

Basque-Iberian Acculturation

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Summary

Acculturation has been an essential characteristic of human history. Acculturation was the name given to all cultural events that resulted from the acquisition, modification or reinterpretation of a culture, in particular the reception and assimilation of cultural elements from one social group by another, with adaptation to a new sociocultural context. The term acculturation was widely accepted among American anthropologists at the end of the 19th century, in order to refer to the changes that occurred when social groups with different cultural traditions came together, and it was not differentiated whether it should be applied to the results or to the processes of cultural change. Historical sociolinguistics raised the need to materialize the most plausible working hypotheses on the historical, sociological and cultural reconstruction of the processes of oral formation and written normalization of the romances. The Iberian world was made up of a mosaic of peoples (Turdetans, Bastetanos, Contestanos, Oretanos, etc.). Between the 5th and 3rd centuries BC, the period of greatest apogee of this culture took place, known as the "first Iberian period", during which cities were built and inhabited, sculpture was materialized, there was an increase in trade and the accumulation of wealth, and a good level of development was achieved. Without a doubt, Basque-Iberian acculturation determined the vocalism of Spanish, and its concise simplicity facilitates teaching as a first foreign language.

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I. Introduction

The hypothesis of the history of linguistics as a succession of paradigms was more appropriate to linguistic facts and to the continuity of history itself than to a substitution of models. One of the most assiduously upheld principles in historical linguistics has been the theory of the regularity of linguistic change. In the Neogrammarian model, phonological change and analogy constituted the two basic components of linguistic change. Phonological change acted independently of morphological, syntactic and semantic functions, and analogy dealt precisely with the relationship between phonological and morphological structure.

In this sense, we could differentiate two interpretations: 1) autonomous version of the assumption of phonological regularity, and 2) grammatical version of linguistic change. The hypothesis of the autonomy of linguistic levels was incompatible with the post-generative theory of grammatical change, but some European functionalists have not recognized this incompatibility. Syntactic, semantic or phonological change implied a grammatical change in the communicative competences of successive generational groups of different social groups, within the speech community, through the reorganization of the vernacular with the generational change.

1.1. On the other hand, there was a double starting strategy in the investigation of linguistic change: a) homogeneity, and b) structured heterogeneity. According to these interpretations, which provided us with a double entry into the history of linguistics, there were the following models of linguistic change:

- a1) Neogrammarian.
- b1) Historical dialectology.
- a2) Diachronic functionalism.
- b2) Pragmatic.
- a3) Generative.
- b3) Historical sociolinguistic.

If all linguistic change implied ongoing variation (although not all variation implies change, see F. Gimeno, 2008a, 2008b), the homogeneous models of linguistic change (neogrammarian, functionalist and generative) were unrealistic and inadequate. However, a real success of diachronic functionalism was the recognition that the formation of the various Romance languages from the same Latin system questioned the past simplification of hypotheses based only on linguistic systems, but it was an intuition relegated from its objectives and methodology.

Our main working hypothesis has been the intrinsic relationship between linguistics, sociology and anthropology, and both the history of languages in contact and of linguistic change were part of acculturation. Historical sociolinguistics opened new possibilities for the knowledge of the social and cultural dynamics of the historical processes of linguistic change. From this point of view, historical sociolinguistics reviewed and updated the historical processes of linguistic change, and has developed with the study of the reconstruction of the language of the past, within the temporal, geographical and social context of the Romance speaking communities.

II. Acculturation

The introduction of anthropology into medieval history was one of the most significant historiographical events in the last third of the last century. Indeed (since 1970), there was an enrichment of perspectives and a deepening of knowledge of the configuration of society, and especially of its behavior in relation to the occupied territory. In particular, J. A. García de Cortázar (1985) proposed starting from the conception of society and space as elements of a system, whose evolution occurred through the complexity of its social organization, and established the intimate connection between the formulas of economic reproduction and the structures of domination and social cohesion, as well as the system of values.

2.1. The introduction of anthropology (and medieval history) into the history of language came later and could be dated to the end of the last century. F. Gimeno (1990: 138-44) showed that sociolinguistics was born from an anthropological commitment that ultimately considered linguistics as a chapter of social and cultural anthropology (and of the psychology of knowledge). General sociolinguistics as an extension and revision of institutional disciplines (linguistics, sociology and anthropology) integrated a *sociology of language* and a *strict sociolinguistics*, as well as the *ethnography of communication* (see J. A. Fishman, 1971; F. Gimeno, 1988, 1995, 2019: 182-96).

Studies of language and cultural contact in Europe were not widely coordinated, although their precursors were European (W. Leopold, E. Haugen and U. Weinreich). U. Weinreich (1953: 37-40) commented that for some anthropologists language contact was nothing more than an aspect of cultural contact, and language transfer was a facet of social diffusion and acculturation. However, despite the increase in anthropological interest in contact problems, particularly in the United States of America after the First World War, studies of language contact and cultural contact were not widely coordinated, nor had the relationship between the two fields of study been properly defined.

The main issue of interest in language transfer was the interaction of social and cultural factors that promoted or impeded such transfer. Anthropologists who investigated acculturation were forced to include linguistic evidence as indications of the total process of acculturation, while linguists needed the help of anthropology to describe and analyze those factors that governed language transfer and were actually within the realm of culture (see F. Gimeno and M. V. Gimeno, 2003: 101-35).

Acculturation referred to all cultural events resulting from the acquisition, modification or reinterpretation of a culture, in particular the reception and assimilation of cultural elements from one social group by another, with adaptation to a new sociocultural context. The term acculturation *was* widely accepted among American anthropologists in the late 19th century to refer to the changes that occurred when social groups with different cultural traditions came together, and no distinction was made as to whether it should be applied to the results or the processes of cultural change.

Acculturation, then, included those events resulting from direct and continuous contact between social groups that had different cultures, with the corresponding changes and reinterpretations in the original culture of one or both groups. The terms “acceptance,” “adaptation,” and “reaction” referred to the assimilation of cultural elements and the reinterpretation within new groups, as well as the rejection of said elements. Gradually, the term *transculturation* has become less common compared to the more frequent term acculturation. While the latter had been used to refer to the change of only one or both poles of contact, in the case of transculturation it has generally been used in relation to a single society or group (see F. Gimeno, 2024c).

2.2. R. Menéndez Pidal (1923: 414) wrote that the languages of Spain had three periods of development:

- 1) From the most remote times until the end of the Second Punic War in 206 BC.
- 2) From the arrival of the Romans to Spain in 206 BC until the fall of the Visigoths in 711 AD.
- 3) From the Arab invasion in 711 to the present day.

However, wars, conquests, invasions and other abominable events were mere exceptions in the great ocean of the macro-history of humanity, and the primordial principle of the history of languages in contact and of linguistic change was the acculturation of generational and social groups. An anthropological history of Hispanic Romance languages assumed the contact of different social groups and different languages, with the linguistic and cultural transfers that implied the social and cultural mixing of pre-Roman peoples, within the various Romance-speaking communities. In them there was a linguistic and cultural continuity, with the Basque-

Iberian, Fenopunic-Greek and Roman acculturation, as well as the reinterpretation of foreign models and the substitution of their languages, except in the case of Basque. These peoples and cultures were the first agents of the change from Latin to Romance, in their respective speaking communities (see J. A. García de Cortázar, 1969, 1973, 2012, 2016; F. Gimeno y C. García Turza, 2010; F. Gimeno, 2016a, 2016b, 2021; F. Gimeno (coord.) 2020).

Within the anthropological history of Hispanic romances there was a linguistic and cultural continuity, based on the successive and diverse historical acculturations (Indo-European, Basque-Iberian, Fenopunic-Greek, Roman, Christian, Germanic, Visigothic, Byzantine, Islamic, Castilian, Catalan-Aragonese, Hispanic and Anglo-Saxon), with the linguistic and cultural transfers that implied the social and cultural mixing of these groups, and the adaptation to a new sociocultural context. During the second half of the last century, great contributions to historical linguistics were accumulated, which were far from being recognized by historians of the language, and have meant great successes and technical applications to decontextualized purposes and facts inexplicable until now. The only viable solution was the intrinsic relationship between language, society and culture. Acculturation has been an essential feature of human history (see F. Gimeno, 2019, 2024d).

2.3. In his considerations on structuralism and history, R. Menéndez Pidal (1959: 106-9) sought the adoption of the new methodological proposals, but within his own convictions and without revising their basic foundations, so that he assimilated the concept of “structure”, even though he continued to admit that language was a historical product, whose essence was uninterrupted tradition, and that evolution depended on a millennial tradition that pressed on the structural forces acting at each moment. In most cases, when faced with a linguistic change, he concluded, the possibilities of historical explanation that were offered should first be examined, and his starting hypothesis was that a first historical tradition preceded the structural elaboration, and therefore conditioned it.

Previously, R. Menéndez Pidal (1926/1950: 532-8) commented that the beginning of the evolution of language had been sought in each change of generation, but generations (according to him) did not change every twenty or thirty years but were born and renewed imperceptibly every day. Without a doubt, it was an unfounded geological assumption, within a section in which the author argued that the constitution of a phonological change was never usually the exclusive work of three or four generations into which the cohabiting population was arbitrarily considered divided, but rather it was the product of a multi-secular latent state that persisted through many generations of social groups, and was based on the fact that many consecutive generations participated in the same innovative idea, and constituted a new tradition, in conflict with another older tradition.

2.4. The term “substratum” designated the latent influence of the defeated native languages on the victorious languages and was accepted (in one way or another) by various linguists, even from the beginning of the 19th century (see I. Jordan, 1932: 20-1). On the theory of linguistic strata, B. E. Vidos (1956: 203) offered the reference that, at bottom, substratum, superstratum and adstratum were nothing more than metaphorical expressions to indicate the linguistic influences of the defeated, victorious and co-existing peoples, respectively.

However, the historian P. Wolff (1971), when he summarized that in Gaul the action of the superstratum confirmed and reinforced the action of the substrata, did not realize that the duality of the victor/vanquished people offered the same result (linguistic transfers), and that this meant that the conflict did not matter, since it was alien to linguistic change. On the other hand, he argued that Christianity promoted the sociological function of romance, and Europe in the 9th century was enveloped in a bilingualism that presided over its intellectual life for several centuries. Outside the oral and everyday register, the vernacular languages only managed to impose themselves very slowly in the written register, and above all this occurred in the didactic register, as well as in England within the legal register. In effect, the Anglo-Saxon legislation of this country was written in its mother tongue.

The action of the linguistic substrate was explained by the enormous duration of the phonological changes, the long coexistence of forms that fought against each other, and the latent state of a tendency that existed with roots, although completely ignored by observers (see A. Alonso, 1941; R. Menéndez Pidal, 1950; A. Martinet, 1955: 275-80; B. Malmberg, 1963; F. Gimeno, 1984, 1995: 40-2).

Linguistic geography claimed that each word had its history, and that the sum of the history of each of the words would give us the history of the constitution of the phonological rule. E. Coseriu (1955: 157) alluded to the fact that when linguistic geography discarded the generality and physical nature of the “phonetic law” it had to introduce a new rule: the continuity of the areas. The risks of falling into the objectivism of the linguistic forms and areas considered as independent of the speakers, and of attending only to the multiplicity and heterogeneity, meant questioning the unity and homogeneity of the language.

However, the association between structure and homogeneity was a false assumption, since linguistic structure included the orderly differentiation of social groups and registers, through rules governing variation in the speech community. Moreover, a “structured heterogeneity” of language was proposed, and mother tongue

dominance implied control of such heterogeneous structures (see U. Weinreich, W. Labov and M. I. Herzog, 1968: 187-8; F. Gimeno, 1990: 79-87).

2.5. W. Labov (1972: 53-4) highlighted the social research of the Swiss Romanist L. Gauchat (1905) on phonological change in the French-speaking community of Charmey (Switzerland), where he observed and analyzed the familiar linguistic behavior of the three generations of the social groups (over 60 years, between 30 and 60, and under 30), based on five linguistic variables. In this way he showed us a clear precedent of the linguistic change “in progress”, over the consideration of an “apparent” time, since the variants in the colloquial register of the successive generations helped to determine if a linguistic variable was in expansion or recession within the speech community. In 1929, this research was confirmed by E. Hermann, since the comparison of these variables showed that in three cases the data of L. Gauchat were corroborated, given the testimony of the change in real time (see S. Pop, 1950: 187-96; F. Gimeno, 1990: 70-5).

Outside the sociocultural framework of language contact, U. Weinreich (1953: 4) rethought (in the words of E. Haugen) that theories built on the influence of languages were suspended in the air, since what was said about substrata and superstrata should continue to be considered stratospheric, unless we found it empirically in the behavior of different social groups. The strata theory confusingly simplified the facts of linguistic and cultural transfer from social situations of acculturation, and represented a very superficial and pre-scientific first manifestation of an acculturation and grammatical theory of linguistic change, based on the contributions of social multilingualism.

Linguists have therefore overcome the obsolete assumption of linguistic strata, which are authentic catch-alls and simple imitations of acculturation, and have accepted the proposal of historical sociolinguistics on the general configuration of linguistic change, based on the various social situations of language contact. In contrast to traditional and meager labels of substratum, superstratum and adstratum, we had to seek hypotheses based on empirical studies on linguistic behavior and the dimensions of social multilingualism, and to specify which facts of linguistic transfer (interference, code-switching, calque or borrowing) and of cultural transfer (social or cultural mixing) appeared to be involved in which mutually exclusive dynamic (linguistic amalgamation or substitution), within the convergent strategies of linguistic change.

On the other hand, centuries-old traditions and stable discursive traditions of written texts were alien to the anthropological history of the communicative competences of successive generations of different social groups, within the Basque-Iberian acculturation of some Romance-speaking communities, less linked to the Latin-Roman tradition.

Variation and change were distinct dimensions of linguistic evolution, and ongoing variation and linguistic change should never be confused. If all change involved ongoing variation, not all variation involved change. Indeed, linguistic change that was based on the discontinuous interaction of parents and children simplified the issue to generational variation, but the parents' grammar was the first component of the child's first grammars, and ensured acculturation and continuity of family transmission.

The historical varieties of Latin could be arranged along a temporal continuum, like a chain in which each pair of adjacent varieties of successive generations of social groups (within the different speech communities) were mutually intelligible, although the opposite ends of that chain were not. We should never assume a final generation of medieval Latin, nor a first generation of Romance (see Y. Malkiel, 1985: 30-40; J. Portolés, 1986: 45-83; R. Cano, 1998; M. T. Echenique, 2004, 2006; F. Gimeno, 1995: 21-7).

III. Historical Sociolinguistics

An anthropological investigation of the history of the language proposed the deduction of linguistic variables and social and cultural factors from the past, and empirically verified them in the present. Historical sociolinguistics raised the need to materialize the most plausible working hypotheses on the historical, sociological and cultural reconstruction of the processes of oral formation and written normalization of the Romance languages, based on empirical principles for a grammatical theory of linguistic change. In accordance with these foundations, it has surpassed the descriptive contributions of a historical pragmatics, based on the functionalist analysis of stable discursive traditions of written texts (see B. Frank and J. Hartmann, 1997; D. Jacob and J. Kabatek, 2001)

The autonomous version of linguistic change advocated by the Neogrammarians was unacceptable in our days, and the phonological rules of historical-comparative linguistics were simplifications of linguistic changes. Above all, when we considered the geographical and social differentiation of the language, within its own “structured heterogeneity”, and the variability as part of the communicative competence of the various generational and social groups that coexisted in the speech community. Only in this way was it possible for the social history of the language to be an authentic reality, with the necessary complementarity between homogeneity and heterogeneity. Moreover, both linguistic change and the change in progress were neither mechanical nor merely phonologically determined.

3.1. In *Synchrony, diachrony and history*, E. Coseriu (1958: 29-67) raised the problem of linguistic change and criticized the Durkheimian doctrine of the social fact as external to individuals, which was advocated by F. de Saussure and A. Meillet. He also alluded to the fact that Saussure's perplexity regarding linguistic change and the tendency to consider it as a spurious phenomenon (caused by "external" factors) were ultimately due to the fact that he started from abstract language, separated from speaking and considered as a result (*ergon*), without even asking what languages were, how they really existed, as well as what a "change" in a language actually meant. Language changed to fulfill a function, which corresponded to the purpose of continuing to function.

Although three different problems had often been confused, it was necessary to distinguish:

- a) *Rational* problem of change, that is, why were languages not immutable?
- b) *General* problem of changes, that is, under what conditions did changes in languages usually occur?
- c) *Historical* problem of such a determined change.

As a theorist, the first problem of the mutability of languages had depended on knowledge of the "facts" and on "original knowledge" about language, and not on the belief that it had been resolved with the "cause" of linguistic change, or all the alleged "causes" of the many particular "changes."

Likewise, according to this author (1958: 114-6), it would be better to speak of "systematic" and "extra-systematic" factors than of structural and historical factors. While the former were the functional system and the normal achievements of the language, the latter ("non-external") referred to the variety of linguistic knowledge in a speech community and the strength of the linguistic tradition. Both series of factors belonged to the language, although not in the same sense, and it should be taken into account that these factors were not "causes" but conditions or determinations of linguistic freedom, and that change should find its possibility and justification in "language" as a systematic technique and culture. That is, it would not be wrong to speak of historical and structural factors, as long as their circumscription to the circumstances of speech and historical determinations of linguistic freedom were understood, that is, mere passive factors and not "causes" determining change.

Moreover, even these had to be included within the framework of purely internal factors, as conditions or determinations of speech, since other cultural factors (e.g., the mixing of populations, cultural centers, etc.) would be relegated to secondary roles, not as direct determinants of linguistic activity, but as indirect factors, as the state of interindividual linguistic knowledge that could result from them. In this way, one could arrive at the apparently paradoxical conclusion that language was the "cause" of its own change, but that change was the diffusion of an *innovation* that had to find in a "state of language" the favorable conditions for its interindividual acceptance.

3.2. However, innovations were ongoing linguistic variations and changes that could only be fully and completely understood and explained in relation to social and cultural factors, and not in linguistic features for their social and cultural justification. Languages were excellent instruments of expression and communication of the cognitive development of social groups, within a speech community. Linguistic change was never a problem, nor even a complex matter of oral or written traditions, but a process in which the successive generational change of different social groups and diverse cultures was directly involved, and the analysis and delimitation of the complex relationships between linguistic variables and social and cultural factors, as well as the historical, sociological, cultural and legal determinants of the various Romance-speaking communities, was essential (see B. Malmberg, 1966: 207-22; F. Gimeno, 1995: 39-53, 2019: 343-51).

Faced with a partial diachrony of the various linguistic levels (and even, of all descriptive ones) of the Romances, we had to assume in our days an anthropological history of the communicative competences of the successive generations and social groups, within the various Romance-speaking communities (see H. López Morales, 1989, 2006; F. Gimeno, 1995: 27-39). The qualitative and autonomous descriptions of the linguistic change in the Latin compilation of the early medieval Riojan glossaries prevented us from seeing and understanding the social multilingualism of hybrid manuscripts (as well as the implicit normalization of the Romances), through regulating the multiple linguistic variables and factors (social and cultural), as well as the superficial variants of the texts.

In this sense, the synchronic techniques of monolingual description were insufficient and inadequate by themselves for the analysis of linguistic variation in these manuscripts and the study of the sociological, cultural and legal change that determined the written standardization of the romances. Only in this way have we revised the hypotheses of historical dialectology and diachronic functionalism that prevailed throughout the last century, and we offer a new investigation into the anthropological history of the formation of Hispanic romances.

3.3. In the set of medieval documents, during the five centuries or so that they considered (750-1250), B. Frank and J. Hartmann (1997) proposed that the most frequent descriptive configuration was that of a Romance production dominated by another language (generally Latin), within which the Romance languages would often enjoy a rather marginal role, due to the very absence of documentary tradition. Within many of the texts, the

elements of the two languages alternated and interspersed in such a way that it was difficult to find documents in Romance that did not have any Latin variable, or on the contrary, Latin documents free of any Romance variable. The simultaneous presence of Romance and non-Romance linguistic elements within the same text frequently posed descriptive problems regarding the linguistic attribution of the text in its entirety.

One of the most common names for these hybrid documents was “very corrupted or Romance Latin” (either in the Proto-Romance period or in the early period), which was an imprecise designation of the variety involved, since it was merely the label of a clear process of linguistic transfer between the two varieties (Romance and medieval Latin, without forgetting sometimes the non-Romance vernacular involved, Basque), which intervened in the multilingual competence of the scribe. In addition, it had to be ruled out that the hybrid documents responded to a question of greater or lesser Latin competence of the scribes, whose legal training had been received through the trivium in monastic and episcopal schools, and in accordance with the subjection to the legal concepts of cause and consent by the legal subjects of the legal acts.

Merovingian Latin and Visigothic Latin were transitional Romance varieties (more and less Latinized) of a long process of written standardization of the Romance languages, which were foreign to the communicative competences of successive generations of different social groups, within the social multilingualism of the Romance-speaking communities. The texts were hybrids of two varieties, in which the Romance language was underlying, which already consciously fulfilled the corresponding sociological and legal function, with the substitution of the Latin nominal inflection for the universal case and the syntactic calque of the Semitic word order, as well as with the appearance of glosses and glossaries. Hybrid samples and texts characterized, therefore, the process of written standardization of Hispanic romances, from the second half of the 8th century until the middle of the 12th century, in which the syntactic calque (Latin or Romance) and the lexical and phonological importation (Latin or Romance) demonstrated the bilingual competence of the scribes.

The documentary reliability that was assumed in scientific research required a prior analysis of its textual fidelity, and had to take into account the nature of the texts that served as the object of study. In this sense, it had to be indicated whether the handwritten diplomas were originals or copies, and from the beginning, the need for maximum demand when warning about the condition of late transfers to the date of the original had to be considered, in order to avoid statements and conclusions of a linguistic nature about certain chronological data. Historical sociolinguistic analysis was the only valid criterion for dating a text, based on the analysis of the temporal, geographical and social context, whatever its register.

3.4. Based on the descriptive analysis provided by the study of six Visigothic Hispanic glossaries from the 10th and 11th centuries, our specific working hypothesis was that the presence and abundance of proto-Romanesque testimonies of the glossistic tradition and the diplomas that appeared in the Iberian Peninsula (not only in Catalonia, Aragon and Navarre, but also in Castile, Asturias and Galicia, and even by possible Mozarabic authors from the south, from the second half of the 8th century) should be understood and explained within the temporal, geographical and social context of an initial linguistic normalisation of the romances, where the development of writing responded to new expectations of expanding the sociological and legal function of the romance. In general, the greatest Romanesque tradition of legal documents revealed the very background of the influence of Roman law in determining the sociological and legal function of Hispanic romances, and the connection between Hispanic cultural transmission and the Carolingian Renaissance (see C. García Turza, 2011).

From the second half of the 8th century, the first Romance texts in manuscript documentation and the first Romance samples of glosses could not be seen merely as superficial innovations by scribes, but were inscribed within an implicit process of linguistic planning. Visigothic Spain was one of the last and most valuable manifestations of ancient culture. Isidore of Seville laid the foundations of all medieval culture, and was the bridge that united Antiquity with the Middle Ages, although we had to keep in mind the transcendental legacy of Jerome to the cultural and textual transmission of ancient history from monasteries, codices and copyists, in which written standardization permanently maintained a leading role.

3.5. Education in the High Middle Ages was linked to the effort to gather and preserve the heritage of Roman antiquity. In the face of the weak and negative image provided by studies of the past, J. García Turza (2000) highlighted the connection between Hispanic cultural transmission and the Carolingian Renaissance, and stated that the period of Hispanic-Gothic Spain was a period of gathering the ancient cultural tradition, in the terms in which the Visigoth bishops and the Irish and Italian monks had maintained it between the 5th and 8th centuries. In Western Europe (especially around the Mediterranean) what remained alive in that culture was passing into the service of the Church. Christianity with its Scriptures and Hebrew tradition, its faith and its liturgy could not do without such a rich expression as that received from antiquity, and the debate between the two positions (acceptance or rejection of a pagan culture) was settled with the acceptance of the Greco-Roman tradition.

Charlemagne's concern for the achievement of an efficient administration and a profitable use of economic resources was translated into the field of culture in what was called the "Carolingian Renaissance". The cultural reform promoted by the French king was an aspect of his program of religious reconstruction and reorganization, and it involved a Latin, biblical and humanistic culture that had been transmitted in the minority circles of the ecclesiastical aristocracy. To do so, he turned to the clergy, who were more prepared and had greater intellectual potential in the European panorama of authors such as Boethius, Cassiodorus, Gregory the Great, Isidore of Seville and Bede the Venerable. Their works had found refuge in the mid-eighth century in the *scriptoria* of the best schools (monastic or cathedral) that guaranteed the Roman tradition (Jarrow and York in England, Luxueil and Saint Denis in France, Bobbio and Monte Cassino in Italy).

The solution came from the creation of the Christian cultural *corpus*, the intellectual foundation of Europe, at least until the 12th century. Isidore of Seville (ca. 570-630) was bishop of the city and beneficiary of the cultural tradition of the episcopal and monastic school of Seville, who composed a great encyclopedia (*Etymologiae*) in which he summarized the knowledge of Antiquity in twenty books, and placed it at the service of Christian science. He also laid the foundations of peninsular historiography, and made Hispania a unit of destiny under the leadership of the Visigoth monarchy. The diffusion of his work made it a manual present in all the monastic libraries of the Middle Ages.

There seems to be no doubt that Ireland received its new culture from Aquitaine and Hispania, and from there the Irish monks spread it across the continent. In this way, the evangelization of England led to the emergence of numerous centers of culture. In this cultural environment appeared Bede the Venerable (672-735), who was undoubtedly a product of Irish Celtic Christianity in the lands of England, in a region foreign to the Latin tradition. His success came from the method of work and teaching, which he took (in large part) summarized from Isidore of Seville. After Bede's death, his disciple Egbert received as an oblate the young Alcuin, born around 730, and transmitted to him this new program that, apparently, had given England an indisputable intellectual superiority. For his cultural work, Alcuin was the "master of Carolingian Europe."

The Iberian Peninsula was thus situated at the very center of the medieval world, in what was the heritage of the Roman Empire. In the *Etymologies* of Isidore of Seville we must refer to at least two versions. The one called Sisebuto, to whom it was dedicated around the year 620, with a short text, and the one finished by Braulio around 659, which was more extensive and divided into books. In their unstoppable diffusion, both were already in France in the middle of the 7th century or the beginning of the 8th century.

In relation to Ireland, it was N. Bischoff who drew attention to the role played in the dissemination of Isidore by the pilgrim monks who spread from Ireland and the kingdoms of Great Britain continuously across the continent from the end of the 7th century to the end of the 8th century. Alcuin of York (the brilliant renovator of Carolingian teaching) did not miss the opportunity to praise and use Isidore to the full. The *Etymologies* became the example of a kind of Isidorian conversion to profane culture.

3.6. In the preliminary historical aspects of San Millán de la Cogolla in the High Middle Ages, C. García Turza and J. García Turza (1997: 99-114) stated that La Rioja since ancient times it had been defined by its border or transitional character. In the pre-Roman centuries, it was located on the border between the Indo-European and non-Indo-European territories: the Celticized Berones lived there in contact with the Autrigones, Varduli, Caristii and Vascones. After Romanization, this region was included in the province of Tarraconense, and in the 6th century (with the campaigns of Leovigildo) it formed part of the Duchy of Cantabria, a scarcely Romanized territory. This transitional character was maintained with the arrival of the Arabs, and continued during the Middle Ages, as has been stated.

Tradition linked San Millán de Suso with the place where Emiliano practiced his hermitage, whose biography was drawn up by Braulio de Zaragoza, around the years 635-640. From this work some information about San Millán could be extracted: he was born in the year 473 and died at the age of 100 around 574. This biography was what provoked an unusual interest in him, and confirmed that there were followers of his in the middle of the 7th century. La Rioja was occupied by the Muslims at the beginning of the 8th century, and remained under the control of the Banu Qasi, governors of la Marca Superior, until the first decades of the 10th century. In the year 923, King Sancho Garcés I of Pamplona, with the help of Ordoño II of León, definitively occupied the towns of Nájera and Viguera, and with them the rest of the smaller towns and their respective lands.

The Navarrese proceeded to dominate this territory and reorganize it, with the presence of leaders and settlers from the kingdom of Pamplona. Its subsequent historical evolution, until 1076 when it became part of the kingdom of Castile, always took place within the framework of the kingdom of Pamplona, although we should not lose sight of the fact that León and especially Castile also had their interests in La Rioja. In this way, while San Millán (great beneficiary of the border situation) let himself be carried away, and acted in his own interest by assuming Castilian ambitions of dominion, the rest of the Riojan monasteries generally gravitated more around the Pamplona monarchy.

During the early medieval centuries, despite the well-known emigrations and their magnitude, this region was inhabited by a significant number of settlers, as can be seen from the preservation until the present of a large number of place names of Latin origin. In the reorganisation of the space and in the strengthening of the Christianity that had survived in the villages and in the fields, the Leonese and Navarrese monarchs applied themselves to restoring and strengthening Christian life in the territory, whose fundamental base was the monasteries. Ordoño II restored the monastery of Santa Coloma, near Nájera, and Sancho Garcés I founded that of San Martín de Albelda. In addition, others were documented in the 10th century: San Cosme and San Damián, next to Viguera, San Millán de la Cogolla, San Andrés de Cirueña, etc. Their role was clearly to support the repopulation of the different valleys in which they were located and in their areas of influence, thus, for example, San Martín de Albelda was located in the lower Iregua valley, San Millán in the Cárdenas river valley (see F. García Andruva, 2009, 2010a, 2010b).

The study of the ethnic or geographical origin of the inhabitants of High Rioja was a topic of interest because this area was a border area, but it raised many complex problems. In the resumption of monastic life in San Millán there must have been some Navarrese contribution, perhaps promoted by the monarchy itself, and a similar contribution could have been made in Nájera, the habitual residence of the Pamplona monarchs. Likewise, a population of Castilian-Leonese roots was perceived, which coincided with that found in the monasteries of Cardeña and Valpuesta. Through the examination of onomastics, it could be inferred that there was never an Arab occupation in La Rioja Alta that went beyond military and (in some aspects) political control.

However, with the arrival of a large number of Mozarabs from all the territories of Al-Andalus and the Ebro valley, everything was renewed and lived a time of splendour and well-being. However, it was difficult to judge the penetration of people from the bordering areas to La Rioja. Regarding the Basque language, its influence did not reach the Cárdenas river basin, nor that of the Najerilla, so it should not be surprising that in the centre of the domain of San Millán hardly any Basque elements appeared. On the other hand, in the valleys of the Tirón and the Oja not only were major Basque place names collected, but there were also many minor ones, especially in the valley of Ojacastro, where this language was still spoken in the 13th century.

3.7. After the Muslim occupation of La Rioja, according to these authors, the survival of the Emilian monastic community from the 8th century onwards was more difficult to prove, although historians not only analysed ancient documents, but also archaeological remains, and never gave up interpreting the facts. The continuity of the monastery until the first decades of the 10th century was one of the most extensively discussed issues by all researchers who delved into the study of the monastery, but they considered as a first working hypothesis that Christian influence could have been maintained during the period of domination of the Banu Qasi. Some oratories or rock churches that extended along the basins of the Riojan rivers assumed this.

Furthermore, it would be difficult to explain the rapidity with which monastic life grew in La Rioja after the reconquest, as demonstrated by the examples of the monasteries of San Martín de Albelda, San Millán de la Cogolla or San Prudencio de Monte Laturce. Such evidence was indicative of the condescension of the Banu Qasi and the role of the obligatory intermediary that the Riojan space played between Arab and Christian culture. On the other hand, it should not be forgotten that other monastic centres such as San Miguel de Pedroso, San Vicente del Valle or San Félix de Montes de Oca, closely linked to the Emilian monastery, showed clear signs of having adapted to different times, and of having maintained a spiritual life throughout the High Middle Ages.

In addition to there were several general aspects that favoured the continuity of a eremitic or cenobitic life in San Millán de Suso, and there were eminently archaeological arguments, supported by several scholars. M. Gómez Moreno, among others, argued for the possible antiquity of the caves, and the clearly Mozarabic character of the origins of the church of Suso. Other authors supported different arguments to resolve the problem of the continuity of religious life in San Millán.

G. Martínez Díaz also supported the thesis of the survival of the cult and memory of the saint's tomb between 714 and 923, although there was no reliable proof of the existence of a monastic community on the site during the same period of time. In fact, the first documentary evidence of the monastery of San Millán de Suso appeared in the 10th century. Thus, for example, codex *1007 B* (or *1729*) of the Historical Archive of Madrid seemed clearly Emilian, copied by Jimeno in San Millán in 933, that is, a decade after La Rioja was reconquered. Much more certainty was offered by codex *25* of the Royal Academy of History (a copy of the *Etymologies* of Isidore of Seville), prepared by the same scribe in 946. The first mention of an authentic document on San Millán de la Cogolla corresponded to the year 942.

3.8. Most of the peninsular monasteries encouraged, to a greater or lesser degree, the maintenance of a Latin culture, especially through ritual and religious readings. The royal protection enjoyed by San Millán gave it an aristocratic character, through which the kings of Pamplona or the Castilian count became its benefactors. Consequently, the Emilian monks left the work of the land in the hands of other men, while they dedicated their efforts to intellectual work. This circumstance favoured the formation of a library, perhaps not especially rich

during the High Middle Ages, but sufficient to correspond to a monastery of the importance of the Emilian one (whose enclosure undoubtedly exceeded that which has been preserved to this day), with texts of monastic orientation and works dedicated to grammatical and philological training, as was the case of the glossaries that exceeded in number what was usual in any place.

This library was already functioning regularly in the second quarter of the 10th century, and with a policy of open expansion of ecclesiastical literature with dense theological and moral content. In addition, due to its strategic location and its outstanding cultural development, the area (which included the dependent territories of Cardeña, Silos, San Martín de Albelda and of course San Millán) became a focus of permanent and enriching exchange of texts. In the library, Leonese and Castilian copies came together with others from Navarre, the Ebro valley and Andalusia, without forgetting the novelties from beyond the Pyrenees, with the introduction of esmaragdos, glossaries, etc. The relations with the Christian resistance centres of the Pyrenees were equally intense, and explained certain cultural currents that linked La Rioja with the east of the peninsula. The conciliar codex of San Millán reflected the Pyrenean-Catalan influence, which sometimes overlapped or was confused with that of the Narbonense or Septimania. Another fundamental aspect in both areas (Catalonia and La Rioja) was the production of lexicographic content, quantitatively and qualitatively superior to that of the rest of the peninsula.

The “Camino de Santiago” played a prominent role in these cultural relations, and meant a new element and a substantial cultural change for La Rioja. Between 780 and 820, the Church (which had been the institution most affected by Muslim penetration) it consolidated its real and theoretical position in the nascent Asturian kingdom. Around the second decade of the 9th century, a circumstance that consolidated the situation of the ecclesiastical hierarchy (and the very life of the kingdom) was the news of the discovery of the tomb of the apostle Santiago, on a mountain near the recently created seat of Iria Flavia. The place (called Compostela) immediately became a destination for pilgrimages, and at the beginning of the 12th century the apostle (whose remains were believed to be buried there) was erected as a symbol of Christian resistance against Islam.

From the 10th century onwards, the “Camino de Santiago” allowed monarchs to organise a route (the “French Way”) with certain services, although in its origin and heyday the Christian Church played a considerable role, and was part of the process of renewal of urban life, which was experienced simultaneously throughout Western Europe. A documented fact was that Godescalco (French bishop of Puy, on his pilgrimage to Compostela in 950) stopped at the monastery of San Martín de Albelda, in order to order a copy of the text *De Virginitate Beatae Mariae* by Ildelfonso de Toledo, which allowed us to know the quality of the codices produced in the offices of the Riojan monasteries, and the bibliographic agreement between the different monastic libraries (see J. A. García de Cortázar, 2004; C. García Turza and J. García Turza, 2000, 2001, 2004; F. Gimeno, 2004, 2024a, 2024b).

IV. Basque-Iberian Acculturation

Among the languages of pre-Roman Hispania, Iberian was the best documented, and allowed a phonological system of the textual material of the inscriptions (see A. Tovar, 1962). This culture had been the product of the arrival of new social groups (probably of North African origin) in the Neolithic to the entire Mediterranean coast from the south of France to the south of the Iberian Peninsula. In the first millennium BC, it was impacted by a Fenopunic-Greek acculturation, produced by the knowledge of new technical advances on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, as well as by the repeated contact with individuals from there who possessed a more advanced culture.

4.1. R. Menéndez Pidal (1923: 438-41) referred to the Basque language and its relationship with Iberian, and to the scant information given to us by Greek and Latin writers, as well as to the deductions drawn from Iberian toponymy and certain inscriptions and numismatic legends found in different localities in Spain. Moreover, this difficulty was twofold, because they were written (in most cases) in an unknown alphabet, behind which an equally unknown oral register was hidden.

In fact, Iberian appears only exceptionally with Latin characters, and only the inscriptions of Lusitania and Galicia occupy an exceptional position, to which (according to H. Schuchardt) one could perhaps assign some exceptional position between Celtic and Iberian. As for the script itself, not only is it not completely harmonious, but neither does the language contained in it. The scarce known Iberian material was collected conscientiously and methodically in the work of E. Hübner (*Monumenta linguae ibericae*, Berlin, 1893).

Despite the scarcity of these materials and the enormous difficulties presented by the etymology of the names of places and rivers, as well as the reading and interpretation of the aforementioned inscriptions and legends, the sagacity and science of various philologists (among whom stood out G. de Humboldt, Luchaire and, above all, H. Schuchardt) provided weighty arguments in favor of the relationship of Iberian, and in particular of one of its branches of Aquitaine with the Basque.

The Iberian inscriptions were attributed to the Celts, Hebrews, Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Greeks, Visigoths and more or less direct ancestors of the Basques, and among all these hypotheses the last seemed the

most serious. It was G. de Humboldt who presented the Ibero-Basque hypothesis in a scientific way. Although modern critics have believed that they have been able to definitively dismiss Humboldt's hypothesis, many of his comparisons and analogies have been confirmed by subsequent research. Thus, for example, this thesis was later brilliantly supported by H. Schuchardt in *Die Iberische Declination* (Vienna, 1907).

The characteristic features of the Basque language were studied by various authors and in a special way by the Dutchman C. C. Uhlenbeck, who found some similarities between the Basque pronouns and those of other ancient languages (Hebrew, Algonquin, etc.) without daring to draw conclusions from this fact, which could be due to simple coincidence. The vocalism of the Basque language was simple, and had five simple vowels (*a, e, i, o, u* and the sulletina *ü*) and although it could not be compared to the Uralo-Altaiic vowel harmony, it presented cases of progressive and regressive assimilation.

4.2. Initially, "Iberia" designated a specific area of the Mediterranean or South Atlantic strip of the Spanish coast, a name given to it by Greek writers, and very soon this name was extended to the entire coast. Later, this name included the interior territories until it came to designate the entire peninsula, and it was a geographical name. This concept was adopted by the Romans, when they called the entire Iberian Peninsula or its inhabitants, respectively, "Hispania" and "hispani". Regarding the possible Punic origin of the name Hispania, R. Lapesa (1942/1981: 15) recorded that in Phoenician it meant "land of rabbits".

From an archaeological reconstruction, L. Abad (1987: 172-80) suggested some clearly differentiating elements of Iberian culture: complex habitats, developed urban planning, the existence of a large religious and funerary sculpture, the use of the lathe, knowledge of writing from a very early age and the use of currency in the last centuries of independent existence. Iberian culture emerged as a consequence of the impact on the native populations of the small nuclei of eastern groups, traditionally identified with Phoenicians and Greeks, although under these names people of very diverse origins were included, who arrived on the coasts of the Iberian Peninsula from the second millennium onwards. Their degree of influence was very different on the different coasts of the peninsula, and if we add to this that the cultural development of the various Hispanic peoples was also different, it should not surprise us that neither the degree nor the process of Iberianization were homogeneous throughout the Iberian area.

Although we can identify the Iberians as indigenous people who inhabited the Mediterranean coasts, without forgetting that a large part of southeastern France was soon Iberianized, Iberian culture also spread inland and came to assimilate peoples who at first could not be considered Iberian, such as those of the Ebro valley or the Meseta. Iberian culture did not therefore represent an ethnic unity, but rather a cultural one, so it was not surprising that originally non-Iberian peoples (such as those in the interior of the peninsula) became culturally Iberian over the centuries, although there were regional and local differences specific to Iberian culture.

Tyre was an ancient Phoenician seaport founded in the 3rd millennium BC and was the main outlet for wood from the forests of Lebanon and for products from eastern Asia or Africa, brought to the west by caravans (via Damascus and later via the Red Sea). This city became a focus of Phoenician expansion in the Mediterranean (Sicily, the Iberian Peninsula and Africa), and its main foundation was Carthage, on the route to Gádir (now *Cádiz* in 814-813 BC), rich in precious metals (silver and tin). This exchange activity developed a flourishing trade and industry (monopoly of purple-dyed woolen fabrics, glass objects and shipbuilding) that ensured great prosperity.

During the 6th century BC, the crisis of the Tartessian culture (as a result of the submission of Tyre to the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar II, in 573 BC) was archaeologically manifested in a series of sites that showed a continuous evolution, and in almost all of them important changes took place between strata dated to somewhat before the year 600. From then on, the evolution of the Iberian culture was different in each of the regions, now subjected to new external influences, mainly Greek, but without forgetting (although at a more advanced stage) the Punic influence. In Andalusia, the Iberian resulted from the development of the previous Tartessian culture, but this was not so clear in the rest of the Iberian area.

The Iberian world was made up of a mosaic of peoples (Turdetans, Bastetanos, Contestanos, Oretanos, Edetanos, Ilercavones, Lacetans, Ilergetes, etc.). Between the 5th and 3rd centuries BC, the period of apogee of this culture materialized, known as the "first Iberian era", when cities were built and inhabited, sculpture was manifested, there was an increase in trade and the accumulation of wealth, as well as a good level of development. An emblematic reference of Iberian sculpture and art was the "La dama de Elche", whose face had the features and majestic perfection of the severe style Greek goddesses, in the first half of the 5th century BC.

Regarding Iberian writing, L. Abad (1987: 216-23) offered a brief state of the question on the strange character of this alphabet, which had already attracted the attention of scholars in the 16th century, and was one of the clearest testimonies of the high degree of development of the Iberians. Thus, Strabo pointed out that the Turdetans were the most cultured of the Iberians and had written laws and a "grammar" that were many years old. It was evident that in order to establish the value of each of the signs, it was necessary to go first to the bilingual coins, since they had a legend in Iberian characters and another in Latin characters, with the same meaning.

M. Gómez Moreno was able to see that some signs were alphabetic and others syllabic, and his phonetic transcriptions gave correct readings, although it was applicable only to the Levantine area, where there was a relatively high number of this type of coins. In the southeastern area (and less so in the southwest), the system obtained was only applicable to very general features, and it seemed indisputable that it was also a semi-syllabic system (alphabet composed of letters and syllables), but the value of the signs was not yet fully established.

The origin of this semi-syllabary was very difficult to determine and was subject to different interpretations. In the current state of our knowledge it seemed evident that Iberian writing had its origin in the south of the peninsula, and we could speak of a Tartessian script, which gave rise to Iberian writing over time. Most authors agreed on the assumption that the Iberian writing system was the result of a graphematic importation in the southeast and southwest by Tartessian groups in the 7th or 6th century BC, based on the knowledge of the Cypriot, Phoenician and Greek syllabaries. There were enough discrepancies between the Levantine and southeastern scripts to consider them distinct, although related, while the southeastern and southwestern scripts presented so many similarities that they seemed to be two variants of the same script.

4.3. In the cosmopolitan world of the East, J. de Hoz (1996: 195) referred to the existence of various social groups, including Phoenician merchants who were fully competent in various forms of writing, and knew their own alphabet and the Cypriot and Neo-Luwian syllabaries, both with their series of vowel syllabograms, and in particular the former with the vowel signs <a, e, i, o, u>, the same ones that we found in Greek and in some Paleo-Hispanic scripts. The Greeks did not invent the vowel signs, but the adapters of the Phoenician alphabet to other languages could combine the consonantal signs of the former with vowel signs, arising from the reinterpretation of the Phoenician laryngeal signs, and at the same time the concept of the vowel sign (common in their cultural domain), when they found it convenient to explicitly indicate the values of the vowels.

Regarding the origin and development of Paleo-Hispanic writings, J. de Hoz (1996: 201-3) summarized them in the following sections:

- 1) The first Paleo-Hispanic writing was derived from a model belonging to the tradition of the Western Semitic alphabet (probably Phoenician), although other stimuli from writing traditions were not improbable.
- 2) The creator of the new writing was Phoenician, since he must have had experience of various cultural traditions, although some radical transformations of the model were a very weak indication of the Tartessian creator.
- 3) The first Paleo-Hispanic writing could have been a semi-syllabary typologically identical to the Iberian one or a redundant, alphabetic or semi-syllabic writing.
- 4) The set of transformations could have occurred in a single go, at the time of creation, in which case the order of the Tartessian signary of Espanca (a new inscription of the southwestern script, on a slate plate found near Sete, Castro Verde, although without archaeological dating) would reflect the various steps of the creator of the Paleo-Hispanic script.
- 5) The script of the Espanca signary was not identifiable with the southwestern script, nor with the southeastern script, nor with the Levantine script. The former must have possibly originated in Tartessian, but it cannot be identified with certainty with that of the Espanca signary, since the latter contained not only the signs of the southwestern script, but also others that were not used in it. If the Tartessian script was not redundant, the redundancy that characterized the southwestern script would have developed in the process of transmission.
- 6) Southeastern writing is also believed to have been born from Tartessian writing, but the lack of evidence of southeastern writing in ancient times, and especially in the geographical vicinity of the Tartessian area, rendered any attempt to determine how it developed futile.
- 7) Geographical reasons, weakly supported by internal data, seemed to indicate that the Levantine script was born as an adaptation of the southeastern script. Since both were used to write down Iberian, the problem can only be resolved when we have more data on the area of use of the southeastern script, its variants and the languages for which it was used, if there were any others apart from Iberian.

In the late period (postartestic), there was a void in the valley of the Guadalquivir (with very few written texts), and it could be interpreted as a testimony that at this time the center of gravity of the Iberian culture had shifted towards the east, as a consequence of an important economic and cultural development that forced to make lasting notes. The Levantine script was the best known of all, since it was the one that presented the greatest number of bilingual coins and other types of documents, especially the lead coins. The writing was more regular than the southern one, and the value of almost all the signs was known. It seemed to be an evolution of that, although in some aspects a greater Greek influence could be seen, in accordance with the strong Greek impact in the southeast, and its date was in no case earlier than the 5th century BC.

4.4. In the non-Indo-European and Indo-European elements within pre-Roman history, J. A. Correa (2004) stated that inscriptions were known in Fenopunic, Greek, Iberian, Celtiberian and Lusitanian, in addition to an unidentified language that was ascribed to the Tartessian-Turdetanian world. The first two languages were clearly of extra-peninsular origin, and it could be argued that they did not go beyond the status of colonial varieties, which was clear in the case of Greek, but much less so in that of Phoenician-Punic. The remaining four languages were called Paleo-Hispanic varieties although two of them (Celtiberian and Lusitanian) because they were Indo-European ultimately had an extra-peninsular origin.

The Iberians used three different graphic systems, without a satisfactory explanation for this multiplicity of uses: two semi-syllabaries of Hispanic creation (the Levantine and the Southeastern, also called the Southern) and an alphabet of a very simple adaptation of the Greek (the Greco-Iberian). The Levantine semi-syllabary (late 5th century-late 1st century BC) was documented from the south of France to the city of Murcia, but its own territory ended at the Júcar River, where further south it clearly retreated towards the coast, and coexisted with the other two graphic systems. Most of the inscriptions were written in this semi-syllabary, which consisted of thirteen alphabetic signs and fifteen syllabic signs. Among the former were the five vowels and eight continuous signs (silbants, nasals, vibrant and lateral), and among the latter were the following occlusives with a vowel, without distinction of point of articulation: **ba be bi bo bu; ta te ti to tu; ka ke ki ko ku** (no graphic distinction in dental and velar occlusives between voiceless and voiced).

The southeastern semisyllabary (4th century BC-first third of the 1st century AD) was used from the Júcar River, far from the coast, and extended throughout the southeast. It was not yet fully deciphered, and the number of known inscriptions written in it was low. Despite the chronological data currently available, it has been considered for historical and geographical reasons that the Levantine semisyllabary originated from it. Although there were few testimonies, the Greco-Iberian alphabet had the advantage that all its signs were alphabetic, which were more indicative of the catalogue of its phonemes, and it was used safely in the 4th century BC, in a very restricted area of the provinces of Alicante and Murcia: a quadrilateral whose angles corresponded to Alcoy and Campello in Alicante, and Jumilla and Mula in Murcia (plus a lead found in Sagunto). Two semi-syllabaries were also used within this area.

Iberian had five vowel phonemes /a e i o u/, in which there was no data on a possible distinction in quantity. Although it was not easy to demonstrate, some of the features of the Romance languages were ultimately related to pre-Roman languages, and in this case it had to be taken into account that the penta-vocalic system of Castilian was similar to Basque and Iberian. Although in the past it could not be proven that there was a genetic relationship between Iberian and Basque, at present Basque-Iberianism has been confirmed, since it was unquestionable that there was a certain closeness in the phonological system, among other features, and that both languages shared anthroponymic elements (see F. Gimeno, 2019: 87-113).

4.5. The Roman acculturation of the northern half of the Iberian Peninsula began in the Ebro basin, along which the Romans laid out the main trade routes that linked the capital of Tarraconensis, on the Mediterranean coast, with the interior of the country. In parallel with this early Romanization, the various native languages were blurred in favour of Latin. Roman acculturation increased from T. Sempronius Gracchus, the founder of Gracchuris (today Alfaro), in 184 BC, until the dismemberment of the Empire due to Germanic acculturation.

La Rioja was probably the region in the north of the Peninsula that was most affected by the earliest and fastest Roman acculturation. The ancient onomastics of this area do not offer Basque names, but Latin ones. As for the relations between Basque and Latin, throughout antiquity and the Middle Ages, we must admit that, in the stage of Romanization of northern Hispania, many Latin words used by Roman colonists and legionaries passed directly into the Basque language. Later, other, already evolved, words were taken from the Romance languages spoken in the territories adjacent to the Basque Country (see S. Segura and J. M. Etxebarria, 1996: 11-2).

Furthermore, on the Basque-Iberian acculturation in the Romance languages, M. Echenique (2004) offered various considerations on the Basque-Romance contact, since Basque as a pre-Romance language was the only Paleo-Hispanic language to survive the Roman acculturation of the Iberian Peninsula. First, it coexisted with Latin (from which it received numerous lexical transfers, as well as other syntactic ones), and then with the Romance languages (mainly with Riojan, Aragonese, Navarrese, Occitan-Gascon and later with French), in whose contacts the transfers that the Romance languages influenced on Basque were undoubtedly more effective than the other way around, without implying the displacement of the Basque language, within a situation of broad diglossia (see C. A. Ferguson, 1959; F. Gimeno and M. V. Gimeno, 2003: 31-48; F. Gimeno, 2024d).

Likewise, regarding the oral formation process of the Riojan vocalism, the author explained that it came from Basque-Latin bilingualism and the formation of the proto-Romance variants. In effect, this process was inseparable from the close proximity and contact with the reality of the Basque language, and at the beginning of the 10th century the entire west of the province of Logroño (from the Najerilla river) spoke Basque and Riojan, just as it is well known that in the 13th century Basque was still spoken in the valley of Ojacastró .

4.6. Regarding Iberian and Basque, in his monograph on the stratigraphy and chronology of prehistoric populations (Indo-Europeans, Iberians, Basques and their relatives), F. Villar (2014: 259-71) examined at length the question of Basque-Iberianism, the durability of which has thus been confirmed once again. The identity between Iberian and Basque was the only reasonable hypothesis, since all the favorable indications that had been provided up to now (for example, the very wide coincidence between the first ten numerals, the vowel system, constituent morphemes, etc.) responded to the common pre-Roman heritage. Languages from the Tartessian territory and Lusitanian also belonged to it.

Our specific working hypothesis was that this vowel system was a clear Semitic influence of Iberian on the vocalism of Basque and Castilian. Regarding Basque-Iberian acculturation in Hispanic romances and mainly in Rioja, the most important transfer was undoubtedly the substitution of the Latin-colloquial vocalism (according to the reconstruction for the late period of Latin) by the calque of the phonological variants of the penta-vocalic system, within the Basque-Romance bilingualism of the different Basque-speaking social groups of their speech community, who did not know the quantity oppositions.

Furthermore, in the mid-10th century, the Basque glosses (GLEmil [31] *izioqui dugu* and GLEmil [42] *guez ajutuez dugu*) of the *Glosas Emilianenses* assumed that in a place near San Millán de la Cogolla there coexisted (in addition to Basque and Riojan) medieval Latin (as the language of Christian worship and official documents), the Occitan of the Frankish immigrants together with its very marked Gascon variety (both used in very distinct official documents) and Hebrew, as well as the Mozarabic of the immigrants from the south. The Basque-Romance contact therefore occurred in a multicultural context of social multilingualism, less linked to Roman acculturation (see C. García Turza, 2003, 2023).

In the reconstruction of the Basque language, a system of five oral vowels with three degrees of opening could be observed, without any trace of the opposition of quantity. The Riojan vocalism (as well as that of Aragonese and Asturian, which presented a system identical to that of the Basque language) had, consequently, its origin in the Basque-Romance bilingualism of the different social groups within the Basque-speaking community, and not in the vocalism of Hispanic Latin in the Pyrenean area and surrounding Hispanic areas. In addition, these Riojan-speaking groups consolidated the Romance diphthongization of the two open stressed vowels of colloquial Latin (*e* and *o*), although this diphthongization existed in other Romance languages, but in none of them did the diphthongs completely replace the two open vowels (see M. T. Echenique, 1983, 2013; F. Gimeno, 2024b).

Compared to English dialects, which have between sixteen and twenty vowel phonemes, Spanish behaves like other languages of the world, which maintain a simple and archaic model of between three and five vowels and assign the main character of the phonological structure to the consonant system. Without a doubt, Basque-Iberian acculturation determined the vocalism of Spanish, and its concise simplicity facilitates teaching as a first foreign language (see F. Gimeno 2023a, 2023b).

V. Conclusions

1. Acculturation has been an essential characteristic of human history. Acculturation was the name given to all cultural events that resulted from the acquisition, modification or reinterpretation of a culture, in particular reception and assimilation of cultural elements from one social group by another, with adaptation to a new sociocultural context. The term acculturation was widely accepted among American anthropologists in the late 19th century, in order to refer to the changes that occurred when social groups with different cultural traditions came together.

2. Within the anthropological history of the Hispanic Romance languages there was a linguistic and cultural continuity, based on the successive and diverse historical acculturations (Indo-European, Basque-Iberian, Fenopunic-Greek, Roman, Christian, Germanic, Visigothic, Byzantine, Islamic, Castilian, Catalan-Aragonese, Hispanic and Anglo-Saxon), with the linguistic and cultural transfers that implied the social and cultural mixing of these groups, and the adaptation to a new sociocultural context. One of the most assiduously maintained principles in historical linguistics was acculturation.

3. Iberian had five vowel phonemes /a e i o u/, in which there was no data on a possible distinction in quantity. Although it was not easy to demonstrate, some of the features of the Romance languages were ultimately related to pre-Roman languages, and the penta-vocalic system of Castilian was the same as Basque and Iberian. Although in the past it could not be proven that there was a genetic relationship between Iberian and Basque, at present Basque-Iberianism has been confirmed, since it was unquestionable that there was a similarity in the vowel phonological system, among other features. The Phoenician merchants were fully proficient in several forms of writing, and knew their own alphabet and the Cypriot and Neo-Luwian syllabaries, both with their series of vowel syllabograms, and in particular the former with the vowel signs <a, e, i, o, u>, the same ones found in Greek and in some Paleo-Hispanic scripts.

4. Our specific working hypothesis was that this vowel system was a clear Semitic influence of the Iberian on the vocalism of Basque and Castilian, and it is confirmed. With respect to the Basque-Iberian acculturation in Hispanic romances and mainly in Rioja, the most important transfer was without a doubt the substitution of the Latin-colloquial vocalism by the calque of the phonological variants of the penta-vocalic system. Of course, within the Basque-Romance bilingualism of the different Basque-speaking social groups of their speech community, those who did not know the oppositions of quantity.

5. Historical sociolinguistics considered the need to materialize the most plausible working hypotheses on the historical, sociological and cultural reconstruction of the processes of oral formation and written normalization of the Romance languages, based on empirical principles for a grammatical theory of linguistic change. The main hypothesis of the history of humanity as a succession of acculturations was more appropriate to the continuity of history itself. The intrinsic relationship between linguistics, sociology and anthropology is confirmed, and both the history of languages in contact and of linguistic change formed part of acculturation. Historical sociolinguistics opened new possibilities for understanding the social and cultural dynamics of the historical processes of linguistic change.

6. Languages were excellent instruments of expression and communication of the cognitive development of social groups in the anthropological history of humanity and had to be considered within the biological process of children's acquisition of languages. Such acquisition was subject to the combined action of nature and education, just as its innate character was the necessary basis for acculturation. In the lexical differences between languages we must implicitly accept the notion that there existed an underlying universal matrix of semantic features and a set of universal rules of semantic selection, syntactic ordering and phonological selection that established the basic patterns of human cognition. Languages were specific to human beings.

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