the latest official figures (1882) giving 685,950 for the province, exclusive of the Kuldja region. Of these Russians numbered, ac­cording to Kostenko, 44,585, 20,640 being Cossacks, who are very poor as compared with the free Russian emigrants. The majority of the population are Kirghiz (595,237) ; next come Tarantchis (36,265), Kalmucks (about 25,000), Mongols and Manchurians (22,000), and Dungans (19,657), these last two mostly in Kuldja ; while Tatars and Sarts are each represented by some 3000 or 3500 (all the foregoing figures include those for Kuldja). The

province is subdivided into five districts ; Vyernyi (18,423 inhabit­ants in 1879, of whom 3586 were military), the chief town of the province, formerly Almaty, is situated at the foot of the Trans-Ilian Ala-tau, and has a mixed population of Russians, Tatars, Sarts, Kirghiz, Kalmucks, and Jews ; its trade with Kuldja and Kashgar is increasing rapidly, and it has now two lyceums, for boys and girls, and several other schools. The other towns—Kopal (5450 inhabitants), Serghiopol (1045), Tokmak (1770), and Karakol (2780) —are merely administrative centres.

THE name “Semitic languages ” is used to designate a group of Asiatic and African languages, some living and some dead, namely, Hebrew and Phoenician, Aramaic, Assyrian, Arabic, Ethiopic (Geez and Amharic). The name, which was introduced by Eichhorn, @@1 is derived from the fact that most nations which speak or spoke these lan­guages are descended, according to Genesis, from Shem, son of Noah. But the classification of nations in Genesis X. is founded neither upon linguistic nor upon ethno­graphical principles : it is determined rather by geograph­ical and political considerations. For this reason Elam and Lud are also included among the children of Shem; but neither the Elamites (in Susiana) nor the Lydians appear to have spoken a language connected with Hebrew. On the other hand, the Phoenicians (Canaanites), whose dialect closely resembled that of Israel, are not counted as children of Shem. Moreover, the compiler of the list in Genesis x. had no clear conceptions about the peoples of south Arabia and Ethiopia. Nevertheless it would be undesirable to give up the universally received terms “ Semites ” and “ Semitic.” There exist large groups of languages and peoples which bear no natural collective appellations, because the peoples grew up unconscious of their mutual relationship ; so science must needs give them artificial designations, and it would be well if all such terms were as short and precise as “ Semitic.”

The connexion of the Semitic languages with one another is somewhat close, in any case closer than that of the Indo-European languages. The more ancient Semitic tongues differ from one another scarcely more than do the various Teutonic dialects. Hence even in the 17th century such learned Orientalists as Hottinger, Bochart, Castell, and Ludolf had a tolerably clear notion of the relationship between the different Semitic languages with which they were acquainted ; indeed the same may be said of some Jewish scholars who lived many centuries earlier, as, for instance, Jehuda ben Koraish. It is not difficult to point out a series of characteristic marks common to these lan­guages,—the predominance of triconsonantal roots, or of roots formed after the analogy of such, similarity in the formation of nominal and verbal stems, a great resemblance in the forms of the personal pronouns and in their use for the purpose of verbal inflexion, the two principal tenses, the importance attached to the change of vowels in the interior of words, and lastly considerable agreement with regard to order and the construction of sentences. Yet even so ancient a Semitic language as the Assyrian ap­pears to lack some of these features, and in certain modern dialects, such as New Syriac, Mahri, and more particularly Amharic, many of the characteristics of older Semitic speech have disappeared. But the resemblance in voca­bulary generally diminishes in proportion to the modern­ness of the dialects. Still we can trace the connexion between the modern and the ancient dialects, and show, at least approximately, how the former were developed out of the latter. Where a development of this kind can be proved to have taken place, there a relationship must

exist, however much the individual features may have been effaced. The question here is not of logical categories but of organic groups.

All these languages are descendants of a primitive Semitic stock which has long been extinct. Many of its most important features may be reconstructed with at least tolerable certainty, but we must beware of attempt­ing too much in this respect. When the various cognate languages of a group diverge in essential points, it is by no means always possible to determine which of them has retained the more primitive form. The history of the development of these tongues during the period anterior to the documents which we possess is often extremely obscure in its details. Even when several Semitic lan­guages agree in important points of grammar we cannot always be sure that in these particulars we have what is primitive, since in many cases analogous changes have taken place independently. To one who should assert the complete reconstruction of the primitive Semitic language to be possible, we might put the question, Would the man who is best acquainted with all the Romance languages be in a position to reconstruct their common mother, Latin, if the knowledge of it were lost ? And yet there are but few Semitic languages which we can know as accurately as the Romance languages are known. As far as the vocabulary is concerned, we may indeed maintain with certainty that a considerable number of words which have in various Semitic languages the form proper to each were a part of primitive Semitic speech. Nevertheless even then we are apt to be misled by independent but analogous formations and by words borrowed at a very remote period.2 Each Semitic language or group of lan­guages has, however, many words which we cannot point out in the others. Of such words a great number no doubt belonged to primitive Semitic speech, and either disappeared in some of these languages or else remained in use, but not so as to be recognizable by us. Yet many isolated words and roots may in very early times have been borrowed by the Hebrew, the Aramaic, the Ethiopic, &c., perhaps from wholly different languages, of which no trace is left.

The question which of the known Semitic dialects most resembles the primitive Semitic language is less important than one might at first suppose, since the question is one not of absolute but only of relative priority. After scholars had given up the notion (which, however, was not the fruit of scientific research) that all Semitic lan­guages, and indeed all the languages in the world, were de­scendants of Hebrew or of Aramaic, it was long the fashion to maintain that Arabic bore a close resemblance to the primitive Semitic language.3 But, just as it is now recog­nized with ever-increasing clearness that Sanskrit is far from having retained in such a degree as was even lately supposed the characteristics of primitive Indo-European

*@@@1 Einleitung in das A.T.,* 2d ed., i. 45 (Leipsic, 1787).

@@@2 The more alike two languages are the more difficult it usually is to detect, as borrowed elements, those words which have passed from one language into the other.

@@@3 This theory is carried to its extreme limit in Olshausen’s very valuable *Hebrew Grammar* (Brunswick, 1861).