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Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaften
Histoire des sciences du langage

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An International Handbook on the Evolution of the
Study of Language from the Beginnings to the Present

Ein internationales Handbuch zur Entwicklung der
Sprachforschung von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart

Manuel international sur l'évolution de l'étude
du langage des origines à nos jours

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Editors' Foreword

1. General introduction

1.1 Definition

In this Handbook the term 'history of the language sciences' will be used to denote the development of linguistic theories (ideas, proposals of analysis, explanations, methodological frameworks) as well as the organizational structures of their implementation, dissemination and teaching throughout the documented history of humankind. The regular use of the term 'linguistics' in this Handbook should not be taken as in any way implying a strict definition of the field. In a strict sense the term might be taken to be applicable only to the modern period in which linguistics was recognized as a separate discipline with its own well-defined principles of research and professional organization. However, in many linguistic traditions a special place was assigned within the general scheme of knowledge to the science that dealt with language. Even though the delimitation of this science with respect to topics and methods may differ between traditions, in a general sense these traditions are all related in that they regard language as a subject to be studied in its own right. 'Linguistics' will therefore be used as a general term for everything connected with the study of human speech. Obviously, the circumscription of the field itself is one of the topics to be dealt with in the analysis of its history, as will the subdivision of the field into various branches as well as its connection with other disciplines.

In most branches of linguistics an historical introduction surveying the development of the discipline has always been standard practice. Accordingly, most of the other handbooks in the present series contain historical chapters, whose main purpose is to sketch the development of a particular line of research leading up to contemporary commitments. This purpose differs, of course, from the one adopted in the present Handbook, which aims at the presentation of linguistic theories, of both past and present, in their own right. The focus in this presentation is on the explanation of their development, in terms of their own internal dynamic as well as in terms of external factors of social and cultural development in the society in which they are embedded.

As in all histories of a particular field, the relationship between the discipline to be studied, on the one hand, and the discipline which analyzes on a metalevel its methods, presuppositions and historical development, on the other, is a complex one. Linguistic historiography, as the discipline which analyzes the development of linguistics, has to be distinguished carefully from the object of its study. Although most historiographers of linguistics are themselves linguists, their goal must be different from that of linguists in that they attempt to explain the development of linguistics without passing value judgments of the theories involved. Typically, historiographers of linguistics aim at the elucidation of lines of development within the field within a particular cultural, socio-economic or political setting, and their interaction with other disciplines at different points in time, avoiding any kind of 'tunnel vision'.

Fundamentally, the aim of the historiography of linguistics differs from that of linguistics in that the historiographer does not aim at the elucidation of linguistic facts, but rather, at the elucidation of how scholars in different traditions approached the problems of language structure and language use. This also means that for the historiographer all approaches are equally relevant: there is no value scale in these approaches, let alone a cumulative development of the discipline up till the present time. For the historiographer, the past of the discipline cannot serve as the legitimization of its present state.

1.2 Scope

In the definition given above, the coverage of the Handbook has already been indicated as presenting all ideas about language and languages within the context of their development. It attempts to encompass as much as possible all studies, theoretical and practical, of language as a means of human communication throughout history. With the inclusion of practical studies we aim in particular at examining the work done in (pedagogical) grammar, lexicography, translation and any other activity concerned with language, analyzed as a function of the historical setting in which they took place.

There is one important exclusion to be mentioned here. The Handbook will only deal with those studies of language that have been laid down in written form of some kind. This means that so-called folk-linguistics has been reserved for other handbooks, such as the one dealing with Sociolinguistics. The same exclusion applies to empirical studies concerned with language attitudes: although language attitudes play an important role in the establishment of linguistic ideas and theories, they have been dealt with only insofar as they are mentioned explicitly in linguistic treatises.

Obviously, certain overlaps between individual handbooks in the present series have been inevitable. For instance, it is not always possible to distinguish sharply between the subject matter of the History of Linguistics and that of the Philosophy of Language, in particular in some of the non-Western traditions such as Chinese or Sanskrit, in which linguistics and philosophy of language are linked inextricably. As a result, both the present Handbook and the one dealing with the Philosophy of Language contain historical sections on major philosophical traditions dealing with language. In the case of the ancient Greek tradition, for instance, the work of Plato, Aristotle and the Stoics, or the work of the late medieval language philosophers is also studied in the present Handbook, though from the perspective of their relevance for the study of language, rather than merely touching upon the interface between philosophy and linguistics.

An important aspect of the present Handbook is its dedicated attempt at a complete coverage, both geographically and chronologically, of all linguistic traditions. This means that every effort has been made to go far beyond the traditional Eurocentric accounts which typically include a section on the work of the Sanskrit grammarians because (and only inasmuch as) they have become a point of interest to the discovery of the Indo-European language family, or a section on classical Arabic linguistics as an alibi rather than because a dedicated effort is made to break through the Western (claim to) hegemony. Alternatively, when non-Western traditions have been incorporated in recent years into general histories of linguistics, the emphasis has usually been on major figures, such as Pāṇini (for Sanskrit) or Sībawayhi (for Arabic). Our aim in the present Handbook has been to include as much as possible all linguistic traditions, both major and minor ones, in an effort to offer a picture that is as complete as possible of all

different forms the study of language has taken throughout the centuries. Obviously, this ideal has not always been reached: for some traditions the documentation is insufficient. Thus, for instance, we were unable to include articles on the Ethiopian or the Cambodian linguistic tradition, to mention just two examples. In other cases, we were forced to cancel an article for purely practical reasons since it turned out to be impossible to find a competent author or the author we had invited could not deliver the article in time for inclusion in the Handbook.

A major problem has been the chronological delimitation of the Handbook with regard to the contemporary period. Although it would no doubt have been simpler to exclude recent developments in linguistics, we have decided not to take this course. It goes without saying that the historiographical analysis of contemporary linguistics can only be undertaken with special caution, even more so when those surveying the development of a given sub-branch of the field are also engaged in purely linguistic research and thus may find it difficult to detach themselves from their own research activities. In the subdivision of the subject matter in the final chapters of the Handbook and in the choice of authors we have tried to steer away as much as possible from biased accounts of modern currents and developments. At the same time, we believe that by presenting recent developments from a historiographical perspective we contribute towards a better understanding of the place and importance of a historical perspective to current pursuits within the discipline.

1.3 Themes

The editors of the present Handbook have attempted to deviate, as much as possible, from the traditional treatment that depicts the history of linguistics through a succession of great men, even if at times, especially for 19th and 20th century linguistics, such an approach imposed itself. However, it is not clear whether this would hold for earlier periods in the West or much earlier linguistic activity in the East. Even in cases where the articles focus on the contributions of individual linguists, the emphasis is on the specific themes, lines of linguistic thinking, research commitments and the connection of the individual linguist with the development of the tradition.

Given the enormous diversity, geographical, chronological, and thematic, of all the traditions involved, it is rather difficult to identify central themes that guide the approach taken here. However, we may point to the following considerations which underlie the selection of topics, the presentation of the subject matter as well as the organization and analysis of the material.

A central theme is the analysis of the development of linguistics in terms of 'mainstream' and 'undercurrent'. The organization of linguistic research in the Western tradition is such that, although it is possible to distinguish in each period research programs with a general validity for a large part of the scholarly community, there has never been a monopoly of one 'paradigm' over another. In contrast to the usual presentation of the history of the sciences, changes of direction do not normally take place in the form of sudden collapses of previous commitments and revolutionary innovations, but more often than not as a gradual alternation between 'mainstream' preoccupations and 'undercurrent' developments. This implies that along with the paradigm prevalent during a given period, other research programs (if such a modern concept can usefully be applied to earlier centuries) usually remain in force as more or less marginal movements

within the scholarly community, at least one of which frequently returns to the foreground in the course of time and develops into a new 'mainstream' preoccupation.

In connection with the view of the history of linguistics just sketched, it is worth mentioning here that there appears to be at least one constant alternation between two diametrically opposed views on the methodology of the discipline of linguistics. Periods in which language is treated as an ideal structure, used in an ideal communicative situation with an ideal speaker/hearer, alternate with periods in which attention focuses on the variety and variability inherent in the phenomenon of speech. This alternation is very obvious in the 19th century, for example in the interaction between the comparative framework and the emergence of dialectology as the study of speech variety. The mainstream/undercurrent treatment of history suggests that both tendencies never completely supplanted each other, but always coexisted in varying degrees of monopolization vs. marginalization. In 20th-century linguistics one can observe a very similar alternation between the prevalent emphasis on the systematic and ideal structure of language and a seemingly growing interest in phenomena of variation in human speech and the function of language in actual communicative situations.

The mainstream/undercurrent dichotomy may also be seen to apply to more or less all linguistic activities in language departments all over the world. Regardless of the prevailing paradigms, linguists continue to occupy themselves with the grammar, history, lexicon, and structure of individual languages or language families. This, too, is part of the total picture of the history of linguistics, and must be included in a Handbook like the present, along with the practical aspects of linguistic study mentioned earlier.

One overriding concern has been the desire to avoid any kind of *Systemzwang* in the classification of the material and the subdivision in chapters and articles. The large number of contributors with differing backgrounds and areas of specialization should guarantee a broad choice of perspectives. Any attempt to force the analysis of the history of linguistics into a narrow classificatory scheme is bound to fail; such an attempt would distort the facts and obscure the developmental changes in each tradition. As mentioned above, a biographical approach has been avoided, but even so some articles have been included devoted to the achievements and ideas of one personality or one particular group of scholars within the context of an overall picture of the development.

The absence of a narrow organizational frame has another consequence for the presentation of the material. We have not made a choice between a data-oriented and a theory-oriented approach, since we believe that an exclusive choice in favor of either approach would have led to a biased perspective and a distorted picture of the linguistic activity in any culture. In some instances, it turned out to be more appropriate to focus on the results and products of a theory or a period; in other instances, the analysis of the methods, presuppositions and underlying principles of a research program provided a better picture of the tradition involved. Indeed, these two approaches complement each other in the analysis of the different trends and lines of developments in the history of the language sciences.

1.4 State of the art

Although the scope of the present Handbook is unprecedented, it builds on the result of earlier scholarship to some extent. As a separate discipline with its own professional organization, journals, and series, the historiography of the language sciences may be

said to have started in the late 1960s and early 1970s. This does not mean that prior to the 1960s there were no histories of linguistics. In several non-Western traditions histories of the discipline were a standard component of the curriculum. Arab grammarians, for instance, made use of large biographical dictionaries in which the work of earlier grammarians was discussed. Such histories were dedicated exclusively to the history of one tradition only. In Western linguistics, historical introductions were usually connected with the treatment of specific languages or language groups, or in conjunction with studies devoted to particular linguistic topics, for instance phonology or semantics, where earlier endeavours were delineated.

Yet general surveys of the history of linguistic theory have been produced earlier than the 1960s, perhaps beginning with François Thurot's "Tableau des progrès de la science grammaticale" attached as *Discours préliminaire* to his 1796 translation of James Harris' *Hermes* (1751) which has been suggested to constitute "a first attempt at a historiography of grammar". Important historical accounts appeared by the mid-19th century, beginning with the 3-volume *Die Sprachphilosophie der Alten* by Laurenz Lersch (1838–41). Indeed, classical philology dominated the field, to the exclusion not only of traditions other than those of the Greeks, Romans, and possibly that of the Ancient Indians, but also of the more recent periods in the history of linguistic thought, from the Middle Ages to the present. A typical example of this is Steinthal's *Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft bei den Griechen und Römern* (1863) which largely deals with language philosophy, not linguistics proper.

The last third of the 19th century witnessed the beginning of history-writing of these later periods in the works of Benfey (1869), Raumer (1870), Delbrück (1880, especially from the 4th ed. of 1904 onwards), and Bursian (1883), though generally conceived with a presentist bias. The Eurocentric treatment of past linguistic ideas has prevailed to the present day, though treatises on the development of Hebrew and Arabic grammar have begun to appear from the late 19th century onwards. Although the 1960s saw the publication of a fairly large number of textbooks devoted to the history of linguistics, it appears that only during the 1970s a greater awareness of the desirability of a much wider scope began to emerge. This newer trend is evident in the 2-volume *Historiography of Linguistics* undertaking published in 1975 as the last volume of the "Current Trends in Linguistics" series edited by Thomas A. Sebeok, which also includes surveys of linguistic traditions in the Far East and the Americas. It should be noted, however, that 'historiography' in most of the contributions to these volumes is understood as overviews of the "recent literature devoted to the history of the study of language" during the respective periods of Western linguistics or the non-Western traditions more generally, and not to actual history-writing as the term usually implies.

The present project follows instead the line of historiography of linguistic thought as has become more clearly articulated since the appearance, late in 1973, of the first journal exclusively devoted to the subject, *Historiographia Linguistica*. It was soon followed by the launching of regional as well as international societies for the history of the language sciences and the organization of scholarly meetings both in Europe and North America in which not only particular past linguistic theories were discussed and certain traditions presented but also questions of methodology and epistemology of historiographical research and presentation were addressed. The advances made in recent years in this field of study are best seen in the contributions to *Historiographia Linguistica*, the journals *Histoire – Épistémologie – Langage* (Paris, 1979–) and *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft* (Münster, 1991–), and the proceedings of

the triennial International Conference on the History of the Language Sciences (ICHoLS). The 1980s, finally, saw the publication of monographs devoted to questions of philosophy, theory, and method of linguistic historiography that have guided much of recent research. These debates are continuing.

About the time the present project was first discussed, Peter Schmitter launched his *Geschichte der Sprachtheorie* (Tübingen, 1987–), a monograph series covering various areas and periods in the history of linguistics, of which 4 have thus far been published (of altogether 9 projected volumes). With comparable goals, Sylvain Auroux has brought together a 3-volume *Histoire des idées linguistiques* (Brussels, 1990–2000), followed by a 5-volume *History of Linguistics* edited by Giulio Lepschy (London, 1994–). In the meantime, E. F. K. Koerner and R. E. Asher brought out their 500-page *Concise History of the Language Sciences: From the Sumerians to the Cognitivists* (Oxford, 1995), which not only offers a survey of the most important traditions but also a fairly up-to-date treatment of the various schools, theories, and strands in 20th-century linguistics not found in any of these multi-volume histories. We will have to wait until the publication of tome III of the present project for a fuller account of 20th-century linguistic science.

For information on the large majority of the main figures in the history of world linguistics the 1,000-page *Lexicon grammaticorum* (Tübingen, 1996), directed by Harro Stammerjohann, will be the main sourcebook for many years to come.

1.5 Structure of the Handbook

The Handbook has for the most part been organized in terms of chronological development. It was necessary to depart from this principle especially in the chapters devoted to the various non-Western traditions, which are depicted in parallel fashion, irrespective of chronology, although they often constitute independent traditions in geographically separate places. In some cases where the main impetus for the establishment of a tradition was derived from foreign influence, the treatment of this tradition has been connected with that of the mother tradition. This decision was taken, for instance, in the case of Armenian and Georgian linguistics, which are dealt within the chapter on the Greek tradition, or Coptic and Turkic linguistics, which are dealt with in the chapter on the Arabic tradition, and Vietnamese linguistics, which is dealt within the chapter on the Chinese tradition. Since most traditions at one time or another have undergone the influence of other traditions, this division has a certain arbitrariness and should not be taken as a judgment on the intrinsic value of the tradition in question.

The Greek and Latin traditions have been instrumental in the development of the Western linguistic tradition, but are treated here independently from their role in the post-Renaissance period. The indebtedness of post-Renaissance linguistics to Greek and Latin grammar is obvious, but the continuity between them has sometimes been exaggerated: there is certainly more to Greek and Latin grammar than just a preparation for mainstream Western linguistics. From the Greek and Latin linguistic traditions onwards chronological treatment has been kept more consistently down to the end of the Middle Ages.

Thereafter the Handbook describes the prevalent modes of Western linguistics, beginning with the period in which the Western European vernaculars began to be used both as objects and as media of research, i.e., as metalanguages. From this time onwards

linguistic study is no longer concerned with a single language as object and as point of reference. The geographic spread of these ideas and research practices throughout Europe, the Americas and beyond after 1500, and their subsequent modification has severely tested a chronological treatment.

Another important change in the history of linguistics occurred during the 19th century through the development of comparative and historical linguistics as a dominant paradigm of the period. The shift towards synchronic linguistics at the beginning of the 20th century has become characteristic of the entire century. As the theories and methods of these two centuries have been exported to most of the non-Indo-European countries ever since they first emerged, they receive broad treatment in the present Handbook.

The presentation of the history of the language sciences in the West along established lines (Middle Ages, Renaissance, Enlightenment, 19th century, 20th century) has at times been challenged. In the present Handbook the chronological labels have been maintained for practical reasons; however, the subdivision into chapters has been determined by a thematic ordering of the subject, in terms of the mainstream/undercurrent dichotomy referred to above as well as other considerations of substance. For the most recent developments in linguistics a chronological ordering was, of course, out of the question; we have attempted here to concentrate on the methodological similarities and differences between existing theories as well as on the connections between linguistics and related disciplines (sociology, psychology, neurology, logic, mathematics, etc.). This aspect of the interrelatedness of linguistics within the human sciences is, indeed, one of the most characteristic features of modern linguistics.

2. Description of Individual Chapters

Chapter I deals with the Near Eastern traditions, in which the study of language mostly consisted in the study of the writing system and the lexicon. On the other hand, the coexistence of various stages of the language, or of several cultural languages, forced the specialists to occupy themselves with the codification of grammar as well.

Chapter II deals with the Chinese tradition. Most of the linguistic activities in China concentrated on phonology and lexicology, but in relation with philosophical theories a number of important ideas about the nature of the linguistic sign, both phonic and graphic, were developed. Preoccupation with language as a literary medium played, of course, an important role in Chinese society. Two linguistic traditions, namely, those of Korea and Japan, dealt with in Chapters III and IV, incorporated the Chinese heritage to a large extent. In the situation of bilingualism which persisted in both areas, there was room for a contrastive analysis of grammatical systems. In the case of the Japanese tradition, an interesting aspect was the introduction of Dutch grammar as a model in the period called Rangakusha.

Chapter V is devoted to one of the major non-Western traditions, that of India. The Sanskrit tradition has received quite a lot of attention in recent linguistic literature, since it boasts the first attempt to give a complete description of a language with the help of a linguistic formalism, Pāṇini's *Astādhyāyī*. An important aspect of the Indian tradition is the relation between linguistics, logic and philosophy. Two sections are devoted to the use of the Indian model in Old Javanese and Burmese. Indian grammar

played an important role in the development of the two linguistic traditions dealt with in Chapters VI and VII, devoted to Dravidic and Tibetan linguistics, in which indigenous elements were combined with the Indian heritage.

The Hebrew tradition, treated in Chapter VIII, was developed in connection with the exegesis of religious writings; in its later development it took over many elements from the Arabic tradition, to the extent where Arabic was even used as the primary medium. An important aspect of this tradition is that it contained the first attempt to establish a comparative relationship between the Semitic languages. In the Arabic tradition (Chapter IX), too, the relationship between language and religion was an important determinant in the development of ideas about the nature and origin of speech. Linguistics as a separate discipline began with the complete and systematic account of the language in Sībawayhi's *Kitāb*. The Arabic model was used for the description of other languages, such as Malay, Persian, Turkish and Coptic. The special interest of the Syriac tradition (Chapter X) is the fact that it combined elements from two linguistic traditions, Greek and Arabic.

In most histories of linguistics the Greek linguistic tradition (Chapter XI) is analyzed primarily in its role as the model for Latin and subsequently the entire Western tradition. In such an approach those aspects of the tradition that were not taken over tend to be neglected. What is aimed at here is a description of Greek linguistic tradition in its own right. The first sections are loosely ordered chronologically, highlighting, for the earlier period, the interdependence of philosophy and grammar and, for the later period, the philological tradition and the technical side of grammar on the basis of Dionysios Thrax' *Téchnè*. There are separate sections dealing with the role of grammar in education and the relationship between linguistics and other sciences. The translation of Thrax' *Téchnè* provided the point of departure for many indigenous traditions, such as Georgian, Armenian, Syriac and Old Church Slavonic.

The Greek tradition also served as an important model for the Latin tradition (Chapter XII), which culminated in the many treatises by Charisius, Donatus, and Priscian later assembled in the *Corpus Grammaticorum Latinorum*. These descriptions of Latin served as the starting point for the continuous traditions of the study of Latin in the early Middle Ages. Special sections in this Chapter are dedicated to grammar and rhetoric, and to the relationship between language and revelation in Christian theology. In the early Middle Ages (Chapter XIII) the cultivation of Latin was the determining factor in the development of linguistics. Special sections deal with linguistics and theology, linguistics and the system of sciences, and linguistics in society. In the later Middle Ages a distinction is made between the development of linguistic theory (*grammatica speculativa*) and the development of grammatical description (*grammatica positiva*). Speculative grammar (Chapter XIV) deals with the linguistic theory of the Modistae, and the relationship between linguistics and logic, theology, and other sciences in the late Middle Ages.

Chapter XV deals with the continuous tradition of the study of Latin in the late Middle Ages. A new development during this period was the use of the Latin model for various vernaculars, such as Irish, Welsh, Icelandic, English and Slavic languages. The last article of this Chapter describes the intrusion of vernaculars as literary language in poetics/stylistics. In subsequent Chapters the perspective changes and the vernaculars become languages in their own right which can be used at the metalinguistic level.

Chapter XVI deals with the re-awakening of interest in the classical languages, Latin and Greek, and the cultural content transmitted in these languages leads, in the course of the 15th century, to a reorientation in (Western) linguistics. It treats the caesura introduced by this shift in direction. Chapter XVII deals with the parallel development of an active interest, at first chiefly among merchants and soon thereafter among the aristocracy, in the vernaculars which Humanism had in effect revalorized, and a regular language learning process sets in. The transfer of humanistic ideas to the vernaculars paves the way for a grammatical (and lexical) description of vernacular literary texts (Chapter XVIII). The next step in the increased importance of the vernaculars is characterized by the development of rules and regulations for these languages, in effect to the establishment of a norm (Chapter XIX).

The discovery of the New World by Portuguese and Spaniards (and subsequently by the English, French and Dutch), which occurred about the same time as the re-awakening of interest in the classical languages, introduces Europeans to 'exotic' languages. These are first studied not for their own sake, but for practical, including political, reasons, notably for missionary purposes (Chapter XX). Only in the course of the 17th century is linguistic theory gaining attention; particularly in the 18th century do theoretical discussions take center space (Chapter XXI). The revalorization of the vernaculars and the declaration of their equal footing with the classical languages also leads to theoretical considerations; in the first phase of development these interests lead largely to discussions about the origin of languages (Chapter XXII). In the next phase these theoretical considerations lead to investigations into the origin and development of individual national languages. In this situation the relationship between these national languages takes on a special role (Chapter XXIII).

Chapter XXIV deals with the development and formal establishment of comparative-historical Indo-European linguistics in the first half of the 19th century, before the backdrop of a long-standing tradition of philological studies and literary interests in language, and with the establishment of academic positions and programs in this emerging field of study. Chapter XXV delineates the progressive professionalization of linguistics during the second half of the 19th century, including the establishment and proliferation of specialist journals, the creation of chairs for the 'new philologies', i.e., languages and language groups other than the traditional classical ones, Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit.

Chapter XXVI presents the evolution of the 'comparative method' developed within historical-comparative Indo-European philology for the reconstruction of earlier stages of languages and the assumed protolanguage. Further, it accounts for the application of the 'comparative method' to language families other than Indo-European, such as Finno-Ugric, African, Austronesian, and American Indian languages, since the second half of the 19th century.

Chapter XXVII delineates the vicissitudes in the evolution of ideas concerning the classification of languages according to morpho-syntactic organization of the early 19th century, through the development of sophisticated typological systems between 1850 (Steinthal) and 1921 (Sapir), to later 20th-century concerns for the discovery of structural unity within the diversity in languages worldwide, including the search for and the construction of universal grammars.

Chapter XXVIII depicts the development of methods of data elicitation in the 19th century and the parallel development of the scientific study of sound and sound production, the growing importance of phonetics in the teaching of modern languages, the

establishment of universal alphabets for the transcription of unwritten languages, and the beginnings of dialectology. Chapter XXIX shows the evolution of the study of meaning in 19th-century linguistics, from the modest proposals made by Reisig and his followers, via the preoccupation with semantic change toward the close of the 19th century, and the 'Wörter und Sachen' approach in the first half of the 20th century. At the same time, contemporary work in dictionary-making is given its due. Chapter XXX deals with the early impact of psychology and physiology on linguistic studies in the 19th century, the relationship between linguistics and psychology especially in the work of Wundt, and emanating from the work of Broca, Wernicke and others, the development of research devoted to language and the brain, in particular the study of aphasia. Early investigations in first-language acquisition, too, reflect the emergence of psycholinguistics as an important area of interdisciplinary study.

Chapter XXXI is devoted to the evolution of the structural principle in European linguistics from its beginnings in the 19th century until the present day. Particular attention is given to the establishment of various post-Saussurean schools, trends, and research programs from the Geneva school at the beginning of the 20th century to the eventual exportation of structuralist concepts to other disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, literary theory, and psychology. Chapter XXXII traces the origin and development of the distinctly North American approach to language, its ethnolinguistic tradition developed during the 19th century as a result of the recognition of the importance of American Indian languages and the impact of Humboldtian ideas of language structure and perception, the establishment of anthropological linguistics, and the development of several parallel descriptive approaches. It also includes an account of the history of glottochronology and lexicostatistics as an outgrowth of the interest in establishing an historical dimension to languages without a written tradition.

Chapter XXXIII is devoted to the development of 20th-century linguistic theory in which the emergence of generative linguistics is central. It deals with the early formalization efforts of the 1940s and 1950s inside and outside of American descriptivist linguistics, and it depicts the influx of mathematical models and computer-assisted translation programs into linguistic theorizing and the various alternatives to Chomskyan linguistics, most of which take their cue from the generativist framework in one form or another.

Chapter XXXIV depicts the various traditions and trends in 20th-century semantics, only a small number of which can be traced back to Saussurean proposals. It includes articles on Firthian contextualism and generative semantics as well as on lexicology, lexicography, onomastics, etymology, and the influence of Peircian semiotics on semantic investigations, both synchronic and diachronic. Chapter XXXV accounts for the various strands of phonological and morphological inquiry in the later 20th century, from Chomsky & Halle's *Sound Pattern of English* (1968) to work in non-linear phonology and recent articulations of 'natural morphology', many of which respond to proposals made by Chomsky and his associates. However, other traditions in derivational morphology are treated as well.

Chapter XXXVI, essentially, illustrates the development of 'sociolinguistics' in the 20th-century from earlier work in dialectology to the thorough investigation of variation in language, both synchronically and diachronically. It begins with the debate over homogeneity and heterogeneity of language and ends with more recent trends in language-contact research, whether they be studies of pidgins and related forms of

language development or problems in language planning around the globe. Chapter XXXVII assesses the resurgence of historical linguistics in the second half of the 20th century, following its initial decline as a result of the 'Saussurean revolution', and its impact on synchronic studies. It shows the revitalization of the field within the changed climate of opinion, the more recent research hypotheses in the field (such as the laryngeal and the glottalic theories), and the inroads made by creolistic and sociolinguistic studies on questions of language change. Chapter XXXVIII presents alternative – 'parole'-oriented – approaches to the various system-centered linguistic analyses described in the three preceding chapters, such as the Wittgensteinian emphasis on 'use of language', the development of speech act theory and pragmatics, text linguistics, discourse analysis, and various theories of enunciation.

Chapter XXXIX – by far the longest of the project – demonstrates the abandonment of the idea of autonomy of linguistics, advocated by Saussure and embraced by Chomsky, in favour of a multidisciplinary contact between and integration of the study of language with semiotics, philosophy, psychology, neurology, biology, artificial intelligence studies, and the impact of computer technology on translation, phonetics and other linguistic pursuits. At the same time the various applications of linguistic insight in other fields are reflected.

In the concluding Chapter XL, the editors, individually and complementing each other, map out their views on the origin, development and future of the history of the language sciences and detail their position with regard to questions of methodology and philosophy of linguistic historiography.

The Editors

Vorwort der Herausgeber

1. Allgemeine Einleitung

1.1 Begriffsbestimmungen

Unter ‘Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaften’ wird in diesem Handbuch die Entwicklung sprachwissenschaftlicher Theorien und Vorstellungen von Erklärungs- und Analyseverfahren und methodologischen Abgrenzungen sowie die Herausbildung von organisatorischen Strukturen und Institutionen verstanden – sofern dies überhaupt dokumentarisch erfaßt werden kann – welche zur Verbreitung sprachwissenschaftlicher Kenntnisse beigetragen haben. Die Verwendung der Termini ‘Sprachwissenschaft’ bzw. ‘Linguistik’ sollte also keinesfalls dahingehend mißverstanden werden, als sei hierunter ein klar abgegrenzter Objektbereich zu verstehen. Eine solche Verwendung wäre für das Wesen der Sprachwissenschaft unserer Tage nur dort zutreffend, wo sie als eigenständige Disziplin mit eigenen, wohldefinierten Forschungsprogrammen und eigenen beruflichen Organisationsformen anerkannt und etabliert ist. In manchen Traditionen hatte die Sprachwissenschaft schon immer einen eigenen Platz innerhalb des allgemeinen Rahmens der Wissenschaften. Obgleich die genaue Abgrenzung der Sprachwissenschaft in Bezug auf ihre Themen und Methoden in jeder ihrer traditionellen Ausprägungen verschieden war, sind doch alle Traditionen durch ihre gemeinsame Betrachtung der Sprache als Wissenschaftsobjekt verbunden. Die Termini ‘Sprachwissenschaft’ bzw. ‘Linguistik’ werden in diesem Handbuch somit als generelle Bezeichnungen für all das verwendet, was mit dem Studium menschlicher Sprache zu tun hat. Die Abgrenzungen des Objektbereichs der Sprachwissenschaft(en), welche im Laufe der Jahrhunderte immer wieder anders vorgenommen wurden, werden dagegen im Zuge der Ausführungen zu ihrer Geschichte darzulegen sein, genau so wie ihre wechselvollen Kontakte mit anderen Disziplinen auch.

In den meisten Bereichen der Sprachwissenschaft ist es üblich geworden, umfassende Darstellungen einen historischen Überblick voranzustellen, welcher über die Entstehung und Herausbildung der Disziplin informiert. Ebenso gibt es auch in anderen Handbüchern dieser Serie historische Kapitel, deren Hauptziel es ist, die Herausbildung bestimmter Teildisziplinen darzulegen, welche zum aktuellen Stand und zu den derzeitigen Forschungsaufgaben geführt haben. In einem Handbuch zur Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaften ist dies aus einsichtigen Gründen nicht möglich, geht es hier doch darum, die Entstehung und Entwicklung sprachwissenschaftlicher Theorien in Geschichte und Gegenwart in ihrer Eigengesetzlichkeit und unter Rekurs auf interne und externe Faktoren darzustellen und zu erläutern.

Wie bei allen wissenschaftsgeschichtlichen Darstellungen ist auch hier die Beziehung zwischen der zu untersuchenden Disziplin auf der einen Seite und der Disziplin, die auf einer Metaebene ihre Methoden und Grundannahmen sowie ihre geschichtliche Entwicklung analysiert, recht komplex. Daher ist auch eine Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaften, welche die Entstehung und Entwicklung eben dieser Sprachwissenschaften

analysiert, sorgfältig vom Objekt ihrer Untersuchungen zu unterscheiden. Auch wenn die meisten Historiographen der Sprachwissenschaften selbst Sprachwissenschaftler sind, so muß sich die historiographische Analyse in Zielsetzung und Blickrichtung doch von der sprachwissenschaftlichen Arbeit unterscheiden, und zwar so, daß historische Entwicklungslinien innerhalb der Sprachwissenschaften ohne Werturteile beschrieben werden. Somit geht es dem Historiographen letztlich um die Erhellung von Entwicklungstendenzen innerhalb eines konkreten kulturellen, sozioökonomischen bzw. politischen Rahmens auf der einen und um die Darlegung zeitweiliger Kontakte sprachwissenschaftlicher Forschungsrichtungen mit anderen Disziplinen auf der anderen Seite, auf alle Fälle aber um die Vermeidung eines 'Tunnelblicks'.

Die Aufgabe des Historiographen der Sprachwissenschaft ist grundsätzlich von der des Sprachwissenschaftlers verschieden, weil der Historiograph nicht auf die Erklärung linguistischer Tatsachen abzielt, sondern auf die Analyse der Behandlung dieser linguistischen Tatsachen, wie sie von Sprachwissenschaftlern in den verschiedensten Traditionen vorgenommen worden sind. Das heißt auch, daß für den Historiographen alle Annäherungsweisen prinzipiell gleichwertig sind und daß die Geschichte nicht als bloße kumulative Entwicklung bis zur gegenwärtigen Lage der Disziplin betrachtet werden kann: der Historiograph sollte somit vermeiden, die Vergangenheit als Legitimierung der Gegenwart zu benutzen.

1.2 Gegenstandsbereich

Bei der vorstehenden Begriffsbestimmung ist der Inhalt des Handbuches bereits ansatzweise umrissen worden. Es geht darin um einen Überblick über die Theorien und Vorstellungen, welche je von Sprache und Sprachen entwickelt worden sind. Es geht außerdem um die Kontexte, in denen dies geschah. Es wird also der Versuch unternommen, die Forschungen zur Sprache als Mittel menschlicher Kommunikation zu allen Zeiten so weit wie möglich zu erfassen und zu dokumentieren, seien diese nun theoretischer oder praktischer Natur. Schulgrammatiken und Sprachlehrbücher, Lexika und sonstige Werke sprachforscherischer Tätigkeiten werden in angemessenem Umfange berücksichtigt und hinsichtlich ihrer Bedeutung in der jeweiligen Zeit sowie hinsichtlich der sie leitenden Theorien beschrieben und gedeutet.

Eine wichtige Einschränkung besteht allerdings darin, daß das Handbuch nur solche Forschungen behandelt, welche in schriftlicher Form überliefert sind, so daß beispielsweise die sog. 'Volkslinguistik' nicht berücksichtigt wird. Ebenso werden auch Einstellungsfragen zur Sprache (*attitudes*) in diesem Handbuch nicht ausdrücklich erörtert. Obgleich sie eine wichtige Rolle in der Entwicklung von sprachwissenschaftlichen Theorien spielen, werden sie hier nur insofern behandelt, als sie in diesen Theorien erwähnt werden.

Selbstverständlich waren Überschneidungen mit einzelnen Handbüchern der Reihe im Einzelfalle nicht ganz zu vermeiden. So ist es beispielsweise nicht möglich, stets scharf zwischen der Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaften und der Sprachphilosophie zu unterscheiden, vor allem in einigen nichtwestlichen Traditionen, wie der chinesischen oder der das Sanskrit betreffenden, in denen Sprachwissenschaft und Sprachphilosophie immer fest verbunden waren. Deshalb finden sich historische Einleitungen zu den wichtigen philosophischen Traditionen sowohl in diesem, als auch in dem Handbuch zur Sprachphilosophie. So werden zum Beispiel die Werke von Platon, Aristoteles und

der Stoiker sowie die der spätmittelalterlichen Sprachphilosophen erörtert, wenn auch lediglich hinsichtlich ihrer Bedeutung für die Sprachforschung, nicht aber hinsichtlich ihrer Berührungspunkte mit der Philosophie.

Ein wichtiges Charakteristikum dieses Handbuchs besteht darin, eine zeitlich und räumlich möglichst vollständige Darstellung aller sprachwissenschaftlichen Forschungsrichtungen anzustreben. Dies bedeutet gleichzeitig auch, daß wir über jene eurozentrische Blickweise hinausgehen wollen, welche die Sanskritgrammatik beispielsweise nur insofern berücksichtigt, als sie für die Entdeckung der indoeuropäischen Sprachfamilie von Interesse war. Unser Ziel in diesem Handbuch war es, so viele sprachwissenschaftliche Traditionen wie möglich einzubeziehen und sie in ihrer Eigenständigkeit zu behandeln. Leider war dieses Ziel nicht immer zu erreichen: für einige Traditionen gibt es einfach zu wenig dokumentierte Quellen. So ist es uns z. B. nicht gelungen, einen Aufsatz über die äthiopische oder die kambodschanische sprachwissenschaftliche Tradition aufzunehmen. In einigen Fällen sahen wir uns gezwungen, einen Aufsatz aus praktischen Gründen zu streichen. Teilweise war es uns nicht möglich, einen Autor ausfindig zu machen, teilweise lieferte ein eingeladener Autor nicht rechtzeitig ab.

Ein Problem stellte auch die chronologische Abgrenzung der zeitgenössischen Forschung in diesem Handbuch dar. Auch wenn es ohne Zweifel einfacher gewesen wäre, jüngste Entwicklungen einfach auszuklammern, so haben wir diesen Weg nicht eingeschlagen. Es dürfte sich aber von selbst verstehen, daß eine historische Analyse zeitgenössischer Sprachforschungen nur unter Wahrung gewisser Vorsichtsmaßnahmen betrieben werden kann. Dies gilt insbesondere dann, wenn diejenigen, die die Entwicklung auf einem Teilgebiet beschreiben, zugleich mit rein sprachwissenschaftlichen Forschungen auf ebendiesem Gebiet befaßt sind und daher möglicherweise nicht so leicht bereit sind, sprachwissenschaftliche Forschungen und wissenschaftsgeschichtliche Forschungen voneinander zu trennen. Mit dem Schlußkapitel des Handbuches, seiner Untergliederung, und mit der Wahl der Autoren haben wir versucht, dieser Gefahr entgegenzusteuern. Wir haben auch versucht, Grundannahmen und Prinzipien darzulegen, auf denen dieses Handbuch basiert. Wir sind jedenfalls der Überzeugung, daß eine Darstellung der zeitgenössischen Sprachwissenschaften unter historiographischem Blickwinkel zu einem besseren Verständnis eben dieser Forschungen beiträgt und ihre Bedeutung innerhalb des modernen Wissenschaftsbetriebes, aber auch innerhalb der Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaften, klarer hervortreten läßt.

1.3 Thematische Schwerpunkte

Die Herausgeber dieses Handbuchs haben versucht, von einer weitverbreiteten Darstellungsform von Wissenschaftsgeschichte, der 'Geschichte großer Persönlichkeiten', so fern wie möglich zu bleiben, selbst wenn diese Vorgehensweise, etwa bei der europäischen Sprachwissenschaft des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts, manchmal schwer zu vermeiden war. Allerdings scheint es zweifelhaft, ob ein solcher Ansatz auch dann noch seine Tragfähigkeit behält, wenn es um frühe Epochen der Sprachwissenschaft geht. Auch dann, wenn ein Aufsatz die Beiträge individueller Sprachwissenschaftler hervorhebt, werden doch die spezifischen Themen, Gesichtspunkte und Forschungsprogramme einer bestimmten Tradition sowie die Beziehungen zwischen dem individuellen Sprachwissenschaftler und der Entwicklung dieser Tradition in den Vordergrund gestellt.

Angesichts der großen geographischen, chronologischen und thematischen Variationsbreite des Feldes möglicher Sprachforschungen fällt es nicht leicht, ein zentrales

Thema zu benennen, mit dem der hier gewählte Zugang vereinheitlichend beschrieben werden könnte. Trotzdem können nachfolgend einige Gesichtspunkte genannt werden, nach denen die Auswahl der Themen, die Präsentation des Stoffes sowie die Organisation und Analyse des Materials erfolgt ist.

Eine Art Leitmotiv bildet die Analyse von Entwicklungsgängen der Sprachwissenschaft in 'vorherrschende' und 'marginale' bzw. 'unterschwellige' Richtungen. Obwohl es bei den Sprachforschungen westlicher Tradition möglich wäre, für bestimmte Zeiträume Forschungsprogramme aufzuzeigen, welche für einen Großteil der gelehrten Welt eine Zeit lang Gültigkeit besessen haben, so kann doch nie vom Monopol eines 'Paradigmas' die Rede sein. In der Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft lassen sich auch so gut wie keine Richtungsänderungen aufzeigen, die durch den plötzlichen Zusammenbruch früherer Forschungsprogramme oder durch irgendwelche 'revolutionären Entdeckungen' hervorgerufen worden wären. Statt dessen sind aber oft allmähliche Übergänge zwischen 'vorherrschenden' und 'unterschweligen' Forschungsinteressen zu beobachten, weshalb hier parallel zum jeweils beschriebenen, vorherrschenden Paradigma andere Forschungsprogramme 'am Rande' ebenfalls weiterverfolgt werden. Diese nämlich können sich im Laufe der Zeit wieder in den Vordergrund drängen und dann zur 'herrschenden Lehre/Praxis' werden.

In Zusammenhang mit der hier skizzierten Auffassung von Wissenschaftsgeschichte kann auch darauf hingewiesen werden, daß es eine Art regelmäßigen Wechsel zwischen zwei gegensätzlichen Auffassungen des Zugangs zur Sprachforschung zu geben scheint. So lassen sich Zeiträume beobachten, in denen die Sprache gleichsam als ideales Werkzeug behandelt wird, das in idealen Kommunikationssituationen einem idealen Sprecher/Hörer dient. Diese werden dann abgelöst von Zeiten, in denen sich die Sprachforschung wiederum der sprachlichen Vielfalt und den Varietäten von Sprachen in Raum und Zeit zuwendet. Ein solcher Wechsel ist im 19. Jahrhundert zu beobachten, wo das Programm der vergleichenden Sprachwissenschaft durch die aufkommende Dialektologie in Frage gestellt wird. Die Unterscheidung zwischen einer 'vorherrschenden' und einer 'unterschweligen' Richtung in der Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft deutet an, daß keine der beiden Richtungen die andere jemals vollständig verdrängt, sondern daß sie jeweils nebeneinander betrieben werden, wobei sie auf der Skala zwischen 'vorherrschender Stellung' und 'Randerscheinung' immer wieder neue Plätze einnehmen können. In der Sprachwissenschaft des 20. Jahrhunderts scheint sich ein ähnlicher Positionswechsel abzuzeichnen, denn neben das offensichtlich vorherrschende Interesse an systematischen, idealen Strukturen der Sprache, tritt in jüngerer Zeit deutlich erkennbar wieder ein Interesse an sprachlichen Variationen sowie am Funktionieren der Sprachen in (komplexen) Kommunikationssituationen.

Die Unterscheidung zwischen 'vorherrschender' Lehre und 'unterschweligen' Richtungen scheint auch auf sprachwissenschaftliche Institutionen anwendbar zu sein, denn unabhängig vom jeweils vorherrschenden Paradigma befassen sich diese recht oft weiterhin mit grammatischen Fragen in einem sehr praktisch verstandenen Sinne, mit Sprachgeschichte, mit dem Wortschatz, der Struktur einer Sprache oder mit Fragen der Sprachverwandtschaft, selbst wenn das dominierende Paradigma anderen Forschungsinteressen folgt. Auch das gehört in ein vollständiges Bild der Sprachwissenschaften und muß Berücksichtigung in einem Handbuch wie diesem finden.

Unser Bestreben war es darüber hinaus, bei der Anordnung der Materialien oder bei der Einteilung in Kapitel und Artikel jede Art von 'Systemzwang' zu vermeiden. Die

große Zahl der Beiträger, welche aus den unterschiedlichsten Schulen kommen und dabei ihr spezifisches Fachwissen einbringen, sollte hinreichend Garantie dafür bieten, daß hier ein weites Spektrum von Perspektiven abgedeckt ist. Jeder Versuch, die Arbeiten zur Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft in ein engeres Klassifikationsschema zu zwingen, muß Schiffbruch erleiden und zu verzerrten Darstellungen jener Abläufe und Veränderungen auf dem Gebiet der Sprachforschungen führen, welche im Laufe der Zeit stattgefunden haben.

Das Fehlen eines engen Organisationsrahmens hat eine weitere und, wie wir glauben, positive Konsequenz. Wir haben nicht zwischen einem ‘datenorientierten’ und einem ‘theorieorientierten’ Annäherungsverfahren gewählt, weil wir der festen Überzeugung sind, daß eine solche Wahl zu einem verzerrten Bild der Sprachwissenschaft in einem Kulturbereich führen würde. In einigen Fällen schien es angebracht, die Ergebnisse der Theorien hervorzuheben, in anderen Fällen ergab sich aus der Analyse der Methoden und Grundsätze eines Forschungsprogramms ein genaueres, schärferes Bild der jeweiligen Tradition. Beide Annäherungsverfahren ergänzen sich unserer Meinung nach somit bei der Darlegung von Entwicklungstendenzen in der Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft.

1.4 Forschungsstand

Obwohl dieses Handbuch hinsichtlich der Breite seiner Anlage in gewisser Weise Neuland betritt, stützt es sich auf die Ergebnisse früherer Forschungen. Als eigenständige Disziplin mit Organisationsformen, Zeitschriften und Reihen ist die Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft zwar erst zwischen dem Ende der sechziger und dem Beginn der siebziger Jahre in Erscheinung getreten. Das heißt nun aber nicht, vor den sechziger Jahren des 20. Jahrhunderts habe es überhaupt keine allgemeineren Überblicke über die Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft gegeben. In manchen nicht westlichen Traditionen ist die Geschichte der Disziplin von jeher ein üblicher Bestandteil des Faches. Beispielsweise benutzen die arabischen Grammatiker ausführliche biographische Lexika, in denen die Schriften der früheren Grammatiker evaluiert wurden. Diese Art von Geschichtsschreibung widmete sich ausschließlich der Geschichte der eigenen Tradition. In der westlichen Sprachwissenschaft hingegen ging der Behandlung individueller Sprachen bzw. Sprachfamilien oder der Analyse von spezifischen linguistischen Problemen, z. B. in der Phonologie oder der Semantik, fast immer eine geschichtliche Einleitung voran, in der die historische Entwicklung des Problemkreises erörtert wurde.

Von einigen Forschern wurde François Thurots ‘Tableau des Progrès de la Science Grammaticale’, der als *Discours Préliminaire* zu einer 1796 publizierten Übersetzung des Hermes (1751) von James Harris erschien, als “erster Versuch einer Geschichte der Grammatik” bezeichnet. Umfangreichere wissenschaftsgeschichtliche Darstellungen erscheinen aber erst um die Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts, wobei zunächst die dreibändige *Sprachphilosophie der Alten* von Laurenz Lersch (1838–1841) zu nennen wäre. Damals beherrschte die Klassische Philologie das Feld, was zur Folge hatte, daß außer der Tradition der Griechen und Römer, auch ansatzweise der Inder, alle anderen ausgeschlossen blieben, also auch die gesamte Sprachforschung vom Mittelalter bis zur Moderne. Ein typisches Beispiel hierfür ist auch Steinthals *Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft bei den Griechen und Römern* (1863), welche zudem in erster Linie die antike Sprachphilosophie und nicht systematisch die Sprachforschung im eigentlichen Sinne behandelt.

Längere Perioden der Sprachwissenschaft finden erst in den historiographischen Arbeiten eines Benfey (1869), Raumer (1870), Delbrück (1880, namentlich ab der 4. Auflage von 1904 an) und Bursian (1883) Berücksichtigung, allerdings mit einseitiger Bevorzugung der Moderne. Eine eurozentrische Behandlung sprachwissenschaftlicher Vorstellungen und Ideen blieb bis in unsere Tage vorherrschend, obwohl es bereits seit Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts Abhandlungen über die Entwicklung der hebräischen und arabischen Grammatik gab.

Auch wenn in den sechziger Jahren des 20. Jahrhunderts eine stattliche Zahl von Hand- bzw. Lehrbüchern zur Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaften verlegt wurde, scheint sich ein echtes Interesse doch erst in den siebziger Jahren bemerkbar zu machen. Diese jüngere Entwicklung ist ablesbar an der zweibändigen *Historiography of Linguistics*, welche 1975 erscheint und die von Thomas A. Sebeok herausgegebenen *Current Trends in Linguistics* (Den Haag) beschließt. Sie enthält, außer den 'üblichen' Kapiteln, Überblicke über die sprachwissenschaftlichen Traditionen im Fernen Osten sowie in Nord- und Südamerika. Auffallend ist dabei allerdings, daß in vielen Beiträgen unter Wissenschaftsgeschichte eine Art Forschungsbericht zu 'jüngeren Publikationen zur Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft' parallel zur westlichen Sprachwissenschaft verstanden wird, nicht aber eine eigenständige Forschungsaufgabe, wie man vielleicht erwartet hätte.

Das vorliegende Handbuch orientiert sich stattdessen an jenem Typus von Wissenschaftsgeschichte, der sich seit 1973, dem Erscheinungsjahr der ersten, ausschließlich der Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaften gewidmeten Zeitschrift, *Historiographia Linguistica*, immer klarer abzeichnet. Bald danach kam es auch zur Gründung von internationalen sowie regionalen Gesellschaften zur Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaften und zu ersten Tagungen und Kongressen, sowohl in Europa als auch in Amerika. Dort wurden nicht nur sprachwissenschaftliche Theorien der Vergangenheit bzw. einzelne Forschungstraditionen, sondern auch methodologische und epistemologische Fragen einer Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaften behandelt. Die Fortschritte, welche in den letzten Jahren gemacht wurden, lassen sich am besten an den Zeitschriften *Historiographia Linguistica*, *Histoire – Epistémologie – Langage* (Paris, 1979–) und den *Beiträge[n] zur Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft* (Münster, 1991–), sowie an den Akten der in dreijährigen Abständen stattfindenden International Conference on the History of the Language Sciences (ICHoLS) ablesen. In den achtziger Jahren erscheinen schließlich auch Monographien zur Theorie und Methodologie der Sprachwissenschaftsgeschichte, welche die heutigen Orientierungen der Disziplin noch klarer hervortreten lassen.

Etwa gleichzeitig mit den ersten Diskussionen über das heutige Projekt lancierte Peter Schmitter seine *Geschichte der Sprachtheorie* (Tübingen, 1987–), eine Reihe von Monographien über verschiedene Gebiete und Perioden der Sprachwissenschaftsgeschichte. Von den 9 geplanten Teilen sind inzwischen 5 erschienen. Ein vergleichbares Ziel vertritt die 3-bändige *Histoire des idées linguistiques*, herausgegeben von Sylvain Auroux (Brussels, 1990–2000) und die 5-bändige *History of Linguistics*, herausgegeben von Giulio Lepschy (London, 1994–). In der Zwischenzeit erschien auch die 500-seitige *Concise History of the Language Sciences: From the Sumerians to the Cognitivists*, herausgegeben von E. F. K. Koerner und R. E. Asher (Oxford, 1995), die nicht nur einen Überblick über die wichtigsten Traditionen bietet, sondern auch über den aktuellen Forschungsstand der verschiedenen Schulen und Theorien der Sprachwissenschaft des

20. Jahrhunderts informiert. In anderen vielbändigen Handbüchern zur Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft ist dies bisher noch nicht geschehen. Ein vollständigeres Bild dieser Periode wird erst im dritten Teil des hiesigen Handbuchs geliefert werden.

Auskünfte über die wichtigsten Persönlichkeiten in der Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft sind zu finden in dem 1000-seitigen *Lexicon Grammaticorum*, herausgegeben von Harro Stammerjohann (Tübingen, 1996), das ohne Zweifel noch längere Zeit eine wichtige Quelle zur Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft bleiben wird.

1.5 Aufbau des Handbuchs

Das Handbuch ist nach chronologischen Gesichtspunkten gegliedert. Abweichungen von diesem Prinzip erwiesen sich aber bei den ersten, den nicht westlichen Traditionen gewidmeten Kapiteln als notwendig, da sich die Sprachforschung in geographisch getrennten Räumen parallel und unabhängig von einander etabliert hat. Wo die Entwicklung einer Tradition am engsten mit fremdem Einfluß verbunden war, wurde diese Tradition im Rahmen der 'Muttertradition' behandelt. Dies betrifft zum Beispiel die armenische und georgische Tradition, die im Kapitel über die griechische Linguistik, die koptische und türkische Tradition, die im Kapitel über die arabische Linguistik oder die vietnamesische Tradition, die im Kapitel über die chinesische Linguistik behandelt werden. Solchen Entscheidungen haftet eine gewisse Willkür an, weil die meisten Traditionen irgendwann dem Einfluß anderer Traditionen unterworfen waren. Die hiesige Einteilung soll deshalb nicht dahingehend interpretiert werden als beinhalte sie ein Urteil über den Eigenwert der betroffenen Tradition.

Anschließend beschreibt das Handbuch die jeweils vorherrschenden Strömungen der westlichen Sprachwissenschaft, wobei es bei jener Zeit eine Zäsur setzt, in der die westeuropäischen Volkssprachen sowohl als Gegenstand der Sprachforschung als auch als Forschungsmittel, als Metasprachen, verwendet werden – der Renaissance. Von diesem Zeitpunkt an hat die Sprachforschung nicht mehr nur eine einzige Sprache als Untersuchungsgegenstand und Bezugsrahmen. Dies gilt natürlich nicht für die nichtwestlichen Traditionen, bei deren Beschreibung man heute oft von 'Klassik', 'Mittelalter' und 'Renaissance' redet und dabei Termini verwendet, die ursprünglich ausschließlich dazu dienten, Entwicklungen innerhalb der westlichen Hemisphäre zu beschreiben. Bei der Beschreibung nichtwestlicher Traditionen sollten sie dagegen vermieden werden, nicht zuletzt weil sie mit zu vielen Konnotationen verbunden sind, die auf Europa verweisen. Trotzdem kann auch hier von einer Zäsur gesprochen werden, einer Zäsur, welche durch den Import westlicher Sprachforschungen bewirkt wurde. Dabei kam es zu einer Mischung der einheimischen Sprachwissenschaft mit dem westlichen Modell. Mit der (in diesem Sinne verstandenen) 'Renaissance' übernimmt also das westliche Paradigma in der ganzen Welt eine vorherrschende Position, was eine einheitliche Darstellung der Sprachforschung in der nachfolgenden Zeit möglich macht.

Ein weiterer entscheidender Wandel in der Geschichte der Sprachforschung erfolgte im 19. Jahrhundert, wo sich die historisch-vergleichende Sprachwissenschaft zum vorherrschenden Paradigma der Zeit herausbildet. Mit der Hinwendung zur synchronischen Sprachforschung zu Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts hebt schließlich die Geschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts an. Ihr, sowie der Geschichte der Sprachforschung im 19. Jahrhundert, wird der meiste Raum in diesem Handbuch gewidmet.

Bei den Unterteilungen der Zeiträume in einzelne Kapitel waren vornehmlich thematische Gesichtspunkte maßgeblich, wobei sowohl die oben erläuterte Unterscheidung

von ‘vorherrschender’ Forschungsrichtung und ‘unterschwelliger’ Forschungsinteressen, als auch sonstige Erwägungen eine Rolle spielten. Für die Darstellung der jüngsten Entwicklungen im Bereich der Sprachwissenschaften kam eine rein chronologische Anordnung aus einsichtigen Gründen allerdings nicht mehr in Frage. Wir haben uns stattdessen auf methodologische Übereinstimmungen bzw. Divergenzen bei den in Frage stehenden Theorien konzentriert. Ferner haben wir auf Berührungspunkte zwischen den Sprachwissenschaften und ihren Nachbardisziplinen wie Soziologie, Psychologie, Neurologie, Logik, Mathematik, usw. geachtet, ist doch die wechselseitige Verbindung zwischen den Sprachwissenschaften und benachbarten Disziplinen eines der charakteristischen Merkmale der Sprachforschung unserer Zeit.

2. Erläuterungen zu den einzelnen Kapiteln

Die Sprachforschung des Nahen Ostens beschäftigt sich vornehmlich mit Problemen der Verschriftung und des Lexikons. Darüber hinaus bringt die Existenz unterschiedlicher Kulturdialekte und das Nebeneinander verschiedener Kultursprachen auch einen gewissen Zwang zur grammatischen Kodifizierung mit sich (Kapitel I).

Kapitel II behandelt die chinesische Sprachforschung. Hier stehen zwar Lautlehre und Lexikon im Mittelpunkt des Interesses, aber es kommt auch, im Zusammenhang mit philosophischen Erwägungen, zur Entwicklung von wichtigen Vorstellungen über die Natur des sprachlichen Zeichens (in seiner phonischen und graphischen Gestalt). Darüber hinaus spielt Sprache als literarisches Medium eine wichtige Rolle. Die chinesische Sprachforschung hat tiefgreifenden Einfluß auf die koreanische (Kapitel III) und die japanische Sprachforschung (Kapitel IV). Der für beide Sprachbereiche charakteristische Bilinguismus führt dort darüber hinaus zu kontrastiven Grammatikstudien. Interesse verdient auch die Übernahme niederländischer Grammatikmodelle im japanischen Sprachbereich während der Rangakusha-Zeit.

Die Sanskritsprachforschung, eine der bedeutendsten der vom Westen unabhängigen Sprachforschungsrichtungen, hat in der historiographischen Literatur viel Aufmerksamkeit erfahren. Ihr entstammt der erste Versuch einer vollständigen Sprachbeschreibung mit formal strenger Methode, Pāṇinis *Astādhyāyī*. Ein weiterer wichtiger Aspekt der Sanskritsprachforschung ist ihre Zuordnung zu Philosophie und Logik. Das Sanskritmodell hatte Auswirkungen für die Beschreibung des Alt-Javanischen und des Burmesischen (Kapitel V). In der dravidischen (Kapitel VI) und der tibetischen Sprachforschung (Kapitel VII) verschmelzen eigene Traditionen mit dem Modell der Sanskritsprachforschung.

Die hebräische Sprachforschung entwickelt sich aus der Exegese religiöser Texte. In einer späteren Phase assimiliert sie manche Elemente der arabischen Tradition, welche schließlich vorherrschend wird. In diesem Zusammenhang ist auch ein erster Versuch zu verzeichnen, eine Beziehung zwischen den verschiedenen semitischen Sprachen nachzuweisen (Kapitel VIII). Auch in der arabischen Sprachforschung (Kapitel IX) ist die Beziehung zwischen Sprache und Religion entscheidend für die Entwicklung von Vorstellungen über Ursprung und Wesen der Sprache. Eine eigenständige Sprachforschung beginnt hier mit Sībawayhis *Kitâb* und der darin enthaltenen vollständigen, systematischen Darstellung des Arabischen. Sein Modell dient später zur Beschreibung anderer Sprachen, wie des Malaiischen, Persischen, Türkischen und Koptischen. Die syrische

Sprachforschung verdient Interesse namentlich deshalb, weil sie Elemente zweier Traditionen mit einander verbindet, der griechischen und der arabischen (Kapitel X).

In manchen Geschichten der Sprachwissenschaft wird die griechische Sprachforschung (Kapitel XI) hinsichtlich ihrer modellhaften Rolle für das Lateinische und für die gesamte westliche Tradition präsentiert. Dabei kommen jene Elemente üblicherweise zu kurz, welche nicht übernommen worden sind. Hier geht es dagegen um eine Darstellung, welche die griechische Sprachforschung an sich darstellt. Die ersten Abschnitte weisen nur eine chronologische Ordnung auf. Sie behandeln die wechselseitige Abhängigkeit von Philosophie und Grammatik in der Frühzeit und die philologischen Traditionen und die technischen Aspekte der Grammatik der späteren Zeit, welche auf der *Téchnè* des Dionysios Thrax basieren. Weitere Abschnitte behandeln die Rolle der Grammatik im Erziehungswesen sowie die Beziehung zwischen der Sprachwissenschaft und anderen Disziplinen. Übersetzungen der *Téchnè* stehen am Anfang vieler weiterer sprachwissenschaftlicher Traditionen, so die des Georgischen, Armenischen, Syrischen und Altkirchenslawischen.

Die griechische Sprachforschung ist auch ein wichtiges Vorbild für die lateinischen (Kapitel XII), welche ihren Höhepunkt mit den Arbeiten u. a. eines Charisius, eines Donats oder Priscians findet, deren grammatische Beschreibungen am Anfang einer langen Tradition von Lateinstudien im frühen Mittelalter stehen. Weitere Abschnitte dieses Kapitels sind dem Verhältnis von Grammatik und Rhetorik gewidmet, ferner die Beziehung zwischen Sprache und Offenbarung in der frühchristlichen Theologie. Im frühen Mittelalter (Kapitel XIII) bleiben die Lateinstudien bestimmender Faktor bei der Weiterentwicklung der Sprachforschung. In eigenen Abschnitten geht es um ihre Beziehung zur Theologie, ihre Position in der Wissenschaftssystematik und um ihre Rolle in der Gesellschaft. Im Hochmittelalter kommt es zu einer Unterscheidung zwischen Sprachtheorie (*grammatica speculativa*) und Sprachbeschreibung (*grammatica positiva*). Kapitel XIV behandelt die spekulative Grammatik der sog. Modisten sowie die Beziehung zwischen Sprachforschungen und Grammatik, Theologie und anderen Disziplinen.

Kapitel XV behandelt das Fortleben der vormodistischen Art der Sprachforschung, zum einen bei der Beschreibung des Lateinischen, zum anderen, ansatzweise, bei den ersten grammatischen Analysen verschiedener Volkssprachen, so des Irischen, Gälischen, Isländischen, Englischen und verschiedener slavischer Sprachen. Eine besondere Position nimmt dabei das Okzitanische (bzw. Provenzalische) ein, dem der letzte Abschnitt gewidmet ist; es ist Literatursprache und wird als solche von Katalonien und Kastilien bis Norditalien und Sizilien studiert und grammatisch und stilistisch beschrieben.

Die Rückbesinnung auf die klassischen Sprachen Latein *und* Griechisch und die in ihnen überlieferten Inhalte führt im Laufe des 15. Jahrhunderts zu einer Neuorientierung der (westlichen) Sprachwissenschaft; Kapitel XVI behandelt die damit eingeleitete Zäsur. Zeitlich in etwa parallel dazu entwickelt sich, zunächst vornehmlich bei Kaufleuten und dann bei Adeligen, ein praktisches Interesse an den, durch den Humanismus de facto aufgewerteten, Volkssprachen, und ein regelrechter Sprachlehrbetrieb setzt ein (Kapitel XVII). Die Übertragung humanistischer Vorstellungen auf die Volkssprachen bereitet den Weg zu einer grammatischen (und lexikalischen) Beschreibung volkssprachlicher literarischer Texte (Kapitel XVIII). Der nächste Schritt führt dann dazu, für die immer wichtiger werdenden Volkssprachen Regeln und Gesetze aufzustellen und eine Norm zu erarbeiten (Kapitel XIX).

Die Entdeckung der Neuen Welt durch die Portugiesen und Spanier (und bald darauf auch durch die Engländer, Franzosen und Holländer), welche etwa parallel zur Rückbesinnung auf die klassischen Sprachen erfolgt, bringt Europa in Kontakt mit 'exotischen' Sprachen, welche zunächst allerdings nicht um ihrer selbst Willen, sondern mit dem praktischen Ziel studiert werden, die neu entdeckten Welten zu missionieren (Kapitel XX). Sprachtheoretische Erwägungen gewinnen dagegen erst im Laufe des 17. Jahrhunderts wieder an Bedeutung; sie rufen namentlich im 18. Jahrhundert großes Interesse hervor (Kapitel XXI). Die Aufwertung der Volkssprachen und die Erklärung ihrer Gleichberechtigung mit den klassischen Sprachen führt ebenfalls zu theoretischen Überlegungen, welche zunächst in Abhandlungen über den Ursprung der Sprachen ihren Niederschlag finden (Kapitel XXII), die dann zu Forschungen zur Entstehung und Entwicklung einzelner Nationalsprachen überleiten, wobei den Beziehungen der einzelnen Nationalsprachen zueinander eine wichtige Rolle zukommt (Kapitel XXIII).

In der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts führt dann die Entstehung und Entwicklung der historisch-vergleichenden indoeuropäischen Sprachforschung zum Zurückdrängen der seit langem etablierten Tradition philologisch-literarischer Sprachstudien, wozu auch die Einrichtung von Lehrstühlen für dieses neue Forschungsgebiet entscheidend beiträgt (Kapitel XXIV). Diese Entwicklung greift bald auch auf die 'Neuphilologien' über, also auf neue Disziplinen, welche nicht mehr die klassischen Sprachen Griechisch, Latein und Sanskrit studieren, sondern jüngere Sprachen und Sprachengruppen. Auch hier kommt es zur Institutionalisierung und Professionalisierung durch die Einrichtung von Lehrstühlen und die Begründung neuer Zeitschriften (Kapitel XXV).

Innerhalb der historisch-vergleichend ausgerichteten indoeuropäischen Philologie entwickelt sich die 'vergleichende Methode' weiter zum Rekonstruktionsinstrument früherer Sprachstufen (und der mutmaßlichen Ursprache). In der 2. Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts wird diese Methode auch auf nichtindoeuropäische Sprachfamilien wie das Finno-Ugrische, auf afrikanische Sprachen sowie auf die austronesischen und amerikanischen Indianersprachen übertragen (Kapitel XXVI).

Die Klassifizierungsversuche von Sprachen nehmen im Laufe der Zeit immer neue Formen an, wobei im frühen 19. Jahrhundert zunächst morphosyntaktische Ansätze vorherrschen, die zwischen 1850 (Steinthal) und 1921 (Sapir) dann von komplexeren typologischen Verfahren abgelöst werden, die ihrerseits wieder durch die Suche nach einer strukturellen Einheitlichkeit aller Sprachen dieser Welt zurückgedrängt werden, wobei auch Fragen der Entwicklung einer Universalgrammatik mitspielen (Kapitel XXVII).

Im 19. Jahrhundert werden parallel hierzu Methoden der Datenerfassung bei schriftlich nicht fixierten Sprachen entwickelt sowie das wissenschaftliche Studium des Sprachlautes und der Lautproduzierung vorangetrieben. Damit gewinnt die Phonetik immer größerer Bedeutung, auch im Rahmen des Fremdsprachenunterrichts. Universelle Alphabete zur Aufzeichnung schriftloser Sprachen werden entwickelt und die Dialektologie nimmt ihren Aufschwung (Kapitel XXVIII). Aber auch semantische Forschungen gewinnen an Bedeutung. Hier reicht das Spektrum von den, eher bescheiden zu nennenden, Vorschlägen Reisigs über die Forschungen zum Bedeutungswandel am Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts bis hin zur Richtung 'Wörter und Sachen' am Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts. Damit verbundene Arbeiten auf dem Gebiete der Lexikographie sind hier ebenfalls zu berücksichtigen (Kapitel XXIX). Schließlich sind auch Einflüsse von Psychologie und Physiologie auf die Sprachforschung des 19. Jahrhunderts zu verzeichnen, insbesondere im Werk von Wundt, Broca und Wernicke. Unter ihrem Einfluß

entwickeln sich Untersuchungen zur Beziehung Sprache–Gehirn, insbesondere was Aphasie und Erstspracherwerb anbelangt (Kapitel XXX).

Die Wurzeln der strukturellen Sprachwissenschaft, welche gelegentlich mit dem Namen Saussures verbunden worden sind, reichen weit ins 19. Jahrhundert zurück. Im 20. Jahrhundert kommt es zur Herausbildung verschiedener Schulen und Forschungseinrichtungen, an deren Anfang die Genfer Schule steht. Strukturalistische Vorstellungen werden in der Folge auch für andere Humanwissenschaften bedeutsam, so die Anthropologie, Soziologie, Literaturtheorie und Psychologie (Kapitel XXXI). Nordamerika schlägt mit der Ethnolinguistik andere Wege ein. Auch sie hat ihre Wurzeln im 19. Jahrhundert, wo die Bedeutung der Indianersprachen für die Sprachforschung erkannt worden war. Die Sprachauffassung Humboldts war von entscheidender Bedeutung hierfür, wie auch die Anfänge einer anthropologisch orientierten Sprachforschung sowie die, getrennt von einander vorangetriebenen, Entwicklungen deskriptiver Ansätze. In diesem Zusammenhang kommt auch der Glottochronologie sowie der Lexikostatistik Bedeutung zu, kann man hierin doch den Versuch erblicken, bei Sprachen ohne Schrifttradition eine historische Dimension zu erschließen (Kapitel XXXII).

Zwischen 1940 und 1950 kommen neue Beschreibungsverfahren in und außerhalb Amerikas auf, welche durch den Versuch gekennzeichnet sind, Sprachen nach dem Vorbild der Mathematik mithilfe formaler Verfahren zu beschreiben. Die später aufkommende generative Sprachwissenschaft ist besonders charakteristisch hierfür. Mathematische Modelle sowie Arbeiten auf dem Gebiet der automatischen Übersetzung gewinnen damit immer größere Bedeutung für die sprachwissenschaftliche Theoriebildung, die sich in einer großen Zahl unterschiedlicher Entwürfe artikuliert, welche in mehr oder minder großem Maße der generativen Grammatik verpflichtet sind (Kapitel XXXIII).

Auch semantische Studien werden im 20. Jahrhundert in vielfältiger Form betrieben, aber nur ein kleinerer Teil davon geht auf Saussures Lehren zurück. Der Kontextualismus eines Firth und die generative Semantik können hier beispielsweise genannt werden, aber auch verschiedene Modelle der Lexikologie, der Lexikographie, Onomastik, Etymologie und jenen Arbeiten, die unter dem Einfluß der Semiotik von Peirce entstanden sind (Kapitel XXXIV). Ab Mitte des Jahrhunderts kommt es bei der Phonologie und Morphologie ebenfalls zu einer stärkeren Differenzierung in verschiedene Richtungen und Strömungen. Den Ausgangspunkt bilden Chomsky und Halles *Sound Pattern of English* (1968). Behandelt werden ferner Arbeiten von der 'nichtlinearen Phonologie' bis hin zur 'natürlichen Morphologie', von denen manche auf Vorschläge Chomskys und seiner Schule zurückgehen (Kapitel XXXV).

Die Dialektologie entwickelt sich im Laufe des 20. Jahrhunderts über Studien zu sprachlichen Varietäten zur Soziolinguistik. Die Entwicklung hebt an mit einer Debatte über Homogenität oder Heterogenität der Sprache und endet (vorläufig) bei der Sprachkontaktforschung, wobei das Spektrum des Forschungsinteresses von Pidgin- und Kreolsprachen bis hin zu Fragen der Sprachplanung reicht (Kapitel XXXVI). Als Folge der 'Saussureschen Wende' und dem damit eingeleiteten Aufschwung synchronischer Forschungen kommt es auf dem Bereich sprachhistorischer Forschungen in der ersten Hälfte unseres Jahrhunderts zunächst zu einer relativen Stagnation. Unter dem Einfluß neuer Forschungsannahmen (z. B. die Laryngal- und Glottal-Theorien) sowie angeregt durch die Resultate, welche die Kreolistik und Soziolinguistik bei Untersuchungen zum Sprachwandel erzielten, erfolgt ab der Mitte des Jahrhunderts dann wieder eine deutliche Neubelebung (Kapitel XXXVII). In den letzten drei Artikeln werden

alternative ('parole'-orientierte) Ansätze zu den behandelten Forschungseinrichtungen dargestellt, u. a. derjenige Wittgenstein, der den Schwerpunkt auf den Sprachgebrauch legt, ferner Sprechakttheorie, Pragmatik und Textlinguistik, sowie Diskursanalyse und Aussagentheorie (Kapitel XXXVIII).

Im Kapitel XXXIX, dem längsten Kapitel des Handbuchs, geht um den Nachweis, daß die Vorstellung von der Autonomie der Sprachwissenschaft, welche seit den Anfängen des 20. Jahrhunderts nachdrücklich vertreten worden waren, heute zugunsten multidisziplinärer Sprachstudien, also im Hinblick auf eine Integration von Erkenntnissen auf dem Gebiet der Semiotik, Philosophie, Psychologie, Neurologie, Biologie, der Künstlichen Intelligenz, maschinelle Übersetzung usw. langsam aufgegeben wird. In dem Maße, wie die Sprachforschung sich aber anderen Disziplinen gegenüber als offen erweist, durchdringen sprachwissenschaftliche Kenntnisse auch diese Bereiche und werden hier fruchtbar.

Im abschließenden Kapitel XL legen die Herausgeber, ein jeder für sich, aber einander ergänzend, ihre Auffassung von Ursprung, Entwicklung und Zukunft der Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaften dar und erläutern ihre Position hinsichtlich der Methodologie und Epistemologie einer Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaften.

Die Herausgeber

Préface des éditeurs

1. Généralités

1.1 Définitions

Dans ce manuel, sous le nom d'‘Histoire des sciences du langage’ nous entendons tout aussi bien l'évolution des théories et conceptions linguistiques, des procédés d'analyse et des délimitations méthodologiques, que la formation de structures organisatrices et d'institutions qui ont contribué à l'expansion des connaissances linguistiques par l'histoire documentée de l'humanité. L'utilisation des termes ‘sciences du langage’ et/ou ‘linguistique’ ne doit pas porter à confusion; dans un sens étroit on pourrait soutenir que ce terme ne s'applique qu'à l'époque moderne, lorsqu'on a reconnu la linguistique en tant que domaine d'étude à part, avec ses propres principes nettement définis de recherche et d'organisation professionnelle. Toutefois, plusieurs traditions linguistiques assignaient un statut particulier, parmi les diverses branches du savoir, à la science qui s'occupait du langage. Malgré le fait que les diverses traditions pouvaient différer les unes des autres quant aux limites de cette science du point de vue des sujets et des méthodes, de façon générale ces traditions sont liées les unes aux autres en ce qu'elles voient en le langage un objet digne d'intérêt en soi. Dans ce manuel, nous utilisons les termes ‘sciences du langage’ et/ou ‘linguistique’ essentiellement comme désignation générale pour tout ce qui a trait à l'étude du langage humain. Les délimitations du domaine d'objets des sciences du langage, qui n'ont pas cessé d'être remodelées au cours des siècles, seront présentées par rapport à leur histoire ainsi qu'à leurs relations mouvementées avec d'autres disciplines.

Dans la plupart des domaines de la linguistique, il est devenu d'usage de faire précéder les présentations encyclopédiques d'un aperçu historique qui donne des informations sur la création et la formation de la discipline (cf. les chapitres de ce type dans les manuels de la série où paraît cet ouvrage). Il s'agit habituellement de décrire la constitution de certains programmes qui ont conduit à l'état actuel et aux tâches présentes de la recherche. Pour des raisons évidentes, une telle pratique est impossible dans un manuel d'histoire des sciences du langage, puisqu'il s'agit de présenter et d'expliquer la création et l'évolution des théories linguistiques, dans leur passé comme dans leur actualité, en ce qu'elles ont de particulier. Dans cette présentation, on souligne l'explication de leur évolution du point de vue de leur dynamique interne propre comme du point de vue des facteurs externes que sont l'évolution sociale et culturelle de la société d'où proviennent ces théories.

Comme dans toute représentation historique des sciences, il y a des relations assez complexes entre, d'un côté, la discipline que l'on prend pour objet et, de l'autre, celle qui, à un niveau supérieur, analyse ses méthodes, ses hypothèses de base et son évolution. C'est pourquoi il importe de distinguer une histoire des recherches linguistiques, qui analyse leur création et leur évolution, et l'objet de ces recherches. Même si la

plupart des historiens sont eux-mêmes des linguistes, l'analyse historique doit se distinguer, dans sa visée et son point de vue, des travaux de linguiste, afin de pouvoir décrire les lignes d'évolution internes sans que soient portés des jugements de valeur fondés sur d'autres théories. En fin de compte, le but de l'historien des sciences du langage est d'éclaircir des tendances évolutives à l'intérieur d'un cadre concret (culturel, socio-économique et/ou politique), ainsi que d'exposer les contacts temporaires de certaines directions de recherche avec d'autres disciplines. Mais, dans tous les cas, il faut éviter d'avoir des oeillères.

Essentiellement, les buts de l'historiographie de la linguistique diffèrent de ceux de la linguistique en ce que l'historiographe ne cherche pas à mettre en lumière des faits linguistiques, mais plutôt à mettre en lumière comment des penseurs appartenant à des traditions diverses ont affronté les questions de structure et d'usage linguistique. Ceci signifie également qu'aux yeux de l'historiographe toutes les approches se valent également: il n'y a pas d'hierarchisation possible de ces approches en terme de leur valeur, encore moins un 'progrès' du domaine jusqu'à l'époque contemporaine. Aux yeux de l'historiographe, le passé du domaine ne peut servir à légitimiser son état actuel.

1.2 Envergure

Dans la définition qu'on vient de lire nous avons déjà esquissé les objectifs du manuel. Il s'agit de présenter une vue d'ensemble sur les théories et conceptions qui se sont jamais développées à propos du langage et des langues ainsi que les contextes dans lesquels elles se sont produites. Nous essaierons donc, autant que possible, de construire une représentation et de produire une documentation sur toutes les recherches concernant le langage conçu comme moyen de communication de par l'histoire, qu'elles soient de nature théorique ou pratique. Nous tiendrons également compte, de façon appropriée, des grammaires scolaires, des lexiques et d'autres ouvrages qui relèvent des activités de recherche linguistique, que nous décrirons et expliquerons en fonction de leurs rôles dans les activités humaines et de leurs théorisations implicites.

Il faut cependant mentionner une importante restriction. Le manuel ne traite que des recherches qui sont transmises par écrit. Cela signifie que ce que l'on nomme 'linguistique populaire', tout comme les prises de position envers les langues, doivent être réservées à d'autres manuels, par exemple, au manuel de sociolinguistique. La même restriction vaut pour les études empiriques portant sur les attitudes langagières: bien que les attitudes langagières jouent un rôle important dans la mise en place d'idées et de théories linguistiques, on ne les aborde que lorsqu'on les mentionne directement dans les écrits linguistiques.

Certes, dans quelques cas particuliers, on ne peut éviter des recoupements avec d'autres manuels de la série. Par exemple, il n'est pas possible de distinguer nettement l'histoire des sciences du langage et celle de la philosophie du langage; c'est particulièrement vrai dans le cas de certaines traditions non-occidentales, telles que la chinoise et la sanskrite, où sont liées de manière inextricable linguistique et philosophie du langage. Par conséquent, les deux manuels concernés contiendront chacun des sections sur certaines traditions philosophiques importantes par rapport au langage. Seront ainsi prises en compte dans ce manuel, par exemple, les traditions des Grecs anciens, notamment de Platon, d'Aristote ou des Stoïciens, ainsi que celle des grammaires spéculatives de la fin du Moyen Âge, eu égard à leur importance pour la recherche linguistique et non pour ce qui concerne la philosophie.

Une caractéristique importante de ce manuel est donc d’approcher d’une présentation à peu près complète dans l’espace et dans le temps de toutes les branches de la recherche linguistique. Ceci signifie également que nous voulons dépasser cette visée eurocentrique qui, le plus souvent, ne tient compte dans une section de la grammaire sanskrite uniquement parce que (et dans la mesure où) elle a présenté un intérêt dans la découverte de la famille des langues indo-européennes, ou alors ne tient compte dans une section de la linguistique arabe classique que pour se donner bonne conscience plutôt que pour briser l’hégémonie occidentale (autoproclamée). D’autre part, lorsqu’on a tenu compte récemment dans certaines histoires de la linguistique générale de certaines traditions non-occidentales, on a le plus souvent mis l’emphase sur les individus les plus importants, ainsi Pāṇini (dans le cas du Sanskrit) ou Sībawayhi (dans le cas de l’arabe). Notre but dans ce manuel a été de comprendre autant que possible toutes les traditions linguistiques possibles, tant majeures que mineures, nous efforçant d’offrir un panorama aussi complet que possible de toutes les diverses formes que l’étude du langage a prises au cours des siècles. Idéal que nous n’avons pas toujours atteint, évidemment: la documentation ne suffit pas dans le cas de certaines traditions. Ainsi, nous n’avons pu, par exemple, comprendre des articles sur les traditions linguistiques éthiopiennes ou cambodgiennes, pour ne mentionner que deux exemples. Dans d’autres cas, nous avons eu à laisser tomber un article pour des raisons purement pratiques, vu qu’il s’est avéré impossible de trouver un auteur compétent, ou alors l’auteur que nous avions invité ne pouvait terminer l’article à temps et de ce fait ne pouvait se trouver dans le Manuel.

L’un des problèmes que nous avons rencontrés a été de trouver une limite chronologique pour la recherche contemporaine. Même s’il était plus simple d’ignorer les tout derniers développements, nous n’avons pas choisi cette voie. Il va sans dire qu’on ne peut procéder à une analyse historique des recherches contemporaines que si l’on respecte un certain nombre de mesures de prudence, surtout quand ceux qui décrivent l’évolution d’un domaine entreprennent aussi des recherches dans ce domaine et, pour cette raison, ne sont peut-être pas tout à fait prêts à distinguer entre les recherches linguistiques et les recherches sur l’histoire des recherches linguistiques. Nous avons essayé, dans la dernière partie du manuel, par sa structure et par le choix des auteurs, de faire face et de présenter largement les hypothèses de base et les principes qui sont les fondements de l’ouvrage. En tout cas, nous sommes convaincus qu’une présentation des sciences du langage contemporaines d’un point de vue historique contribue à une meilleure compréhension et qu’elle souligne autant leur importance dans la recherche moderne que dans l’histoire de la discipline.

1.3 Les dominantes thématiques

Les directeurs de la publication sont tombés d’accord dès le départ sur ce qu’il ne fallait pas céder à une forme d’exposé largement répandue, l’‘Histoire des grands personnages’, même si ce procédé peut, çà et là, produire des résultats utilisables, comme c’est le cas pour la linguistique européenne des XIXe et XXe siècles. Mais il semble douteux qu’une telle approche garde encore sa valeur quand il s’agit des périodes plus anciennes de la tradition occidentale ou celles, plus anciennes encore, des traditions orientales. Même lorsque les articles traitent des contributions de linguistes en tant qu’individus, on souligne les thèmes propres, l’orientation de la pensée linguistique, la direction de la recherche et les liens unissant l’individu à l’évolution de la tradition.

Par rapport à l'immense latitude de variation géographique, chronologique et thématique dans le champ des recherches linguistiques possibles, il n'est pas facile de nommer un thème central qui pourrait décrire de façon unifiante l'accès que l'on a choisi. On peut, cependant, citer quelques aspects selon lesquels nous avons effectué le choix des thèmes, la présentation du contenu ainsi que l'organisation et l'analyse du matériau.

L'analyse de l'évolution des sciences du langage en branches 'dominantes', 'marginales' ou 'sous-jacentes' forme une sorte de leitmotiv. Quoiqu'il soit possible dans la tradition occidentale de dégager, pour certaines périodes, des programmes de recherche qui, pour une grande partie du monde cultivé, sont demeurés valables durant un certain temps, on ne peut jamais parler du monopole d'un 'paradigme'. Dans l'histoire des recherches linguistiques on ne peut pratiquement pas déceler de changements de cap qui soient provoqués par l'effondrement soudain des programmes de recherche précédents ou par de quelconques 'découvertes révolutionnaires'. Au lieu de cela, on observe souvent des transitions souples entre des intérêts de recherche 'dominants' et d'autres qui étaient 'sous-jacents'. C'est pour cette raison que, parallèlement au paradigme dominant, nous suivrons d'autres programmes de recherche 'marginaux', puisque ceux-ci, au fil du temps, passent à l'avant-plan et peuvent devenir la 'pratique et/ou théorie dominante'.

On peut faire remarquer, en rapport avec la conception de l'histoire des sciences ici esquissée, qu'il semble y avoir une sorte de balancement régulier entre deux conceptions opposées concernant la façon de procéder en abordant la recherche linguistique. On peut effectivement observer des périodes où la langue est traitée comme un outil idéal servant à un locuteur idéal dans des situations de communication idéales. Ces périodes sont ensuite relayées par d'autres périodes où la recherche linguistique se tourne à nouveau, dans l'espace et dans le temps, vers la diversité des langues et la variété linguistique. On peut remarquer une telle oscillation au XIXe siècle, au cours duquel le programme de la grammaire comparée est remis en cause par l'émergence de la dialectologie. La distinction entre une direction 'dominante' et une direction 'sous-jacente' signifie qu'aucune des deux ne fait jamais complètement disparaître l'autre mais qu'elles sont poursuivies parallèlement. C'est ainsi qu'elles peuvent occuper sans cesse de nouvelles places sur une échelle entre la 'position dominante' et le 'phénomène marginal'. Dans la linguistique du XXe siècle semble se profiler un changement de position de même type, car à côté de l'intérêt apparemment dominant pour les structures systématiques et idéales de la langue se manifeste clairement ces derniers temps un intérêt tant pour les variations linguistiques que pour le fonctionnement de la langue dans les situations (complexes) de communication.

La distinction entre théorie 'dominante' et directions 'sous-jacentes' semble également être applicable aux institutions linguistiques. Aujourd'hui, en dehors du paradigme dominant, ces institutions traitent assez souvent, en effet, des questions de grammaire dans un sens plus pratique, de l'histoire des langues, du 'trésor' d'une langue, de la structure d'une langue ou de questions de parenté, même si le paradigme dominant s'oriente vers d'autres intérêts de recherche. Cela aussi fait partie d'un tableau complet des sciences du langage et, dans un manuel comme celui-ci, on doit en tenir compte.

Notre but était, en outre, d'éviter toute sorte de 'contrainte induite par le système' lors du classement du matériel ou de la division en chapitres et articles. Le grand nombre des collaborateurs qui, venant des écoles les plus variées, apportent ainsi leurs connaissances spécifiques, devrait offrir des garanties suffisantes à ce qu'un large

spectre de perspectives puisse s'exprimer. Toute tentative visant à enfermer les travaux sur l'histoire des sciences du langage dans un schéma classificatoire étroit est voué à l'échec; une telle tentative déformerait les faits et rendrait moins clairs les changements évolutifs dans chacune des traditions. Comme on a fait remarquer ci-dessus, on a évité l'approche biographique, mais malgré cela sont inclus des articles traitant des réussites et buts d'un individu ou d'un certain groupe de penseurs dans le contexte d'un examen d'ensemble de l'évolution de ladite tradition.

L'absence d'un cadre d'organisation étroit a une conséquence supplémentaire que nous croyons positive: elle préserve la possibilité de choisir entre une présentation de l'histoire des sciences du langage 'orientée vers les données et/ou les résultats' et une présentation 'orientée vers les théories'. Nous sommes convaincus qu'un choix exclusif pour l'une ou l'autre de ces possibilités doit conduire à biaiser la représentation. Dans certains cas, il est plus avantageux de privilégier ce qu'a engendré une théorie ou ce qu'a produit une époque; dans d'autres cas, une discussion des méthodes, principes et hypothèses d'un programme de recherche donne une image plus claire des traditions linguistiques. Les deux approches se complètent justement lors de la présentation des tendances de développement.

1.4 L'état de la recherche

Bien qu'il innove, en quelque sorte par la largeur de sa structure, notre ouvrage a la possibilité de s'appuyer sur les résultats de recherches antérieures. L'histoire des sciences du langage n'est apparue comme discipline autonome, dotée de ses propres formes d'organisation, de revues et de collections, qu'entre la fin des années 60 et le début des années 70. Cela ne veut pas dire qu'avant les années 60 il n'y ait eu aucune présentation générale de l'histoire des sciences du langage. Dans le cas de plusieurs traditions non-occidentales l'histoire du domaine faisait partie de l'apprentissage. Ainsi, les grammairiens arabes se servaient de gros dictionnaires biographiques on l'on traitait des travaux de générations antérieures de grammairiens. Ces histoires ne s'occupaient que de l'histoire d'une tradition. Dans la linguistique occidentale, les introductions historiques se rattachaient le plus souvent à l'examen de langues ou de groupes de langues particuliers, ou de pair avec l'examen de sujets linguistiques particuliers, par exemple la phonologie ou la sémantique, où l'on traçait dans leurs grandes lignes les travaux antérieurs.

L'ouvrage de François Thurot *Tableau des progrès de la science grammaticale*, qui fut publié comme "Discours préliminaire" de sa traduction (parue en 1796) du *Hermès* (1751) de James Harris, a été caractérisé par certains chercheurs comme la 'première tentative d'une histoire de la grammaire'. Ce n'est que vers le milieu du XIXe siècle que des présentations historiques plus vastes (parmi lesquelles il faudrait citer en priorité la *Sprachphilosophie der Alten* en 3 volumes de Laurenz Lersch, 1838–1841), seront publiées. La philologie classique était alors prépondérante; ce qui avait pour conséquence qu'à l'exception des Grecs, des Romains et, partiellement, des Indiens, toutes les autres traditions restaient exclues. Cette exclusion frappait dans sa totalité la recherche linguistique qui va du Moyen Age jusqu'aux temps modernes. On en trouvera un exemple typique dans la *Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft bei den Griechen und Römern* (Steinthal 1863), qui finalement ne traite que de la philosophie du langage antique et non de la recherche linguistique au sens propre.

Ce n'est qu'avec les travaux historiques de Benfey (1869), Raumer (1870), Delbrück (1880, surtout à partir de la 4e édition de 1904) et Bursian (1883), que l'on tient compte

des périodes récentes de la linguistique, mais avec une préférence unilatérale pour les temps modernes. L'orientation eurocentrique des conceptions et idées linguistiques est restée dominante jusqu'à nos jours, bien qu'aient paru depuis la fin du XIXe siècle des traités sur l'évolution des grammaires de l'hébreu et de l'arabe.

Même si un nombre important de manuels et de traité pédagogiques consacrés à l'histoire des sciences du langage a été publié dans les années 60 de notre siècle, il semble que ce soit seulement dans les années 70 qu'un véritable intérêt pour les traditions extra-européennes puisse être perçu. On peut constater cette évolution récente en lisant l'*Historiography of Linguistics* en 2 volumes, publiée en 1975 comme postface des *Current Trends in Linguistics* dirigés par Thomas A. Sebeok. Elle contient, outre les chapitres 'habituels', des aperçus des traditions linguistiques en Extrême Orient ainsi qu'en Amérique du Nord et du Sud. Il est frappant que, dans de nombreuses contributions, on entende par 'histoire' une sorte de rapport de recherche, en parallèle avec la linguistique occidentale, sur les 'publications récentes en histoire des sciences du langage', plutôt qu'un travail de recherche indépendant, comme on l'aurait peut-être attendu.

Notre manuel, à l'encontre de l'orientation que l'on vient de décrire, adopte le modèle du type d'histoire des sciences qui se profile de plus en plus nettement depuis 1973, année de publication de la première revue (*Historiographia Linguistica*, Amsterdam) entièrement consacrée à l'histoire des sciences du langage. Peu après cette parution furent fondées des sociétés internationales et régionales d'histoire des sciences du langage; les premiers séminaires et congrès eurent lieu en Europe et en Amérique. Lors de ces séminaires et congrès, on traitait non seulement des théories linguistiques du passé ou de traditions de recherche particulières, mais également des questions méthodologiques et épistémologiques posées par l'approche historique. La meilleure façon de constater les progrès qui ont été faits dans ce domaine, lors des dernières années, est de lire les revues *Historiographia Linguistica*, *Histoire Epistémologie Langage* (Paris, 1979–) et *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft* (Münster, 1991–), ainsi que les actes de l'International Conference on the History of the Language Sciences (ICHoLS) qui, depuis 1978, a lieu tous les trois ans. Dans les années 80 ont été publiées des monographies consacrées à la théorie et à la méthodologie de l'histoire des sciences du langage qui illustrent encore mieux l'orientation actuelle de la discipline. Ces débats continuent toujours.

Vers l'époque où l'on commença d'abord à parler de l'actuel projet, Peter Schmitter donna le coup d'envoi à sa *Geschichte der Sprachtheorie* (Tübingen, 1987–), une série de monographies traitant de divers champs et périodes de l'histoire de la linguistique, dont 4 (sur 9 volumes prévus) ont été publiés jusqu'à maintenant. Avec des buts comparables, Sylvain Auroux a mis en place une *Histoire des idées linguistiques* (Bruxelles, 1990–2000) en 3 volumes, suivi d'un *History of Linguistics* (Londres, 1994–) en 5 volumes, sous la direction de Giulio Lepschy. Pendant ce temps, E. F. K. Koerner et R. E. Asher ont fait paraître leur ouvrage de 500 pages, *Concise History of the Language Sciences from the Sumerians to the Cognitivists* (Oxford, 1995), qui non seulement offre un tour d'horizon des plus importantes traditions, mais offre également une vue d'ensemble assez contemporaine des diverses écoles, théories et tendances de la linguistique du XXe siècle que l'on ne trouve dans aucune de ces histoires à plusieurs volumes. Pour un exposé plus détaillé des sciences du langage au XXe siècle, on devra attendre la publication du volume III de l'actuel projet.

Pour des renseignements sur la plupart des grands personnages dans l'histoire de la linguistique mondiale, le *Lexicon grammaticorum* de 1000 pages (Tübingen, 1996), sous la direction de Harro Stammerjohann, sera la principale source de renseignements pour bien des années à venir.

1.5 Structure du manuel

Nous avons organisé cet ouvrage, avant tout, selon une orientation chronologique. Néanmoins, il s'avérait nécessaire de dévier de ce principe pour les premiers chapitres, consacrés aux traditions non-occidentales, que l'on dépeint de façon parallèle, indépendamment de la chronologie, bien que ces recherches linguistiques du Moyen et de l'Extrême Orient se sont établies, de façon parallèle et indépendante, en des lieux géographiquement séparés. Dans certains cas, lorsqu'une tradition a eu pour principal point de départ une tradition extérieure étrangère, on a traité de cette tradition du point de vue de la tradition-mère. Ainsi, on a pris cette décision dans le cas de la linguistique arménienne et géorgienne, dont on traite dans le chapitre sur la tradition grecque, ou la linguistique copte et turque, dont on traite dans le chapitre sur la tradition grammaticale arabe, et la linguistique vietnamienne, dont on traite dans le chapitre sur la tradition linguistique chinoise. Vu que la plupart des traditions, à un moment ou l'autre, ont subi l'influence d'autres traditions, cette division n'est pas sans un certain arbitraire et ne saurait être prise pour un jugement sur la valeur intrinsèque de la tradition examinée.

Les traditions grecques et latines ont joué un rôle-clé pour ce qui est de l'apparition de la tradition linguistique occidentale, mais on les examine ici sans prendre en considération leur rôle lors de la période suivant la Renaissance. La linguistique, après la Renaissance, a évidemment pris pour base la tradition latine et grecque, mais on en a parfois exagéré l'importance: la grammaire grecque et latine ont été bien autre chose que des préparatifs en vue de l'apparition des courants principaux de la linguistique occidentale. C'est à partir des traditions linguistiques grecques et romaines, que l'ordre chronologique sera davantage respecté.

Le manuel passe ensuite aux courants dominants de la linguistique occidentale et établit une coupure avec la Renaissance, époque où les langues vernaculaires de l'Europe Occidentale sont devenues objets de recherche, moyens de recherche et métalangues. Désormais, la recherche linguistique n'a plus uniquement une seule langue comme objet et comme cadre de référence. Ce schéma n'est, bien évidemment, pas valable pour les traditions non-occidentales. Pour décrire ces traditions, on parle volontiers de nos jours d'époque 'classique', de 'Moyen Âge' et de 'Renaissance', utilisant des termes qui à l'origine servaient exclusivement à décrire les évolutions propres à l'hémisphère occidental. Ces termes devraient être évités pour la description des traditions non-occidentales, pas seulement parce qu'ils sont associés à trop de connotations qui renvoient à l'Europe. On peut cependant parler également d'une coupure à propos de ces traditions: elle a été causée par l'importation des recherches linguistiques occidentales, ce qui provoqua une fusion de la science linguistique locale avec le modèle européen. Avec la Renaissance (si l'on prend le terme en ce sens), le modèle occidental prend une position dominante à travers le monde, ce qui permet d'envisager une représentation unifiée de la recherche linguistique durant les périodes qui lui succédèrent.

Un autre tournant décisif dans l'histoire de la recherche linguistique eut lieu au XIX^e siècle, lorsque la linguistique historique et comparative se dégagèrent comme paradigme

dominant. Pour finir, l'histoire de notre siècle commence avec l'orientation vers la synchronie. C'est au XXe et au XIXe siècles, que nous consacrons la plus large place dans ce manuel.

Les aspects thématiques ont présidé au découpage des périodes en chapitres; mais, autant la distinction entre branche 'dominante' et intérêts de recherche 'sous-jacents' que d'autres considérations substantielles y jouent également un rôle. En ce qui concerne la représentation des évolutions les plus récentes des sciences du langage, il n'est plus question, pour des raisons évidentes, d'un ordre purement chronologique. Au lieu de cela, nous nous sommes concentrés sur les points communs et les divergences méthodologiques des théories en question. Nous avons, en outre, prêté attention aux points de contact entre les sciences du langage et les disciplines voisines, comme la sociologie, la psychologie, la neurologie, la logique, les mathématiques, etc. Cette relation mutuelle entre les sciences du langage et les disciplines voisines est, en effet, l'une des caractéristiques les plus frappantes de notre temps.

2. Commentaires sur les différents chapitres

La recherche linguistique du Proche Orient s'occupe principalement de problèmes d'écriture et de lexique. En outre, l'existence de différents dialectes et la coexistence de différentes langues de culture impliquent une certaine contrainte de la codification grammaticale (chapitre I).

Le chapitre II traite de la recherche linguistique en Chine. La phonétique et le lexique sont ici les centres d'intérêt. Mais, dans le cadre de considérations philosophiques, il est aussi question de l'évolution d'importantes représentations de la nature du signe linguistique (dans sa forme phonique et graphique). La langue joue, en outre, un rôle capital en tant que médium littéraire. La recherche linguistique chinoise a eu une grande influence sur la Corée (chapitre III) et le Japon (chapitre IV). Le bilinguisme caractéristique de ces deux cas mène cependant à des études de grammaire contrastives. On s'intéresse aussi à l'emploi de modèles grammaticaux néerlandais pour la langue japonaise, lors de la période Rangakusha.

La science indienne, l'une des plus importantes parmi celles qui sont indépendantes de l'Occident, a suscité, ainsi que le sanskrit, un grand intérêt dans la littérature historiographique. C'est d'elle que provient la première tentative de description complète d'une langue (en l'occurrence le sanskrit), utilisant une méthode formelle stricte, l'*Aṣṭādhyāyī* de Pāṇini. Un autre aspect important de la recherche linguistique indienne est son association à la philosophie et à la logique. Le modèle indien (sanskrit) a eu des effets sur la description du javanais ancien et du burmesien (chapitre V). Dans le cas des recherches linguistiques consacrées aux langues dravidiennes (chapitre VI) et au tibétain (chapitre VII), les traditions propres se fondent plus ou moins avec le modèle adopté en provenance du sanskrit.

La recherche linguistique hébraïque se développe à partir de l'exégèse des textes religieux. Dans une phase postérieure, elle assimile certains éléments de la tradition arabe qui devient finalement dominante. On trouve également dans ce contexte une première tentative visant à démontrer la relation entre les différentes langues sémitiques (chapitre VIII). Dans la recherche linguistique arabe, la relation entre la langue et la religion est déterminante pour l'évolution des conceptions de son origine et de sa nature. Le *Kitāb* de Sībawayhi, qui contient une présentation complète et systématique de

l'arabe, marque le début d'une recherche linguistique indépendante. Son modèle servira plus tard à la description d'autres langues, telles que le malais, le persan, le turc et le copte. La recherche syrienne est intéressante notamment dans le sens où elle combine des éléments de deux traditions, grecque et arabe (chapitre X).

Dans certaines histoires des sciences du langage, la recherche linguistique grecque est présentée en fonction de son rôle modèle pour le latin et pour la tradition occidentale toute entière. Les éléments qui n'ont pas été adoptés ultérieurement font habituellement figure de parents pauvres. Nous avons choisi, au contraire, une présentation qui illustre la tradition linguistique grecque en tant que telle. Les premières sections ne suivent qu'un ordre chronologique sommaire. Elles traitent de la dépendance mutuelle entre la philosophie antique et la grammaire ainsi que des traditions philologiques et des aspects techniques de cette dernière, qui, à une époque plus récente, sont fondés sur la *Téchnè* de Denys le Thrace. Les sections suivantes traitent du rôle de la grammaire dans le système éducatif et de la relation entre la science du langage et d'autres disciplines. Les traductions de la *Téchnè* sont à la base de beaucoup d'autres traditions linguistiques, comme celles du géorgien, de l'arménien, du syriaque et du vieux slavon liturgique.

La recherche linguistique grecque a aussi été un modèle important pour la latine (chapitre XII). Cette dernière atteint son apogée avec les travaux, entre autres, de Charisius, Donat ou Priscien dont les descriptions grammaticales constitueront pour le début du Moyen Âge le point de départ d'une longue tradition d'études latines. Les sections suivantes de ce chapitre sont consacrées à la relation entre grammaire et rhétorique, et entre langue et révélation dans la théologie des débuts du christianisme. Au début du Moyen Âge (chapitre XIII), les études du latin demeurent un facteur décisif pour l'évolution de la recherche linguistique. D'autres sections sont dédiées à leur rapport avec la théologie, à leur position dans la systématique des sciences et à leur rôle dans la société. Pendant le Haut Moyen Âge, on parvient à une distinction entre théorie linguistique (*grammatica speculativa*) et description linguistique (*grammatica positiva*). Le chapitre XIV traite de la grammaire spéculative de ceux que l'on appelle les modistes ainsi que de la relation entre les recherches linguistiques, la grammaire, la théologie et les autres disciplines.

Le chapitre XV traite de la survie du type de recherche linguistique pré-modiste, d'une part dans la description du latin, d'autre part dans le début des premières analyses grammaticales de différentes langues vernaculaires telles que l'irlandais, le gaélique, l'islandais, l'anglais et diverses langues slaves. La dernière section est consacrée à l'Occitan (ou Provençal) qui occupe dans ce cadre une position particulière; c'est une langue littéraire, elle est étudiée, décrite grammaticalement et stylistiquement en tant que telle depuis la Catalogne et la Castille jusqu'à l'Italie du Nord et la Sicile.

Le 'retour' aux langues classiques (latin et grec) et aux sources qui se sont exprimées dans ces langues conduit au cours du XVe siècle à une nouvelle orientation de la linguistique (occidentale); c'est au chapitre XVI qu'est traitée la rupture qui s'effectue ainsi. A peu près à la même époque se développe parallèlement, d'abord chez les marchands puis chez les nobles, un intérêt pratique pour les langues vernaculaires, revalorisées de fait par l'Humanisme; un apprentissage régulier de ces langues se met en place (chapitre XVII). La transposition des conceptions humanistes aux vernaculaires ouvre le chemin à une description grammaticale (et lexicale) de textes littéraires rédigés dans ces langues (chapitre XVIII). L'étape suivante mène à dresser, pour les vernaculaires dont l'importance ne cesse de croître, une liste de règles et de lois et à élaborer une norme (chapitre XIX).

La découverte du Nouveau Monde par les Portugais, les Espagnols, les Anglais, les Français et les Hollandais, qui a lieu à peu près au même moment que le retour aux langues classiques, met l'Europe en contact avec des langues 'exotiques', qui sont d'abord étudiées non pas en tant que telles, mais dans le but pratique d'évangéliser ces mondes nouvellement découverts (chapitre XX). Ce n'est qu'au cours du XVII^e siècle que les réflexions de linguistique théorique reconquièreent une signification; c'est, en fait, au XVIII^e siècle qu'elles suscitent un grand intérêt (chapitre XXI). La revalorisation des vernaculaires et l'explication de leur égalité avec les langues classiques conduit du même coup à des points de vue théoriques, qui apparaissent d'abord dans des traités sur l'origine des langues (chapitre XXI), conduisent ensuite à des recherches sur la naissance et l'évolution de langues nationales particulières, recherches où les relations entre les différentes langues nationales jouent un rôle important (chapitre XXIII).

Pendant la première moitié du XIX^e siècle, la naissance et le développement de la recherche linguistique historico-comparative concernant l'Indo-européen conduit à un refoulement de la tradition, établie depuis longtemps, des études linguistiques philologico-littéraires. La création de chaires pour ce nouveau domaine de recherche contribue de manière décisive à son développement (chapitre XXIV). Cette évolution a rapidement un impact sur les 'Nouvelles Philologies', c'est-à-dire sur de nouvelles disciplines qui n'étudient plus les langues classiques grec, latin et sanskrit, mais des langues et groupes de langues plus récents. On en vient, là aussi, à une institutionnalisation et une professionnalisation, par la création de chaires et la fondation de nouvelles revues (chapitre XXV).

La 'méthode comparative' se développe, au centre de la philologie historico-comparative indo-européenne, comme un instrument de reconstruction d'états de langue antérieurs (et de la langue primitive présumée). Au cours de la seconde moitié du XIX^e siècle, cette méthode est appliquée à des familles de langues non indo-européennes, comme les langues africaines, austronésiennes ou encore amérindiennes (chapitre XXVI).

Les tentatives de classification des langues adoptent au fil du temps de nouvelles formes. Les approches morphosyntaxiques dominent le début du XIX^e siècle, et sont ensuite évincées entre 1850 (Steinthal) et 1921 (Sapir) par des procédés typologiques plus complexes, qui sont refoulés à leur tour par la recherche d'une unité structurelle de toutes les langues du monde où il est également question du développement d'une grammaire universelle (chapitre XXVII).

Parallèlement à cela, des méthodes de saisie de données pour les langues non fixées par écrit se développent durant le XIX^e siècle, tout comme l'étude scientifique du son (linguistique) et de sa production. La phonétique prend de plus en plus d'importance grâce à ces nouvelles recherches, mais aussi dans le cadre des cours de langues étrangères. On développe des alphabets universels pour la transcription des langues non écrites et la dialectologie prend son essor (chapitre XXVIII). Les recherches sémantiques gagnent également de l'importance, depuis les propositions de Reisig, plutôt modestes, vers les années 30, et les études concernant les changements de sens de la fin du XIX^e siècle, jusqu'au courant 'des mots et des choses' (Wörter und Sachen) au début du XX^e siècle. Des travaux apparentés dans le domaine de la lexicographie sont également à prendre en considération (chapitre XXIX). Il faut, pour terminer, aussi mentionner les influences de la psychologie et de la physiologie sur la recherche linguistique du XIX^e siècle, et tout particulièrement l'oeuvre de Wundt. C'est sous son influence que

se développent des recherches sur les relations entre le langage et le cerveau, spécialement en ce qui concerne l'aphasie et l'acquisition de la langue maternelle (chapitre XXX).

Les racines de la linguistique structurale, qui, à l'occasion, ont été associées au nom de Saussure, remontent fort avant dans le XIXe siècle. On en arrive au XXe siècle à la formation de différentes écoles et orientations de recherche, avec, à leur origine, l'École de Genève. Les conceptions structuralistes deviennent par la suite également importantes pour d'autres sciences humaines comme l'anthropologie, la sociologie, la théorie littéraire et la psychologie (chapitre XXXI). Avec l'ethnolinguistique, l'Amérique du Nord choisit d'autres voies. Celle-ci trouvent aussi leurs racines au XIXe siècle, au cours duquel on a progressivement reconnu l'importance des langues amérindiennes pour la recherche linguistique. Sur ce point, les conceptions de Humboldt ont été également d'une importance décisive, tout comme les débuts d'une recherche linguistique tournée vers l'anthropologie et le développement de travaux descriptifs, menés indépendamment les uns des autres. Dans ce contexte il ne faut pas négliger la glottochronologie et la lexico-statistique, dans lesquelles on peut déceler une tentative pour donner une dimension historique aux langues sans tradition écrite (chapitre XXXII).

Entre 1940 et 1950, de nouveaux procédés de description émergent en Amérique et ailleurs; on peut les caractériser par la tentative de décrire les langues à l'aide de procédés formels, sur le modèle des mathématiques. La linguistique générative, qui apparaît plus tard, est caractéristique de ces tentatives. Les modèles mathématiques, ainsi que les travaux dans le domaine de la traduction automatique, sont d'une importance toujours croissante pour l'élaboration de théories linguistiques, qui s'articulent en un grand nombre de projets, tous plus ou moins tributaires de la grammaire générative (chapitre XXXIII).

Au XXe siècle, des études sémantiques sont menées sous de multiples formes; une petite partie seulement provient des théories de Saussure. On peut citer ici, à titre d'exemple, le contextualisme de Firth et la sémantique générative mais aussi différents modèles de lexicologie, lexicographie, onomastique, étymologie et les travaux exécutés sous l'influence de la sémiotique de Peirce (chapitre XXXIV). A partir du milieu du siècle, on en vient à une plus forte diversification de la phonologie et de la morphologie en différentes branches et courants. Le point de départ est donné par *Sound Pattern of English* de Chomsky et Halle (1968). Sont également traités des travaux allant de la 'phonologie non-linéaire' jusqu'à la 'morphologie naturelle' parmi lesquels certains trouvent leur origine dans des propositions de Chomsky et son école (chapitre XXXV).

Au cours du XXe siècle, la dialectologie, en passant par des études sur les variations linguistiques, est absorbée par la socio-linguistique. L'évolution commence avec un débat sur l'homogénéité ou l'hétérogénéité de la langue et s'achève (provisoirement) avec les études sur les contacts entre langues. Dans ce domaine, le spectre de l'intérêt de recherche s'étend des pidgins et créoles jusqu'aux questions de planification linguistique (chapitre XXXVI). Suite au 'tournant saussurien' et à l'essor des recherches synchroniques qu'il a induit, on en arrive, pendant la première moitié de notre siècle, à une stagnation relative dans le domaine des recherches sur l'histoire des langues. Sous l'influence de nouvelles hypothèses (par exemple, la théorie des laryngales et glottales), on assiste à partir du milieu de ce siècle à un regain d'intérêt significatif (chapitre XXXVII), stimulé par les résultats qu'obtiennent la créolistique et la socio-linguistique en ce qui concerne le changement linguistique. Dans les trois dernières sections sont

présentées des approches alternatives ('orientées parole', si l'on peut dire) aux branches de recherches traitées jusqu'ici ('orientées langue'): il s'agit de Wittgenstein, qui met l'accent sur l'usage, de la théorie des actes illocutoires, de la pragmatique et de la linguistique textuelle, ainsi que de l'analyse de discours et de la théorie de l'énonciation (chapitre XXXVIII).

Dans le chapitre XXXIX, le chapitre le plus long de l'ouvrage, il s'agit de démontrer que la conception d'une linguistique autonome, qui a été énergiquement défendue depuis le début du XXe siècle, est aujourd'hui peu à peu délaissée au profit d'études pluridisciplinaires, qui visent l'intégration des résultats produits dans les domaines de la sémiotique, de la philosophie, de la psychologie, de la neurologie, de la biologie, de l'intelligence artificielle, de la traduction automatique, etc. Dans la mesure où la recherche linguistique se montre ouverte aux autres disciplines, des connaissances linguistiques pénètrent également ces domaines et s'avèrent fructueuses.

Dans le dernier chapitre (chapitre XL), les responsables de l'ouvrage exposent, tantôt en commun, tantôt séparément, leur conception de l'origine, de l'évolution et de l'avenir de l'histoire des sciences du langage, et exposent leur point de vue sur la méthodologie et l'épistémologie de cette discipline.

Les Editeurs

I. The Establishment of Linguistic Traditions in the Near East

Die Anfänge sprachwissenschaftlicher Traditionen im Nahen Osten

La constitution des traditions linguistiques au Proche-Orient

1. The Sumerian and Akkadian linguistic tradition

1. Writing and languages
2. Scribal training
3. Akkadian lists
4. Linguistic consciousness
5. Bibliography

1. Writing and languages

Around 3000 BC in Mesopotamia – today's Iraq – the first writing system was invented. The first use of writing was for bookkeeping purposes (Nissen, Damerow & Englund 1993). The identity of the language first committed to writing – Sumerian or some substrate language that left few traces in the Sumerian vocabulary – cannot be established, since the first signs were pictograms that identified objects without being language specific. As a pictogram became simplified and stylized so that it lost its pictorial character, it became a symbol. Such a symbol is called an ideogram. An ideogram does not denote a word but a concept and can represent any word associated with that concept. Only when a particular word becomes permanently attached to the sign, does the sign become a logogram. A logogram corresponds not only to a particular word, but to a set which represents all forms of a word, the choice among which is context sensitive. Only when the choice is indicated by another sign that serves as phonetic indicator is the writing disambiguated and does the writing become language specific. In the earliest written records the order of the signs was not fixed; thus the writing did not reflect a particular language with a fixed word order, but only expressed the idea – it was ideographic;

inflectional morphemes were not always written. A pictogram, which eventually evolved into a cuneiform sign, could stand not only for the name of the object it depicted but also for a homophonous word, e. g., the sign for arrow, Sumerian *ti*, for the word “life”, Sumerian *ti(l)* and the sign for reed, Sumerian *gi*, for the homophonous verb “to return”. On these and a few other examples is based the theory that the writing reflects the Sumerian language and not another, and that the first written texts were Sumerian.

With this application of the rebus principle, the step toward using signs to write ‘empty words,’ that do not represent a concrete object, was taken. As Sumerian words are preponderantly monosyllabic, the concept that a sign represents a syllable could evolve. In this sense, the invention of writing itself may well be considered testimony of linguistic analysis of the spoken language. – Sumerian being an agglutinating language, inflectional morphemes appended to a root morpheme came to be represented in the writing by a sign symbolizing a homonym; e. g., the morpheme {a} by the sign representing a “water”. Still, writing is not purely morphemic; a sequence of morphemes can be written on a lower level as a sequence of syllables, e. g. *lugal+ak+a(k)* written as *lugal-la-ka*, while others may be written independently, as the ergative morpheme {e} when appended to the word *lugal* “king” written *lugal.e* but when appended to the (divine) name *En.lil* written *En.lil.le*. The reasons for such distinctions may be phonological, but normally cannot be ascertained. Words consisting of both root and inflectional mor-

phemes were regarded as units; that the notion of ‘word’ existed can be shown by the fact that words are not divided between two lines on the tablet, and the end of the line coincides with the word boundary.

Cuneiform writing was adapted to Akkadian, a Semitic language with inner inflection, but never achieved a perfect fit. For example, there never developed a one-to-one correspondence between the number of CV signs beginning with a stop or sibilant (either voiced or voiceless), e. g., *da* and *ta*, and the number of Akkadian stops and sibilants (either voiced, voiceless, or ‘emphatic’); e. g., the syllable *ta*, with ‘emphatic’ – probably glottalized – dental stop, has no separate sign but is written with either *da* or *ta*. The solutions for writing the third member of such sets were not uniform.

2. Scribal training

The early preoccupation of Mesopotamian scholars with linguistic matters stems no doubt from being faced with a bilingual situation, probably more prominent in the written medium, since in the Old Babylonian (OB) period (1894–1595 BC) already Sumerian was no longer a spoken language though it remained written as a literary language used in administrative, technical, and religious texts up to the first century AD. The word for “tongue, language”, *eme* (Akk. *lišā-nu*) is applied also to dialects or trade languages; the women’s dialect is called *eme.sal* “fine tongue”; others are *eme.galam* “high tongue”, *eme.si.sá* “straight tongue”, *eme.te.ná* “oblique[?] tongue”, etc.

The necessity of training scribes gave to rise to various lists, the most basic of which is the list of signs, with glosses indicating the sign’s possible pronunciations (‘readings’). The earliest lists written in cuneiform, as early as the third millennium, simply catalogue objects or living beings; members belonging to a class are preceded (rarely followed) by a class mark, called ‘determinative’; e. g. names of professions are preceded by the word for “man”, *lú*; objects made of wood, stone, clay, reed, etc., by the word for “wood”, “stone”, “clay”, “reed”, etc. This classification while obviously semantic is also acrographic, a principle useful for mnemotechnical and didactic purposes and at the same time displaying Mesopotamian man’s preoccupation with the classification of the world around him.

These Sumerian unilingual lists were eventually provided with an additional column of Akkadian translations, but their sequence still displayed the ‘acrographic’ principle of the Sumerian. Other bilingual lists are arranged according to (a) sign forms, (b) semantic groups, or (c) phonetic similarity (with or without etymological connection) of the Akkadian entries. As in all of Babylonian scientific literature which knows only two forms: the list and step-by-step directives, the oral instruction that must have accompanied these ‘lessons’ cannot be recaptured, even though we possess a humorous literary text in the form of an examination of a student by a scribe (Sjöberg 1974).

Most striking are the so-called Grammatical Texts (henceforth GT; Landsberger, Hallock & Jacobsen: 1956, 46–202), the earliest of which date to the OB period, the OBG. They are the first example of contrastive linguistics, as they compare and contrast paradigms. Akkadian verbs, like those of other Semitic languages, express such categories as causative, passive, reflexive, etc., through stem modifications by means of infixes, consonant reduplications, and the like, and person, mood, and a direct or indirect verb object by means of prefixes and/or suffixes; by contrast, the Sumerian verb stem is invariable and the meanings corresponding to the Akkadian inflected form are expressed by affixes. The GT present in parallel columns the Akkadian inflected form and the Sumerian agglutinated form. Each category is given in the full paradigm according to person, tense, mood, etc., often resulting in compilations of several hundred lines.

OBGT III

84 *dím-ma-ab* = *e-pu-uš* /*epuš*/ “make!”

85 *ga-ab-dím* = *lu-pu-uš* /*lūpuš*/ “let me make”

86 *ab-dím-me-en* = *e-pe-eš* /*eppeš*/ “I shall make”

87 *nu-ub-dím-me-en* = *ú-la e-pe-eš* /*lula eppeš*/ “I shall not make”

88 *hé-ib-dím-me* = *li-pu-uš* /*līpuš*/ “let him make”

89 *na-ab-dím-me* = *la i-pe-eš* /*la ippeš*/ “he shall not make”

Such paradigms with imperative, cohortative, and optative forms, in this sequence, suggest that they were devised for writing letters or administrative orders.

Indicative forms follow the sequence 3rd, 1st, and 2nd persons, e. g.

OBGT VII

126 *al-sus-bi-eš* = *i-il-la-ku* “they go”

127 *al-sus-bi-en-dè-en* = *nī-il-lak* “we go”

- 128 *al-suš-bi-en-zé-en* = *ta-al-la-ka* “you [pl.] go”
 129 *i-suš-bi-eš* = *i-il-la-ku* “they go”
 130 *i-suš-bi-en-dè-en* = *ni-il-lak* “we go”
 131 *i-suš-bi-en-zé-en* = *ta-al-la-ka* “you [pl.] go”

Obviously, to the same Akkadian inflected form different Sumerian forms may correspond, and vice versa; what this says about the aim of the grammatical texts, whether to provide the proper Sumerian equivalent to a text composed in Akkadian or to demonstrate underlying principles of word-formation, is a still debated question. – Most completely preserved – and comprising 227 lines – are the paradigms of the verb *gar* = *šakā-nu* “to place” (OBGT VI, 227 lines) and *gin* = *alāku* “to go” (OBGT VII, 318 lines); other tablets list more than one verb, e. g., OBGT IX, after dealing with the compound verb *sá* ... *dug₄* = *kašādu* “to reach”, ends with 27 lines listing the imperative, cohortative, and optative of each of nine common verbs, e. g.,

- 137 *tuš.a* = *ši-ib* “sit!”
 138 *ga.tuš* = [blank]
 139 *hé.tuš* = [blank]

The blanks indicate that the second and third entries have to be construed as usual in the GT, namely as *lūšib* “I will sit” and *līšib* “let him sit”; the Akkadian cohortative and optative are all replaced by blanks in the right-hand column of this tablet. Shorter, and listing less common verbs, are OBGT VIII with 65 lines with the verb *kas₄* = *lasāmu* “to run” and 26 lines with the verb *kú* = *akālu* “to eat”.

Besides verb paradigms, the OBGT also compare and contrast pronouns, e. g., OBGT I 385–394 lists personal pronouns with the Akkadian emphatic ending *-ma* which has the function of a copula corresponding to the Sumerian copulative ending /am/:

OBGT I

- 385 *me.en.dè.àm* = *ni-i-nu-ma* “it is we”
 386 *me.en.da.nam* = *ni-i-nu-ma*
 387 *me.dè.en.da.nam* = *ni-i-nu-ma*
 388 *me.en.za.nam* = *at-tu-nu-ma* “it is you [pl.]”
 389 *za.e.me.en.za.nam* = *at-tu-nu-ma*
 390 *e.ne.ne.àm* = *šu-nu-ma* “it is they”
 391 *lú.ù.ne.àm* = *šu-nu-ma*
 392 *lú.bi.ne.àm* = *šu-nu-ma*
 393 *ur₅.meš.àm* = *šu-nu-ma*
 394 *ur₅.bi.àm* = *šu-nu-ma*

The next three sections (395–400, 401–409, and 410–418) repeat the Akkadian pronouns on the right-hand column but modify the Sumerian pronouns by adding the prefixes *i*

and *in.ga* and the infix *-na-* that turn the pronoun into a nominal clause.

The OBGT list entire forms only, while the Neo-Babylonian Grammatical Texts (NBGT) also isolate morphemes. Due to the nature of the writing which can express syllables only, a consonant morpheme appears in four forms, according to all four vowels with which it combines – depending on the final vowel of the head word – in the sequence *u-a-i-e*, the same sequence which occurs in the sign lists. For example,

NBGT II 46–52:

uš = *a-na i-na KI.TA* “to, in, suffix”

aš

iš

eš

úr

ar

ir (there is no sign <er> separate from <ir>); the /r/ morpheme is listed in a Middle Babylonian (MB) text (Civil, Gurney & Kennedy 1986: 78f., II, 35–36, 39–40, 63–64, 65–66) in the arrangement *ir* = *i-na*, *ir* = *a-na*, *úr* = *i-na*, *úr* = *a-na*, *ar* = *i-na*, *ar* = *a-na*, *ur₅* = *i-na*, *ur₅* = *a-na*.

In addition to the ‘translation’ of the morpheme into its Akkadian counterpart, an explanatory term is sometimes added. The meanings of some of the terms, e. g., AN.TA “prefix”, KI.TA “suffix”, MURUB₄.TA “infix” and MEŠ “plural”, are clear, but even when the literal meaning of such others as “full” (*malû*) or “empty” (*rīqu*) is known, their relationship to the referent may be obscure. Other Akkadian terms with unclear meaning also occur. The most frequent – and most debated – of these are *hamtu* (Sumerian LAGAB “short”) and *marû* (Sumerian *gid* “long”), which characterize two suppletive verb stems in Sumerian (cf. Civil, *forthcoming*). Several technical terms (AN.TA, KI.TA, MURUB₄, *rīqu*, *riātu*, *hamtu*, *marû*) also appear in Sumerian-Akkadian vocabularies arranged according to the sign forms, and seven (*uhhurtu*, *atartu*, *gamirtu*, *šushurtu*, *qablītu*, *marû*, *hamtu*) occur in the humorous examination (Sjöberg 1974).

3. Akkadian lists

Writing exercises: These acrographic lists of mostly verb forms replace a CVC syllable with CV-VC, e. g. *it-ta-lak*, *it-ta-la-ak* (Cavigneaux 1981), or add an enclitic particle or pronominal suffix.

Synonym lists: These cite in the left column a rare, obsolete, or foreign word and in

the right column a more common word, e. g. in the list *malku* = *šarru* (Kilmer 1963: 427):

175 *abdu* (West Semitic “slave”) = *ardu* “slave”
 176 *rēšu* (poetic word) = ditto
 177 *dušmû* “houseborn slave” = ditto.

Words of foreign – Elamite or Hurrian – origin are marked in the right column as NIM “(in) Elam(ite)” or SU.BIR₄ “(in) Subartu”, i. e., Hurrian. Similarly marked are often foreign plant names in Akkadian plant lists.

Commentaries to scholarly texts (*omina*, lexical texts) or learned poetry explain rare words by synonyms, both in the two-column format and in a continuous fashion. They are often based on bilingual lexical texts but may use the Sumerian entry as *tertium comparationis* only. E. g., GI *ša-la-mu* GI *la-pa-tum* ... *ša-la-mu la-pa-tum ina lišāni qabi* “GI [as Sumerogram] = to be safe, GI = to be ill-portending, it is said in the synonym list [lit. “tongue”]: *šalāmu* = *lapātu* (Thureau-Dangin 1922: no. 5 rev. 39–41). Some give phonetic variants, e. g., *mi-hi-iš-tum* : *mi-hi-il-tum* “stroke” (Labat 1933: 124 rev. 10), or etymologies, e. g., *ri-pi-it-tum* : *ana ra-pa-du* “*ripittu* [is relevant] to [the verb] *rapādu*” (ibid. 12).

A few vocabularies translate foreign language terms (Kassite, see Balkan 1954; also Hittite) into Akkadian. Outside Mesopotamia syllabaries and vocabularies were sometimes augmented by a column in the local language (Ugaritic, Hurrian).

Literary texts often appear in bilingual form, with usually the Sumerian being the source language, as is also indicated by the layout, with the translation normally under the Sumerian and indented; that late texts were also composed in Akkadian which was then provided with a Sumerian version, is recognizable from word-for-word transpositions without regard for Sumerian syntax.

4. Linguistic consciousness

The variety of languages impressed and intrigued the Mesopotamians; through their contacts to the east and west they had to use interpreters (Sumerian *eme.bal* “who changes the languages” attested c. 2300 BC, Akkadian *targumannu*, “dragoman”, 19th century BC); only for Lydian “among all languages from east to west that (my god) Assur had given into my hands” was no interpreter found when Gyges sent a messenger to As-

surbanipal (Piepkorn 1933: 16). The sounds of foreign languages were described as birds chirping or simply as “difficult to write” (Thureau-Dangin 1912, line 364). In the second half of the first millennium Aramaic replaced Akkadian as spoken and written language; it was written in alphabetic script by special scribes (*sēpiru*). A few school texts inscribed on the obverse in cuneiform and on the reverse in the Greek alphabet are the only evidence for teaching or learning Greek under the Seleucids (Maul 1991; Geller 1997).

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2. Indigenous Egyptian grammar

1. Introductory remarks
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1. Introductory remarks

Interest on the part of the ancient Egyptians in matters of language hardly went beyond the practical level and rarely became theoretical. In this respect their attitude was no different from that toward other branches of knowledge; its orientation was eminently empirical. Handbooks in the fields of mathematics, astronomy and astrology, medicine, calendar-lore, dream-explanation, onomastics and sacred geography had no theoretical basis either, but were a systematic elaboration of practical observations and of religious speculation, the two regularly being joined as complementary. Indigenous linguistics was no different. For instance, no systematic indigenous grammatical descriptions are known from the whole Pharaonic period, nor are they likely to turn up.

However, the Egyptian interest in language gains perspective when a number of details are taken into account relating to their preoccupation with their own script and language and those they came into contact with, and put on a gradient running from the empirical to the more theoretical level. Since

no consistent indigenous linguistic discipline existed, a presentation of the facts by necessity follows the outline of a modern overview, but it should do justice to the interest in certain fields displayed by the Egyptian themselves.

The indigenous writing (hieroglyphic and two cursive variants, hieratic and Demotic) is pictorial, but uses both logograms and phonograms. No vowels are written, which is a serious hampering to phonological reconstruction. Yet it is obvious that much practical knowledge of phonology is inherent to the system, and that on the graphic level phonemes are distinguished from morphemes, although nowhere any theoretical statement is made on this. In course of time, several attempts were made to adapt the writing system to the particular needs of rendering the exact phonetic constituency of a word, including its vowels: early in the Pharaonic period the so-called syllabic orthography (Schenkel 1986) was customarily employed to render foreign names, and in the Ptolemaic period occasionally Egyptian words were written with Greek letters. In due time this would lead to the replacement of the various indigenous writing systems by westernizing the script: a phonetically more adequate slightly adapted Greek system of letters, the Coptic writing system.

In a similar way as the script reveals elementary consciousness of phonetics and phonology on a non-theoretical level, so does some natural syntax emerge, from carefully composed literary (including historical and religious) texts. The single line served as the

basic unit, usually combined with a following one into a couplet; triplets are also known (Burkhard 1996). The binding force between the components in such metrical arrangements is unity of thought, but its basis is natural syntax (cf. Schenkel 1972). An example is the following quotation from a Middle Kingdom story which contains two coordinated sentences: $m\bar{z}=sn\ p.t\ m\bar{z}=sn\ t\bar{z}\ \# \ m\bar{k}\bar{z}\ i\bar{b}=sn\ r\ m\bar{z}(i).w$ “Whether they saw the heavens, whether they saw the earth # their heart was steadier than (that of) lions” (*Sh.S.* 28–30), where the first and last words are even in alliteration, thus supporting the grammatical cohesion. In the New Kingdom such units were graphically distinguished by supralinear red dots (‘verse-points’).

In one of the current systems of metrical analysis, of Gerhard Fecht, an even greater analytical depth is assumed, taking as the smallest basic unit the bearer of an accent (a word or phrase), and giving it the status of a ‘colon’, two the three accented units or cola forming a verse line. Should this be verifiable, there would be a system of prosodic segmentation as a further testimony to a tradition of implicit linguistic analysis.

2. Natural semantics: Paronomasia

Paronomasia occurs in countless passages (mostly religious and literary) in texts of all periods. It served different purposes: stylistic and theological.

In literature it might be helpful as an ordering means, the occasional alliteration supporting cohesion between verse lines (cf. above, 1). Or it might call up allusions, sometimes in an ironical sense (true word play; Guglielmi 1984). Most widespread is the custom of making phonemic similarity the postulate of a historical or ritual relationship between words on theological grounds (sacral etymology). Alliteration shows that phonetic oppositions were noted, as in the following passage from the Pyramid texts: $m\ n=k\ i\bar{r}.t\ Hr\ d\bar{z}p(=i)\ t\bar{w}\ i\bar{m}$ “Take for yourself the Eye of Horus, with which I donate you” (*Pyrt.* 110), a statement which accompanies the ritual act of giving of $d\bar{z}b\ 2$ “two figs”; the opposition $p:b$ has been exploited. Only a minority of the results of this never ending Egyptian search for meaning through etymological relationship is tenable by modern standards, e. g. when in an old text the verb $ndr(i)$ “to seize” alliterates with $\underline{d}r.t$ “hand”

(*Pyrt.* 539.b, 582.b, 672.a–c, 1405.b). In most cases correspondences turn out to be unlikely, as in the following example of theologizing etymology, serving as an explanation of a particular form of the sun god: $i\bar{n}\ m\bar{i}.w\ sw\ m\ nn\ i\bar{r}.w=f\ h\bar{p}r\ rn=f\ pw\ n(y)\ m\bar{i}w$ “In fact, is he like (*miu*) himself in what he does? – It is the way his name ‘Tomcat’ (*miu*) came into being” (*Coffin Texts* IV, 288–289.a–b, version T1Cb). However false, such paronomastic elaborations, apart from having a theological value of their own, are a sure sign that on the prosodic level (for the script, cf. above, 1.) attention was given to phonemes.

3. Systematic formation: Schooling

Formation in schools is at the center of several forms grammatical interest could take in Ancient Egypt. Scribal training appears to have been a major component in the school curriculum (Janssen & Janssen 1990: 76–80). Although school instruction is mentioned a number of times in pre-Ramesside sources (i. e., before 1300 BCE), direct evidence is extremely scarce and consists of mere glimpses of school life. The actual products of the disciples, surviving as exercises, are best known from the New Kingdom and later. Here our main source is the village of Deir el-Medīna, a small community of workmen and their families who as decorators and sculptors worked on the tombs of royal persons and well-to-do private people in the mountains bordering the West bank of Thebes (ca. 1500–1100 BCE). The professional activities of the workmen included continuously transmitting religious texts onto the walls of tombs, and most of it was in Classical Egyptian. Hence, their métier and the administration of the workforce itself required experience in or at least an acquaintance with writing, and the degree of literacy in this village was higher here than elsewhere (Janssen 1992).

A great number of writing exercises survive. Combining this material with the sparse evidence of earlier periods and other centres, it seems likely that the young apprentices were put to copying texts right away in the cursive script (hieratic). Training meant copying entire words in the hieratic script, much of which were classical texts, in an idiom that was no longer current (Middle Egyptian). This evident interest in and respect for the cultural inheritance embodied in particular

literature brought people, who otherwise spoke and wrote in the vernacular of the day, into contact with literary compositions which were several hundreds of years older. At a certain moment this became problematic: the gap between spoken and written language became unbridgeable. For coping with this linguistic problem, see below, 6.

4. Grammatical theory

While copying texts (classical and contemporary) was the chief part of the apprentice scribe's homework, testimony to more theoretical reflection consists of a few brief grammatical exercises, which contain the germs of theory. These and lexical work (Johnson 1994) stand central in our knowledge about the linguistic interest of the ancient Egyptians. The earliest grammatical exercises date to the Ramesside period (roughly, 1200 BCE) and are all in the vernacular, Late Egyptian; for, apart from the archaic literary component, texts in the contemporary idiom with an administrative touch were also copied; the young men were not trained as theorists or literates, but for a professional career in the administration. The grammatical notes are written in the margin of everyday notes on potsherds, the traditional writing material for all sorts of jottings. Ostrakon Petrie 28, from Deir el-Medîna, contains the inflection of the particle *iw*, and ostrakon Cairo CG 25227, from Abydos, that of the conjunctive prefix *mtw*, both carrying suffix pronouns. To form a true paradigm, the conjugation basis should be followed by a form of a lexical verb (e. g., *mtw=f sdm* "and then he hears"), but absence of the latter in the exercises testifies to the awareness of an abstract paradigm by itself. Another such text, also from Deir el-Medîna (ostrakon Turin 57118), is a fragmentary list of written out ordinal numbers.

There is a gap in our knowledge about the indigenous study of grammar for the period between the Ramesside era and the Ptolemaic period, due to the lack of well-excavated settlements where such schooling activities might have taken place. Apparently classical literary texts were being kept on the school program, as is proven by copies of the pre-Ptolemaic period (Posener 1966). Meanwhile, the Greek language was gradually finding entry into daily life and in the longer run formed a threat to the knowledge of indigenous writing systems. While Greek appren-

tices copied classical Greek texts as did Egyptian young scribes centuries before, those being schooled in Demotic had no such ancestral literary texts on their program (Tassier 1992: 313–314). The older texts they did learn to read and copy in a school in Karnak of Ptolemaic date, somewhere in the centre of the temple, were of a religious nature (Devauchelle 1984: 56–57). Grammatical exercises only turn up again in the abundant mass of documents written in the Demotic script (Kaplony-Heckel 1974; also, Devauchelle 1984; Tassier 1992), in the Ptolemaic period (from ca. 330 BCE on); at present a good 15 are known. They deal with the systematic inflection of verb forms (chiefly auxiliaries) and a few with that of nouns, including numerals. These texts, all of them fragmentary, are nonetheless sufficient in number to reveal a fixed order in which pronouns appear, whether after verbal elements or prepositions. Singular inflection comes first: "I", "you [masc.]", "he", "she", "you [fem.]", then the plural, where the order is different: "they", "we", "you". The Ramesside forerunners seem to separate at least singular from plural inflection, but are not informative enough to allow further comparison with the later grammatical tradition. There was standardization in other respects as well, in the ordering of the alphabet (see below, 7.).

Between the Ramesside and Ptolemaic eras, many official texts are couched in Neo-Middle Egyptian, with varying quality (Jansen-Winkel 1996; Der Manuelian 1994: 103–294). The gap in grammatical exercise copies mentioned already leaves one to guess as to how the scribes kept up their grammatical knowledge of Classical Egyptian. Possibly this happened in the way of practical philology, by copying older texts, probably through the use of pattern books of phraseology available in temple libraries, rather than by directly taking a text from an original (Schenkel 1977: 436).

5. Indigenous linguistic terminology

No general equivalent of 'language' is available; rather, the terms refer to 'speech' (i. e., 'parole'), not to a system ('language'). The word *r*, lit. "mouth", by extension "spell", "text unit", also denotes "speech", e. g. "You shall hear the language (lit. speech) of Egypt" (*r n(y) Km.t*), a promise made ca. 1950 BCE (Middle Kingdom period) at a Syrian court

to the Egyptian refugee Sinuhe, referring to his compatriots in residence there (*Sinuhe*/B. 31–32). That it denotes ‘speech’, not language as a system, appears from the fact that it can be ‘hampered’ (*swḥꜣ*), i. e., by stammering or stuttering (*Coffin Texts* V, 322.h). A New Kingdom equivalent is *mdw(.t)* ‘word’, ‘speech’, even ‘recitation’.

An early New Kingdom term is *ns* ‘tongue’, covering the notion of ‘language’ (more like ‘langue’). According to a sun-hymn from Amarna (early New Kingdom), speaking about foreign languages, the sun god has caused that ‘the tongues (*ns*) are distinguished (*wꜣ(i)*) by words (*mdw.t*)’ (*Texts from the Time of Akhenaten* 95.1), a concept to be dealt with later (see below, 9.). The emphasis on the phatic aspect suggests that one was well aware of differences between languages, but that they were thought to consist of the words, not properly in the system of a language. This may be another aspect of the theoretical Egyptian view on language (for this, see below, 9.). Finally, a third term is simply *ḏd* ‘saying’, referring to words in a foreign language, e. g., ‘a conjuration [...] in the speech (*ḏd*) of Keftiu [Crete]’ (pap. London/British Museum 10059, 11.4, New Kingdom).

In grammar again the basic unit is *mdw.t* ‘word’, which, however, also means ‘matter, affair’. A higher grammatical unit is *ṯs*, lit. ‘knot’, corresponding to ‘utterance’, ‘statement’. It comprises *mdw.t* ‘words’, as in ‘utterances of well-spoken words’ (*ṯs.w n(y.w) mdw.t nfr.t*, *Instruction of Ptahhotep* 42). Here the term *ṯs* serves as a basic unit of an argumentative text. Teachings are, as are many literary texts, composed of the above mentioned thought couplets, which have a syntactic basis (see above, 1.). Thus *ṯs* has also a syntactic meaning: it can mean a ‘sentence’ (and in another context a ‘verse line’ or a ‘couplet’). Strictly morphological terms like ‘noun’ or ‘verb’ are unknown; it comes as a surprise that, following one particular proposal (Fecht 1960: 205, n. 580), the definite article seems to be referred to in one source – not by an abstract categorical term, but denominatively. One of the Middle Egyptian forms for the nascent definite article ‘the’ is *pꜣ* (properly ‘this’) and the reference in the source is to *pꜣw.t*, which may be rendered as ‘using the demonstrative pronoun/article’, lit. ‘this-ing’ or ‘the-ing’ (stela Metropolitan Museum 12.184, 13). Although in this case the use of the article, a colloquial affair,

is disapproved of, being below the norm of good speech according to this particular source, the important thing is that it is recognized as a morpheme.

To pursue the above search for terms with a grammatical touch, *mdw.t* ‘word’, in a comparable way can also be the contents of a *ḥn* ‘enunciation’, which may comprise more than one sentence: a *ḥn n(y) mdw.t* is a ‘maxim’ (*Eloquent Peasant* B.1, 50 [= old, 19], Middle Kingdom), but a *ḥn* can have some length as well (perhaps in another context a distich) and amount to a ‘song’.

Reference to lexemes is made with the word *rn* ‘name, denomination’; the technical term for ‘translate, explain’ is the verb *wḥ*, lit. ‘unwrap, unfurl’ as in ‘he who translates (*wḥ*) the word(s) (*mdw*) of all foreign countries’ (stela Cairo CG 20765, a.3, Middle Kingdom).

6. Practical philology, diglossia

A number of examples are known of epigraphic texts having been checked by Egyptian experts for mistakes and these subsequently corrected. The majority of such modifications are graphic: signs wrongly copied from a mother text are recut in the correct manner. In general, such changes are illustrative of textual history and of philological insight. However, a minor part are grammatical changes and are therefore relevant to be discussed in this frame. Thus, in the Old Kingdom experts carefully went through the many columns of religious texts inside the Pyramid of king Unas (ca. 2340 BCE) and took care, among other things, of correcting grammatical mistakes. Thus a prospective verb form (*ḥnḏ.w=f*) was replaced by an imperfective verb form (*ḥnm=f*, Matthieu 1996: 296 = *Pyrt.* 366.a), a prepositional phrase (*m=s*) acquired its correct pronominal form (*im=s*, Matthieu 1996: 296 = *Pyrt.* 139.c), an agentive particle (*in* ‘by’) was inserted which had been forgotten (Matthieu 1996: 300 = *Pyrt.* 264.c), an incorrect suffix pronoun form (*ṯ* ‘you’) was replaced by the enclitic pronoun (*ṯm*, Matthieu 1996: 304 = *Pyrt.* 195.c), a compound negation (*n is*) was removed before a particle (*iw*) with which it is grammatically incompatible (*Pyrt.* 392.d, differing from Matthieu 1996: 306–307), and so on. Much fewer corrections occur in the sequel to this genre, the texts on private coffins of the Middle Kingdom. Here, for in-

stance, an emphatic particle *in* was deleted from a particular focussing construction where it does not belong (*Coffin Texts* II, 334.b, version B2P). After this period the care for philological and grammatical detail of ancient texts virtually comes to a stop, the reason being given in the following.

During the early New Kingdom (18th Dynasty, ca. 1550–1300 BCE) Middle Egyptian was still the standard language of inscriptions of all genres, and command of grammar and orthography were still at a high level. However, the gap between the spoken language and language in official records had been widening and the general opinion is that knowledge of Middle Egyptian grammar was soon deteriorating in the subsequent Rameside period, although this is also the period when canonical literary texts still belonged to the school program (see above, 3.). However, the text copies are the least trustworthy, and other school manuscripts of the New Kingdom, partly composed in Middle Egyptian but with a number of Late Egyptian influences and written by advanced students, bristle with orthographical mistakes (Erman 1925: 486). There is also considerable difference in trustworthiness between manuscript copies of the Book of the Dead of the 18th and the subsequent dynasties. In contrast, texts in unmistakable Late Egyptian, with due allowance for its more loose orthographical customs, effortlessly follow the prevailing rules of grammar. On the other hand, copying and adapting classical texts in the Saite period of cultural revival often went astray of the strict rules of orthography and morphology of the Classical idiom in details, but otherwise, independent compositions in Neo-Middle Egyptian testify to a good understanding of the rules of classical grammar (Der Manuelian 1994: 391–402, and, for an earlier period, Jansen-Winkel 1996: 489–493, for comparative surveys).

To solve the problem of understanding the grammar and vocabulary of older texts, these were often rephrased in or even translated into the vernacular. The lightest form of this procedure is what might be called modernization: an older form is replaced by its nearest equivalent in the subsequent language stage. Already in the Middle Kingdom spells of the corpus of the Pyramid Texts, in Old Egyptian, utterances were grammatically and lexically modified so as to fit into the corpus of the so-called *Coffin Texts*, the successor to the former genre (for a recent example, see

Morenz 1994). In their turn, texts in Middle Egyptian might be slightly adapted, to fit the grammar of the Late Egyptian of the day, as in the case of, for instance *didī=f sw m dʒi.w n(y) s.t* “He girds himself with a woman’s loincloth” (*Satire of the Trades* xix.f) which was modernized in one version into *i.didī=f sw*, etc. The form *i.didī=f* is a hybrid, but close enough to its correct equivalent in Late Egyptian (*i.dī=f*).

In cases of wide divergence, for which the term ‘diglossia’ has been used (Jansen-Winkel 1995; Vernus 1996), the most thorough form became retranslation. A few ‘bilingual’ texts are known from the early post-Rameside period, where an older version is provided with a sublinear rendering in the current language; in some cases the result was a reinterpretation rather than a grammatical and lexical rewriting, as in the case of *mr(i) bik ḥ^ˁ.wy n(y) tʒ=f* “The falcon loves the joy of its fledgeling” (old version), which became *mr(i) Pr-ʒ pʒ ršwy <n(y)> nʒy=f ḥrd.w* “Pharaoh loves the delight of his children” (papyrus British Museum 10298, 2.9–10), apart from lexical substitution adding definite articles (*pʒ* and *nʒy=f*). More examples of ritual and astronomical treatises, written in classical Egyptian and provided with a targum in the later idiom, are known from the Ptolemaic period (listed in Vernus 1996: 564).

7. Lexical work

Lexicography in a broad sense and in an Egyptian context comprises several things. Two kinds of topic-organized reference book existed: the encyclopedia (called ‘onomasticon’ in the Egyptological jargon), and the dictionary, chronologically appearing in that order. Encyclopedias could be organized following two principles. The one was graphical, where a certain logogram (a determinative) served as guiding principle to put cognate words together, while the other system followed a lexical/semantic arrangement. Dictionaries were set up according to the acrophonic principle. While an onomasticon is already known from the Middle Kingdom, alphabetical dictionaries seem to be a product of the Ptolemaic period.

The principle of the onomasticon is listing by topic, a genre which doubt grew out of listing as an administrative habit. Through all times lists are known with a practical purpose for a particular occasion, inventoring fu-

nerary offerings, linen, ointment, ritual temple property, extensive lists of royal names (Redford 1986). Equally, lists were kept up of foreign rulers and their topography for ritual (magical) purposes as well as for recording conquered territory and the tribute it had to deliver. For religious purposes the body members were catalogued (Massart 1959) as well as parts of ships and of the fishing net (*Coffin Texts spells* 389, respectively 473–481), all tabulated with the divinities responsible for their mythological aspects; divinities themselves were listed (e. g., Faulkner 1958). For some of these the rules of ordering were obvious: listing parts of the body went from top to toe, toponymical lists have a geographical orientation (from south to north), king lists follow a chronological order.

After the Old Kingdom also lists of a more abstract character appear, organizing subject-matter of great variety, truly serving as a handbook: the summit of decontextualization. The ‘onomastic’ tradition (Gardiner 1947) begins with the Middle Kingdom, when a single papyrus from the Ramesseum in Thebes (ca. 1700 BCE) lists all sorts of items, each time separating the lexical body of the word from the determinatives, which were set apart. This early handbook lists plants, liquids, birds, fishes, some quadrupeds, fortresses in Nubia, towns in Egypt, confectionary and so on. No explanations are offered; only at the end there is a row of abbreviated writings of bull types accompanied by brief comments. The best known and most extensive encyclopedic text is of the Ramesside age, recorded by several mss., and known as the *Onomasticon of Amenemope*. Its governing principle is not graphic, but hierarchical: it enumerates, but again does not explain, cosmic and geographical notions, the hierarchy of gods and human ranks/occupations, anthropological notions, towns, buildings and land, and so on. This top-down list text is called a ‘teaching’, and perhaps it was connected with the school trade (see above, 3.). More varied onomastica appear in the early Roman period, some with explanations. They do not always exactly fit the bipartition of above; one of them is a mixture of a dictionary and a manual of sacred entities (Ray 1976; Osing 1989). The dictionary section contains verbs, neatly separated from substantives, both arranged into sections of semantic cognates (Osing 1992: 42).

The first traces of the custom of arranging words by sound correspondence are found in

the New Kingdom. A few lists of Semitic names are known and in recording these names the scribes seem to have grouped some of them with the same initial consonant together (Posener 1937: 196), and such a sporadic application is also found with Egyptian names (ostrakon Turin 57382). In a similar way, compound names are analyzed as core and varying satellite (ostrakon Turin 57473 recto). However, true word lists organized alphabetically and dictionaries are only known from the Ptolemaic period. Thus, the sole extant full page of an alphabetic dictionary in hieratic of the 1st century CE contains words beginning with /h/ (Iversen 1958). Here contemporary phonology has got the better of historical phonetics, for words beginning with *h* and *ḥ* are put together indiscriminately. Interestingly, to judge from a sign list which had a separate entry for monoconsonantal signs, a fixed alphabetical order had been established by this time (Kahl 1991), the letters being referred to by bird-names, as appears from a papyrus from Saqqara, another Demotic word list of the 4th century BCE (Smith & Tait 1983: 198–213, no. 27), e. g., “the ibis (*hb*) was on the ebony-tree (*hbryn*)”. It also appears that in those days the Egyptian order of the alphabet did not follow the north-Semitic abecedar, but that of the South Arabian alphabet (Quack 1993).

8. Foreign languages

Cultural contact with other languages can stir interest in linguistics in general (for whatever purposes, practical or theoretical), and may ultimately promote reflection and thus analysis of the national language. Before contacts with the western world of the Greeks became politically important, no such cultural relationship existed between the Egyptians and any of their direct neighbors. Three important areas with native language(s) surrounded Egypt: Nubia in the south, Libya in the west and Syro-Palestine in the north-east; and at times different peoples appeared on the horizon with still other languages, as in the great surge of the Sea Peoples (around 1200 BCE). In Egypt, peoples speaking foreign languages were indicated by the term *i ʕw/ʕ* (Bell 1977), an unusual combination of uvulars and pharyngeals whose meaning comes close to the Greek verb *barbarizein*; the term *ʕ* “babbling” is chiefly used to refer to a dragoman. The word also served to indi-

cate Egyptians who were able to speak or translate from a foreign language.

In the course of time the greater part of Nubia was colonized and contacts with the indigenous cultures always had imperialist overtones; at all times interest in the native culture, including the language(s), was practically nil. Throughout the Pharaonic period, if the Nubian population expressed itself in writing, it was in Egyptian (cf. Zyhlarz 1961).

Contacts with tribes living on the Libyan territory were of the same kind, except that this region was never colonized but regarded as an area where raids and outposts were the best means to guarantee peace on the border. Only the late New Kingdom saw these countries exercise influence themselves on Egyptian territory, first Libya (ca. 940–710 BDE) and then Nubia for a brief spell (ca. 710–665 BCE), including temporary occupation of the throne for a certain period (22nd Libyan Dynasty, 25th Nubian Dynasty). A few words of these languages are recorded in Egyptian texts (chiefly proper and ethnic names and a few titles), but there is no evidence of linguistic contact or interest to any depth. On the other hand, personal and topographical names were at all times carefully noted: they were the basic information for the purpose of execrative ritual and for recording conquered territories. Nubian names were already noted in the Old Kingdom (ca. 2500 BCE) and give an inkling as to how the Egyptians rendered Nubian phonology (Osing 1976).

The situation was different in regard to Syro-Palestine, which consisted politically of a number of city-states with a certain autonomy; this area was a constant battle ground of the great powers of the 2nd and 1st millennia BCE, including Egypt. In pre-New Kingdom contacts with Syro-Palestine the idea seems to have been that Egyptian was being spoken at high levels in society (as stated in the story of the fugitive Sinuhe – see above, 5.). On the other hand, names of West-Asiatic rulers and geographical names were well known and recorded in special phonetic notation (the syllabic script, see above, 1.). Semitic-speaking captives were settled in Egypt, and although leaving few traces as a language community, probably contributed to the growing number of Semitic loan-words imported into Egypt from the early New Kingdom (Hoch 1994); a great number of Semitic names are known (Schneider 1992). When the Egyptian interests established a firm footing in Western Asia and a number of local

city-states became protectorates of Pharaoh, the international language was not Egyptian, but a particular brand of Akkadian. It was used in the correspondence preserved in an archive at El-Amarna (Moran 1992: xviii–xxii), a newly founded city which served as capital during the reign of King Amenophis IV or Akhenaten (ca. 1350–1310 BCE). The Akkadian used by the clerks who worked as translators of the Amarna correspondence shows the influence of Egyptian (Cochavi-Rainey 1990). Hence close contact must have existed between native speakers of Egyptian and Semitic (Artzi 1990: 140), to which also scholarly texts in Akkadian bear testimony, which even used the Egyptian system of punctuation by means of red dots (see above, 1.). It also included a much discussed bilingual vocabulary (Izre'el 1997: 77–81) which raises the question of the native language of the scribe (Meltzer 1988): Egyptian or Semitic?

Language policy with regard to foreign speakers comes to the surface several times. The official Egyptian attitude toward speakers of a foreign language was disdain. Firstly, the status of foreign names is revealing. Although a great number of Semitic names are known from documents in Egypt, already in the Middle Kingdom children of immigrants (mostly slaves) were given Egyptian names (Hayes 1955: 93–94), and when in the New Kingdom courtiers of Semitic provenance wished to get ahead, they adopted an Egyptian name, with the name of the ruling monarch conspicuously incorporated in it (Helck 1971: 368). In contrast, in much later times and under different socio-historical conditions, the Jewish community at Elephantine (5th and 4th centuries BCE) strictly kept to its own language. Secondly, in a few stray remarks the status of foreign languages is at issue. In the Wisdom of Ani, datable to the 18th Dynasty (around 1400 BCE), it is said (*Ani* 23.5–6): “One teaches Nubians (*nḥsy*) the speech of the Egyptian people (*md.t rm̄t n(y) Km.t*); the Syrians and any foreign country likewise”. Equally, some centuries later, it was said of King Ramesses III (ca. 1180 BCE) about the Libyans and the Meshwesh, who belonged to the invading Sea Peoples, and who were among the warrior tribes pressed into Egyptian service, that “They heard the speech (*mdw.t*) of men (*rm̄t*) while accompanying the king; he let their speech (*mdw.t*) be dropped; he changed (*pn*) their tongues (*ns*)” (*Ramesside Inscriptions* III,

91.6). It should be noted that the term “men” (*rmꜥ*) is used for “Egyptians”; what the passage implies is that the only truly human language is Egyptian. A young scribe whose results were insufficient was scolded as “a gibbering Nubian (*nḥsy ʒꜥ*) who has been brought with the tribute” (papyrus Sallier I, 8.1), containing the very word that was also used for dragomans (see above, 8.). However, all this changed much later, when Egypt allowed Greek-speaking immigrants to settle in its territory; King Psamtik I (ca. 665–610 BCE) even trusted some Egyptian children to the Ionians and Carians, mercenary tribes which had settled in Egypt, in order to be taught the Greek language (Herodotus, *Hist.* II, 154). However, the linguistic interaction between Egyptians and speakers of Greek and other languages, like Carian (Kammerzell 1993) is a different topic.

9. The concept of language

No comprehensive Egyptian theory is known about the origin of language, although in a number of creation myths a demiurge is said to conceive an idea (*sꜥ*) in his heart, which next takes form as an authoritative word (*ḥw*) coming from his mouth, which is at the same time its material realization (Zandee 1964). On the level of everyday experience there was always interest in the first words a child might utter. A New Kingdom medical text offers a prognostic on whether a new born child will live or die. If it says *nee* (*ny*) it will live; if it says *embee* (*mbi*) it will die (papyrus Ebers 97.13). The latter word resembles the Egyptians word for “no”, but the other word does not correspond to any known confirmative particle. Many centuries later the Greek writer Herodotus reported on King Psamtik I’s (mentioned above, 8.) interest in linguistic universals. He tried to find out which language belonged to the first word that a child uttered for the first time after it had been withheld from contact with the speaking community from birth. In his opinion, that language would be prototypical; in the event, the outcome of the experiment was that Phrygian, not Egyptian, was the oldest language (Herodotus, *Hist.* II, 2; cf. Salmon 1956; Sulek 1982).

On many levels the thinking of the Egyptians about their culture upheld the tradition of a continuous derivation of valuable elements of all sorts from the higher levels of

society, both divine and royal. The invention of the Egyptian script was attributed to Thoth, the ibis- or baboon-headed intellectual among the gods, and the sun god’s own vizier in the heavenly hierarchy. Thoth, and a famous royal scribe of times immemorial, Imhotep, were the patrons of the scribe. As with writing, so with language: in the New Kingdom (cf. above, 5.) and later (Sauneron 1960), several gods might be credited with the differentiation of human languages, but, again, it was especially Thoth who was held responsible for their variety, according to a hymn in the New Kingdom: “Hail to you, Moon-Thoth, who differentiated the tongues (*ns*) from country to country” (Černý 1948). There is a socio-cultural perspective to this: such ideas are met in the early New Kingdom, when the Egyptians had for the first time to deal with foreign peoples they were ready to regard as equals, even conceding their deceased a place in the Netherworld (cf. Hornung 1989: 176; 1980: 134–137).

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3. Die Sprachforschung in Ugarit

1. Einleitung
2. Einheimische Schriftdenkmäler im Rahmen der syllabischen Keilschrift
3. Einheimische Schriftdenkmäler im Rahmen der Keilschriftalphabeten
4. Bibliographie

1. Einleitung

Die seit 1929 auf dem Ruinenhügel Ras Schamra ("Fenchel-Hügel") ca. 11 km nordwestlich der modernen syrischen Hafenstadt Latakya am Mittelmeer stattfindenden franko-syrischen Ausgrabungen haben die antike Stadt Ugarit ans Tageslicht gefördert, die bereits im 7. Jahrtausend v. Chr. existierte, ihre Blütezeit als Handelsmetropole und Gelehrtenzentrum aber erst im 14. und 13. Jh. v. Chr. erlebte (Yon 1997). Den Aufstieg zu einem der bedeutendsten Kulturzentren an den östlichen Gestaden des Mittelmeers verdankte Ugarit einem Herrscherhaus, das gegen Mitte des 2. Jahrtausends aus dem Südosten, möglicherweise aus der nördlichen Region des heutigen Jordanien, dorthin kam und seine neue Heimat Ende des 14. Jh. im hethitischen Großreich verankerte (Dietrich & Loretz 1988: 309–311; Dietrich 1997a: 81–85). Der Untergang der Stadt geschah Anfang des 12. Jh. und wird gemeinhin mit dem 'Seevölker'-Sturm in Verbindung gebracht, dem damals die Kulturzentren an der Levan-

te zum Opfer fielen (Lehmann 1970, 1985). Bis zu seiner Zerstörung stellte die Hafenstadt den Endpunkt der transkontinentalen Handelsstraßen aus Kleinasien, Mesopotamien, Arabien und Syrien-Palästina und den Anfangspunkt der überseeischen Handelsrouten nach Ägypten, nach Zypern, zu den Zentren an der Südwestküste Kleinasien, nach Kreta und in die Ägäis dar; hier wurden die Güter durch ugaritische und überseeische Händler umgesetzt. Also war die Bevölkerung Ugarits während seiner Blütezeit nicht nur gesellschaftlich vielschichtig, sondern auch ethnisch vielgesichtig. Beredte Zeugen dessen sind die bei den Ausgrabungen freigelegte Architektur und die dabei geborgenen Kleinfunde und schriftlichen Dokumente (umfassende Darstellungen: Kinet 1981; von Reden 1992).

Aus der Zeit der ugaritischen Herrscher Ammistamru I., Niqmaddu II. Arḫalba, Niqmepa, Ammistamru II., Ibirānu, Niqmaddu III. und Ḫammurapi, die das Geschehen der Stadt und deren Dependence Ras Ibn Hani im 14. und 13. Jh. bestimmten, haben sich in teilweise umfangreichen Archiven zahlreiche Staats- und Privatverträge, Briefe privater und offizieller Natur, Wirtschaftstexte für die Belieferung von Palast und Tempel sowie Zensuslisten unterschiedlicher Kategorien gefunden, die uns einen mitunter deutli-

chen Einblick in das offizielle, halboffizielle und häufig auch private Leben eines Herrschers, eines seiner Familienangehörigen oder Untertanen ermöglichen. Hieraus wird klar, daß Ugarit kurz vor seinem Untergang eine von allen Seiten besuchte und umworbene Handelsmetropole war: Die Namen und Taten vieler Ugariter und Nichtugariter, Gäste aus aller Herren Länder, sind für uns einsehbar – Leute des palästinischen Ortes Ašdod, der Länder Amurru, Kanaan, Ägypten und Nubien stammen aus dem Süden, die aus Assur und Subartu aus dem Osten, die aus Mukiš mit dem Zentrum Alalah, Hatti und Mitanni aus dem Norden und Nordosten sowie die von den Inseln Zypern, Kreta und Sardinien aus dem Westen, also von Übersee. Die multi-ethnische und multi-kulturelle Zusammensetzung der Einwohner Ugarits brachte es mit sich, daß die Schriftdenkmäler alle zu jener Zeit gängigen Schriften und verschriftlichten Sprachen widerspiegeln.

Das geistig-religiöse Leben der gemischten Bevölkerung von Ugarit kommt in den Texten der Tempel-, Priester- und Gelehrtenbibliotheken, die neben den Texten des täglichen Lebens (Briefe, Wirtschafts- und Rechtsurkunden) gefunden worden sind, zum Ausdruck – die Palastarchive spielen hier eine weniger wichtige Rolle. In den Tempel- und Priesterbibliotheken fanden sich Mythen und Epen, Beschwörungen, mantische Texte, Omensammlungen und Rituale, in den Gelehrtenbibliotheken Schultexte aller Art (Götterlisten, Wortlisten, Wörterbücher, Weisheitstexte), human- und veterinärmedizinische Traktate, Beschwörungen, Wahrsage- und Ritualtexte. In den Sprachen des Koine-Babylonischen und Ugaritischen ist das Gros dieser Texte verfaßt, das Hurritische, eine der traditionellen Kultsprachen in Ugarit, begegnet in den vielen Opferlisten und Ritualtexten.

Für den Sprachforscher, der sich mit den Schriftdenkmälern Ugarits beschäftigt, bedeutet dies, daß er sich einer Vielzahl heute toter Sprachen aus mindestens drei stark differierenden Sprachfamilien gegenübergestellt sieht.

2. Einheimische Schriftdenkmäler im Rahmen der syllabischen Keilschrift

Die politische Einbindung in das hethitische Reich öffnete für Ugarit den Weg in die Welt der Keilschrift des Koine-Babylonischen, des

damals üblichen Verständigungsmittels der internationalen Diplomatie und Wirtschaft. Das bedingte, daß hier das Babylonische in seiner westlich-syrischen Ausprägung und das mit diesem verbundene Sumerische heimisch wurden (van Soldt 1995). Da, wie van Soldt (1995) ausführt, die Keilschrift unter Zuhilfenahme literarischer – hierzu gehören auch Omensammlungen – und lexikalischer Texte der mesopotamischen Tradition in babylonischer und sumerischer Sprache, bei Bedarf um eine hurritische und ugaritische Rubrik erweitert, erlernt wurde, finden sich in den Palast-, Privat- und Tempelarchiven auch zahlreiche Dokumente dieser Genres. Also haben wir es bei den sumero-babylonischen Texten mit zwei Kategorien zu tun: Eine umfaßt Schultexte, die zur Ausbildung der Schreiber nach Ugarit importiert wurden – nach J. Huehnergard (1989: 9), *canonical texts* –, und eine andere jene Texte, die in Ugarit verfaßt worden sind – nach J. Huehnergard (1989: 9) *non-canonical texts* – und eindeutige Indizien für eine Mischsprache aufweisen.

Die Schultexte literarischen und lexikalischen Inhalts spiegeln in Grammatik, Lexikon und Syllabar weitgehend zuverlässig ihre Vorlagen – ob sie nun aus Babylonien, Assyrien, Hattuša oder dem benachbarten Emar stammen – wider und lassen nur vereinzelt spezifisch ugaritische Züge erkennen (Huehnergard 1989: 12–14; van Soldt 1991, bes. 519–523; Kämmerer, 1998).

Dann, wenn diese ursprünglich ortsfremden Texte eine längere Tradition in Ugarit selber oder in einem syrischen Nachbarort durchlaufen haben, ist es mitunter zu sachlichen Veränderungen etwa in Lexikon und Pantheon gekommen. Solche Veränderungen fallen nicht direkt ins Auge, müssen also mit Hilfe der makro-syntaktischen Forschungsmethode erfaßt werden (Kämmerer 1998).

Eine Besonderheit stellt das in den Schulen Ugarits und anderer syrischer Zentren überlieferte Sumerisch dar. Während die lexikalischen Listen die sumerische Normalorthographie ihrer östlichen Vorlage weitgehend beibehalten haben, bieten die zusammenhängenden Texte (Sprüche, Beschwörungen, ein literarischer Brief) die im Westen beliebte unorthographische, ‘syllabische’ Schreibweise, die eine vielfach nicht mehr – oder noch nicht – sicher erklärbare Aussprache des dort überlieferten Sumerisch aufzeigen (Krecher 1969: 142–143).

Die *Non-canonical* (Huehnergard 1989: 9) Schriftstücke wie Wirtschaftstexte, Rechtsur-

kunden und Briefe unterliegen den philologischen Gegebenheiten des damals in Syrien verbreiteten Koine-Babylonischen, das bis Mitte des 13. Jh. in allerlei Details einen hurro-mitannischen, danach einen assyrischen Einschlag hatte (van Soldt 1991: 521–522). Die beiden umfangreichen neueren Studien zu diesem substratbehafteten Mittelbabylonischen stammen von J. Huehnergard (1989) und W. H. van Soldt (1991); sie bieten eine umfassende Erörterung philologischer Fragestellungen und haben damit das Tor zur Einordnung des in Ugarit beheimateten Koine-Babylonischen in die weite Gruppe der Koine-Sprachen Syrien-Palästinas und Kleinasiens der Mitte des 2. Jahrtausends v. Chr. weit geöffnet.

Texte wie die *Marduk-Beschwörung* (RS 25.460: Dietrich 1994: 134–137, mit weiterführender Literatur) oder das *Gebet für den König* (RS 79.025: Dietrich 1996: 43–45, 1998: 156–171) gehören zwar zur Gruppe der literarischen Texte, stellen jedoch Dichtungen dar, die in Ugarit (und Emar) ihre uns überlieferte Gestalt angenommen haben: Sie entfalten zwar östliche Themen, tun dies aber in Wortwahl und Gottesverständnis mit einer deutlich syrischen Einstellung.

Ugaritische Wörter und Wortformen begegnen innerhalb der *non-canonical*-Texte wiederholt in koine-babylonischem Kontext oder stellen beim viersprachigen Vokabular in der rechten, d. h. letzten Rubrik die Übersetzung eines zuvor sumerisch, akkadisch und hurritisch erfaßten Wortes dar. Die Überlieferung ugaritischer Wörter in syllabischer Keilschrift ist für die Philologie von größter Wichtigkeit, weil sie die Wortformen besser zum Ausdruck bringt als die sonst für diese Wörter gebrauchte Alphabetschrift (Huehnergard 1987; van Soldt 1991, 1995: 172–176).

Für die Erschließung der Aussprache von Vokalen und Konsonanten sowie für die lexikalische Erfassung von Namenselementen, die normalerweise in Alphabetschrift vorliegen, ist deren syllabische Überlieferung von größter Bedeutung. Dies gilt in gleicher Weise für Orts- (van Soldt 1996, 1998) wie für Personennamen (Gröndahl 1967; del Olmo Lete & Sanmartín 1996, *sub voces*).

Die drei- und viersprachigen lexikalischen Listen stellen sumero-babylonischen Wörtern in einer gesonderten Rubrik mitunter hurritische in syllabischer Schreibweise gegenüber. Diese Listen sind für die Erforschung des Wortschatzes der in Nordwestsyrien behei-

mateten Hurriter von unschätzbarem hohem Wert, auch wenn sie eher in die Semantik eingebundene Wortübertragungen als Übersetzungen in unserem Sinn bieten.

3. Einheimische Schriftdenkmäler im Rahmen der Keilschriftalphabeten

Für die Sprachforschung ist Ugarit wegen der Entwicklung einer genuinen Alphabetschrift besonders aufschlußreich: Es kamen hier Tontafeln an den Tag, die nicht mit der aus Mesopotamien importierten syllabischen und ideographischen Keilschrift beschriftet sind, sondern mit einer in Keilen ausgeführten, mit der jüngeren altphönikischen verwandten, Alphabetschrift. Da die Sprache, die dieser Schrift zugrundeliegt, kanaanäisch-südwestsemitisch-altarabische Züge aufweist, dürfte sie speziell für das in Ugarit gesprochene Idiom eingeführt worden sein, das wir vereinfachend 'Ugaritisch' nennen.

In diesem Zusammenhang ist hervorzuheben, daß auch Tontafeln gefunden wurden, die lediglich das Alphabet bieten: Also liegen uns hier die ältesten Zeugen für das Genre Alphabet vor.

Das Studium der keilschriftalphabetischen Schrift von Ugarit hat in den letzten Jahren ergeben, daß wir uns dort, wo wir meinen konnten, am Anfang der Alphabetgeschichte zu stehen, wiederum bereits an einem Endpunkt derselben befinden (Dietrich 1997b): Das ugaritische Standardalphabet umfaßt 30 rechtsläufig geschriebene Buchstaben ('Langalphabet') und ist das Produkt der Erweiterung eines levantinischen, ebenfalls in Ugarit gebrauchten Alphabets mit 22 linksläufig geschriebenen Buchstaben ('Kurzalphabet') in der *a-b-g*-Abfolge ('phönikisch-kanaanisches Alphabet') um 8 Buchstaben (Dietrich & Loretz 1988, bes. 124–143, 1989: 110–112). Diese Erweiterung wurde infolge der Zuwanderung des Herrscherhauses aus dem Südosten etwa Mitte des 2. Jahrtausends v. Chr. nötig (siehe oben 1.), das in der neuen Heimat seine Sprache einfuhrte, deren Lautstand stärker differenziert war. Daraus folgt, daß das ugaritische 'Langalphabet' das Produkt aus der Addition von einem nordwest- und einem südwestsemitischen Idiom war.

Die Annahme, daß das in Ugarit eingewanderte Herrscherhaus in seiner ursprünglichen Heimat eine eigene, für seine Sprache mit einem differenzierteren Lautstand besser geeignete Alphabettradition hatte, bestätigte

sich jüngst: Bei den Ausgrabungen in Ugarit wurde 1988 in einem Händlerarchiv eine Tontafel entdeckt, die das südwestsemitische, ‘altarabische Alphabet’ mit 27 Konsonanten in der *h-l-ḥ-m*-Abfolge bietet (Bordreuil & Pardee 1995; Dietrich 1997b: 80–81).

Mithin haben wir es in Ugarit mit der Überlieferung von drei verschiedenen Alphabeten zu tun: dem ‘Kurzalphabet’ mit 22 linksläufig geschriebenen, dem ‘Langalphabet’ mit 30 rechtsläufig geschriebenen und dem ‘altarabischen Alphabet’ mit 27 ebenfalls rechtsläufig geschriebenen Buchstaben.

Der Begriff ‘Ugaritisch’ für die Sprache der zahlreichen keilschriftalphabetischen Texte aus Tempel-, Palast- und Privatarchiven, deren Zahl mit jeder Ausgrabungskampagne wächst, ist ein Notbehelf: Er soll alle jene Schrift Dokumente umfassen, die während des 14. und 13. Jh. in Ugarit mit den Zeichen des ‘Langalphabets’ geschrieben worden sind und die für Ugarit im 2. Jahrtausend v. Chr. typische nordwestsemitische Mischsprache (Gordon 1965; Segert 1984; Sivan 1997; Tropper 1997, 2000) aufweisen. In Lexikon und Grammatik überwiegen zwar die kanaänischen Elemente, die phönikischen, aramäischen und arabischen können aber nicht außer Betracht bleiben. Das Lexikon wird zudem von vielen Lehn- und Fremdwörtern aus kontemporären Sprachen wie dem Sumer-Babylonischen, Hurritischen – diese beiden Sprachen haben verschiedentlich auch die Grammatik des Ugaritischen beeinflusst –, Hethitischen und Ägyptischen bereichert (vgl. Watson 1995, 1996, 1998).

Aus dem Blickpunkt der Inhalte haben wir es bei den ugaritischen Texten sowohl mit religiösen Texten (Mythen, Epen, Ritualen, Beschwörungen, Omensammlungen) aus Tempel- und Privatbibliotheken, als auch mit Schultexten (Alphabeten, Schreibübungen) und administrativen Texten (Briefen, Rechts-, Wirtschaftsurkunden) aus Palast-, Tempel- und Privatarchiven zu tun (Kondordanz: Bordreuil 1989; Textedition: Dietrich, Loretz & Sanmartín 1995); wie Vertragstexte zeigen, diente das Ugaritische in begrenztem Rahmen auch internationalen Aufgaben.

Die führende Rolle der babylonischen Mantik und Beschwörungskunst hat zu einer Übersetzungsliteratur ins Ugaritische (Astrologie-, Geburts-Omina, Beschwörungen) geführt (Dietrich & Loretz 1990, 2000).

Die Sprache der Texte im ‘Kurzalphabet’ mit 22 linksläufig geschriebenen Buchstaben (siehe oben 2.; Dietrich & Loretz 1988: 145–

204) ist, wie J. Tropper (1998) feststellt, nächstens mit dem späteren Phönikischen verwandt.

Eine umfangreiche Gruppe von Tafeln aus Priesterbibliotheken, deren etwas grobe Schrift der ‘Langalphabet’-Tradition zugehört, bietet kultisch-religiöse Texte (Opferlisten, Beschwörungen, Rituale) in hurritischer Sprache. Sie weist darauf hin, daß die Hurriter eine lange Geschichte in Ugarit hatten und den offiziellen Kult nachhaltig mit ihrer Sprache und ihrem Pantheon geprägt haben (Dietrich & Mayer 1995, 1998).

Abgesehen davon, daß die Erfassung des Lexikons und der Grammatik des Hurritischen an sich noch problematisch ist, legen die hurritischen Texte in ugaritischer Alphabetschrift zusätzliche Hindernisse für ein Verständnis in den Weg: Die von ihnen angewandte Alphabetschrift verzichtet fast gänzlich auf die Darstellung von Vokalen, so daß jeder Hinweis auf Qualität oder Quantität einer Silbe fehlt, und das von ihr angewandte phonetische System wirft beim Versuch, es an das geläufige der syllabischen Keilschrift anzuschließen, viele Probleme auf (Dietrich & Mayer 1995: 32–34).

Babylonische Beschwörungen wurden, wie der Fund von vier Tafeln in einer Priesterbibliothek zeigt, auch ohne Übersetzung in Alphabetschrift überliefert: Der Text wurde, auf sein Konsonantengerippe reduziert, durch Buchstaben des Langalphabets wiedergegeben. Somit haben wir es hier mit dem philologisch höchst aufschlußreichen Phänomen einer phonetischen Gleichsetzung von Konsonanten der syllabischen und der langalphabetischen Traditionen zu tun (Segert 1988).

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II. The Establishment of the Chinese Linguistic Tradition

Die Anfänge der Sprachwissenschaft in China

La constitution de la tradition linguistique chinoise

4. Classical Chinese philosophies of language: Logic and ontology

1. Two aspects of language in early Chinese philosophy
2. Nature and function of non-substantive words in the Chinese language
3. Five positions (theories) of names and sayings in Classical Chinese philosophy
4. The Confucian doctrine of *zheng-ming* “rectifying names”
5. The Daoist doctrine of *wu-ming* “no names”
6. Nominalistic tendencies in Yinwenzi
7. Platonistic tendencies in Gongsun Long
8. Empirical (scientific) realism of names and language in the Neo-Moist Canons (*Jingl Shuo*)
9. Concluding remarks
10. Bibliography

1. Two aspects of language in early Chinese philosophy

Classical Chinese philosophers of the period from the 6th century BC to the 3rd century BC were as a rule concerned with the problems of names (*ming*). To them names are not simple units of language but were the representations of substantive things and objects. It was not until Xunzi (ca. 300–230 BC) that names were classified into a hierarchy of categories or types and that a theory of origin and nature of names was offered. Names in general were considered identification labels which were intended to apply to and correspond with reality (*shi*). This correspondence between names and reality was conceived to be of such a nature that things in nature could be given names and the names had to identify or distinguish reality. For it was conceived that names were the products of naming (*ming*) and naming was intended to give a label to a thing, a relation, or a state of affairs, in nature, society, or in a system of values. This general assumption that all things can be named perhaps was the earliest belief held by Chinese philosophers and was

not questioned until the rise of the Daoists in the 5th century BC. The Chinese term *ming* as a verb exists logically prior to its being as a norm. For until the naming of things takes place, there are no names in the world. To name is to identify and to distinguish individual things, relations, or types of individual things or relations and states of affairs. Thus *ming* is primarily explained as “naming oneself” (*zi ming ye*) in Xu Shen’s *Shuo-wen* “Discourse upon language”, and as the “process of illuminating” in Liu Xi’s *Shi-ming* “Interpretation of names” in order to distinguish between names and actuality. But when it is found or discovered that the genuine ultimate reality need not be nameable or actually be named, and that not all names need correspond to reality and capture or represent actuality in certain aspects, various theories of the relation between names and actuality (*shi*) are proposed and various explanations of names and name-orientated language and their limited usefulness or possible misleading nature are offered, even though there are theories which propose to defend the validity of names. It might even be suggested that various ontological and logical theories in classical Chinese philosophy are responses to the nature and validity of naming and the namability of reality.

Although *ming* as a verb and a noun occupies a crucial position in philosophical issues, the classical notion of *ming* however does not lead to a definition of language in terms of *ming*. On the contrary, language is defined instead in terms of “speech” or “saying” (*yan*). Saying is considered the natural unit of expression of meaning in language unified with the intent of a speaker. In saying, naming, names, or expressions of names occur, but there would be no real need for introducing names if there is no need for saying, even though names could serve some useful pur-

pose. In this sense saying seems to be more basic to language than names, even though naming and names were the sources of philosophical issues and disputes in classical Chinese philosophy, whereas sayings or statements (the results of saying) were not generally a genuine philosophical issue. The reason for this is not difficult to explain. Naming and names relate to and contrast with the actuality of which naming and names are made, but sayings, on the other hand, relate to a speaker and his intent. In order to make a statement, one needs to introduce names referring to characterizing the things and affairs of the world. Thus, rigorously speaking, naming and names depend on the context of saying for their introduction, whereas saying depends on our actual and possible ability to name (to identify or to characterize by using labels) for the purpose of explaining or intent or meaning. Early Chinese philosophers in general always recognized this context principle of saying and never felt seriously interested in an atomistic analysis of language in terms of names as such. Thus it is said in the *Rites of great Dai*: “To express one’s intent (*zhi*) leads to saying, to speak language [i. e., to make statements] leads to names”. The Song Neo-Confucianist Shao Yong in his *Huangji jingshi, guanwu nei-wai pian*, says: “For the ancient people names arise from speech” (*fayan wei ming*).

To summarize, the difference between *ming* and *yan* is as follows:

- (1) *Ming* must be true to reality and therefore possess an ontological significance, whereas *yan* must be true to the intent of the speaker and therefore possess an intentional significance;
- (2) *Ming* must be established on the basis of human knowledge or understanding of perception, whereas *yan* must serve some practical purpose of life and action, for its truth need not always be a matter of correspondence-verification: it is also often conceived as a matter of practical or pragmatical fulfillment of expectation;
- (3) The institution of *ming* and even the possibility of the institution of *ming* requires some presuppositions regarding what there is, whereas the occurrence of *yan* does not require that in its application of *ming*, *ming* has a distinctive referent. What *yan* is about need not be some distinctive object or state of affairs, but could be some implicitly intended object or state of affairs which may not have a name.

The last point about *yan* is very important, for as we shall see, in Chinese philosophy, it is generally held that unless names are specifically used to refer to things or objects, one cannot depend on *yan* for making a specific nameable reference. Often it is suggested that one can intend something without even using *yan*, not to say, using *ming*. In the context of *yan* a reference need not be mentioned by name at all. This is due to the existence of the ontological consideration of a deep structure, as well as the existence of the consideration concerning the complexity and sophistication of intent and purport of *yan* and its use.

In going through the basic classical writings of various schools, it is clear that *yan* is most frequently judged on the basis of conduct (*xing*). This is particularly true of the Confucian school of philosophy. The reason for this, of course, is that since *yan* embodies the intent and purport of a person, *yan* is to be borne out therefore by conduct which carries out the intent and purport of the person. This exhibits a pragmatic dimension of *yan*. Thus Confucius (*Analects* 13-3) says: “In saying something, what one says must be true to one’s conduct”. He also says (*Analects* 4-22): “In ancient time, people did not say something for having misgivings about not being able to practice it in person” and (*Analects* 4-24) “The superior man wants to be slow in saying and quick in action”.

Confucius does not neglect to indicate the presence of some link between *yan* and *ming*. In his doctrine of “rectifying names” (*zheng-ming*), Confucius suggests that in order for sayings (language use) to be fit (*shun*), names must be rectified (*zheng*). Without elaborating at this moment on what Confucius intends by rectification of names, Confucius has made clear this: Correct names must be assumed for fit speech, where ‘fit speech’ means clarity and pertinence to a situation and being true to one’s intent. He says (*Analects* 13-3) that “names must be sayable, and sayings must be practicable”. This no doubt indicates that no name can be said to be rectified if it cannot be used in saying. Insofar as language remains a practicable human activity, names must also be created to serve human and practical purposes.

In Mencius, *yan* is also conceived as being a directive toward fulfillment in conduct. But Mencius makes it more clear than Confucius that *yan* is closely related to mind – the basis of one’s intent and intentionality. He criti-

cizes Gaozi for holding the view that if one is not satisfied with *yan*, one should not seek reasons in one’s mind (*xin*); if one is not satisfied with mind, one should not seek reasons in vital feelings (*qi*). He says (*Mencius* 2a-2):

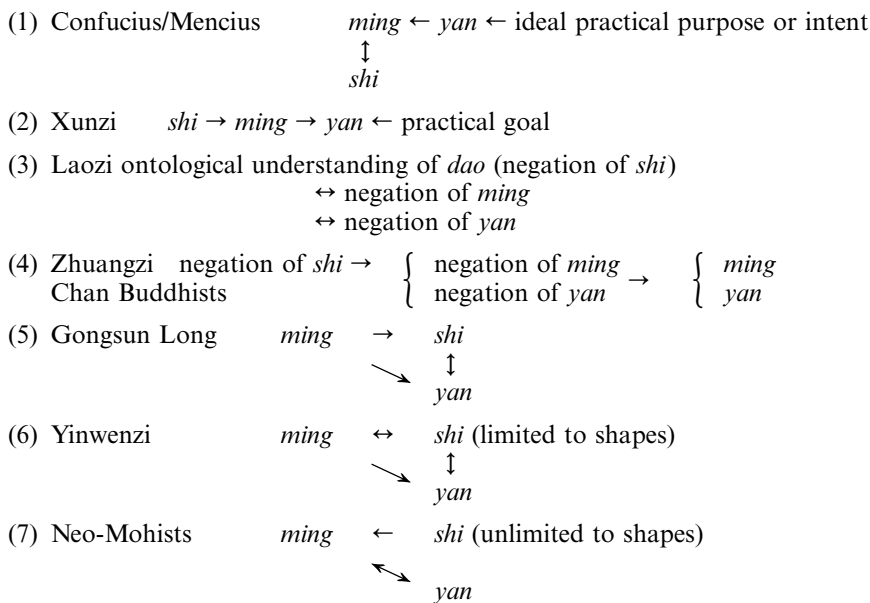
If one is not satisfied with mind, one should not seek reason in vital feelings. This is permissible [to say]; but if one is not satisfied with *yan*, one shouldn’t seek reason in mind. This is not permissible [to say].

What Mencius means by this is that one must find the source of the merit or demerit of *yan* in mind, for it is mind which gives meaning to *yan* through its intent and purposefulness. In this sense Mencius asserts that he “knows *yan*” (*zhi-yan*) because he knows the practical consequence and theoretical limit of *yan* in relation to the community good and political goals.

Our purpose in making the distinction between *ming* and *yan* in the conception of language of Chinese philosophers is to show that in a way Chinese philosophers recognize two aspects or dimensions of language – the referential-characterizing aspect or dimension and the intentional-practical aspect or dimension. The former can be conveniently identified with the informational content of reference and predication in a proposition,

where the latter can be conveniently identified with the performative or illocutionary forces of speech acts. This may sound Austinian, but the important point here is that for Chinese philosophy early language (which literally may be called “name-speech” or *ming-yan*) is always a unity involving an objective side and a subjective side – a unity of naming reality and expressing intent. It may be suggested that the ideal form of language consists in expressing intent by means of using correct names or using names correctly. This means that using names is an integral part of intent expressing but not vice versa. The focus is obviously on language as a communicative medium developed for the purpose of consolidating a community or preserving its ordering. Naming is necessary and meaningful in regard to such communicative contexts. Although this may be the primary notion of language in early Chinese philosophy, the genuine distinction between *ming* and *yan* is a significant one and leads to a differentiation between modes of language use and underlies (explains) later Chinese philosophical disputes.

To sum up, we may suggest that Classical Chinese philosophy may be understood in regard to various possible theories regarding



[Here “→” “←” and “↔” means “determine” in the direction of the arrow]

Tab. 4.1: Possible theories regarding naming and saying

the nature of naming, the nature of saying, and their relation to ontological understanding.

2. Nature and function of non-substantive words in the Chinese language

Names (*ming*) and words (*zi*) in Chinese are often classified according to the categories suggested by ontological thoughts and experiences. Three pairs of polarities of ontological import are specifically recognized. (1) Void or nonsubstantiveness (*xu*) versus substantiveness (*shi*); (2) Motion (*dong*) versus rest (*jing*); (3) Death (*si*) versus life (*sheng*). Anyone who is familiar with Chinese philosophy will recognize these three polarities as basic ontological ultimates in Confucian, Neo-Confucian, and Daoist literature. These categories are applied to classify words in language so that three pairs of words (*ming*) are generated therefrom: (1) void words (*xuci*) vs. substantive words (*shici*); (2) motion words (*dongzi*) vs. rest words (*jingzi*); (3) dead words (*sici*) vs. live words (*huoci*). I shall briefly discuss these distinctive classifications in order to explore their ontological implications.

(1) Void words vs. substantive words: Void words or terms are words or terms which do not refer to any substantive object. But to say this is to say that void words either refer to nonsubstantive things or they do not refer to anything at all. This implies that the scope of void words could be highly comprehensive: it includes all syntactically or semantically significant words, such as relations of space and time, propositions, logical operators, quantifiers, kinds of adverbs, modal words or words of modality and other syncategorematic words. It also includes words used to indicate or express emotive moods in which a sentence is introduced, ended, or related to other sentences relative to the speaker's intent. This dimension of the speech act is to suggest the mood of the speaker and his evaluation of the meaning of the sentence in use. Nobody can deny that this dimension of speech constitutes an important but hidden side of the significance of discourse. It is primarily sentence or discourse-orientated, and it can be referred to as the existential illocutionary forces of speech in use. They explain or show a certain existential relation between

the speaker and the speech which may affect the existential relation between the intended listener and the speech. It may be said that void words of the later type are words standing for the existential illocutionary forces. But unlike the stressed or unstressed, they are codified and incorporated in the total written symbolism.

As void words do not say anything about the reality of the world and the reality of the speaker, but rather show or show forth the illocutionary force of some existential relation between the speaker and the speech, they can also be called words of showing, and for that matter, demonstratives are also words of showing, in distinction from words of saying or naming.

The substantive words (*shizi*) on the other hand refer to (or name) substantive things. They are words for material objects, persons, and other substantive entities or particulars, such as processes and activities. They are also words for qualities and attributes. Thus substantive words, basically speaking, include nouns, adjectives, and verbs. They form a major portion of the vocabulary of our language and carry the ontological burden of the language. They stand for objects of which names are names. Therefore they form elements for the propositional-assertive use of language.

The contrast between void words and substantive words is that, whereas substantive words generally represent and correspond to the concrete or perceivable side of reality, void words represent and correspond to the imperceivable hidden yet concrete side of reality. A whole sentence of course is a totality of two sides. It has a manifest side borne out by the substantive words and a hidden side borne out by the void words. The meaning of a sentence is a unity of the two sides and involves both the objective reference and the subjective intent. The ontological model in Chinese philosophy has clearly effected an understanding or at least a predisposition toward understanding what a whole sentence is and in what the whole meaning of a sentence consists.

On the basis of the distinction between void words and substantive words, it has also been suggested that there could be half-void words (*banxuzi*) and half-empty substantive words (*banshizi*). The intuitive grounds for such suggestion, of course, are the ontological consideration or observation of the existence of the half-void states of things, as well

as the possibility of a creative context for regarding things as half-void and half-substantive. In the latter case the basis for the suggestion is, of course, the uses to which void words and substantive words are put. The following definitions are suggested by Yuan Renlin in his *Xuci Shuo* (*Dui Lei*):

Words that refer to things having forms and bodies are substantive. Words that refer to things having no forms and no bodies are void. Words that refer to things that appear to have forms and bodies, but in reality do not have them are half-void. Words which refer to things which appear to have no form and body but in reality have them are half-substantive.

In general, one can see that nouns that are used as verbs are half-void words e.g., the Chinese word for “eye”, *mu*, as used in *er er mu zhi* “use ears to see” is a half-void word. For in such use, “eye” is used in the sense of seeing with the ears, which appears to have a form and in fact does not have one. Similarly, words which originally are void may be used in such a way as if some substantive object or state is referred to, then such a word would be a half-substantive word; e.g. the word *jin* “now” is a temporal adverb, but it can be used as if it is a noun referring to a state of actuality, such as *jinyu* “the present being” or *jinye* “the present moment”.

The point here is that, in principle, void words can be used as if they are substantive words or used substantively and that, in principle, substantive words can be used nonsubstantively. Thus through the practical use of the words in sentences and speech the ontological nature of a name could be transformed into another. This of course illustrates the principle of the mutual transformation of *yin* and *yang* in the Great Ultimate (*daiji*) in Chinese philosophy. This also bears out the fact that *ming* receives a determinate ontological status only in the context of *yan*; *yan* being the use (*yong*) of *ming*. Many celebrated Chinese poems thrive on the use of substantive words in a non-substantive and, grammatically speaking, adverbial and modal way.

(2) Motion Words vs Rest Words: The distinction between motion words and rest words is made clear by Yuan Renlin of the Ching Period in his *Xuci Shuo* “Treatise on void words”:

The same word, if used to show activity through effort, is a motion word; if used to retain its natural spontaneity, it is a rest word.

The basic rationale for the distinction is that motion words indicate motion or activity and show some effort or purpose, whereas rest words indicate a natural state of being devoid of such an effort or purpose. This distinction apparently is more functional than the distinction between void words and substantive words, for it depends on the context of *yan* “speech” for identifying the motion or rest of a state of affairs. Yuan illustrates the distinction with sentences such as:

“Respect the respectable” (*zun-zun*)
 “Love [your] parents” (*qin-qin*)

By identifying the first word in the combination as a motion word and the second word as a rest word the distinction is established. But in such combinations as (cf. *Analects* 12-11):

“The ruler should be ruler-like” (*jun-jun*)
 “The father should be father-like” (*fu-fu*)

We identifies the first word as a rest word and the second word as a motion word. This makes it clear that rest words and motion words are relative to each other and are mutually determined in a context of *yan*.

(3) Live Words vs Dead words: This distinction is made in the Ming text *Dui Lei* in the following way:

To say that a word is dead is to say that it refers to a state which is such and such by nature, such as the words high and low, big and small, and the like. To say that a word is live is to say that the object of its reference is made so and so, such as flying, diving, changing, and transforming and the like.

The basis for such a distinction is the presence or absence of effort and purpose in the named objects or objective state of reality.

From the above it is clear that the distinction between void words and substantive words is the basic and primary distinction. It has both a syntactic and ontological basis. The distinctions between motion words and rest words and that between live words and dead words, on the other hand, are derived from the use of void words and substantive words in the context of *yan*, and thus they reflect the various uses of the void and substantive words. The very way in which these distinctions are made suggest how the ontological understanding of reality in terms of substance (*di*) and function (*yong*) illuminate the functioning of language, and how the ontological and semantic meanings of sentences or words are mutually dependent and mutu-

ally transformable. That language can represent or show an ontology becomes quite obvious. Yuan Renlin says in his *Xuci Shuo*:

To use words nonsubstantively or lively is not something which the rhetoricians invent and impose, it is a fact that in heaven and earth the void and the being are always mutually dependent, and that substance and function are never separate from each other, that amidst the principle of utmost tranquility there is the principle of utmost motion. All things are like this. [The deadness and the substantiveness of a word are to do with the object of its referent.] Thus the principle [of mutual transformation by using it in a non-substantive or lively way] will also naturally apply to it. As to its original meaning, it exists between its being used and its being not used.

This passage explicitly focuses on the embodiment of the ontology of *yin* and *yang* in *daiji* in the formation of language and determination of reference words in language. On the basis of this we might even say that the ontology in Chinese philosophy is the ontology of the language in Chinese philosophy.

3. Five positions (theories) of words and sayings in Classical Chinese philosophy

With the concept of language as sayings and names as a background, Chinese philosophers in the Classical Period developed basically five positions. These five positions were: (1) The doctrine of no names no sayings; (2) The doctrine of the rectifying of names; (3) The doctrine of nominalism; (4) The doctrine of Platonism; (5) The doctrine of empirical realism (scientific realism). The first doctrine was developed and maintained by the Daoists. The second doctrine was developed and maintained by the Confucianists. These two doctrines were initiated historically prior to the other doctrines. But between the Daoists and Confucianists, it is difficult to say which should be placed earlier in their development. Apparently, both doctrines presuppose the existence of names and can be correctly said to be developed in response to the unsatisfactory uses and abuses of names at the time of their development. For the Confucianists, the primary function of names was to serve the purpose of well regulated *yan*, which was taken to form the basis for institutionalized social order and political stability. As *yan* was conceived to be goal-orientated, the end of so-

ciety and government therefore provides the ultimate context, basis, and rationale for the rectification of names and language. Insofar as social-political considerations as well as the practical significance of *yan* and *ming* have become the constant concerns of the Chinese mind from the very ancient past, one might treat the Confucian doctrine as being historically prior to any other theory.

As to the Daoist doctrine of *wu ming* and *wang yan*, it is apparent that the Daoists focus their attention on the nature of reality more than on human affairs. But then, this entire concern about ontology may merely be apparent, for they can also be said to search for a rule for solving the problems of social and political order and stability. Their solution led to their ontological insight, which they thought would lead to the solution in question. What they held is that only when we dissolve names, not rectify them, then social and political order can be restored or permanently secured. Of course, it might be the case that they first found their languageless ontology of the *dao* and then tried to apply it to life and society. It may also be true that they noticed the disruptive and destructive nature of names and consequently constructed their ontological theory. A plausible suggestion is that they wished to solve the problem of social order and political stability and they found it when they came to see the true nature of the *dao*. In this perspective, the Daoists are equally practical-minded as the Confucianists. They pay equal attention to *yan* and *ming*, where Zhuangzi's doctrine of *wang yan* as well as Confucius' doctrine of *wu yan* are mutually dependent.

Both the doctrine of nominalism and the doctrine of Platonism may appear to be far removed from practical considerations. The proponent of the former is Yinwenzi, the proponent of the latter is Gongsun Long. Both are remembered in Chinese philosophy as logicians from the School of Names. Though their doctrines appear to concentrate on the logical analysis of the origins of nature and references of *ming*, there is evidence that they are nevertheless concerned with practical problems, such as the rectification of names. Thus, their doctrines may be motivated by practical considerations, like the Confucianists, but once formulated, become more a matter of logical and ontological theory. What we wish to point out is simply that their doctrines of *ming* could be first intended

ro relate to a doctrine of *yan* which is practical orientated.

The only doctrine of *ming* and *yan* which is devoid of overt practical considerations is that of empirical realism, as advanced by the Neo-Moists. Though the Neo-Moists are disciples and members of the practical-minded Schools of Moism founded by Mozi, their concentrated researches on language, logic, and science clearly provided self-sufficient and self-contained results comparable to the products of Aristotle. Their writings known as *Jing* "Canons" and *Jing Shuo* "Discourse on canons" and the *Da Ju* "The greater taking" and the *Xiao Ju* "The smaller taking" are brilliant works of their rigorous and organized research. Recent discussions of them by Needham (1954), A. C. Graham (1955, 1959, 1978, 1986), Chmielewski (1962–1966), Chung-ying Cheng (1971, 1973a, b, 1975, 1983, 1987) and Chad Hansen (1983, 1985, 1992) have made amply clear that rather than choosing to be guided by some fixed prior preoccupation or vagueness of practical values and goals the Neo-Moists are logically and scientifically disciplined thinkers who intend to establish a logical and scientific philosophy and methodology so that questions of value and norm can be adequately settled in light of them (cf. Cheng 1971). It is in this view that one can regard their work as reflecting the scientific, methodological spirit. They have developed both a logical theory of names and a logical theory of speech (*yan*).

4. The Confucian doctrine of *zheng-ming* "rectifying names"

As we have noted, the Confucianists regard language as a matter of sayings instituted for serving the practical purpose of stabilizing society and ordering government. Language being social in origin and used for social stability, those in a position to ensure conformity of usage and correspondence between names and what are named for the purpose of social communication and social control must see that this will happen. Names specifically must be incorporated in language (sayings) so that they will identify and characterize things correctly. This is the general basis for the Confucian doctrine of the rectifying of names.

The basic principles of this doctrine are as follows:

(1) Language is for social communication and social control, so that language must be

correctly instituted and used for this purpose. Confucius says (*Analects* 20-3): "If a person does not know language, he will not know people".

(2) Names are for sayings and sayings are to ultimately serve the purpose of social ordering. Thus names must be correctly regulated and understood and not be abused lest disorder and confusion will result.

(3) All things are nameable. To name a thing is to identify it by its true characteristics. Thus names serve to provide us with knowledge of things in the world. This is the case with the names of birds, beasts, grass, and woods. Thus in speaking of the merits from learning poetry, Confucius mentions (*Analects* 17-9): "[One should] know the names of grass, wood, birds and beasts".

(4) Human relations, as well as human goals and values can also be names. As names of such, they must correspond correctly to the reality of such.

(5) To use names correctly is to rectify names. But a primary pre-condition is to have a correct understanding of reality. Since the reality of human relations, goals, and values is to be understood in terms of our experiences and visions of human nature and its relation to heaven, names resulting from such an understanding involve a correct recognition of such a reality. To correctly name is to correctly see and correctly understand the standard norm and goal of human behavior and their relation to society and government, as well as the relation of the latter to the former.

(6) Once the names of things and values are established, they should be correctly used to refer to the things which they are intended to represent, so that a blockage of social communication and social control will not take place, and confusion as to what is referred to will be avoided. Blockage of social communication and social control, and confusion of preference will lead to a breakdown of social norms, and value standards, which will in turn lead to confusion of thought and reasoning and will inevitably give rise to chaos and political instability. Therefore, in order to rectify names, one should insure not only that names correspond correctly to reality, but that in our use of sayings or languages, precaution should be taken to prevent confusion and the abuse of names.

The practical goal of rectifying names and the main tasks of rectification are suggested

in Confucius' own statements (*Analects* 13-13):

If names are not rectified, sayings will not serve their purpose. If sayings do not serve their purpose, then rites and music (social mores) will not flourish. If rites and music do not flourish, then codes of punishment (laws) will not function right. If codes of punishment do not function right, then people will not know how to behave. Thus being a superior man, a ruler must make sure that names must be sayable and sayings must be practical. A superior man must be very serious and cautious with regard to his sayings.

Although Confucius does not make explicit the distinction between facts and values, it seems clear that for him there are two kinds of names: the first kind of names are natural names governed by fact and things; the second kind of names are value or norm names which govern human behavior. It might be suggested that in the realm of natural objects, names must correspond to reality, but in the realm of human values, reality must correspond to names, for it is up to man to make his reality, as a man conforms to a social standard of value so that he can be a socially cultivated entity and the larger goal of society be fulfilled. With this in view, Confucius suggests (*Analects* 12-11): "The ruler should be ruler-like, the minister minister-like; the father should be father-like; the son should be son-like". The rule of rectifying therefore is twofold: names must conform to natural objects, value names must make human persons conform to them. It is clear that Confucius' doctrine of rectifying names is developed around the latter principle. It is no wonder that he comes to formulate his well-known doctrine as answers to questions on how to conduct government. Again, although Confucius does not explicitly suggest how one may avoid confusion in the use of names once names are made to represent correct reality, yet from his various discourses we could see that he has come to adopt two basic rules of the application of names: (1) One name should apply to one type of thing; (2) A thing or a person may have many names, depending in its or his relation to other things or other persons.

In Xunzi, the basic principles of Confucius' doctrine of the rectifying of names are well elaborated and further developed. Xunzi's essay on *zhengming* "rectifying names" makes it clear that language is a social and human institution and therefore always possesses social and human signifi-

cance. He further points out that a ruler, in being responsible for social ordering, must regulate language as a means of social ordering, which will contribute to the peace and well being of people, and eliminate confusion and disorder. But more than Confucius, he recognizes two more important aspects of language beside the practical-social aspect of language: Namely, language is empirically based and language is conventional. He is, furthermore, committed to demonstrating all three aspects of language by inquiring into: (1) How names are introduced (*suo-wei-you-ming*); (2) How the similarity and difference of names originate (*suo-yuan-yi-dong-yi*); and (3) How names are instituted or formulated as they are used (*zhi-ming-zhi-shu-yao*). Let us briefly describe Xunzi's theses as responses to these three questions.

(1) Xunzi points out that if there are no fixed names, our ideas of things cannot be clearly expressed and we are too confused about what objects we want to refer to. Consequently, the noble and the lowly cannot be distinguished, and the difference and the identity cannot be separated. Communication will be difficult and social action will be impossible. Thus the sage decides to institute names to refer to different things so that the noble and the lowly can be distinguished, and the difference and the identity can be separated. This means that one can distinguish between the different values which we attach to things and that we can classify and record things according to their identities and differences. Social communication and social action will result from these.

(2) The basis for instituting names of the difference and similarity of things, according to Xunzi, is our natural sense. He trusts that our natural senses share common impressions of things. Consequently, we can adopt the same names to refer to the same things and different names to refer to different things. His approach to what names stand for, therefore, is realistic yet empirical. He recognizes the different qualities of sight, sound, taste, smell, touching and feelings (desires and emotions). He recognizes that the human mind has organizing power and the power for inference. Thus he concludes that our names correspond to things in the world through our ability to know things in terms of the senses and mind. In this regard, one may say that for Xunzi, names in language are conceived to represent the objects of the

empirical worlds: language therefore has empirical origins and an empirical reference.

(3) Different things must have different names and same things must have the same name. This is the principle of correspondence. This correspondence in terms of difference and identity seems to imply that things can be recognized in terms of a hierarchy of classes. Things are the same because they belong to the same classes, and are different because they belong to different classes. The implicit criterion of identity and difference is class identity and difference. By recognizing the names of various sizes of classes or generality, Xunzi, together with the Neo-Mohists, has introduced the notion of class (*lei*) into the Chinese logical vocabulary. The purpose of naming is to identify the identical in regard to the same class (attribute) and to distinguish the different in regard to different classes (attributes). A proper name will thus distinguish one thing from all other things. A universal name (*da-gong-ming*) will identify all things in the same class. Although Xunzi is basically realistic with regard to the institution of class names, he introduces the principle of convention by saying (*Zhengming* chapter) that,

Names have no intrinsic quality which necessitates its corresponding to a particular object. We stipulate the correspondence between one name and one object by convention (command). Once the convention is agreed upon and usage established, we will say that the name is proper. If a name is introduced (used) in disagreement with out convention, we will say this is improper.

The conventionality of names, of course, is the conventionality of the initial choice of names for a certain purpose. It does not alter the nature of correspondence or the nature of what the names correspond to. Thus Xunzi's theory does not allow us to infer that we can legislate reality to the world through the convention of names. His view of language is basically realistic and empirical. In fact, he even points out the following principle of the individuation of things: Things are to be individuated by their location and forms. When one thing changes form but does not change its nature and location, it is still to be regarded as one thing. But if two things occupy two different locations, even if they have the same form, they are to be regarded as two things.

On the basis of the above theses concerning origin, purpose, and the nature of language, Xunzi is able to reject the fallacies of sayings of the following kinds: fallacies of

sayings based on using names to confuse with other names, without regard to their intended meaning and purpose; fallacies of sayings based on using objects (*shi*) to confuse with names, without regard to origins of names in difference and identity of perception; fallacies of sayings based on using names to confuse with reality without regard to goals by which institution of names or specifically class names is intended.

Two or more observations can be made about Xunzi's theory of the rectifying of names:

(1) Xunzi clearly recognizes that names are necessary for social and human life. He recognizes this on the basis of the recognition that human communication and society are based on the existence of human desires, and human desires are not eliminable. Thus language can be introduced to satisfy human needs. To avoid confusion in and by language one needs to know the truth with one's reason or with one's mind, but needs to be rid of desires and the implicit consequent thesis of no names and no language.

(2) In the beginning of his essay on rectifying names, Xunzi mentions common values, such as life (*sheng*), nature (*xing*), feeling (*qing*), deliberating (*lei*), human doing (*wei*), business (*shi*), virtuous deeds (*xing*), cognitive power (*zhi*), knowledge (*zhi*), natural capacity (*neng*), developed talent (*neng*), illness (*ping*), and accident (*ming*). If these names are considered (mentioned) as examples of names which should conform to the three conditions of names of the above, it is clear that Xunzi would recognize that the reality to which names correspond must be open to rational understanding by the mind, but is not just confined to our perceptual experience. Thus correct naming implies correct understanding of the world by the mind. In an implicit way, what an ontology is will determine what names will be introduced, just as what names are to be introduced will reflect what ontology will have to be presupposed.

5. The Daoist doctrine of *wu-ming* "no names"

We have discussed the doctrine of no names in Laozi and forgetting language in Zhuangzi. The obvious reason and argument for the namelessness of the *dao* in Laozi is that the *dao* as the ultimate reality is whole and indeterminate and cannot be characterized in

determinations without losing sight of its totality, unlimitedness, and its source nature. Names are names of being (*you*). *Dao* is not exactly being in the ordinary sense and therefore essentially cannot have a name to identify or characterize it. That is why it is called void (*wu*) by Laozi. In fact, insofar as everything has a hidden side, the side of *yin* or *wu*, everything cannot be exactly identified and characterized by a name, for everything cannot be conceived as completely determinate. This is the true nature of things which Laozi's theory of reality envisions. In this regard, Laozi holds that basically language is superfluous and dispensable. Although it may help us to identify and characterize things in such a way that the identification and characterization may prove to be practically useful, language could be misleading and illusion-generating simply because it could prevent us from seeing the true nature of things and the totality of reality.

There is an implicit theory and argument in Laozi to the effect that things and the *dao* could remain nameless if we diminish or eliminate our need for naming them. In other words, Laozi's doctrine of the nameless of the *dao* goes hand in hand with his doctrine of desirelessness or no desires (*wu-yu*) and his doctrine of effortlessness or no action (*wu-wei*). Laozi holds that if we are devoid of desires (*yu*), we are able to see the true nature of the *dao*, whereas once possessed of desires we shall see the beginnings of things. Thus the true nature of reality is related to perception in the state of no desires, whereas the reality of differentiated things is related to perception in the state of having desires. What are desires? Although Laozi does not discuss this question in detail, his discourse provides the following indications about what desires are.

Desires are the ego-centric and selfish claims to possession and thus products of the self in opposition to the world. They are therefore exclusive of the points of view of other things. They give rise to so called knowledge which will serve private interests. They lead to actions which blind us to the true nature of things. Laozi is not opposed to natural desires, or desires which occur spontaneously, as he sees in the images of water and the uncarved block. Desires which are cultivated by cunning and promoted by intelligence are unnatural. They distort the nature of man and will not show the true nature of the *dao*. Thus having desires is to wish

to do specifically something (*you-wei*). It is to possess things, control things, and divide things. To have no desires, on the contrary, is to let things happen spontaneously and to let one's creativity develop in harmony with reality without forcing or imposing. It is to create without possessiveness, to do things without arrogance, and to lead without domination.

Laozi points out that it is when the *dao* does not do anything specific that everything is done. This means that the cosmos, with its variety of life forms, involves spontaneity precisely because there is no convention nor goal for the *dao*. In this sense the *dao* can be said to have no desires and to make no effort toward a predesignated goal. Man should be guided by the image of the *dao*. In order to achieve creativity, man should remain desireless and effortless in the sense Laozi uses these terms.

This means that man should retain or cultivate a spontaneous life and a selfless attitude. To do nothing and to have no desires are therefore to have no desires and to do nothing from the point of view of oneself. It is to abandon the self (*wu-wo*), but not to abandon life or creativity. In this sense man will not only come to perceive or understand the *dao*, but he will be like the *dao*. In this sense language also becomes superfluous and dispensable, because as a vehicle for expressing desires, knowledge and guiding actions, language loses its ground of existence once desires, knowledge, and guiding actions are not needed and unnecessary. Of course, this does not mean that man will not act or know and have no life. It means that when man comes to live in harmony with other men and nature, language like weapons will not perform any useful function. Its use will not create difficulty and commotion like the uses of weapons and the use of the boat.

Laozi's vision is that in the spontaneous state of nature, living people need to have little commerce with one another, people will not war with one another and thus there is no need to use means of transportation and means of war – the weapons (*Daodejing* 80). Similarly, when no need for communication by language is necessary, language should be laid to rest and names need not be used. The true nature of things will be shown in their own light precisely because of their namelessness. We shall see the true nature of things and the totality of *dao* precisely because of their namelessness. This is the second reason

why Laozi rejects names and language. He says (*Daodejing* 37): “The primal simplicity (the uncarved block) which is nameless (*wu-ming*) will alone do away with desires (*wu-yu*)”.

We may note that the Daoist doctrine of no names is the antipode to the Confucian doctrine of the rectification of names. Whereas the Confucians wish to develop language as a human institution and regulate it in serve to human goals, the Daoists wish to abolish language simply because it is a human invention and social institution on the ground of its ontological partiality and ill effects. Whereas Laozi sees desirelessness as a reason for namelessness, Xunzi responds by showing how desires cannot be dispensed with, and precisely because of this, names and language as founded on experience and reason would be preserved for guiding and yet satisfying desires.

6. Nominalistic tendencies in Yinwenzi

Chinese thinking is conducted in a framework of naturalistic concepts of concrete terms. But as we have argued elsewhere (cf. Cheng 1973), this does not mean that the Chinese language or Chinese philosophy does not permit or does not involve abstract theoretical thinking. What is characteristic of Chinese thinking in general, of course, is that the abstract and the theoretical are not separable from the concrete and the particular. The relation between the two is one of illumination, illustration, and symbolic embodiment, as well as ontological constitution. It would therefore be more surprising to come across Platonic views of ontology than to come across nominalistic views of ontology in Chinese philosophy.

The ontological pull toward concrete particulars is stronger than that toward an ontology of abstract universals. Even in the Neo-Confucianist philosophy of principles (*li*) advanced by Chu Xi, principles cannot be really ontologically prior to the process and power of material generation (*qi*), nor are they transcendently separable from *qi*.

On problems concerning the ontological dimensions of name, it is therefore not surprising that there are philosophers and logicians like Yinwenzi (350–270 BC) who argue that names are essentially intended for representing things on the basis of their material and observable forms (*xing*). In fact, Yinwen-

zi can be regarded as a typical example of the nominalistic theory or doctrine of names and language in ancient Chinese philosophy. In the remaining essays attributed to Yinwenzi, we find the following important assertions (*Yinwenzi* 1):

The great *dao* has no forms, but to refer to concrete things (*qi*) we need names. Names are what correctly represent (*zheng*) shapes (or forms). Since shapes (forms) are to correctly represented by names, names must not be inaccurate.

The great *dao* cannot be named. All shapes on the other hand must have names. It is because of its unnameability, there is the *dao*. Because of the nameless *dao*, thus all shapes have their peculiarities (squareness, roundness). As names are born out of the peculiarities (squareness and roundness) of shapes, all names have their respective referents (*Yinwenzi* 2).

From these two passages it can be seen that Yinwenzi affirms the Daoist premise that the great *dao* has no names. But he would not draw the Daoist conclusion that we should abolish names and forget language. On the contrary he holds that names serve an important purpose. They represent reality as it is diversified into things. Since the diversification of reality into things is by way of the differentiation of shapes, names must be faithful to these shapes, in order that things can be identified or characterized.

The following two passages (*Yinwenzi* 8, 5) formulate the nominalistic requirement for the institution of names or language use by Yinwenzi.

Names are to name shapes. Shapes are in answer to names. If shapes are not to give rise to correct names, nor to identify correct shapes, then shapes and names would remain irrelevant to each other. Though names should not be confused with shapes, they are not independent of each other either. In having no names, the great *dao* cannot be said. Having names, we use names to correctly represent shapes. Now ten thousand things exist at the same time, if we do not apply names to represent them [identify them], we will have confusion of knowledge. Ten thousand names exist at the same time, if we do not resort to shapes to answer them, we will have difficulties of thought. Therefore, shapes and names cannot but be made to correctly represent each other.

The nominalistic principle for Yinwenzi in the above is that names must answer to shapes, just as shapes must answer to names. If shapes are concrete criteria for the existence of things, then names are ontologically meaningful if and only if they correspond to some concrete features of things, such as

shapes. If names do not name shapes or things with shapes (concrete particulars), names must be in error or they must have other justifications for their existence. Yinwenzi seems to favor the requirement that names would not be ontologically significant if there were no concrete objects corresponding to them. Yet he also allows that names without reference to shapes could be useful for human purposes and therefore are justifiable on pragmatic grounds. He says (*Yinwenzi* 8, 5):

All things which have shapes must have names. But we could have names which need not have shapes. Shapes that are not names do not necessarily lose the reality of their being square, round, white and black. In the case of names which do not have shapes referred to them, we must identify these names and investigate why they are different. Thus then we could use names to find out of which shapes they are true. Shapes determine names. Names determine certain states of affairs (*shi*). States of affairs will control names. When we investigate why certain names refer to shapes and certain other names to not, then we shall see that no reason is hidden from us in regard to the relation between shapes and names on the one hand between states of affairs and things on the other.

Though Yinwenzi does not specify how we justify and construe names without representing shapes, he lets it be understood that some reason must be found other than the existence of things which have no shapes. His whole essay, which is reconstructed by scholars such as Sun Yirang, indicates very clearly that he quickly moves to a doctrine of rectifying names of the Confucian persuasion, by suggesting the introduction of names as the basis of the distinction of values and in terms of the contexts of fulfillment of practical goals of society and government. This may remotely suggest the possibility of construing non-shape names in the context of practical language and thus confining ontology to names which correctly represent the shapes of things. It is noted of course that the so-called shapes (*xing*) could be interpreted to mean not just literally shapes such as squareness and roundness, but any quality of things which is open to sensory perception. Thus qualities such as white and black and the like could be the basis for the names of things (cf. Wang Dianji 1961: 70–97).

7. Platonistic tendencies in Gongsun Long

Although the Chinese language may appear to prohibit Platonistic thinking, the existence

of the Platonistic ontology in Gongsun Long demonstrates that ordinary language or natural language does not determine the ontological picture of the world one may hold. In fact Gongsun Long's philosophy shows language is capable of receiving different local and ontological interpretations and there is no necessity for following one interpretation rather than another. The ultimate goal of Gongsun Long may still be the clarification of the relation of names to realities for social and political purposes. But his discourse and basic thesis leave no doubt that language is name-oriented and should possess ontological significance independently of and prior to its application to social and political affairs (cf. Cheng 1983).

Gongsun Long holds the celebrated thesis that "white horse is not horse" (*bei-ma-fei-ma*). It is in arguing for this thesis that he develops the Platonic theory of what reality is. Gongsun Long works out two main arguments for his thesis. First, he argues that, since the term 'horse' is a name for shape, and the term 'white' is a name for color, and the name for color is not the name for shape, therefore 'white horse' is not 'horse'. The peculiarity of this argument is that the premises of the argument do not immediately warrant the conclusion. Apparently one could only draw the conclusion that what the name 'white' stands for is not what the name 'horse' stands for. But this is what is precisely presupposed in the premises. In order to reach the conclusion that 'white horse' is not 'horse', one has to inquire into what name 'white' and what name 'horse' stand for. Apparently for Gongsun Long 'white' designates white color and 'horse' designates horse-shape form. Insofar as white color and horse shape are not particulars, they can be alternatively construed as universals, attributes, classes, or concepts.

Actually, these different construals should not make a real difference to Gongsun Long's argument. Assume that 'white' and 'horse' are universals. Then to say that 'white' is not 'horse' is to say (x) (x is white \neq x is horse). Since (x is horse \equiv x is horse), it follows that (x) (x is white. x is horse \neq x is horse. x is horse). Therefore: (x) (x is white horse \neq x is horse). This conclusion, saying that anything is a white horse, is not equivalent to saying that anything is a horse on the grounds of the difference of truth conditions of the two sayings, which can be used to con-

strue Gongsun Long's thesis that white horse is not horse.

Alternatively one may interpret 'white' and 'horse' as classes, namely, a class of white things [called w] and a class of horse-form things [called h]. Then the premise of the argument says:

w ≠ h
But h = h
Therefore w . h ≠ h . h
and w . h ≠ h

This of course says that the class of things which are white and horse is not the same as the class of horse things. Thus under extensional interpretation of 'white' and 'horse' again the conclusion of Gongsun Long's argument can be derived.

What is essential for proving the validity of Gongsun Long's argument under both interpretations is to recognize Gongsun Long's affirmation of nonequivalence of propositions or nonidentity of two classes. The paradox of this recognition is that normally one expects that white horse is horse because the class of white horse is a subclass of the horse, or alternatively because saying that anything is white horse implies that anything is horse. What Gongsun Long denies in his thesis may appear to be just the relation of class-inclusion and sentential implication. But in fact what he actually denies is the equivalence and class identity. The question is whether he is right to make such a denial. The answer is that from the use of the Chinese negation word *fei* "is not" in "white horse *fei* horse", Gongsun Long is justified in asserting identity as being denied or equivalence as being negated. In fact, Gongsun Long argues merely for the admissibility (*ke-yi*) of such an interpretation, not the necessity of such an interpretation as he makes clear in the beginning of his essay:

Q.: To say that white horse is horse, is it admissible? A.: Yes, it is admissible.

Thus we make clear that the first argument of Gongsun Long does not rule out his possible commitment to a concrete ontology. He merely indicates in his argument the possibility and acceptability of an abstract ontology because our language is capable of being construed in terms of an abstract ontology of universals or classes.

The second major argument for his thesis is that if one asks for horse, a horse of different colors will meet this request. But if one

asks for white horse, only a white horse meets this request. This may appear to be an obvious pragmatic argument. But what makes this argument pragmatically valid according to Gongsun Long is some ontological fact about the qualities of white horse and horse. For Gongsun Long we would refer to horse as such as a single quality which may combine with other qualities to produce white horse, yellow horse, black horse. Thus to ask for horse is to ask for a thing identifiable by a single quality and to ask for white horse is to ask for a thing identifiable by the conjunction of two qualities. Since the identification conditions for the two requested objects are different, these two requested objects are two different objects.

The independence of different qualities, which is assumed in Gongsun Long's second argument, implies the separability of these qualities. For Gongsun Long all names are names for independent qualities. In fact, there are two kinds of names: the single names for single simple qualities, such as white, the compound names for compounds or conjunctions of single simple qualities, such as white horse. Gongsun Long's logic of inference is one of identity, according to which no simple name is equal to a compound name, or what a single name stands for is not identical with what a compound name stands for and vice versa. Gongsun Long (*Beima* chapter) says:

The 'horse' which does not fix a color is different from the 'white horse' which does fix a color. Therefore white horse is not a horse.

From the above it is clear that Gongsun Long's theory that 'white horse is not horse' leads to or presupposes the abstract ontology of qualities or universals. Once their abstract ontology is accepted, there is the question as to how we understand concrete things. Are concrete things of a different order of existence than abstract qualities? Or are they analysable into or reducible to abstract qualities? Or are they analysable into or reducible to abstract qualities? There seems to be a tendency in Gongsun Long to develop the ontology suggested in his *Bei ma lun* into a full theory which recognizes no concrete things in the world. This is seen in his work *Zhi wu lun*.

Before we discuss the complete theory and the reduction theory of Gongsun Long, we shall see another argument for the separability and independence of individual qualities in Gongsun Long's essay on hardness and whiteness, *Jien bei lun*.

In *Jien bei lun*, Gongsun Long offers a new argument for the thesis that qualities are separate and independent. His argument consists in pointing out that our different sense organs independently identify respective qualities which are different. Thus we identify the hardness of a stone by touch and identify the whiteness of a stone by sight. If we observe sight, we don't get hardness, and thus relative to sight there is no hardness. If we observe touch, we do not get whiteness, and thus relative to touch there is no whiteness. On this ground Gongsun Long concludes that whiteness and hardness are external to each other and are independent qualities. In making this argument Gongsun Long denies the relevance of our concept of a stone which possesses the qualities of white and hardness in itself. Since what we see and what we touch are not stone, Gongsun Long tends to rule out the actual existence of stone. Therefore he denies that there are three things – stone, white, and hardness – which cannot exist in some one thing of which there seems to be evidence. His argument therefore is used to establish both the separability of independent qualities and the nonexistence of things such as stone.

That qualities such as white and hard are separable and independent is also based on the fact that in verifying the existence of whiteness by sight, hardness is hidden, and in verifying the existence of hardness by touch, whiteness is hidden, so we may as well say that it does not exist in the same sense in which hardness and whiteness can be said to exist.

That Gongsun Long clearly believes that whiteness and hardness are separate universal qualities in a Platonic sense is indicated by the following statement (*Jianbei* chapter):

Things have white color, but white is not fixed and confined (*ding*) to a specific white thing. Things have hardness but hardness is not fixed and confined to a specific hard thing. What is not fixed and confined to a specific thing can characterize all things. Then how can we say that hardness and whiteness belong to a stone?

He further says:

Hardness, even not yet conjoined with stone, is hard. It is hard even not conjoined with other things. Hardness itself possesses the quality to make nonhard things hard. Thus it is hard in stone and in other things. If we find no independent hardness in the world, it is because it is hidden. If whiteness cannot make itself white, how could it make a stone and other things white? If whiteness

possesses by itself the quality which makes itself white then it can remain white even not making things white. By the same token yellow and black are the same.

To generalize, Gongsun Long draws the Platonic conclusion:

All things (qualities) have independent and separate existence. Things (qualities) of independent and separate existence are normal states of being in the world.

To complete his abstract ontology, Gongsun Long finally comes to hold the Platonic reduction thesis that all things in the world are conjunctions of qualities and thus that there are no concrete things per se. What concrete things there are, are qualities manifested (*wei*) in space and time. When qualities are not manifested in space and time, they are hidden from us and are not identifiable by our senses. But this of course does not mean that they do not exist or subsist. Like Platonic forms, these qualities are not only separate from each other, they are absent from the world if they do not make themselves available to characterize things in the world.

When qualities are identified by names in the world, they are called *zhi* "objects of reference". In *Zhi wu lun*, Gongsun Long holds that nothing in the world is not *zhi* and *zhi* is not *zhi*. Again there exists many possible interpretations of this paradoxical statement of Gongsun Long. But in light of Gongsun Long's Platonistic tendencies, we may pinpoint the following two interpretations:

(1) Since all things in the world (space and time) are identifiable in terms of qualities, they are therefore compounds or conjunctions of identifiable qualities. But identifiable qualities need not themselves be identifiable in the things of the world, for they themselves may not exist in the world. Thus they are not identifiable qualities (apart from things). This interpretation makes it clear that qualities can be hidden and can be manifested and that things are manifested qualities which form objects of the reference of names, whereas qualities per se are not manifested (hidden) and thus do not form objects of reference. The abstract ontology of qualities is not only abstract but transcendent.

(2) All things are describable in terms of their qualities and there is nothing else in things aside from their qualities. But qualities per se are not further to be described or characterized by qualities, at least not by qualities of the same order. Since qualities are essen-

tially simple and separate (independent), they are not to be described by second order qualities either, for there would not be second order qualities. Therefore it is misleading and wrong to say that qualities or identifiable *zhi* are things identifiable by qualities. This is a logical interpretation of the nature of qualities. The outcome of this interpretation is that not only the abstract ontology of qualities is abstract but it cannot be describable or characterizable at all. We only come to know qualities through our names applicable to things for identification in the world. Thus one may infer that language (names) provides a means for knowing the abstract ontology of qualities.

To conclude, the moral which we can draw from Gongsun Long's Platonism is that, given a certain logic, a language can generate an ontology which differs from the normally presupposed or assumed ontology of the language. This means that ontology is a product of language under a certain interpretation or construal satisfying certain arguments in inference.

8. The empirical (scientific) realism of names and language in the Neo-Moist Canons (*Jing/Shuo*)

We come to the last doctrine of names in Classical Chinese Philosophy. This doctrine of names is above all, developed by logical-minded and scientific-minded followers of the Moist School. They are therefore referred to as Neo-Moists. The Neo-Moists may be motivated to develop their views of logic and language by their wish to prove the truth of their social, ethical and religious beliefs and to disprove those of their rivals. But in their rigorous collective works on logic and empirical science, such as optics and mechanics, they have achieved an objectivity of methodology and a neutrality in their investigative attitude which one does not find in other schools. Thus it is not an exaggeration to say that it is in Neo-Moist works that an objective and scientific language is developed and that the conception of language as a means to express scientific and logical truth is established. Language is not used for persuasion nor for social control. It is to indicate and formulate of reality as discovered by observation and clear thinking.

Given this conception of language, language is then seen by the Neo-Moists to in-

volve three important aspects: It involves names, propositions, and inferences. These three aspects of language have their individual objectives. Thus the Neo-Moists say in the *Xiao Ju*:

We use names to mention realities (things in reality) (*yin-ming ju-shi*). We use propositions (judgments) to express intention and meanings (*yi-ci shu-yi*). We use discourse or inference (agreement) to reach reasons (explanations) of things (*yi-shuo-chu-gu*).

In this manner, the Neo-Moists have paid equal attention to *ming* and *yan* in language and have linked both to the context of inference and reasoning in which their roles can be understood and their contributions recognized. *Ming* and *yan* are equally needed for reasoning, for reaching truth about the world, for settling doubt, and even for producing reason for our actions. The Neo-Moists also explicitly recognize the notion of class as a basis of inference. It is said in the *Xiaoqu*:

We should illustrate our knowledge from taking examples from the same class of things; we should infer to unknown things by examining examples from the same class of things (*yi-lei-ju, yi-lei-yu*).

The notion of class plays an important role in the Neo-Moist logic although we do not have space here to elaborate upon this. It suffices to say that the Neo-Moists have developed an extensional logic in opposition to the intentional logic of abstract qualities of Gongsun Long. It is on the basis of this extensional logic founded on concrete things that the Neo-Moists advance their scientific, realistic understanding of the world. To say that the Neo-Moists view of ontology and language is realistic is to say that they are not nominalistic like Yinwenzi, nor Platonistic like Gongsun Long. To say that their views are empirical or scientific is to say that their views are not practicality-dominated like the Confucianists nor a priori-determined by a totalistic approach like the Daoists. The Neo-Moists understand language as somehow capable of presenting the true nature of the world. But this true nature of the world is subject to empirical investigations and logical clarification. Thus language can be used to define and describe reality through a process of logical analysis and clarification of the language. Reality on the other hand can be used to refine and reform language through a procedure of scientific observation and experimentation on reality. This mutual inter-

change and interaction between language and reality enables the Neo-Moists to produce an image of the world and language not far from what scientific philosophers or logical philosophers have strived to achieve in modern days. What the Neo-Moists strive to establish is the objectivity of truth which is their criterion for ontological understanding. They believe that language can be used to establish objective truth and they way to do this is to obey logic and argument according to logical principles. The Neo-Moists (*Mojing* Canon I-32) say:

Language is to make representation of reality possible [...] Since names are used to represent reality, *yan* is to use names to represent things for achieving objective truth by saying something about things named. Thus *yan* is to say something about names.

The importance of reasoning and argument consists in their need for establishing objective truth. The Neo-Moists believe that in argument the goal for either side of the argument is objective truth and that only the side which reaches objective truth can be said to win.

Argument: the purpose of it is to compete for the truth (*bi*) When argument is won, it is because it reaches truth (*Mojing* canon I-74).

Of course it is possible that both sides of an argument can be wrong. But it is not possible that both sides of an argument are right. The Neo-Moists are strongly opposed to the sceptical position that rejects all statements or sayings about reality as false. Such a position is held or believed to be held by Daoists. The Neo-Moists reject this position by pointing out its logical absurdity.

To regard all sayings (*yan*) as all false (self-contradictory) is self-contradictory. The explanation consists in the nature of the saying formulating this position (*Mojing* canon II-5).

The Neo-Moists have advanced many theses and views regarding many subjects bearing on problems of language and ontology. To discuss all of these or to give details on any of these will require a separate treatise. For our purpose we shall briefly mention the following highlights in addition to what we have said in the above about their general position of empirical realism.

(1) The Neo-Moists have engaged in constructing definitions of basic terms of things (or categories and concepts) for classifying

purposes. These definitions also function as a basis of reasoning and scientific investigation. They are therefore terms which refer to fundamental natures of things in a logical and scientific language. For example, they have defined metalanguage terms referring to kinds of names and sayings, methodological terms of identity and difference which are distinguished by them. they even define life, time, space and important ethical terms.

(2) The Neo-Moists have engaged in empirical experimentation on optical and mechanical phenomena in order to describe them and explain them correctly. In Canon II we find highly interesting experiments made on the refraction and reflection of light. This means that the Neo-Moists permit construction of knowledge on the basis of empirical observation and scientific hypotheses. It is in this sense that they permit our understanding of the world and our formulation of our understanding in language to be guided by objective inquiry and an objective conceptional of reality. Therefore they do not favor a nominalistic approach to the description of reality.

(3) The Neo-Moists strongly reject the Platonistic theses of Gongsun Long. Their rejection of Gongsun Long's theses amounts to pointing out that Gongsun Long does not have an explicit notion of class and does not know how to classify things and therefore does not know the similarity and difference of things. For example, cow, horse, and sheep, belong to the same class (genus); they should not be treated as thoroughly different things as Gongsun Long tends to do (*Mojing* canon II-65). Without a correct notion of class one will have a false representation of things (*kuang-ju*).

Regarding Gongsun Long's thesis, 'white horse is not a horse', the Neo-Moists have this to say. First, one should distinguish the case of a disjunction (union) of two things (or qualities) from the case of a Cartesian product or conjunction of two things (or qualities). Two things A and B are disjunctively A or B, but conjunctively are neither A nor B. On the basis of this distinction and the two associated principles of inference, one can thus infer that:

Cow and horse disjunctively are cow and horse. Cow and horse conjunctively are neither cow nor horse (*Mojing* canon II-66).

By the same token one can say:

White and horse disjunctively is white or horse. White and horse conjunctively are neither white or horse (*Mojing* canon II-13).

In light of this clarification, Gongsun Long's thesis can be said to be misleading and not totally right if not totally wrong. Our inference to what there is depends on a clear analysis of our concepts in our language. Gongsun Long's Platonism therefore can be regarded as resulting from a confusion of or lack of reasoning.

(4) The Neo-Moists also repudiate Gongsun Long's thesis that hard and white are separate, independent qualities. According to the Neo-Moists, the error of Gongsun Long consists in not understanding or not having a proper conception of space and time as individuating principles for an individual things such as a stone. For although we could perceive hard and white successively in time and through different sense organs, what we have perceived, however, resides in one location (space) and belongs to one interval (time). Insofar as location is one and time is one, the separate impressions of white and hard cohere in one thing and therefore are not separate from each other, but rather fill each other (*xiang-yin*) because they fill each other in the same time and in the same space. It is said (*Mojing* canon II-15):

One separates hard from white, explanation being lack of conception of interval of time and location. Hard and white are one, explanation being (that they originally belong to the same location of the same time interval).

(5) The Neo-Moists also discuss the notion of *zhi*. They differ from Gongsun Long in that they regard *zhi* as being basically acts of reference rather than objects of reference or indefinable qualities and things. They hold that we can know that something exists without being able to identify it by identifiable qualities or by pointing toward them. For example, we know that the spring has come and gone without being able to point to the spring; we know that a person has disappeared or hidden without being able to point to a person; we know that a neighbor's dog is around without knowing the dog's name; and we know that something is beyond reasonable doubt, even in the presence of *zhi* as ways of characterization, identification or as simple names. The point of the Neo-Mohists is to reject Gongsun Long's doctrine that no things are not *zhi* and *zhi* is not *zhi* as we have explained above.

9. Concluding remarks

In the above I have discussed the ontological import of Chinese language and the conception of language in various ontological per-

spectives developed in Classical Chinese Philosophy. I distinguished names (*ming*) from sayings (*yan*) which are two basic aspects of Chinese language. I also distinguished between ontology in and of language and ontology independent of or without language. I have shown that for the Confucianists the ontological considerations of names are subject to practical, normative considerations of *yan*. For the Daoists, both names and sayings are abolished for ontological and normative, practical reasons, and an ontology without language is tacitly suggested and presented. For Yinwenzi and Gongsun Long, the ontological import of names dominates the practical, normative ends of *yan*. Finally, for the Neo-Moists ontological considerations are to be regulated by logical and methodological considerations, and language is to be developed and refined by logic and scientific discovery into a tool for expressing objective truth and objective knowledge.

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5. The Suí-Táng tradition of *Fǎnqiè* phonology

1. Introduction
2. The origins of *Fǎnqiè*
3. Aesthetics of *Fǎnqiè* organization
4. The *Qièyùn* rime-book
5. The significance of the *Qièyùn*
6. Prosody and other linguistic ideas
7. Bibliography

1. Introduction

The Chinese intellectual tradition has always been profoundly literary and graphic – real, systematic phonology developed late, and then only under heavy foreign influence.

Most Chinese written characters contain information about their pronunciation in the form of *xiéshēng* "sound-matching" pseudo-phonetic elements, but this information is haphazard and has certainly not represented any particular living form of Chinese in a systematic way since high antiquity (if even then). By late antiquity (c. AD 100), the *xiéshēng* elements were giving very misleading ideas about pronunciation, and better means of indicating pronunciation were needed. The sound of a character was often given by reference to a homophone or near-homophone:

“character X sounds like character Y” – the so-called *dūruò* method, but this too was only a partial solution.

In the late 2nd century, however, Chinese scholars developed a practical tool for describing the pronunciation of their written characters, called *fǎnqiè*. *Fǎnqiè* was not an absolute alphabetic or syllabic spelling system, but a way of analyzing the monosyllabic reading of any Chinese character into phonological elements that could be represented with other, common characters. It was a purely relative means of indicating sound. By way of illustration, consider a story told by the 6th century scholar Chinese Yán Zhītūī, thinking of his days in Shǔ, in modern Sichuān. He was sitting with friends as the sun came out after the rain, and they saw something small glistening on the ground. They asked a boy-servant what it was, and he said, “It’s just a bean-*pik*.” This reply meant nothing to them, so the boy fetched it and they saw that it was a little bean sprout. But the word *pik* for something like this was still unfamiliar to them. Then Yán remembered having seen an obscure character meaning ‘a little round thing’ in an old dictionary, and recalled that “its sound is given as *piān* plus *lik*.” He adds, “Everyone was pleased and understood” (Chou Fa-kao 1960: “Miān-xué” 51a).

When Yán Zhītūī says that “its sound is given as *piān* plus *lik*” he is using a *fǎnqiè* formula. In this case, he is describing the sound of a character pronounced *pik*, and the formula he cites defines it as the combination of the first part of *piān* plus the last part of *lik*:

$$\begin{array}{l} piān > p- + -iān & lik > l- + -ik \\ p- + -ik = pik \end{array}$$

It must be stressed that *fǎnqiè* is only a relative system for showing pronunciation: Every character glossed by a *fǎnqiè* has its sound indicated not with any absolute or even conventionally defined phonetic symbols, but by reference to two other characters, the sounds of which are presumably known to the reader. Nowhere does the *fǎnqiè* tell us that *pik* begins with a *p-* and ends with an *-ik*; it only tells us that *pik* begins with the same sound as *piān* and ends with the same sound as *lik*. In order to illustrate how *fǎnqiè* works, I have turned to a simplified formal reconstruction (designed after Martin 1953 and Stimson 1976) that is typologically close to modern varieties of Chinese. But Yán Zhītūī

had no such spelling system; *fǎnqiè* gives only algebraic information about sound: This character has the same initial sound as that character, which has the same initial sound as a third character, and a fourth character, and so on. The same *fǎnqiè* gloss could be read aloud in many different varieties of Chinese, and though it might be found valid in some or all of them, it might also be invalid in some of them. *Fǎnqiè* are, again, only a relative system of pronunciation. Written out as above in Roman letters, the system looks perhaps a little naïve to us, but to the medieval Chinese, who had no alphabet and knew no other way to describe sound other than by reference to homophones, it was extremely powerful. The beginning of *fǎnqiè* was the beginning of phonological awareness in China, and they formed the basis of the whole medieval tradition of phonology.

Special terminology is associated with the *fǎnqiè* gloss, in both English and Chinese: the beginning of the glossed syllable is called its “initial” (*shēng*), and the end is called its final or “rime” (*yùn*); the first element of the *fǎnqiè* gloss, which glosses the initial, is called the “upper” (*fǎnqiè shàngzì*), while the second element, which glosses the final, is called the “lower” (*fǎnqiè xiàzì*). Here are two more examples:

<i>fǎnqiè</i>	glossed word =	upper +	lower
麻莫霞反 <i>ma</i>	=	<i>mak</i>	+ <i>ya</i>
甜徒兼反 <i>dem</i>	=	<i>do</i>	+ <i>kem</i>

As a general rule, we with our modern, reconstruction-aided understanding believe the *fǎnqiè* lower to have included all vocalic and tonal matter in the glossed syllable, though the Chinese did not at that time have terms for such things as discrete vowels or other sub-syllabic segmental elements. (J. R. Firth’s conception of prosodic features is similar to what was apparently the medieval Chinese treatment of the syllable.)

Fǎnqiè were incorporated into various dictionaries, the most important of which is the *Qièyùn*, which will be discussed below. But we know of such large-scale compendia beginning only from the middle of medieval period – from around the 6th century. At first, *fǎnqiè* seem to have been used most often in the annotation of classical texts. These early materials are especially useful in trying to understand the principles of *fǎnqiè* construction. One of the best extant sources for early exegetic *fǎnqiè* is a book called the *Jīngdiǎn shìwén*, or “Exegeses on Classical

Texts”, compiled by Lù Dēmíng (c. 550–630). The *Shìwén* is meant to be read along with one of the standard editions of the ten classical books most revered in that day. It supplies glosses and readings for individual characters in order as they appear in the original text. Lù Dēmíng gathered his material from hundreds of different sources, most of which are otherwise unknown to us. Sometimes enough *fǎnqiè* from an individual scholiast appear in the *Shìwén* that we can get a working idea of the outlines of a coherent phonological system from them, but most of the time we can recover no such context.

2. The origins of *Fǎnqiè*

The term *fǎnqiè* dates only from the Sòng dynasty (960–1279), but it is a combination of two older terms *fǎn* 反 (also read *fān* and so written: 翻) “to turn back, overturn” and *qiè* 切 “to run together” (the reading *qiē* “to cut” for this character, commonly seen in Western works, appears to be a purely modern interpretation). One or another of these of these syllables was always used as the last part of the *fǎnqiè* formula, as you can see in Yán Zhītuī’s example above: What Yán actually says is that *pik* is read as “*piɑŋ lik fǎn*” – *piɑŋ* and *lik* ‘turned back’, i. e., combined in such a way as to attach the beginning of *piɑŋ* to the end of *lik*. *Fǎn* is the original term, but it also means “to rebel”, and after the shattering rebellions in the middle of the 8th century, the word apparently became too sensitive to use and so *qiè* was substituted. (This explanation is due to Gù Yǎnwǔ 1966[1667]b.) The words *ǎn*, *fān*, and *qiè* are simply markers that identify the preceding two syllables as a *fǎnqiè* sound-gloss. It is not known how far back these terms go. Yán Zhītuī already refers to *fǎnyǔ* – “*fǎn*-expressions”, and Liú Xié (c. 465–c. 532) uses *fǎn* as a verb in the sense of “to indicate pronunciation by means of *fǎnqiè*”. And *fǎn* occurs in the earliest attested *fǎnqiè* formulae. Yán Zhītuī and Lù Dēmíng themselves attributed the invention of *fǎnqiè* to one Sūn Yǎn, a 3rd century follower of the eminent Confucian scholiast Zhèng Xuán (127–200), and there are a few surviving examples attributed in later works to Fú Qián and Yīng Shào, both of whom were active before AD 200.

The conceptual origins of the *fǎnqiè* system are uncertain, but it appears to be native to China. Although many scholars have

sensed Indic inspiration for it (see especially Chou Fa-kaio 1964), no conclusive link has ever been demonstrated, and indeed there are several reasons to think that it is an original Chinese idea. One important argument, due to Zhèng Qiáo (1104–1160), is that classical texts contain a number of examples of contractions following *fǎnqiè* principles: two characters being run together into one syllable and written as one new character. (For more on Zhèng Qiáo, see Mair 1993.) Most often this kind of contraction appears with function words. For example: the compound 如是 *njiu zǐ* “in this way” was often written 爾 *njǐ*, which would be a perfect example of the *fǎnqiè* running-together of *njiu* and *zǐ*. The common combination 之歟 *tǐ yu* “[third person pronoun as direct object] + [interrogative sentence-suffix]” was written 諸 *tǐu*; the combination 而已 *nji ĭ* “and that is the end of it” was written 耳 *njǐ*; the combination 之矣 *tǐ yǐ* “[third person pronoun as direct object] + [sentence-suffix indicating completion]” was written 只 *tǐ*, and so on. In these examples, two syllables appear to be collapsed into one syllable in the same way that the two elements of a *fǎnqiè* gloss are run together to give the sound of a third character.

The most important reason to doubt Sanskrit influence is that *fǎnqiè* does not assign one symbol to one sound, as a syllabary- or alphabet-inspired system would – in this case, one *fǎnqiè* upper to one initial consonant. One initial, even in the same set of *fǎnqiè* material, may be represented by several different uppers, or one upper may behave in several different ways. Apparently the reason for this is that the *fǎnqiè* principle was a practical tool to show the sound of a given Chinese character and was rarely used to make general phonological statements. In Tab. 5.1. are some examples of many symbols representing one sound, all taken from a single redaction of the *Qièyùn*.

Tab. 5.1.

<i>fǎnqiè</i>	glossed word	=	upper	+	lower
郎魯當反	<i>laŋ</i>	=	<i>lǒ</i>	+	<i>taŋ</i>
浪郎宕反	<i>lɑŋ</i>	=	<i>laŋ</i>	+	<i>dɑŋ</i>
苓力鼎反	<i>lɛŋ</i>	=	<i>liək</i>	+	<i>tɛŋ</i>
麗閭激反	<i>lek</i>	=	<i>liu</i>	+	<i>kek</i>
樓落侯反	<i>lou</i>	=	<i>lak</i>	+	<i>you</i>
犖呂角反	<i>lak</i>	=	<i>liü</i>	+	<i>kak</i>

Here, a single initial that we recognize as *l*-is represented by six different *fǎnqiè* uppers.

This is by no means an extreme case; in the earliest complete extant version of the *Qiè-yùn*, there are no fewer than 25 different *fǎnqiè* uppers representing the one initial k^h . For this reason, we cannot reliably read off *fǎnqiè* and interpret them at sight; we need a way to show which groups of uppers and which groups of lowers constitute meaningfully contrastive groups. Such a method, called *xiliánfǎ* or “linking method” and based on algebraic principles, was eventually pioneered by the Manchu-period geographer Chén Lǐ (1810–1882), but it by no means belongs to medieval phonology. And even with this method the answers are not always clear; in the 20th century there have been serious disagreements over how many initials are actually meant to be represented in the *fǎnqiè*.

3. Aesthetics of *Fǎnqiè* organization

Fǎnqiè seem to have been composed in a fairly haphazard way, though from surviving collections we can see certain patterns that must reflect the linguistic values of the time. For instance, the uppers and lowers in the earliest *fǎnqiè* tended to be very common characters, and often characters of very few pen-strokes. *Fǎnqiè* uppers rarely end in $-m$ or $-p$ and most often end in open syllables or in $-ŋ$ or $-k$ – this must have been a question of ease of pronunciation. *Fǎnqiè* lowers are rarely aspirated. There tends to be loose agreement as to what in modern Chinese are ‘medial’ vowels – the semi-vowels in the *fǎnqiè* lower and following the initial of the *fǎnqiè* upper. For instance (again speaking in terms of our reconstruction), both upper and lower may share a palatalized initial and a medial or main vowel $-i-$, and the character being glossed will also have an $-i-$:

$$\text{陣直刃反 } d\dot{j}in = dji\grave{a}k + n\dot{j}in$$

Or both upper and lower may have a medial $-u-$, and the character being glossed will also have a medial $-u-$:

$$\text{鎬火玄反 } huen = hu\check{a} + yuen$$

Or neither upper nor lower has a medial vowel, and the character being glossed also has no medial:

$$\text{朗盧黨反 } l\check{a}ŋ = lo + t\check{a}ŋ$$

Or both upper and lower have a medial main vowel $-iu$ (or $-y$), as does the syllable being glossed:

$$\text{月魚厥反 } \eta iu\grave{a}t = \eta iu + ki u\grave{a}t$$

Agreement of medials – rather, what have conventionally been reconstructed as medials, for this question is by no means settled – is the general rule for *fǎnqiè* glosses, and must have been an important element of their aesthetics. In particular, what is written as a palatal medial $-i-$ in the simplified system used here has an enormous effect on the construction of *fǎnqiè*. *Fǎnqiè* uppers as a group fall into two hazily distinct sets: for each recognizable initial, there is usually one set that occurs with palatalized syllables and one that occurs with unpalatalized syllables. This distinction is not rigid, as some have thought, but the tendency to make the distinction is seen almost everywhere.

For if there is any one characteristic of *fǎnqiè*, it is that only loose distinctions are made. There are many places, even in fairly consistent corpora of *fǎnqiè*, where the gloss and the glossed syllable do not quite match. For example:

$$\text{役營隻反 } ju\grave{a}k = ju\grave{a}ŋ + t\dot{j}i\grave{a}k$$

If *fǎnqiè* operated as neatly as an alphabetic system, the gloss would give a reading $*ji\grave{a}k$, instead of *ju\grave{a}k*. Another example:

$$\text{生所更反 } sra\grave{e}ŋ = sri\check{u} + ki\grave{a}eŋ$$

The expected form, based on the *fǎnqiè*, would be $*sri\grave{a}eŋ$. Another example:

$$\text{鳳馮貢反 } bi\grave{u}ŋ = bi\grave{u}ŋ + k\grave{u}ŋ$$

The expected form would be $*b\grave{u}ŋ$. Another example:

$$\text{敬居孟反 } ki\grave{a}eŋ = ki\grave{u} + m\grave{a}eŋ$$

The expected form would be $*k\grave{a}eŋ$. There are even stranger cases:

$$\text{芥古邁反 } k\grave{a}i = k\check{o} + m\grave{a}i$$

$$\text{夾古邁反 } ku\grave{a}i = k\check{o} + m\grave{a}i$$

These two *fǎnqiè*, which appear in the same redaction of the *Qièyùn*, appeared in separate places in the book and so must have been considered distinct sounds, yet their *fǎnqiè* glosses are identical. Here are two more such pairs from the same source:

$$\text{黠胡八反 } yat = y\check{o} + pat$$

$$\text{滑胡八反 } yuat = y\check{o} + pat$$

$$\text{行胡孟反 } y\grave{a}eŋ = y\check{o} + m\grave{a}eŋ$$

$$\text{蝗胡孟反 } yu\grave{a}eŋ = y\check{o} + m\grave{a}eŋ$$

In these cases it is likely that the vowel of the *fǎnqiè* upper, spelled *-o* here, was ambiguous enough after a velar initial that when combined with a labial-initial *fǎnqiè* lower the presence of medial *-u-* was also ambiguously felt.

Clearly, *fǎnqiè* were composed not with rigorously distinct phonological categories in mind, but by ear (see Chao 1941 and Lù Zhiwéi 1963). They appeared very widely in medieval commentaries, and in some cases they were used in the glosses of character dictionaries such as the early *Yùpiān* of Gù Yěwáng (519–581). But as far as we know these sources never supplied a phonological framework within which to interpret them; people were evidently expected to read off *fǎnqiè* in whatever literary accents they knew, and to find the prescribed readings based on those accents.

4. The *Qièyùn* rime-book

The earliest surviving dictionary that does supply a kind of phonological framework for its *fǎnqiè* glosses is the *Qièyùn* of Lù Fǎyán (fl. 581–601), which exists in a number of redactions and has been far and away the most influential single source in Chinese historical phonology. The individual character-entries of the *Qièyùn* are arranged in a kind of partial phonological order by rime, which gives rise to the name “rime-books” (Chinese *yùnshū*) for all works of this kind. The *Qièyùn* was probably not the first such book – its preface names five earlier (4th?–6th century) rime-books that probably also used this format – but the *Qièyùn* is the earliest that has come down to us, and it has certainly been more authoritative than any other rime-book.

Rime-books of the *Qièyùn* type are divided into *juǎn* “volumes” by tone category: the *píng* (“level”) category is represented by two *juǎn* (because it comprises so many characters), and the other tones (*shǎng* or *shàng* “rising”, *qù* “departing”, *rù* “entering”) by one *juǎn* each. All characters in a given *juǎn* have a reading in the corresponding tone; if a character has readings in two tones, it occurs in each of the two corresponding *juǎn*.

Each tone is subdivided into several dozen rimes, each of which is named by the first word comprised in it. (It is very common in Chinese linguistics for phonological categories and features to bear exemplary names;

the four tones, for instance, are named as exemplary categories.) In Tab. 6.5.2 are shown the first eleven rimes (out of some 60-odd) in all four tone categories, to which are appended simple reconstructed values.

Tab. 5.2.: Tone category

	<i>píng</i>	<i>shǎng</i>	<i>qù</i>	<i>rù</i>
rime:	東 <i>tuj</i>	董 <i>tũj</i>	送 <i>sùj</i>	屋 <i>uk</i>
	冬 <i>toj</i>	———	宋 <i>sòj</i>	沃 <i>ok</i>
	鍾 <i>tʃiõj</i>	腫 <i>tʃiõj</i>	用 <i>yìõj</i>	燭 <i>tʃiok</i>
	江 <i>kaŋ</i>	講 <i>kãŋ</i>	絳 <i>kàŋ</i>	覺 <i>kak</i>
	支 <i>tʃi₁</i>	紙 <i>tʃi₁</i>	寘 <i>tʃi₁</i>	———
	脂 <i>tʃi₂</i>	旨 <i>tʃi₂</i>	至 <i>tʃi₂</i>	———
	之 <i>tʃi₃</i>	止 <i>tʃi₃</i>	志 <i>tʃi₃</i>	———
	微 <i>miài</i>	尾 <i>miài</i>	未 <i>miài</i>	———
	魚 <i>ŋiu</i>	語 <i>ŋiũ</i>	御 <i>ŋiũ</i>	———
	虞 <i>ŋio</i>	麌 <i>ŋiõ</i>	遇 <i>ŋiõ</i>	———
	模 <i>mo</i>	姥 <i>mõ</i>	暮 <i>mõ</i>	———

etc. ...

The order of the rimes within each tone is clearly purposeful. We can see this in two features: First, rimes are grouped together according to what the reconstruction shows to have been similar phonetic structure: The first three rimes have an *-ŋ* or *-k* ending and a *-u* or *-o* main vowel; the next rime has an *-ŋ* or *-k* ending and an *-a* main vowel; the next four rimes are open syllables with varieties of *-i* (distinguished formally here by numerical subscript) as the main vowel; the next three rimes are open syllables with varieties of *-u* or *-o* as the main vowel. Second, the sequence of rimes is parallel in the four tone categories. Third, the exemplary names of each of the rimes tend to have the same initial in all tones. With some exceptions, the rest of the book is organized the same way.

Each rime is subdivided into smaller units called *xiǎoyùn* “small rimes”, which comprise anywhere from one to several dozens of characters, to the first of which the *fǎnqiè* for the whole group is appended. All the characters in a given *xiǎoyùn* are homophonous, and we believe that *xiǎoyùn* within a single rime are always meant to be contrastive, although there is still much argument about the basis and nature of some of the distinctions. An important point is that the arrangement of *xiǎoyùn* within the rime seems to be generally haphazard and does not show the conscious order that the arrangement of rimes shows. Like *fǎnqiè* themselves, rime-books of the *Qièyùn* type embody a level of organization in which linguistic analysis is only partial.

The full blooming of phonology in China is not found until the rime-table tradition.

The currency of the original *Qièyùn* (which means “closely distinguished rimes”) was followed by the *Tāngyùn* “Rimes of the T'ang dynasty” dating from the first half of the 8th century, the great Sòng dynasty *Guǎngyùn* “Expanded Rimes” of 1008, and the *Jìyùn* “Collected Rimes” of 1039. The number of entries increased from some 12,000 in the original *Qièyùn* to 26,000 in the *Guǎngyùn* to an unbelievable 53,000 in the *Jìyùn*. Part of the reason for the size of the *Jìyùn* was not more distinct characters, but great numbers of alternate readings, including much of the information in the *Jīngdiǎn shìwén* and the *Shuōwén jiězhì* and countless lesser works. Both the *Guǎngyùn* and *Jìyùn* have much fuller glosses than the original *Qièyùn* did – the *Qièyùn* was really just a guide to character readings, while the later books attempted to give encyclopedic definitions and even citations to classical texts.

Later ages produced rime-books based on different principles, such as the *Zhōngyuán yīnyùn*, which gave Northern Chinese character readings for use in colloquial drama during Mongol rule (1206–1368), and the *Hóngwǔ zhèngyùn*, which was the official rime-book of the Míng dynasty (1368–1644). The 17th and 18th centuries saw the beginning of a tradition of rime-books describing regional varieties of Southern Chinese, such as the *Qī-Lín bāyīn* of Foochow, dated 1747 but combining two earlier dictionaries. The importance of these books, particularly the *Zhōngyuán yīnyùn*, to modern linguistic research is considerable, but in their time they did not represent a radically new linguistic viewpoint. Generally speaking, these books manifest two minor innovations: they describe some form of uncanonical and often regional phonology, and make heavier use of rime-table analysis than books in the *Qièyùn* family. The *Qièyùn* tradition has remained the great tradition in China, and although some of these later works are more useful, the *Qièyùn* and *Guǎngyùn* are still the most important representatives of the whole rime-book tradition. For this reason it is worth assessing the meaning of the *Qièyùn* in its own day.

5. The significance of the *Qièyùn*

What actually did the *Qièyùn* represent in its time – what did Lù Fǎyán intend it to be?

What kind of phonology does it embody, and how was it meant to be used? These questions, which have by no means been resolved today, are among the most important in Chinese historical linguistics – the answers to them determine, among other things, whether reconstructions of *Qièyùn* phonology are meaningful, and whether genetic interpretations of dialect affiliation can be related to known historical events and cultural relationships.

The primary source for studying these questions is the preface to the *Qièyùn*, of which an early version survives. It is written in the elegant “parallel prose” (*piántǐwén*, a highly stylized form of unrhymed prose composition in parallel couplets) of its day, and is full of polite literary expressions. In it, Lù Fǎyán describes the origins of this book at a party held at his father's home in AD 581, the first year of the Sui dynasty. At this party, some of the learned literary men of his father's generation – including Yàn Zhītuī – held a discussion on the correct accent to be used in reading. There are a few main points: They agree that the accents used in different time periods and different places are inconsistent, and complain that many people fail to make important phonological distinctions. They agree that a good literary accent is important for a learned person or if one wishes to experience the intimacy that comes from shared appreciation of poetry. They name five older rime-books, all of which are said to contradict each other and have errors. Rhyming practice itself is inconsistent in different parts of the country. They discuss the various features of different kinds of pronunciation, and finally appoint themselves the arbiters of correct pronunciation, concluding, “if we settle it, then settled it is.” Lù Fǎyán says that he himself, only a young man at the time, took notes on this discussion. Twenty years later, in the relative isolation of retirement and having now become a tutor, he finds that exact pronunciation is important to good writing, and has gone back to those old notes and used them as the germ of his dictionary. Stripped of its elegant language, this is the gist of the preface.

Ever since serious critical study of the *Qièyùn* began in the 19th century, different ideas have vied to explain what it represented in its own time. The preface has been pored over by scholars seeking to understand Lù Fǎyán's intentions, and the discussion continues unabated today after several generations.

Below are a few common themes in this discussion.

First, it is generally agreed that the *Qièyùn* embodies a mixed phonological system; it came out of an awareness of different accents and different kinds of rhyming, ancient and modern, and representing different parts of the Suí empire. Lù Fǎyán himself says in his preface that he and the others decided that “the sounds of antiquity and of the present day have a divide between them, and what the various schools accept or reject is varied, too. [...] So I have taken from the sounds and rimes of all schools, from word-books ancient and modern, and from what I wrote down long ago, and settled this material as the *Qièyùn* in five parts.” A relatively early statement of the idea of the mixed nature of the *Qièyùn* came from the philologist and anti-Esperantist Chāng Píng-lín (1868–1936):

[...] What the *Guǎngyùn* contains is variously the sounds of ancient and current times, of regional languages and the national language. It is not a collection of 206 weighty rime categories from one place and one time (1917–1919: 上 18b).

However, it is not agreed whether the *Qièyùn* is a disorderly heap of material or a carefully organized work. In early modern times, the original *Qièyùn* and even the *Guǎngyùn* were scarcely known at all, probably not until the beginning of the 20th century; the *Qièyùn* was known mainly in the form of the huge and chaotic *Jiyùn*. So it is not surprising to find some scholars arguing that it represents a meaningless system of hybrid and artificial origin. The philosopher and textual critic Dài Zhèn (1725–1777) wrote:

The general method of Lù Fǎyán’s *Qièyùn* is like this throughout; it deals with the reading pronunciation of its time. Based on the comparison of various differences and equivalences it prescribes specific readings, always seeking fine divisions and going too far with them; it creates distinctions that are unnatural. It even includes ancient graphs from the Xià, Shāng, and Zhōu dynasties [of high antiquity and legendary times], *jiǎjiè* loan-characters and *xièshēng* abbreviated characters, near-rhymes and forced rhymes from the *Classic of Poetry*. To include all these for the purpose of composing songs and music was to act indiscriminately and without critical examination (Dài 1966[1775]: 6a).

The name of the book *Qièyùn* itself means “closely-distinguished rimes”, and Lù Fǎyán says that his “analysis is hairsplitting, the distinctions manifold.” This is an important element of the idea of the mixed nature of

Qièyùn phonology. Zhōu Zǔmó (1914–1994) has shown that in organizing the *Qièyùn*, Lù Fǎyán essentially followed five earlier rime-books, making distinctions wherever any of the five made a distinction (Zhōu Zǔmó 1976[1966]). If this resulted in disorder, at least it was achieved methodically. Zhōu’s view that the *Qièyùn* comprises a “maximal diasystem” (Pulleyblank 1984: 134) has been fairly widespread among 20th century scholars. Luó Chángpéi (1899–1958) had already called this system the “least common multiple of the regional languages of the whole nation” (1930: 55). Juhl (1989) has attempted to confirm that the poets of various regions of China rhymed in accordance with the phonologies of the different regional rime books on which the *Qièyùn* was based. (See also Mather 1968 for English-language discussion of some of these issues.)

There have even been those who argue that the *Qièyùn* represents a common phonological system ancestral to and underlying all modern Chinese dialects. This idea has consistently appealed to philologists and to scholars with a highly evolved appreciation of formal order. It comes up, for example, in an explication of the Western concept of historical-comparative reconstruction by the mathematician and linguistic reformer Láo Nǎixuān (1843–1921), best known in the West as Richard Wilhelm’s master in the study of the *Yijing*:

The initials and rimes defined by ancient scholars were created after the examination of dialects spoken all over the country. And so, if one takes an interest in historical phonology, it is necessary to assemble the [ancient] features that are accurately attested in the various northern and southern dialects if one is to do a thorough job. Even if one’s mouth cannot manage all the sounds, anyway one’s mind can grasp the significance of each of them, and thus one will not be unnecessarily constrained by dialects (Láo 1898[1883]: 37 a).

This view appeals strongly to Chinese popular national pride, because it presents all of modern linguistic diversity as reflecting one or another aspect of an ancient unity. Luó Chángpéi wrote:

Rime-books of the *Qièyùn* system comprise regional sounds of all parts of China and from all time periods. Their goal was to find the least common multiple of the regional languages of the whole nation and use that as a unified national standard. Therefore, the sounds of any regional dialect, regardless in what part of China, can never exceed the boundaries of that system, nor can they correspond exactly to that system (Luó 1930: 55).

This particular view is now seriously disputed, though it persists as a popular and romantic myth in China. The fact that the preface explicitly mentions the “sounds of antiquity” shows that the reading of texts is meant, and not just everyday regional pronunciation.

There is another question: If the *Qièyùn* is inherently orderly, there is still the question of whether its phonology represented something authoritative in its day. Can we take it as ‘standard’ medieval phonology? Zhōu Zǔmó argued:

The rime-book *Qièyùn* is extremely systematic and makes strict phonetic distinctions. Its phonological system is not based purely on the dialect of one particular place; rather, it is set up as a compromise between the different features of the North and the South, based on the ‘cultured speech’ and the bookish readings used by gentlemen in the South. Cultured speech and bookish readings always lean toward traditional reading pronunciation, and since the *Qièyùn* tends to be strict in the way it distinguishes rimes and prescribes readings – so that such-and-such a group of characters is not going to be confused with such-and-such a different group of characters – naturally, it preserves some of the distinctions from the language of a previous age. It was not that Yán Zhītuī [and the others] intentionally used dialect readings here and archaic readings there [...] They discussed the issues over and over again, analyzing linguistic differences, and finally decided on this system. Since it was reached through discussion among scholars and literary men from both North and South, it necessarily corresponds to the language of both North and South. This system can be said to be the phonological system of the literary language of the 16th century (Zhōu Zǔmó 1976[1966]: 473).

This view is now fairly widespread, in one form or another. But there have been other views of the *Qièyùn* as the representative of prestigious forms of Chinese. Bernhard Karlgren (1889–1978), who first applied rigorous Western methods of phonetic reconstruction to the study of *Qièyùn* phonology proper (Karlgren 1915–24), held that the phonology of the *Qièyùn* was that of the dialect of Changan, the first capital of the T'ang dynasty, which he believed had been the basis of a *koinè* used throughout the T'ang empire. He called this *koinè* “a real living and homogeneous language” (1954: 212n.), but produced no evidence to support his view; indeed, Karlgren does not seem to have analyzed the *Qièyùn* preface anywhere in his work. Karlgren’s idea of a Changan-based *koinè* was long influential in the 20th century West but

is now clearly defunct (see Norman & Coblin 1995). Its ghost persists, however, in the form of the ‘Late Middle Chinese’ (*i. e.*, post-*Qièyùn* period) reconstruction of Edwin Pulleyblank (1984: 3).

Chinese scholars after Karlgren have tended to look to Loyang as a source of *Qièyùn* phonology. Loyang, the eastern capital of many Chinese dynasties since ancient times, was the capital of the Western Qin dynasty (AD 265–317). The eminent historian Chén Yínkè (1890–1969) argued (1949) that the prestigious accent of Western Chin Loyang was kept as a kind of standard by aristocratic families of the Eastern Chin and Southern Dynasties (317–589) around the southern capital of Qièkāng (modern Nanking), and that it actually influenced the language spoken by southerners and so came to be used as the basis of the *Qièyùn*. Chén Yínkè’s view is contradicted by some linguistic data (Zhōu Zǔmó 1976[1966]: 472–3). Nevertheless, there have been a number of variations on this idea, and the jury is still out (see Pān Wénguó 1986).

One last question is whether the *Qièyùn* describes real spoken language or not. Although Zhōu Zǔmó and many others have mentioned that the basis of the phonology was character readings, nevertheless understanding of the distinction between character readings and spoken morphemes comes with difficulty to many Chinese scholars. Certainly, as Coblin (1996) has pointed out, Lù Fáyán emphasizes writing and the appreciation of culture and poetry several times in the preface: “Whenever there is good writing [to be done], I require [attention to] sound and rime [...]. Desiring to broaden the road of culture, one must by all means be perfectly conversant in the ‘clear’ and the ‘muddy’; if one would enjoy a soul-mate [with whom one can truly appreciate the verbal music of poetry], it is necessary that ‘light’ and ‘heavy’ be distinguished.” (‘Clear’ and ‘muddy’, ‘light’ and ‘heavy’ are recognizable technical terms, but they are apparently used merely as tokens to give the feeling of thoroughness to what is essentially a literary composition).

There are many variations on these views, but to sum up it is generally agreed that the *Qièyùn* embodies an artificial phonological system based mainly on reading pronunciations from different traditions, not all of the same time period. This complex phonological system has been heaped with prestige since the end of the 6th century and continues to be used as the framework of general histori-

cal phonology in Chinese. Even when simpler systems of rhyming were adopted for use in the official examinations, as for instance the *Pingshui* system, they were usually derived from the framework of the *Qièyùn*.

6. Prosody and other linguistic ideas

In early medieval times there was deep interest in phonological issues generally, and a whole technical theory of poetic prosody was developed in imitation of Sanskrit principles. (The main source we have for early medieval prosodic materials is the *Bunkyō Hifuron* of the Japanese monk Kūkai, 774–835, for which the principal Western-language study is Bodman 1978). This theory was the work of a number of 5th century poets, but it is most saliently associated with the name of Shěn Yuē (441–513), who also gave us the names of the four canonical tone categories, *píng*, *shàng*, *qù*, and *rù*. Shěn's prosodic rules, the so-called *sishēng bābìng* “four tones and eight prosodic defects” emphasize arranging the syllables of a poetic couplet and quatrain so that their tones, initials and finals all contrast as much as possible. Shěn and his followers developed the concept of contrasting the *píng* tone category with the so-called *zè* “non-level” category, embracing the *shàng*, *qù*, and *rù* tones. The terms *píng* “level” and *tsè* “non-level” for these contrasting categories survive down to the present day, but evolved out of the older names *qīng* “light” and *zhòng* “heavy”, apparently themselves merely calques for the Sanskrit prosodic terms *laghu* “light” and *guru* “heavy” (Mair & Mei 1991).

Medieval prosody has left us various kinds of linguistically conscious terminology. Much of this is concerned with the details of prosody, which are not relevant here, but some of it deals with certain kinds of phonological relationships in vocabulary. For instance: Chinese poets had long used descriptive compounds composed of two syllables with the same initial or the same final, but in an early 6th century essay on literary aesthetics, the *Wénxīn diāolóng* of Liú Xié, special names were assigned to these relationships: two characters sharing the same initial are called *shuāngshēng* “doubled initials” and *diéyùn* “concatenated rimes”. There was even a style of purely alliterative poetry occasionally fashionable in medieval times called the *shuāngshēng shī*. Aside from the interest of

seeing the linguistic term *shēng* used in the name of a poetic form, we learn from this that Shěn Yuē's contrastive rules were not the only kind of prosodic stricture in use.

There is one last medieval linguistic idea to mention: In their glosses on classical texts, medieval scholiasts are thought to have made conscious use of the principle of derivation by tone-change. That is, a word may exist in two forms, identical except for tone, so that the difference in tone corresponds to the difference in meaning. For example, turning again to a simple, illustrative reconstruction, *gī* (in the *píng* tone) means “to ride a horse” and *gì* (in the *qù* tone) means “a rider”; both meanings are typically represented with the same written character 騎, so that the difference in meaning and sound is not evident to the eye except in an explicit gloss. Similarly, *tōm* 擔 means “to carry a burden” and *tòm* means “a burden”; *biōn* 縫 means “to stitch” and *biòu* means “a seam”. This may actually have been a general principle of word-formation in classical times, and in recent decades the principle of derivation by tone-change has been incorporated into reconstructions of medieval and classical Chinese phonetics, typically by the addition of a final *-s* in *qù*-tone words. But as a feature of natural language in high antiquity it does not concern us here. It is significant that one of the pre-eminent phonologists of the Manchu period believed that these tone-changes were not natural at all, but were the work of ignorant commentators (Gù 1966[1667]a). Whether or not it was born of ignorance, in many early medieval exegetical texts, notably certain of those represented in the *Jīngdiǎn shìwén*, there seems to be a pattern of glossing in which tone-change is used intentionally as a way of distinguishing what we would call syntactic functions or parts of speech. In most cases the derived form is in the *qù* tone, and in G. B. Downer's long list of examples from the *Shìwén* the greatest number of cases are nouns derived from verbs, although there is no simple pattern to the part of speech of derived meanings as a whole (Downer 1959). Evidently medieval exegetes used derivation by tone change as a conscious principle in glossing words.

Phonological ideas burgeoned in the early medieval period, but devoted linguistic works such as the *Qièyùn* remained in only a partial state of development. The rime-tables that developed during or before the 10th century were a far more sophisticated phonological apparatus.

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6. The rime-table system of formal Chinese phonology

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1. Introduction

Though of foreign inspiration, rime-table theory was the most influential single development in native Chinese linguistics in premodern times. It is a formal system, associated with the so-called *děngyùntú* 等韻圖, or “graded rime-tables”, which appeared after the 6th and 7th century rime-books such as the *Qièyùn*. The oldest rime-tables we have date from the twelfth century, and their organizing principles have been the dominant phonological tool in Chinese up to the present day.

There are several important features that distinguish these tables from the older *fǎnqiè* 反切 tradition of rime-books (→ Art. 5). First, they are not dictionaries of the whole reading tradition, but guides to the phonological outlines of that tradition. Rime-tables are systematic syllabaries that show only one character for each sound, whereas the rime-books are more comprehensive and less methodical, listing at times dozens of homophones under a single heading, together with definitions, citations to classical texts, and miscellaneous lore. Second, rime-tables embody a formal classification scheme, under which the various phonological categories and features of Chinese are organized. Rime-books are usually more haphazard and lack explicit phonological analysis. Third, the classification scheme of the rime-tables is finely detailed and embodies significantly abstract phonological ideas, so that where *fǎnqiè* allowed readers no more than to find the pronunciation of a given character in their own accent, using rime-table phonology they could consider conceptual linguistic matters. Although rime-table phonology did not allow

one to record phonetics verbatim, nevertheless one could describe the place and manner of articulation with a kind of precision that was out of the question with *fānqiè*. Nevertheless, from the prefaces to various rime-tables as well as from the way they are organized, it is clear that the primary purpose of early rime-table phonology was to analyze *fānqiè* found in books of the *Qièyùn* tradition.

It is because the rime-table movement was primarily analytical that its intellectual basis is so much easier to describe – and so much harder to learn – than that of the more impressionistic *fānqiè* tradition. (For more detailed studies of various aspects of rime-table phonology, see Branner, *fc.* 1999.)

2. The formal system of rime-table phonology

Fig. 6.1. shows a pair of facing pages from the earliest extant rime-table, the *Yūnjìng* 韻鏡 or “Mirror of rimes”, which has come to us through Japan in an edition of the Southern Sūng (probably 12th century). It was not

known to Chinese scholars during the great period of scholarship in the Manchu era (1644–1911), but in the 20th century it has come to be appreciated as the earliest surviving document of its kind, and it will serve here to illustrate many common features of rime-tables.

Classical rime-tables, like all traditional Chinese books, are read from right to left. In the right-most column is the title of this table: “inner-*zhuǎn*, Number 11, open”. The words *zhuǎn* and “open” are technical terms that will be discussed below; here it is enough to say that they apply to the whole table, which is the eleventh out of a total of forty-three. The greater part of the table is taken up by a grid of twenty-three columns and sixteen rows, representing various initials and rimes of the language, respectively. As in modern syllabaries in Western linguistics, whenever a character appears at the intersection of an initial-column and a rime-row, its phonological value is defined as the combination of that initial and rime. Empty circles are used to indicate both possible syllables that happen to be unattested and also impossible syl-

Fig. 6.1: Table 11 from the *Yūnjìng*

lables; in later rime-tables, however, it was usual to distinguish unattested from impossible syllables.

3. Phonological categories and their classification

Rime-tables embody a few positively epochal advances over *fǎnqiè*-phonology, and the greatest of these is to identify individual phonological categories and assign them explicit names. Tone categories and rimes already had exemplary names in the *Qièyùn* of AD 601, but rime-table phonology also identified and named initial categories, and more importantly entire classes of initials and rimes, and even different kinds of articulatory features that characterized such classes of initials and rimes. A book like the *Qièyùn* might have a dozen or more distinct *fǎnqiè* uppers corresponding to what in the rime-tables are a single, named initial category. Where *fǎnqiè* were a mere guide to pronunciation, rime-table theory was a formal system of phonological analysis; its tabular presentation implies that this analysis was felt to be complete and confident.

The rime-rows in Fig. 6.1. are divided into four groups, demarcated by horizontal lines and representing the four canonical tone categories. Each of these tone categories is subdivided into four rows, called *děng* 等 “levels” (a term variously translated as “division”, “grade”, and “rank”). The phonological meaning of these *děng* is one of the most important problems in rime-table phonology and will be discussed below. At the left edge of the table is the name of the rime category or categories represented in each tone, corresponding to usage in later rime-books of the *Qièyùn* tradition. In Fig. 6.1. there happens to be only one rime per tone, but there may be as many as four per tone; that is, one for each *děng* in each tone. Ordinarily all the rimes in a given table are closely related in sound, differing by tone and by the qualities that *děng* represent. Indeed, both initials and finals are further classified in various ways.

4. Classification of initials

The initials are arranged into six types, separated by vertical lines. Reading from right to left they are:

chúnyīn 唇音 “lip sounds” (reconstructed as labials);

shéyīn 舌音 “tongue sounds” (alveolar stops and nasals);
yáyīn 牙音 “fang sounds” (velar stops and nasals);
chǐyīn 齒音 “tooth [molar?] sounds” (sibilants);
hóuyīn 喉音 “throat sounds” (velar fricatives and laryngeals); and
shéyīnchǐ 舌音齒 “tongue-sounds-tooth” (*sic*; reconstructed as *l* and *nj*).

If the names “fang sounds” and “tooth sounds” seem unlikely for velars and sibilants, one should be aware that the Chinese name *yá* for “fang” is an example of a velar initial (**ŋa*) and the name *chǐ* for “tooth” an example of a sibilant initial (**ʃhi*); the use of exemplars is very widespread in Chinese phonology.

The individual initials represented by each column also have their own exemplary names, which however are shown not on the table but in the *Yūnjìng* preface. This is an unusual arrangement; most other rime-tables have the names of the initials heading the various columns. On *Yūnjìng* tables, however, initials are represented by the names of their four possible manners of articulation:

qīng 清 “clear” (voiceless and unaspirated);
cìqīng 次清 “secondarily clear” (voiceless and aspirated);
zhuó 濁 “turbid, murky” (reconstructed as voiced and by some scholars also as aspirated);
qīngzhuó 清濁 “clear and murky” (perhaps this is actually supposed to mean “neither clear nor murky”; reconstructed as nasal or liquid).

The preface lists thirty-six initials, which are canonical in rime-table phonology. Initials are called *zìmǔ* 字母 “mothers of characters” in Chinese, which may be an attempt to capture the feeling of the Sanskrit word *mātrkā*. (The Sanskrit means something like “listing of formative elements” but resembles the word for “mother”.)

Each of the thirty-six initial-names is exemplary: it is a real morpheme in its own right, but it begins with the same sound as the class it represents. The ‘lip’ sounds are represented in two series. One series is *zhòng* 重 “heavy” (bilabial):

bāng 幫 **p*
pāng 滂 **ph*
bìng 並 **b*
míng 明 **m*

The other series is *qīng* 輕 “light” (labiodental):

<i>fēi</i> 非	* <i>pf</i> > * <i>f</i>
<i>fū</i> 敷	* <i>pfh</i> (?) > * <i>f</i>
<i>fèng</i> 奉	* <i>bv</i> > * <i>f</i> or * <i>v</i>
<i>wéi</i> 微	* <i>mw</i> > * <i>w</i>

The labiodental series is interesting because (at least in this specific form) it does not seem to be attested in rime-books of the *Qièyùn* tradition, although it is known in many modern varieties of Chinese. The *Yùnjīng* shows the distinction between bilabials and labiodentals, but instead of creating a single initial category for what is now *f*, it preserves separate initials for each of the two or three *Qièyùn* tradition-initial categories to which *f* corresponds. This may be because at one time there were indeed three separate labiodental initials (as suggested in the reconstruction used here) or it may be because the anonymous compilers of the *Yùnjīng* were trying to be true to the distinctions made in the *Qièyùn*. The latter possibility would have been very characteristic of them. In any case, modern Chinese labiodentals do not always appear in precisely the same words as rime-table labiodentals.

‘Tongue’ sounds are also in two series. There are the *shétóu* 舌頭 “tip of tongue” (apical) sounds:

<i>duān</i> 端	* <i>t</i>
<i>tòu</i> 透	* <i>th</i>
<i>dìng</i> 定	* <i>d</i>
<i>ní</i> 泥	* <i>n</i>

and the *shéshàng* 舌上 “on the tongue” (dorsal) sounds:

<i>zhī</i> 知	* <i>tj</i>
<i>chē</i> 徹	* <i>tjh</i>
<i>chéng</i> 澄	* <i>dj</i>
<i>niáng</i> 娘	* <i>nj₁</i>

‘Fang’ sounds are as follows, in one series:

<i>jiàn</i> 見	* <i>k</i>
<i>qī</i> 溪	* <i>kh</i>
<i>qún</i> 群	* <i>g</i>
<i>yí</i> 疑	* <i>ŋ</i>

‘Tooth’ sounds are in two series. The first is the *chītóu* 齒頭 “tip of the teeth” (apico-alveolar):

<i>jīng</i> 精	* <i>ts</i>
<i>qīng</i> 清	* <i>tsh</i>
<i>cóng</i> 從	* <i>dz</i>
<i>xīn</i> 心	* <i>s</i>

xié 邪/斜 **z*

The second tooth-sound series is the *zhèngchǐ* 正齒 “up against the teeth” (palato-alveolar):

<i>zhào</i> 照	* <i>tʃ</i>
<i>chuān</i> 穿	* <i>tʃh</i>
<i>shàn</i> 禪	* <i>ʃ</i>
<i>shěn</i> 審	* <i>ʃ</i>
<i>chuáng</i> 牀	* <i>ʃ</i>

Within the tooth sounds as a whole there is a sub-distinction: between affricates, which have no special terminology and should be understood as ‘plain’, and fricatives, called *xī* 細 “fine”.

There is one series of ‘throat’ sounds:

<i>yǐng</i> 影	*[zero initial]
<i>xiǎo</i> 曉	* <i>x</i>
<i>xiá</i> 匣	* <i>ɣ</i>
<i>yù</i> 喻	* <i>j</i>

Initials *xiǎo* and *xiá* are said to be “flying in pairs”, while *yǐng* and *yù* “stand alone”; this may have to do with the fact that *yǐng* and *yù* are essentially vocalic while *xiǎo* and *xiá* are consonantal, but any literal meaning of the terminology is opaque.

Finally, there are two initials in the ‘tongue-sounds-tooth’ category:

<i>lái</i> 來	* <i>l</i>
<i>rì</i> 日	* <i>nj₂</i>

5. Classification of rimes

Rimes are also arranged into types, called (in most tables other than the *Yùnjīng*) *shè* 攝, literally “to gather up”. The nature of this category will be clear on examination of the reconstructed rimes associated with the sixteen canonical *shè* in Fig. 6.2.

It is surely significant that the *Qièyùn* itself arranges rimes very largely in keeping with *shè*-order.

Each of the forty-three tables has certain other features associated with it. One is the *zhuǎn* “cycles” – a single table may belong to either the *nèi* “inner” or *wài* “outer” cycle of tables. It is now understood that these terms refer to the height of the main vowel in the rimes on each table – low vowels were ‘outer’ and others were ‘inner’. Another feature of tables of rimes is whether they are *hé* “closed” (i.e., generally showing lip-rounding) or *kāi* “open”.

Name of Shè	Shared ending of component rimes
tōng 通	*-uŋ
jiāng 江	*-aŋ
zhǐ 止	*-i
yù 遇	*-uo
xiè 蟹	*-ai
zhēn 臻	*-en
shān 山	*-an
xiào 效	*-au
guǒ 果	*-ɑ
jiǎ 假	*-a
dàng 宕	*-aŋ
gěng 梗	*-æŋ
liú 流	*-u
shēn 深	*-em
xián 咸	*-am
zēng 曾	*-əŋ

Fig. 6.2: The Sixteen Shè

6. Origins

Although *fānqiè* are probably of native Chinese origin, there is no doubt that rime-table phonology was inspired by Indian linguistic theory (→ Art. 19), in particular by the practical systems for teaching the Sanskrit syllabary that came to be known collectively as Siddham (Chinese *xītán* 悉曇). Sanskrit Siddham was already known in China by the last decades of the 4th century, and is the subject of certain still poorly understood Chinese treatises from this time (see Ráo 1990). One of the most striking features of Siddham is the way it presents lists of initial consonants, arranged by place and manner of articulation, in tabular form. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that this was the ultimate inspiration for the Chinese rime-tables. But note that Siddham, even in Chinese, is still the study of Sanskrit phonology, not Chinese

phonology. The application of its principles to Chinese must have taken place some time after the introduction of its Sanskrit form.

Rime-tables proper appear almost a millennium after the introduction of Buddhism into China, but there are other sorts of evidence suggesting that someone was already analyzing and classifying Chinese phonological categories much sooner than that. An important concept of this kind is the *niǔ* 紐 ‘knot, gather’, a prosodic term which Roy Andrew Miller considers to be a calque of the Sanskrit term *varga* ‘class of consonants’. A *niǔ* in Chinese was a diagram showing groups of four syllables, one in each of the four canonical tones, having in common a single initial and sometimes also a single rime. Such *niǔ* are meant to illustrate tonally different syllables sharing part or all of the rest of their phonetics. Here is an example of a *niǔ* from the *Bunkyō Hifuron* (see Bodman 1978), illustrating the principles of *tiáoshēng* 調聲 ‘harmonizing the tones’:

尚 *ziànŋ* 常 *ziāŋ*
杓 *ziak* 上 *ziǎŋ*

The only differences among these four readings are their tones (there is nothing unusual in the fact that the *rùshēng* example, in the lower left corner, has a *-k* ending corresponding to *-ŋ* in the other tones). Materials like this show a kind of control of phonology that unambiguously anticipates rime-table theory, but which is absent in the rime-book tradition. *Niǔ* date from no later than the 8th and perhaps as early as the early 6th century, so we may arguably date the peculiarly Chinese transformation of Siddham into rime-table theory from this time.

Among the manuscripts rescued at Dūnhuáng 敦煌 by Paul Pelliot (1878–1945) is the precious Shǒuwēn 守溫 manuscript fragment, thought to date from the 9th century. Shǒuwēn was an ethnic Chinese bonze to whom the invention of the 36 initials had long been attributed in received sources. The Shǒuwēn fragment already mentions many of the technical terms associated with rime-table phonology, including the names of most of the initials, the four *dēng*, and the solecism of *lèigé* (see below). This document is the earliest surviving record we have of rime-table phonology in its proper form, and is especially important for dating some of the reconstructed phonetic features the evidence for which comes from the rime-tables. (Import-

tant new discoveries about the Shǒuwēn fragments appear in Coblin, *fc.* 1999.)

As for how the actual organization of rime-table phonology developed, we have no explicit record. Nonetheless, we can tell certain things about what the compilers of this system must have had in mind. It is clear that they were trying to represent all the distinctions in some rime-book of the *Qièyùn* type (such as the *Guǎngyùn* 廣韻), even if at times they may have introduced features of their own contemporary pronunciation. In fact, there are relatively few examples of contemporary features intruding on the structure of the *Qièyùn* system – most of the time such features are indicated around the edges of the tables or in ways that do not create phonological distinctions unknown in the *Qièyùn* or eliminate known distinctions. There are important exceptions, however.

7. Higher structures of the phonological system: paired series of initials

So far all the features that have been discussed are either the names of simple categories or of classes of simple categories. But there was far more to rime-table phonology than just classification. One of its most important and least appreciated features is the subtle relation between the thirty-six initials and the four *děng*, truly the key to the whole system. Not all initials are actually found in combination with all rimes, so that there are patterns formed by the actual appearance of specific classes of initials in specific rimes. The *Yùnjing* makes use of these distributional patterns to reduce the amount of space each table takes up – in most rime-tables, a single table takes up four pages, but the *Yùnjing* uses only half that space. Whenever one of the classes of initials comprises two series, the *Yùnjing* lists both series together, with the expectation that the reader will know which initial appears in which *děng*.

For instance, words with the ‘tip of the tongue’ initials (*duān* *t, etc.) appear only in the first and fourth *děng* but never in the second or third; and words with the ‘on the tongue’ initials (*zhī* *tj, etc.) appear only in the second and third *děng* and never in the first or fourth. In modern terminology, these two sets of initials are in complementary distribution, and although there was no comparable terminology in the 10th century, the

concept was clearly understood. Some later rime-tables would nevertheless list the two sets of initials separately, using eight columns to represent them, but the *Yùnjing* combines them into four columns. By squeezing thirty-six initials into only twenty-one columns, the *Yùnjing* compilers produced tables that can be viewed all at once, on two facing pages. This may also be the reason that the *Yùnjing* lists not the names but the manners of articulation of the various initials at the tops of the columns – one column often represents two initials with the same manner of articulation but slightly different places of articulation.

The fact that some series of initials are complementary illustrates something profound about the conceptual origins of the tables: the likely origin of that most puzzling single feature of the rime-tables, the *děng*. *Děng* are literally the horizontal rows of the tables into one of which each rime category is classified, but the puzzle is to understand why there are specifically four of them and what it means for a rime to be placed in a particular one of them. What do these four *děng*, these four rows, these four kinds of rime, really represent?

As always when there is no hard evidence, speculation abounds. Since the late 19th century, scholars of many nationalities have vied to produce phonetically realistic reconstructions that would most perfectly account for these *děng*. Underlying that struggle is the assumption that the compilers of the rime-tables were practicing phonetic description; yet that is a most improbable idea, given what we know about the overwhelmingly unphonetic or indeed anti-phonetic Chinese tradition. Far more insightful is the explanation of the eminent 20th century scholar Lǐ Róng, who holds that each *děng* represents not a specific kind of sound but a specific kind of cooccurrence of initial and rime: that is, a distributional pattern of initials that occur with the rime-book rimes placed in each row of the tables. (Lǐ has apparently never published an explicit statement of this approach, though he is well known to advocate it and it is implied in his 1956: 76–79.) Since the whole inspiration of the rime-tables has to do with classification of categories, it makes good sense that the *děng* should do the same. This explanation is almost surely the right one, because it suits the profoundly analytical but only intermittently descriptive bent of the compilers of the tables.

	Tongue-tooth	Throat	Tooth		Fang	Tongue		Lip
			up against teeth	tip of teeth		on tongue	tip of tongue	
Type X			no			no	yes	
Type Y			yes			yes	no	

Fig. 6.3: Tabulation of the Two Main Types of Rime

	Tongue-tooth	Throat	Tooth		Fang	Tongue		Lip
			up against teeth	tip of teeth		on tongue	tip of tongue	
Type X		<i>xiá</i>	no			no	yes	<i>bāng</i>
Type Y1		<i>xiá</i>	yes (one)			yes	no	<i>bāng</i>
Type Y2	<i>rì</i>	<i>yù</i>	yes (two) <i>xié</i>		<i>qún</i>	yes	no	<i>bāng</i> <i>fēi</i>

Fig. 6.4: Tabulation of the Three Main Types of Rime

In other words, the four *děng* are, in the main, part of a schematic classification of rime-categories in rime-books of the *Qièyùn* tradition. To say that there are four *děng* is to say that there are four types of correspondence between initials and rimes in the *Qièyùn*. We can derive this four-fold analysis in a few steps, as follows:

In the incidence of initials, the most significant pattern is that all rimes can be classified almost without exception into two types: those which have the ‘tip of the tongue’ initials but not the ‘on the tongue’ or ‘up against the teeth’ initials, and those which, conversely, can have ‘on the tongue’ and ‘up against the teeth’ initials but not ‘tip of the tongue’ initials. With rare exceptions, these types are in complement. They are shown in Fig. 6.3., tentatively labeled Types X and Y.

Of all the rimes in the rime-book tradition, then, the basic bifurcation is between these two types. Each of these two types of rime can be further divided in two on certain grounds. Type Y comprises one group of rimes (let us call them Y1) that can appear with only one set of the ‘up against the teeth’ initials, and another group (‘Y2’) that can appear with two contrasting sets of that series of initials. This may seem unlikely as basis for a distinction, but the split between Y1 and Y2 is certainly not haphazard because it is corroborated by several other dis-

tinctions. For example: Type Y1 can appear with only one set of the ‘lip’ initials (only the “heavy” *bāng* series) but Type Y2 can appear with two sets (the *bāng* series as well as the “light” *fēi* series). Type Y1 can appear with the initial *xiá* but not with *yù*; Type Y2 can appear with *yù* but not with *xiá*. And there are three other initials that appear exclusively with Type Y2 rimes: *qún*, *xié*, and *rì*. These distributions are displayed schematically in Fig. 6.4.

Note that these patterns are not merely inventions of the rime-table compilers but are actually present in rime books of the *Qièyùn* type; the three rime-types labelled here X, Y1, and Y2, are implicitly distinguished, distributionally, in the *Qièyùn*. And they correspond very closely to the first three of the four rows in the rime-tables.

The origin of the fourth row has no basis in the *Qièyùn*; almost all fourth-row rimes belong to what we have been calling Type X, together with first-row rimes. Type X rimes in the *Qièyùn* cannot be divided into two such clear groups as the first and fourth rows on purely distributional grounds. But on the basis of modern Chinese pronunciation in most dialects – and presumably in some dialects of the 10th or 12th centuries, as well – Type X can be divided into those rimes that are palatalized and those that are not. Let us call these Types X1 (plain) and X2 (palatal-

	Tongue-tooth	Throat	Tooth		Fang	Tongue		Lip
			up against teeth	tip of teeth		on tongue	tip of tongue	
Type X1 (unpal.)		<i>xiá</i>	no			no	yes	<i>bāng</i>
Type Y1		<i>xiá</i>	yes (one)			yes	no	<i>bāng</i>
Type Y2	<i>ri</i>	<i>yù</i>	yes (two) <i>xié</i>		<i>qún</i>	yes	no	<i>bāng</i> <i>fēi</i>
Type X2 (pal.)		<i>xiá</i>	no			no	yes	<i>bāng</i>

Fig. 6.5: Tabulation of the Four Main Types of Rime

ized). And since rimes of Type Y2 are also palatalized in most attested varieties of Chinese dialects, it is natural to place the palatalized Type X2 near Type Y2. This arrangement produces a table as shown in Fig. 6.5.

And Fig. 6.5. is none other than the basic layout of the canonical rime-tables. There are complications having to do with the fact that certain words belonging to third-row rimes can actually appear in rows two and four (*i. e.*, without belonging to second- and fourth-row type rimes). But in essence it is indisputable that the four *děng* must have had their origins in the kind of analysis presented above, as Lǐ Róng has suggested. Thus, we can be sure that the *děng* of the rime-tables originated in an analysis of some book or books of the *Qièyùn* tradition, only somewhat modified by contemporary phonetic considerations.

8. Other technical terminology

Analysis of the *Qièyùn* tradition was the prevailing goal of early rime-table phonology. In addition to isolating phonological categories and assigning them names and classes, rime-table theorists identified certain aspects of the relation of *fǎnqiè* to rime-table categories. These features were called *mén* 門 “gateways”. They were almost all mnemonic rules for figuring out how to make sense of *fǎnqiè*. The study of them was called *ménfǎ* 門法 “the method of [using] gateways”. Below are discussed a few of the better-known of these *mén*.

Yīnhé 音和 “the sounds match” – this appears to be the name for the correct choice

of *fǎnqiè* uppers and lowers to represent a given syllable.

Lèigé 類隔 “treating things that are distinct as belonging to the same category” – similar initials differing in some smaller aspect of articulation, *e. g.*, using the *duān* initial instead of the *zhī* initial (**t* instead of **tj*) or the *pāng*-series instead of the *fēi*-series (bilabials instead of labiodentals). *Lèigé* involving the *bāng*- and *fēi*-series was mentioned by Shǒuwēn but was assigned a separate *mén*-name in later, attested tables: *qīngzhòng jiǎohù* 輕重交互 “light and heavy taking each other’s place”.

Píngqiè 憑切 “[placement of the syllable] follows the initial” – There are several sub-varieties of this, all of which seem to have had to do with deciding the *děng* of the spelled syllable. In these various *mén*, the identity of the upper character in a *fǎnqiè* expression usually overrode any influence of the *fǎnqiè* lower character in deciding the *děng* of the spelled syllable. (It is clear from the great number of *mén* dealing with *děng* that they have never been an easy feature to work with.)

Guǎngtōng 廣通 “expanding connections”. This has to do with the fact that in certain rimes, the ‘lip’, ‘fang’, and ‘throat’ classes of initials may have words appearing in both the third and fourth rows of the same table, yet these rimes are considered to belong inherently to the third *děng*.

9. Chinese alphabets

The *mén* discussed above are only a small part of the overgrowth of mnemonic tools and other arcana associated with the rime-

tables. There is no question that full control of all this theory was a highly specialized branch of learning even in its own time, and there must not have been many ordinary educated people in society (*i. e.*, other than bonzes) who had such control. But if we cast aside all the elaborate formal terminology and consider only the basic ideas associated with rime-tables – the sixteen *shè*, the ‘closedness’ or ‘openness’ of syllables, and above all the thirty-six initials – then it is clear that these things rapidly achieved a permanent place in native Chinese linguistics. The thirty-six initials in particular are the first thing in attested history to have served as something like an alphabet for the Chinese themselves.

There have been other, more traditional alphabets used in Chinese in pre-modern times. The ‘Phags-pa (Chinese Bāsībā 巴思八) alphabet is always mentioned in histories of Chinese linguistics, even though it is not Chinese and does not represent an important stage in Chinese linguistic history. It was designed by the Tibetan lama ‘Phags-pa (1235–1280) based on the Tibetan alphabet, at the behest of the Mongol Qubilai Khan. Qubilai promulgated it in 1269, so that it could be used as a standard system to transcribe Mongolian and various other languages spoken within the Mongol Empire, including Chinese. (Mongolian had previously been written in the Uyghur script.) It never seems to have caught on at all among the Chinese people themselves, however, and Chinese transcriptions in ‘Phags-pa are attested today mainly by various inscriptions on steles and coins of the day and by a rime-dictionary of dubious dialectal affiliation, the *Ménggǔ zìyùn*, which is laid out like a traditional Chinese character-based rime-book but gives the sound of each homophone group in ‘Phags-pa script (see Jūnast & Yáng 1987). ‘Phags-pa consists of Tibetan-like letters with an expanded vowel set, combined to form square or rectangular shapes arranged vertically like Chinese characters. The significance of this alphabet in the history of linguistics is that it was the first attempt at a universal system of alphabetic transcription used in China; it also seems to have provided some of the inspiration for the vastly more sophisticated Korean alphabet (Ledyard 1997; → Art. 9). Other than these considerations, ‘Phags-pa is important mainly to modern research on Mongolian and Mongol-period transcriptions of Chinese.

There has not really been a true Chinese alphabet, unless one considers the set of thirty-six canonical rime-table initials to be the Chinese alphabet. Certainly rime-table phonology has accumulated enough prestige to bear this honorable name. Even in modern times, when the Mandarin Phonetic Symbols (*zhùyīn fúhào*) were devised early in the 20th century, they were arranged by phonetic classes and in an order reminiscent of the initials of the *Yunjīng*: labials first, then apicals, then velars, then sibilants, then varieties of zero. And the rime-table tradition has provided the basic vocabulary of phonology in China ever since late Táng times; although it has evolved, it is still in use. Discussion of *Qièyùn*-tradition books since the 12th century has taken place in the main using rime-table terminology. When 16th century Jesuit missionary Nicholas Trigault (1577–1628) published his explanation of true alphabetic writing for the Chinese, he found it natural to present it in rime-table format. Manchura historical phonologists, grappling with the phonologies underlying ancient rhyming texts and character-formation, used rime-table language and organization as a matter of course in their discussions, and sometimes presented their conclusions in tabular form. 19th century Chinese even applied the rime-table principle to descriptive dialect studies of a kind. Rime-table categories have been the unquestioned framework used in the reconstruction of all ancient varieties Chinese ostensibly on Western comparative principles. In the 20th century, Yuen Ren Chao and later Dīng Shēngshù and Lǐ Róng developed a kind of modern rime-table for use in dialect fieldwork, which continues to be widely used. If there is any one variety of phonology that is characteristically Chinese it is rime-table science, and the irony is that it came to China from India.

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7. Le rôle du savoir linguistique dans l'éducation et la société chinoise

1. Introduction
2. Avant l'instauration des examens impériaux
3. Après l'institution des examens impériaux
4. Conclusion
5. Bibliographie

1. Introduction

La langue, en tant que médium littéraire, mais aussi dans ses variations dialectales, a toujours joué un rôle considérable dans la société chinoise. Que savaient les Chinois anciens de leur langue, et comment ce savoir était-il transmis? Pour répondre à ces questions, il convient assurément de différencier plusieurs étapes, tant il est vrai que le savoir linguistique, qui s'est accumulé au cours des siècles, a, sinon changé de nature, du moins évolué dans ses centres d'intérêt. Deux grandes périodes doivent d'abord être distinguées, en fonction de l'existence ou non des examens impériaux, dont les épreuves testaient surtout le savoir littéraire, mais aussi philologique, des candidats. Ces examens, instaurés sous la dynastie des Sui (581–618), ont été supprimés définitivement en 1905. Ils ont servi à former une élite bureaucratique (le mandarinat), politique et culturelle, et à stratifier la société chinoise.

2. Avant l'instauration des examens impériaux

2.1. Époque archaïque (jusqu'au III^e siècle avant J.-C.)

Le savoir linguistique semble n'avoir pas été important. Rares sont les œuvres des philosophes de la période des Royaumes-combattants (475 à 221 avant J.-C.) – qui constituent la base de ce qu'on appelle communément

le chinois classique – qui traitent de questions linguistiques. On trouve, ici ou là, par exemple dans le *Xunzi*, attribué à Xunzi (ca. 313–238 avant J.-C.), ou dans le *Mozi*, attribué à Mozi (480–420 avant J.-C.), quelques considérations d'ordre sémantico-philosophique sur les dénominations, mais ces remarques sont éparpillées et ne constituent pas, loin s'en faut, des réflexions intégrées d'un quelconque intérêt théorique.

On est frappé du rôle tout à fait marginal que tient le savoir linguistique dans le *Lun yu* "Entretiens" de Confucius (V^e siècle avant J.-C.), qui est pourtant un recueil d'enseignements dispensés par Confucius (551–479 avant J.-C.) à ses disciples.

2.2. Dynastie des Han (206 avant J.-C.–220)

Une science, qu'on peut déjà qualifier de linguistique, voit le jour, en parallèle avec l'herméneutique. C'est en effet à cette époque pré-médiévale qu'ont été compilés des dictionnaires qui resteront pendant longtemps la base des études classiques: le *Er ya* "Approcher la perfection", d'auteur inconnu, mais compilé vraisemblablement au I^{er} siècle avant J.-C. à partir de manuscrits rédigés entre le V^e et le I^{er} siècle avant J.-C., qui rassemble des synonymes ou quasi-synonymes et est organisé, de manière encyclopédique, en sections thématiques; le *Shuo wen jie zi* "Expliquer les figures et interpréter les caractères" (100) de Xu Shen (ca. 65–130), dictionnaire étymologique de 9353 caractères classés sous 540 clés ou éléments graphiques entrant dans la composition des caractères, et fondé indubitablement sur la pensée spéculative (théorie du *yin* et du *yang* et des cinq éléments) propre à l'époque des Han; le *Fangyan* "Expressions régionales" (I^{er} siècle) de Yang Xiong (53

avant J.-C.–18), premier lexique général des différents parlars de plusieurs régions de Chine.

Le savoir linguistique commence donc à devenir important, mais il joue encore un rôle négligeable dans l'éducation et dans la société. Il concerne uniquement quelques lettrés, dont le but essentiel reste, par-delà les querelles philologiques, l'établissement d'une juste interprétation des classiques confucéens. Xu Shen, à ce sujet, est un savant typique ayant voulu fixer une fois pour toutes le sens des caractères en s'appuyant sur des graphies plus anciennes. Il n'est pas non plus impossible que ces dictionnaires aient été conçus, au départ, dans le cadre d'une politique visant à définir une norme linguistique, voulue par les empereurs ou par leurs conseillers immédiats.

2.3. Époque des Wei-Jin et des dynasties Nord-Sud (220–589)

Elle peut être caractérisée, d'un point de vue linguistique, comme une étape transitoire, où les études phonétiques prennent quelque importance, en raison de l'expansion du bouddhisme et des traductions du sanskrit ou du pali. Une méthode est ainsi créée pour la prononciation des caractères, qui sera systématiquement utilisée jusqu'en 1918: la méthode *fanqie* "retourner et couper" (→ Art. 5). Elle consiste à transcrire le son d'un mot en le décomposant et en le glosant par deux caractères différents, le premier indiquant l'initiale, le second la finale.

3. Après l'institution des examens impériaux

3.1. Dynasties des Sui (581–618), des Tang (618–907) et des Song (960–1279)

Les recherches phonétiques et phonologiques sont désormais prédominantes. Deux ouvrages fondamentaux marquent le début de cette période: Le *Jingdian shiwen* "Explications des classiques" de Lu Deming (556–627), qui utilise la méthode *fanqie*, et surtout le *Qieyun* "Rimes standardisées" (601) de Lu Fayan (dates précises non connues), qui propose une classification d'environ 11500 caractères, selon leur prononciation et en prenant en compte trois paramètres, les tons, les rimes et les initiales.

Ce dernier Thésaurus devient très rapidement une somme indispensable à tout candidat tenu de composer des textes rimés et de connaître parfaitement les règles de prosodie,

lors des examens impériaux qui viennent d'être institués. De même, le *Er ya* est désormais un ouvrage obligatoire pour les élèves du Collège impérial, dans la version du commentateur Guo Pu (276–324). Le *Shuo wen jie zi*, enfin, et l'étude de la phonétique ancienne, sont aussi l'objet de nombreuses recherches, surtout à partir des Song, toujours en vue de la préparation aux examens.

C'est aussi sous les Song qu'apparaît le premier recueil de particules: le *Wenzi* "Règles de composition littéraire" (1170) de Chen Kui (1128–1203). Il s'agit d'un petit opuscule qui discute les principales particules grammaticales (morphèmes fonctionnels) de la langue classique. L'objectif primordial de Chen Kui est d'ordre stylistique et rhétorique. Il vise à fournir une bonne maîtrise de l'emploi des particules grammaticales pour la composition littéraire.

3.2. Dynasties des Yuan (1279–1368) et des Ming (1368–1644)

L'invasion mongole et l'instauration de la dynastie mongole des Yuan marquent une rupture radicale avec le passé. Les points de vue sur la phonétique sont délibérément nouveaux, notamment dans le *Zhong yuan yin yun* "Rimes et sons du mandarin des plaines centrales" (1324) de Zhou Deqing (1277–1365), qui milite contre l'imitation des anciens, contre le respect de la tradition, et est décidé à décrire les réalités phonétiques de la langue standard de son époque.

Sous les Yuan, également, paraît le premier traité "grammatical": le *Yuzhu* "Particules grammaticales" (1324) de Lu Yiwei (dates précises non connues). Comme celui de Chen Kui, précédemment, c'est un traité d'ordre stylistique et rhétorique. Il est néanmoins tout à fait original sur deux points cruciaux. Son auteur (un précurseur de la linguistique textuelle?) considère d'abord que les explications ne doivent pas se limiter au mot ou même à la phrase, mais tenir compte du contexte et donc se rapporter à de longs passages, voire au texte dans son entier. Ensuite, Lu Yiwei a intégré dans son recueil des particules grammaticales de la langue vernaculaire. Il donne aussi souvent les équivalents en vernaculaire, et même parfois en dialecte wu (région de Shanghai), des mots vides de la langue classique qu'il cherche à expliquer.

Ce nouveau savoir linguistique restera l'apanage d'une minorité de lettrés sous les Yuan. Il se diffusera d'autant plus mal que le système des examens est supprimé dès le dé-

but de la dynastie, et n'est restauré qu'en 1314. Lorsque les examens seront rétablis, les épreuves sur les rimes et la poésie ancienne ou moderne et régulière seront supprimées. Il faudra attendre 1757 et 1759 pour que des questions de poétique soient réintroduites dans les programmes des examens au niveau des villes et au niveau des provinces. Les recherches phonologiques ont, en conséquence, cédé le pas aux études philologiques classiques sur l'étymologie et la composition littéraire pendant toute la dynastie des Ming.

3.3. Dynastie des Qing (1644–1911)

L'école philologique de la dynastie mandchoue des Qing prône un retour important aux sources et aux études épigraphiques et paléographiques. Les études sur le *Shuo wen jie zi* sont ainsi relancées, notamment par Duan Yucai (1735–1815), auteur du *Shuo wen jie zi zhu* "Annotations du *Shuo wen*" (1807). Les autres dictionnaires anciens, le *Er ya* et le *Fangyan* font aussi l'objet de nombreuses recherches comparatives. L'étude de la langue archaïque est à l'honneur, et on ne compte pas le nombre des éditions critiques et révisées des textes anciens, entreprises par des lettrés célèbres comme Dai Zhen (1723–1777), Lu Wenzhao (1717–1795), Wang Niansun (1744–1832).

L'époque des Qing voit aussi le développement des études grammaticales, toujours dans une optique de retour aux sources. On peut ainsi citer: (i) le *Xuci shuo* "Traité des mots vides" (1710) de Yuan Renlin (dates exactes inconnues), qui développe le *Yuzhu* de Lu Yiwei; (ii) le *Zhuzi bianlue* "Analyse des particules" (1711) de Liu Qi (dates précises non connues), qui adopte une approche plutôt philologique que stylistique, à la différence de Yuan Renlin; le *Jingzhuan shici* "Explication des particules dans les classiques et dans les chroniques" (1798) de Wang Yinzhi (1766–1834), qu'on considère raisonnablement comme le premier essai systématique de classification et d'explication des particules pour bien comprendre les textes classiques.

Tous ces traités sont alors abondamment utilisés comme manuels dans la préparation des examens à différents niveaux. C'est aussi pour aider les candidats à la composition d'essais littéraires classiques que l'empereur Kangxi donne l'ordre en 1704 de compiler un nouvel ouvrage de référence, le *Peiwen yunfu* "Thésaurus arrangé selon les rimes", achevé et publié en 1711.

4. Conclusion

On l'aura compris, ce qui précède traite uniquement du savoir linguistique de l'élite, qui a toujours concerné, quelles que soient les époques, une infime minorité. Les écoles impériales ont toujours été réservées, en Chine, aux élèves parlant le mandarin et ayant déjà une très bonne connaissance du chinois classique. Et les examens, même les plus simples organisés au niveau local, théoriquement ouverts à tous, excluaient de fait plus de 90% de la population. Il est un autre savoir, le savoir populaire, pour lequel, dans la Chine ancienne et impériale, nous ne disposons d'aucun renseignement.

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