

Avec *De Mayerling à Sarajevo* (1940), Ophüls met fin à son séjour en France. Il est de nouveau contraint de fuir le nazisme et s'exile alors aux États-Unis où il tourne quatre films dont *l'Exilé* (1947). *La Ronde* (1950) marque avec succès son retour à Paris. Il achève sa carrière cinématographique en mettant en scène la vie d'une courtisane : *Lola Montes* (1955).

Insaf Ouhiba

Ophüls Max, ouvrage collectif, Seghers, 1976. Revue 1895 n°34-35, *Ophüls*, sous la direction de Noël HERPE, AFRHC, octobre 2001. *Souvenirs, Cahiers du cinéma*, Éditions de l'Étoile/La Cinémathèque française, 2002.

OPPERT Jules (Hambourg, 1825 – 1905)

Épigraphiste (assyriologie et sumérologie).

Le « père » de l'assyriologie et de la sumérologie française est né et s'est formé en Allemagne, puis a passé le Rhin à une époque où les intellectuels de son pays étaient nombreux à gagner la France pour tenter d'y trouver une position : comme ses aînés, Jules Oppert subit la force d'attraction de l'orientalisme français et suit l'exemple prestigieux de son compatriote Jules Mohl*, titulaire de la chaire de persan du Collège de France*, qui, par son action au sein de la Société asiatique* et auprès du gouvernement, a su déclencher les recherches archéologiques en Mésopotamie, en obtenant la nomination de Botta* au consulat de Mossoul.

Après avoir fait ses études aux universités de Heidelberg, Bonn et Berlin, et avoir obtenu le titre de docteur en philosophie à Kiel en 1846, Oppert, à qui son origine juive interdit l'accès à l'enseignement dans son pays, gagne la France où il enseigne d'abord l'allemand aux lycées de Laval, puis de Reims. Dès 1847, il fait une entrée remarquée dans le milieu des orientalistes qui, en Europe, s'évertuent à déchiffrer les inscriptions de Persépolis et de Naqsh-i-Roustem relevées par le Danois Karsten Niebuhr au cours de son passage en Perse (1761-1767). En 1851, non seulement Jules Mohl obtient que le consulat de Mossoul soit confié à Victor Place* chargé de poursuivre les fouilles de Khorsabad, mais il suscite au sein de l'AI BL* une commission qui définit

les conditions d'une expédition scientifique et artistique de Mésopotamie et de Médie : la direction en est confiée à Fulgence Fresnel*, qui sera accompagné de Jules Oppert et de l'architecte Félix Thomas*. Au cours de cette expédition, qui connaît de nombreuses péripéties pour s'achever en catastrophe – le naufrage dans le Tigre du convoi transportant les objets et monuments recueillis par la mission et au cours des fouilles de Khorsabad –, Oppert procède au relevé topographique de Babylone et recueille de nombreuses briques inscrites. Après avoir étudié les inscriptions de Khorsabad, il prend, en janvier 1854, la décision de regagner la France sans en référer à Fresnel. Dès son retour à Paris, il obtient sa naturalisation et est appelé par Jules Mohl à présenter devant l'AI BL ses travaux topographiques sur Babylone et la lecture des inscriptions cunéiformes : une commission réunie au sein de la compagnie décide la publication des résultats de sa mission (*Expédition scientifique en Mésopotamie exécutée par ordre du gouvernement, de 1851 à 1854*, 1859). Devenu professeur de sanskrit à l'École des langues orientales vivantes* en 1857, il participe à l'entreprise internationale de déchiffrement de la troisième écriture de Persépolis, reconnue comme de l'assyrien, au terme du « test » proposé par la Royal Asiatic Society de Londres, qui demande à plusieurs savants – dont Oppert et Rawlinson – de traduire la même inscription et constate la concordance des résultats. Oppert est le premier à établir les principes du déchiffrement des cunéiformes et à reconnaître dans le syllabaire assyro-babylonien l'héritage d'un « peuple sumérien » non-sémitique (*Déchiffrement des inscriptions cunéiformes*, 1859). Son hypothèse suscite l'opposition d'Ernest Renan* (« Sur l'ouvrage d'Oppert : Expédition scientifique en Mésopotamie », *Journal des savants*, 1859) et une vive polémique avec J. Halévy*. La naissance de l'assyriologie et de la sumérologie illustre parfaitement la « solidarité » de la philologie et de l'archéologie dans les progrès accomplis depuis 1842 : en effet, Oppert rattache aux Sumériens (« Études sumériennes. Sumérien ou akhadien ? Sumérien ou rien ? », *Journal asiatique**, 1875) les fragments de

Bishop *Kollonitsch, viewed his monopolistic position with misgivings, pointing out that not only was he Austria's sole military purveyor but that a disproportionate part of the state income was being earmarked solely for him as payment for his services. All attempts to dispose of his services failed, however, for few others were in possession of sufficient capital to assume his place and none was prepared to extend credit to the state with its chronically empty treasury. The state's debts to Oppenheimer grew from 52,600 florins in 1685 to 700,000 in 1692, and to 3,000,000 in 1694, at which point it remained stable for a few years until it increased during the War of the Spanish Succession.

Bishop Kollonitsch, appointed head of the treasury in 1692, frustrated by his unsuccessful attempts to dispense with Oppenheimer's services, tried to undermine Oppenheimer by falsely accusing him of attempting to murder Samson Wertheimer. As a consequence Oppenheimer was forced to buy his freedom and establish his innocence with the sum of 500,000 florins. In 1700 when his sumptuous home was stormed and plundered by a mob, order was reluctantly restored by the authorities and the two instigators hanged. It has been suggested that the cause of the attack was Oppenheimer's intervention in suppressing an anti-Jewish book of *Eisenmenger.

When Oppenheimer died the state refused to honor its debts to his heir Emanuel and had his firm declared bankrupt. His death brought deep financial crisis to the state; it experienced great difficulty in securing the credit necessary to meet its needs. Emanuel appealed to European rulers to whom the state owed money and who intervened on his behalf. After deliberate procrastination the state refused Emanuel's demand for 6 million florins and instead demanded 4 million florins from him. This amount was based on a sum which (with compound interest), according to the state, Oppenheimer had allegedly obtained by fraud at the beginning of his career. Emanuel died in 1721 and the Oppenheimer estate was auctioned in 1763.

Although Oppenheimer was not himself learned, he was a benefactor on a scale hitherto unknown, building many synagogues and yeshivot and supporting their scholars. He also paid ransom for the return of Jews captured during the Turkish wars and supported as well R. Judah he-Hasid's voyage to Erez Israel in 1700. Known as "Judenkaiser" by his contemporaries, he was a man whose complex personality, a mixture of pride and reserve, defied historical analysis. Twenty years after his death it was estimated that more than 100 persons held residence in Vienna by virtue of their being included in Oppenheimer's privileges.

Bibliography: M. Grunwald, *Samuel Oppenheimer und sein Kreis* (1913); idem, *Vienna* (1936), index; S. Stern, *Court Jew* (1950), index; H. Schnee, *Die Hoffnanz und der moderne Staat*, 3 (1955), 239-45; MHJ, 2 (1937); 5 (1960); 9 (1966); 10 (1967), indexes.

[H.W.]

OPPER, FREDERICK BURR (1857-1937), U.S. political cartoonist; an originator of the comic strip. Oppert left Madison, Ohio, for New York, where he worked for 18 years on the weekly *Puck*. He joined Hearst's *New York Journal* in 1899, and his work was then syndicated through the *International News*. Oppert depicted suburban types which became familiar to almost every American household. He also became Hearst's leading political caricaturist, lampooning the eccentricities of public figures, particularly during election campaigns.

A volume of his political drawings, *Willie and his Papa*, was published in 1901. His cartoons on England, *John Bull*, appeared in 1903. Other collections were *Alphabet of Joyous Trusts* (1902), *Our Antediluvian Ancestors* (1903), two volumes

of his character *Happy Hooligan* (1902-07) and *Maud and the Matchless* (1907). Oppert also illustrated the work of some of his contemporary humorists, including Mark Twain, Peter Finley Dunne, Bill Nye, and George V. Hobart.

Bibliography: DAB, 23 (1958), 504f. (incl. bibl.).

[Ed.]

OPPERT, GUSTAV SALOMON (1836-1908), German orientalist and Indologist. Born in Hamburg, younger brother of the archaeologist Jules *Oppert and of Ernst Jacob Oppert, the traveler, Oppert studied the lore of India, its languages, literature, and history and was appointed assistant librarian at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and at Queen Victoria's Library in Windsor. In 1872 he was appointed professor of Sanskrit at the Presidency College in Madras, India where from 1878 to 1882 he also served as editor of the *Madras Journal of Literature and Science*. After traveling through India, the Far East, and the U.S. he accepted a teaching post at Berlin University in Dravidian languages.

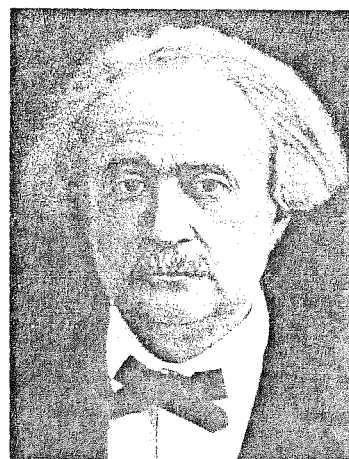
He also produced a number of works in folklore, general philology, ancient Hindu culture, epigraphical studies of South Indian inscriptions; travel accounts, and editions of various classics of Sanskrit culture in the areas of philosophy, poetry and philology.

Like his brother Jules, Gustav Oppert devoted himself to various Jewish causes. He was a trustee of the Hochschule fuer die Wissenschaft des Judentums and bequeathed his estate to this organization.

Bibliography: JC (March 20, 1908), obituary; Winger, Biog.

[E.Fr.]

OPPERT, JULES JULIUS (1825-1905), French philologist, orientalist, and archaeologist. Born in Hamburg, he studied law but changed to Oriental languages. He migrated to France where he continued his research on Old Persian and Assyrian and became a recognized authority in his field. In 1851 he was invited to join a sponsored expedition to explore Mesopotamia. The results of this expedition contained Oppert's definite identification of the site of ancient Babylon, and appeared in a two-volume report, *Expédition Scientifique en Mesopotamie* (1859-63), which received a prize for the most significant discovery of the year. In 1869 Oppert joined the Collège de France, first as



Jules Julius Oppert, Assyriologist. Jerusalem, J.N.U.L., Schwadron Collection.

instructor in Assyriology, and then in 1874 as professor of Assyrian philology and archaeology.

His studies in various branches of Oriental learning included Indq-Iranian, Sumerian, Elamitic, and Assyriology, in which he became a founder and preeminent authority. He discovered and deciphered numerous historical, astronomical and religious inscriptions, juridical documents, contract tablets, and collected material for his history of the Chaldean and Assyrian civilizations.