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PHILOSOPHY AND PHILOLOGY IN A.W. SCHLEGEL'S *BHAGAVAD-GITA* AND THE ENSUING DEBATE: TRANSLATIONS AND COMMENTARY

La philosophie et la philologie dans la Bhagavad-Gita *d' A. G. Schlegel et sa critique : traductions et commentaire*

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Abstract: August Wilhelm von Schlegel's edition and Latin translation of the *Bhagavadgītā*, with its pioneering application of the methods of Classical Philology to a Sanskrit text, played an important role in establishing Indology as a scholarly discipline in Europe. But Schlegel's work, and the critical debate that it catalysed, which would draw contributions from Wilhelm von Humboldt and eventually G. W. F. Hegel, also provides a rich—and largely neglected—source of philosophical enquiry. The technical business of creating, refining, and justifying a translation of ancient Indian philosophical poetry ultimately forces reflection on the nature of conceptual and linguistic diversity across cultures, the essence of language, and the hermeneutical process of understanding a foreign culture. This paper, after a general historical introduction, offers a translation of a generous selection of Schlegel's original (Latin) preface to his *Bhagavad-Gita*, a document fundamental to the ensuing debate, but which has not yet been translated into English. This is followed by a brief philosophical commentary, which leads into an extended discussion of the responses to Schlegel's work and his replies, up to the (posthumous) second edition of his *Bhagavad-Gita*, illustrated throughout with translations of selected passages. It is thus possible to track not only the increasingly sophisticated reflections of Schlegel and Humboldt on translation and understanding, but also the development of a hermeneutic method for approaching Indian texts, involving the epistemological evaluation of the Indian scholarly tradition. The discussion concludes with a brief assessment of the contribution of Hegel, and its relationship to the preceding debate.

Keywords: A. W. Schlegel; *Bhagavadgītā*; translation; hermeneutics; Indology.

Résumé: L'édition avec traduction latine de la Bhagavadgītā qu'a publiée Auguste Guillaume von Schlegel, en appliquant de façon novatrice les méthodes de la

philologie classique à l'étude d'un texte sanskrit, joua un rôle important dans l'établissement de l'indologie comme discipline scientifique en Europe. Mais l'ouvrage de Schlegel et le débat critique qu'il déclencha, auquel contribuerait Guillaume von Humboldt et finalement G. W. F. Hegel, fournissent aussi une source riche, et souvent négligée, de recherche philosophique. Le travail technique de la création, raffinement, et justification d'une traduction de la poésie philosophique indienne pousse enfin à la réflexion sur la nature de la diversité conceptuelle et linguistique à travers les cultures, l'essence du langage, et le procédé herméneutique de la compréhension d'une culture étrangère. Dans cet article on traduira du latin, à la suite d'une introduction historique générale, une sélection généreuse da la préface originale de Schlegel à sa Bhagavad-Gita, document fondamental pour le débat qui suivait mais jusqu'ici pas traduit en anglais. Il suit un bref commentaire philosophique, qui amène à une discussion étendue de la critique du travail de Schlegel et ses répliques, jusqu'à la deuxième édition (posthume) de sa Bhagavad-Gita, que l'on illustre toujours par des traductions de passages choisis. Il est ainsi possible de poursuivre non seulement les réflexions de plus en plus sophistiquées de Schlegel et Humboldt sur la traduction et la compréhension, mais aussi le développement d'une méthode herméneutique pour aborder les textes indiens, qui implique une évaluation épistémologique de la tradition savante indienne. On conclut la discussion en évaluant la contribution de Hegel et sa relation au débat precedent.

Mots-clés: A. G. Schlegel; *Bhagavadgītā*; traduction; herméneutique; indologie.

INTRODUCTION

1823 was an important year for the study of Sanskrit in Germany: it saw the publication of continental Europe's first edition of a 'complete' Sanskrit text—the first book printed with the new German *Devanāgarī* letter-type—edited, translated, introduced, and annotated by Germany's first Professor of Indology. But this book, August Wilhelm Schlegel's *Bhagavad-Gita*,[i] has a genealogy that can be traced. Over the previous few decades the study of Sanskrit had established itself in Europe as a nascent discipline with revolutionary intellectual potential. In 1785 the pioneering British Orientalist Charles Wilkins had introduced the "Bhăgvăt-Gēētā" to the European intellectual community, making it the first Sanskrit text available in any form;[ii] this (along with William Jones' English translation of Kālidāsa's play *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* in 1789, beloved of Goethe) attracted the attention of such eminent figures as Johann Gottfried Herder,[iii] whose student Friedrich Majer would in 1802 publish a complete translation of

the *Bhagavadgītā* from Wilkins' English into German, the first complete version available in that language. (Majer, a thoroughgoing Romantic, was a friend and supporter of Friedrich Schlegel's Indian studies, and would later introduce Schopenhauer to Indian thought.)[iv]

It is notable how many of the early contributors to the study and reception of India in Germany were significant philosophical thinkers in their own right. A key turning point was the publication in 1808 of a book *Ueber die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier* ["On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians"] by Friedrich Schlegel, the younger brother of August Wilhelm Schlegel, a philosopher and philologist, and, like his brother, a key theorist of Romanticism. With this book, imbued in his Romantic project, F. Schlegel made a decisive contribution both to the comparative linguistic study of Sanskrit and Indo-European, and to the discussion of Indian philosophical concepts, for which the *Bhagavadgītā*, along with the *Rāmāyaṇa* and especially the Laws of Manu, was an important source.[v] Schlegel, developing Herder's application to India of the idea of *pantheism* (a contentious topic in contemporaneous philosophical debates) and his Edenic view of Indian antiquity, characterises Indian religio-philosophical thought as a gradual degradation from a noble doctrine of 'emanationism', remnant of an original divine revelation, to nature-worship and a debilitating pantheism.[vi]

Almost as important as F. Schlegel's original contributions is the fourth part of his book,[vii] which contained selected passages of Sanskrit poetry translated into German verse, including the first sections of the *Bhagavadgītā* to be translated into German directly from the Sanskrit, selected by Schlegel for their philosophical value.[viii] Schlegel's elegant German translations had a huge impact on the enthusiasm for the study of these texts, and for appreciation of their philosophical interest. When the pioneer of comparative linguistics, Franz Bopp, published eight years later his answer to Schlegel's treatise, a far more extensive and rigorous disquisition on the comparative grammar of the Sanskrit verb, he still felt the need to include a substantial collection of (metrical) German translations of Sanskrit literature.[ix] Nevertheless, F. Schlegel tells us that the final form of his book was not what he had originally intended: "It had been my intention to publish an 'Indian Chrestomathy' in Latin and in the original characters, which should contain, besides the elementary principles of the language, a selection of extracts from the most important Indian works, with a Latin paraphrase, notes, and a glossary."[x] He was forced to abandon this plan, he goes on to tell us, due to the impossibility of acquiring *Devanāgarī* type.

Devanāgarī type was available first in Britain, amongst the European nations, and thus when Franz Bopp published in 1819 the very first Sanskrit text to be printed in Sanskrit in Europe, namely the Nala and Damayantī episode of the *Mahābhārata*—still a staple of elementary Sanskrit education today—it was printed and published in London.[xi] Bopp provided students with a text drawn from the comparison of several manuscripts (though lacking an apparatus), along with a literal Latin translation, particularly useful for students in that it notes with a hyphen words compounded in the original, and brief notes. In his preface, Bopp stresses the pedagogical importance of translating word for word [*verbo verbum reddens*], and he defends the Latin language as particularly apt for translation from Sanskrit, due to its ability to conserve the original word order; nevertheless, he seeks the readers' pardon for inevitable faults in the style and naturalness of the Latin translation.[xii] He adds a very brief summary of the poem's metre, and his approach to orthography.

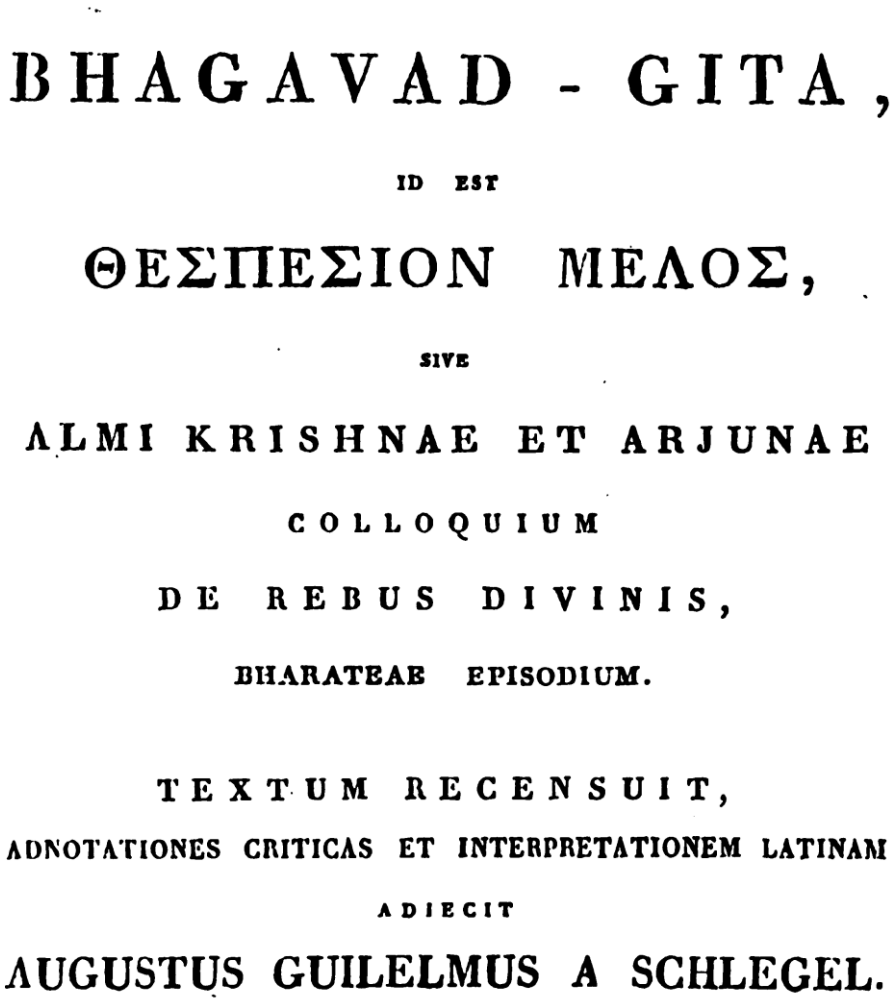
August Wilhelm Schlegel's project in his *Bhagavad-Gita* was akin to that of Bopp's *Nalus*, but significantly more ambitious. Schlegel was already well known as a critic and as a distinguished translator into German—his German versions of Shakespeare are still generally considered the best translations of the dramatist into any language. Thus it is unsurprising that he set himself higher literary standards for his translation than Bopp had done, even though Schlegel too opts for Latin as the 'target language'. We should not forget, however, that A. W. Schlegel had also made significant theoretical contributions to the journal of the 'Jena Romantics', the *Athenaeum*, which he ran together with his brother Friedrich, and was in fact a subtle and acute thinker when it came to the theory of translation and interpretation.[xiii] Compared to Friedrich, it is striking how reticent August Wilhelm Schlegel was to enter into speculation about the philosophical characteristics of Indian texts;[xiv] his approach is instead consistently philological, methodical, and technical. Nevertheless, these works of scholarship—such as the preface to his *Bhagavad-Gita*—do reveal, on close reading, rich philosophical fruits. For the technical business of creating, refining, and justifying a translation of ancient Indian philosophical poetry ultimately forces reflection on the nature of conceptual and linguistic diversity across cultures, the essence of language, and the hermeneutical process of understanding a foreign culture.

In A. W. Schlegel's work and the debate to which it gave rise, we see not only the birth of the discipline of Indology, but the gradual understanding of Indian philosophical concepts through philological methods adapted from Classical scholarship, and the

increasing engagement with, and epistemological evaluation of, the indigenous Indian scholarly tradition. *Philosophia facta est quae philologia fuit*, we may say with Nietzsche: what was philology has become philosophy—or, perhaps we should say, what was *Indology*…

1.0. A. W. Schlegel, preface to *Bhagavad-Gita*: selected translations

Figure 1: Schlegel's Frontispiece.


BHAGAVAD - GITA,

ID EST

ΘΕΣΠΕΣΙΟΝ ΜΕΛΟΣ,

SIVE

ALMI KRISHNAE ET ARJUNAE

COLLOQUIUM

DE REBUS DIVINIS,

BHARATEAE EPISODIUM.

TEXTUM RECENSUIT,

ADNOTATIONES CRITICAS ET INTERPRETATIONEM LATINAM

ADIECIT

AUGUSTUS GUILELMUS A SCHLEGEL.

{vii}[xv]

When, three years ago, I was staying in Paris on account of a task that had been entrusted to me, namely to see to the engraving, forging, and casting, in that foremost centre of typographical art, of Devanagari letter-type, with which Royal liberality has enriched our Rhine University[xvi] — I immediately began to consider what I might most profitably publish, printed with this type. It was necessary to choose something that would

not require excessive labour, so as not to frustrate the expectations of scholars with a longer delay, nor too difficult, so that, since so few books were readily available and able to be purchased at a reasonable price, I might also provide for beginners. Of course, a great quantity of unpublished manuscripts was available to me in the *Bibliothèque royale de France*;[xvii] but I was not greatly enticed by the petty glory of being able to say that I was the first to have published something new: since indeed, as far as I am able to judge, the majority of editions of Sanskrit texts thus far published have been undertaken in such a manner as to leave remaining ample matter for the exercise of critical acumen and the careful attention of a skilled translator. I thus turned my attention to {viii} the philosophical poem entitled *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, which throughout all India is practically unsurpassed in its renown for wisdom and holiness. Its subject had recently become known to all those who value the study of the history of philosophy not only among the Greeks but also among the ancient peoples of Asia, thanks to the elegant English translation of the illustrious *Charles Wilkins*, which appeared in '85 of the last century;[xviii] but it had befallen very few scholars from among our own crowd—Europeans, I mean—to be able to read for themselves the words of the divine bard.[xix]

…[Schlegel notes that the preexisting edition of the *Bhagavadgītā* published in Calcutta is extremely difficult to acquire.]

Already several years before I formed this plan, I had transcribed the first few chapters of the Bhagavad-Gîtâ from the Paris manuscripts for my own use. Now {ix} I once again studied those same manuscripts, and carefully compared them with the Calcutta edition. The latter is full of errors, of which most are such as anyone only moderately versed in Sanskrit grammar could correct with little trouble. Others, however, could keep a much more learned reader occupied. It appeared altogether safer to recover the true reading based on the testimony and authority of the manuscripts, rather than through conjectures, however obvious they may be. Besides, I was extremely eager to learn by my own effort whether the same lot had fallen to the Bhagavad-Gîtâ as I knew had befallen other ancient texts of the Indians, especially the Hitopadeśa and the epics: plainly, that in various MSS whole verses, and sometimes even whole sets of verses, are found in a much changed form, or are transposed, and some things are omitted, others added and interpolated. I soon discovered with no small delight that in the case of the poem in hand there is no disagreement among the manuscripts, not even in the smallest

matters, or those that could have been changed without any detriment to the structure of the sentence, the words, and the metre. By this miraculous consensus of the manuscripts, both of the Paris codices among themselves, and of the exemplar from which the Calcutta edition was printed, and finally of the copy that the distinguished *Charles Wilkins* had before his eyes as he put together his translation; by the consensus of manuscripts, I say, that were without doubt written all over India, it is proven beyond certainty that the text of the Bhagavad-Gîtâ has been most religiously preserved right up to our age, and that we clearly have that most noble poem just as it once came forth from the divine mouth of the ancient poet.[xx] This same fact is even more apparent from the contents of the poem themselves. {x} It is contained—which I am astonished no-one has yet noticed—in a full and perfect number of distichs, 700: surely not by chance, but, if I have any sense, by the definite intention of the poet, so that none could thoughtlessly add anything, or remove anything from the number. The philosophical reasoning[xxi] is sometimes a little more obscure, but it could hardly have been otherwise when adorning in poetic language matters so far removed from the common sense of mankind. In particular, the connection between sentences is not everywhere easy to understand at first sight, when the poet in his zeal for brevity omits many things that the reader's reflection must supply.

…[In the next ten pages Schlegel describes his approach to establishing the text; lists and evaluates his manuscript sources; criticises O. Frank's edition/translation of selected passages of the *Bhagavadgītā* in his *Chrestomathia*; explains and justifies his approach to *Devanāgarī* orthography; and expounds in some detail the principles of the poem's metre.]

{xxi}

In working on my translation of the Bhagavad-Gîtâ, the English translation of the distinguished *Charles Wilkins* was of great assistance—that I do not only not deny, but of my own accord gratefully acknowledge. And yet in several passages I considered it necessary to diverge from the path of my predecessor: whether I have done so correctly {xxii} or not the learned English translator himself shall judge, if he ever wishes to revise what he wrote so many years ago, as well as the other authorities of our field. But I took particular care to write both in good Latin and clearly, since a translation accomplishes nothing if you cannot understand it well enough by itself without studying the original in the place of a commentary. For if anyone introduces a new and unusual manner of speech

in an attempt, against the spirit[xxii] of the language that he is using, to translate word for word[xxiii]—it necessarily turns out that the phrases and verbal periods, which are proper and native to a language of a very different character[xxiv] (and as such flow smoothly there), are fashioned in some absurd imitation and seem to the readers twisted and obscure.

Besides, I consider that Latin is very much an ideal language for the translation of Sanskrit texts. It is not weighed down by those heaps of particles, articles—both definite and indefinite, personal pronouns, and auxiliary verbs of various kinds, that most languages of the modern peoples of Europe are forced to drag around with them due to a lack of grammatical endings, by which genders, numbers, cases of nouns, and persons, tenses and moods of verbs might be distinguished, fittingly and with a certain melodious sweetness. As such, Latin can happily imitate the orders of words found in the Sanskrit language, and its boldest inversions, since the endings themselves reveal that certain phrases, though separated by a long stretch of words, are to be taken together in sense; and it can match its brevity, {xxiii} which is to be judged rather by the number of words necessary to complete a sentence, than the number of syllables.[xxv] In one matter, however, the Greek language must seem to approach closer to Sanskrit, and would be preferable, if I could write it with equal skill: in its freedom of compounding, I mean, and of creating on the spot new words aptly fitted together from various parts. In this respect the Latin language never equalled the Greek; Sanskrit surpasses even Greek. And yet Latin is not completely devoid of compound words, unless, led by the fussiness of the age of Augustus,[xxvi] we wish to reject most Ennianisms, Pacuvianisms, and Lucretianisms.[xxvii] Why should we too not be permitted to create something new, as long as it be in accordance with analogy,[xxviii] and not liable to any ambiguity? Compound words not only embellish poetry[xxix] most brilliantly, but also have great power and utility for expounding the more exact sciences—philosophy, mathematics, physics—concisely and with precision. This latter domain is suited to those turns of phrase[xxx] that are customarily called *abstract*. The Sanskrit language is rich in both types; contrary to the usage of most languages, it freely admits the abstract also in poetry. It cannot be denied that also in this respect the Latin language is confined in too narrow bounds: the Romans, who were born more for action than idle subtleties of the intellect, shrunk from saying anything alien to the common usage. Quintilian[xxxi] complains that the locutions Sergius Flavius fashioned on the model of Greek were rather rough. If only we had more from Flavius! It would be better thought of than the compositions of later authors. As {xxiv} the matter now stands,

we must sometimes, as the Romans did, take refuge in Hellenisms; sometimes we will call the Latinity of the church fathers to our aid. This double poverty of the Latin language is certainly inconvenient, but it is compensated by its other virtues, which I set out above.

I see that some scholars, when they come upon concepts that are peculiar to the Indian philosophers, and so far removed from our own notions that hardly any word in our usage could properly match them, tend to introduce the Sanskrit word itself into their translation. And yet, in my opinion, to do this is not to translate from a foreign language into our own, but nothing other than to write Sanskrit words in Latin letters. Therefore I have tried to turn everything into Latin, and to express the true sense and character even of philosophical concepts, as far possible without long paraphrases. But I would not be so bold as to assert that I have always correctly discerned the poet's intention.

I declare this expressly, so as not to disappoint anyone: in what I have done so far, I think I have dealt fairly satisfactorily with the textual and grammatical criticism of the Bhagavad-Gîtâ; the philosophical I have not yet touched. That requires a deeper investigation than can readily, and with a hurried effort, be accomplished. One must explain the poet's entire teaching on divine and human matters; one must further explain the link between individual sentences and the first foundations that the poet places of his philosophy. In such a task I think no-one will acquit himself favourably, unless he has first carefully studied better commentaries on this poem, of which there are many. {xxv} I was able in Paris to transcribe only a part of one commentary (mentioned above):[xxxii] and yet from this I drew a not inconsiderable profit. Besides, our poem contains many mythological passages, which stand in need of explanation.

…[On the antiquity of the poem and of philosophy in India.]

Therefore I have resolved to publish a commentary that will illustrate the Bhagavad-Gîtâ on mythological, historical, and philosophical grounds, as soon the opportunity presents itself to me;[xxxiii] and then at last I will consider that I have fulfilled all the duties of a translator.[xxxiv]

That largely completes the main points that I wanted to make by way of a preface. One remains. Reverence for one's teachers {xxvi}is held by the Brahmans to be among the holiest duties of devotion.[xxxv] In this matter I am certainly a follower of their teachings, and it would be sacrilegious to forget this duty while standing in the entrance-hall itself of the ancient wisdom. Therefore you first, most holy poet and interpreter of the

Divine,[xxxvi] whoever among mortals you may in the end have been, author of this poem, whose holy pronouncements[xxxvii] carry the mind up to all the highest, eternal, and divine objects, with an ineffable delight: you first, indeed, I greet in veneration, and I ever honour your footsteps. Then you, most learned men, who with your toils have opened up for me these untrodden paths of the Muses;[xxxviii] and especially you, my excellent friend,[xxxix] who did not scorn to pass on to me with your eloquent voice the elements of the sacred language of the Brahmans; and you too, my dearest brother, who by your example spurred me on to undertake this difficult task: for the good you have done me, accept the greatest thanks I can give. But you all, who are about to read this work, I beg that you regard favourably what I have at this time been able to offer you.

1.1. Commentary

This preface is itself a pioneering work of scholarship, since it represents a sustained—and largely successful—attempt to apply the methods of Classical Philology to the study of Sanskrit texts, especially textual criticism, metrics, and grammar. The notes printed between the Sanskrit text and the Latin translation continue the same endeavour. A. W. Schlegel explicitly postpones philosophical interpretation of the poem, which would require a better knowledge of the Indian commentaries; he does indulge in speculation about the origins of Indian philosophy, subscribing to the ancient myth of the extreme antiquity of Indian thought (though in doing so putting India on a par with Greece), but ultimately he recognises that "firmer argumentation" is required.[xl]

Perhaps the most interesting passages are those that justify Schlegel's choice of Latin and his method of translation. He had already written in favour of the use of Latin several times, for example in his 1819 essay *Ueber den gegenwärtigen Zustand der Indischen Philologie*,[xli] in which he repeats the familiar argument that Latin can imitate the word-order of Sanskrit, while also pointing out that for 300 years Latin had been "die Kunstsprache der Philologie", the literary language of philology;[xlii] this perhaps suggests a desire to use the shared language of learning as a means of bypassing the deep national divides that beset European Indology of the time. As Marchignoli has argued,[xliii] Schlegel may also have wished, in translating the *Bhagavadgītā* into Latin, to use the Latin language as a means of introducing the text into the philological and classical canon: compare his Homericising Latinisations of the names of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the

Mahābhārata as the *Rameïs* and *Bharatea* respectively, subtly encoding a comparative programme into his language.

Nevertheless, we should take seriously Schlegel's linguistic reasons for using Latin, since the argument of the preface is far more extensive than the standard point about word-order, which, though not without literary and stylistic importance, is perhaps of most significance for the elementary student. He adduces a wide range of grammatical phenomena in order assert a fundamental similarity between Latin and Sanskrit, a kinship not simply genealogical, but as linguists would now say, *typological*. That is, as regards several key characteristics or parameters that structurally differentiate the world's languages, Latin and Sanskrit group together, while many of 'the modern languages of Europe' fall into another class. The idea of a universal categorisation of languages based on their means of expressing grammatical information was first popularised by Friedrich Schlegel in his 1808 book on India,[xliv] with a twofold doctrine of superior inflectional, and degenerate agglutinative languages; A. W. Schlegel himself had, in an 1818 treatise on Provençal, developed and expanded this to a threefold categorisation that essentially corresponds to our terms 'isolating', 'agglutinative' and 'inflectional'. The threefold division would later be popularised by Humboldt, and would go on to have an enormous influence on the history of linguistics, and is still frequently—if somewhat reluctantly—invoked today.

Here A. W. Schlegel subtly applies these new linguistic ideas to the theory of translation: the implication is that typologically similar languages are mutually better suited to translation, an observation that is perhaps not without some truth. But this also has practical ramifications: if Europeans are to truly understand the Sanskrit language and its literature, they would do best to approach it through the ancient language that they possess, and which bears such a striking resemblance to Sanskrit. Latin thus becomes a hermeneutical bridge between modern Europeans and ancient Indians.

Greek might have been even better, Schlegel opines, given its greater facility in compounding, but is not familiar enough. Remarkably, 21 years before Schlegel's book,[xlv] an eccentric but highly talented Greek Indologist named Demetrios Galanos, who lived for many years in India, completed a translation of the *Bhagavadgītā* into what is essentially 'ancient' Greek. In 1848 Georgios Typaldos, the first Librarian of the University of Athens, edited and published Galanos' translation under the title *Γίτα ἢ Θεσπέσιον Μέλος* ["The Gita, or the Divine Song"],[xlvi] intentionally choosing the same Greek subtitle that A. W. Schlegel had used for his Latin edition (see fig. 1), Θέσπεσιον

Μέλος in fact being a rather literal and poetic translation of "Bhagavad-Gītā". Galanos does not seem to have been particularly concerned about imitating the Sanskrit word-order, but he *is* in fact able to render Sanskrit compounds more frequently with compound words into Greek, as Schlegel proposed.[xlvii]

Why are compound words so crucial? Given their dual suitability, for poetry and intellectual discourse, Sanskrit's richness in compounds makes it ideal, on grounds of *linguistic typology*, for the early Romantics' favourite literary genre—philosophical poetry, which is precisely how A. W. Schlegel identifies the *Bhagavadgītā*. Thus his technical linguistic framing of the *Bhagavadgītā* subtly places it back within his brother Friedrich's Romantic project, namely the search in India for aesthetic and philosophical perfection.

Unlike Bopp, A. W. Schlegel considers it necessary to translate in elegant, idiomatic Latin, following to the character of the Latin language. As such, he will not translate word for word [*verbum e verbo reddere*], as Bopp, in the same terms, explicitly said he would [*verbo verbum reddens*], and as, for example, Hessler in his Latin translation from the *Ayurveda* would later also aim to do, [*ut… verbum verbo reddat*].[xlviii] They are all invoking one of the most ancient texts on the theory of translation, Cicero's *De Optimo Genere Oratorum*,[xlix] itself a preface to an intended translation of two Greek speeches. Cicero declares that he does not intend to translate word for word [*verbum pro verbo… reddere*, 14], but to keep the style and force of the words; to use the same phrases and figures, but to adapt the words to suit the custom of the Latin language. In following Cicero here, against Bopp, Schlegel is not merely flaunting his quality as a literary translator; rather, just as Cicero wished to convey the essence of Attic rhetoric in a form naturally intelligible to Romans, Schlegel's insistence on thoroughly idiomatic Latin could be seen as an attempt at *understanding*. Not to convey the Sanskrit text according to the spirit, or *genius,* of the Latin language would be to leave the *Bhagavadgītā* in the hinterland between the two languages, and thus to lose its internal cohesion: the result is that it becomes unintelligible, an "absurd imitation", as Schlegel says, that seems to the readers "twisted and obscure".[l]

A similar motive lies behind the resolution to translate *all* Sanskrit words into Latin, even philosophical terms or alien concepts. For if translation is an act of interpretation, not to translate some words might betray a hermeneutical incompleteness, or even a resignation to the idea that some words are not—to us—intelligible. Herling is here unfair to Schlegel in attributing this decision to "arrogance", or "the entitled

European desire to 'translate everything.'"[li] It instead displays what we might called a linguistically oriented hermeneutic perseverance, a desire to pursue tenaciously philological understanding of the text, and thus fulfil "all the duties of an *interpres*"—Schlegel's Latin term which refers equally to the role of translator and interpreter. It is worth citing here a passage from a later essay in which Schlegel retrospectively justifies this decision (in response to criticism from S.-A. Langlois):[lii]

> Nevertheless, M. Wilkins had left gaps[liii] by keeping a host of Sanskrit terms, no doubt because he despaired of finding equivalents for these metaphysical expressions in the English language. I could not accommodate myself to this method: I imposed on myself the strict rule that everything must be translated in Latin words, as well as possible. What would we say of a translation of the works of Plato or of Aristotle that bristled with Greek words?[liv] I was able to take support from a great model. The Latin language lacked technical terms for metaphysics: nevertheless Cicero, in explaining the systems of the Greek philosophers, tried to convey everything in Latin, even in occasional violation of the spirit [*génie*] of his language. He knew very well that it was only an approximation, and that the assistance of definitions would be necessary. I have used the same method, with the same discretion. I shall not here enter into the theory of the art of translation: I shall only observe in passing that it is poetry and metaphysics that present the most difficulties for the translator; yet in the Bhagavad-Gîtâ these two difficulties are found together.

It is significant that Schlegel understands Wilkins' use of Sanskrit terms as a form of *gap*—a hermeneutical gap, we may say. Drawing again on Cicero, Schlegel formulates the act of translation as an *approximation*, a process of understanding. This is an important idea that also characterised W. von Humboldt's contribution to the debate following the publication of Schlegel's *Bhagavad-Gita*.

2.0. Reviews, Responses, and Revisions

2.1.

August Wilhelm Schlegel's *Bhagavad-Gita* initiated a protracted academic and philosophical debate of considerable significance. As Marchignoli notes, "the appearance of A. W. Schlegel's edition and translation gave a new opportunity for a philosophical appraisal of the Indian text" of a type that had simply not occurred following the publication of Wilkins' earlier, English translation.[lv] But this exchange, which attracted such eminent thinkers as Humboldt and Hegel, concerned not only the philosophical ideas contained in the *Bhagavadgītā*; it also elicited illuminating contributions on the nature of translation and the possibility of understanding Indian texts, as well as an increasingly

sophisticated evaluation of the indigenous Indian scholarly traditions and ways of thinking.

The first response came from an undistinguished French Indologist, Simon-Alexandre Langlois, who reviewed Schlegel's *Bhagavad-Gita* in four articles, published in the *Journal Asiatique* in 1824 and early 1825.[lvi] Langlois was a student of the renowned Antoine-Léonard de Chezy (Schlegel's former teacher), but had little published work to his name. Schlegel was understandably rather annoyed that such an important contribution as his *Bhagavad-Gita* should be reviewed by an unknown and underqualified student of Chézy, all the more so since Langlois seemed to have published his reviews with the connivance of Chézy, with the intention "to discredit my work, passing over everything I have done for the emendation and explanation of the text, and focusing on some minutely dissected details".[lvii] Moreover, in 1825 Chézy himself published a brief review,[lviii] which reused many of the criticisms that had already appeared under Langlois' name.[lix]

The criticisms of Langlois and Chézy are heavily dependent on the Sanskrit commentary of Śrīdhara-Svāmin; Schlegel had transcribed a section of this text in Paris, but did not have access to the majority of the commentary when working on his translation. The changing attitude to and use of Sanskrit commentators marked an important development in 19th century Indology. In a sense the detailed use of a Sanskrit commentary in interpreting a text, such as Langlois attempts, is a significant milestone, though Langlois was simply a beneficiary of the impressive collection of manuscripts at the national library in Paris. Moreover, Langlois and Chézy are largely uncritical in their invocation of the commentator's authority, which they put to principally adversarial use.

Langlois, in particular, was clearly a scholar of limited capabilities.[lx] His reviews are saturated with speculative comments on Indian philosophy and the nature of poetry that come to little more than common stereotypes interspersed with inanities. (He manages to call the poet of the *Bhagavadgītā* a Spinozist-pantheist[lxi]—a common idea found in Herder and F. Schlegel—*and* a deist.)[lxii] Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that Langlois was engaged in a valuable enterprise, even if on the whole he carried it out poorly, namely scrutinising the interpretation of individual words and passages, with reference to commentaries and parallel passages; and in a very few instances, Langlois seemed even to Wilhelm von Humboldt to have made a modest improvement on Schlegel's version.[lxiii] But this is rare and always requires qualification.

Langlois made one criticism, which, though "severe, and also unjust,"[lxiv] would be an important point of reference in the following debate: "in every philosophical work there are words to which the author must attach a fixed and determinate meaning. To change this meaning is to spread obscurity in one's ideas voluntarily."[lxv] And of another passage: "I well know that each of these words expresses something superior by its energy or its brilliance; but it seems to me that *vibhuti* should have been translated in the same way everywhere."[lxvi] Langlois is of course demanding the impossible, and confusing the unity of the a complex Sanskrit concept with the unitary mapping of that concept onto a Latin or French complex concept. Nevertheless, this raised the important question of the possibility of grasping these concepts, and catalysed further methodological discussion on the process of translation.

A. W. Schlegel responded directly to Langlois with an "Antikritik" [lxvii] that appeared in the *Journal Asiatique* in July 1826.[lxviii] This included the paragraph translated above, defending his decision to translate everything into Latin, and the general evaluations of the collective efforts of Langlois and Chézy that we have already mentioned. But he refuses to engage with Langlois' third-rate speculations, and for the most part adopts a masterly method of refutation: he focuses on the one passage of the text for which he does have access to the commentary, cites both Langlois and the commentator in full, and demonstrates systematically that Langlois was either utterly confused in his interpretation of both text and commentator (who in fact supports *Schlegel's* view), or misguided in his subservience to the latter. His rich array of comparative material from other Sanskrit texts, and his forceful, judicious rebuttals, which are not without an ironic bite, give the impression of a scholarly virtuoso swatting away a critic who is out of his depth—doubtless precisely the effect Schlegel wanted to create.

This led Schlegel to express some general appraisals of the Sanskrit commentarial tradition, which are valuable not only as a methodological advance in Indological scholarship, but as a tentatively open, cross-cultural evaluation of the differing intellectual characters of the Indian and European traditions:[lxix]

> As for the rest, I protest in advance against the principle that one should always follow the opinion of any scholiast. What would have become of the study of Greek authors, if we had adopted that approach to them? Nevertheless, I consider the Indian commentators in general far superior to the majority of Greek scholiasts. If the Indians themselves had not found points of obscurity in ancient texts, they would never have thought of writing

> commentaries; if the first commentator had resolved all the difficulties, he would not have had a host of successors. …The Indian scholiasts know many things better than we do; but on the other hand we have practised the art of interpretation through the study of several languages; we are not, like them, limited to the horizon of India; we are familiar with the history of philosophy and that of the human spirit.
>
> Generally speaking, historical and philological criticism are European inventions. Indian scholars seem to accept, with a faith too implicit, what is traditional in their school, in order to be able to apply all the insight they possess to the correction of texts. I made a necessary emendation in the last verse of the Bhagavad-Gîtâ; it was later verified by manuscripts. Well! Śrīdhara-Svāmin had the false reading before his eyes, but, instead of correcting it, he tried to save it by a subterfuge.
>
> Sometimes one can also see that the commentators' personal opinions, in which they are steeped, each in his own school, have biased them in their explanation of the text. It is thus that Śrīdhara-Svāmin, commenting on that remarkable passage in which the poet repudiates the Vedas so boldly and accuses those sacred books of promoting worldly interests alone, slipped into his notes various attenuations that are not present in the original.
>
> Finally, the Indian commentators generally have a very serious flaw: they are obscure, and often more difficult to understand than the texts that they claim to explain. This is due in part to their mental inclination towards abstraction and subtility, in part to the character of the language. …They often squeeze their definitions into a single word of excessive length and difficult to unravel.

The position of judge is reserved for the European scholar, since the philological method itself is considered a European invention, but an effort is made to understand the concerns and methods of the Indian commentators, and they are compared favourably with their Greek counterparts. (The charge of obscurity, however, is unfair: they may be hard for Europeans to read, but this is at least in part due to a far inferior knowledge of commentarial idiom and convention than learned Indian readers possessed.) In essence, an accurate understanding of the goals and methods of the Indian commentators, and an assessment of their reliability, has been incorporated into the hermeneutic process, the approximation to the original text. This of course necessitates an eternal, asymptotic scholarly effort—after all, the commentators require interpretation in their own right. But it also implies a certain optimism, since, though the goal is unreachable, progress towards it is always possible via the rigorous methods of philological scholarship.[lxx]

2.2.

Schlegel continued his work on this project, with interruptions, for many years after the publication of his *Bhagavad-Gita*, having decided not long afterwards that a second edition would be in order.[lxxi] To this end he enlisted the help of his student Christian Lassen, who would devote special attention to revising and expanding the

critical notes that accompanied the text, though in the end he indefinitely delayed the promised philosophical commentary, due to the impossibility of obtaining the fundamentally important commentary of Śaṅkara.[lxxii] Schlegel died in 1845, and in the following year Lassen, who had succeeded to Schlegel's chair in Bonn, published the second edition that his master had not lived to complete. The text and translation, as well as the notes, had all been significantly revised, thanks to a much more extensive study of the manuscripts and commentaries than had originally been possible: this time, Schlegel copied out the whole of Śrīdhara's commentary when he visited Paris, and he had access also to the important commentary of Madhusūdana.

Lassen's detailed evaluation of these two commentators in his preface to the second edition evinces a dramatic advance in the understanding of the Sanskrit commentatorial tradition. Crucially, a deeper study of the Indian philosophical systems, which Colebrooke had initiated in a series of famous papers just after the first edition of Schlegel's *Bhagavad-Gita* was published,[lxxiii] allowed Lassen to understand the intellectual context of the commentators, and thus better appreciate their aims and evaluate how they should be used in interpreting the *Bhagavadgītā*. This process led to a view of the complexity and diversity of Indian philosophical thought, and paved the way for an understanding of the *Bhagavadgītā*'s unique place within it (rather than simply subsuming the text under one of the later systems, as had formerly often been done, or taking it as representative of Indian thought as a whole). An excerpt from Lassen's treatment of Madhusūdana will demonstrate this:[lxxiv]

> Madhusūdana is a very attentive and learned expositor; he elucidates with care the link between distichs and changes of theme, he fully explains individual words and frequently cites passages from the *Vedas*, especially from the *Upaniṣads*, the *law-books*, the *Purāṇas*, the books of *Patanjali* and *Vasiṣṭha* on *Yoga*, and others. He usually makes reference to the opinions of former interpreters, and often combats them; he not uncommonly states the different opinions of philosophers on the matters dealt with in the text, and puts them on trial. It is thus a very useful book for one's reading, although it cannot be denied that it is somewhat more difficult to read—for the author often digresses from his subject-matter and appends discussions that are of little help in illuminating the Bhagavadgita, nor is he careful enough to avoid verbose explanations, or repeating glosses on words that he has already given more than once. His two other faults, however, are more serious, and it is clear that he had a propensity for the first already from the title of his book itself;[lxxv] for he is extremely eager to find signs of a hidden and secret meaning in the poet's discourse, and he often distorts the poet's words in order to elicit a sense which is not even obscurely intimated. I have provided below some examples of this ingenious method of interpretation. The second fault is more serious: it may be perceived that Madhusūdana explains the text not according to the intention[lxxvi] of the author, but pre-formed opinions, which he attempts to force upon the text. This is certainly the wrong method, but we should not rebuke

> Madhusūdana to harshly for it, since it is intimately linked with the whole disposition of those Indian commentators who work on explaining sacred texts. …[Lassen discusses Madhusūdana's philosophical allegiances.] But it is very important to understand which school an interpreter of the Bhagavadgita follows, since in that text the older Vedānta doctrine and the Sāṃkhya are in a way mixed together; and as such we must carefully distinguish what arises from which school, and take care not to trust too far an expositor who is an eager promoter of a particular school.

The second edition of Schlegel's *Bhagavad-Gita* does in itself constitute a sort of response to the criticism of Langlois and Chézy—who were so uncritical in their use of Śrīdhara's commentary.[lxxvii] We might even wonder whether the decision to print the Latin translation not, as in the first edition, in a separate section, but below the Sanskrit text on each page, replies to Langlois' charge that Schlegel ought to have translated key Sanskrit terms always with the same Latin word: if the reader can cast his eye up the page and check which Sanskrit word is being translated, this criticism simply seems irrelevant. In any case, this small change of layout subtly implies a shift in orientation in the accompanying Latin translation, now tacitly presented as more strictly scholarly (rather than literary) in purpose. (Should we impute this to Lassen?)

2.3.

More productive than Langlois' criticism itself was the response it elicited from Wilhelm von Humboldt, who in June 1825 wrote "a long letter to Schlegel in which he took up all the points in Langlois' criticism";[lxxviii] Schlegel published Humboldt's text, along with comments of his own in response, in the 1826 edition of his journal, the *Indische Bibliothek.*[lxxix] It is here that Humboldt made his famous remark that the *Bhagavadgītā* is perhaps the only true philosophical poem in any language known to us, a claim he elsewhere provided with a detailed and clever theoretical justification, resting on the specific theoretical contents as well as the form of the work.[lxxx]

Alongside discussions of the meaning of particular words and passages, Humboldt includes some general remarks on the problem of translation, which, together with Schlegel's responses, are particularly valuable. The relevant sections have been translated[lxxxi] and astutely commented in a paper by Helmut Gipper.[lxxxii] Humboldt defended Schlegel's method of translation against Langlois' criticism:[lxxxiii]

> When assessing any translation it must first of all be remembered that translating is in principle an impossible undertaking, since different languages do not constitute synonymies of identically structured concepts. A good translation can be expected only from one who has realized and assimilated

> this point. No translation can be more than an approximation, not only to the beauty, but also to the sense of the original. For someone who does not know the language, this is all it can be; but for someone who knows the language, it must achieve more. Given a good translation, he must be able to recognize from every word of the translation the corresponding word in the original. Only the best of translations make this possible. I do not think it an exaggeration to praise your translation for achieving this distinction, along with many other qualities, such as simplicity, brevity, emphasis, lightness, elegance, and finally true Latinity… If, as is the case with many philosophical expressions in Sanskrit, words have meanings of such many-sidedness that they cannot be rendered by any one word in the language into which one is translating, then there is no choice but to represent each aspect of the meaning with one word and to use the appropriate one on each occasion.

We see that Humboldt's assessment of the practice of translation is very close to that of Schlegel: translation is a process of hermeneutic approximation. The convergence is so direct that Schlegel begins his response by endorsing all Humboldt's general points. In fact, Humboldt's theory of translation rests on slightly different, and deeper, philosophical premises about the relationship between language and thought.[lxxxiv] We have observed the importance of grammatical typology in Schlegel's reflections on translation; when in this passage Humboldt chooses to emphasise rather that "different languages do not constitute synonymies of identically structured concepts", we glimpse what Gipper takes as the first key principle of his philosophy of language, namely that every language "differs from all other languages not only in having unique grammatical structures, but above all in having specific semantic structures. Humboldt says that linguistic diversity is not a matter 'of sounds and signs" but "of world-view'."[lxxxv] This principle is apparent when, in his ensuing investigation into the meaning and best translation of the term *yoga,* Humboldt begins with an analysis of the mechanisms of concept-formation and their implications for linguistic diversity. "For languages tend to use a word for a sense perception in order to express an intellectual meaning. This intellectual meaning is then philosophically treated, analysed, and applied. Everything that accrues to the meaning is then applied to the word itself, but the connection with the original meaning of the word remains, since the applied and original meaning are always thought of together." [lxxxvi] The translator must make a choice in view of this process: to render with one word the original concept, which will not in the target language have the required "intellectual meanings", or to use various words to translate the various different meanings appropriately.

Humboldt approaches the understanding of Indian texts from a similar position to that of A. W. Schlegel, but surpasses him in the philosophical depth he brings to—and

demands of—the task. Schlegel, in the end, is above all a practitioner of translation and a philologist. "I might perhaps be able to communicate much that is useful from my own experiences about the art of poetic imitation," he says in his response to Humboldt, "but not as theory. There are few things I would be able to express profitably in general statements; I would always have to make my opinion clear through examples."[lxxxvii] For Schlegel, "Everything, even the concept of faithfulness to the original, is determined by the nature of the text in hand and by the relationship of the two languages." In short, the attempt to understand Sanskrit texts like the *Bhagavadgītā*, with their linguistic and conceptual foreignness, necessitated for Schlegel a hermeneutic method and the technical study of language; for Humboldt it led further to hermeneutic theory and the philosophy of language.

3.

Humboldt gave two public lectures further developing his reflections on the *Bhagavadgītā*, which were published in 1826,[lxxxviii] eliciting a response from none other than Hegel.[lxxxix] Hegel's contribution, while deeply engaged with Schlegel, Humboldt (and even Langlois), is nevertheless philosophically opposed—even *reactionary*—to their key assumptions and conclusions. If, for Schlegel and Humboldt, it was possible to understand foreign concepts through a process of linguistic approximation—through *translation*—Hegel situates conceptual variation beyond language, in the realm of the *spirit*, by differing division of content according to *genus* and *species*.[xc] Hegel thus attacked all translations of the *Bhagavadgītā* as deceptive, guilty of illicitly assimilating fundamentally foreign Indian concepts to (in his view actually superior) European notions.[xci] Though Hegel is open to detailed *conceptual* analysis of Indian notions, his ideas undercut the possibility of the *linguistic* process of translating Sanskrit texts comprehensibly into European languages, and, more seriously, the philological method that for Schlegel and Humboldt promised a steady path towards clearer understanding. And, although the warning against assimilating Sanskrit terms unduly to European concepts is salutary, without the linguistic analysis that Schlegel and Humboldt had carried out in the very process of translation, Hegel's interpretation is unmoored, open to the currents of his own prejudices. It is unsurprising, then, that Hegel ultimately accorded very little value to the *Bhagavadgītā* and Indian thought in general.

Though Hegel's philosophy of history may have had great influence, and his prejudices regarding India may have been widespread, his intervention in the debate over the *Bhagavadgītā*, with its hermeneutic pessimism, did not prove decisive. Humboldt's reception of Hegel's essay was unsurprisingly cool, and it is notable that Lassen, in his preface to the second edition of Schlegel's work, mentioned the responses of Langlois, Chézy and Humboldt, but not Hegel. Between Friedrich Schlegel's enthusiastic call for an Indian Renaissance and Hegel's devaluation of the *Bhagavadgītā*, it was above all August Wilhelm Schlegel's philological method that would prove fundamental in the developing study of Indian thought. The works of A. W. Schlegel and Humboldt, though from the earliest stages of European Indology, remain valuable for the philosophical and hermeneutic depth they bring to the endeavour.

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[i] All the texts discussed in this paper were written before the creation of a standardised transcription for Sanskrit, and thus each expresses Sanskrit words in Roman characters in a slightly different fashion. I have, for the purposes of clarity, modernised all transcriptions of Sanskrit words, *except* the title of the *Bhagavadgītā*: the standard modern transcription (*Bhagavadgītā*) I reserve for the Sanskrit text itself (when I refer to it), whereas A. W. Schlegel's edition/translation is referred to as *Bhagavad-Gita*, the form that appears on the title page. Likewise the name of the *Bhagavadgītā*, when it appears it translations from the works of Schlegel and other early scholars, is left in the form in which it appears in the (Latin, French) original.

[ii] Wilkins (1785).

[iii] For a detailed analysis of Herder's responses to the *Bhagavadgītā*, see Herling (2006), ch. 2 and esp. 3. See also Wilson (1955).

[iv] On this obscure but interesting figure, see Willson (1961).

[v] Cf. Schlegel (1808) vii, and *passim*. At 286 he calls the *Bhagavadgītā* "ein beinah vollständiger kurzer Inbegriff des Indischen Glaubes" ["an almost complete brief epitome of Indian belief"]. The work is available in English in Schlegel (1849), p. 425-526.

[vi] See Herling (2006), ch. 4, for discussion.

[vii] Omitted in the English translation of 1849, but included in Adolphe Mazure's French version of 1837.

[viii] Schlegel (1808), p. 286.

[ix] Bopp (1816). The book is prefaced, interestingly, by Bopp's old teacher, the philosopher Windischmann (whose son would go on to become an eminent Indologist).

[x] Translation adapted from Schlegel (1849), 426. Original at Schlegel (1808), vii.

[xi] Bopp (1819). When Ottmar Frank published in Munich his *Chrestomathia Sanskrita* in the following two years—a Sanskrit-Latin reader for beginners, the second set of Sanskrit texts to be available in Europe—he was forced to print the *Devanāgarī* with a spidery *lithography* that would be harshly criticised by A. W. Schlegel: Frank (1820), (1821); Schlegel (1823), xii-xiii.

[xii] Bopp (1819), p. 3-4.

[xiii] See Berman (1984), p. 205-225.

[xiv] Cf. Herling (2006), p. 182-3.

[xv] Here the preface begins. Page numbers refer to Schlegel (1823). All translations are my own unless noted.

[xvi] The University of Bonn, where Schlegel was professor of Indology.

[xvii] Now the *Bibliothèque nationale.*

[xviii] I.e. 1785.

[xix] *Vatis divini* in Schlegel's Latin. *Vates* in Latin is an ancient, religiously charged word for 'poet' that can also refer to a divinely inspired prophet; it is associated especially with the early Latin poets and with Virgil.

[xx] *Prisci vatis.*

[xxi] *ratio philosophica.*

[xxii] *genio*.

[xxiii] *verbum e verbo reddere.*

[xxiv] *indolis.*

[xxv] A measure that favours 'synthetic' or inflectional languages; see below.

[xxvi] The 'Golden Age' of Latin poetry, which produced Virgil and Horace.

[xxvii] I.e. the mannerisms of pre-classical and archaising Latin poets (Ennius, Pacuvius, Lucretius).

[xxviii] *analogiae*: an important word in Roman linguistic theory, referring to the structural regularity of language: see Varro, *De Lingua Latina*, books VIII-X.

[xxix] *poësin.*

[xxx] *dictionum.*

[xxxi] 1st century AD writer on rhetoric, author of the *Institutio Oratoria.* For these remarks see 8.3.33; the text of the passage is uncertain, and some emend the name to *Sergius Plautus.*

[xxxii] On p. xi among the description of manuscripts, omitted from this translation. This was the commentary of Śrīdhara-Svāmin.

[xxxiii] Though the second edition of 1846 contains fuller annotations, the philosophical commentary never really came to fruition.

[xxxiv] *interpretis.*

[xxxv] *pietatis*: a central term of Roman ethics encompassing devotion to and respect for the gods as well as human authority-figures.

[xxxvi] *Numinisque hypopheta*. Schlegel capitalises *Numen*, which in his Latin translation of the *Bhagavadgītā* often refers either to Kṛṣṇa (when qualified with *almum*) or to *Brahman*.

[xxxvii] *oraculis.*

[xxxviii] The image (and the use of *avia* in this context) goes back to Lucretius' philosophical poem: *De Rerum Natura* 1.926 & 4.1, itself drawing on Hellenistic tropes (especially Callimachus).

[xxxix] This apparently refers to Antoine-Léonard de Chézy, Europe's first professor of Sanskrit, who taught A. W. Schlegel for a short while in Paris. (See Lassen's preface to the second edition, below.)

[xl] P. xxv, in the omitted section.

[xli] "[F]irst published in the *Jahrbuch des preussischen Rhein-Universität*, then in French translation in the *Bibliothèque universelle*, and again in the *Revue encyclopédique* (how much in demand such information must have been!), and finally in Schlegel's own periodical, *Indische Bibliothek* (1, 1820, 1-27)." Staal (1972), p. 50.

[xlii] Schlegel (1820), p. 23.

[xliii] Marchignoli (2004), p. 254.

[xliv] Part I, Ch. 4

[xlv] See Schulz (1969), p. 340.

[xlvi] Galanos (1848).

[xlvii] E.g. 1.9b Galanos has ῥιψοκίνδυνοι ["danger-throwing, reckless"], a compound attested in classical Greek, for *tyaktajīvitāḥ* ["abandoning their lives"], while Schlegel has to be content with a paraphrase, *animae prodigi* ["careless of their lives"], that is, however, significantly closer to the letter of the Sanskrit. In 1.4a Schlegel achieves a Latin compound, using the old adjective *arquitenentes* [lit. "bow-holders, holding bows"] to translate *maheṣvāsā* ["with large bows"], while Galanos can use the more literal μεγαλότοξοι ["with large bows"].

[xlviii] Hessler (1844), vii.

[xlix] And Horace *Ars Poetica* 133-4, which Hessler especially clearly has in sight.

[l] Cf. Berman (1984), p. 224. A striking contrast to Schlegel's method of translation is offered by Anquetil-Duperron's earlier (1801) Latin translation of the *Upaniṣads* from the Persian translation of Dārā Šikōh. Anquetil-Duperron strives to be literal in the extreme, claiming to have rendered the individual Persian words into Latin, with the Persian phrase-structure largely conserved. (Anquetil-Duperron (1801), iii.) He leaves many key terms untranslated—both terms the Persian translation itself borrowed from the Sanskrit (such as "*Brahm*" and "*Pran*"), and Persian words; but rather than adding Latin inflections to these loan words, he indicates their grammatical relations by using inflected forms of the Greek definite article (Latin has none). The Greek article is also co-opted to forge new types of grammatical construction, on the model of the Persian, that are entirely foreign to Latin. As such he is surely right to think that some people will imagine that they are reading more a Persian book than a Latin one. (iii) But this was precisely what he intended: when dealing with philosophy and theology, *res nuda*, "the bare matter" should be placed before the reader, and when it is impossible to publish the original text a "rough and servile translation" is the ideal, to allow the reader to approach the original as closely as possible. (iii-iv) Anquetil-Duperron clearly has a purely instrumental view of translation: it is not in itself a process of understanding, but simply a means of facilitating access to a text. Thus the translation is avowedly nothing but a poor substitute for the original; but in an age when the original texts were hard to come by, it has its value. Schopenhauer famously counted Anquetil-Duperron's translation of the *Upaniṣads* as a favourite book; and its intellectual—if not strictly scholarly—value is increased by the extremely copious notes on very diverse subjects. Yet A. W. Schlegel's comment is telling: he said of the method of the Persian translation of the *Upaniṣads*, that of leaving Sanskrit words untranslated, that it is "very convenient but quite unprofitable", (Gipper (1986), 119), and Anquetil-Duperron pushes the same method to the extreme. Convenience is all very well, but Schlegel wants a translation to *accomplish* something.

[li] Herling (2006), p. 186.

[lii] Schlegel (1846 [1826]), p. 291-2. See below, section 2.1.

[liii] *des lacunes.*

[liv] Ironically, this is now, of course, fairly common practice.

[lv] Marchignoli (2004), p. 254.

[lvi] Langlois (1824a), (1824b), (1824c), (1825). A fifth and final instalment was promised, but never appeared.

[lvii] Schlegel (1846 [1826]), p. 292-3.

[lviii] Chézy (1825).

[lix] Schlegel (1846 [1826]), p. 309. Schlegel saw this attack, according to his successor Lassen, as a betrayal of his friendship with Chézy, whom he had mentioned in friendly terms in his preface: Schlegel & Lassen (1846), xxxi.

[lx] Schlegel found good reason to doubt not only Langlois' knowledge of Sanskrit, but even his Latin. (E.g. Schlegel (1846 [1826]), p. 297, 300.)

[lxi] Langlois (1824a), p. 115.

[lxii] Langlois (1825), p. 234. Chézy, though his review adds little of significance to what Langlois had already written (whoever was in fact the source of the criticisms), is at least comparatively free of this vitiating tendency.

[lxiii] E.g. Humboldt (1841 [1826]), p. 119.

[lxiv] Gipper (1986), p. 112.

[lxv] Langlois (1824b), p. 247-8.

[lxvi] Langlois (1825), p. 245.

[lxvii] Humboldt [Schlegel] (1841 [1826]), p. 111.

[lxviii] Schlegel (1846 [1826]), p. 288-310.

[lxix] Schlegel (1846 [1826]), p. 293-5.

[lxx] Cf. Berman (1984), p. 212-13: *empirically*, translation comes up against limits, but *theoretically* everything is translatable.

[lxxi] Schlegel & Lassen (1846), ix.

[lxxii] Schlegel & Lassen (1846), xxxiii.

[lxxiii] Lassen himself had made important contributions: see Lassen (1832).

[lxxiv] Schlegel & Lassen (1846), xxi-xxiv. I omit the extensive footnotes.

[lxxv] *Gītā-Gūḍhārtha-Dīpikā*, 'illumination of the secret meaning of the *Gītā*'.

[lxxvi] *mentem* in Lassen's Latin.

[lxxvii] Cf. Schegel/Lassen (1846), xxxi.

[lxxviii] Gipper (1986), p. 112.

[lxxix] *Ueber die Bhagavad-Gita. Mit Bezug auf die Beurtheilung der Schlegelschen Ausgabe im Parisier Asiatischen Journal*. Humboldt (1841 [1826]), p. 110-184.

[lxxx] See Marchignoli (2004), p. 257-9.

[lxxxi] By T. I. Rhodes, who translated Gipper's paper for the edited volume.

[lxxxii] Gipper (1986).

[lxxxiii] Translated at Gipper (1986), p. 112. Original at Humboldt (1841 [1826]), p. 135-6.

[lxxxiv] See Gipper (1986), p. 124-6 for a clear overview of Humboldt's philosophy of language, and Berman (1984), p. 242-8 for his theory of translation.

[lxxxv] Gipper (1986), p. 124.

[lxxxvi] Gipper (1986), p. 114. Original at Humboldt (1841 [1826]), p. 137.

[lxxxvii] Gipper (1986), p. 118. Original at Humboldt [Schlegel] (1841 [1826]), p. 143.

[lxxxviii] *Ueber die unter dem Namen Bhagavad-Gítá bekannte Episode des Mahá-Bhárata*. Humboldt (1841 [1826]), p. 26-109.

[lxxxix] Hegel (2001 [1827]), p. 19-77. An English translation has been published as Hegel (1995), though it is perhaps more readily accessible in Rathore & Mohapatra (2017), p. 87-139. Though he knew no Sanskrit, Hegel spent several months studying all the available resources on India, and in particular the debate following Schlegel's *Bhagavad-Gita* forms the crucial background to his essay.

[xc] Rathore & Mohapatra (2017), p. 100. Cf. Marchignoli (2004), p. 260.

[xci] Marchignoli (2004), p. 259-60.