince on religious life in England. Thanks to him a new diplomatic position was found Bunsen in Switzerland from October 1839, with instructions, however, 'to do nothing'.<sup>38</sup>

On the death of Frederick William III in June, 1840 the new King was the centrepoint of Bunsen's - as so many others' - hopes. As King, Frederick William would continue his trusting relationship with Bunsen along with a few other selected individuals - the Pietist-conservative Leopold von Gerlach, the Catholic Joseph von Radowitz. Such men were used as unofficial personal advisers on various

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37. Ranke, *op. cit.*, p. 16; see also Bunsen's poem to the Prince in 1837 on which this analysis is based, pp. 15-16, and, for the course of the relationship as a whole, Chapters I-III.

38. Bunsen I, p. 331.

issues chosen by the King. Thus, shortly after his accession, Bunsen was consulted on the calling of important men to Berlin to assist the government and on the choice of a new Minister of ecclesiastical affairs. But Frederick William had more than this in mind for Bunsen: a special project of typically ideal nature was soon entrusted to him. In mid-1841 he was sent as special Envoy to London to secure the co-operation of the British toward the foundation of a joint Prussian-English Protestant Bishopric in Jerusalem. Bunsen was very enthusiastic about the project and quickly secured the required British co-operation between June and October. This outstanding success led to his appointment as Prussian Ambassador to England in November 1841, a position he held for over twelve years until April 1854.<sup>39</sup>

Bunsen's relationship with Berlin, or at least with the monarch seemed again very secure, and he had achieved 'the highest prize in the lottery' on the heels of significant diplomatic disgrace.<sup>40</sup> The London years, like those in Rome, were again full of variety. Personal relationships were built up with the great English figures of the day, from the Royal Family - Bunsen was particularly

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39. On the events of 1841 see Bunsen I, Chapter X, Ranke, op. cit. pp. 85-99, Höcker, op. cit., pp. 92-96; on the Jerusalem Bishopric see Bernhard Karnatz, 'Das Preussisch-Englische Bistum in Jerusalem' (Sonderdruck aus dem Jahrbuch für Berlin-Brandenburgische Kirchengeschichte, 47, 1972, pp. 1-10).

40. Bunsen I, p. 387; the King is reported to have said just before their meeting in 1841 "'I hunger and thirst after Bunsen!'" (ibid., p. 366).

close to Prince Albert - to diplomatic and political circles - Gladstone, Palmerston, Lord John Russell, Sir Robert Peel. The house again became an intellectual centre:

'... first to foreigners, gradually to Englishmen. All who were connected with what was best in theology, history, philosophy, in poetry, music, or painting seemed naturally to gravitate towards it, and its cosmopolitan gatherings...The host and hostess had the gift of putting all their guests at their ease, by being perfectly at ease themselves...' 41

A huge circle of acquaintances surrounded the Bunsens - from Carlyle, Florence Nightingale, Elizabeth Fry, to a group of German-influenced intellectuals - the Arnolds, the Hares, the Stanleys, Thirlwall, Kingsley, and outstanding individuals in various departments - A.H. Layard, J.C. Prichard, Mendelssohn. Bunsen's name was known, at times controversially, throughout the country: he threw himself into the furthering of worthy causes - the Great Exhibition of 1851, the establishment of new Chairs for languages, the development of a standard Alphabet for use by missionaries in Bible translations. He even used his contacts to try to secure suitable positions for his friends Arnold and Prichard.<sup>42</sup> The most outstanding examples of the 'patronage'

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41. Hare, op. cit., II, p. 37.

42. The extent of the Bunsens' contacts in England is ascertainable in the pages of Bunsen II, chapters XI-XV inclusive and Hare, op. cit., II, chapters II-III in an undifferentiated mass. Recently more critical studies have drawn out certain important themes from such contacts: Bunsen's intellectual influence on English historians has been discussed by Klaus Dockhorn, Der Deutsche Historismus in England, Göttingen, 1950, as well as Höcker, op. cit., p. 99ff; Bunsen's intermediary position between English and German political ideas has been the topic of a dissertation by Klaus D. Gross, 'Die Deutsch-Englischen Beziehungen im Wirken Christian Carl Josias von Bunsens', Dissertation at Würzburg, 1965.



he could wield - the securing of a Professorship and a government supported Egyptian Expedition for Carl Richard Lepsius, and of the East India Company's support for the publication of the Rig Veda and considerable further career assistance for Friedrich Max Müller - will be examined fully later in this chapter.

Behind the brilliant scenes of Bunsen's English life in the 1840's his relationship with Frederick William IV was to change. Amongst the King's 'advisers' Bunsen's position was unique in that he was physically removed from the realities of German and Prussian life, just as had been the case during the Roman years. Perhaps as early as 1841 Bunsen's political views were moving in a more liberal direction under the impact of English political life.<sup>43</sup> The issue on which he and the King were gradually to diverge was that of a Constitution for Prussia, promised since 1815. Many, including Bunsen looked to Frederick William IV to fulfill this promise, but up to 1844 the King showed himself prepared to proceed only with great caution. In that year Bunsen was called to Berlin to give advice to a Commission on Constitutional questions. He was much feted by the King but found that the ideas he was preparing to lay before the Commission were not those of his Royal patron. Bunsen advocated the creation of a Prussian Central Diet or Parliament on a permanent basis, structured in two houses, of great lords, and of representatives of the estates.

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43. See Höcker, op. cit., pp. 97-8 and Gross, op. cit., pp. 145-6.

The election of representatives would be under the control of King and aristocracy - no open voting system would be used. However an opposition, a cabinet and responsible ministry system were to be built. In such a combination of parliamentary forms, along English lines, with very tight royal and aristocratic control Bunsen hoped to erect a conservative 'dam' against the radical forces demanding 'democracy', or at least middle-class government. He warned that reforms were necessary: without them a crisis, and the forcible introduction of the 'ideas of 1789' could not be averted.<sup>44</sup> Bunsen's proposals were heard but not implemented: they clashed markedly with the King's own preferred path of gradually building on the advisory and financial responsibilities of the Provincial Diets of Frederick William III. Bunsen's reaction to the political mood of Berlin was one of impatient concern:

'I cannot even comprehend how business can be performed as it is here - I mean really great and necessary business. All seem to be gliding quietly down the stream to the cataracts which are actually before them. The daily life of the court and of the ministers experiences no interruption for a single day, as though we lived in the most commonplace period; and yet every one SAYS that we are in a time of crisis!...Often am I haunted by the spectre of the court and ministry at Paris in 1788-89; but then, I say again, Prussia is not France, and, above all, Frederick William IV is not Louis XVI...'<sup>45</sup>

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44. The best study of Bunsen's political ideas is to be found in Ulbricht, *op. cit.*, particularly because he is the last writer to have open access to Bunsen's Archive material, containing many of Bunsen's memoranda and drafts. These, now housed in East Germany, are not available to western scholars: Höcker, Gross and the present writer probably amongst others have all been refused access. On Bunsen's major political memoranda see Ulbricht, p. 32-33, and on the, in toto, seven memoranda produced for the 1844 visit pp. 38-44; also Ranke, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-120.

45. Bunsen II, p. 40.

However he still believed that 'The King is in real earnest ...', and that their eventual goals coincided.<sup>46</sup>

From 1845 the clash between Bunsen and the King intensified. Although he was raised at this time to the official status of Privy Councillor of the first class, the constitutional question was no longer willingly broached by the King. When Bunsen did so on his own initiative he was rebuked for insisting on his own proposals. The King continued in his own way: in April 1847 he called a general assembly of the Provincial Diets under the title of a 'United Diet'. To them the King outlined his own planned 'constitution'; future 'United Diets' were to be organized into a noble house, and a house of the three estates. However they were to have only consultative powers. Although Bunsen welcomed this as a first step, he was dissatisfied with the gradualist approach. Two years earlier he had already declared:

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46. Ibid., p. 42. Bunsen believed he had impressed the liberalizing viewpoints of the English experience on the King's brother William, later Kaiser Wilhelm I, whom he had known in Rome in 1822, and with whom he was renewing acquaintance during 1844: see ibid., p. 36 and pp. 43-46. Ideally, the goals of the King and of Bunsen did of course coincide: the goal of the Christian national state:  
 'It is only by becoming a member of the Church that a nation becomes a portion of divinely-liberated humanity, and that the body politic becomes actually the highest visible manifestation of moral life.'  
 (Bunsen's The Constitution of the Church of the Future, London, 1847, p. 40). However, when it came to specifying ways and means to reach the goal, whether in the political or the religious sense, their agreement was not so clear. The King's attitude to Bunsen's proposals for the organization of the state in the original German edition of The Church of the Future, (Die Verfassung der Kirche der Zukunft, Horn bei Hamburg, 1845) was one of criticism: see Ranke, op. cit., p. 104.

'.. the King's heart is like that of a brother towards me, but our ways diverge. The die is cast, and he reads in my countenance that I deplore the throw. He too fulfils his fate, and we with him.'<sup>47</sup>

He seemed to be proved right: the United Diet, after putting forward some markedly liberal demands, was dissolved by the King in June without any definite results. In 1847 Bunsen again urged the cause of liberal reform with the King on the question of further restrictions on the freedom of the press. Again he set moderate concessions in the context of the need to ward off the extremes of democratic radicalism. Frederick William on the contrary condemned virtually any liberal reform as

'liberalen Dummheiten, die gar nichts, nichts und noch einmal nichts als ein kurzer Übergangszustand in den Radicalismus sind.'<sup>48</sup>

The decisive break between them came with the revolutionary crisis of 1848-9. Some weeks after the revolution broke out in Berlin the King wrote to Bunsen accusing him of being infected with the sickness of liberalism which he held responsible for the sudden collapse of the God-given order of society. Bunsen defended himself with spirit, and urged the monarch to join him in speaking the language of the time and meeting the necessities of the moment in order to conquer them. For, from the first, Bunsen looked not to the King or to Prussia,

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47. Bunsen II, p. 47.

48. Quoted in Ranke, op. cit., p. 134 and further on Frederick William's attitudes, p. 163 ff; on Bunsen's urgings and attitudes ibid., pp. 123-134 and Ulbricht, op. cit., pp. 45-6.

but to Germany and the dream of its unification as the resolution of the revolutionary crisis. Therefore he could see, even in revolution, 'the birth-pangs of a nation'.<sup>49</sup> He now devoted all his intellectual energies to the cause. By May he had already written various papers on the construction of a united German constitution and parliament, including a formal essay on the subject sent to Frankfurt. In it he supported the principle of a federal union of individual monarchical German states, with a federal court and parliament. The federation was to include Austria, and to be under the control of an 'Emperor' chosen by the various rulers - most probably Austrian.<sup>50</sup>

The debate between the King and Bunsen on the correct way of dealing with the revolution continued when Bunsen was called to Berlin at the end of July. The main business of the trip was the Schleswig-Holstein question. The German population in Schleswig-Holstein had called upon the German Confederation in March 1848 to help them against the Danish threat to incorporate them into Denmark. On behalf of the Diet of the German Confederation Prussia and Hannover had beaten back the Danes, but Prussia especially

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49. Bunsen II, p. 113; cf. Ranke, op. cit., pp. 184-191.

50. See Bunsen's Die deutsche Bundesverfassung und ihr eigenthümliches Verhältniss zu den Verfassungen Englands und der Vereinigten Staaten...Sendschreiben an die zum Deutschen Parlamente berufene Versammlung, Frankfurt (May), 1848, and for the drafts and other memoranda which formed the basis of this see Ulbricht, op. cit., pp. 46-56.

was being pressured to withdraw and conclude a peace. England took a strongly anti-Prussian position: Bunsen had been occupied in London trying to create a more sympathetic current of opinion. Already the possibility that he might be offered the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs for the new German Reich was in the air. However the atmosphere of tension against Frankfurt in Berlin warned him against taking on the post. Whereas Prussia was prepared for peace, Frankfurt still demanded war. Bunsen threw in his support on the Prussian side - yet, as always, with hope of greater German gain in the end. He found the King bewildered, and saw his chance to convince Frederick William to place Prussia at the head of the Frankfurt German movement. After his return to London, in August and September, he began a campaign of letters and memoranda to the King and the ministers in power, urging them to accept leadership of the country on the basis of the Frankfurt constitution then being hammered out. To Frankfurt he sent further suggestions toward the constitution, showing a significant change in his ideas. Prussia should form the centre of the smaller German states: only a loose bond should tie this group to Austria. Frederick William IV made it clear that he would not accept an imperial crown from the revolutionary group in Frankfurt, but seemed inclined to consider taking over leadership of a federal German state if it were offered to him freely by his peers, the German rulers. On December 5th, still in hope of uniting Prussian with German interests, Bunsen accepted from Frankfurt the position of German representative in

London. An armistice with Denmark had been signed in August. Bunsen was now empowered to make peace as both Prussian and German plenipotentiary.<sup>51</sup>

Bunsen kept up his pressure on the King: yet by the end of 1848 both knew that their ideas were directly incompatible. Nevertheless Frederick William called Bunsen to Berlin again in terms which showed that their personal relationship still stood:

'Sie müssen, je eher, je lieber hierher kommen, theuerster Bunsen...' 52(a)

'...Ich erwarte Sie mit Sehnsucht, theuerster Bunsen, obgleich ich mir nicht verberge, dass wir harte Kämpfe mit einander bestehen werden und müssen.' 52(b)

The effect of Bunsen's immediate presence proved sufficient to influence the King in the hoped-for liberal and German national direction. In a remarkable scene on January 20th, 1848, he convinced the King to sign a circular note urging the governments of the German states to declare their opinion on the Constitution being decided on in Frankfurt. Joyously, Bunsen took the news to Frankfurt himself, and found himself in a completely congenial atmosphere there:

51. On the events of June-December 1848 see especially Bunsen's diary entries given in Bunsen (Nippold) II, pp. 442-485, Ulbricht, op. cit., pp. 56-87; on Schleswig-Holstein and Bunsen's part in negotiations see Gross, op. cit., pp. 199-236; and Bunsen's Vorschlag für die unverzügliche Bildung einer vollständigen Reichsverfassung...zweites Sendschreiben an die zum Deutschen Parlamente berufene Versammlung, Frankfurt, (September) 1848. Bunsen himself indicates that he had written enough material in preparation for these suggestions to make an entire book (Bunsen (Nippold) II, p. 478).

52. (a) Ranke, op. cit., p. 242.  
 (b) Ibid. p. 243 and for the background to their disagreement from the beginning of the revolution, ibid., p. 202 ff.

'...es war mir, als wäre ich aus der Fremde in die eigentliche Heimat gelangt. Fremd war mir das Preussenthum...Dort war ich ein Ausländer, ein Emporkömmling, ein Liberaler...Hier war ich ein Deutscher unter Deutschen, ein Bürgerlicher unter Bürgerlichen, ein Patriot unter Patrioten. Zum ersten male in meinem Leben fühlte ich mich als deutscher Staatsmann, und in Geschäften als Deutscher und in Deutschland.'<sup>53</sup>

But the victory was only temporary. On his return to Berlin, as he urged the King to continue in the spirit of the decision of 20th January, the King refused. After returning to England in great dejection, Bunsen saw his last chance in persuading Frederick William to accept the Imperial Crown of a United Germany. By March the opposition between Frankfurt and Berlin on the Danish question was such that Bunsen resigned the diplomatic commission from Frankfurt. On the same day, the 27th, the Crown of Germany was offered to the Prussian King. As soon as he heard of it, Bunsen wrote to the King in the strongest terms pleading with him not to reject the offer outright. Even before his letter arrived the King had decided to refuse. Soon afterwards Berlin rejected the Frankfurt Constitution, and then recalled the Prussian representatives. Once again restored to his rightful place, Frederick William replied to Bunsen in May, facing him with a choice of loyalties:

'Sie sind von den Eindrücken der Revolution von 1848 überwältigt. Sie haben dem scheusslichen Bastard von Mensch und Teufel einen ehrlichen Namen, 'Teutschland' gegeben. - Ich hingegen habe vom 18-19 März 1848 bis heut Nichts darin erkannt, als den Abfall von Gott...

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53. Bunsen (Nippold) II, p. 493, and the scene of 20th January described ibid., p. 492; Ranke's account, op. cit., pp. 245-248 suggests the King's own motives for following Bunsen's advice.



...Ich schweige - und handle, wie meine und Hohenzollerns Ehre, wie der teutsche Name und der gewissenhafte Blick in die Geschichte es gebiethen. - Und die, welche mit mir gehen wollen ... die können besorgt für ihre Existenz, aber gewiss nicht für ihren guten Namen in der Historie sein - Wählen Sie, lieber Bunsen.' 54

Bunsen made the choice to follow his King, to whom personal loyalty bound him, as far as possible. In the light of their open political disagreement, however, he knew it could not be long before an issue arose which would remove him from the London post. As for Germany, his faith remained, but his hopes were gone:

'I have interred Germany, as in Good Friday's tomb - sure in the hope of that Easter morning of resurrection, which, however, I shall not see.' 55

The next four and a half years were difficult ones for Bunsen. He had determined to stay on and to exert whatever liberalizing influence he could - but had very little communication with the King on political questions. Those in power around the monarch in Berlin were trying to oust him, and he found himself at odds with virtually every decision of Prussian foreign policy which he was supposed to carry out. The London Treaty and Protocol on the Danish - Schleswig-Holstein problem, to which he was forced to put his signature as Prussian representative, especially disturbed him between 1850-2. He thought then to resign; the inevitable finally came in 1854 over the Crimean war. Bunsen took an outspokenly anti-Russian position: Berlin

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54. Ibid., p. 270 and pp. 274-5.

55. Bunsen II, p. 199, and see also Bunsen (Nippold) II, pp. 498-500.

had decided on neutrality. When the war was declared in February, Bunsen tendered his resignation. Because of his dejection over the reactionary policies now dominating Prussian political life, he deliberately looked elsewhere for a place of retirement. The Bunsens settled near Heidelberg for most of the remaining years of Bunsen's life.<sup>56</sup>

Throughout these last years of political retirement Bunsen nevertheless kept up a correspondence with the King, and a personal relationship of considerable warmth and trust. The most discussed subject was religion, and the organization of the Prussian United Evangelical Church. Here too they were in disagreement. In 1855 Bunsen published Die Zeichen der Zeit, a strong attack on the Prussian Church-State relationship under the official policies of Stahl and Hengstenberg. Just as their political antagonism could not destroy the link between King and outspoken minister, so their religious disagreement failed to break their relationship. In September 1857 the King sent Bunsen a warm invitation, pressing him to come to Berlin for a meeting of the Evangelical Alliance, and indeed to stay at the Palace for the length of his visit. Bunsen spent three weeks in Berlin, again engaged in intimate discussions with the King, with politicians and friends, as always trying to urge his own suggested reforms on the

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56. On this period see Ulbricht, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-120, pp. 129-30 and pp. 132-141; Bunsen II also indicates briefly the difficulties - p. 186 ff (Schleswig-Holstein), pp. 178-9 (unpopularity with Prussian Camarilla).

Church-State relationship. A week after his departure, on 3rd October, Frederick William signed a patent of nobility elevating Bunsen to the peerage with the title of 'Freiherr' (Baron). A few hours later on the same day the King suffered the stroke, heralding the onslaught of insanity, from which he never recovered.<sup>57</sup>

Since Bunsen's death in 1860 and the creation of the united German Reich in 1871 there has been much discussion about the nature of Bunsen's relationship with his King and the extent of his influence on Frederick William's policies. Two of the most important Nineteenth Century scholars, Ranke and Treitschke, both agreeing on the liberalism of Bunsen's own views, have offered sharply differing evaluations as to the effectiveness of Bunsen's message: the former revealing Bunsen's isolation from most of the real moments of decision, the latter blaming him as an active force in underlining Frederick William IV's English sympathies, and thereby retarding the independent growth of Prussian power. Since the Second World War Bunsen's political ideas have been the subject of revived interest, but in a wider context, emphasizing his importance as liberal theologian and intellectual figure, cross-

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57. On the relationship between the King and Bunsen in the last years see Ranke, op. cit., chapter XII and Ulbricht, op. cit., pp. 130-131 and his Die Zeichen der Zeit, 2 vols, Leipzig, 1855 (English, Signs of the Times, London, 1856), which was a great success in Germany going through two editions within three months (Hare, op. cit., II, p. 190 and p. 191).

fertilizing both Germany and England.<sup>58</sup> The question of Bunsen's own intellectual products in the last decade of his life, and their continuity with his early intellectual goals has however been completely neglected. It is to this role, Bunsen as a writer of universal history, to which we now return.

The 1848-9 crisis was unique in that during this time Bunsen dropped all other concerns. Otherwise, even in the midst of the most pressing diplomatic and political responsibilities, he never forgot the great intellectual goals of his early scholarly days. When he first came to England in 1839 he had already begun to turn back to linguistic and historical studies. While keeping up his hectic official and public life Bunsen also tried to absorb developments in these intellectual pursuits. He well knew that they were advancing at a pace which demanded more full-time involvement than he could give. Following a pattern which he himself experienced under Heyne and Niebuhr, he turned instead to encouraging others in the forefront of relevant researches, and to patronising promising but as yet unestablished young scholars. In this way he hoped to secure for his own work the support of the latest knowledge -

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58. Cf. Ranke, Briefwechsel..op. cit., and Treitschke, Deutsche Geschichte.. op. cit. Treitschke's interpretation was most popular in the early Twentieth Century, exemplified in the vilification of Bunsen in Curt Fritzsche, Die Englandpolitik Friedrich Wilhelm IV., Dresden und Leipzig, 1916. Gross, op. cit., who is an excellent example of the post-World War II reinterpretation of Bunsen, gives a further description of ante-1945 attitudes to Bunsen, pp. 1-11. Other examples are Höcker, op. cit., and Maas, op. cit.

even if at second hand. His public position therefore was to be turned from a disadvantage to an advantage in furthering his intellectual goals: he combined career patronage with intellectual collaboration in the case of a few selected scholars. The two outstanding examples of such patronage and collaboration occurred with Carl Richard Lepsius and Friedrich Max Müller.<sup>59</sup>

Carl Richard Lepsius was born in Naumburg in Thuringia on 23rd December 1810, and studied classical philology, comparative linguistics, ancient history and mythology at the universities of Leipzig, Göttingen and Berlin, under some of the most famous German scholars of the day - Gottfried Hermann, K.O. Müller, the brothers Grimm, Heinrich Ewald and Franz Bopp. K.O. Müller influenced Lepsius' choice of topic for the doctoral dissertation, De Tabulis Eugubinis (1833), which consisted of an analysis of ancient Italian inscriptions in a little-known Umbrian dialect, thus involving palaeographic, linguistic and ancient-

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59. Others with whom Bunsen had a similar relationship include Carl Friedrich Meyer, who followed the Bunsens from Rome to London and then to Heidelberg, was appointed for a time private secretary to Prince Albert in London, and contributed an essay to Bunsen's Outlines on Celtic languages, which was also read before the British Association in 1847; Theodor Aufrecht, a German Sanskrit scholar who assisted Müller with the Rig Veda edition and contributed two essays on Indo-European linguistics to Bunsen's Outlines; Paul Bötticher, a Semitic scholar later better known as the polemical anti-Semite Paul de Lagarde, who was secured a grant from the Prussian government by Bunsen and also contributed to the Outlines; and Martin Haug, a Persian scholar, who translated crucial parts of the Avesta for Bunsen for Egypt III, and was engaged as an assistant during the last years at Heidelberg. On these and others see Bunsen II generally; Bunsen's letters to Müller published in Chips III, pp. 409-520; Hare, op.cit., II, pp. 165-6 (footnote on Meyer); further on Aufrecht, Neue Deutsche Biographie, I (1953), pp. 442-3.

historical skills. While engaged in thesis work in Berlin in 1832 Lepsius met Gerhardt from the Archaeological Institute in Rome; on Müller's recommendation Gerhardt asked Lepsius to assist with the Institute's current projects and contribute to its Bulletin. He also favourably impressed Alexander von Humboldt at this time. After receiving his doctorate Lepsius went to Paris to continue his studies in ancient history and languages. In Paris from April 1833 he attended, inter alia, the Egyptian lectures of Letronne, but had as yet made no settled decision about his future career.<sup>60</sup>

During the first few months in Paris he wrote Palaeographie als Mittel für die Sprachforschung (published 1834), which won him a Volney Prize. The work was based on the same combination of skills as that behind the dissertation. It argued a parallel between the development of writing and of human sounds: in effect, the growth of language itself. The Indian and Hebrew alphabets were traced back to their original, syllabic, symbols, and these in turn even further back to the origin of writing itself in simple picture symbols. This implied a phonological or linguistic parallel, from the (different) balance of phonetic elements found in complex Indian and

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60. The standard biography is Lepsius. Also useful is August Dillmann, 'Gedachnissrede auf Karl Richard Lepsius', Abhandlungen der königlichen Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, 1885, pp. 3-25 and the article by Eduard Naville, in the Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie, Leipzig, 1906, Vol. 51, pp. 659-70.

Hebrew roots, back to the simpler syllabic roots of consonant and vowel, ending finally with the basic human sounds postulated as a consonant with indeterminate vowel. Chinese characters were clearly the closest of all scripts to the original picture-writing of man: by corollary, the Chinese language was that closest to the original phonetic sounds of humankind. The Egyptian script was mentioned in passing as showing some advance on the Chinese. But the evolution of Indian and Hebrew took centre stage. They were obviously meant to stand as representatives for their whole linguistic group. Indian/Indo-European was described as more complete than Hebrew/Semitic because of the harmonious balance between consonant and vowel functions palaeographically and linguistically.<sup>61</sup>

In October 1833 Lepsius received an invitation from the Archaeological Institute to come to Rome, and two suggestions, transmitted from Bunsen on Gerhardt's recommendation, for future work suitable to Lepsius' experience and talents. One proposal was that of further investigation into Italic inscriptions; the other broached the idea of tackling the continuing problems of hieroglyphic decipherment. On the second possibility Lepsius at first showed some hesitation, probably because of the cloud surrounding Champollion's 'system' in France. Encouraged by Bunsen however he began investigations into Egyptology and was soon completely caught up by it. Like Champollion

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61. Palaeographie als Mittel für die Sprachforschung...  
Berlin, 1834.

himself, he started with Coptic, and moved on to the hieroglyphs themselves only in early 1835, with the assistance first of Salvolini, then by correspondence, of Rosellini; finally he gained access briefly to Champollion's precious manuscript notes. Meanwhile, thanks to the efforts of Bunsen and Alexander von Humboldt, financial support from the Berlin Academy was secured for him. In reports to them and in private letters to Bunsen he revealed the progress of his studies. Some of his conclusions were published in the Zwei Sprachvergleichende Abhandlungen (1835-6), where the Egyptian (Coptic) writing and language was situated more precisely in the framework of development outlined in 1834. Lepsius here placed Egyptian as an earlier stage related to both Indo-European and Semitic. He proceeded to copy manuscripts in Paris, Turin, Livorno, and finally arrived in Rome in May 1836. Here he took on responsibilities with the Archaeological Institute, including the editorship of the Bulletin. One of the essays he contributed to it, the Lettre à M. Rosellini (1837) proved a milestone in the further development of Egyptology after Champollion.<sup>62</sup>

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62. Zwei Sprachvergleichende Abhandlungen: Über die Anordnung und Verwandtschaft des Semitischen, Indischen, Äthiopischen, Alt-Persischen und Alt-Ägyptischen Alphabets (1835); Über den Ursprung und die Verwandtschaft der Zahlwörter in der Indo-Germanischen, Semitischen und der Koptischen Sprache (1836), (pub.) Berlin, 1836. Lettre à M. le professeur H. Rosellini ... Sur l'Alphabet hiéroglyphique..., Rome, 1837.



The most important experience of Lepsius' two years in Rome until July 1838 was his friendship with Bunsen. Like so many others he too participated in the stimulating social and intellectual life of the Bunsen house, and a genuinely close personal relationship grew between the two men, based on a sympathy of interest in linguistic and historical researches. Lepsius held Bunsen in great respect, and deeply admired the scope of his ideas:

"Ich bin ihrer [väterlicher Liebe] viel mehr bedürftig und von ihr abhängig, als es Ihnen erscheinen mag; ich fühle dies aber bei jedem Blatte, das mir aus Ihrer Hand zukommt, und mich bei meiner Neigung zur Kleinlichkeit, Verzagheit und jeder Art von Unfreiheit überrascht. Ihre Worte, selbst die unbedeutensten, fallen wie Perlen in meine Armuth, und ich nähre mich von ihnen, von einem Briefe zum andern".<sup>63</sup>

Almost automatically, therefore, Lepsius was drawn into Bunsen's plans: he was to assist, indeed, co-author Bunsen's great planned work on Egypt. Lepsius was secured further financial support from the Berlin Academy. Sorting out the confused chronology of Egypt now became the subject of his research as well. He left Rome in July 1838, just after Bunsen himself, on Institute business. After visiting Paris and Leeman's collection in Leyden he joined Bunsen again in England and was introduced by him to British society and intellectuals. Much discussion and work toward the planned collaborative volumes continued until the announcement of Bunsen's new ambassadorship to Switzerland. Still uncertain as to his own future, Lepsius then began to express the desire to go to Egypt.

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63. Quoted from Lepsius, p. 120.

He wrote to Bunsen:

"'...in England kann ich nicht bleiben... in Frankreich habe ich nichts zu thun und nach Deutschland käme ich zu früh. Es bleibt mir also nur Aegypten, und das hält sich wie ein Leitstern in allen Überlegungen, die ich anstelle. Aegypten muss einmal doch verschlungen werden; meine Zeit ist da...Sollte es nun nicht möglich sein, dies Ziel auf irgend eine Weise zu erreichen?...Eine angelegentliche Verwendung von Ihnen beim Kronprinzen müsste die Hauptsache thun...' " 64

Frederick William IV had already shown some interest in the mysteries of Egyptology in the 1820's; indeed he had purchased the Passalacqua collection for Berlin. As his relationship with Bunsen grew during the 1830's, he probably knew of Bunsen's planned Egyptian work; now, Bunsen made a point of keeping up the Prince's interest. He and Alexander von Humboldt both undertook to try to secure support for Lepsius' plan. Their activities behind the scenes intensified after Frederick William's accession in 1840. The original idea of an individual journey was transformed into that of a scientific expedition under Lepsius with official government support, and including the aim of collecting further Egyptian antiquities for Berlin. Frederick William acceded to this proposal, and further, on Bunsen's and Humboldt's urging, named Lepsius as Extraordinarius in a newly created chair of Egyptology at the University of Berlin, in January 1842. Lepsius had no time to begin teaching in his new post: he was caught up in the preparations for the great expedition, which set out from Southhampton on 1st September 1842.

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64. Ibid., p. 153.

Bunsen of course was present to farewell Lepsius on the voyage he had substantially made possible.

During the time of waiting from 1839 Lepsius continued to work assiduously: three publications of 1842 were the result. Chronological research for the joint Bunsen-Lepsius work produced a pioneering outline of the succession of Egyptian rulers, the first draft of what would later become Lepsius' Königsbuch der alten Aegypter (1858), based on sources available in Europe. In Turin he had been drawn to the study of the religious text known as 'The Book of the Dead', and published the text he had earlier copied in 1842. Further original source material for other scholars based on his own copies were published in the same year as an Auswahl der wichtigsten Urkunden des aegyptischen Alterthums.<sup>65</sup> By the time that Lepsius left on the Egyptian Expedition he had, by his own work, secured himself a considerable reputation as Egyptologist. At the same time the support of Bunsen had placed him in an enviable public position such that no other European Egyptologist up to that time, including Champollion himself, had ever enjoyed.

Apart from Bunsen's very important role in establishing Lepsius in a public position, and the intellectual

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65. See ibid., p. 129 on the unpublished chronological sketch and Lepsius' Das Todtenbuch der Aegypter nach dem hieroglyphischen Papyrus zu Turin...Leipzig, 1842; Auswahl der wichtigsten Urkunden des Aegyptischen Alterthums...Leipzig, 1842.

collaboration between them, Lepsius shared Bunsen's serious Christian convictions, and was certainly influenced by Bunsen's idealistic approach to the Church-State relationship. One of the aims of the Expedition was to follow up the Biblical scenes played out in the Sinai and to establish the location of the mountain on which Moses received the Commandments. For this purpose Lepsius undertook a special, and dangerous, detour, and announced the results as part of the scientific information gathered by the Expedition. To some extent Bunsen's politics also had an effect on him. In the student years he had once himself flirted with liberal ideas, but had prudently drawn back, and afterward usually reacted very conservatively to French-associated ideas of representation, with the usual fear of revolution. He never involved himself in politics, and must be accounted, after 1842, a loyal, conservative Prussian, as his own interests dictated. By this time Lepsius' relationship with Bunsen was changing. Well before the publication of Bunsen's major universal-historical works it evolved into something closer to that of intellectual equals than that between master and disciple. The reason for this alteration was mainly Lepsius' increasing professional independence, and the result of it was that Lepsius, unlike the younger disciple Müller, avoided direct contributions towards Bunsen's great works of the 1840's and 1850's. At the same time he always maintained the personal loyalty of a grateful protégé. In this role his continuing friendship with Bunsen must have impressed a liberal political view on him. During 1839

Lepsius shared the experience of English parliamentary life with his patron, and during the dark days of 1848-9, as well as the last visit of 1857, was always on hand to greet, accompany and offer hospitality to Bunsen.<sup>66</sup> He could not have been ignorant of the liberal tenor of Bunsen's hopes.

Bunsen's relationship with Friedrich Max Müller followed a very similar pattern. Müller was born in Dessau on December 6, 1823, and studied philology, Sanskrit, Persian and comparative linguistics, as well as philosophy at Leipzig and Berlin again under several famous German scholars - Brockhaus, Bopp, Kuhn, Schott and Schelling. In 1844 he published a translation in German of the Hitopadesa. Like many of his generation he also pursued interests in religious and philosophical studies, but moved to Paris in 1845 with a settled ambition to continue his Sanskrit studies. Here he met and fleetingly worked with the Baron Frédéric d'Eckstein, the mystical orientalist; more importantly he studied under the great French linguist and orientalist Eugène Burnouf. It was Burnouf who suggested to Müller the project of editing the Rig Veda, a project of high priority at a point when Indo-European

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66. On Bunsen's religious influence on Lepsius see Lepsius, p. 146, and his account of the Sinai journey, Reise von Theben nach der Halbinsel des Sinai, Berlin, 1846 (English translation also, 1846) and Lepsius' summary-prospectus of the Egyptian expedition, foreshadowing the publication of its results, Denkmäler aus Aegypten, Berlin, 1849, pp. 13-14. On Lepsius' politics see Lepsius, pp. 18-21 p. 30 ff and p. 149.

scholars had grown competent with later Sanskrit texts but still knew virtually nothing of the fabled ancient and original Veda to which the more modern works so often referred. Müller went to England in 1846 in order to collate Vedic manuscripts in the possession of the East India Company and at Oxford, all towards his great aim. Even before his trip to Paris he had been recommended to Bunsen, and in England he presented himself almost immediately at the Prussian legation.<sup>67</sup>

The two men were immediately drawn to each other, for they shared similar educational and religious backgrounds and had in common the love of Indian antiquity - since 1816 one of the focal points of Bunsen's interest. Alone and in a difficult financial position in a strange country Müller came to depend on Bunsen's help in several ways:

'...Bunsen is wonderfully good to me. I dine there once or twice every week, and he always gives me fresh courage and hope. When my first volume is out he hopes to get a salary for me from the Prussian government...Tomorrow I am again invited to Bunsen's for his birthday. Professor Lepsius from Berlin is now staying at Bunsen's with his young wife; he owes everything to Bunsen. He got him a Stipendium to study, then to go to Italy, France and England, and at last to Egypt: and now he is Professor at Berlin...'<sup>68</sup>

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67. The standard biography of Müller is Müller. The biography by Nirad C. Chaudhuri, Scholar Extraordinary. The life of Professor the Rt. Hon. Friedrich Max Müller, London, 1974, adds nothing significantly new; also useful, but written very much with the knowledge of hindsight is Müller's own My Autobiography, London, 1901: however this only covers the very early years. See also Hitopadesa. Eine alte indische Fabelsammlung, Berlin, 1844.

68. Müller I, p. 55.

Bunsen's relationship with Berlin was less happy in 1846-7 than it had been in 1840-1. In order to help Müller he therefore turned to his English contacts. Negotiating with the East India Company to secure their financial backing for Müller he pointed out 'what a disgrace it would be if some other country than England published this edition of the Sacred Books of the Brahmans...'. By April 1847 Müller was secured financial support:

'I am to hand over to the Company, ready for press, fifty sheets each year... for this I have asked £200 a year, £4 a sheet... I had not a penny left... I should have had to return to Germany had not Bunsen stood by me and helped me by word and deed'.<sup>69</sup>

In the context of a disinterested academic environment and an ignorant general public Bunsen was formulating a conscious missionary aim to introduce German science and philosophy to England. The task was to be shared by Müller. He introduced the young scholar everywhere, advised him, consulted on individual problems to do with his own researches and discussed his views freely. He forced Müller into the academic and public arena, arranging for him to give a paper to the British Association for the Advancement of Science alongside his own in 1847: 'On the relation of the Bengali to the Arian and Aboriginal Languages of India'. This was basically a propaganda piece demonstrating the strength of German Indo-European linguistics for the unknowing English public. In mid-1848 Müller settled in Oxford and the two began an important

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69. Ibid., pp. 60-61.

correspondence. The first volume of the Veda appeared in 1849, and in the same year Müller was awarded the Prix Volney for an essay, 'Results of the Investigations of Language as to Ancient History'. It was never published in the original form, but was extended and appeared in 1856 as the important essay on 'Comparative Mythology', including an exposition of the results of linguistic palaeontology revealing the ancient life of the Indo-European group. In the next year Bunsen suggested and engineered Müller's first article in the English press; pursuant to the 'missionary' goal, it was a review of the English translation of Bopp's Comparative Indo-European Grammar. In December 1850 Muller was offered a post at Oxford, as deputy for Trithen, the Taylorian Professor of Modern Languages. After Trithen's illness he was elected to the full Professorship, in 1854, with Bunsen's strong recommendation. From this post he continued the 'missionary' role, crusading for Oriental and Indian studies in England, and deliberately aiming to fascinate his Oxford hearers, unaccustomed to his German style, approach or exotic matter. At a mere 28 years of age in 1852 he had been elected a member of the Bavarian Academy, at the same time as Bunsen himself, and probably on Bunsen's recommendation.<sup>70</sup>

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70. On this period in Muller's life see ibid., chapters V-VIII, Bunsen's Letters to Müller in Chips III, p. 409 ff. Müller's paper of 1847 was published in the British Association's Report for that year alongside Bunsen's own and a paper from Meyer (note 59 above); Müller's article on 'Comparative Philology' appeared in the Edinburgh Review, October 1851, pp. 297-339.



After the collapse of his German hopes, Bunsen repeated his reaction to the Roman fiasco by burying himself in his intellectual interests more completely than ever before. Müller became deeply involved with the preparation of Bunsen's publications. He was called on for specific information of all kinds, and whole articles were commissioned on linguistic subjects - three major essays from him were published in Bunsen's Outlines, III, on Persian, Sanskrit and "Turanian" language studies. After Bunsen's departure, Müller felt an acute sense of loss, however was steadied in the resolve to stay in England by Bunsen. An affectionate and scholarly correspondence continued between them, Müller providing information on request and ushering Bunsen's works before the English public.

Apart from providing the material conditions whereby Müller was transplanted out of the Franco-German scholarly environment and established academically and socially in England, as it turned out for life, and apart from their intellectual collaboration especially during the early 1850's, friendship with Bunsen solidly confirmed certain leanings in Müller's own personality. Much more than with Lepsius, Bunsen and Müller shared philosophical, political and religious sympathies, and Bunsen's outspokenness on such questions only served to channel Müller's inclinations even further. Bunsen's 'simple faith of a child and the boldest freedom of a philosopher' became exemplified in

Müller's own approach to religion.<sup>71</sup> The younger man too was lifelong a deeply religious man, unafraid to voice his religion in public, ready to present his ideas rationally, undogmatically, for open scrutiny. He too would publically campaign for Germany and German unity in England, continuing Bunsen's liberal idealism. With Müller, very much more openly than with Lepsius, Bunsen's universal history took firm root.

As a result of Bunsen's collaboration with Lepsius and Müller he was finally enabled to put together the works of universal history which he had dreamed of over thirty years earlier. Written in Switzerland, in periods of country refuge from London life, or in the early morning hours before the day's diplomatic business and social rounds began, Bunsen's universal history began to appear in the 1840's. First came the fruits of Lepsius' assistance, the first three volumes of Egypt's Place in Universal History, in German in 1845, the first volume translated into English in 1848. These volumes, ostensibly packed with technical information about the 'facts' of ancient Egyptian language and chronology, were meant to serve as an unshakeable basis for the discussion of the origins of man and the discovery

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71. These were Müller's words about Bunsen in his biographical article on 'Bunsen' reprinted in Chips III, pp. 358-405, p. 405. After his death others summed up Müller's own faith in much the same way: 'Although his faith in Christ was so firm and his acceptance of Him, as indeed the Son of God, was so heartfelt and sincere, it is hardly necessary to say that it was not based upon the miraculous element contained in the Gospels, much less upon any form of ecclesiastical authority.' (Müller II, p. 437).

of the universal-historical pattern of his development:  
ancient Egypt was only the historical key towards this.

'The method which we call the philosophy of general history will be applied, in this work, to the examination of the strictly primeval Origines of man. We shall endeavour by means of it to discover, if possible, some strata and deposits in the earliest stages of man's existence, like those which modern geology has pointed out in the material stratum of our planet, and which it has traced over the whole globe. As it has been so successful in discovering progression in these strata, and in defining thereby the periods in our orb, so will the science of primitive history have to distinguish the ancient from the modern element, and thus to fix the turning points and epochs which are actually exhibited in those periods.'

'If we succeed in this the first attempt at a strictly historical examination of the formation of language, writing and mythology, if we succeed in discovering in them the strata and epochs of the oldest history, we shall not only thereby have exhibited those deeds and thoughts of the ancient inhabitants of the valley of the Nile... but we may also hope to have paved the way, for ourselves and others, towards a more correct estimate and an historical treatment of the Origines of the human Race...'<sup>72</sup>

This last mentioned subject was to be treated in Books IV and V of the Egyptian work. In 1847 Bunsen read a summary of the universal-historical argument as to language, on the basis of the Egyptian researches, to the British Association: 'On the results of the recent Egyptian researches in reference to Asiatic and African Ethnology and the Classification of Languages'.

After the failure of the German cause Bunsen threw himself back into his researches. From 1851 he was determined to carry through the purposes of a lifetime. In a frenzy of activity he began on the last volumes of Egypt,

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72. Aegyptens Stelle in der Weltgeschichte. 1-3 Buch, Hamburg, 1845; quotation from Egypt I, Introduction, pp. xxxvi-vii and p. xlv.

and a work on the early development of Christianity, Hippolytus and his Age. At the same time he was working out the philosophical structure and principles of universal history, a "'History and Method of the Philosophy of History'", in a way almost involuntarily:

'I only wished to give an introductory survey of the manner of treating the world's history, and to my astonishment something else appears, to which I yield myself with fear as well as delight, with the old youthful ardour.'<sup>73</sup>

Short 'Aphorisms' on the philosophy of universal history appeared in Hippolytus; almost immediately after its publication Bunsen set to work on a 'new edition' which in fact became an entirely new work, Christianity and Mankind (7 vols., 1854). The first two volumes reproduced the original Hippolytus, the last three contained nothing but source material in the original, edited by Bunsen, dealing with the early history of the church. The two middle volumes, III and IV, were the focal point, and were entitled Outlines of the philosophy of Universal History applied to Language and Religion. Here at last Bunsen returned to the aims and ideals of the 1820's and of 1816, following the path of reason and of revelation in history. In 1854 the object was, again,

'...to trace the Outlines of a Philosophy of Universal History, especially with a view to

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73. Bunsen's letters to Müller in Chips III, letter of May, 1851, p. 427; Bunsen's 1847 paper is found in the Report of the British Association for that year; see also Bunsen's Hippolytus and his Age, 4 vols, London, 1852.

discover and define the principle of progress, and to apply these general principles to Language and Religion as the two universal and primitive manifestations of the human mind, upon which all subsequent social and national development is based.'<sup>74</sup>

In practice the Outlines devoted most space to linguistic 'facts', in much the same way that the first three volumes of Egypt had been full of Egyptological 'facts'. It was here that the researches of Müller and other helpers - Theodor Aufrecht, Karl Meyer, Paul Bötticher - fitted in. The letters that passed between Müller and Bunsen during the Crimean crisis of 1853-4 show that Bunsen was much more concerned with his intellectual work than with holding on to his diplomatic post. His resignation took on the aspect of a liberation from prison:

'The snare is broken, and the bird is free; for which let us bless the Lord. As they have once let me out of my cage, they shall not catch me again.'<sup>75</sup>

With Müller's help Bunsen pressed on with the important final volumes of the Egyptian work (published 1856) which dealt with the origins of the human race. There was so much factual discussion required still in these last two volumes that only a 'sketch' of the unfolding of universal history could be given. For the other side of the problem, the spiritual development of humanity, Bunsen gathered together all his researches on the scriptures and the early church. Hippolytus and a small part of the Outlines dealt with the nature of Christianity. A universal-historical

74. Outlines; III, p. iii.

75. Chips III, p. 460 and on other helpers see note 59 above.

background to it did not appear until God in History (German, 1856-7, 8-9). In the wake of the philosophy of universal history of 1854 even the fundamental text of Christianity, the Bible, was revealed in a new light, as a product of certain linguistic, historical and spiritual stages in human development. Bunsen embarked on a massive project, an entirely new translation of the Bible, with commentary, based on his new insights. He also aimed at a final synthesis of his universal-historical ideas, an Organon der Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit. In early 1860 the family moved to a house in Bonn, with the hope that Bunsen could give a course of lectures at the university, as he had aimed in 1816 and 1817. The aim was never achieved, the Organon never appeared, and the Bibelwerk was left incomplete. Bunsen died at the end of November, 1860.<sup>76</sup>

The great universal-historical works of Bunsen's last years combined different elements in his personality

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76. The final volumes of Egypt published in German, Gotha, 1856; Gott in der Geschichte, 3 vols., Leipzig, 1856-7, 8-9, and in English as God in History, 3 vols, 1868-70; Bunsen's Vollständiges Bibelwerk für die Gemeinde, Leipzig, 1858-70 was completed by various others who had collaborated with him to the plan he had set out, in 9 volumes, plus a Bibelatlas supervised by Bunsen himself, drawn by Henry Lange, Leipzig, 1860. For a breakdown of how much of this work was drawn directly from Bunsen's notes and how much he completed himself see Bernhard Baehring, Bunsen's Bibelwerk nach seiner Bedeutung für die Gegenwart beleuchtet, Leipzig, 1861. The proposed "organon" is mentioned several times in God in History III, and the translator's preface indicates that some progress had been made toward it (God in History I, p. xi; references God in History III, p. 6, p. 237, p. 279). On the hope of giving lectures at Bonn see Bunsen II, pp. 365-7.

and experience in a unique way. An unshakeable personal piety dominated his whole life - neither an unquestioning acceptance of religious dogma, nor a simplistic rational reduction of it to manageable proportions, but a committed, analytical approach to religious truth. The philosophy of the German Enlightenment particularly that of Herder and Schelling, whom he consciously emulated, convinced him that the truths of religion were manifested in the whole history of man, in a way ascertainable by human reason, and indeed even proceeding through human reason and its development. His training in the heyday of early Orientalism directed him to one particular facet of human reason - language, and also encouraged him to investigate the new wealth of information about the human past. The conjunction of the three elements sparked off the desire to write universal history and dominated it as a finished product:

'The noblest nations have ever believed in an immutable moral order of the world, constituted by divine wisdom, and regulating the destinies of mankind...

There is a moral order of the world, and there is a progress...

Indeed, if there exist a divine rule of human destiny and development in the history of mankind, a philosophy of that history must be possible. For there is no divine rule which does not originate in reason, and which is not essentially reason.'

'...from a higher point of view...we behold an encouraging and elevating development of life and light - a glorious course, starting from reason and liberty, and tending towards them... Both language and religion, the great records and monuments of primordial life, unanimously attest the divine dignity, and proclaim with heavenly voice the sublime destiny, of mankind.'<sup>77</sup>

Universal history transformed and united all Bunsen's

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77. Outlines III, pp. 3-4; IV, p. xv.

particular researches, whether 'factual' or 'religious'. Egyptology, comparative linguistics and other budding 'sciences' became the means whereby to penetrate into the unfolding plan of God in history. Christianity itself was the central point of the process: its doctrines could not be contradicted but only correctly reinterpreted in the light of the establishment of the universal-historical pattern. Revelation and reason were reconcilable in universal history: Bunsen set about the demonstration of this conviction, with some confidence, in the 1850's.

At exactly the same time, the brilliant young scholars whom he had enthused by his great aims, and whose collaboration he had secured for the necessary, if mundane, 'factual' bases of his demonstration, began to disassociate themselves from the project in a subtle way. Lepsius, the elder disciple, made the first move. By the end of 1839 he and Bunsen could no longer agree on the correct method of restoring the Egyptian chronology. Refusing to compromise his own views, Lepsius gently but firmly broke away from Bunsen. Before his departure for Egypt he encouraged him to publish the Egyptian work alone. There was certainly more involved than a purely factual disagreement. Temperamentally prosaic, formal, even cold, Lepsius himself was not inclined to venture into the philosophical fields of universal history. He had good grounds for uneasiness about publications of such a tremendous scope. In his own chosen field of Egyptology there had been too many fantastic speculations and 'systems' since Champollion. For the sake of his own career he aimed at founding a



proper science of Egyptology in Germany and in Europe, with all due academic respectability. The results of the Egyptian expedition confirmed his consciousness of the need for painstaking research on the vast materials to hand.

Open collaboration with Bunsen, especially in the light of their disagreement could only hinder, not assist his aims. On the other hand he did not decry the idea of universal history, nor Bunsen's peculiar fitness for constructing it. He continued to correspond with Bunsen throughout the expedition and to provide him with the vast new materials acquired in Egypt well in advance of their publication. The great success of the Expedition and the consequent consolidation of his academic prestige only heightened the ambiguity in his attitude toward his patron's work. In his Chronologie der Aegypter (1849), much of which had been put together with the collaborative work in mind, Lepsius made the following important distinction between his own and Bunsen's work:

'Meine chronologische Arbeit... von weit beschränkteren Standpunkten ausgehend, und ein weit näheres Ziel ins Auge fassend, als Ihr Geschichtswerk, wird nun im günstigen Falle nachträglich die ergänzende Stelle ausfüllen, die Sie ihr ursprünglich in Ihrem weit umfassenderen Plane zugebracht hatten. Meine Aufgabe ist nicht, Aegyptens Stelle in der Weltgeschichte, sondern nur in der ausserlichen Form derselben, in der Zeitgeschichte nachzuweisen, ist also nicht eine geschichtliche, nur eine chronologische.'

At the same time the work was fulsomely dedicated to Bunsen, and the agreement between them on all important points unquestionably asserted:

'Mit inniger Freude und treuer Dankbarkeit, mein hochverehrter Gönner und Freund, blicke ich auf die Reihe von Jahren zurück, in denen es mir vergönnt war, theils in Ihrer unmittelbaren Nähe zu leben, theils mich Ihrer steten Theilnahme und

ungetrübten Freundschaft auch aus der Ferne zu erfreuen... unter Ihrer Leitung und im steten Genuss Ihres vertrauensvollen Wohlwollens lernte ich auf den klassischen Boden das Leben und die Wissenschaft von ihren höchsten und edelsten Seiten kennen...' 78

Not only during the 1850's, when he attained independence as an important Egyptologist, but after Bunsen's death, and indeed to the end of his own life, the ambiguity in Lepsius' attitude toward Bunsen's universal history remained. He remained loyal to Bunsen and to the memory of his great ideals:

'Noch in späten Jahren belebte sich Lepsius' Auge, gewann seine gemessene Rede feuerige Wärme, wenn er Carl Bunsen's, des nie versiegenden Reichthums seiner Ideenfülle, der Tiefe seiner Kenntnisse, der Lauterkeit seines Charakters gedachte...' 79

But he himself would never, after 1839, participate directly again in Bunsen's works, although, again, he never openly criticized them. The last volumes on Egypt were thus completed without his assistance.

The relationship with Müller developed a similar ambiguity. As early as 1853 Müller's admiration for Bunsen was tempered with critique:

'... he writes one book after another, but writes too much and too quickly...' 80

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78. See Lepsius' dedicatory Preface to Bunsen in Die Chronologie der Aegypter, Berlin, 1849 (unpaginated), and, on the break from Bunsen, Lepsius pp. 150-1 and 164-5.

79. Ibid., p. 121.

80. Müller I, p. 138.

In April 1855 Bunsen proposed a four-volume collaborative work to Müller to be entitled 'Kosmos of Language', in which the latter was to write at least two and a half volumes. This Müller politely declined. He too was assuming an independent academic career, and aiming at academic respectability for himself and his chosen science of linguistics in a not particularly hospitable English environment. He too was becoming involved in his own works and publications - the Veda, shorter articles and reviews on related subjects, notably mythology, and soon after this time, a history of Sanskrit literature. In this year, 1855, his contributions toward Bunsen's Outlines came directly under attack by two highly reputable linguists, August Pott and Ernest Renan. Working from entirely dissimilar assumptions and scholarly backgrounds, both were nevertheless agreed that Müller's essays were unscientific, essentially unworthy of their author's status as professional. As Bunsen launched into a reconstruction of Vedic chronology as part of Egypt IV Müller openly objected to his results:

'The more I see how deeply you penetrate into Indian chronology, the more I regret that I cannot follow you as I did formerly.'<sup>81</sup>

He too seems to have politely refused to help further with the last volumes of Egypt. In the last two or three years of Bunsen's life the relationship became less scholarly, and more personal, like that of father to son. Yet Müller's works after Bunsen's death attest to his lasting belief in

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81. Ibid., p. 180; the plan of the proposed 'Kosmos of Language' is given in Chips III, p. 473 ff.

the idea of universal history, as well as a lifelong gratitude and admiration:

'Bunsen was by nature a scholar...Scholarship with him was always a means, never in itself an object, and the study of languages, the laws, the philosophies and religions of antiquity, was, in his eyes, but a necessary preparation before approaching the problem of all problems. Is there a Providence in the world or is there not?... during all his life, whether he was studying the laws of Rome or the hieroglyphic inscriptions of Egypt, the hymns of the Veda or the Psalms of the Old Testament, he was always collecting materials for that great temple which in his mind towered high above all other temples, the temple of God in history...

When I first came to know Bunsen, he was fifty-six, I twenty-four years of age; he was Prussian ambassador, I was nobody. But from the very beginning of our intercourse, he was to me like a friend and fellow student, and when standing by his side at the desk in his library, I never saw the ambassador, but only the hard-working scholar, ready to guide, willing to follow, but always pressing forward to a definite goal... It has been my good fortune in life to have known many men whom the world calls great... but take it all in all, take the full humanity of the man, I have never seen, and I shall never see his like again.'<sup>82</sup>

Even in the 1890's, in one of the last public addresses he ever gave, Müller paid tribute to Bunsen's genius and the truth of his analyses and ideas. Yet from 1856-7, though he admired works like God in History greatly, he would no longer associate himself publically with them.<sup>83</sup>

The problem for both Lepsius and Müller was not that they did not share Bunsen's religious commitment, his

82. Chips III, pp. 409-10.

83. See Müller's laudatory reminiscences of Bunsen and his paper of 1847 in his 'Presidential Address to the Anthropological Section of the British Association' Cardiff, 1891 (Report, 1891), pp. 782-796; and his admiring letter to Bunsen on the latter's God in History, Müller I, p. 188.

philosophical ideal of progressive realization of God's plan through human reason, and his high estimation of the importance of language. It was not that they did not believe in the ideal of universal history: all their subsequent works prove over and over again that they did. They parted company with Bunsen in the 1850's essentially over the confidence with which Bunsen overcame difficulties of factual evidence, or even more significantly, the lack of evidence. Both were conscious of problems of inadequate knowledge in their own chosen fields, and above all, both were, and aimed to continue being, professionals within specific academic fields. Lepsius, if anyone, knew of the great gaps of Egyptological knowledge, chronological and linguistic. Müller, if anyone, knew how far the chronology of the Veda and its content actually lived up to the fabulous expectations held about it for a generation, and how sophisticated the study of languages was becoming under the impact of Indo-European studies. These were issues they had to face no matter how inclined they were to collaborate with Bunsen. These were the issues which would eventually substantially alter the nature of universal history as it appeared in their own works after Bunsen's death.

In the 1850's however they had not yet reached the stage of reformulation, but only of subtle disassociation. If, as Müller described, Bunsen

'was an architect, but he wanted builders; his plans were settled, but there was no time to carry them out. He therefore naturally looked out for younger men who were to take some share of his work...' 84

- then, in the 1850's, as the planned universal-historical construction was going up, the builders were no longer sure that it would stand firm on the basis of the available materials.

CHAPTER IIIBUNSEN'S UNIVERSAL HISTORY

Bunsen's universal history began with a set of philosophical speculations on the nature of God and His relationship to the world and to man. They were neither original nor extensive, for they were not in such abstract form the centre of Bunsen's interest. Yet the spiritual nature of his first propositions - even if they were borrowed - should be stressed, for they became the crucial foundation for tracing God's path in universal history.

God necessarily exists as an intelligent Being. His absolute and eternal existence implies an immanent Trinity, a threefoldness in unity. United in God's Consciousness are two dialectically opposed concepts -

'... The Consciousness of Thought of Himself (the ideality)...' and God's 'Being (or reality ...)'<sup>1</sup>

A synthetic Act of Eternal Will holds together this dialectic duality. The opposition of Subject and Object which the duality represents is equivalent to that of Reason and Existence, and yet both are still unified as they are in God.

Cutting short any further elaboration of the essence of God Bunsen also gave the question of physical Creation only cursory examination. That there exists a physical Creation means that the Eternal, in His immanent trinitarian nature, has entered into the Finite. Essentially Creation is a finite reflex of God's thought of Himself: it is an entry of spirit into matter, perhaps simply the process of forming unconscious dead matter into conscious or

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1. Outlines IV, p. 155.

spiritualized matter. Bunsen avoided confrontation with the traditional view of Creation. In his interpretation a 'creatio ex nihilo' was nowhere mentioned in the Bible, but was a false reading imposed by later scholasticism.

Not content with the reflection of Himself in Nature God's creative process continued. He produced a creature which reflected the complexity of His own nature: the self-conscious creature Man. By sheer definition as a mirror image of his Creator, Man innately possessed Reason and Conscience. As well as these he was granted the privilege of free will, allowed to use his gifts in whatever way he chose, whether in the finite sphere of everyday action or in the infinite sphere of spiritual struggle toward moral perfection. God's creative urge formed man not just singly but also as a unified group, as Humanity:

'Humanity is to us the MACROCOSM of the Spirit, as the individual soul is its MICROCOSM'.

Bunsen had thus sketched the three elements of a 'finite trinity' reflecting the 'infinite trinity' of God's nature. This second trinity - God, Man, Humanity - represented a second and higher Creation, a second spiritualization of matter.<sup>2</sup>

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2. Quotation from God in History I, p. 29; Bunsen's speculative bases are most clearly set out in Outlines IV, pp. 155-170; the lengthier philosophical discussion in God in History I, pp. 1-59 is weighted toward the problem of religious consciousness only. For a discussion of Bunsen's borrowings from German idealist philosophy, the speculative philosophy, and how Bunsen's Bible translations were tailored to suit his philosophical views see Maas, op. cit., pp. 25-52.



With the Divine Creation of man Bunsen had reached his own central concern: the relationship of Man to God as expressed in the finite sphere. To attain this point he had relied heavily on the idealist philosophers of the German Enlightenment and would continue to do so throughout. However he also infused his own particular interests from this point onward, especially his interest in language. The fundamental human possessions, Reason and Conscience, were immediately allied with two further divinely endowed qualities: language and religious consciousness. As to the latter Bunsen was well within accepted norms when he asserted that God directly planted in all mankind and in each individual man 'a great fundamental consciousness of a moral Reason'.<sup>3</sup> However he was on somewhat less solid ground with the former, when, by linking it with Reason, he claimed the non-material, directly divine origin of language. The English Empiricists Locke and Lord Monboddo had put forward a plausible view of linguistic origins from animal sounds: the 'materialist' view. Bunsen replied to it by quoting approvingly the anti-materialist views of German philosophy, particularly Kant and the great speculative linguist Humboldt:

'The materialists have never been able to show the possibility of the first step...How, indeed, could reason spring out of a state which is destitute of reason? How can speech, the expression of thought, develop itself, in a year or in millions of years, out of inarticulated sounds, which express feelings of pleasure, pain, and appetite?...'<sup>4</sup>

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3. God in History I, p. 16.

4. Outlines IV, p. 75 and see pp. 75-9 passim.

Language and religious consciousness were the 'primary products and acts of the human mind'<sup>5</sup> on the basis of which all subsequent human development was built. Man developed these qualities along the progressive principle to which all Creation conforms: the principle of ever greater spiritualization of the finite.

'The end of all ethical effort is, philosophically speaking, that Nature becomes Spirit; and the aim of creation is, that Spirit ends in becoming incarnate. For this is the process of the realization of the infinite in the finite, and man has to reproduce the very thought and act of creation, he being the finite mirror of the Infinite in the Universe'.<sup>6</sup>

The result of the progress of the spiritualizing principle in language and religious consciousness was thus civilization:

'With man's perception of the Universe as a Whole is ever associated the artistic impulse to embody the Spirit of the Universe in material forms. As Nature is ever striving to become Spirit, so is the indwelling spirit ever striving to embody itself in outward form. When this ceaseless aspiration takes the direction of religion, it gives birth to worship and mythological legend, sacrifices and holy rites and art; when it is directed towards the outer world, it gives birth first to language, then to polity and law and science'.<sup>7</sup>

In order to chart the progressive principle in universal history several methods lay already to hand. One was the orthodox Christian theme marking the periods of Creation, Flood, Christ's Coming on Earth and His Second Coming in the Future. The German idealists often adopted another, though not irreconcilable scheme, the 'Ages' theory. This structured the growth of human civilization

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5. God in History III, p. 302.

6. Outlines IV, p. 159.

7. God in History I, p. 35.

from its primitive origins in the family, through tribal organization to the nation, and then through the great national achievements of Greece and Rome to the modern era. Hegel had made such a linear theory much more sophisticated by describing progress as the result of a clash of opposites, thesis and antithesis, and their unity or synthesis. Bunsen accepted the theory of the dialectic mode of progress as well as both the Christian and the "ages" framework, with a few necessary readjustments. For example the recent rediscovery of the antiquity of Egypt forced Greece and Rome together in the Third Age while Egypt alone took over the Second Age, the adolescence of Humanity. However Bunsen subordinated all these theoretical methods to his preferred mode of tracing the path of God in universal history: the growth of language itself.

Language had a particularly important function amongst the four individual or two pairs of divinely endowed human qualities. It alone was the medium of contact between man's finite environment and his inner, essentially supra-finite self. It alone transmitted man's reason and religious consciousness, both mirror and agent of the human spirit. It alone of human qualities could and had been concretely and scientifically studied. Linguistics had ordered language into morphologically defined types. Bunsen believed that such types could be structured according to the progressive principle he defined for all things. The 'isolating' 'agglutinative' and 'inflected' types described by early linguistics represented to him a literal historical succession, from the origin of language

to its highest stage, in a direction from simple to complex. To interpret the abstract 'types' literally and to link them historically in this way was a step which no professional linguist, not even the philosophically-minded Humboldt, had ever openly taken, however much they might assume it covertly. Bunsen was quite conscious of the originality of asserting that the growth of linguistic types was 'more conclusive than the succession of strata in geology' for showing the progress of universal history.<sup>8</sup>

The use of linguistic types in this way posed some dangers. Following Humboldt the linguistic definition stood as a shorthand description of group intellect. But Humboldt complicated discussion of the way in which a linguistic type was related to a mode of thought, and that mode of thought was transmitted through and become characteristic of cultural or ethnic groups was short-circuited by Bunsen. He operated at a much simpler level, of virtual linguistic-cultural-ethnic group equivalence. Throughout his theory of universal history he slipped into an easy identification of linguistic type with the peoples who were the examples of that type. Often - as with the Chinese - the known or assumed characteristics of specific peoples actually became part of the definition of the linguistic type they were supposed to represent. The ambiguity of the

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8. Outlines IV, p. 126; for Bunsen's conviction that he was taking up where Humboldt left off see Outlines III, pp. 58-60. Note that Bunsen telescoped Humboldt's 'agglutinative' and 'incorporating' types into one 'agglutinative' type in line with Bopp's theory of the three stages of origin of Indo-European inflection.

relationship of linguistic form to group cultural characteristics continued to be unresolved: for Bunsen the one functioned as cause and/or effect of the other, but never consistently. Either could be discussed at will - they were synonymous. Perhaps the meaning of linguistic type even extended to a physical dimension. For Blumenbach, Prichard and Latham language played an important role in physical classification of man. Bunsen too at one moment declared that his theory involved a 'universal comparative ethnological philology',<sup>9</sup> and often loosely used the word 'race' or breezily discussed the continuity of a group's 'inherent' characteristics. The direction of movement from simple to complex therefore applied to much more than linguistic structure in abstract. Added to such ambiguities was Bunsen's inbuilt Eurocentrism. The pinnacle of universal-historical progress in language was not surprisingly the linguistic type belonging to the great nations of Nineteenth century Europe, even more specifically, those Europeans with whom Bunsen especially identified himself: the Teutonic subgroup, English and German, of the Indo-European family. Universal history thus tottered on the verge of an outright Eurocentric reading of all human events, conveniently proved by the 'scientifically-based' theory of the superiority of Indo-European inflection.

However the strength of the religious element in Bunsen's thought pulled the theory of universal history in a different direction. By divine Creation man was a unity, his basic endowments the same. Bunsen interpreted this too

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9. Outlines III, p. 60.

on a literal level: one Urvolk in one Urheimat, one original human language, one physical type, one religious consciousness. He would find an explanation for all human linguistic, religious, cultural and physical differences consistent with original human unity. For example on the physical question Bunsen adopted Prichard's monogenism, attributing differences to climatic influences in different parts of the globe.<sup>10</sup> So convinced was he that he sought to prove original human unity also by linguistic means. He tried to show that morphologically defined types were literally related and completely continuous with one another. Breaking with the new linguistics altogether he even reverted to a far older and currently less reputable technique: the use of crude etymological comparisons cutting right across morphological types. As his religious convictions determined the beginning of universal history, so they determined its end and goal. It was in accordance with the second triad of Creation, and the spiritualizing principle of progress:

'The goal of humanity is a state of the world in which the society of man, although divided by tongues, nations, and governments, shall exhibit that incarnation of divine life which is called ..."the Kingdom of God", or "the Church" in the highest sense'.<sup>11</sup>

Between the beginning and end of universal history he continued to emphasize spiritual progress. Genuine religious foundations dominated the whole theory, whether in details - for example, his preference for Biblically-based

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10. See Outlines IV, pp. 107-8.

11. Ibid., p. 162.

terminology - or actual framework - for example, the centrality of Christianity. This religious emphasis interacted with his ambiguously-defined linguistic Eurocentrism in a very complicated way as Bunsen tried to unite revelation and reason in universal history.

If Bunsen's account of the origin of man was fundamentally religious, when it came to offering more specific information about primaeval humanity he adopted the critical stance of one committed also to the dictates of reason. The orthodox textbook for the primitive era, Genesis, might indeed provide the best spiritual account of human origins, but it also required careful, rational interpretation:

'The Biblical tradition consequently must be understood according to the spirit, on the basis of the letter rightly understood: a method which has been triumphantly discussed and settled by research and science during a century'.<sup>12</sup>

On the question of chronology for example, the Bible contained no relevant information at all about this first Age. The various Biblical chronologies in circulation were nothing but

'... the arbitrary barriers which Jewish superstition and Christian sloth have erected upon God's free field of human history... The ordinary views as to the existence of our race and the antiquity of its records, are as childish as were the ideas and assumptions current fifty years ago about the age of this planet'.<sup>13</sup>

At least three scientific disciplines could contribute toward a more legitimate chronological framework: the new

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12. Egypt IV, p. 392; for Bunsen's approach to the Bible as (primarily) a spiritual account of Creation and the early history of man, with (secondary) historical overtones see ibid., pp. 376-428. The basis of this approach is his analysis of the special nature of the Hebrews for which see below.

13. Ibid., p. 21.

geology, Egyptology, and the theory of linguistic stratification itself.

According to current speculations about the geological formation of the earth, the angle of tilt of the earth's axis changed in a set cyclical way. About the year 20,000 B.C. and at regular 20,000-year intervals before and after that date, the angle of tilt was such as to create the most temperate climatic conditions in the northern hemisphere. By the half-way point in the cycle, 10,000 B.C., and at regular 20,000-year cycles before and after that date, the opposite, the most unfavourable angle of tilt for the northern hemisphere, occurred. Bunsen took the location of man's Urheimat unquestioningly as the northern hemisphere. Since God would not, of course, have created man to suffer unbearable cold or a hostile climate, one of the favourable periods of tilt for the northern hemisphere must have been the epoch of human appearance on earth.<sup>14</sup> To determine which, he worked backwards from historical facts, taken from the oldest known civilization - Egypt. The current dates for the establishment of the united Old Kingdom by Menes were generally high: Bunsen's own at 3623 B.C. was typical. He pointed out that the phenomenon of a united Kingdom could not occur overnight:

'...Menes is only the starting point of a new order of things. A united empire is raised upon a primitive basis, with many stages of progression

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14. See Bunsen's computations in ibid., pp. 52-55; they are based especially on the work of Joseph Adhémar, Revolutions de la Mer, Déluges périodiques, Paris, 1842.



in its political development, with an advanced language and assuredly also not without a written character. Its civil and political institutions again we have seen growing out of a religious system partly provincial, partly uniform. We must consequently place the epoch of the formation of language anterior to the formation of myths. Thus we have three distinct stages in the life of Egypt before Menes, each succeeding one being dependent upon the progressive development of the preceding'.<sup>15</sup>

To date the formation of the Egyptian stage the idea of linguistic stratification was applied. According to the leading researches of Lepsius the Egyptian languages was not of the 'isolating' type of the primitive language of mankind, but very much more sophisticated. If the necessary pre-history of Egypt alone threw mankind back several thousand more years - Bunsen computed the period 14,000 - 12,000 B.C.<sup>16</sup> - the necessary linguistic stages before the Egyptian level was reached went back even further. Bunsen ultimately opted for the virtues of economy: he chose the lowest favourable geological epoch, 20,000 B.C., as the likely date of human appearance on earth. The formation of language up to the Egyptian stage could be accounted for between 20,000 and 12-14,000 B.C.<sup>17</sup> To determine the location of the event, Genesis and geology, or revelation and reason,

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15. Egypt IV, p. 553.

16. See ibid., pp. 55-59 for the prehistorical computations; for Bunsen's detailed reconstruction of Egyptian historical dates see Egypt II and III passim.

17. The argument for economy is given in Egypt IV, pp. 54-5 and p. 563.

were again combined. The Garden of Eden, traditionally located in northern-central Asia, was described with due regard for new scientific theories about the changing shape of the Eurasian land mass:

'The cradle of our race was in Northern Asia. There is arose at the most favourable period for our northern hemisphere, in that region now for the most part uninhabitable, which extends southward as far as the 40th degree of north latitude, and from the 60th to the 100th degree of longitude. On the north this district was bounded at about the 53rd degree by what was then the open North Sea, with the Ural as an island: on the east it was surrounded by the Altai and the Chinese Himalaya, on the south by the chain of the Paropamisus, extending from Asia Minor to Eastern Asia, and on the west by the Caucasus and Ararat. We have therefore a primeval country containing on an average 1½ degrees of latitude and 50 degrees of longitude'.<sup>18</sup>

At this time and in this place began the First Age of Humanity.<sup>19</sup> As symbolically represented by the Biblical Adam and his descendants, man formed a small, tightly-knit, absolutely equal family-based community within which he began to develop his innate linguistic and religious instincts. Working backwards along the theory of linguistic stratification and through the principle of spiritualization, Bunsen logically reconstructed the nature of the original human language. It was extremely simple and concrete:

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18. Ibid., p. 557.

19. For a tabular synopsis of Bunsen's Ages of the World and their prime occurrences see Appendix I below.

'...every sound had originally a meaning, and every unity of sounds (every syllable) answered to a unity of object in the outward world for the world of mind...every word had first a substantial object in the outward world, and received only in process of time an application to the inward...' <sup>20</sup>

The original simple sound/word would have fulfilled all possible grammatical functions - it would have been noun, verb, adjective; each word itself would have implied a complete existential proposition, accompanied if necessary by gesture or accentuation to convey negation or qualification. Simple picture-writing would have accompanied this first language. In an often-used metaphor from the natural sciences, recalling the mood of early linguistic speculations, Bunsen termed this the 'inorganic' stage of language. It preceded 'organic' language just as the natural world preceded man, just as 'all organic life springs out of inorganic soil...' <sup>21</sup> The parallel state of religious consciousness would have been simply that basic 'instinctive consciousness of a rational unity of the kosmos, of things and of mind...' <sup>22</sup> with which all men were endowed, symbolized concretely in the outer world: the worship of the sky on the one hand, and of ancestral spirits on the other.

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20. Outlines IV, p. 80; see also Bunsen's attempt to define the historical information contained in the spiritual Biblical account of the ante-diluvian Age, Egypt IV, p. 376 ff.
21. Ibid., p. 47 and see the discussion in Outlines IV, pp. 80-85.
22. Egypt IV, p. 558.

Bunsen's logical reconstruction of primaeval humanity not only conformed with the abstract 'isolating' type of language, but was very clearly tailored to fit the current European view of the prime example of that type, the Chinese language and culture. Bunsen made the language-culture equation openly: he chose the term 'Sinism' to describe the earliest stage of Humanity, and meant the identification to be literal. The modern Chinese are

'... the relics of the actual primordial inhabitants of the earth'.<sup>23</sup> Confidently he set about explaining how Sinism had been transferred out of the Urheimat to Chinese location and perpetuated there. Sinism must have required thousands of years to fully develop in the Urheimat, however the Urvolk must have passed beyond the Sinism stage before 14,000 B.C., already the time of a more advanced (Egyptian) linguistic stage. Sinism survived in one human group because of their early migration away from the Urheimat and also because of the innate characteristics of these particular migrants, the Chinese.

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23. God in History I, p. 224. Bunsen's 'Sinism' identified monosyllabism very specifically with Chinese, however without distinguishing changes in the language over time, or the various different dialects, or the effect of foreign influences and dynasties. Such a view was still prevalent in the first half of the century, even though Remusat and Julien were trying to point out its inaccuracy. However Bunsen's focus on China alone for the monosyllabic type was less common: he depended on Müller's classification of a few far eastern languages bordering on China as 'agglutinative' rather than monosyllabic. Others did not agree: Benfey, in his Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft, defined a whole Indo-Chinese 'monosyllabic' group (pp. 760-768) including Tibetan and Thai. The languages of Korea and Burma were still too little known to be classifiable. Thus in general the geographic extent and the actual linguistic meaning of Bunsen's monosyllabic 'Sinism' remained very vague.

Bunsen supported these assertions with different types of evidence. Firstly, the Bible mentioned a migration away from the Urheimat by the symbolic personality 'Kain' in an easterly direction. Geographically the evidence pointed to

'... the high tableland of Mongolia... and the Chinese derive their rivers mythologically from these primordial regions'.<sup>24</sup>

The date of this Chinese migration was put, conveniently for his own chronological system, around 15,000 B.C. Secondly, Bunsen constructed a theory of the effect of 'colonization' of a language away from the main body of its speakers, based on his observations of the relationship of the isolated 'colonized' Icelandic language with the rest of the Germanic group. A 'colonized' language is frozen in the state at which it left the parent language, however is capable of developing a secondary direction of its own.<sup>25</sup> However - and here a third type of evidence took over - this had not occurred in the Chinese case. Bunsen adopted wholesale the current European view of the static Chinese culture. The Chinese chose - whether deliberately, or inevitably as part and parcel of their language structure was not made clear - to continue the path of inorganic concrete language ad infinitum. By resisting the universal principle of progress, this choice led to petrification. Müller assisted on the cultural plane by stating that Chinese society still rested at the first, family stage of human civilization. Bunsen himself rose to unqualified

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24. Outlines IV, p. 121 and also Egypt IV, p. 388.

25. On 'colonization' see Outlines IV, p. 52 ff.

peaks of despair over the spiritual inadequacies of the Chinese, somehow linked with the continuing inorganic state of their language.

'...The spontaneous impulse to intellectual activity is lacking...', a dreadful tendency to materialism and stagnation infected the whole culture. Reformers like Confucius and Lao-Tse laboured in vain to reawaken the living truths of primitive Sinism, but the 'death-like sleep' of Chinese 'ossification' had so far defeated all progressive forces.<sup>26</sup>

Bunsen thus adopted an extremely pessimistic evaluation of what he himself estimated as between one-third and one-quarter of the entire human race. Since the Chinese have not, perhaps cannot, break the fatal materialistic grip of their own language or nature, and since spiritualization was the first basic definition of all progress, the Chinese were denied any possibility of progress of their own accord. Their only hope lay in the intervention of an external, spiritualizing agent - European Christianity - to break the evil spell:

'... we see before our very eyes, how the religion of the Spirit, how the Bible and the Spirit everywhere know how to break the spell, and dissolve the cataleptic trance in which so large a portion of our race in China...seem to lie wrapt...'<sup>27</sup>

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26. Quotation from God in History I, p. 269 and see the whole section on the Chinese in ibid., pp. 243-272. See Müller's correlation between language type and political organization in Outlines III, pp. 281-286, on Chinese pp. 284-5.
27. God in History I, pp. 269-70.

Though the entry of such a progressive force would cause the destruction of materialist Chinese culture, by definition, Bunsen justified that step in the name of universal historical progress, and looked forward to the day when the Bible and the Spirit ruled there.

After the departure of the Chinese colonists Bunsen found indications of the growth of further differentiation even within the main body of Asiatic Urvolk. Though mankind continued to progress according to the spiritualizing principle, Genesis hinted symbolically at a gradual separation of two groups, 'Kain' and 'Abel' and their descendants. The one group, agricultural city builders, moved probably even geographically apart from the other, the nomadic shepherds.<sup>28</sup> The division was only just being established in the period of growth of language and religious consciousness after Sinism. It became partly crystallized outside the Urheimat in the next two stages of universal history, 'Turanism' and 'Khamism'.

Around 15,000 B.C. the remaining Urvolk progressed into the 'organic' stage of language; simply put, they broke the spell of monosyllabism under which the Chinese still labour. Having inherited Sinism's rigid and multi-purpose concrete roots, the Urvolk began to combine them into polysyllables, at first in the simplest possible

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28. See Egypt IV, p. 385 ff. and p. 424 ff; see also Henry Lange's Bibelatlas to Bunsen's Bibelwerk, drawn to Bunsen's specifications, Map I, entitled 'Das Umland der Menschheit' divided into two geographic centres, west and east.

way. Eventually, after such combinations became common, certain often-combined roots were stylized so as to virtually lose their original concrete meaning and take on abstract, grammatical functions. The linguistic description of this stage was that of 'agglutinative' form. As a description it fitted several languages, the best known examples being the Finno-Ugric and the Altaic dialects, and, if stretched into an abstract 'type' of language covering all non-inflected, non-isolating forms, 'agglutination' could be applied to cover a huge number of little-known languages in the farthest corners of the earth. Bunsen took this large-scale view of agglutination, and relied on Max Müller to make it linguistically plausible. The term they adopted for the agglutinative stage was 'Turanism'.<sup>29</sup>

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29. 'Turanism was one of the current possible alternative terms to describe the Ural-Altai relationship Castrén had especially worked on. The geographic area 'Turan' and the 'Tuirya' people who occupied it are mentioned in the Old Persian Avesta, referring to the north-eastern area, basically that of Turkey ( see A Comparative Etymological Dictionary of the English Language, Amsterdam, London and New York, 1967, vol. II, p. 1664). The distinction between the 'Tuirya' and themselves, the 'Arya', was always emphasized in the ancient Persian myths. Müller adopted the Persian terminology from the later epic poem, the Shanameh (see Outlines III, pp. 122-7 and p. 310 ff.) Thus 'Turanian' referred very specifically at least initially to the Turkish language or people, and by Castrén's Ural-Altai link, to a wider middle-Eurasian phenomenon. The distinguishing characteristic of 'agglutination' was commonly agreed on by contemporary linguists for all these languages, again following Castrén: again the Turkish language formed the central core of this. Müller too saw the Turkish as the most classically agglutinative of the Turanian languages (ibid., p. 335). He transferred the definition and the term outside that given by previous research when he applied it also to the Thai, Tibetan, Malay, Himalayan dialects and the south Indian Dravidian. Most of his Letter on



The first obstacle in their path was the obvious extreme diversity of the multifarious languages the 'Turanian' stage was supposed to have produced. Very

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the Turanian Languages concentrated on trying to prove the validity of extending Turanian 'agglutination' from the best-known Turkish and Finno-Ugric foundation to these new groups. It should be noted that Castrén rejected the term 'Turanian' as too limited to the Turkish base even to be applied to the Ural-Altaiic group (Nordische Reisen und Forschungen, ed. by A. Schiefner, vol. IV, St. Petersburg, 1857, p. 21). Finally it should be stressed that by 'Turanism' and 'Turanian' Bunsen and Müller meant only a linguistic-based relationship, which was itself difficult enough to establish. The late Nineteenth and early Twentieth century saw an overtly nationalistic and political use of these terms by certain Hungarian, Turkish and Finnic intellectuals, who saw in 'pan-Turanism' a solution to the incursions of surrounding powerful non-Turanian peoples, particularly the Russians (see, inter alia, Joseph A. Kessler, 'Turanism and Pan-Turanism in Hungary 1890-1945', Ph.D. Dissertation, University California, Berkeley, 1967; Bernard Lewis, The Emergence of Modern Turkey, London, etc., 1961, pp. 337-346; Walter Kolarz, Myths and Realities in Eastern Europe, London, 1946; A Manual on the Turanians and Pan-Turanism, compiled by the Geographical Section of the Naval Intelligence Division, Naval Staff, Admiralty, London? 1920? . Bunsen and Müller's 'Turanism' served only as the initial linguistic hypothesis upon which such later sophistications were constructed.

few Turanian dialects could be shown to have a respectable genetic relationship with each other, which in the eyes of Indo-European linguists was the crucial factor. Bunsen and Müller turned the description 'agglutination' to their own account, stressing that variety was itself implied by the simplicity of the agglutinative principle. New formations were easily available; differentiation could easily occur if Turanian-speakers were isolated from each other, for they possessed

'... an abundance of forms... from which all took what seemed useful and necessary to them according to their different tastes and characters'.<sup>30</sup>

Supporting the logical unity of all 'agglutinative' languages, Bunsen and Müller reverted to the older method of direct etymological comparisons - a method still currently in use to study non-Indo-European languages, particularly those about which not much was known.<sup>31</sup> Care was taken to link Turanian agglutination at one end to Sinism, and at the other to the highest, inflected type of language: a concern which not only reflected the need to prove the continuity of linguistic types in universal history, but also conformed with Bopp's theory of the origin of Indo-European inflection. Thus Müller traced two parallel series

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30. Outlines III, p. 480.

31. See ibid., p. 446 ff. and the comparative tables of roots pp. 489-521.

of languages ascending from quasi-Sinistic to quasi-inflected, one in the north: Tungusic - Mongolic - Turkic - Finno-Ugric, and the other, less well-known, in the south: Thai - Malay - Tibetan - Tamul.<sup>32</sup> Linguistic continuity was not only formal, but in Bunsen's eyes a literal continuity of roots. Obediently, therefore, Müller asserted that some of the common Turanian roots '... can be proved to be the common property of the Turanian, the Semitic and the [Indo-European] branches...', although such examples were but 'vague and fragmentary'.<sup>33</sup>

The next problem for Bunsen and Müller was whether the useful universal-historical stage of Turanian agglutination would stand the scrutiny of professional linguists. It was not one of these, but the scientifically-minded philosopher of Kosmos, Alexander von Humboldt, who gently first pointed out the convenient vagueness of the definition of Turanism to Bunsen:

'... Die turanischen Sprachen (der Name ist nicht ohne Gefahr) müssen nicht so lax behandelt werden, dass die Unzahl der Sprachen, als hätten sie alle einen Typus, mongolische gemacht werden! Turanische wird dann eine Art Polterkammer, in die man packt, was man noch nicht studiert hat. Dürfte ich mir einen Scherz erlauben, so erinnerte ich an des Chemikers Hassenfratz Einteilung der Metalle in 2 Klassen ceux qui sentent l'ail et ceux qui ne le sentent pas. Dans la première classe je place l'arsenic seul et dans l'autre classe tous les autres métaux...' <sup>34</sup>

In public Bunsen and Müller had already replied to any such critiques. In the Outlines the argument was advanced that

32. Ibid., pp. 334-6 and p. 480 ff.

33. Ibid., pp. 478-9.

34. Letter from Alexander von Humboldt to Bunsen, 30 December 1854, reprinted in Briefe von Alexander von Humboldt an C.C.J. Freiherr von Bunsen, Leipzig, 1869, p. 190.

important philosophical and historical questions demanded some attempt to group the languages concerned, and that early Indo-European studies too had indulged in initially controversial hypotheses to their eventual profit:

'Without Frederick Schlegel, we should have had no Bopp and Pott; without Sir William Jones, no Colebrooke and Wilson...' 35

As to the methods of proof employed to support the Turanian hypothesis, Bunsen and Müller were aware that a reversion to crude etymological comparisons might smack of the 'irregular and unscientific method' of discredited earlier language studies. However Bunsen explained why he used it in the Turanian case and would indeed continue to use it throughout his universal history. He claimed - with some measure of perception - that the new Indo-European linguistics emphasized morphology and genetic relationships in language study because such were the features crucial for its own language group. Such methods were simply too rigid outside the Indo-European group, and certainly could not apply to the cross-morphological universal-historical relationships Bunsen was interested in. Etymological comparisons, on the other hand, could perhaps fulfil this large-scale function:

'But why... why should we despair of finding also a strictly scientific method for investigating a more remote affinity by a comparison of the roots of their substantial words?' 36

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35. Outlines III, p. 280

36. Ibid., pp. 174-5 and see whole section pp. 172-5.

It is doubtful whether Bunsen's etymological comparisons were in fact 'scientific' or that he ever perfected an adequate methodical base for constructing them. Having made his criticism of the new linguistic techniques he proceeded to assume the reliability of his own approach. On such a basis, he asserted that the Turanian stage existed in fact as well as being a universal historical necessity: it was

'... a real stage in the historical development of Humanity; it has a history of its own, and it testifies to the autochthonic character of this great branch of the human family...Turanism is not a mere empty term, nor yet a mere superficial phenomenon, but rather a fact of great importance, representing an integral idea in the general history of our race...' 37

Beneath the surface however Bunsen and his young protégé were not as fully in agreement as they seemed in print. The difference between them, not only in the Turanian case but in general, was a subtle one of degree. In another context Bunsen revealed it himself when he wrote to Müller

'... I must proclaim what is positively true far more sharply...I arrive at the same point which you aim at, but without your roundabout way, which is but a makeshift. But in the fundamental conception.... we do certainly agree altogether' 38

There were some differences about Turanian. Typically Bunsen pushed the logic of the 'agglutination' definition to its end. Since there were only three linguistic types which he accepted, 'agglutination' - that is to say, the

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37. God in History I, p. 241.

38. Letter from Bunsen to Max Müller of July 17, 1856, reprinted in Chips III, see p. 497.

term 'Turanian' - had to cover every non-isolating, non-inflected language on earth. Bunsen asserted this conclusion quite positively.<sup>39</sup> However Max Müller discussed only Eurasian Turanian languages in the crucial letter in the Outlines. Many years later he claimed that his model for Turanian had been Rask's 'Skythic' family - a large group but yet not as large as Bunsen required. Even in the 1854 contributions Müller's hesitancy about annexing the languages of Africa, America, Oceania, Japan and Korea could be sensed, though he dutifully implied that it could be done. Furthermore Müller was always more cautious about methods of proof than Bunsen: as a professional linguist he preferred to rely on the accepted morphological mode of argument, the plausibility of the historical continuity of isolating-agglutinative-inflected forms based on Bopp's agglutinative theory of inflection. Indeed he even expressed some reservations about the possibility of finding common Turanian roots in 1854. However these comments were made in the course of a highly technical argument, were swamped by the universal-historical context, and were contradicted at times by Müller himself.<sup>40</sup>

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39. See Outlines IV, p. 111 ff.

40. Müller's reference to Rask can be found in his Natural Religion, 2nd edition, London, 1892 p. 325, and repeated in the rewritten edition of his Lectures on the Science of Language, Vol. I, London, 1891, p. 397. The difficulty of finding primaevial roots intact is an undercurrent of his discussion on Turanian unity in Outlines III, p. 444 ff, and his preference for solid grammatically based arguments revealed in his article on 'Comparative philology' in the Edinburgh Review, 1851, pp. 309-10. The conjectural nature of Bunsen's extension of the Turanian group is also stated in the Outlines III, pp. 483-4. However the possibility of finding common Turanian roots, and/or the united origin of all human languages was equally stressed throughout his Conclusion, ibid., pp. 473-486.

Both the Turanian theorists immediately equated the agglutinative stage of language with the historical reality of those peoples who spoke the languages thus classed. Their account of Turanism had therefore also to explain the origin, differentiation and geographic spread of the peoples concerned, and to give some insight into their character. The agglutinative mode of language had been deeply impressed upon the Urvolk just after Chinese migration. Soon afterwards various tribes began to stream out of the Urheimat in two nuclei - north and south - carrying the Turanian stage with them. The chronology of migration followed the direction of (modern) linguistic sophistication, the quasi-Sinistic languages having been the first to migrate, the quasi-inflected, the last. The close relationship demonstrable in the case of accepted sub-groups like Finno-Ugric was simply the result of group migration, lengthy cohabitation and late separation from each other.<sup>41</sup> Turanian tribes had their own particular religious consciousness, a step beyond the Sinism stage just as their language was. Turanism revered the divine in all the forces of nature, seen as the ruling forces of the universe. Just as there were many different Turanian languages so there were many different forms of this nature-worship stage. Bunsen was also influenced by Müller's essay on 'Comparative Mythology' to ascribe a certain power to 'organic' forms of language - of which Turanism was the earliest - to produce mythology. The most advanced Turanians -

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41. Ibid., p. 480 ff.

for example the Finns with their Kalevala - created coherent nature-myth cycles out of misunderstandings of original metaphors and epithets applied to the powers of nature. As well as these advances however Turanian religion had its negative side: an innate trend to superstition perfectly exemplified in the well-known Finno-Ugric phenomenon of Shamanism.<sup>42</sup> The discussion of Turanism was rounded off by placing them within the theoretical stages of growth of human civilization. Turanism represented the next stage on from monosyllabic family structure: the 'tribal' stage of humanity. It was a time of fluid migration, easy separation and as yet little social or political consolidation. The Biblical figure Nimrod, or the historical Attila were the representative types of Turanism:

'... the hunting monarch, wild and valiant, the man of conquest not of civilization'.<sup>43</sup>

Turanians have continued to fill the same role down to the present - the Huns and Tatars were truly typical.

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42. See Bunsen's praise of Müller's 'Comparative Mythology' in his abovementioned letter of July 1856, Chips III, p. 497. However Bunsen stressed somewhat more than Müller the different spiritual levels of religious consciousness from linguistic group to linguistic group, and attributed their different mythologies as much to the spiritual as to the linguistic difference: see the analysis of the factors within mythology in Egypt IV, pp. 60-78; his debt was basically to older philosophies of mythology, of Heyne, Schelling and Creuzer, see ibid., pp. 305-11. On Turanian religion in general see God in History I pp. 236-242; the Kalevala was only mentioned in passing and never investigated: see God in History II, p. 403 and Egypt IV, p. 457.
43. Outlines IV, p. 23; on Nimrod's 'Skythic' Empire see Egypt IV, pp. 410-418.



In Bunsen's confident version of Turanism the Turanian tribes formed the aboriginal population of the whole earth apart from China, originating in the primaeval age. The three interlocking sets of characteristics - flexible agglutinative linguistic form, magical nature-worship, and nomadic tribalism - fitted them well for such a role in universal history. They also happened to conform with the European view of most modern 'aboriginal' tribes. Bunsen conveniently explained this continuity to the present by invoking the notion of 'colonization' outside the Urheimat and the limiting effect of language on national psychology, or vice versa. The characteristics of Turanism, like those of Sinism, were self-perpetuating and limiting: primitiveness and wildness became somehow 'hereditary' features of the whole group. Though the most advanced Turanians have virtually adopted inflected forms and European-style civilization - the ascending scale of Turanian linguistic complexity also measured cultural advancement from the European vantage point - yet even these peoples had not broken out of the Turanian mould. Bunsen refused to face the question of the political sophistication and national consolidation of 'Turanian' groups like the Magyars and the Turks in the modern day; nor did he admit the fact of their long-term political domination over 'higher' groups speaking inflected languages. The explanation for such incongruities probably lay in the adoption of 'higher' religions - Christianity or Islam - by these particular Turanians, or perhaps even 'mixed blood': but such explanations were never explicitly offered,

for the whole problem was avoided. The distinction between Turanian and non-Turanian remained. As with Sinism Bunsen restated the Eurocentric attitude on a 'scientific basis'.<sup>44</sup>

Yet sometimes Bunsen's view of Turanism was complicated by his loyalty to the facts of language, and another strand in his universal history - that stressing unity and continuity. Agglutination was so clearly on the road to inflection according to the best linguistic theories that Bunsen felt justified in postulating a special relationship between Turanian and Indo-European language, transformed by universal historical theory into a single phenomenon, 'Japhetism'. There were actually two meanings of the term 'Japhetic', and two approaches to Turanism. The wider use of 'Japhetic' probably preferred by Bunsen, took a more positive view of Turanism, the origins of later Indo-European inflection, and therefore underlined their continuity. The narrower use of 'Japhetic' contrasted Turanism sharply with absolutely Indo-European Japhetism, emphasizing their dissimilarity and Japhetic superiority. Müller had already begun to stress the narrower meaning of 'Japhetism' in the 1840's when trying to establish the difference between Indo-European and non-Indo-European, on all levels, in India. Even in terminology he systematically referred to the first as 'Aryan', making the contrast with Turanian inevitable. Bunsen on the other hand rejoiced in the unspecific nature of the Biblical term 'Japhetic', and never made a final decision between wider or narrower use.

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44. Outlines IV, p. 23; on Nimrod's 'Skythic' Empire see Egypt IV, pp. 410-418.

The distinction yet connection between Turanian and Indo-European was continued throughout under the formula:

'...the Turanian is...the as yet undeveloped Aryan; unless we prefer to say that the Aryan is the thoughtful, intelligent, definitely-stamped Turanian..... The Turanians have been driven out by their mentally superior brethren into the more inhospitable regions of the earth; where most of them drag on a miserable and precarious existence. But they... may, nay to some extent will, when by the Aryans awakened to a higher life by means of religion so called, take a place in the general history of man, especially in the case of those tribes which are of mixed blood. The Osmanli Turks supply an example of this, still more the Finns, and most of all the Magyars'.<sup>45</sup>

With the departure of the Turanians universal history reached that point at which Bunsen placed the origins

45. God in History I, p. 240. Early and late examples of the wider use of 'Japhetic' can be found: for example, in his paper read to the British Association in 1847 Bunsen claimed that the whole of Asia belonged  
'... to one great original family, divided into the Iranian and Turanian branches. We beg to call this definitively the Japhetic race'. (pp. 296-7).

In Egypt IV, over a decade later, he still asserted the 'historical connection of the Turanians and Iranians as a matter of fact...' (p. 36) on their linguistic similarities. For the narrower use of 'Japhetic' and Bunsen's generally wavering use of terminology for the Indo-European group see below. See Müller's emphasis on the 'Aryan' and non-'Aryan' distinction in his paper to the British Association of 1847, 'On the Relation of the Bengali to the Arian and Aboriginal languages of India', and in the Outlines III, p. 484:

'They are Arians...inasmuch as they are no longer Turanians; and though their antecedent growth must have passed through a Turanian phase, this is overcome... It is only after having conquered in themselves Turanianism, in every sense of the word, that they advance through Asia and Europe...'

Note that the narrower use of 'Japhetic' (= Indo-European) is the one consistently meant by our usage of the term, including that in the Appendix, unless otherwise specified.

of Egypt, chronologically around 14,000 B.C. He arrived at this view by combining chronological and linguistic data on Egyptian civilization mostly supplied by Lepsius. For most of Champollion's audience in the 1820's and 1830's Egypt was significant simply because it challenged the assumptions of orthodox Biblical chronology, though it was difficult to precisely define the extent of that challenge. At first Bunsen's interest too was directed toward spelling out Egypt's implications for the antiquity of man by reconstructing its chronology. The choice of Richard Lepsius as a collaborator was an excellent one since the young man rapidly developed into the leading, indeed almost the only figure in Egyptology from the death of Champollion at least to the 1850's. The Bunsen-Lepsius chronological reconstruction supplemented the basic, though varying, Greek reports of Manetho's king list with the fragmentary Turin papyrus and copies of individual royal cartouches from Champollion's and Lepsius' own collections. By 1842 they achieved some highly significant results: a system of division into 'old' and 'new' Kingdoms divided by the Hyksos invasion, and a much-simplified dynastic scheme which defined several of Manetho's dynasties as contemporaneous. However Bunsen and Lepsius clashed over the question of establishing which of the Greek versions of Manetho should ultimately be followed, and consequently over which dynasties should be defined as contemporaneous. As a result Lepsius encouraged Bunsen to publish his own version of the chronology while he led the great Egyptian expedition of 1842-6, during which he anticipated gaining further information.

These expectations were certainly fulfilled. Lepsius achieved the most exhaustive survey of surface monuments up to that time, and his results, published in 12 massive volumes as Denkmäler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien (1849-58), provided the fundamental materials for Egyptology in all ways until the archaeological digs of Mariette in the second half of the century, and still retain importance today. Despite the break between them Bunsen benefited considerably by receiving information from Lepsius in the field and later, well before the publication of the Denkmäler. Thus, while acknowledging his disagreement with Lepsius in details, Bunsen's chronological reconstruction could claim the support of his latest researches and a fundamental agreement with his results.<sup>46</sup>

During the same period of collaboration Lepsius gave Bunsen the key to a far more profound interpretation of 'Egypt's Place in Universal History' than simply chronological. In the Zwei Sprachvergleichende Abhandlungen of 1835-6 Lepsius put forward the idea that the Egyptian language was to be positioned as an earlier, intermediary form somewhere between the systems of Semitic and Indo-

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46. See the discussion of the Bunsen-Lepsius collaboration in Chapter 2, above, the reconstruction in general in Egypt I-III, Bunsen's comments in the introductory sections of these volumes, especially I pp. vii-xxii, II, pp. vii-xxiv and pp. 19-29 and III, pp. ix-xxviii and pp. 3-34, Lepsius' Preface to the Chronologie der Aegypter and pp. 405-10, 510-11. F.A.F. Mariette, the first great Egyptological archaeologist indicated that Bunsen's Egypt was probably the first chronological reconstruction to attempt to use the fragmentary Turin Papyrus for the very confused first few dynasties of Manetho: see Mariette's 'Note sur un Fragment du Papyrus Royal du Turin...', extract from the Revue Archéologique (s.l.n.d.), p. 305 ff.

European inflection. He based this conclusion on his recently-acquired knowledge of Coptic and the theory of palaeographical development in history he had sketched in 1834. Like Bunsen he employed the terminology of the Bible for the languages in question. The Egyptian (Coptic) 'Hamitic' - possibly related to the language of 'Ethiopia' - was grouped into a sequence with Semitic and 'Japhetic'. The sequence implied a historical succession from the simpler Hamitic to the complex Japhetic, but all three language types were specially related, with probably a closer link between Hamitic and Semitic than between Hamitic and Japhetic. Their common bonds, and the particular Hamitic-Semitic relationship were illustrated by their common possession, in different degrees, of the important phenomenon of grammatical gender designations:

'Es gab ursprünglich... nur zwei Pronomina, ein Pronomen der ersten Person, "p" und ein anderes der zweiten "t"; dieselben dienten zur Bezeichnung der Geschlechter, "p" für das männliche, "t" für das weibliche, dieselben endlich für die Zahlen 1 und 2. Das erste Pronomen erwiechte sich meist in "m", zuweilen in "f" oder "y"; die Erweichung des "p" in "m" oder "v" erzeugte zugleich den Plural, den ursprünglich nur die 1te Pers. und das masc. hatte. Auf dieser Stufe bleiben die semitischen und die koptischen Sprache stehen in Bezug auf das Geschlecht; femin. und neutr. ist hier noch nichts geschieden, und der Plural hat mit Ausnahmen späterer Weiterbildung nur eine Form, die vom masc. auf das fem. übertragen wird. Keine Sprache blieb hier auch für die Personen stehen; die semitischen Sprachen und das koptische haben durchgängig eine 3te Person. Diese wurde aber nicht neu hinzugeschaffen, sondern die vorhandene 2te Person spaltete sich in eine 2te und 3te. Die 3te wird sogar durchgängig als die stärkere betrachtet und erhält das ursprüngliche "t" viel reiner als die 2te, die es meist in "s" abschwächt. - Der indogermanische Stamm bildete ganz analog den Personen, auch die Geschlechter zu einer Dreiheit aus, und verliess dadurch in einem

wesentlichen Punkte den gemeinschaftlichen Boden, auf dem es mit den semitischen Sprachen erwachsen war... Wie nun aber das masculinische "m" ins neutr. eingedrungen ist..., so wie viele andere Fragen, zu denen man sich nach obiger Auseinandersetzung aufgefordert fühlen dürfte, können hier nicht weiter erörtert werden...' 47

Lepsius' knowledge of the language of the hieroglyphs when he first put forward the 'Hamitic' theory was still that of Champollion. It was still confined to a vocabulary of signs collected from royal cartouches of a later period, and depended heavily on Coptic and classical sources, using the Greek versions of Egyptian royal names to fix further hieroglyphic values. His Lettre à M. Rosellini of 1837 indeed signalled the revival of the whole science of Egyptology but his progress in it was not spectacular. The questions he dealt with were of the most basic kind - the working out of phonetic values again through Coptic and Greek. He did begin to correct Champollion: for example he defined two linguistic periods, the earlier 'sacred' dialect of the hieroglyphs and early hieratic, and a later 'popular' dialect, or demotic. Thus he knew that Champollion's equation between Coptic and the language of the hieroglyphs was not literally tenable: yet he relied for that information on Champollion's own sources, the Greeks, and in practice defined only a dialectic variation between the early and late form of language. In the absence of anything better he also continued to transliterate directly into Coptic. Again, he examined Champollion's classification of types of hieroglyphic signs

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47. Lepsius, Zwei Sprachvergleichende Abhandlungen, pp. 92-3.

and regrouped them into ideographic, phonetic and determinative signs, postulating also the basically syllabic nature of the phonetic signs. It was a significant clarification which formed the foundation of later Egyptology. Yet it proceeded again from the Greeks, and tied in with Lepsius' own theory on the growth of writing: ideographic signs must have developed into the earliest type of phonetic script, syllabic signs, and then moved on toward the alphabet proper. The coexistence of all three types of signs in Egypt underlined the early period in which 'Hamitic' had developed in comparison with Semitic and Indo-European. Lepsius had to make his linguistic point about Hamitic through a discussion of Egyptian writing systems because he knew so little about the language itself.<sup>48</sup>

In the 1840's and 1850's Bunsen eagerly adopted Lepsius' 'Hamitic' theory, for it provided him with the hitherto missing link in the continuous chain of universal history. The next step after Turanian agglutination was the development of inflection - but Bunsen wanted inflection as a single, universal-historical stage, not yet separated into its two very different modern varieties, Semitic and Indo-European. The next step in the growth of religious consciousness was some more abstract awareness of the divine, but a more primitive one than that of the very different, yet highly sophisticated religions of the best-known Semites

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48. Lepsius, *Lettre à M. Rosellini: ancient and modern dialects of Egyptian*, pp. 70-71; the analysis of types of signs and its subordination to the palaeographic theory, p. 36 ff; references to Semitic-Egyptian relationship, p. 37, p. 47, p. 71.



and Indo-Europeans. The next step in the growth of civilization after tribal nomadism was logically that of settled, agricultural, and early political organization: yet again it had to have occurred at a much earlier date than that at which Semites and Indo-Europeans could be dated. Bunsen found the fulfilment of all these theoretical expectations in the real civilization of Egypt and the 'Hamitic' theory. Varying Lepsius' terminology slightly he called this the universal historical stage of 'Khamism'. The Khamitic stage of language crossed the boundaries of Turanian agglutination to step into the world of inflected language, but neither as yet in its Semitic or Japhetic forms. It is characterized by

'... the appearance of affixes and prefixes, even of endings (pure formative syllable) attached to the root. The latter is so far affected that its long vowel becomes a short one'.<sup>49</sup>

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49. Egypt IV, p. 50. Both the terms 'Ham' and Kham' are directly Biblical in origin, and synonymous: the second being the Septuagint Greek version of the original Hebrew 'Ham'. From the Bible the sons of Ham are Cush, Egypt, Put and Canaan: since the ancient language of Egypt was the only one of this group known to the early Nineteenth century researchers, the identification of Egyptian as Hamitic was at least understandable. The problems began with the meaning of 'Hamitic' and its sole identification only with the Egyptian language. The Egyptians called their land 'Kemit', which meant 'black': such information was well known to Bunsen and Lepsius through the accounts of the Greeks, including Herodotus, as was also the idea that the Egyptians themselves were blacks, or at least burnt by the sun. The Hebrew also implied the 'black' meaning. However an alternative explanation, advanced by Plutarch, that the term 'Kham' or 'Ham' applied to the blackness of the inhabitable Egyptian soil around the Nile was that preferred by Bunsen, certainly by Lepsius, and most Nineteenth century Egyptologists and linguists. The identification with Africa became so complete (Bunsen: Khamitic means 'nothing more nor less than the Egyptian', Egypt IV,

All the implications of the linguistic 'Hamitic' hypothesis were worked out in Bunsen's 'Khamitic' to the

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p. 18) that the problem of Canaan was ignored or reinterpreted in suitably dismissive ways (see Outlines III, pp. 190-191). In fact there is no solid evidence to prove that the Biblical Hamites were linguistically related nor that they shared the physical characteristic of black skin colour. The problem of the skin colour of the Egyptians is equally still unresolved, and perhaps unresolvable, despite the amount of debate through the Nineteenth century on the basis of the famous 'red-brown' colour the Egyptians used in their wall-paintings. The term 'Hamitic', stripped of its physical meaning and solely African identification, is still in use today in the compound 'Hamitico-Semitic', although alternatives ('Afro-Asiatic') have been put forward to counter its problems. The compound refers to a whole group of assumedly related north African and middle-eastern languages. (See 'A.N. Tucker, 'What's in a Name?' in Hamitico-Semitica, Proceedings of a Colloquium..., edited by James and Theodora Bynon, The Hague, 1975, pp. 471-477, and also, for a partisan, pro-black view, Cheikh Anta Diop, The African Origin of Civilization, (trans. and ed. Mercer Cook), Westport, 1974, especially Chapter 1). The differences between Bunsen's more Egyptian-centered use of 'Khamitic' and Lepsius' wider and more overtly physical (non-black) use of 'Hamitic' will be discussed below.

degree required by his religious framework. Monogenesis and the Asiatic Urheimat were applied to Egypt. As well as Lepsius' grammatical similarities Bunsen supported the relationship of Khamitic, Semitic and Japhetic on the one hand, and the relationship of Khamitic to earlier stages of language on the other, by means of his favoured method of etymological comparisons, in addition to which he traced a universal-historical theory of the growth of root-structure. The roots of Sinism and Turanism had been essentially monosyllabic though the latter combined individual roots into polysyllables. Khamitic roots were transformed into closed biliteral monosyllables by continuing the process observed in Turanism whereby certain roots lost their concrete meaning and were formalized into grammatical particles. Khamism made certain polysyllabic combinations permanent, contracted or elided the vowels involved and thus created the biliteral root. Yet such biliterals could be reduced again to simpler monosyllables, and such monosyllables compared with Japhetic monosyllabic roots: Bunsen called on Max Müller to produce a comparative table of such roots for the final volumes of Egypt. To prove Khamitic continuity also with Semitic language he asked Bötticher to reduce the characteristic trilateral roots of known Semitic language to biliterals, and to compare Semitic biliterals with those of Khamism. In Semitism biliterals had simply grown to trilaterals by a process of rhythmic or mimic amplification. From all this Bunsen concluded in general that

'... more than the third part of the old Egyptian primitive words in the Coptic will be found in Semitic, and particularly in Hebrew, and about one-tenth part in [Japhetic]'<sup>50</sup>

This argument was supposed to prove the literal unity of Khamitic language with that of the rest of humankind in the Asiatic Urheimat, and consequently imply the Asiatic origins of Egyptian culture, as well as exemplifying the unity and continuity of linguistic stages.

'... The Egyptian language... clearly stands between the Semitic and Indo-Germanic; for its forms and roots cannot be explained by either one of them singly, but are evidently a combination of the two. If, then, it be of Asiatic origin, and consequently introduced by colonisation into the valley of the Nile, where it became naturalised, it will enable us to pronounce upon the state of the Asiatic language from which it sprang, and consequently upon an unknown period of mental development in primeval Asia'.<sup>51</sup>

It was at this point, which roughly coincided with Richard Lepsius' expedition (although Bunsen's full proofs and theory were not written till later), that Lepsius' and Bunsen's paths diverged radically. Characteristically for the latter there was no great problem about using the Egyptian language. He was prepared to assert that it had not changed substantially since Menes or even before. Equally there was no difficulty with the root comparison method: it had and would produce 'incontestable results'.

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50. Egypt V, p. 774. On the Egyptian language type and root structure see Egypt I, pp. 269-305, IV, pp. 32-52, Outlines III, p. 185 ff. Bunsen's requests to Müller to produce Egyptian - Indo-European comparative tables dated back to 1851 (see Chips III, p. 429 and p. 443) and the results appeared in Egypt V, pp. 747-773 and pp. 776-777; the comparisons with Semitic appeared in ibid., pp. 778-787 on the basis of Bötticher's work in Outlines IV pp. 345-359.
51. Egypt I, p. x.

He breezily claimed the whole Khamitic hypothesis as a 'linguistic fact' and thus a universal historical stage of humanity.<sup>52</sup> For Lepsius Bunsen went too far beyond the acceptable and the factual. Even in 1835-6 he had warned against the dangers of etymological comparisons especially without adequate linguistic knowledge.<sup>53</sup> Moreover, since 1837, he had engaged in very little further work on the Egyptian language, and, as will be discussed, had lost a good deal of his early confidence in the swift and sure progress of decipherment. The expedition to Egypt faced him with another problem - the extension of Egyptian 'Hamitic' amongst the populations to the south and south-east of its historical boundaries, the ancient 'Ethiopians'. He became sure that 'Hamitic' represented a whole north African phenomenon, distinctive linguistically, culturally - and even physically - from the rest of Africa and all closely related to Semitic and Japhetic. But he would take many years and much specialized research before presenting his conclusions publically, and then with a solid foundation of fact. As to Egypt itself, the expedition confirmed his personal inclinations toward chronological and religious researches, and thoroughly reinforced his devotion to his chosen field and his professionalism within it. After his return he announced that his interest lay in Egypt as a

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52. Outlines III, p. 190 and on the root method ibid., pp. 176-8; Bunsen's heavy reliance on Coptic and his assumption that the language had not changed substantially over thousands of years can be found in Egypt I, p. 258 ff.

53. See Lepsius, Zwei Sprachvergleichende Abhandlungen, pp. 124-5, note 1.

historical phenomenon, not a universal-historical stage. Egypt began with Menes - and even to establish the chronology and history of historical Egypt proved difficult enough.<sup>54</sup> He thereby avoided any open denunciation of Bunsen's 'Khamism' and nevertheless managed to convey clearly his disassociation with Bunsen's work. From about 1849 onward, the period when he was preoccupied with the publication of the Denkmäler, he continued nothing more than a personal friendship with Bunsen and some private sympathy with his goal of constructing universal history.

Unabashed Bunsen went on to define Khamism in all its universal-historical implications. The Khamitic linguistic step toward inflection was paralleled by a religious advance. Khamism attained for the first time in history a

'...consciousness of moral responsibility and a belief in the personal indestructibility of the human soul'.<sup>55</sup>

Expressed in the Khamitic proto-inflected linguistic form the result was a flowering of mythology:

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54. See the distinction made by Lepsius between his own work and that of Bunsen in the Preface to his Chronologie der Aegypter, quoted in Chapter 2 above; we discuss Lepsius' efforts toward a reasonable and secure Egyptian chronology below, however it should be pointed out that Lepsius was well aware of the tentativeness of the current dating systems for Egyptian history ('Über die Manethonische Bestimmung des Umfangs der aegyptischen Geschichte... Abhandlungen der königlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, 1857, see especially pp. 207-8). On the linguistic issue it is significant that Bunsen relied for factual information on Samuel Birch throughout Egypt, even though the theory according to which the information was arranged was that of Lepsius. Birch contributed directly or organized the linguistic descriptions and translations in Egypt I and V.

55. Egypt IV, p. 640.

'... mythology in language, by unfolding the world to the mind in substantive nouns and signs, is the symbol of Khamism. The formation of the noun is the mottoe for the formation of mythological deities; both of them being well-understood symbols of a thought.

The forces in things are represented as real deities; the properties are epithets of Gods and Goddesses: and then again, these epithets become special independent deities; just as an adjective becomes a noun, and all nouns were originally qualificative words for things which were pointed at by the finger.

Consequently, the mythological and symbolical form is the religious speciality of Khamism...' 56

Bunsen defined three types of myth growing out of this state of religious consciousness and linguistic potential - the Kosmogonical, the Astral and Psychical - in order of degree of sophistication. Taking the 'facts' of Egyptian religion from Herodotus he claimed that these three mythological strata could be isolated in progressive development in Egypt. The Psychical myth of Osiris was defined as 'the real intellectual centre of the worship or religious consciousness of the Egyptians', and it was already present in earliest predynastic times. Osiris and other Khamitic deities also showed many similarities with Semitic deities. 57

The evidence of language and religion together settled the question of the historical origins of Egyptian culture in favour of Asiatic monogenism:

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56. Ibid., p. 569.

57. Quotation from Egypt IV, p. 326 and the whole section on Egyptian mythology ibid., pp. 305-360 and on mythology in general ibid., pp. 66-78. The basic 'facts' of the mythology had been given in Egypt I, pp. 357-444; Bunsen also attempted to analyze the 'Book of the Dead' (translated for the first time by Birch and appended to the posthumously published English edition of Egypt V) which he dated well into the pre-Meneic era, with similar results (Egypt V, p. 88 ff.).

'The cradle of the mythology and language of the Egyptians is Asia'.<sup>58</sup>

Earlier hypotheses about Indian or Ethiopian origins thus refuted, Bunsen sketched a suitable scenario for his conclusions. Following the departure of the Turanian tribes, the primitive Urvolk as a whole developed through the Khamitic stage within the Urheimat from about 14,000 B.C. Later, about 11,000 B.C. one more portion of the Urvolk detached itself and migrated, this time to Egypt, carrying the Khamitic stage with them. There they settled amongst Turanian tribes who were the basic African population and to some extent mingled with them. Egyptian culture in prehistoric and historic times is founded entirely on this migration.<sup>59</sup> Khamism, the proto-inflected stage, was also that of the first nation state. Bunsen painted an ideal picture - with no known basis in reality - of the prehistoric Egyptian 'Nomes' as 'an incomplete and imperfect republican union of districts'.<sup>60</sup>

Bunsen's preoccupation was always with Khamism as a universal-historical stage. He had little interest in Egyptian civilization for its own sake and therefore his usual equation between the abstract linguistic type and the

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58. Egypt I, p. 144.

59. Further support for Bunsen's dating system came from a system of dating pottery fragments excavated near the Nile by means of working out an assumed rate of deposit of Nile mud per yearly inundation, using a statue of known date as control: see Egypt III, pp. xxiii-xxviii. The actual basis of Bunsen's computations was the religious-chronological framework of universal history as a whole.

60. Egypt IV, p. 577 and the interpretation of Manetho's pre-Meneic dynasties of Gods and Heroes as referring to actual prehistoric kings, ibid., pp. 334-339.



specific historical example of the type was perhaps looser in the Khamitic case than elsewhere. Where Sinism and Turanism were still contemporary phenomena, Khamism could safely be regarded as a transitory phenomenon. Its importance lay solely in the tenacity and faithfulness with which the Egyptians clung to Asiatic Khamism in their new homeland - thus allowing Nineteenth-century researchers to piece together universal history. Here Bunsen was restating the classical theory of unchanging Egypt, and a general acceptance of Greek misconceptions about Egypt dominated the brief and rather superficial treatment he accorded it in historical terms. Herodotus' portrait of 'static Egypt' organized in a hierarchical order of castes, full of symbolic and mystical ritual became Bunsen's own, explained by new arguments drawn from the 'Khamitic' theory. 'Static Egypt' was explained once again by the effect of 'colonization' away from the Urheimat. The Egyptians became enmeshed in their own linguistic-spiritual characteristics in a similar way to that of the Chinese.<sup>61</sup> Such stultification was encouraged, and 'symbolic' and hierarchical Egypt explained by the same transferral to north Africa and the geographical and human environment the migrants encountered there. Bunsen certainly knew something of Lepsius' extensions of the Hamitic theory into north Africa,

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61. On Egyptian as a 'colonized' language see Outlines IV, pp. 58-65 and on Egyptian culture and history Egypt IV, pp. 557-597 and pp. 634-699.

and other, similar theories,<sup>62</sup> but he never took them seriously into account. He insisted on the clash between Asiatic and aboriginal African elements right in Egypt, and the inevitable result was intermixture. This spelt doom and degeneration for Khamism in Africa. The Khamitic tendency toward symbolism was encouraged by the African element to over-symbolism, fetishism and finally animal worship. Predynastic times and the Old Empire when Asiatic elements, focussed in the northern capital Memphis, were preponderant were the great highlights of the Egyptian culture. The African element, from its centre in Thebes in the south, ruled the Middle and New Empires and brought despotism, political weakness and spiritual decline. Khamism in Egypt lingered on, a melancholy spectacle, at one time a symbol of universal-historical significance, eventually only a symbol which 'outlived itself'.<sup>63</sup>

Though not evinced in the Egyptian deposit of Khamism, there was a more progressive side to that stage. Like Lepsius Bunsen saw a particularly close linguistic relationship between Khamitic and Semitic, a less close one between Khamitic and Japhetic. Balancing the special link between Turanism and Japhetism, Khamism prepared the way for the specifically Semitic formation: Khamism as 'ante-

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62. See Bunsen's comment that a whole group of Egyptian-related languages might exist in north Africa in Outlines III, p. 178. As well as his personal acquaintanceship with Lepsius, Bunsen also knew and it seems worked with another important theorist of the wider African Hamitic, W.H.I. Bleek, who will be discussed below, and also knew of Koelle's work (see for example Chips III, p. 447 and Bunsen II, p. 396).
63. Egypt IV, p. 636 and see ibid., pp. 557-597 and 634-399 passim.

historical Semitism'.<sup>64</sup> An eventual duality - Turano-Japhetic over against Khamito-Semitic was thus already foreshadowed even before Semitism and Japhetism proper emerged as historical realities from the Urheimat. Even there Bunsen referred to the Bible for proof of a split in the remaining Urvolk. The Japhetites had moved to the country of the sources of the Oxus and Iaxartes, the Semites to the country of the sources of Euphrates and Tigris.<sup>65</sup> These two groups were finally pushed out onto the wider stage of human history by the Biblical Flood.

In the 1840's and 1850's the Flood still attracted serious scientific attention, possibly as a dim remembrance of known ancient changes in the physical face of the globe, possibly as simply a real, though limited natural catastrophe, which had devastated the presumably concentrated area of prehistoric human habitation. Bunsen could unite the testimony of revelation and reason with some confidence in this case. He suggested that the Flood was a local natural catastrophe which had struck the Urheimat. It might have been part of attested geological phenomena like the melting of the ice cap, the rising and sinking of continents and seas. Like them, it was associated with the effects of the changes in degree of tilt of the earth's axis. The cycles which he had used to pinpoint the date of human appearance on earth also indicated the date of the Flood: the most unfavourable period for the northern hemisphere,

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64. Outlines III, p. 183.

65. See Egypt IV, p. 487, Lange's Bibelatlas, map 1.

about 10,000 B.C.<sup>66</sup> The confirming of revelation in this partly literal, partly freely interpreted way was done for a universal-historical purpose. The Flood had not destroyed all mankind and certainly did not touch those peoples who had migrated away before it. Instead it marked the entrance of humanity into a new Age by completely disrupting the remaining Urvolk, already in two distinct groups. The Flood was remembered therefore solely in the historical traditions of these two groups, from the Semitic viewpoint in Genesis, and from the Japhetic clothed in various mythological forms.<sup>67</sup>

The Second Age of Humanity after the Flood was outwardly dominated by the power of the migratory hordes of Turan on the one hand and the gradual rise of the civilization of Kham on the other. But in the shadow of the opposition of Turano-Khamitic, that of Semitic and Japhetic was established. This was a much more significant development for it was here that the highest point of linguistic progress was reached: inflection.

The first to develop was the Semitic type of inflection, prepared by the advances of Khamitic proto-inflection. Bunsen was certainly not in the vanguard of

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66. See Egypt IV, pp. 52-55: the precise nature, duration and location of the Flood was never consistently defined. It may have been 'an era of indefinable duration' rather than a single occurrence (ibid., p. 427).
67. Bunsen asserted that the Chinese and the Egyptians had no reminiscence of the Flood; this fact became part of the motivation for dating the departure of the Chinese and Egyptians from the Urheimat before the Flood period. See Egypt III, p. 379 ff. (Chinese) and Egypt IV, p. 564 (Egyptians). Bunsen emphasized that the Flood was remembered by Semites (Egypt IV, pp. 369-372) other than just the Hebrews, and by the most ancient Indo-Iranian Japhetites (ibid., p. 432 and Egypt III, pp. 459-60).

Semitic scholarship. His definition of Semitic was that current among traditional Biblical scholars - the very limited group of modern Semitic languages, especially Hebrew, Arabic, Syriac, Aramaic. On the same foundations Lepsius had described Semitic inflection in the usual way - trilateral roots with variable vowel inflection - and evaluated it as inferior to the more integrated and subtle transformations of Japhetic inflection. Bunsen took up this theme: Semitic inflection is imperfect. The root is commonly trilateral and undergoes proper inflection and division of function, but within verbal relations and in existential expressions 'the personal pronoun predominates, not the verb substantive'.<sup>68</sup>

Bunsen was certainly however aware of newer additions to the Semitic group - the Phoenician, and the much more controversial discoveries of Rawlinson and Layard in Mesopotamia. He was excellently placed in London in the early 1850's to follow the exchanges between Rawlinson, Hincks and Norris as they groped toward the conclusion that the third series of the trilingual cuneiform inscriptions contained a Semitic language. However the implications of Semitic 'Akkadian', what its polyphonic syllabic sign-values meant for the idea of an absolutely characteristic trilateral inflected system remained points for debate for

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68. Egypt IV, p. 50; Lepsius' views had been expressed in his Palaeographie... in 1834, the argument of which was summarized in Chapter 2 above. The definition of Semitic inflection as 'inferior' rather than simply 'different' to Indo-European inflection was common, but cannot be attributed to anything but ethnocentrism on the part of Indo-European scholarship, and a very limited knowledge of Semitic.

some decades. The most rational of Semitic scholars of the old school, Ernest Renan, would not for some time accept that the new language was Semitic. Bunsen - partly deliberately, partly as a result of the very sketchy state of knowledge about the new Semitic language - chose to consider it seriously, but characteristically to subordinate it to the accepted framework, both of Semitic and of universal history. Linguistically this meant that the new Mesopotamian Semitic language had to be shown to be somehow continuous with modern Semitic languages and their triliteral system. Historically it meant that ancient Mesopotamia would be defined in terms taken from the traditional Biblical and classical sources.

Khamitic having been accepted as leaning strongly in roots and morphology toward the Semitic type, the Bible was consulted by Bunsen for the real Semites, the sons of Shem. The first of these was named 'Elam', representing the men of Susania or lower Babylonia: Bunsen adopted the term 'Elamitic' for the Semitic language of Mesopotamia. For data on Elamitic he relied on Rawlinson's ideas of the early 1850's - which were not entirely those of the final decipherment later in the decade. The literal continuity between Khamitic, Elamitic and modern Semitic was proved by the usual method of root comparisons and the theory of growth of root structure. Elamitic roots according to Bunsen were basically biliteral, like those of Khamism, and like the latter too formed the background to later Semitic triliteralism by amplification. The grammar of Elamitic was found also to contain elements of quasi-agglutination similar to

some Egyptian expressions. Bunsen concluded that Elamitic was extremely ancient, perhaps to be dated close to the age of Khamitic formation. It was however clearly Semitic and bridged 'the immense chasm left between Khamism and Semitism'.<sup>69</sup>

Although such a widening of the Semitic group was indeed important and pertinent, Bunsen had to bulldoze his way through contemporary difficulties and vast gaps in knowledge to attain it, in the process often ignoring uncomfortable information which contradicted his view. For example, he rejected outright the suspicions of Norris and Hincks about the non-Semitic nature of the cuneiform characters themselves. Rawlinson in 1855 would describe a pre-Semitic Scythic civilization upon which he claimed that Semitic Mesopotamian culture had been built, which had vastly influenced the Semitic culture and lent it the cuneiform system. But Bunsen was committed to the exclusively Semitic nature of Elamitic for the purposes of universal history, and the idea of a 'Scythic', obviously a Turanian civilization was simply not acceptable to him. If he rejected the Scythic theory he still had to explain the strangeness of the cuneiform characters. One of the characteristics of Semitic idioms was their very closely related

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69. On 'Elamitic' see Outlines III, pp. 193-219. Bunsen's use of 'Elamitic' has no relationship with the modern understanding of the term, referring to the difficult and unclassified 'Susian' language. Quotation from ibid., p. 192. Bunsen seems to have caught the ideas of Rawlinson about 1852-3, just before Rawlinson accepted Hincks' theory of polyphonic values, for he still spoke of preferring Rawlinson's 'method' to that of Hincks, which he distrusted as 'subjective guessing' (ibid., p. 198).

alphabet, based probably on the Phoenician model - but the cuneiform script seemed to have no relationship to it. Bunsen solved this problem in a most unconvincing way. He referred to the cuneiform script as a decayed and conventionalized hieroglyphic system - another link with Khamitic - used only for an official sacred language. Besides this language he assumed the co-existence of a vulgar tongue and a much more usual Semitic-style script in Elamitic society - an idea which was pure fabrication.<sup>70</sup>

In the usual way the nature of Semitic inflection and its stages of growth were immediately translated into information about the Semitic-speaking peoples. Theoretically Bunsen should have been able to construct a historical picture of the growth and dispersion of the Semites after the Flood. Elamitic must have been the language of the very first Semitic settlement after the deluge, still close to the area of the antediluvian homeland and not as yet in modern Semitic areas. From the Elamitic issued the Chaldean and Syrian groups, further south the Arabian stocks were established, and finally in the north the Hebrew and Phoenician. But Bunsen ran into problems when describing this dispersion and its dates because of the sheer lack of information about prehistoric Mesopotamia or its relationship with other Semitic groups. In terms of chronology he

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70. On the cuneiform and its relationship to Semitic scripts see ibid., pp. 203-6 and pp. 254-262. Bunsen specifically denied that the cuneiform script was foreign to a Semitic language in 1854 (ibid., p. 206). It was on such indirect evidence that the 'Skythic' theory was propounded from 1854 onward: see Rawlinson's Notes on the early history of Babylonia, London, 1854 and see Pallis, op. cit., p. 176.



admitted that 'everything anterior to the 8th or 9th century appears to stand on a very unstable footing...', and turned to the account of Berosus to reconstruct Semitic prehistory. He dated the Babylonian dynasties from 3784 B.C., the Median conquest of Babylon at 2234 B.C. and the supremacy of the Assyrians at 1273 B.C. This left a huge unfilled gap between the establishment of the first Semitic language, Elamitic, in the very ancient period around the Flood, and the appearance of the Empire of Babylon and Elamitic in the fourth millenium B.C.: a gap about which Bunsen remained silent. Another difficulty was that 3784 B.C. was certainly older than Bunsen's date for Menes, yet he indulged in no speculation about necessary stages of formation before the foundation of the Empire of Babylon as he had done with that of Egypt. He defined Semitic and therefore Elamitic as a later development in universal history than Khamitic - yet there are indications that he knew he must admit that Elamitic was at least equally as ancient as Khamism.<sup>71</sup> These difficulties were never resolved - nor could they have been given the state of Mesopotamian and prehistoric Semitic studies in the mid-Nineteenth century.

Thus in the Semitic case the fusing of Biblical and rational truth was not particularly successful:

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71. Quoted from Egypt IV, p. 417; see also the reconstruction of Babylonian chronology in Egypt III, pp. 432-452. In Outlines IV, Bunsen admitted that Elamitic must belong 'to the same primitive world' or very close to it, that Khamism does (p. 12), but nevertheless insisted on seeing Elamitic as logically a later development than Khamitic. As well as the chronological break between 'Elamitic' and later Babylonian culture Bunsen did not explain the linguistic continuation of the 'Elamitic' unchanged from immediate postdiluvian times to 3784 B.C.

altogether the discussion of this group formed probably the weakest part of Bunsen's universal history. Elamitic managed to be inconsistent with both Mesopotamian archaeology and with the religious framework of universal history at the same time. For different reasons it convinced neither orthodox Semitic scholars nor rationally-minded experts in the field like Ernest Renan.<sup>72</sup> Yet however unsatisfactory in execution, the intention of reconciling reason and revelation did lend Bunsen's account of Semitic a breadth and depth unusual for the time. For the orthodox 'Semitic' was concentrated strongly on the Hebrews; even for Renan the centrality of Hebrew characteristics remained. The external characteristics of the Hebrew type were indeed generalized to apply in a rigid way to the whole Semitic group:

'... la race sémitique se reconnaît presque uniquement à des caractères négatifs: elle n'a ni mythologie, ni épopée, ni science, ni philosophie, ni fiction, ni arts plastiques, ni vie civile; en tout, absence de complexité, de nuances, sentiment exclusif de l'unité. Il n'y a pas de variété dans le monothéisme'.<sup>73</sup>

Bunsen brought at least a little prehistoric and extra-Hebraic perspective into 'Semitic' before he relapsed back

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72. Renan refused to consider the Assyro-Babylonian language as 'Semitic' until 1868, on the grounds that it did not conform with the trilateral type, nor used the characteristic Semitic alphabet. He directed an argument specifically against Bunsen's and Lepsius' idea of a Hamitic-Semitic link as well, on similar grounds: see his Histoire générale des langues sémitiques, p. 217 (Hamitic) and p. 195ff. (Assyro-Babylonian Semitic), and Chapter I above.

73. Ernest Renan, Histoire générale des langues sémitiques, p. 155.

into the traditional emphasis on the Hebraic role. His account thus tried to be more rational than that of the orthodox, more spiritual than that of Renan and broader than both.

Since Semitism was originally a unified phenomenon before its mysterious break-up into tribes, Semitic characteristics outside language were also held in common. Semites in general were 'the sacerdotal race of the world'; all intuitively perceived the cosmic moral order and the unity of mankind under God.<sup>74</sup> However on the basis of their inflected language alone mythology should be present throughout the group. Unlike Renan Bunsen happily identified kosmogonical, astral and psychical myths present in Babylonian traditions, consulted through Berosus, and in Phoenician, through Philo. Because of their innate religiousity no Semitic group simply indulged in uncontrolled mythological production like that of Khamism: they searched for philosophies and ideas, and tended to create theogonic unities out of their mythological material. The Semites were also by nature tenacious in the extreme: a quality mirrored in the close similarity between all their languages and myths. Bunsen was quite well aware of the parallels between the Creation traditions of the Babylonians and the account found in the Bible. He was not afraid of putting the two side by side, and adding similar ties found in Phoenician mythology. He even constructed a comparative table of Hebrew and other Semitic expressions to show how

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74. Egypt IV, p. 295.

the Hebrews had retained common Semitic phrases, simply transferring them to apply to their own religion.<sup>75</sup> Less innovative was Bunsen's description of Semitic political organization. They were characteristically tribal, patriarchal, giving great loyalty to their leaders, and also nomadic. Yet because they spoke an inflected - 'state' - language, and because of the reality of Babylonian and Assyrian civilization, Bunsen granted them some capacity to found settled urban centres of culture.<sup>76</sup> The zenith of all this common Semitic creativity was reached around 3000 B.C., only shortly before the advent of Abraham.

It was only out of this common Semitic context that the Hebrews developed, yet to emphasize the special nature of the Hebrews Bunsen stressed that they were ultimately atypical Semites. In the orthodox fashion he saw in Judaism the origins of Christianity and the path of universal-historical progress; he also took literally the Biblical account of God's direct intercession in history to identify his Chosen People through Abraham. That was

'... a true miracle: a miracle wrought by the divine energy of the ethical Mind in the sphere of the religious consciousness...'<sup>77</sup>

The event marked a breaking away from most of the common Semitic traditions and the establishment of the first great ethical religion; it was indeed important enough to

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75. See the comparative table in ibid., pp. 422-4, the comparative accounts of the Flood, ibid., pp. 369-372, and the analyses of Babylonian Phoenician myth in general, ibid., pp. 149-301.

76. See God in History I, p. 173 ff.

77. God in History III, p. 301 and see God in History I, pp. 79-83.

herald a new Age of Humanity, the Third. Without such a directly Divine calling the Semitic group were incapable of development beyond their own type. As with the Chinese, Turanian and Khamitic peoples the non-Hebrew Semites were doomed by their own linguistic-spiritual characteristics. After the advent of Abraham they degenerated into meaningless mythologizing, uncompromising one-sidedness, and political despotism.<sup>78</sup> Only the Hebrews, by virtue of their spiritual election played a universal-historical role in the future Third Age.

About the same time as the establishment of imperfect Semitic inflection, the highest form of language, Japhetic, also began to crystallize:

'... the complete symmetrical organism, the perfect instrument of the consciously creative mind, unfettered by subordinate and therefore one-sided formation ... it rises to the most perfect syntactical arrangement. Conjunction and copula are expressed by the verb substantive'.

By 'Japhetic' Bunsen generally meant the Indo-European languages, although the continuity with the earlier Turanian form was also specifically underlined as a counterbalance

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78. See ibid., pp. 196-202.

to the Khamitico-Semitic progression.<sup>79</sup> By using the Turanian link Bunsen neatly turned to advantage the problems of grouping languages like Celtic. Charles Meyer, Bunsen's Celtic 'expert', held back from incorporating Celtic unqualifiedly into Japhetic inflection, for, unconvinced by the conclusions of Bopp, he claimed he could find important non-Japhetic elements in the Celtic dialects. The Meyer-Bunsen hypothesis described Celtic as a language poised in a state of transition between Turanism, Khamism and Japhetic inflection:

'... the most ancient, and as it were most remote, of the Indo-European or Arian stock...'

Proof was presented in terms of root comparisons as well as

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79. Quoted from Egypt IV, p. 50. Bunsen never made up his mind to define a systematic term for the Indo-European group, although his letters to Müller indicate that he was thinking about settling on one term, or at least more specific meanings for the various synonyms he continued to use (see Chips III, p. 449, p. 450, p. 462 ff.): this was never achieved. As well as 'Japhetic' he would use 'Aryan' (= 'Arian'), as well as 'Indo-Germanic', 'Iranian', and more rarely 'Indo-European'. Sometimes however 'Aryan' or 'Iranian' would be confined to the narrower meaning relating to the Persian, Indo-Iranian or both. (see for example Outlines III, pp. 63-4 where 'Arian' is used with both wider and narrower meanings in the same few paragraphs). It was Müller, not Bunsen, who systematically used the term 'Aryan', and opposed it to 'Turanian'. We have indicated the convenient vagueness of the term 'Japhetic' and the possibility of the Turanian-Indo-European continuity above; Bunsen would oppose 'Japhetic' with 'Semitic' in the dialectic of universal history, as the two different types of inflection. Note that Bunsen's 'Japhetic' has no relationship whatsoever with the Caucasian-based language group or stage defined by N. Ja. Marr in the Twentieth Century as 'Japhetic', though both men relied on the same Biblical source for their terminology, and Marr's work certainly shows a great debt to Nineteenth century linguistics (see Lawrence L. Thomas, The Linguistic Theories of N. Ja Marr, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1957).

grammatical structure. Celtic thus functioned like 'Elamitic', as a highly convenient connecting link between Japhetic inflection and its universal-historical predecessors. By the same method two further difficult languages were disposed of - Basque and Etruscan were classed as types of sub-Celtic with strong Turanian leanings.<sup>80</sup>

There being little problem with establishing Japhetic as a reputable linguistic phenomenon, originally unified - since this was the trend of so much specialized linguistic work in the first half of the century - Bunsen went straight on to the universal-historical implications of Japhetic language. The original Japhetic Ursprache immediately implied the existence of a united Japhetic Urvolk. In tune with current opinion Bunsen turned to the language and sacred texts of the most ancient Japhetites - those rediscovered by the Orientalist Renaissance in northern India and in Persia - for information about the chronology and characteristics of united Japhetism. He was especially privileged in having Max Müller, the first editor of the fabled and most ancient north Indian text, the Rig Veda, close at hand and ready to provide all basic information. However, much to Müller's dislike, Bunsen insisted on computing dates from Vedic and Persian mythology. He claimed that the oldest Vedic hymns dated back to 3,000 B.C. so that the Indo-Iranian cohabitation attested by the

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80. Quotation from Outlines III, p. 64; see ibid., pp. 143-171, pp. 84-109 and also p. 287 on Celtic, Basque and Etruscan.

ancient eastern texts must have occurred earlier than that date, the period of common wandering also mentioned in the texts ante-dated that in turn, and finally the original unity of all Japhetism had to be put even further back in time. Bunsen used the Veda and Avesta as highly convenient adjuncts to his universal history. In his interpretation the original Japhetic homeland - the western region of the Asiatic Urheimat in prediluvian times according to his own analysis - was also indicated by the ancient eastern texts in precisely the same spot. After the Flood period, of which Bunsen again claimed to find reminiscences in Indo-Iranian mythology, a period of common migration west and south began for the Japhetites to about 8,000 B.C.<sup>81</sup> In contrast with these large-scale computations Müller, from his History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature (1859) would in public at least conservatively estimate the date of compilation of the Veda at 1,500 B.C. He always assumed that the hymns had been composed at some earlier time, and certainly felt that they contained modes of expression and sentiments dating from a very primitive age: but as to more precise dating, he consistently avoided all specification.<sup>82</sup>

Apart from this disagreement Bunsen and Müller nevertheless fundamentally agreed in the picture they drew of the united Japhetic Urvolk from the Vedic source material. It was a Utopian life:

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81. See Bunsen's computation of Vedic and Indo-Iranian dates in Egypt III, pp. 509-599.

82. Müller's polite dissassociation of his chronological views from those of Bunsen has been mentioned in Chapter 2 above: they came as a result of Bunsen's revelations about his reconstructive techniques in private letters (for example, of April, 1856, in Chips III, pp. 483-493). Müller's chronological views are discussed below.



'... blest with the choicest gifts of the earth, under that glowing sky, surrounded by all the grandeur and all the riches of nature, with a language "capable of giving soul to the objects of sense and body to the abstractions of metaphysics".'<sup>83</sup>

The Japhetic religious consciousness was a reflection of their 'innate spirituality', their 'remarkable quest after the Spirit'; yet at the same time they had the gift of a rational and enquiring attitude toward all things.<sup>84</sup> Thus all Japhetic religions were based on the consciousness of the 'spiritual' within the physical. The potential of the highest organic form of language manifested itself by the common Japhetic construction of the most complex mythological cycles. Basing himself closely on Müller's work on Indo-European comparative mythology Bunsen described how the Japhetite

'... gives names to the powers of nature, and after he has called the fire Agni, the sun-light Indra, the winds Maruts, and the dawn Ushas, they all seem to grow naturally into beings like himself, nay, greater than himself. He invokes them, he praises them, he worships them'.<sup>85</sup>

Such Vedic nature-myth could at first sight be mistaken for an almost Turanian phenomenon, a 'mere adoration of the visible powers of Nature: of the sun, the sky..., of fire... and in general of the eternal powers of light...'. However Bunsen was quick to underline that the hymns displayed a mentality and a spiritual capacity far beyond those of

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83. Outlines III, p. 135: these are the words of Müller.

84. See God in History I, pp. 273-328 passim.

85. Outlines III, p. 134.

Turanism, and distinct too from the cloudy symbolism of Khamism and Semitism:

'The hymns... display not only great beauty of language and imagery, but also discover a spiritual element, an inner purport of pure human meditation on God and the universe. Here, too, the inward spirit of man tries to find in the luminous Aether a God of the spirit; while the sense of sin and of the imperfection of all things finite comes out in all its depth when he contemplates the Infinite and the Eternal, exalted above all that can be seen or named. The mind soars up beyond the unconscious orbs of heaven, and the divided Elements. It is not even the spirit of light inhabiting the heavenly bodies, or the physical forces impelling their flight, which he seeks; the spirit towards which he turns, is the All-good and All-wise, the Infinite One, who, unrevealed to him by Nature, yet speaks to his inmost heart'.<sup>86</sup>

Even on the more mundane level of political organization the Japhetites constructed a superior life to that of all other prehistoric peoples. Like the Semites they lived 'a peacable, patriarchal, pastoral and even agricultural life ...' in tribes. They always had much greater potential for settled national organization, were somewhat less subject to the domination of one man, and were extremely moral in their social relationships.<sup>87</sup>

Bunsen used the Avesta to show how this common Japhetic inheritance of language, religion, instinctive spiritual nature and settled tribal organization was broken up. During their continued wanderings through the whole of central Asia between 8,000 and 5,000 B.C. individual groups gradually detached themselves, mostly

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86. God in History I, pp. 301-2.

87. Outlines III, p. 72, and see the list of common Japhetic words ibid., pp. 71-81.

moving further westwards, toward Europe, starting with the Celts. The ever-diminishing number remaining in the central Asiatic area underwent a final split with the migration of the Indian group into the Indus country about 4,000 B.C.<sup>88</sup> Already in 1854 Müller disagreed with this scenario of Bunsen's. Instead of individual migrations he postulated a simple two-way split between the (modern) eastern and (modern) western dialects: one common Indo-Iranian group, and one common proto-European group.<sup>89</sup> This idea had certain universal-historical advantages and Bunsen himself began to incline toward it when he elsewhere described an ascending scale of Japhetic idioms along the criterion of comparative perfection of this perfect inflected type. The Celtic intermediate idioms obviously stood on the lowest rung, closely followed by other nondescript languages of Asia Minor, ancient and modern, which were not held in high esteem at this stage. Surprisingly considering the attention they attracted amongst contemporary scholars and from Bunsen himself, the Indo-Iranian subgroup was placed next on the scale, subordinated to the Hellenico-

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88. See Bunsen's interpretation of the first section of the 'Vendidad' from the Avesta as an account of the various migrations of the Japhetites on the basis of translations by Martin Haug: Egypt III, pp. 457-506.

89. This theory is already found in Outlines III, Müller's report on Sanskrit researches, especially pp. 128-130, and this essay would later be reprinted with a few alterations in the very popular editions of Chips I, thus securing an extremely wide audience. Otto Schrader, in his survey of Nineteenth century Indo-European linguistics, Sprachvergleichung und Urgeschichte claimed that the proto-European, proto-Indo-Iranian split idea originated with Müller (Sprachvergleichung..., Zweite.. Auflage, Jena, 1890, p. 72); it would be used later in the century by August Fick for proto-Indo-European reconstructions.

Italic dialects, these in turn to the Slavonic and Lithuanian. At the crown of the Japhetic tree of perfection stood the Germanic sub-group.

Behind this linguistic scale lay highly non-linguistic motivations. Although the Japhetic type was extolled as unified and innate, Bunsen still wanted to underline that there were very different levels of Japhetic achievement in universal history. Each Japhetic group created its own individual destiny, some more successfully than others. The ascending linguistic scale paralleled the various levels of success and the chronology of that success, from Bunsen's own viewpoint, that of Christian Europe.<sup>90</sup> The Celtic and other idioms on the lowest rungs had achieved nothing in particular to Bunsen's knowledge: he treated them perfunctorily and inconsistently, referring to them as Japhetic, Turanian or mixed as the case might require. What was paramount were those Japhetic peoples whose culture aroused 'a sense of kindred with ourselves'.<sup>91</sup> Bunsen the classical Christian scholar focussed naturally, lovingly and idealistically on the ancient Greek civilization, for him the foundation of all European culture. The Hellenes were the Japhetic 'Chosen People':

'... that nation of...antiquity which was the most humane... and which has exercised the most powerful agency in moulding the actual world...' <sup>92</sup>

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90. 'Each tribe fought the divine battle according to its own fancy...' (Egypt IV, p. 460). Compare the enumeration of the linguistic subdivisions of Japhetic in Outlines IV, pp. 609 with the role of the same Japhetic peoples individually through the course of history described in ibid., pp. 21-28.
91. God in History I, p. 328.
92. God in History II, p. 1.

The path taken by the Japhetites of 'weary-hearted Asia'<sup>93</sup> had ultimately little to do with the rise of Europe, the direction in which universal history was progressing. Bunsen therefore had only limited sympathy for the Asiatic members of the Japhetic group, however important their early reminiscences and their language might have been to establish Japhetism in the first place. Indeed he set out to demonstrate why the battleground of universal history only briefly belonged to them, and to justify the superiority he automatically accorded to European Japhetism. Thus he became involved in constructing a Eurocentric reading of history not only with regard to non-Japhetic groups like the Chinese and the Turanians, but also within the Japhetic type. The result was a consistent down-grading of the eastern Japhetic peoples.

In the Second Age the Indo-Iranians established themselves in Western Asia in counterpoint to East Asiatic Khamism and Semitism. They split into Indian and Iranian groups contemporary with the establishment of Khamitic and Semitic civilizations about 3,000 B.C. Even before Abraham the first great Japhetic personality, the religious reformer Zoroaster, attempted in Bactria not so much to negate the old Vedic Nature worship as to transform it into something higher, superimposing a strong ethical strain and elevating to prominence the supreme deity Ahura-Mazda.

'The antagonisms of Light and Darkness, of sunshine and storm, become transformed into

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93. God in History I, p. 375.

antagonisms of Good and Evil, of Powers exerting a beneficent or corrupting influence on the mind'.<sup>94</sup>

However, as with most great reformers, his message was not completely accepted by the people at large, was misunderstood and later distorted, finally degenerating into superstition and magic. Along with this spiritual decline went the decay of ancient Persian society, in Bunsen's eyes at its most corrupt even in the days of the fabled hegemony of the Persian Empire. In India no ethical reformer arose to redirect Vedic mythology away from its naturalistic elements, and in due course Brahmanism began to take shape. Uninterrupted over thousands of years, Brahmanic pantheism and the accompanying 'incubus of priestcraft and despotism' resulted in the 'tragical catastrophe of India'.<sup>95</sup> Only in the Sixth Century did India find its prophet, the Buddha. He too, like Zoroaster, attempted, in Bunsen's interpretation, to turn away from the destructive cycle of nature myth towards morality as the foundation of religion and social life - and he too failed.<sup>96</sup>

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94. Ibid., p. 273, and on Zoroaster see pp. 273-293. The date for Zoroaster fluctuated from 3500-2500 B.C. in Egypt III (e.g. p. 586) Egypt IV (p. 491) and God in History I, p. 276.

95. Ibid., p. 316, and on India generally see pp. 294-339.

96. On Buddha see Egypt III, p. 532 ff. and God in History I pp. 340-382. The fate of the reforms of Zoroaster and Buddha are examples of the general principle Bunsen defines as the effect of a single 'World-Historical' Personality on the course of History. Such personalities bring God's message with great impetus to their communities, the message is then diffused into the nation, or rejected, or partially applied. Eventually decline sets in and a new Personality appears out of the now stagnating community. Such Personalities are God's Prophets on earth, and form themselves a progressive series toward ever higher spiritualization in the nation and

Bunsen's view of the stagnation of Asiatic Japhetism, which indicated why the focus of universal history was transferred to European Japhetism, was of course that commonly adopted by Nineteenth Century Europe, particularly by Britain, when dealing with its colonies in the east. Bunsen drew on several elements of popular prejudice to support his statements about oriental decline, including quasi-anthropological notions. The Hindus for example were described as having been isolated from other (progressive) elements in a particularly peaceful but almost hothouse cocoon environment. These expressions were deliberately chosen, since the effects of heat were probably relevant to the degeneration of Japhetic stock as well. Perhaps there was a particularly 'eastern' sub-grouping of Japhetic characteristics which included a certain lethargy or lack of determined progressive momentum.<sup>97</sup> The Persians seemed to have declined to despotism almost inevitably according to Bunsen. He hinted that they might have inter-married with non-Japhetic peoples, Turanian or Semitic, which would have reinforced 'lower' elements in their culture and psychology and thus led to degeneration such as occurred with Zoroastrianism. However the intermixture

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religion. Zoroaster is compared directly to Abraham (*ibid.*, p. 274) on this basis and Buddha to Christ (*ibid.*, p. 374 and p. 379) although neither of the Japhetic reformers reached the level of their Judeo-Christian counterparts. On the World-Historical Personalities theory see *ibid.*, pp. 29-38.

97. See *Outlines III*, p. 132, *God in History I*, p. 316; Bunsen put the moral or physical decline at the moment when the Japhetites migrated into the Indian peninsula: see *Egypt III*, p. 510.

idea was not consistently expounded.<sup>98</sup>

Ultimately, whether plausibly and logically or not, Bunsen was determined to concentrate attention on the European Japhetites. The Hellenes, like the Hebrews, arose out of common Japhetic origins in Asia, but represented a fresh beginning, spiritually and geographically, in a later Age of Humanity. In this respect Bunsen's view differed again from that of Müller. Typically for his profession and generation the latter idealized the ancient eastern Indo-European cultures and languages to such an extent that his interest in them outweighed that in the modern European dialects. Müller's sympathy spilled over from the ancient to the modern India and he would later become a champion for the Indian national heritage and for the self-improvement of the Indian people. For him the Indo-European group never meant solely the European section of that group. For Bunsen however, the importance of the early eastern cultures was transitory, and in themselves they were flawed, inferior to their European brothers. The only hope for India lay in its regeneration by Christian Europe, 'the humane civilization based upon intelligence and freedom of conscience'.<sup>99</sup>

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98. Bunsen vacillates between stating that the Indo-Iranian conquests destroyed the earlier Turanian (or Semitic) populations of the area entirely, creating a 'pure' Japhetic culture for a time, and that the Turanian or Semitic populations were merely subdued, suppressed and eventually intermarried with the Japhetites. See Egypt III, p. 597 (thorough destruction), ibid., p. 461 (mingling), God in History I, p. 197 and p. 290 (Semitic influence on Persia). Bunsen used the intermingling idea to explain 'Shamanistic' elements in Japhetic religions (ibid., pp. 238-9).

99. Ibid., p. 381.



With the development of Semitic and Japhetic inflection the spiritualizing principle of universal history in language had reached its goal. The linguistic foundation now achieved set the scene for further development of the highest linguistic groups through their universal-historical representatives, but now in more abstract, religious, social and cultural directions. This took place in the Third Age of Humanity, the first truly historical age, dated from the time of Abraham (2877 B.C.) to the advent of Christ. The choice of these chronological points was very self-consciously religious, the Third Age very specifically the ante-Christian Age. Outwardly it saw the dominance of the (Semitic) Babylonian and the (Japhetic) Medo-Persian Empires. But Khamism, Turanism, pre-Hebraic Semitism and Asiatic Japhetism had already been dismissed by Bunsen from leading roles in universal history, limited by their inherent characteristics to decay. Along with Sinism all these groups disappeared from Bunsen's universal-historical view without apology, never to be resurrected. They formed only the necessary background to the central drama of this Age, the dialectic opposition between Hebraic Semitism and Hellenic Japhetism, prepared throughout the first two Ages by the Khamito-Semitic and Turano-Japhetic split. The Hebraic Semites represent religion, faith, ethical force: they are the conscience of Humanity, corresponding to the human being's innate religious consciousness. The Hellenic Japhetites represent philosophy, art, science, government: they are the 'reason' of Humanity, correlating with the rational

element in every human being. As in himself, so in all men, in his definition of God himself, and in that of the central drama of Universal History, Bunsen sought to unite reason and religion: the uniting factor being the divine figure of Christ. Although the direction of the dialectic was eventually weighted toward the Japhetic side because of Bunsen's Eurocentrism, the strength of the religious basis of this Eurocentrism, Europe as the modern Christian culture, secured the Semites an equal hearing at least in this pre-Christian era because of the continuity of Judeo-Christian belief. The dialectic of the Third Age was therefore no matter of black and white, pro-Japhetism and anti-Semitism. Both sides were shown to be again in themselves incomplete, yet both sides were necessary for God's universal-historical purpose.<sup>100</sup>

Emerging out of their Semitic past, imbued with Semitic characteristics, the Hebrews fulfil the general Semitic religious vocation par excellence. They shaped the inherent religious tendency into a most profound and ethical 'theory of the Divine Order of the World'.<sup>101</sup> Their religious role dominated Bunsen's description of the Hebrews to the exclusion of any attempt at realism: his only source was the Old Testament. What he defined as the natural Semitic tribal organization under one man's influence was reflected in the position of the prophets Abraham, Moses, Elijah and

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100. See Egypt IV pp. 492-5 and our Appendix for the concentrated dialectic of this Age in synopsis.

101. God in History I, p. 61.

Jeremiah in the Hebraic case. As Semites generally were prone to fall victim to the despotism of monarchs, so in the Hebraic case, they succumb to the despotism of priestly castes. Semitic 'tenacity' manifested itself among the Hebrews in the fidelity - almost rigidity - with which they clung to the message of their prophets. Hebraic laws were defined as having remarkable moral force. The Hebrews were denied any artistic creation outside their religious vocation, and even this in itself was so tenaciously ethical that it lacked philosophic depth. Having rejected anything outside the religious role of the Jews in history, Bunsen's interpretation of Judaism focussed on Judeo-Christian continuity. He saw the message of Abraham and the prophets as unique truths directly revealed by the faculty of prophecy, and all such Hebrew prophecy pointed forward to Christ. Judaism from Abraham onwards prefigured Christianity.<sup>102</sup>

Given that Judaism represented the first national ethical consciousness of God in universal history, the Jews had a negative side as well. Their exclusively religious

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102. See the section on the Hebrews in ibid., pp. 60-203 passim; so important was the place of the Hebrews among the Semites that perhaps even the Hebrew language has a correlative special status amongst Semitic languages (see Outlines III, p. 241). Maas, op.cit. emphasizes how strongly Bunsen's view of Judaism in God in History, and also in his translations in the Bibelwerk are dominated by the conviction of Judeo-Christian continuity, to the point of virtual falsification, or at least complete misreading of the Old Testament (Maas, op.cit., pp. 60-73, 168-186). An example of this is Bunsen's insistence that the Jews had proto-Christian ideas about monogamy and respect for womanhood in terms of legal rights (God in History I, pp. 176-8): quite clearly untrue from Biblical evidence alone, as was accepted by contemporaries (see William Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, London, 1863, vol. II, p. 240, article on 'Marriage' where polygamy is cited over and over again).

drive resulted in a one-sided attitude, their strict ethicalism in a spirit of formalism. These flaws eventually narrowed the original universal scope of Judaism, surrounding the religion with 'an impervious shell':

'... the rigidity of Judaism crushed back the world-religion which it bore within its womb...' 103

Bunsen identified 'rigidity' and 'exclusiveness' so closely with Judaism that the epithet 'Judaic' was applied by him wherever such characteristics were to be found - for example with regard to the scholasticism of mediaeval Christianity.<sup>104</sup> The basis of these Judaic failings was surely that same narrowness and rigidity which Bunsen described for all Semites, and which led eventually to the downfall of pre-Hebraic Semitism. Christ, the world-historical Personality to whom all Hebrew religion looked forward, broke completely with these negative elements, and in this sense represented an entirely non-Judaic fresh beginning:

'Judaism died of having given birth to Him who proclaimed the Spirit of the Law ...' 105

The basis of Bunsen's picture of Hellenic culture was equally that of earlier Japhetic characteristics raised to the height of the peculiar genius of the Greeks. The important geographic transition from Asia to Europe was

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103. God in History II, p. 337.

104. For example in Bunsen's Signs of the Times, p. 308. The Judaic phenomenon of rigidification is one most religions undergo at one stage or another: see Outlines IV, pp. 179-189.

105. Ibid., p. 283.

emphasized, as has been noted, and gave Hellenism already the character of a fresh beginning:

'... the Hellene...set out on his brilliant career through the world's orbit, with his face turned towards Europe, true to the spirit of his earliest memories, reverently cherishing tradition, yet dealing fairly with its letter, in order to give it a new birth in the Spirit'.<sup>106</sup>

Bunsen focussed lovingly on the unique artistic, political and intellectual achievements of the Greeks - lyric poetry, drama, art, history, philosophy, the creation of a democratic state and a true national life. Yet all these were extensions of common Japhetic potential. Spiritually Hellenism advanced beyond Japhetic foundations very early: mythological deities became humanized for the first time. Even more importantly the Hellenes openly expressed an unshakeable faith in the moral order of the world, with the idea of Nemesis, an abstract and deeply religious creation. On such early foundations two Hellenic 'prophets', Homer and Hesiod, created a unifying national Epos, the Hellenic equivalent of the national Law which served and unified the Hebrews so well. Again the continuity of the Hellenic with the future Christian European culture was an important point of emphasis. Bunsen described the philosophy of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle as direct predecessors of the European philosophy of history, including his own. Moreover Greek myth and philosophy directly foreshadowed Christianity.<sup>107</sup>

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106. God in History II, p. 21.

107. See the whole section on the Greeks in ibid., pp. 1-352.

At times Bunsen spoke of the unity of the Graeco-Roman world; certainly the Ages theory and common practice required some consideration of the Roman Empire. However - in the German tradition, and at least partly because of his difficult personal experiences in Italy and with Roman Catholicism - the Roman contribution to universal history was defined as second rate in Bunsen's version. At best Rome was the creation of severely practical men, devoted to valour and patriotism, having a tenacity of purpose: they fulfilled the function of the legislative nation for the pre-Christian Age - statesmen, lawgivers, empire-builders. But Rome contributed nothing independently to the vital spiritual progress of humanity: only imitations of Greek ideas took the place of Roman art, literature, philosophy, mythology. Indeed the Roman conviction of their mission to rule resulted in the terrible state of Imperial society described in terms of despair and decay by Tacitus. From the spiritual vantage point of universal history Bunsen pronounced that a sort of Divine Justice had led the Romans to perdition:

'... the Nemesis of that godless obduracy of Roman pride ...'

resulted in a total blindness to truth, and thus to their fall. Other than the hint of possible mingling with non-Japhetic elements, the fate of the Romans was not explained further. It became relevant again later on in the progression of universal history, when Roman characteristics became the basis of Bunsen's damning view of the Roman Catholic Church. In general however the Graeco-Roman

connection was not emphasized.<sup>108</sup>

Well before Roman civilization lost what little spiritual force it might have borrowed and fell by its overweening arrogance, Hellenism too had decayed. Like the Hebrews, the Hellenes became exclusive: even in Plato or Aristotle

'... No loftier sentiment linked the Hellenic consciousness to that of Universal Humanity...'

This narrowness was accompanied by a moral decline, tending toward shallow materialism and rationalistic philosophy. By the end of the classical century of Greece their spiritual advance had lost its momentum and their political and social organization had succumbed to aristocratic absolutism and self-interest.<sup>109</sup> Thus, like the Asiatic Japhetites the Hellenic, or the Graeco-Roman world sank into materialism, moral decline and absolutism, through its internal failings. As much as the Hebrews, Bunsen's much-idealized Greeks were inadequate to the full task of universal history.

Bunsen saw the contemporary rise and eventual failure of the Hebrews and the Hellenes certainly in accordance with a higher destiny, the fulfillment of the Divine plan in history. Both were incomplete without the other: on the stage of universal history as within each human being the Good and the True, Conscience and Reason must be united. Only with Christ was this achieved: His

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108. Quotes from *ibid.*, p. 388 and the section on the Romans, pp. 353-390.

109. Quotes from *ibid.*, p. 337 and see the pages following; the decline sets in with Euripides: see Bunsen's tirade against him pp. 224-244.

Coming was a new true miracle, out of the decay of Judaism, directed towards the inheritors of Hellenism. Christ brought the religion of the Spirit to the whole of Humanity, and was thus the centre-point in Universal History, uniting the dialectic of the old world and pointing the way to the New through Christianity.<sup>110</sup>

The Fourth Age of Humanity stretched from Christ to Bunsen's own day: the Age of the rise to world dominion of Christian Europe. The impact of Islam, Arabic nations, and the Turkish state was ignored. However Christian Europe's external and international predominance had been accompanied by dangerous forces of internal antagonism. There had been a schism within Christianity between Romanic and Teutonic varieties. The first three centuries of the Church after Christ witnessed the establishment of an almost ideally Japhetic form of religion, 'congregational apostolic Christianity'.<sup>111</sup> But when the Church became an Imperial Roman institution under Constantine and then the sole established faith under Theodosius, typically Roman ideas of patriarchy and hierarchy began to take over. Charlemagne helped to consolidate Papal rule with his Holy Roman Empire, and thus inaugurated a period reminiscent of the worst characteristics of heathen

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110. See the need for uniting Hellene and Hebrew expressed in God in History I, p. 203, the treatment of Christ in God in History III, pp. 7-41, and for comments on the theological adequacy of this see Maas, op.cit. pp. 74-98. Christianity is 'the religion of the world' (see Outlines IV, p. 281).

111. God in History III, p. 103.



Imperial times. Roman Catholicism to Bunsen's own day continued on this path of 'Judaic' dogmatism and Papal ordinance, served by Jesuit agents: it waged

'... open warfare ... against mental liberty ...', practicing tyranny, inquisition, oppression, and by its rigidity encouraged violent revolution. Romanic forces had brought only destruction and distorted the world religion Christianity.<sup>112</sup>

True Christianity had been upheld by a relatively newly-arisen Japhetic group, the Teutons. In late Roman times the 'thoroughly pure-blooded Bactro-Aryan Teutons',<sup>113</sup> were recognized by Tacitus (according to Bunsen) as a new force in universal history. At that time Teutonic mythology still contained the physical forces and personifications of Vedic and early Greek myth. Their social life still manifested that love of loyalty, truthfulness and liberty which allowed of democratically elected assemblies and a truly communal and equal society. They too had their faults - for example, from Tacitus, a tendency to sluggishness - but their virtues were of far greater importance. In the purest Japhetic tradition, they were already potentially the people of the future while the Graeco-Roman world degenerated. In helping to finally destroy it, the Teutons met the tremendous influence of Christianity and adopted it. Not only did the world-historical religion rescue them from the dangers of polytheism and spiritual decay, but it also set free their

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112. Ibid., p. 210 and see pp. 42-198.

113. God in History II, p. 394.

greatest qualities - susceptibility to culture and beauty, devotion to the inner spirit and an aversion to outer form, finally their love of liberty. It was no accident that Germanic Reformers brought the original truth of Christianity back to Humanity. Since that time and despite lapses the countries of the German Reformation have led the way in civil liberties and national government.<sup>114</sup>

Bunsen saw his own time as a period of crisis especially as a result of the internal schism within Christianity. The conflict of Romanic and Teutonic was somewhat reminiscent of the earlier Semitic-Japhetic antagonism: formalistic Romanic characteristics recalled the worst aspects of Semitic, the freedom and religious depth of the Teutonic peoples revived the best aspects of Japhetic. In a millenarian mood he felt that 'the present civilization of Europe may perish' in violence, with the threat of total political and cultural collapse:<sup>115</sup>

'... everything may sink into inextricable confusion ...'<sup>116</sup>

However there was also a more positive hope for the future,

114. See Bunsen's whole treatment of the Teutons on the basis of Tacitus' Germania in ibid., pp. 391-516 and the Reformation (centered around Luther rather than Calvin), God in History III, pp. 199-281. Note particularly Bunsen's insistence that the heathen Teutons themselves were deeply moral in their relationships particularly that of marriage, and held women in high esteem (God in History II, p. 397ff), stressing the direct continuity with Christian or Judeo-Christian morality, and also his overt preference for Germanic rather than Romanic philosophy and culture into modern times (further examples in Outlines III, pp. 3-32).
115. Outlines IV, p. 283; see also pp. 266-8 and p. 293, God in History III, pp. 328-9, p. 336ff. and throughout Bunsen's Signs of the Times for the millenarian mood.
116. God in History III, p. 353.

which the ever-optimistic Bunsen preferred. Whether the great calamity occurred or not, the future might be a time of compromise and amalgamation, self-renewal, the surmounting of antagonisms, the waning of the Hierarchical spirit and the advance of the spirit of Association.<sup>117</sup>

For the continuing progress of universal history was a part of God's plan, and thus necessary. The first steps had already been taken: missionaries and colonists had been sent out beyond the Old world to regenerate the whole earth. For all the true followers of Christ, Japhetic, European or otherwise, there will dawn a new day beyond the potential day of judgement on Europe:

'The divine figure of Christ alone stands pre-eminent, and rises majestically over the ruins of the greatest social fabric which the world has ever seen - the shattered house of the great European Christian family'.<sup>118</sup>

Such a Second Coming of Christ would again overcome all antagonisms and once more join the imperfect and scattered elements of our world into the higher unity of another.

It should be stressed that two different under-currents ran through the whole of Bunsen's elaborate attempt to write universal history by uniting the truths of revelation and reason. On the one hand lay the implications of Bunsen's marshalling of 'factual' elements. In so far as

117. These are the two Spirits of his own Age that Bunsen defined in his Signs of the Times. The hope for betterment and amalgamation is expressed also pp. 432-3 and p. 291ff. and in God in History III, pp. 352-3; also in ethnological terms pp. 311-312.
118. Outlines IV, p. 268 and further on the coming Apocalypse, God in History III, pp. 354-359.

language was considered reliable, factual information, the universal-historical stages and types could claim a factual status. The fact that such a use of language involved a deep confusion between language type, thought and cultural, or even ethnic group characteristics, and thus was anything but 'factual', never became apparent to Bunsen. On the basis of this hidden illogicality he emphasized the notion of stratification and differentiation and limitation. His overt Eurocentrism embraced and worsened this confusion: without apology or justification he structured history in this one direction. The result was a theory which often seemed to assert the inevitable superiority of the Japhetites. Their

'march through the world's history is an unbroken progress', now 'over all regions of the globe ...'

Since linguistic stages were so ambiguously defined, the meaning of this Japhetic domination, towards which all history had been developing, could stray dangerously close to one of biological race.<sup>119</sup>

On his own premises, however, Bunsen was left with a host of 'factual' problems. On the one hand were problems of inadequate linguistic and historical knowledge: these were the difficulties his young collaborators were only too aware of. On the other hand, there were problems of inconsistency with modern reality, even reality as seen from the Eurocentric viewpoint: the problem of the advanced Turanians and their national culture, of the power of the

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119. God in History I, p. 221.

modern Islamic Semites, the problem of explaining eastern Japhetic 'degeneration' in a way consistent with Japhetic characteristics in general.

On the other hand the religious and spiritual foundations of Bunsen's universal history led to a single framework for humankind, from origins to the apocalyptic future, all explained by an unselfconscious emphasis on the supra-factual. The whole of man's experience on earth formed a coherent whole ever moving toward the realization of the Kingdom of God on earth and the Second Coming of Christ. The definition of earthly progress was entirely non-material

'The Religious Consciousness is the efficient cause of all civilization; and in its workings is exhibited ... the unity of one Divine Progressive Force working in Humanity ...'<sup>120</sup>

The linguistic stages of universal history formed only the necessary foundations of the much more important spiritual growth of man. By the Third Age language was complete and the Hellenes and Hebrews had begun the preparation of larger national and cultural progress, still in a spiritual way. Both were necessary to set the stage for the Fourth Age, and the basis of the superiority of Christianity and Christian culture was its divine origin and world-scope. The aim was to unite all men in the future as men had been created united and equal by God, and as all men had taken part in the development of universal history.

The religious undercurrent counterbalanced and

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120. God in History III, p. 304.

defused the 'factual' undercurrent throughout the theory, and resolved all contradictions. Language was both 'factual' and by definition spiritual. Bunsen took great pains to prove in linguistic terms that his religious framework of unity and continuity was 'factually' true. Each stage was continuous with and dependent upon that which had preceded it right back to the origins of language and of man. Each stage was necessary, but incomplete. All stages and groups could be united by Christianity, which was the focal point of all history. Perhaps even European Japhetism and its Christianity would be superseded in the future. Even when defining the characteristics of individual groups on a linguistic basis Bunsen preferred to speak of the intangible psychological and cultural characteristics. Direct discussion on a factual level - for example of physical characteristics - was entirely absent. The justification for attributing superiority in universal history was usually specifically religious;

'If we compare the relative position of the two civilizing families, we observe an increasing extent and power of the Japhetic element, evidently destined to rule the world by a series of successive nations. Of the two first known empires of the world, the more powerful and influential seems to have been that which, speaking the most ancient form of Chaldee, must be considered as the representative of Shem ... In the historical age of the world the power passes rapidly and irresistibly to Japhet. The great continuous stream of human civilization runs, since that time, clearly in a Japhetic channel; whereas Shem takes the most prominent part in the religious development of mankind. The three cognate religions which govern the world are Semitic ... But conscious speculation and philosophy speak by the mouth of Japhet ... It is to the sons of Japhet that the beautiful was revealed ... Thus everywhere the Semitic and

the Japhetic mind assist and complete each other; but the Japhetic formation is nationally always the higher ... Throughout history the Semitic nations act, as it were, the great episodes in universal history by temporary reconquests of the land of the Japhetites, and by opposing profound thought and religion, enthusiasm and cunning, to the more comprehensive genius, in science, politics, and war, of the sons of Japhet'.<sup>121</sup>

The result was an internally complex but coherent theory uniquely poised between positive, genuine, religious elements and potentially dangerous 'factual' elements. Ultimately the two sides of the theory were held together by Bunsen's personal convictions, deep religious convictions which were announced freely. In the 1850's and 1860's the greatest problem was not with such convictions per se, but with the plausibility of the factual base of the theory, linguistically and historically.<sup>122</sup> Bunsen's disciples Lepsius and Müller would continue to share Bunsen's religious convictions on a personal level, but would find it much more difficult, as professional scholars in certain newly established fields, to parade them openly. They were also aware of the factual problems which Bunsen's conviction had conveniently glossed over, and tried to honestly face them in the decade after his death.

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121. Outlines IV, pp. 24-5.

122. The overriding weight of the religious elements, and Bunsen's only secondary concern with the accuracy of the factual elements were recognized and criticized openly during his own lifetime by the linguist August Pott, as will be discussed below.

CHAPTER IVHAMITIC, TURANIAN, 'ARYAN': THE WORK OF CARL  
RICHARD LEPSIUS AND FRIEDRICH MAX MÜLLER,  
1850's - 1870

Given the circumstances of his life and the religious and philosophical bent of his thought, Bunsen would have had little chance of constructing the factual side of universal history entirely on his own. His two collaborators Richard Lepsius and Max Müller played a fundamental role in transforming the ideal of universal history into a plausible account of linguistic and historical growth which conformed with a good deal of the knowledge available in the 1850's. For Bunsen the factual structure of the theory of universal history continued to reflect quite transparently a foundation of unshakeable religious conviction. In its major outlines universal history was beyond the reach of intellectual doubt: it was a central article of Bunsen's faith, dominating most of his life and activity. Whatever factual problems or criticisms it might incur - Bunsen indeed anticipated some - were a matter for internal readjustments and continuing research. The theory as a whole was thereby not diminished, and Bunsen would never cease to invoke it as the ultimate truth.<sup>1</sup>

However the balance between religious conviction and factual knowledge differed in the minds and work of

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1. The centrality of universal history in Bunsen's thought is emphasized in Maas, op.cit., especially pp. 199-203.



Lepsius and Müller: conviction would be less publically exposed, fact more specifically brought forward. Indications of this difference surfaced even during their period of collaboration with Bunsen and intensified as the major works of universal history appeared. They were faced with discrepancies or outright gaps in knowledge which, unlike Bunsen, they could not ignore or conveniently theorize away. One factor especially determined their hesitation to completely endorse Bunsen's theory: their increasing professionalism. The scholarly promise which had originally been the object of Bunsen's very genuine and effective patronage, and on which he had drawn to such advantage, now drew Lepsius and Müller away from universal history. In effect they were forced to choose between their present and future credibility as scholars in two particular fields, and loyalty to Bunsen and to the ideal of universal history which, it is important to note, they still shared as an ideal.

The elder man, Lepsius, made this choice first. By 1849, as will be seen, he had secured a niche in the highly critical and competitive German academic environment, and was acclaimed as the leading European Egyptologist of the time. It was only natural that he wished to consolidate his position at home, to maintain his international reputation, to further the cause of his science. And Bunsen had helped him considerably to this point. But the religious motivations and chronological

speculations of Bunsen's universal history not only at times clashed with Lepsius' own results but were actually undesirable for the solid Egyptological science that Lepsius hoped to build. Perhaps Bunsen's philosophical flights would even have been entirely out of harmony with Lepsius' essentially factual cast of mind, had he not admired Bunsen, and felt a deep debt of loyalty to him. Lepsius balanced loyalty and his own inclinations in the Preface to his Chronologie der Aegypter in 1849 by disassociating himself from universal history in public, though not from Bunsen or Bunsen's attempts to construct it. He made clear his disagreements with Bunsen on historical questions to do with Egypt as well. However he expressed his gratitude to his patron, and claimed assurance of Bunsen's indulgence, indeed support, for factual corrections which could not shake Bunsen's theory in toto:

'... die chronologische Grundlage zu gewinnen, galt auch Ihnen mit Recht als der erste und wichtigste Punkt... Sie gingen hierbei zunächst von den Berichten der Striftsteller aus, welche den Zusammenhang im Grossen und im Einzelnen lehren, ich von den Denkmälern, welche den griechischen Berichten ihre Glaubwürdigkeit sichern, oft ihr Verständniss erschliessen, und ihre einzelnen Angaben berichten, ergänzen, bestätigen müssten. Der gegenseitige Austausch sollte zu einem gemeinschaftlichen Resultate führen. Wenn dies schon früher nicht immer gelang, so musste die Unterbrechung begreiflicher Weise in gar manchen Punkten uns noch weiter auseinander führen. Ich habe nie Anstand genommen, mich unumwunden über solche Abweichungen gegen Sie auszusprechen, weil ich wohl weiss, dass Sie wie ich nur die Sache im Auge haben und mit mir überzeugt sind dass nur aus der scharfen Darstellung der möglichen Gegensätze sich die Wahrheit zuletzt herausstellt. Auch in den vorliegenden Untersuchungen bin ich dieser

Überzeugung gefolgt, habe aber deshalb nur um so mehr das Bedürfniss gefühlt, dieselben zunächst Ihnen vorzulegen und in Erfüllung einer theuern Pflicht als ein öffentliches Zeichen meiner Dankbarkeit Ihnen zu widmen'.

Bunsen accepted both criticism and compliments graciously, maintained his friendship with Lepsius and continued on his own path unperturbed.<sup>2</sup>

The younger man, Müller made his choice a few years later. By the mid 1850's he was situated in the unpromising English academic environment in a position not entirely suitable to his training, nor in keeping with his work on the internationally awaited edition of the Veda. Müller naturally wanted an academic post which would allow him to continue his chosen activities: whether in England or in Germany (he would have preferred the latter, but Bunsen encouraged him to stay with the former) was not important at this point. Shortly after Bunsen's departure from England however his scholarly reputation was seriously threatened. Bunsen's universal history was attacked in general, but it was not Bunsen, even less Lepsius, but in fact Müller who found himself in the front line of fire, over the Turanian theory.

The critics of universal history were no nonentities. One was August Friedrich Pott, professor of general linguistics at Halle, one of the leading figures

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2. Quotation from Lepsius, Die Chronologie der Aegypter, Preface (unpaginated, found on third and fourth page of the Preface) and cf. above, Chapter 2, for Lepsius' disassociation from universal history. Very little source material survives of the Bunsen-Lepsius relationship in the 1850's; from references in Lepsius, Bunsen and in Bunsen (Nippold), however, there is no indication of anything but a genuine friendship up until Bunsen's death.

in the mid-century generation of Indo-European linguists. Pott's knowledge was astoundingly versatile: he ranged from sharp-minded analyses of questions of method to unusually detailed coverage of many little-known far Eastern and African languages. It was a serious matter then, when in 1855 he directed a characteristically polemic treatise against Müller in particular in a leading German scholarly journal: 'Max Müller und die Kennzeichen der Sprachverwandtschaft'. Pott had little patience for the philosophy of universal history in language. He would for years continue to attack the idea of original monosyllabic roots, the three-tiered morphological progression from monosyllabism to agglutination and then to inflection, and even more any attempt to draw from these linguistic hypotheses any historical conclusions, especially if they were conclusions of a theologically-motivated kind, like Bunsen's about the unity of all mankind. He hammered on the theme that linguistic unity was one thing - not yet proved; human original unity was entirely another, and theology should not enter the discussion at all. Thus dismissing Bunsen and all his theoretical foundations, Pott shifted his focus mercilessly onto Müller, and precisely for the reason that the young man manifested such a promising linguistic talent. According to Pott, all of Müller's excellent work was wasted because he too had adopted Bunsen's false theological foundations. Once caught by this basic mistake, Müller had allowed himself to expound

an essentially inaccurate linguistic hypothesis: Turanian. The idea of what constituted linguistic relationship, on which Turanian had been built, was unscientific. Similarity of form proved nothing at all. Only geneological relationship, which included regular phonetic, etymological and structural correspondances could be the subject of correct linguistic grouping. Pott emphasized that he directed this critique against Müller in his own interests and in the interests of scientific linguistics, and more in sorrow than in anger:

'Ich habe ausführlich ... meine Gründe angegeben, warum ich mich nicht mit Hern. M. in Einverständniss finde .... Der Umstand, je nachdem man unserm Autor seine Gründe als beweisend zugiebt oder nicht, entscheidet im Gebiete der Linguistik über unglaublich ausgedehnte und folgenschwere Consequenzen, zumal unter ungeschickten Händen. Eine solche Aussicht rief mich - und zwar heisst mein Wahlspruch: Principiis obsta! - gegen Hern. M. in den Schranken; übrigens einen Gelehrten, gegen dessen Talente und Kenntnisse ich von der höchsten Achtung beseelt bin. Ja gerade darum trete ich ihm entgegen, weil er seinen Argumentationen durch Gelehrstamkeit, Scharfsinn und Geist fast überall einen so verführerischen Reiz zu verleihen weiss, dass ihnen nur zu leicht, auch wo sie falsch sind, zu erliegen Gefahr läuft, selbst wer nicht gerade zu den Unkundigen gehört, um so mehr Gefahr läuft, als sich bestimmte theologische Interessen hineinzumischen drohen, die auf die Linguistik nur voreinnehmend und verwirrend wirken, und sie über kurz oder lang ihrem alten heillosen Sprachenmischmasch, und einer nicht bloss bildlichen Confusio Babylonica wieder überantworten könnten. Hätte, wie nicht der Fall war, eine beurtheilende Anzeige von der Müller'schen Arbeit in meinem Plane gelegen: dann wäre, nicht nur, trotz vieler gegen sie erhobener Einreden, ihre Tüchtigkeit im Allgemeinen, sondern auch in vielen Besonderheiten rühmend auszuzeichnen, für mich eine angenehme Pflicht gewesen. Indem ich dies zu meinem Bedauern jetzt Andern überlassen muss, kann ich mir wenigstens nicht die Bemerkung versagen: die gegenwärtige Abhandlung Hrn.

Müller's zählt, nach meiner Ansicht, zu dem Bedeutendsten, was im linguistischen Fache seit lange erschienen ist'.

These statements were a very clear warning to Müller to beware lest universal history destroy his scholarly credibility.<sup>3</sup>

In the same year another prominent critique of universal history appeared from the pen of Ernest Renan, the rising Semitic scholar of the day, trained in German linguistic methods and a philosopher of language in his own right. In what was probably the most influential work on Semitic linguistics in the first three-quarters of the Nineteenth century, his Histoire Générale des Langues Sémitiques (1855), he focussed on Bunsen's theory from his own point of view. Renan like Pott, supported the notion of linguistic (although not physical) polygenism, and therefore denied Bunsen's unified origins for language. He of course rejected the Khamitic hypothesis along with Bunsen's 'Elamitic' extension to Semitic. But he reserved an especial criticism for Müller's Turanian theory: it was entirely unscientific:

'... gratuite et formée par des procédés qui ne sont pas ceux de la science rigoureuse'.

Renan brought Pott's implications out into the open. He

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3. Quoted from August Friedrich Pott, 'Max Müller und die Kennzeichen der Sprachverwandtschaft', Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft, vol. 9, 1855, p. 463; note that the emphasis is Pott's own. On Pott (1802-1887) see Sebeok, Portraits of Linguists, I, pp. 251-261.

concluded in public that Müller had constructed the Turanian theory to Bunsen's specifications:

'... M. Müller[se] fait l'organe des idées de M. Bunsen'.<sup>4</sup>

Müller had to repudiate this accusation, had to stand by the Turanian hypothesis as his own work, if he wished to retain any independent linguistic reputation at all. The difficulty was that he did not completely agree with Bunsen's version of Turanian at all. The incident quickly produced a feud between Renan and Müller in private, which threatened to become public, through a sharp counter-critique of Renan's Histoire which Müller wrote in fury and was prepared to publish. The quarrel was only halted by the personal intervention of Bunsen, with his usual attitude of untroubled acceptance of criticism. He appealed to Müller to accept what he saw as a scientific disagreement compounded by an unfortunate misunderstanding:

'I send you these lines... to stop, if possible, your wrath against Renan. He confesses in his letter that "ma plume m'a trahi"; and has partly not said what he thinks, and partly said what he does not think. But his note is not that of an enemy. He considers his book an homage offered to German science, and ... deserves all our thanks in a theological, national, and scientific point of view. We cannot afford to quarrel unnecessarily with such a man. You must deal gently with him. You will do it, will you not, for my sake? I am persuaded it is best'.

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4. Quoted from Renan's account of his opinions of 1855 given in his De l'Origine du Langage (second edition, 1858), reprinted in his Oeuvres Complètes, VIII, Paris, 1958, see pp. 27 (footnote 1)-28; here he mentions that his original accusations appeared in the first edition of the Histoire, p. 555; I have not been able to gain access to the first edition of this work.

Müller responded to his patron's appeal by suppressing his anti-Renan pamphlet, and, for his part, Renan already regretted the feud. Subsequent editions of the Histoire did not repeat the most offending accusation, although a general critique of the Turanian hypothesis, amidst compliments to Müller's linguistic ability, continued to appear. The incident had a lasting effect on Müller's relationship to Bunsen's universal history. For accusations such as those of Pott and Renan were a serious thing for a young professional scholar. From 1856 he devoted himself to his career and personal interests, as we have seen, and even became critical in private of some of Bunsen's last speculations. As always, Bunsen accepted the criticisms in a generous spirit; he never complained of Müller's change in attitude.<sup>5</sup>

Clearly, Bunsen never grasped the serious nature of the attacks on his philosophy of universal history. He remained tolerant and undisturbed as Renan and Pott demolished the whole framework from its foundations. Furthermore he did not understand that, by withdrawing their direct factual support, his disciples were introducing

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5. Quoted from a letter of December 2, 1855 from Bunsen to Müller, in Chips III, p. 476; on the change in the Bunsen-Müller relationship cf. chapter 2 above, and, for example, Bunsen's statement to Müller, 'I depend on your marking all egregious blunders with a red pencil. Many such must still have remained, leaving out of view all differences of opinion...', letter of Bunsen to Müller, February 17, 1858, Chips III, pp. 516-7. The Müller-Renan controversy can be followed in Müller I, pp. 172-3, and in Renan's Correspondance (Oeuvres Complètes, X, Paris, 1961), two letters of November 1855, pp. 171-178, of June, 1857, pp. 212-214; see Renan's continued criticism of Turanian in his Histoire générale (3rd. edition), p. 579.



a degree of hesitancy which the theory could not survive unscathed. The researches of Lepsius and Müller had been fundamental to the viability of Bunsen's theory. If they were no longer prepared to stand by Bunsen in public, and if, as they had begun to do in the 1850's, they questioned and revised, where stood the 'proof' of monogenesis, the Asiatic Urheimat, the stages of universal-historical development, and the path of God in History? Bunsen died in 1860 without coming to terms with this crucial issue.

Yet he was not alone in this. For Lepsius' and Müller's part, withdrawal from universal history in public and professional devotion to their subject fields did not mean a rejection of Bunsen's theory in toto. It meant a factually-oriented revision of it, with particular reference to those parts of universal history with which they were especially involved. During the 1850's and 1860's both Lepsius and Müller indicated publically, however briefly, that they still agreed with Bunsen's framework in fundamentals - man's special nature, his basic unity, the unity and continuity of linguistic development in history. Unquestioningly they continued Bunsen's idea of universal history as a progressive and meaningful whole, and relied on language and the course of its growth to demonstrate it. They continued to use the concept of linguistic types ambiguously, implying cultural and to some extent ethnic types, although they saw themselves as arguing on linguistic bases. These assumptions

lay beneath all their specialized researches, and explain why Lepsius, the sober and leading Egyptologist of his generation, not only retained the Hamitic hypothesis, but substantially extended and strengthened it; while Müller continued to expound the Turanian and 'Aryan'<sup>6</sup> hypotheses to an even greater extent than Bunsen, in revised form, while carrying the reputation of one of the outstanding Sanskrit and general Indo-European scholars of the day. But the way in which they chose to continue universal history reveals their difference from Bunsen. They submerged Bunsen's freely-expressed religious convictions - those convictions on which universal history had been constructed in the first place - and tried to replace them with almost exclusively factual, indeed in the parlance of the time, 'scientific' arguments. The end product was much the same, yet the mode of argument was qualitatively different. As little as Bunsen did they realize that an increased 'scientific' emphasis could neither prove nor disprove a theory founded on religious conviction.

Even less did Lepsius and Müller realize that the more they insisted on the 'scientific' nature of their linguistic-based hypotheses, the more dangerous they became.

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6. Müller adopted this term for the Indo-European group, or Bunsen's (Indo-European) Japhetic, as early as 1847 and used it absolutely consistently from the late 1850's onwards. See below and note 45 for his reasons for doing so. The term will here be quoted in parentheses to distinguish Müller's very precise linguistic meaning from the many confused layers of meaning that Aryan has acquired over the past century, building on the original linguistic base.

Especially in the hands of those who had no interest in the religious presuppositions of universal history whatsoever, the Eurocentrism of Bunsen's original theory, the potential for linguistic types to be interpreted as cultural, and even physical types, would soon become manifest. Lepsius' and Müller's 'scientific' work on Hamitic, Turanian and 'Aryan' would fuel a great number of such misapplications, beginning already in the 1860's. These two loyal disciples of Bunsen's Christian universal history would never accept such abuses of their work as valid. But they never understood how much they, unconsciously, had contributed toward such misuse in the 1850's and 1860's.

Lepsius' declaration of independence from Bunsen in 1849 was based in part on the success of his Expedition to Egypt of 1842-6. In north Africa he had engaged in a remarkably methodical and exhaustive survey of surface monuments extending southwards into Nubia and the modern Sudan, and east to the Sinai. Some minor but pioneering excavation took place and a wealth of new information was gathered and brought back to Europe in the form of Lepsius' huge collection of meticulously exact copies of inscriptions and sketches. Not only did he score a great scholarly success but he took care to fulfil a promise made to Frederick William IV during the negotiations which had led to his promise of financial support for the Expedition: the promise to select outstanding Egyptian antiquities and ship them back to Berlin for inclusion in the Passalacqua collection,

already housed under the protection of the King at Monbijou. Lepsius was probably the last important Egyptologist to be granted *carte blanche* for exportation of Egyptian treasures. He did so under the banner of genuine antiquarian concern - although at times the objects chosen were extracted not without serious damage to surrounding antiquities. He would later be attacked over this 'plunder' during the period when the first important Egyptian archaeologist, Auguste Mariette, was attempting to control the antiquities traffic and establish an Egyptian National Museum.<sup>7</sup>

For Lepsius personally the Expedition was a triumph on all counts. The 'Extraordinarius' Professorship created for him at the Berlin University by the King before his departure was quickly transformed into an official tenured post, an 'Ordinarius'. Frederick William IV agreed to subsidize the publication of Lepsius' results, the twelve great volumes of Denkmäler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien, which became a vital sourcebook for Nineteenth century Egyptology and are still valued highly today. In 1850 Lepsius was elected to the Berlin Academy; he took part in planning and decoration of the new premises for the expanded royal Egyptian antiquities collection, eventually the Egyptian Museum, of which he became Keeper after Passalacqua's death, in 1865. Teaching duties too

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7. On the Expedition see Lepsius, p. 162ff., and on the collection of monuments, pp. 171-5 especially. For a modern - and still high - estimate of the importance of the Expedition see G. Bratton, A History of Egyptian Archaeology, London, 1967, p. 74.

were taken up from October 1846. Loaded with these honours, Lepsius also felt a great responsibility for the field of Egyptology: it was still a scarcely reputable scholarly field in Germany, and in France all progress had been temporarily halted.<sup>8</sup> His new position helped to turn him away from further collaboration with Bunsen, yet his experiences in Africa forced him to retain the concept of Hamitic, and develop it.

Hamitic was not retained openly within Lepsius' Egyptology, although it was always implied. The difficulty here was the inadequacy of current knowledge about the ancient Egyptian language, and Lepsius' marked lack of interest in continuing work on it. Before the Expedition he had inclined toward optimism about the rapid progress of decipherment and seems to have put together a rough grammatical work on the language of the hieroglyphs, in manuscript, around 1841. However the first-hand experience of Egypt encouraged his chronological, and wide cultural interests. After 1846 the publication of the Denkmäler, which again covered all aspects and periods of Egyptian civilization, dominated his activity until the end of the 1850's. Other major works of the period: Die Chronologie der Aegypter (1849), Königsbuch der alten Aegypter (1858), dealt with issues arising from the information gathered in Egypt. Outside the main interest in chronology, smaller essays surveyed art and religion in a preliminary way. On linguistic questions there had been some advance. By 1849 he firmly restated the ideas of 1837, to see the language

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8. Lepsius' conscious attempt to build up the reputation of Egyptology is suggested in Lepsius, p. 160.

of the hieroglyphs as having eventually been frozen into a dead language, surviving only in formalized texts of the late period. Consequently transliteration into the last offshoot of the ancient language, Coptic, was no longer valid. Nevertheless Coptic remained the key to decipherment, and the process of decipherment seemed much less likely to be immediately completed. At least until 1855, Lepsius considered that only a general understanding of the contents of any hieroglyphic inscription could be attained:

'... die Aegyptische Wissenschaft hat seit ihrem Beginn daran gelitten, dass man viel mehr übersetzt und erklärt hat, als man verstand und verantworten konnte .....  
... Es ist mir überhaupt nur eine Arbeit bekannt, welche Anspruch auf den Namen einer philologischen Analyse eines fortlaufenden aegyptischen Textes machen kann ....

Der Grund dieser sparsamen Kommentare zu einzelnen Inschriften liegt darin, dass es bis jetzt eben noch nicht wohl möglich ist, längere Texte ohne grosse und wesentliche Lücken mit einiger Zuverlässigkeit zu erklären. Ja es giebt nicht wenige Inschriften, von denen wir nach unserer bisherigen Kenntniss noch gar nichts verstehen, und welche kaum ihren oberflächlichen Inhalt errathen lassen ...'.<sup>9</sup>

It was indeed quite true that up until the beginning of the 1850's no analysis or full translation of an ancient hieroglyphic running text had been achieved. Since Lepsius, for the sake of his science, and probably even temperamentally, would not publish work unless he felt

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9. Quoted from Lepsius, 'Über eine hieroglyphische Inschrift am Tempel von Edfu ...', KAWB, Abhandlungen, 1855, pp. 69-71; on the unpublished grammar of 1841 see Lepsius, pp. 166-7, and for linguistic views after the Expedition, the Prospectus to the Denkmäler, 1849, p. 33ff. Lepsius, Denkmäler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien, 12 vols, Berlin, 1849-58, Königsbuch der alten Aegypter, Berlin, 1858.

sure of his ground, he chose to avoid the linguistic question entirely for some time. This attitude left the Denkmäler somewhat lacking. He admitted that a full textual commentary with translations, which should accompany the plates, was impossible, given the linguistic problems of the day. Instead he proposed a general commentary, with some geographic detail based on his journal notes. Even this failed to appear: probably because it too left too many gaps which could not be filled. Perhaps the Chronologie and Königsbuch can be seen as preparation towards the proposed textual commentary, and the publication of letters written during the Expedition (Briefe aus Aegypten, Aethiopien und der Halbinsel von Sinai . . ., 1852) could have served as an outline. But important as these works were, they were taking Lepsius further and further away from linguistic work on ancient Egyptian for its own sake.<sup>10</sup>

The basis of a better knowledge of the nature of the language of the hieroglyphs came not from Lepsius but from the gradual revival of French work in Egyptology.

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10. On Lepsius' temperamental disinclination to publish on inadequate knowledge see Lepsius, p. 332ff., and, with specific reference to the linguistic problem, Adolf Erman's obituary for Lepsius, Literatur-Blatt für orientalische Philologie, I, 1883-4, pp. 473-476; Lepsius' discussion of the proposed Denkmäler text in the Prospectus of 1849, pp. 32-3. A text was finally compiled from Lepsius' Journals and notes posthumously under the editorship of one of his students, Édouard Naville, 5 vols, 1897-1913. Lepsius, Briefe aus Aegypten, Aethiopien und der Halbinsel von Sinai, Berlin, 1852; (English, Letters from Egypt, Ethiopia and the Peninsula of Sinai, trans. L. and J.B. Horner, London, 1853).

Calls for the resumption of French scholarship in the field had resulted in the appointment of Charles Lenormant, who had accompanied Champollion to Egypt, to Champollion's chair at the College de France in 1848. In the next year the virtually self-taught Emmanuel de Rougé was appointed Conservator of the Egyptian Museum at the Louvre, working in close co-operation with Lenormant and eventually succeeding him to the chair in 1860. The revival brought important results. De Rougé fulfilled the double function of teacher and researcher admirably. He is credited with being the founder of the strict methodical and philological investigation of the Egyptian language. His Mémoire sur l'inscription du tombeau d'Ahmes (1851), which philologically analyzed and translated seven running lines of text for the first time, became the model for a whole French 'school' of textual work. Earlier, de Rougé still held Champollionesque ideas about the language and scripts, and in 1851 continued to rely heavily on Coptic. But from this point his conviction grew that there was a special link between the ancient Egyptian language and the Semitic group. The French 'school' around de Rougé - his pupils numbered François Chabas and the brilliant Gaston Maspero - picked up their teacher's conclusions about the nature of the language as well as his philological technique.<sup>11</sup>

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11. For the revival of French Egyptology after Champollion see Hartleben, op.cit., vol. 2, especially p. 559ff.; on Lenormant and de Rougé see the entries in Dawson and Uphill, op.cit., and for the latter the excellent article by M.H. Wallon, 'Notice historique sur la vie et les travaux de M. le Vicomte Emmanuel de Rougé', Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, séance



De Rougé's first important pupil was not, however French, but a German, Heinrich Brugsch. At twenty years of age Brugsch made a precocious debut with an essay into the neglected Demotic field, Scriptura Aegyptiorum demotica et papyris et inscriptionibus explanata (1848). The young man was mainly self-taught, with some assistance from the old antiquities dealer Passalacqua; he had been given financial support from that indefatigable patron of scholars, Alexander von Humboldt. But the newly established leader of the science in Germany, Lepsius, mercilessly panned Brugsch's first effort. Lepsius' attitude not only created a lengthy antagonism between himself and Brugsch - and caused incidentally also a rift with Humboldt - but drove Brugsch to seek encouragement and recognition elsewhere. De Rougé had received the essay with more indulgence, and through his interest, virtually secured Brugsch's transferral to his own French 'school'. The incident reveals some rivalry between German and French Egyptology: as early as the late 1840's Lepsius had been accused of jealously guarding an arrogant claim to sole master-status

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publique annuelle du ... 7 décembre, 1877, Compte-Rendu, pp. 381-432, and Brugsch, Die Aegyptologie, p. 131. For de Rougé's linguistic views early and late see his 'Examen de l'ouvrage de M. le chevalier de Bunsen ...', Annales de Philosophie chrétienne, 1846-7, reprinted in de Rougé's Oeuvres Diverses, Tome I, 1907, see especially pp. 37-9; Mémoire sur l'inscription du tombeau d'Ahmes ..., Paris, 1851, especially pp. 15-16; Chrestomathie égyptienne ..., part 2, Paris, 1868; Recherches sur les monuments qu'on peut attribuer aux six premières dynasties de Manethon ..., Paris, 1866, especially pp. 2-3.

in the science. Brugsch's defection was sealed during the course of his first voyage to Egypt, 1853-4, when he developed a close friendship with Auguste Mariette. His pioneering Grammaire Démotique (1855) was the initial result of the French influence, but he later broadened his scope to produce a large number of works on varied Egyptological subjects, amongst them the important Dictionnaire hiéroglyphique et démotique (1867-1880). By this time the French 'school' were quite sure of the Semitic-Egyptian link. Brugsch expressed it confidently:

'Es steht mir nämlich fest, dass die altaegyptische Sprache, d.h. die älteste Gestaltung derselben, im Semitischen wurzelt und dass wir von hier aus, alle jene Erscheinungen zu erklären haben, welche sonst ohne jede Auflösung dastehen würden ... Im voraus kann ich es weissagen, dass die Sprachforschung eines Tages erstaunt sein wird über die mir jetzt schon feststehende Thatsache, dass alle eine gemeinsame Mutter haben, deren Ursitze an den Ufern des Euphrat und Tigris zu suchen ist ...'<sup>12</sup>

Lepsius strongly resisted the whole tenor of French philological work throughout the 1850's. At least partly because of his inclination toward reliability and

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12. Quoted from Brugsch, Hieroglyphisch-Demotisches Wörterbuch, 7 vols, Leipzig, 1867-82, vol.I, p. IX. On Brugsch see his autobiography, Mein Leben und mein Wandern, second edition, Berlin 1894, and on the Lepsius incident p. 46ff. The tone of the work is embittered against Lepsius throughout although the two men were later reconciled (*ibid.*, p. 270); from Lepsius' side only passing references to this difficult relationship are given, Lepsius, p. 242, 287, 335. The accusation of Lepsius' arrogance came from F. de Saulcy during a controversy with Lepsius found in the Revue Archéologique, 1847, see p. 113. See Brugsch, Scriptura Aegyptiorum demotica ..., Berlin, 1848; Grammaire démotique, Berlin, 1855; Dictionnaire hiéroglyphique et démotique, 7 vols, Leipzig (1867-1880).

solidity in publications, he distrusted their translations and rejected Brugsch's early attempts to use Semitic comparisons to determine ancient Egyptian sign-sound values, standing by the use of Coptic alone. In general it is fair to say that from this decade his avoidance of linguistic work for its own sake became permanent. He was by no means unaware of its importance, nor did he refuse to absorb French work in the field. A recognition of the current theory of Semitic-Egyptian similarity can be deduced by reading between the lines in two textual works of the late 1860's. But he never clearly put forward his standpoint on the issue. The great Egyptologist Adolf Erman, who knew Lepsius in his last years, suggested that Lepsius' opposition to the French 'school' in temperament and approach was lasting.<sup>13</sup>

Lepsius' greatest contributions to Egyptology were made outside the linguistic question: the chronological reconstructions which were used by virtually every major student of the subject in the Nineteenth century, the pioneering differentiation of epochs of rise and decline,

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13. For Lepsius' continued opposition to the French 'school' see his Königsbuch, p. 177ff, but his awareness of their work lies behind his translations Aelteste Texte des Todtenbuchs ..., Berlin, 1867; Das bilingue Dekret von Kanopus ..., Berlin, 1866. For Erman's opinion of Lepsius' linguistic work and attitudes see his Obituary for Lepsius, op.cit., p. 476 and his autobiography, Mein Werden und mein Wirken, Leipzig, 1929, pp. 258-9. Brugsch, predictably, had a low opinion of Lepsius' linguistic expertise and emphasizes the falling-off of Lepsius' linguistic work, Die Aegyptologie, p. 131, pp. 139-40; however this is supported by the chronological list of Lepsius' works in Lepsius, pp. 376-390, if considered from the point of view of linguistic work, and the argument in ibid., pp. 124-6.

of developments in art and religion, including perhaps the earliest descriptions of the religious revolution of the Eighteenth dynasty.<sup>14</sup> To all sides of his wide-ranging work Lepsius brought a characteristically factual and sober attitude, in contrast to Bunsen's approach to the same material. Thus Lepsius' date for the reign of Menes, 3892 B.C., was the result of calculations from the religious and astronomical periods used by the ancient Egyptians, cross-references to other cultures, for example, Mesopotamia, and careful examination of any chronological information appended to natural or historical events on the monuments. Even so he stressed that his conclusions were only tentative:

'Dennoch will ich ... nicht unterlassen, nochmals auszusprechen, was ich trotz früherer Erklärungen noch neuerdings verkannt gefunden habe, dass ich das Jahr 3892 vor Chr. keineswegs in dem Sinne für ein historisch gesichertes halte, wie etwa das Jahr 776 für die erste Olympiade des Koroebus'.

He was quite aware that the Manethonian foundation on which he relied might one day be found inaccurate, and that the dearth of monumental evidence for Manetho's first three Dynasties - not rectified until the very end of the

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14. See testimonials to the importance of Lepsius' chronological work in Brugsch, Die Aegyptologie, p. 129, Erman, Obituary for Lepsius, pp. 474-5. Apart from the Chronologie and the Königsbuch see on art 'Sur l'ordre des colonnes-piliers en Égypte ...', Annales de l'Institut de correspondance archéologique, IX, 1838; 'Über einige aegyptische Kunstformen und ihre Entwicklung', KAWB, Abhandlungen, 1871; on religion, the Prospectus to the Denkmäler, pp. 18-19 (the religious revolution of the Eighteenth Dynasty), 'Über den ersten aegyptischen Götterkreis ...', and 'Über die Gotter der vier Elemente ...', KAWB, Abhandlungen, 1851 and 1856 respectively; and the list in Lepsius pp. 376-390.

century - meant that real knowledge of ancient Egypt could only begin with the Fourth Dynasty, not with Bunsen's prehistoric Khamites.<sup>15</sup> Such caution produced a general willingness to change or revise his pioneering earlier works when new information came to hand. He was very ready to take into account the chronological information supplied by Mariette's digs from the 1860's, or to urge the definitive revision of the Book of the Dead text which he had originally published in 1842 from what he later recognized as a faulty original of the late period.<sup>16</sup> What he proved entirely unwilling to do was to discuss the Hamitic hypothesis within his Egyptology, firstly because it was based on linguistic knowledge which seemed inadequate, and secondly because the linguistic work which was being done by the French emphasized only the Egyptian-Semitic link, but not the Egyptian-Semitic-Japhetic triad he had originally set up in the 1830's.

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15. Quoted from 'Über die Manethonische Bestimmung des Umfangs der Aegyptischen Geschichte', KAWB, Abhandlungen, 1857, pp. 207-8. Nineteenth century Egyptologists commonly referred to the first three Manethonic dynasties, but started their real historical investigations with the fourth: see de Rougé, Recherches sur les monuments ... for example.
16. On Auguste Mariette see entry in Dawson and Uphill, op.cit., G.C.C. Maspero, 'Mariette-Pacha', Jahresbericht über die Fortschritte der classischen Alterthumswissenschaft, XXIV, 1880, pp. 34-40; J.-P. Lauer, 'Mariette à Sakkarah', in Mélanges Mariette, Paris, 1961, pp. 3-55. On Lepsius' efforts toward a new, definitive edition of the Book of the Dead see his report '... über den Fortgang der ... Herausgabe des Thebanischen Todtenbuches ...', KAWB, Monatsberichte, 1881, pp. 939-9; the task was completed by his student Naville: Das aegyptische Totenbuch der XVIII. bis XX. Dynastie, Berlin, 3 vols, 1886.

Even if Lepsius was gradually falling behind the times on the linguistic question, nevertheless, as a result of his painstaking and unfailingly realistic grasp of the broad sweep of Egyptian civilization, his reputation remained very high throughout the 1860's. Certainly he was no longer the sole champion of a neglected field of study. This was the decade of public consolidation of Egyptology in France and Germany, when specialized journals were begun. Chabas pioneered this idea in his Mélanges Égyptologiques (1862-74) followed by Brugsch's foundation of the central organ of the subject in 1863, the Zeitschrift für aegyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde. Again, while de Rougé was busily educating a whole new generation of French Egyptologists, Lepsius was less successful in this direction. But he remained the central Egyptological figure in Germany, and a man who enjoyed considerable official favour. For Brugsch, the only scholar of comparable status in the country, led a roving, varied life outside the academic mainstream, involving diplomacy and archaeology in Egypt and Europe and the Near East. Typically, the established scholar Lepsius took over the editorship of the Zeitschrift in the year after its foundation while Brugsch went to Egypt as Prussian Consul; and Lepsius remained editor for the rest of his life, occasionally assisted by Brugsch as circumstances permitted.<sup>17</sup>

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17. On Brugsch see reference in note 12 above, the entry in Dawson and Uphill, op.cit., Erman, Mein Werden, pp. 183-66, and G.C.C. Maspero, 'Henri Brugsch' in Actes du Dixième Congrès International des Orientalistes, Genève, 1894, section IV, pp. 95-102; on Chabas see entry in Dawson and Uphill, op.cit. Lepsius' major

Around the fringes of all of Lepsius' respectable Egyptological work the Hamitic hypothesis was continued without a break. The great Expedition itself triggered off the means to extend the concept, and though Lepsius' results would not be fully expressed in public for another thirty years, private research on it continued unabated from the 1840's. The key to his studies were the languages and peoples immediately to the south of Egypt, the 'Ethiopia' of the ancients, that part of modern Egypt south of Aswan, and the area which is known as the Sudan.

Before the Expedition Lepsius had shared with Champollion an idea based on classical sources: that the civilization of Egypt had descended the Nile from the southern land of 'Ethiopia', and its fabled centre, Meroë. One of Lepsius' aims had been to discover whether this view were tenable, by travelling south, as Champollion had not. In the field he quickly became convinced that the Meroitic monuments, art and writing were only later and in many cases inferior offshoots of Egyptian civilization:

'It has ... been proved, that nothing can be discovered of a primitive Ethiopian civilization,

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students were Georg Ebers, his biographer, Johannes Dümichen, and Édouard Naville, all of whom did useful, although not outstanding work. See the entries in Dawson and Uphill, *op.cit.*, for these three men, and the evaluation of Erman in his *Mein Werden*, p. 255ff. (Ebers), 169-70 (Dümichen), 170-1 and 260 (Naville). On Lepsius as a teacher see *Lepsius*, pp. 227-9, Erman, *Mein Werden*, pp. 113-4, and August Dillman, 'Gedächtnissrede auf Karl Richard Lepsius', *KAWB*, *Abhandlungen*, 1885, p. 18.

or indeed of an ancient Ethiopian national civilization, which is so much held up by modern erudition; indeed, we have every reason to deny this completely. Whatever in the accounts of the ancient does not rest on total misapprehension, only refers to Egyptian civilization and art, which had fled in the time of the Hyksos rule to ETHIOPIA'.<sup>18</sup>

The relationship of the southern remains with the culture of Egypt still held a particular interest, however, because of the unintelligible inscriptions in 'barbarous Greek or Coptic' script found along the southern Nile. On the model of the Coptic- ancient Egyptian relationship, Lepsius hoped that the contemporary African languages of the region, the Nuba, and Bega especially, might prove the key to decipherment. Early in 1844 he had learned enough Nuba from native speakers to correct the early word-lists of Caillaud and later in the year worked hard on the Bega. He found the two languages quite distinct, and was immediately drawn to the Bega. The latter seemed to fit into an intermediate position between Semitic and Indo-European just like the Coptic/Egyptian, although Lepsius realized that there was some distance between the Bega and the Egyptian in vocabulary. A strong point to prove Bega affinity with Egyptian Hamitic, and Semitic and Indo-European was the presence of grammatical gender endings, masculine and feminine, throughout the whole verbal and pronominal structure of the language: an argument which referred back to the Zwei Sprachvergleichende Abhandlungen of 1835-6. These results were reported to the Berlin Academy in a letter on Ethiopian languages and history

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18. Lepsius, Letters from Egypt, p. 244, letter of September 1, 1844.



at the end of 1844. Herein Lepsius described the historical relationship between Egyptian and Meroitic cultures, placing the evolution of the Meroitic style at a late period. He stated that contact had long before this (indeed since the Twelfth Dynasty) been established between the two cultures, but that at all times the southern was completely subservient to the northern culture. The strength of the Bega grammatical gender characteristic was stressed, and Lepsius placed the language squarely into the same Hamitic category as Egyptian. Since the ancient northern and southern cultures were so alike, and since Hamitic Coptic was the modern descendant of the ancient Hamitic language of the hieroglyphs, Lepsius had already convinced himself that the Hamitic Bega was the modern descendant of the ancient unknown language of the Meroitic inscriptions:

'Diese Sprache [Bega] nimmt in linguistischer Hinsicht eine besondere wichtige Stelle ein, da sie als ein Zweig des ... Stammes erscheint, dessen ... Glieder unter dem Namen der Hamitischen Sprachen zusammengefasst werden können, und hat auch ausserdem ... noch das besondere Interesse, dass sie aller Wahrscheinlichkeit nach einst den Schlüssel zur Entzifferung der altaethiopischen Inschriften darbieten dürfte ... Diese Inschriften sind in einer von rechts nach links gewendeten einfachen Buchstabenschrift abgefasst und rühren von dem mächtigen Volke der Meroitischen Aethiopien her, als deren direkte Nachkommen sie die heutigen Bega-Völker anzusehen genöthigt sind'.<sup>19</sup>

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19. Quoted from the Prospectus to the Denkmäler, 1849, pp. 22-3 and see the 'Schreiben an Herrn Böckh, über Sprachen, Denkmäler, Inschriften und Civilization der Aethiopier des Alterthums und jetzt', KAWB, Monatsberichte, 1844, pp. 379-406. Lepsius' use of terminology is close to the modern: his 'Bega' is now termed 'Beja', 'Nuba' generally 'Nubian' (J.H. Greeberg, The Languages of Africa, Bloomington, 1963). On the general Nineteenth century, and earlier, reference to the southern land of 'Ethiopia': that is, south and south east of modern Aswan, see Chapter I above.

Lepsius evaluated his 'Ethiopian' discoveries, with justice, as of great importance. He devoted a separate section of the Denkmäler to them, which thus became the first large collection of Meroitic and other southern material reliably available to European scholars. In the Prospectus to the Denkmäler he foreshadowed a forthcoming linguistic work which would discuss a whole north African Hamitic group of languages. But already his private research had shifted away from the Hamitic Bega toward the unclear and unclassified Nuba language. Perhaps the central reason for this was that the Meroitic inscriptions proved much more resistant to decipherment, with or without Bega, than Lepsius had expected. By education and personal interest Lepsius was often drawn to difficult palaeographical problems of this kind. Apart from the basic example of his initial involvement in hieroglyphs, for the same reason, he continued to focus on the problems of undeciphered or only partially deciphered scripts of half-forgotten peoples throughout the 1840's: the Oscan-Umbrian, and the Etruscan (which had also fascinated Champollion). Now, the problem of the Meroitic inscriptions - which remained undeciphered during Lepsius' lifetime, and though transliterated, cannot still be translated today - would draw Lepsius on to a lifetime's work in African languages. While still in Africa he began a project to translate the Gospel of St Mark into the Nuba language, which had no indigenous script.<sup>20</sup> He brought back to Berlin the first draft, plus

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20. See Lepsius' Denkmäler, vol X for the 'Ethiopian' monuments, and the Prospectus to the Denkmäler, p. 23 for the promised linguistic work. Lepsius' other work

other material on the languages of the region to continue work in private. Shortly afterward his interest in African languages was reinforced by his acquaintance with Wilhelm Bleek.

Wilhelm Heinrich Immanuel Bleek (1827-1875) studied classical philology, Hebrew and Arabic in Bonn, before visiting Berlin in the course of theological studies in 1848-9. Exactly why or how is unclear - perhaps because, as Bleek's biographer fleetingly mentions, Bunsen was a friend of the family - Bleek came into contact with Lepsius, and was influenced by him to work on African languages. Lepsius entrusted him with manuscript material from his own collection and material from German missionaries was also available. Bleek devoted the rest of his life to African language studies, beginning with his doctoral dissertation, De Nominum Generibus linguarum Africae australis, Copticae, Semiticarum aliarumque sexualium (1851). It concentrated on the question of the presence or absence of grammatical gender distinctions in the noun and pronoun systems of what were known as the 'Kaffir' languages of South Africa, in comparison with Semitic, Hamitic (Coptic), and incidentally, Indo-European systems.

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on scripts include two articles on Etruscan in the Annales de l'Institut de correspondance archéologique, vol. 8, 1836-7, Inscriptiones Umbricae et Oscae . . ., 2 vols, Leipzig, 1841, Zwei Abhandlungen, Über die Tyrrhenischen Pelasger in Etrurien und über die Verbreitung des Italischen Munzsystems von Etrurien aus, Leipzig, 1842. The course of Lepsius' southern travels and linguistic researches can be followed in the Letters from Egypt, letter XVI-XXVIII inclusive; the Preface to the Nubische Grammatik. Lepsius, p. 185 indicates that the lure of decipherment encouraged Lepsius' African language work. On the problems of Meroitic decipherment see Chapter I above and Chapter V below.

Bleek also took up a point already recognized by Latham: the general 'prefix' system of the 'Kaffir' languages' inflections in contrast with the general 'suffix' system of Coptic and Semitic inflections. Where Latham had dismissed this contrast as unimportant, Bleek incorporated it with the grammatical gender phenomenon. For him the contrast between the prefixed class determinatives of nouns in the 'Kaffir' - or, as he would later be the first to call them 'Bantu' - languages, and the suffixed gender inflections of nouns in the Coptic proved the existence of two very different linguistic groups. On this differentiating principle, and from material available in Berlin, Bleek classed the Hottentot language of South Africa with the Coptic and Semitic, quite different from the other, Bantu, languages of the south. Hottentot was thus Hamitic, in Lepsius' sense, though it was separated from the main Hamitic body by an enormous geographic distance, filled with untold numbers of little-known African languages.

In 1854 Bleek managed to be appointed as a linguist to the first really successful English Expedition up the Niger River, possibly through the good offices of Bunsen with whom he was in close contact in England. Though he was forced to return to London early, prevented by fever from full participation in the Expedition, Bunsen performed another invaluable service by introducing Bleek to Sir George Grey, the newly appointed Governor of the Cape Colony. After some travelling in south Africa Bleek became Grey's assistant in 1857, and took charge of

ordering Grey's unique collection of African and other 'native' language manuscripts. After Grey's departure from the colony in 1861, when the collection was presented to the South African Public Library, Bleek was appointed curator and librarian, a post retained until his death. Thus he was in an excellent position to compile important works on African languages and folklore; he became perhaps the first professional African linguist, in the sense that previously linguistics had been a sidelight to missionary concerns. However the scope and quality of his work could not match the sophistication of Indo-European or Semitic linguistics, given the problems of African linguistic knowledge. His expertise was limited to the Southern languages; his main works were a Comparative Grammar of South African Languages (1862-9, unfinished, though already begun in 1853) and publications on the little-known Bushman language and folklore. Through all these pioneering works, the grammatical gender and prefix-suffix distinctions were consistently invoked as criteria for linguistic grouping. Later, Lepsius credited Bleek with having been the first to suggest the use of these criteria in the African situation. But since he himself had already put forward ideas along this line, perhaps not so precisely expressed, in 1835-6 and 1844, it seems that the grammatical gender criterion which was to become so important in African linguistics down to very recent times should be referred back to Lepsius himself, and his influence on Bleek and

others.<sup>21</sup>

While Bleek was elaborating this method of African linguistic classification Lepsius' Nuba Gospel translation was leading him on to somewhat different problems. Lepsius had at first decided to use the Arabian script but found it inadequate to the task of transcribing Nubian sounds. Then he tried to use the Latin alphabet, adding special signs where necessary. Working his system out held up the translation, but drew him toward those struggling in the same area, the missionary societies. He would undoubtedly have taken note of the discussion of the problem by Henry Venn, secretary of the Church Missionary Society, in 1848, and during a visit to London in 1852 submitted a 'tableau' of his results to Venn, which was later published. Early in the following year Lepsius discussed his system with Koelle who had returned to Europe to see his great African linguistic works through the press. In 1854 Lepsius expounded his system to the informal conferences set up by Bunsen at his London residence especially to deal with the problem of a standard missionary alphabet, attended by representatives

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21. On Bleek see Otto H. Spohr, W.H.I. Bleek: a biobibliographical sketch, Capetown, 1962 and the entry in Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie, Nachträge, vol. 47, 1903, pp. 15-17; see Bleek's De Nominum Generibus..., Berlin, 1851 and the Comparative Grammar..., London, 1862-9; Lepsius' attribution of the gender criterion to Bleek is in the Nubische Grammatik, note on p. XXV. The idea of the significance of grammatical gender, as a higher development of linguistic form, comes from Wilhelm von Humboldt; the deep psychological significance of grammatical gender, as a reflection of nature itself and of (patriarchal) society, comes from Jacob Grimm. Lepsius and Bleek put the two early Indo-European linguists' theories together. See Beneš, op.cit., pp. 16-25 (Humboldt) and pp. 42-56 (Grimm). The grammatical gender criterion is no longer accepted

of 'most of the Missionary, the Asiatic and Ethnological Societies'. Here Lepsius' submission won general approval over two alternative systems, one proposed by Max Müller, and Venn decided on it as a standard alphabet for the C.M.S. About the same time it had been put before the Berlin Academy, which had agreed to have the necessary type cut, and copies sent to the C.M.S. Two of Koelle's works, on Kanuri language and literature, were the first to be printed using Lepsius' alphabet, in 1854; in 1855 a published description appeared, with examples, directed at missionaries in the field. In the midst of this activity Lepsius once again went over the Nuba Gospel translation and finally published it in conformity with his new alphabet in 1860.<sup>22</sup>

The publication of a second, enlarged English edition of the Standard Alphabet (1863) was the occasion on which the background of universal history reappeared in Lepsius' work and intersected with all his private researches into Hamitic and African languages. A table of all human languages was appended to the work, divided, sensibly for the purpose to hand, into two main groups: those languages possessing an indigenous script, and those without one. Here, for the first time featured among the 'literary' languages, Hamitic appeared as a whole north

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as an adequate criterion of grouping, and the Hamitic Hottentot classification has consequently been revised - all this since the 1950's (Greenberg, op. cit., pp. 42-3 and Chapter IV).

22. On these events see the Standard Alphabet, p. 39ff. and the Report of Bunsen's London conferences in Outlines IV, Appendix D, quotation from p. 379. Lepsius' translation was The Gospel according to Saint Mark, translated into the Nubian language, Berlin, 1860, and for other works using Lepsius' Alphabet see the Standard Alphabet, p. 2ff.

African group, a third 'family' of languages alongside the familiar Semitic and Japhetic. Hamitic consisted of Egyptian, 'Ethiopian', Lybian, Hausa, and after Bleek's work, Hottentot. The inclusion of the last two languages was by no means uncontroversial, and the whole idea of a 'Hamitic family' appeared rather abrupt, considering that, though Lepsius may have been working in private, there was only too little published analytical work on even the better-known Egyptian, Lybian and 'Ethiopian' languages. These three language families were again, as in 1835-6 placed in the sequence Hamitic, Semitic, Japhetic. Lepsius considered them a special subdivision of 'literary' languages, the 'gender' language group, quite separate from other languages with scripts.<sup>23</sup> Amongst the 'no gender' 'literary' languages, a 'monosyllabic' and a Turanian classification survived, but they differed a good deal from Bunsen's definitions. In an article of 1860, 'Über die Umschrift und Lautverhältnisse einiger hinterasiatischer Sprachen', which characteristically proceeded from palaeographic evidence, Lepsius had traced

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23. See the General Table of Languages at the end of the Standard Alphabet, pp. 301-308. The idea of a Hamitic family was still being argued in the 1870's, especially as it pertained to ancient Egyptian: see Maxence de Rochemonteix, 'Sur les Rapports grammaticaux qui existent entre l'Égyptien et le Berbère ...', Congrès International des Orientalistes, Paris, 1873, Compte-Rendu, Tome II, pp. 66-106; on Hausa problems see C. Lottner, 'On Sisterfamilies of language, especially those connected with the Semitic family', Transactions of the Philological Society of London, 1860-1, especially p. 112. Lepsius used 'Japhetic' to mean Indo-European reasonably consistently, although he could also use 'Indo-Germanic' occasionally.



a close connection between Chinese, Tibetan and other neighbouring languages, such that, instead of asserting a move from original Chinese monosyllabism, to Indo-Chinese polysyllabism, he found that Chinese 'monosyllabism' was actually the result of lengthy decay from an earlier polysyllabic structure. This marked one of the first points of reassessment of the standard view of Chinese. Consequently, not only did Lepsius' 'monosyllabic' category in 1863 include Tibetan, Burmesé and Thai as well as Chinese itself, but Lepsius had already denied Bunsen's attempt to identify Chinese as the concrete historical remnant of original human language.

'Die Ansicht der neueren Sprachforscher, unter dem Vorgange von Wilh. von Humboldt, neigt entschieden dahin, dass all Sprachen von einem einsilbigen Principe ausgegangen seien und sich von da entweder zu einem mehrsilbigen erhoben haben, oder wie das Chinesische und andere benachbarte Sprachen jenes einsilbige Princip festgehalten und nur consequenter ausgebildet haben. Dem ersteren Theile dieser Ansicht pflichte ich gleichfalls bei, ohne hier auf eine neue Erörterung derselben eingehen zu wollen, dem zweiten nicht, und das modificirt auch den Inhalt des ersten Theils. Mir scheint die Chinesische Sprache ... in den südlichen Dialekten ihre ältere Formation zu haben, und noch früher auf eine mehrsilbige Sprache zurückzugehen ...'.<sup>24</sup>

Apart from these newly defined 'monosyllabic' languages, Lepsius' Turanian category conformed strictly only with Max Müller's northern and southern Eurasian Turanian of 1854. There was no question of Bunsen's enormous Turanian hypothesis. Lepsius was quite honest about problem languages like Basque, Caucasian dialects and Japanese,

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24. Lepsius, 'Über die Umschrift ...', kAWB, Abhandlungen, 1860, p. 495.

defining them as completely unrelated to any established linguistic grouping. Outside the 'literary' languages, the other languages of the world, the 'illiterate' languages, were classified simply by geography - Australasian, African, American.

If, in this table of 1863, Lepsius seemed to present an eminently factual, concentrated summary of well-accepted linguistic knowledge and his own detailed researches, without any extraneous references, this was only one side of the coin. Despite his revisions of Bunsen's language groups, and the absence of any overt reference to linguistic universal history, Bunsen's theory lay behind the whole classification, fortified by Lepsius' factual emphasis. Following Bunsen Lepsius immediately made the connection between linguistic classification and group characteristics - cultural, and to some extent, physical. As a basic mode of division the literary - illiterate contrast was certainly pertinent, but not as exclusively practical as it seemed. It was also a vehicle for constructing an unapologetic and non-religious standard of Eurocentric cultural evaluation. The possession of a script meant the key to civilization for the people who spoke the language concerned; the absence of a script inevitably implied barbarity. Lepsius pronounced that the Christian missionary societies brought not only the word of God to the heathen with their Bible translations, but brought a superior culture to abject savages:

'The aboriginal tribes of Africa, America, Australia, and Polynesia are almost entirely destitute of written language. This fact alone

characterises them as barbarous and uncivilized. And if there be no nobler calling for the civilised and Christian world than to impart to all mankind the treasures of religious knowledge and human culture so freely entrusted to their hands by Divine Providence, - and if the obligation of this calling, now more powerfully felt than ever, rests especially on those associations of high-minded Christian men, which have taken their name as Missionary Societies from this highest of all missions; - then it is their especial duty to furnish destitute nations, first of all, with that most important, most indispensable means of intellectual, moral, and religious culture, a written language'.<sup>25</sup>

Amongst the 'literary' languages, the twofold division into a 'gender' and 'no gender' group also functioned as a criterion of cultural evaluation: the former were defined as innately superior, indicating the superiority of the peoples who spoke Hamitic, Semitic and Japhetic languages. Here was a significant difference from Bunsen's theory. To the two inflected language groups which Bunsen had defined, on the linguistic basis, as the two great civilizing peoples of universal history, Lepsius had added a third, the Hamitic. And he had changed the linguistic basis of the evaluation accordingly: from Semito-Japhetic inflection, to Hamitic, Semitic and Japhetic grammatical gender. To explain this change it is only necessary to refer to Lepsius' profession: Egyptology. He was as instinctively Eurocentric in his evaluations as Bunsen had been, with the significant addition that he had in full measure early Egyptology's high evaluation of Egyptian culture. As a professional Egyptologist, Lepsius' evaluation pertained not to pre-historic Egypt, like Bunsen's, but to the realities of

historic Egypt. For Lepsius, in the terminology of the Ages theory, Egypt had indeed been the childhood of human civilization, and should be judged on its merits accordingly. Semitic and Japhetic culture may have improved on the Egyptian advances, but they must not be allowed to overshadow Egypt's contribution to history. 'Inflection' did not allow the inclusion of Egyptian civilization in the mainstream of universal-historical significance, but the grammatical gender criterion certainly did. The positive cultural evaluation of Egypt extended to the whole Hamitic group which Lepsius and Bleek built around it, though none of the other Hamites ever overshadowed the Egyptian centre. Against this background, Lepsius and Bleek became the foremost theoreticians of the superior nature of peoples speaking languages with grammatical gender, purportedly simply by virtue of their possession of that linguistic feature:

'It seems however unquestionable, that the three great branches of gender-languages were not only in the past the depositaries and the organs of the historical progress of human civilization, but that to them, and particularly to the youngest branch of them, the Japhetic, belong also the future hopes of the world. All the other languages are in decline and seem to have henceforth but a local existence'.

August Pott, the indefatigable critic of all non-sequitur conclusions on the basis of linguistic features, had already blasted the whole idea of the superiority of suffix-gender- languages over prefix-no-gender languages as simply a product of Ethnocentrism in linguistics. Following Lepsius and Bleek generations of African linguists

down to very recent times would ignore him.<sup>26</sup>

Lepsius' block of gender languages and his emphasis on the importance of Hamitic Egypt altered the shape of Bunsen's universal history. Lepsius almost entirely abolished the Semitic-Japhetic dialectic basically because he was not interested in the advance of universal history to the present day more than in a general sense. He certainly underlined Japhetic superiority, but not in an anti-Semitic way. On the contrary he had a high opinion of the Old Testament as a historical as well as religious document, so long as it was properly understood, and used Biblical terminology quite deliberately: terming the gender-languages 'Noachian', and meaning by that a literal unity of Hamitic, Semitic and Japhetic origins. It was the Hamitic group which he was specially concerned with, and his own and Bleek's work on grammatical gender resulted in a smoothly developing evolutionary sequence with the gender languages, from Hamitic, to Semitic and finally Japhetic, without internal universal-historical antagonisms.<sup>27</sup>

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26. Quotation from *ibid.*, p. 90; on the theory of the innate superiority of peoples speaking a gender language see Bleek, *Über den Ursprung der Sprache*, Weimar, 1868, pp. XII-XXIII and 42-5. See Pott's critique in the article 'Verwandtschaftliches Verhältniss der Sprachen vom Kaffer- und Kongo-Stamme unter einander', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, II, 1848, especially pp. 24-5. The modern revision of this view is mentioned in note 21 above.

27. See the use of the Old Testament in Lepsius' *Chronologie* for his high opinion of it; the 'Noachian' epithet is applied in the article 'Über die Umschrift ...', p. 491. The evolutionary sequence from Hamitic to Japhetic, rather than Bunsen's transitional 'Khamitic', half-way between Semitic and Japhetic, is implied in Lepsius' listing in the *Standard Alphabet*, but not stated outright (pp. 89-90): Lepsius was never absolutely clear on this question.

Lepsius transferred the point of universal-historical dialectic elsewhere: to Africa, the field of his greatest interest. There he set up a dialectic antagonism between Hamitic and non-Hamitic, in which, because of the nature of the circumstances and the ambiguous potential of linguistic typologies, the distinction became more than linguistic, cultural or indefinably spiritual: it became physical as well. For Lepsius instinctively had the lowest possible opinion of Negroes and of anything, languages or cultures, associated with them. Thus, for example, his description of black soldiers recruited by the Egyptians to help maintain northern dominance in the Sudan:

'... black faces staring out of their white linen uniform and red-tasselled caps, made them look like dressed-up monkeys, only much more unhappy and oppressed. The negroes are incapable of any military discipline and regular exertion, and generally sink beneath the imposed yoke. We did not, however, suspect that these same people would two days afterwards rebel in a body and set off to their hills'.<sup>28</sup>

Unlike Bunsen, Lepsius refused to admit that Egyptian civilization, or its Meroitic offshoot, or any part of the Hamitic group, could possibly involve Negro elements. To underline this non-Negro conviction he consistently invoked one of Bunsen's most fundamental ideas - Asiatic origins - but applied it specifically only to unite the Hamitic, Semitic and Japhetic groups. Bunsen's truly universal Asiatic monogenesis was suppressed; the Asiatic Urheimat applied only to the grammatical gender group,

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28. Lepsius, Letters from Egypt..., p. 186.

and implied not only the common cultural and spiritual gifts of that group, but their like physical nature as well. In 1844 he termed them the 'Caucasian' languages, referring to a vaguely defined, but absolutely non-Negro physical type.

This physical as well as cultural and linguistic definition of Hamitic began very early in Lepsius' work. Even before the Expedition, when he still accepted the tradition of 'Ethiopian' origins for Egyptian culture, there was never any possibility of African Negro origins from the south - though this had been the conclusion of other scholars. The Zwei Sprachvergleichende Abhandlungen insisted on an Asiatic origin for the Egypto-Ethiopians, probably through south-western Arabia, across the straits and then northward to Egypt: that is to say, no black Africans were involved. Once in Africa, Lepsius saw essentially what he wanted to see. His physical and cultural convictions predetermined his 'factual' decisions about the Hamitic language of the Meroitic inscriptions. Apart from instinct, his only real source for the definition of Hamitic as non-Negro was the Egyptian and Meroitic wall-paintings, which, with their famous 'reddish-brown' skin colour convention, could not unambiguously decide the question one way or the other. Yet it was from these wall-paintings that he concluded that the whole population of the Nile Valley in ancient times had perhaps been brown, but certainly not black:

'ein braunes, kein schwarzes Volk'.<sup>29</sup>

The Bega, rather than the Nuba, were identified by Lepsius as the modern descendants of the Hamitic 'Ethiopians' as much for the reason that the Bega were more obviously a 'brown' people than the Nuba. He found in the 'schön gewachsene, glänzend braune, mit edlen fast Europäischen Gesichtsformen und einer reichen Sprache begabte' Bega people the only true type of the Meroitic Hamites, and their brothers in cultural gifts.<sup>30</sup>

The definition of a whole north African Hamitic group, distinct physically and culturally from the rest of Africa, and allied with the other Asiatic bearers of civilization can be traced even in Lepsius' respectable Egyptological work. Of course any question of Bunsen's 'progressive degeneration' definition of historic Egypt was scrapped. Where the older man had seen the Theban Dynasties of the New Kingdom as the rise to power of the African Negro element, Lepsius upheld them as the highpoint of (non-Negro Hamitic) civilization. So closely was Hamitic identified with Asia, and so highly did Lepsius rate Egyptian civilization that he even defined at times a reverse theory of cultural diffusion from Egypt back to Semitic Asia and Japhetic Europe. For example, he traced Greek art and religious ideas back to Egyptian

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29. Lepsius, 'Schreiben an Hern. Böckh ...', p. 382, Lepsius' emphasis; on his pre-Expedition views see Zwei Sprachvergleichende Abhandlungen, pp. 78-9.

30. Lepsius, 'Schreiben an Hern. Böckh ...', p. 391.



originals. And he used the Bible to interpret the still-disputed Assyro-Babylonian culture as 'Cushite': by which he meant literally a colony of Hamitic culture-bearers who had migrated from Egypt back to Mesopotamia.<sup>31</sup>

In sum, Lepsius was perhaps the first scholar to insist on the closest possible connection in all ways between Hamitic and European culture. Especially on the physical question, earlier and even contemporary scholars, including of course Bunsen, admitted at least the mixed nature of the Egyptian physical type. Of course Lepsius was still very vague as to what precisely was meant by a common 'Caucasian' physical type. He associated 'Hamitic' with linguistic and cultural features much more concretely than the physical, and always preferred to argue on the first two levels. But he certainly inclined in intention toward the identification of Hamitic as 'white' even if he could not exactly dismiss the brown skin hue of modern and ancient Hamitic peoples. Once Lepsius had put the weight of his reputation behind the idea of Hamitic in this form, his conclusions would be picked up and

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31. For the high importance of Egypt see the Chronologie and Königsbuch passim; examples of the theory of cultural diffusion from Egypt to the middle east and to Europe in 'Sur l'ordre des colonnes-piliers...', 'Über einige Aegyptische Kunstformen ...' especially pp. 4-6, the Vorwort to the Todtenbuch (1842), p. 13; Asiatic origins for the Egyptians is mentioned throughout. For the 'Cushite' theory see Chronologie, p. 221ff.; Lepsius' interpretation was quite acceptable up to the 1870's, cf. George Rawlinson, The Five Great Monarchies of the Ancient Eastern World, second edition, 3 vols, London, 1871, vol. I, p. 47ff. But it conflicted with Bunsen's view of the Turanian Nimrod, the founder of Babylon; Bunsen 'reinterpreted' the Biblical 'Cushite' as 'Cossite': see Outlines III, p. 191.

perpetuated indiscriminately, without regard for 'scholarly' nuance and preferred modes of argument. Examples of this occurred almost concurrently with the Expedition to Egypt. George Gliddon and Samuel Morton, two of the leading American polygenists, cited Lepsius' - and even Bunsen's - work on Hamitic Egypt as part of their armory of proof for the permanence of race characteristics and roles in history. For them Lepsius' 'brown' 'Caucasians' were simply 'white men'. Their dominance over north Africa at even that ancient time bolstered the justification for the institution of slavery in the Nineteenth century.<sup>32</sup>

Lepsius himself was no polygenist, and would not have agreed with such a misuse of his work. At least in theory he believed in the original unity and historical continuity of linguistic types - and all that such a belief implied for a disciple of Bunsen. Even in a 'scientific' frame of mind he could point to Bleek's arguments tracing the origins of the 'higher' languages' grammatical gender in the class determinatives of the 'lower', like Bantu. Hottentot was in fact a transitional form for Bleek, who seemed to be working out a new

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32. Quoted from George Gliddon, Otia Aegyptiaca, London, 1849, p. 9 and see also Samuel Morton, Crania Aegyptiaca, Philadelphia and London, 1844; on the American polygenists and their pro-slavery arguments see Haller, op.cit., especially Chapter III. For a denunciation of 'Lepsius' and other Egyptologists' 'white falsification' of history see Diop, op.cit., Chapter III. Against Diop's insistence that the Egyptians were in fact pure African Negroes it should be pointed out that there does not seem to be completely conclusive evidence one way or the other.

'Universal Comparative Grammar' in the same way that Bunsen had, though Bleek concentrated on the development of grammatical gender rather than inflection.<sup>33</sup> Ultimately Lepsius believed in the united origins of the human race. With factual reserve he asserted in 1863:

'If we are not yet able to prove the affinity ... of all no-gender languages, to the [gender languages] and to one another, although their original relationship is inseparable from the propagation of the one human race, it would certainly be too hasty an assertion to say that we never should be able to do so'.

Further positive references to the unified origins of mankind peppered his work.<sup>34</sup>

However such references to the fundamental background of universal history were incidental and brief. Lepsius' 'scientific' detachment and professionalism militated against any more elaborate discussions. And, as he left unspoken the religious foundations which explained his 'Noachian' and his 'Caucasian' epithet for the grammatical gender languages, as he insisted on purely factual arguments, as he intensified the meaning of linguistic relationship to imply cultural and physical relationship - Lepsius was drawing out the most destructive elements of Bunsen's universal history. Without wishing to, he was constructing, in the Hamitic theory, a vehicle

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33. See Bleek's article, 'The Concord, the Origin of Pronouns, and the Formation of Classes or Genders of Nouns' in the Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, I, 1872, pp. lxiv-xc. In this Bleek was closer to Humboldt than to Grimm; see note 21 above.

34. Quoted from Standard Alphabet, p. 90; see references to the unity of mankind in the Chronologie, p. 22, p. 25, and in the article 'Über die Umschrift ...', pp. 495-6.

for one of the worst varieties of Eurocentrism: a 'scientific' justification for white superiority in black Africa and elsewhere.

A similar progression can be seen in the work of Bunsen's other major disciple, Friedrich Max Müller. Müller was part of the booming post-Bopp generation of still predominantly German Indo-European linguists; in England in the 1840's and 1850's he was engaged in probably the single most important Indo-European project of the period, the huge task of editing the Rig Veda for the first time in definitive scholarly form, with a detailed scholarly commentary. In common with the leading linguists of the period - the critical Pott, Theodor Benfey, Georg Curtius, Otto Böhtlingk, and August Schleicher - Müller shared a certain set of underlying attitudes towards his work, as well as the knowledge and techniques perfected by the previous generation. All these men had a high estimation of Sanskrit, both as a field of study in itself and as the basis of Indo-European linguistics; a general concern with dead languages rather more than with the living; an orientation toward editing of ancient texts, and a willingness at the same time to examine their contents; a tendency to move away from the very literal 'comparative grammar' of the first generation to a general application of a sophisticated comparative method; a fascination with reconstruction of the history of the Indo-European linguistic group. In general Bopp's agglutination theory of the origins of Indo-European inflection and the assumption of originally

monosyllabic roots held sway. It was along these lines that Curtius' famous 'Zur Chronologie der indogermanischen Sprachforschung' structured seven chronologically stratified stages from monosyllabism to inflection. Some scholars put forward variations on the common theme. Pott questioned the validity of the tripartite morphological division, monosyllabism-agglutination-inflection, as adequate to describe all possible linguistic forms. He pointed out the American Indian languages as examples of what he, following a suggestion of Humboldt, called 'incorporating' or polysynthetic structure, for him, a fourth morphological type. Benfey rejected the concept of actually definable monosyllabic roots. Despite these individual points of difference, the cohesion and consolidation of Indo-European linguistics was self-evident. Up until the decade of the 1870's it radiated a sense of self-confidence, even self-congratulation, in the main probably quite justifiably.<sup>35</sup>

Within their commonly agreed perimeters individual linguists ploughed ahead in different directions.

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35. On the general application of the comparative method see Henry M. Hoenigswald, 'On the history of the comparative method', Anthropological Linguistics, V, 1963, pp. 1-11; on the cohesion and achievements of Indo-European linguistics up to the 1870's consult any historical survey (Arens, Pedersen, Thomsen, op. cit.): for example in particular Jespersen, op. cit., Chapter III, and pp. 89-90. See Georg Curtius, 'Zur Chronologie der Indogermanische Sprachforschung', Mittheilungen der königlichen Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, V, 1870, pp. 187-261. For Pott's dissent from the tripartite division and support for an 'incorporating' class see for example his Wilhelm von Humboldt und die Sprachwissenschaft, Berlin, 1876, pp. CCLXXIII-IV and CCCXII-XXI; for Benfey on monosyllabic roots see his review of Müller from the Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen, 1862, reprinted in his Kleinere Schriften .... (ed. A. Bezzenberger), Berlin, 2 vols, 1890, 92, vol. I, pp. 120-130, especially p. 129.

Pott's versatility and his position as critical reviewer of linguistic studies in general has been mentioned, but his Indo-European studies, especially the Etymologische Forschungen, which set the foundations for Indo-European comparative phonology, were perhaps even more important. Theodor Benfey was almost as versatile, ranging from Greek to Egyptian, from Persian cuneiform to his famous historical overview of the state of linguistic studies, the Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft of 1869. Georg Curtius, as well as being a highly influential teacher, was the first to restructure Greek philology according to the achievements of general Indo-European linguistics. Taking Grimm's work on Germanic as a model, he stressed the regularity of Indo-European phonetic change and traced its course in the formation of the Greek language. Böhtlingk remained essentially a Sanskrit specialist. It is significant to note that in the early 1840's he had corresponded with Müller, with a view to a collaborative edition of the Veda under the auspices of the St Petersburg Academy, before Müller's decision to attempt the task alone in England. Böhtlingk went on to edit the massive St Petersburg Sanskrit dictionary.<sup>36</sup>

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36. On Pott see the reference in note 3 above; Arens, op.cit., I, pp. 230-33; Pedersen, op.cit., p. 262ff. and his Etymologische Forschungen auf dem Gebiete der indogermanischen Sprachen, 2 vols. Lemgo, 1833-6, and the revised and expanded edition in 6 vols, 1859-76. On Theodor Benfey (1809-1881) see his Kleinere Schriften, vol. I, Biography of Theodor Benfey by M. Benfey, pp. VII-XL, and the Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft ... On Georg Curtius (1820-1885) see Sebeok, Portraits of Linguists, I, pp. 311-373; Arens, op.cit., I, pp. 266-276; and E. Windisch's edition of Curtius' Kleinere Schriften, 2 vols, Leipzig, 1886, 1887, I, Vorrede by E. Curtius, pp. VII-XXVIII. On Otto Böhtlingk (1815-1904) see

Of all the linguists of this second generation August Schleicher was probably the most important, for his works systematized the achievements of earlier and current Indo-European studies and often opened up paths taken by later linguists. He can thus be seen as an intermediary figure, moving away from the 'ideal' approach to language study which had been at the base of the birth of Indo-European linguistics, and toward a 'real' or 'positivistic' attitude toward language of the next generations. The 'positivist' idea was put most clearly in those works of Schleicher's inspired by Darwin's theory of evolution: Die Darwinische Theorie und die Sprachwissenschaft (1863) and his essay Über die Bedeutung der Sprache für die Naturgeschichte des Menschen (1865), but he had thought along these lines quite independently as early as his Die Sprachen Europas (1850). Apart from these works and his outstanding studies of Lithuanian and Slavic languages Schleicher is most remembered as the author of the Compendium der vergleichenden Grammatik der indo-germanischen Sprachen (1861-2). This was mainly a handbook of the state of Indo-European linguistics to date, but characteristically took one further step. Schleicher assumed the complete regularity of phonetic and morphological development in the Indo-European group; he used this assumption to reconstruct proto-Indo-European forms and sounds. Two by-products of

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Sebeok, Portraits of Linguists, I, pp. 261-268, and for Müller's side of the proposed 1840's collaboration see Müller I, p. 39ff.

the Compendium - the famous Indo-European 'tree' diagram of descent of individual Indo-European languages from the parent language and Schleicher's construction of a fable in his proto-Indo-European language - are usually accorded considerable attention, but they are rather misleading advertisements for the Compendium and for Schleicher's approach to his subject. In fact he engaged in very little speculation about proto-Indo-European life, culture, or origins, and never concentrated on the reconstructed 'Ursprache' itself. On the contrary, his work was sober, and his main interest technical. Like Curtius, he came very close to conclusions about the regularity of phonetic changes in Indo-European idioms, which the next generation would take up.<sup>37</sup>

During the 1840's and 1850's Max Müller gave every indication of intending to work within the accepted limits of professional Indo-European linguistics of this second generation. It was quite acceptable for him to compile a more general History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature (1859) and to produce occasional essays on

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37. On Schleicher (1821-68) see Sebeok, Portraits of Linguists, I, pp. 374-395; Arens, op.cit., I, pp. 248-266; Pedersen, op.cit., especially pp. 265-272; and two excellent detailed considerations of his work, Beneš, op.cit., and Joachim Dietze, August Schleicher als Slawist, Berlin, 1966. See Schleicher's Die Darwinische Theorie und die Sprachwissenschaft, Weimar, 1863; Über die Bedeutung der Sprache für die Naturgeschichte des Menschen, Weimar, 1865; Compendium der vergleichende Grammatik der indo-germanischen Sprachen, Weimar, 1861, 2; Die Sprachen Europas..., Bonn, 1850. For Schleicher's proto-Indo-European fable see Jespersen, op.cit., pp. 81-2.



Sanskrit-related areas, mainly discussing the religious, mythological and cultural life of the ancient eastern Indo-Europeans, while working on his scholarly Veda edition. But there was a significant differentiating factor. From 1846 Müller was no longer surrounded by the sophisticated linguistic environment of Germany, but had moved to England. There Müller faced an environment of almost complete ignorance about his field of study, at least as far as it was understood by German practitioners. The educated English public had a very limited, pragmatic and self-centered attitude to language: even English linguists knew of German Indo-European linguistics mostly at second hand, through a revival of Anglo-Saxon studies. Under the leadership of the Philological Society of London they would consistently avoid the wider issues and philosophical questions which had fuelled German efforts and would continue to set themselves precise utilitarian tasks, exemplified by decades of work on the New English Dictionary from the 1860's.<sup>38</sup>

Müller's permanent transplantation into this essentially hostile environment was in great measure the work of Bunsen, who encouraged him not to think of

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38. A useful list of Müller's major works was compiled in 1893 by Moritz Winternitz, Catalogue of Principal Works published by Professor F. Max Müller, Oxford, 1893, but this does not, in the main, include Müller's vast numbers of contributions to serial publications, including regular contributions to the Saturday Review, and The Times although anonymously. The most important essays of the period were later collected and republished in Chips; see also A History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature, London, 1859. On linguistics in England see Hans Aarsleff, The Study of Language in England. 1780-1860, Princeton, 1967, especially p. 221ff.

returning to Germany in the 1850's, and the connection with Bunsen continued to affect Müller's career in England in significant ways. After he was appointed to a position in the rarified, orthodox Anglican atmosphere of Oxford, teaching the modern languages and literatures of Europe, the friendship with Bunsen brought Müller into disrepute. For Bunsen was a well-known propagandist for German intellectual disciplines and methods, and had been charged by the orthodox party with 'rationalism' because of his notorious willingness to 'reinterpret' the tenets of religion in a rational way. Bunsen's Biblical interpretations would be expounded by Rowland Williams in one of the most controversial contributions to the collection of Essays and Reviews over which the English orthodox party created a furor in 1860-1. It was precisely in 1860 - also the year of Bunsen's death - that Müller had the opportunity of securing an academic position, in his eyes, exactly suited to his qualifications and interests: the Boden Chair of Sanskrit at Oxford, which had fallen vacant with the death of H.H. Wilson. Naturally Müller applied for the post, and with his reputation as the editor of the Veda, expected to get it. To his surprise a feverish campaign was waged against him by an anti-German orthodox coalition, which secured instead the appointment of an English Sanskritist, Monier Williams. Müller took this rebuff very hard, particularly because Williams leaned heavily toward the pragmatic approach to Sanskrit as a useful language for British missionaries and administrators in India, and knew

no Vedic Sanskrit at all.<sup>39</sup> Müller chafed against the limitations of his modern languages post and the time it demanded away from his real fields of specialization.

It was against this background of disappointment and frustration with the English academic establishment that Müller accepted an invitation to lecture in London to a general audience on subjects more to his taste. While he continued the Veda work, the 1860's saw Müller establishing himself with huge success outside Oxford as the leading exponent of German Indo-European linguistics, and the popularly best-known Sanskrit scholar. His two series of Lectures on the Science of Language (1861 and 1863), which aimed at presenting the subject matter, methods, and results of German linguistics to the general public, were overwhelmingly popular, not the least because he presented his subject in brilliantly clear form. The printed versions went through several editions. So too did Müller's collection of essays on various subjects, the Chips from a German Workshop (1867 ff.).

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39. On this period in Müller's life see Müller, I, Chapters VI-XII inclusive, and Bunsen's letters reprinted in Chips III, especially p. 462ff.; the account of the Boden Chair election in Chaudhuri, op.cit., p. 220ff.; The judgement on Monier Williams is that of Müller himself in Müller, II, p. 210. However it is backed up by Chaudhuri, p. 220ff. and also in the entry on Monier Williams in Dictionary of National Biography, Supplement, vol. XXII, London (reprinted) 1912-22, pp. 1058-1059; Rowland Williams' article 'Bunsen's Biblical Researches' in Essays and Reviews, Ninth edition, London, 1861, pp. 50-93 and the continued critique of the orthodox party, for example H.J. Rose, 'Bunsen, the Critical School and Dr Williams', in Replies to Essays and Reviews, London, 1862, pp. 55-127.

In this decade he certainly fulfilled Bunsen's German intellectual 'mission' to England in an exemplary way, though he was forced to do it in the teeth of local academic opposition. On an international scholarly level too, Müller was acclaimed, not only in his native Germany, but throughout Europe. The Science of Language (1861 series) was awarded another Prix Volney - Müller's second - and in 1869 he was elected a Foreign Member of the French Institute, the youngest man ever granted that honour in the Nineteenth century: the list of his honorary memberships of scholarly societies around the world grew ceaselessly. In England, however, popular acclaim and foreign respect did little to alter his official position. Rather belatedly Oxford recognized Müller's talents, and partly made up for the mortification of 1860 by creating a special Chair of Comparative Philology for him in 1868.<sup>40</sup>

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40. On this period see Müller I, Chapters XIII-XVII inclusive. Bunsen had imbued Müller with the idea of a German intellectual 'mission' to England, and later, one of Bunsen's friends and biographers applauded Müller's fulfilment of this role: 'Whenever I thought of you, it was as our spiritual ambassador in England, as the indispensable representative and pioneer in Britain of German opinions, and cultivation of the highest order. You were in my eyes Bunsen's successor in that grand international or Teutonic mission'. (quoted in Müller II, p. 3). For Müller's efforts on behalf of oriental studies in England see ibid., I, p. 154, 204ff., 214, II, pp. 249-51; on the magnetic effect of Müller's lectures, ibid., I, p. 116ff. In a letter of 1850 Bunsen had advised Müller on the most appropriate style for the general public: 'Write as for ladies' (Chips III, p. 424 and see also Müller I, p. 117), which advice was passed on to others (see letter to Taine in ibid., p. 416). See the impressive list of scholarly honours accorded to Müller in Müller II, pp. 462-3. For an example of the English scholarly establishment's

In answer to the critiques of 1855, which had stressed the 'unscientific' nature of Müller's contributions to Bunsen's universal history, Müller's popular lectures on Indo-European linguistics self-consciously invoked a 'science' of language on a par with the physical sciences. Müller saw himself as examining language as an independent organism, with its own immutable laws of growth, against a background of scientifically accumulated fact. Although his main focus was on Indo-European linguistics, and consequently research into Indo-European languages, he included also a brief, purely expository coverage of other linguistic groups. He mentioned the 'monosyllabic' Chinese in the standard way. Then he moved on to Turanian, the point of controversy in 1855, and since that time stubbornly reasserted by Müller in order to underline the fact that it was his, not Bunsen's, hypothesis. He had done much to popularize Turanian in a handbook commissioned by the English government for the use of officers sent to the Crimea.<sup>41</sup> Now he was prepared to readjust its basic definition, separating it from association with Bunsen's universal history, and bringing forward instead his new 'scientific' emphasis. Consistent with his (suppressed) reservations of 1854,

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continued opposition to Müller see T. Hewitt Key, 'The Sanskrit language, as the basis of linguistic science, and the labours of the German School in that field - are they not overvalued?' Transactions of the Philological Society of London, 1862-3, pp. 113-160.

41. See Müller's Suggestions for the assistance of officers in learning the languages of the Seat of War in the East, London, 1854, quickly reprinted in a second edition, Languages of the Seat of War in the East ..., London, 1855.

the pressure of lack of information about the languages of other continents limited the Turanian group in 1861 to the Northern and Southern Eurasian idioms. The term Turanian no longer implied all the non-isolating, non-inflected languages of the world; it was no longer a synonym for the agglutinative stage of language, but only a specific group representative of a certain morphological form. It was presented as a 'family', of the same kind as the Indo-European and Semitic families of language, in two divisions, North ('Tungusic, Mongolic, Turkic, Finnic, and Samoyedic') and South ('Tamulic', 'Bhotiya', 'Taic', 'Malaic'). As well as their common agglutinative form, these languages were supposedly linked by common roots.<sup>42</sup>

Even in its revised 'scientific' form Müller's Turanian continued to attract formidable critiques. Pott lost no opportunity of repeating his 1855 attack: in his Die Ungleichheit menschlicher Rassen (1856), the Anti-Kaulen of 1863, again in his treatise on Wilhelm von Humboldt in 1876, and others, including Benfey, supported him.<sup>43</sup> Müller however seemed untroubled by

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42. See Science of Language I, p. 292ff.

43. See for example in Pott's Wilhelm von Humboldt ... p. LXV and similar remarks in his Die Ungleichheit menschlicher Rassen ..., Lemgo, 1856 and Anti-Kaulen ..., Lemgo, 1863; Benfey's critique in his Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft, p. 742ff.; R.G. Latham, Elements of comparative Philology, London, 1862, p. 706; the constant critiques of W.D. Whitney, whose opposition to Müller will be discussed further in Chapter V; see, on Turanian, Whitney's The Life and Growth of Language, London, 1875, p. 229ff.; Frederick W. Farrar, 'Language and Ethnology', Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London, IV, n.s. 1865-6 pp. 196-204.

such critiques and Turanian appeared in the new 'scientific' form throughout his work in the 1860's and later. The hypothesis found a good deal of support: from Caldwell's Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages and Edkins' work on China - both pace-setting in their fields - and beyond Müller's strict boundaries, from Bleek, Oppert, Lenormant and others. Müller fastened on such support with alacrity, incorporating, for example, Edkins' suggestion that the way to establish the unity of North and South Turanian was to conceive of them as two separate radii from the Chinese centre.<sup>44</sup>

But Turanian was not the centre of Müller's interest, in the Science of Language or elsewhere. After a brief summary of the Semitic family, adding to Renan's results the Assyrian language which he still did not recognize, most of Müller's attention concentrated on the Indo-European group. Because of his (not unusual) high estimation of and specialization in Vedic Sanskrit, Müller's approach to Indo-European was entirely different to that of Bunsen. His centre of attention was not the

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44. See Robert Caldwell, A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South Indian Family of Languages, second edition, London, 1875, p. 65ff., Joseph Edkins, A Grammar of the Chinese colloquial language . . ., Shanghai, 1857 and China's Place in Philology, London, 1871; W.H.I. Bleek, 'On the position of the Australian Languages' Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, I, 1872, pp. 89-104; and see the various articles all agreeing with the Turanian hypothesis in the Memoires du Congrès International des Orientalistes, Paris, 1873, vol. I, pp. 419-441, vol. II, pp. 348-50. On the work of François Lenormant and Jules Oppert on Sumerian see below, Chapter V; Müller adopted Edkin's suggestions in the Rede Lecture, 'On the Stratification of Language' of 1868, see Chips IV, pp. 109-114.

modern European but the ancient eastern Indo-European. This was the reason for his choice of terminology: 'Aryan', the name the Indo-Iranians called themselves, became the name Müller would use for the whole Indo-European group.<sup>45</sup> In that age of Indo-European linguistics, discussion of the modern European idioms seemed unnecessary; Müller manifested the common fascination for reconstructing the prehistory of the 'Aryan' group. For him as for many others this involved more than linguistic analysis: a whole generation of Indo-European linguists assumed that the 'Aryan' Ursprache belonged to an actual prehistoric, unified 'Aryan' Urvolk, whose Asiatic Urheimat was indicated or assumed by investigating the records of the oldest 'Aryan' idioms, the Veda and the Avesta. Bunsen's immediate equation between a linguistic type and a cultural or ethnic group which spoke that type of language was almost universally made in the 1850's in the proto-'Aryan' case.

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45. See the reasoning behind the adoption of the term described in Science of Language I, pp. 238-53. Müller probably picked up the idea of using 'Aryan' (before about 1856 also spelt 'Arian') from the suggestion of Adolphe Pictet, De l'affinité des langues celtiques avec le Sanscrit, where it was put forward in an appendix, as an afterthought, following which suggestions in the direction of comparative Indo-European linguistic palaeontology were also made: see Chapter I above. Both the term 'Aryan' and the idea of comparative Indo-European linguistic palaeontology appeared in Müller's work by the late 1840's and many of Pictet's ideas reappeared in Müller's 'Comparative Mythology' of 1856. Müller had already defined 'Aryan' in the way he would continue to do for a lifetime in the 1851 Edinburgh Review article, see p. 315.



Müller followed suit. By linguistic palaeontology, that is by phonetically linking certain key words in many 'Aryan' idioms, and therefore assuming that such words represented a common inheritance from prehistoric times, Müller built up a much more intricate picture of proto-'Aryan' life than Bunsen had done. His most-used source was the prized Veda, in terms of human psychology 'the oldest book in existence', though in more sober moments, dated only to 1,500 B.C.<sup>46</sup> The result by 1861 was an ideal picture of a golden age of mankind: the 'Aryans' were a small, half-nomadic, half-pastoral people, patriarchal, well-organized in family life, possessing houses, domestic animals, a political structure, clothes, corn, numbers, metals, knowing the arts of ploughing and cooking and sharing a belief in a Supreme God of the Heavens (Dyaus/Zeus/Jupiter).<sup>47</sup> If Müller's Turanian hypothesis was 'scientifically' not unquestionable, his proto-'Aryan' reconstruction on the contrary had the full weight of Indo-European linguistics behind it.

Müller's stress on the 'scientific' nature of his views did not overshadow the background of universal history as Lepsius' did in the 1860's. Certainly Turanian and 'Aryan', like Hamitic, were now purportedly factual linguistic descriptions. But Müller's adherence to universal history was forced into the open. The 1860's

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46. Quoted from Müller, History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature, p. 557; on the date of the Veda see ibid., p. 572 and Müller I, p. 327.

47. On 'Aryan' civilization see Müller's 'Comparative Mythology', pp. 26-68, and 'Aryan' religion in the 1851 Edinburgh Review article, pp. 334-9.

saw the revival of a 'scientific' theory of language with which Müller's 'science' could not agree: Darwin's Origin of Species unleashed a controversy over the origins of man during which the materialist definition of the origin of language was again widely discussed. Müller's response to this 'scientific' challenge to the religious bases of universal history was a 'scientific' restatement of those religious bases.

His desire to refute the 'new materialism' was unmistakable. The Science of Language devoted much space to reasserting Bunsen's definition of the divine origin of man and of language. For Müller, as for Bunsen, man was more than a brute by virtue of the special nature of reason and language, his fundamental gifts. Language could not be traced to the physical configuration of the human brain but was an 'inward mental faculty' connected to the equally supra-material faculty of reason. Man had been endowed with such faculties by definition, 'by nature', indeed by 'the hand of God'. Slogans such as

'Language is our Rubicon and no brute will dare to cross it'.

Language is the 'barrier between man and beast' appeared throughout Müller's lectures.<sup>48</sup> However after 1855 he would not, indeed could not, argue on a theological plane. Instead he argued 'science' against 'science'. He

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48. See Science of Language I, p. 360 and pp. 13-15. The whole of Lecture IX revolved around the question of the non-material origins of language, p. 349ff.

contended that language was literally and demonstrably not reducible to animal sounds because of the basic components of language, monosyllabic roots. Darwin's cousin Wedgwood argued that such roots were the product of onomatopoeia or the repetitious use of initially random interjectional cries - and that both methods were within the reach of animal intelligence. He assumed, as Bunsen had done, that primaeval monosyllabic roots were absolutely concrete. Müller changed the old definition of 'primaeval monosyllabic roots' to serve his present purpose, taking Indo-European roots as his model. He defined them as indeed monosyllables, but they no longer expressed individual concrete objects; they referred instead to general ideas or concepts related to concrete reality. These roots demonstrated the presence of the specifically human capacity to generalize and individualize. They were a sure proof of a rational mentality of an entirely different order to that of animals:

'The fact that every word is originally a predicate - that names, though signs of individual conceptions, are all, without exception, derived from general ideas - is one of the most important discoveries in the science of language. It was known before that language is the distinguishing characteristic of man; it was known also that the having of general ideas is that which puts a perfect distinction betwixt man and brutes; but that these two were only different expressions of the same fact was not known till the theory of roots had been established as preferable to the theories both of Onomatopoeia and of Interjections ... No animal thinks, and no animal speaks, except man. Language and thought are inseparable. Words without thought are dead sounds; thoughts without words are nothing... The word is the thought incarnate'.<sup>49</sup>

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49. Ibid., pp. 390-391.

The fundamental argument of Müller's 'scientific' proof of the non-material origin of language was in fact highly dubious: he simply reasserted Bunsen's premises, that from its origins language was rational, and that such rationality was a special human quality which could not be reduced to animal origins. However Müller managed to imbue his arguments with at least a tone resembling that of the 'scientific' materialist party. The 'scientific' restatement of universal history continued. Describing the growth of language from its conceptual roots he deliberately used Darwinian phraseology. How individual phonetic roots came to be used consistently to mean specific conceptual ideas was a lengthy and rather mysterious process involving the gradual elimination or 'struggle for life' or 'natural selection' of an almost infinite number of conceptual roots which emerged from the mind of man. By such a view Müller implicitly gave up Bunsen's search for identifiable primitive roots of the common human Ursprache, and, as Lepsius had done, modified considerably Bunsen's doctrine of the unity of all languages. The common origin of language was not a unity of kind in the abstract - conceptual monosyllabic roots - not in the concrete roots themselves. From this point Müller still wanted to assert the historical progression of language from monosyllabism to inflection, but without the religious framework of Bunsen's version. Müller defined therefore a 'Rhematic' period of language followed by a 'Dialectical' period. The first, the period of 'roots', was still to be seen in Chinese; the second

involved the growth first of the agglutinative and then of the inflected linguistic type, that is, Turanian (amongst others) and Semitic and 'Aryan'. He explained the differentiation between these by mentioning a 'main current' of linguistic growth leading inevitably to inflected form, from which 'different channels' diverted and 'became stationary and stagnant, or if you like, literary and traditional', retaining 'for ever that colouring which the main current displayed at the stage of their separation'.<sup>50</sup> All this was merely a restatement of Bunsen's human Urheimat, migration and colonization theories; but Müller would never again allow himself to say so with the naiveté of 1854. The discussion now proceeded under the banner of simple linguistic fact.

In fact Müller's arguments seemed quite convincingly factual and, if compared with those of the leaders of the 'materialist' party, cannot easily be differentiated from them. Müller was one of the few contemporary linguists to proclaim with Schleicher that language was a natural organism, linguistics a natural science. Not only for Müller, but for Schleicher, indeed for Huxley and Darwin himself, man was distinguished as man by the possession of language. Müller openly adopted the tone of 'science' and its phrases. Schleicher produced almost identical descriptions to those offered by

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50. Quoted from ibid., pp. 337-8; see ibid., pp. 267-8 (roots and their form), 335 ff. (common origin of languages), 390-99 (how language began) and his 'Comparative Mythology', pp. 9-12 (periods of growth).

Müller as to original phonetic types, the early differentiation of types, and their development into separate linguistic forms along the path from monosyllabism to inflection. Müller took the scientific mode to an extreme in the Rede Lecture of 1868, 'On the Stratification of Language'. From the title onwards he transferred the idea of geological strata piled on top of each other by natural processes over time metaphorically into linguistics. He underlined his previous scepticism about the possibility of discovering roots common to different families of language. He even picked up Schleicher's controversial method of representing types of morphology as algebraic formulae, and agreed that none of them in their original purity could be found in the modern world.<sup>51</sup>

Despite all this seeming conformity with current 'scientific' and linguistic fashion, Müller never changed his idealist stance, inherited from Bunsen, and ultimately from Humboldt and German idealist philosophy. It was

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51. Compare Schleicher's Über die Bedeutung der Sprache..., and also his 'Zur Morphologie der Sprache', Mémoires de l'académie imperiale des sciences de St. Petersburg, 1859, série 7, vol. I with Müller's Rede Lecture, 'On the stratification of language' in Chips IV pp. 65-116, for example p. 81ff. on morphological formulae. A critique of Georg Curtius' Zur Chronologie ... appended to the Rede lecture in 1875 rejected a too literal expectation of the existence of pure morphological types (ibid., pp. 117-144). Müller continued to reject the existence of an 'incorporating' morphological type, standing by the tripartite monosyllabic-agglutinative division however (Science of Language I, p. 331). All parties agreed with Müller on the importance of language as part of the definition of man: see Schleicher, Über die Bedeutung der Sprache ..., p. 14; T.H. Huxley, 'On the Methods and Results of Ethnology', Fortnightly Review, I, 1865, pp. 257-277, especially p. 257, 259; Charles Darwin, The Descent of Man, London, 1871, I, p. 54.

a basic philosophical choice. For Schleicher and those who adopted the materialist interpretation of language the origin and development of language occurred parallel with and dependent upon the development of man in the evolutionary sequence and his physical differentiation. For Müller there was no question of material origins for man or language at all. On the one hand he repudiated any charge of being influenced by religious belief:

'I have been accused of having been biassed in my researches by an implicit belief in the common origin of mankind. I do not deny that I hold this belief ... But I defy my adversaries to point out one single passage where I have mixed up scientific with theological arguments'.<sup>52</sup>

He claimed that he was arguing on simple factual evidence, to factual ends:

'The problem of the common origin of languages has no necessary connection with the problem of the common origin of mankind'.<sup>53</sup>

On the other hand, ultimately, he abandoned the 'scientific' proof of his most basic beliefs and called on faith and philosophy, not science:

'It is quite clear that we have no means of solving the problem of the origin of language ... as a matter of fact which happened ... Nothing, no doubt, would be more interesting than to know from historical documents the exact process by which the first man began to lisp his first words, and thus to be rid for ever of all the theories on the origin of speech. But this knowledge is denied us ... We are told that the first man was the son of God, that God created him in His own image, formed him of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. These are simple facts, and to be accepted as such; if we begin to reason on them, the edge of the human understanding glances off. Our mind is so constituted that it cannot

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52. Science of Language, I, p. 347.

53. Ibid., p. 332.

apprehend the absolute beginning or the absolute end of anything. If we tried to conceive the first man created as a child, and gradually unfolding his physical and mental powers, we could not understand his living for one day without supernatural aid. If, on the contrary, we tried to conceive the first man created full-grown in body and mind, the conception of an effect without a cause would equally transcend our reasoning powers. It is the same with the first beginnings of language ... man could not by his own power have acquired the faculty of speech which is the distinctive character of mankind, unattained and unattainable by mute creation .... We want no explanation how birds learn to fly, created as they are with organs adapted to that purpose .... It is the same with speech. Speech is a specific faculty of man ... the instruments of our knowledge, wonderful as they are, are yet far too weak to carry us into all the regions to which we may soar on the wings of our imagination'.<sup>54</sup>

It was no wonder, then, that Müller's apparently 'scientific' and actually religious line of argument about linguistic and, ultimately, human origins was so often invoked in the defence of theology against the Darwinian hypothesis during the evolution debate in England in the 1860's.<sup>55</sup>

The pattern which the Science of Language

54. Ibid., pp. 350-354.

55. On the evolution controversy see Alvar Ellegård, Darwin and the General Reader, Göteborg, 1858, especially on the use of Müller's work, pp. 316-321; examples of such uses can be found in G.W. Cox's review of the Science of Language lectures, 1861 in the Edinburgh Review, vol. 115, 1862, pp. 67-103, and in the review of Thomas Huxley's Man's Place in Nature (inter alia) in the Edinburgh Review, 117, 1863, pp. 541-569. Max Müller formed a friendship with the politician and amateur scientist George Campbell, 8th Duke of Argyll, an inveterate denouncer of Darwinism, through the effect of his Lectures of 1861: see Müller, I p. 247 and pp. 346-7 for the beginning of their correspondence, which centres mostly on the language question. On Argyll and his works see the entry in the Dictionary of National Biography, First Supplement, I, London, 1901, pp. 385-391.



followed, whereby Müller gave what seemed to be a factual account of linguistic questions which really represented a 'scientific' restatement of Bunsen's universal history, was repeated throughout Müller's work in this period. Another example of the same process can be found in Müller's famous theory of comparative mythology. The method of linguistic palaeontology, when applied to the names of the 'Aryan' sky god in various modern and ancient 'Aryan' idioms led to a spectacular result. Not only in function, but also in etymology, the name Dyaus/ Zeus/Jupiter revealed the same basis: a reference to the bright sky.<sup>56</sup> Outside this one instance, however, there was a problem with the body of Vedic and other 'Aryan' mythologies. Their profuse, polytheistic confusion of myths seemed so irrational as to defy comprehension. Müller could not agree with Bunsen that this mass of mythology in itself was a stage in the growth of human religious consciousness. Various clues to a more adequate explanation of the problem combined in Müller's thought: the method of linguistic palaeontology, the pronounced naturalism of the Vedic myths on which he was working and their characteristic delight in poetic epithets and embellishments, the universal-historical conviction that man and his products were by definition rational from the very beginning. The result was the theory of 'Comparative Mythology' put forward in a long essay of 1856. Müller followed Bunsen, and Bunsen's mentor Heyne,

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56. See Müller's review of Bopp in the Edinburgh Review, 1851, especially pp. 334-9.

in seeing mythology as a product of the human mind at a certain ancient period of its development: the Mythopoetic Age. In his own scheme of the stages of development of universal history Müller placed this Age just after the Dialectical period. Subject to the basic material at hand - the 'Aryan' inflected form was the most promising in this respect - the ancient human mind could not yet grasp abstracts, whether verbs or nouns, and so was inclined to metaphorize and concretize whenever he attempted to express non-concrete ideas. With his knowledge of the Veda, in which such a process could be clearly followed, Müller pressed further. Often such concrete metaphors were polyonymous, distinct metaphors differing only very slightly in meaning; but as language, and the generations of man grew, such virtual synonyms were applied, or forgotten, misunderstood or became completely incomprehensible at random. This was the origin of mythology: the concrete metaphors became personalities or qualities which acted or were acted upon. Again the Veda offered the classic examples of the process:

'... a whole world of primitive, natural, and intelligible mythology has been preserved to us in the Veda. The mythology of the Veda is to comparative mythology what Sanskrit has been to comparative grammar. There is, fortunately, no system of religion or mythology in the Veda. Names are used in one hymn as appellatives, in another as names of gods. The same god is sometimes represented as supreme, sometimes as equal, sometimes as inferior to others. The whole nature of these so-called gods is still transparent; their first conception, in many cases, clearly perceptible ... As the conceptions of the poet varied, so varied the nature of these

Gods. ... If we want to know whither the human mind ... is driven necessarily and inevitably by the irresistible force of language as applied to supernatural and abstract ideas, we must read the Veda ...' 57

All 'Aryan' mythological personalities and their exploits could be reduced, according to Müller, to similar concrete metaphoric bases, shrouded by the fertility of linguistic expansion. The key to the basic conception beneath the linguistic profusion was to be found by applying the linguistic technique to the names of mythological personalities. Again the Veda produced the model results which would be reduplicated throughout the 'Aryan' group. The linguistic basis of Vedic mythology, like the basis of 'Dyaus', was a reference to the sun and solar phenomena:

'... sunrise was the revelation of nature, awakening in the human mind that feeling of dependence, of helplessness, of hope, of joy and faith in higher powers, which is the source of all wisdom, the spring of all religion ...' 58

Sun and sky-worship could be found linguistically beneath all the elaborate metaphorical extensions of the 'Aryan' group, extensions produced in the ancient period when the 'Aryan' group was breaking up into separate peoples. Soon after the final 'Aryan' separation the period of mythology ceased: the human intellect had matured to the point where it could control the development of language. The descendants of the ancient 'Aryans' preserved and sometimes codified their ancestors' mythologies into the form now known to us, but created no more. Only by reference to a

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57. See 'Comparative Mythology' pp. 98-9.

58. Ibid., p. 124.

much earlier period of human development can the real basis of the traditional mythologies be understood.

The essay on 'Comparative Mythology' had been a pioneering effort in 1856, but after it was supported by the very successful second series of Lectures on the Science of Language in 1863, and the essay itself reprinted in the popular Chips from a German Workshop collection in 1867, Müller's theory of the linguistic origin of mythology, and its solar, or generally speaking, natural basis, became extremely well-known. In Germany, Adalbert Kuhn, like Müller an Indo-European and Sanskrit scholar, had arrived at a very similar method of comparative mythology, with very similar results by the 1850's, although quite independently of Müller. There were some differences: Kuhn took the view that spectacular meteorological phenomena - storm, clouds, wind, and rain - lay etymologically at the heart of Indo-European mythology and not, as Müller stated, solar phenomena. Kuhn remained in Germany and, in the midst of that critical academic and linguistic environment, always confined himself to the detailed tracing of permutations of individual myths and personalities within the Indo-European group in a highly technical way.<sup>59</sup> Müller's work - of necessity

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59. On Adalbert Kuhn (1812-1881) see K. Bruchmann, 'Adalbert Kuhn' in the Jahresbericht über die Fortschritte der classischen Alterthumswissenschaft, XXIV (Bibliographisches Jahrbuch 1881), pp. 49-64; and see Kuhn's early important works Zur älteste Geschichte der Indogermanischen Völker, Berlin, 1845, 'Zur Mythologie' Zeitschrift für deutsches Alterthum, 6, 1848, pp. 117-134, the classic exposé Die Herabkunft des Feuers und des Göttertranks, Berlin, 1859 and 'Über

aimed at the broader general public - presented the technique and its results in more anecdotal and accessible form. While he too mostly discussed 'Aryan' mythology, the idea of a general Mythopoetic Age of language and of man implied the possibility of applying 'comparative mythology' outside as well as inside the Indo-European group. In the end, although both he and Kuhn had their followers, to the point of seeming to form rival 'schools' of comparative mythology, solar or metereological, it was Müller's rather simplified version which became so widely known that it dominated the thinking of those engaged in mythological studies of all kinds for some decades.<sup>60</sup> Yet this new 'science of mythology' as Müller

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Entwicklungsstufen der Mythenbildung' KAWB, Abhandlungen 1873, pp. 123-151. Müller's movement in the same direction began with the unpublished Prix Volney essay of 1849 (see Chapter II above), proceeded through the Edinburgh Review article of 1851, and was almost complete with the article 'Bellerophon' dating from 1855 (reprinted Chips II, pp. 175-191) which advanced a few Vedic-Greek equivalences between names of mythological personalities, before the publication of the essay on 'Comparative Mythology'.

60. Kuhn's most faithful disciple was his brother-in-law F.L.W. Schwartz (1821-1899) on whom see de Vries, op.cit., p. 218ff. Kuhn's ideas were introduced directly into England by W.K. Kelly: see Richard M. Dorson, The British Folklorists. A History, London, 1968, p. 171ff. Müller's most enthusiastic follower was George Cox, notably in Cox's The Mythology of the Aryan Nations, London, 1870; a personal correspondance was begun between the two men in 1863 (Müller, I, pp. 276-7). In both cases the followers tended to go much further, and on a much less reliable basis, than their masters: thus Schwartz, see de Vries, op.cit., pp. 222-3; Cox, see Müller's attempt at warning and restraint, Müller I, p. 364, and cf. Richard M. Dorson, 'The Eclipse of Solar Mythology' in Thomas Sebeok (ed.), Myth: A Symposium, Bloomington and London, 1972, see especially p. 41. The heaviest stress is generally laid on Müller's work as typical of comparative mythology: thus Dorson, 'The Eclipse ...' and The

would later call it, with all its technical linguistic comparisons and reductions, was based on a whole set of assumptions from linguistic universal history. It relied on 'facts' such as the assumed poetic but rational nature of man and language in primaeval times, the assumed growth of language from simple and concrete to complex and abstract, the assumed instinctive veneration of natural phenomena by primitive man, the assumed unique psychological antiquity of the Veda. The open references to religion were missing but the framework of Bunsen's universal history was continued in 'scientific' dress.

Müller's 'scientific' restatement of universal history culminated in the late 1860's with the 'science of religion'. Undoubtedly he had long been interested in the philosophy of religion. As a student in Germany he had attended lectures on idealist philosophy, including those of Schelling. From another point of view, no Indo-European linguist of the mid-century generation working on the most ancient and most fabled of Sanskrit texts, the Veda, could have confined himself to linguistic questions alone, and ignored the contents. Above all, Müller's collaboration with Bunsen had left a deep mark: the conviction of 'God in History'. Even in the course of linguistic works Müller would state, with his patron, that there was a universal and very basic

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British Folklorists, Pinard de la Boullaye, op.cit., see p. 343ff., Richard Chase, Quest for Myth, Baton Rouge, 1949.

human religious instinct:

'We are so fashioned - and it is no merit of ours - that as soon as we awake, we feel on all sides our dependence on something else, and all nations join in some way or another in the words of the Psalmist, "It is He that Hath made us, and not we ourselves". This is the first sense of the Godhead, the sensus numinis as it has been well called; for it is a sensus - an immediate perception, not the result of reasoning or generalizing, but an intuition ...' 61

Like Bunsen, Müller believed in the growth of the religious instinct through history, culminating in the Christian experience:

'History seems to teach that the whole human race required a gradual education before, in the fulness of time, it could be admitted to the truths of Christianity. All the fallacies of human reason had to be exhausted, before the light of a higher truth could meet ready acceptance ... in the sight of Him with whom a thousand years are but as one day ... all the ancient religions of the world may have but served to prepare the way of Christ...' 62

India had contributed several important stepping-stones in the growth of religion: not only the highly prized Veda religion, but also that of the Buddha, which had been re-evaluated so positively by Bunsen. Most of Müller's early essays on religion began as extensions of

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61. Science of Language II, p. 436. For a discussion of Müller's early interest in religion see Garry W. Trompf, Friedrich Max Müller as a Theorist of Comparative Religion, Bombay, 1978, Chapters I and II with the proviso that Trompf's interpretation of Müller throughout almost completely ignores Müller's linguistic career and works, to emphasize instead Müller's role in religious studies. The lack of understanding of the linguistic basis of the theory of universal history makes Trompf's account of the relationship between Müller and Bunsen inadequate.
62. Müller, A History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature, p. 32.

his interest in the ancient Sanskrit religious texts: such was the content of the first volume of Chips from a German Workshop which pronounced in 1867 that it was devoted to the 'Science of Religion'. Only a specially added Preface explained what Müller might mean by the phrase and, throughout the Preface, Müller referred again and again to Bunsen and the argument of Bunsen's God in History. There was very little new in the idea of the unconscious but continuous growth of religion in history; perhaps the most important innovation on Müller's part was his plea for an objective and open-hearted study of non-Christian religions:

'... in the history of the world, our religion, like our own language, is but one out of many; and in order to understand fully the position of Christianity in the history of the world, and its true place among the religions of mankind, we must compare it, not with Judaism only, but with the religious aspirations of the whole world ...  
... Every religion, even the most imperfect and degraded, has something that ought to be sacred to us, for there is in all religions a secret yearning after the true, though unknown, God ...' 63

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63. Müller, Preface to Chips I, quoted from pp. xxviii-xxxii. The movement of Müller's interest through Vedic and other ancient Eastern religions to religion in general and Bunsen's question of 'God in History' can be seen already in the 'Lecture on the Vedas', reprinted in Chips I, see for example, p. 48. Trompf interprets the 1867 Preface as 'the first major statement of the essentials of Müller's religious views' (Trompf, op.cit., p. 43), and on the basis of this and other works see Müller as the founder of the science of comparative religion (ibid., pp. 2-3). It should be pointed out how little new technique, or even new ideas were contained in Müller's Preface if those of Bunsen and even earlier religious theorists - the Symbolic school for example - are considered. A more realistic assessment of Müller's contribution toward comparative religion is given by Louis Henry Jordan, Comparative Religion - its Genesis and Growth, Edinburgh, 1905, p. 150ff. and Eric J. Sharpe, Comparative Religion. A History, London, 1975, pp. 45-6.



This appeal was meant to extend interest and respect especially to Müller's loved ancient religions of the East. Three years later he gave a series of Lectures on the Science of Religion which relied very heavily on ancient Indian materials to illustrate the justice of Müller's pleas for objectivity and width of scope in understanding the development of religion. Here at last he explained in a little more detail his proposed 'scientific' method. Firstly, religions must be classified. But previous criteria - for example the idea of 'true' and 'false' or 'revealed' and 'natural' religions - were inadequate, for they were biased toward the Judeo-Christian understanding of religion. His new 'science of religion' would use an objective criterion: like Bunsen, Müller chose language. In its formative epochs, religion

'may really and truly be called a sacred dialect of human speech ... at all events early religion and early language are most intimately connected, religion depending entirely for its outward expression on the more or less adequate resources of language.

... it follows, as a matter of course, that whatever classification has been found most useful in the science of language ought to prove equally useful in the science of religion. If there is a truly genetic relationship of languages, the same relationship ought to hold together the religions of the world, at least the most ancient religions'.<sup>64</sup>

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64. Müller, Lectures on the Science of Religion, New York, 1872, p. 60; this edition of the Lectures reported them as they had been originally given in 1870. In 1873 Müller's own, rewritten, version of the Lectures appeared, but this edition belongs in a different context, discussed in Chapter V below.

He therefore isolated three types of religion: Turanian (into which, according to Edkins' theory, he merged Chinese), Semitic and 'Aryan'. Initially these three were defined in much the same way as they had appeared in Bunsen's God in History: Turanian primitive spirit and ancestral worship, Semitic worship of 'God in History' and 'Aryan' worship of 'God in Nature'.<sup>65</sup>

Müller's construction of these 'scientific' linguistic-religious types marked the extreme point of his accommodation to current scholarly fashions, and yet still transparently revealed the basic framework of Bunsen's universal history. The emphasis on the 'scientific' proof, and not the original religious conviction, was taking Müller in the same direction as Lepsius. Like the latter, Müller had not cleared up Bunsen's confusion between linguistic, cultural and ethnic meanings for the stages and types of universal history. He worsened the confusion by his insistence that Turanian, Semitic and 'Aryan' were objective, 'scientific' facts, without any reference to religious theory. All the implications of these classifications were brought out as they became more 'scientific'. Even in 1854, in the interests of fact and clarity, Müller had tried to specify the relationship between linguistic and physical classifications:

'Ethnological race and phonological race are not commensurate, except in ante-historical times, or perhaps, at the very dawn of history...'<sup>66</sup>

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65. Ibid., pp. 61-64.

66. Outlines III, p. 349 and see the whole 'Ethnology vs Phonology' section, pp. 349-353.

The 'factual' nature of this statement stood out more and more as the convenient vaguenesses and genuine religious-based disinterest of Bunsen's spiritual universal history was pushed into the background. Certainly, as in Lepsius' case, the physical meaning of linguistic-based classifications was a very minor part of Müller's understanding and usage. But in the Science of Religion of 1870 it was undoubtedly present. Müller described Turanian, Semitic and 'Aryan' as three entirely separate groups on a variety of levels - linguistic, religious, cultural and physical - without differentiation. He spoke of separate 'cases of language' and 'three independent settlements of religion', of the 'ancestors of the Semitic, Aryan and Turanian races', of languages and nations and religions and ethnic groups synonymously.<sup>67</sup>

As with Lepsius' dealings with Hamitic, the physical implications of Turanian and 'Aryan' came to the fore in the area of Müller's specialization: ancient India. For Müller, the Vedic scholar, the core of 'Aryan', and his greatest interest in it, lay in the heathen ancient East, and he was always concerned to establish the unique value and contribution of India to 'Aryan' as a whole. This was conceived in almost a physical way; he spoke of convincing

'... the English soldier that the same blood was running in his veins and in the veins of the dark

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67. Müller, Lectures on the Science of Religion (New York edition), see the whole of Lecture III, pp. 54-99.

Bengalese .... Though the historian may shake his head, though the physiologist may doubt ... all must yield before the facts furnished by language ...' 68

Like Lepsius' interest in Hamitic, Müller's interest in ancient India changed the shape of universal history. The group which had to be distinguished carefully from the ancient Indian 'Aryans' was not the Semites, but the Turanians. Bunsen had established the fundamental difference between Turanian and 'Aryan' by allocating them quite separate migrations from the Urheimat and thus separate stages of development spiritually, linguistically and culturally. By his suppression of this religious-based framework, and his 'scientific' attitude toward linguistic classification, Müller had undermined the distance between these two types. Formally, all that remained was a difference of linguistic structure which Müller acknowledged, at least in theory, was not absolute:

'... every inflectional language was once agglutinative, and every agglutinative language was once monosyllabic ... we cannot resist the conclusion that what is now inflectional was formerly agglutinative, and what is now agglutinative was at first radical ...' 69

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68. Müller, A History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature, pp. 13-14. Joan Leopold's 'British Applications of the Aryan theory of race to India, 1850-1870' The English Historical Review, LXXXIX, July, 1974, makes a case for the use of Müller's work on 'Aryan' in the mid-Nineteenth century Indian-British political situation. It should be stressed that Müller himself was far too caught up with Vedic Sanskrit and Indo-European linguistics during this period to interest himself in modern India. Certainly such an interest developed, but later, from the 1870's, and for a great variety of reasons which will be discussed in Chapter V below. His central focus continued to be ancient India even then.
69. Science of Language I, p. 337.

The 'science of mythology' brought Turanian and 'Aryan' even closer: it emphasized, in Müller's famous phrase, that mythology was universally a 'disease of language',<sup>70</sup> and reduced 'Aryan' myth to its natural bases, indistinguishable from Turanian nature myth. This was of course not Müller's especial aim: on the contrary, there was an ever more pressing need to distinguish Turanian from 'Aryan':

'The Finns are the most advanced of their whole family, and are, the Magyars excepted, the only Finnic race that can claim a station among the civilised and civilising nations of the world. Their literature and, above all, their popular poetry bear witness to a high intellectual development in times which we may call mythical ... From the mouths of the aged an epic poem has been collected equalling the Iliad in length and completeness - nay, if we can forget for a moment all that we in our youth learned to call beautiful, not less beautiful. A Finn is not a Greek, and Wainamoinen was not a Homer. But if the poet may take his colours from that nature by which he is surrounded, if he may depict the men with whom he lives, Kalewala possesses merits not dissimilar from those of the Iliad, and will claim its place as the fifth national epic of the world, side by side with the Ionian songs, with the Mahabharata, the Shahnameh, and the Nibelunge'.<sup>71</sup>

In Vedic India the virtual cultural equivalence of Turanian and 'Aryan' could not be allowed to stand. Müller concentrated much effort on establishing a Turanian - 'Aryan' opposition with all the ambiguities allowed by linguistic universal history. The general difference was one of degree, linguistically:

'The difference between an Aryan and a Turanian language is somewhat the same as between good

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70. Science of Language II, p. 347.

71. Science of Language I, p. 323.

and bad mosaic. The Aryan words seem made of one piece, the Turanian words clearly show the sutures and fissures where the small stones are cemented together'.<sup>72</sup>

It was also still one of stages of civilization:

'The name Turanian is used in opposition to Aryan, and is applied to the nomadic races of Asia as opposed to the agricultural or Aryan races'.<sup>73</sup>

But in the Indian case it became a pronounced physical difference: 'Aryan' associated with the European physical type, Turanian associated with either Negro or Mongol characteristics. In 1847:

'When the Arian tribes immigrated into the north of India, they came as a warrior-like people, vanquishing, destroying and subjecting the savage and despised inhabitants of those countries. We generally find that it is the fate of the negro race, when brought into hostile contact with the Japhetic race, to be either destroyed and annihilated, or to fall into a state of slavery and degradation, from which, if at all, it recovers by the slow process of assimilation. This has been the case in the north of India'.

And in 1870, the Turanians in general still have

'... yellow skin and ... high cheek-bones ... black Chinese eyes ...'<sup>74</sup>

On the basis of such fundamental distinctions it was clear that the myths of the Veda were quite different from Turanian nature myth. Müller could go on to assert

72. Ibid., p. 297.

73. Ibid., p. 295.

74. Müller, 'On the Relation of the Bengali ...', p. 348 (1847), Lectures on the Science of Religion, (New York), p. 83 (1870). In the Turanian letter in the Outlines III the 'Mongolian' physical nature of the Turanian group as a whole is suggested (p. 340ff.).

Bunsen's conclusion that the 'Aryan' mind was distinguished by its spiritual qualities, applying this to ancient India in particular:

'... their thoughts were fixed on the one great and ever recurring question, What am I? What does all this world around me mean? Is there a cause, is there a creator - a God?'<sup>75</sup>

One of the side-effects of Müller's ancient eastern focus for 'Aryan' and his Turanian- 'Aryan' opposition was that he almost abolished Bunsen's dialectic confrontation between Japhetic and Semitic. There was simply no need to stress the difference between them. Müller followed Bunsen's theological assumptions about the unity of the Judeo-Christian experience and the continuity of Divine Revelation from Abraham to modern Christianity. For him 'Aryan' and Semitic were two distinct but more or less equal types of inflected form: he was not prepared to class the latter as 'imperfect' inflection and draw the implications of this throughout. Certainly there was some difference between 'Aryan' and 'Semitic' cultural products, and of course Müller was convinced that there was something superior about the 'Aryan' man. But it was not over the Semitic man that he wanted to assert such superiority.

'We must not compare the Aryan and the Semitic races ...'<sup>76</sup>

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75. Müller, A History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature, p. 566.

76. Ibid., p. 558; on the unity of the Judeo-Christian experience see the article on 'Semitic Monotheism' in Chips I, especially p. 373.

Müller's 'Aryan' implied no anti-Semitism: it was directed against Turanian.

This fact differentiates Müller's work markedly from that of his famous counterpart in Semitic linguistics, Ernest Renan. After an uneasy period of truce following the 1855 controversy Müller and Renan gradually developed an occasional and polite correspondence, based on the sense that they shared 'scientific' aims and ultimately similar theoretical foundations - for example, the idealist view of the origins of language. But for Renan - in this particular way probably closer to Bunsen than Müller - a great chasm separated Semitic and 'Aryan'. The first was limited to a sterile desert tribal life and rigorous monotheistic belief; the second allowed an expansive development in varieties of civilizations, in philosophy and culture. Renan's Semitic and 'Aryan' also became physical during the 1860's, and this added a powerful dimension to his implied anti-Semitism. For example, in his Vie de Jésus (1863) Renan stated that since ('Aryan') Christianity was the product of a totally different type of mentality to that of (Semitic) Judaism, Christ, even physically, could not have been a Semite. Renan welcomed Müller's theory of 'comparative mythology' as an excellent support for his Aryan-Semitic differentiation.<sup>77</sup> Müller however disassociated himself from

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77. On the gradual growth of a better relationship between Renan and Müller see Müller I, pp. 216-7, and Renan's Correspondance (Oeuvres Complètes X) pp. 212-14, pp. 224-5 (in which Renan's translation of Müller's 'Comparative Mythology' is discussed) pp.



Renan's conclusions and criticized the use of his 'comparative mythology' in this way, not because he necessarily disagreed with the general cultural difference between the two types, but because for him there was no need to stress it as Renan did:

'We thus arrive at a different conviction from that which M. Renan has made the basis of the history of the Semitic race. We can see nothing that would justify the admission of a monotheistic instinct, granted to the Semitic, and withheld from the Aryan race. They both share in the primitive intuition of God, they are both exposed to dangers in framing names for God, and they both fall into polytheism. What is peculiar to the Aryan race is their mythological phraseology, superadded to their polytheism; what is peculiar to the Semitic race is their belief in a national god - in a god chosen by his people as his people had been chosen by him'.<sup>78</sup>

Again, in contrast to Renan, Müller's 'Aryan' was not translated into a political analysis for the modern world. Whereas the former equated 'Aryan' superiority directly with modern, especially Germanic, 'Aryans',<sup>79</sup> the ideal type of Müller's 'Aryan' remained

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269-71, pp. 365-8. For Renan's attitude on the origin of language see his De l'Origine du Langage, Chapter X (Oeuvres Complètes, VIII, pp. 100-108). On the Semitic type in Renan's work see Chapter III above; examples of the quasi-physical use of the term 'Aryan' and Semite in Renan's Histoire Générale ... (Oeuvres Complètes VIII) on pp. 155-7, p. 577; on the question of the racial origins of Christ see Renan's Vie de Jésus, Paris, (129th edition, n.d.), p. 2.

78. Müller, article on 'Semitic Monotheism' of 1860, reprinted in Chips I, quotation from p. 371.

79. On Renan's 'Aryanism' see Ernest Seillière, 'L'Impérialisme Germaniste dans l'oeuvre de Renan', part I, Revue des deux mondes, October 1906, pp. 836-862.

lost in the mists of Vedic antiquity. Certainly Müller was nationalistic: but his nationalism was not directly related to his linguistic-based typologies. As he gradually realized that Oxford would never really accept him, and that his successes only aroused suspicion and hesitation among the English academic establishment, he developed a longing for his homeland, idealized from afar as the land of earnest philosophers and Christian scholars. It was this Germany of which he said, right at the end of his life,

'... though I had spent nearly a whole life in the service of my adopted country ... still I was, and have always remained, a German'.<sup>80</sup>

Like Bunsen, he held to the ideal of German unity in a liberal and constitutional sense, but again like his patron, isolation from Germany led to a not entirely realistic assessment of events there. In the 1860's he presented positive explanations of Prussian policy to the British public on the Schleswig-Holstein question (with which Bunsen had also been so involved) and supported Bismarck's path to war in so far as it might lead to German unity. In 1870-71, like so many others, he was swept away with nationalistic enthusiasm. He even served as an unofficial channel between the pro-French

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80. Müller, My Autobiography, p. 304; for the strength of German Romanticism in Müller, crossed with Bunsen's kind of high-minded piety, see also the very successful novel of idealized love written and published anonymously by Müller, Deutsche Liebe. Aus den Papieren eines Fremdlings, Leipzig, 1857.

Gladstone and Bismarck through his friendship with Heinrich Abeken, Bismarck's secretary and a man who had once been yet another of Bunsen's young protégés. However, on a sober level, Müller did realize that Bismarck's Germany was not really the fulfilment of his ideals and he would later gradually understand and reject the German state of the 1880's and 1890's. Already in 1870-71 he hoped

'... that the wild beast will soon retire, and that the spirit in Germany will gain the upper hand ...'

The idea of 'Aryan' superiority was not confused with Müller's modern German nationalism. He dreamed like Bunsen of an ideal confederation of 'Teutonic' states to keep firm hold over the autocracy and radicalism of the Romanic and Slavic states of Europe.<sup>81</sup>

Certainly Müller's Turanian and 'Aryan' had reached such a self-consciously 'scientific' level by 1870, and on this concrete level had so continued to stretch the meaning of linguistic classification, that Bunsen's balance between factual and spiritual had very

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81. Quoted from Müller I, p. 400; on the pro-Teutonism of Bunsen and the liberal Anglican circle with whom Müller came into contact in these years at Oxford see Duncan Forbes, The Liberal Anglican Idea of History, Cambridge, 1952; Frederick E. Faverty, Matthew Arnold, the Ethnologist, Evanston, Illinois, 1951 and Klaus Dockhorn, op.cit. A discussion of Müller's nationalism is given in Johannes H. Voigt, Max Müller, the Man and his Ideas, Calcutta, 1967, p. 52ff. For Müller's pro-Prussian stand up to and including the Franco-Prussian war see Müller I, p. 291ff. (Schleswig-Holstein) p. 317ff. (Austro-Prussian war), pp. 376-423 passim (Franco-Prussian war) and, for example, his 'A German Plea for Germany', The Times 29th February, 1864, p. 5.

nearly been destroyed. Bunsen's religious ethnocentrism had almost been transformed into a physical racism in the Turanian - 'Aryan' opposition. But unlike Lepsius, Müller was always much more prepared to explicitly invoke the fundamental spiritual and egalitarian framework of universal history, even if he also tried to do this in a 'scientific' way. However factual it seemed, his linguistic work always included some reference to the special nature of man, the unity and continuity of linguistic types and the similarity of human potential.

During the 1860's others - who used Müller's as well as Renan's work - did not maintain this precarious balance. Émile Burnouf, the nephew of the great Eugène Burnouf, published a series of articles in the Revue des deux Mondes between 1864-69 with Müller's title 'Science des Religions'. Here he developed an outright physical interpretation of the growth of religion in history, using the work of current linguistics. The true, metaphysical doctrine of Christianity was an Aryan product, developing without a break from the Veda. The Semites, physically distinct from the Aryans, were incapable of metaphysical thought, just as their language was incapable of mythology. The Jewish Bible had in fact nothing to do with the doctrines of Jesus, who had been a member of a tiny Aryan group of Galileans. All other peoples have imported elements of the original Aryan truth to create what metaphysical foundations their religions might have. Otherwise they remained at the level

of the most primitive spirit worship. Émile Burnouf was not alone. In 1867 the Reverend Dunbar Heath argued very similarly in the Journal of the Anthropological Society of London that Christ and especially Saint Paul preached doctrines sympathetic only to Aryans. One of Bunsen's sons, Ernst, was busy from the 1860's producing works in a similar vein, distinguished only by a confusion of linguistic-physical definitions approaching total incoherence.<sup>82</sup>

Müller would completely repudiate Burnouf's 'Science of Religions' when it was published in book form:

'... such statements ... take away the breath of a mere man of letters. But are [they] supported by the authority of any scholars? ... Science wants no partisans ...'<sup>83</sup>

The reaction was quite consistent with Müller's own 'Science of Religion', even as it was put forward in the extreme 'scientific' form of 1870. For the same work that structured three separate types of religion also defined the universality of the religious instinct.

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82. Émile Burnouf's articles were published in book form as La Science des Religions, Paris, 1872; cf. Dunbar J. Heath, 'On the great Race-Elements in Christianity', Journal of the Anthropological Society of London, 1867, pp. xix-xxxii, Ernst von Bunsen, Die Einheit der Religionen in Zusammenhange mit den Völkerwanderungen der Urzeit und der Geheimlehre, Berlin, 1870 and later works in the same vein: Biblische Gleichzeitigkeiten ..., Berlin, 1875, Die Überlieferung. Ihre Entstehung und Entwicklung, 2 vols, Leipzig, 1889.

83. Müller, (personally revised edition of) Introduction to the Science of Religion, London, 1873, pp. 36-7.

And in the end the results of Müller's discussion of the three separate types of religion turned out to be surprisingly similar. He did not follow Bunsen in cutting Chinese religion entirely out of consideration. On the contrary, using Edkins' evaluation of Chinese as the centre of North and South Turanian, he based his whole analysis of Turanian religion on Chinese. Having adopted language as a 'scientific' basis for religious classification, he now applied the linguistic method of comparative mythology to determine the characteristics of united Turanian, Semitic and 'Aryan' religion. The result - the common Turanian sky spirit, the common Semitic moral Lord of the Heavens, the common 'Aryan' bright god of the sky - allowed very little stress on fundamental differences between the three groups.<sup>84</sup> The veneration for nature and for a sky god, which Müller originally found in the Vedic 'Aryans' and then throughout the 'Aryan' group and underlying their mythology, would soon be generalized by him into a theory of the origin of all the religions of humanity.

Thus, by about 1870, both Lepsius and Müller had ostensibly replaced the religious foundations of Bunsen's universal history with a purely factual orientation. It was under this guise that Hamitic, Turanian and 'Aryan' reappeared, complete with extensions and readjustments. However the theory of universal history

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84. Müller, Lectures on the Science of Religion (New York, 1872 edition), see pp. 68-99.

continued to underlie the two men's work: its ambiguities and evaluations were perpetuated by the new 'scientific' versions of linguistic-based classifications, in the main without reference to the religious framework which had originally given them birth. Hamitic, Turanian and 'Aryan' were asserted on a number of levels and sometimes reached the point of physical identification. That is to say, these two disciples overtipped Bunsen's delicate balance between the factual and the spiritual and let loose the inherent Eurocentrism of the original theory in its crudest form.

In the 1860's this dangerous level of physical argument was however a minor part of Lepsius' and Müller's concerns. It appeared on those occasions when it was a matter of preserving their most highly-prized groups' place in the universal-historical order. Of itself, the two men's work was entirely unpolitical in intent: predominantly scholarly, whether linguistic or historical. It could feed internal European racism only at second hand, or, in the case of anti-Semitism, only by complete misapplication. Yet European racism directed externally, especially in dealings with black Africa or southern India, was perhaps more consciously involved. Lepsius' Hamitic theory, in particular, owed a great deal to the long history of European downgrading of black Africa. Nevertheless, even if it was more openly avowed by Müller than by Lepsius, the religious framework of universal history remained part of both men's private and public

belief during this crucial period of 'scientific' elaboration of the 1860's. In theory for both, but especially for Müller, the ultimately spiritual basis of universal history defused any potential antagonisms and united all men.

The decade of the 1870's would pose a fundamental challenge to Bunsen's religious framework such that it would be rejected completely from the acceptable concerns of scholarship. If universal history survived the onslaught of the new 'materialism' at all, it could only do so on a completely factual level. That is to say, it would produce an absolutely factual Eurocentric analysis of human history, in most cases, including the physical dimension. Lepsius and Müller had produced Hamitic, Turanian and 'Aryan' in an earlier, quite different intellectual atmosphere, which allowed for the supernatural element. Both would have to respond to the full-scale destruction of the remnants of the spiritual philosophy of universal history. Lepsius would choose to continue, indeed to extend the Hamitic theory and its racist implications in the new atmosphere of the next decade. His ostensibly 'scholarly' attitude would be perpetuated down to the 1950's. The fate of Müller's Turanian and 'Aryan' concepts would be more complex, not the least because, unlike Hamitic, they and their potential uses were directly concerned with Europe itself. Unlike Lepsius, Müller would be prepared to reject the coming physical and political misuses of his linguistic-based



concepts, and to do so openly, through a sense of continuity and loyalty to the original linguistic universal history expounded by Bunsen.

## CHAPTER V

THE END OF UNIVERSAL HISTORY 1870 - 1880's

The decade in which Lepsius and Müller re-structured and expanded their Hamitic, Turanian and 'Aryan' theories was also the decade during which a great change in the dominant mode of European thought was taking place. Müller had already understood that a new 'materialism' had raised its head, entirely antipathetic to the idealist philosophical foundations he shared with Bunsen; and he hoped to combat it with a 'scientific' restatement of Bunsen's spiritual rationalism. In 1861 he was probably guilty of underestimating the opposition. A vast intellectual shift was going on, of which Darwin's evolutionary theory was only one outstanding symptom. It involved a rejection of all supernatural perspectives on man and the world, and their replacement by a confident scientifically oriented materialism crossed with a strong current of social evolutionary thought. By the 1870's the whole of Bunsen's subject matter - language, antiquity, prehistory, culture, religion - was being overtaken by these two interrelated intellectual currents, all at the same time.<sup>1</sup>

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1. It is difficult to find a single adequate term to cover the changed intellectual trend of the 1860's, 1870's and 1880's. J.W. Burrow, whose Evolution and Society, London, 1974, deals with certain aspects of this change, uses the term 'evolutionary social theory' most often, and occasionally 'evolutionary positivism'. In the light of Max Müller's very conscious identification of a new 'materialism', rather than evolutionary thought itself, as the crux of the change, it seems more legitimate to mention both currents individually with the understanding that they were interrelated, but not

During the 1860's Hensleigh Wedgwood and Frederick Farrar and the first great English cultural anthropologist Edward B. Tylor all inexorably continued to maintain the materialistic origins of language. They pointed their arguments against Müller's 'scientific' idealism in particular, and formed the background to Darwin's own conclusion in The Descent of Man:

'... I cannot doubt that language owes its origin to the imitation and modification, aided by signs and gestures, of various natural sounds, the voices of other animals, and man's own instinctive cries... we shall see that primeval man, or rather some early progenitor of man, probably used his voice largely as does one of the gibbon-apes at the present day...' <sup>2</sup>

The materialist origins of language and another product of the new scientific materialism, the emergence of an independent, specialized field of physical anthropology, would have great implications for the meaning of linguistic classification. Schleicher spelled them out

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necessarily equivalent. This general intellectual change clearly fits in with the literary modes of 'realism' and especially 'naturalism'.

2. Charles Darwin, The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex, London, 2 vols, 1871, vol. I, p. 56 and see the whole section on language pp. 53-62. The second and subsequent editions included footnotes and additional references specifically criticizing arguments from Max Müller: see the second edition, London, 1889, pp. 84-92, especially pp. 88-9. For E.B. Tylor's view on the origin of language see his review of Müller's Science of Language, inter alia, in the Quarterly Review, vol. 119, 1866, pp. 394-435 and his 'On the Origin of Language' in the Fortnightly Review, IV, 1866, pp. 544-559. See also Hensleigh Wedgwood, A Dictionary of English Etymology, (Introduction on the Origin of Language), first published 1857, 3rd edition, London, 1878 and Frederick W. Farrar, The Origin of Language, London, 1866 and Chapters on Language, London, 1865.

in 1865 when he admitted that different linguistic forms were ultimately secondary phenomena to the development of different physical configurations of man. This marked the end of Bunsen's and early Nineteenth century scholars' 'ethnological philology'. The basis of that ethnology had been the conviction of the special, deep relationship between a language and those who spoke it. The sophisticated classifications of the 'science of language' had dominated those of early physical anthropology. Now, two possible routes were open to linguistics and physical anthropology. They could part company entirely for all practical purposes: as Schleicher suggested, in historical times language had little correlation with identifiable physical groupings. It was perhaps a more stable and continuous phenomenon, associated with the life of man in society. On the other hand, linguistics and physical anthropology could continue to combine, with the dominant element now the latter. Language and with it culture would then be a reflection of physical differentiation.<sup>3</sup>

Perhaps the clearest example of this second alternative was the 'ethnographical linguistics' of the Austrian ethnologist-cum-linguist Friedrich Müller. In its scope his Grundriss der Sprachwissenschaft emulated the Mithridates of a much earlier age. He began with the assumption that man was one unified species, but that

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3. See August Schleicher, Über die Bedeutung der Sprache für die Naturgeschichte des Menschen, and on the rise of physical anthropology T.K. Penniman, A Hundred Years of Anthropology, London, 3rd edition, 1965, p. 83ff.

linguistic research could prove nothing as to this question, given, as Pott had pointed out, the irreducible diversity of forms at the earliest period in which we have any knowledge of languages. Müller worked in close collaboration with Ernst Haeckel, the great apostle of Darwinism in physical anthropology, and was much taken with the theory of evolution and the law of the survival of the fittest. He explained by them the evolution of the manifold types of the human species, and allowed their reduction into two basic types definable by hair type: the woolly and the smooth-haired races. The process of physical evolution of types of man had been pre-linguistic: language was a corollary of physical differentiation. Müller agreed that language had developed along the well-worn path from original monosyllabism to inflection. However, linguistic form too was a secondary phenomenon, dependent on physical grouping.

'Ethnographical linguistics' did not necessarily affect well-established linguistic groups. It simply emphasized their physical as well as, or more than, their linguistic relationship. The old, vague correlation between 'white' or 'Caucasian' peoples and the Semitic and Indo-European language families was consolidated by him into a distinct physical-linguistic 'Mediterranean peoples' grouping. Yet in the less linguistically-secure cases - Hamitic for example - the ethnological element could dictate the linguistic conclusion. Thus, with Hamitic defined as 'Mediterranean', Müller relegated

Hottentot and Hausa to entirely different physical - and thereby also linguistic - groups.<sup>4</sup>

The new emphasis on physical anthropology could nevertheless affect even the most accepted linguistic classification. If Müller did not change the Indo-European grouping as a whole, others certainly did. In the mid-1860's the French Société d'Anthropologie staged major discussions on the definition of 'Aryan' which degenerated into a confrontation between linguistic and physical meanings of the term. The pro-anthropologists claimed, in the words of the Belgian Omalius d'Halloy, that

'Ceux qui ont décrit... les anciens Ariens, les ont représentés comme une race aux yeux bleus et aux cheveux blonds, à peau blanche. C'est dans la race arienne que l'on est habitué à trouver le véritable type de la race blonde: qui dit Arien, dit blond.'

Pierre Broca, the famous anthropologist of the Celtic peoples, added dolichocephaly to this definition. The physical description certainly did not tally with the traditional linguistic concept of 'Aryan' as propounded by Max Müller. Centered as it was in the ancient East,

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4. On Friedrich Müller (no relation to Friedrich Max Müller) see the entry in the Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie, vol. 52, Nachträge, 1906 pp. 500-503 and the Österreichisches Biographisches Lexikon, vol. VI, pp. 414-5. See his Grundriss der Sprachwissenschaft, 4 vols, 1876-1888 especially the lengthy Einleitung to vol. I which set forth his theory of physical and linguistic grouping, especially pp. 71-98; and several articles in the Mittheilungen der anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien: 'Über die Bedeutung der Sprache für die Naturgeschichte des Menschen' (1870-71, pp. 111-117), 'Über die Verschiedenheit des Menschen als Rassen - und Volks-Individuum' (1870-71, pp. 247-267), 'Einheit oder Mehrheit des Ursprungs der menschlichen Sprachen' (1873, pp. 181-184).

linguistic 'Aryan' obviously included dark- and light-haired groups, dolichocephals and brachycephals. Broca and the anthropologists tended to dismiss the problems of the linguistic hypothesis and advance the idea of European origins for the physically-defined 'Aryans': an idea which tied in with certain suggestions made by Robert Latham on commonsense grounds ever since 1851. The idea was convincing enough for Theodor Benfey, in his Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft, to question the traditional linguistic-based view of Asiatic origins for 'Aryan'.<sup>5</sup> With this suggestion linguistic and physical assumptions about 'Aryan' were becoming intertwined in a most confusing way.

The most unquestioned applications of 'ethnographical linguistics' occurred in problem areas for linguistics - one of the outstanding examples being African languages. Thus Bleek, who was faced with the vast problems of south and (often unknown) west African

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5. See the 'Discussion sur les origines Indo-Européennes' in the Bulletin de la Société d'Anthropologie, V, 1864, pp. 187-383, quotation from p. 277, and see further Omalius d'Halloy's article 'Sur la prétendue origine asiatique des Européens' in the same journal, vol. VI, 1865, pp. 237-60. R.G. Latham's view on the probable European origin of the Europeans at least was suggested first in his edition of The Germania of Tacitus..., London, 1851, Epilegomena, see pp. cxlii-cxliii, and reappeared consistently and ever more firmly in his work from that time on: see Man and his Migrations, London, 1852, p. 188 ff., Elements of Comparative Philology, 1862, p. xxiii, and p. 689ff. The argument was based on a questioning of the Indo-European nature of the Indo-Iranian group, and an emphasis on the sheer number of Indo-European languages in Europe rather than in Asia. Benfey's support was expressed in his Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft, pp. 597-600.

languages, solved them with ethnology. Bleek was much influenced by August Schleicher's deference to physical evolution and felt strongly the effect of Darwinian thought through his cousin, Haeckel. When he defined the Bantu group linguistically, he also defined them physically as African Negro. Then he proceeded to link them linguistically with their physical brothers, the Negroes of the West coast, and on the same physical basis with the (language of the) Malay, Polynesian and Papuan natives.<sup>6</sup>

In the case of relatively sophisticated Semitic and Indo-European linguistics physical information was rarely imposed in this simplistic way. Professional linguistics was affected by the mood of scientific materialism in another way. It chose Schleicher's path of separation and increased concentration on its own particular province, without regard for wider cultural or physical questions. The 1860's saw the birth of another generation of linguists heralded by the 'commonsense' linguists Michel Bréal and the first outstanding American, William Dwight Whitney. Both men had been trained by the mid-century German Indo-Europeanist school, but both took a somewhat different approach to language and its growth. They emphasized the real, individual factors in language. There

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6. See Bleek's Preface to part I of his Comparative Grammar; also, in general, his Über den Ursprung der Sprache, which, although actually written in 1853, was brought up to date with evolutionary perspectives by a new introduction from the author, and a powerful physical argument in a preface by the editor of the work, Bleek's cousin Ernst Haeckel, when it finally appeared in 1868.



was no question of an organically ordained path of structural development, and certainly not of supernatural origins. Language was a purely human affair, its different 'families' and types simply historical products. Whitney, who was prepared to accept the evolutionary theory and the materialist origins of language without fuss, directed most of his discussion on such general questions against Max Müller:

'Whether, among the powers that contribute to the production of language, there is one, or more than one, not belonging in any degree to a single animal below man, is a point which must be left to the psychologist to decide. It may fairly be claimed, however, that none such has yet been demonstrated; and also, that none such is necessary: a simple difference of degree ... is amply sufficient.... It is the height of injustice to maintain that there is not an approach, and a very marked approach, made by some of the lower animals to the capacity of language... But, as an actual fact, their capacity, though rising thus far, stops short... There is a long interval, incapable of being crossed by the lower animals, between their endowments and ours; and he is a coward who, out of fear for the preservation of man's supremacy, attempts to stretch it out, or to set up barriers upon it....  
 ... What we have to guard especially against is the tendency to look upon language-making as a task in which men engage, to which they direct their attention, which absorbs a part of their nervous energy... Language-making is a mere incident of social life and of cultural growth; its every act is suggested or called forth by an occasion which is by comparison the engrossing thing, to which the nomenclative act is wholly subordinate....'

Following this general line, the new group of linguists which would emerge in the mid-1870's would focus their interest on determining the detailed mechanics of especially phonetic growth and change in human society: in the process they would make a complete break with the

older, more philosophical and organic approach to language.<sup>7</sup>

At the same time that the philosophy of language and the practise of linguistics was changing, scientific materialism revolutionized the understanding of prehistoric and early historic times. The key was a decided shift of emphasis from reliance on Biblical and other secondary textual sources to direct and original material revealed by the new techniques of archaeology. Historical archaeology had begun in Mesopotamia in the 1840's out of sheer necessity, for there the suspected ancient monuments were simply not accessible on the surface as they so spectacularly were in Egypt. By the late 1860's the Assyro-Babylonian culture revealed by archaeology had won the fight for recognition: its passage had certainly been assisted by the fact that it had been mentioned in the traditional sources as well. But archaeology and Assyriology indicated the existence of another, earlier culture, unknown to any of the traditional sources: the Sumerians. Though large-scale monumental proof of the Sumerian culture was not

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7. Quotation from William Dwight Whitney's The Life and Growth of Language, London, 1875, pp. 305-7. On Whitney (1827-1894) see the two articles in Sebeok, Portraits of Linguists, I, pp. 399-439; and further by Whitney, Language and its Study, edited R. Morris, London, 1876. On Bréal (1832-1915) see Antoine Meillet, Linguistique Historique et Linguistique Générale, II, Paris, 1938, the essay 'Michel Bréal et la grammaire comparée au Collège de France', pp. 212-227: a good example of Bréal's general approach to language can be found in 'Le Langage et les Nationalités', Revue des deux mondes, 1. Décembre, 1891, pp. 615-639, also in Mélanges de Mythologie et de linguistique, Paris, 1877. We discuss the change in direction of linguistics further below.

discovered until the 1880's, A.H. Layard had dug up bilingual texts and syllabaries, and the leaders in 'Akkadian' decipherment had at first suspected and then confirmed the non-Semitic (often termed 'Skythic') nature of the unknown culture's language. From 1870 the tempo of work on Sumerian increased dramatically, with transliteration and decipherment using the 'Akkadian' syllabaries. Archibald Sayce - a versatile linguist and orientalist who was soon to become Max Müller's deputy at Oxford - edited the first Sumerian text in 1871. A flood of further work appeared from Jules Oppert and from François Lenormant - both general orientalists and linguists - in this decade. By about 1880 this whole new culture, unsuspected and unaccounted for by the traditional scheme of universal history, had been convincingly demonstrated by scientific materialism, that is, archaeology and Assyriology.<sup>8</sup>

The same shift of source material occurred with

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8. For a general account of Sumeriology see Pallis, op.cit., Chapter III, especially p. 175ff. and the works from François Lenormant (1837-1883, the son of Charles Lenormant who had accompanied Champollion to Egypt and had taken over the Chair in 1848), Jules Oppert (1825-1905), and Archibald Henry Sayce (1845-1933) cited therein. On Lenormant see entry in Dawson and Uphill, op.cit., and entry in L.G. Vapereau, Dictionnaire Universel des Contemporains, Paris 1880, Vol.II, p. 1040. On Oppert see entry in Dawson and Uphill, op.cit., and entry in Anton Bettelheim, u.a., Biographisches Jahrbuch und Deutsches Nekrolog 18 vols, Berlin, 1897-1917, Vol.X, pp. 86-93. On Sayce see entry in Dictionary of National Biography 1931-1940, London, 1949, pp. 786-788. The Sumerian problem is discussed further below.

regard to ancient Egypt, through Auguste Mariette's vast digs during the 1860's and 1870's. Mariette had been installed as the Director of a newly-created Egyptian Antiquities Service in 1858 as part of French financial interests in the country, though, he was supposedly independent and working for the Egyptian government. He was able to work on a scale unequalled since that time: 37 digs in all stretching the whole length of Egypt and employing thousands of workmen. Through Mariette, de Rougé's booming French school of Egyptology had privileged open access to the digs themselves and the new material they revealed. The results were sufficient to occupy an army of scholars and to encourage far greater specialization and deeper knowledge than had been possible in the early days of the science.<sup>9</sup>

Contemporaneously with the publication of the Darwinian theory of evolution, archaeologists and geologists in Britain and France were arguing all over again the existence and significance of flint tools found in the same geological strata as the bones of extinct animals. On much the same evidence the idea of extreme antiquity for man had been put forward earlier in the century, but had been blocked, ignored or explained away, even by geologists, still striving to harmonize with Biblical notions, at least of human chronology. By 1860,

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9. On Mariette and Egyptian archaeology see references given above, Chapter IV, note 16 and the general accounts given in Bratton, *op.cit.*, pp. 76-80, Greener, *op.cit.*, pp. 176-202, and James Baikie, A Century of Excavation in the Land of the Pharaohs, London, 1926?, pp. 18-34.

when the evidence was brought forward again, a serious debate on human fossils, human antiquity and the nature of prehistoric human society could ensue: scientific materialism was on the rise. Earlier in the century Christian Jürgensen Thomsen and J.J.A. Worsaae had worked out a materially-defined 'Three Ages' system to order the remnants of the Danish pre-Christian period. Worsaae helped to spread the definition of a 'stone', 'bronze' and 'iron' age by his travels and publications; the system was therefore at hand to be applied and modified when the debate on prehistoric remains re-emerged. The 1860's established prehistoric archaeology, with the Ages system, as a recognized science: the first international conference on the subject was held in 1867. Prehistorians gradually went on to grapple with more complex issues - the relationship between geological epochs and materialistically-defined ages for example. On this there was much argument, but a general disdain for traditional Biblical chronology; thus the hypothetical dates advanced for the appearance of man in Europe by Gabriel de Mortillet (230,000-240,000 B.C.), or the more sober computations of the Swiss 'Stone Age' on a geological basis (5-7,000 B.C.).<sup>10</sup>

It was only a matter of time until historic and prehistoric archaeology linked up. That this happened first in the case of Egypt was probably due to the better

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10. See Glyn Daniel, 150 Years of Archaeology, 2nd edition, London, 1975 especially Chapter 3, and his The Idea of Prehistory, London, 1962.

knowledge of this ancient culture than of those of Mesopotamia, and the clear nature of its unbroken history. In 1867, that eventful year for prehistoric archaeology in Europe, a brief note from a French prehistorian in Egypt, Adrien Arcelin, announced the discovery of flints akin to those of the European 'Stone Age'. The evidence was discussed at the International Conference of that year. The real impact, however, came with the publication of Arcelin's letters and memoirs, coinciding with the announcement of further 'Stone Age' finds in Egypt by the two friends Théodore Ernest Hamy and François Lenormant (the Sumeriologist of the 1870's), toward the end of 1869. Both men had previously shown great interest in European prehistory and must have known the resistance which might arise against the Egyptian discoveries. They therefore made their views as public as possible, and took care that an illustrious company of scholars from several nations, present in Egypt for the opening of the French-funded Suez Canal, witnessed their finds. Lepsius, who was part of the official German representation on the occasion, took the opportunity of inspecting the sites and objects concerned. The case for the reality of an Egyptian 'Stone Age' was so tirelessly canvassed by Lenormant and Hamy that within a year French scientific journals at all well-inclined toward the idea of prehistory had accepted it.<sup>11</sup>

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11. Jacques de Morgan, whose digs at the end of the century confirmed the existence of Egyptian prehistory, gave an account of the rather premature arguments of 1867 ff. in his *La Préhistoire Orientale*, I, Paris, 1925, see especially pp. XXII-XXV. See Lenormant's

Originally the Three Ages had not necessarily been conceived as an evolutionary progression, but the system quickly took on these overtones. A new materially-based picture of man struggling out of 'Stone Age' barbarity toward higher and higher civilization, measured in metallic and technological terms, was the result. By the mid-1860's another new discipline, cultural anthropology, had emerged and would gain great momentum in the 1870's. It was dominated by the belief

'... that one definite system can be found according to which all culture has developed, that there is one type of evolution from a primitive form to the highest civilization which is applicable to the whole of mankind, that notwithstanding many variations caused by local and historical conditions, the general type of evolution is the same everywhere'.

Thus, for example, L.H. Morgan's division of human stages of development into three - Savagery, Barbarism, Civilization - each defined materially, economically and culturally. Such stages applied universally, regardless of the specific epoch in which any one culture was actually situated, and regardless of the idealistic notions of man in antiquity taken from written sources - the Bible, the Veda, Herodotus or Tacitus. The cultural anthropologists relied on tangible source material for a description of life in Europe and Asia in antiquity; if necessary it could be supplemented by observation of the primitive

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contemporary Notes sur un Voyage en Egypte, Paris, 1870 (for example the article 'Découverte de restes de l'âge de pierre en Égypte...') and Hamy's reports to the Société d'Anthropologie, 'L'Égypte quaternaire et l'ancienneté de l'homme', Bulletin, 1869, pp. 711-719, 'Sur l'Égypte préhistorique', Bulletin, 1870, pp. 15-22.

'Stone' and 'Bronze Age' cultures of the present day.<sup>12</sup>

Cultural anthropology developed another attack on the philosophy of universal history: a materialistic definition of religion. Religion and myth were found, by observation, to be interrelated components of all human societies and to function integrally within the ambit of those societies. There was no demonstrable lofty, divinely-implanted religious consciousness; religion, like culture, developed according to human needs from the most basic origins. Thus as early as 1870 Sir John Lubbock put together an evolutionary sequence beginning from primitive atheism, progressing through Fetishism, Totemism, Shamanism, Anthropomorphism, and finally ending with ethical Monotheism.<sup>13</sup> No culture and no religion was exempt from the materialistic evolutionary model. When E.B. Tylor developed his theory of the 'animistic' origins of all religions - from observation

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12. For the background and development of cultural anthropology see Robert H. Lowie, The History of Ethnological Theory, New York, 1937; Burrow, op.cit.; Idus L. Murphree, 'The Evolutionary Anthropologists: the Progress of Mankind', Proceedings of the American Philological Society, vol. 105, no.3, 1961, pp. 265-300; Erwin A. Ackerknecht, 'On the Comparative Method in Anthropology' in R.F. Spencer (ed.), Method and Perspective in Anthropology, Minneapolis, 1954, pp. 117-125. The quotation is taken from one of the greatest Twentieth Century Anthropologists, Franz Boas, 'The History of Anthropology', Science, vol. 21, October, 1904, p. 516. The division of history comes from Morgan's Ancient Society, London, 1877.
13. On the definition and theories of primitive religions see W. Schmidt, The Origin and Growth of Religion. Facts and Theories, (trans. H.J. Rose) New York, 1972, Chapters 5,6,9 and p. 31ff. and Sharpe, op.cit., p. 32ff. and p. 72ff. Lubbock's synthesis is described in ibid., p. 52 and Schmidt, op.cit., p. 58.



of the religion of contemporary 'savages' - he proceeded to find remnants, or 'survivals', of primitive animism in Vedic practices as well as Chinese, ancient Greek as well as Fijian, Germanic as well as American, Oceanic and African, stretching right down to Nineteenth century European folklore.<sup>14</sup>

Altogether, the wave of scientific materialism and social evolutionary thought which swept over Europe during the 1860's, which created new sciences and redirected older ones, would, by the next decade, throw out the old philosophy of universal history. The old, traditional sources were replaced; man, language, religion and culture all lost the spiritual aspect. The link with the divine which Bunsen had conceived so literally and confidently only a few years before was decisively cut off on all levels except perhaps one: private belief. Scholarship and universal history had parted company. Here would be the great contradiction in which both Lepsius and Müller were caught. Hamitic, Turanian and 'Aryan' were concepts from the spiritual context of universal history, concepts which they had been instrumental in making so 'scientific' during the 1850's and 1860's that their 'scientific' form could survive the new

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14. On Tylor in general see Robert Ranulph Marett, Tylor, London, 1936, Burrow, op.cit., Chapter 7 and Lowie, op.cit., chapter VII. 'Animism', the theory of a universal primitive mentality which endowed all the phenomena of nature with a vibrant personal life, or spirit, thus forming the origin of all religion and mythology, was first put forward in Tylor's article 'The Religion of Savages', Fortnightly Review, vol. VI, 1866, pp. 71-86 and emerged fully in his Primitive Culture, 2 vols, London, 1871, see vol. I, chapters III and IV.

materialism in major outlines. These concepts would be continued by others regardless of their original, now outdated, context. They would assume a materialistic definition in themselves. The result would be to set loose all the potential for Eurocentrism and racism which Bunsen's theory had balanced with the spiritual element.

In the hands of Lepsius and Bleek, the Hamitic theory had already in the 1860's come very close to supporting the long-standing European assumption of superiority over black Africa, with the assertion that the great culture-builders of Africa were linked, even physically, with the superior European culture-builders, Semites and Japhetites. Scientific materialism would intensify this trend. Thus Franz Pruner, one of the leading lights in the French Société d'Anthropologie in the 1860's, had already defined the capacities of the Negroes in 1847:

'Seit undenklichen Zeiten sind die Negervölker, obgleich in Berührung mit den gebildetsten Nationen des Erdballes, in einem so ziemlich stationären Zustande verblieben; sie haben immer eine sehr untergeordnete Rolle auf dem Welttheater gespielt; nie haben sie eine Geschichte gehabt - ein Besitz, dessen sich doch jedes Volk, welches zu einem höheren Geschicke berufen, selbst in seiner Kindheit rühmt...'

In 1861 Pruner described, in contrast, how the Hamitic race

'...a joué anciennement en Afrique... un rôle analogue à celui que la race arienne devait plus tard jouer sur un champ plus vaste'.<sup>15</sup>

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15. First quotation from Franz Pruner, 'Der Neger', Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft, I, 1847, pp. 129-136, p. 135; second quotation from his 'Recherches sur l'origine de l'ancienne race égyptienne', Mémoires de la Société d'Anthropologie, 1861, pp. 399-433, p. 432, note 2.

Müller's Turanian and 'Aryan' had come rather less close to physical identifications; he had avoided them generally for Europe, although they had been stressed for ancient India, Müller's main concern. As these concepts were highly relevant for Europe itself, their potential for use and abuse with their new materialistic identifications was much more complex, though not more common than occurred with Hamitic. Instead of straightforward white-black confrontations, political and national confrontations formed their background. Thus in the 1860's the bitterly nationalistic Pole, Duchinski, refused the contemporary Russian rulers of his native Kiev the status of Aryans, damning them as semi-barbarian Turanians instead:

'... chez les peuples appelés Aryâs-Européens prédominent les penchants, les prédispositions physiologico-psychologiques sédentaires, agricoles... tandis que chez les Tourans prédominent les penchants nomades, se manifestant tantôt dans les faits comme chez les Nègres et les Peaux-Rouges, tantôt dans les idées, dans la législation, dans les règles de la formation des États et de garantie de la stabilité, comme chez les Chinois et les Moscovites'.

And just after the Franco-Prussian war, the anthropologist Armande de Quatrefages de Bréau envisaged the German invasion of France and their treatment of Paris as the work of pre-Aryan barbaric Finns, a race to which he claimed the Prussians actually belonged.<sup>16</sup>

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16. Quotation from Franciszek H. Duchinski, Peuples Aryâs et Tourans, Agriculteurs et Nomades, Paris, 1864, p. XXX and see Jean-Louis Armand de Quatrefages de Bréau, The Prussian Race, Ethnographically Considered, London, 1872.

For neither Lepsius nor Müller was scientific materialism and the wave of social evolutionary thought a welcome or comfortable experience, dominating as it did the last decades of their lives and careers, begun in a vastly different intellectual climate. Both were quite conscious of the difference between their own views and those currently circulating, both in general, and specifically with regard to their linguistic classifications. Both would react against scientific materialism; but in different degrees. Lepsius would consciously stand against some aspects of materialistic and evolutionary thought, but his final version of the Hamitic theory would reveal his accommodation to the background of racist beliefs from which it originally came, and which it ideologically justified. Müller, faced with a refutation of his whole philosophy of language and religion, and the confusions of political use of materially-defined classifications, would try to fight the new intellectual climate on all levels. He would try to return to the idealist philosophy of the past and to the 'scientific' idealistic definitions of Turanian and 'Aryan' of the 1860's.

Lepsius' response to the new scientific materialism and evolutionary thought came very quickly. But it was a limited reaction to a specific challenge - the incursion of the 'Stone Age' into his beloved ancient Egypt. His 'Über die Annahme eines sogenannten prähistorischen Steinalters in Aegypten' emphatically

rejected the so-called 'Stone Age' flint implements found by Arcelin, Hamy and Lenormant. They were the result of natural processes, environmental forces which cracked rocks and split off at random those 'flints' now found strewn about. For the majority of tendered examples there was no proof of human craftsmanship. Excavations too had revealed nothing identifiably prehistoric. Even if the crude objects were granted a human origin, there was no reason to transpose a 'Stone Age' to vast prehistoric times, since the Egyptian continued the use of stone throughout historical times. In sum, Lepsius insisted throughout that there was simply no proof sufficient to establish the existence of an Egyptian 'Stone Age'. Egyptology generally followed the main lines of Lepsius' argument. Mariette, at meetings on the issue at the Institut Égyptien, used the argument of the continuing manufacture of stone flints in the country down to the present day to disprove the 'pre-historic' tag. François Chabas devoted a major work to the issue, drawing heavily on Lepsius' views: Études sur l'antiquité historique d'après les sources égyptiennes (1872).<sup>17</sup>

Lepsius' attack, which seemed to centre on the reliability of the tendered evidence and the possibility

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17. See Lepsius, 'Über die Annahme eines sogenannten prähistorischen Steinalters in Aegypten', Zeitschrift für aegyptische Sprache und Alterthumskunde, 1870, pp. 89-97 and pp. 113-121 and François-Joseph Chabas, Études sur l'antiquité historique d'après les sources égyptiennes et les monuments réputés préhistoriques, Paris, 1872.

of alternate explanations, hit a weak spot in the pre-historians' argument. In the 1870's it was true that only sporadic discoveries, difficult to date or characterize, would be made. The evidence was certainly not overwhelmingly convincing. Yet the prehistorians, taken aback by the vehemence of Egyptological resistance, sensed that some other factor was operating, something quite different from a purely objective scientific scepticism. Lenormant concluded that Egyptologists, who had over some time established the reputation of Egypt as the first highpoint on the 'voie de la civilisation' which led inexorably to modern Europe, felt threatened by a prehistoric basis akin to the life of the lowest modern savages:

'C'est pour moi un véritable sujet d'étonnement que la passion que les égyptologues les plus distingués comme M. Lepsius, M. Mariette et M. Chabas, mettent à ne vouloir pas admettre que l'Égypte ait eu son âge de pierre; c'est pour eux comme une question d'amour-propre national égyptien'.<sup>18</sup>

Lenormant's comment rings true, though his professed incredulity does not. Lepsius, at least, was aware that the whole structure of history and prehistory based on written sources and universal history upheld the unique importance of ancient Egypt, its intrinsic and

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18. François Lenormant, Les Premières Civilisations, 2 vols, Paris, 1874, vol I, p. 166, note (1). Glyn Daniel, 150 Years of Archaeology..., notes that there was a general reluctance to subject the Near and Middle East to prehistoric analysis, perhaps because it was so commonly agreed that it was from there that 'civilizing' invasions, for example, of Indo-Europeans, were supposed to have come to lift Europe out of its 'Stone Age': see pp. 118-9.

literal links with the leading cultures of humanity. Lepsius, at least, understood that to pose a 'Stone Age' for Egypt could be a preliminary step to breaking down not just Egypt's cultural importance and superiority, but that of the whole Noachian group. Lenormant did not understand that, if both Europe and Egypt were shown to have evolved from a primitive 'Stone Age' culture, or at least had experienced such a culture, it would be increasingly more difficult to uphold the innate superiority of the culture-bearers: the traditionally defined Indo-Europeans, Semites and Hamites. Where would they come from? Why had they too not experienced a 'Stone Age'? What could set them off intrinsically from other 'Stone Age' peoples? Lenormant himself was not a thorough-going social evolutionist and scientific materialist. His solution to these problems was to combine a certain amount of pre-historic theory with the old framework of universal history. For him, the Egyptian 'Stone Age', like that of other continents, had been the product of the aboriginal inhabitants of the earth - in this case, the Negroes. He still believed that Egyptian culture was a product of Hamitic invaders from the cradle of civilization in Asia. At this point Lenormant's ideas became chaotic. He stopped abruptly short at Darwin to reassert the divine origins of man, God's plan of progress in history, the unity of all mankind which had occurred in the Tertiary Age and the superior development of bronze and iron in the Asiatic Urheimat by the Noachian

groups.<sup>19</sup> Lepsius would have agreed with the equation between the Negroes and an Egyptian 'Stone Age' if he had been prepared to admit its existence. But, scholarly to the last, he never gave any indication of being attracted to a mixture of universal history and pre-historic theory. He preferred to reject the new prehistory outright as far as he could - that is to say, as far as Egypt was concerned, with some incidental reservations about Europe as well, on the grounds of lack of proof:

'Ich vermuthe daher für jetzt, dass die ganz älteste Species von Feuersteininstrumenten aus der Technik zu streichen und den Naturprodukten zuzurechnen ist, und dass namentlich alle die Steinfelder, auf denen man so geartete Instrumente in Masse aufgefunden hat, nicht Stationen, Fabriken, Ateliers einer Urtechnik, sondern natürliche Lager von zersprungenen Feuersteinen sind. Daher gehören die Terrains, die Arcelin oberhalb Silsilis und am Eingange zu Bab-el-meluk antraf... Ebenso.. von zahlreichen solchen Fabrikationsorten in Frankreich, Belgien und England....

Das sind alles Orte, die wie mir scheint noch einmal untersucht werden müssten, ausdrücklich von dem Gesichtspunkte aus, ob diese rohen Instrumente, die man erst gefertigt und dann liegen gelassen haben soll, nicht sämmtlich einfache Naturprodukte sind...'<sup>20</sup>

Lepsius left a great deal unsaid in the arguments of 1870. He did not put forward a clear statement of an

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19. For Lenormant's views see especially two articles in vol. I of his *Les Premières Civilizations*, 'L'homme fossile' and 'Les monuments de l'Époque Néolithique, l'Invention des Métaux...' and his multivolumed *Histoire Ancienne de l'Orient*, especially vol. I (9th edition, Paris, 1881), *Les Origines - les Races et les Langues*.
20. Lepsius, 'Über die Annahme...', pp. 116-7 and on the Negro ownership of any Egyptian 'Stone Age', *ibid.*, p.92.



alternative view of prehistory, although others - Chabas for example - would publically repeat the religious and universal framework of universal history.<sup>21</sup> Lepsius was interested specifically in rejecting the 'Stone Age' for Hamitic culture, and probably for Semitic and Japhetic as well: he was prepared to insist on the old structure of Asiatic origins for them, but for them alone:

'Unter allen Umständen aber müssen wir annehmen, dass die Verbreitung der drei grossen im höhern Sinne geschichtsbildenden Völkerfamilien, der Japhetischen..., der Semitischen und der Hamitischen Familie, von einem gemeinsamen Ursitze in Asien, zu einer Zeit ausgingen, in welcher daselbst bereits eine höhere Kultur erreicht war, als wir bei den Völkern der sogenannten Feuersteinzeit voraussetzen dürfen. Wenn sich daher eine solche in Aegypten nachweisen lässt, so muss sie noch älter sein, als die frühesten Auswanderungen dieser Stämme aus Asien...'<sup>22</sup>

Apart from his stated scepticism about the proof for a 'Stone Age' anywhere at all so far, the prehistory of the rest of humanity was left in deep gloom.

This very limited response to scientific materialism and social evolutionary thought can be referred to Lepsius' concentration of professional interest in (Hamitic) Egypt. There was simply no need for him to involve himself in a head-on clash with the new intellectual currents of the 1870's. As long as he could retain his interpretation of Egypt, he would not reject the scholarly views of other professionals outright.

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21. See Chabas, Études sur l'antiquité...., especially chapter VII.

22. Lepsius, 'Über die Annahme...', pp. 92-3.

This was the meaning of his stand of 1870. Lepsius found no reason to change his attitude in the years up until his death.

The by now dominant French 'philological' school of Egyptology stressed solely the Egyptian-Semitic linguistic link, not the Egyptian (Hamitic) - Semitic - Japhetic that Lepsius still preferred. Nevertheless they agreed that the Egyptians were Asiatic migrants.<sup>23</sup> Outside Egyptology the physical anthropologists were revising Lepsius' 'Caucasian' hypothesis, though without any newer source material than the wall-paintings and classical references. Lepsius' one-time supporters, the American polygenists Morton and Gliddon deserted him during the 1850's and 1860's, to assert that the Egyptians were neither Asiatic nor Negro but an individual north African type akin to the neighbouring ancient Libyan population, the fabled 'Atlantidae'. This idea was regularly discussed among anthropologists in the 1860's and reverberated into Egyptology by 1873, when Samuel Birch, formerly a supporter of Bunsen and his mixed 'Khamitic' hypothesis, pointed out that there was a

'... tradition de l'origine autochtone des Égyptiens. Il n'existe pas un seul renseignement historique ou mythologique d'une

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23. See de Rougé, Recherches sur les monuments..., pp. 1-4; Brugsch, Histoire d'Égypte..., Leipzig, 1859, pp. 1-2; Gaston Maspero, Histoire ancienne des peuples de l'Orient, 3<sup>e</sup> édition, Paris, 1884, p. 16ff. For Lepsius' continuing belief that the Egyptian language was not only related to Semitic but also to Indo-European see 'Über die Annahme...' p.92, and further discussion on the Nubische Grammatik, below.

émigration lointaine qui pourrait avoir transporté le germe d'une nouvelle population sur le sol de l'Égypte...

...Tout est donc favorable à l'idée que l'Égyptien est issue d'une race africaine qui s'est développée par des circonstances inconnues, pour atteindre au plus haut degré auquel soit jamais parvenue la civilisation dans l'ancien monde'.<sup>24</sup>

As little as the Egyptologists did the cultural anthropologists wish to suggest, by all these variations on Lepsius' Hamitic theory, that Egyptian or Hamitic in general was not fundamentally different from the rest of Africa on all levels. They did not oppose the Hamitic theory: they were simply debating its precise terms of reference. In fact the only important challenge to the Hamitic theory came from the 'Stone Age' debate, and in that context Lepsius was fortunate enough to be able to plausibly continue an attitude of scientific scepticism for the rest of his life. Although Arcelin and Lenormant, supported by Lubbock and others, continued their side of the argument, the whole question remained unanswerable until the excavations of Jacques de Morgan and Flinders Petrie at last provided tangible proof in the 1890's. So reasonable did the traditional Hamitic theory seem that, on the eve of the archaeological breakthrough, the

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24. Quoted from Samuel Birch, 'Sur l'origine des Égyptiens', Congrès International des Orientalistes, Paris, 1873, Compte-Rendu, Tome I-II, pp. 61-66, pp. 65-66; see also J.C. Nott, G.R. Gliddon, et.al., Indigenous Races of the Earth, Philadelphia, 1868, for example, p. 542 and Types of Mankind, Philadelphia, 8th edition, 1860, Chapter VII; the Libyan solution was also favoured by Franz Pruner in his 'Recherches sur l'origine de l'ancienne race égyptienne'.

leading Egyptologist Gaston Maspero could restate exactly Lepsius' argument against prehistory. In the 1890's Petrie himself did not interpret his archaeological finds accurately at first.<sup>25</sup> All the essentials of Lepsius' Hamitic theory thus passed relatively easily into the 1870's, and Lepsius was prepared to let this happen without regard for the logical problems posed to Hamitic by the destruction of the general theory of universal history. In 1880 he would produce his most concentrated discussion of Hamitic, with no sense of a return to the philosophical foundations of the past.

Yet the Hamitic theory still would not appear in the context in which it had most relevance - the culture of ancient Egypt itself. Sufficiently solid knowledge of Egyptian prehistory and the ancient language seemed no closer to Lepsius' grasp. As a self-conscious professional in the 1850's and 1860's Lepsius had scrupulously pointed out the lack of source material about Egyptian origins. He had compounded his difficulties by his avoidance of detailed linguistic investigation when the Egyptian-Semitic link provided the only available

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25. See de Morgan's account of the continuing impasse between pro- and anti- Egyptian 'Stone Age' supporters in his La Préhistoire Orientale, I, p. XXVff. See Maspero's The Dawn of Civilization, (edited A.H. Sayce), London, 1894 (part of the translation of his Histoire ancienne...) pp. 46-9 and the remarks on the possibility of prehistoric flints by Flinders Petrie in his History of Egypt, I, London, 1894, p. 7. For some time Petrie was convinced that his 'prehistoric' finds were the work of invaders (Semites? Elamites?) from Asia. On this and his work in general see his autobiography, Seventy Years in Archaeology, London, 1931? and the account of prehistoric finds in Egypt in Glyn Daniel, 150 Years of Archaeology, pp. 174-177 and pp. 195-199.

clue to the problem of origins. But even language did not provide a full historical account, particularly when the physical anthropologists began to argue for an independent north African population. Lepsius was not alone in avoiding a full discussion of Egyptian origins: most Nineteenth century Egyptologists, having indicated a vague support for the Asiatic hypothesis, tended to leap to safe historical times and to get on with their own concerns.<sup>26</sup>

But Lepsius had further reasons. He remained firmly entrenched in his public position as Professor at Berlin, fulfilling as well a variety of important official functions until his death in 1884 - directorship of the Egyptian Museum, of the Prussian State Library, of the Archaeological Institute, editorship of the Zeitschrift für aegyptische Sprache ... - all in the midst of regular publications. Yet by the mid-1870's he had taken on the aura of a man from the 'heroic age' of Egyptology in the eyes of the rising generation; for the revival of the French school and its control over the treasures of Egyptian archaeology had changed the field entirely. De Rougé found a brilliant successor in Gaston Maspero, who took over Champollion's Chair after de Rougé's death. Unprecedented numbers of pupils of

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26. This was the attitude taken by the supporters of the Asiatic hypothesis cited in note 23 above. Adolf Erman noted that the conflicting views of the 'philologists' and the 'ethnologists' on the origins question could not be settled without more substantial - that is to say prehistoric - evidence: see his Life in Ancient Egypt, London, 1894, p. 29ff. The question of origins is still not entirely clear today.

Chabas, de Rougé and Maspero - all with direct access to the Egyptian digs - created an explosion in French Egyptological publications in the 1880's. The English-speaking world, which had been somewhat late in recognizing Egyptology officially, was beginning to catch up. A determined programme of publication begun by the veteran pioneer of ancient eastern studies, Samuel Birch, and continued after him by Peter le Page Renouf. The enthusiasm of a small number of private individuals, Amelia Edwards in particular, finally secured British involvement in excavations and the establishment of a Chair of Egyptology in England (1892) against the background of British political control in Egypt.<sup>27</sup> The struggle between France and England over political control of the country resulted in the use of Mariette's position to keep Germany, a possible third political contender, out of Egyptian archaeology. This policy, which was continued as far as possible under Maspero, who succeeded to Mariette's position, meant that German Egyptology was blocked off from vital new source

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27. On Maspero see the entry in Dawson and Uphill, op.cit.; Maspero himself gave an excellent sketch of the wealth of French Egyptology in this period in his L'Égyptologie, Paris, 1915. A good short account of English Egyptology is given by S.R.K. Glanville, The Growth and nature of Egyptology, Cambridge, 1947; see also the entries on Renouf, Amelia Edwards and Petrie in Dawson and Uphill, op.cit., and Petrie's autobiography, Seventy Years... . Lepsius quotes Maspero's description of Lepsius in his last years: 'Lepsius... était un des derniers survivants de notre âge héroïque...' (p. 353) and Erman expressed the same sentiments: '... er [Lepsius] fühlte sich... noch als gleichzeitig mit diesen Begründern der Aegyptologie, die mir schon als halb mythische Gestalten erschienen...', Mein Werden und Mein Wirken, p. 114.

material.<sup>28</sup>

Lepsius, who had always inclined to historical and general cultural interests, was thus substantially cut off from the most important new information on these subjects. Added to this problem was his disinclination for the conclusions of French linguistic analyses. Virtually alone in the 1880's he still supported the Hamitic-Semitic-Japhetic relationship he had first described almost fifty years before in the infancy of the science. The result of these difficulties was that Lepsius, and with him, German Egyptology, was becoming more and more outdated. By the 1870's Lepsius gave only the obligatory weekly public lecture (on historical questions) and had very few students. His most important pupils - Ebers, Dümichen, Naville - occupied further academic posts established for them, but none showed the quality or linguistic expertise of the French school. Adolf Erman, who brought about the revival of German Egyptology after Lepsius' death, testified to the aura of fantastic and mysterious unreliability which surrounded German Egyptology in the last years of Lepsius' life.<sup>29</sup>

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28. On the political background see John Marlowe, A History of modern Egypt and Anglo-Egyptian Relations, 1800-1956, Connecticut, 1965 and P.M. Holt, Egypt and the Fertile Crescent, 1516-1922, London, 1966. Political motivations are very clear, particularly in the affair of the succession to Mariette's theoretically 'independent' position, which probably should have gone to his friend Brugsch, if he had not been a German: see Maspero's L'Égyptologie, p. 12ff. and Brugsch's Mein Leben und Mein Wandern, p. 375ff.

29. See Erman, Mein Werden und Mein Wirken, p. 255; and on Lepsius as a teacher and his main pupils, the references given in Chapter IV note 17 above. On Erman's own work see Mein Werden..., and the entry in Dawson and Uphill, op.cit. The chronological list of works at the end of Lepsius reveals only very small Egyptological contributions apart from a large

Not only could Lepsius not discuss the Hamitic theory within Egyptology for lack of source material; he would also have revealed how inadequate and outdated his Egyptological knowledge actually was if he had tried to do so.

The Hamitic theory faced far fewer problems outside Egyptology, in African linguistics, where the pace of research had not been anything like that on Egypt. Lepsius' work was not outdated. On the contrary, as the linguistic map of the great 'dark' continent was gradually pieced together by explorers and travellers in the 1860's and 1870's, the gender distinctions of the Hamitic languages, and their opposite, the class distinctions of the Bantu, seemed the only clear principles of grouping in a sea of languages. The fact that there had as yet been no detailed linguistic discussion of the Hamitic group as a whole, not even yet of the central, and most troublesome, Egyptian language, was not unusual in the context of infant African linguistics. It did not prevent a general agreement about Lepsius' grammatical gender Hamitic group, even while problem fringe languages - Hottentot, Hausa, Nuba - continued to be debated.<sup>30</sup> As his

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work on metrology, Die Längenmasse der Alten, Berlin, 1884, during the last decade of Lepsius' life.

30. Thus Friedrich Müller's classification of Hottentot as an independent physical-linguistic type, close to the Papuans; Hausa, simply as an African Negro language; Nuba in an intermediate position between Dravidians and Mediterraneans, including Hamites: see his Grundriss der Sprachwissenschaft I, p. 82ff.



Egyptological status declined, Lepsius at last decided to publish the results of almost forty years' work, including a lengthy exposition of the Hamitic theory, in the welcoming atmosphere of African linguistics.

The stated subject matter of his Nubische Grammatik (1880) was accompanied by a lengthy preface, 'Die Völker und Sprachen Afrika's'. If Lepsius seemed to begin, in this preface, from a position somewhat distinct from current scientific materialist and evolutionary theories, he revealed at the same time his unwillingness to oppose them clearly, and especially his disinclination to return to the philosophy of universal history to do so. His purpose was to suggest a reliable method for dealing with the confusion of African languages, in order to explain his decision to class the Nuba languages as non-Hamitic. He rejected Friedrich Müller's method of 'ethnographical linguistics' in African language classification. Linguistic grouping and physical descriptions should be treated independently. Language groups should be based on strict attention to specific grammatical features; languages remaining in doubt should be dealt with individually, with appropriate historical and geographic information. Physical groupings should be based on strict physical criteria alone. Lepsius certainly saw himself as only interested in linguistic problems, by which he meant, in the best Bunsenian and Humboldtian tradition, language as the outer tangible reflection of the inner gifts of any particular people.

But though these views were not scientific materialism, they were not Bunsen's universal history either. The central issue, the unified origins of all mankind, was left a blank. Questions of a link with the divine had disappeared completely. A certain support for monogenism can be deduced indirectly from the statement that human physical differences were produced by environmental forces; but Lepsius rejected outright Bunsen's attempt to demonstrate the literal unity of all languages and thereby of all peoples, and to establish the stages of linguistic universal history. It was simply not possible:

'Die Sprachen sind das individuellste Erzeugniss der Völker und ihr unmittelbarster geistiger Abdruck, aber sie lösen sich häufig ab von ihren Erzeugern, überziehen grosse fremde Völker und Rassen, oder sterben ab, während ihre früheren Träger, ganz andere Sprachen sprechend, fortleben; kurz sie führen ein mehr oder weniger unabhängiges Leben... Im Alterthum und bei den uncivilisirten Völkern liegen die Verhältnisse etwas anders und doch im Wesentlichen ebenso. Wir können uns sehr wohl eine Zeit denken, wo sich die Völker und Sprachen noch deckten, wo sich von einem oder, was in dieser Beziehung keinen Unterschied macht, von mehreren Mittelpunkten aus, die Erde allmählich bevölkerte, wo die Hauptfaktoren der Völkerbildung und der von ihr noch ungetrennten Sprachenbildung nur in den Schicksalen der in unbewohntes Land Einwandernden und in den klimatischen Verhältnissen der Länder, in denen sie sich niederliessen, lagen;... Diese Zeiten liegen aber so weit hinter uns, dass sie kaum noch irgendwo erkennbare Spuren zurückgelassen haben, und unser wissenschaftliches Material, so weitschichtig es uns auch bereits vorliegt, reicht doch bei weitem nicht aus, und wird uns wahrscheinlich nie in den Stand setzen, eine allgemeine Völker - und Sprachen - Genealogie aufzustellen'.<sup>31</sup>

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31. Nubische Grammatik, pp. II-III and, for these general questions, pp. I-XIII passim.

Lepsius' proposed solution to the problem of African linguistics was essentially geographic. He placed the vast numbers of unclassified languages lying between his established (mostly northern) Hamitic group and Bleek's established (mostly southern) Bantu group into one 'middle zone' category, thus producing a three-zone division of the continent linguistically. His reasons for this conclusion were not particularly linguistic, however. Ignoring his own statements that language and physical anthropology should be kept apart, Lepsius identified the Bantu group as Bleek had done, as the pure Negro aboriginal inhabitants of Africa. The Hamitic group was of course identified as 'Caucasian' invaders from Asia. He developed these physical and cultural implications of established linguistic groupings into a historical explanation for the problems of African language classification: that is, the theory of the three zones. The Hamitic invasion from Asia pushed the homogeneous original (Bantu Negro) population of the continent southward as the Hamites took over the north. In between the northern zone of Hamitic occupation and that of the Bantu south, virtually untouched by the invasion, developed an intermediate zone of mixed languages (and peoples), originally 'Urafrikanische' and now in various degrees changed by Hamitic contact:

'... diese zersprengten Sprachen [sind] ohne Ausnahme ein Produkt des grossen, theils feindlichen, theils friedlichen, Zusammenstosses zwischen den urafrikanischen und den eingedrungenen Asiatischen Sprachen...' 32

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32. *Ibid.*, p. XIX, and generally on the 'zones' see pp. XIII-XIX. The three 'zones' had been mentioned in 1863 in the Standard Alphabet linguistic table (pp. 306-8 especially) but without explanation.

This theory of African languages had clearly little to do with simple pondering of the mass of contradictory evidence available. It was the result of a partial restatement of the background of universal history for the Hamitic group and incidentally for their Noachian brothers (Asiatic origins), and the suppression of universal history for the rest of mankind, specifically the African population (origins unstated or autochthonous). Lepsius in practice showed that he himself did not ever read the 'three zones' of African languages in simple linguistic terms, but had imported the full circle of universal-historical meaning into the confrontation of Hamite and non-Hamite in Africa, including a very clear use of the physical meanings of his 'linguistic' terms. The Hamitic invaders had not perhaps been pure whites since their arrival in Africa, but they were certainly racially distinct from other aboriginal Africans. They were, of course, intrinsically superior. The proof was their possession of grammatical gender, that feature which linked them into an absolute unity of origins with the Semites and Japhetites, the unquestionably dominating groups in universal history:

'... so sind die... Geschlechter für die drei Noachischen Sprachfamilien ein starkes sprachgenealogisches Band. Denn sie theilen ebenfalls diese Eigenthümlichkeit mit keinem andern Sprachstamm auf der ganzen Erde... Ihre Entstehung muss vor die Trennung [der drei Familien] fallen, in die Zeit als ihr gemeinschaftlicher Mutterstamm diejenigen Eigenschaften entwickelte, welche ihn befähigten, zu einer höheren Kulturstufe sich emporzuschwingen und die kulturgeschichtliche

Leitung der Menschheit für alle Folgezeit zu übernehmen...' 33

The 'linguistic' features of the Negro Bantu, on the other hand, especially its use of class determinatives, revealed to Lepsius the most primitive of mentalities; that of the 'Naturmensch'. The explanation for the Bantu class prefixes

'...scheint mir in der Stellung der Individuen ältester Naturvölker gegenüber der sie umgebenden Natur zu liegen. Dem Menschen trat noch die Thierwelt und die gesammte übermächtige Natur feindlich und imponirend entgegen, nur in seines Gleichen fand er Schutz und Hülfe gegen ihre fortwährende Drohung. Daher die Wichtigkeit, die er auf die schnelle und deutliche Bezeichnung eines jeden ihm feindlich, freundlich oder indifferent gegenübertretenden Objektes legt.

Der Unterschied des Geschlechts ist dem Naturmenschen von diesem Standpunkte aus unwichtig...'

In addition Lepsius stressed Bantu features like alliteration, vocal harmony, simple word order, intonation akin to the Chinese - all elements which implied that this was one of the most simple, undeveloped of language types.<sup>34</sup>

The analysis of the 'Mischsprachen' of the 'middle zone' was dominated by one purpose only: to ensure a qualitative and fundamental break between Hamitic proper and even the most non-Bantu, or quasi-Hamitic, mixed languages. No 'Negro' language, however mixed, had actually attained the special Noachian

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33. Nubische Grammatik, pp. XXV-VI; on the physical intermixture of the Hamites with the Africans from their first arrival see p. LXXIV.

34. Quoted from ibid., p. XXII, and generally see the listing of Bantu characteristics, with observations on their difference from Hamitic characteristics pp. XXI-XXXII. Lepsius' psychological use of the gender criterion is closer to Grimm than to Humboldt. See Beneš, op.cit., pp. 42-56.

linguistic feature of grammatical gender. Conversely, however 'degenerated' individual Hamitic languages - Hausa, Hottentot, and for good measure, although on virtually no evidence, Bushman as well - might have become by dint of separation from the main body of Hamitic in the northern zone, no Hamitic language had ever given up its intrinsic quality of grammatical gender. Hamitic always remained Hamitic and superior; Bantu and half-Bantu could never cross the chasm to the Hamitic level. When Friedrich Müller flatly contradicted Lepsius about the presence of grammatical gender in Hottentot and took a cautious view of Bushman, pointing to the scarcity of source material, Lepsius simply denied Müller's arguments. When several clearly non-Hamitic Nile languages were admitted even by Lepsius to possess grammatical gender, Lepsius placed them amongst the other non-Hamitic 'Mischsprachen', without hesitation, on technical or 'psychological' grounds. The sophistication of real Hamitic grammatical gender, and the cultural and psychological superiority it was connected with, was simply beyond the capacities of the Naturmensch even in terms of borrowing:

'Hiernach ist es ersichtlich, dass im Allgemeinen die Sprachen der zweiten Zone, je weiter sie sich von der ersten Zone entfernen und such den Hamitischen Sprachen nähern. um so mehr Sprachformen von diesen annehmen... mit Ausnahme der Geschlechter, welche keine von allen Negersprachen angenommen hat...' 35

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35. *Ibid.*, p. LXXXIV; the discussion on 'middle zone' languages is found pp. XXXII-LXXIX.

Lepsius would have turned the Hamitic -non-Hamitic linguistic and psychological opposition into an outright opposition of white and black races if it had been possible. He consistently invoked a rough 'rule' whereby the physical signs of Hamitic intermixture would appear most clearly in the most Hamitic-influenced northern part of the 'mixed zone', while near the southern Bantu zone little physical or linguistic traces of Hamitic would be found. At times he threw caution, principles, and the admission that the Hamites were probably not pure whites, all to the winds: a confrontation between white and black, superior and inferior had literally taken place:

'Wolof and Pül bildeten ohne Zweifel einst die äussersten und nordwestlichsten Glieder der Bantu-Sprachen...Die Pül... hatten damals wohl ganz Marokko inne, als zuerst die Libyschen Völker und dann die Araber bis hierher vordrangen. Sie liessen sich nicht austreiben, mussten sich aber massenhafte Vermischung gefallen lassen mit der weissen Rasse, die auch der Zahl nach so übermächtig auftrat, dass sie den Negertypus wesentlich alterirte und die Hautfarbe bleichte. Das geistige und folglich auch sprachliche Übergewicht der Libyer verstand sich von selbst.... mit ihren schwarzen Nachbarn und Verwandten, den Wolof,... Auch ihre Sprache musste sich dem starken Einfluss der nordischen höheren Intelligenz fügen...' 36

But the 'white' physical identification of Hamitic was not always so easy. For example, Friedrich Müller insisted on the non-Hamitic status of Hausa on the sheer physical evidence that they were Negro, Lepsius had to

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36. *Ibid.*, XLIV-V; the rough 'rule' of physical-linguistic correlation on pp. LXXIX-LXXX.

agree at least on the physical level. He tried to get around the problem by admitting that the Hamites could lose their physical Hamitic form if isolated from the main body of Hamitic - for example by an individual group's migration further south - and surrounded by predominantly Negro populations. This, he postulated, had happened in the case of Hausa, Hottentot and Bushman: an analysis which conjured up the shades of Bunsen's 'degeneration' theory of Khamitic much further north in Egypt itself. However in these isolated cases Lepsius left the physical argument altogether and returned to the linguistic and psychological definition of Hamitic. Hausa and the other problem cases were placed in the curious double position of being physically Negro but linguistically, culturally and innately Hamitic.<sup>37</sup>

Lepsius had not entered the field of African languages out of sheer interest in them for their own sake, and the classification system in the Preface to the Nubische Grammatik reflected the problem which had preoccupied him from the first: to establish the Hamitic nature of the still undeciphered Meroitic inscriptions. Since 1844 Lepsius had been convinced that Meroë was a Hamitic culture, created by the ancestors of the Bega people. On the presuppositions of universal history it could scarcely have been otherwise. But factually speaking there was a good chance that it had been the ancestors

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37. See sections on Hottentot and Bushman, *ibid.*, pp. LXV-LXXII, and Hausa, pp. XLIX-LII, and the double classification of Hausa in Lepsius' table, pp. XVII.



of the Nuba people who had created Meroë. Arabic and other sources told of the great Christian Nuba Kingdom of the south in earlier times, and before that, too, the Nuba people seemed to have occupied the same geographic area: the area of Meroë. The Nuba language manifested almost every possible Hamitic linguistic form. The people were physically scarcely distinguishable from the Hamites of the region. Lepsius admitted that they probably resembled the physical type of the ancient Egyptians themselves. Others would be prepared to actually class them as Hamites, or very nearly.<sup>38</sup> But such indications were insufficient for Lepsius: the Nuba lacked grammatical gender. They could not be classed as Hamitic. They could also not have created the culture of Meroë.

The lengthy exposition of the 'three zone' system, accounting for the state of African languages especially in the middle zone, was mainly geared to explaining how the Nuba could appear Hamitic yet be completely non-Hamitic, that is to say, psychologically and culturally inferior, and therefore not the culture builders of Meroë. All possible modes of argument were brought forward to this end, regardless of inconsistencies.

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38. Apart from Friedrich Müller's analysis of the Nuba (see note 30 above), Leo Reinisch, who worked on African languages from the 1870's confidently pronounced the Hamitic status of Nuba in his Die Sprachliche Stellung des Nuba, Vienna, 1911. Lepsius admitted the physical resemblance between the Nuba and what he believed the ancient Egyptians to have looked like in Nubische Grammatik, p. LXXIV.

The Nuba might appear similar to the Hamitic physical type in general but to Lepsius' eyes they had a slightly darker skin colour which revealed their Negro origins:

'Es ist nun auch ebenso natürlich, dass der leibliche Typus [der Nuba], der einst der Neger-Typus sein musste, von dem der Hamitischen Völker, die in überwältigender Mehrheit sie umgaben, allmählich absorbiert wurde, und dass sie jetzt äusserlich wenig von den letzteren sich unterscheiden, um so mehr, da sie sich gegen die fremden sehr wenig abschliessen; doch haben sie noch immer eine eher schwärzliche Hautfarbe...' 39

Lepsius left his preferred level of strict grammatic argument to stress that the Nuba language was related to the language of clearly Negro peoples lying to the south, on the basis of a small number of bald vocabularly similarities. All in all the Nuba had almost entirely physically and linguistically transformed themselves into a Hamitic-like people, and yet they were still innately Negro.<sup>40</sup> This negative proof that the Nuba were innately incapable of creating Meroë because they were not members of the Hamitic 'race' was, however, basically inadequate. On a commonsense and factual level Lepsius still knew nothing about the language of the Meroitic inscriptions beyond the simple observation that the script was written from right to left, was alphabetic and showed word separation. He had no way of defining the culture

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39. *Ibid.*, pp. LXXIII-IV.

40. See the consideration of the Nuba and related groups in *ibid.*, pp. LXXII-LXXIX, to the conclusion of their 'innerafrikanische Ursprung'.

with any certainty. He relied heavily on the assumption that only Noachian groups were capable of creating a culture.

Contemporary research in quite a different area was challenging precisely this crucial assumption. By 1880 Sumeriology was well-known through the work of Oppert, Lenormant and Sayce, and all three agreed that the Sumerian language was neither Hamitic nor Semitic nor Japhetic. From 1869 Oppert had suggested a relationship between Sumerian and selected 'Skythic' or Turanian languages - Turkish, Hungarian, Finnish. This line of argument was put forward at length by Lenormant in his crucial works on Sumerian during the 1870's. His model for the Turanian Sumerian language and their cultural characteristics was taken directly from the work of Bunsen and Max Müller.<sup>41</sup>

It is a testament to the wide acceptance of the linguistic and cultural categories of universal history that the early Sumeriologists sought to escape the contradiction implied in the phrase 'Turanian civilization' at the same time that they expounded it.

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41. See Jules Oppert's discussion of Sumerian studies in his 'Rapport sur les progrès du déchiffrement des Écritures Cunéiformes', Congrès International des Orientalistes, Paris, 1873, Compte-Rendu, I-II, pp. 117-148, and, for example, his Études Sumériennes, Paris, 1876. See Sayce's 'The Origin of Semitic Civilization, chiefly upon philological evidence', Transactions of the Society of Biblical Archaeology, I, 1872, pp. 294-309; see Lenormant's La Magie chez les Chaldéens et les origines accadiennes, Paris, 1874, La Langue primitive de la Chaldée et les idiomes touraniens, Paris, 1875, Les Principes de comparaison de l'accadien et des langues touraniennes, Paris, 1875 (note that Lenormant uses 'accadien' to mean 'Sumerian').

Oppert inclined to the built-in escape clause, the use of the wider definition of 'Japhetic' (Turanian and Indo-European together). The superior Sumerian Turanians could be thus viewed as a type of proto-Indo-European cultural group. At times Lenormant also took this way out, with the formula of the 'four civilizing races' in universal history.<sup>42</sup> However he preferred to rely on another solution: the revival of the Baron d'Eckstein's 'Cushite' theory of the 1840's, with hypotheses from Bunsen, and from the prehistoric Three Ages theory added. Lenormant claimed that the Turanians had shared a common homeland with the Indo-Europeans, Semites and Hamites. However Turanian dispersal from the Asiatic Urheimat was a little vague, and their actual capacities not entirely clear. He tried to link them with the pre-historic Ages theory, as the universal creators of metallurgy and therefore of the earliest civilizations. The Hamites had left the Asiatic homeland somewhat later than the Turanians. Some had travelled westwards to Africa, others to Mesopotamia and yet others to the coastal areas of Iran and the Hindu-Kush. The last two groups were the 'Cushites'. They had arrived in Mesopotamia under Nimrod more or less contemporaneously with their Hamitic brothers' arrival and settlement in Egypt. Lenormant used this elaborate theory to prove that even if

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42. See Oppert's Expédition Scientifique en Mesopotamie, 1851-4, Paris, vol. 2, 1859 and his La Peuple des Mèdes, Paris, 1879 for his belief in a Sumerian-Median relationship leading on to the Indo-Europeans. See Lenormant's La Langue Primitive..., p.380 or La Magie... p. 300ff. where the 'four civilizing races' are discussed.

the prehistoric Mesopotamian population was predominantly Turanian, it was the influx of the Hamitic Cushites which had created the mainsprings of Sumerian culture. Thus he hoped to water down the problem of a purely Turanian civilization. Yet even this conception of

'... une Asie koushite et touranienne, puissamment constituée et parvenue à un haut degré de progrès matériel et scientifique bien avant qu'il fût question des Sémites et des Aryens...'

implied some recognition of the Turanian role in creating the Sumerian culture. At the same time it played down considerably the historic importance of Egypt in universal history.<sup>43</sup>

The idea of a non-Noachian culture was totally unacceptable to Lepsius, as was a diminution of the dominating role of Egyptian culture in antiquity. He was not prepared to consider the possibility of a pre-Hamitic culture anywhere. Where Bunsen's 'Khamitic' had looked backwards to Turanian as well as forwards to Semitic and Japhetic inflection, where even Bleek found the origin of grammatical gender in Bantu class prefixes, Lepsius was not interested in generalizing his support for the universal-historical definition of the Noachians into a truly universal philosophy countering

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43. Quotation from Lenormant's Les Premières Civilisations..., II, p. 149. The Cushite theory is defended in his La Magie..., p. 274ff, and expounded at greater length in his Histoire Ancienne de l'Orient (see vol. IV, 9th edition, 1889 edited posthumously by E. Babelon). Lenormant's Cushites are not quite consistent with those of d'Eckstein - the latter had defined the Cushites as the first metallurgists, and Lenormant, with his prehistoric 'Three Ages' perspective, identified the Turanians in that role.

that of scientific materialism. Only at one point did he mention the growth of Noachian forms out of a 'Turanian humus' - but what was meant by this remained obscure.<sup>44</sup> Indeed the correct, desirable solution to his nagging problem with regard to Meroë actually demanded the complete separation of Hamitic and non-Hamitic and the absolute denial of the possibility of a non-Hamitic culture. If Turanian culture were admitted to be possible in Mesopotamia, the Nuba might well have been the creators of Meroë.

Such convictions led him to dabble in a most uncharacteristic manner into a field about which he confessedly knew very little. He had undoubtedly observed the Turanian and Cushite theories' advancement in Mesopotamia with some interest. From 1877 he entered the lists to pick a quarrel with Oppert over details of Mesopotamian metrology. Rejecting Sumeriologists and the compromise Cushite theory alike, he restated his Egyptian migrant Cushite solution of 1849 on the old classical and Biblical sources. He argued against Oppert for the relationship between Mesopotamian and Egyptian metrological systems, and for the hieroglyphic origin of Mesopotamian cuneiform. As a result he found himself embroiled in a fierce debate with Oppert over metrology until his death. Having reduced Mesopotamian culture, to his own satisfaction at least, to its Egyptian origins, he took the opportunity to dismiss the

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44. See Nubische Grammatik, p. XXIV.

Sumerians out of hand. Their civilization simply did not exist: none of the traditional and reliable sources mentioned it:

'Denn ich habe die Ansicht, so weit ich die alten Quellen und die neueren geschichtlichen und linguistischen Forschungen über das merwürdige Verhältniss jener beiden Völker am Euphrat und Tigris habe prüfen können, dass die relativ älteste Bevölkerung dieser Landstriche eine Semitische war. Diese hatte bereits in vorgeschichtlicher Zeit eine gewisse Höhe der Civilisation erreicht... Das höher befruchtende Element aber, und namentlich die ursprüngliche Hieroglyphenschrift, kam ihnen nicht von einem Volke der nordöstlichen sogenannten Turanischen Barbarenwelt.... sondern von Süden durch ein vom Meere her bis nach Babylon vordringendes und ganz Sinear oder Kephienien kolonisirendes Kuschitisches Volk, welches durch sein näheres Verhältniss zu Aegypten befähigt war, die Früchte dieser bereits höher gesteigerten... Kultur... zu vermitteln... Für diese Ansicht ist namentlich sowohl die in mythologischer aber unmissverständlicher Form erhaltene Tradition jener Länder selbst, als auch die Darstellung des... Verfassers des Noachischen Stammbaumes in der Genesis von grösstem Gewichte'.<sup>45</sup>

This was a rather unscholarly conclusion from the normally cautious and factual-minded Lepsius. It sprang from the same attitude which had produced the much more plausible rejection of an Egyptian 'Stone Age' in 1870:

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45. Lepsius, 'Die Babylonisch-Assyrische Längenmass-Tafel von Senkereh' in the Zeitschrift für aegyptische Sprache und Alterthumskunde, 1877, quoted from p. 57. This article was a reply to Oppert's Étalon des mesures assyriennes, Paris, 1875; the controversy continued in Lepsius' 'Nochmals über die babylonische Halbe-Elle des Herrn Oppert...' and 'Nachträgliches zu der Mittheilung...' in the KAWB, Sitzungsberichte, 1882, pp. 847-853 and pp. 991-2; and his last work, Die Längenmasse der Alten. Oppert secured the last word after Lepsius' death, when discoveries of Sumerian antiquities had proved the Sumerian-Semitic cultural continuity in Mesopotamia and the lack of any Egyptian influence: see Oppert's 'Sur Quelques-unes des inscriptions cuneiformes, nouvellement decouvertes en Chaldée', Travaux de la 6<sup>e</sup> session du Congrès International des Orientalistes, 1885, vol. II, pp. 3-12 especially pp. 10-12.

the refusal to allow a pre-Hamitic culture, the necessity to uphold the Hamitic, and Noachian, though not any other group's traditional role in universal history. The Preface of 1880 went much further in this non-scholarly direction. It presented an expanded Cushite theory designed to give a positive explanation of the Hamitic nature of both Meroë and ancient Mesopotamian culture. Without direct documentation and ignoring the progress of Sumeriology entirely, using mythological references and etymologies of Egyptian and Greek names, Lepsius described how the Hamitic Cushites had moved out of the common Noachian Urheimat with their brother-Hamites. They had taken the southerly route to Africa, however, through the Arabian west coast and over the Red Sea to 'Ethiopia'. There they met the aboriginal Negro population of the area - the ancestors of the Nuba - and forced them westwards to the south-west bank of the Nile. Cushite-Negro warfare continued, though on Egyptian sources the Cushites generally won out over the inferior Negroes. Some intermixture may have taken place. For Lepsius the Egyptologist the Cushites had no independent civilization of their own: they naturally adopted the dominant Egyptian culture of the region. Such inter-Hamitic connections went back to prehistoric times and were definitely documented from the Twelfth Dynasty, when the Cushites were completely drawn under Egyptian influence. Lepsius made the Cushites literally the ancestors of the Phoenicians, fulfilling a similar role as their descendants would - the diffusion of culture.



Some Cushites had remained in southern Arabia for a time and the central area of Cushite influence always remained the Erythraic Sea and surrounding coast. The Cushites became the prime seafarers of the 'Hamitic era'. Around the end of the third millenium B.C. a general movement of Cushites occurred, possibly in reaction to the expansion of Semites into Arabia. Southern Arabian Cushites moved north to the Mediterranean coast and Palestine, there to be absorbed by Semitic tribes, to give up their own language and reappear as the Phoenicians. Possibly as an extension of the same northern movement Lepsius' Cushite invasion of Mesopotamia took place. The Sumerian language was a mixed produce of Cushitic language with the local Semitic, Indo-European and perhaps a few barbarian Turanian idioms. But the Turanians themselves had achieved nothing of importance in Mesopotamia. At the same time Cushite movements made themselves felt even in Egypt. Perhaps the last of the Arabian Cushites crossed over into Africa, attacking Egypt from the south and south-east as the fabled Hyksos. About the same time again the Cushites were building their cultural centre at Meroë. They later made themselves independent from Egypt and reconquered it, under Egyptian princes of the Twenty-third Dynasty. After withdrawing from the north they first made Napata, and then, again, Meroë their capital. Cushite Meroë lasted until the late Sixth Century A.D.. During this later period the Cushites evolved their Meroitic script from the Egyptian hiero-

glyphic model. The eventual takeover of Cushite Meroë by the Nubian Christians was the result of weakening and internal antagonisms within the Cushite state. Lepsius stressed that the Nuba brought nothing new into Meroë: they simply adopted wholesale the earlier Cushite official structure including the language and script.<sup>46</sup>

Lepsius' version of the Cushite theory, which encompassed a Cushite Meroë, a Cushite pre-Semitic Mesopotamia and Cushite Hyksos invaders, had little relationship with the facts known about these three problem areas. There was virtually no reliable knowledge of Meroitic culture and origins available at all, except for some rather one-sided Egyptian references, until the first archaeological digs in the early Twentieth Century.<sup>47</sup> The problem of the origin and actual nature of the Hyksos is still unsolved, while Lepsius' denial of Sumerian culture was far too extreme even to be acceptable in his own day. All the versions of the Cushite theory represented a transitional compromise solution between the framework of universal history and the new data of prehistory and historical archaeology. The Cushite idea in itself was a compound of misreadings,

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46. See *Nubische Grammatik* pp. LXXXV-CXXVI passim.
47. On the archaeology of Meroë and the problems still faced today see Shinnie, *op.cit.*, especially Chapter I and Bruce G. Trigger, *Nubia under the Pharaohs*, London, 1976 especially Chapter I. Both indicate the difficulties of deciding on the physical nature or on the language of the inhabitants of Meroë and Nubia in ancient times (see Shinnie, especially p. 154ff. Trigger, p. 33 and p. 54). The modern view sees the arrival of the modern Nuba in the area only in the fourth century A.D.: see Shinnie, around p. 56 and Basil Davidson, *Africa in History*, Paladin, Frogmore, St Albans, 1974, p. 54.

misunderstandings and false etymologies, which would not last beyond the mid-1880's and the discovery of tangible Sumerian remains.<sup>48</sup> But at least the early Sumeriologists recognized to some degree the existence of a non-Noachian culture in Mesopotamia. Lepsius' unusual intransigence on this issue undermined his whole Cushite hypothesis. He had, as Ebers remarked in a review, advanced some interesting theories about a scarcely-known period and a mysterious people. But there was no proof.<sup>49</sup> In the end, the whole of Lepsius' elaborate linguistic and historical system carefully designed to support his conviction of the Hamitic nature of the Meroitic culture, would fail to do so at all convincingly.

Lepsius' 'three zone' analysis was not taken up with any great enthusiasm: the compiler of a general account of the state of African linguistics in the 1880's, Robert Cust, described it as the imposition of a 'net of

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48. On the Hyksos problem, still unresolved today, see J.A. Wilson, The Culture of Ancient Egypt, Chicago and London, 1971, p. 158ff. The Cushite theory was popular - in Lenormant's mixed form - during the period between the discovery of Sumerian culture philologically and the archaeological discoveries of their remains by de Sarzec in 1877-78, published 1884-1912 (see Pallis, op.cit., chapter III). Thus for example, Zénaïde A. Ragozin, Chaldea, from the earliest times to the rise of Assyria, London and New York, 1887, still supported it just when the archaeological evidence was beginning to overwhelm it; see also Maspero's support in his Histoire ancienne ... (1884) p. 145. The reading of the Biblical 'Cush' for the Nubian 'Kush', and the association of the Nubian 'Kush' of the Old and Middle Kingdoms with the later civilization of Meroë were all incorrect.
49. See Georg Ebers' Review of the Nubische Grammatik, in the Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft, XXXV, 1881, pp. 207-218 which stresses the novelty of Lepsius' views on the Cushites and the pioneering nature of Lepsius' attempt to piece together the history of the Nuba and of Meroë.

theory' over the very real problems of the field. The complaint was not, however, against the Hamitic theory, or against the mixture of physical, cultural and psychological assumptions into a supposedly linguistic argument. Lepsius' 'three zones' were certainly too simple; but his basic principles and definitions for Hamitic had passed into the realm of accepted linguistic fact:

'It has been decidedly a step in advance to group all non-Semitic Languages with Grammatical Gender in the North and North-East of Africa together...

F. Müller declares that it is an accepted fact of Science, that the Hamitic has no connection whatever with any other African Languages...

...Although the degree of Culture of the Semitic and Hamitic people is very different, it may safely be said, that they are both derived from the same source...

...If it be accepted, that the Hamites were originally from Mesopotamia, it must be admitted that no other Group has so vast an expansion, for in Africa alone it extends from the Red Sea to the Canary Islands, from the Mediterranean to the Niger and Senegal Rivers. Vast as the space covered proves to be, it is impossible to form any notion of the time occupied in the Migration of the Race from Asia...' 50

Lepsius' Hamitic theory would be perpetuated in linguistics and in popular European discussions of Africa. Thus Carl Meinhof, an admirer of Lepsius' work and a central figure in African linguistics until the end of the Second World

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50. Quoted from Cust, op.cit., I, pp. 94-5; Cust's 'net of theory' critique was made in ibid., I, p. 145, but he still regarded Lepsius as one of the great scholars in the field (see vol. II, p. 456). Cust adopted Friedrich Müller's 'ethnological linguistics' system in this work rather than that of Lepsius. Even Ebers agreed that Lepsius' system was perhaps too abstract, although the general idea of Hamitic was not in doubt (see Ebers' Review of the Nubische Grammatik, 1881, p. 208).

War, would finally produce the first comparative analysis of the Hamitic group, Die Sprachen der Hamiten (1912), without any major revision of Lepsius' definition:

'Wir nennen "Hamiten" linguistisch nicht die Neger, sondern in Gegenteil die Leute, deren Zugehörigkeit zur kaukasischen Rasse trotz allerlei negrischer Beimischung nicht zu bestreiten ist'.<sup>51</sup>

'Es ist ja bei einem Blick auf die Sprachenkarte Afrikas evident, dass die hamitischen Sprachen als Sprachen von Leuten kaukasischer Rasse zusammengetroffen sind mit den Sprachen der Nigritier. Wie es scheint, hat sich der Vorgang im Lauf der Geschichte immer wiederholt, dass hamitische Stämme als Herrenvolk unter dunkelfarbigem, anderssprachigen Völkern auftraten, sie unterwarfen und beherrschten'.

Meinhof would faithfully continue Lepsius' grammatical gender criterion as the hallmark of Hamitic influence anywhere in Africa almost to the point of absurdity. Only in the 1950's would the grammatical gender criterion be reassessed.

Only since that time has the long tradition of non-linguistic implications behind the designation 'Hamitic' been discarded. Lepsius' Hamitic theory, which set up white-black, superior-inferior differentiations in Africa on a purportedly scholarly, 'linguistic' basis, lasted over a hundred years.<sup>52</sup>

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51. Carl Meinhof, Die Sprachen der Hamiten, Hamburg, 1912, p. viii, and on the physical nature of the Hamites and their association with the other 'Mediterranean' groups see the appendix on 'Hamitische Typen' by Felix von Luschan, pp. 241-256.
52. Quotation from ibid., p. 2; note that Meinhof still could not deal with Egyptian in this work on the Hamitic group. On Meinhof (1857-1944) see the entry in Sebeok, Portraits of Linguists, II, pp. 110-122. His influence on African linguistics and his continuation of Lepsius' Hamitic theory is well documented in Doke, op.cit., and D.A. Olderogge, 'The Hamitic

Max Müller's response to the new intellectual currents of the 1870's was much more forthright than that of Lepsius. Unlike the latter, individual issues of expanded human chronology or prehistory did not concern Müller in themselves:<sup>53</sup> the whole philosophy of scientific materialism and social evolutionism was in his eyes incorrect. Müller proved willing to openly revert to the spiritual and philosophical foundations of universal history, and would fight the new materialism for the rest of his life. In adopting this attitude he demonstrated what had already been indicated in the 1860's, that he was a more faithful disciple of the essence of Bunsen's theory than Lepsius. But perhaps his general idealist stance was forced into the open unambiguously because he experienced the challenges of scientific materialism not just in one aspect of his work, like Lepsius, but in virtually every area. His definitions of the origin of

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Problem in Africanistics', (trans. P.O. Dada) *African Notes*, vol. 7 (1), pp. 70-84. Greenberg's *The Modern Languages of Africa* (1963) can virtually be read simply as a detailed critique of the structure imposed on African linguistics by Meinhof; Greenberg makes a point of showing up the absurdity of Meinhof's (Lepsius') grammatical gender criterion for 'Hamitic influence': '...its mere presence in two languages proves very little...' (p. 42, and see the whole section on 'Afroasiatic' p. 42ff.). See also I.M. Diakonoff, *Semito-Hamitic Languages. An essay in classification*, Moscow, 1965, which makes the same point (p. 55). For modern views of the Hamito-Semitic or 'Afroasiatic' family see Diakonoff, Greenberg, and James and Theodora Bynon (eds) *Hamitico-Semitic*, *Proceedings of a Colloquium...*

53. Müller gave up the chronological issue rather early, as impossible of definition: see his letter to the Duke of Argyll in 1868 in Müller I, pp. 347-9. It was never argued in any of his subsequent works.

language, the meaning of linguistic classification, and the nature of religion, all of which he considered important, were all overthrown at once. At the same time, with 'Aryan' and Turanian, Müller experienced at much closer quarters than Lepsius the damaging and chaotic potential which the new materialism could bring in its wake for Europe itself and Müller's beloved ancient eastern cultures.

After the Franco-Prussian War which he had so patriotically supported Müller was offered a Professorship in Sanskrit at the new German University at Strasbourg in 1872. He reacted with some caution, deciding to give a trial course of lectures on the Science of Language in the summer of that year. In his Inaugural Lecture of the series Müller clarified his position with regard to the new materialist philosophy of language. He stripped away most of the fashionably 'scientific' veneer of the 1860's to reveal the old idealist philosophy of universal history inherited from Bunsen and from Humboldt. The Science of Language, he now proclaimed, was not only a natural but also an intellectual and historical science, for language itself was more than natural sounds, interjections or imitations. It was a spiritual product of the innate and special endowments of man:

'...The Science of Language will yet enable us to withstand the extreme theories of the evolutionists and to draw a hard and fast line between spirit and matter, between man and brute'.<sup>54</sup>

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54. Inaugural Lecture 'On the results of the Science of Language', delivered May 23, 1872 at the Imperial University of Strasbourg, reprinted in Chips IV, quoted from p. 234.

Then he distanced himself from the new physical applications of linguistic-based concepts. He repeated the injunctions of 1854 that ethnology and philology should be kept strictly apart. He still believed that

'Nations and languages were in ancient times almost synonymous',

but he continued to uphold the ambiguous spiritual-linguistic definitions of the philosophy of universal history:

'... what constitutes the ideal unity of a nation lies far more in intellectual factors, in religion and language, than in common descent and common blood... if we speak of Aryan and Semitic families, the ground of classification is language, and language only. There are Aryan and Semitic languages, but it is against all rules of logic to speak, without an expressed or implied qualification, of an Aryan race, of Aryan blood, of Aryan skulls, and to attempt ethnological classification on purely linguistic grounds ... it would be as wrong to speak of Aryan blood as of dolichocephalic grammar'.<sup>55</sup>

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55. Ibid., pp. 222-3. Leon Poliakov, The Aryan Myth, London, 1974, especially pp. 204-214, L. Snyder, The Idea of Racialism, New York, 1962, pp. 41-2 and Walter Theimer, Lexikon der Politik, 7th revised edition, Bern und München, 1967, pp. 47-8 have all recently identified Müller as a key perpetrator of the 'Aryan myth', and have all tried to assert that either in this Inaugural Lecture of 1872 or at some other time Müller 'revised' his earlier 'racial' use of the term openly. In the light of our analysis of the background of universal history, and the ambiguities possible with Bunsen's and Humboldt's understanding of linguistic classification, in the light of Müller's central interest in ancient eastern 'Aryan' antiquity rather than in modern Europe, and in the light of his references to his statements of 1854 on the relationship between language and ethnology - references which continued for the rest of his life - it is impossible to find any 'revision' of Müller's 'racist' use of 'Aryan' in 1872 or at any other time. In the first place there had never been a 'racist' use of the term; only a linguistic and universal-historical use. In 1872, Müller was not 'revising' but referring to his past (ambiguous) understanding of linguistic classification and contrasting it with the distortions of the last quarter of the Nineteenth century. Only the



At the end of the trial course of lectures in Strasbourg Müller decided - for reasons which are not clear - to return to Oxford. He took with him a copy of David Friedrich Strauss' recently published book, Der alte und der neue Glaube, a work which took extreme rationalist Biblical critique and crossed it with evolutionary theory. Strauss defined the path to religion as motivated by

'... the selfish craving for material welfare...' and this proved to be the final straw for Müller. Almost immediately after he had finished reading the work around Christmas 1872 he wrote to Gladstone of the need to stand up boldly against the whole philosophy of scientific materialism and social evolutionary thought.<sup>56</sup>

He began to plan a series of Lectures originally under a title taken from the anti-materialist Lectures of

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surrounding understanding of what was meant by 'Aryan' and other such classifications, or what could be meant by them, had changed. Müller's greatest mistake lay in not realizing that he could not turn the clock back; as will be discussed below, he would try to hold on to the linguistic philosophy of universal history for the rest of his life. Perhaps the case for a 'revision' can be made more strongly in Renan's case after 1871-2, but even here the basic understanding was linguistic: see E. Seillière, (Part II) 'Après la guerre Franco-Allemande', in Revue des Deux Mondes Nov., 1906, pp. 323-352 especially pp. 345ff. and Renan's lecture of 1878, 'Des services rendus aux sciences historiques par la philologie' in his Mélanges religieux et historiques, compiled in 1904, Oeuvres Complètes, VIII, (1958) pp. 1213-1232, especially pp. 1224-1232.

56. See David Friedrich Strauss, Der alte und der Neue Glaube, Leipzig; 1872, translated by Mathilde Blind as The Old Faith and the New, 2nd edition, London, 1873; quotation from p. 109; on Strauss see Karl Barth, op.cit., pp. 541-568. See Müller's comments to Gladstone in Müller I, p. 442.

1861: 'Lectures on Language as the barrier between Man and Beast'. They were given at the Royal Institution in March and April 1873 with a different heading: 'Three Lectures on Mr Darwin's Philosophy of Language'. They contained, predictably, an elaboration of the idealist arguments on the origin of language put forward in 1861. Against the new materialism Müller invoked Kant's philosophical 'fortress', the abstract categories of the human intellect. Man might share with the beasts certain types of 'emotional' language, traceable to interjections and imitations. But real language was 'rational' language, the language developed from the basic building blocks of language, conceptual roots. Such roots were neither interjections nor imitations, though Müller could not exactly define their actual origins. For, as in 1861, no scholar, linguist or biologist could go beyond conceptual roots - only (idealist) philosophy could do so. If such a view of language were adopted man could avoid the

'... dreaded level of the Gorilla'.

The Lectures were reported in Fraser's Magazine in May, June and July of 1873 and Müller had a few private copies printed for personal distribution, notably to Darwin himself. In the same year he rewrote and published in book form his 1870 Lectures on the Science of Religion, as part of his response to the new materialist and evolutionary approach to the subject. The groundwork of universal-historical philosophy was considerably expanded in this rewritten version, and it was here that Müller

took the opportunity of sharply condemning Émile Burnouf's distorted race-based 'Science des Religions'.<sup>57</sup>

Müller's stand against materialist philosophy quickly involved him in a most unpleasant controversy. Some correspondence and eventually, in 1874, a brief, inconclusive meeting took place between Darwin and Müller. On this level it remained a scholarly disagreement of views. But Darwin's son, George Darwin, published a counterattack on Müller's Lectures of 1873. He tried to undermine Müller's authority to speak on linguistic questions at all by referring to Whitney's critiques of Müller, critiques which had been gathering force for some time and now openly questioned the quality of Müller's linguistic expertise. The philosophical issue - scientific materialism vs idealist philosophy - was ignored in the series of insult-trading articles between Whitney and Müller which followed. The point at issue degenerated to the level of establishing or attacking each other's credibility as professional linguists, and the American press in particular came out strongly on the side of its native son. Neither party emerged victorious but the enmity built up during this episode

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57. On the genesis and delivery of the 'Lectures on Mr Darwin's Philosophy of Language' see Müller I, p. 444ff.; they are reported in Fraser's Magazine, May 1873 (n.s. vol. 7, pp. 525-541), June, 1873 (n.s. vol.7, pp. 659-678), July 1873 (n.s. vol. 8 pp. 1-24). The quotation came from an article by Müller, 'My Reply to Mr Darwin' which was part of the ensuing controversy, discussed below, reprinted in Chips IV, see p. 472. See Müller I, p. 452, 468, 476, 495 for the printing and distribution of the copies of Müller's lectures and the meeting with Darwin. The rewritten edition of the Lectures on the Science of Religion, entitled Introduction to the Science of Religion, has been cited above, Chapter IV, with regard to the critique of Émile Burnouf (note 83).

remained for life.<sup>58</sup>

The Whitney-Müller controversy reached its highpoint during 1875-6, and, added to several other

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58. The original article which set off the controversy was George H. Darwin, 'Professor Whitney on the Origin of Language', Contemporary Review, XXIV, 1874, pp. 894-904. Müller's reply, 'My Reply to Mr Darwin' (reprinted in Chips IV, pp. 433-472) originally appeared in the same journal in the next volume, early 1875. George Darwin's reference was to Whitney's article on 'Darwinism and Language', which, inter alia, reviewed Max Müller's anti-Darwin lectures of 1873, in the North American Review, vol. 119, 1874, pp. 61-88. Müller only saw the original article after his 'My Reply to Mr Darwin', and then proceeded to write an essay, 'In Self Defence' (reprinted Chips IV, pp. 473-549) against Whitney's critiques, in September 1875. Various letters to the editors of English and American journals followed: see for example Whitney's letter, explanations and counter-critique of Müller in The Nation, March 30, 1876. The issue faded out inconclusively soon afterward: see Müller II, p. 20ff., though in Whitney's mind (see his Max Müller and the Science of Language - a criticism, New York, 1892), and in that of the American press (see E.W. Hopkins, 'Max Müller', The Nation, 1900, pp. 343-344, reprinted for the modern generation as the only account of Müller's linguistic activity in Sebeok, Portraits of Linguists, I, pp. 395-399), the critique of Müller's quality as linguist has still not been revised. Whitney had begun to attack Müller about the end of the 1860's: see various articles written at different times, showing a gradual escalation of criticism in Whitney's Oriental and Linguistic Studies. The Veda; the Avesta; the science of language. New York, 1873. Perhaps these attacks were motivated by Müller's critique of the Petersburg Sanskrit dictionary collaborators, headed by Böhtlingk, a group to which Whitney belonged, Müller being convinced that he was a better Sanskrit scholar than any of them (see Whitney's Oriental and Linguistic Studies..., p. 137, the attack on Müller's Vedic competence around p. 113, pp. 208-9, p. 268ff.) Eventually this issue exploded into another controversy, with Böhtlingk attacking Max Müller's Veda edition in his F.M. Müller als Mythendichter, St Petersburg, 1891; for an understandably pro-Müller account of this see Chaudhuri, op.cit., p. 256ff. and Müller II, pp. 281-2.

difficulties, created a great personal crisis for Müller. The last volume of the Veda text and commentary was completed in 1874, more than a quarter of a century after Müller first embarked on the project. Despite this feat of Sanskrit scholarship, Müller still saw no prospect of officially engaging in this, his own special field, while he remained at Oxford. Some private pupils and his personal inclination encouraged him to think of further important Sanskrit and other textual editing. These were ambitious projects, but his official duties as Professor of Comparative Philology did not seem to allow sufficient time for them. At the same time, his post at Oxford was not altogether a success. Müller felt that the younger generation were not interested in his subject, and he became more than ever conscious of his isolation from continental comparative linguistics. With some truth he saw himself professionally -if not popularly - ignored in England. All these problems came to a head around 1875. Müller's solution to them was the decision to leave Oxford and England altogether and take up residence, with possibly some academic activity, in Germany. A special arrangement was hurriedly secured by friends to retain him at Oxford. A Deputy Professor - the orientalist linguist and Assyriologist A.H. Sayce - would take over Müller's lecturing duties while Müller retained for the rest of his life the status of Professor, but was left free to embark on whatever work he chose. Though the new situation would never allow Müller to feel the support of a German linguistic environment, he accepted

the offer for the freedom it gave him to pursue his own interests.<sup>59</sup>

These interests took him in a somewhat different direction to that which he had pursued so far. 1875-6 marked the end of Müller's career as a straightforward German Indo-European linguist in England. This change was both a reflection of his failure to gain a scholarly niche in England for his subject, and of the overwhelming need Müller felt to firmly counter the philosophical danger of scientific materialism in language and religion. He invested much effort to produce a convincing work on the idealist philosophy of man and language. For some years after the Whitney controversy he planned to expand the anti-Darwin lectures of 1873 into a book with the same title. In 1877 he began a friendship and correspondence with a like-minded idealist philosopher, Ludwig Noiré, professor at Mainz. As well as private discussions Müller brought Noiré into his project of publishing a new translation of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason (1881). Müller's Preface to the

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59. See Müller, (ed.) Rig-Veda-Samhita, the sacred hymns of the Brahmans; together with the commentary of Sayanacharya, London, 6 vols, 1849-74, and, for the contemporary high estimation of this, and other Vedic works of Müller see the review in The Times, Monday September 25, 1876, p.4. On this crisis period in Müller's life see Müller I, Chapter XXI, passim. There are some indications that Müller's lectures were no longer so well attended by the early 1870's: see The Times' Obituary for Müller, 29 October 1900, p. 13, reprinted in Heimo Rau (ed.) F. Max Müller: What can he teach us?, Bombay, 1974, pp. 139-148, especially pp. 145-7. The lack of official recognition in the form of English honours (though cf. Müller's many international honours) galled him also: see Müller II, pp. 189-90. The single major project he was most concerned with at the time was the Sacred Books, discussed below. On Sayce see above, note 8.

work revealed the true motive for the translation: it was part of his campaign against scientific materialism:

'We live in an age of physical discovery, and of complete philosophical prostration, and thus only can we account for the fact that physical science, and, more particularly, physiology, should actually have grasped at the sceptre of philosophy...

... the idea that these physical and physiological researches have brought us one inch nearer to the real focus of subjective perception, that any movement of matter could in any way explain the simplest sensuous perception, or that behind the membranes and nerves we should ever catch hold of what we call the soul, or the I, or the self, need only to be stated to betray its utter folly...how can any one who weighs his words say that the modern physiology of the senses has in any way supplemented or improved Kant's theory of knowledge?...

Metaphysical truth is wider than physical truth, and the new discoveries of physical observers, if they are to be more than merely contingent truths, must find their appointed place and natural refuge within the immoveable limits traced by the metaphysician...'<sup>60</sup>

'In Kant's Critique the Divine is heard in the still small voice - the Categorical Imperative - the I Ought - which Nature does not know and cannot teach. Everything in Nature is or is not, is necessary or contingent, true or false. But there is no room in Nature for the Ought... Let that suffice, and let future generations learn all the lessons contained in that simple word I ought, as interpreted by Kant'.<sup>61</sup>

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60. Quoted from Max Müller's preface to his edition of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, London, 1881 (2 vols): vol. I, pp. xxx-xxxii. The background to its publication and the relationship with Noire can be followed in Müller II, p. 37ff. Müller wrote a highly complementary review of Noire's Der Ursprung der Sprache, Mainz, 1877 in an article, 'On the Origin of Reason' in the Contemporary Review, February 1878, pp. 465-493, while Noire responded with an appreciative discussion of Müller's ideas in his Max Müller and the Philosophy of Language, London, 1879.
61. Müller, Preface to Kant's Critique, vol I, pp. lxi-ii.

Noiré backed up Müller's Preface with a lengthy 'Sketch of the development of Occidental Philosophy' with the same motivations in mind. A similar background of collaboration between the two men went into the final expression of Müller's 1873 Lectures, the work which appeared in 1887 with the title The Science of Thought, a title evocative of Müller's popular expositions of the 1860's. Here he repeated his Kantian and idealist arguments on the nature of perception and the origin of language, more or less without change. In the same year, shortly before Noiré's death, Müller also gave a series of Three Introductory Lectures at the Royal Institution on the same topic.<sup>62</sup>

Discussion on the origin of religion and 'primitive' religion escalated in Müller's private correspondence after the publication of the Lectures on the Science of Religion in book form in 1873. By 1875 Müller had fully worked out the huge project which would take up much of his attention for the rest of his life:

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62. On the background of collaboration between Müller and Noiré for The Science of Thought, London, 1887 (dedicated to Noiré) see Müller II, p. 169, p. 173, p. 176; Müller picked up Noiré's idea of the origin of language in a common clamor concomitans used by primitive man instinctively during his co-operative activities. These cries then became institutionalized into an agreed set of meaningful noises (clamor signifans), that is, meaningful conceptual roots, Müller's basic building blocks of language. See Noiré, Der Ursprung der Sprache, and Müller, Science of Thought, especially p. 580. See also Müller's Three Introductory Lectures on the Science of Thought, London, 1888. Appended in the American edition (Chicago, 1888) is correspondence on the origin of language with other scholars.



the fifty volumes of translations of Sacred Books of the East, of which he was general Editor, co-ordinator, and also an individual contributor. The purpose of this vast collection of high quality scholarly translations was also ultimately to fight the new scientific materialism:

'The Science of Religion is, in fact, the history of all religions, and when I saw, as quite a young man, the gap in our materials for studying the origin and growth of religious ideas... I determined to devote my life to collecting all the manuscripts that could still be found... People do not yet see the full importance of the Veda in an historical study of religion, and yet I feel convinced that the true solution of many of our theological difficulties - difficulties that will become far more terrible than they are at present - is to be found in the study of the history of all religions. We shall then see what is essential and what is accidental, what is eternal and what is human handiwork; among all the possibilities displayed before us, we shall in the end discover the reality of religion...' 63

Not only did the Sacred Books represent an accumulation of sources against the materialist definition of religion, but by 1878 Müller's efforts against scientific materialism and social evolutionary thought resulted in a complete revision of his stratification of religious types in the earlier Science of Religion. His Hibbert Lectures On the Origin and Growth of Religion were directed

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63. Quoted from Müller I, pp. 501-2. The first mention of the idea of the Sacred Books in ibid., pp. 455-6, see also pp. 478-82. The Sacred Books of the East (ed. Max Müller), 50 volumes, Oxford, 1879-1924, were not quite complete at the time of Müller's death; for an individual list of their contents up to vol. XLVIII see Winternitz, op.cit., pp. 12-17; he supervised the rest of the printing after Müller's death.

primarily at insisting on the necessity of a non-material origin for all religions, and in the process simply ignored the Turanian, Semitic and 'Aryan' types of religion proposed in 1870. Müller reasserted philosophically the idea of a universal religious faculty of necessity in man. It was now described as a third 'potential energy', the ability to apprehend the Infinite, to be added to Kant's zero definition of the human mind, with its rational and sensuous perception.<sup>64</sup> Müller thoroughly criticized the cultural anthropologists' stratifications of 'primitive' religion and their definition of its selfish or superstitious origins. He made some pertinent points about their methods of information gathering, their theoretical uniformitarianism, and the vagueness of their terminology, particularly the meaning of 'fetishism'. He argued that the cultural anthropologists' 'primitive' religions made more sense as later corruptions of the religious instinct of man than as its earliest manifestations. Finally he pointed out the results attainable by studying the ancient, historically continuous religions of India. On the understanding of the human mind and stages of human development which he had drawn from universal history, Müller still saw the Veda as having been compiled at a very early stage of human language and consequently of

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64. Müller, Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion, as illustrated by the Religions of India, London, 2nd ed., 1878; see all of Lecture I, pp. 1-51.

human thought. The Nature-worship found by comparative mythology in the Veda took a form neither exactly polytheistic, nor monotheistic, but as Müller had earlier already suggested, 'henotheistic': that is, individual gods without definite ranking into any order or system. This henotheistic nature religion had proved itself capable of expansion into polytheism proper, or contraction in a monotheistic direction during the course of Indian religious development, mainly through the agency and effect of language.<sup>65</sup>

The central question was whether this analysis of Vedic and Indian religion could legitimately be generalized into a universal pattern for all religions. Although Müller seemed to rest content with the negative argument that fetishism, animism or spirit worship could not really be seen as 'primary' forms of religion, and the additional point, very strongly made, that the cultural anthropologists' categories and descriptions simply did not fit the Indian situation, his attack on

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65. See the critique of cultural anthropology, and particularly of 'Fetishism' in ibid., Lecture II, pp. 52-127; it had been preceded by earlier critique of the same kind in Müller's Preface to W.W. Gill, Myths and Songs from the South Pacific, London, 1876, pp. v-xviii. Before this time - in the Preface to Chips I or in the Introduction to the Science of Religion - there had been no discussion against cultural anthropology. Lectures IV, V, VI and VII in 1878 discuss Vedic and later Indian religions. The idea of 'henotheism', although not the term, was already present in Müller's treatment of Vedic religion and mythology in his History of Sanskrit Literature and in his elaboration of the theory of 'comparative mythology' (see for example, note 56, chapter IV above). It had been expanded in his Introduction to the Science of Religion (see Lecture II), and now appeared fully fledged in 1878 (see Lecture VI, p. 254ff.). Boullaye, op.cit., p. 349 gives a pertinent critique of Müller's and others' use of the term.

scientific materialism was incomplete unless he did put forward an alternative, general, idealist description of religious growth. He had already made the choice to use the Veda and the pattern of Indian religious development as a universal model, regardless of linguistic or cultural differences, in all but name in 1878:

'Far be it from me to say that the origin and growth of religion must everywhere have been exactly the same as in India... When we have learnt how the ancient inhabitants of India gained their religious ideas, how they elaborated them, changed them, corrupted them, we may be allowed to say that possibly other people also may have started from the same beginnings, and may have passed through the same vicissitudes...' 66

'I thought it right to warn you again and again, against supposing that the foundations which we discovered beneath the oldest Indian temples, must be the same for all the temples erected by human hands...

No doubt the solid rock, the human heart, must be the same everywhere: some of the pillars even, and the ancient vaults, may be the same everywhere, wherever there is religion, faith or worship.

But beyond this we must not go at least not for the present'. 67

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66. Müller, Lectures on the Origin..., pp. 132-133.

67. Ibid., pp. 376-77. With regard to Müller's long-standing high regard for Indian antiquity, now raised to a universal model for religious purposes, it is significant to note that Müller's involvement and interest in modern India increased markedly from the 1870's. Müller's concern for India is the subject of a growing body of literature: Chaudhuri, op.cit., Voigt, op.cit., Rau's collection, op.cit., are dominated by this viewpoint. We should stress that the origins and the continuing heart of Müller's interest in India lay in his foundations as an Indo-European linguist of the mid-century generation, and in his ancient Sanskrit scholarship. He never knew India at first hand, and his role as adviser to and special pleader for modern India was always coloured by his European scholarly perspectives. It was an essentially late, and always a very secondary aspect of his work. Trompf, op.cit., has a more balanced view of this issue.

The works on religion in the last years of his life would openly use the Vedic and Indian information as the basis of a universal description of religious growth.

The emphasis on the stand against materialism following 1875 did not, however, mark the end of Müller's expertise or involvement in linguistics. His editing of the Sacred Books was unquestionably in the tradition of mid-century Indo-European scholarship and he continued to publish and occasionally lecture on comparative linguistics. Certainly his main interests had taken a more philosophical direction, but it would be as a result of events independent of Müller himself that from the early 1880's he would gradually lose his scholarly reputation in the field in which he had been originally trained. The gradual emergence of a new generation of linguists, the 'Junggrammatiker', occurred just about the time when Müller withdrew from active linguistic teaching at Oxford. The Junggrammatiker were to change the direction of Indo-European linguistics entirely. Their focus was on the mechanics of linguistic change, not on the broad sweep of the whole Indo-European group and its morphological form. They concentrated on phonetic change in a highly technical way, not on the editing of texts; they inclined very much less to the languages of antiquity or proto-history, and much more to the processes of living languages and dialects. The result of a decade of their work, between 1875 and 1885, would thoroughly revamp the received tenets of the older generation. The antiquity of

the eastern Indo-European languages, the monosyllabic and then agglutinative origin origin of Indo-European inflection, the growth of Indo-European dialects from a single Ursprache, the importance of Sanskrit: all these assumptions were denied or thoroughly transformed by the new generation.<sup>68</sup>

At least two important mid-century linguists lived to see their work outdated and thrown aside. August Fick, whose Vergleichendes Wörterbuch der Indogermanischen Sprachen was a massive exercise in the reconstruction of the Indo-European Ursprache on Schleicher's - and incidentally also Max Müller's - principles during the 1870's, found it impossible to reprint or extend the work into a fourth edition in the 1890's. Georg Curtius, by the year of his death (1885), had been so criticized by his own one-time pupils, now leaders of the Junggrammatiker school, that he denounced the new generation and its linguistics publically and set off a 'Kampf um die Lautgesetze' against them after his death.<sup>69</sup> Much the same outdating process was happening

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68. On the 'Junggrammatiker' and their work see Arens, op.cit., I p. 314ff., Mounin, op.cit., p. 198ff., Jespersen, op.cit., chapter IV, p. 89ff., and discussion of individual theoretical changes in Pedersen, op.cit., p. 277ff. and biographies of individual members of the 'Junggrammatiker' movement in Sebeok, Portraits of Linguists, I.

69. On August Fick (1833-1916) see the entry in ibid., pp. 453-468. Fick followed Müller's theory of a basic two-way Indo-Iranian and European split between the originally unified Indo-Europeans (see above, Chapter III, note 89) in the three editions of the Wörterbuch: Göttingen, 1868, Göttingen, 1870, 4 vols, Göttingen, 1874-6. The attack on the Ursprache and the old dispersion theory came especially from Johannes Schmidt, Die Verwandtschaftsverhältnisse

to Max Müller by the early 1880's. In 1882 Henry Sweet of the Philological Society of London (which had never been friendly to Müller) classed Müller's work at a very low level when set against that of the new generation of linguists:

'This work forms a striking contrast to the productions of our own "Drawing-room" school, of which Prof. Max Müller, with his fascinating and facile pen, is both the founder and still the worthiest representative. Perhaps, indeed, some of those whose mental digestions have not been hopelessly impaired by the toffy and Turkish delight served up to them in the pages of Prof. Müller... will turn with something like a sigh of relief to the plain loaf of whoal-meal bread provided by Prof. Paul. ... Perhaps, too, those who have vainly tried to grasp the brilliant, but unsubstantial theories of what may be called the "Soap-bubble" school, will find the severely consistent logic of Prof. Paul more satisfying in the end...' 70

Such accusations would have destroyed Müller's academic standing entirely if he had not already moved away from the 'Science of Language' per se, and been more specifically engaged in using language to support his fight

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der indogermanischen Sprachen, Weimar, 1872 on which see Arens, op.cit., I, pp. 304-311 and Pedersen, op.cit., p. 314ff. See also Berthold Delbrück's Einleitung in das Sprachstudium, 2nd edition, Leipzig, 1884, p. 53 and pp. 133-140 on the new views. Curtius' critique came in his Zur Kritik der neuesten Sprachforschung, Leipzig, 1885; the reply from his students in Delbrück's Die neueste Sprachforschung..., Leipzig, 1885 and Karl Brugmann's Zum heutigen Stand der Sprachwissenschaft, Strasbourg, 1885; for the incident and the ensuing 'Kampf um die Lautgesetze' see the article on Curtius in Sebeok, Portraits of Linguists, I, p. 364ff., Mounin, op.cit., p. 203ff., Arens, op.cit., I, p. 337 and pp. 362-374.

70. Henry Sweet, 'Report on General Philology...', Transactions of the Philological Society of London, 1882, quotation from p. 107.

for idealist rather than materialist philosophy on all fronts. As it was, his reputation as anything but a hard-working Sanskrit scholar of the old school would only last for a few more years.

One particular question brought him back to linguistics proper, and at the same time revealed how outdated his views were becoming: the physical and potentially political misuse of linguistic classifications. The 1870's and 1880's was the period when the term 'Aryan' was dropped or completely transformed by professional linguistics in such a technical way that it could no longer stand for a general 'stage' or type in the way that it had since the beginning of the century. As linguistics left the concept, it was taken over more and more by physical anthropology, and as the great vistas of European prehistory were opened up, by prehistoric archaeology. Both had potential nationalistic overtones. The Nordic hypothesis of 'Aryan' origins which, like other European hypotheses, came to the forefront in the 1880's, was often associated with the physical description of the blond 'Aryan' type and was all in all highly conducive to being linked in with nationalist German feeling. About the same time Sumeriology and incipient Turkish and Hungarian nationalism were combining to produce similar lines of physical, cultural and archaeological speculation to do with Turanian origins and typology.<sup>71</sup>

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71. See Theodor Poesche, Die Arier: Ein Beitrag zur historischen Anthropologie, Jena, 1878 and Karl Penka, Origines Ariacae, Vienna, 1883, also



Müller had already in 1872 made it clear that he was not in agreement with such transformations of his spiritual-linguistic classifications. And his Inaugural Lecture at Strasbourg had opened with a warning against the loss of the old German 'spiritual' values in the wake of military and national triumph. Müller feared a possible growth in German arrogance and materialism in the future.

'You know that the world at large does not prophesy well for us. We are told that the old and simple German manners will go, that the ideal interests of our life will be forgotten, that, as in other countries, so with us, our love for the True and Beautiful will be replaced by love of pleasure, enjoyment, and vanities. It rests with us with all our might to confound such evil prophecies, and to carry the banner of the German mind higher than ever. Germany can remain great only by what has made her great - by simplicity of manners, contentment, industry, honesty, high ideals, contempt of luxury, of display, and of vain-glory. "Non propter vitam vivendi perdere causas", - "Not for the sake of life to lose the real objects of life", this must be our watchword for ever, and the causae vitae, the highest objects of life, are for us to-day, and will, I trust, remain for coming generations the same as they were in the days of Lessing, of Kant, of Schiller, and of Humboldt'.<sup>72</sup>

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Salomon Reinach, L'Origine des Aryens. Histoire d'une controverse, Paris, 1892 which clearly demonstrates the shift to physical and archaeological information in discussion of 'Aryan'. On Turanian origins see the Sumerian controversy discussed above, and a short history of theories about the Finno-Ugric homeland in Toivo Vuorela, The Finno-Ugric Peoples, Bloomington, etc., 1964 pp. 9-14; see also the romantic Nationalism of Arminius Vambéry: Travels in Central Asia, London, 1864 and Hungary in ancient, mediaeval and modern times, London, 3rd edition, 1889.

72. Müller, 'On the results...', reprinted in Chips IV, p. 213.

In 1878 he wrote an article on 'Aryan' for the Ninth Edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, very pointedly from the linguistic point of view. The source was Müller's section on the term 'Aryan' from the Lectures on Language of 1861, and he repeated in 1878 the usual undercurrent of cultural and spiritual implications.<sup>73</sup>

A decade later he emerged from his work on the philosophy of language and religion, and the editing of the Sacred Books, to compile his sole entire work devoted to the 'Aryans': Biographies of Words and the Home of the Aryas (1888). By this time Müller was beginning to understand that the old German 'spirit' was changing into a much more aggressive and materialist nationalism, the same degeneration that he had warned against. He rejected the Nordic hypothesis of 'Aryan' origins not only on a factual level, disputing the evidence, but equally for the nationalistic undercurrent which seemed to him to have produced these arguments about 'Aryan' hair type, skin colour, skull shape, and so on:

'Can they prove, or in any way make it plausible, that the people who spoke an Aryan language near the northern course of the Indus, and at least 2000 B.C., were emigrants from Scandinavia? and is there anything in any of the Teutonic or European languages in general, which could have arisen in Europe only, and which is the necessary

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73. See Müller's article on 'Aryan' in the Encyclopaedia Britannica, 9th edition, vol II, London, 1878, pp. 672-675; it was reprinted as an appendix to Müller's 1872 Inaugural Lecture in the German edition of Chips (vol II, Leipzig, 1879) and appeared in this way also with the reprinted Inaugural Lecture in the Selected Essays, London, 1881 (vol I).

antecedent of any Sanskrit word or any grammatical form in Sanskrit or Zend? If there is, let them produce their facts....

... I shall be as proud as anybody to look upon Germany as the cradle of all Aryan life, and upon Teutonic speech as the fountain of all Aryan thought. But if, on the contrary, no new facts have been discovered to disturb a theory which is the result of the combined labours of the most competent scholars during the last fifty years, let us not waste our time on building castles in the air, but let us be satisfied with the humbler task of testing, strengthening, and completing the noble building which has been planned by bold but trustworthy architects and carried out by many humble but honest labourers'.

Müller himself would later be shocked to realize the internal changes to the German 'spirit' produced under Bismarck's Reich, and would himself experience the nationalistic abuse of the German press when he took Britain's side in the Boer War.<sup>74</sup>

In 1888 Müller also waxed righteously angry about the 'theft' of linguistic terminology by anthropology and hammered home time after time that linguistic classification had nothing to do with physical race. Classifications like 'Aryan' referred to a linguistic and a spiritual succession irreducible to any more measurable

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74. Müller, Biographies of Words and the Home of the Aryas, London, 1888, quotation from p. 154. There is early evidence of Müller's uncomfortable feelings about academic and political freedom in Germany (see Müller I, p. 280, p. 325) and by the 1890's his critique of German national life and the Reich of Bismarck had grown explicit: see Müller II, p. 353, 377, 380, 382. On the Boer War controversy see ibid., p. 403ff., and Johannes H. Voigt, 'Die Auseinandersetzung zwischen Theodor Mommsen und Max Müller über die Burenkrieg', Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht, 1966, pp. 65-77.

terms:

'There is no Aryan race in blood, but whoever, through the imposition of hands, whether of his parents or his foreign masters, has received the Aryan blessing, belongs to that unbroken spiritual succession which began with the first apostles of that noble speech, and continues to the present day in every part of the globe. Aryan, in scientific language, is utterly inapplicable to race. It means language and nothing but language...' 75

He would continue again and again to refer to his remarks of 1854 on the relationship between philology and ethnology, and to Bunsen's even vaguer and more ambiguous understanding of that relationship. He generally avoided discussion of information from pre-historic archaeology, and refused to engage in attempts to pinpoint the 'Aryan' homeland in any more precise way than generally in Asia. These attitudes were applied to Turanian prehistory and ethnology as well: in the 1890's he still showed extreme reluctance to accept the classification of Sumerian as Turanian. It was not that, like Lepsius, he felt constrained to deny the possibility of a Turanian culture altogether. Lepsius' elaborate Cushite theory was greeted by Müller with interest but no great conviction. It was simply that Müller's universal-historical linguistic classifications were at base incompatible with anything more than the vaguest ethnological correlates and had nothing whatever to do with

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75. Müller, Biographies of Words, pp. 89-90.

prehistoric archaeology.<sup>76</sup>

Müller clearly wanted to go back to the understanding of Turanian and 'Aryan' of the 1860's, perhaps even of the 1840's and 1850's. Only with these linguistic and universal-historical definitions, compatible with the idealist philosophy of language and of man, could he prove the inaccuracy of scientific materialism, social evolutionary thought, and, incidentally, the physical and political abuses of his terminology. His purportedly rewritten edition of the Science of Language in 1891 repeated at times word for word the inflected - agglutinative, agricultural-nomadic, 'Aryan' and Turanian opposition of 1861. He continued the vague correlation of these terms with physical types especially in ancient India.<sup>77</sup> But by this time linguistics itself had

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76. See in ibid., another section on language-ethnology which, down to the title, virtually exactly repeated the old ideas (Appendix IV, 'Philology vs Ethnology'). Later articles: Müller's 'Address to the Anthropological Section of the British Association', Reports of the British Association, Cardiff, 1891, pp. 782-796 and his Inaugural Address at the Ninth International Congress of Orientalists, 1892 (Transactions of the Ninth International Congress..., I, pp. 1-37) continued the references to the past understanding of language, ethnology, to Bunsen himself, and to the old view of 'Aryan' and 'Turanian'. For Müller's opinion on Lepsius' Nubische Grammatik see his review in The Times, 29th December, 1880, reprinted as an appendix to Müller's New Edition of Introduction to the Science of Religion, London, 1882, pp. 236-246. His suspicion of arguments from prehistoric remains is clear in Biographies of Words and remained for the rest of his life (see 'Prehistoric Antiquities of the Indo-Europeans' reprinted in Müller's Last Essays, first series, London, 1901, pp. 183-217).
77. See Müller's (rewritten edition of) The Science of Language, 2 vols, London, 1891 especially vol I; his Three Lectures on the Science of Language, London, 1889; and on the vague physical correlation, his India, what can it teach us? (Lectures delivered in 1882), New edition, 1892 (see 1919 reprint of 1892 edition, for example, p. 95 on 'black' skinned aborigines).

deserted Müller. His description of 'Aryan' was a superficial and old-fashioned one; the idea of the tripartite morphological succession from monosyllabism to inflection had been pushed aside. The Turanian group was no longer technically acceptable, either in its basic agglutinative definition, nor in its supposed Northern and Southern divisions: the advance of specialized Finno-Ugric and Altaic studies had exploded it.<sup>78</sup> Müller made some half-hearted attempts to come to terms with the contemporary state of linguistics. He mentioned Junggrammatiker work, only to ignore it entirely in his actual analyses. He defined Turanian as only the Northern group, the Ural-Altaic conglomerate, yet in the same breath claimed that the larger Turanian hypothesis was rather 'unproved' than 'wrong', and clearly referred to the probability of its existence.<sup>79</sup> Müller's brave fight against scientific materialism and the transformation of

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78. On the growth of Ural- Altaic studies see Björn Collinder, An Introduction to the Uralic Languages, Berkeley, etc., 1965, especially pp. 34-7, Johannes Benzing, Einführung in das Studium der altaischen Philologie und der Türkologie, Wiesbaden, 1953 and Gyula Decsy, Einführung in die finnisch-ugrische Sprachwissenschaft, Wiesbaden, 1965. On the destruction of the agglutination theory of inflection by the Junggrammatiker see generally the references in note 68 above, and, for example, Debrück's Einleitung in das Sprachstudium..., pp. 79-85 (the nature of roots) and pp. 61-101 (agglutination theory of inflection). Even Müller's wife remarked that the 'new' edition of the Science of Language of 1891 was almost immediately outdated (see Müller II, p. 272).
79. Turanian was revamped first in Müller's Natural Religion, 1888 (pp. 324-350), and then more fully in Science of Language (1891) I, chapters X, XI, XII.

his linguistic concepts was conducted on the basis of a linguistics now technically defunct.

All in all Müller's philosophical standpoint, and especially his definitions of Turanian and 'Aryan', had no place in the 1890's. Linguistically, they were inadmissible; at the same time they were completely alien to the surrounding non-linguistic understanding of those terms. This was the decade of the intensification of the use of Turanian as a nationalistic ideology: in Hungary, to counter the threat of Pan-Slavism; in Turkey, as part of the anti-Ottoman patriotic movement.<sup>80</sup> The use of 'Aryan' had undergone vast complications and permutations since the 1870's. For the scientifically-inclined 'Aryan' did not work at all as a measurable concept, and the cultural association of innate superiority had been transferred to seemingly more manageable and tangible Nordic or Germanic ethnological and prehistoric speculations. Even if 'Aryan' were argued on a linguistic level, outside Müller's usage the results of European prehistory could not be ignored. Otto Schrader's Sprachvergleichung und Urgeschichte, which relied heavily on linguistic palaeontology, still agreed on European origins for the 'Aryans'. But gradually linguistics and

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80. On these developments see Joseph A. Kessler, op.cit., Kolarz, op.cit., the Admiralty's Manuel on Turanians..., Lewis, op.cit.; also Charles Warren Hostler, Turkism and the Soviets, London, 1957, p. 137ff, V.T. Sirelius, L'Origine des Finnois, Helsinki, 1925, and the amazing work by Wetenhovi Aspa, Fenno-aegyptischer Kulturursprung der alten Welt, 2nd edition, Helsinki, 1942.

anthropology and prehistory were all becoming irrelevant. The concept 'Aryan' was becoming a stereotype, which did not have to conform with any consistent scientific evidence. It was attaining the status of a symbol for all that was preferable and stable in a threatening and fast-changing world. Thus the non-linguistic, ultimately non-physical but innate psychological nature of Houston Stewart Chamberlain's description of 'Aryan' in the year before Max Müller's death:

'Und nun wollen wir versuchen, einen Blick in die Tiefen der Seele zu werfen...Die Rassen der Menschheit sind in der Art ihrer Befähigung, sowie in dem Masse ihrer Befähigung sehr ungleich begabt, und die Germanen gehören zu jener Gruppe der Zuhöchstbegabten, die man als Arier zu bezeichnen pflegt. Ist diese Menschenfamilie eine durch Blutbande geeinigte, einheitliche? Entwachsen diese Stämme wirklich alle der selben Wurzel? Ich weiss es nicht, es gilt mir auch gleich; keine Verwandtschaft kettet inniger aneinander als Wahlverwandtschaft, und in diesem Sinne bilden ohne Frage die indoeuropäischen Arier eine Familie. In seiner Politik schreibt Aristoteles (I,5): "Wenn es Menschen gäbe, die an Körpergrösse allein soweit hervorragten, wie die Bilder der Götter, so würde Jedermann gestehen, dass die übrigen von Rechtswegen sich diesen unterwerfen müssen. Ist aber dies in Beziehung auf den Körper wahr, so kann mit noch grösserem Rechte diese selbe Unterscheidung zwischen hervorragenden Seelen und gewöhnlichen gemacht werden". Körperlich und seelisch ragen die Arier unter allen Menschen empor; darum sind die von Rechtswegen (wie der Stagirit sich ausdrückt) die Herren der Welt'.<sup>81</sup>

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81. Quoted from Houston Stewart Chamberlain, Die Grundlagen des Neunzehnten Jahrhunderts, Volksaufgabe (IX. Auflage), München, 1909, pp. 596-7; see also Schrader, op.cit. On these general developments see Poliakov, op.cit., Chapter 11, and especially Mosse, op.cit., chapters 5-10 inclusive.



In comparison with all this, Müller's was a lone and unheeded voice, speaking in the vocabulary of the past:

'... when we say Aryas, we predicate nothing - we can predicate nothing - but language. We know, of course, that languages presuppose speakers; but when we say Aryas, we say nothing about skulls, or hair, or eyes, or skin... All that has been said and written about the golden hair, the blue eyes, and the noble profile of the Aryas, is pure invention, unless we are prepared to say that Socrates, the wisest of the Greeks, was not an *Ârya*, but a Mongolian...'

'... let us not forget ... the discoverers of that Old, that Prehistoric World of which I have been speaking... The discoveries of Sir William Jones, Schlegel, Humboldt, and of my own masters and fellow-workers Bopp, Pott, Burnouf, Benfey, Kuhn, and Curtius, will for ever remain a landmark in the studies devoted to the history, that is, the knowledge of our race, and, in the end, the knowledge of ourselves.... As long as I live, I shall protest against all attempts to belittle the true founders of the Science of Language. Their very mistakes often display more genius than the corrections of their Epigoni'.<sup>82</sup>

It is clear that by the 1880's the predominance of scientific materialism and social evolutionary thought had effected lasting changes in the concepts built up by universal history - Hamitic, Turanian, 'Aryan'. They had acquired much-debated physical, archaeological, and even political meanings, had retained their general cultural implications, but had shed much of their original linguistic meanings. In the Hamitic case the linguistic base remained, but it was conveniently vague, and set in a context of ignorance and linguistic problems where such

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82. Müller, Inaugural Address to the Ninth International Congress of Orientalists, quoted from pp. 11-12 and p. 17.

vagueness could appear comparatively precise and highly convincing. Since the philosophy of universal history was unable to survive into the 1870's, Lepsius and Müller had somehow to come to terms with the decisive loss of the original spiritual link, and with all the changes that their linguistic classifications were undergoing. Certainly both Lepsius and Müller had themselves in the 1860's helped to set up 'scientifically' some of the conditions for the transformed meanings and uses of their terms in the next decades. But when scientific materialism appeared in an unmistakable way in the 1870's, and completely pushed aside the whole framework of universal history, both men were very conscious of fundamental challenges to their work.

Lepsius however confronted only those aspects of scientific materialism and evolutionary thought which seemed to threaten the universal-historical role and importance of the Hamites, or, at most, the Noachians. Otherwise he basically agreed with most of the physical and cultural typologies around him, particularly as they pertained to Africa. His partial return to the perspectives of universal history with the Cushite theory was even motivated by his basic agreement with racist and Eurocentric assumptions. His underlining of the black-white, inferior-superior division in Africa was virtually indistinguishable from current views, and ultimately foreign to the philosophy of universal history. He had always seen himself as a 'scientific' and cautious

scholar, and his Hamitic theory was presented in this light: the result of linguistic research alone, not the imposition of Eurocentric racist assumptions on a vast number of inadequately researched African languages and peoples. Yet it is highly unlikely that he would ever have had second thoughts about his Hamitic theory, even if he had survived to witness the complete European parcelling-out of Africa. This was the logical result of the longstanding assumption of the innate 'white' right to rule and exploit the inferior blacks, that is to say, the logical result of a 'scholarly' theory like Lepsius' Hamitic theory. The idea of Hamitic, with almost the precise formulation that Lepsius had given it in 1880, would last in African linguistics and in popular assumptions right down to the end of dominating European control of Africa in the second half of this century.

Max Müller's opposition to scientific materialism was of a different, and far wider order. He recognized in it a fundamental philosophical challenge which affected all sides of his work. His main efforts from 1875-6 were concentrated on recreating the balance of factual and spiritual which had supported the idealist philosophy of universal history. It was however precisely this balance which he would not be able to regain. Bunsen's general, spiritual Eurocentrism was being inexorably replaced by a forthright European racism which, as Müller knew, distorted the terms and meanings of universal history completely. At the same time, within

the crucial areas of linguistic and religious studies, the old philosophy of universal history was being more and more outdated. Müller was caught for the rest of his life between these two interrelated and contemporary currents. In the field of language, the current non-linguistic uses of 'Aryan' and Turanian were certainly unacceptable to him. Yet he would not fight them by truly clarifying his linguistic terminology, by accepting the dictates of the new linguistics, and rejecting 'Aryan' and Turanian entirely. Instead, he tried to maintain these terms in the old, ambiguous way, with the focus conspicuously shifted to the ancient East, well away from the current European centre stage of argument. He took refuge in philosophical, religious and especially Indian studies, emerging only occasionally to denounce contemporary European racial speculations in an unconvincing, ambiguous, and ever more outdated way. In the field of religion, Müller found that the only way to fight materialism and evolutionary thought was by dropping all the stratifications of idealist universal history entirely. He had to insist on the central point, an unprovable, but still appealing assertion: the universal, innate and lofty faculty of religion in man. Even this position was not tenable for long. It was only a matter of time until research into religion and mythology revealed his Vedic model for the origin of religion, and by the 1880's, the Vedic model was certainly not held in awe by the social evolutionary and

materialist view. By the time of his death Müller's idealist philosophy of universal history, and with it, his scholarly and general reputation, would be in ruins.

CONCLUSION

The decade of the 1880's saw the death of the philosophy of universal history constructed by Bunsen, Lepsius and Müller in the 1840's and 1850's. The old idealist philosophy of language and Bunsen's half-spiritual, half-rational universalistic synthesis were no longer viable for the later age of scientific materialism. Its new theories of the physically definable origins of man, its vast expanses of prehistoric time, its complex discoveries in ancient history, its concrete evolutionary view of cultural growth all betokened a decided rejection of spiritual and religious perspectives for the dictates of another, scientific orthodoxy. If elements of the old universal history survived the changes of the 1860's and 1870's at all, they could only do so in transformed guises, for different purposes. If Hamitic, Turanian and 'Aryan' clearly did not die out as terms in the last decades of the century it was because they could be moulded and used by the era of scientific materialism, no longer as concepts referring to a coherent theory of universal history, no longer as demonstrable exemplars of God's progressive working in the world and in man, but as physical or psychological or cultural types, that is, as racial concepts, relevant to contemporary European concerns. Seen in the context of the European 'scramble for Africa' the Hamitic concept functioned as a scholarly justification for the longstanding European assumption of (white) superiority over black Africa: it

gave the European right to rule a form of 'scientific' backing. Seen in the context of the attempts at nationalistic self-assertion by isolated minor, or decaying states - Hungary and a Turkey which looked back to its pre-Islamic heritage - the Turanian concept offered a myth of distinctive and larger-scale cultural origins, with the possibility of political co-operation to counter the pan-Slavism and pan-Germanism of the 1890's. Seen in the most complicated context of the self-confident ethnocentrism and imperialist rivalry of late Nineteenth Century Europe, and at the same time, of the rise of Germany in particular, the concept 'Aryan' functioned with several layers of meaning and political application, ever more self-contradictory yet ever more symbolically powerful.

To gauge how far the philosophy of universal history itself encouraged these later racial and political uses of its concepts has been the underlying theme of this dissertation. Bunsen, who never lived to experience the changes of the 1860's and after, would surely have been horrified by them. However it is through the different reactions of Lepsius and Müller, and what became of them, that the degree of contribution of the philosophy of universal history to the ideology of race becomes clearer. Already during Bunsen's lifetime, Lepsius and Müller were moving in a more 'scientific' direction, away from the coherent and spiritual philosophy which their patron had conceived. With their specialized 'factual' work on Hamitic, Turanian and 'Aryan' in the 1860's, they to some

extent set the stage for the transformation of these concepts by the era of scientific materialism. Yet it had been done unconsciously: neither Lepsius nor Müller were comfortable with the changes apparent during the 1870's.

Lepsius' death in 1884 ensured that he would never experience the full racial or political implications that his Hamitic concept could have. However it is clear enough from his formulation of the theory in 1880 that, under the cover of objective scholarship, he himself had altered and expanded the old universal-historical 'Khamitic' almost beyond recognition. In all the most crucial aspects, his Hamitic was very much in line with the ideology of European racial superiority with regard to Africa. Certainly there were facets of Lepsius' theory which struck an old-fashioned rather than contemporary note, particularly the theoretical rejection of all pre-Noachian culture in the face of mounting scientific evidence to the contrary. Yet even this can be referred to Lepsius' basic agreement with the assumptions of European anti-black racism. An independent Sumerian culture opened the logical possibility of an independent Meroitic culture, and in the latter, at least, Negroes would almost certainly have to be involved.<sup>1</sup> After

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1. The rejection of the possibility of a pre-Semitic Sumerian culture could also occur for other, pro-Semitic reasons. Joseph Halévy (1827-1917), about whom little biographical information is available apart from the fact that he was born at Adrinople in Turkey, and held the post of Professor of Ethiopian languages at the École des Hautes-Etudes in Paris, spent much of the last forty years of his life engaged in a propaganda campaign to deny the reality of the



Lepsius' death, the Hamitic theory - in several different forms - certainly survived partly as a matter of luck. It was fortunate that the question of Meroë and the origins of ancient Egypt itself were unresolvable in the Nineteenth Century; it was fortunate that European knowledge of African prehistory and languages was so backward that the few facts available continued to be able to be squeezed into a shape conformable with European requirements for over half a century. Nevertheless, despite all the changes, the fundamentals of the theory, Lepsius' white-black racial contradistinction, would remain unchallenged: the long history of the Hamitic theory stands as an indictment of the potential dangers of the theory of universal history.

The theory altered in specifics most significantly in the last decades of the Nineteenth Century. The linguistic nature of Hamitic - though Lepsius would never himself acknowledge it - had already been researched well enough in the 1870's for its strong Semitic connections

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Sumerian civilization, and to insist on the independent genius of the ancient Mesopotamian Semites. The opening shots were fired against Lenormant's and Oppert's early work in the articles 'Observations critiques sur les prétendus Touraniens de la Babylone' (Journal asiatique, 1874, pp. 461-536) and 'Nouvelles considérations sur le syllabaire cunéiforme' (ibid., 1876, pp. 201-380) reprinted together in one work as Recherches critiques sur l'origine de la civilisation babylonienne, Paris, 1876. For Halévy the Sumerian language was nothing but a sacred dialect of 'Akkadian' Semitic, and, though he eventually softened this view, he lifelong refused to accept the Sumerian culture and language as an important and independent phenomenon. Halévy's works on the subject are innumerable: as well as publishing many monographs, he filled the pages of the review of which he was editor and chief correspondent, the Revue Sémitique (1893-1913), with his anti-Sumerian views.

to be emphasized and any further idea of an Indo-European linguistic relationship thoroughly questioned. By the beginning of the Twentieth Century the Hamito-Semitic was conceived as a closely linked group which fell into two halves, African and Asiatic. At the same time from a physical standpoint, the 'Libyan' autochthonic north African group was more favoured than the old idea of white invaders from Asia. These two new elements in Hamitic allowed the incorporation of the idea of African origins for Hamito-Semitic or even further groups without impinging on the fundamental doctrine that Hamitic meant non-Negro, and had, indeed, a Eurasiatic association. The concept continued unquestioned in Egyptology, in the hands of Erman, Maspero, Petrie, de Morgan and others; most commonly they suggested a combination of African and Asiatic origins, for example, the 'dynastic race' theory which still has its supporters. The unconscious hold of the Hamitic theory has been so strong that until very recently the whole tone of scholarly approach to the civilization of Egypt has emphasized Egypt's complete separation from the rest of Africa, her Eurasiatic links only.<sup>2</sup>

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2. For the linguistic fate of Hamitic see Adolf Erman's articles 'Das Verhältniss des aegyptischen zu den semitischen Sprachen', Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft, XLVI, 1892, pp. 93-129 and 'Die Flexion des aegyptischen Verbums', KAWB, Sitzungsberichte, 1900, pp. 317-353 especially pp. 350-353. For the argument of the physical anthropologists see, for example, Camille Sabatier, 'Essai sur l'ethnologie de l'Afrique du Nord', Revue d'Anthropologie, 2<sup>e</sup> série, VII, 1884, pp. 404-459. On questions of Semito-Hamitic origins see the ambitious African hypothesis of Leo Reinisch, Der einheitliche Ursprung der Sprachen der alten Welt..., Wien, 1873, and for a survey of various possibilities,

It has already been mentioned that Hamitic not only retained but expanded its place in African linguistics thanks to the allegiance of Carl Meinhof, perhaps the leading figure in the field in the first half of the Twentieth Century. Meinhof's prime criterion for Hamitic status was Lepsius' grammatical gender feature, and, with the help of D. Westermann, he structured a three-zoned linguistic model of Africa which was virtually an updating of Bleek and Lepsius' efforts. The languages of the Sudan (Lepsius' middle zone) were the primitive Negro languages at the 'isolating' stage. The Bantu was 'agglutinative', a pre-Hamitic or mixed early Hamitic-Negro type. Finally Hamitic itself was stretched to cover a greater number of languages - groups like the Nilotic and the Fulani (Pūl) which Lepsius too had agreed were very close to Hamitic. Meinhof saw the Hamites as the white 'Herrenvolk' of Africa, and found their influence linguistically, culturally, and physically throughout the

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George A. Barton, Semitic and Hamitic Origins, social and religious, Philadelphia, 1934, especially chapter 1. For Erman's theory of the mixture of Semitic invaders with an autochthonous north African population see his Life in Ancient Egypt, pp. 1-4; for Maspero's Asiatic invaders see his The Dawn of Civilization, p. 45ff.; for Petrie's invaders see his History of Egypt, I (1894) p. 12 and pp. 28-9 right down to his Prehistoric Egypt, London, 1920, p. 49; for de Morgan's view see his Recherches sur les Origines de l'Égypte, 2 vols, Paris, 1896-7, vol. II, p. 190ff. For a modern exposition of the 'dynastic race' theory see Emery, op.cit., p. 38ff., and a more balanced view in J. Bottero, E. Cassin and J. Vercoutter, (eds), The Near East: The early Civilizations, New York, 1967 pp. 232-257, especially p. 253ff. The common attitude of separation of (Eurasian-associated) Egypt from the rest of Africa is a point well made by Basil Davidson, Africa in History, Paladin, 1974, p. 36ff.

continent.<sup>3</sup>

If such were the constructions of the scholars, Hamitic became even more clearly racist - though ever less consistent - in the hands of the popularizers. The Hamites were the central stock of Sergi's 'Mediterranean race' which originated in the Great Lakes region of Africa. These peoples were - on 'cranio-facial skeletal characters' rather than skin colour - a 'brown race', absolutely uniform in their characteristics. They had spread in various directions over the whole north African coast, thence to the Canary Islands, to Asia Minor and Europe. Placed in this category were not only the Hamites but the blonde Nordic race, the Hittites, and the Etruscans, amongst others. Much of the popular anthropology of the early Twentieth Century was built around the same conviction: that all the great civilizations of antiquity and especially Egypt were the handiwork of various sub-types of the 'white race'.<sup>4</sup> The implications for the rest

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3. For Meinhof's views see his Die Sprachen der Hamiten, the references given above, Chapter V notes 51 and 52, and the three-zoned language map found at the end of Die Sprachen der Hamiten. Meinhof wanted to cast the Hamitic net wider than just the African continent; see also his articles, 'Die Entstehung des grammatischen Geschlechts', Zeitschrift für Eingeborenen-Sprachen, XXVII, 2, 1937, pp. 81-90 and 'Das Sumerische und die Sprachen Afrikas', Zeitschrift für Kolonialsprachen, V, 1914-15, pp. 319-331.

4. See Giuseppe Sergi, The Mediterranean Race: A study of the origin of European Peoples, New York, 1913; Grafton Elliot Smith, The Ancient Egyptians and the Origin of Civilization, New and Revised Edition, London and New York, 1923; William H. Worrell, A Study of Races in the ancient Near East, Cambridge, 1927. Note that a revised and highly technical version of the Mediterranean hypothesis of Hamitic origins is still put forward, along with the possibility of African origins: see the article 'The archaeological context of the Hamitic Languages in Northern Africa' by C.B.M. McBurney in Hamitico-Semita... (ed. J. and T. Bynon), pp. 495-506.

of Africa were spelled out by Sergi's disciple, A.C. Haddon, and other anthropologists. The Hamitic 'brown race' dominated the rest of the African population, an innately superior group ruling over inferior savages, and raising them to a higher level by various degrees of influence or intermixture. The Hamitic hypothesis as fact, the Hamites as the pre-European racially superior civilizers of black Africa, are only too recent ideas:

'... it would not be very wide of the mark to say that the history of Africa south of the Sahara is no more than the story of the permeation through the ages, in different degrees and at various times, of the Negro and Bushman aborigines by Hamitic blood and culture. The Hamites were, in fact, the great civilizing force of black Africa from a relatively early period, the influence of the Semites being late and in the main confined to the 'white' areas north of the Sahara inhabited by Hamitic peoples'.<sup>5</sup>

'From a distant period there has been a southward migration of Hamites into East Africa and through their tendency to marriage with the sedentary agricultural Negroes has evolved the virile type to which we now refer. Apart from the introduction of pastoralism - early Hamites are credited with the bringing of the ox and fat-tailed sheep to East Africa - the Hamites taught the Negroes the art of iron-working and in many other ways have affected their culture'.<sup>6</sup>

The racist use of the Hamitic concept has only been called into question since the 1950's, from two

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5. Quotation from C.G. Seligman, Races of Africa (Revised edition), London, 1939, pp. 18-19; these ideas were repeated word for word in the 1967 edition of the same work, quoted in Hamitico-Semitica..., p. 474. See also A.C. Haddon, The Races of Man and their Distribution, Cambridge, 1924.
  6. Quoted from Walter Fitzgerald, Africa: A social, economic and political geography, 8th edition, London and New York, 1957, p. 127.

interrelated directions. The simple fact of the decline of European world power and the end of colonial rule in Africa has slowly stimulated a European revision of the ideology of racism even in its 'scientific' or scholarly aspects. In practical terms this has meant the beginnings of a willingness to accept African cultures on their own terms, and to include the civilization of Egypt in the history of Africa, not simply of Asia and Europe. More specifically, linguistics itself has revised the whole Hamitic concept in the past three decades. Strongly influenced by Franz Boas' emphasis on detailed linguistic knowledge and appreciation of even 'primitive' languages, and his separation of linguistic from non-linguistic criteria or evaluations, particularly those structured by the ethnocentrism of the investigator, J.H. Greenberg has revolutionized the grouping of African languages since 1955. In particular he has rejected the longstanding importation of ethnological or cultural overtones into linguistic questions, focussing especially on Meinhof's - and Lepsius' - grammatical gender criterion and the Hamitic group:

'There are three fundamentals of method underlying the present classification. The first of these is the sole relevance in comparison of resemblances involving both sound and meaning in specific forms. Resemblances in sound only, for example the presence of a tonal system as such, or in meaning only, as in the existence of morphemes (meaningful) forms indicating sex gender but without phonetic similarity, are irrelevant. The second principle is that of mass comparison as against isolated comparisons between pairs of languages. The third is the principle that only linguistic evidence is relevant in drawing conclusions about classification. This last is so self-evident when stated that it would seem unnecessary. In fact, disregard of

this principle is very common and a subtle source of errors in classification in Africa and elsewhere...'<sup>7</sup>

With this last point Greenberg placed his finger upon the ambiguities which the linguistic philosophy of universal history allowed for all its classifications, and which, in Lepsius' Hamitic, created a racist concept out of a linguistic description.

If the work of Lepsius and the fate of Hamitic illustrates the dangerous potential of universal history and its realization, the work of Max Müller demonstrates that Bunsen's philosophy did not necessarily merge into the ideology of race, indeed that it was only under certain conditions that it could do so. Unlike Lepsius Max Müller survived to experience the full impact of the reorientation of European thought by scientific materialism, and the use of his linguistic universal-historical concepts in a racial and political way. As well as reacting sharply against scientific materialism as a whole, Müller was genuinely disturbed by the transformation and abuse of his Turanian and 'Aryan' concepts. However he tried to combat all these things by a return to the past - philosophically and linguistically - without realizing how ambiguous the original philosophy of universal history had itself been.

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7. Quoted from Greenberg, The Languages of Africa, p. 1. For modern views of 'Afroasiatic' or the Hamitico-Semitic group see the references given in Chapter V, note 52 above. On Franz Boas (1868-1942) and his work see Sebeok, Portraits of Linguists, II, pp. 122-139. Examples of a more African perspective on ancient Egypt are Davidson, op.cit., p. 36ff, Wilson, The Culture of Ancient Egypt, Chapters I, II, III, and, from a very pro-black African perspective, Diop, op.cit., passim.

Müller maintained this stand for the rest of his life, in the process diverting his career substantially away from linguistics per se and into the realm of the philosophy of language, religion and thought, or into the editing of ancient eastern texts. His stand proved futile: his protestations were incapable of offering a firm critique of contemporary uses of Turanian and 'Aryan'. For he used the same terminology, though with a different meaning; for the basis of that meaning he appealed to linguistics when linguistics was technically completely bypassing his Turanian and 'Aryan', and to an unclear spiritual perspective which could only be interpreted in the 1880's and 1890's in a biological or psychological or intuitive racial sense. He never understood this dilemma, for, in trying to maintain the linguistic philosophy of universal history in the old way, he could never clarify his terminology in Greenberg's sense.

The general outdated effect that the era of scientific materialism had on Müller's idea of the meaning of his linguistic terminology also caught up with Müller's work in the other fields in which he took refuge in the 1880's. Even as a competent practical linguist Müller's reputation declined sharply from the late 1880's. His expertise in Vedic Sanskrit was subjected to a considerable smear campaign in the 1890's by Böhtlingk and Whitney, followed by the American press. The cloud hanging over Müller's Rig Veda edition, after all considered his most important single scholarly work, has still not been



completely lifted.<sup>8</sup> The famous theory of comparative mythology also crumbled in the 1890's. For some decades it had been perhaps too popular, being applied well outside the Indo-European group, and without the etymological detail that the original theory had had. Müller's own attitude to the generalization of his theory of linguistic solar mythology had been slightly cautious, but not discouraging. However, from the 1870's, evolutionary cultural anthropology began to attack Müller's separation of myth and religion, the assumption of a linguistic solar basis to all myth, and Müller's high-flown assumptions about the mentality of Vedic antiquity. Müller's tendency to generalize the Veda into a universal model was beginning to be perceived: a point which would have some bearing not only on the theory of comparative mythology but also on Müller's religious theories as well. Müller's most famous critic was Andrew Lang, an enthusiastic and aggressive

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8. See the references on Müller's reputation as linguist given in Chapter V, note 58 above. Even a sympathetic American review of Müller's work questioned Müller's actual share in the Rig Veda edition: see A.V. Williams Jackson, 'Max Müller and his Work', The Forum, XXX, 1900-1901, pp. 620-629; his own one-time pupils were rather over-defensive on the same subject: see F. Kielhorn, 'Max Müller', Nachrichten von der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Geschäftliche Mittheilungen, 1901, pp. 35-39. From the point of view of modern linguistics, Müller scarcely rates any reference at all. Pedersen, op.cit., and Mounin, op.cit., do not mention him, Jespersen, op.cit., stresses only the popular linguist aspect, Thomsen, op.cit., grants Müller one footnote (p. 82, note 2), Arens, op.cit., dismisses him cursorily (I, p. 325), Aarsleff, op.cit., condemns him along with the whole German Indo-European school (p. 225 and p. 229ff.) and the Sebeok, Portraits of Linguists collection includes only the short and uncomplementary American view of Hopkins.

disciple of E.B. Tylor, with whom Müller had been on good terms. Lang's merciless critiques developed great force when combined with the undoubted inadequacy of Müller's linguistics once he refused to accommodate himself, for philosophical reasons, to the new methods and results of the Junggrammatiker. Taking his cue from Whitney, Lang revealed the problem:

'It is actually said ... that Ahana never means the dawn, and could never, by any known process, become Dahana and so Daphne. And if this be true, where are we all?'<sup>9</sup>

Müller had no answer to this fundamental challenge, but an ever weaker and less convincing reiteration of the old theory. He seemed to agree in 1885 with the Junggrammatiker, that

' ... phonetic laws cannot be administered in too Draconian a spirit...',

but at the same time pleaded for freedom to find capricious

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9. Quoted from Andrew Lang, 'Anthropology and the Vedas', Folk-lore Journal, I, 1883, p. 114. On Lang's series of critiques beginning in 1873, and also on the vast popularity of a general version of Müller's comparative mythology see Dorson, British Folklorists, Chapter V and p. 206ff. and also by Dorson, 'The Eclipse...'. For Lang in particular see further R.L. Green, Andrew Lang: A Critical Biography, Leicester, 1946; and see especially Lang's article on 'Mythology' in the Encyclopaedia Britannica, 9th edition, vol. XVII, Edinburgh 1884, pp. 135-158. For further critiques of Müller's reliance on an idealized Vedic model see Otto Gruppe, Die griechischen Kulte und Mythen in ihren Beziehungen zu den orientalischen Religionen, Leipzig, 1887 (reprinted New York and Hildesheim, 1973) p. 76ff. For examples of the over-stretching of Müller's theory see Peter le Page Renouf, Lectures on the Origin and growth of Religion as illustrated by the Religion of Ancient Egypt, London, 2nd edition, 1880 (the Hibbert Lectures, 1879). For Müller's own tendency to indulge in wide applications of his Indo-European linguistic-based theory see his articles in The Nineteenth Century: 'Mythology among the Hottentots', XI, Jan. 1882, pp. 110-125, 'The Savage', XVII, Jan., 1885, pp. 109-132, 'The Lesson of Jupiter', XVIII, Oct. 1885, pp. 626-650, and 'Solar Myths', XVIII, Dec. 1885, pp. 900-922.

phonetic switches in the names of mythological personalities in the way he had always done. His one major work on comparative mythology appeared only in 1897, far too late to save the theory he had first worked out in the 1850's. Linguistically and anthropologically the work was outdated even before it appeared in print. Although the Twentieth Century has seen the revival of an Indo-European comparative mythology by Georges Dumézil, its methods are sociological, and its results bear no resemblance to the solar myths of Müller.<sup>10</sup>

The area of religious studies is perhaps the only one in which something of Max Müller's work and reputation may have been continued after his death. Much emphasis has recently been placed on Müller's role as a - or even the - pioneer of comparative religious studies, beginning with the 1867 Preface.<sup>11</sup> As has been shown, Müller's early works on the subject, up to the 1870 Lectures owed a great deal to Bunsen's idea of God

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10. Quotation from Müller's 'The Lesson of Jupiter', p. 635. On plans to write the work which appeared too late, the Contributions to the Science of Mythology, 2 vols, 1897, as early as 1885 see Müller II, p. 169. Compare Müller's old-fashioned linguistic equivalences with the cultural anthropological perspectives of A.A. Macdonell, The Vedic Mythology, which appeared in the same year as Müller's work (1897) in the Grundriss der indoarischen Philologie, Bd 3, 1.Hft.A. (Reprinted Delhi, 1971). For the modern theory of Indo-European comparative mythology see Georges Dumézil, L'Idéologie tripartite des Indo-Européens, Bruxelles, 1958, and C. Scott Littleton, The new comparative mythology..., (revised edition), Berkeley, etc., 1973.
11. This is essentially the theme of Trompf, op.cit., and also partly that of Voigt, Max Müller...

in History: that is, they were not particularly original. Müller's individual contribution to religious studies should be seen to begin in the 1870's, with the idea of editing the Sacred Books, and with the Hibbert Lectures of 1878 on the origin of religion. Certainly these works pointed the way to a significantly different approach to religion from that of Bunsen and earlier seekers after universal revelation: one based on wide, in-depth, original knowledge of the texts and the languages, and on a more objective approach to the phenomenon of religion in general. This would be the path to 'comparative religion' as it is now known. However it is difficult to find in Müller's own work anything more than a general inclination in these directions. Müller's motivation for pursuing the subject, and the results of his structuring of religious types in his last important works were rather backward- than forward-looking. He was concerned with the need to fight scientific materialism, the need to demonstrate the inner, spiritual ...

'bookless religion ..., natural religion...,  
eternal religion...'

throughout humanity, in the face of the attacks of evolutionary cultural anthropology.<sup>12</sup> This need - which united him more with Bunsen's universal history than with any objective approach to religion - dominated the four series of Gifford Lectures from 1888-1892, even though he seemed to have changed so many of his views, and to have

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12. Quoted from Müller, Natural Religion, p. 572.

dropped entirely the linguistic-based stratifications characteristic of Bunsen's God in History. His whole analysis of the growth of religion still saw a progressive movement from 'natural' to 'spiritual' with Judeo-Christianity as a culmination (though the Vedanta philosophy also had a special place in Müller's heart). The assumed religious faculty in man still depended heavily on language and the Vedic model: indeed critics felt that Müller was virtually turning the whole question of the origin and development of religion into one of semantics. Müller always assumed a basic human 'rationalism'. He never investigated the function of religion in society - an especial strongpoint of cultural anthropology - or the phenomenon of belief. All his work remained on the level of historical survey (of a selected number and type of religion) or abstract assumptions about origins; his specific views cannot be said to have had any following in the later development of religious studies.<sup>13</sup> Like the other reflections of the philosophy of universal history, his philosophy of religion died with him in 1900.

In the case of both Turanian and 'Aryan',

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13. See the four series of Gifford Lectures, Natural Religion (delivered 1888), Physical Religion (delivered 1890), London, 1891, Anthropological Religion (delivered 1891), London, 1892, and Theosophy, or Psychological Religion (delivered 1892), London, 1893. For a critique of Müller's views see Boullaye, op.cit., pp. 250-1 (note 4) and pp. 350-1. Fair assessments of Müller's contribution to comparative religious studies are offered by Jordan, op.cit., p. 150ff. and Sharpe, op.cit., pp. 45-6.

nothing of Müller's understanding of the concepts survived after his death except the terms themselves and the vaguest resemblance of approximate meaning. As a linguistic hypothesis Turanian had been completely exploded by the 1880's, even if Müller refused to recognize it. Strictly speaking it could refer to nothing more than Finno-Ugrian or 'Uralic', that is to say, in major outlines, to the Samoyed, Finnic, Lapp and Hungarian languages. There was no particular political or cultural capital to be made out of this linguistic relationship. The group boasted only one modern, semi-independent nation, the Hungarians, who, with a proud tradition of culture and statehood, disdained the idea of a particular relationship with a disparate group of small, often still tribal and backward peoples, long dominated by various more powerful (Indo-)European groups. Given this lack of supra-linguistic motivation, if linguistic certainty had been the other deciding factor, the term Turanian would have disappeared entirely, for it was entirely inappropriate to the Finno-Ugrian group. However there was - and is still - mooted the (remote) possibility of a larger linguistic relationship, 'Ural-Altaiic', which postulated the link between Finno-Ugrian and the Turkish, Mongol and Manchu languages. This would allow the term Turanian to survive, although not with the wide Eurasiatic reference and abstract, culturally stratified meaning that Müller had conceived.

The tenuous Ural-Altaiic relationship was adopted as fact by one Uralic-speaking group, the Hungarians, and

one Altaic-speaking group, the Turks, for nationalistic reasons. In this form, 'Turanism', Turanian continued in currency well into the Twentieth Century. It is ironic that this least linguistically viable of all the concepts structured by linguistic universal history should, when transformed by scientific materialism and applied as a political and racial concept, have come closest to the half-spiritual half-linguistic nature of the original. Unlike Hamitic and 'Aryan', Turanian never became a physical concept: Ural-Altaic speakers were far too disparate in physical type. The Admiralty's Manual on the Turanians (1920?), while it insisted that there was a distinctive Turanian physical type:

'The normal Turanian is middle-sized and of muscular build. He has a broad flat face, with small slanting eyes, high cheek bones, broad flat nose, thick lips, and low forehead. His complexion is yellowish brown, his hair straight and jet black, and his beard scanty...'

had to admit that

'the physical characteristics of the Turanian race have been almost entirely obliterated in the Osmanli Turks and the Hungarian people'.<sup>14</sup>

Since it was amongst these same Turks and Hungarians that the phenomenon of Turanism was most vociferously upheld, the meaning of Turanian clearly had to refer to cultural, linguistic or psychological-spiritual factors. However it

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14. Quoted from A Manual on the Turanians and Pan Turanism, pp. 17-18 and p. 17. On the linguistic fate of the old Turanian hypothesis see the references given in Chapter V, footnote 78 above, and Peter Hajdu, Finno-Ugrian Languages and Peoples (trans G.F. Cushing), London, 1975.

was applied and interpreted slightly differently in Hungary and in Turkey. The Hungarians, isolated and wedged between powerful German and Slavic speaking peoples, used Turanism as a wider, ancient frame of reference by which they could bolster confidence in their own historical and cultural individuality. It is unlikely that they ever seriously conceived of a modern political alliance of Turanians, for their major partner would have had to have been the Turks, a much-hated group in Hungarian history. For them, Turanism functioned as a deepened form of nationalism only. For the Turks, Turanism also represented a myth of cultural origins, one particularly relevant for the rising movement of secularized nationalism because it referred to the pre-Islamic past. However Turanism could equally be used in the modern day, to legitimize claims to reunion with Turkish-related groups now living in Russian territory, although this would be an interpretation too ambitious for the Turkish State of the 1920's. In both Hungarian and Turkish cases Turanism was submerged into simple nationalism by the 1930's, in the Turkish case by a deliberate policy of lowering of previous, expansive aims.<sup>15</sup>

If the term Aryan continued after Müller's death it did so in a way even less related to Müller's definition

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15. On the Hungarian use of Turanism see especially Kessler, op.cit.; on the Turkish use see particularly Bernard Lewis, 'History-writing and National Revival in Turkey', Middle Eastern Affairs, June-July, 1953, pp. 218-227, and his The Emergence of Modern Turkey, pp. 337-346.



than the nationalistic use of Turanian. Müller's 'Aryan', that is, the Indo-European linguistic group, certainly still stood, but - as had already occurred in Müller's lifetime - in such a complex, technical and qualified form that the idea of an easily identifiable ancient eastern 'Aryan' Urvolk, Urheimat and Ursprache or of the linguistic-spiritual continuity of the 'Aryan' speakers could draw little support from it. Indo-European linguistics disassociated itself entirely from <sup>any</sup> idea of ethnological identification by elaborating theories of different layers of linguistic and cultural intermixture, significant borrowings and cross-linguistic influences, and waves of migrations. Those who have seriously tried to use linguistics to search for the proto-Indo-Europeans in this century have ended up by finding them somewhere in very eastern Europe or in central Russia.<sup>16</sup> None of these qualified and complicated linguistic results had any appeal for the theory and practise of German racism. Indeed Twentieth Century German

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16. Thus Otto Schrader, op.cit., V. Gordon Childe, The Aryans. A Study of Indo-European Origins, London, 1926, and down to recent attempts, for example Littleton, op.cit., pp. 23-31. For the complexities of the use of linguistics for these purposes see George Cardona, H.M. Hoenigswald and Alfred Senn (eds), Indo-European and Indo-Europeans..., Conference held at the University of Pennsylvania... 21-23 April, 1966, Philadelphia, 1970: the articles of Winifred P. Lehmann, 'Linguistic Structure as Diacritic Evidence on Proto-Culture', pp. 1-10 and Ward H. Goodenough, 'The Evolution of Pastoralism and Indo-European Origins', pp. 253-265. For an indication of the revision of simple ideas of Ursprache Urvolk and migration of languages and peoples see Antoine Meillet, La méthode comparative en linguistique historique, Oslo, 1925, and Pedersen, op.cit., pp. 277-339.

theoreticians looked upon linguistics as a whole with suspicion, for its long tradition of eastern hypotheses of origin diverted attention from the real, German centre of affairs. If they used the term Aryan at all - and indeed attempts were made to substitute terms like 'Nordic' or 'Germanic' which would be easier to handle - they had to define it in such a way as to fit their own required northern European origins and the myth of the blond Nordic physical type. Aryan became a pseudo-scientific synonym for 'Germanic' or 'Nordic'; that is to say, the term lost all relationship with its own original frame of reference - the Indo-European linguistic group and the predominant role of the ancient eastern representatives within it - and became a self-contradictory symbol:

'Als Resultat der Untersuchungen über Heimat und Wanderungen der Indogermanen hat sich herausgestellt, dass das landläufige Bild von der asiatischen Herkunft der Indogermanen, wobei durch den von Süden nach Norden wandernden Kulturstrom "zufällig" Germanien entdeckt wurde, einer vollständigen Umkehrung bedürfte...

Nicht in Asien, sondern in Europa stand die Wiege der arischen Menschheit, und als Repräsentant des indogermanischen Urvolkes stellte sich das Germanentum selbst heraus'.<sup>17</sup>

It is clear that 'Aryan' as Müller defined it - linguistically, centered with much personal affection in the ancient east - bears no more relationship with the

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17. Quoted from Theobald Bieder, Beiträge zur Geschichte der Rassenforschung und der Theorie der Germanen-Heimat, Hildburghausen, 1909, p. 48. This work and Bieder's Geschichte der Germanenforschung, especially vol. II, Leipzig, 1922 (the period 1806-1870) is characteristically highly distrustful of anything to do with linguistics.

Aryan of the National Socialists than one of shared terminology. In content the two meanings could not have been further apart. For Lepsius too, for the sake of his Hamitic concept, Indo-European had to be centered solidly in the ancient east, and its physical identification had to be amorphous enough to incorporate both Semitic and Hamitic. As to Bunsen, certainly he had stressed the importance of the Germanic achievement, the highpoint of Japhetic and therefore of universal-historical development; but he, least of all, could be linked with the Germanic racism of the Twentieth Century. His (Germanic) Japhetites originated unquestionably in the ancient east along with the rest of mankind, and more importantly, the definition of Germanic or any other group's achievement was for Bunsen completely spiritual, and to be set in a universal human context:

'... language, art, and science, equally with the popular life and the State, become imbued with a new life, if the Gospel be accepted as their principle of existence. The whole history of mankind can present nothing comparable to the transformation already wrought by this principle, though it has been in operation as yet barely three hundred years. It is only since the Reformation, and only in consequence of the Reformation, that there have existed nations who carry their conscience within them, and States which derive their legitimization from that conscience and the loyal hearts of their citizens. The groundwork is laid for a new development of Humanity, worthy to rank beside that of the ancient world, and the wall of partition between Semite and Aryan ... has been broken down...' 18

The philosophy of universal history which Bunsen

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18. God in History III, p. 201.

set out in the 1840's and 1850's with the help of Lepsius and Müller was admittedly highly Eurocentric and very ambiguous in its linguistic definitions. In this sense it provided a possible basis for a racial stratification of human experience with the Germanic peoples cast in the leading role. However the theory was tipped well away from any such implications by Bunsen's very genuine and open religious commitment, which unified all human experience, by his idealist, spiritual definition of his linguistic types and of historical progress itself, by his fundamentally humanitarian and cosmopolitan outlook. It was only after Bunsen's death, when scientific materialism destroyed the possibility of such a balanced synthesis, that the ambiguities and the Eurocentrism of the original theory could function freely. Residue terms from the now exploded philosophy of universal history - Hamitic, Turanian, 'Aryan' - were redefined and used with concrete, racial meanings. None of the original collaborators in the theory had ever intended such uses to occur, although Lepsius and Müller went unconsciously some way along the path of setting the 'scientific' foundations for them. Neither of the two protégés who experienced the changes of the 1870's and 1880's understood fully what was going on around them, nor how far they themselves had contributed to it. Lepsius, who was conscious that some facets of scientific materialism were incompatible with some of his own universal-historical concepts, nevertheless shared the general European assumption of white superiority too deeply to be aware of the

contradiction between the racial use of Hamitic and the spirit of Bunsen's philosophy. Under the banner of scientific scholarship, his work formed the central foundations for the white Hamitic theory. Müller stood closer to Bunsen in the last quarter of the Nineteenth Century, seeing far more clearly the inconsistencies and dangers, and ultimately suffering for his loyalty to the original philosophy of universal history. Yet even he did not see far enough to clarify the ambiguities of the theory and to rethink its Eurasian ethnocentrism: such clarifications would themselves have destroyed the very philosophical position he was trying to use against scientific materialism. Only if he had been able to achieve this painful and fundamental self-critique - which he was not - would he perhaps have produced some more effective counter to the racial ideology of his time and after.

APPENDIX

## The Outline of Universal History

The following table is an amalgamation of several sketches of Universal History made by Bunsen, each with dates, events and terms slightly varying. The main source is the Table of the Ages of the World in Egypt IV, pp. 485-497. Additional elements from Egypt V, pp. 102-4; from Max Müller's Turanian essay in Outlines III, pp. 263-486; from Outlines IV, pp. 21-28; and God In History III, p. 296 ff.

FIRST AGE: Ancient Pre-diluvian History.  
Growth of Language and Religious  
Consciousness.

The appearance of Mankind in central Asia. The Urvolk develops as follows:

(a) 20,000 - 15,000 B.C.

Sinism: Every syllable a word, every word fully substantial, represented by pure picture symbols.  
Awe of the physical Kosmos and instinctive reverence for divine in man: worship of the sky and of ancestors.

Migration and deposit of Sinism in China.

(b) 15,000 - 14,000 B.C.

Turanism: Agglutinative stage in language. Polysyllabic words, origin of particles denoting relationship, and movement towards grammatical parts of speech.

Spirit worship. Beginning of mythology through the development of language. All things have substance, and powers. Superstition.

Various migrations in waves from central Asia in all directions, taking Turanian stage with them.

(c) 14,000 - 11,000 B.C.

Khamism: Complete formation of roots and parts of speech. Declension and conjugation, affixes, suffixes. Symbolic as well as ideographic writing.

Consciousness of humanity's relationship to the Divine; understanding of the immortality of the soul. Continued development of mythology through symbolic use of language.

Migration and deposit of Khamism in Egypt complete by 11,000 B.C.

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THE FLOOD: CONVULSIONS IN NORTHERN ASIA

Break-up of remaining Urvolk. 11,000 - 10,000 B.C.

Semites - leave the country of the sources of the Euphrates and Tigris.

Japhetites - leave the country of the sources of the Oxus and Iaxartes.

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SECOND AGE: Post-diluvian History.  
The Age of Kham.

(a) 10,000 - 7250 B.C.

Khamitic

Language and writing develops. Phonetic writing. Formation of Osiris religion. Beginning of Egyptian nationality, kings, castes.

Semitic

Establishment of triliteral roots and affix system. Semitic migrations. First Empire of Babylon. Strong religious consciousness.

Turanian

Migrations, tribal Empires and invasions.

Japhetic

Flexible vowel and consonant inflection. Journey of Japhetites to Bactria and setting up of state there. Veneration of nature. Flowering of mythology through language.



(b) 7250 - 4000 B.C.

Khamitic

Hereditary monarchs of upper and Lower Kingdoms.  
Local deities.

Semitic

Language completely formed, but rigorously limited in expressing 'ideality' in the sentence. Separation into different groups.

Turanian

Static role as migratory tribes. Individual groups play a spectacular part in history at certain times. Linguistically, some groups develop toward Japhetic.

Japhetic

Perfect inflected language developed. Separation and migration of different groups.

(c) 4000 - 2878 B.C.

Khamitic

Menes 3623 B.C.  
United Kingdom.  
Superior culture of the Old Kingdom.

Semitic

Chaldean Empire in Babylon. Momentous religious development amongst the Chaldees: the birth of Abraham (2927 B.C.) Direct recognition of God as causal principle of the world.

(Turanian and) Japhetic

Aryan Japhetites migrate into the Indus country. Vedic culture. Magnificence of linguistic and mythological forms. Zoroaster institutes a new dynamic and ethical religion. Japhetites not yet free from Turanism.

THIRD AGE: Post-diluvian History.

The dialectic of Semite and Japhetite.

## (a) Time of Abraham and Moses 2877-594 B.C.

Khamitic

Hyksos destroy the Old Empire.  
Restoration but decline of  
Egyptian culture under New  
Empire.

Semitic

Rise of the Hebrews and their  
religion under Abraham's  
descendants. Egyptian bondage,  
Moses, and the Exodus. Full  
development of Judaic religion.  
Other Semites establish  
Assyrian and Carthaginian  
cultures, but are morally  
degenerate, their religion  
nothing but meaningless ritual.

Japhetic

Advance and settlement of  
Japhetic groups in Asia  
and eastern Europe.  
Early Hellenic culture and  
the foundation of Rome.

## (b) Time of Solon and Socrates: 593-30 B.C.

(Khamitic and) Semitic

Conquest and death of  
Egyptian culture.  
Semitic influence throughout  
Asia.  
Destruction of Jerusalem.  
Growth in formalism of Judaic  
religion.

Japhetic

Flowering of Hellenic  
culture.  
Empires of the Medes and  
Persians.  
Rome.

TIME OF CHRIST

Union of Japhetic and Semitic.

FOURTH AGE: The rise of Christianity

(a) The Time of Christ to A.D. 1860

Japhetic groups, especially the Germanic peoples, lead humanity with a powerful admixture of Semitic religious consciousness.

Domination of European culture.

A Split in Christianity. Germanic reform revivifies true religious consciousness.

(b) The Future.

Apocalypse

OR

Possibility of future amalgamation of all peoples of the world under Christianity.

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This bibliography is divided into three sections:

Section A : Primary Sources. The major printed works of C.C.J. Bunsen, C.R. Lepsius and F. Max Müller. Relevant manuscripts.

Section B : Biographies, reviews and other comments on Bunsen, Lepsius and Müller.

Section C : Other works on language, religion, mythology, culture, Egyptology, etc., in the Nineteenth Century.

(1) Works published during the Nineteenth Century.

(2) Works published since c. 1900.

Note that where works are cited in two different languages or editions, the first mentioned has been used for references in this work.

Abbreviations :

kAWB, Abhandlungen/Bericht/  
Monatsberichte/  
Sitzungsberichte

Königliche Akademie der  
Wissenschaften zu Berlin,  
Abhandlungen/Bericht/  
Monatsberichte/Sitzungs-  
berichte.

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