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Klaproth, Balbi and the language atlas

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Julius Klaproth's *Asia Polyglotta* (1823) and Adriano Balbi's *Atlas ethnographique du Globe* (1826a, 1826b) were the first examples of so-called 'language atlases'. This article investigates how these atlases presented language as an object of study, and how the study of language intersected with history, geography, ethnography, and other learned pursuits in Klaproth's and Balbi's research programmes. This gives us a new perspective on the shaping of linguistics as a discipline and the role of non-Indo-European languages in it.

Keywords: Klaproth, Julius (1783–1835), Balbi, Adriano (1782–1848), language atlases, language classification, ethnolinguistics

1. The birth of the language atlas

An atlas can be two things: a collection of maps, most often of the whole world; and a collection of scientific images and/or data “that identify a discipline’s most significant objects of enquiry” (Daston & Galison 2007: 17). The first is the original meaning of ‘atlas’ and the more common usage, going back to Mercator’s *Atlas* of 1595 (one of the few early modern allegorical titles that stuck; another one is *Flora*). The second is a more technical meaning, derived from the first, made popular among historians and philosophers of science by Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison’s monumental *Objectivity* (2007), who used scientific atlases as the basis of their analysis of changes in the representation of knowledge. Both types of atlases are typically large to extraordinarily large books; ‘atlas folio’ is a 64 × 37.5 cm printing format.

A language atlas can be both types of atlas at once. In its modern form, it is typically a collection of maps on which regional linguistic varieties are indicated; but that data can also be laid out in comparative tables.¹ The first language atlases,

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1. For an historical overview, see Werlen (1996) and Lameli (2010). Earlier language maps are in Ten Kate (1723) and Hensel (1741). Language atlases directly following upon Klaproth’s example are Biondelli (1841) and Koelle (1854a).

Julius Klaproth's (1783–1835) *Asia Polyglotta* (1823) and Adriano Balbi's (1782–1848) *Atlas ethnographique du Globe* (1826a, 1826b), primarily do the latter, for the languages of Asia and for all known languages, respectively. These are relatively slim volumes in comparison to the voluminous compendia that language atlases later became, of 59 and 41 folio or double folio tables respectively, both accompanied by an introductory volume. They are compilations rather than outcomes of standardized surveys; all the same, with their tabular overviews and geographical coordinates, they are distinctly different in format from early modern Lord's Prayer collections and antiquarian compendia. They represent, in more than one sense, the changing place of language and language study in the landscape of knowledge.

This article is concerned with the emergence of language atlases as a genre and as a form of representing knowledge. In other words, what were Klaproth and Balbi doing in putting language into an atlas? First of all, they were presenting language as an object of knowledge, an object that could be localized and inspected. Second, they were presenting condensed information – data which had gone through a process of compilation, classification, and abstraction. And third, they were using that data to make statements about people, history, and geography. Klaproth was a self-taught Sinologist and polyglot who doubled as a map-maker, sometimes under his pseudonym Louis de l'Or. Balbi was a geographer both by training and in mind-set, the later author of an authoritative *Abrégé de Géographie* (1833). Through their language atlases, they contributed to shaping linguistics as a discipline – Klaproth first put 'Indo-Germanic' to systematic use in a series of tables (Klaproth 1823: 42–107), Balbi introduced the term *linguistique* into French (Auroux 1987) – before there were professional linguists proper. Still, what their atlases represent is not language as an object of study for its own sake but as part of a network of learned pursuits, which included ethnography, map-making, exploration, political science, world history, the study of ancient texts, and also racial classification.

Klaproth and Balbi present us with two different ways of positioning linguistics as a field of study, and language as an object of study. In Klaproth's *Asia Polyglotta*, we can detect all kinds of intertextual links to his earlier and later works, especially the journal of his travels in Georgia and the Caucasus (Klaproth 1812–14), his historical atlas of Asia (Klaproth 1826), and his three volumes of *Mémoires relatifs à l'Asie* (1824–28). *Asia Polyglotta* sums up his life's work and offers his most daring hypotheses on early history, language relatedness, and the migrations of mankind. Balbi's *Atlas ethnographique* offers less of an hypothesis of its own (though more than it pretends to). Rather, it summarizes the current state of linguistic and ethnographic knowledge, and Balbi's introduction is more of a bibliography than a treatise, an intricate fabric of references and long quotations in which it is sometimes difficult to discern his own position. Klaproth, the brilliant autodidact, loudly proclaims his authority as an expert because of his first-hand knowledge of

Asia and its languages, and disputes (almost) everyone else's. Balbi, the judicious compiler, has a much more deferential attitude towards the expert judgement of others, except when it comes to classification and presenting a global overview – in which he was indeed exceptionally adept.

Klaproth is the more picturesque figure of the two, with manuscripts in at least twelve languages drafted in places as remote as Tbilisi and Irkutsk. The son of a pioneer chemist, he taught himself Chinese in his teens, escorted an abortive Russian embassy mission to China and was taught Japanese in Irkutsk by a Japanese castaway,² came back from his subsequent Caucasus expedition more dead than alive, stole books from the Imperial Library in St Petersburg, visited Napoleon on Elba, and spent his last two decades in Paris while on a sinecure professorship from Bonn, co-founding the *Société Asiatique de Paris*. In spite of his obstinate temper and constant polemics, he managed to ingratiate himself with powerful patrons like Andreas von Merian (1772–1828), Wilhelm (1767–1835) and Alexander von Humboldt (1769–1859), and Count Jan Potocki (1761–1815). He has also left more traces of his collections and correspondence, and in secondary literature (Walravens 1999a,b, Benes 2008, Tintemann 2014a,b, 2015). Balbi, the impoverished scion of a Venetian noble family that built Palazzo Balbi, had a life that was interesting enough, working in Lisbon, Paris, and Vienna, but when he wrote of his own work he wrote in plural or third person, and the most extensive source about his life and deeds is an 8-page eulogy delivered during his lifetime (Jarry de Mancy 1842).

Both lived in Paris throughout the 1820s, and precisely because of this physical proximity, their correspondence is brief. Balbi refers a lot to Klaproth in the introduction to the *Atlas ethnographique* and occasionally in other writings; Klaproth's main reference to Balbi was the commentary he wrote to a pre-published segment of Balbi's atlas, which provoked Balbi's ire and an angry five-page addendum to the *Introduction* (Balbi 1826a: 385–90). Apart from that quarrel, they seem to have got along well; a brief note from 1831 simply reads, "Si Monsieur Balbi me veut faire l'honneur de venir demain Mardi vers 5 heures chez moi, j'aurai le plaisir de l'attendre" (Amsterdam University Library, Special Collections: Hs 75 Ed 4).

Klaproth and Balbi share the same precedents for their atlases: the polyglot vocabulary compiled at the behest of Catherine the Great (Pallas 1786–89), and Johann Christoph Adelung's (1732–1806) overview of the world's languages as represented in nearly 500 versions of the Lord's Prayer (Adelung & Vater 1806–17). Klaproth, in his travels in Siberia and the Caucasus, was following almost literally in the footsteps of Peter Simon Pallas (1741–1811) and of a range of other

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2. Shinzo, a.k.a. Nikolai Kolotygin (Cf. Kornicki 2000: 582–3). Klaproth's transcript of a Chinese-Japanese dictionary made under Shinzo's supervision is in the British Library (Add MS 21437).

18th-century explorers in the Russian empire, who were mainly German; he refers to manuscripts in the Imperial Library by Daniel Gottlieb Messerschmidt (1685–1735) and Gerhard Friedrich Müller (1707–1783) as crucial sources for *Asia Polyglotta*, and one manuscript by Messerschmidt from St. Petersburg shows up in the auction catalogue of his library (Klaproth 1839: 65). After completing *Asia Polyglotta*, with support from the Humboldt brothers, he took up a revised edition of Adelung's *Mithridates*, to bring the overview of the world's languages up to date (Tintemann 2014a); nothing came of the plan.

Balbi, reviewing the state of *linguistique comparative* in the introduction to his atlas, judged that “Le vocabulaire de Pallas, les immenses collections de Hervas et le *Mithridates* d'Adelung et Vater doivent être considérées comme les ouvrages qui ont posé les véritables fondemens de cette branche importante de la linguistique” (Balbi 1826a: xv). Of these three, *Mithridates*, the most recent and extensive one, was also by far the source that Balbi most relied on, together with *Asia Polyglotta*. Balbi refers to the precedent of Pallas in dedicating his work to Tsar Alexander I, presenting the atlas as a direct successor to the project of the Tsar's grandmother and thus “une émanation du génie de CATHERINE II” (Balbi 1826b: n.p.). The exact nature of the Tsar's support is unknown, but Alexander I personally approved the manuscript shortly before his death (Malte-Brun 1826), and an extensive overview of the state of Russian literature and culture (Balbi 1826a: 323–83) was appended to the introduction in his honour.

It is possible to view both Klaproth and Balbi as transitional figures between an early modern practice of erudite compilation (Gierl 2001; Zedelmaier 2015) and a modern model of language classification and expert judgement. While their atlases are products of the centralization of knowledge – and could hardly have been produced elsewhere than in the metropolis – their personal trajectories were more erratic. Both operated within central state institutions but were only loosely affiliated with them, Balbi as a bureaucrat without an office, Klaproth as a romantic wanderer who adhered to no Romantic movement. Still, they offered a model for the study of language largely independent from theology, classical philology, and *grammaire générale*. Instead, the motto of *Asia Polyglotta* (a quote from Alexander von Humboldt) linked ‘l'étude des langues’ to ‘l'histoire philosophique des peuples’,³ while Balbi treats it under ‘ethnographie’. The question, in view of this re-orientation and change of nomenclature, is not so much how modern they were but how they gathered and processed information and presented the outcomes as knowledge.

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3. “Quelqu'isolées que paroissent au premier abord certaines langues, quelqu'extraordinaires que soient leurs caprices et leurs idiotismes, toutes ont de l'analogie entre elles, et ces rapports multipliés seront aperçus à mesure que l'on perfectionnera l'histoire philosophique des peuples et l'étude des langues, qui sont à la fois le produit de l'intelligence, et l'expression du caractère individuel de l'homme” (Humboldt 1816: II, 383)

2. Klaproth's *Asia Polyglotta*

The two leading hypotheses in *Asia Polyglotta* are (1) a distinction between two kinds of language relatedness, *allgemeine* (universal) and *Stammverwandtschaft*; and (2) the Deluge as a historical (and probably natural) event around 3000 BCE that occurs in Chinese, Indian, and Hebrew sources, part of a series of deluges that marked the separation between the different language families. In loud contradiction to Schlegel, Bopp, and the dominant trend in early 19th-century linguistics, Klaproth asserts the primacy of lexical over grammatical similarities:

Die Wurzeln und Wörter sind der Stoff der Sprachen, welcher durch die Grammatik geformt wird; Sie bleiben sich gleich, so wie der Diamant Diamant bleibt, er mag als Brillant, als Rosette, oder als Tafelstein geschliffen sein. (Klaproth 1823: x)

Lexical similarities, according to Klaproth, are to be found between all languages; but languages are part of the same *Stamm* only when these occur consistently over a range of words, when the grammar is also alike, and when the people that speak them are connected through history and physical resemblance. On the language map at the end of the atlas (signed *Louis de l'Or del.*) the borders between these languages families are drawn in colored lines (Figure 1). Since so many *Stämme* are separated by or grouped around mountain ranges, Klaproth infers that this is where different tribes of men must have fled to survive the Flood.

Almost the entire introductory volume (pp. 35–365) is taken up by the section ‘Die Völker Asiens nach den Sprachen geordnet’. For each family – Klaproth numbers XXIII of them, beginning with ‘Indo-Germanen’ and ‘Semiten’ – the sub-section starts with a geographical-historical description, followed by mainly two-column word lists. Each family is divided into different *Stämme*, and in particular, Klaproth has strong opinions about the relations between the nomadic tribes of Central Asia, devoting two separate sub-sections to determining the origins of ‘Tatars’ and ‘Buchars’, one to the migrations of Finnic (or ‘Uralian’) tribes, and an earlier treatise (Klaproth 1812) to the language and alphabet of the Uyghurs. Here and elsewhere, Klaproth collates linguistic material with Chinese and other Asian historical sources in order to correct Adelung, Pallas, and other predecessors. ‘Tatars’, according to him, are simply Mongols, and should not be confused with Turks (whereas in Klaproth 1812, 8–10, he had loudly argued the opposite); ‘Buchars’ are not Turkic but Persian, since Klaproth has communicated with them in Persian; finally, since the Urals are ‘the gate through which the nomads of Central Asia burst into Europe’ (Klaproth 1823: 182), it follows that many of these tribes, including Hungarians and Huns, speak or must have spoken a mixed (Turkic-) Finnic language.

Not all families treated in the introduction recur in the atlas, which mainly covers language groups in the Russian Empire: Caucasian, Samoyedic, Finnic, Turkic,

Figure 1. Language map of Asia. Klaproth, *Asia Polyglotta*, pl. I (Princeton Theological Seminary Library)

Tungusic, Kamchatkan, and Yukaghir. Each of these is laid out in a separate series of tables, with some 200 rows (words) and 12–24 columns (languages/dialects, grouped into various *Stämme*) each (see Figure 2).

To a larger extent than Klaproth is willing to acknowledge, this is a revision and re-arrangement of the vocabulary presented by Pallas, which covers an overlapping set of 285 words in 200 languages (Pallas 1786–89; cf. Archaimbault 2010). Klaproth, however, had a low opinion of Pallas in linguistic matters: he was not truly a ‘Sprachkenner’ and had ‘no sense of etymology’ (Klaproth 1823: 239, 244). Pallas would not have wholly disagreed: the *Vocabularia comparativa* was not his brainchild nor entirely his own work, we have his word for it that he took up the task against his own inclination (Wendland 1992: I, 494–6), and though a committed Linnaean, he made only a very sketchy attempt at language classification. Also, apart from a short Latin foreword, the *Vocabularia comparativa* is entirely in Cyrillic, in which many non-Slavonic words are distorted or simply rendered wrong (Fodor 1975: 29–34). Klaproth, instead, uses Cyrillic as a kind of phonetic notation system within the Latin alphabet, to more correctly represent certain sounds especially in

KAUKASISCHE SPRACHEN.

LESGLI.															MIZDGLI.										WEST KAVKASIER.											
DICTION.	ABKAS.			ABUR.			TAL AND KAVC.			ABDI.			DID AND DUG.			QAT QOTQ.			ABCH AND KURU.			MURGU.			INGUR.			TUTU.			VAGUR.			ABCHER.		
Abad.	Balki.			Balki.			Chamduki.			Kamdu.			Kamdu.			Sturuch.			Sturuch.			Sturuch.			Sturuch.			Sturuch.			Parguma, pumbe.		Kolpen.			
Ad.	Biruk, m'w'w'w.			Hiruk.			Hiruk.			Kiruk.			Kiruk.			Ulu, ubu.			Ulu, ubu.			Ulu, ubu.			Ulu, ubu.			Ulu, ubu.			Tilun.		Logen.			
Ang.	Bira, Bir.			Bira + K. H.			Hiruk, churk, hunc.			Guruk.			Guruk.			Bira, Bira.			Bira, Bira.			Bira, Bira.			Bira, Bira.			Bira, Bira.			Nor. na.		Ulen A. A. A.			
Bart.	Mukuk, smu.			Mukuk.			Biruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk.			Muruk.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Deuk, deuk.		Deuk, A. Deuk.			
Barch.	Yach, yach.			Yach.			Biruk, m'w'w'w.			Biruk, m'w'w'w.			Biruk, m'w'w'w.			Guruk, yach.			Guruk, yach.			Guruk, yach.			Guruk, yach.			Guruk, yach.			Byak, byak, byak.					
Bash.	Gut, dui, hunc.						Turuk, dui.			Guruk, dui.			Muruk, dui.			Kali, kiki.			Kali, kiki.			Kali, kiki.			Kali, kiki.			Kali, kiki.			Dig, sig, p. h.		Asp, p. h. d. h.			
Bat.	Ant.						Kuruk.			Kuruk.			Kuruk.			Ch.			Ch.			Ch.			Ch.			Ch.			W'w'w, w'w'w, h. h.		Kuruk.			
Beg.	Mukuk, Abur.						Ziguk.			Ziguk.			Ziguk.			Duruk.			Duruk.			Duruk.			Duruk.			Duruk.			Kuruk, k'w'w, h. h.		Asp, p. h. d. h.			
Blat.	Tijuk.						Ziguk.			K'w'w, k'w'w.			K'w'w, k'w'w.			K'w'w, k'w'w.			K'w'w, k'w'w.			K'w'w, k'w'w.			K'w'w, k'w'w.			K'w'w, k'w'w.			Asp, p. h. d. h.					
Buch.	Kehuk.						Kuruk.			Nuruk.			Nuruk.			Chuk.			Chuk.			Chuk.			Chuk.			Chuk.			Muruk, muruk.		Asp, p. h. d. h.			
Blit.	Pr.			Pr.			Pr.			Lamuk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk.			Paruk.			Paruk.			Lamuk, m'w'w'w.			Lamuk, m'w'w'w.			Lamuk, m'w'w'w.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.		Asp, p. h. d. h.			
Blut.	Ph, juk.			Ph.			Hiruk, m'w'w'w.			Hiruk, m'w'w'w.			Hiruk, m'w'w'w.			Osuk.			Osuk.			Osuk.			Osuk.			Osuk.			T'w'w, h. h.					
Buguk.	Kuruk.						Kuruk.			Kuruk.			Kuruk.			Kuruk.			Kuruk.			Kuruk.			Kuruk.			Kuruk.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.		Asp, p. h. d. h.			
Buruk (Wadler).	Kuruk, k'w'w, h. h.			Kuruk.			Kuruk, k'w'w, h. h.			Kuruk, k'w'w, h. h.			Kuruk, k'w'w, h. h.			Kuruk, k'w'w, h. h.			Kuruk, k'w'w, h. h.			Kuruk, k'w'w, h. h.			Kuruk, k'w'w, h. h.			Kuruk, k'w'w, h. h.			Dig, sig, p. h.		Asp, p. h. d. h.			
Buruk.	W'w'w, w'w'w.			W'w'w.			W'w'w, w'w'w.			W'w'w, w'w'w.			W'w'w, w'w'w.			W'w'w, w'w'w.			W'w'w, w'w'w.			W'w'w, w'w'w.			W'w'w, w'w'w.			W'w'w, w'w'w.			W'w'w, w'w'w.			W'w'w, w'w'w.		
Brut.	K'w'w, k'w'w.			K'w'w.			Chuk, k'w'w.			K'w'w.			K'w'w.			Muruk.			Muruk.			Muruk.			Muruk.			Muruk.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.		Asp, p. h. d. h.			
Bud.	Tud.			Tud.			Tud, A. k'w'w.			Tud.			Tud.			Tud.			Tud.			Tud.			Tud.			Tud.			Tud.			Tud.		
Buter.	Nab.			Nab.			Nab, A. j'w'w.			Hiruk, m'w'w'w.			Guruk, m'w'w'w.			Nuruk.			Nuruk.			Nuruk.			Nuruk.			Nuruk.			T'w'w, h. h.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.		
Gunuk.	Mus.			Mus.			Mus, A. j'w'w.			Kuruk.			Kuruk.			Muruk.			Muruk.			Muruk.			Muruk.			Muruk.			Egh, A. w'w.			Egh, A. w'w.		
Daun.	Guruk, h.			Guruk.			Guruk, h.			Chuk, h.			Chuk, h.			Kuruk, h.			Kuruk, h.			Kuruk, h.			Kuruk, h.			Kuruk, h.			Guruk, h.			Duruk, m'w'w'w.		A. w'w.
El.	Chuk, hunc.			Hunc.			Hunc, A. j'w'w.			Kuruk.			Kuruk.			Guruk.			Guruk.			Guruk.			Guruk.			Guruk.			Jokuk.		Katur, katur.			
En.	Turuk.			Turuk.			Turuk, j'w'w.			Buruk.			Buruk.			Muruk.			Muruk.			Muruk.			Muruk.			Muruk.			Muruk.			Muruk.		
Eus.	Mach.			Mach.			Mach.			Muruk.			Muruk.			Muruk.			Muruk.			Muruk.			Muruk.			Muruk.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.		
Esh.	Kuruk, hunc.			Kuruk.			Kuruk, hunc.			Kuruk, hunc.			Kuruk, hunc.			Kuruk, hunc.			Kuruk, hunc.			Kuruk, hunc.			Kuruk, hunc.			Kuruk, hunc.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.		
Est.	Hunc, hunc.			Hunc, hunc.			Hunc, hunc.			Hunc, hunc.			Hunc, hunc.			Hunc, hunc.			Hunc, hunc.			Hunc, hunc.			Hunc, hunc.			Hunc, hunc.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.		
Ex.	Duruk, chuk, hunc.			Hunc.			Hunc, hunc.			Duruk.			Duruk.			Duruk.			Duruk.			Duruk.			Duruk.			Duruk.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.		
Eok.	Ruf, hunc.			Ruf.			Ruf, hunc.			Ruf, hunc.			Ruf, hunc.			Ruf, hunc.			Ruf, hunc.			Ruf, hunc.			Ruf, hunc.			Ruf, hunc.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.		
Eut.	Nab, hunc.			Nab.			Nab, hunc.			Nab, hunc.			Nab, hunc.			Nab, hunc.			Nab, hunc.			Nab, hunc.			Nab, hunc.			Nab, hunc.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.		
Yokuk.	Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.		
Yokuk.	Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.		
Yokuk.	Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.		
Yokuk.	Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.		
Yokuk.	Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.		
Yokuk.	Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.		
Yokuk.	Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.		
Yokuk.	Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.		
Yokuk.	Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.		
Yokuk.	Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.		
Yokuk.	Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.		
Yokuk.	Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.		
Yokuk.	Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.			Chuk, k'w'w, h. h.		
Yokuk.	Muruk, m'w'w'w.			Muruk.																																

Figure 2. Languages of the Caucasus. Klaproth, *Asia Polyglotta*, tab. I (Princeton Theological Seminary Library)

Caucasian, Uralic, and Siberian languages; e.g. ЧЕЧЕНЗИ for Chechen, or МАНДЖУ for Manchu (cf. Comtet 2010).

All the same, there is a significant element of autopsy to Klaproth's overview and to his knowledge claims. Most of the words in the tables for Caucasian languages come straight from the appendices to Klaproth (1812–14). In an essay in the second volume of *Mémoires relatifs à l'Asie*, about 'races and languages of the old and new continent', he rejects Blumenbach's influential classification of human races as a product of armchair scholarship, "excellent pour avoir été imaginé dans le cabinet d'un savant":

Or, si les nations européennes, et, avec elles, les peuples sémitiques, les Turcs, les Persans et les Hindous (...) ne sont pas venus du *Caucase*, pourquoi leur donner la dénomination de *caucasiens*? Parce que, répondent les défenseurs de ce système, c'est dans le *Caucase* qu'on trouve *le type le plus parfait, l'idéal enfin de cette race*. Malgré cette assertion si positive, je doute que Canova eût choisi un Géorgien pour modèle d'un Apollon, et une jeune fille circassienne, avec son nez retroussé, ses cheveux roux et ses cuisses courtes, pour modèle d'une Vénus.

(Klaproth 1824–28: II, 2–3)

Moreover, Klaproth's background as a self-trained Sinologist goes a long way to explain his preference for lexical over grammatical comparison, since Chinese had no inflectional morphology to offer, and the rise of historical-comparative grammar, with its emphasis on Indo-European languages, lowered the philological prestige of

Chinese. Klaproth's insistence on first-hand knowledge, and his troubled relationship with French erudition and Parisian institutions,⁴ is especially manifest in his polemic against Louis-Mathieu Langlès (1763–1824), keeper of the Oriental manuscripts at the Bibliothèque Nationale, whom he accuses repeatedly of 'ridiculous', 'grave', and 'singular' mistakes in Manchu, and even of not properly understanding Manchu, in spite of having published a Manchu alphabet and a Manchu-French dictionary (Klaproth 1812–14: II, 549n; Klaproth 1824–28: III, 48, 87–8; cf. Söderblom Saarela 2015: 505–10). In his last and longest statement on the matter, Klaproth adds the judgement – in Manchu – of a native speaker who finds that Langlès' Manchu characters "ne ressemblent pas aux nôtres, et on voit bien qu'ils sont faits par un homme d'un royaume étranger" (Klaproth 1824–28: III, 44–6).

Klaproth's polemic with Langlès touches upon several aspects of his wider project around *Asia Polyglotta*. Langlès had argued that the Manchu alphabet, which was taught as a syllabary, could also be read as compound phonetic signs (Langlès 1807). For Klaproth, this was stating the obvious, and pretending to know better than the Manchu themselves; moreover, Klaproth had traced the history of the Mongol and Manchu alphabets in his tract *Über die Sprache und Schrift der Uiguren* (1812; published in at least five different versions). Also, Langlès had presented Manchu as a shortcut to studying Chinese sources, since the language was easier to learn and closer to European languages, and since all Chinese classics had been reliably translated under the ruling Manchu (Qing) dynasty. Klaproth, the busy compiler of Chinese sources, found these suggestions untrue and unworkable: Manchu was quite as foreign, only part of the canon had been – sloppily – translated, and without consulting the Chinese originals, readers would be at a loss determining precise meanings, core concepts, and proper names. In his catalogue of Chinese and Manchu manuscripts in the Royal Library in Berlin (Klaproth 1822), Klaproth offers an overview of that canon and which parts of it were available in Europe, together with an evaluation of their value as historical sources.

Thus, personal experience, language study, and source criticism intersected in Klaproth's epistemology. *Asia Polyglotta* starts with a shorter 'Würdigung der Asiatischen Geschichtsschreiber' (pp. 1–18), distinguishing between three phases of 'mythical', 'uncertain', and 'true' history; the Chinese are by far the first to enter the third stage. Appended to the introductory volume is a tract about the life of Buddha, 'according to Mongolian sources'. In his manuscripts in the British Library, one can see Klaproth adding hundreds of Chinese and Manchu place

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4. Klaproth had a similar polemic with Chrétien-Louis de Guignes (1759–1845) about the latter's *Dictionnaire chinois, français et latin* (1813), adapted – or, as Klaproth (1817) saw it, plagiarized and distorted – from a late 17th century manuscript by Fr. Basilio da Gemonia, of which Klaproth also owned a copy (British Library, Add MS 11709; cf. Landry-Deron 2015).

names on Jesuit maps (Add MS 11706), commenting on the Great Imperial Atlas (Add MS 11703), and transcribing Asian epitaphs, seals, and coins (Add MS 18105). Throughout his career, he would be collecting and editing annals from various parts of Asia, rewriting the history of Asia through maps, linguistic data, commentaries, and source publications rather than writing a history of his own.

In particular, one can read Klaproth's *Tableaux historiques de l'Asie* (1826) as a companion volume to *Asia Polyglotta*. On 27 consecutive maps, plotted on the same geographical outline of the continent, the empires and political configurations of Asia are laid out from the days of Cyrus the Great to the present, while the introductory volume, again, comments on Persian, Chinese, Armenian, Georgian, Korean, and Japanese historical sources. The greater part of the introduction, though, is taken up by an 'Aperçu historique et ethnographique' (pp. 81–232) of the Tungusic, Turkic, Tibetan, Mongolic, and 'blond' peoples that populated Asia, and an overview (pp. 233–86) of the migrations of the Huns, Bulgars, Avars, Khazars, and Hungarians to the West. Klaproth's historical maps, then, also track the movements of the various *Sprachstämme* and the corresponding races of men. Criticizing Blumenbach's system of five races did not imply that Klaproth opposed the idea of racial classification outright: speakers of Turkic languages belong to the 'peuples de race turque', etc.; one characteristic that sets people apart is the form of the skull (Klaproth 1823: 35); the 'Indo-Germans', descending from the Caucasus and the Himalaya, are contrasted with the "braunen oder negerartigen Urbewohner von Indien" (Klaproth 1823: 43); and the 'blond, blue-eyed people' (Tocharians) mentioned in old Chinese sources are interpreted as the remnant of a much larger Central Asian 'Indo-German' population (Klaproth 1826: 161ff). For Klaproth, the difference between human races was a well-attested natural fact, and must have preceded that between languages (Klaproth 1824–28: II, 27, 45). It was just that the human race did not divide into three or five: to call all yellow people mongoloid or all black people negroes was plainly wrong, and the 'Indo-Germans' must have mixed with aboriginal Europeans as they did with the *Urbewohner* of India. Klaproth suggested that even bone structure and skull shape are ultimately due to external influences, although "la science naturelle est encore trop peu avancée" to decide such issues (Klaproth 1824–28: II, 8–9). Arguably, universal *Sprachverwandtschaft* was ultimately more important to him than racial differences.

In spite of long tables pointing out lexical resemblances within and across language families (which pervade both *Asia Polyglotta* and the *Mémoires relatifs à l'Asie*), there is not much of a linguistic theory articulated in *Asia Polyglotta*. Partly, Klaproth articulated one by proxy, in dedicating his work to Baron von Merian and later posthumously publishing Merian's *Principes de l'Étude comparative des Langues* (1828; previously published in German under a pseudonym: Faber 1826). In Klaproth's words, this was a work that created "une nouvelle division de la

grammaire générale” and revealed “des vérités qui n’avaient pas encore été aperçues ni même entrevues” (Merian 1828: v–vi). For the rest of the learned world, it must have looked rather outdated if not pseudoscientific. Merian envisioned a *science linguistique* based on the unity of all language, to be reconstructed to its original monosyllabic roots through analogies and sound shifts. That science, purportedly adumbrated by a range of sages from ‘les Hindus’ and Pythagoras to Herder and Goethe, traced the progressive development of *l’esprit humain*; its all-explanatory principles were that

Il n’y a eu, dans l’origine, qu’une seule langue. Ce qu’on appelle communément langues, ne consiste réellement que dans des dialectes de cette langue primitive. La forme des mots varie, leur essence ne varie jamais. L’essence est dans les racines et dans les élémens des racines; élémens qui subsistent dès l’origine, et peuvent être analysés physiologiquement. (Merian 1828: 3–4)

Klaproth supplemented his dead friend’s work with a series of ‘Observations sur les langues sémitiques’ (Merian 1828: 209–32; lacking in many copies), in which he argued that Hebrew and Arabic words, with their three-consonant roots, could be reduced to monosyllabic roots because the third consonant was superfluous. On the whole, if Klaproth and Merian held different views, it is hard to point them out, while it is easy to find commonalities: Merian shares Klaproth’s preference for Chinese and borrows his ‘diamond’ metaphor, and together they compiled four more volumes of comparative tables, spotting similarities between Germanic, Slavonic, Latin/Greek/Romance, and ‘other’ words (Klaproth & Merian 1820–23).

Cross-family comparisons did not end with Klaproth. Rather, they went hand in hand with mapping languages and identifying language families: Wilhelm von Humboldt looked for a missing American-Oceanic linguistic link, Müller (1854) lumped all agglutinating languages of Asia together in the ‘Turanian’ macro-family (immediately taken up by Caldwell 1856), and Koelle (1854b: 3–8), whose own atlas was called *Polyglotta Africana*, made a list of “Bornu roots which are evidently cognate with either Indo-European or Semitic roots”. Klaproth’s adherence to quaint theories, then, does not disqualify his project at large. Lexical comparison on a regional level is still the guiding principle of language atlases, and for modern readers, there is much about Klaproth’s tables and comparisons that is reminiscent of Joseph Greenberg (1915–2001).

3. Balbi's *Atlas ethnographique*

Balbi was a data-gatherer by nature. In a bibliography of his works, three years before his death, he defended himself against charges of plagiarism in what could be read as a rare personal statement about how he viewed his task:

L'originalité d'un travail consiste, non pas à créer tous les éléments qu'on y voit figurer, mais à les *découvrir* dans les recueils, dans les pièces inédites, dans la conversation des hommes spéciaux; à les *réunir*, tandis qu'ils étaient éparpillés en vingt, en cent endroits différents, à les *vérifier*, en éliminant tout ce qui est ou faux ou douteux; à les *rendre comparables*, tandis que la plupart des temps ils ne le sont pas; à les *coordonner*; à *combler les lacunes*, ou du moins à dire quelles lacunes existent et quelle en est l'importance; en un mot, à *élever* les éléments, jadis épars et suspects, à l'état scientifique. (Balbi 1845: xiv)

This is the attitude that pervades his life work: his *tableaux statistiques* of various European states, his tables with demographic and economic data, his *Abrégé*, his inventory of the libraries of Vienna, and his one work which is still regularly quoted, the three maps comparing levels of instruction and crime rates across French regions (Balbi & Guerry 1827).

It also sums up what he does in the *Atlas ethnographique*. For Balbi, cataloguing the world's languages (numbered 1–860) was the most unambiguous way to distinguish one nation from another, more lasting than political configurations, more precise than racial classification and levels of civilization (Balbi 1826a: xvi–xx; Balbi 1833: 55–8). His *tableaux* are hierarchically ordered: the first table is a global overview in which the languages of Asia, Europe, Africa, Oceania, and America are divided into different families or groups/regions (see Figure 3); then the section for each continent begins with an overview of the different languages within those families/groups/regions, followed by 8, 5, 5, 2, and 11 tables giving more details about the individual languages within each of those divisions. At the end are five *vocabulaires polyglottes* (per continent again), with 16 nouns and the numbers 1–10 in a total of 700 languages – enough, according to Balbi, to easily notice relatedness – and an alphabetical index of all languages.

On the issue of language classification, Balbi was careful not to claim too much authority, since it was such a contested issue. His opinion is mainly expressed through a series of overlapping long quotes. On the advice of fellow geographer Conrad Malte-Brun (1775–1826), he adopted a Linnaean distinction between *règnes* and *familles*: grammatical analogies defined a *règne* of several families, while nations had a family relation if their basic vocabulary was related (Balbi 1826a: 6n). Examples of such *règnes* were the languages of the Americas, and of

LANGUES ASIATIQUES, Depuis le n° 1 jusqu'et y compris le n° 193.	I. FAMILLE DES LANGUES SEMITIQUES Famille : Égyptien, 1. Éthiopien, 2. Arabe, 3. Chéou, 4. Araméen, etc. etc.
	II. LANGUES DE LA RÉGION CAUCASIENNE Famille : Géorgien, 1. Arménien, 2. Arménien, 3. Arménien, etc. etc. ; 4. Arménien, 5. Arménien, etc. etc.
	III. FAMILLE DES LANGUES FINNO-UGRIENNES Famille : Finno-ougrien, 1. Finno-ougrien, 2. Finno-ougrien, etc. etc.
	IV. LANGUES DE LA RÉGION INDUE-ARYENNE Famille : Indue-aryenne, 1. Indue-aryenne, 2. Indue-aryenne, etc. etc.
	V. LANGUES DE LA RÉGION TRANSANGLO-INDUE Famille : Transanglo-indue, 1. Transanglo-indue, 2. Transanglo-indue, etc. etc.
	VI. GROUPE DES LANGUES TIBÉTO-CHINOISES Famille : Tibéto-chinoise, 1. Tibéto-chinoise, 2. Tibéto-chinoise, etc. etc.
LANGUES EUROPÉENNES, Depuis le n° 194 jusqu'et y compris le n° 340.	VII. LANGUES DE LA RÉGION GERMANO-SCANDINAVE Famille : Germaine, 1. Germaine, 2. Germaine, etc. etc.
	VIII. FAMILLE DES LANGUES ROMANES Famille : Romaine, 1. Romaine, 2. Romaine, etc. etc.
	IX. FAMILLE DES LANGUES SLAVES Famille : Slave, 1. Slave, 2. Slave, etc. etc.
	X. FAMILLE DES LANGUES BALTIQUES Famille : Baltique, 1. Baltique, 2. Baltique, etc. etc.
	XI. FAMILLE DES LANGUES LITHUANIENNES Famille : Lithuanienne, 1. Lithuanienne, 2. Lithuanienne, etc. etc.
	XII. FAMILLE DES LANGUES LATVONIENNES Famille : Latvienne, 1. Latvienne, 2. Latvienne, etc. etc.
LANGUES AFRICAINES, Depuis le n° 341 jusqu'et y compris le n° 400.	XIII. LANGUES DE LA RÉGION DU NORD Famille : Nord, 1. Nord, 2. Nord, etc. etc.
	XIV. LANGUES DE LA RÉGION DU SUD Famille : Sud, 1. Sud, 2. Sud, etc. etc.
	XV. LANGUES DE LA RÉGION CENTRALE Famille : Centrale, 1. Centrale, 2. Centrale, etc. etc.
	XVI. LANGUES DE LA RÉGION OCCIDENTALE Famille : Occidentale, 1. Occidentale, 2. Occidentale, etc. etc.
	XVII. LANGUES DE LA RÉGION ORIENTALE Famille : Orientale, 1. Orientale, 2. Orientale, etc. etc.
	XVIII. LANGUES DE LA RÉGION MÉRIDIONALE Famille : Méridionale, 1. Méridionale, 2. Méridionale, etc. etc.
LANGUES OcéANIENNES, Depuis le n° 401 jusqu'et y compris le n° 450.	XIX. FAMILLE DES LANGUES MALAYO-POLYNÉSIENNES Famille : Malayo-polynésienne, 1. Malayo-polynésienne, 2. Malayo-polynésienne, etc. etc.
	XX. FAMILLE DES LANGUES AUSTRALOPOLYNÉSIENNES Famille : Australopolynésienne, 1. Australopolynésienne, 2. Australopolynésienne, etc. etc.
	XXI. FAMILLE DES LANGUES AUSTRALIENNES Famille : Australienne, 1. Australienne, 2. Australienne, etc. etc.
	XXII. FAMILLE DES LANGUES PACIFIQUES Famille : Pacifique, 1. Pacifique, 2. Pacifique, etc. etc.
	XXIII. FAMILLE DES LANGUES Océaniques Famille : Océanique, 1. Océanique, 2. Océanique, etc. etc.
	XXIV. FAMILLE DES LANGUES Océaniques Famille : Océanique, 1. Océanique, 2. Océanique, etc. etc.
LANGUES AMÉRICAINES, Depuis le n° 451 jusqu'et y compris le n° 500.	XXV. FAMILLE DES LANGUES ALÉUTIENNES Famille : Aléutienne, 1. Aléutienne, 2. Aléutienne, etc. etc.
	XXVI. FAMILLE DES LANGUES ALUTIENNES Famille : Alutienne, 1. Alutienne, 2. Alutienne, etc. etc.
	XXVII. FAMILLE DES LANGUES ALUTIENNES Famille : Alutienne, 1. Alutienne, 2. Alutienne, etc. etc.
	XXVIII. FAMILLE DES LANGUES ALUTIENNES Famille : Alutienne, 1. Alutienne, 2. Alutienne, etc. etc.
	XXIX. FAMILLE DES LANGUES ALUTIENNES Famille : Alutienne, 1. Alutienne, 2. Alutienne, etc. etc.
	XXX. FAMILLE DES LANGUES ALUTIENNES Famille : Alutienne, 1. Alutienne, 2. Alutienne, etc. etc.

Figure 3. ‘General ethnographic table of the world’. Balbi, *Atlas ethnographique*, tab. I (detail) (University Library, Göttingen)

East Asia. From another informant, Portuguese philosopher and statesman Silvestre Pinheiro-Ferreira (1769–1846), Balbi drew a distinction between different degrees of genetic relatedness between and within languages: *patois*, *dialectes*, *langues sœurs*, and rarely, a *langue-mère* (Balbi 1826a: 20). On the whole, Balbi judged it wise to wield Ockham’s razor, and not to identify too many separate languages or family relations, since there was “pas une mesure absolue de parenté” (Balbi 1826a: 31). Therefore, he speaks of “la prétendue famille indo-germanique” (Balbi 1826a: 29–30), which is too weakly related to be of positive ethnographic value, and which, one might add, would mess up his arrangement by continent. Developments in historical-comparative grammar, accordingly, are almost entirely absent from Balbi’s account; Bopp and the Schlegel brothers are hardly mentioned. All the same, Balbi adopted the Schlegels’ distinction between inflecting, agglutinating, and isolating languages (Balbi 1826b: tab. I); Grimm’s *Deutsche Grammatik* was even ‘a veritable treasure’ of which one would wish a counterpart for each ‘ethnographic family’ (Balbi 1826a: 57, 176), precisely because it documented much closer linguistic kinship.

Balbi's eclecticism in matters of classification led to less consistent results than he would have wanted. For instance, almost all Turkic languages are heaped together under one number (n° 24), while 38 numbers (n° 42–79) are devoted to living members of the 'Sanskrit family', all labelled as varieties of Prakrit – including the Dravidian languages of Southern India. At several points, Balbi could not avoid making decisions of his own: Armenian (n° 22–23) is classified as an isolated family in the Caucasian region in spite of its links to the 'pretended Indo-Germanic family', Pehlvi (n° 6) (ceremonial Middle Persian)⁵ as Semitic because of its vocabulary and in spite of its grammatical kinship to Persian, and Kawi (n° 41bis), an Old Javanese literary language with many Sanskrit loan words, as belonging to the 'Sanskrit family' for similar reasons (Balbi 1826a: 126–7). Relying upon Adelung and Rask, Balbi held to the already then outdated view that Latin derived from Greek, and identified a 'Greco-Latin' or 'Thraco-Pelasgic' family that included Romance languages, Albanian, and Etruscan.

Balbi's synopticism also had clear virtues. He noted how much knowledge about the languages of the Americas had increased in the mere ten years since *Mithridates*; these languages account for almost half of those in his atlas (n° 438–860), grouped into at least 29 families (see Figure 4).

Pace Peter Stephen du Ponceau (1760–1844), whose work he knew and regularly referred to, there is no discussion of the 'polysynthetic' grammatical structure that Du Ponceau had identified in them; instead, they are all labelled as agglutinating, on the authority of Alexander von Humboldt (Balbi 1826a: 30). Practical wisdom is a key characteristic of Balbi's atlas: he held that each language should be listed in the name its speakers give to it, dead languages are marked with an obelisk (†) and listed before living ones in each family, and the numbered classification made cross-references a lot easier both between introduction and atlas and in comparisons across different regions and families.

Although Balbi distinguished different peoples by their skin colour and "quelques autres traits remarquables" (eyes, hair, physique), he was quite as sceptical as Klaproth about all extant taxonomies of human races: none of them was remotely complete, precise, or consistent enough to be of any use for him (Balbi 1833: 51–2). Balbi's ethnographic descriptions in the atlas vary in size between one line and several columns, depending on whether the language has a rich literature or long history linked to kingdoms, empires, or religions. At the top of each table is a general description of the region and its inhabitants. Perhaps because Balbi had never left Europe, there is much more overt prejudice in his descriptions than in

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5. 'Pehlvi' or Pahlavi is actually the name of a writing system derived from Imperial Aramaic, and used for various Middle Iranian languages in the Sassanid Empire.

I. LANGUES DE LA RÉGION ORÉNO-AMAZONE OU ANDES-PARIME.

Famille Caribé-Tamanac :
Caribé. 576. *Chaymas*. 577. *Cumanogotte*. 578. *Palenca*. 579.
Guarive. 580. *Pariatogos*. 581. *Tamanaque*. 582. *Guayanos*. 585.
Guarunco. 584. *Arawaque*. 585.

Rocouyenne. 586.
Oyanpis. 587.
Emerillon. 588.
Gualaibos. 589.
Guayca. 590.
Maquittare. 591.
Guahiva ou Guagivos. 592.
Guamas. 593.
Yaruro ou Japuin. 594.
Otomacu ou Otomaque. 595.
Manitvitianos. 596.
Marcpianos. 597.
Manos. 598.
Miranhas. 599.
Barés. 600.
Bannybas. 601.
Aribuys. 602.
Uaupes. 603.
Famille Saliva :
Saliva. 604. *Atures* + 605. *Quaquas* ou *Mapoje*. 606. *Maens* ou *Piaroas*. 607.

Famille Cavere-Maypure :
Chibcha ou *Mozcas* + 615. . . . .
Goabiros. 616.
Cunacunas. 617.
Cocinas. 618.
Catuma + 619.
Copia + 620.
Popayan + 621.
Paes ou *Paos*. 622.
Guanuca + ? 625.
Cocanuca + ? 624.
Citaracas + ? 625. *Chocos* + ? 626. *Neivas* + ? 627. *Andakies*. 628.
Panches. 629. *Timacacs*. 630. *David*. 631. *Guaimies*. 632. *Casajral*. 635.
Xibaros. 634. *Mainas*. 635. *Audons*. 636. *Ayacoec*. 637. *Parana*. 638.
Encabellada. 639. *Quittus* + 640. *Cofane*. 641. *Yquitos*. 642. *Utarinas*. 643.
Yanaeos. 644. . . . . { *Yarura*. 645.
Famille Yarura-Betoi . . . . . { *Betoi*. 646.
Pinches. 648. . . . . { *Ele*. 647.

Changuenes. 649.
Terrabas. 650.
Torresques. 651.
Urinamas. 652.
Cavecaras. 653.
Chontal. 654.
Popalua. 655.
Nahut. 656.
Chorti. 657.
Sinca. 658.
Alaguillac. 659.
Moscos ou Mosquitos. 660.
Poyais. 661.
Taukas ou Xicaques. 662.
Sambos. 663.
Lencas. 664.
Albatuinas. 665.
Jaras. 666.
Taos. 667.
Gaulas-Fantasma. 668.
Lilles. 669.
Motucas. 670.
Quechchi. 671.
Acalaés. 672.
Mopanes. 673.
Chol ou Choles. 674.
Lacandones. 675.
Famille Maya-Quiche . . . . . {
Trendal. 683.
Chiapaneca. 689.
Queleens. 690.
Zoques. 691.

Cavere ou Cabre. 608.
Guaypunabis. 609.
Pareni. 610.
Maypure. 611.
Moxos. 612.
Meppury? 613.
Achagua. 614.

V. LANGUES DE LA RÉGION DE GUATEMALA . . . . .

VI. LANGUES DU PLATEAU D'ANAHUAC OU DE LA RÉGION MEXICAINE.

Popoluca. 692.
Chocoma. 693.
Matzecca. 694.
Mixo. 695.
Chinanteca. 696. Mixteca. 697. Zapoteca. 698.
Totonaeca. 699.
Matlazinga. 700.
Famille Mexicaine. . . . . { *Mexicaine* ou *Aztèque*. 701.
Huasteca. 704. . . . . { *Pipil*. 702.
Cuiclateca. 705. . . . . { *Coru*. 703.
Othomi. 706.
Tlapanèque. 707.
Tarasque. 708.
Pirinda. 709.

Maya ou Yucatané. 706.
Cuba? + 678.
Haïti? + 678.
Porto Rico? + 679.
Jamaïque? + 680.
Caichi. 681.
Mam ou Pocomam. 682.
Quiché. 683.
Kachiquel. 684.
Tzutuil. 685.
Kachi. 686.
Poconchi. 687.

Figure 4. Languages of the Americas. Balbi, *Atlas ethnographique*, tab. XXV (detail) (University Library, Göttingen)]

Klaproth's: Siberian languages are "aussi incultes que les peuples qui les parlent" and offer "rien d'intéressant au philologue" (Balbi 1826b, tab. IX); Hindus live in a static society with an astonishing mix of laudable civilized qualities and gruesome fanaticism and superstition, expressed in obscene *lingam* rituals, widow-burning, and "images affreuses ou dégoûtantes" of their Hindu deities (tab. VI); some African, American, and Polynesian tribes are simply characterized as 'sauvages', 'barbares', or 'féroces anthropophages', while others are 'paisibles', 'industrieux', and 'polices'. Balbi shared Klaproth's admiration for China and Japan though: the Chinese, whose empire exceeded that of the Romans, who invented gunpowder, the compass, and the printing press, and whose literature was 'the oldest, the richest, the most varied, and the most original' of Asia, rated among "les principaux peuples du Globe" (tab. VII). Elsewhere, in the *Abrégé* and in his demographic tables, originally intended

as part of the atlas, he clearly pointed out that Beijing and Edo were larger than London and Paris (Balbi 1828).

Balbi's work belongs to a period in which geography was turning towards the analysis of large-scale regularities and processes: ecosystems and habitats, climate zones and isotherms, geological layers and regions, population densities, migrations, and their influence on human history. Language was part of that analysis not just for Balbi but also for Malte-Brun, Carl Ritter (1779–1859), and Alexander von Humboldt; it was Malte-Brun (1810: 579), for instance, who first suggested the term 'Indo-Germanic' (Shapiro 1981). Humboldt is the most outstanding example of this development in geography and the role of language in it, especially when his geographic projects intersected with his brother's linguistic projects, from his collection of word lists and missionary grammars on his journey through South America (1799–1804) to his statements about man and language in *Kosmos* (1845–62) (Schmidt 1990). The clearest cartographic expression of this is vol. VIII of Berghaus' *Physikalischer Atlas* (1846–48), with its maps of language variety within European countries and of languages and peoples around the globe. It was through Humboldt, too, that Balbi obtained the first draft of Gallatin (1836), his most important new source on the languages of North America (Balbi 1826a: 279; cf. Verlato 2013: 34–5). Within this turn in geography, Balbi was mainly focused on the human (demographic, economic, political, ethnographic) aspect. Klaproth's connection to it was more remote: even as an explorer and cartographer, he showed little interest in natural history as such, and the data he collected were words, not numbers.

4. Conclusions

Balbi's atlas is an outstanding example of the 'handbook paradox': by summing up the state of linguistic and ethnographic knowledge, it is innovative without offering any new information or hugely original insights of his own. In order to make his overview consistent, he had to point out the gaps and formulate desiderata for a *science linguistique* or *philologie ethnographique*. Even though *Linguistik* and *Völkerkunde* had been in German usage for nearly half a century, this still was something of a constitutive moment. There was not, at that point, a 'Handbook of Linguistics' or an 'Introduction to Ethnography', in French or in any other language. The nearest thing, apart from *Mithridates*, was Eichhorn's (1807) volume on *Sprachenkunde* in his all-encompassing bibliographic *Geschichte der Litteratur*.

Klaproth's and Balbi's language atlases show us how disciplines are defined in interrelation. In both works, linguistics and ethnography, and also history and geography, are in a state of mutual interdependence. And yet, already then, these terms stood for different areas of expertise. Klaproth and Balbi followed different

trajectories: Klaproth's went from linguistics to history and geography, Balbi's from geography to linguistics and ethnography. Ultimately, all Klaproth's knowledge claims came down to his language skills; even his geographical observations depended on expeditions on which he was sent because of those language skills, and on his collection of rare (Chinese, Japanese, Russian) maps and manuscripts. Balbi wrote about languages and peoples as a geographer, and never pretended otherwise.

This interrelation between linguistics, ethnography, and geography is typical for how the world's languages were studied and mapped throughout the 19th century, up to and including Boas (1911–22) and Grierson (1903–28). Sound systems, phonetic alphabets, and comparative grammars were as much part of that process as ethnographic collections, ethnic/racial classifications, geographic surveys, and the work of missionaries and explorers. Important overviews (Koelle 1854a, Caldwell 1856, Cust 1878, 1883) were made by people who were not trained linguists, while Müller (1873, 1876–88) treated ethnography as part of his brief as a professor of linguistics, and wrote handbooks on both *Ethnographie* and *Sprachenkunde*. Rather than a succession of linguistic theories, we see an ongoing trade-off between different areas of expertise that both reinforced and flouted disciplinary boundaries. The implication is that, if we look beyond the study of Indo-European languages, we get a different account of the history of linguistics, one that is interwoven with the wider history of knowledge.

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