

Julius Klaproth

His Life and Works with Special Emphasis on Japan

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Oriental Studies in Europe grew out of the study of the Bible and focused first on Hebrew and the related Semitic languages. Until the beginning of the 19th century there were a few, mainly self-taught individuals who dealt with Asian languages and cultures outside the scope of Near Eastern Studies, and they suffered from lack of texts, reference tools, and training, and, of course, usually did not have an opportunity to visit the countries of their scholarly pursuits. While Andreas Müller, Christian Mentzel, Étienne Fourmont, and Gottlieb Siegfried Bayer tried very hard, their achievements were fragmentary and not devoid of errors.²

In the area of East Asia the situation changed only at the beginning of the 19th century when again two self-taught scholars appeared on the scene, Jean Pierre Abel-Rémusat³ (1788–1832), a medical doctor who was appointed to the first chair of Chinese Studies in Europe (Paris, 1814), and Julius Klaproth (1783–1835). What is the rationale behind researching such people's work? After about 170 years so many things have changed, we have an abundance of texts available, many dictionaries and reference tools, we can travel easily, and the command of Chinese and Japanese is by no means a prerogative of scholars. There are some good reasons, however, not to ignore history: The two scholars were instrumental in turning East Asian Studies into scientific disciplines with critical methods. The development of East Asian Studies in

1 Lecture given at the Nichibunken, Kyoto, at the end of January, 2005.

2 Cf. some information on early East Asian studies in *China illustrata. Das europäische Chinaverständnis im Spiegel des 16. bis 18. Jahrhunderts*. [Weinheim:] VCH Acta humaniora (1987). 302 p. (Ausstellungskataloge der Herzog August Bibliothek.55).

3 E. A. X. CLERC DE LANDRESSE: Notice sur la vie et les travaux de M. Abel-Rémusat. *JA* 1834, 205–231, 296–316.

Europe is hardly understandable without taking their work into account. They published extensively – Klaproth has more than 300 published items to his credit⁴ – so that their work cannot be ignored, even today. Both were “Asiatologists”, in the good sense, i.e. they had a good command not only of e.g. Chinese but also Manchu, Mongolian, Sanskrit, Turkish, Arabic, Persian, and even Caucasian languages. That allowed for a wide horizon and the study of the development of individual countries in an Asian context – in contrast to today’s age of specialists.

1. *Life*

Julius Heinrich Klaproth was the son of a famous father, Martin Heinrich Klaproth (1743–1817), the owner of the pharmacy *The White Swan* in Berlin and member of the Academy of Sciences, an outstanding scientist – he discovered no less than four chemical elements, among them uranium. As a boy young Klaproth was proficient in science but later on he felt attracted by Oriental languages, to a degree that he went to the Berlin Royal Library to study the Chinese-Spanish dictionary of Father Diaz⁵ and other books pertaining to China. His deficiencies in some disciplines astonished the examination board at his graduation but he explained that he had been studying Chinese instead – and proved it. His father sent him to Halle University to get him away from the Royal Library but young Klaproth found Chinese books in Dresden. And he managed to convince a publisher to take on his *Asiatisches Magazin* (Asiatic Magazine)⁶ for which he won a number of scholars as contributors; Klaproth was just 19 years old at that time.

He had become acquainted with Count Jan Potocki⁷ (1761–1815), a Polish nobleman who was interested in finding the original homeland of the Slavic

4 H. WALRAVENS: *Julius Klaproth (1783–1835). Leben und Werk*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 1999. X, 230 p. (Orientalistik Bibliographien und Dokumentationen.3).

5 This famous manuscript is no longer in the collection of the library.

6 *Asiatisches Magazin*. Verfaßt von einer Gesellschaft Gelehrten und herausgegeben von Julius Klaproth. 1.–2. Band. Mit Kupfern und Charten. Weimar, im Verlage des Industrie-Comptoirs 1802.

7 Władysław KOTWICZ: *Die russische Gesandtschaftsreise nach China 1805*. Zu Leben und Werk des Grafen Jan Potocki. Nebst Ergänzungen aus russischen und chinesischen Quellen hrsg. Berlin: Bell 1991. 119 p. 4^o (Han-pao tung-Ya shu-chi mu-lu.44); Maria E. ZÓLTOWSKA: Potocki, Jan. *Polski Słownik biograficzny*. 28.1984/85, 36–42.

peoples, and for that reason he intended to go through Oriental language sources. Klapproth seemed to be the right man for this task. When Potocki became attached to the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he recommended Klapproth as professor for a newly to be established Oriental Academy at Vilnius. This project did not materialize but Potocki was charged to head the scholarly section of a Russian embassy to China in 1805, and he invited Klapproth to join him. The embassy never reached Peking⁸ but Klapproth had an opportunity to travel through Siberia and along the Russian-Chinese border where he collected much information, last not least many books. He also learned from the interpreters⁹ of the embassy. When Klapproth returned to St. Petersburg where he had been made an associate member of the Academy of Sciences, he was sent immediately on another trip of exploration, namely to the Caucasus. Russia had annexed a large area of this mountainous region and was in need of collecting more information on her new dominions. Klapproth, recommended by Count Potocki, seemed the right man. When he came back with rich material he set to work on a catalogue of the Chinese and Manchu books of the academy library¹⁰ and started another journal. As he needed Chinese type he proposed to have it cut in Berlin;¹¹ when he was there, however, he felt reluctant to go back to Russia. During the Napoleonic wars he published a comprehensive report on his Caucasian travels¹², which includes a volume on the Caucasian languages, and notes on his trip along the Russian-Chinese border. He also prepared a catalogue of the Chinese

8 Klapproth himself gave an anonymous report: *Die russische Gesandtschaft nach China im Jahre 1805. Nebst einer Nachricht von der letzten Christen-Verfolgung in Peking*. St. Petersburg, im Ziemenschen Verlage, Leipzig, in Commission bey Bruder u. Hofmann 1809. 95 p.

9 Cf. H. WALRAVENS: Anton Vladykin. Eine Biobibliographie des russischen Mandjuristen und Sinologen. *Uralaltaische Jahrbücher* NF 2.1982, 291–298.

10 Julius VON KLAPROTH: *Katalog der chinesischen und mandjurischen Bücher der Bibliothek der Akademie der Wissenschaften in St. Petersburg*. Zum ersten Mal aus dem Manuskript herausgegeben von H. Walravens. Berlin: Bell 1988. 43 p. 4° (Ch'ing-wen tsung-hui.1).

11 *Specimen characterum sinicorum jussu Alexandri primi ligno excisorum*. Cura Julii de Klapproth, Cons. aulic. et academ. Petrop. Soc. [Berlin] 1811. 2 p. 2°.

12 *Reise in den Kaukasus und nach Georgien unternommen in den Jahren 1807 und 1808, auf Veranstaltung der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu St. Petersburg, enthaltend eine vollständige Beschreibung der kaukasischen Länder und ihrer Bewohner*, von Julius von Klapproth, Kais. Russischem Hofrathe und Mitgliede der Akademie der Wissenschaften zu St. Petersburg. 1.–2. Band. Halle und Berlin, in den Buchhandlungen des Hallischen Waisenhauses 1812–1814. XVI, 740 p., XVIII, 626 p., 4 pl., 3 maps. An additional volume is entitled: *Kaukasische Sprachen* (1814).

collection of the Berlin Royal Library. He then went to Italy but found the situation there not very conducive to his scholarly intentions. He moved to Paris because a number of famous Orientalists were there, and the Imperial Printing Shop had an excellent reputation regarding the printing of Oriental scripts. For a while he could stay with his colleague Abel-Rémusat; then luck struck: In Dresden he had become acquainted with Wilhelm von Humboldt, an outstanding linguist, and he and his brother Alexander, the famous naturalist, regarded Klaproth as a man to make major contributions to the knowledge of East Asia, knowledge that would also be useful for their own research. They persuaded the Prussian government to make Klaproth Professor of Asian Languages at the new University of Bonn (1816). But Klaproth petitioned to be allowed to stay in Paris because he would lack all the resources for his studies in Bonn. This was granted, and so he remained in Paris on an official stipend. While this provided Klaproth with a financial basis for his astounding scholarly output, it is also the reason for the slow development of East Asian Studies in Germany; the first chair of Chinese Studies to play a role in the academic context was only established in Hamburg in 1909. Count Potocki¹³ who had encouraged Klaproth to go to Paris had ended his life in 1815 so the Prussian support was a godsend for Klaproth. He had even tried to get Napoleon interested and had paid him a visit on the island of Elba where he lived in exile and took interest in the young man. But the historical development was not in Napoleon's favour any more. During twenty years Klaproth worked, studied and published without giving himself a break. He only took short trips, e.g. to Berlin, his hometown, and to London.

13 Klaproth felt a lifelong obligation towards Potocki. So he edited three of his papers, with an introduction: *Voyage dans les steppes d'Astrakhan et du Caucase. Histoire primitive des peuples qui ont habité anciennement ces contrées; Nouveau périple du Pont-Euxin*, par le comte J. Potocki, membre des Sociétés Asiatiques de Paris, de Londres et de Bombay. Avec 7 planches et 2 cartes. Ouvrages publiés et accompagnés de notes et de tables, par M. Klaproth. Paris: Merlin 1829. 2 vols.; he also followed his mentor's idea of synchronistic historical tables: *Tableaux historiques de l'Asie, depuis la monarchie de Cyrus jusqu'à nos jours, accompagnée de recherches historiques et ethnographiques sur cette partie du monde*. Ouvrage dédié à MM. Guillaume et Alexandre de Humboldt. Par J. Klaproth. Avec un Atlas in-folio. Paris: Schubart 1826. 289, XXXI p. 4^e.

2. *Scholarly Activities*

Klaproth's talents were not so much creative but critical. He had an amazing command of languages but his main linguistic contributions were lexicographical, not comparative or grammatical. He studied the Afghan language and recognized its relationship with Persian, Kurdish and Sanskrit. The *Dissertation on language and script of the Uighurs*¹⁴ became famous because it led to a major controversy with Isaak Jakob Schmidt¹⁵ (1779–1847), the founder of Mongolian Studies. Schmidt recognized Uighur as a “Tangut” language while Klaproth maintained it was Turkic. The first Chinese dictionary printed in Europe had been published in Paris in 1813; it was none else than the famous dictionary of Father Basilio Brollo¹⁶, called de Glemona [usually thus misspelt; the name of the town is Gemona]. The editor, Deguignes fils, who had spent years at the French factory in Canton supervised the printing but Klaproth and Abel-Rémusat were not satisfied with his work and therefore published a large volume as a supplement.¹⁷ Besides vocabularies of several Caucasian languages Klaproth also published Kurdic, Koibal and Motor¹⁸ glossaries and criticized Robert Morrison's *Chinese-English dictionary*¹⁹ which was published at Macao. *Asia polyglotta*, accompanied by an atlas of languages, is an attempt to classify languages in groups. Klaproth recognized 23 branches, or families, and he gave short introductions to lexicographical samples. He

14 *Abhandlung über die Sprache und Schrift der Uiguren*. Von J. v. Klaproth, correspondirendem Mitgliede der Königlichen Societät der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen. Berlin 1812. 96 p., 2 pl.

15 Cf. H. WALRAVENS: *Isaak Jakob Schmidt (1779–1847). Leben und Werk des Pioniers der mongolischen und tibetischen Studien*. Eine Dokumentation. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 2005 (Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes) [in press].

16 1648–1704; cf. G. BERTUCCIOLI: Brollo, Basilio. *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani* 14.1972, 454–456.

17 *Supplément au Dictionnaire chinois-latin du P. Basile de Glemona (imprimé, en 1813, par les soins de M. de Guignes)*, publié, d'après l'ordre de Sa Majesté le roi de Prusse Frédéric-Guillaume III, par Jules Klaproth. A Paris, de l'imprimerie royale 1819. X, 168 p. 2°.

18 Wörterverzeichnis der Koibalen und Motoren, zweyer Ssamojedischen Stämme im Altayschen Gebirge, von Herrn Julius von Klaproth. *Fundgruben des Orients*. 5.1816, 61–67.

19 自賢征 [Tzu hsien cheng] *Dernier mot sur le dictionnaire chinois du Dr. Robert Morisson* [cover: Morrison], par M. J. Klaproth. Paris: Lithographie passage Dauphine, no 28.1830. 32 p.

discovered (and edited) a Coman dictionary which was supposed to have once belonged to the poet Petrarca, at the library of St. Marc in Venice. It is still considered an important source for that language.²⁰

Klaproth's contributions to Caucasian Studies were geographical, historical, and linguistic. His main work is the report on his trip of exploration which soon became a standard work. It was supplemented by a volume on the Eastern part of the Caucasus which Klaproth did not visit.²¹ He also prepared a new and revised edition of J. A. Güldenstädt's travels to Georgia and Imerethi.²² His *Vocabulaire et grammaire de langue géorgienne* (1827) was posthumously concluded by Marie-Félicité Brosset (1837).

Klaproth had a strong interest in Central Asia. So he translated from the Eastern Turkic chronicle, *Babur-nameh*, published Armenian inscriptions, gave a description of Lake Baikal, established the course of the Brahmaputra in Tibet, edited Father Carlo Orazio della Penna di Billi's Description of Tibet (in the original Italian) and edited and corrected Father Iakinf Bicurin's translation of the *Wei-Tsang t'u-chih*, a description of Tibet from 1792.²³ He used Tibetan script, and while he cannot be called a Tibetologist, he had a pretty good knowledge of the country and its language, mainly from Chinese sources. Klaproth's Manchu chrestomathy²⁴ was reprinted some years ago; his Manchu dictionary was never published as the Société asiatique had

20 Notice sur un dictionnaire persan, coman et latin, manuscrit légué par Pétrarque à la république de Venise. *JA* 8.1826, 114–117.

21 *Geographisch-historische Beschreibung des östlichen Kaukasus, zwischen den Flüssen Terek, Aragwi, Kur und dem Kaspischen Meere*. Von Julius v. Klaproth. Weimar, im Verlage des Landes-Industrie-Comptoirs 1814. IV, 216 p. (Bibliothek der neuesten und wichtigsten Reisebeschreibungen zur Erweiterung der Erdkunde nach einem systematischen Plane bearbeitet und in Verbindung mit einigen anderen Gelehrten gesammelt und herausgegeben von M. C. Sprengel, fortgesetzt von T. F. Ehrmann.50).

22 Dr. J. A. Güldenstädt's *Reisen nach Georgien und Imerethi*. Aus seinen Papieren gänzlich umgearbeitet und verbessert herausgegeben, und mit erklärenden Anmerkungen begleitet. Von Julius Klaproth. Mit einer Charte. Berlin, in der Maurerschen Buchhandlung 1815. VI, 305 p.

23 *Description du Tibet*, traduite partiellement du chinois en russe par le P. Hyacinthe Bitchourin, et du russe en français par M.***; soigneusement revue et corrigée sur l'original chinois, complétée et accompagnée de notes par M. Klaproth, membre des Sociétés asiatiques de Paris, de Londres et de Bombay. Paris: Imp. royale 1831. 280 p., 1 map: *Carte du Tibet, traduite du chinois*.

24 *Chrestomathie mandchou ou Recueil de textes mandchou, destiné aux personnes qui veulent s'occuper de l'étude de cette langue*, par J. Klaproth. [Paris:] Impr. royale 1828. XII, 275 p.

some problem with the necessary type. Baron Schilling von Canstadt²⁵ (1786–1837), the specialist in Oriental printing, gave his support but the project was never finished. Only a few sample sheets saw the light of day.

Klaproth's main field, however, was China. Already in his *Asiatisches Magazin* his own contributions had been on China, the conquest by the Manchus, the old literature, the language, Buddhism. He published descriptions of individual parts of China, like Hainan and Taiwan, discovered (from Chinese maps) an archipelago in the Yellow Sea, unknown to Europeans and named it in honour of Jan Potocki²⁶ – a name which did not stick, however. He was the first to draw attention to the so-called Chinese Encyclopedia, *Ku-chin t'u-shu chi-ch'eng*;²⁷ he worked on an edition of Marco Polo's travels (not published) and before he passed away he finished a Description of China, which was not published, either.

Two of his journals were mentioned already; in addition, as a founding member of the Société asiatique in Paris (1822), he was co-editor of the *Journal asiatique* and one of its frequent contributors; he was also on the editorial board of the *Nouvelles Annales de voyages* (1827–1835), and he published another journal of his own, *Magasin asiatique* (1825–1826) which was mainly concerned with geography and history.

Egyptian studies took a lot of his time. After the French expedition to Egypt, hieroglyphic writing occupied many scholars, and it was finally Jean-François Champollion who succeeded in making a breakthrough in their decipherment. Klaproth commented upon the different approaches to decipherment, and acknowledged Champollion's success but development was too slow for him. His own main contribution was the creation of the first hieroglyphic type!

Another main field of Klaproth's activity was cartography. Almost 400 maps from his hand are known, most of them in manuscript, in collections in Paris, London, and Berlin. The Berlin manuscripts are beautifully coloured and very carefully executed. Klaproth used Chinese maps, especially those in the *Ta Ch'ing i-t'ung-chih* 大清一統志, and the Jesuit maps on which they

25 H. WALRAVENS: *Zur Geschichte der Ostasienwissenschaften in Europa. Abel Rémusat (1788–1832) und das Umfeld Julius Klaproths (1783–1835)*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 1999. 183 p. (Orientalistik Bibliographien und Dokumentationen.5).

26 Notice sur l'archipel de Jean Potocki, situé dans la partie septentrionale de la Mer Jaune. Par M. Jules Klaproth. *NAV* 4.1820, 383–392, 1 map.

27 Notice de la grande encyclopédie chinoise, intitulée: Kou kin thou chu [i.e. *Ku-chin t'u-shu chi-ch'eng* 古今圖書集成]. *JA* 9.1826, 56–58.

were based, as well as the *Kuang-yü-t'u* 嘯輿圖 and other traditional sources. By critically collating them with European maps he opened up new territory for geographers. He was in contact with the famous geographer Karl Ritter²⁸, the cartographer Heinrich Berghaus²⁹ and others, and they highly appreciated Klaproth's work. More than forty maps were printed, among them his large map of China and the one of Central Asia.

What kind of a person was Klaproth? During his Berlin years he had belonged to a small poetic club, the North Star Union among whose members were Adalbert von Chamisso (1781–1838), also known as a globetrotting naturalist, and Varnhagen von Ense (1785–1858), the historian of Prussia. Young Klaproth liked playing pranks, so he contrived to hang Damocles' sword above the seat of the president of the Prussian Academy, and he directed a workshop on making poems on the noses of some prominent people (who did not like that at all, almost needless to say). Such pranks gave rise to the suspicion later on that not all of Klaproth's work was serious, and he might as well have invented "facts". We do not have any proof for this, however.

Klaproth was a bookish person; for one thing, he needed books for his work. Then he traded books, especially Chinese ones. He bought them and sold them, especially to libraries. That was also a source of income. He was a knowledgeable bibliographer and did excellent work in this field.

Books did not make him blind to the pleasures of society; far from living in an ivory tower, he was a society man; he felt secure there, moved around easily, and was apparently good at conversation.

This must have helped him also when talking to his publishers. He seems to have been able to persuade them to accept his works in spite of the very limited audience.

Klaproth has inherited the reputation of a severe and relentless critic who always smelled charlatanry; he took his time to write carefully researched brochures to expose these "frauds". In many cases this was certainly unneces-

28 Karl Ritter (1779–1859), renowned geographer, author of the monumental *Erdkunde von Asien*, since 1820 prof. of geography at the University of Berlin. Cf. *ADB* 28.1881, 679–697 (F. Ratzel); Hanno BECK: *Carl Ritter, Genius der Geographie. Zu seinem Leben und Werk*. Berlin: D. Reimer 1979. 132 p.

29 Heinrich Karl Wilhelm Berghaus (1797–1884). 1824–1836 prof. of applied mathematics at the Building Academy in Potsdam. Editor of *Allgemeine Länder- und Völkerkunde*. 1–6. Stuttgart 1837–1844. *Hertha. Zeitschrift für Erd- Völker- und Staatenkunde*. 1825–1829 (with K. F. Hoffmann); *Annalen der Erd-, Völker- und Staatenkunde*. 28 vols. 1830–1843.

sary, at least from today's point of view. So he published a Tomb stela on the grave of the Chinese scholar of Dr. Hager (1811)³⁰ who was an able Orientalist but a beginner in the Chinese field. 1815 he printed two pamphlets under the title *Grande execution d'automne*, explaining that in China the major criminals were executed as soon as possible while the minor culprits had to wait for the general execution in autumn. These two pamphlets were directed against Louis-Mathieu Langlès (1763–1824)³¹, the founder of the *École des langues orientales* in Paris (1795), who edited the China Jesuits' work on the Manchu language, and Stephen Weston (1747–1830)³², a British antiquarian who published little treatises and translations of Chinese inscriptions and poems. Many people looked at Klapproth in awe and considered him a sinister character. We know from Klapproth's correspondence that while he was relentless when he suspected fraud he was easily reconciled when he saw that people were in earnest and accepted him as an authority. He heavily criticized the historian Karl Friedrich Neumann³³ but addressed him as "Dearest Friend", and he meant it. When he heard that his harsh criticism of Wilhelm Schott's translation of *Lun-yü* had brought this scholar into a very difficult situation, not to say killed his career, he was offering help immediately. Klapproth was also considered a spy by some French scholars because they knew that he was paid through the Prussian embassy. Why should the Prussians pay an Orientalist to live in Paris? There must be an ulterior motive.

Klapproth was in contact with practically all major Orientalists of his time. In Paris many got together through the *Société asiatique*, and for some time this was dominated by Abel-Rémusat, Klapproth, and Antoine St. Martin³⁴, historian and Armeniologist. The relationship with the Arabist Silvestre de Sacy, the great old man of Oriental Studies in Paris, seems to have been a bit strained. An important correspondent and acquaintance was Baron Paul Schil-

30 *Leichenstein auf dem Grabe der chinesischen Gelehrsamkeit des Herrn Joseph Hager, Doctors auf der hohen Schule zu Pavia*. Gedruckt in diesem Jahre. [n.p. 1811.] 56 p.

31 Cf. *NBG* 29.1859, 422–424 (L. de Rosny); Notice sur la vie et les ouvrages de M. Langlès, lue dans la séance générale de la Société de Géographie, le 2 avril 1824, par M. Roux. *NAV* 22.1824, 113–122.

32 Cf. *Dictionary of national biography*. 20, p. 1283–1285. After his wife had passed away Weston turned to literature and art and became a prolific author.

33 H. WALRAVENS: *Karl Friedrich Neumann [1793–1870] und Karl Friedrich August Gützlaff [1803–1851]. Zwei deutsche Chinakundige im 19. Jahrhundert*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 2001. 190 p. (*Orientalistik Bibliographien und Dokumentationen*.12).

34 Jean Antoine Saint-Martin (1791–1832), Orientalist, one of the founders of the *Société asiatique*. Cf. *Biographie universelle* (Michaud). 37, p. 367–372 (P-ot).

ling von Canstadt, inventor, pioneer of Oriental printing and collector of Oriental books. Then one should name Alexander and Wilhelm von Humboldt, Heinrich Kurz (1805–1873)³⁵ who became a specialist in German literature after his emigration, Samuel Butler, bishop of Litchfield in England, Ladislaus Endlicher (1804–1849)³⁶, librarian in Vienna, the historian Karl Friedrich Neumann this could be a very long list. A large part of the correspondence was conducted in French, according to the custom of the time.

Klaproth was extremely active, he must literally have worked day and night. In his later years he tended to be rather conservative and religious.

3. Klaproth and Japan

What was Klaproth's attitude to Japan? He was, like most Orientalists, keenly interested in this *terra incognita* about which only occasionally news trickled to Europe through the channels of the Dutch East India Company. At Klaproth's time the important available sources were Kaempfer's Description of Japan, the old compilation by Montanus (1625–1683)³⁷, and the newer books by Carl Per Thunberg (1723–1828)³⁸, the famous Swedish botanist. When Klaproth arrived in Irkutsk in connection with Count Golovkin's abortive embassy to China, he learnt of the existence of a government school for the teaching of Japanese. The teacher was a certain Shinzô from Ise, who had been stranded in Russia as a castaway. He had been baptised and given the name of Nikolaj Kolotygin.³⁹ Most seafaring people are not necessarily language professors,

35 H. WALRAVENS: Kurz, Heinrich. Walther KILLY: *Literaturlexikon*. Bd 7. München 1990, 96–97.

36 Constant v. WURZBACH: *Biographisches Lexikon des Kaiserthums Österreich*. 4.1858, 44–47.

37 Arnold MONTANUS: *Denckwürdige Gesandtschafften der Ost-Indischen Gesellschaft in den Vereinigten Niederländern an unterschiedliche Keyser von Japan* Amsterdam: Jacob Meurs. 1669. 443 p., 25 pl.

38 Karl Peter Thunbergs, Ritters des Königlich Schwedischen Wasaordens, Doctors der Arzneygelahrtheit, Professors der Botanik zu Upsala, und Mitgliedes verschiedener einheimischer und auswärtiger Akademien und gelehrter Gesellschaften, *Reise durch einen Theil von Europa, Afrika und Asien, hauptsächlich in Japan, in den Jahren 1770 bis 1779*. Berlin: Haude & Spener 1792–1794. 4 vols.

39 Nikolaj Kolotygin was appointed teacher at the Japanese School in Irkutsk on Sept. 13, 1791; he died in 1810. See Martin Ramming: *Reisen schiffbrüchiger Japaner im XVIII. Jahrhundert*. Berlin 1931. 90 p.; also M. DOSTOJEWSKI: Rußlands Vordringen zum Stillen

and the success of the language school was apparently very limited. Nevertheless, Klaproth had an opportunity to acquire basic Japanese from a native speaker even if his knowledge of kanji seems to have been rather limited. Tangible result of these lessons was a Japanese dictionary (unfinished) written in good-looking brush strokes. Klaproth also acquired some Japanese dictionaries and a copy of the *Sangoku tsûran zusetsu*⁴⁰ which he read (or tried to read) with the help of Kolotygin. He published later on a well annotated translation of this work by Hayashi Shihei. In his *Asia polyglotta*⁴¹ Klaproth treats Japan as branch XVI (p.326–333); after a brief introduction he gives two glossaries, one German-Japanese, and another one German-Japanese-Ryûkyû.

He also published a description of the Ryûkyû Islands from Chinese and Japanese sources⁴² and made use of a Chinese embassy report which reproduced the King's seal – which we also find illustrated by Klaproth. He translated from the *Hôka jiryaku* 寶貨事略 by Arai Hakuseki⁴³, treating of the mineral resources of Japan. Another major work was the publication of a posthumous work of Isaac Titsingh⁴⁴ who used to be the Dutch *opperhoofd* in Deshima; he had worked with some of the Nagasaki interpreters like Yoshio Kôsaku 吉雄 辛作 (1724–1800) to have important works translated into Dutch. Klaproth

Ozean und seine erste Berührung mit Japan. *Japan.-Dt. Zeitschrift*. NF 2.1920, 127–136.

- 40 *San kokf tsou ran to sets, ou Aperçu général des trois royaumes*, traduit de l'original japonais-chinois, par Mr. J. Klaproth. Paris: Printed for the Oriental Translation Fund of Great Britain and Ireland. Sold by John Murray [usw.] 1832. VI, 228 p.
- 41 *Asia polyglotta*. Von Julius Klaproth. Zweite Auflage. [with:] Sprachatlas. Paris: Heideloff und Campe 1831. XV, 384, [121]–144, 8 p.
- 42 *Description des Iles Lieou-Khieou*. Extraite de plusieurs ouvrages chinois et japonais par M. J. Klaproth. *NAV* 21.1824, 289–316, 1 map.
- 43 *Fookua Siriak ou Traité sur l'origine des richesses au Japon, écrit en 1708 par Arrai Tsikougo No Kami Sama, autrement nommé Fak Sik Sen See, instituteur du dairi Tsuna Ioosi et de Yeye miao tsou*; traduit de l'original chinois et accompagné des notes, par M. Klaproth. *NJA* 2.1828, 3–25.
- 44 Titsingh (ca.1740–1812) was in Japan during the years 1774–1780, 1781–83 and 1784 then went on an embassy to China in 1794/95. Besides the mentioned publication by Klaproth two further works by Titsingh were edited posthumously: *Cérémonies usitées au Japon pour les mariages et les funérailles, suivies de détails sur la poudre Dosia, et de la préface d'un livre de Confoutzée sur la piété filiale*; le tout traduit du japonais par feu M. Titsingh. Paris 1819. 2 vols., 76 pl. – *Mémoires et anecdotes de la dynastie régnante des djogouns, souverains du Japon*, avec la description des fêtes et cérémonies observées aux différentes époques de l'année à la cour de ces princes et un appendice contenant des détails sur la poésie des Japonais, leur manière de diviser l'année, etc. Publié avec des notes ... par M. Abel Rémusat. Paris: Nepveu 1820. XXVI, 301 p.

compared the Dutch 日本王代一覽 *Nippon ôdai ichiran* version with the original, added an introduction and a supplement to bring it up to his time, and Clerc de Landresse, librarian of the Institut de France, provided a comprehensive index.⁴⁵

Klaproth also reported on Siebold's activities in Japan.⁴⁶ This came about by a letter that Siebold wrote to the president of the Academy of Naturalists (Academia Leopoldina), the botanist Nees van Esenbeck⁴⁷, asking him to forward a memoir on the origin of the Japanese to the Société asiatique in Paris. Which was done. When Siebold returned to Europe he was keen to find out what had happened with his paper. He noticed a (critical) report on it in the *Journal asiatique* but was certainly unhappy not to see it printed under his name. The standard Siebold biography⁴⁸ contends that Klaproth prevented the publication but that both scholars became reconciled with each other in 1834. From the letter files in the archives of the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences we get a slightly different picture.⁴⁹

After complaining about unfair treatment Siebold made it clear that he wanted to cooperate with Klaproth and that he was not interested in literary feuds.

1. The crucial information, and the turning-point in both scholars' relations, is contained in Klaproth's letter of Sept. 2, 1832. Klaproth pointed out that

a. according to the statutes of the Society manuscripts sent in had to be reviewed by a committee;

45 *Nippon o dai itsi ran, ou Annales des empereurs du Japon*, traduites par M. Isaac Titsingh avec l'aide de plusieurs interprètes attachés au comptoir hollandais de Nangasaki; ouvrage revu, complété et corrigé sur l'original japonais-chinois, accompagné des notes, et précédé d'un aperçu de l'histoire du Japon par M. J. Klaproth. Paris: Printed for the Oriental Translation Fund; sold by Parberry, Allen & Co., London. 1834. VIII, XXXVI, 460 p. 4°.

46 Kure Shûzô's famous biography of Siebold is available also in German: Shûzô Kure: *Philipp Franz von Siebold. Leben und Werk*. Deutsche, wesentlich vermehrte und ergänzte Ausgabe, bearbeitet von Friedrich M. Trautz. Herausgegeben von H. W. München: Iudicium 1996. LXVI, 800; XXX, 899 p. (Monographien aus dem Deutschen Institut für Japanstudien der Philipp-Franz-von-Siebold-Stiftung. 17, p. 1–2.)

47 Christian Gottfried Nees von Esenbeck (1776–1858), physician in Sickershausen near Würzburg, 1818–1830 professor of botany in Bonn, then in Breslau, since 1818 President of the Academia Leopoldina.

48 Hans KÖRNER: *Die Würzburger Siebold. Eine Gelehrtenfamilie des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts*. Leipzig: Barth 1967. 662 p. (Lebensdarstellungen deutscher Naturforscher.13).

49 H. WALRAVENS: *Julius Klaproth (1783–1835): Briefwechsel mit Gelehrten, größtenteils aus dem Akademiearchiv in St. Petersburg*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 2002. XVII, 216 p. (Orientalistik Bibliographien und Dokumentationen.18).

b. nobody in the Paris membership group of the Société was able to read German handwriting, so Klaproth had to translate the paper, and necessarily became a member of the committee;

c. the committee was critical, among other reasons, because Malte-Brun⁵⁰ was quoted as an authority who was considered superficial and unreliable in Paris;

d. the committee was not willing to recommend the printing of a paper with such “authorities”. In addition as Siebold had made it clear that he could not act without the consent of the Dutch Government. Therefore the committee decided to print the report on the research paper, with copious quotations, something against which the Dutch Government could not protest. On the other hand this review would make some of the new discoveries and ideas of Siebold known in the scholarly community;

e. that the report did not contain Klaproth’s private view but the opinion of the committee. Especially Abel Rémusat was critical of certain points;

f. that the printing of the report was done in dissatisfactory form (“verstümmelt”) in Klaproth’s absence. Therefore Klaproth printed a German translation in the *Annalen der Erd-, Völker- und Staatenkunde*.⁵¹

He then pointed out that he never used or quoted anything from Siebold except those things published in the *Journal asiatique* under Siebold’s own name. He then tried to dissuade Siebold from lithographing the *Shinzô Jirin gyokuhen*⁵² 新增字林玉篇 [*Hsin-tseng tzu-lin yü-p’ien*], with reference to Morrison’s and other dictionaries.

2. Regarding the alleged unauthorized use of a Korean syllabary sent by Siebold to the Netherlands Institute in Paris,⁵³ Klaproth commented: “The

50 Konrad Malte-Brun (1775–1826); 1800 exiled from Denmark, he moved to Paris, where, in 1806, he became one of the main contributors to the *Journal des Débats*; 1808 he started the *Annales des voyages* and in 1818, with Eyriès, the *Nouvelles Annales des voyages. Précis de la géographie universelle*. 8 vols. Paris 1810–1829, is considered his most important work.

51 Klaproth’s Bericht über Hrn. v. Siebold’s Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Japaner. (Vorgelesen in der Versammlung der asiatischen Gesellschaft in Paris, am 6ten Julius 1829.) *Annalen der Erd-, Völker- und Staatenkunde*. 2.1830, 321–353.

52 Published as *Sin zoo zi lin gjok ben. Novus et auctus literarum ideographicarum Theasaurus, sive collectio omnium literarum sinensium secundum radices disposita ...* Lugduni Bataavorum, ex officina lithographica editoris 1834. XIV, 164 p. (Bibliotheca japonica.1).

53 “It took three years, till the document reached Paris, going through the bureaucratic stages. The Royal Dutch Institute in Amsterdam had added an unfavourable evaluation, and Professor Klaproth, considered an authority on Oriental languages, declared the news of a Korean alphabet impossible and even questioned the mental sanity of the young

Korean Syllabary that I added to my translation of the *San kokf tsu ran*, is taken from a book printed in Peking, which I received at St. Petersburg in 1810, and of which M. Langlès (see his Catalogue n° 4282) owned quite a similar one. Besides, I collected quite a few Korean words at Petersburg, especially names of drugs, which I found in a Chinese medical book printed in original Korean characters. – You should also have your Korean dictionary lithographed. If the Chinese translation goes with it, I shall be pleased to provide the explanation.”

Klaproth added then that he would much appreciate closer cooperation and that he was by no means always a harsh critic.

3. Siebold answered on Sept. 13 in an almost dithyrambic manner: “From now on we will call each other literary friends! We will forget the earlier misunderstandings, and by means of united activity and mutual communications, explanation even reproof, our well meant works on Japan and the neighbouring countries should be given the desired perfection!” He then agreed to Klaproth’s cautionary remarks regarding the printing of the mentioned dictionary, promised to send a list of all his Japanese dictionaries, and invited Klaproth to send in his additions and corrections to *Nippon* and to participate in a dictionary project.

4. Two extant letters (1834/1835) from Johann Joseph Hoffmann⁵⁴ – in Siebold’s name – make it clear that Klaproth proposed to publish a French edition of Siebold’s travels. The title and material for a prospectus were prepared, and Klaproth had the first sheet of the book printed. Owing to Klaproth’s death in 1835, the project did not come to fruition in the original form. Nevertheless, the idea was taken up by the Société asiatique, and the *Voyage au Japon, exécuté pendant les années 1823 à 1830, ou Description physique, géographique et historique de l’Empire japonais, de Iezo, des îles Kuriles méridionales, de Krafu, de la Corée, des îles Liu-Kiu* etc. etc. came out in 5 volumes in 1838–1840, with a preface by the Duc d’Orléans, long time president of the Société asiatique.

scholar who made bold to announce such an improbable discovery. Siebold never received an answer.” (KÖRNER, 379)

54 Johann Joseph Hoffmann (1805–1878), 1825–1830 active as an opera singer, became Siebold’s collaborator and learned Chinese and Malay from Kuo Ch’eng-chang 國成章; in 1855 he was appointed Professor of Chinese and Japanese in Leiden. See Franz BABINGER: Johann Joseph Hoffmann. Ein Würzburger Orientalist (1805/1878). *Archiv des Historischen Vereins von Unterfranken und Aschaffenburg*. 54.1912, 217–232.

If we review the information gleaned from the correspondence, it turns out

- a. that the information regarding the Korean Syllabary as given by Hans Körner in his Siebold biography is misleading. Klaproth had known such syllabaries already in 1810, before he left St. Petersburg, and thus he would hardly have considered such a script an “impossibility”. It may be remembered that he published one such syllabary himself;

- b. that it was not a “similar report” that Siebold sent to the Société⁵⁵ but he sent it to Nees van Esenbeck who was asked to forward it with the paper on the origin of the Japanese to Paris. While Siebold certainly offered his paper for publication, he also sent the paper itself! Siebold’s original letter to the Société was sent in 1826, not 1827, according to Siebold’s own statement;⁵⁶

- c. that it was already in 1832, not only in autumn of 1834, that both scholars made peace. Siebold accepted Klaproth’s explanations and decided they should become literary friends. This led to the project of a French edition of Siebold’s works which Klaproth prepared and which was published after his death;

- d. that the extant correspondence shows Klaproth as a very cooperative and open-minded person, eager to help; he sent his publications to Siebold and offered his advice on a number of issues;

- e. that Siebold promised in his letter of Aug. 1832 that he would send the first fascicle of *Nippon* to Klaproth, and in September he assumed that Klaproth had received it. This, by the way, is another proof of the fact that the first fascicle of *Nippon* did appear in the late summer of 1832.

Thus the St. Petersburg letters fill a small gap in current Siebold research and shed some light on the relationship of two gifted and important scholars.

55 KÖRNER 394: “A report similar to the one sent to President Nees v. Esenbeck Siebold forwarded to the members of the Société asiatique in Paris on Dec. 15, 1827; it was printed in translation in *Nouveau Journal Asiatique* (3.1829, 237–240).”

56 While Günther Schmidt published several of Siebold’s letters to Nees, the one in question is not among them. See *Botanisches Archiv* 43.1942, 487–530.