

## The Fundamental Problems of Comparative Linguistics A forgotten Spanish contribution from the early 20th Century

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Ángel Amor Ruibal's *Los problemas fundamentales de la filología comparada*<sup>1</sup> is the work which actually reveals its author's linguistic competence, specifically in his treatment of what today is termed Comparative Linguistics. Let us leave aside his other work, *Principios de Lingüística Indo-Europea. Introducción al estudio de la Ciencia del Lenguaje*, which AR placed as an introduction to his translation of the book by Regnaud<sup>2</sup> and in fact is a summary of the question focused on the Indo-European family of languages. In the following appraisal, then, we will refer only to the first work mentioned.

In a preliminary appraisal, we can say that the work represents the fusion of three levels, which nowadays would be given separate treatments: *The Philosophy/Theory of Language* (PFFC I: chaps. I-II + II: chap. X), *A History of Linguistics* (PFFC I: chaps. III-VIII + II: chaps. III-VI) and *Comparative Linguistics* (PFFC II: chaps. VII-IX). It is, therefore, a kind of encyclopaedic survey or *Summa* of the linguistic/philological knowledge of the time, a combination of Hjelmslev,<sup>3</sup> Arens<sup>4</sup>/Mounin<sup>5</sup> and Szemerényi,<sup>6</sup> that is not to be found in modern manuals of linguistics.<sup>7</sup> On the one hand, one is amazed at the scope of the enterprise and on the other, at the complete isolation in which it has remained, even taking into account the almost absolute lack of concern for such studies in the Spain at the beginning of the 20th Century. This state of affairs recalls immediately another great Spanish linguist of the late 18th/early 19th

1. A. Amor Ruibal, *Los problemas fundamentales de la filología comparada. Su historia, su naturaleza y sus diversas relaciones científicas*. Primera/segunda parte (PFFC), Madrid/Barcelona/Paris/Leipzig 1904-1905 (repr. Consello da Cultura Galega, Santiago de Compostela, 2005).

2. P. Regnaud, *Principios generales de lingüística indo-europea, versión española, precedida de un estudio sobre la Ciencia del Lenguaje* por el Dr. A. Amor Ruibal (PGLI), Santiago (de Compostela) 1900 (repr. Consello da Cultura Galega, Santiago de Compostela, 2005). This study is more historically erudite in character than linguistically informative; in fact, it is an outline of the later work we are commenting upon and includes its data.

3. L. Hjelmslev, *Prolegomena to a Theory of Language*, Bloomington, IN, 1955.

4. H. Arens, *La lingüística. Sus textos y su evolución desde la Antigüedad hasta nuestros días* (Biblioteca románica hispánica. Manuales 37), Madrid, 1975 (orig. 1969).

5. G. Mounin, *Histoire de la Linguistique dès origines au XXe Siècle*, Paris 1967.

6. O. Szemerényi, *Introduction to Indo-European Linguistics*, Oxford, 1996; (German Original 1970/1990).

7. For example, see H. H. Robins, *General Linguistics: An Introductory Survey*, London, 1964. In this work the question of the theory of language and comparative linguistics are marginal and of lesser importance.

century, Lorenzo Hervás y Pandero, who had also written a wide-ranging work in the field of linguistics<sup>8</sup> and to whom AR devotes fervid and patriotic acknowledgement (PFFC I:72, 338, 367; II:1f.; 8, 36, etc.; see also PGLI:4, n. 1, 34ff., 48, etc.). Nevertheless, both scholars have remained marginal in the modern history of linguistics.

Before moving on to the specific analysis of the problems implied in the three levels just mentioned, we are going to set out a general appraisal of aspects that touch the work as whole.

a) The first thing that attracts the reader's attention is the breadth of perspective into which AR sets Comparative Linguistics (CL). The main part, of course, is taken by Indo-European Linguistics (I.-E.), as is the case nowadays (see Szemerényi's manual, already mentioned) and as imposed by the state of such studies in the 19th century; AR himself recognises this (PFFC I:xv, n. 1).<sup>9</sup> However, within the possibilities that such studies allowed and with amazing skill, he also uses other linguistic families as evidence: Semitic, Egyptian, Ural-Altaic, Chinese, Amerindian, etc. Their phonological and morphosyntactical traits are discussed with expertise on the basis of their own lexica.

b) The enormous bibliographical information cited by AR is in keeping with this vast linguistic perspective. The number of scholars of any period quoted in the original as witnesses of the different schools or tendencies is striking. Especially significant is the knowledge the author shows of the whole bibliography that the 19th century provides on I.-E. and comparative linguistics, when those branches attained the rank of fully developed scientific disciplines. Unavoidably, German bibliography is given preference, not to say the monopoly, and is quoted abundantly in the original in an explicit way, as we said, not through mere references. In his search for the latest works in the field, AR left a large amount of correspondence with German editorial houses. In addition, his personal library, now in Santiago, is proof of his first-hand information.<sup>10</sup>

c) All that implies a good working knowledge of many languages, both living and dead. In this regard, what is surprising is his constant use of Greek and Latin texts, but also of Sanskrit and to a lesser extent of other ancient languages. Furthermore, the bibliography in modern languages includes some as unusual as Hungarian, and is cited when necessary.

8. L. Hervás y Pandero, *Origine, formazione, meccanica ed armonia degli idiomi*, Cesena, 1785, idem, *Catalogo delle lingue conosciute*, Cesena, 1784 (in vol. 17 of his *Idea dell'Universo*; Span. ed. 1800-1804); see G. Mounin, *Histoire de la Linguistique dès origines*, p. 151. AR was awarded a prize by the Altorientalische Gesellschaft of Berlin (1892-1893), which no longer exists; in this connexion, see J. L. Lemos Montanet, "*Obra viva*" de Ángel Amor Ruibal (Cuadernos de estudios gallegos. Anexo xxxii), Santiago de Compostela, 2004, pp. 58f. Another distinguished Spanish linguist from the first half of the 19th century and whom AR quotes favourably (PGLI:8) is F. Orchell Ferrer, Professor of Hebrew at the Universities of Alcalá and Madrid (PFFC I:79f.; PGLI:8). AR shows less esteem for A. García Blanco, also a Hebraist from the late 19th century; see in this connexion G. del Olmo Lete, *Semitistas catalanes del siglo XVIII* (Orientalia Barcinonensia, 5), Sabadell (Barcelona), 1988, pp. 269f. (index). The most significant Spanish works on general and Indo-European linguistics published at the turn of the century, also quoted by AR, are those by F. García Ayuso, *El estudio de la filología en su relación con el sanskrit*, Madrid, 1882; idem., *Ensayo crítico de gramática comparada de los idiomas indo-europeos ...*, Vol. I, Madrid, 1986; J. Cejador y Frauca, *El lenguaje. Sus transformaciones, su estructura, su unidad, su origen, su razón de ser, estudiados por medio de la comparación de las lenguas ...* Vol. I. *Introducción acerca de la lingüística ...* Salamanca, 1901. The last two works, privately published by the authors (!), remain incomplete.

9. In relation to the Semitic languages, it would be several years before the appearance of the standard work by C. Brockelmann, *Grundriss der vergleichenden Grammatik der semitischen Sprachen*, Wiesbaden, 1908-1913. It was preceded by the pioneering essays by Renan (1863), Lindberg (1887) and Zimmern (1898), far removed from the corresponding works of I.-E. linguistics. In fact, AR's book was intended for students of Semitic languages, as he himself recognises (PFFC I:xi).

10. See S. Casas Blanco, "El catálogo de la biblioteca de don Ángel Amor Ruibal", *Pensamiento* 25, 1969, 371-402; 26, 1970, 33-71.

d) However, beyond these traits of AR's work, which could be considered as more or less circumstantial or incidental, the author exhibits a relentless critical acuteness when rejecting opinions that he considers as unacceptable. This criticism is carried out without any complex and at the same time is open to acknowledging the contributions and the valid perspective which such opinions may contain. AR adopts a position that we could define in general terms as sound realism, conditioned by his 'scholastic' training (PFFC I:11, n. 1) and, why deny it, by his profession of theologian and believer. This entails the *a priori* dismissal of certain evaluations, unacceptable in his eyes, in some of the opinions he rejects. In this connexion, I would like to point out a peculiar category of his way of thinking which catches the eye because of its unusual character in this field nowadays. It is the frequent use AR makes of the category of 'psychological' to define what today would be called 'human', 'mental' or 'voluntary' and refers in general to 'semantics' as opposed to or in complementary distribution with 'phonology'.<sup>11</sup> It is what makes a word a sign of human intercommunication rather than a mere sound.

e) This mental attitude, which AR turned into a profession,<sup>12</sup> caused his plan of Comparative Linguistics to be 'holistic' in character, namely, universal and radical. He tries to include every cause involved in the origin and configuration of its object. And as the object is a human product, it requires the idea of man implied here to be taken into account. Inevitably, then, a certain apologetic tone will sometimes emerge and the author will become involved in the development of questions that today would be considered obsolete, not to say outside this scientific ambit.

f) Finally, one has to acknowledge that this highly discursive and critical approach in AR's work, the fruit of a complex and reductive mentality, frequently comes wrapped in a prolix style of long sentences that attempt to include all the aspects of a topic within a single main clause. Also, this style frequently becomes repetitive, a condition often imposed by his claim to reject or analyse, one by one, opinions that inevitably have many aspects in common. One can also find certain solecisms and even syntactical errors, along with moments of lyrical exaltation. In this regard, the work opens with what could be called a 'Hymn to the Word' (PFFC I:1ff.) and closes with a 'Praise to Philology' and to the great *Geometer* (PFFC II:735f.), emphasised by the quotation of some Orphic verse. Also, his frequent attempt to summarise long critical disquisitions as precise 'conclusions' results in the repetition of concepts. In the long run and without his attempts to criticise every other opinion, a compilation of all those 'conclusions' would give us AR's own linguistic theory.<sup>13</sup>

Once these general appraisals of AR's work have been set out, we can proceed to evaluate the interpretation of what he calls "Los problemas fundamentales de la Filología Comparada". What are these 'fundamental problems'?

### 1.- Preliminaries: Philology or Linguistics?

AR sets up Comparative Philology (CPh) as a *Language Science* (LSc) (PFFC I:7f.), which studies language in its nature and manifestations, after delimiting the subject of his investigation, the word and its

11. In this programmatic way, AR expresses his aim in his note 'Al lector': "... estudio la Filología comparada en su naturaleza, en sus múltiples problemas y varias relaciones científicas... pesando con imparcial crítica a la luz de la verdad psicológica y de la verdad lingüística, el valor de las teorías que se disputan el campo glotológico" (PFFC I:xii; cf. also II:733f.).

12. One must not forget that AR's great work had the same title as the one here commented upon: *Los problemas fundamentales de la filosofía y del dogma*, in 5 double vols. (Xunta de Galicia, Santiago de Compostela, 1995), a work of profound and very modern philosophical content.

13. Many errata have crept into the work, more than those supposed by the final note (PFFC II:737), above all in respect of texts and transcriptions of ancient languages, especially Semitic.

conceptual implications, making it distinct from other scientific perspectives.<sup>14</sup> Later on, he will make this notion more precise and single out the relationships of CPh/LSc with Glottology (the analysis of linguistic material) and General Philology (the historico-cultural study of language and its products).

*La Glotología y la Filología General preparan los elementos del arte lingüístico; y la Ciencia del Lenguaje o Filología comparada los eleva al orden científico presentándolos como manifestaciones históricas dentro de un sistema* (PFFC I:58).

*Reducidas a la unidad la parte empírica y filosófica en la naturaleza histórica de la Ciencia del Lenguaje, es dado distinguir en ésta un elemento descriptivo que constituye la glotografía, un elemento racional del eslabonamiento de hechos, propio del Pragmatismo, un elemento teórico, la glotomathia, o enseñanza de las teorías y dogmatismo científico* (PFFC I:66).

Consequently, LSc includes a philosophy/theology of language and a history of language. Apparently, this position seems remote from the modern approach of linguistics, which is predominantly analytical. On the other hand, however, it foretells in some way the plurality of perspectives from which linguistics is dealt with today: psychology, sociology, the acquisition and transmission of language, and so on. The holistic horizon mentioned above is therefore clearly set out from the very beginning:

*Y en estas investigaciones de la naturaleza de la palabra como auxiliar de la inteligencia, de las formas históricas que reviste en el tiempo, está todo el complejo de la Ciencia del Lenguaje, que estudiando la síntesis singular de la palabra y del concepto viene a colocarse en los confines de las ciencias del espíritu y de la materia, y en cierta manera ha de contraponerse a unas y otras, ya que la palabra es órgano universal de toda forma de conocimiento* (PFFC I:7).

AR feels obliged to justify his identification of Comparative Philology with Language Science. He distinguishes *glottics* (the instrumental usage of language), *philology* (the scientific study of language as a historico-cultural 'monument/document') and *Language Science* (in the sense previously defined). Nevertheless, he prefers to call it *Comparative Philology* rather than *Linguistics*, which he considers to be a more fitting alternative term for *glottics*. It is clear that this label has not been accepted in modern linguistic studies. There, the expression *Comparative Linguistics* has prevailed to mean the comparative aspect of language, whereas AR's *Comparative Philology* corresponds to what today is called *General Linguistics*. As for philology, it has taken on the specific cultural meaning it assumed in the 19th century, as an institutional and academic rather than a scientific label: even today, a treatise on philology has yet to be written.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, although AR recognises that it is simply a question of names, and not worth dwelling upon (PFFC I:20), it reveals a profound insight into the significance of comparison in the scientific study of language, as universally recognised and carried out today, even when linguistics is focused on the analysis of a single language.<sup>16</sup> Even if non-comparative philology could ever exist, from an abstract point of view, linguistics simply cannot avoid being comparative.

14. In this regard he sets out a long disquisition in I:11-15.

15. However, see H. Fleisch's work *Traité de philologie arabe*, 1-2, Beirut, 1990, which, in fact, is a grammar of the Arabic language with an introductory chapter on its history.

16. See J. H. Greenberg, "Some Methods of Dynamic Comparison in Linguistics", in J. Puhvel, ed., *Substance and Structure of Language*, Berkeley/Los Angeles, 1969, pp. 147-203; W. Eilers, "Die vergleichend-semasiologische Methode in der Orientalistik", in *AWLabGSKl Jahrgang* 1973 10; see also in this connexion G. del Olmo Lete, *Questions de linguistique sémitique. Racine et lexème. Histoire de la recherche (1940-2000)* (Antiquités sémitiques V), Paris, 2003, pp. 154f. Since I have recently dealt with current problems of Comparative Linguistics in this work, I allow myself to refer anyone who may be interested in more detailed information to it.

... *tenemos que en la Filología general existe una razón lingüística y una razón de comparación que, concentrada a los idiomas en sí mismos, lleva directamente a la Ciencia del Lenguaje el elemento comparativo de la Filología, por el cual se constituye en Filología Comparada* (PFFC I: 21).

The reasoning seems rather false, but AR was obliged to justify the title of his book. In any case, the subject –the scientific study of language– was well established in his day and he intended to justify it a very astute way. The Science of Language, or Linguistics par excellence, was Comparative Philology, focused on the study of the languages themselves or conversely, Comparative Linguistics is Philology *par excellence* as LSc.<sup>17</sup>

... *denota la comparación manifestada expresamente, el modo peculiar de ser y señal característica de la Ciencia del Lenguaje* (PFFC I: 21).

## 2.- Establishing the Subject

For AR, language is a human product with two components: one psychological (/internal/formal (meaning < semasiology) and other phonetic/external/material (sound and its forms < phonetics and morphology). Together, both forms shape the word and according to our author the many erroneous theories on LSc to be analysed and rejected originate from the imbalance in maintaining this combination (PFFC I:27f.). He defines its subject in an empirical way, whatever the name given to the science in question:

*La suma científica de las razones naturales y de las razones psicológicas del lenguaje históricamente realizadas* (PFFC I:28).

In this way, AR sets out a theoretical discussion (two types of 'reasons') in order to establish his subject matter, which he will develop later on: the historical character of language. LSc, then, includes structurally a discursive or philosophical side (in keeping with what nowadays is called 'Language Theory') and an historical side ('Historical Linguistics'). Both shape the double perspective which its components impose, since it includes the phonetic and semantic development of the language, as required by clearly theoretical problems like those related to the causes that determine its phenomena or even by topics which go further, such as the origin of language (PFFC I:29, n.1).

From this perspective, AR sketches an adequate division of historical and comparative grammar, as a description of the transformations experienced by language forms (morphology in a broad sense) through space and time (morphogeny and metamorphism) (PFFC I:31). Today, we would define this as the synchronic and diachronic structure of language, going back to a proto-language and its branches. AR calls it *glottological paleomorphism* (PFFC I:32).

Once this outline of the subject matter of LSc has been set out, which can be defined as perfect, AR yields to his uncontrollable inclination as a theoretician and a polemicist, namely, the analysis and rejection of other scholars and their theories. These have deviated from an overall perspective, overstating one of the two components of the subject of linguistics: theories that are positivist and Darwinian, neglecting the free and psychological element of language (Schleicher, Hovelacque, M. Müller, etc), and theories that are historical, tending towards the phonetic component and its laws (Humboldt, Whitney, Sayce, etc.).

Against such options, AR maintains that LSc includes both elements as well as a philosophical discussion on the reasons of the subject matter. This subject matter, which is the 'word', is human, and so

17. Remember, however, that the work translated by him four years earlier, although a work of comparison, bears the title Linguistics (cf. supra n. 1).

free, but it is also phonic in nature, and therefore subject to laws that are perfectly predictable, not simply verifiable, which allow the etymological reconstruction of a pattern that underlies the historical development of language (PFFC I:45).

Here, for the first time, AR introduces the topic of etymology, which later on he will refine in detail (PFFC I:56, n. 1, 69, 212ff.; II:19, 22, 34, etc.), a topic of fundamental importance in a treatment of Comparative Linguistics. He holds to the historico-psychological perspective, provided that this does not dispense with the phonetic component.

A third synthesising, historical and naturalistic opinion or school will accept phonetic laws, but in the Darwinian sense, as natural and immutable (F. Müller). Once again, for AR this position falsifies the question (PFFC I:46f.) as it applies evolutionary theory, a method unsuitable for the nature of the subject matter (PFFC I:48). This is one of AR's clever insights, in tune with our own time, when attempts have been made to apply 'scientific' methods to the analysis of the radical lexeme

Seen from this perspective, his notion of language as an individual reality and at the same time as a social reality is very interesting:

*La lengua y el dialecto no son cosas distintas, sino manifestaciones diversamente consideradas; la lengua no está en el orden social, sino en cuanto es puramente individual; por eso llámese dialecto o idioma es peculiar de cada individuo o sea, existe tan solo en el hombre que lo habla; y si de esta suerte cada hombre hace la lengua, cada lengua puede considerarse como dialecto personal, y así como de la suma de idiomas personales resultan los dialectos regionales, el substratum común de los cuales da lugar a la lengua, a su vez dialecto de la rama respectiva de donde procede* (PFFC I:40s, véase p. 51).

His criticism of M. Müller's distinction between 'phonetic change' and 'dialectal restoration' proves to be correct: both imply each other, they are not 'corruptions' but transformations of a flexible whole (PFFC I:41).

In his critique, AR shows remarkable acuity as a polemicist with a firm philosophical and theological base, who makes no concessions to the fashion of the moment, and is not blinded and seduced by the brilliant discoveries of a new and overwhelming science that displaces a wholly imperfect past. The philosopher and the thinker that AR was emerges from every quarter. Next, he substantiates his own opinion, advanced earlier, in a long digression that develops and repeats the basic concepts already formulated (PFFC I:48-58). His opposition to any relationship between language and race is to be noted ("ninguno de los aspectos verdaderamente glotológicos de la palabra tiene relaciones antropológicas", I:51), which later he will extend to the 'nation' (PFFC II:347).

The discussion on the scientific determination of LSc provides the opportunity for a long disquisition on science in general, very like a treatise on epistemology, where he feels at ease, reflecting his wider vision of the *Arbor scientiae* (PFFC I:60-66). In this connexion, he points to the uniformity of human nature as the primary *base* of LSc, which guarantees the homogeneity of linguistic facts that otherwise would not be comparable. Its primary *condition* is their distribution by families, attained by comparing them, which allows their reduction to common centres or trunks ("A este procedimiento debe su existencia la Filología comparada") (PFFC I:69). Finally, its common *principle* is etymological parallelism:

*Esto es, que en toda etimología se proceda por cotejo de formas que tengan el mismo estadio lingüístico, o que mediante una legítima reconstrucción se puedan ofrecer en el grado de desarrollo propio de la época en que corresponde hacer la comparación. Este principio constituye la garantía de acierto en toda la labor deductiva de parentesco de idiomas, de constitutivos de raíces, y demás problemas concernientes al ser íntimo de la lenguas* (PFFC I:69).

Base, condition and principle combine into the descriptive and philosophical function of LSc, a function that AR always bears in mind. It is quite remarkable that this theoretician of linguistics includes etymological parallelism as the basis of philosophical speculation on language. It would be rather difficult

to assert the function of LSc/CL in a more precise way, above all in relation to etymological reconstruction. This function is primordial, but also quite risky, given the frequent contradictions that seem to obliterate the kinship or the family resemblance between languages, which can only be surmounted by reduction to the same linguistic level (PFFC I:70).

### 3.- *The History of the Language Science*

AR devotes chapters III to VIII of the first volume and chapters I to III of the second to setting out the history of LSc, as mentioned above. After some brief considerations on the philosophy of the history of language (he is always concerned with the 'why?!') (PFFC I:72f.), he sets out a brief but complete survey of the subject matter, basically focused on I.-E. Some thoughts on the division of this history into periods follow (PFFC I:74f.), allowing AR to recover the pattern of the two tendencies that he will see emerging throughout this history, one experimental and the other speculative, moulded by the Indians and the Greeks respectively. In fact, as we said above, these chapters as a whole form a separate work which is more worthy of admiration than comment.

In any case, the tone of these chapters is overwhelming, so different from the speculative tone of the preceding chapters and of the those that will follow in the second volume, and clearly demonstrate AR's mental agility. In fact, they are summaries of the histories of the respective literatures, disguised as if intended to be mere histories of language.

#### 3.1.- *Sanskrit Linguistics*

AR sets out a complete overview of Sanskrit linguistics that is amazing because of its thoroughness and erudition. A complete survey of Sanskrit literature is provided within the precise framework of its periods and language levels. One remarkable aspect of this historical view that can be singled out is the appearance of all the basic topics of LSc and the solution, very often definitive, that had already been reached at that time. The discovery of Sanskrit and of its grammarians was decisive for the modern scientific shaping of LSc, as AR will emphasise in due course.

#### 3.2.- *Greek and Latin Linguistics*

Next comes the historical presentation of Greek linguistics (Latin simply being its successor) (PFFC I: chaps. IV-V). In it, the dominant interest is in speculative matters rather than in empirical or grammatical aspects, as provided by Indian linguistics. Here, a double theory of the origin of language is conspicuous, either by *phýsei* or *thései*, either natural or conventional, a duality that derives from earlier philosophical positions. In this regard, the emergence of phonetic-alphabetical symbolism has to be mentioned (see *infra*), the echo of which still rings in our days.<sup>18</sup> Again, in this connexion, the vast knowledge of Greek and Latin grammar shown by AR is astonishing, with abundant quotations and appraisals of writers, without translation as a matter of fact. In the margin of this historical overview are interesting sketches of such disparate questions as the accentual quality of classical verse (PFFC I:121f.) or the significance of Greek and Roman libraries for the development of linguistics at that time.

However, AR is not satisfied with an historical description, and in a new chapter (PFFC I: chap. VI), once again he inquires thoroughly into the problems that this history has thrown up and will remain topical

18. See in this connexion R. M. Voigt, *Die infirmen Verbaltypen des Arabischen und das Biradikalismus-Problem* (AWLM, Veröff. der Orient. Kommission, 39), Stuttgart, 1988, p. 50; G. del Olmo Lete, *Questions de linguistique sémitique*, pp. 113f., 126, 132f.

in linguistics. Some of these problems are: the natural or conventional origin of the word, as mentioned above (PFFC I:163ff.) and the associated process of anomaly/analogy in its formation (PFFC I:169), the question of meaning (PFFC I:169f.) and such questions as the nature of grammar as *empeiría*, *téchne* or *epistéme*, the distinction between grammar, philology and criticism (PFFC I:173, n. 1), the origin of the theory of parts of discourse and the shaping of grammar (PFFC I:196f.) and also the question of the relationship between verbs and nouns (PFFC I:197ff.; see also I:22f., 79f., 82, 95, 109, 137; II:222, 227, 237f., 240ff., 362ff., 366). AR is shown to be a sharp critic of the different theories of Antiquity, but his layout, as we pointed out above, becomes repetitive and very unsystematic, and continually mixes up historical data and theoretical reflections so as to leave the reader bewildered. One gets the impression that this chapter was once a separate essay, reused here.

A long discussion on the etymological theory valid in this field is carried out as part of his appraisal of Greek and Latin glottology: the creation and derivation of words, the nature of roots, etc. This is a basic problem of CL which AR had touched upon earlier and which he will once more develop systematically later on. His historical approach imposes unsystematic repetition of this kind.

In this regard, he rehearses classical theories on the nature of the word, asserting their recurrent phonetic symbolism as the ultimate basis of etymology (PFFC I:216; see also I:72f., 122, 143f., 148f.; II:144ff., 409, 411ff.), to which we have already referred. Of interest is his commentary on the different modes of words and consequently of etymology, according to the Stoics: by imitation (*mímesis*), by resemblance (*omóiesis*), by analogy (*análogía*) and by antiphrasis or enantiosemy (*enantíosis*) (PFFC I:216f.).

For him, etymology is basically historical not radical. Nevertheless also at this level it is very significant, not only in I.-E., but also in the Semitic languages, as has always been the case in Arabic and is now projected in a systematic way onto the etymological level.<sup>19</sup>

In the long run, the fundamental principle of Latin etymology was resemblance (PFFC I:218), completed by rules for the development of meaning (metonymy/metaphor) or of sound change (metathesis, epenthesis), elements still valid today. Etymology of any kind has to function on the basis of phonology and semantics simultaneously, in order to overcome the unavoidable problems of homophony and polysemy that constantly emerge.

*Sobre el principio, pues, de comparación de las palabras con las cosas y de las voces nuevas con las antiguas, las reglas próximas de análisis se refirieron unas al sonido y otras al sentido, ya que por uno y por otro concepto eran las palabras imitables y de hecho imitadas, o imitación a su vez* (PFFC I:218).

### 3.3.- Semitic Linguistics

If his account of Greek and Latin linguistics is surprising, it is no less surprising that he makes of Semitic linguistics. His mastery of the theme is again complete and detailed, very much in accordance with his biblical and oriental studies, which were rounded off during his brief stay in Rome. Curiously enough, however, generally speaking in this case he is more inaccurate in certain aspects of Semitic linguistics. In general, one has to assert that he has a good knowledge of language type (PFFC I:228) and of the history of its linguistics. However, he shows deficiencies, for instance in his knowledge of Akkadian grammar and of the history of Arabic grammar, among other things. For him, Semites are basically Syrians, Jews and Arabs (PFFC I:229). As AR himself shows, the same sluggish state of Semitic studies at that time, as compared to work on Indo-European, must have influenced his information

19. See G. Bohas, *Matrices et étymons. Développement de la théorie. Séminaire de Saintes 1999*, Lausanne, 2000, pp. 139-149; G. del Olmo Lete, *Questions de linguistique sémitique*, pp. 81, 146, 194.

concerning Semitic. In what follows, we group together languages on which his opinions or assertions deserve to be stressed because of their excellent treatment and those which need some corrections or the complete exclusion. AR will summarise and repeat his opinions later on, when he deals with the classification of the Semitic languages (PFFC II:cap. VII).

*Hebrew-* By starting with the biblical text, AR entangles himself in an impossible distinction between Palestinians, Phoenicians/Canaanites and Semites. The Canaanites came from the Persian Gulf, from Punt (from which < *Phoinikes/Poeni*[!] is derived) (PFFC I:255f.), a region from which Hebrews and Assyrians also came.<sup>20</sup> The Canaanites took over their language from the Hebrews (!) (PFFC I:256). Aramaic was to affect the Semitic language of all those peoples to a greater or lesser extent, which resulted in the formation of two linguistic groups: Assyro-Aramaic and Canaanite-Hebrew.

Apart from his somewhat inexact appraisal of Rabbinic tradition (PFFC I:231, n. 1), he shows a good knowledge of the value of the *masorah* as a pre-grammatical attempt (PFFC I:232, cf. pp. 292, 299ff.) and of the Judaeo-Spanish grammatical school (PFFC I:233ff.), as well as the task of Christian Hebraists, starting from the 17th century, in shaping scientific Hebrew grammar (PFFC I:236).<sup>21</sup>

He considers Hebrew to have a special relationship with "primitive Aramaic, Assyrian and Phoenician" (PFFC I:277) within the Semitic family. As we will see later on, on this depends his theory on the origin of the Semites and their language, determined by the biblical view as derived from Catholic exegesis at that time. AR presumes that Hebrew fell under the influence of Aramaic and had already disappeared completely in Ezra's time (PFFC I:278). On this basis, he sketches the historical periods of the language and of its study among Jews and Christians (PFFC I:279), expanding the description of each period with great erudition, generally in a correct way. Naturally, his characterisation of Targumic literature has to be revised in the light of new discoveries, which curiously enough he guessed at, as he was well informed of the latest news in the field (PFFC I:283, n. 1). He gives a correct appraisal of the LXX version (PFFC I:285, n. 1) and an enthusiastic defence of the Vulgate, along with a precise evaluation of the *Vetus Latina* (PFFC I:286ff., n. 1). His ideas on the origin of the Hebrew alphabet and even to some extent of its development are completely up to date.

*La escritura hebraica es una de las derivaciones de la escritura fenicia, como la fenicia es a su vez derivación de la egipcia, cuyo ideografismo (tipo yerático [sic]) supieron los fenicios convertir en sistema alfabético totalmente fonético* (PFFC I:287f.).

Taking advantage of the topic of the alphabet, AR provides an *excursus* (PFFC I:188, n. 1) on the anomalous hermeneutical systems based on the values of letters or similar sounds in other languages. He also gives a correct interpretation of the task carried out by the compilers of the *masorah* in fixing the written biblical text (PFFC I:291ff.) and its pointing/vocalisation, along with the increasing complexity of the system. He defends the Syrian origin of the proceeding (PFFC I:295). His discussion of vocalic notation leads him to develop the subject of vocalic sounds in Hebrew (PFFC I:295f.) and the use of *matres lectionis*;<sup>22</sup> in this connexion, he also offers for consideration Semitic vocalism in general. The *Kabbalah* is considered to be an extension of the *masorah* because of its obsession with letters. AR also offers a correct description of it, going beyond the popular sense (PFFC I:299, n. 1), but all in all he labels it "trabajo tan fatigoso como inútil". He is ultimately in favour of leaving aside the *masorah* as a source of

20. It is not clear whether AR considers the Phoenicians to be Semites ("tres pueblos ... no de una sola raza ..."); linguistic classification does not clarify the question, because they all adopted the same language (PFFC I:256).

21. In this field, AR has two *bêtes noires*, against whom he will battle throughout his work: Renan, with his *Histoire des langues sémitiques* (PFFC I:237, n. 1), and García Blanco, with his *Diqduq* (PFFC I:231, n. 2, 288, n. 1, 290, n. 1, 293, n. 2, ...).

22. Note the incorrect presumed mnemonic character of these letters (PFFC I:296).

linguistic study, a position widely shared by many Semitists and Hebraists, in spite of the high esteem it enjoys in the Jewish world, since

*debe decirse que la masora ha acarreado grave perjuicio a la buena filología y hermenéutica; si ha sido 'cerco de la ley' fue más para estrecharla que para defenderla* (PFFC I:302).

In fact, in the past biblical exegesis was practised without the *masorah* being taken into account and the same also applies now, generally.<sup>23</sup> Instead, AR is an enthusiastic exponent of the period of the grammatical study of the Hebrew language, following the masoretic text. He gives a thorough presentation of it in its medieval, renaissance and mature phases, paying particular attention to the comparative method that emerged then for the first time, both in grammatical studies and in lexicography. AR sums up the situation as follows:

*El actual momento científico en la materia está representado por su conjunto equilibrado del método histórico, crítico y comparado, en cuya aplicación está la verdadera norma de investigaciones lingüísticas. Las lenguas semíticas, sin embargo, esperan todavía su Bopp para figurar dignamente al lado de las indoeuropeas* (PFFC I:318f.).

However, before reaching this conclusion, AR could not forego providing, even if only in the form of a long note (PFFC I:312, n. 1), a summary of poetic technique in biblical Hebrew, in order to round off the horizon of the applications of language in its prosodic components. He gives a sound summary of Lowth's theory on parallelism ("la rima del pensamiento", as he labels it), so fashionable in modern studies of Hebrew poetry, and at the same time he shows his contempt for medieval Hebrew poetry (PFFC I:316, n. 1: "no tiene originalidad"), a position that surely will not be shared by many specialists and editors of this poetic world, which is so well studied in our day.

*Aramaic*- In contrast with his prolix description of Hebrew linguistics, his summary appraisal of Syro-Aramaic grammar (PFFC I:237) is surprising, apart from isolated references elsewhere, generally apropos of Hebrew. It is excessively succinct in relation to the medieval and renaissance phases, and neglects the significance of the survival of Syriac dialects to modern times. Even in his day these dialects had already begun to be studied.

*Arabic*- For AR, Arabic is the most complete and perfect language among all the Semitic languages (see below on language classification). He maintains its original unity in which the dialectal aspect has only a marginal value and is only lexical in character (PFFC I:242).<sup>24</sup> This appraisal is difficult to accept today. However, he is very critical of the value of Arabic literature, which he considers as mere imitation and lacking originality (PFFC I:238f., 244, n. 1, 245, n. 1); much the same can be asserted of its poetry (PFFC I:253, n. 1). Nowadays, such an assessment would satisfy many people and anger just as many others.<sup>25</sup> I cannot resist quoting the following paragraph, in as much as it can signify a diagnostic of a situation that touches us so closely. Arabic literature passed through

*Un periodo de decadencia que alcanza desde la caída del Califato hasta la toma de Egipto por Selim (1515), si bien puede decirse perpetuado hasta el siglo XX, porque toda la moderna literatura árabe dista inmensamente de sus antiguos esplendores, a los cuales no volverá mientras el contacto con sólidas*

23. He makes Ben-Nephtali a Babylonian massorete (PFFC I:302); P. Kahle's works on the *Massoreten des Ostens/Westens* (1913/1927-1930) had not yet appeared.

24. In this sense, he ignores the linguistic peculiarity of the South-Arabian 'dialect' (PFFC I:252, n. 1). This whole section of the book would need thorough revision in respect of the transcription of proper names and titles of works.

25. "Sobre las doctrinas y libros que guardaban aquellos pueblos (those invaded by the Arabs) se apoya toda la ciencia del Islam, cuyo carácter y nota distintiva estuvo en conservar e ilustrar, sin que pueda decirse en rigor que haya sabido producir" (PFFC I:238).

*civilizaciones no coloque a los hijos del desierto en circunstancias psicológicas análogas a las de otro tiempo, si no es que debe negarse la existencia de una cultura rigurosamente arábica ...* (PFFC I:244, n. 1).

AR feels, then, the significance of the Turkish 'desert' in which Arabic culture became lost for four centuries and the necessity of recovering the socio-cultural level that allowed this people to look to the future and escape the perspective of the past. Certainly, the Nahda had not yet given its best fruits and neither Taha Hussein nor Nagib Mahfuz had yet appeared.

He also words a very strict judgement on the Koran itself, only permitted to outsiders in the wake of I. Golziher:

*Es una de formación sucesiva, sin unidad de plan ni de pensamiento, y en la cual no solo hay desproporciones de estilo y hasta de extensión... sino también repeticiones y contradicción en las ideas, sin orden de tiempo ni de materias* (PFFC I:241, n. 1).

AR exhibits a rather poor knowledge of the history of Arabic grammar, and knows almost nothing about its lexicography. He gives an outline of the development of Arabic grammar that goes up to the 19th century,<sup>26</sup> enhancing its autochthonous origin (PFFC I:252f.), although its tripartite division into 'nouns, verbs and particles' is considered to have been imported from outside (PFFC I:253). He shows himself to be enthusiastic about the Arabic language, then, but much less so about Arabic culture.

*Akkadian-* Given the recent entry of Akkadian or Assyro-Babylonian language and literature into the academic scene, it is not surprising that AR's knowledge of it is revealed to be somewhat confused. He knows the prehistory of cuneiform well (PFFC I:257ff., 260ff.)<sup>27</sup> and the history of its interpretation through the Persian inscriptions. For instance, he knows that the second column of the large inscription of Darius in Behistun corresponds to Elamite (later on we will return to this question), while the language later called Hurrian uses its own cuneiform alphabet (Hittite had not yet appeared on the scene). AR correctly interprets the 'hieroglyphic', i.e. pictographic origin of cuneiform writing (PFFC I:258, p. 1), but, as he himself acknowledges, "no existe todavía una colección completa de los signos de escritura babilonia y asiria para fijar sus grados evolutivos" (PFFC I:259, n. 1). This task, well established by AR, was reserved for syllabaries in the future. He correctly describes the original direction of cuneiform writing and its transformation from ideographical into phonographical signs (PFFC I:260, n. 1), and has a good knowledge of the Assyriological texts available in his day, including the El-Amarna letters, and successfully sketches their historical and linguistic problems (PFFC I:262, n. 1).

Matters become more complicated when AR attempts to define the position of the Assyrian/Akkadian language within Semitics. Misled, perhaps, by the initial usage made of Hebrew in the interpretation of that language and dependent on biblical tradition, he establishes a close kinship between both peoples and languages under a single Aramaic umbrella in respect of homeland and language (PFFC I:264). The Babylonian language is a Semitic language, but it is not the earliest of the Aramaic-Hebrew group (!):

*De hecho la familia del semitismo, conocido sobre todo en las formas arcaicas del arameo, habrá de ser la que proporcione la luz necesaria para alumbrar las obscuridades de la fonética y morfología asirias, para que nos sea dado ver el lugar en que haya de ser colocado aquel idioma dentro del semitismo ya estudiado y comparado* (PFFC I:265).

An extraordinary historiographical concoction is set up in this way, the result of an uncritical telescoping of data and dates (PFFC I:265) and of the ambiguous meaning of 'Assyrian' in Antiquity, understood as follows:

26. The absence of Caspari's grammar is surprising, a work later made widely available in Wright's revised English edition (1859/1862) and still a reference work today.

27. Some of the ancient references to the Assyrian letters refer to Aramaic, as correctly pointed out by AR; certainly this is true of Firdausi's simile (the Pahlavi text).

*Es un hecho digno de ser notado que en general los datos antiguos que llegaron a nosotros de la lengua de los asirios la presentan como idioma aramaico o la suponen en afinidad próxima a esta familia (PFFC I:265).*

The confusion may be so great that we do not really know the language that Sennacherib's general used to address the inhabitants of Jerusalem (2 Kings 18:26ff.): Aramaic-Aramaic, Aramaic-Assyrian or Assyrian-Aramaic (PFFC I:266).

In connexion with defining the language of the second column of the Achaemenid inscriptions, which AR considers of "tipo lingüístico de transición semítico-aria", he introduces the question of Sumerian (*sumeriano*), then fully in a state of ferment, as a pre-Semitic element of the region (PFFC I:268f.). A series of names and theories are brought into the discussion, which sound awkward and fantastic today when Sumerian has attained an objective status and its civilisation is clearly defined, in spite of so much vagueness regarding its semantics. AR tries to fit it into the scheme of language groups that developed later; it is even possible that Sumerian was present in the second column of the Persian inscriptions just mentioned (!). He presumes that we are dealing with a particular language different from Akkadian but with the same writing system. In any case:

*El 'sumeriano' representaría una forma de transición aglutinante a las principales variantes lingüísticas de los tres grupos indicados (dravídico, ario y uralo-altaico), cuya base evolutiva es evidentemente en ellos una aglutinación rudimentaria ... (PFFC I:271).*

AR is perfectly aware of Akkadian literature in its different genres (PFFC I:272ff.), pays special attention to the lists and lexicographical texts because of their peculiar linguistic relevance and shows interest in their relationship with biblical literature, a question very much alive then under the motto "Babel und Bibel". A common cultural background is recognised, but also the superiority of biblical conceptions (PFFC I:272, n. 1). Given the fragmentary state of many Assyro-Babylonian texts, it becomes very difficult to classify them by genre and to assign a period to the inscriptions as well. All in all, AR shows himself well acquainted with the state of Akkadian studies, but the backwardness that Semitics suffered in those days and its inability to incorporate the new data into the old classification frames, prevented him from interpreting them correctly.

### 3.4.- *Contemporary Linguistics*

From this moment the historical attention of AR's work is not on the task of study and development carried out by ancient peoples on their own languages, but on the task carried out by European scholars on languages in general and, evidently, on their own also. In this way, the Renaissance continued the development of Greek, Latin and Semitic linguistics, with a certain dominance of the latter (PFFC I:322). On the other hand, not only does a new period of study begin, but also one of imitation and use of the ancient languages, furthered by the abundant translations of 'Classical' works (PFFC I:323f.). A climate of vast erudition begins, due to the discovery and renewal of the past, along with the introduction of new insights into language studies. One example is the debate on the pronunciation of Greek (iotacism) (PFFC I:324, n. 1). With patriotic ardour, which never slackens throughout the entire work, AR gives maximum importance to the task of Spanish linguists, who were the first to deal with the languages of Asia and America (PFFC I:326ff., 331ff.), along with those of other European nationalities (PFFC I:327ff.), whom they preceded and inspired.<sup>28</sup> As was to be expected, the long list of grammarians, Hellenists and Latinists closes with the mention of Hervás y Panduro (PFFC I:338).

However, the Renaissance did not succeed in shaping a 'Science of Grammar'; it lacked the correct comparative viewpoint (PFFC I:338), preventing awareness of true linguistic problems. Classical Greek

28. Curiously, he does not mention the translations of Horace and Virgil by Fray Luis de León.

had been succeeded by Byzantine Neo-Greek, which required the study of its phonetic rules to explain its development without dialects by a non-aprioristic historico-empirical method. In setting out this linguistic problem, AR shows himself in full command of the situation (PFFC I:339-344). In keeping with the transformation of Greek, it enabled him to sketch the linguistic framework in Asia Minor into which Greek fits (PFFC I:356, n. 1). He feels at ease on the subject of relationships among the I.-E. languages. As for Latin, it overcame the phase of vulgar Latin with its own problematic development, starting from the Latin spoken in the Lacium (PFFC I:344-354). Then, it gave way to the fragmentation of Romance as a consequence of its diffusion through the whole Roman Empire and of contact with more differentiated languages. This contact did not mean real dialectal contamination. In fact, according to AR, the Latin from the Lacium had already been contaminated by its contact with the Italic peoples. In this way the 'Law of Margins' in the diffusion of language, according to which languages are more conservative the more distant they are from their original centre, also applies here (PFFC I: 253). Following AR, four stages can be pointed out in the historico-philological process: 1) the formation of the Latino-Italic dialects, 2) the formation of Latin in Italy; 3) the formation of Latin in the Empire and 4) the splitting up of Imperial vulgar Latin, which can be connected with the loss of contact with the Imperial Court. The process is similar to the one followed by Greek, taking into account the differences in the way they were spread. However, Greek endured better the conservative reaction that both languages suffered before their definitive breakdown (PFFC I:355, n. 1).

As a colophon to this historical outline, AR mentions two questions that arose at that time and have implicit significance for the studies of comparative grammar to appear in the last historical phase and will mean the arrival and affirmation of scientific linguistics.

The first question concerns the earliest language and the origin of language, and it had already arisen before (PFFC I:374f.). Theories multiply, both from the historico-revelationist viewpoint (the first language) and from philosophy (the origin of language), based on symbolism, onomatopoeia, 'rhemic' or root language, or on a system of the nine basic sounds (PFFC I:359). Among theologians, Hebrew prevailed as the earliest language, but there were many other fantastic theories (PFFC I:359f.).

The second question that then arises concerns the possible relationship among languages. The abundance of new linguistic material which contact with the peoples of America and Asia brought, as well as the creation of chairs of oriental languages, the publication of polyglot bibles and the resulting preparation of grammars and dictionaries, called for the comparison and classification of languages (PFFC I:360f.). However, this was not yet a science. It is possible to think that the beginning of scientific comparativism began with Leibniz (I: 364f.). He reduced languages to one common trunk with two branches: the Japhetic and the Aramaic languages, which today would be called I.-E. and Semitic (PFFC I: 365). This programmatic beginning received its first pioneering form in the work of Hervás and Adelung at the end of the 18th century (PFFC I: 367).

AR emphasises how this comparativist treatment was alien to the interests of the Classical world, due mainly to its lack of concern for 'other' people and to its xenophobia (PFFC I:367ff.). It was Christianity that opened the way, with its doctrine of universal brotherhood and, from the 16th century on, with its expansion among peoples all over the world (PFFC I: 370). The versions and comparison of the Lord's Prayer in many different languages exemplifies this contact among these peoples and the comparative study of them (PFFC I:370f.; II:4, n.1). The problem of general grammar and of the possibility of a universal language, that Leibniz himself and other scholars after him tried unsuccessfully to create, then arises as a corollary of the question of the earliest language (PFFC I: 371ff.).

In this way, according to AR, the beneficial influence that religious ideas had on the development of Comparative Linguistics (PFFC I:373ff.) is acknowledged. The chapter closes with a defence of this thesis

in respect of the whole subject of the earliest language, a subject that could be considered more appropriate in a book on apologetics than in a treatise on linguistics.

### 3.5.- *Comparative Linguistics: its Origin*

The beginning of LSc was set in by Hervás' work, to whom warm and patriotic praise is attributed<sup>29</sup> (see II:1ff.). He established the principle of the historical development of language, put aside the exclusivity of filiation as a kinship principle and introduced the principle of etymology and grammatical analysis instead of mere external lexical resemblance as a research method (PFFC II:5f.). Hervás' work was supported by Adelung's (PFFC II:8). However, such pioneering inklings were still mere juxtaposition rather than authentic comparison.

The definitive turning point was provided by the appearance of Sanskrit (PFFC II:9). Study of this language and comparison with other languages would break the impasse in which LSc stood at this moment, allowing the full development of the new methods identified by Hervás and Adelung. Above all, the principle of collaterality developed, which was to permit many languages to be collected under one common trunk, and so make strange classificatory systems obsolete (PFFC II:0). The study of Sanskrit enabled the comparative and genetic instrument to be refined (PFFC II:1), the concept of linguistic family and its relationships to be specified, and phonetic laws as the basic principle of linguistics to be established.

Nevertheless, in this case the enthusiastic claim that Sanskrit was the original language (PFFC II:12) also had to be given up, once primitive forms were also discovered in other languages. The common centre is detected that coordinates them and in this way an historical understanding of the development of languages is obtained. As a final result, the process of reconstructing this common centre or trunk, namely I.-E., could begin (PFFC II:12), without however excluding its dialectal nature (PFFC II:12, n. 1).

Although Sanskrit was already known to other peoples (PFFC II:16ff.), including European scholars and Catholic missionaries, since the Renaissance (PFFC II:13, 16ff., 21ff.), its discovery as a catalyst of Comparative Philology began with the foundation of the Asiatic Society in Calcutta. This Society furthered the work of scholars such as Wilkins, Jones, Forster, Carey and the brothers Schlegel, who opened the way for the renewed and comparative study of the language, with their versions of the main works of Vedic literature and Sanskrit epic (PFFC II:14ff.). In this sense, Jones had already drawn attention in 1788 to the resemblance Sanskrit shows with Greek, Latin, Gothic, Persian and Celtic (PFFC II:14f.),<sup>30</sup> a resemblance already pointed out previously by Coeurdoux and Halhed (PFFC II:23).

In this premonitory context, Bopp's work *Ueber das Conjugationssystem der sanskrit Sprache in Vergleichung ...* (1816) appeared (PFFC II:25ff.). It was a work that meant the triumph of the new science, Comparative Linguistics, carried out on the basis of the study of five branches: Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, Persian and Germanic, as lateral variations of an original unified organism, I.-E. (PFFC II:28).

What Bopp actually discovered was a procedure of comparative morphology that later on he himself was to generalise in his *Vergleichende Grammatik* (1849), profiting from similar studies by other colleagues on other languages and language families, in particular the *Deutsche Grammatik* by J. Grimm (1819-37). AR describes Bopp's task as follows:

*Bopp tratando de buscar el primitivo indo-europeo llegó a la Filología comparada, casi a la manera como Cristóbal Colón descubrió la América buscando el camino de las Indias* (PFFC II:29).

29. His work is acknowledged by all; for example, see G. Mounin, *Histoire de la Linguistique dès origines*, p. 151. If one were to believe AR, all work on comparative and general linguistics originated in Spain (PFFC II:2ff.).

30. See O. Szemerényi, *Introduction to Indo-European Linguistics*, op. cit., pp. 4f.

AR has a detailed knowledge of Bopp's basic and minor works. He sets out his doctrinal development and summarises it in the following appraisal:

*Las palabras de las lenguas indo-europeas constan de raíces monosilábicas; estas raíces no se desarrollan en palabras por crecimiento interno, sino externo y con aglutinación de elementos extraños. Hay dos clases de raíces, o sea raíces verbales de las cuales provienen los verbos y los nombres, y raíces pronominales, de las cuales se originan los pronombres, las preposiciones primitivas, conjunciones y partículas* (PFFC II:42).

In Bopp's method, speculative and practical tendencies are combined. At the beginning of his book, AR had already stated that this combination was peculiar to Greeks and Indians respectively, and would open the way to LSc (PFFC II:32), leading to the birth to Comparative and General Philology (PFFC II:33, n. 1). The opposition of Classical scholars and others had to be overcome, as they were not ready to accept interference in their discipline. In this way, Greek was inserted into a wider context and emerged in its splendour as a harmonious selection of forms within the vast variety at its disposal, as Sanskrit proves. The result was a rich morphology and a nuanced syntax, making it into a wonderful language, "el más prodigioso instrumento de la inteligencia que el espíritu de un pueblo haya podido jamás elaborar" (PFFC II: 35).

In one of his frequent flash-backs, AR gives a detailed account of Bopp's antecedents (PFFC II:36ff.), which is unavoidably repetitive. He dwells mainly upon the theory of the 'unique verb' ('to be') and M. Schlegel's theory on inflexion by inward development, theories that Bopp would reject in the long run (PFFC II:7-40). His last position appears reflected in the summary quoted above, to which could be added the determination of desinential morphemes shaping inflexion, considered as derivations from the pronouns. According to AR, Bopp created a general theory on word construction, but without achieving a general theory of LSc (PFFC II:43). His position is essentially analytical and empirico-positivist, but his contribution was enormous and today, nobody disputes his position as the father of Comparative Linguistics. His method is still unsure and faltering. The same applies to the 'phonetic laws' he proposes, some of them 'physical' and others 'mechanical', vaguely understood as laws of sound changes and their syllabic compensation with each other (PFFC II:44). His antecedents can be seen in Humboldt and in A. W. Schlegel, who finally criticised Bopp's method.

Other criticisms of his work were feeble. Instead, very soon Bopp saw his position strengthened and rounded off by the theories of J. Grimm, the founder of Historical Grammar (PFFC II:46). In his famous *Deutsche Grammatik*, mentioned above, Grimm insisted on research into phonetic variations and their rotation,<sup>31</sup> which are subject to fixed laws. In their turn, A. F. Pott, with his rule of etymological analysis and his comparative table of sounds, T. Benley, with his theory of primary verbs and of suffix derivation, Schleicher, with theories that are erroneous in many aspects, F. Schlegel, the first to use the expression 'Comparative Grammar', and others (PFFC II:48ff.) continued Bopp's work, and followed him on essential points.

AR then summarises this key phase in the development of LSc, from the first insights of the similar relationships among I.-E. languages, that had arisen due to Sanskrit coming on stage, up to the consolidated work of Bopp and his followers (PFFC II:53f.). Two complementary tendencies develop under the guidance of Bopp (in Berlin) and W. Schlegel (in Bonn). One is more analytical and the other more philological (in the general sense of the word), but both share an interest in grammatical problems and in the diffusion of Sanskrit literature (PFFC II:54ff.). The Göttingen School, led by T. Benfey, is intermediary between both tendencies. In this productive context, M. Müller and many other German

31. On phonetic circularity or the 'Law of consonant substitution' see O. Szemerényi, *Introduction to Indo-European Linguistics*, op. cit., pp. 17ff.; AR has some reservations regarding its universal application (PFFC II:47, n. 1).

Sanskrit scholars of both schools developed, whose progress AR follows, carefully and skilfully (PFFC II:55f.).

As a matter of fact, this flowering of comparative studies was not exhausted with the study of Sanskrit. Later, AR provides a long survey of scholars and works, true followers of the new trend set by Bopp. These scholars were engaged in the study of comparative and historical grammar of the other languages and linguistic families: German, Latin, Greek, Romance, Celtic, Slavonic, Iranian, Semitic, Egyptian (which for AR is a [pre]-Semitic language), Chinese, Ural-Altaic, Polynesian, Dravidian, South-African, Australian and Amerindian. Nothing escapes AR's overview, which provides brief commentaries on most of the works quoted (PFFC II:56-60).

The last stage of his historical survey of LSc begins with the tendency at the end of the 19th century, that apparently opposed the thesis of Bopp and his school. In his appraisal of Bopp's grammar, AR asserts:

*... allí se hace un examen sólido y concienzudo de las formas lingüísticas, pero sin atender otras fuentes ni consultar otros actores que el lenguaje en cuanto escrito y muerto, recogiendo así sus fenómenos puramente externos ...* (PFFC II:63).

Thus, language emerges as "un cuarto reino de la naturaleza", to use Bréal's expression. Against Bopp's glottological positivism, focused on analysis of the material phonetic data, a new trend is set that makes room for what AR calls "la parte psíquica de las lenguas", namely, the role of the individual in the development of language. This new school is given the label *Neo-Grammarians* (*junggrammatische Schule*), initiated by W. Scherer and A. Leskien. Its more important representatives were H. Osthoff in Heidelberg and K. Brugmann in Leipzig (PFFC II:63f.).

*Los Neogramáticos establecen como postulado en sus investigaciones el carácter psíquico-histórico del habla humana, la cual les lleva a conclusiones tocantes al método lingüístico encontradas con las de la primera escuela, dicha también de los Paleogramáticos. La naturaleza de los cambios y leyes fonéticas, la teoría de la aglutinación como base de las lenguas flexivas, la representación glotológica y el lugar preferente que al sánscrito debe asignársele, según los Paleogramáticos, todo ello viene discutido y nada de esto subsiste en la escuela de los Neogramáticos* (PFFC II:64).

Therefore, from the twofold mechanism of language, both psychological and physiological, that is, from man as a speaker, one reaches the following conclusion: phonetic changes obey laws without exception ("la dirección del movimiento fonético es siempre la misma") and are applicable to any word in the same phonetic conditions, and any apparent exception is due to analogy. It is here, according to a well-known principle, that the 'psychological' or individual aspect just mentioned lies (PFFC II:65, n. 1). Phonetic laws and analogy are universal and apply in any period of language.

*De aquí que, mientras la escuela antigua contraponía las excepciones a las normas fonéticas, la nueva escuela contrapone, en toda época y en toda lengua, el peso de la analogía al de las leyes ciegas y constantes* (PFFC II:66).

Some scholars prefer to focus on 'letters', others on 'sounds'; both sets offer advantages and disadvantages in the practice of their methods (PFFC II:67f.). Certainly, Bopp ignores historical grammar, apart from comparison, but in turn the Neo-Grammarians take their basic data from Bopp and his school and take the rigidity of phonetic laws to unacceptable extremes (PFFC II:70f.). For some scholars, language is an independent system, while for others, it is formed by the speaker's phonetic prototypes. In line with his speculative tendency, AR extends his scrutiny of the origin of both trends, going back to Indian linguistics, from which Bopp's work originated and which did not dissociate sound and meaning (PFFC II:72ff.).

The brilliant insight of Bopp and his followers was to use this comparative material in the reconstruction of the underlying proto-Aryan language backwards in time, but it was not without problems (PFFC II:74f.). In practice, the attempt was impossible, as it relied only on successive alterations in which

analogy, namely, the speaker's will, had a primordial role (PFFC II:76). Consequently, the attitude of the Neo-Grammarians was opposed to the method of the Paleo-Grammarians, based on the isolation of germinal *roots* and on the exclusive function of inflexion and agglutination in word formation (PFFC II:76). The change of direction was necessary, which the Neo-Grammarians intended in a radical way and, as such, was equally unacceptable.

AR then tries to emphasise the elements that were already definitively acquired and to show how, in the long run, both schools profited from them in the same way, although with excessive and one-sided bias (PFFC II:77-82). These pages suffer from the deficiency pointed out at the beginning of my note: they are too repetitive. However, in themselves they represent a correct account of the state of the art and even a powerful summary. AR is not satisfied with the 'history' of the subject; he feels the need to understand and explain it.

The 'balanced' school that ought to replace these opposing attitudes (PFFC II:88f.) must insist on the criticism of their radicalism and attempt a combination of their perspectives, namely, a harmony between facts and laws, between induction and deduction. There is no such thing as a completely homogeneous language. It is always the sum of variants created by the law of least effort (entropy) and the influence of its milieu and its traditions (PFFC II:95), completed in the case of phonetics by the 'general phonetic circle' and the 'articulation basis' which each language presents (PFFC II: 96). Such typical variants have to take into account individual variants, which are also produced by the law of least effort and the law of emphatic meaning. AR sums up his unifying position as follows:

*Es innegable que en el conjunto de los fenómenos lingüísticos, debe buscarse la estabilidad y constancia de ellos, ya que sin eso no sería posible conocimiento científico en la materia; pero no debe pedirse estabilidad que no se encuentra, ni está conforme con la naturaleza de dichos fenómenos; por lo mismo, no puede hablarse de leyes fonéticas de constancia necesaria, sino de la natural inconstancia del fonetismo glotológico, dentro de normas históricas regulares* (PFFC II:95).

*Es, pues, la palabra en todo tiempo efecto de una suma de concausas de distinto orden, contenidas en ciertos límites por los agentes sociales exteriores a que dejamos hecha referencia, sin que sea posible fijar la medida de su influjo en las alteraciones lingüísticas sucesivas* (PFFC II:99).

Analogy is not the cause in this process of constant instability, but the means that articulates it and facilitates and clarifies its expression, coordinating the different forms. It turns out to be a controlling not a disturbing force (PFFC II:101).

This succinct digression ends with a grandiose and intense speculation on the nature of language as a psycho-physical activity, dependent on the will of man who constantly reshapes it. That is, language as both *enérgεια* and *érgon*. Of course, AR will not fail to condemn the final aberrations in this connexion, so patent in V. Henry's 'antinomies', a later abuse of Neo-Grammatical ideas. This field of dialectical polemics is where AR feels at ease (PFFC II:108ff.). However, in his final conclusion, he acknowledges the merits of that school (PFFC II:117, n.1), repeating the subject of this chapter at its end, having moved away from polemical digressions on theory.

Here the historical part of AR's work ends. It leaves us at the threshold of the 20th century. It seems to me that an attempt to extend it to the threshold of the 21st century in his perspective is beyond the ability of one scholar working alone.<sup>32</sup>

#### 4.- *Comparative analytical linguistics*

32. On this matter see the remarks by R. H. Robins, *General Linguistics: An Introductory Survey*, pp. Vs., who speaks of a manual for beginners.

#### 4.1.- Phonetics

Before beginning the analytical study of language and position it correctly, AR feels obliged to specify the nature of language and its components (PFFC II:120f.). He had already repeated this many times in the preceding pages. And so, after rejecting a series of incorrect definitions, he defines it as *enérgeia* and *érgon* at the same time, as we have seen. In other words, it is a system created by individuals and received by society in keeping with the psycho-physiological bipolarity which AR constantly propounds (PFFC II:132). Consequently, he defines it as "un sistema de sonidos articulados para la transmisión de nuestros conceptos y sensaciones" (PFFC II: 121), or rather as "un simbolismo fonético manifestativo de la vida psíquica y sus diversos actos", understanding this symbolism to be conventional and not natural (PFFC II:122ff.). Therefore, we have the two basic components that today we define as phonology and semantics. The most disputed point in his definition is the idea of 'articulated sound' that AR attempts to identify (PFFC II:124-132), making the 'word' the primary subject of articulation. This is defined as a combination of sound and meaning as against any claim to define it from a merely oral mechanism.

*Para constituir la palabra, hemos de repetirlo, no basta el sonido oral, cualquiera que sea su condición, ni basta la expresión de los conceptos o sensaciones, ni aún que las sensaciones y conceptos tengan su expresión mediante sonidos orales; es menester que la relación entre el sonido y el sentido, de donde resulta una forma verbal, se haga duradera y manifiesta por el tipo fonético de cada voz en consonancia con la serie de sus modificaciones, las cuales constituyen su fisonomía en relación con la idea que en tales condiciones la informa y anima* (PFFC II:127).

For language to become a communication system, this phonetic regularity is inevitable, but it does not exclude dialectal variation. In this case, it is the 'root' that represents the original articulation (PFFC II:128). Starting with these notions, it is possible to isolate for analysis the phonetic element, which becomes feasible from the viewpoint of static, dynamic or historical phonetics (PFFC II: 132f.). In connexion with static phonetics, AR excludes physiological and acoustical aspects from LSc: it simply makes use of their conclusions. For him, linguistic phonetics is clearly discredited (PFFC II:133ff. and n. 1). This is clearly very remote from modern treatments of phonetics and even from such systems as those of the Prague School. The distinction between phonetics and phonology remains implicit, although AR seems to take them as synonymous:

*La división que debe admitirse filológicamente se refiere al cuerpo mismo fonético constituido, y comprende la clasificación de fonemas en unidades naturales, dispuestas para la expresión de pensamientos, y en unidades artificiales, que resultan de las operaciones que ejecutamos sobre unidades naturales* (PFFC II:135f.).

And he concludes:

*... no es la naturaleza y análisis de los sonidos y sus propiedades lo que compete a la Filología comparada, sino el conjunto realizado o realizable de la palabra en el medio ordinario social de la vida humana* (PFFC II:136).

As a proof of what he means by using the conclusions of phonetics and perhaps somehow forcing his own approach, AR gives us a precise and very well informed summary of physiological phonetics, its organs and mechanics. This, surely, is only as a basis of the manifestation of the idea of sound (PFFC II:137ff.) and its acoustical qualities: intensity, tone, timbre, fundamental tone and overtone (PFFC II:138f.). He sets out clearly the distinction between sound and noise, and distinguishes the various kinds of timbres (PFFC II:139f.), as well as the distinction between language and music (PFFC II:140). On this basis, he gives an excellent summary of the basic principles of phonetics, starting from the distinctions between language/timbre // music/tone (PFFC II: 141-143).

Moving on, now, to the conventional element of the word, its semantic load, without excluding absolutely the role of onomatopoeia and analogy in the formation of words, AR acknowledges that the combination of 'root' and 'idea' takes place in many ways, in which convention (*thésis*) is assisted by nature (*phýsis*). A purely conventional process is unthinkable, "para lo cual sería siempre indispensable la palabra antes de inventar la palabra" (PFFC II:143f.). In this connexion, he gives us an excellent account of 'meaning'. However, at the same time he absolutely rejects any form of 'phonetic symbolism' as pure fantasy (PFFC II:144ff.), as well as any claim to find in it the existence of a primitive language, a claim labelled by him as "darwinismo invertido" (PFFC II:147). His rejection of this symbolism is very well argued: on its own, no sound has meaning and the universality of 'exclamations' depends on their being mere organic reactions; nor are some sounds more primitive than others (PFFC II:148ff.). Also, the claim of creating a universal phonetic alphabet would be feasible only to the extent that it avoided phonetics: sound and writing are independent systems (PFFC II:150f.).

These considerations lead AR to set out the question of the origin of the graphic representation of language (*graphematics*), more specifically, of alphabetical languages. He asks: How is it possible to turn an optical tool into an acoustical one, into an alphabet? (PFFC II:151f.). He successfully describes the process that resulted in the reduction or conversion of sounds to graphic signs (PFFC II:151ff.).<sup>33</sup>

To return to the phonetic element, once these side issues have been settled, the problem of the origin and evolution of the sounds shaping the language is proposed. As we said above, here the law of least effort applies (PFFC II:156) and consequently a trend towards developing or shifting from strong sounds to weak ones, from long sounds to short ones, always maintaining a certain compensatory balance (PFFC II:156), as can be ascertained in the development of gutturals. The process is verifiable, but is only of relative importance. It can be found in several languages, for instance, in the I.-E. family, starting from Greek, along with the concomitant processes of contraction, elision, etc. (PFFC II:157-164).

In these pages, AR is on a par with modern manuals of Comparative Linguistics, which usually focus on analytical aspects rather than on theory.

From the basic elements, phonemes, AR moves on to consider the natural unit (a word, a phrase) and artificial glottological units (syllables) (PFFC II:164ff.). The latter is visualised in alphabetic writing, the concrete origin of which AR sets out in detail (PFFC II:167, n. 1).<sup>34</sup> His emphasis is placed not on the syllable but on the word (which appears to be quite bold and fits in with modern proposals)<sup>35</sup> (PFFC II:168). The word has an absolute existence, the syllable only a relative one. In this way, a hierarchy of the phoneme is present: organic, syllabic, asyllabic. Asyllabic phonemes, i.e. consonants and vowels, are arranged according to compatibility laws in the formation of words (PFFC II:173). The word is the complete basic unit that has meaning, either full or dependent on other words (PFFC II:171). Ultimately, in monosyllabic languages this meaning depends on position (PFFC II:172).

AR carries out an interesting analysis of consonantal phonemes, taking into account 'sonant' or consonantal syllabic phonemes and their double function (PFFC II:173, n. 1), as well as the actual priority of the word, indeed of the phrase, before syllable.

*Históricamente, pues, las sílabas y demás unidades artificiales, son siempre posteriores al lenguaje, y de data más reciente. En las unidades naturales (palabra y frase) es la frase anterior a la palabra en cuanto, aún suponiendo que el lenguaje comenzare por la palabra, ésta debe incluir todo el valor virtual de una proposición y, por lo mismo, de una frase* (PFFC II:174).

33. However, note that Coptic is not a Semitic language, nor is Egyptian either (PFFC II:155).

34. AR's erudition is immense: he even knows the history of mathematics and recommends it for philological studies (PFFC II:170, n. 1).

35. See G. del Olmo Lete, *Questions de linguistique sémitique*, pp. 31, 49f.,

The level of dynamic phonetics closes with an analysis of the vowel-consonant relationship in the formation of the syllable (PFFC II:174ff.). The distinction is purely analytical. Today, it is accepted that a vowel can stand alone, namely, it is syllabic by itself, whereas to be realised a consonant always needs a vowel. This gives the consonant timbre, otherwise it would be mere 'noise'. It implies the phonological unity of phonemic systems, although the distinction of phonemes is acceptable from the functional point of view (PFFC II:174, n. 1).<sup>36</sup> Finally, AR sets out the transition/distribution phonemes with an accurate analysis of their functions (PFFC II:177ff.).<sup>37</sup>

There are five causes of phoneme variation:

1° *Acción y reacción de fonemas que se encuentran*. 2° *Acción y reacción a distancia o de fonemas que no se encuentran entre sí*. 3° *Acción y reacción del medio sobre los fonemas*. 4° *Acción perturbadora o reguladora de la voluntad*. 5° *Mutatación de base glotológica en un lenguaje* (PFFC II:180).

These are analysed carefully, recoding the phenomena they produce: assimilation, dissimilation, analogy or diacritism; free interventions are in keeping with the introduction/suppression of a word by outside interference (PFFC II:180ff.).

The most important cause of mutation, on which AR dwells more at length, is the mutation based on glottology, accent or prosody, and includes tone, quantity and intensity, all elements that AR explains extremely well (PFFC II:182-188).

As for *historical phonetics*, it represents the summary of the rest, but is difficult to reconstruct due to lack of information. It forms the experimental side and as such is the true subject of LSc as Comparative Linguistics (PFFC II:188f.). Traditionally, it has been focused on the I.-E. branch, the best documented up to now. Its investigation is based on the determination of the 'genetic centre of phonetism' or the particular inflexion pattern of each language, and above all on the bearing of its 'phonetic continuity and regularity', which defines the degree of its possible variation. From here the different historical variations and their kinship will result, namely, the new languages.

*Y esto es lo que da origen al parentesco de lenguas entre sí, el cual no es otra cosa que la semejanza de las resultantes lingüísticas de dos o más evoluciones diferentes de una misma lengua hablada en otro tiempo. Sobre el parentesco, así entendido, se funda la familia de lenguas, o sea el grupo de idiomas cuyas diferenciaciones marcan la evolución de una lengua anterior, conservando un tipo de semejanza* (PFFC II:191).

In this way, the kinship centres are generated and access to the mother-tongue becomes possible through various centres differently spread. The concept of 'mother-tongue', however, is relative, given its largely hypothetical character. Here the theories on 'reconstruction' are examined: Schleicher's theory, based on the three short vowels, the corresponding table of consonants and his thesis of dialectal primitivism (PFFC II:192, n. 1); the opposite theory of Brugmann, who starts from three original types of the vowel /a/ that generate all the other vowels (PFFC II:195ff.), a theory that will prevail in the long run. As yet unresolved are the long or short character of primitive vowels and the processes of strengthening and weakening already foreseen by Sanskrit grammar, and the laws of unavoidable inflexions since they are psychological, that govern them (PFFC II:198f., n. 1). Our understanding of the process of language differentiation has to be founded on this amount of data. Again, AR's authority and expertise in his account of the state of the art are obvious.

36. On this see G. del Olmo Lete, *Questions de linguistique sémitique*, p. 85, without forgetting that semivowels and sonants mark the transition from one category to the other.

37. Note that he considers /h-/ to be a semivowel (PFFC II:179); see G. del Olmo Lete, *Questions de linguistique sémitique*, p. 79.

As for primitive consonants, less disputed than vowels, AR offers some points for discussion that, we may say, are still unresolved today: the vocalic character or otherwise of sonants, the number and nature of the gutturals and more specifically, the existence of a double /k/ (PFFC II:199-203, 205, n. 1).<sup>38</sup>

Leaving aside Schleicher's theory and having established the hypothetical character of linguistic reconstruction (PFFC II:204f.), AR summarises the state of historical linguistics as follows:

*... es menester reconocer en el lenguaje una intrínseca condición de mutabilidad, de fraccionamiento dialectal, de proceso general evolutivo fonético, morfológico y semántico, y puesto que el hombre hace lengua cada vez que habla, y una generación recibe el conjunto más saliente de variantes lingüísticas de la generación que precede, y ésta a su vez las aumenta y las transmite sin normas precisas ni prefijadas, la descripción histórica de un lenguaje no podrá hacerse jamás con exactitud sin documentos que atestigüen los pasos de su evolución ... (PFFC II:206).<sup>39</sup>*

#### 4.2.- Morphology (morphosyntax)

After rejecting theories considered unsuitable (PFFC II:207ff.), which generally revolve around the function of the root in the primitive stage, AR spends some time defining the nature of the root as the basic category in the field. Any language supposes a preceding one of which it is a variation. However, there are limitations on reaching this earlier language:

*... aunque se dan raíces propiamente históricas de todo idioma, cuando nos referimos a un lenguaje prehistórico, como es el tronco indo-europeo, los tipos fonéticos a que por análisis reducimos las voces, no son indispensablemente representaciones de aquéllas, sino representación de un tipo común de palabras, que aparecen reducibles mediante el análisis a una unidad fonética que encierra la unidad significativa de todas ellas; de esta suerte la raíz viene a constituir un símbolo por medio del cual se expresa la asociación de palabras distintas en un centro fonético y significativo, el cual constituye la razón de un comunidad lingüística dada (PFFC II: 212).*

The root, as the fruit of comparative analysis, is in correlation with the suffixes or endings as substitution elements rather than with the words of the primitive language. It is necessary, then, to distinguish between 'common' and 'primitive', between comparison and reconstruction (PFFC II:213). However, one cannot ignore the root simply for this reason. A root is an actual element (as is its semantic load), at least as a hypothesis. It can be considered either earlier or later depending on one's viewpoint (PFFC II:214).

*Las raíces consideradas en las locuciones primitivas son lógica e históricamente anteriores a las palabras de los idiomas que sobre ellas se han formado; pero consideradas como fruto del trabajo gramatical reflejo, deben reputarse lógica e históricamente posteriores a las mismas, como elementos que dicen existencia de relación a los demás componentes que integran la palabra, sin los cuales no tiene equivalencia concreta, como éstos no la tienen sin aquélla. Consideradas estas raíces en su valor genético de la palabra en que entran, son en el orden objetivo gramatical elementos reales de conformación lingüística; en el orden subjetivo de expresión psíquica, símbolos prácticos por los cuales se traduce la idea capital de un vocablo, que luego se hace modificable por las desinencias y demás elementos complementarios que las concretan en el discurso; en el*

38. In this connexion, there is still no reference to Hittite. The problem continued to be discussed in I.-E. as was the origin of /k:/ in Semitic and Arabic phonology; see G. Bohas, *Matrices, Étymons, Racines. Éléments d'une théorie lexicologique du vocabulaire arabe* (Orbis / Supplementa 8), Leuven - Paris, 1997, pp. 143-152; G. del Olmo Lete, *Questions de linguistique sémitique*, pp. 66f., 82.

39. However, in this context he does not mention the systems for establishing a language: the press, mass education, the mass-media, etc. This explains centuries of identity, of extended geography and a population in millions ....

*orden histórico, tipo hipotético de palabras relativamente primitivas en una fase también hipotética del lenguaje* (PFFC II:214).

The root has to be dealt with very carefully in its artificial, actual and hypothetical aspects in order to avoid overstated enthusiasm and discredit.

From the morphological viewpoint, the concepts implied here have to be well specified: word, theme, radical, root (primary and secondary), suffix (PFFC II:215f.). The idea of 'theme' was already strange at that time and AR felt obliged to discuss it (PFFC II:216). In summary:

*Sufijos, temas primarios y secundarios, y raíces, en cuanto términos de una reducción que se considera morfológicamente irreducible, prescindiendo de que fuesen o no forma real lingüística en otro tiempo, ofrécese como un extracto artificial formado sobre el material léxico de las lenguas pasadas que nos dan razón de las formas de hoy, como éstas nos darán de las formas de mañana. Sobre esta base se apoya lo que atrás dejamos establecido acerca del valor real e ideal de las raíces* (PFFC II:218).

Later, AR goes on to analyse more accurately and precisely the relationship between word and root as perceptible and analytical, synthetic and mental phenotypes, to be projected either forwards or backwards. Correctly understood, the word is remote both from the theory of inarticulate language and from the theory claiming that language begins with the sentence (PFFC II:219). However, the 'syntactic' value of the word is defended (PFFC II:220) and the correct relationship between word and phrase is specified (PFFC II:221f.).

Within this perspective, the implicit concept of etymology also has to be valued, a concept that must be measured from what has been said on the bearing of the root with which it functions. And here, in defence of the idea of creation, the theologian emerges, as we saw above, to reject any other origin of the word different from man being endowed with the faculty for words and to maintain that language was born as a human product. And from this origin, languages depend on each other in a long process of differentiation.

*La historia del lenguaje en cada pueblo va siempre vinculada a la de éste, a sus fraccionamientos, al influjo de clases determinadas, a la acción de colectividades y, dentro de ellas, a la de los individuos que consciente o inconscientemente dan la norma en el lenguaje, como en otras instituciones sociales* (PFFC II:225).

The reconstruction of language is intimately connected with etymology:

*De conformidad con lo que venimos estableciendo, reconstruir la lengua primera en idiomas de un mismo tronco, es restituir a las lenguas actuales sus formas históricas primitivas, es hallar la prolongación de un mismo lenguaje a través de las vicisitudes y rompimientos producidos por los hechos de la Historia, guardando la continuidad de las transformaciones fonéticas hasta nosotros* (PFFC II:225).

However, we must not forget that dealing with roots is relative and hypothetical in nature. Roots refer to the ultimate elements of the word and will not necessarily be monosyllabic or of a defined grammatical category, either nominal or verbal, as such coming after etymology: "la morfología es posterior a la sintaxis, y ésta a la semántica" (PFFC II:227).

The subsequent configuration of the word in its formal categories, starting from that undifferentiated beginning supposed by the root, follows a process of differentiation and semantic and grammatical individuation (sequence, empty words, phonetic variation) resulting in morphosyntax (PFFC II:229f.). These modes of grammatical individuation match the three types or phases of language (monosyllabic, agglutinative, inflexional) which AR will discuss later on (cf. II:chap. IX).

He closes this account of his own theory of the root by assessing other theories considered as incorrect in respect of nature (Bopp, Pott, Sayce) (PFFC II:231-236), kind (Bopp, Benfey, Humboldt, Steinthal, Curtius, Müller) (PFFC II:237-243) and form (Schleicher, F. Müller, Bopp, Fick, etc.) (PFFC II:244-248). Also, as far as the formation of inflective words is concerned (Bopp), the psycho-evolutionary theory (Westphal) and the theory of adaptation (Ludwig) (PFFC II:248-258). Above all, in

these last two parts AR gives a balanced and well argued theory of the root, with questions that are absolutely modern, already going beyond the I.-E. linguistics where they were forged. Some of these problems concern syllabism and vocalism (PFFC II:244),<sup>40</sup> root determinatives and roots with a free third radical (PFFC II:245ff., 261),<sup>41</sup> or primitive phonetic variants (PFFC II:250, n. 1, 259),<sup>42</sup> the infinitive as the centre of inflexion (PFFC II:258),<sup>43</sup> zero-root-words (zero-suffixes) (PFFC II:170, n. 1)<sup>44</sup> and the original relationship between the noun and the verb (PFFC II:274).<sup>45</sup> In fact, AR shows that all the scholars quoted resort to the Semitic inflexional pattern in order to establish their own theories of word formation.

J. Curtius' theory merits special attention, with his linguistic chronology of I.-E. divided into seven periods based on internal criteria, the only way to deal with such primordial epochs of language. AR closely examined this theory in the light of his previously maintained ideas (PFFC II:258-263), of which once again he provides a well argued summary, fully conscious of the unusual character of his own position (PFFC II:263-275). Nevertheless, it is a point of view that, free from its polemical and theological partisanship, is vindicated by its balance and wide glottogonic perspective. It is precisely in theoretical summaries of this kind that AR displays his vast philological knowledge.

These final remarks are collected here as a token of his position on the question of morphology and its origin, which will be developed more extensively later:

*Por lo indicado fácil es colegir también que nuestra teoría no es, como a primera vista pudiera creerse, contraria a la teoría de las fases; ya porque la aglutinación no queda excluida ni puede excluirse en muchos casos, pues resulta evidente, ya porque siendo el crecimiento por incorporación fonética lo que ha de dar las variantes morfológicas, antes de éstas variantes que producen la flexión nominal y verbal, existió la palabra tipo sobre la cual dichas flexiones hubieron de desarrollarse; dado, pues, este estado no flexivo de la palabra, y una vez admitido como forma durable de la lengua, hallámonos necesariamente con la evolución por fases hasta llegar al período en que encontramos el indo-europeo. Sin duda alguna que estas mismas fases requieren fijar los conceptos de aglutinación y flexión de una manera particular...* (PFFC II:275).

#### 4.3.- Semantics

For AR, 'psychic' (psychological) *glottology* is the conceptual element or meaning that the word includes and that constitutes it as such, that is, as the expression of or reference to some idea. This takes us to the heart of language theory as such and consequently, as AR points out, we are closely dependent on the philosophical principles from which we start. He reduces the types of systems to four: objective, subjective, theosophical-subjective and theosophical-objective theories. Or, stated differently, physicist-materialistic // idealistic // ontologist (based on an inner-divine principle) // traditionalist (based on an outer-divine principle) theories. Summing up, we obtain two theories according to which the word is the *raison d'être* of the idea and another two that assert the opposite (PFFC II:277ff.). AR is at ease in this

40. On this see the theory of M. Diakonoff, "Problems of Root Structure in Proto-Semitic", *Archív Orientální* 38 (1970), pp. 455ff.; G. del Olmo Lete, *Questions de linguistique sémitique*, pp. 20f., 29, 34ff., 53.

41. See S. T. Hurwitz, *Root-Determinatives in Semitic Speech. A contribution to Semitic Philology*, New York, 1913 (repr. 1966); G. del Olmo Lete, *Questions de linguistique sémitique*, pp. 91ff.

42. See S. S. Majzel', *Types of derivation from the stock of Semitic roots* [in Russian], Moscow, 1983; G. del Olmo Lete, *Questions de linguistique sémitique*, pp. 22f., 106ff.

43. See M. Diakonoff, "Problems of Root Structure in Proto-Semitic", *Archív Orientální* 38 (1970), pp. 476ff.; G. del Olmo Lete, *Questions de linguistique sémitique*, p. 51.

44. See M. Diakonoff, *op. cit.*, p. 460; G. del Olmo Lete, *Questions de linguistique sémitique*, p. 20, 31, 34.

45. See G. del Olmo Lete, *Questions de linguistique sémitique*, pp. 49ff.

section of the book, which is basically speculative, but inevitably there is a great deal of repetition of concepts, especially in view of the historical character that part of it will assume.

The author begins by discarding all those theories presumed to be valid in an absolute manner, since all of them break the psycho-physical balance that the speaking act implies:

*... la palabra, siendo de suyo creación artificial, no tiene en sí valor alguno determinado más que el que libremente le da el hombre, así que no sólo no es fundamento de nuestro conocimiento, sino que sin el conocimiento no podría existir* (PFFC II:281).

The word is really important because it is a sign and a means of communication, qualities that AR explains very lucidly (PFFC II:282f.). The word is an image midway between outer world and understanding. By nature, it belongs as much to logic as to 'psychic glottology' (LSc, semantics).

Leaving aside the logical and psychological perspectives, which he obviously knows very well (PFFC II:284, n. 1), AR analyses what he calls 'psychic (i.e. psychological) glottology' in its threefold dimension: historical, objective and semantic. His historical account, without omitting the Indian phase, which was not very productive in theoretical arguments, starts from the schools and trends of Greek and Roman philosophy (PFFC II:284-287). Next come Arabic philosophy, with its rationalistic and mystical tendencies, for whose value and originality he does not feel great enthusiasm (PFFC II:288-292),<sup>46</sup> and Jewish medieval thought that follows the same trends (PFFC II:293-294), although there is some confusion in his attributions.<sup>47</sup>

At this point, the Christian medieval period should have been discussed, the linguistic achievements of which he had defended enthusiastically (PFFC II:290. n.1). Instead, attention is focused on the problem of *universals*, which comes to summarise the contribution of that period to the question, oscillating between nominalism and realism, conceptualism and moderate realism. An accurate account of all these trends is provided (PFFC II:294-318). All accept the traditional and biblical idea of the origin of language, apropos of which Abelard asserted that "vocis enim impositionem summus artifex nobis commisit, rerum autem naturam propriae suae dispositioni reservavit" (PFFC II:303). The Renaissance did not supply anything meaningful in this regard, restricting itself to adopting earlier philosophical positions once again, preferably those of Platonic and Neo-Platonic orientation (PFFC II:318f.). The question becomes more acute in modern philosophical thought, from English empiricism to Kant, who reproduced medieval attitudes: in another guise (PFFC II:319-321).

AR then gives his own decidedly apologetic defence of the moderate realism of Aristotelian scholasticism, pinpointing furthermore the actual relationship between LSc, logic and psychology (PFFC II:321-333). Let us quote the following paragraph as a summary of his historical vision on the 'psychic' constituent of language:

*Todo sistema, pues, de la Ciencia del Lenguaje refleja en sus principios un sistema lógico sobre su formación y naturaleza de ideas, juicios y raciocinios, y sobre el valor que se reconozca a los conceptos abstractos de género, diferencia, especie, atributo, etc., que constituyen al mismo tiempo que el universal lógico, el universal lingüístico, o sea las categorías de las palabras genéricas, específicas, atributivas, etc.; y un sistema psicológico sobre la verdad de las palabras como expresión de ideas y de objetos a los cuales estas se refieren, y sobre la influencia de las palabras en las ideas, y de las ideas en las palabras, así como la realidad que unas y otras designan en las categorías del ser, o en los universales ontológicos* (PFFC II:325f.).

46. AR has a somewhat negative opinion of Arabic science and culture which today would be fairly unpopular, however, it is not without some foundation; see what has been said above. Otherwise it is a judgment that is frequently made by their Iranian 'brothers', for whom so-called Arabic culture is simply a copy of Persian culture.

47. AR makes Ibn Gabirol and Maimónides "karaítas". Clearly, here 'karaíta' does not have its usual historical meaning but means "free-thinker", i.e. not subject to strict rabbinic tradition.

Unsatisfied with his long and detailed theoretical account, AR once again feels the need to summarise his own words in some no less verbose 'conclusions' of nine points. To a large extent, these repeat what he had said before, freed this time from the constriction of sequential history. In them AR summarises his linguistic thought, his theory of language and its morphosyntactic and semantic functionality. One could say that here one has a glimpse of pure speculation (PFFC II:333-349).

Since it is both impossible and impertinent to summarise this already long summary, let me collect some ideas that are particularly relevant to the present discussion:

- nouns are adjectives, including 'proper' names; in fact, there are no proper names:

*todos los nombres, aun los llamados nombres propios, son en realidad adjetivos que expresan una cualidad; ninguna palabra es, en rigor, propia; todo lenguaje es en orden a las individualidades un conjunto de pseudónimos combinados. Por eso, si bien lo individual es el motivo de la palabra, toda palabra es un universal individualizado (PFFC II:343s, 346).*

- This individualisation is reached deictically or by combination with other words. Therefore, denomination is not opaque, it marks a quality made into a noun, or, as we would say, nouns are lexicalised adjectives. The subject is interesting and in keeping with the origin of semantics.

- *Hablar, pues, viene a ser limitar en combinación lo general por lo general, mediante las varias categorías de palabras (PFFC II:344, 346).*

- AR proposes a genetic classification of universal words: demonstrative pronouns, words of instrument, attributive designations (quality-genres and substance-genres), abstract nouns. Once again he speaks of nouns as derived from adjectives (PFFC II:346).

- As a result, language is independent of its origin, the human spirit:

*El lenguaje que depende del hombre en su existencia real y en sus modificaciones, no tiene relación alguna necesaria ni con el individuo ni con la sociedad que le dio ser y forma determinada. En este sentido, nada menos exacto que decir que la lengua caracteriza un pueblo (PFFC II:347).*

This page of linguistic anti-nationalism would be rather provocative nowadays and in any case would require some nuances, given that AR is speaking as a pure linguist (not as a socio-linguist) and that a 'necessary relationship' is invoked. (Nevertheless, this opinion of his did not prevent him from being a strong supporter of the culture and language of Galicia at this early prenationalistic stage).

- Language is not related to intellectual capacity, either of peoples or of individuals.

- *En ninguna lengua las palabras tienen orden necesario para ninguna clase de ideas (PFFC II:348).*

Here, this is 'raw' material in need of some elaboration. At all events, this axiom forces AR to set out a range of modifications.

- *En el lenguaje primitivo no era, pues, el hombre indiferente para todos los sonidos, que pudiesen expresar ideas, y existió para la designación oral una razón que no fue convencional (PFFC II:348).*

This idea, bordering on the phonetic symbolism rejected by AR, is very interesting and in keeping with his explanation of the origin of language, although this 'razón' remains obscure (PFFC II:348). Later on, once it has been lexicalised, sound becomes 'mummified'. Afterwards, organised language is filled with meaning accumulated by intellectual development, and is used normally without an awareness of all its importance, whereas at birth language was simple and elemental.

- Language is assumed by tradition, but is transformed into one's own language:

*lo que se nos ofrece como lengua común y social, antes de ser recibida personalmente, pasa a ser única propiedad del individuo, como si nunca hubiera tenido lengua madre (PFFC II:349).*

A tongue is therefore subject to a constant tension between *conservative* and modifying forces. The sound produced in this way and changes in meaning will be governed by *phonetic* laws (and by the laws of the personal creativity and social influence).

At this point, the topic of etymology, already discussed by AR, reappears. Etymology has to sail through the breakwater of changes in sound and meaning, and for safety has at its disposal phonetic laws. It is clearly understood that etymology is not a question of simple phonetics, nor is phonetic resemblance any guarantee, as was claimed in the past (PFFC II:349ff.). What is valid in this respect is not mere analogy but a proven historical relationship, "que es el objeto de la Filología Comparada" (PFFC II:352, n. 1).

'The theory of tropes or figures of speech' plays a determining role in the change in meaning with which semantics or semasiology deals. AR gives a correct summary of these tropes, which is a good introduction to semantic etymology (PFFC II:352ff., 354f., n.1).<sup>48</sup> These semantic resources are based on the allusive and incomplete character of language from which its semantic indefiniteness and its transformations (synecdoche, metonymy, metaphor) derive (PFFC II:254, n.2).

On the other hand, syntax comes on stage from the combinations of sounds and changes in meaning that formalise them in the long run.

*Si la Fonética y la Semántica nos dan la parte material y la lexicográfica de la Etimología, o sea el sonido y la significación, la Sintaxis histórica, nos ofrece la parte formal de aquélla* (PFFC II: 355f.).

In this connexion, his opinion, quoted above, according to which every word is by itself syntactic, must be taken seriously into account:

*las lenguas nunca comienzan sino por la frase; esto es, que ya se trate de una o muchas palabras, y sean éstas de cualquier condición ...* (PFFC II:356, n. 1).

Consequently, syntax must be etymological, must go back to the first elements and must be historical morphosyntax (PFFC II:357, n. 1).

The failure of syntax comes from giving up this perspective, and reducing it to a mere logical sentence pattern (PFFC II:358). However, this does not mean denying that a logical structure is at work in syntax, as the innate grammar of structuralism implies. Neither the purely aprioristic starting-point of the logical order nor the historico-morphological starting-point is valid, then. The variability of each language in this regard must be taken into account, since we are dealing with an operation of meaning by the psyche; syntactical divergence or coincidence does not imply either genetic relationship or kinship between them (PFFC II:360f.).

The *historico-psychic*[psychological?] *method* required by syntactic analysis must take into account the common and the individual elements of each language, including all its cultural life (Comparative Philology) (PFFC II:361f.). The classical starting-point, however, is the analysis of the elements 'noun' and 'verb' (PFFC II:362f.). In connexion with this, AR notes that the notion of 'time' is not essential to the verb; it is merely a presupposition of any action. In fact, there is a large variety of ways to signify time in the various verbal systems (PFFC II:364f.). Here we have an excellent discussion of the subject. Verbal time is properly the present, as its basic 'aspect' is to mean activity or passivity, which differentiates it from the 'noun'. Whose function is to denote qualities and the objects that manifest them.<sup>49</sup> This is very close to the aspect theory, which is particularly valid in Semitic (PFFC II:365f.).

*Así como la razón de tiempo verbal en sentido lógico corresponde sólo al presente, porque sólo en un presente, al cual nos trasladamos, se enuncia la identidad del sujeto y del predicado, también la razón primaria del verbo está lógicamente en el sustantivo ser, que por lo mismo que tiene significación sustantiva, se incluye en todos los demás de significación adjetiva, los cuales en una forma u otra pudieran descomponerse en el verbo sustantivo y un nombre ...* (PFFC II:367f.).

48. On this see G. del Olmo Lete, *Questions de linguistique sémitique*, pp. 189ff.

49. At this point, AR refers to the role of case in the noun (PFFC II:367), which should be nuanced within the general concept of 'inflection'.

However, all that must be understood not on the grammatical but on the logical level, as if the only primitive verb were the verb 'to be'. Active and passive meanings require a multiplicity of verbal roots (PFFC II:368f.).<sup>50</sup>

## 5. *The classification of languages*

### 5.1.- *Principles of glottological classification*

The classification of languages has been attempted since Antiquity, but with the appearance of Comparative Linguistics it was first set out on new basis by the pioneers Hervás and Adelung (PFFC II:372). The old principle of genetic filiation was given up in favour of collateral kinship: languages do not come from other known languages, for instance, Latin from Greek. Instead, they emerge together from another language that had disappeared earlier, to be reconstructed through comparison of them. The first attempts failed from a lack of perspective and from vagueness in understanding the dilemma of inflexion/agglutination. Such attempts used five types of classification according to the point of view adopted: geographical, ethnographical, genealogical, morphological and psychological (PFFC II:373). The geographical and ethnographical classification are the least scientific. However, I believe that this criterion should be qualified.<sup>51</sup> The most perfect criterion turns out to be the genealogical one, but it needs the morphological criterion for its correct development (PFFC II:374).<sup>52</sup> On the other hand, however, this is governed by the determination of the phases of languages and in this way it always presupposes the genealogical perspective (PFFC II:374). Both classifications, then, complete each other. The psychological classification works from the point of view of the expression of ideas, that is to say, from the point of view of semantics, but it is too risky and in the long run it depends on morphological classification.

From the morphological point of view, the division of languages into monosyllabic (with fixed monemes), agglutinative and inflected is classical. As we have pointed out, there are problems in defining the last two categories (PFFC II:375-384). This is the division of Bopp, Schleicher and M. Müller, taken from Humboldt, which other scholars replicate in different ways. It is impossible to claim absolute differences in character among languages, given the unity of the human race. Furthermore, languages do not show clear-cut limits, defining a family of languages or an individual language (PFFC II:387). However, a classification according to their morphological characters is certainly feasible.

In an attempt to refine and round off the threefold division proposed, the question as to how the fundamental element (root) and the formal element (modification) are related in the word has to be settled right from the start. The root and the word are the same in monosyllabic languages, where the material and formal parts coincide (PFFC II:388). Agglutinative languages have external elements that are affixed to a central nucleus. In inflected languages, both elements change and become fused, as it is impossible to distinguish and separate them (PFFC II:389, n. 1). In this way the word is born. AR carries out a tremendous balancing act in refining these concepts. He turns morphological classification into a *theory of phases* that languages are supposed to go through in general, becoming consolidated in one or other of

50. On the other hand, no reference is made to 'stativity' as a verbal category, which is so important in Semitic; it should be included among the adjectives as a quality.

51. See G. del Olmo Lete, "The Genetic Historical Classification of the Semitic Languages. A Synthetical Approach", in L. Kogan, ed., *Studia Semitica* (Festschrift A. Militarev) (Orientalia, Papers of the Oriental Institute, Issue III), Moscow, 2003, pp. 18-52.

52. See A. Farber, "Genetic Subgrouping of the Semitic Languages", in R. Hetzron, ed., *The Semitic Languages*, London, 1997, pp. 3-15.

those phases, and in the long run assuming elements from all three types (PFFC II:390-394). It is possible to distinguish different types of agglutination-inflexion (by modifying the root, the suffix or the vowel). More specifically, it is possible to notice *agglutinative inflexion*, peculiar of I.-E., and *vocalic inflexion*, peculiar to Semitic languages. The latter seems to be the better and more original form of inflexion.

*Y hablamos de una evolución general, porque ella basta para legitimar la teoría de las fases, tal como puede efectuarse en los idiomas; pues así como es imposible hallar una lengua o grupo de lenguas donde no se descubran fenómenos ajenos al tipo lingüístico correspondiente sin que esto obste a la clasificaciones generales que se hacen, así no es necesario ni posible que todas las formas lingüísticas flexivas hayan comenzado por ser formas aglutinadas para que se reconozca en el conjunto de las lenguas de flexión, una conformación aglutinante transformada, o sea una fase ulterior de aglutinación, como ésta en sus líneas generales no excluye en manera alguna una fase primera del llamado monosilabismo, siquiera la independencia que en los tiempos históricos presentan entre sí las tres fases aludidas haya contribuido a hacer cada vez más hondas la diferencias entre ellas, debido a la ineludible necesidad de sistematizar y modelar cada pueblo su tipo de lengua como propio medio comunicativo* (PFFC II:392).

Starting from morphological classification, one may speak of genealogical classification (PFFC II:395). Due to phonetic changes, development occurs in every language, but in a different manner and degree (PFFC II:395f.). AR repeats his criticism of the great gurus from the 19th century and ends with a summary of his own viewpoint, aware at this moment "de las doctrinas comúnmente recibidas" (PFFC II:394, n. 1):

*Puede decirse que el principio general objetivo en las lenguas no monosilábicas es el crecimiento por extensión y por yuxtaposición en sus varias gradaciones; el principio subjetivo del orden fonético es la ley dinámica del menor esfuerzo relativo así en los sonidos, como en el conjunto de ellos formado por composición, derivación, etcétera; el principio subjetivo del orden psicológico es la más íntima relación entre materia y forma en las lenguas, entre la idea y el sonido. El crecimiento por extensión y yuxtaposición sujeta a la acción fonética y a la acción psíquica, presenta los cambiantes suficientes para la aglutinación y flexión sobre el fondo común de un monosilabismo originario o de elementos simples en su orden. Leyes fonéticas y leyes psicológicas son la razón última en la morfología diversa de las lenguas y de su vario mecanismo, y por lo tanto la razón también de la clasificación que sostenemos, y de toda otra que no estudie a priori la estructura de los idiomas* (PFFC II: 396).

AR also analyses "la parte que en las lenguas flexivas es debida a la aglutinación" (PFFC II: 397, n. 1) in a model exercise of analytical linguistics, in which his unbelievable polyglot erudition is developed, and even includes the Asiatic languages. He exemplifies his opinion in the same analytical line with a detailed group of phenotypes that can appear in each of the three types of languages mentioned (PFFC II:398-416). In a monosyllabic language, one has to take into account not only 'order' as a specifying element, but also the usage of 'empty' words as determining 'full' or 'root' words, the first step towards agglutination. The agglutinative languages systematise and multiply this process, while at the same time they appear to come close to inflexion. The inflexional languages, with the Semitic languages<sup>53</sup> as their prototype, are distinguished by the variation of the very form of the root. AR analyses them well and defends their prevalence in this regard, at the same time acknowledging that they share this principle with I.-E. in such a way that it becomes feasible to speak of a common Aryan-Semitic group. This trend, which was very much alive in his day, foreshadowed the 'Nostratic' theory of our own time.<sup>54</sup> Doubled and

53. He gives a correct analysis of the root in Semitic.

54. See A. R. Bomhard, J. C. Kerns, *The Nostratic Macrofamily. A Study in Distant Linguistic Relationship* (Trends in Linguistics. Studies and Monographs 74), Berlin - New York, 1994. AR analyses and rejects the absurd theories put forward in this connexion during the 19th century (PFFC II:421ff., 425).

reduplicated Semitic forms are good examples of inflexional development, derived from Hamitic<sup>55</sup> through Egyptian, according to AR. The bearing of this process is such that it is possible to see it as the explanation of trilateralism, which is typical of the Semitic root.<sup>56</sup> To end these examples of characteristic phenomena, AR quotes similar cases in the Ural-Altai languages, in which vocalic harmony is prominent and can be understood as a phenomenon of root agglutination/accommodation.

In keeping with this account, AR sets out a table of languages "según el enlace del elemento de significación y del de relación" (PFFC II:416f.). Isolating (monosyllabic): Chinese and Indo-Chinese; agglutinative: most languages; inflective: by agglutinative inflexion the I.-E. languages, by vocalic inflexion the Semitic languages, also called inflexional (PFFC II:417). An adequate justification of this distribution is later provided according to the morphological, semantic and 'psychic' (psychological) aspects (PFFC II: 417-420).

Nevertheless, these are not completely isolated families. Yet, as we said earlier, it is possible to determine multiple relationships among them (PFFC II:420f.), although each preserves its own distinct historical development.<sup>57</sup> Well aware of the problem, AR pays particular attention to the relationship between Aryan and Semitic and does not consider it impossible (PFFC II:423f.). Even so, he holds opinions that are not easily acceptable nowadays. For instance, he asserts that "el camitismo no es otra cosa que una fase anterior del semitismo" (PFFC II:422). The criterion of parallel descentance that he invoked earlier fails here and today we do not accept the existence of a Hamitic family, but of an Afro-Asiatic or Hamito-Semitic super-family with five collateral branches. In this connexion, he rejects the arguments of Schleicher, F. Müller and others against the 'reducibility' of the Aryan and Semitic languages, especially those showing the triconsonantal root structure peculiar to Semitic (PFFC II:424-428).

*La forma trilateral ... es completamente accidental a la raíz semítica tal como se entiende ésta al hablar de las raíces indo-europeas, y representa en la palabra un complemento de la idea radical contenida en la forma primaria no trilateral y monosilábica* (PFFC II:428, también p. 447f.).

As we have seen, AR is in favour of a general bi-consonantal/bi-syllabic origin of the root in Semitic, which became triconsonantal by processes of (re)duplication, suffixation and allothesis ("verbos idénticos por dos de sus letras radicales", such as the famous /k-d/ group, II:428, n. 1), mainly in the case of weak verbs.<sup>58</sup> The present trilateral roots come "de otras más simples" (PFFC II:429) by processes of prefixation, infixation and suffixation. Here, AR shows himself to be in perfect agreement with the modern debate on the question and had his work not gone unnoticed in important academic circles we could say that he sparked off that debate. He acutely observes that trilateralism is not contrary to monosyllabism, as Delitzsch, Ascoli and Grill had already noted (PFFC II:429, 431ff., n. 1, 433, n. 1). Being lexically simpler, monosyllabism is earlier (PFFC II:430). Nor is the use of prefixes and suffixes a discriminant between both families (PFFC II:430), but it is a simple historical option along its development. On the

55. This concept is not outlined by AR, who presents it as a group of languages apparently in contrast to Semitic. The principle of collaterality among the five Hamito-Semitic families fails here, as was pointed out above. His opinion of Egyptian as a proto-Semitic language (PFFC II:410, n. 1, 420) belongs to the the same deficient perspective.

56. See in this regard G. del Olmo Lete, *Questions de linguistique sémitique*, pp. 126ff.

57. On Sumerian ("representante de los menos lejanos del proto-semítico") AR voices a series of opinions that are frankly untenable nowadays (it was the language of the second column of the Achaemenid inscriptions (!), related to Ural-Altai, etc.) (PFFC II: 421), which is not surprising in view of how opaque this language has remained, even for modern specialists, as we pointed out above.

58. See in this connexion, for example, A. Zaborski, "Biconsonantal Roots and Triconsonantal Variation in Semitic: Solutions and Prospects", in A. S. Kaye, ed., *Semitic Studies in Honor of Wolf Leslau*, Wiesbaden, 1991, vol. II, pp. 1675-1703; G. del Olmo Lete, *Questions de linguistique sémitique*, pp. 126ff., and the scholars quoted supra nn. 17 and 42.

other hand, the claimed consonantal beginning of the syllable has its parallel in the Aryan 'spirit', ascertained in some of its old stages. There are also numerous syntactic links that relate Aryan to the Semitic languages, without considering the Semitisms of biblical Greek, the result of secondary contamination by translation (PFFC II:435, n. 1).

Taking into account the importance of 'roots' in this question of linguistic correlation, AR lists a series of rules that ought to be considered. In fact they are a new summary, one of the many he feels obliged to provide in order to recapitulate and improve his ideas. Roots are not historical words and therefore their irreducibility among families is only related to the level of their respective proto-language or mother-tongue, which is where the root actually appears ("no existen ni deben decirse raíces griegas, raíces latinas, raíces sánscritas..."). This the mistake which modern 'Nostratic' lexicography has made, by directly comparing languages of different families without their own 'radical' reduction according the laws of their own historical evolution.

*... aun dado que las raíces estuviesen definitivamente reconocidas como formas históricas, siendo posible una formación por fases en ambas familias, el proto-ario y el proto-semítico no excluyen formas comunes en un periodo anterior a la aglutinación, y en el que precede al actual trilaterismo de la raíz y demás variantes semíticas* (PFFC II:437).

Radical vocalism is also claimed for primitive Semitism, as is also asserted for I.-E. (PFFC II:438), but without therefore assuming the polysyllabic nature of Semitic trilateralism (PFFC II:438f.). In fact, a certain uniform process in the form, extension and fusion of roots in I.-E. and Semitic can be established. In support of his thesis, AR gives a long list of examples of presumed roots common to both families (PFFC II:440ff.). The one hundred roots cited by Delitzsch would be enough to demonstrate the original unity or nexus of Aryan-Semitic and to rule out onomatopoeia or chance as its explanation. Today, Bomhard-Kerns has adduced more than five hundred roots for the whole of Nostratic<sup>59</sup> (PFFC II:442). We are then speaking of a period that would be neither Aryan nor Semitic, and consequently must not to be measured from their respective proto-languages. Lexical remoteness must not deter us, because frequently it is greater within the same Aryan family than between I.-E. and Semitic in the basic list quoted (PFFC II:443, 445, n. 2).

However, we cannot deny the differential elements that separate both families in phonetics and morphology (PFFC II:445ff.). In this regard, Semitic exhibits a more perfect syllabism, patent in a more regular gradation of the vocalic and consonantal elements (shock + vibration), in the use of free vocalism, which derives from Egyptian (!) according to AR, and in general in what has been said on root structure.

The preeminence of Semitic is also evident in the field of morphology, from its apophonic vowel inflexion as against the declensions in I.-E. "que indican cierto grado de inferioridad fonética" (PFFC II:449). Nevertheless, they also remain in Arabic (and in Akkadian, Ugaritic and South-Arabian) in a complete manner and in the remnants attested in Hebrew<sup>60</sup> (and in Ethiopic). The Semitic conjugation is also apophonic and simpler, with only two modes, the only ones that are strictly acceptable (PFFC II:450), an assertion that would need to be refined. Time is concomitant to the Semitic verb, which properly lacks the present tense and becomes determined by the aspects of action (PFFC II:451). According to AR, the present is an abstract in itself, difficult to apprehend in the time as a process that consumes both itself and the past. It is the converter of the future into the past. From the morphological point of view, in I.-E. languages the present is an ancient future.

59. See the work quoted in n. 54.

60. Some of these (locative -h, adverbial -m) are interpreted incorrectly by AR (PFFC II:449).

All that is clearer in Egyptian (PFFC II:452f.) with its original multifunctional words, its monosyllabism and its agglutination by auxiliary elements that become internal inflexion in Coptic. In this way, it is a model of the process followed by Semitic "sino es que el mismo egipcio, como para nosotros es indiscutible, representa el verdadero tipo anterior y predecesor del actual semítico" (PFFC II:453). Egyptian passed from biliteralism to trilateralism through the same process of duplication and addition,<sup>61</sup> the use of prefixed determinatives (S, T, M), suffixes (T) with an added semantic value (lost later), and of biliteral roots extended by aspirated, nasal and dental consonants, resulting in a large pattern of root development and transformation (PFFC II:454ff.). This is the same transformation system that Semitic would follow and has parallels in I.-E., so documenting the bond among the three groups.

On the other hand, Egyptian presents *phonetic variation* affecting the root (PFFC II:456f.), which could apply to Semitic and Aryan as well, whose radical stability could not be original in this regard (PFFC II:456f.).<sup>62</sup> This root variation is based on *root inversion*, a subject in CL that has emerged in our day and that supposes a root that is not static, as usually envisaged, but mobile.<sup>63</sup> The process can also be seen in I.-E. (PFFC II:457f.), along with a possible inversion of meaning. In this connexion, *expansion and contraction of the root* reveals biconsonantal components and in general the variable nature of the root already mentioned. The laws of least effort and of linguistic reunification are also at work. In this way, the root develops from within through the various modes of reduplication (PFFC II:459ff.). This system fits I.-E. The *union of several such phenomena* results in numerous combinations of radical expansion.

In the field of Semantics, also, Egyptian exhibits interesting phenomena that are easily transferable to other families: multiple meaning of the same term and its semantic inversion (enantiosemiss), largely attested in Arabic grammar (PFFC II:461).<sup>64</sup> Such phenomena can combine with phonetic variation (already mentioned), giving rise to a great number of variants (PFFC II:462). They must all be taken into account when assessing roots in Egyptian, as much from the morphological as from the semantic point of view. In this regard, AR quotes A. Abel's work and its application to the relationship between Aryan and Egyptian (PFFC II:461f., n. 1), although he prefers a wider perspective, in the manner of Bomhard-Kerns. Could it be supposed that this system emerged independently in Aryan? No-one has detected it in this language family, according to AR. It is in Egyptian where variants become more evident and consequently they turn out to be more primitive than in I.-E. and in Semitic (PFFC II:465). We can assume that the I.-E. languages adopted some of the many variants from the original Aryan-Egyptian trunk (PFFC II:465), which are better preserved in Egyptian, the basis for comparison.

To sum up: Egyptian supposes a previous phase of language, and Semitic and I.-E. stem from it by their own evolution (PFFC II:466f.); the phonetic and semantic interchange points to a fluidity of forms that may explain the variants of its Semitic, Hamitic and I.-E. derivatives. The difference lies in the fact that while all of them are present in Egyptian in one single language, the variants in I.-E. appear distributed among the languages of the group.

In our opinion, we have to admit that AR's claim of finding the mother-stage of the other families in the Egyptian model (certainly, not in the language) turns out to be very remote from the evolutionary

61. In this connexion, see G. Conti, *Studi sul bilitterismo in semitico e in egiziano, I. Il tema N1212* (Quaderni di Semitistica 9), Florence 1984.

62. See in this regard G. del Olmo Lete, *Questions de linguistique sémitique*, pp. 182-188.

63. See G. Bohas, *Matrices et étymons. Développement de la théorie. Séminaire de Saintes 1999* (Instruments pour l'étude des langues de l'Orient Ancien), Lausanne, 2000, pp. 20f., 30 ; G. Del Olmo Lete, *Questions de linguistique sémitique*, pp. 132ff.

64. See G. del Olmo Lete, *Questions de linguistique sémitique*, p. 146 (the problem of enantiosemiss in Semitics). For Hebrew see B. Morrison, *Wonderful Words. The Development of the Meaning of Hebrew antonyms from a Common Root. A study in countersense*, Johannesburg, 1954.

pattern proposed nowadays for all those languages, namely, an Afro-Asiatic super-family, from the point of view of both linguistics and ethnography. At that time, there were no clear-cut ideas on this group, shaped by the Berber, Chadic, Cushitic and Omotic families along with Semitic and Egyptian. In fact, AR does not mention these (Hamitic) language families as such.

### 5.2.- *Historical Glottology*

Now AR goes on to analyse the materials provided by the language types in their manifold variants. Actually, this is a more detailed description of the generic groups that classification and its problems have brought to light, with no claim, of course (PFFC II:470f.), to be an exhaustive record and study of all the languages. Only the group changes are taken into account, leaving aside variants in individual languages, even if they have social roots. In this connexion, the concepts of tongue, dialect<sup>65</sup> and sub-dialect (PFFC II:471) are defined. There is no completely unitary language; every language is a complex of similarities that imply continuity and difference, and may be labelled language (abstract) and tongue (concrete) (PFFC II:472f.), a distinction that recalls De Sussure's distinction between *langage* and *parole*. Linguistic kinship emerges from comparison of certain historical facts and is defined as "*semejanza en las resultantes de diversas evoluciones glotológicas de una lengua misma hablada en otro tiempo*" (PFFC II:473). The notions of mother-tongue, trunk and branch define the 'kinship' or relationship of languages.

*Hallar las relaciones más íntimas posibles de los idiomas conocidos, multiplicando así las manifestaciones de parentesco lingüístico y disminuyendo el número de familias y troncos no eslabonados, es uno de los principales fines del trabajo comparado sobre los materiales de la Glotología histórica...* (PFFC II:473).

To carry out this plan, AR takes the ethnographical route, namely, the route of groups of speakers (note that earlier he had rejected it as a principle for classification, II:373f.), grafting onto it the appropriate morphological observations. AR distinguishes and describes the peculiarities of the following groups, here merely listed, giving an unbelievable display of erudition:

*I. Lenguas africanas de la raza amarilla: de los hotentotes, de los bosquimanos.*

*II. Lenguas de los pueblos Bantú.*

*III. Lenguas de la raza negra africana: mandé, wolof, de Guinea, del Sudán,<sup>66</sup> del Nilo.*

*IV. Lenguas de Papúa-Nueva Guinea: mafor, lengua de los negritos, de los mincopias.*

*V. Lenguas de Australia*

*VI. Lenguas malayo-polinesias: melanesias, polinesias, malayas.*

*VII. Lenguas dravídicas: munda/kolh, cingalés, tamil/malabar.*

*VIII. Lenguas amer-indias: distinguidas en 29 clases.*

*IX. Lenguas hiperbóreas: yukaghir, tschitschke y koriaco, ainu, ostiaca-yenisei y kote, kamchadal, innuit, alotiana.*

*X. Lenguas mongólicas: indo-chinas (con seis subgrupos),<sup>67</sup> coreana, japonés, uralo-altaicas (con cinco subgrupos).*

*XI. Lenguas nubias: occidentales (relacionadas con el wolof) y orientales.*

*XII. Lenguas caucásicas entre las que se computa el euskera<sup>68</sup> y el ibérico.*

65. His assessment of the dialects as languages in very modern: "De igual manera todos los llamados dialectos de España adquieren carácter de lenguas con sólo prescindir de sus relaciones de subordinación, y atender a su objeto propio como medio de comunicación de un pueblo dado" (PFFC II:472)

66. Here he includes Hausa, the main Chadic language of the Afro-Asiatic group: "con formas análogas a los idiomas camíticos".

67. Including Chinese: "la lengua más extendida del mundo, hablada por cerca de cuatrocientos millones de hombres" (PFFC II:484).

(XIII). *Lenguas camito-semíticas: egipcio, libio-berber, gala,*<sup>69</sup> *rama aramea, rama cananea, rama arábiga, en la que se incluyen las lenguas etiópicas.*

(XIV) *Lenguas indo-europeas: rama asiática y rama europea,*<sup>70</sup> *con los subgrupos conocidos.*

AR spends most time on the description of the fragmentation and the peculiarities of this last group (PFFC II:499-508) and all his other digressions concern them.

However, before continuing, allow me to consider the distribution of the Semitic group according to AR. Here, curiously, we witness the worst aspect of his theories. It is paradoxical that it happens to a Christian theologian. However, the drawback of the mediaeval perspective (the original *trilinguis* curriculum decided by the Council of Vienne: Aramaic, Hebrew, Arabic), that still persists in the present Spanish university system, makes its weight felt. Apart from the name 'Hamitic', mentioned above, enough data were available in his time<sup>71</sup> to avoid including Akkadian within the Aramaic family, a reflex of a rather elementary biblicism, although AR acknowledges it to be "la representación más antigua del semitismo" (PFFC II:492). On the other hand, his classification of the Aramaic dialects is very vague (see for instance what he says of Palmyrene, II:494). It is completely unacceptable in respect of Rabbinic Hebrew, the language of mediaeval Jewish literature ("abrazo el periodo más brillante de la literatura judaica, debe su aparición como dialecto formado y literario a los judíos sabios de España, de donde se propagó a otras regiones ..."), which is a form of Aramaic according to AR (PFFC II:493ff.).<sup>72</sup> As for the Ethiopian family, even if it did belong to the South-Semitic branch, it cannot be derived from Arabic; once again the collaterality principle fails here. By the same token, modern dialects of Arabic cannot be taken as derived from Amharic (PFFC II:499). Furthermore, he ignores languages belonging to the *Gurage* family. Finally, his notion of literary Arabic as a single unit, from which the vernacular form with its dialects would derive, is too simplistic (PFFC II:498). Although he acknowledges the supremacy of Arabic among the Semitic languages, due to its abundant literature, morphology, elegance and smoothness, nevertheless he points out quite correctly and with complete relevance today: "no puede en manera alguna legitimarse la aserción de los que pretenden, o mejor, han pretendido, hacer del árabe el sánscrito del grupo semítico" (PFFC II:498). However, in Comparative Semitic Grammar this claim was prevalent up to our own times.<sup>73</sup>

In any case, within this linguistic panorama, I.-E. remains the prototype on which LSc/CL is set out (PFFC II:508f.). Historically, it was the motor and now structurally allows the study of the significant elements to be found in other languages.

From his frequently mentioned holistic perspective, this forces AR to pose a related problem: the origin of the Aryan people (PFFC II:512ff.), because we cannot separate anthropology from glottology. Leaving aside different theories in this regard (PFFC II:514ff.),<sup>74</sup> we must take into account that I.-E. is

68. Later, he notes the connexions that Basque has with Libyan and therefore with Hamitic (PFFC II:571)

69. Today these would be called Cushitic.

70. As yet he does not know Mycenaean Greek and is bold enough to predict (!) the disappearance of Lithuanian and Latvian, "uno y otro lenguaje, destituidos del amparo de una nacionalidad propia y consiguiente vida literaria" (PFFC II: 506) .

71. On this compare the comparative grammar by C. Brockelmann, *Grundriss der vergleichenden Grammatik der semitischen Sprachen*, I-II. Band, Hildesheim, 1961 (original edition: 1908-1913), pp. 1-38 ("Einleitung")

72. "Inútil será advertir que los libros escrito en rabínico, no los entiende un hebraísta sin una preparación especial correspondiente" (PFFC II:494).

73. It is the point of view governing Brockelmann's grammar (cited above) and perpetuated by works such as S. Moscati, ed., *An Introduction to the Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages. Phonology and Morphology*, Wiesbaden, 1964.

74. For a modern account of the problem see F. Villar, *Los indoeuropeos y los orígenes de Europa. Lenguaje e Historia*, Madrid, 1991.

not an anthropological concept, but merely a linguistic one (PFFC II:518f.). This implies that in our case the problem of origin is badly formulated. What we should ask is how those people came to speak related languages (PFFC II:520).

However, it is quite clear that the claim of a primary common language type implies the existence of an original common society with its own territory, its own history and its own social order, and in this sense its common fatherland. However, it is not a question of a single race but of a single language (PFFC II:521). And one can ask, within this social group and given the mobility of primitive societies, who imported this language and who exported it? Who were the Aryans and who the 'Aryanised'? Actually, this becomes an anthropological question for which the answer has been sought in cranial typology or in prehistorical archaeology (megalithic monuments) without convincing results (PFFC II:522ff.).

Faced with the dilemma of Europe or Asia, AR tends to favour the European point of view of Aryan expansion. Historical traditions are not enough to support the Asiatic theory of Proto-Aryan (PFFC II:529ff.). This gives him the opportunity to provide a detailed account of Aryan literature. Nor is the presence of 'Ionians' in all the I.-E. traditions sufficient to give an answer to this problem (PFFC II:536ff.). In this regard, the presence of Hittites in Asia Minor was still unknown, where an old non-Aryan substrate was shrewdly surmised.

The glottological argument starts from Sanskrit as the oldest language of the I.-E. type and consequently as the mother-tongue of the European branch (PFFC II:539f.), which will provide the greatest variations because of its greater distance from the original centre. However, what today is labelled 'the law of margins' opposes such a way of reasoning ("la expansión de los idiomas está en razón inversa de la alteración glotológica", II:540). In any case, the alteration depends on the social milieu in which it develops and therefore has little weight as a glottological argument to found the originality and age of a linguistic variant. It is then possible to assume that variants within the same family which have undergone more transformations are linguistically more ancient. However, that does not mean they are representatives of a 'former' language (PFFC II:541), as it would favour the European thesis. Due to the existing gap between both traditions, the 'documentary' argument is no longer valid and the argument from comparative grammar is ambiguous.

In favour of the European origin of the Aryans and of their tongue are their greater differentiation and diffusion as against the uniformity and concentration of Asiatics, where the linguistic type was foreign (PFFC II:543ff.). However, its expansion was the result not of an invasion but of the diffusion of the original Proto-Aryan unit. This is independent of any connexion with dispersion after the Flood. Its splitting up is completely vague (PFFC II:549f.), making it impossible to draw a subordinate genealogical tree of the different variants. This fragmentation must have taken place in the last stage of Proto-Aryan. This means that all I.-E. languages are considered as having been born at the same time, in other words, I.-E. is intrinsically dialectal (PFFC II:551f.). Its development communicates peculiarities among the branches and at the same time constitutes the general language structure:

*... así se explica que no sea posible fijar una línea divisoria entre grupo y grupo lingüístico, sin que a cada paso sea menester interrumpirla, que no exista ninguna lengua ni grupo de lenguas del todo aislado y representante genuino de su propio tipo, y, finalmente, que todas las lenguas hayan cooperado en germen a la constitución de la lengua madre, y ellas mismas la hayan hecho desaparecer, puesto que todas la han llevado consigo (PFFC II:552, véase p. 570).*

All the above is valid for the first anthropological type of Aryans and 'Aryanised' peoples as a linguistic type, whose anthropological expansions "demuestran no haber estado en otra edad, como no está actualmente, vinculada la raza a la lengua, ni la lengua a la raza" (PFFC II:553f.). On the other hand, the

claim that linguistic palaeontology is able to disclose the original I.-E. civilisation through language analysis, a claim repeated nowadays,<sup>75</sup> must be considered well-intentioned but hardly trustworthy. AR carefully analyses and successfully criticises this claim (PFFC II:554-570). What can be obtained is rather meagre and relates to the use of materials, stone and metals, to the metric system and to some legal and religious ideas.

If we now look ahead, we establish that Proto-Aryan diffusion has contributed to linguistic differentiation, taking in elements from the pre-Aryan substrate as can be seen above all in toponymy: in this way remnants of Basque and Etruscan can be conjectured in the Romance languages or remnants of Egyptian in Celtic. The existence of a pre-Hellenic, Eteo-Cretan and Asianic population has been also established in the Greek-speaking region. It is clear that metallurgy and the sexagesimal system were imported from the Sumero-Akkadian east, together with some religious, technical, architectural and artistic ideas and the writing system (PFFC II:571ff.), while from Greece the Indians took astrological knowledge (PFFC II:577, n. 1).

As a colophon to language classification, AR offers a more precise grouping of the Proto-Aryan fragmentation of dialects, the best known and most interesting for comparative linguistics. He sets out the various theories (the *Pelasgic* group, Graeco-Latin, Sanskrit), dwelling upon the account and criticism of Schleicher's opinions (two groups: Latvian-Slavonic-Germanic//Aryan-Graeco-Italic-Celtic) that broke away from the European group, and the more current view that also distinguishes two groups: Indo-Iranian//Indo-European:

*Dada la afinidad manifiesta del leto-eslavo y germánico con el indo-eranio, la rama europea y la rama asiática aparecen íntimamente enlazadas, y por lo mismo gravemente comprometida la distinción fundamental de los grupos que caracterizan a esta teoría* (PFFC II:582).

Against the branching theory, which appears to be so objectionable, J. Schmidt sets his *wave theory*: *Pártese en esta teoría como en la de las ramificaciones, de la conformidad fundamental de las lenguas indoeuropeas en su materia y forma; pero distínguese de ella al establecer que en vez de separaciones ramificadas en grupos lingüísticos de mayor o menor cuantía, sólo existe una propagación de variantes y afinidades, que pasando de unas lenguas a otras al constituirse, producen los tipos de idiomas emparentados sin solución de continuidad en toda la familia* (PFFC II:583).

Successive affinities among languages relate all of them within a system of intersecting circles, creating a 'cyclic linkage' of the whole family (PFFC II:585). Therefore, while the wave theory seems preferable, it cannot be exclusive since there are splits that allow one to speak of 'branches'. Consequently, AR assumes an eclectic position that combines both theories, fixing limits to its sphere of preferential but not exclusive application. This should be different for the first period of dialectal fragmentation and the later period of configuration. The efficacy of both theories must be maintained in the whole process. We are dealing with a question that is current today in the classification of languages, specifically the Semitic languages.<sup>76</sup>

*Puede, pues, decirse en nuestra opinión, que la teoría de las ondas explica el procedimiento regular de formación en la familia aria, y la teoría de las ramificaciones explica la parte excepcional, que limita el procedimiento regular, pero que lejos de excluirse completan el todo del cuadro genético de los idiomas indoeuropeos* (PFFC II:586).

75. In this connexion, see P. Fronzaroli, "On the Common Semitic Lexicon and its Ecological and Cultural Background", in J. and T. Bynon, (eds.), *Hamito-Semitic. Proceedings of the Colloquium ...* (Janua Linguarum, Series Practica, 200), The Hague - Paris, 1975, pp. 43-53.

76. See the studies quoted in nn. 51 and 52.

### 5.3.- Glottological phases

In the previous chapter, based on the classification of I.-E., the subject of language origin is introduced (in AR's account there is also thematic link). However, the subject is dealt with more profoundly in the following chapter, starting from the three basic linguistic groups: monosyllabic, agglutinative and inflexional, that represent three evolutionary stages (PFFC II:587f.). Are we dealing with fixed types or with a transition from one to another? In line with many other philologists, AR favours the second option, aware that these are three phases in the language transmission in which each language is established for reasons of historical evolution common to them all (PFFC II:589). Apropos of this evolutionary process, the different concepts of the mother-tongue proposed earlier are summarised, namely, collateral evolution, original variability in Proto-Aryan and later dialectal development, a development that absorbs the mother-tongue and transfers it to itself, etc. (PFFC II:591ff.).

This state of the art is an indication that Proto-Aryan is different from what derived dialects provide now. From the data provided by comparative grammar, we must conclude that Proto-Aryan was agglutinative-inflexional in type, neither purely monosyllabic nor purely inflexional.

*Por cuanto las lenguas arias (se) constituían como formas dialectales en el protoario, según queda dicho, y lo llevaron consigo al separarse, tenemos que la manera uniforme de constituirse la familia es consecuencia obligada del modo de ser común en su origen, así como las diferencias típicas que se observan, son fruto natural de la separación en cada rama desprendida de la unidad primera* (PFFC II:595)

The apparent sophism implied by this type of reasoning is due to the need to reconcile the process by phases, assumed as logical, with the undeniable kinship of the I.-E. languages within these phases. In any case, one must take into account the enormous capacity for change implied by the agglutinative-inflexional type, which allows a large evolutionary gap between the various languages of the group.

It is possible to go a step further and ask whether it would be possible to reduce all tongues to a single unity (PFFC II:597). Opposing answers have been given, more or less connected with the question of the unity and origin of the human race (monogenism/polygenism), although they are questions that do not imply each other, as is also true of tongue and race (PFFC II:599). Any language shows an inner development of forms and at the same time a similarity with other languages. Both facts warrant their belonging to a common trunk. The phase theory, as an answer to this problem, is in keeping with language as a unity, but neither element, phase and language unity, necessarily implies the other (PFFC II:601). The problem has no clear answer, but this does not invalidate the phase theory as an explanatory model. Each phase has its own peculiar way of working as perceptible sign of ideas.<sup>77</sup> A fine summary of such a process is reflected in the following paragraph:

*Las raíces arias entran en la palabra y crecen o disminuyen en vocales y consonantes, mientras las raíces chinas entran en la frase para poder ser palabras, sin recibir ni causar modificaciones* (PFFC II: 607).

The agglutinative languages, however, move towards inflexion in the reshaping of added elements, while the inflected languages show the previous agglutinative transformation. This time making use of Turkish and Sanskrit, AR once again repeats this and similar ideas on inflexion, the phase theory, the unique language, the relationship between language and race, etc. (PFFC II:609-625), in polemic with opposing scholars. In connexion with the problem of this chapter, he specifies that the incorporating/polysynthetic (Amerindian) languages form the lost link between monosyllabism and agglutination (PFFC II:625). As we have pointed out several times, this repetition is due to AR's polemical

77. Two digressions are inserted here, one on the 'dialectal' character of the phase theory and another on the monosyllabic functionalism of Chinese (PFFC II:602-608).

approach: he has to set up a discussion with each of his opponents; his diffusiveness is due to his holistic thought, especially when dealing with questions of origin.

Language transformation, then, is gradual and has no fixed rhythm, nor does it suppose a particular mental exercise. Evolution is the result of social and external cultural pressure, the result of the solidarity between words and creative ideas. Language received in this way is already determined, which is why it persists in the various phases, but without losing contact with other languages. This persistence does not exclude the process proposed: "las lenguas de flexión han sido primero aglutinantes, y que las lenguas aglutinantes han comenzado por ser monosilábicas" (PFFC II:627).

AR stresses the false reasoning implied by the polygenist thesis, which asserts that "el lenguaje comienza con los dialectos" (Sayce).<sup>78</sup> This thesis assumes that the further we go back in time, finding more primitive communities, the more numerous they are, until we reach an endless magma of dialects which appear as wholly shaped types (Renan) (PFFC II:629f.). Ascendant human genealogy proves the opposite, assuming an endless series of ancestors, but with inversion in the number of centres of convergence: in fact the number of predecessors diminishes in both cases (PFFC II:630). If we go backwards, we have increasingly fewer languages, because there are fewer societies and there is less dialectal differentiation. If, instead, we go forwards, we encounter development and differentiation, with an almost endless distance between variants, but that does nullify confluence (PFFC II:632). If there were no linguistic development, we would have parallel lines and many primary centres, running counter to empirical experience.

*De esta manera la Ciencia del Lenguaje vino a quitar toda posibilidad de afirmar dogmáticamente la pluralidad originaria de lenguas. Que no se haya llegado a reconocer la concatenación en muchos idiomas, es porque han desaparecido muchos eslabones de la cadena; pero eso no autoriza jamás a concluir que las lenguas no han estado realmente eslabonadas ... Ni la teoría, pues, de las fases, ni la del monogenismo lingüístico son científicamente impugnables, aunque hayamos de reconocer, a tenor de lo expuesto en varios lugares de este libro, que toda reconstrucción de una lengua histórica única ha sido, es y será un imposible glotológico y que todas las tentativas en tal sentido deben tenerse por fracasadas* (PFFC II:632f.).

To complement what has been said, and in fact running through it all, the question of the biblical teaching on this subject is posed, with its focus on the Genesis stories: the creation of language by Adam, the episode of the Tower of Babel. This question is marginal to LSc and both dogmatic and apologetic in character, which a philologist who is a theologian and a believer feels obliged to take into account. Here, possibly, another of AR's many succinct notes, would have been enough. However, perhaps the appealing nature of those stories spurred him on to develop it further, as the self-justification of a scholar too independent in questions in which the Church had not yet reached a defined position, caught between overwhelming scientific theses and its own exegetical tradition.<sup>79</sup>

The enemy to overcome is Darwinian evolutionism, represented by the linguist Schleicher, introduced as a hermeneutical pattern in this case with a similarly dogmatic uncompromising attitude. The friend to defend is the episode of the Tower of Babel. There is an admissible evolutionism and in fact the phase theory is evolutionary. However, the pattern is not applicable to linguistics, nor does reducing language to a single type contradict the Babel story, either in the literal sense or in other more flexible interpretation that AR prefers. However, his textual arguments cited in defence of literal exegesis are no longer considered valid today (PFFC II:635, n. 1). The story of the Tower of Babel does not refer to all

78. See nowadays L. Edzard's thesis: *Polygenesis, Convergence and Entropy: An Alternative Model of Linguistic Evolution Applied to Semitic Linguistics*, Wiesbaden, 1998.

79. One will have to wait for Pope Pius XII and his Encyclical *Humani generis* to see the evolutionary theory exorcised.

peoples, just as the Flood was not universal, but only affected a group of rebels. Furthermore, following the sequence of the stories and linking chapter 12 with chapter 10 (even with chapter 9) we find that the human race was already divided by languages, a division that could be even antediluvian. Furthermore, AR thinks that the 'confusion' does not relate to the fragmentation of a single language but to the lack of mutual understanding (PFFC II:635ff.). This is a well-informed exercise in hermeneutics and the result could be labelled concordism in a certain sense. Here AR starts from a 'Babel event', which has to be saved at any price. Instead, modern exegesis would say that this is a theological pattern with merely synthetic or symbolic historical objectivity, which has to be read from the dynamic point of view of the 'History of the Origins' as an introduction to the 'History of Election/Salvation' inaugurated by the call of Abraham.

It is therefore possible to conclude that the present apparent irreducibility of languages does not exclude either linguistic or even less anthropological monogenism (PFFC II:645). However, reducibility does not assure them either: other languages could have existed and polygenetic man could have made use of an imported tongue. Glottology is not valid as an argument either in favour of or against anthropological monogenism. Language concerns man, but the origin of man is another matter.

#### 6.- *The origin of language*

Historically, the problem of the origin of language, introduced in the previous chapter, has entailed the problem of the origin of man, placing it in an already extra-linguistic perspective with unavoidable philosophical and religious implications. AR criticises them strongly and either rejects or modifies practically all of them. He favours the idea of the speaking act as a faculty or ability man receives along with his being, whatever his origin may be (obviously he follows the creationist thesis) and that man tries to actualise, influenced by his milieu. Language, then, is a human affair, even the original language that the bible ascribes to Adam, who gave things their correct names (Gen 2:19). Language is therefore born from an ability and a stimulus (although AR does not outline it clearly) and develops through a transmission process. Above all, AR opposes any naturalistic trend that makes it develop from a linguistic Darwinism through onomatopoeia or the inarticulate emission of sounds: whether it is a shout, vocalisation or simple consonantal articulation. According to him, empirical analysis of languages, the only material we have in this regard, refutes it categorically. However, this empirical base cannot solve the problem that refers beyond itself. Consequently, we will not be able to see the birth of language, to know its origin, for the simple reason that we will never be able to arrive at the original language from known tongues, however many reductions to 'radical' centres we may make, not even if we could arrive at a single centre or trunk. Such reductions will always be hypothetical and abstract and will not be able to correspond to an empirical language.

AR's attitude, even taking into account his ideological thesis, is realistic and has a serious critical objectivity in relation to a problem that modern linguistics considers to be marginal, even though it still emerges from time to time in present day glottogonic approaches.<sup>80</sup> In fact, a thesis like that of Bohas is not far removed from AR's perspective.<sup>81</sup> By virtue of this attitude, AR rejects any claim to see any specific language as the language of the first man, and in this regard Hebrew has been a very much

80. See for instance M. Nowak and D. Krakauer, "The Evolution of Language", *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* (Princeton) 96 (1999) 8028-8033; M. Nowak, D. Krakauer and D. Dress, "An Error Limit for the Evolution of Language", in *Proceedings of the Royal Society* (London), 266 (1999), 2131-2136; for other proposals see G. del Olmo Lete, *Questions de linguistique sémitique*, p. 133.

81. See the summary and critique in G. del Olmo Lete, *Questions de linguistique sémitique*, pp. 132f.

favoured candidate in the Judeo-Christian tradition. We have seen already how AR assumes an interpretation of the Babel story that saves its sense, as would be expected in a believing theologian, but goes beyond its literal meaning.

As a matter of fact, this whole subject did not merit the attention AR pays to it in a treatment of CL. And even less the other topic that by virtue of his holistic and unavoidably theological perspective he deals with next: the language that Jesus spoke and the concomitant classification of Aramaic, which he had already discussed in its appropriate place. In both cases, AR's opinions no longer seem to be acceptable today, and the same applies to Hebrew becoming extinct in the time of Christ, Rabbinic Hebrew being considered a form of Aramaic or the dialectal distribution of that language, in particular his idea of 'Assyrian' Aramaic.

However, when AR limits himself to the strict horizon of CL, his position is completely modern and reasonable. Primitive language eludes us and cannot be reconstructed, as he elegantly summarises in these words:

*... dado que las lenguas no sean, como legítimamente se puede juzgar y nosotros pensamos, otra cosa que prolongaciones sucesivas de un primitivo lingüístico sin solución de continuidad, acomodadas al medio o conjunto de influencias mesológicas de lugar, tiempo, raza, etc. no puede tratarse de reconstruir por las formas existentes las formas primeras de la palabra para siempre desaparecidas por la marcha ordinaria de los idiomas, y sólo es permitido conjeturar un estado filológicamente prehistórico del lenguaje que baste a explicar las formas del dominio histórico y de las variantes actuales. En este caso estamos en cierto modo siempre en posesión de la lengua primitiva sin buscarla, y en alguna manera siempre fuera de ella sin poder hallarla aunque la busquemos (PFFC II:694f.).*

Linguistic reduction by the lexematic analysis of radical and relational components, whether we suppose a single trunk or several, what are called *mother-tongues*, does not give us the earliest language, because a 'root' is not a 'word' and language is made up of words (PFFC II:698).

*La lengua primitiva no estuvo constituida por un sistema de raíces, como se nos ofrece mediante el análisis que suelen hacer los filólogos de las lenguas para su comparación,... sino por palabras completas como tales [II:698].*

This approach is thoroughly modern, causing many linguists nowadays to speak of 'base' rather than of 'root' along with its restored vocalism, especially in the field of Semitic languages, as an unavoidable requirement.<sup>82</sup>

Furthermore, AR maintains that, in order to find this original tongue, one has to know it beforehand, otherwise we would not know what we have found nor could we assert that it is the primitive language (PFFC II:696f.). On the other hand, the root reductions, which AR defines as *phonetic types*, take on an abstract and vague meaning, while in principle primitive words should have a concrete meaning as "signos de objetos percibidos por los sentidos".<sup>83</sup> Afterwards, they can 'be generalised' as *phonetic categories*, in keeping with the particular abstracting process of the human psyche which creates language, and which the author correctly sets out when dealing with the problem of the 'universals' as a linguistic problem (PFFC II:700, n. 1). This concrete meaning derives from man's ability to name (language), but it does not exhaust the significance of the object. In this sense, any name is a pseudonym (PFFC II:702), even those given by Adam, but it is also the correct name. This is the conventional phonetic sign (there is no link

82. This is for instance M. Diakonoff's thesis. See *supra* n. 40.

83. See G. del Olmo Lete, *Questions de linguistique sémitique*, p. 190.

between sound and meaning), incomplete in its referential value since it makes an adjective into a noun.<sup>84</sup> Therefore, language is concrete, but an individual is not (that would be impossible), and at the same time language is abstract and general, but not unreal.

From this position, at once modern and soundly traditional, AR rejects the 'glottological idols' which have been invented in order to explain the origin of language (PFFC II:704). In the first place, the 'mythological idol' that relates language and myth allows him to set out a long disquisition on the relationship between myth and religion. In fact, in those pages AR is more concerned with the origins of myth ('linguistic myth') than with the origin of languages (PFFC II:704-729), the subject in question. The supposition that word is born as an expression of myth (*nomina/numina*) is completely gratuitous (PFFC II:712f.). The religious significance of language as an actual interpretation of reality always supposes a metaphorical transfer, a second degree of denotation, even in the case of understanding 'divine' reality (PFFC II:716f.).

*... nada nos autoriza para establecer en este punto otro proceso intelectual y verbal en los hombres primitivos, que el que hallamos en sus descendientes, el cual ciertamente no nos ofrece las palabras como causa de las ideas que entrañan, lo mismo en el orden religioso que en cualquier otro orden, sino todo lo contrario* (PFFC II:717). *... El sistema filológico no demuestra a posteriori el origen glotológico de las divinidades del politeísmo* (PFFC II:718). *... La Glotología, pues, como explicación científica de las formaciones míticas es mito lingüístico...* (PFFC II:729).

In principle, this whole disquisition, followed immediately by another on the origins of polytheism (PFFC II:729-733), once again seems superfluous in a treatise on the SL as understood today. Interesting, however, is his consideration in this connexion on the inner relationship between etymology and metaphor in order to define the original semantics of the root (PFFC II:718ff.). In this sense, mythological systems, especially Vedic mythological systems, are the result of this process of metaphorical transfer and later revision by professional priests (PFFC II:725f.).

At this point, AR ends his "disquisiciones... escritas como estudio sistemático de los problemas múltiples que se ofrecen en la CL" (PFFC II:733), and intended to provide the ideological basis for a correct setting out of its contents in order to overcome the narrow perspectives of dominant positivism. As we pointed out at the beginning of these notes, the final pages<sup>85</sup> represent a somewhat rhetorical and emotional outburst (the last paragraph runs to 45 lines without a full stop) of the master and scholar fully aware of and enthusiastic about his scientific dedication to Philology and Linguistics, that through the changes of history rises as firm as "una esfinge inmóvil en medio de la movediza arena del desierto" (PFFC II:736).

Let us end these notes summarising and commenting on AR's work by quoting its final paragraph that reflects the profound religious concern pulsating within it, as well as the open humanism that allows him to end his task by recalling Plato instead of Ecclesiasticus (chap. 24) and quoting some Orphic hexameters<sup>86</sup> instead of Psalm 104 or the Prologue to St. John's Gospel:

84. We have already seen that, according to AR, nouns derive from adjectives, and so the problem is postponed but not solved: to 'nominare' is in fact to point out a functional relation of man with his environment, but the sense of this function/adjective is purely conventional. See in this connexion G. del Olmo Lete, *Questions de linguistique sémitique*, p. 51.

85. The final three pages, like many others throughout the book?, reproduce literally the closing pages of PGLI.

86. In this connexion, Prof. J. Pórtulas, Professor of Greek Philology at Barcelona University, comments: "Se trata de un Himno a Zeus que aparece citado, casi sin variantes, de punta a punta de la tradición griega. La primera cita se halla en Las leyes de Platón; la última, un tanto más extensa, en un tratado neoplatónico de Porfirio. Son los fragmentos 21 y 168 de los *Orphicorum Fragmenta* de Otto Kern (1922); Alberto Bernabé los cita como fragmentos 31 y 243 respectivamente". See A. Bernabé, *Hieros Logos. Poesía órfica sobre dioses, el alma y el Mas Allá* (Akal/Clásica 68. Clásicos Griegos), Madrid, 2003.

*Desde las alturas del espiritualismo científico son grandes los horizontes, y hermoso y dilatado el cielo del saber; y es desde allí desde donde podremos observar el organismo de cada ciencia, fijar las leyes de sus movimientos y hallar las trascendentales relaciones que existen entre ellas, y que habrá de llevarnos, como cifra y remate de todo, a reconocer la existencia de aquel eterno compás con que el gran Geómetra, que dijo Platón, ha trazado a la luz soberana que destella del abismo de su altísimo ser las órbitas de la toda verdad, y a proclamar a la realidad divina principio y centro de la realidad humana y de la realidad cósmica, como ya bellamente lo significaron aquellos versos órficos:*

Ζεὺς ἄρχῆ (/κεφαλή) Ζεὺς μέσσα Διὸς δ' ἐκ πάντα τέτυκται  
Ζεὺς πυθμὴν γαίης τε καὶ οὐρανοῦ ἄστερόεντος