
German Indology and the Orientalism Debate

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CONDEMNATIONS

The ideological basis of the attacks against the Orientalists rest upon assumptions such as the following:

1. Michel Foucault

"All knowledge rests upon injustice"

"The instinct for knowledge is malicious"

NGH, 163

2. Jack Derrida

"There is nothing outside the text"

"The signified is already in the position of the signified"

= there is an object

"Presence is always an error"

= there is no subject; there is no being

3. de Man

"What we assume to be persons in our environment are actually not persons but language"

The utter absurdity of the above statements be condemned as the following will show.

Academic Indology started with William Jones (1746-1794), Henry Thomas Colebrooke (1765-1836), and H.H. Wilson (1819-1899); James Prinsep (1799-1840) read Asoka inscriptions and he, together with Christian Lassen (1800-1876), deciphered the Pali Legends on Bhaktian coins found by Ventura. Brian H. Hodgson (1800-1894) brought the important Mahayana manuscripts from Nepal. George Tunour (1799-1843) translated the *Mahavamsa*, the chronicle of Ceylon.

This collection of names and facts was stated in Eugene Burnouf's introduction to his translation of the *Bhagavata Purana* from 1840. It shows clearly the dependence of Indic studies in the West on the presence of scholarly trained men in the service of the East India Company who due to the powerful position of their employer had access to the treasures of the past on the subcontinent and cooperative informants, and could make use of them. They transmitted their knowledge to others who came to learn from these newly opened sources.

It is, however, interesting to observe that in the nations with colonial presence in India the academic interest in the Indology remained restricted to a small number of tenured professors. In Oxford this was H.H. Wilson (1819-1899) and after him Monier Williams Monier (1849-1899) and in Paris Antoine Leonard de Chezy (1784-1860) and his successor Eugene Burnouf (1801-1852). Chezy's chair at the college de France remained for a long time the only academic position in Indology in France and the Boden Chair of Sanskrit at Oxford and since 1860 a chair at the University of Cambridge were the positions native British Indologists occupied throughout the nineteenth century.

Already Burnouf observed that, due to the great schools of Bonn and Berlin, Sanskrit was put on the first place of the great family of Indo-European languages and received the consecrations of German philological criticism. This point has to be taken in view when dealing with Indological studies in the context of the Orientalism debate, i.e., that Indologists of colonial nations recognized the leading role of the Indologists of a non-colonial nation, Germany.

In Germany scholarly Indology started with the reform of the universities under the Prussian Minister Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835) who knew Sanskrit and had exchanged arguments about the use of Indic studies with nobody less than the philosopher F.W.A. Hegel. However, Indologists were not among the first professors appointed at the newly reformed universities Berlin, Bonn and Breslau. But after Napoleon was defeated and the pre-revolutionary order was confirmed and stabilized, three very remarkable men were appointed: August Wilhelm Schlegel (1818 at Bonn), Friedrich Bopp (1821 at Berlin) and Friedrich Ruckert (1826 in Erlangen). The interesting fact is that all three are known much more for work in other fields than as Indologists: August Wilhelm Schlegel (1767-1845) is the congenial translator of all the dramas of Shakespeare into German which even today is used on German performances of Shakespeare's plays. Schlegel is also as one of the founding fathers of the romantic movement in Germany and, before his appointment in Bonn, he was private secretary to Madame de Stael, the former wife of the French Minister of Finances N. Necker. Friedrich Ruckert (1788-1866) is one of the best poets in the German language who used his linguistic talents also for the translation of the *Sahname*, the Arabic *Maqamat*, and Jaydeva's *Gitagovinda*. This latter work is still unsurpassed and translators from Persian into German envy Ruckert's work. Franz Bopp (1791-1867) was one of the founders of Indo-European linguistics, but he edited also the Nala and Damayanti episode of the *Mahabharatra*, a book from which many generations of Sanskritists learned the language. However, the really remarkable fact about these three men and some of their successors is, that they not only

belonged to the romantic generation but were themselves romantics and contributed to the movement.

This point must be well understood because on it hinges the argument that Central European Indology cannot be labeled Orientalism when we take this term in the sense of E. Said. The romantic movement was an ideological revolution which expressed its dissatisfaction with the bourgeois society by directing its view to goals outside and beyond the realities of life, not, as is widely assumed, as an escape but as an attempt to invigorate the present with the experiences of other worlds. These worlds could be found in very different directions: in the past, in nature, in the neo-platonic ideal of beauty, in language, in folk art and folk lore, etc. Beginnings, origins and unbridled originality were regarded pure and less soiled than the conventions of the present. For this reason, not an imperialistic design, Schlegel learned Sanskrit in Paris and Ruckert studied as many classical Oriental languages as he could. Schlegel's successor, the Dane Christian Lassen(1800-1876) together with a number of Orientalist scholars found that the time had come for a second Renaissance. While the first was ushered in by the Greek and Latin manuscripts which became available to men such as Petrarch, Ficino and many others had made them humanists, so the Oriental manuscripts would start a second Renaissance based on the wisdom of the East. Sentences such as these can be lifted from the founding manifesto of the forerunner organization of the German Oriental Society, about which we will have to say more later. But the same spirit speaks still today out of the seal of the American Oriental Society which bears the inscription "Ex Oriente Lux".

Around 1850 already 13 German Universities had chairs of Sanskrit and this number increased consistently. It attests to the fact that the institutions which had to provide the intellectual support and the state, which had to provide the financial means, never wavered in their support for this field of studies although the hoped for second Renaissance never materialized and Sanskrit as such had no practical use for the Central European states. The reason for the status Sanskrit could achieve in the German university landscape of the 19th century was that, similar to many other fields taught, Indology had shed its romantic hopes and was developing a meticulous scientific methodology.

Evidence for this is the outcome of the scholarly debate between Rudolf von Roth (1821-1895) and Theodore Goldstucker (1821-1872) about the methods of studying the Vedas. The issue was whether, as Goldstucker had proposed, the Indian commentary tradition should be made the basis of all our understanding of the text. The opposite position advanced primarily by Roth and others held that the student of the Veda needs the tools of Indo-European grammar in order to deal with its many unsolved problems. The latter approach prevailed and made

Vedic studies an exemplary scientific field equal with classical philology, the ideal of the textual scholarship throughout the 19th century. On the other hand, the scholarly success gained in this field made the German Sanskritists very self-assured and independent, if not degrading of Indian scholarship. The common opinion was that with the exception of access to new material there was nothing that could be learned from contemporary Indians, and whatever they knew was coached in such a round about and unscholarly way that it was useless to ask questions. This is not simple arrogance or bias as the Orientalist bashers would let us believe, but the attitude of a scientist who approaches the object of his studies with another mind set than his informant or is patient. And indeed, Indology went in directions completely independent from the Indian realities. A good example is that since the middle of the 19th century first in France then in Germany Buddhism became the center of interest. At this time no Indian would have taken up such a subject, for Buddhism was still anathema for all the Hindus and the term *arhat* was one of the severe insults hurled against atheistic modernists. But the European Indologists did not only study the Sanskrit sources of Buddhism but started to learn all the languages in which Buddhistic traditions are preserved, i.e., Pali Tibetan, Chinese and Central Asian Languages, Burmese, Singhalese and recently also Japanese and Thai. Even today, there are no Indian Buddhologists who can hold pace with this type of scholarship. There was also no sinister reason behind it, except scholarly curiosity, why Albrecht Weber (1825-1901), Ernst Leuman, Hermann Jacobi (1850-1937) and after him Ludwig Alsdorf (1904-1978) got interested in Jaina studies. In India nobody studied Janisim except the Jains themselves, but they were bound by sectarian restrictions and other handicaps while these few Swiz and German scholars could freely use their philological tools and make their historical observations on the material the Indian Jains were willing to give them access to.

This scientific attitude is the main reason for the unwillingness of most of the 19th century Indologists to visit the land of their studies. They were aware of the realities there because some of the professors such as Georg Buhler (1837-1898) and Franz Keilhorn (1840-1908) were former officers of the British colonial administration and knew the country better than most natives. Moreover, the sudden death of Richard Pischel (1849- 1908) who finally at the age of 59 set foot at the coasts of Madras and succumbed there to a fever, did not encourage these primarily middle class men to leave their desks for a country vastly different from the record in their manuscripts and books. Well known is Max Muller's "Benares is in my head and not in India," lesser known is Richard Garbe's (1857-1927) outcry of despair after hours of unsuccessful waiting for a manuscript

in the library of the Raja of Benaras at Ramgarh: This land needs a Prussian administration, then things would run more orderly.

By the end of the 19th century a remarkable structure of Indic learning had been erected in Europe and was solidly founded on 17 university professorships in Germany, in Vienna, Prague, etc. In addition to the achievements mentioned before there was the Grammar of the Prakrits by Pischel, Hillebrand's (1853-1907) *Mahabharata* studies. Theodore Benfey's book on the *Pancatantra* studies, Otto Bohtlingk's (1815-1904) and Carl Capeller's work on the Sanskrit dictionary, Paul Deussen's (1845-1919) interpretations of Indian Philosophy, Ferdinand Justi's (1837- 1907) work on Indian Law, etc., etc., and a new generation of promising young scholars was growing up. While the first German Indologists had gone to Paris or London to learn from French or English scholars and to make use of the new collections of Sanskrit manuscripts available only there in Europe at this time, already in 1829 a German Indologist was appointed to teach English students. This was Friedrich Rosen (1805-1835) who became professor at the University College at London. With him starts a long series of German Indologists at English institutions of higher learning. The next appointment was that of Max Muller (1823-1900) who in 1850 became professor of linguistics at Oxford. In the following year Theodore Goldstucker (1821-1872) started to teach at the University College at London. At about the same time Reinhold Rost (1822-1896) was appointed at the college or St. Augustine at Canterbury. From 1864 to 1869 he was secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society and later he became Librarian of the India Office. His successor in this office was Hans Haas (1835-1882), who formerly had served as a private tutor to Lord Minto's family. From 1872 onward, he taught at the University College at London. His predecessor in this position and successor of Goldstucker was Julius Egeling (1842-1918), also a secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society who from 1875 until 1914 taught at the University of Edinburgh. There he followed Theodore Aufrecht (1821-1907) who had occupied this position since 1861. This list could easily be extended by adding the names of German Indologists in the service of the East India Company and later of the British Government in India.

However, in spite of these successes, academic Indology was not without criticism. After the attacks of Georg Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) against the *Bhagavadgita* at the beginning of the century, toward the end of the century we come across another outburst, this time in the writings of Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) but Nietzsche's opponent was a tightly knit net of Classicists, who ostracized him from the guild of serious, i.e., philological, scholars of the Classics. That means, by the end of the century, there was no serious opponent left, on the contrary, one of the Indologists, Alfred Hillebrandt (1853-1907), had become

Senator, Rudolf Roth and Richard Garbe (1857-1927) were elevated in the nobility. The rest enjoyed the privileges of German university professors which put them officially at an equal social rank with Generals of the army.

In the 20th century, this peaceful and self-assured idyll suffered a rough awakening, but it would be wrong to assume that the major political events of our century have basically changed the role of Indology in Central Europe

The first World War does not bring a great movement into this picture. Although Germany was defeated in 1918 and, as some of the politicians of the time liked to describe it, suffered one economic disaster after the other, the number of Indologists surprisingly increased. The Universities of Hamburg and Cologne started Indology in 1920, and at Munchen a special Institute of Indic Studies was established around the same time whereas only in the marginal institutions such as Rostock and Wurzburg no significant teaching of Sanskrit took place during these times. The complains of Theodore Benfey (1809-1881), the Jewish Professor of Indic studies at Gottingen, that his religion was the reason that he did not become a full professor until 1862, did not seem to apply anymore because at Breslau and Koln two Jewish Indologists were appointed: Otto Strauss (1881-1940) and Isidor Scheftelowitz (1875-1935). Hans Heinrich Zimmer (1890-1943), Walter Ruben (1899-19xx), and Otto Stein (1893-1942), all Jews, joined them at Heidelberg and Hamburg and Prague.

This period is characterized by names such as Heinrich Lueders (1869-1943), Willibald Kirfel (1895-1964), and Walter Schubring (1881-1969). They represent the acumen of meticulous textual scholarship and from their prestigious positions at Berlin, Bonn, and Hamburg saw to it that only linguistically and phonologically first class Sanskritists got a chance to become tenured professors. Deviations from the strict philological method were regarded as a sign of unprofessional behavior. When Willibald Kirfel published his *Dreikopfige Gottheit*, the guild judged him senile and no more in possession of his former sharp intellect. In the same manner because of his book *Kaunstform und Yoga* (1926), Hans Heinrich Zimmer lost credibility among his colleague long before his Jewish descent became an issue. From the students in the first semester to senior professors, everybody was judged according to whether he adhered to a general standards and did not say or write anything that was not supported by the texts. This standard worked as the rule in patronage of students, in the promotion of young scholars, in the awarding to research grants and review articles, and, of course, in the grape wine of correspondences and scholarly meetings. It is reflected also in the books of this time which were regarded masterworks. And this they were indeed, although some of them are plainly unreadable. I name here only Walter Pischel's *Prakrit Grammar*, Henirich Luder's *Varuna und die Wasser*, Walter Krifels *Indian*

Cosmology, and Schubring's work on the Jaina Canon. This basic attitude for the exactness of detail, the richness of material and the careful avoidance of unwarranted generalizations prevented these scholars from writing general surveys.

However, the first survey of the achievements of Indology had been already written by Christian Lassen and was published between 1847 and 1862. It appeared under the title *Indische Altertumskunde*. After him scholars turned to the minutiae of special research. The next and really successful "popularizer" of classical India was Helmut von Glasenapp (1891-1963), a gentleman scholar with wide contacts to the leading politicians in India. But among the German Indologists he counted as a light weight, and my teacher Paul Hacker (1913-1979) found always new words to describe Glasenapp's basic misunderstanding of Hinduism while other scholars of Indian philosophy criticized that he treated his sources superficially only and others not at all.

One can call this guild-like conduct, however, what I said about the twenties, applies as well into the fifties and sixties and between these decennia lies the most trubulent period of modern European history. Looking at it from the angle of Indology one thing is noteworthy : there was no direct attempt by the Nazi state to influence teaching and writing. What happened in the Indological seminars in the twenties, went on in the thirties, some of the colleagues found the Aryan connection so attractive that they published and taught prehistory according to the Nazi ideology in their Indological classes. The names are not those of the famous Indologists but rather middle level scholars. In Germany these were W. Wust (1901-19xx) in Munchen and, at Tubingen, J.W Hauer (1881-1962), a former missionary who joined the German Religious Movement, and who in his aggressive anti- Christian attitudes tried to prove the Nordic roots of yoga and other Indian practices. Wust, however, a lexicographer, came to his classes in SS uniform and made his students stay in attention while he went through a Nazi ritual before lecturing. Both did not surface after the Second World War again in teaching positions, a fact which by no means should imply their irrelevance.

On the contrary, due to such people and many others, it happened that in their membership meeting of August 8, 1938, the German Oriental Society decided : "Based on the relevant laws of the Reich, the board of directors peroposes a change in paragraph three of the bylaws : 'German subjects can only become members if they are citizens of the Reich or are preliminarily declared to be citizens of the Reich'." The laws of the Reich mentioned here are the infamous Nurmberg Laws which were designed to exclude Jews from the public life in Germany. The minutes of this meeting note that this proposal was unanimously accepted. I spare you to read the names present at this meeting.

I talked to one of them and he said that under the prevailing circumstances nothing else was possible. I raised the possibility of a vote to dissolve the Society in order not to take the enforced vote. But he said, all the professors were officers of the State and had pledged alliance to the "Führer" with an oath, they did not want to be fired. So instead of resistance against an evil power, one reads in the records of the German Oriental Society about resignations of scholars such as Heinrich Zimmer, Isaak Markon, Hary Torcyner, and others. The State, however, to show his power, was not satisfied with the quoted change in the bylaws and insisted on an additional phrase to be published in the papers of the society reading : "or if they fulfill the conditions to become citizens of the Reich because of their descent."

Of course the exclusion from the German Oriental Society so horrible it sounds today would have been a small evil. However, the stake took much devastating steps against the Jewish colleagues. They were deprived of their status of German officials and that meant dismissed from their tenured positions. More terrible things waited for them. Heinrich Zimmer could leave in time for America where he found a congenial soul in A. Coomaraswami. Also Isidor Scheftelowitz, who was a prominent Rabbi of the Jewish community at Koln, died in London in 1934 and Walter Ruben found a refuge in Turkey. Others were unable to escape : Otto Strauss was caught up by the brown tide in Holland where he perished in 1940, and Otto Stein, the successor of Moitz Winternitz at the German University of Prague, perished in the concentration camp of Lodz. I know it would not be fair to name the ones who profited from the positions opened by the ouster of their Jewish colleagues. But these positions survived the Nazi period, the war and post-war turbulence, at least in West Germany, for Western Germany was a legalistic state and one of the German university administrators once told me : to establish a position is difficult, but when it is once established, it is practically impossible to abolish it. This was true, of course, only about West Germany which made it a point to return to pre-nazi legal conditions as an attempt of stability after a time of utter lawlessness. In East Germany, however, this argument did not count, because there one had one's own recipe for a better society and that meant the downfall of Indology in the Eastern part of Germany.

When the Second World War progressed, it became more and more difficult to make a case for Indic studies. But something which served as an eye-opener to this guild of philologists. This was the appearance of Subhas Chandra Bose in Germany during the war, who if he did not save Indology, but he, definitely, saved the lives of many Indologists. The Indian National Army (INA), he had formed from Rommel's prisoners of war in the fall of 1941, needed interpreters and who was more apt to do the job than the academic

Indologists. It was to their advantage that Bose had negotiated with Hitler, that the INA would only fight the British and preferably on Indian soil and under no conditions see action in Russia. Instead of being drafted into the fighting army, this arrangement made an assignment of a German Indologist to the NIA something like a sojourn on a peaceful island in the middle of a stormy ocean. The Indian Legion was first stationed near Berlin, later (1943) in Holland, and finally near Bordeaux. Around this Indian unit and Bose's diplomatic and propaganda staff in Berlin a whole German support apparatus grew, its top was in the Foreign Office and its tentacles reached into the very platoons of the Hindustani soldiers. On all these levels, Indologists and specialists on Islam were employed as advisors and interpreters and so survived the war by the grace of Netaji. Their list is long and their stories are colorful. It was here that the Private Leopold Fischer could practice his linguistic talents and Indian habits that after Germany's collapse the British took him for a Kashmiri Brahman. Two years later he became Swami Agehananda Bharati (1923-1980), and after this Professor of Anthropology at Syracuse University. In the capacity of a translator, the Indologist Gustav Roth (1916-) spent several years with the NIA. Later he became the Abbot of the University of Nalanda. In the camps of the NIA, Otto Spiess (1901-1981) and Ernest Bannerth concocted their Hindustani Grammar a mixture of village and army slang and high flown Persian expressions, because their informers were illiterate farmers from U.P. and Panjab and these two scholars were specialists of Arabic and Persian literature. In 1941 Ludwig Alsdorf, the only Sanskritist who had written a survey book on India which included the most recent statistics he could lay his hands on, was drafted into the 'Special India Unit' of the Foreign Office which coordinated and supervised the activities of the Indians in Germany.

Did this brush with the Indian realities have any impact on German Indology in general ? From Agehandanda's recollections it becomes clear that most of the German liaisons kept a distance to the Indians, who were mostly illiterate, because their former officers and NCOs had not followed Bose's call to turn their coats. Agehandanda goes so far as to say that most of the circa 4000 soldiers of the Indian Legion did not even belong to the former fighting units of the British Indian Army but were cooks, tailors and other support personnel. This fact could have increased personal contacts and sympathy from the Indologist for this stratum of the Indian society but, instead, it instilled more feelings of superiority because the command over the classical languages of India and their literatures made the German Indologists immediately persons of authority among the Indian soldiers and even gave them a priestly status. More important, then these experiences was the disastrous outcome of this first but intensive

encounter of his first but intensive encounter with Indian realities. All the political choices the Indologists could and did make turned out to be wrong : They had chosen for Subhas Chandra Bose, a looser, whose political aims are very questionable even now. Moreover, the Foreign Office, especially the Special India Unit with its then Head* von Trotha, was one of the centres of the conservative resistance against Hitler and Bose and his Indians were just pawns in this dangerous game. So, in 1944 before the very eyes of the Indological specialists in Berlin, after the abortive attempt of assassination of Hitler, his gruesome and bloody revenge took place. It is no wonder that after the war, German Indologists approached modern India and its violent political issues with special caution.

It was much safer to fall back on contacts made already before the war. This applies to the more senior Indologists who had experienced longer stays in India before the war, e.g., Paul Thieme (1905-), Ludwig Alsdorf and Helmut von Glasenapp. They had adopted Brahmanical attitudes. Their work with the most prestigious texts of the Hindus and Jains had given them direct access to the traditional Indian intellectual upper class and this they took as a confirmation for the intrinsic power of the philological method. So there was no doubt that after the war academic Indology should continue as before. The professors newly appointed in fifties prove this: Frank Richard Hamm (1920-1973), Paul Hacker (1913-1979), F. Bernhard (1931-1971), Wilhelm Rau (1922-). But the establishment of the Indian Union and a beginning exchange of scholars on a regular basis made the problem of an extension of the limits of scholarly research unavoidable. In a *Denkschrift zur Lage der Orientalistik*, the German Oriental Society adopted the ideas of the leading German Indologists and asked for the establishment of many new professorships in modern Indology. Of course, this did not happen at that time. In 1956 at the conclusion of a detailed report on Sanskrit and allied Indological Studies in Europe V. Raghavan stated : "Oriental studies have generally been carried on in a textual, and often times cold ponderous manner and conducted in seclusion so that they have failed to reach the larger public or enthuse the common people" (p.82). Of course, Raghavan let 'the monkey out of the sleeve' when throughout his book, he praised the swamis in Europe for their excellent work in spreading Indian culture. But in the whole of Europe, Indologists became worried about the small number of their students, the rapid development of Social Studies claiming to have better explanation for all relevant questions and, consequently, they feared that the resources allotted to them by their respective governments would ultimately dry up.

Let us now consider how the German Indologists responded to these pressures. In Western Germany, being a Federal Republic, the responsibility for higher education was with the State Governments. But the initiative to expand

the research of Indology into more modern areas did not come from the Indologist but from some of the many scholars of Social Science. Science and Medicine were interested in the modern developments in India, and together with the State Government of Baden Wurtemberg a new institution for interdisciplinary research, the Sudasien Institute at the University of Heidelberg came into being. This institution was modeled somehow after the South Asia Regional Studies Department at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. Its purpose was the research of contemporary problems of South Asia. The classical Indologist Ludwig Alsdorf and Paul Hacker were asked to join the new institution. Both declined, Hacker with a very critical reply concerning the whole concept of this new institution. And right from the beginning the ingrained feelings of the German *ordinarii* (full professors) who wanted to be the directors of a one-professor, one-secretary institute with its own budget, made cooperation beyond the boundaries of the disciplines difficult. By the Heidelberg institute, in the first enthusiastic surge of common strength four projects were proposed to the German Council of Research: (1) the Dhanbad project for research on the Indian coal industry; (2) the Orissa project for the research on the interaction of temple and society exemplified by the Jagannath temple at Puri; and two projects in Thailand dealing with agricultural issues. The Dhanbad project which ran from 1969 to 1972, employed 25 persons, among them five Indians; the Orissa project which started in 1970 was staffed with 15 persons, three of them Indians. The members of the Sudasien Institute were not sufficient in number to man these major endeavors. They were replenished by scholars from elsewhere with temporary contracts. This created a number of continuity problems. Moreover, the preparations, paperwork and logistics put a heavy burden on the members of the institute. German Indology had never before undertaken such large operations, although the history of Classical Archaeology of the 19th century offers already examples of a number of successfully executed large scale operations. The Heidelberg projects were clearly an advantage for many of the members of the institute and are still today emulated by other institutions. However, the human factor, culminating in the 1977 death of Anncharlott Eschmann from malaria contracted during the Orissa project and certain allegations against members of the staff who were alleged to have misused their privileges, dampened the original enthusiasm. Moreover, inside the Sudasian Institute a major conflict developed about the Thailand projects which factually destroyed the original organization of the Institute. The State Government concluded that a fruitful cooperation between the professors of the institute was no more possible and ordered the break up of the institute into many small units attached to various traditional administrative sections (departments). What remains is comparable to one of our Graduate Groups. At present, the Institute functions

primarily as a facility for the various publication series and as an administration for a branch institute attached to the Max Muller Bhavan in New Delhi. The emphasis is now again on the research of individual scholars, and indeed the most remarkable achievement of the Heidelberg scholars is the work on Burushaski by the Sanskritist and Iranist Hermann Berger (1926-), the studies of Maharashtrian folklore by Gunther Sontheimer (1934-1992) and the solid historical research on the rulers of Orissa by Herman Kulke, who is now Professor at Kiel University. *By the way, in this silly, but often mentioned article on Indology by *Ronald Inden, Kulke, was called a romantic and linked with Christian liberalism, analytic psychology, religious foundations, self-help institutions, conscious theories, and tourism. It seems as if Inden has prematurely become Derrida's clown who is supposed to appear as critic but only after grammatology has destroyed the fallacy of opposition.* The widely advertised publications published by the Heidelberg Institute, however, are of mixed quality due to the fact that the strict criteria of the traditional Indologists were never consistently applied in the selection of manuscripts for publication.

In 1981 a conference was held in Tübingen on Indo-German cooperation in the field of Indic studies. This time R.K. Sarma and R.C. Dvivedī gave the Indian "Perspective." Their contribution was that Indology in Europe would be better off when scholars would study Sanskrit as a living language and familiarize themselves with the achievements of modern Sanskrit writers, e.g. the *Kṛistubhagavatam* by Devasya, one of the *poetae laureati* of the Sahitya Akademi (p.29). The final resolution of the conference, however, treated this proposal with silence. Instead, Sontheimer and Tivari outlined their concept of modernization: documentation of folk-rites threatened by extinction due to Westernization, and Jaina studies which are today as actual as hundred years ago.

While the modernists at Heidelberg have returned to traditional Indology, the classical Indologists elsewhere developed their version of modern cooperation. Following the example of the very successful venture of the Orient Institute at Beirut, an undertaking of the German Oriental Society with money from the Federal Government, the Indologists proposed to the Society a similar project for Nepal with the main purpose of microfilming the Royal Library of Kathmandu. While the Beirut Institute about which nothing than good can be said succumbed to the civil war in Libanon and had to be evacuated to Turkey to be resurecred recently in Beirut again, the Nepal branch flourishes and has photographed so far more than 500 000 manuscripts in Kathmandu and elsewhere in Nepal. The huge collection of microfilms of these manuscripts at Berlin has become a condition *sine qua non* for any research on Sanskrit texts and the enormous experience of history and living traditions in a country unspoiled by colonial

interference has helped to give young German Indologists a leading edge, e.g., at the appointment of one of the former directors of the Nepal institute, Michael Wizel to the chair of Sanskrit at Harvard.

In France and England there were similar attempts for modernization which took very different turns according to the national diversities. In France the concentration on Indic studies remained restricted to Paris and there the number of professorships extended only marginally. The overall policy toward research in this country resulted in a mammoth institutional organization like an academy which provides numerous scholars with a regular income and practically does not ask what they do in their *sine cura*. Under this umbrella numerous specializations can be exercised although with each new government and each budgetary cut a shiver runs through all scholars whether the axe may fall now or not. For the time being no essential cuts have been done, however, the Indological section of the French institute at Pondicherry escaped its demise just so.

Most of us are familiar with the pre-Thatcher expansion of modern Indic studies in England where every newly founded university had to have an Indic department, of course without Indology but crowded with Social Scientists. Already in*....., we hear complains about regional specialists for South Asia without command of a South Asian language and any training in South Asian history. Most of those "specialists" were unemployable. So it was no wonder that the restriction in funding of the universities in England caused the demise of many of these institutes and left classical Indology in the old universities only, but in a very precarious state indeed.

But it would be a mistake to assume that just the amassing of endless material such as the Nepal films which still are only roughly catalogued and contain numerous medieval compilations of well-known texts, constitutes the basis on which the self-esteem of the Indologists rests today. After the second World War and very carefully indeed, a discussion started to develop about the purpose of Indological research. A starting point was the question whether Kirfel's text critical approach to the Puranas and Luder's dealing with the Rsyasmga myth was really the last word Indology had to say about such issues. Although Paul Hacker said that in both cases invaluable results were achieved, he did not agree that we have to be satisfied with the bits and pieces into which Kirfel had dissected the Puranas nor have we to accept with Luder's that the oldest version of the Rsyasmga myth is also the most valuable one and all the other versions are merely derivatives. In his study of the Prahlada myth Hacker showed how its various versions represent different trends in Indian thinking and on the basis of them he proposed a relative chronology for most of the major Puranas. His

studies gave the later periods of Indian religion and philosophy new importance but more than that he had shown what creativity in the Indological discipline really means. The time of adding just another text or commentary to the existing corpus, or translating once more a well-known work or a minor manuscript, is over when achievement in the field is to be measured. There must be a new insight or new material has to be introduced which sheds new light on well-known concepts. Hacker made many enemies among his colleagues with his merciless criticism of mindless historicism and purposeless textual criticism, however since his death in 1979 not only conferences were held discussing his ideas but also his criteria for meaningful textual scholarship have guided many of the younger Indologists.

Despite many voices to the contrary, namely, that German Indology is responsible for the idea of Aryan supremacy, the symbols of the Nazi movement, and consequently for the crimes committed in its name, the above makes it clear that the enterprise of German Indology in the 19th Century was not to transform knowledge about India into a political weapon of nationalism and racism. The Indological interests throughout the 19th century retreated more and more in highly specialized arcana and actually shunned popularization of recoveries and results of research. If one wants to find the forerunner of these evil trends of European ideology one has to look for people without scholarly training who appropriated bits and pieces of scholarly research for their scholarly constructs. From Friedrich Forster to Alfred Rosenberg, there is an ample crop of them. But there were also others such as Buddhist societies, Vedanta societies etc. who made a gentler use of the fruits of Indological scholarship. One complains that the Indologists did not forcefully resist the misuse of their findings. But it is more likely that they did not take notice of the plethora of popularization and misappropriation of their work. They went on according to their own rules of excellence and appointed professors with no regard of their race until the Nazis took power.

It is, however, plausible to claim that this sort of Indology until recently marginalized the study of modern India (caused by the limited access to the country and the easy availability of manuscript material in Europe) and created a scholarly view of ancient South Asia exclusively from a mostly Brahmanical point of view. This body of knowledge excluded non-brahmanical cultures, especially in South India, and Muslim India as a whole. But it has to be said also, the mastery of Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit and later of the Southeast Asian and East Asian languages of Buddhism was more than a single scholar could master. Moreover, from their European students, the texts in Sanskrit required an extraordinary amount of asceticism in order to understand them properly,

which simply did not leave time to acquire other languages (e.g. Persian, Tamil and some of the host of modern Indian idioms) which would have opened the doors to those neglected parts of the past and present of South Asia we just mentioned. However, if the Germans had started Indology like the Americans did, i.e., from the other end, trying to grasp the truth with the help of Sociological and Anthropological methods, the desert of ignorance about the Indian past would have spread over Europe and America. But now it is at least possible to counter the lofty constructs of Social Sciences with textual evidence prepared by those assiduous scholars of the past, an evidence which does not testify for the whole but surely for a major part of the past. And so it is the task for future generations of scholars all over to fill the gaps which are left by previous scholarship as far as it is possible.

I really don't know what to say about a man who enjoys the freedom of speech of the Western world and declares that "knowledge rests upon injustice" while it was unjust ignorance which destroyed the just knowledge of the Jewish Indologists in the thirties. Nothing but barbaric injustice could declare their presence an error to be blotted out. If anything is to be learned from my "logocentric" history, it is that whenever the person, instead of being celebrated as the presence of being, is reduced to a trace and that is to say to nothingness, it is very likely this person will not become just language but will end up literarily on the ash heap of another tyrannical regime.

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