EUROPE IN TRANSITION: THE NYU EUROPEAN STUDIES SERIES

# LANGUAGE, NATION, AND STATE

## IDENTITY POLITICS IN A MULTILINGAL AGE

EDITED BY TONY JUDT AND DENIS LACORNE

Language, Nation, and State

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# Language, Nation, and State: Identity Politics in a Multilingual Age

*Edited By*
*Tony Judt and Denis Lacorne*

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# List of Contributors

**Daniel Beauvois**, former professor of Slavic history at the Université de Paris I, is the author of *Histoire de la Pologne Paris*, Hatier, 1995, and of *La Bataille de la terre en Ukraine*, 1863–1914, Presses universitaires de Lille, 1993.

**Astrid Von Busekist**, professor at the Institut d'études politiques de Paris, is the author of *La Belgique, Politiques de la langue et construction de l'État de* 1780 *à nos jours*, Louvain: Boeck-Duculot, 1997, and editor of "Raisons Politiques" (volume 2, May 2001), part of a series of articles on "La République des langues."

**Alain Dieckhoff**, director of research at CERI, is the author of *La Nation dans tous ses États. Les identités nationales en mouvement*, Paris: Flammarion, 2000, and of *L'invention d'une Nation. Israël et la modernité politique*, Paris: Gallimard, 1993.

**Alain Fenet**, professor of public law at the Université de Nantes, directed with Gérard Soulier the publication of *Les minorités et leurs droits depuis 1789*, Paris: L'Harmattan, 1989.

**Paul Garde**, former professor of Slavic languages and literature at the Université de Provence, is the author of *Vie et mort de la Youguslavie*, Paris: Fayard, 1992, and of *Fin de siècle dans les Balkans*, Paris, Éd. Odile Jacob, 2001.

**Tony Judt**, Erich Maria Remarque professor of European Studies and director of the Remarque Institute at New York University, is the author of *The Burden of Responsibility: Blum, Camus, Aron, and the French Twentieth Century*, University of Chicago Press, 1998, and of *Past Imperfect: French Intellectuals, 1944–1956*, University of California Press, 1992.

**Denis Lacorne**, research director at CERI, is the author of *La Crise de l'identité américaine. Du melting-pot au multiculturalisme*, Paris: Fayard,

1997, and of *L'Invention de la République. Le modèle américain*, Paris: Hachette, coll. Pluriel, 1991.

**David Lopez**, professor of sociology at University of California, Los Angeles, is the author of "Social and Linguistic Aspects of Assimilation Today," in Charles Hirschman et al., *The Handbook of International Migration: The American Experience*, New York: Russell Sage, 1999; with Cynthia Feliciano, of "Who does What? California's Emerging Plural Labor Force," in Ruth Milkman (ed.), *Organizing Immigrants*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000, and, with Ricardo Stanton-Salazarrre, of "Mexican Americans: A Second Generation at Risk," in Ruben Rumbaut and Alejandro Portes (eds.), *Ethnicities: Children of Immigrants in America*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001.

**Philippe Martel**, director of research at CNRS, and professor at Université Paul Valéry—Montpellier III is the author of *Les noms de Montpellier*, Presses universitaires de Montpellier—Paul Valéry, 2001 (with Jacques Bres), and of *Enseigner la region*, Paris: l'Harmattan, 2001 (with G. Roques and P. Boutan).

**Kenneth McRoberts**, professor of political science, is the principal of Glendon College, the bilingual college of human sciences at the York University in Toronto. He is the author of *Catalonia: Nation-Building Without a State*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2001, and of *Misconceiving Canada: The Struggle for National Unity*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1997.

**Geoffrey Nunberg**, senior researcher at the Center for the Study of Language and Information at Stanford University and consulting professor at the Stanford Department of Linguistics, is the author of *The Way We Talk Now*, Houghton Mifflin, 2001. He also edited the publication of *The Future of the Book*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.

**Uli Windisch**, professor of sociology at the Université de Genève, is the author of *Immigration, quelle intégration? Quels droits politiques?* Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 2000, and of *Les relations quotidiennes entre Romands et Suisses allemands, Les Cantons bilingues de Fribourg et du Valais*, 2 vol., Lausanne: Payot, 1992.

# Preface to the American Edition

The essays in this book were first presented as papers at a conference in Paris, in September 1998. They have since been published in France as *La politique de Babel. Du monolinguisme d'Etat au plurilinguisme des peoples* (Editions Karthala, Paris, 2002). The present edition follows the French version, except for an Introduction that has been re-cast for an English readership.

We are grateful to the Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Internationales (CERI) for hosting the conference, which resulted in a lasting exchange of information and opinions from which the present volume has benefited greatly. The CERI and the Remarque Institute co-sponsored the conference and ensuing publications, and we are pleased to have this opportunity to show our appreciation to the Fondation nationale des sciences politiques and New York University for their continuing support. Jair Kessler at the Remarque Institute and Francine Bianciardi and Karolina Michel of the CERI deserve our heartfelt thanks for ensuring that the various projects in which the two institutions have collaborated have been a success.

Finally we wish to acknowledge the confidence that Professor Martin Schain and the Palgrave Press have shown in this project. In today's publishing environment collective works, however outstanding their scholarship or significant their subject, often have great difficulty in finding a wider audience. We are thus particularly grateful that the essays gathered in this volume are now appearing in English. In view of the subject matter that they deal with, it would be ironic, as well as unfortunate, were they confined to readers of just one language.

Tony Judt and Denis Lacorne

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# The Politics of Language

*Tony Judt and Denis Lacorne*

## Introduction

The chapters in this collection are based on papers given at a conference in Paris in 1998, devoted to the "Politics of Language." This is a broad and protean topic. Out of necessity, we have confined our attention to just three related aspects of the subject. These are reflected in the arrangement of the book.

Part one addresses the problems faced by multilingual states in which cultural minorities speak variations of the national language, or else another language or languages altogether. Although France and the United States are far from being the only such cases, those are the two examples invoked here, in chapters 1–3. This choice was not wholly arbitrary: both countries carry a long-standing heritage of cultural universalism, in which the national constitution and its ethical premises are held up as shining models for imitation and emulation. Both France and the United States have long had a single national language; and, like the national constitution, that language is intimately embroiled in the proselytizing ambitions of generations of political leaders. In such circumstances language is not just a medium for the projection of the *mission civilisatrice* or the *American dream*; it is *part* of that mission and in its integrative function it embodies the dream.

In part two our contributors discuss three of the best-known Western cases of bi- or multilingualism within a single state: Canada, Belgium, and Switzerland. The striking feature here is the rich variety of ways in which different linguistic communities have succeeded in living in harmony with one another—or, as in the Belgian case, ultimately failed to do so. At the time of writing it is unclear whether the Belgian or Swiss model will

prevail, in those many other cases where the cohesion of the state depends upon fragile accords within and across linguistic communities.

Just how fragile such accords are may readily be inferred from the fact that in all three cases discussed here, it is not at all uncommon for people in one part of the country to be not only unwilling but also unable to communicate in the mother tongue of fellow citizens a few dozen kilometers away. One has only to imagine such a situation transposed to the French or American scene to appreciate the striking contrast that marks the histories of neighboring countries.

The third part of this collection consists of essays devoted to languages that have within recent (sometimes living) memory been reinvented, recast or newly born. In the essay by Daniel Beauvois, the examples of Ukraine, Lithuania, and Byelorussia may stand in for many other similar instances of linguistic reconstruction in the lands separating Germany from Russia. Hebrew may seem a more distinctive and unusual case, but here too the deliberate invention of a daily language out of an ancient tradition of purely literary use is unique only in its detail. The revival of some Slav languages, long repressed under German or Russian rule, might also be thought of as part-resurrection, part-invention.

Finally, in chapter 10, Jeffrey Nunberg discusses the implications of Internet use for linguistic communities around the world. While it is manifestly the case that English predominates and will continue to predominate for some time on Internet sites, it by no means follows that over time English must therefore displace local use of languages other than English. Because it is a vernacular rather than elite linguistic vehicle, English (in contrast to French in centuries past) may not so very readily displace other national languages as a vehicle for official and intrastate communication.

We seem to be moving toward a world in which educated men and women avail themselves of different languages for different purposes: working on the Internet, communicating with neighbors, interacting with the state. The significant variables here would seem to be education and, above all, politics. For an educated resident of the Spanish Basque region, for example, the decision to communicate so far as possible in Basque rather than Spanish is as much a political as a cultural choice. In West Flanders, on the other hand, a citizen of Belgium is more likely to be able (but not necessarily willing) to speak French as well as Flemish depending on his or her level of education.

* * *

At a time when it is accepted that English may become the principal working language of the European Union (EU) countries, without a European linguistic policy ever having been clearly formulated, it seems important to consider the significance of having one such dominant language. What are the links between politics and the diffusion of languages? What are the historic conditions and economic and social factors that at certain times favor monolingualism, at others various forms of bilingualism or multilingualism? Historically, monolingualism is not the norm; but where it is the principal vehicle for social promotion, as in the United States and in France, it has all the advantages. But the evolution of languages is too complex to reduce it to a simple question of politics.[1]

When organizing a colloquium dedicated to the "politics of language in the construction of modern nations," we started from a rather un-Herderian hypothesis: language is not the authentic product of an ancestral or innate culture, predating all political reason, a sort of natural state of culture that expresses the soul or the sentiments of a people. This construction, devised in Germany by Herder and elaborated by the German romantics and in particular A.W. Schlegel, attained its apogee in the thinking of Johann Gottlieb Fichte, expressed in his famous *Discourse to the German Nation* (1807–1808).

Fichte deplored the fact that the Germans, unlike the French, had not experienced a common political history. But the Germans, he claimed, benefited from a unique asset: they had at their disposal a "primitive language," the German language, an authentic language practically unchanged since its origins. Above all, it was a language unpolluted by the many corruptions of the neo-Latin bastard languages, such as French and English. Since German was a "root language," the community of German-language speakers, in Fichte's account, was profoundly national, even before the rise of modern nations. The German people were a "primordial people," a "people as such," forever unified by the treasures of their language.

Disappointed by Germany's political backwardness and revolted, after the catastrophe of Iena, by the behavior of Napoleon's occupation troops, Fichte had chosen to set aside the political history of his country and find outside and below this tumultuous history the "metaphysical identity" of the German people, attached to the "natural" quality of its language. He imagined a radiant future, a new history of Germany in which a homogenous people, finally conscious of its linguistic unity, would adhere to the great values of the Enlightenment: justice, the rights of man, and equality of all citizens.[2]

This romantic vision of the status of languages has not made much of a mark, with the possible exception of the special case of Hebrew in Israel, discussed in this volume by Alain Dieckhoff. Elsewhere—in France, the United States, Canada, Belgium, Switzerland, former Yugoslavia, Ukraine—few would wish to claim that there is anything "innate" in the development of one or more national languages. Linguistic choices are indeed choices, often political ones. Everyone speaks his national language from inclination, doubtless; for facility, surely; but also from self-interest. The cases of institutionalized bilingualism or multilingualism are rare and not very durable, except in countries where the linguistic minorities are associated with a clearly identified territory.

In Europe, the unitary states, following the example of France, are monolingual; the multinational states, following the example of Spain or Belgium, are multilingual. Certain federal states like Germany are monolingual. It is therefore very difficult to generalize. Note, however, that even national monolingualism is never completely "natural." It results, most often, from a long history of linguistic conflicts, strongly suppressed in France, but still very active (and unresolved) in countries like Belgium or Norway.

In Central Europe, as Anne-Marie Thiesse has rightly observed, most of today's national languages did not exist before the nineteenth century. The national awakening in Hungary, Greece, the Baltic countries, and the Slavic countries was intimately linked to the rediscovery, by political elites and intellectuals, of popular dialects that, thanks to the work of folklorists and grammarians (often influenced by Herder), acquired the status of "national languages," to be substituted little by little for the scholarly languages imposed by royal courts or occupying powers. The nineteenth century in Europe marked a historical turning point in the construction of modern nationalism: one no any longer said "the nation exists because it has a language," but rather "the nation exists, therefore it must be given a language."

We should distinguish, as Meinecke proposed, "cultural nations" from "political nations." The existence of the first is due to the presence of a common language and culture that need not preclude considerable political fragmentation: witness the multiplicity of German and Italian states and principalities at the end of the eighteenth century. *Political* nations correspond to Ernest Renan's famous formula: "the existence of a nation is an everyday plebiscite." Meinecke was well aware of the context in which this formula was proposed. Renan, after the defeat of 1870, was looking to justify the "Frenchness" of Alsace, notwithstanding its Germanic culture and language. His reasoning, Meinecke acknowledges,

"remains legitimate . . . if one considers its historic premises. It is produced by the spirit of 1789, by the idea of sovereignty and self-determination of a nation that wants to be political, capable of choosing its own constitution and its own political destiny."[3]

But reality is complex. Did the Alsatian who, before 1870, wanted to be part of the French polity "ever lose the singular marks of his membership in the German cultural nation"? wonders Meinecke. Renan's answer in *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* was clear: everything is a matter of "consent," of "the desire to live together." Renan does not ignore the linguistic question, but he minimizes it:

> Language invites one to reunite; it does not oblige it. The United States and England, Spanish America and Spain speak the same language and do not form a single nation. In contrast, Switzerland, so well formed since it was created by the assent of the different parts, has three or four languages. *There is in man something superior to language: that is will.* The will of Switzerland to be united, in spite of the variety of its languages, is in fact much more important than a similitude often obtained by humiliation. It is to France's credit that it has never tried to obtain unity of language by measures of coercion.[4]

Meinecke scorns such simplistic dichotomies. France a political nation: Germany, a cultural nation? These are stereotypes, ideal types, whose significance he qualifies by specifying that "a cultural nation can be a political nation as well," and vice versa. Consider, specifically, the case of *Ancien Régime* France. The slow enlargement of the royal domain, based on conquests and matrimonial alliances, illustrates well the interconnectedness of political and cultural traditions. The monarchy in the fifteenth century was multilingual. Language-use corresponded to well-specified social, legal, and political functions.

Thus Italian (Tuscan to be precise, whose literary prestige owed much to the works of Dante and Petrarch) was the language of diplomats and artists; Latin, the language of scholars; and the languages of oc and oïl were the "common" languages of the provincial elites of the south and north of the kingdom respectively. The people spoke local forms (*patois*) of these two principal linguistic groups. These languages, when they were written, produced remarkable works, of which the oldest and most impressive are the courtly poems of troubadours in Provençal (twelfth to thirteenth centuries) and chivalrous novels like the Song of Roland in old French.

After the Hundred Years' War, the kingdom was singularly enlarged by the addition of Aquitaine, Provence, and Brittany. A sixteenth-century

historian, Étienne Pasquier, described the effects of the unification of the kingdom on the use of princely languages and the emergence of a single language, reserved for the monarch and his entourage:

> Formerly we did not have a single courtly language, to which the good minds wanted to attach their plumes. And this is why. Even though our Kings were superior to all other princes, our kingdom was divided in pieces, and there were almost as many courts as provinces. The court of the count of Provence, that of the count of Toulouse, that of the count of Flanders, of the count of Champagne and other princes and sirs, all had their separate ranks and orders, while most of them recognized our Kings for their Sovereign. From this it resulted that those who had some assurance of their talent wrote in the common language of the court of their Masters, whether in Picard, in Champenois, in Provencal, in Tolozan . . . Today it is altogether different. For all these great dukes and counts, being united to our Crown, now only write in one language, that is the one of the court of the King, which we call the French language.[5]

This single court language was made official, under François I, by the imposition of a capital law in 1539, the Ordinance of Villers-Cotterêts. This made obligatory the drafting of notarized acts and legal decisions in French in order "that there is and can be no ambiguity or uncertainty, no room for interpretation." The ordinance specifies that from that time, all legal acts must be "pronounced, recorded and delivered to the parties in the maternal French language and not otherwise."[6] The construction of the kingdom was thus accompanied by a genuine linguistic policy, based on a strikingly clear and unambiguous rhetoric.

Thus the grammarian Ferdinand Brunot would claim, in his monumental *History of French Language and Literature*, that "a linguistic monarchy was formed above the vanquished and demeaned dialects."[7] Reality was a little different. The regional languages did not suddenly disappear following a royal *diktat* far from it. They remained, in fact, vibrant languages until the beginning of the twentieth century, but little by little they lost their prestige and their written character. They ceased to be languages of knowledge, business, and communication among the urban elites of the provinces. This decline, as Philippe Martel demonstrates well with respect to Occitan, was not the result of a brutal policing of language imposed by the Crown. The decline was in good part sought by the local elites who, in the name of their "well understood interest," facilitated the diffusion of the language of the king.

This diffusion began well before the Ordinance of Villers-Cotterêts, and it accelerated with the development of the absolutist state. French

was imposed more easily because it was thought of and spoken as a superior language—clear, elegant, a language of distinction for persons of distinction. Occitan and other regional languages were increasingly dismissed as *mere patois*, worthy only of the "populace." The victory of French implies, therefore, as Martel writes, "a growing scorn for the language of the country, shared by the great minds of the country itself" and, especially, an exaggerated respect for the language of the king, "repeatedly saluted in eulogistic terms by eloquent intellectuals."[8] Thus grew the myth that French was of unequaled clarity and for this reason a language unlike all others, a language whose genius was so unique as to justify the claim to universality.[9]

The French Revolution, it is often suggested, marked an additional step in the policy of imposing French on the entire territory. It was necessary, said the revolutionaries, to destroy the *patois*, symbols of reaction and counterrevolution, to better affirm the national identity and the uniqueness of the Republic, destroyed notably by the revolt in the Vendée. Barère's declaration of January 17, 1794 was unambiguous:

> Federalism and superstition speak low-Breton; emigration and hate for the Republic speak German; counter-revolution speaks Italian and fanaticism speaks Basque. Let us break these instruments of domination and error . . . The monarchy had reasons to resemble the Tower of Babel; in democracy, allowing the citizens to be ignorant of the national language, incapable of controlling the power, that is to betray the homeland . . . Being the language of the people, French will become the universal language. . . . It must become the language of all the French. Among a free people language must be one and the same for all.[10]

But the peremptory words of Barère, taken up again five months later by the abbé Grégoire in his famous *Report on the Necessity and the Means of Destroying Patois and Universalizing Use of the French Language* (June 1794), were not followed by action, for a simple reason: obligatory primary schooling for boys and girls was not yet in place and would not be until the formation of the government of Jules Ferry, in September 1879. Then, however, Article 14 of the interior regulation of communal schools in France (adopted June 7, 1880) seemed to resume the coercive tradition of the French Revolution: "French alone will be in use in the schools."

And yet the schools of the Third Republic were not the instrument of a cultural "genocide," as certain regional militants, defenders of an authentically Occitan culture, claimed at the end of the 1960s. Nor did they serve to "colonize" the provinces, as Eugen Weber suggested in *Peasants into Frenchmen*.[11] French was indeed taught in all primary

schools, but the patois or the regional languages were not simply "eradicated." The primary school teachers did not systematically punish students who spoke French badly. Indeed, they often turned to dialectal expressions to explain the meaning of a word or a French text. They encouraged, in fact, an unofficial bilingualism inside the schools by using knowledge of local dialects to "supplement and clarify" the instruction of French.

A national sample of 486 French primary school teachers who taught between the two world wars is revelatory: not only did 85 percent of them affirm that, in the region where they taught, a local language was still spoken; but almost one instructor in two (46.3 %) said that they themselves spoke the language or patois of their region of origin fluently. Since the school authorities did not attempt to uproot instructors by sending them to faraway regions—most taught in their native district, after receiving training in the capital of the department—one can affirm, once again, that local bilingualism was the norm and not the exception, at least in the 1930s. But these bilingual practices did not threaten the "language of the Republic." The hierarchy of languages, instilled by the monarchy and reaffirmed by the Republic, was respected: French was indeed, in the minds of the people, the language of science, of literature, of law, of politics, and of teaching. The patois were tolerated as the expression of a localism that no longer threatened the institutions of the Republic.

* * *

In countries of more recent immigration, like the United States, the linguistic stakes are quite different. Political elites did not need to impose the equivalent of an ordinance of Villers-Cotterêts in order to assure the primacy of the English language. It happened by itself, for a simple reason: the majority of the first colonizers spoke English and the political institutions of the country were envisioned and created by Anglophones.[12] English, however, was never imposed as a national language at the federal level, in spite of the fruitless attempts of Noah Webster, who dreamed of a unifying language, distinct from English in its orthography and grammar: *Federal English*.[13] At the time of the War of Independence and in the first years of the Federal republic, English had no special standing as a symbol of the unity of the nation, and many official texts written by federal authorities were published in French and German to satisfy the new immigrants and the foreign soldiers who fought beside the insurgents. Linguistic tolerance was the rule, all the more so because the first primary schools were run by the churches, who imposed their preferred translations of the Bible—the German translation of Luther for the German protestants or that of Calvin for the Huguenots.[14]

Nothing, therefore, obliged Americans to use only the English language—except perhaps the advantages it conferred in public and commercial life. For a long time the German communities of Pennsylvania, the Dutch colonies of New Amsterdam (the future New York), the Acadian refugees in the state of Maine or in Louisiana maintained their linguistic habits. The "new" immigrants who came by the millions at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth—from Scandinavia, Central Europe, or Mediterranean Europe—continued for two or three generations to speak their languages of origin with the help of whole networks of linguistic support: primary schools, newspapers, churches, labor organizations, and cultural associations.

The linguistic tolerance practiced in the United States was particularly evident in Louisiana during the first half of the nineteenth century. The debates of the first three constitutional conventions of Louisiana (1812, 1845, 1864) were published in English and French, and Article 103 of the second Louisiana Constitution specified that "the constitution and the laws of this State must be promulgated in the English and French languages" and that state employees could be recruited, equally, from both linguistic communities. But, after the Civil War, at a time when national unity was the supreme political virtue, delegates to the constitutional convention of 1864 decided to put an end to the principle of bilingual promulgation of state laws. From the same date French ceased to be the language of primary education. Its use was not strictly forbidden, but it could not be the lingua franca of "principal material" taught at school. As for posts destined for state workers, they were henceforth offered only to Anglophones. The adoption of the Constitution of 1864 thus marked the irreversible decline of French culture in the lower Mississippi basin.

In California, English–Spanish bilingualism in schools was tolerated until 1870, when the state legislature imposed a law specifying, "all schools must instruct [their students] in the English language." California, rapidly colonized by "Anglos" from the East, was recognized as a state in 1850. Further east, in New Mexico (annexed, like California, in 1848, following the U.S.–Mexican War), tolerance was required by necessity, since the majority of the population was Spanish speaking and remained so at least until the beginning of the twentieth century. The territory would not become a state for many years. One reason for this was that consideration of the conditions for joining the Union by the Congress of the United States always ran afoul of the ethno-cultural makeup of the local population: "One of the greatest difficulties with the territory of New Mexico," declared the senator from Indiana, Albert Beveridge, in 1910, "is the [natural] tendency of the

Mexican population to transmit the Spanish language from generation to generation . . . Since we are on the point of making this territory a State of the Union, the demonstrated inclination of its citizens to maintain their racial solidarity and to preserve, for these reasons, instruction in their language, must be annihilated."[15]

Following Beveridge's recommendation, Congress voted a law requiring that instruction in the public schools of the future state "always be conducted in English." In addition, it was specified that state employees must prove "their capacity to read, write, speak and understand English, without the presence of interpreters." These requirements were integrated into the text of the constitution of the new state, but they were not really applied. Starting in 1912, when New Mexico finally joined the Union, the state legislature opened public jobs to Spanish speakers and advocated the use of Spanish in schools "in order to explain the meaning of English words to students who do not understand English." The first education laws of the new state were also designed to make lessons in reading Spanish obligatory, if the majority of parents requested it.[16]

In Illinois, where German and Scandinavian communities were numerous in the nineteenth century, English was nevertheless proclaimed the obligatory language of instruction starting in 1845. But there as well theory and practice diverged considerably. German in particular was taught in primary school when parents requested it, and this practice, still frequent in 1890, was counted in more than 544 private, Catholic, and Lutheran schools. Overall it is estimated that in 1900, for the entire United States, more than 600,000 students regularly attended German courses in primary school.[17]

The best indication of the permanence and vigor of American multilingualism is provided by data on publications in the United States between 1890 and 1920. In these years, more than 1,000 American newspapers appeared in approximately 30 languages other than English. In 1920 Italian Americans had two dailies, the *Progresso Italo-Americano* (108,000 copies) and the *Bollettino della Sera* (60,000 copies); the Jews of New York could read four dailies in Yiddish, including *Vorwaerts [Jewish Daily Forward]* (143,000 copies) and *Warheit* (78,000 copies). German Americans, in spite of the war and the ensuing repression of German as a language of public communication, still had two widely read weeklies: the *Frei Presse* and the *Deutsch-Amerikanischer Bauer* (more than 120,000 copies each); Poles had, among others, *Zagoda* (125,000 copies); the Swedes had their newspaper, the *Svenska Americanaren* (62,000 copies), as did many others.[18]

Most languages spoken and written by immigrants at the turn of the last century have disappeared today, for complex and varied reasons. The mixing of populations; the prestige of English as a language of economic, social, and political success; the progress of large national media (popular press, radio, spoken cinema, television). Each of these factors contributed to the predominance of English. But this progress toward monolinguality was neither smooth nor always spontaneous. A policy of forced Americanization, brutally carried out, contributed to the difficulties and costs of maintaining original languages.[19]

Thus, as soon as the United States decided to intervene on the side of France and Great Britain in World War I, German ceased to be an innocent language. In the name of national unity and defense of the homeland in danger, a repressive policy was adopted, aimed at eliminating the use of German. A linguistic panic seized the public authorities in about twenty states, which, starting in 1918, forbade the instruction of German in public schools. The repression was particularly severe in the Midwest, where some 18,000 Americans were condemned by local courts for speaking German in public places. The effects were lasting: three-quarters of the German-language dailies disappeared between 1910 and 1920. The war precipitated the assimilation of German-speaking communities and the adoption of local laws proclaiming English as the "official language."

Today, English is the official language in 25 states of the United States of America. The effects of these laws, adopted for the most part in the 1960s, remain in large part symbolic. In California, for example, English was declared the official language by popular referendum in 1983, but voting bulletins are still printed in a dozen languages (including Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, Japanese, Vietnamese, Cambodian, and so on), as are the questions for the written exam for the driver's test.[20] The media are multilingual; road signs and public announcements are too, without there being any requirement that they be translated into English.

At the Federal level English is not an official language, in spite of numerous aborted attempts by the *English Only* movement.[21] Nevertheless, naturalization favors the use of English over all other languages and has done so continuously since 1906. In essence, the qualification test for naturalization requires a basic acquaintance with history and republican civics, and a demonstrated mastery of the English language: the ability to write and speak "simple English." Special dispensation is given to foreigners 50 years old and over who have resided legally in the United States for more than 20 years, on the assumption that it is difficult to learn a new language after this age.[22]

From a legal point of view there is no constitutional protection for use of a foreign language. But it is a right that may be protected indirectly if, in the course of judicial action, the plaintiff succeeds in demonstrating that depriving him of his choice of language is equivalent to a form of discrimination by "race, color or national origin." In a recent decision, the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals used this reasoning with regard to a new driving test for residents of the state of Alabama. This test, written in a single language—English—replaced a previous exam printed in 14 different languages. The change followed the adoption by Alabama of a constitutional amendment making English the "official language." For the Appeals Court, the new test violated Federal law because it discriminated against the 13,000 residents of the state who had not mastered the English language.[23] To emphasize their decision, the judges recalled that the Federal Civil Rights Act specifies that, when a "sizable number of beneficiaries" of a public service financed by the state cannot "effectively participate" in this service for lack of information available in their maternal language, the public authorities are obliged to use a "language other than English."[24]

Finally, in the area of education, the Supreme Court in the case of *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) ruled that children of Chinese immigrants, unable to understand or speak English, could not be forcibly placed in monolingual English-speaking classes without "affirmative steps being taken to correct their linguistic difficulty," in order to permit them to "participate fully" in the school activities designed for children of the "English speaking majority" of the same age.[25] This famous decision prompted Congress to develop federal aid programs for bilingual education. That aid still exists: it does not create a "right to bilingualism," but it furnishes supplementary means to instructors of students demonstrating inadequate knowledge of English. It facilitates, in fact if not in name, pedagogical innovation and bilingualism (albeit with insufficient means).[26]

On the whole, American multilingualism today is as fragile as it was 100 years ago, for reasons that relate to the sociology of American society, as David Lopez shows in this volume. The linguistic practices of new immigrants cannot be separated from their strategies of integration or assimilation into the mainstream of American society. Immigrant families, following an intergenerational logic well described by Lopez, encourage their children to integrate into the dominant culture. The language of success and social promotion, in Los Angeles or Miami, is English. Typically, the turnaround—that is, the passage from a foreign monolingual culture to a culture that is almost exclusively Anglo-American—occurs in the third generation, today as in the past.[27] The

continual arrival of new immigrants, at a rate of about 800,000–1.2 million per year, maintains, of course, a genuine linguistic pluralism; but it is a pluralism "of transition," destined to disappear as the new generations of immigrants succeed in their integration.[28]

Thus when American demographers announce that, 100 years from now, more than half of all Americans will claim some Hispanic origin, this does not mean that Spanish will become the true rival of English. These "Hispanics" or "Latinos"—always supposing they retain these "identity tags"—will for the most part have been assimilated Americans for three generations or more, often married to non-Hispanics; the common culture will surely be Anglo-American. This is the American paradox: a multilingual society, relatively tolerant of foreign languages, but which assures—thanks to its conception of the American dream, its education system, and its omnipresent and largely monolingual media—the predominance of English. In this sense, the future prospects of Spanish in the United States are little different from those of Occitan in France. Languages transmit "culture" and culture encourages linguistic preservation. "Little homelands" survive. But the monolingualism of the state almost always triumphs in the end.

## Notes

1. See the very stimulating debate between Pierre Bourdieu, Abram de Swaan, Claude Hagège, Marc Fumaroli, and Immanuel Wallerstein, "Quelles langues pour une Europe démocratique?" *Raisons politiques* 2, May 2001, pp. 41–64.
2. See Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Discourse to the German Nation, 1807–1808*, Harper & Row, NY, 1968. See also Friedrich Meinecke, *Cosmopolitanism and the National State* [*Weltbürgertum and Nationalstaat*, 1907], Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970, pp. 87–94.
3. Meinecke, *Cosmopolitanism*, p. 12.
4. Ernest Renan, *What is a nation?* [*Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* 1882], Paris: Presses Pocket, 1992 (introduction and notes by Joël Roman), pp. 49–50, emphasis added. In response to the German claim for the "re-" attachment of Alsace to Germany, the French historian Fustel de Coulanges wrote in the *Revue des deux mondes* of October 27, 1870: "Language is not the characteristic sign of nationality . . . Five languages are spoken in France, and still no one doubts our national unity. [. . .] What distinguishes nations is not race or language. Men feel in their hearts that they are the same people when they have a community of ideas, interests, affections, memories and aspirations. That is what makes the homeland [. . .] It is possible that Alsace is German by race and by language; but by nationality and the sentiment of homeland, it is French. And do you know what made it French? It was not Louis XIV, it was our

revolution of 1789. Since that moment, Alsace has shared in our destiny. [. . .] Its homeland is France." Cited in the annex of Renan, ibid., p. 260.

5. Etienne Pasquier, *Les recherches de la France, 1621*, cited by Marc Fumaroli, "Le génie de la langue française," in Pierre Nora, ed., *Les lieux de mémoire*, Paris: Gallimard, 1997 (coll. Quarto), vol. 3, pp. 4645–4646.
6. Cited in Claude Hagège, *Le français. Histoire d'un combat*, Paris: Editions Michel Hagège, 1996, p. 52. The Ordinance is a code of legal procedure in 192 articles that aims for "the abbreviation of trials and the relief of our subjects."
7. Ferdinand Brunot, ed., *Histoire de la langue et de la littérature française* (Paris: Armand Colin, 9 vol., 1905–1937), cited by Jean-Claude Chevalier, "L' 'Histoire de la langue française de Ferdinand Brunot,'" in *Les lieux de mémoire*, v. 3, p. 3397. Brunot's *Histoire*, expanded after his death in 1938 by four more volumes (A. Colin, 1945–1972), itself succeeded eight volumes by Louis Petit de Julleville, ed., *Histoire de la langue et de la littérature françaises des origines à 1900* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1896–1899).
8. See chapter 2 in this book.
9. Marc Fumaroli elegantly analyzes the "symbolic architecture" of these commonplaces, much discussed in the eighteenth century. See "Le génie de la langue française'" in Pierre Nora, ed., *Les lieux de mémoire*, v. 3, pp. 4623–4685, and, more recently, his *Quand l'Europe parlait français*, Paris: Editions de Fallois, 2001.
10. Barère, cited by Jean-Claude Chevalier, "L' Histoire de la langue française," pp. 3412–3413.
11. Weber is often criticized by French historians for this claim, expressed in the last chapter of his book. However, his chapters devoted to languages and schools (chs. 6 and 18) suggest there was no outright conflict in schools between partisans of the "great homeland" and defenders of the "little homelands." See Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976, pp. 486, 67–94, 303–338.
12. In 1753, Benjamin Franklin was greatly concerned about the reluctance of "Germans from America" to speak and write English. He feared that the excessively "Germanized" Pennsylvania would one day become a "German colony"; as a remedy he advocated dispersion of the German population and reinforcement of Anglo-Saxon immigration. See Denis Lacorne, *La crise de l'identité américaine. Du melting-pot au multiculturalisme*, Paris: Fayard, 1997, pp. 62–63, 97–98. Contrary to a widespread myth, the American legislature never tried to impose German as the official language of the United States.
13. See David Simpson, *The Politics of American English*, 1776–1850, New York: Oxford University Press, 1986, and Dennis Baron, *The English Only Question: An Official Language for Americans?* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990, pp. 42–48.
14. After the War of Independence, the federal Congress refused to consider the petitions of citizens of German or French origin calling for promulgation of

federal laws in two languages: English and their own. A petition of Francophone residents from Michigan was rejected by Congress in 1810 in terms that recall those of the Ordinance of Villers-Cotterêts: ". . . the greatest confusion could result from the existence of two distinct versions of the same law, which could provoke, given the imperfections of all languages, different interpretations if not outright contradictions." Cited in Baron, *The English Only Question*, p. 90.

15. Baron, Ibid., pp. 101–102.
16. Baron, Ibid., pp. 102–104, 119.
17. German was taught half- or part-time in primary schools in the large cities of the Midwest, like Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, Cleveland, and St. Louis. See Carol L. Schmid, *The Politics of Language: Conflict, Identity, and Cultural Pluralism in Comparative Perspective*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, pp. 19–22, and Baron, *The English Only Question*, p. 119.
18. See Desmond King, *Making Americans*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000, pp. 111–112 (which takes up studies published in 1922 by the sociologist Robert E. Park). For more details, see Dirk Hoerder, ed., *The Immigrant Labor Press in North America, 1840s-1970s, an Annotated Bibliography*, New York: Greenwood Press, 1987, vol. I, *Migrants from Northern Europe*; vol. II, *Migrants from Eastern and Southern Europe*.
19. The true original languages are of course those of the American Indians, destroyed in large part by colonization, massacre and dispersion of native tribes. 210 Indian languages were still spoken at the end of the twentieth century, but only around 20 are still taught to children, in spite of the establishment in the 1960s of federal aid programs for instruction of American-Indian languages. For more details, see Michael Krauss, "Status of Native American Language Endangerment," in G. Cantoni, ed., *Stabilizing Indigenous Languages*, Flagstaff: Center for Excellence in Education (Northern Arizona University), 1996, and the issue dedicated to the "Future of Language," *CQ Researcher* 40, November 17, 2000, pp. 929–952.
20. The *Voting Rights Act* of 1965, amended in 1975, required the printing of voting bulletins for ethnic minorities who in the past were subject to political discrimination. Printing of bilingual bulletins is required when the minority in question equals at least 5% of the total local electoral population. Schmid, *The Politics of Language,* p. 72.
21. This movement, under various names (U.S. English, Official English, English Only), was founded in 1983 by a Republican senator from California, S.I. Hayakawa, and an ophthalmologist from Michigan, John Trenton, the latter also the founder of two movements unfavorable to immigrants: the *Zero Growth Population* and the *Federation for American Immigration Reform* (FAIR). For more details, see Robert D. King, "Should English Be the Law?" *The Atlantic Monthly*, April 1997, and especially James Crawford, ed., *Language Loyalties: A Source Book for the Official English Controversy*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992, pp. 87–158.

22. U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform, *Becoming an American: Immigration and Immigrant Policy*, 1997 Report to Congress, September 30, 1997, pp. 48, 55.
23. *Sandoval v. Hagan*, U.S. 11th Circuit Court of Appeals, 1999 (electronic version www.findlaw.com). This decision has since been reversed by the Supreme Court, which contests the submission of federal trials, but the linguistic question was not addressed. See *Alexander v. Sandoval*, April 24, 2001 (electronic version).
24. 20 U.S.C. 7402 (a) (15), cited in *Sandoval v. Hogan* (electronic version, p. 6).
25. *Lau v. Nichols*, 414 U.S., 568 (1974). See also C. Schmid, *The Politics of Language*, pp. 68–74.
26. In June 1998, California ended by popular referendum (Proposition 227) its public program of bilingual education on the grounds that it was expensive and ineffective, in spite of the almost unanimous opposition of teachers, linguists, and parents of children benefiting from this type of instruction. 61% of California voters voted for Proposition 227, of whom 67% were white non-Hispanics and only 37% were Hispanic. In fact, the referendum in California did not completely abolish bilingualism: it reduced it to one year for students who do not know English and still allows long-term bilingual education when it is requested by parents. See Schmid, *The Politics of Language*, pp. 159–167, and "Debate over Bilingualism," *CQ Researcher* 3, January 19, 1996, pp. 49–68.
27. A recent poll carried out by the *Washington Post* of a national sample of 2,417 Latinos confirmed the classic hypothesis of the three phases of assimilation. The first phase, the arrival of the new immigrants, is marked by a situation close to monolingualism: 70% of those arriving spoke exclusively Spanish at home. The children of the second generation, born in the United States, are truly bilingual. Only 10% of them still used Spanish exclusively. In the third generation, the language of choice is English, but 98% of Latinos of this generation still claim a strong attachment to their Hispanic "culture" and heritage. In general, learning English is perceived as a means "of opening doors to numerous opportunities, starting with making new friends, having access to a greater diversity of jobs, watching television shows . . ." Amy Goldstein and Roberto Suro, "Latinos in America: A Journey in Stages," *Washington Post*, January 16, 2000.
28. Paradoxically, the economic and social failure of certain immigrants and the persistence of a certain racism, which discourages interracial marriages, would be the best guarantee of survival of a strong Spanish-speaking culture. Such a failure is not out of the realm of possibility for the poorest of Latinos. But what differentiates the latter from the majority of "assimilated" Latinos is not so much the language as their type of employment and social class. If they simultaneously face all kinds of disadvantage over an extended period of time, they could indeed come to constitute an "under-caste" of monolingual Spanish speakers (see chapter 3 of this book).

# PART ONE

# The Limits of National Monolingualism

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CHAPTER 1

# Difference Rights and Language in France

*Alain Fenet*

## Introduction

Observing linguistic facts, policies and regulation does not suffice for comprehending contemporary use of language in France. The historical background and its influence on the present, as well as the larger framework, within which language rights are inscribed, must also be taken into account. Without this more global approach, the juridical question itself provides only limited interest.

The debate on the issue of language in France necessarily requires a discussion of the State, and thus of the nation and the Republic. The status of the French language and minority languages has always been at the heart of the country's political and legal development. Today, however, the issue of the French language also implies talking about Europe. The European construction's large-scale developments impose restrictions and transformations both in France and all member countries. This collective, self-transformative phenomenon is probably most visible in the European Community, since it requires redefining sovereignty and questioning the very nature of the nation-state, at least in its traditional form. While less spectacular, but as significant as creating the common currency, the increasing role played by European Community law within the French juridical system illustrates this point.[1] These transformations also result from policy coordination, and increasing similarities between legal systems brought about by EU authorities and also by the Council of Europe especially in the human rights realm.

France seems to be the country with the most to lose in this complex transition toward unification that extends beyond economics to all areas (institutions, law, social practices and mores). Certain specific French characteristics are being called into question, essentially the relationship between the State and the civil society. Indeed, in the words of one analyst, "At the end of the 20th century, the French Jacobin state model is unsteady."[2] An unrelenting defender of European construction as a means to guarantee France's interests and preserve its influence throughout the world, the French State must now deal with the negative consequences of this choice. It is therefore not surprising to observe a great deal of hesitation, incoherent policy, nationalist discourse on the part of some elite groups who feel their power waning, the temptation to fall back on the past, and xenophobic trends expressed in some portions of the population.

In this context, the question of language inevitably arises. On the one hand, the coherence of the ideological–juridical framework governing the status of the French language is being challenged at a time when French is spoken with less frequency around the world, and more importantly, in Europe, where English is the prevailing language.[3] On the other hand, the issue of minority languages has come to the forefront. Most European State models differ from the Jacobin one in that they recognize linguistic diversity and *even encourage European protection* for minorities. French specificity in this area consists in rejecting the enhancement of minority languages, favorably perceived by other European leaders and public opinion, especially within European forums.

Can France, along with countries like Turkey, continue to hold up against this pressure? How long can France continue ignoring its loss of credibility abroad that this unwavering position engenders? It is, of course, oftentimes unjustly caricatured: no single Corsican or Breton has ever experienced the same risks as a Kurd bent on defending his/her language or simply speaking it. The French position is more often than not highly misunderstood. It is, indeed, based on an unknown or misinterpreted Republican-inspired legal approach to differences. Much of the misunderstanding comes from French authorities themselves who fail to demonstrate the validity and considerable development of this particular branch of the law. Thus the central themes to be considered in the following discourse are: what does this branch consist of and what are the challenges looming ahead?

## Republican Difference Rights[4]

This expression might come as a surprise, especially in light of France's secular endeavor at centralization. Since Tocqueville, it has been commonly

acknowledged that the French Revolution simply prolonged centralization initiated by the Monarchy. The Revolution's contribution consisted in establishing new, powerful, unificatory principles with the express purpose of ignoring or even opposing diversity within the civil society. Obsessed with unity, successive Republican regimes pursued this goal, and developed unwavering linguistic (and other) demands, inevitably leading to the demise of regional languages.

Nonetheless, criticism of the French State's oppression of linguistic minorities must be significantly nuanced. Of course, Republican principles of unity are still proclaimed and pursue their design. However, within the context of political liberalism, their implementation is accompanied, when necessary, by interpretations that allow differences to be accounted for, notably in the linguistic realm, and in accordance with numerous juridical arrangements that take social diversity into account.

### *Major Principles of Republican Unity*

The issue has been sufficiently debated so that only essential points need to be presented here. With the 1789 Revolution, France produced an ideology of unity, combining national sovereignty in a specific manner, the "one and indivisible Republic," and the principle of equality. Subsequent Republican tradition avoided authoritarianism by balancing these principles with the concept of liberty.

#### *National Sovereignty*

The fundamental contribution of the French Revolution from which all else flowed is found in the radical split with previous sources of legitimacy, that is, the replacement of divine law with that of the nation. This was clearly laid out in Article 3 of the *Declaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen*: "The principle of sovereignty resides exclusively in the nation. No entity nor individual may exercise authority that does not directly emanate from the nation." Defined in this way, the nation no longer represents the place where one is born, but rather the political unity confirmed *a priori* by the population despite its multiple diversity. As a purely political principle, then, the nation is a means to assemble an empowered people without relying on divine references or a particular ethnic or linguistic identity.

This founding principle implied a specific program. In instituting power in such terms, the nation afforded a new and more vigorous force to centralization. Originating from itself, and free from social mediating constraints, the nation stripped legitimacy away from intermediary

entities, and abolished the existence of any particular political link within the society. From a practical standpoint, then, the individual faces power on his/her own. As such, the French Revolution possesses a universal quality, since it created a political community open to all, and likewise, offers its model to all.

Relying on this new political significance, the nation is "no longer one of the many constituting elements of the State, rather, it is the single constitutive element of the State *par excellence*, since it fully identifies with the State."[5] Thus, despite its universal character, the nation is necessarily incorporated within a State.[6] In the final analysis, the Republic—one and indivisible like the nation and the State—prevailed as the only legitimate form of government in France.[7]

*The One and Indivisible Republic*

The Revolution's conception of the nation directly linked it to the unified State. Indeed, only in this manner could revolutionaries themselves envision the Republic. As for the latter, it was considered as the most appropriate manner of governing smaller communities, yet this posed a certain number of problems for a country as vast as France and with such a large and varied population.[8] During the Monarchy, the sovereign monarch's personage served to preserve unity. With the Republic, unity made sacred by the nation became a principle of action. The Revolution, therefore, implemented a unification process within society, its institutions, law, and throughout the entire territory. The notion of indivisibility signified the search for perfect unity, and its aim was to achieve this goal; "indivisibility will be the immediate consequence of attained unity."[9] Until then, it was to signify the existence of efficient centralized institutions expressing a sole design, and monopolizing the production of law and its application throughout a uniform territory.[10] Armed with this centralized structure, the Republic thus overcame its fear of local feudal structures, and dismissed the federalist specter that had haunted it from the beginning.

*The Principle of Equality*

The principle of equality played a central political and legal role during the construction of unity. Article 1 heading the 1789 *Declaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen* proclaims, "All men are born free and equal before the law." This particular equality principle nonetheless reflected a specific and eminently abstract notion that did not prevent the establishment of a poll tax voting system as well as the exclusion of women from voting and other political rights up to 1944. Thus, it essentially consisted

in formal equality before the law. "In this manner, the unique function of the principle of equality is to guarantee uniform application of the law as well as unity within the legal system."[11] In France, this function was superbly implemented, and has acted as a barrier against particularities that could divide the civil society and identify people other than "citizen," which could lead to a direct attack on the principle of national unity. Since social singularities could not benefit from special treatment, equality thus implied identity. Hence, the principle of equality was a very efficient machine producing uniformity.

During the establishment of the Republican regime throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, the convergence of these three principles (the national sovereignty, the "one and indivisible Republique" and the principle of equality) attained a powerful internal logic that guaranteed the maintenance of political unity and provided a solid basis for social uniformization without much difficulty.[12] In France, any political program must necessarily succeed in implementing this *triptych* in order to achieve a legal form. It must also respond to another ambition that resides in the notion of liberty, which underlines the 1789 Declaration. Indeed, without liberty, the Republic can become an authoritarian regime leaning toward Caesarism, a profound tradition present in French politics that history has repeatedly witnessed.[13]

*The Idea of Liberty*

Despite their "Jacobin" profiles, political figures of the Third Republic were also liberals who consistently and pragmatically juggled with individual liberties and the collective good, political overtures and the need for unity. Based on the notion of human rights and a political conception of the nation, Republican liberty was defined as "a freedom—*power, a freedom*—participation, which encompasses the sense of community." Armed with this political conception, Republicans had to "establish the relationship between liberty and the collective good (and they) always chose to subordinate the collective good to liberty, *belonging to* independence, quite a paradoxical and remarkable preference for a political conception so obsessed with unity." "Republican thought is imbued with at least one consistent and long-lasting vision, that of refusing to place the collective good above individual liberties, thus sacrificing these freedoms."[14]

Hence, Republican unity is expressed in a universal language, one that firmly "claims to be the specific characteristic of French identity."[15] Framing both collective advancement and individual emancipation, it allowed for the creation of a "deeply embedded consensus that has

rallied the diverse strata of the French population to the Republican project over at least the past two centuries."[16] Once integrated into "the explicit mold of unity," the Republican project has welcomed newcomers and allowed them to participate in the political sphere, observed in the continuous and considerable flow of immigrants from a variety of backgrounds/origins.[17] This does not necessarily require a person to abandon his/her origin, but simply to separate it from his/her link to the nation, placing it outside of the political sphere. Each group is free to indulge in this "silent activity," through which it maintains all sorts of customs and traditions.[18] From a legal standpoint, this scheme provides for the separation between the private and public spheres, a distinction that judicial decisions rely on, including decisions by the *Conseil Constitutionnel* (a sort of French Supreme Court).

This leads to the rather paradoxical proposition that Republican unity, in theory, does not imperatively require social uniformity, but is based on the postulate that social heterogeneity is maintained. One may therefore observe "a Republican approach which is much more complex than simplistic representations in current use."[19] This characteristic has allowed the Republic hitherto to handle the expression of differences with increasing tolerance through juridical accommodations based on principles of unity and social pluralism.

### *Juridical Accommodations*

Two methods are in use to achieve this: directly accounting for particularities and adapting the principle of equality.

#### *Directly Accounting for Particularities*

A pragmatic approach has almost always been adopted when taking differences into account throughout the Republic's territory. Recently, this has led to more consistent practices (albeit lacking a theoretical basis) that can be qualified as opportunistic.[20]

*Age-old pragmatism* *This pragmatism* has attenuated centralized unification and imposed legal limits. The status of overseas territories, local law in Alsace-Lorraine, and the regime governing religious practices serve to illustrate this, and all three demonstrate that "though traditionally contested in the name of unity and the Republic's indivisibility, territorial diversification of law nevertheless remained a constant practice." In addition, the principle of legislative uniformity was "not understood to be an integral part of the Republican tradition."[21]

French colonial practices were inspired by the doctrine of political assimilation. Overseas territories were seen as an extension of the mainland and were included within the State's political unity. Legal uniformity resulted from this. The "old colonies," such as the French West Indies (Antilles) and Réunion, as well as the "departmentalized" Algeria fell into this category with the Third Republic. The Fourth Republic extended this approach by departmentalizing Guadeloupe, Martinique, Guyana, and Réunion, and by transforming other colonial lands into overseas territories, all designated as integral parts of the French Republic. Inhabitants of these territories were given French nationality and were entirely governed by the constitutional text.

However, throughout various historical periods, this institutional assimilation never resulted in total legal uniformity. In fact, it was accompanied by derogatory practices resulting from the principle of specialty according to which metropolitan laws were not automatically implemented in the colonies. Established by an 1854 *sénatus-consulte*, this practice was pursued right up to the 1946 Constitution wherein Article 72 stipulated, "French law can only be applied in overseas territories through deliberate provisions." In the absence thereof, regulatory competence prevailed, apart from matters exclusively reserved to the Parliament (criminal legislation, the regime governing public liberties, and administrative and political organization).

Traces of this rather ambiguous situation were passed on to the 1958 Constitution in articles that cover overseas territories (T.O.M.) and departments (D.O.M.).[22] Overseas territories that have not requested independence (in virtue of the principle of the people's free will, written into the Constitution's preamble) continue to belong to the Republic (Article 72). However, they are not bound by the principle of assimilation: *Article 76 provides them with a particular organization and specific interests*. Without delving into detail, suffice to say that their autonomy is presently increasing and provides for their competence "that makes each territory a specific legal entity adapted to its own characteristic diversity."[23] Contrary to overseas territories, assimilation is an increasingly applied rule in overseas departments, though Article 73 of the Constitution clearly indicates that this has not yet been fully achieved. Indeed, according to this Article "the legislative regime and administrative organization of overseas departments can benefit from measures adapted to the necessities of their particular situation." Thus, one may observe that the existence of a constitutionally recognized and specific situation afforded a diverse array of juridical arrangements.[24]

Despite these examples, one may not conclude that France is a federation in disguise.[25] Nevertheless it is obvious that the Republic's unity does not necessarily require institutional and legal uniformity. Even on the mainland, institutional uniformity can concede to juridical diversity when necessary.

Two laws passed on June 1, 1924 reestablished the French judicial system in provinces reconquered in 1918, all the while allowing for a considerable amount of local law to continue to exist. The latter essentially governed associations, religious practices, hunting, labor law, social security, district law, land register, procedure for execution of judgment, craftsmanship, and judicial organization.[26] The situation is more or less the same today due to the population's desire to preserve this inherited juridical patrimony, which is so well adapted to local living conditions.

Major provisions of this juridical framework not only include legal particularities dating before 1871 and German law from the 1871–1918 period, but also French legislative and regulatory measures that provide for the adaptation of local law to general evolutions in national law. Established in 1985, the "Commission for the Harmonization of Alsacian-Mosellan Private Law" proposes laws toward this objective to the parliament. Hence, the French Parliament votes on laws that only apply to a specific portion of national territory.[27]

The very existence of this type of local law underlines that the French legal system can easily distance itself from the fictitious image of a totally homogeneous society. It can allow diversity to express itself throughout the metropolitan territory without setbacks. Not only does it integrate particularities inherited from history, but it also provides for their efficient and long-lasting maintenance. Colonial reasons are not alone in explaining that "while emanating from a single source, the law can vary according to the portion of French territory where it is to be applied."[28] The importance of local Alsacian-Mosellan law results from its "exemplary nature in a country which has, up to now, been dominated by a traditional uniformizing approach."[29] Moving beyond these examples, the *Conseil Constitutionnel* has occasionally, but repeatedly, admitted that "indivisibility does not necessarily require unity in the legal system."[30]

*A Recent Opportunism* Thus one can say that until recent times the "French Republic can be doubly qualified multiple and indivisible . . ."[31] This of course is opportunism. But it evolves in a subtle and gradual manner, bringing a minimal response to particular demands and without

prejudice to the core of Republican principles. Among the numerous examples, one could consider the situation in Corsica and the role of regional languages.[32]

According to the law of May 13, 1991, Corsica was established as a collective territory and benefits from a particular status. With an organization and competencies resembling those of overseas territories, Corsica constituted a *sui generis* collectivity defined as such by the *Conseil Constitutionnel*, the latter judging that nothing prevented the legislator from creating a "collective territory possessing a single unity and having a specific status."[33]

This could only be justified in light of the island's geographic, historic, linguistic, and cultural particularities. In the proposed law, the legislator believed that this could be expressed by recognizing the existence of a "Corsican people among the French," however this was to fail. The *Conseil Constitutionnel* opposed the idea in virtue of the Constitution that only "recognizes French people made up of all citizens regardless of their origin, race, or religion." In reality, what inspired the *Conseil* even more than the Constitution in this matter was the philosophy underlying the Republican order. "Ever since the Revolution, French law has always rejected any official recognition of differences between individuals according to their origin, race, or religion. This represents a conquest major achievement resulting from the Revolution that has never been questioned . . . It signifies the refusal of any form of constitutional recognition of minorities within internal law."[34]

Despite this, the particularities of the Corsican people are nonetheless expressed in the appropriate institutional framework. Naturally, "cultural diversity is contained by the principle of the French people's unity,"[35] and consequently remains subordinate to normative unity. It is nevertheless recognized and accommodated in a specific manner. The refusal to recognize the Corsican people as a fundamental specificity leads to a paradoxical situation wherein there is "no longer any objective limit to demands for differences."[36]

In the final analysis, "despite texts, political, doctrinal, or jurisprudential positions ending towards (unity), the institutional reality is no longer that of a classical unitary State."[37]

Considering now the status of regional languages, the point to be stressed is that in its search for political unity through linguistic unification, the French State inaugurated a "language policy" long before the Revolution.[38] The 1539 Villers-Cotterêts Ordonnance represents the starting point of this endeavor.[39] Under the Monarchy, language clearly became an issue for the State[40] incarnated by the creation of the

*Académie française* in 1635. The French language has indeed been the object of considerable ideological investment throughout its history, taking turns at being called the universal language, the language of civilization, freedom's language, the language of progress, and so on.[41] However, the 1789 Revolution found good reason in its unifying and centralizing design to accelerate the "Frenchization" process. The demise of regional languages, spoken or understood by the quasi totality of the population, went almost without saying since they were perceived as the medium of counterrevolutionary ideas.[42] However, brutal policy measures in this area were to fail.

Bent on fulfilling the same design and harboring the same prejudices, the Third Republic nevertheless succeeded in demonstrating the virtues of its liberal approach. It avoided excessive prohibitions and relegated languages other than French to the private sphere, by simply implementing administrative measures that reinforced centralized law, and above all, by instituting required schooling where French was the only language spoken and taught. This contributed to weakening the regional languages even further, almost to the point of total disappearance.[43]

In the final analysis, the "battle to impose the French language" came to an end in the twentieth century.[44] In the France of today the problem of the native monolingual speaker of a language other than French no longer arises.[45] Persistent linguistic diversity no longer threatens the French language's hegemony nor national unity, assuming that these threats even existed in the past.[46] One only need fear that this diversity may slowly but surely disappear forever.[47] It may be for this reason that under the Fourth Republic, one saw the advent of a reverse movement that took linguistic pluralism in France into account.[48]

In this domain the crucial issue is education. A series of official texts provide for the teaching of local languages and cultures (complementary and optional courses) in primary and secondary public schools. This, of course, keeps local languages on the margins; nevertheless, their position is growing in light of some judicial decisions and case-by-case local measures. The teaching of or in a language, inclusion of these languages and/or cultures in the French baccalaureat (secondary-level final exam), the creation of specialized disciplines in national diplomas (such as the CAPES), as well as specialized teaching positions in or about these languages and cultures—it seems that anything is possible as long as nothing is obligatory. Indeed, required measures would be viewed as a particularly legal constraint imposed by the State on a specific territorial area of the Republic. This rupture with legal unity might be a problem, but as we saw with local law, it is not an insurmountable one. On the other hand, it

would certainly be perceived as a discriminatory measure that unacceptably denigrates the principle of equality. As the *Conseil Constitutionnel* decided in 1991 relative to the status of Corsica, and more specifically, to the provision relative to Corsican language and culture instruction in public schools and during school hours, "this is not contrary to the principle of equality since this instruction is not obligatory."

Even though certain official texts[49] account for occasional recognition of linguistic diversity, in the final analysis, "French law favoring regional languages is rather slim, and contrary to law regarding the freedom of religious practices, the freedom to speak regional languages is limited."[50] However, one must not neglect state subsidies to private schools whose main goal is to transmit a minority language and/or culture, or declarations by some of the most high-ranking political officials regarding the importance of encouraging and preserving diversity.[51] In light of these realities, it becomes clear that the unitary politico-juridical system is capable of dealing with lively linguistic differences throughout the French society today, all the while adhering to its own basic principles. However, this is accomplished on a case-by-case basis and usually in reaction to pressure. This results in the impression that each decision is a reluctant one made by authorities, and that nothing is definitively acquired. This is particularly the case in the realm of education.[52] Results in this area are certainly not insignificant. However from a practical standpoint, they vary considerably from one region to the other, the three Germanophone departments accounting for approximately half of these results.[53]

*Accommodating the Principle of Equality* The issue of the principle of equality is found in all attempts to take differences into consideration. Obviously, its implementation extends beyond religious and/or linguistic minorities, however its evolution has had a retroactive effect.[54]

The concept of formal equality grew to include social diversity in struggles bent on eradicating discrimination. This evolution emanated from jurisprudence established by the European Court of Human Rights located in Strasbourg, and the Court of Justice of the European Communities in Luxemburg. In making the transition from equality to nondiscrimination, the practical implementation of the equality principle was enlarged. Realities corresponding to authentic individuals and the manner in which their right was not respected were accounted for. "Hence, the equality principle no longer forbids difference in treatment itself, which on the contrary can serve as a condition for establishing *de facto* equality. Rather, it now prohibits illegitimate difference in treatment."[55]

Consequently, the struggle against discrimination achieved proportional or differential equality. The *Conseil Constitutionnel* permitted this evolution, relying on what has become a classical consideration when it wrote, "the equality principle accepts both the fact that the legislator regulate different situations in a different manner, and that s/he departs from the equality principle in the name of general interest, as long as in both cases the resulting difference in treatment has a direct relationship with the object of the law that established it."[56] This interpretation can be applied to a variety of areas, especially since the *Conseil d'Etat* seconded it. It permits the search for concrete equality, validated by the *Conseil d'Etat* when justified in the name of "predominate general interest." "In certain cases, it can compete with and even render the equality principle obsolete when considerations deemed superior to equality can justify that certain physical or moral persons be favored over others in the same situation."[57] In order to avoid abuse, however, and when the general interest is invoked as a justification to override equality, it must be in relation to the pursued objective of the contested regulation. This is where the French judge's audacity stops; that different situations be treated differently is not an obligation.[58] "The norm that does not make any distinction is always in conformity with equality."[59]

The *Conseil Constitutionnel* has adopted analogous jurisprudence regarding an increasing number of legislative texts. One could even refer to a French affirmative action model.[60] For example, it has accepted that "the equality principle not interfere with the legislator's regulations, such as fiscal advantages, measures to encourage development and investment in certain parts of the territory, all in the general interest."[61]

In its 1996 report, the *Conseil d'Etat* remarked, "there are numerous areas wherein the equality principle may be overridden by a general interest motivation."[62] Examples such as subsidies attributed to companies or the national defense interest serve as an illustration. Preserving cultural diversity or French linguistic patrimony is not mentioned, but they could be in light of numerous declarations made by high-ranking French public officials who describe this as serving the general interest. As the *Conseil d'Etat* itself has recognized, ". . . the notion of general interest is more a political than a juridical one." The imprecise nature of its content, however, is linked to the fact that it is determined in function of the time period in question. "Indeed, the general interest expresses the values or broad objectives of a collectivity, and these change with time."[63]

In the final analysis, French law provides for "genuine management of differences, a thoroughly pragmatic, unplanified one that does not

rely on a clearly formulated policy."[64] It does so in its own specific way, rejecting the notion of "minority" and the attribution of special rights to minorities, contrary to what is increasingly implemented in other European countries and around the world. One may agree with the *Conseil d'Etat*'s declaration, "the deliberate will of French law to ignore the concept of minority corresponds to the democratic imperative. Indeed, in guaranteeing the equality of each and every one before the law, it allows each and every one, including persons belonging to minorities, to freely express their convictions."[65] However, one may question the coherent nature of a legal order that officially ignores groups in general, yet distributes rights that directly emanate from and favor certain groups in particular. The *Conseil d'Etat* recognizes this paradox when it writes, "Herein lies the heart of the problem—the law guarantees this freedom to an individual and not to a group." However, this original and undoubtedly exclusive approach could amply contribute to the French system of protecting differences if it were properly used. On the other hand, it is difficult to agree with the *Conseil d'Etat* when it contends that the "French conception seeks to achieve the same result (as that of protecting minorities) but by other means." In fact, the protection of minorities is based on a political or ethical project bent on preserving the group's survival as well as its particularities, both representing components of the national community. The French conception is not or no longer is hostile to minority expressions, however it does not afford them long-term legal protection. It simply opens up possibilities for private recourse.

Above all, the French practice of protecting differences, while keeping the foundation and survival of unity in mind, remains spontaneously assimilative. When it is not, no project or overall conception exists within the rhetorical framework of the traditional principles. As a result, each step taken in the realm of difference rights appears as an ambiguous derogation unwillingly conceded to by political authorities. As one author remarked, "the incapacity or refusal to rethink principles so as to better integrate social change becomes a serious obstacle to efficient and coherent management of problems raised by difference."[66] This particular diagnosis has become increasingly true as contemporary reality multiplies the number of difficult challenges facing the French system.

## Contemporary Challenges

The French system is now being exposed to both domestic and international pressure to adopt a radically new attitude toward minorities. So

far, responses have taken their inspiration from previous practices. Consequently, they lack a general vision, and remain fragmentary and contradictory. In the linguistic realm, they are even characterized by a toughened French identity discourse.

### *Pressure on the French system*

The French system is undergoing both domestic and international pressure to push back the limits of what has thus far been a pragmatic approach, so as to create a new way of linking unity and diversity.

#### *Domestic pressure*

Domestic pressure has a history and is expressed in a variety of ways, demonstrated by adaptations in the French juridical system. Presently, pressure exerted by immigration is drawing the most attention due to its social and religious dimensions. Much has been written on this topic and will not be analyzed here.[67] Recent developments in New Caledonia are characterized by a very innovative step in decolonization. However, the Corsican question raises broad general issues as well as specific linguistic demands.

*The Corsican question* Pressure exerted on the French system in this particular case is quite striking. Specifically, it involves the expression of a nationalistic trend that neither repression nor secret negotiations have succeeded in reducing. It is supported by a minority but important part of the electoral body. More generally, there is a much more broadly supported demand for recognition of the particularities of the Corsican people.[68]

Convinced of the need to democratically elaborate a political solution to the Corsican problem, Prime Minister Lionel Jospin launched on December 13, 1999, the so-called "process" of negotiations with the representatives, without excluding the nationalists, of the territorial assembly of Corsica. A strong majority of the Assembly reclaimed, a new statute organizing a regime of autonomy for the island, notably with the transfer of legislative power, based on the model of autonomous Italian regions. The final project adopted on July 19, 2000 by the government was tailored to meet this demand.[69] New domains of competence would be attributed to the Corsican regions, but above all, in order to realize the adaptation of legislative norms they would be equipped with a regulatory power: the power to depart from certain legislative dispositions, within conditions defined by the Parliament and

under the formal control of the latter. The teaching of the Corsican language would take place during the scholarly hours of the school in the nursery and elementary schools and could therefore be followed by all the students, except those whom it is not desired by the parents." This formula would provoke polemical reactions, judged by some as being insufficient in the Corsican context in order to guarantee liberty of the parents. After a transition period lasting until 2004, a constitutional reform would make Corsica a unique territorial entity, with legislative competence lying within the Assembly of Corsica.

The gist of the project was summarized by Jospin in these terms, "The unity was not forcible unity . . . the insularity and the Corsican specificity can justify an exploration of new paths which would permit unity and diversity."[70] If one compares this to the different local, autonomous regimes that were implemented in most European countries, one would be bothered by the timidity of this plan.[71] But the novelty, which was considerable for France, lay in the power given to the locally elected officials to decide legislative adaptations, the base of a new contract between Corsica and the Republic.

This project met with massive approval and support in the Corsican Assembly.[72] However, there was strong reluctance among one section of the government, attached to the dogmas of Jacobinism. The Minister of the Interior Jean-Pierre Chevènement, was alarmed at the threat to republican 'indivisibility'. Similarly the hostile reactions recalled, "the sad episodes of the history of decolonization in France."[73] For Jacques Attali, "that which just happened is an attack to the heart of national identity"[74]; for Jean-François Kahn, "the principle of teaching of the Corsican language at school . . . justifies the instigation of a movement of Republican resistance"[75]; others raised the specter of "autonomous muslim bodies" on the metropolitan territories.[76] A collective of intellectuals did not hesitate to affirm that the "project of Jospin on Corsica constitute potential mortal danger to the Republic."[77]

The proposal of the law on Corsica was finally adopted on May 22, 2001, in its first reading and review, by the National Assembly with a large majority.[78] The project received a critical review from the *Conseil d'Etat*, was slowed down by the President of the Republic, and finally the most controversial provisions were altered, to avoid the risks of censorship by the *Conseil Constitutionnel*. Much to the detriment of the Corsican nationalists the competence of legislative adaptation was surrounded and restricted to the non-obligatory character of the teaching of the Corsican language was affirmed.

## Linguistic Demands

Demands for the preservation of minority languages have always existed.[79] Generally, they are expressed by regionalist organizations, associations created with this specific objective in mind,[80] specialized periodicals, and the like. These initiatives now benefit from a new context wherein regional consciousness and identity needs are being expressed in an environment free from the defamatory comments of the past, and legitimized by examples from abroad as well as certain developments in the European construction. For the defenders of regional languages, the objective is to impose the idea that Jacobins are not the "sole proprietors of the Republican idea" and that one must cease to think of difference in an oppositional mode.[81]

Presently, these demands have been concentrated in the area of education, and are expressed in diverse ways: spontaneous activist measures, demonstrations,[82] petitions,[83] specific demands by parents to public education authorities. Highly diverse associations have emanated from this activity.[84] In addition, a certain number of remarkable initiatives have emerged, such as private school networks created for the sole purpose of teaching in the minority language: *Bressolas* and *Arrels* in Catalogna, *Calendretas* in Occitan, *Cultura di lingua corsa* in Corsica, *Diwan* in Brittany, *Seaska* in the Basque country, and *ABCM-Zweisprachichkeit* in Alsace. A total of 5,000 students are enrolled in these schools,[85] of which more than 2,000 from kindergarten to high school can be found in the *Diwan*.[86] These initiatives resulted from profound dissatisfaction with what is quantitatively and qualitatively offered in public schools.

It is important to underline that these demands are often followed up by local assemblies (municipalities, departments, regions) who vote on certain aspects in this realm and distribute subsidies.[87] This is also reiterated on the national level. Since the end of World War II, bills in favor of regional languages have numbered in the dozens.[88] Perhaps the most radical is a recent proposal by Green Party deputies that calls for a constitutional recognition of regional cultures and languages based on the idea that they "are part and parcel of our identity and contribute to the cultural radiance of our country."[89]

The more precise case of Alsace demonstrates that linguistic demands are widely shared by the population and energetically supported by local officials. Public opinion polls spanning the years 1953–1990 show that more than 84 percent of those questioned were in favor of teaching German in public primary schools in Alsace. The Regional Council as well as the General Council adopted a series of similar declarations in its

favor. In 1984, a petition concerning the teaching of regional languages and cultures was sent to President Mitterrand, signed by 5 senators, 10 deputies, 56 regional representatives, 413 mayors, and 291 deputy mayors and municipal representatives.[90] By 1990, this led to the creation of a Superior Committee of Reference for the Alemanic and French culture in Alsace and Moselle.

Results from domestic pressure are generally disappointing compared to expectations. However, there are some noteworthy accomplishments, for example, the creation of bilingual classes. In 1994, the Rector of the Academy of Alsace underlined the importance of precocious bilingual teaching and public school efforts toward this: "The Academy's priority for bilingual education is to develop teaching modules of 13 hours of German wherein lessons are evenly distributed among French and German. To be efficient, the bilingual curriculum is founded on a precocious start and continued follow-up."[91] The question is, why not generalize this?

It was effectively this path that the new Minister of Education Jack Lang, a partisan of the preservation of linguistic diversity, favored. He announced in April 2001 that he wished to base the actions of his minister on "new plans in order to teach the regional languages". These anticipated intentions that the regional languages would be integrated in the "plan of the development of the living languages of the primary school," but above all recognizing bilingual teaching from the nursery school level itself, "the privileged mode of teaching regional languages."[92] This policy involves the recruitment of teachers who have passed special exams and it rests on a partnership with the regions concerned. It led to an accord with the movement of Diwan schools, which was ratified on May 28, 2001 by the minister, to integrate these schools into the public teaching system.

One can estimate, like the president of the Diwan movement, that this measure comes at a time of "historic change between the Republic and the languages of France."[93] But the manner in which France reacts to international pressure on the question of minorities may lead us nevertheless to suspend judgment.

## The Emergence of an International Legal Framework Protecting Minorities

Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on

December 16, 1966.[94] This text underlines two important characteristics. First, it corresponds to the individualist approach governing the recognition of human rights by the United Nations following the 1948 Universal Declaration: a minority group does not receive specific rights, only its members. Second, these rights do not require the State to do something, rather they define a duty of abstention by the State, thus prohibiting only oppressive policies.[95]

The Declaration of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, adopted on December 18, 1992, proceeds in an entirely different manner. Indeed, it affirms that "States protect the existence and . . . identity" of minorities and that they shall (Article 1). In this text, the right to use and to teach minority languages is expressly recognized to the benefit of individuals and not of the group. This notion respects the modern legal order, which is based on the principles of the law of the individual. Nonetheless the Declaration confirms and legitimizes an evolution of international conceptions on the subject of the protection of minorities, which contrast with doctrinal positions to which France remains faithful.

This evolution is even more advanced in Europe.[96] Two conventions of the Council of Europe particularly merit attention: the European Charter for regional or minority languages of November 5, 1992 and the Framework Convention for the protection of national minorities of November 10, 1994.

### *French Ambiguity*

France thus finds itself in an awkward position. On the international level, France did indeed ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, but expressed reservation over Article 27, based on arguments frequently presented by its representatives to the United Nations, which stipulate that there are no minorities in France.[97] This *reservation* which simply means that the pertinence of a minority problematic is rejected by France, nevertheless renders "any attempt to find a circumstantial solution" virtually impossible for France.[98]

Within the European context, one rediscovers the same behavior from France, founded upon the same principle. These beliefs France to reject the texts elaborated by the Council of Europe and particularly the Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. For the same reason, France refuses to collaborate in the investigations instigated by the

European Community and the Council of Europe for the purpose of establishing some reliable data on linguistic diversity in Europe. However, at the same time, France wants to influence contemporary evolutions and especially to participate as an actor directing the reorganization of Europe, wherein the protection of minorities is one of many elements. This results in an increasingly uncomfortable diplomatic position for France.[99]

Generally speaking, the French position on the issue of minorities is uncomfortable because it is based on conceptions which are not understood elsewhere. Other unitary States have adapted to the institutionalized protection of minorities. This does not appear contrary to the principle of equality in the manner in which it is respected by European countries and promoted by European jurisdictions in Strasbourg and Luxembourg, indeed in a much more progressive manner than by French jurisdiction. Hence, criticism of France essentially targets what is perceived as French anachronic Jacobinism, more preoccupied with the State's unity than with citizens' rights.

French diplomats who offer little in the way of convincing arguments compound this perception. To justify reservations over Article 27, they argue, "insofar as religion and language (other than French) are concerned, each individual may choose. The French government reiterates the fact that these two domains do not belong to the realm of public law but to the citizen's exercise of public freedoms." "Only the national minority formula satisfactorily reflects the object of the Declaration, while religious, linguistic, or ethnic criteria—alone—fail to justify any satisfactory circumstance."[100] These statements are highly debatable and a contrary stand can more readily be defended. Unless one mixes up faith, religious practice, and religion, it is not possible to simply reduce religious aspects/religiosity to the individual exercise of public liberties. To ignore the cultural dimension of religion prohibits one from understanding recent political events in Eastern and Central Europe, and fails to take account of the status of religions in France. Insofar as language is concerned, it is far more than a communication technique left to the individual's discretion. Language inspires the imagination, expresses values, and serves as the basis of relationships. As such, it creates personalities, builds a community, and can subsequently lead to institutions. Of course, when it is either implicitly or explicitly a question of the French language, France's representatives abroad directly acknowledge this reality.[101] Indeed, the paradox lies in the fact that France defends the notion of national minority. But this rather ambiguous concept is only pertinent in certain precise political contexts.[102] Its use in Eastern and

Central Europe relies on an ethnic vision of the nation, quite different from the official political French position. However, relatively objective social data such as religion and language give rise to negative, exclusionary, and marginalization practices, which can be easily noticed and are constitutive of minorities. In reality, French arguments are essentially political in nature. France has actively participated in all forums where the question of minorities has been raised, and has endeavored to orient discussions toward an acceptance of its conceptions. Reformulating the question around the concept of national minority thus protects France from possible juridical incursions, and the inapplicability of this notion within the French internal system is thus secured.

However, this rather subtle approach is not appreciated abroad. Seeking to play a major role in Europe, France has actively participated in the establishment of a European system protecting minorities, and has taken on political responsibility in this area. However, France watches carefully so that those judicial aspects of these evolutions do not concern it. In the long run, however, it has become difficult to justify that minorities living elsewhere be protected, all the while contending that no such minorities exist "at home." Likewise, it has become difficult to say that cultural diversity in Europe should be defended, without ratifying international documents drafted for this purpose. With this sort of behavior, France seems to be defending a double standard.[103] In stepping back from important evolutions in legal conceptions underway in both the international and European arena, France loses the influence it could exert if it chose to develop its own juridical capacities to organize differences that are based not on the communitarian model, but on principles of equality and liberty.[104]

## The Status of Languages in France

By turning to the law, French officials thought they could protect the French language from threatening dangers. What this has ultimately led to is an increased marginalization of regional languages, illustrated by jurisprudence relative to their use. The ambiguous and even incoherent nature characteristic of this domain has thus also intensified.

### *The Protection of the French Language*

The aforementioned theory of the French nation contends that France is a political community founded on its relationship with the citizen,

and not the expression of a particular ethnic community.[105] This representation is maintained because it does not lack justification and corresponds to strong views still present in French society today. It is opposed to the ethnic conception of the nation that traditionally, for France, is incarnated in Germany. However, due to the status attributed to the French language, such a vision deserves to be qualified.[106]

At the start of the French Revolution, universalism was declared, by the force of things, to be inscribed in a determined collectivity organized in a very specific manner within French borders, and within which only one language was to be spoken. Hence, ambiguity took root: the nation's universalism progressively led to the evolution of French society into an ethnic community.[107] As mentioned, the will for political unity led to a social unification process set within a specific cultural framework based on a single language. The Third Republic pursued this ethnic nationalization program, which resulted in the disappearance of other indigenous languages, all the while presenting itself as progressive.[108] This included educational imagery grounded in the history of this community's characteristics.[109] As an essential factor of unity, language therefore became a central element of the representation of France as a nation.[110]

Today, efforts are being made to protect French from the hegemonic expansion of Anglo-American, perceived as a serious threat in France.[111] No longer is it a question of expanding the national foundation but of preserving it, and the law has been mobilized to achieve this goal.[112]

Following several measures underlining France's preoccupation with defending French and working toward its expansion and enrichment, the Bas-Lauriol law was passed in 1975 relative to the use of the French language.[113] Its objective was to guarantee the presence of French within the economic realm by protecting "users of French, in the largest acceptance of the term (consumers, products, goods, and service users, public and news documents) from misunderstandings that result from the use of texts written in a foreign language or from texts in French that include foreign expressions. The law thus renders the use of French obligatory in all texts, and prohibits the presence of foreign expressions when French equivalents exist" in a certain number of situations and cases.[114]

"Defend the language: why not? However, one must be careful not to pick the wrong opponents and wage battle with ensuing victims."[115] Because it did not sufficiently take these points into account, the aforementioned law proved incapable of stopping the denounced onslaught of foreign terms. In 1994, the Toubon law was designed to make up for

this and is much more restrictive.[116] Abrogating the 1975 law, it expanded its application and precisely defined obligations imposed on the commercialization of goods, products, and services, as well as contracts, work relationships, colloquiums, publications, audio-visual communications, and so on. However, the *Conseil Constitutionnel* censured an important provision of the Toubon law: the requirement to use terms or expressions, retained as equivalents in foreign terms by ministerial terminology commissions and approved by regulation.[117] The *Conseil* decided that relative to this point, the principle of liberty limited the legislative's power to regulate language content. Though it can order public persons and private persons accomplishing a public service mission to use official terminology, it cannot order private persons to do so without violating Article 11 of the Declaration of Human and Citizen Rights that proclaims the "freedom of communication of thoughts and opinions." For the *Conseil*, "this freedom implies the right for each individual to choose the terms he/she deems necessary for the expression of his/her thoughts." In the final result, "the promulgated law imposes (. . .) the obligatory use of French on public persons as well as private persons without requiring the latter to use an official terminology."[118]

Meanwhile, officials turned to the status of the French language, a major preoccupation of constitutive powers, enhanced by a June 25, 1992 constitutional revision required by the ratification of the EU treaty. Up until then, successive regimes did not find it "necessary to mention French in fundamental legal texts, undoubtedly believing that things were obvious . . . This seemed to suffice."[119] Coming from right-wing opposition, the initiative was seconded by the socialist government. It was based on preoccupation with the developments of European construction provided for by the Maastricht treaty,[120] and led to the "emergence of a demand calling for a guaranteed permanence of the French language." It also resulted from a widespread reaction to newfound enthusiasm for things English.[121] The official political objective was to establish a steadfast juridical barrier preventing the penetration of English in certain domains. Hence, the French Constitution now proclaims, "French is the language of the Republic"[122] (Article 2, para. 2).

The constitutional value accorded to the French language confirms the intentions of the Toubon law, especially Article 1 that defines the French language as a "fundamental element of France's personality and patrimony." A circular related to the use of the French language by public servants is explicit on this point: "The French language is a constitutive element of our national identity, history, and culture. Reaffirming

the status of French symbolizes the unity of the French Republic and favors the complete integration of everyone within the community's activity."[123] Thus, the ethnicization of national identity is pursued, and the distinction between the subjective and objective nation is blurred.

One deputy interpreted the Toubon law as "a sort of identity reflex brought about within a climate of uncertainty fed by the fear of cultural imperialism on a planetary level."[124] Indeed, more generalized identity crisis seems to be underway,[125] resulting in more pronounced marginalization of regional languages.

### *The Marginalization of Regional Languages*

As we have seen, the marginalization of regional languages and cultures reaches back into history. Laws relative to the French language initially laid out the framework.[126] With the 1975 law, voices were heard to remark "isn't the supposed goal of protecting French against the onslaught of English nothing else but a new attack against regional languages?"[127] Defenders of regional languages, unsatisfied with the ritual claims that vigilance with regard to the French language did not impair the use of regional languages, severely criticized the Toubon law for the same reasons. One remarked that "If this law were applied in Canada, French would be abolished."[128] Though Article 21 of the Toubon law declares that its provisions be "applied without ignoring legislation and regulations concerning regional languages in France, and that it not be opposed to their use," this is a rather limited way of putting things, since the use in question is essentially private, guaranteed but negatively limited by law with regard to the use of French, especially since the latter has been constitutionally recognized as the "language of the Republic."[129] Indeed, the *Conseil Constitutionnel*'s evaluation of the law only mentions regional languages when their existence filters through the French language, and when its terms can be accepted as supplementary elements of the vitality of the French language itself: "the French language evolves," writes the *Conseil*, "like any living language, and integrates terms of various sources into its basic vocabulary, be they regional language, popular, or foreign expressions."

The fact is that this new legal context offers a more solid terrain for jurisprudence in the linguistic domain.[130] For quite some time, courts have opposed public use of regional languages. The contemporary surge of demand in this area has enriched their jurisprudence. The *Conseil d'Etat* thus replied to an advocate of Breton that a legal action not written in French was unacceptable.[131] Whereas townships and regions

strive to promote local traditional toponymy, the *Conseil d'Etat* has also nonetheless found fault with addressing envelopes in regional languages. According to this particular decision, "the refusal to send correspondence to receivers whose address was written in Breton . . . constitutes neither a denial of the freedom of expression nor illegal discrimination on the part of public postal service users."[132] The *Conseil d'Etat* accepts that publications in regional languages do not receive subsidies as do other regional or local publications, on the basis that publications should be in French: "those clauses that are criticized do not concern regulations relative to the citizen's civic rights and fundamental guarantees for the exercise of public liberties."[133]

Inscribing the French language into the Constitution allowed the *Conseil Constitutionnel* to clearly establish principles for excluding regional languages from the public sphere. This was accomplished in 1996 in a decision concerning Polynesia that contained a clause relative to the eventual use of Tahitian and other Polynesian languages. The *Conseil* decided that French as an official language "should be extended in French Polynesia to moral persons in the public sphere, to persons in the private sphere exercising a public service mission, and to people in their relationships with public service administrations; any other interpretation is contrary to Article 2 of the Constitution."[134]

Thus, the main impact of the Constitution's Article 2, according to the *Conseil Constitutionnel*'s interpretation, is not directed toward English,[135] but rather against the regional languages, as certain people had announced it would be.[136] Indeed, due to its constitutional nature,[137] it firmly distinguishes between the domain of the French language and that of regional languages, as if a security system were established to protect against subsequent laws that could allow for more flexible approaches benefiting regional languages. In any case, a certain number of speeches in Parliament have demonstrated that this objective was widely shared.[138]

This risk was raised during debates between different Parliament members, and would have been avoided if the proposition made by some that regional languages also be mentioned in the Constitution had been followed. Article 2 would then have read: "The language of the Republic is French, all the while respecting territorial and regional languages and cultures of France."[139] This would have attributed constitutional legitimacy to regional languages and emphasized the fact that the Republic did not seek their demise. The Minister of Justice Mr. Vauzelle was opposed to this amendment, and expressed his desire to simply have an ordinary law cover this aspect. However, this remains unconvincing in light of the

fact that no such law was ever passed. In 1982 the Giordan report, related to a status for languages in France, was submitted to Mr. Lang but was never pursued. Activities initiated by the National Committee on Regional Languages and Cultures (*Conseil national des langues et cultures régionales*), established in 1986 by Laurent Fabius when he was prime minister, have never attracted much attention.

In light of this situation, France has become ". . . the only country in the European Community whose Constitution privileges the existence of a single official language without referring to the status of other languages historically implanted in its territory. All other countries that refer to the language issue in their Constitutions make specific mention of other languages spoken within their territory."[140] French authorities have therefore seemingly set up barriers against the ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, a question which was the object of intense political and juridical debates.

## The Ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

### *A Pragmatic Approach*

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages on June 25, 1992. France, Cyprus, Greece, the United Kingdom, and Turkey abstained. At least five ratifications were necessary for the Charter to be applied, and this was obtained by March 1, 1998.[141] Polarization surrounding this convention can be explained by its originality and by the flexibility in proposed measures. These two characteristics aimed at taking into account the variety of resistance expressed by different states with regard to their own obligations, and bypassing the difficulty that the minority question encounters in places such as France.

Compared with other documents on the protection of minorities, the Charter's originality lies in the fact that it refuses to attribute rights either to groups as such nor to members of those groups considered separately. It organizes the "protection of historical regional or minority languages of Europe, some of which are in danger of eventual extinction" (Preamble). Starting from this objective perspective, it thus avoids the irritating problems of definition oftentimes exploited by ill-intended states, related to specific rights attributed to certain individuals. It also avoids controversies over the issue of collective rights and communitarianism. Regional or minority languages are defined as "languages that

are traditionally used within a given territory of a state by nationals of that State who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the State's population, and are different from the official language(s) of the State" (Article 1). In addition, the Charter distinguishes between languages whose practice extends across a determined geographic area and other languages, the latter benefiting from a lesser degree of protection. Last but not least, the Charter does not take into consideration languages spoken among immigrant populations.

The Charter's flexibility is inherent in its very structure. Article 7 in Part II determines the objectives and principles that States must abide by, that is, establish an institutional and normative framework aimed at protecting all regional and minority languages spoken within their territory. Part III is much longer (Article 8–14). It provides for a vast array of concrete measures (found within 94 paragraphs or subparagraphs) aimed at favoring the use of these languages in the public sphere. The State designates those languages to benefit from this framework and defines measures to be undertaken. The State is only required to apply a minimum of 35 paragraphs or subparagraphs of these articles, specifically chosen for each language under consideration, of which at least three within each of Articles 8 (education), and 12 (cultural activity and infrastructure) and one within Article 9 (justice), 10 (administrative and public service authorities), 11 (media), and 13 (economic and social life), so as to guarantee a balanced distribution of agreements. The Charter offers a substantial amount of latitude to States to resolve issues of implementation and evaluation for themselves. However, there is no doubt that States are required to take the Charter's objective into serious consideration when evaluating its content. To guarantee this, a nonbinding follow-up procedure is provided for, based on periodical reports sent by the States to a committee of experts. The latter can also obtain information from other sources, then draft its own report to be submitted to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. Hence, States have refused to place this politically sensitive issue in the hands of the courts.

This *à la carte* system applied to the Charter's provisions allows for greater respect of each State's sovereignty. In addition, it expresses the goal of preserving linguistic diversity based on democratic principles and the respect of human rights as guaranteed by the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental freedoms. Generally speaking, therefore, the Charter does not threaten the French legal order. One may even remark on a certain similarity to the French

framework of difference rights. In any case, the Charter establishes a bridge between European/international and French conceptions on protecting diversity.

### *The Necessity for Juridical Adaptation*

A certain amount of uncertainty revolves around the degree of adaptation required by the French legal system in order to ratify the Charter.

Requested by the government to review the issue, the *Conseil d'Etat* had already rendered an opinion on the compatibility of the Charter with the Republic's constitutional principles.[142] In its September 24, 1996 report, the *Conseil d'Etat* agreed upon its compatibility in the realm of education, culture, and the media. It also rather frivolously stated that the Charter's clauses "attributes to regional and minority languages a status that is already covered by internal law." On the other hand, the *Conseil d'Etat* did not find the requirement to implement a minimum of provisions found within Article 9 and 10 compatible with ratification. In Article 9, simply the possibility—not guaranteeing a specific right—to use a regional language in the judicial system according to diverse and incremental modalities is contrary to Article 2 of the Constitution. Insofar as Article 10 is concerned, the *Conseil d'Etat* expressed the following: ". . . the State would find it almost impossible to avoid the difficulty created by Article 10 . . . apparently compatible with the use of French as long as this would not be an exclusive practice. This option does not allow for a consistent policy in achieving the goals set forth in Part II, and which consist in promoting the use of these languages in the public sphere in the same manner as in the private sphere." By adopting this "all or nothing" approach,[143] the *Conseil d'Etat* deliberately ignored the intentions of the Convention's authors as well as the *à la carte* approach. It thus demonstrated that, independent of any constitutional considerations, it is "generally opposed to the promotion of the use of regional languages in the public sphere."[144] This negative vision, sparsely argued from a legal standpoint, led the *Conseil d'Etat* to refuse exploring the adaptive capacities of the French legal system, and on the contrary, to develop restrictive interpretations of these capacities.

Based on a totally different approach, Mme. Nicole Péry, Socialist deputy, submitted a report to Mr. Jospin, completed by M. Bernard Poignant, mayor of Quimper.[145] The report starts with the idea that regional languages belong to France's common patrimony, and that the

Republic "must account for the life of these languages on its territory." In addition, it remarks that the present situation allows for the option of "Republican regionalism." These positions are then translated into ten principles allowing for the promotion of linguistic diversity all the while respecting the official status of the French language. Essentially attributed to the educational realm, these principles then provide for a series of measures permitting their implementation as well as the proposal to ratify the Charter. "Our credibility would be greater if we take part in a genuine recognition of our linguistic and cultural diversity."[146]

For M. Poignant, ratifying the Charter was of utmost political importance, requiring the implementation of legal measures, including a constitutional revision if necessary that could be envisioned in various ways. With regard to this point, he suggested formulating a new legal judgement, and the prime minister conferred this particular mission to Mr. Guy Carcassonne, professor of public law, who submitted his report in September 1998.[147] After having studied the Charter's mechanism, underlined pertinent constitutional principles, and meticulously analyzed law and jurisdictional decisions resulting from it, Mr. Carcassone concluded that the Charter "is not intrinsically incompatible with the Constitution."[148] Then turning to a detailed analysis of the Charter's resolutions, he concluded that Article 7 on principles and objectives was compatible as long as the notion of "group" was defined as the simple addition of individuals, one not creating a distinct entity, thus preserving the French political conception of the nation and Republican equality. Finally, Mr. Caracassonne counted between 46 and 52 Charter provisions that were compatible with the Constitution. In light of this analysis, Mr. Carcassonne concluded that the Parliament could authorize the ratification of the Charter without the need to revise the Constitution.

Reassured by this report, the prime minister, Lionel Jospin, set out to achieve just that. During a reunion in Budapest of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, France finally signed the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, and announced that it would apply 39 of its provisions. But he under-estimated democratic opposition, "the fantasies that were developed were nourished by the more diverse imaginary fears for a potential loss of national sovereignty."[149] In this context, the president of the Republic decided to refer the case to the *Conseil Constitutionnel* in order to decide between contradictory views on the compatibility of the Charter with the Constitution.[150]

### *The Obstacle of the* Conseil Constitutionnel

In its decision of June 15, 1999, the Council effectively affirmed the constitutional incompatibility of the Charter.[151] In considering the fundamental principles of indivisibility of the Republic, of the unity of the French people, and of the equality of the citizens, as well as paragraph 1 of Article 2 of the Constitution making French the language of the Republic, it decided that the Charter was contradictory to the Constitution. The *conseil* judged that the combined provisions of the Charter conferred, "some specific rights to groups of speakers of regional and minority languages, in territories where these languages are used," and "tended to recognize a right to practice a language other than French not only in 'private life' but also in the public sphere, to which the Charter binds justice and administrative authorities and the public services."

This decision was evidently applauded by all those who were hostile to the promotion of regional languages. It received approval from lawyers more sensitive to the unitary demands of the Republic than to the loss of France's regional languages and to the cultural impoverishment that would result.[152] Others denounced "l'intégrisme césaro-papiste" of the *Conseil Constitutionnel* "in the forefront of the fighters for sovereignty."[153] The constitutional judges appear more anxious to give rigid meanings to relative notions than to adapt them to a world constantly in flux. Thier decision expands in effect, "the constitutional powers in respect of regional languages and develops a reasoning more restrictive than that which was held in 1991" when it was judged that the teaching of the Corsican language was not contrary to the principle of equality "as long as it has no obligatory character." This time, "the constitutionality of the projected measures no longer depended on their obligatory character or not: it depends upon the distinction between the granting of a right to utilize a language other than French in public life (unconstitutional) and the favor granted to a speaker to utilize such a language (constitutional.)"[154] This distinction as well as the appeal of the principle not of unity but of "unicité" of the French people accentuates the process of ethnicization of the French nation: the people are no longer a community of citizens but a community of Francophones.

This constriction posed by the *Conseil Constitutionnel* could only be lifted by a modification of the Constitution, which the president of the Republic did not judge appropriate despite a request from the prime minister. The question of the ratification of the Charter found itself

definitively regulated at the cost of a substantial degradation of the image of France.[155]

## Conclusion

The issue of regional languages reveals difficulties experienced by the French Republican unitarian and centralized State in confronting domestic and international developments that appear to threaten it. "Not a single evolution underway in the world today is a favorable one for us," remarked Mr. Védrine, Minister of Foreign Affairs, adding that in order to deal with them, a certain number of "qualities that France does not spontaneously possess" are necessary.[156] This requires adaptations on both the domestic and international levels. This chapter has demonstrated that such efforts are perfectly compatible with the domestic legal order which is in reality capable of more flexibility than political discourse wants to admit. In order to implement these efforts, it is important not to submit to an alienating representation of France that renders sacred and fossilizes the Republican tradition. Indeed, the latter is not a permanent fixed object inspiring sacred incantations based on defensive tactics that render it inefficient and disconnected from reality. The time has come to accentuate, systemize, and theorize an evolution that is taking place in a disorganized manner, not so as to deny Republican principles but to renew them. Concerning the question of equality between the sexes, the French legal system, after intense debates, has demonstrated that it is capable of considerable adaptation. It broke with the Jacobin conception of citizenship by accepting to modify the constitutional text to include the idea of parity between women and men.[157]

The signing of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages belongs to this same evolution. Its ratification would herald a more open conception of the nation that is able to integrate French diversity without denying its universalist character. It might even be the price to pay so that France may genuinely preserve its universal values by rejecting temptations toward identity ossification.[158] The *Conseil Constitutionnel* which had not wanted this development, encouraged a dogmatic and regressive conception of unity. It was left to the government to decide the route to be taken: the implementation of concrete national measures, such as those undertaken by Lang in the domain of teaching and those envisaged in the sphere of the new statute of Corsica. But in so doing, France maintains its paradoxical position, untenable in the long run, between legal accommodation and

ideological tightening. It is only by constitutional recognition of the linguistic diversity of France that this contradiction could be overcome.

## Notes

1. In a 1992 report, the *Conseil d'Etat* underlined the following: "Each year, the European Community introduces more regulations into our juridical corpus than the French government (approximately 54% compared to 46%). Today, more than one (new) text out of two comes from Brussels." "In one out of six cases, regulations that the French must respect emanate from the European Community." Excerpts taken from *Problèmes économiques* 2, p. 346, La documentation française, 1993.
2. Ph. Moreau Defarges, "La France, province de l'Union européenne," *Politique étrangère*, I/1996.
3. Refer to the subject of the Singer-Polignac Foundation, Alliance Française, La Langue Française à la croisée des chemins, Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000, p. 144.
4. We prefer the expression "right to differences" to "difference rights" used by other authors. See, e.g., Geneviève Koubi, "Droits et minorités dans la République française," in *Le droit et les minorités—analyses et textes*, A. Fenet, ed. Bruylant, 1995, particularly p. 221 ss. where the author nevertheless recognizes the dispersed and pragmatic nature of this right.
5. Carré de Malberg, *Contribution à la théorie générale de l'Etat*, Sirey, réédition du CNRS, T.I, 1920, p. 3.
6. This slippery slope notion has oftentimes led to an erroneous usage of the term "nation" by historians of France. See Steven Englund, "De l'usage du mot 'nation' par les historiens et réciproquement," *Le Monde Diplomatique*, March 1988.
7. J.-M. Pontier, *La République en France*, Dalloz, coll. "Connaissance du droit," 1998, p. 146.
8. See F. Braudel, *L'identité de la France*, Champs: Flammarion, 3 vol., 1986 and 1990; Xavier de Planhol (collab. Paul Claval), *Géographie historique de la France*, Paris: Fayard, 1988, p. 635 demonstrating that France was essentially heterogeneous, a puzzle whose pieces were held together by national sentiment.
9. Roland Debbasch, "L'indivisibilité de la République et l'existence de statuts particuliers en France," in *Etat, régions, et droits locaux*, Institut du droit local alsacien-mosellan, *Economica*, 1997, p. 77. This text was reprinted in *Revue Française de Droit Constitutionnel* (*R.F.D.C.*), 30–1997, pp. 361, 77. For a more general discussion of this subject by the same author, see *Le principe révolutionnaire d'unité et d'indivisibilité de la République, Economica*, 1988.
10. See R. Debbasch: "The unified State implies a single political design, provided for by a unique constitutional structure and uniform territorial organization," "L'indivisibilité de la République," p. 77.

11. Jürgen Schwarze, *Droit administratif européen*, Bruylant: Office des publications des Communautés européennes, 1994, T. 1, p. 584.
12. See Mona Ozouf: "With pragmatism but also a certain degree of brutality, the Third Republic proceeded to *neutralize cultural differences." Le Monde*, June 19, 1989.
13. Maurice Agulhon: ". . . in our history, the Republic ideal is more or less identified with liberal democracy rather than democracy *per se*, since non-liberal-plebicitarian or Caesarian democracies have existed. I firmly contend that those in France who defend the Republic also defend democracy and liberty," *Le Monde*, July 9–10, 1989.
14. Mona Ozouf, *Le Monde*, June 19, 1998.
15. Suzanne Citron, *Le Monde*, March 21, 1997.
16. Michel Tibon-Cornillot, "Le défi de l'immigration maghrébine," *Les minorités à l'âge de l'Etat-nation*, Groupement pour les droits des minorités: Fayard, 1985, p. 295.
17. Ibid., p. 299; "Statistics provided by the Minister of the Interior indicate that between 1880 and 1890, 18 million French people were descendants of first, second, or third generation immigrants. Presently, more than one third of the French population is of non-French origin. This is quite an astonishing figure that clearly highlights the French society's large capacity to integrate newcomers," idem., p. 292.
18. Ibid., p. 306.
19. Mona Ozouf, *Le Monde*, June 19, 1998.
20. General bibliographical references on this subject do not abound, however, some excellent analyses exist. See Danièle Lochak, "Les minorités et le droit public français: du refus des différences à la gestion des différences," in *Les minorités et leurs droits depuis 1789*, directed by Alain Fenet and Gérard Soulier, L'Harmattan, 1989, pp. 111–183. Geneviève Koubi, 1994, "Droits et minorités dans la République française," in *Droit et Société*, 27, pp. 381–419, based on a study presented before the *Commission française pour l'UNESCO*, April 27, 1993. Norbert Rouland (ed.), "La France et les minorités," in the handbook *Droits des minorités et des peuples autochtones*, PUF, coll. Droit fondamental, 1996, pp. 307–345.
21. Jean-François Flauss, "Le principe d'égalité et l'existence de droits particuliers," *Etat, régions et droits locaux*, pp. 89–90.
22. Overseas departments include *Guadeloupe, Martinique, French Guyana, and the Reunion. Overseas territories include New Caledonia, French Polynesia, Wallis, Futuna, and Austral and Antarctic French territories*. Mayotte, Saint Pierre, and Miquelon are specific territorial collectivities.
23. Ronland, *Droits des minorités et des peuples autochtones*, p. 317.
24. In the case of French Guyana, the presence of indigenous Amerindian populations offers a particular dimension to the problem of handling diversity. For more on this subject, see Irma Arnoux, "Les Amerindiens dans le département de la Guyane—problèmes juridiques et politiques," *Revue de Droit Public*

(*R.D.P.*), 11–12/1996, p. 1615–1651. N. Rouland, 1996, "Etre Amérindien en Guyane française: de quel droit?" *R.F.D.C.*, 27, pp. 495–522.

25. See Thierry Michalon, 1982, "La République française, une fédération qui s'ignore?" *R.D.P.*, pp. 623–688.
26. See the brochure published by the *Institut de droit local alsacien-mosellan*, 8 rue des écrivains, B.P. 49, 67061, Strasbourg Cedex. For further discussion of this subject, see *Etat, régions et droits locaux*, quatrième partie: "Un droit local à la recherche d'un statut particulier: l'Alsace-Moselle," pp. 156–219. Also see Pierre Otscheidt, 1990, "Le bijuridisme dans un système fédéral ou d'autonomie locale," *Revue internationale de droit comparé* (*R.I.D.C.*) 2, pp. 469–494. J. Flauss, 1992, "Droit local alsacien-mosellan et constitution," *R.D.P.*, pp. 1625–1685.
27. This no longer only includes the very particular status of Alsacian-Mosellan local law. The *Conseil Constitutionnel* has allowed this to be extended elsewhere. For example, with regard to *directives territoriales d'aménagement* whose content varies from one area to another, the *Conseil* decided that "the circumstance that their field of application be limited to certain parts of the national territory corresponds to the need to consider different situations, consequently, will not disavow the principle of equality nor the principle of the Republic's indivisibility"; January 26, 1995, décision no. 94–358 DC, *Journal Officiel*, February 1, 1995, p. 1706.
28. Ortscheidt, "Le bijuridisme dans un système fédéral," p. 490.
29. *Etat, régions et droits locaux*, Introduction, p. 10.
30. Ferdinand Mélin-Soucramanien, "Les adaptations du principe d'égalité à la diversité des territoires," *Revue française de droit administratif (R.F.D.A.)*, 13 (5) September–October 1997, p. 907.
31. Stéphanie Pierre-Caps, "La protection des minorités et l'ordre juridique français," in *Etat, regions et droits locaux*, p.104.
32. According to Geneviève Koubi, "the source of the tolerance of the separation of the state and the church substitutes itself little by little to the judicial logic of the principle of the secular state." In "Laïcité dans le texte de la Constitution," *Revue de droit public*, 1997, p. 1306.
33. *Conseil Constitutionnel*, May 9, 1991, *J.O.*, May 14, 1991, p. 6350; *R.F.D.C.*, 1991, p. 305 ss., commented on by Louis Favoreau.
34. Louis Favoreau, aforementioned commentary, op. cit., p. 308.
35. Geneviève Koubi, *Le droit et les minorités*, p. 226.
36. Roland Debbasch, "L'indivisibilité de la République et l'existence de statuts particuliers en France," *R.F.D.C.*, 30, 1997, p. 373.
37. Ibid., p. 368.
38. M. de Certeau and others, *Une politique de la langue—la Révolution française et les patois*, NRF-Gallimard, 1975.
39. It imposed the use of French in courts and on legal practitioners such as notaries. Not only will Latin be severely affected by this measure, but also regional languages. Philippe Martel, infra.

40. Renée Balibar, *L'Institution du français, essai sur le co-linguisme des Carolingiens à la République*, PUF, 1986, p. 421.
41. This ideologization does not only occur in the political realm. See the inventory of myths and cliches applied to the French language by language specialists, by Henri Messchonnic, *De la langue française*, Hachette, 1997, p. 356.
42. Barère is well known for having raised the issue in a report by the *Comité de salut public* in 1793: "As if it were up to us to maintain these barbarous and vulgar idioms that are now only found on the lips of fanatics and counter-revolutionaries"; in De Certeau et al., *Une Politique de la langue*, p. 296. The same Barère wrote: "Federalism and superstition both speak Breton; emigration and hate of the Republic speak German; the counter-revolution speaks Italian, and fanatism speaks Basque." See both Barère and Abbé Grégoire's texts in "Les voix de la Révolution. Projets pour la démocratie," *Notes et études documentaires*, no. 4906–4907–4908, La Documentation française, 1990. Bienvenu-Martin, Minister of Public Education, echoed these thoughts in 1905: "We must eradicate the barbarian Breton dialect," reproduced in *Le peuple breton*, July, 1973.
43. In 1925, Anatole de Monzie, Minister of Public Education, reiterated the Third Republic's conviction that in order to achieve "linguisitic unity in France, the Breton language must disappear"; reproduced in *Le peuple breton*, July 1973. Some time later, the same Anatole de Monzie was seen "bowing to the conquerors. Those who, during the Occupation, were astonished to see him give a speech at the Arts et Métiers, standing on a podium surrounded by a mass of German uniforms, and celebrating Germany's industrial power . . . harbor a sad and even nauseous souvenir"; André Coriolis, "Anatole de Monzie," *La vie judiciaire*, May 25, 1969.
44. Hugues Moutouh, "Les langues régionales en droit français," *Regards sur l'acutalité*, no. 350, pp. 33–41, *La Documentation française*, April 1999, p. 35.
45. B. Cerquiglini, *Le Monde*, February 23, 2000.
46. Indeed, even for the highest-ranking political officials, this is no longer an issue. In 1996 during a visit to Brittany, President Jacques Chirac "pronounced a long and fervent defense of regional culture and language, declaring that they no longer were 'a threat to [French] identity, and probably never had been.' On the contrary, he saw their existence as a means to combat the Americanization of culture," quoted in N. Rouland, "Les politiques juridiques de la France dans le domaine linguistique," *R.F.D.C.*, p. 550. Also see *Le Monde*, May 31, 1996.
47. Yves Plasseraud; "Ethnic languages in France seem to have entered their dying agony, with aging speakers and *no ambition to endure*"; *Les minorités*, Montchrestien: Clefs, 1998, p. 130. Hugues Moutouh expresses the same opinion, "Numerous studies these past years have demonstrated that without new policy measures aimed at preserving these idioms, they will simply disappear," *Regards sur l'acutalité*, p. 35. This outcome is also largely linked,

at least at the start of the twentieth century, to required military service and the development of mass printing techniques and distribution of newspapers. Today, these factors are simply replaced by television.

48. Richard Grau, "Les langues et les cultures minoritaires en France, une approche juridique contemporaine," Official Editor of Quebec, Quebec, 1985, p. 471. Moutouh, "Les langues régionales en droit français."
49. The July 29, 1982 text (modified in 1986) mentions the expression of regional languages as part of the public audiovisual program mission. The January 26, 1984 law relative to higher educational facilities includes in this mission "the promotion and (. . .) enhancement of the French language and regional languages and culture." Subsequently, the *Conseil national des langues et cultures régionales* was created by a September 23, 1985 decree, *J.O.*, September 25, 1985.
50. Laurent Ruet, "Les fonctions juridiques de la langue," *J.D.I.*, p. 713.
51. During his mandate as prime minister, Jacques Chirac declared, "My position is extremely clear on this point. All aspects of France's patrimony must be preserved, be they historical monuments or regional languages and cultures." Speech given before the *Union internationale des journalistes et de la presse de langue française* (The International Association of Francophone Journalists and Press Agencies), February 2, 1975, *La France devant des questions linguistiques*, Haut Comité de la langue française, speech, p. 10. A similar declaration was made by François Mitterrand for whom "the time has come for an official recognition of the languages and cultures of France. The time has come for schools, radio, and television to open their doors to these languages and cultures, and to guarantee them the place they deserve in public life." For Mitterrand, it was important that France cease being "the only European nation that did not provide elementary cultural rights to these components, which are already provided for by international texts that France itself had signed." Speech given at Lorient on March 14, 1981, and referred to by M. Poignant in his report, see infra., p. 16.
52. The *Conseil d'Etat* thus decided that neither the principle of equality nor that of continual public service had been infringed upon when the "teaching of Breton by a primary school teacher in those region's schools was not pursued after the departure of the particular teacher," *Conseil d'Etat*, March 15, 1996, Association quimpéroise des parents d'élèves pour l'enseignement du breton, quoted by Moutouh, "Les langues régionales en droit français," p. 37.
53. For an evaluation, see M. Poignant's report, infra. According to M. Poignant, the following languages have been retained: Alsacian-Mosellan, Basque, Breton, Catalan, Corsican, Occitan, Dutch, Oîl languages, Franco-Provençal, Creole languages in overseas departments, and vernacular languages in France's Pacific territories. Teaching in the public sector and in schools under contract goes from kindergarten to high school; "In 1996–1997, the total number of students receiving this type of

instruction totaled 335,000." Among the 155,000 students receiving instruction in a regional language at the junior and high school level, 75% of them were located in the Haut-Rhin, Bas-Rhin, and Moselle departments.

54. This particular question was discussed in a detailed and thematic manner by the *Conseil d'Etat* in its 1996 public report, *Sur le principe de l'égalité*, La Documentation française, Etudes et Documents, no. 48. Also see Gilles Péllissier, 1996, "Le principe d'égalité en droit public," *L.G.D.J.*, coll. Systèmes, p. 143.
55. Danièle Lochak, "Les minoritiés et le droit public français," p. 117.
56. For recent examples, see C.C., December 18, 1997, decision no. 97–393 DC, *Actualité Juridique Droit Administratif* (*A.J.D.A.*), February 2, 1998, p. 181, or C.C., June 25, 1998, decision no. 98–402 DC, *A.J.D.A.*, September 20, 1998, p. 735.
57. Rapport public du *Conseil d'Etat*, 1996, p. 23.
58. ". . . generally speaking, this realistic approach to the principle does not require the author of the regulation to treat different situations in a different manner. *A priori*, the rule is meant to satisfy the requirements of the equality principle when it is the same for all." *Rapport public du Conseil d'Etat*, 1996, p. 22.
59. Gilles Pellissier, op. cit., p. 36. The author is very critical of this jurisprudence.
60. Ferdinand Mélin-Soucramanien, *Le principe d'égalité dans la jurisprudence du Conseil constitutionnel, Economica*, coll. Droit public positif, 1997, p. 397. By the same author, "Les adaptations du principe d'égalité à la diversité des territories," *R.F.D.A.*, 13 (5) September–October. 1997, pp. 906–925. Concerning affirmative action, see "Les discriminations positives," *Annuaire international de justice constitutionnelle*, T. XIII, 1997, Economica et Presses de l'Université d'Aix-Marseille, 1998, pp. 49–308. On the American experience in the area, see Gwénaële Calvès, *L'affirmative action dans la jurisprudence de la Cour suprême des Etats-Unis. Le problème de la discrimination positive*, *LGDJ*, 1998, p. 375.
61. Decision no. 94–358, January 26, 1995, Aménagement du territoire, *J.O.*, February 1, 1995, p. 1706.
62. Ibid., p. 24.
63. Ibid.
64. Danièle Lochak, "Les minorités et le droit public français," p. 129.
65. Rapport public du *Conseil d'Etat*, 1996, p. 71.
66. Danièle Lochak, "Les minorites et le droit public français," p. 170.
67. See Philippe Dewitte (ed.), *Immigration and intégration, l'état des savoirs*, La Découverte: coll. Textes à l'appui, 1999, p. 408.
68. This is confirmed by the "fire affair," allegedly set by local *gendarmes* with the intent of burning down an illegally implanted "*paillote*" (beach restaurant) on a public maritime domain. It became a huge State matter with the subsequent imprisonment of Corsica's Prefect in May 1999. During a trip to the island in July 1997, Interior Minister Mr. Chevènement declared that

there was "no such thing as a 'Corsican people,' just as there is no such thing as a 'Belfortian people" (Mr. Chevènement was the former mayor of Belfort), *Le Monde*, May 15, 1999. For more, see this opinion expressed abroad, "In the case of Corsica, if the government were ready to nuance the principle of a 'one and indivisible nation,' sympathy (albeit weak) for 'independentists' would rapidly disappear," Frankfurter Allegmeine Zeitung, quoted in *Le Monde*, October 12, 1996.

69. Refer to the text reproduced in *Le Monde* from August 6–7, 2000.
70. *Le Monde*, August 17, 2000.
71. Jean-Marie Woehrling, "Alsace et Corse," *Land un Sproch* 136, p. 17.
72. Vote from July 28, 2000: 44 votes for, 2 against, 5 abstentions.
73. Editorial of *Le Monde*, February 15, 2001.
74. *L'Express*, July 27–August 2, 2000.
75. *Marianne*, July 24–40, 2000.
76. *Le Monde*, August 26, 2000.
77. *Le Monde*, September 22, 2000.
78. Twenty-three deputies of the right joined the majority government in order to approve it (*Le Monde*, May 24, 2001). The Regime of the Corsican language was aligned in the final project with that of Polynesian languages, taught without obligation during the normal hours in the school, in accordance with Article 115 of the law of 1996 on Polynesia, provision that the *Conseil Constitutionnel* had not judged as unconstitutional.
79. See *La France au Pluriel*? Pluriel/CRISPA, l'Harmattan, 1984, p. 255. Alain Fenet and Gérard Soulier (eds.), *Les minorités et leurs droits depuis 1789*, Paris: L'Harmattan, p. 288, 1989, Henri Giordan (ed.), *Les minorités en Europe*, Deuxième partie, "Politiques et réalités des langues en France," Editions Kimé, 1992, p. 685.
80. One such association is *Culture et bilinguisme d'Alsace et de Moselle—René Schickele Gesellschaft*, 31 rue Oberlin, Strasbourg, which publishes an excellent review entitled *Land und Sproch*.
81. See J.Y. Le Disez, "Mes filles expliquées à la République," *Noir/Blanc*, March–May 1999, pp. 14–24; "You should know once and for all that the more my daughters speak Breton, the more they are citizens, which means they have the means to understand a particular culture in France, and therefore have the means to understand that for the same reasons others might want to defend their language and culture. In short, the more they singularize themselves, the more they grow closer to others." Ibidem., pp. 23–24.
82. On March 25, 1999, almost 5,000 people demonstrated in Carhaix-Plougher (Finistère) demanding that a Breton high school be opened, *Le Monde*, January 15, 1999.
83. A petition signed by 750 Breton artists, writers, intellectuals, and famous personalities was submitted to the highest French authorities, President Chirac and Prime Minister Lionel Jospin on January 13, 1999, demanding that France sign the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, *Le Monde*, January 15, 1999.

84. Of notable interest is the *Fédération pour les langues régionales dans l'enseignement public (FLAREP)*.
85. Rapport Poignant, p. 31.
86. *Le Monde*, April 17, 1999.
87. The State strictly frames and supervises the distribution of these subsidies. An example of this can be found in the case of a subsidy voted by the Breton Regional Council that was contested and brought before the Administrative Tribunal by the Prefect. He based his reasoning on the fact that the sum had gone beyond the 10% limit set by the Falloux Law for public subsidies to private educational facilities. *Le Monde*, April 17, 1999.
88. Rapport Poignant, p. 19. Perhaps the most elaborate one is that of Le Pensec et al. relative to the place of languages and cultures of the peoples of France in general education, adult education, cultural, youth, and leisure activities, radio and television programs, and the public sphere in general, no. 2269, annexe au P.V. de la séance, April 3, 1981.
89. Proposition de loi constitutionnelle, doc. Assemblée nationale, no. 1973, published in *La lettre du Groupement pour les droits des minorités*, no. 53, October 1998, Paris.
90. *Land un Sproch*, publication du Cercle René Schickele, February 1985.
91. Circulaire, Décember 21, 1994, quoted in *Land un Sproch*, no: 114, 1995.
92. See *Le Monde* from April 27, 2001.
93. *Le Monde*, May 30, 2001.
94. There are numerous publications on the protection of minorities. Some general references follow: I.O. Bokatola, *L'Organisation des Nations Unies et la protection des minorités*, Bruylant, 1992, p. 291; A. Fenet, G. Koubi, I. Schulte-Tenckhoff, and Tatiana Ansbach, *Droit et minorités—Analyses et textes*, Bruylant, 1995, p. 462; Norbert Rouland, S. Pierre-Caps, J. Poumarède, *Droits des minorités et des peuples autochtones*, PUF, coll. Droit fondamental, 1996, p. 581; La protection des minorités, numéro spécial de la *Revue Trimestrielle des Droits de l'Homme*, 30/1997. Patrick Thornberry, *International Law and the Rights of Minorities*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991, p. 451. International texts cited can be found in A. Fenet, G. Koubi, I. Schulte-Tenckhoff, and Tatiana Ansbach, *Droit et minorités—Analyses et textes*, pp. 301–448.
95. In virtue of this article, "in those States where ethnic, religious, or linguistic minorities are found, persons belonging to these groups may not be deprived of their right to practice their own culture, religion, or speak their own language along with their fellow members."
96. The same is true for the *United Nations Convention on the rights of the Child adopted in* 1989 in its Article 30 related to the native children who are part of a minority group.
97. Refer to this question in our studies, "Le droit européen des minorités," in A. Fenet (dir.), *Le droit et les minorités—Analyses et textes*, pp. 115–291.

98. Loi no. 80–461 of June 25, 1980, D. no. 81–77 of January 29, 1981, *J.O.*, February 1, 1981, p. 405.
99. G. Koubi, "Droit et minorités dans la République française," *Droit et minorités—Analyses et textes*, p. 228. For the author, the English version is all the more powerful: ". . . is not applicable so far as the Republic is concerned."
100. See Emmanuel Spiry, *Pratique française du droit international des droits de l'homme—le cas des minorités*, Doctoral dissertation, IUHEI/Paris XI, Geneva, 1998.
101. Doc. ONU, E/CN.4/1991/53, pp. 7–8. See other formulas used by French diplomats in N. Rouland, "La tradition juridique française et la diversité culturelle," pp. 21–22.
102. See Hervé de Charrette, Minister of Foreign Affairs, before the UN General Assembly in New York on September 25, 1996: "However, universality must not lead to uniformity. The definition of common values shared by all requires the respect of those identities that are the foundation of our world's cultures. Hence, our values will be more forcefully adopted when they are expressed in each and everyone's language"; *Documents d'Actualité internationale*, La documentation française, November 11, 1996, p. 891.
103. See A. Fenet, 1978, "Essai sur la notion de minorité nationale," *Publications de la faculté de droit d'Amiens* 7, pp. 95–113. Also, in a rather different interpretation, see Theodor Veiter, 1974, "Commentary on the concept of 'national minorities,' " *Revue des droits de l'homme*, vol. VII, 2–4, pp. 273–290.
104. "There obviously is a contradiction when France defines itself as a defender of cultural and linguistic diversity and exhorts Europe to be active in this area, all the while implementing an entirely opposite policy within its territory." "The refusal of France to sign the Charter for Regional or Minority Languages symbolizes this perfectly"; Bernard Oyharçabal, Directeur de recherche au CNRS, *Le Monde*, May 12, 1998.
105. See M. Rocard: "It is this very secularism that allowed the State thus constituted to respect each individual by only affording rights to individuals and not to minorities, condemned to organize, fossilize, or fight until they be recognized as such. There lies, in my opinion, the only body of principles compatible with the necessity to rapidly integrate all Europeans to a new community. Those principles that founded the French nation will inspire the emergence of a European citizenship, not because they are French but because they correspond to Europe's needs"; *Le Monde*, April 24, 1992.
106. For some, this perceived reality justifies a political reconstruction based on a "national Republican charter." See Max Gallo (writer and historian), "La nécessaire recomposition," *Le Monde*, April 27, 1999.
107. Dominique Schnapper, *La communauté des citoyens—Sur l'idée moderne de nation*, Paris: Gallimard, 1994, p. 228.

108. See A. Fenet, "Nation française, nation allemande et construction de l'Europe," *La coexistence, enjeu européen*, Alain Fenet and Cao Huy Thuan (eds.), PUF, 1998, pp. 121–151.
109. Joël Roman has demonstrated this degree of ambiguity in a major text by Renan on the nation: "The modern and elective definition of the nation chosen by Renan reveals a traditional, inherited, and unrationalized element that relies on constituted habits and is not submitted to debate," Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation*? Présentation, Agora: Les Classiques, Presses Pocket, 1992, p. 25. Attention focused on patrimony and places of memory result from this ethnicization. See *Les lieux de mémoire*, under the direction of Pierre Nora, T1, *La République*, Paris: Gallimard, 1984; T2, *La Nation*, Paris: Gallimard, 1986.
110. J.F. Chanet, *L'école républicaine et les petites patries*, Aubier, 1997, p. 428.
111. Claude Billard and Pierre Guibert, *Histoire mythologique des Français, Ed*. Galiléé, coll. Coup pour Coup, 1976, p. 322. Suzanne Citron, *Le mythe national—L'Histoire de France en question*, Ed. Ouvrières, 1987, p. 318.
112. F. Braudel, *Le Monde*, March 24–25, 1985.
113. See Jacques Thibau, *La France colonisée*, Flammarion, 1979, p. 334. Dominique Noguez, *La colonisation douce*, Editions du Rocher, 1991, p. 235.
114. Jean-Yves Faberon, "La protection juridique de la langue française," *R.D.P.*, March–April 1997, pp. 323–341. Norbert Rouland, "Les politiques juridiques de la langue dans le domaine linguistique," *R.F.D.C.* 35, 1998, pp. 517–562. Laurent Ruet, "Les fonctions juridiques de la langue," *J.D.I.* 3, 1998, pp. 697–719.
115. Loi no. 75–1349, December 31, 1975, *J.O.*, April 4, 1975, p. 189. This law as well as previous texts can be found in *Loi relative à l'emploi de la langue française*, Haut comité de la langue française, 1975, p. 148.
116. Circulaire du 14 mars 1977, *J.O.*, March 19, 1977, p. 1483.
117. Jacques Cellard, *Le Monde*, January 9, 1976.
118. Loi no. 94–665, August 5, 1994 relative to the use of the French language, *J.O.*, August 5, 1994, p. 11392.
119. Décision no. 94–345, July 29, 1994.
120. J.P. Camby, "Le Conseil Constitutionnel et la langue française," *R.D.P.* 1994, p. 1670, the text itself included in an annex.
121. R. Debbasch, "La reconnaissance constitutionnelle de la langue française," *R.F.D.C.* 11, 1992, pp. 458 and 459.
122. Ibid., p. 461.
123. See a petition signed by 300 intellectuals denouncing the "increasingly ambitious fanatics of all-in-English who contribute to making French people doubt their own language, and as a result, the credibility of French abroad," *Le Monde*, July 11, 1992. Also see Michel Serres who was quoted as saying that the streets of Paris had less names in German during the Occupation than names in English today. Reported by B. Poirot-Delpech, *Le Monde*, April 17–18, 1994.
124. These provisions can be found in Article 2, para. 2 of the Constitution.

125. Circulaire du 12 avril 1994, *J.O.*, April 20, 1994, p. 5773.
126. M.D. Mandon, quoted by J.-M. Pontier, *Droit de la langue française*, Dalloz: Connaissance du droit, 1997, p. 19.
127. See Claude Liauzu who above all diagnosed a "French identity crisis provoking the re-emergence of quasi-biological obsessions and conservative reactions that extend far beyond those of the right-wing," *Le Monde Diplomatique*, August 1988. Also see Chr. Gallaz, ". . . France is described as a museum whose treasures should be indefinitely lauded by the verb and the spectacle of the verb. In this perspective, the Hexagon has become the world's cradle, and has offered the Enlightenment, the Revolution, Human Rights, gastronomy, the new wave in cinema, Yves St. Laurent, champagne, cheese, and foie gras to the entire world . . . This is the fantasy meant to be preserved that reigns in France today. It has allowed Jean Marie Le Pen, as soon as he appeared in the public arena, to radiate in an almost quasi-natural manner," *Le Monde*, April 17, 1998.
128. For a presentation of the whole question F. Benoit-Rohmer, "Les langues officieuses de France," *Revue française de droit constitutionnel* 45, 2001, pp. 3–29, and R. Debbasch, 2001, "La République indivisible, la langue française et la nation," *Revue de la recherché juridique* 1, pp. 113–130.
129. J. Cellard, *Le Monde*, December 25–26, 1977.
130. Mrs. Ana-Vari Chapalain, President of the French committee of the European Bureau for lesser-used languages. For further information on this institution, see A. Fenet, "L'Europe et les minorités," *Le droit et les minorités—analyses et textes*, p. 143.
131. See Pierre-Caps, ". . . the preservation of regional cultures is only acceptable when the latter partake in the freedom of expression afforded to all individuals"; "La protection des minorités et l'ordre juridique français," *Etat, régions, et droit locaux*, p. 110.
132. See R. Debbasch, "One is nevertheless forced to admit that in the actual state of our law, this new clause contributes a juridical support to the French language that, up to now, was missing to resolve conflicts with regional languages," "La reconnaissance constitutionnelle de la langue française," *R.F.D.C.* 11, 1992, p. 466.
133. C.E., September 22, 1985, Quillevère, concl. Latournerie, *Recueil*, p. 333.
134. C.E., April 15, 1992, Le Duigou, *Dalloz* 1992, Jurisprudence, p. 517, note R. Debbasch.
135. C.E., July 30, 1997, Cercle René Schickele, *Land un Sproch*, 124, 1997. Already in another context, the *Conseil d'Etat* judged that newspapers published in Arabic in Algeria were to be in the category of newspapers published in a foreign language (C.E., February 8, 1935, Dalloz Hebdomadaire, 1935, p. 290). The September 20, 1947 law relative to the status of Algeria put an end to this jurisprudence.
136. Décision no. 96–373 DC du 9 avril 1996, A.J.D.A., May 20, 1996, p. 373. See J.-Y. Faberon, "Indivisibilité de la République et diversité linguistique du peuple français: la place des langues polynésiennes

dans le nouveau statut de la Polynésie française," *R.F.D.C.* 27, 1996, pp. 607–617.

137. The current experience confirms that the political desire to oppose the expansion of English is fading. Innumerable infringements of the Toubon law are not sanctioned. Elsewhere, one can learn that the Parliament itself agrees, that documents addressed to shareholders can henceforth be "drafted in French or in certain cases as defined by specific rules, in another language commonly utilized in financial matters. These translations should therefore be accompanied by a synopsis in French" (this text was adopted by the members of parliament, May 3, 2001; see Ch. Jakubszyn, "La langue du vainqueur," *Le Monde*, May 6–7, 2001); the common language in question is of course English. This legislation overrides a decision from the *Conseil d'Etat* (Géniteau, December 20, 2000, no. 213 415).
138. M.J.-M. Bockel, deputy-mayor of Mulhouse, e.g., who declared, "This amendment meant to combat the imperialist nature of certain international languages also appears to express France's will to exclude regional languages from our national patrimony." *Land un Sproch* 104, 1992. Other parliamentary members denounced Article 2 as being contrary to the exercise of constitutional power. Thus, Mr. Bayrou "considers that abuse exists today when this article is used against the languages of the regions of France," *Land un Sproch* 18, 1998.
139. Cf. Roland Debbasch, "La République indivisible, la langue française et la nation," p. 124.
140. For example, M. Pandraud (R.P.R): " I applaud the secular and Republican school that often imposed French with a great deal of required authority against forces of social or even religious obscurantism . . . I am also pleased that television served as a factor for linguistic unification. The time has come that we now also be French by our language. If we must teach another language to our children, let's not waste time teaching them dialects that they will only speak in their village. Let's teach them an international language." Since the latter is usually English, this type of argument is rather paradoxical in light of the French law, *Land un Sproch* 104, 1992.
141. Amendment proposed by M. Goetschy in the Senate, and by M. Briane in the National Assembly.
142. Henri Giordan, "Langue française et néo-jacobinisme," *Land un Sproch* 108, 1993.
143. The Charter was signed by 18 countries. Germany, Croatia, Finland, Hungary, Liechtenstein, Holland, Norway, and Switzerland ratified it.
144. Opinion from September 24, 1996, Annual Report, p. 303. The *Conseil d'Etat* already returned, July 6, 1995, an opinion concluding that since there exists an incompatibility with the Constitution of the Framework Convention for the protection of national minorities, the state must

recognize some rights for the public use of minority languages (decision no. 357466, Annual Report, p. 397).

145. H. Moutouh, "Les langues régionales en droit français," *Regards sur l'actualité*, p. 41.
146. Commentary on the *Conseil d'Etat's* decision by the Cercle René Schickele, no reference.
147. Bernard Poignant, *Langues et cultures régionales*. Quotations in this chapter are found in the typed version published by the Documentation française in 1998 in the series "Rapports officiels."
148. Rapport Poignant, p. 54.
149. *Etude sur la compatibilité entre la Charte européenne des langues régionales ou minoritaires et la Constitution*. Quotations in this chapter are from the typed version.
150. Rapport Carcassonne, p. 42.
151. Benoit-Rohmer, "Les langues officieuses de France," p. 5.
152. See the example illustrated by D. Sallenave, denouncing "la niaise brume des bons sentiments écolo-folkloriques": "Partez, briseurs d'unité!" *Le Monde*, July 3, 1999.
153. Decision no. 99–412 DC, the text is in Actualité juridique Droit administratif, July 20–August 20, 1999, p. 627, with commentary from J.-E Schoettl, pp. 573–579. Refer to the detailed analysis by P. Fraisseix in "La France, les langues régionales et la Charte européenne des langues régionales et minoritaires," *Revue française de droit administratif* 17(1), January–February 2001, pp. 59–86.
154. O. Duhamel and B. Etienne, *Le Monde*, June 26, 1999.
155. Fraisseix, "La France, les langues régionales," p. 80.
156. Quoted by Stanley Hoffman, in his critique of *Mitterrand et la sortie de la guerre froide*, Samy Cohen (ed.), *Le Monde*, March 27, 1998.
157. Constitutional law no. 99–569, *J.O.*, July 9, 1999, p. 10175.
158. See Michel Wievorka, "We must continue defending universal values, while realizing that we cannot ignore the emergence of cultural identities, as if they were an episodic illness in our society, a simple crisis. I even believe that if we deny this phenomenon in the name of assimilationist ideologies, we run the risk of exacerbating it and pushing it towards the worst forms of extreme communitarianism," *Le Monde*, October 8, 1996.

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CHAPTER 2

# *Langue d'oc,* French and the Construction of a State in France

*Philippe Martel*

The current chapter proposes a return to the past, which essentially leads us from the end of the Middle Ages to the beginning of Modern times. Initially, this return to the past can appear to be a detour in a symposium principally focused on the analysis of contemporary situations. However, there is a common ground to speak of that reveals "l'exception française" on the issue concerning linguistic policy, which has planted its roots in a very distant past. Another common ground that has come about, are the *a prioris*, understandings and common sentiments which continue to structure the French attitude regarding the spoken languages on their national land. It is therefore not entirely useless to return to the past in order to examine the birth of the policies concerning the French language.

The case of *langue d'oc* provides a useful and pertinent entry point to explain this problematic. For, on the eve of the Revolution and for a long time subsequently, the national perspective included it in an indistinct category of "patois," "abandonnés à la populace," according to the Encyclopedia. During this era, the memory of the poetry of the Troubadours of the twelfth century survived largely in the works of Italian writers. *Langue d'oc* was nonetheless not only utilized as the universal language spoken in a third of the Kingdom in the South, but was also the language of a certain number of public notaries, including official correspondence, and upto a certain point, within the Royal

administration. From the evidence given by records of written French, the kingdom was trilingual in 1500. In addition to Latin, the two vernaculars of French and *langue d'oc* were utilized to compose pages and pages of archives for future reference. In 1539, however, two articles in the Ordinance of Villers-Cotterêts sent the same shock to the learned scholars of Latin as they did to the speakers of *langue d'oc*, by imposing the usage of French alone, reducing *langue d'oc* to a literary usage, thereby making it socially less useful and attractive. It is necessary to examine how and why this linguistic revolution took place. How did it occur and what led to the progressive implementation of French alone on the various terrains of France? Was there some resistance, or perhaps a group of defenders for *langue d'oc*? Or was the central power and/or the sentiment of integration of the Southern populations of the Kingdom strong enough in order to drive a massive adhesion to the new linguistic order instituted by the Ordinance?

Why was this Ordinance instituted? Was its sole purpose to give official recognition to an inevitable process, that being the triumph of a national language, confronting the linguistic vestiges of obscure ages? Was it geared to do this to defuse the dangers that could be represented by the provincial languages and their potential affirmation of an identity opposed to the progress of unification patiently achieved by the King and his officers? Or is it necessary to search for another explanation for this explicit exclusion of languages whose written tradition had already become obsolete several centuries earlier?

The response to these questions would perhaps go beyond the case of *langue d'oc* and the episode of the sixteenth century, providing insight into in the relationship between the French citizens, their state and their languages.

## Where does *Langue d'oc* Come From?

Here we will spare the reader the lengthy presentation and exploitation of the origins of *langue d'oc*.[1] Instead, we will limit this analysis to a few simple questions:

*Langue d'oc* originated from a roman language, distinct from French although appearing in France in the areas which Romanists call, as a whole, gallo-roman. Its space covered a third of Southern France, actually more today, including an enclave in Catalonia in Spain (Val D'Aran) and a dozen of the valleys, located in the Southern Piedmontese

Alps, in Italy. The linguistic border, which is relatively clear, begins from the estuary of the Gironde and passes to the east of Angoulême and from Poitiers then to the surrounding area of Montluçon and of Vichy, redescends from there toward the southeast, to find itself at the edge of the mountain plains in Piédmont, before reaching Menton and Vintimille. This map was already present at the end of the Middle Ages. Moreover the *langue d'oc* is on the one hand the language of a space vast enough to compare with the other languages of France: Breton, Basque, Alsatian . . . but on the other hand there was never a state of Languedoc to ensure linguistic cohesion in the geographical sphere of Languedoc.

The coming of the writing of the vernacular was precocious in Languedoc and situates itself as a bridge between roughly the eleventh and twelfth centuries.[2] In a few generations, the novels or the *proensalés* became the language of lyric poetry and its influence was exerted on the aristocratic classes throughout all of Western Europe. The increasing popularity of these heresies, the "vaudois" and the "Cathares"[3] resulted in the birth of a literary heterdoxy in Languedoc, opposed to the Latin of the official theologians. At the beginning of the twelfth century, the first acts of law drafted entirely in *langue d'oc* appeared. From the beginning of the thirteenth century, *langue d'oc* had certainly not replaced Latin in writing: However, it was well installed as an administrative and judicial language to be utilized for military order or the new urban oligarchies that extracted municipal privileges in there years. The same could be said for the Chancellors of the grand religious orders and blessings. The vernacular progressed in civil society, through it affected the grand institutions much less.

The Papal Crusade against the inhabitants of Albi changed only part of the rules of the linguistic game, which was in the process of being altered. The Crusade ruined the structures of sociability and of patronage that formed the grand aristocratic lineages of the South for the literature of *langue d'oc* (and it was in Italy or in Catalonia that the last Troubadours would go to disseminate their work). In a few generations, the literature of *langue d'oc* lost a great deal of the international prestige which it had previously acquired. The return of the official Church, accompanied by the decline of heresy, strengthened the popular Franciscan preaching. Paradoxically, this opened a new space for *langue d'oc* for the next two centuries. In brief, the literature of Languedoc changed in nature and in the degree of support it received within the hierarchy of Europe, but it did not disappear. With respect

to the administrative and judicial usage of *langue d'oc*, it actually, progressed.

Indeed, by 1209, the date of the beginning of the Crusade or in 1229, the date of the Treaty of Meaux, which marked the royal annexation of the eastern parts of the territory of Toulouse, French did not quite exist as a written language outside of its literary usage. The first officially ratified acts drafted in *langue d'oïl* concerned the towns of the north (Tournai, 1197) and of the 2,800 acts drafted before 1270, two-thirds came from the Picardy zone where a written script dominated, heavily influenced by dialects.[4] The Royal Chancellery only began to utilize French sparingly after 1254 in its charters. Between 1322 and 1328, it still hardly counted for 10 percent of the total acts sent by the King. When Simon de Montfort became the Count of Toulouse, it was in *langue d'oc* that he drafted, for example, a Charter of donation to the Monastery of Prouille. The daily language utilized by the Royal power was still for a certain period, Latin. It was in Latin that the central administration wrote to the town of Languedoc in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, even after it had become the custom to write in French to the Northern towns. At the very most, French could be utilized, from the second half of the twelfth century, for internal correspondence to the representatives and the officers of the King of the South. The Hundred Years, War actually ameliorated the situation for *langue d'oc* and increased its importance because it was in *langue d'oc*, in 1337, that King Philippe VI addressed his loyal subjects in order to invite them to participate in his next defeats.[5]

The Hundred Years' War itself would progressively change this state of affairs. Part of the growth of French can be attributed to the royal acts concerning Languedoc, dating from this time. According to August Brun, between 1350 and 1390 there were 22 acts in French compared to 100 acts in Latin.[6] Subsequently, between 1390 and 1450, there were 75 acts drafted in French compared to the 18 drafted in Latin. As for *langue d'oc*, it was absent from these acts, even with the arrival of Jean le Bon and his efforts to translate them into *langue d'oc* from the original French for his subjects of Midi.

The rise of royal power influenced the linguistic practices of the subjects of Languedoc. French began to encroach upon the aristocracy. Gaston Febus, viscount of Béarn, utilized *langue d'oc* in 1347, when he affirmed in confronting the King of France that he held his viscountess as "de nul homme au monde." However, 20 years later, when he

corresponded on the same subject with the Black Prince, it was French that he spoke. In 1377 as well, when Febus promised his aid to the King of France, he utilized French. This was the case in his grand literary work, a book entitled, *Le Livre de la chasse*, a text related to one of the most aristocratic activities of the era, which he wrote in French despite the fact that he could also compose poems in *langue d'oc*. The columnist Froissard insisted on the pleasure with which this grand Lord spoke French. However, locally it was in *langue d'oc* that he wrote to the towns of Languedoc in 1360, when he proposed that he would protect them against the evils of the Franco-British war. In certain moments, he successively utilized Latin, French and *langue d'oc* for the inhabitants of Languedoc. In other words, despite his vague attempts at independence from the King, he already considered that *langue d'oc* was not appropriate in all circumstances."

And progressively, French began to descend the social hierarchy. Between 1410–1412, the Périgord and the neighboring regions were experiencing a period of serious troubles, which instigated a correspondence between the authorities of the towns, and concerning the diverse representatives of royalty. The interaction of languages in this correspondence is very interesting. Between, the municipalities—Périgueux, Sarlat, Cahors-they utilized *langue d'oc*, which was a southern language and therefore foreign to the city of Périgueux. They utilized *langue d'oc* in their correspondences with the lieutenant of the King, the Count of Armagnac, who despite being in the royal service responded to them in *langue d'oc*. On the other hand, if they wrote in *langue d'oc* to the constable of France, the constable responded to them in French. In the same case when the towns had dealings with some of the royal officers, local or from Paris (Parisian), they responded in French to the letters which were written to them in *langue d'oc*.[7] It would seem imprudent to extrapolate too far from this localized example—but one can find other such examples. They indicate, that up to this date *plurilingualisme* was still tolerated by the royal administration, as the price of a little good will. Thus the Councils of Narbonne were registered in *langue d'oc*, in 1405. This registration was a response to the request sent to the King stating, "una supplication faita en franses, que partet en Fransa escripta en frases." It is this usage of several languages that was noticed and noted towards 1450 by the archbishop of Toulouse Bernard of Rosier, when he affirmed that there existed in France "deux spécifiques ou deux langues, la langue gallicane et l'occitane."[8]

This potential equilibrium would rapidly be compromised. A few examples: in 1424, in the Estates of Languedoc, an instance occurred in which the Orders of Provence negotiated with the King on the issues of the increase of taxes and addressed their grievances in *langue d'oc* to which the King responded in Latin. Four years later, the question of these complaints returned, but this time, the Estates utilized French in redressing their grievances, to which, from this point, they would remain faithful. In 1443, the consuls of Millau paid the Dauphin, the future Louis XI, a visit and drafted a letter recounting the episode in *langue d'oc*, which they referred to as "notre langue." The King was unable to understand this letter and made his displeasure known to his representatives. In 1444, the Parliament of Toulouse, drafted its letter and greeting to the King in French. Subsequently, the usage of written French spread to the people and to the Church. At the end of the century, the Provence region was united with the Kingdom. Up to then, the state had addressed its grievances to the Count of Provence in *langue d'oc*, and the Count would respond in the same language. However, in 1482, one year after the unification, the grievances and complaints of the people were drafted and the responses were received in Latin.[9] French made its appearance in 1491. In the years following this annexation, royal agents of the King arrived directly from France in order to disseminate the language to the provincial regions.

At the top of the French hierarchy therefore things were clear: it was the language of the King that it was necessary to speak and to write, especially in correspondence with the King. But on the ground as well, the language began to make its mark. French penetrated the Northern Languedoc region in the fourteenth century: in Marche and Bourbonnais, zones of linguistic contact where in any case, there was little evidence of written *langue d'oc* previously, they adopted French, respectively, from 1308 and 1359; The South resisted for a long time, until the last third of the fifteenth century in the regions of Aurillac and Saint Flour. The notaries of Aurillac continued to utilize *langue d'oc* until the beginning of the fourteenth century, but Aurillac, from a dialectal point of view was already a Southern Languedoc country. The consuls of Limoges utilized *langue d'oc* and Latin until the end of the fifteenth century: French made its appearance there in 1496. Nevertheless, one finds that among the smaller regions of the area, sporadic use of *langue d'oc* continued until the beginning of the following century. The same situation and the same chronology applied, in the region of Valence to the East.

Further South, French progressed in the same pattern, at the expense of either Latin or *langue d'oc*. The notaries of Bordeaux had begun to use the language of Languedoc from the first part of the thirteenth century; they abandoned it after 1510. But French was already dominant for several decades, next to Latin, in notarized commercial contracts with the English (Latin) or Brittany (French).[10] The grand "Languedociennes" towns like Toulouse, Nîmes, Montpellier, changed radically during the same era, at the end of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth. In brief, one can say that by 1539, French dominated in most of the cities and *langue d'oc* had been reduced to townships and to the countryside. However, an exception must be made with regard to the peripheries of the Kingdom to the East, to the South and to the West, an area to which we will return.

The French language first imposed itself as a language for administrative practices. The north of the Kingdom, in areas that spoke *langue d'oïl* by the end of the twelfth century, would also be the last to give way to the new language, at the end of the fifteenth century. Throughout France, the "français du roi" triumphed from the fourteenth century. There grew up an 'ideology of language' (formulated in Latin) by a few grand intellectuals often affiliated with the Royal Court. French was promoted as the most beautiful language in the world, or the most noble, since the thirteenth century at least. Progressively also, the language became an argument justifying the adhesion of such and such a region to the kingdom. And it is clear that the Hundred Years' War led to an intensification of linguistic consciousnesses.

Not immediately, of course. After all, the familiar language of the reigning dynasty in England was French (wasn't Edward III the grandson of Philippe le Bel?). And French, a particular form of French to say the least, was in competition with Latin. In England, English only gradually appeared in the register of usage at the end of the fourteenth century. Anglo-Norman French would survive for a certain time, but it was clear that the vernacular would predominate. Meanwhile in France the propaganda of the Valois made no mistake about it, affirming that the French would not have submitted to a King who did not speak their language. This fact justified the recovery of the continental lands formerly under English rule, but inhabited by subjects who did not speak English.

Additionally, there was the development of the royal administration, from the moment when the English pressure relaxed and Charles VII, then Louis XI, undertook to remind their subjects of who was master.

The arrival in the towns of Languedoc of francophone officers, who supervised the population, were signs of a new mastery of the King on his territories. It is not surprising that the language of the King now prevailed.

## An End that does not End There

The kings were concerned with the linguistic question in the domain of justice as well. In the terms of Article 101 of the Ordinance of Moulins, 1490, concerning Languedoc, statements of evidence were to be registered "en langage français ou maternel, tels que lesdits témoins puissent entendre leurs depositions."[11] In 1510, a new ordinance specified that criminal trials and the investigations, in the country of written law (the South) should be pursued in the vernacular and the language of the country. In 1531, François I, questioned by the Estates of Languedoc, ordered the employment of translators by the notaries using the vernacular. The same year, the Parliament of Grenoble imposed on François I also the responsibility of promoting the common language by his notaries. By 1535, an ordinance concerning justice in Provence renewed the injunction to have documents henceforth drafted in French, which were "a tout le moins" in the common language of the country. It is thus possible to extrapolate two conclusions: on the one hand: Latin, the language targeted in these texts, vigorously resisted. On the other hand, the prince still took some precautions with his subjects in the south. They could use the vernacular, for the lack of anything better.

The Ordinance of Villers-Cotterêts was signed on August 19, but was not registered until October in the Parliament of Aix and in November in that of Toulouse. In Article 111, its centralizing purposes were rendered explicit:

"Et pour ce que de telles choses sont souventes fois advenues sur l'intelligence des mots latins contenus esdictz arrestz, nous voulons que doresenavant tous arrestz, ensemble toutes autres procedures, soient de noz courts soveraines ou autres subalterns et inférieures, soient de registres, enquestes, contracts, commissions, sentences, testaments et autres quelzconques actes et exploictz de justice ou qui en deppendent, soient prononcés, enregistréz et delivrez aux parties en langaige maternel François et non autrement."

This was the manner in which the King spoke. As is evident, justice was not the only factor concerned: the many functional usages, of

French, were highlighted as well. Across the land, the effects of his decision were extremely varied. In certain cases, French had already made great strides before 1500. The surveys of Jean-Paul Laurent in diverse notarial archives of the Midi revealed that for the people of Bordeaux, Périgord, the Limousin and the future department of *Gard*, the notaries moved directly from Latin to French with barely a few traces of *langue d'oc* well before 1539. A notary of Bourg St. Andéol, in the Ardèche, made the effort in 1533 to explain that with the expectation of a royal mandate the common language had been determined and that within his domain it was French. In the *Cévennes*—at Sumène or Valleraugue—*langue d'oc* retained this role, as late as the 1640s. Elsewhere, in Lodève, or Montpeller, other notaries waited until 1539 in order to change the language, but the language which they thenceforth abandoned was Latin. Nonetheless, it was sometimes *langue d'oc* that paid the price: most of the consulates of Provence who formerly utilized *langue d'oc*, abandoned it for French starting from 1540.

But the Ordinance was not a "magic word." If Latin hardly survived, *langue d'oc* would remain strong in a few areas and thereby preserve a few strongholds. In Albigeois, around Montpellier and Béziers, in Rouergue, in Eastern Provence, in Southern Dauphiné, in the central Pyrenees, *langue d'oc* survived up to the next century: one still finds some parish registers inscribed in a mix between French and Rovergois up until 1640. Elsewhere, the change occurred between 1560 and 1600. In most of the cases, this *langue d'oc* was itself very varied: the traditional spelling was copied in the French used to draft official documents. The fact that the model with regard to the spelling would not be the former native norm but that of a foreign language shows that, in their minds, even at that point, French had already partially won, from the simple fact that even the notaries who remained faithful to *langue d'oc* could already write this or that act in French.

Elsewhere, there were a few exceptions: in the seventeenth century, the Val d'Aran, in the ex-Kingdom of Aragon, reveals a particularly complex picture. French is present in the archives where it represents 41 percent of the total. But one finds there also 29 percent Catalan Castillan and 22.5 percent Latin. It is interesting to note that langue d'oc could still be utilized in correspondence with Toulouse, even though the latter had renounced written *langue d'oc* more than one century earlier.[12] In another particular case, that of the piédmontais boundaries of the Kingdom, in the County of Nice and the Occitan valleys of Italy, *langue d'oc* could be utilized commonly enough up in to the seventeenth

century, notwithstanding a text of the Duke of Savoy imposed in 1561, announcing the usage of Italian in his territory.[13]

Additionally, there was the case of Béarn. The story of this locality is particular. First, it is of interest because it was not France, but rather part of the kingdom of Navarre. It was Protestantism, practised by the mother of Henry IV, Jeanne d'Albret, which encouraged for a time a policy of promoting *langue d'oc* as a local, religious language, at least for the psalms. It was necessary to wait until 1621, and the beginning of the personal reign of Louis XIII, in order to see the beginning of the true unification of Béarn to France, on the map and in the field of linguistic policy. Even so, the transition to written usage was extremely slow.

Such was the situation of *langue d'oc* and of French after the Ordinance of Villers-Cotterêts. Certain questions remain.[14] Was the Ordinance of Villers-Cotterêt really directed against regional languages or only against Latin? A lot of historians opt for the latter response. On one hand, it is certain that the only explicit mention of another language other than French is in Article 111 and is aimed at Latin. In no part of this text are the vernaculars named. Then, what was the exact sense of the expression "langue maternel françois"? In the sixteenth century, a lawyer named Rebuffe formulated a theory according to which the maternal language implied the total of spoken idioms by the subjects of the King, as opposed to foreign languages. In other words, the only language one speaks in France is French, even if it is not truly "French". Danielle Trudeau has found other sixteenth century authors who were defending the same idea.[15] In this perspective, the Ordinance would have, in fact, permitted the usage of other languages in France.

It seems necessary to pursue this analysis further. Older ordinances had clearly specified that one could utilize French or the common language of the particular country. The disappearance of "the common language of the country" from texts dating from 1539 seems to leave no doubt as to the real sense of the Ordinance except to lend its writers a taste for imprecision. On the other hand, the only vernacular that rivaled French was *langue d'oc*, since no other language was utilized by the local administration and the notaries of the Kingdom. Additionally, it was unlikely that foreign maternal languages, like English or Spanish, risked casting a cloud over the maternal language of François I. *Langue d'oc* was therefore firmly targeted, but this was done in an implicit fashion.

This leads us to the real question at hand: why was *langue d'oc* still tolerated in 1535 and no longer in 1539? There are several possible explanations. There is first the fact that the Ordinance in its totality paves the way for an ascendancy of central power and inscribes itself there in the long story of the construction of an absolutist state. The eviction of Latin pursues a similar path.

On a more conjectural level, one should note that the unity of the Kingdom was itself a compromise. With the beginning of the Reformation there begun a trial of strength between the King and his first Protestants. The unity of language permitted a symbolic warding off of this danger.

It is helpful to consider the implementation of French in its intented setting. National languages were crystallizing everywhere. In 1477, the Flemish had broken away from the French they had inherited from Charles the Bold. In 1492, the Grammar of Nebrija constituted the first major certification of the Spanish language, and it clearly affirmed the superiority of Castillan over other languages on the peninsula. This was also a time when modern German emerged, carried on the one hand by the Lutheran reforms and on the other by the choice of various German states.[16] Finally, if one turns toward the inherited partner/enemy of France, England, one encounters the Act of the Union of England and of Wales in 1536 which states: "Because that the people of the same Dominion have and do daily use a Speech nothing like, not consonant to the natural Mother Tongue used within this Realm, some rude and ignorant people have made Distinction and Diversity between the King's subjects of this Realm and his Subjects of the said Dominion and Principality of Wales, whereby great Discord, Variance, Debate, Division, Murmur and Sedition hath grown between his said subjects."[17]

As a result of this obligation, agents of the King were compelled to henceforth utilize only English under the threat of losing their office. The same policy would subsequently be applied in Ireland and Scotland. In brief, the English model may well have acted as an incentive to address and resolve the linguistic question. Note, though, the profound difference which existed between the formulations of 1536 and 1539: in England, the King of England spoke to the public and threatened them, while the King of France did not envisage a single sanction against offenders. This tends to confirm the view that the Ordinance of Villers-Cotterêts was not primarily motivated by linguistic concerns as such. Language in France was not (yet) a topic of conflict.

Are there any traces of resistance? A protestant grammairien, Ramus, recounts in 1572 a story from 1539, of how Provence was agitated by ridiculous complaints against the implementation of French. The response that came to them was that the king was not receiving their representatives because "il ne prenoit point plaisir d'ouir parler en autre langue que la sienne" and this, Ramus commented, "leur donna occasion d'apprendre songneusement le français." Consequently, when they finally managed to meet the King, it was in French that they ask him to save the provincial: "Lors ce fut une risée de ces orateurs qui étaient venus pour combattre la langue française et néanmoins par ce combat l'avaient apprise."[18]

This story is too edifying to be entirely believable. Allow us therefore to note simply that the only documented resistance to the linguistic policy of the kings came, much later, from the Kingdom of Navarre. But Navarre, for reasons that we have already articulated, is a particular case. Everywhere in the kingdom, the provincial Estates never demanded the maintenance of their own languages. The king and his ministers certainly encountered resistance there, sometimes violent, that led them in the eighteenth century to try to suppress the Estates, or at least to avoid consulting them. But this resistance concerned privileges and taxes, not language. The Midi regularly resorted to violent revolts, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries provoked most often by the refusal to pay the tax. The grievances of the Estates, as well as the lists of demands addressed to the King by the revolters, are always drafted in French.

Allows us to add to this analysis, the religious factor. The Welsh, for example, who were outcast in 1536 and whose language survived the Reformation, from that point utilized it in order to translate the bible. Nothing of that nature occurred with the Reformation in the *Languedoc*.

In Southern France, language was a social, not a cultural heritage. The choice open to the elites of Languedoc was therefore simple: if they wanted to take part in all the activities of the elites and to engage in successful business transactions among the bourgeoisie of the South, they would have to recognize that it was necessary to change the language. And thus they did so.

In this way, the '*langue d'oc*' become a popular "patois" servicing the undifferentiated mass of the populace.

And therefore began, for *langue d'oc* as it did for other languages of France, the time of the "diglossie," the conflicting and stigmatized

cohabitation between a superior language and a lower, more common vernacular.

This ideology of language was going to have some devastating effects on the linguistic consciousness of the subjects of Languedoc. In 1553, the brotherhood of goldsmiths of Avignon revised its statutes. These statutes dated to 1373, and were initially drafted in *langue d'oc*. They were subsequently translated into French. Despite the fact that this city was dependant on the Pope, it was enclosed in the heart of French Provence, and thus followed the evolving state of affairs. The goldsmiths took the trouble to explain why they were committed to translating their ancient statutes:

> parce que lesditz status ont nécessairement besoin d'estre reeus comme estantz couches et escriptz en vulgare corrompu non François, dificile à lire et en langue barbare . . . aurions advise et conclu de traduire et remettre toutz nos dictz statutz en vraye et bonne langue Françoise.[19]

The vernacular was broken and barbaric, in contrast to the true and good language, French; one cannot more effectively express or explain the degradation of the image of the *langue d'oc* to those who spoke it, including, for example, our goldsmiths, their neighbors and a good portion of their clients, who ironically would not have been capable of speaking French. However, in the long term, transmitted from generation to generation, the reaction toward the depreciation of the "patois" and the growth of the recognition of the superiority of French prepared the ultimate decline of *langue d'oc* as a normal language for social intercourse. Of course, the insistence with which our goldsmiths overcame their loyalty to their "patois" is perhaps a revealing due to the subconscious uneasiness that they experienced.

In conclusion, the monolinguistic nature of the official French language has not always existed in its modern form. There was a brief moment, in which several written languages existed, a time characterized by tolerance for several languages in one country. But this moment did not endure. With the rise of a new type of monarchy, capable of keeping in check the resistance and the counter-forces that existed in the country, the provincial people understood the concessions that would be expected. It was necessary to adopt the language of the King, if the grievances that one formulated were to be read, because they would not be read if they were drafted in another language. It was this

calculation that motivated the adoption of French, not necessarily underwritten by any particular appreciation for the intrinsic qualities of French.

## Notes

1. For more information, refer to: Bec, Pierre, *Que-Sais-je? La Langue Occitane*, Paris, Puf, reed (1997).
2. Refer to: Lafont, Robert and Christian Anatole, *Nouvelle histoire de la literature occitane*, Paris, PUF (1970), Vol. 2.
3. A Christian heretic sect of the Middle Ages from Southwestern France.
4. Refer to Volume II, 2 of *Lexicon der Romanischen Linguistik*, Tubingen, Niemeyer (1995): pp. 271–405 (for French refer to pp. 406–473 for L'Occitan).
5. *Histoire Générale du Languedoc*, Toulouse (1885) TX, 2 Preuves No. 3.
6. Unless otherwise indicated, the facts, dates and examples which follow are taken from Auguste Brun's Thesis: *Recherches sur l'introduction du Français dans les provinces du Midi*, Paris, 1923, or from: *Histoire de la langue francaise* of Ferdinand Brunot (1905) Paris, Armand Colin (1967), TT 1 and 2.
7. Text published by Géraud-Lavergne in the *Bulletin de la Société Archéologique du Périgord* (1928): pp. 209–230.
8. Beaune, Colette, *Naissance de la nation France*, Paris, Gallimard (1985): p. 297.
9. Gérard Gouiran and Michel Hérbert, *Le Livre Potentia des Etats de Provence*, Paris, CTHS (1997).
10. Gilda Nacq, 1979 "Introduction du français et disparition du gascon dans la pratique notariale à Bordeaux et dans le Bordelais (1450–1539)" *Lengas* 5, pp. 77–121.
11. The reference on this question and on the effects of Villers Cotterêts, is found in the article of Jean-Paul Laurent, 1998, "L'Ordonnance de Villers-Cotterêts (1539) et la conversion des notaries à l'usage du française en pays d'oc," *Lengas,* 26, pp. 59–93.
12. Poujade, Patrici, 1997, "Situacion linguistica de la val d'Aran al sègle XVII e produccion en occitan," *Textes Occitans*, 2, pp. 55–70.
13. Refer to Chapter on "Alpes-Maritimes" of the *Documents linguistiques du Midi de la France* edited by Paul Meyer (Paris, Champion, 1905).
14. The most recent discussion of this subject, is by Gilles Boulard (Janvier-Mars, 1999) "L'Ordonnance de Villers-Cotterêts, le temps de la claret, et la stratégie du temps" *Revue Historique,* 609, pp. 45–100.
15. "L'Ordonnance de Villers-Cotterêts et la langue française: histoire ou interpretation?" *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et renaissance*, T.XLV (1983), pp. 461–472.
16. Cf Daniel Baggioni, *Langues et nations en Europe*, Paris, Payot (1998), notably Chapter III, "la première révolution écoloinguistique en Europe."

17. Durkacz, Victor E., *The Decline of the Celtic Languages*, Edinburgh: John Donald, 1983, p. 3
18. Cited by Ferdinand Brunot, *op.cit.*, T 2, p. 31, note 1.
19. Cited by Pierre Pansier, *Histoire de la langue provençale à Avignon*, Avignon: Aubanel 1925, T.2: p. 9.

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CHAPTER 3

# Bilingualism and Ethnic Change in California

*David Lopez*

## Introduction: Language Politics and Ethnic Change in California

In June 1998 Californians voted 2:1 in favor of Proposition 227, which banned bilingual education from the state's public schools. California's unusual referendum electoral system allows direct voting on constitutional amendments put forth by organizations or, as in this case, by wealthy individuals. This was the third proposition in five years that impacted directly on the state's Latino and other immigrant-origin minority populations. The first, the notorious Proposition 187, sought to ban a host of public services for illegal immigrants, the vast majority of whom are from Mexico and Central America. In 1997 the state's electorate voted to ban affirmative action based on race, ethnicity, or gender in all public universities and government programs. Like the referendums against immigrant services and affirmative action, Proposition 227 was generally perceived by Latinos as a racist attack directed at them. Proposition 227 was seen as particularly heinous because it struck directly at the core of Latino identity: the Spanish language.

Ethnic languages have been an important parti of the identity of most immigrant-origin ethnic groups in the United States. But Americans understand that, whether they like it or not, language shift to English monolingualism has been the rule in the history of American ethnic

groups. Monolingualism in languages other than English is rare except among immigrants. With very few exceptions, bilingualism in America has been transitional bilingualism, confined largely to the "second generation" . . . the children of immigrants. By the third generation the ability to use ethnic mother tongues drops precipitously. This was true among European American ethnic groups who trace their origins back to the mass immigration of the early twentieth century. And it appears to be equally true of Asian-origin groups who came at the end of the twentieth century.

Spanish may be an exception. Like French in northern Maine and parts of Louisiana, Spanish was well established in what is now California and the Southwest centuries ago. However the use of both Spanish and French has survived largely in isolated rural settings, or in narrow border regions with Mexico and Quebec, respectively. The transformation of California was especially rapid and complete: only a few years after the Goldrush of 1849, Spanish speakers were less than 10 percent of the population, and in subsequent decades most were absorbed into the English-speaking majority. In urban California Spanish survived largely in place names. It was only after the first great wave of immigration from Mexico, stimulated by the Mexican Revolution of 1910, that Spanish began to be spoken again in California. But as early as 1940 there was evidence that the new Mexican American population of the state was following the traditional pattern of language shift. By 1970 the evidence was compelling that the Mexican American third generation had shifted to English monolingualism at rates similar to European-origin third generation Americans.[1]

Today this older Mexican American population has been overwhelmed by the renewed mass immigration from Mexico and other parts of Latin America. Immigrants and their children constitute the majority of California's Latino population, and the children of immigrants represent about one-third of *all* schoolchildren in the state. Latinos will soon be the largest single ethnic segment of the state's population. In the city of Los Angeles this is already the case: according to the 2000 Census, Latinos are 46 percent of the city's population, Whites only 32 percent (the remaining 22 percent is split evenly between Asians and Blacks). It is the confluence of these two demographic facts—the growing preponderance of the Latino population and the preponderance of immigrant households among Mexicans and other Latinos—that creates the potential political significance of Spanish in California today.

Without these demographic trends it is unlikely that the Spanish language would be of any political significance in California or elsewhere

in the United States. However the demographic facts alone do not explain this political potential: they take on meaning only through the ideological prism of the Chicano movement that emerged in the 1970s. For this protest movement of students (overwhelmingly English-speaking third generation Mexican Americans) the Spanish language was an essential ideological pillar, but not a commonly used language. Language rights became an essential demand of an emerging generation of Mexican American politicians. In the late 1970s language rights in elections and schools emerged as issues that would distinguish Latinos from other minorities: in a 1976 amendment to the 1964 Civil Rights Act they became a "language minority." But language rights for whom? Like the student protestors, the politicians and most Latino voters spoke Spanish poorly if at all. Their primary concerns were similar to those of the Black civil rights movement that they used as their model: bad schools and discrimination in jobs and housing.

Bilingual elections produced some controversy but never became a major political issue: the number of people requesting services in Spanish or other languages was so small that protests soon disappeared. Bilingual education also began slowly, and away from the political arena, the purview of educational specialists committed to "multicultural" education. But as Spanish-speaking children went from a tiny minority to an increasingly important segment of public school children, the issue grew in importance. By the mid-1990s over one-third of California's children began school speaking Spanish only. Beyond the question of numbers, bilingual education became central to the multicultural ideal of the Chicano movement: the dream of maintaining Mexican cultural distinctiveness from generation to generation with, of course, the use of Spanish at the core of this distinctiveness.[2]

At this point in time the future and the political importance of Spanish in California is uncertain: on the one hand continuing immigration (and it will almost certainly continue) ensures that poor Spanish monolingual immigrants will continue to arrive, and their children will begin school with little or no knowledge of English. On the other hand there is evidence that the dynamics of intergenerational language shift, through bilingualism in the second generation to English monolingualism in the third, continues to operate today as it did in the past. There is at least the possibility (slight in my view, but a possibility) that the immigration-driven growth of the state's Latino population can reach a point of "critical mass" such that the historical pattern of language shift from generation to generation will be modified. It is such a possibility that leads some observers to see California as potentially

"another Quebec." Can demographics and the collective efforts of the Mexican American "community" reverse the typical pattern and create genuine linguistic multiculturalism that endures from generation to generation? If the pattern is reversed, will the increased ethnic pluralism lead to corrosive ethnic politics? Only time will tell. In the rest of this chapter I present my interpretation of the best evidence we have on these questions.

## Assimilation or Ethnic Pluralism?

One does not need a Ph.D. in sociology to appreciate that California is undergoing rapid ethnic change, in ways that do not obviously follow earlier patterns in the United States. But the interpretation of these changes is not a simple matter, and raises issues that go to the heart of theorizing on ethnically diverse societies. U.S. social scientists' ability to understand ethnic dynamics today are heavily influenced by the experience of European immigration to America a century ago. By the middle of the twentieth century it had become clear that the forces of acculturation and assimilation had reduced, though not entirely eliminated, economic disparities and social barriers between the descendents of the last great wave of immigrants, from Southern and Eastern Europe, and those who came before. The debate over their integration was carried out in such terms as "triple melting pot," "emergent ethnicity," "symbolic ethnicity," and so on, and to this day there is some disagreement over the persistence of ethnic identity for European-origin groups. But what is not contested is that economic equality, acculturation, and social assimilation are more the rule than the exception for European-origin groups. Milton Gordon's synthesis of the Euro-American experience of assimilation in *Assimilation in American Life*, supported by empirical studies on Italian Americans and other groups that at first seemed unassimilable, left little doubt that, in Mary Waters's words, ethnicity for White Americans was increasingly "optional."[3]

It was not until the mid-1960s, 40 years after the abrupt end of large-scale immigration in the early part of the twentieth century, that American social scientists reached these conclusions. Sociologists today have the exceedingly difficult task of trying to reach conclusions about the long-run impact of immigration while that immigration is at its peak. In contrast to social scientists a century ago we have better technical tools of research, though it is not clear that we are any wiser or theoretically more sophisticated. On the questions of language maintenance and the importance of language for cultural and political solidarity, as

in all matters of ethnic dynamics, we need to be very cautious in our interpretations and tentative in our conclusions.

Research and theory on intergenerational language maintenance and shift has been done in various settings worldwide, but the best-known work is based on the experience of immigrant-origin communities in the United States. Several decades ago Joshua Fishman proposed what has come to be known as the "Fishman Model" of language shift: adult immigrants continue to use their mother tongues in most domains, especially the home, which means that the ethnic mother tongue is transmitted on to the second generation. But this second generation grows up using the socially dominant language in most public and private domains, sometimes to the point of responding to their parents in the dominant language while understanding what the parents say in the ethnic tongue. This second generation, including those who are ethnically endogamous, tend to shift to the dominant language in all domains by the time they are adults, including the home, generally the last domain of ethnic language use. This means that the third generation has little opportunity to learn the ethnic mother tongue, which becomes an aspect of "symbolic" ethnicity, to use Herbert Gans's term, rather than a used language.[4]

Fishman originally proposed this model for European immigrant tongues. In fact we have only general knowledge of the dynamics of language maintenance and shift in the period 1870–1940: fluctuating Census Bureau policy with respect to questions about language and ethnicity make retrospective studies difficult. But we do know the result: few third generation Americans speak their non-English mother tongue. This, as well as evidence from Canada and Australia, suggests that this commonsense model of language shift accurately describes the experience of most European immigrants into English-speaking countries. Canada and Australia, the two other principal Anglophone nations that receive large numbers of immigrants, have national policies, recently under attack, but still in force, that officially support multilingualism and multiculturalism. But there is little evidence that bilingualism and mother tongue retention is any more vigorous in those nations than in the United States (French in Quebec is of course an exception, but it is hardly an "immigrant language"). In those nations, as in the United States today, the apparent vigor of immigrant languages is largely due to the continuing arrival of new immigrants, not to long-term intergenerational language maintenance.[5]

Does this model of language shift apply today in California? As Lieberson and Curry pointed out long ago, and as recent analysts have re-emphasized, the rate of language shift and the potential for stable

bilingualism is affected by demographic and contextual factors as well as individual desires. Two demographic factors have consistently been found to be associated with higher levels of language maintenance: isolation from the dominant population and concentration, in the sense of sheer numbers. In California today the use of Spanish is both more common and more concentrated than is true for Asian languages. Over three million Spanish speakers reside in the Los Angeles area. In several parts of the city there are large neighborhoods that predominantly house Latinos, and there are smaller pockets of Latino communities throughout the region. A much smaller proportion of Asians reside in ethnic neighborhoods, but are instead spread throughout middle-class neighborhoods throughout the city. There are more Latinos in Chinatown than Chinese; there are more Latinos in Koreatown than Koreans.[6] In Los Angeles today about half of all Latino adults are immigrants, and an even higher proportion of Latino children are immigrants or the progeny of immigrants. About three-quarters of all Asians are either immigrants or their children.

The implications for the use of languages other than English are profound, at least in the short run. The most obvious consequence is that there are a lot more speakers of these languages, at all age levels. And to the degree that these speakers constitute actual communities of language users, these communities should facilitate the maintenance of ethnic languages among second and third generation individuals who might otherwise shed them. Judging by data from Los Angeles, precisely this is happening among Latinos, who tend to live in comparatively homogeneous neighborhoods throughout the city. Asians, who tend to live much more dispersed, and are divided into many different language groups, show little evidence of intergenerational language maintenance.

From this combination of contextual, demographic, and political factors there is reason to believe that ethnic language maintenance in general may be greater in Greater Los Angeles today than it was in the past, especially for Latinos. The preceding discussion leads us to hypothesize that Spanish-language maintenance in the Los Angeles area today is higher than the maintenance of European languages a century ago and Asian languages today. This hypothesis follows largely from the changed demographic context of increased concentration and absolute numbers of Spanish speakers. Asian languages, in contrast, do not have any extraordinary contextual support outside of the ethnic enclaves that house only a small portion of their communities, so there is no reason to expect notable levels of language maintenance. We hypothesize that Asian rates of both intergenerational and (for immigrants) intragenerational language maintenance will be well below Latino rates.

### *Language Acculturation*

Language Shift Across Generations: Census data from 1990 (2000 data are not yet available) does show very large differences in ethnic language use between immigrants and natives; it also points to some ethnic differences. About 95 percent of all Latino immigrants and the same percentage of post-1980 Asian immigrants continue to speak their language at home. Asian immigrants who arrived before 1980 have slightly lower rates. The rates for immigrants who are not Asian or Latino are considerably lower, at least at the national level. Ethnic language use drops markedly for all native-born groups, but here the ethnic differences are sharper: U.S.-born Asians speak their ethnic language at home considerably less than native Latinos. In Greater Los Angeles the rates are 41 and 63 percent, respectively.

It is important to note that these rates may or may not represent ethnic tongue monolingualism in the immigrant generation, but among the native-born they represent bilingualism. The same is true for the data in table 3.1, which provides information separately for the second and third generations as well as for immigrants. The data are for Los Angeles, and is derived from 1989, the last year that the Census Bureau Current Population Survey collected detailed information on both language and generation.

Both Latinos and Asians exhibit a pattern of language shift across generations. But the patterns are quite distinct, and neither follows the classic pattern. Latino immigrant households are overwhelmingly Spanish speaking. There is a strong pattern of shift between generations, but the rate of using Spanish in third generation households remains a rather high 43 percent, higher than was true of third generation Euro-Americans and also higher than third generation Latinos 20 years previously. The pattern for Asians is closer to the historical norm, with a

**Table 3.1** Percent of adults who speak their ethnic mother tongue at home, by ethnicity and generation: Greater Los Angeles 1989

| *Generation* | *Latino (in percent)* | *Asians (in percent)* |
|---|---|---|
| First | 97 | 85 |
| Second | 72 | 25 |
| Third | 43 | 8 |

*Source*: 1989 Current Population Survey of the U.S. Census Bureau.

precipitous drop in the use of ethnic languages in first- and second-generation homes, dropping to a low 8 percent in third generation homes. The differences between Latinos and Asians is very marked, and supports our hypotheses based on population size and density. It also suggests that Asians are shifting to English at least as rapidly as any previous immigrant-origin ethnic group. They are also notable for the relatively high rate of English-only households in the immigrant generation: 15 percent. Asian immigrants are much more likely to be well educated, and some come to the United States with a good knowledge of English—something that is quite rare among Latino immigrants.

But there is another way to interpret the information in table 3.1. Since most second and third generation respondents told us that they speak English well, the rates in table 3.1 can also be read as good indicators of the intergenerational transmission of bilingualism. Whatever the individual or collective advantages of bilingualism, it is of interest to see if immigrant communities today are breaking with the "language shift" model typical of the American experience and succeeding in maintaining bilingualism across generations. From this perspective native-born Latinos have substantially higher rates of continuing bilingualism than do Asians. The crucial difference is seen in the third generation: Latinos are five times more likely to maintain bilingualism than are Asians. Among Asians the shift to English monolingualism is nearly universal by the third generation, when less than one in ten Asian adults report that they continue to speak their ethnic tongue at home. Among the Latino third generation bilingualism is less common than English monolingualism (43 percent compared to 57 percent), but it is nevertheless a very important secondary pattern.

These data suggest that intergenerational bilingualism may be substantial among at least a minority of Latinos. But one must be very cautious in interpretation. All of this information is self-reported. We cannot be sure what a person has in mind when she, or someone in the household answering for her, tells us that she speaks "a language other than English at home," or responds that they speak English "very well." Furthermore, since the renewed mass immigration of Asians and Latinos to California is a relatively recent phenomenon, the majority of the new second generation and almost all of the third generation is still in their childhood and young adult years. Third generation adults in 1989 are the descendents of an earlier and much smaller set of immigrants. On the other hand, one could argue that these data from 1989 may *underestimate* the future of stable Spanish bilingualism, because the forces for language maintenance, both demographic and cultural, may be stronger

today than in the past. As I argued earlier, it is the second generation, the children of immigrants, who are the most crucial link between the language of immigrants and future generations. If they pass their language on to their children, then there is at least a chance that it will be maintained by those children when they become adults. Without this crucial link, the third generation, however strong their motivation, has little chance of effective large-scale bilingualism.

Firm conclusions about the language patterns they pass on to their children can be drawn only after large portions of the new second and third generations have formed families. But it is possible to predict future patterns by studying their language patterns during childhood. Recognizing this, a research team led by Alejandro Portes and Ruben Rumbaut devised a panel study of immigrant children in San Diego and Miami, most of whom were either born in the United States or arrived as small children, the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study (CILS). Even the first phase provided evidence of very rapid language shift among second generation middle school children. The results of the second phase have recently been published; they demonstrate an overwhelming shift to English as the language of preference among Latino as well as Asian second generation teenagers, at least in these two cities. According to both self-reports and actual testing the level of speaking and understanding English is quite high, 90 percent or more; only those who came to the United States soon before the study began in 1992 continued to have difficulty with English. Equally high is the preference for English, even though most report that English is not the main language spoken in their homes. This preference for English increased over the four-year period of the study, from 70 percent in 1992 to 90 percent in 1996.

In this study of adolescents there are definite differences by national origin that mirror the data we reviewed earlier: about 90 percent of Asians prefer to speak English, in comparison to 72 percent of the Mexican Americans. Of the major Asian groups, only the Vietnamese had a rate close to the Mexican American one. On the other hand, the smaller Latino groups (Cubans, Columbians, Nicaraguans) all preferred English at rates similar to the Asians. There were equally striking differences in the bilingual abilities of Latinos and Asians, as measured by actual evaluations of their oral and written fluency. Among the Asian language groups, only 6–10 percent were fluent enough in their parents' language to be rated as bilingual; for most Latino groups the rate was about 40 percent. These are ratings of language ability, not use. But it is worth noting that these rates are very close to the third generation

language use rates in table 3.1. Bilingual ability in one's youth does not necessarily mean that one *will* raise one's children in bilingual households but it does mean that one can.[7]

The relatively small size and low concentration of Asian immigrant groups are important reasons why the languages seem to be shed so rapidly. It has also been suggested that the combination of the difficulty of many tone-based Asian languages and the complex hierarchical relations that are built into their grammars, make them especially difficult to maintain. Which is not to say that parents take no steps to preserve their languages: most Asian groups have established language schools (usually just one day a week) that impart at least the basics of literacy as well as cultural lessons. Such schools are virtually unknown among Spanish speakers, suggesting that the founding of a language school may be the best indication that a language is in the process of disappearing.[8]

### *Social Assimilation*

Linguistic and other acculturation has long been characteristic of most groups, including those who continue to be excluded from social integration and economic opportunity, such as African Americans, as well as many groups who actively resist social assimilation. From his perspective in the 1960s Gans saw that his "urban villagers" were largely acculturated, linguistically and otherwise, to working-class American patterns, even though they continued to live socially apart for a combination of external and voluntary reasons. Gordon concluded much the same with respect to Jews, African Americans, and Euro-Catholics. Twenty years later Alba and other observers, including Gans himself, saw that Italians and other Catholics, as well as Jews, did indeed move rapidly toward social assimilation by the third generation; but in the second, acculturation without social assimilation was the norm. There is, then no particular reason to expect that second generation acculturation today should lead in any quick and decisive way to social assimilation or, for that matter, economic success.[9]

What can we say about the pattern of social assimilation among the new second generation? Not a great deal, if we mean the children of recent immigrants currently being studied by Portes, Rumbaut, and others. They are simply too young. If language use is both a good and the most commonly available indicator of cultural maintenance, then intermarriage is the best and most easily available indicator of social assimilation. Ethnic groups with high rates of intermarriage simply cease to be groups. At the other end of the spectrum, groups with continuing high

rates of in-marriage are the very archetype of unassimilated minorities. This is true whether the in-marriage is voluntary or imposed; whether for reasons of geographical isolation, group size, religious conviction, or societal rejection.

Any conclusions about marriage patterns, and social assimilation generally, must wait until the children of today's children of immigrants are grown up. On the other hand, even in the middle of this century there were substantial numbers of native-born Latinos and "older" Asian subgroups like Chinese and Japanese Americans. Recent decennial censuses do not distinguish between second and subsequent generations, but comparing marriage patterns of older native-born Asians and Latinos with young adults of the same groups does provide a rough comparison between second and third generations. Table 3.2 compares the out-of-group marriage rates ("intermarriage") of two age cohorts of native-born women in Greater Los Angeles, by ethnicity: those aged 55–64 in 1990 and those aged 25–34. Of course this generational comparison is also a historical comparison, between marriage patterns today and 30 years ago. There is no easy way to distinguish between generational and historical factors, and in fact I presume that at least some of the change does indeed reflect the declining salience of racial lines over time.

Table 3.2 shows that for the European (including the "Russians," a rough proxy for Jews) and Asian-origin groups the increase in intermarriage has been substantial. The Black rate is still by far the lowest; Mexican women are the second most endogamous today. Asians, in contrast, have over the past 30 years shifted from among the most endogamous to rates of intermarriage approaching the rates for White women. This is true for the Japanese and Chinese subgroups, and, significantly

**Table 3.2** Out-of-group marriage rates for U.S.-born women, Los Angeles, 1990

| *Ethnic group* | *Women 55–64 (in percent)* | *Women 25–34 (in percent)* |
|---|---|---|
| Italian | 65 | 86 |
| "Russian" (Jewish) | 52 | 76 |
| Japanese | 11 | 68 |
| Chinese | 26 | 56 |
| All Asians | 14 | 56 |
| Mexican | 17 | 34 |
| Black | 2 | 8 |

*Source*: 1990 Census of Population.

it is also true when all Asian subgroups are combined into one panethnic Asian category. Let me underline the latter point: on the evidence of these data there is no evidence that Asian Americans are shifting from national origin to pan-ethnic (among all Asians) marriage patterns, though pan-Asian in-marriage does certainly exist.

Table 3.2 provides intriguing hints regarding the relevance of race for understanding assimilation today: 30 years ago endogamy was the norm for Asians as well as Mexicans and Blacks, but today over half of Asian women marry across racial lines. This suggests both intergenerational change and profound changes in societal attitudes. Even Black/White intermarriage has become more common, though it is still a pitifully small 8 percent. Whatever has changed in the meaning of the Asian/White boundary, it seems that it can be conceptualized in much the same terms that Alba used to discuss change in the meaning of being Italian: both the salience of the boundary itself and its correlation with socioeconomic characteristics can change over time.

## Ethnic Inequality in California

The final section of this chapter examines ethnic stratification in California, with a focus on Latinos. The 2000 U.S. Census confirmed that Latinos are now the largest minority in the entire country, surpassing the African American population. One of the most interesting "stories" revealed by the recent census is the degree to which Mexicans and other Latinos are increasing their presence in virtually all states, not just their traditional destinations of California and Texas. Direct migration from Mexico is the single largest component of this growth: immigrant Mexican workers are displacing Blacks and other low-skilled labor in manufacturing and services throughout the nation. In other words, they are extending the pattern already well established in California to the entire United States. It seems unlikely that Latinos will become a third of the nation's population any time soon, as they already are in California. But many of the patterns that have developed in California will be replicated nationwide, so it is important to understand the dynamics of ethnic stratification in California in some detail.

In California Latinos are fully one-third of the entire population, an increase from one-quarter in 1990, and only one-eighth as recently as 1970. Immigration drives this growth, but in two very different ways: the direct immigration of young workers from Mexico and other parts of Latin America, and the births of their children in the United States. As mentioned in the introduction, this "new second generation"

**Table 3.3** Ethnic composition of selected occupations: California, 1996 (in percent)

| | *Total work force* | *Professional/ technical/managerial* | *Labor* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Whites | 56 | 71 | 30 |
| Immigrant Latinos | 17 | 5 | 49 |
| Native Latinos | 8 | 6 | 9 |
| Blacks | 6 | 5 | 5 |
| Immigrant Asians | 10 | 10 | 5 |
| Native Asians | 2 | 3 | 1 |

*Source*: Tabulated from 1995–1997 Current Population Survey.

of Latino children is now the single largest segment of California's schoolchildren and, explicitly or implicitly, they are at the center of political debates about education. Bilingual education is the most obvious issue, but the more general debate about the poor quality of California's public schools is also very much about Latino children, who constitute the vast majority of the poorly performing public school students. As this new second generation ages into adulthood the debate will shift, or at least extend, to ethnic inequality in the workforce. No one seriously expects that poorly educated immigrants will attain economic parity with other Americans, but their U.S.-born children will expect this parity. However if the inequalities of education extend to the workplace then they will be sorely disappointed. And there is preliminary evidence that this is in fact taking place.

Immigrant Latinos currently make up 17 percent of California's workforce, but they are 49 percent of all laborers, 38 percent of all service workers, and 45 percent of all factory workers. Whites and Asians are concentrated more at the top of the occupational range and African Americans and native-born Latinos are concentrated in the middle (see table 3.3).

The two most ethnicized major occupational categories are at the top (Whites 71 percent of the professional/technical workers) and bottom (Latino immigrants are 49 percent of laborers). Within these broad categories, of course, are specific occupations (Hollywood producer, grape picker) that are even more ethnic-specific. But it is worth noting that

**Table 3.4** Occupations and earnings of California's workforce by ethnicity and nativity: 1996

| | *Average earnings (in dollars)* | *Professional/ technical/managerial (in percent)* | *Clerical/craft (in percent)* | *Labor/ service/operative (in percent)* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Whites | $29,231 | 47 | 37 | 16 |
| Immigrant Latinos | 14,606 | 13 | 26 | 61 |
| Native Latinos | 22,377 | 28 | 41 | 31 |
| Blacks | 23,175 | 32 | 40 | 28 |
| Immigrant Asians | 22,577 | 40 | 33 | 27 |
| Native Asians | 29,389 | 52 | 34 | 13 |

*Source*: Tabulated from 1995–1997 Current Population Survey.

even the more ethnicized occupations have considerable ethnic diversity within them. And, except for Latino Immigrants, non-Whites are spread across occupational levels in proportions roughly equal to their representation in the labor force.

In table 3.4 we see the average earnings and occupational distributions of California's major ethnic groups. Looking first at the three larger U.S.-born groups (White, Black, Latino) we find the familiar White/non-White disparity: nearly half of all White workers are found in managerial/professional/technical positions, compared to less than a third of African Americans or Latinos. Conversely, the latter two are about twice as likely to be factory workers or service workers. White/non-White income gaps are substantial: Whites earn about 25 percent more overall and maintain a substantial advantage at each occupational level except for service, where Black workers earn slightly more.

The occupational profile for U.S.-born Asian Americans is similar to that for Whites, and in fact somewhat more elevated: Asian Americans have the highest proportion of professional/technical workers and the lowest proportions of factory workers and service workers. In terms of income, they are quite close to Whites by occupational level and overall.

Turning to the two immigrant groups we see two very two distinct profiles. Latino immigrants provide the greatest contrast to Whites and native Asian Americans: only 13 percent are in top occupational category and they are three to five times more likely than Whites or native Asians to be factory workers, laborers, or service workers. Overall, 47 percent of Whites and 52 percent of native Asians are

professional/managerial/technical workers, and only 16 and 13 percent respectively are laborers/factory/service workers; the occupational profile for immigrant Latinos is just the reverse: 61 percent are found at the three lowest occupational levels, compared to only 13 percent at the top. Furthermore, immigrant Latinos have the greatest income disparities at each occupational level and, of course, overall. The overall disparity (they earn about half of what Whites and native Asians do) is hardly surprising, but the magnitude of the disparity at each occupational level is worth calling attention to: at every level they earn only about two-thirds what Whites do, and also substantially lesser than any other group.

The reasons for these disparities are not difficult to discern: most Latino immigrants arrive with low levels of education, poor English skills and, of course, little or no financial capital. They average only 8 years of school and only 14 percent have had any education above high school. Averages do obscure individual differences: among immigrant Latinos are to be found millionaire surgeons, Ph.D.s, and a substantial minority that has earned middle-class or "affluent working-class" status through dint of hard work and thrift. But the fact remains that two-thirds of all immigrant Latino workers are in low-paying, low-status "dirty-work" jobs.

Asian immigrants provide a more mixed picture, in some ways resembling Whites and native Asian Americans, and in other ways resembling Latino immigrants. Forty percent are in professional/managerial/technical occupations, more than African Americans or native Latinos. Like the latter, they are more likely than Whites to be found in factory or service work. In contrast they are markedly *under*represented among laborers. This mixed occupational pictures reflects the fact that Asian immigrants in the past three decades are an incredibly diverse group, probably the most diverse in the history of immigration to the United States. About two-thirds come from middle-class backgrounds and arrive with high levels of education and good English skills. The other one-third have more humble backgrounds, such as the second wave of Southeast Asian refugees who were largely peasants, fisherfolk, and small-town workers. Overall they average 13 years of school, close to the U.S. national average, and 62 percent have had some college education. In ways unique in U.S. immigration history, the well-equipped two-thirds move directly into professional, technical, and commercial occupations that, if not at the very top, are at or above the U.S. average. Some, especially those with relatively modest English skills, settle for careers below average for their level of education, Korean shopkeepers being the best-known example. Their earnings are below Whites and native Asians, though vastly above immigrant Latinos. This is true even

at the lower rungs of the occupational ladder, suggesting that even the less well-prepared Asian immigrants are doing substantially better than Latino immigrants.

In sum, 61 percent of immigrant Latinos toil as factory workers, service workers, or laborers, as do 27 percent of immigrant Asians. The latter have more diverse backgrounds, are generally better-educated, and are spread up and down the occupational ladder. The latter point is of particular interest with regard to the question of ethnic stratification. While the relatively homogeneous low-skilled Latino immigration contributes to the appearance of ethnic economic castes, the diversity of Asian immigration militates against it. Economically as well as culturally (as evidenced by language shift) and socially (as evidenced by intermarriage) Asians are assimilating as rapidly as any previous group, including the White immigrant groups from Europe a century ago. Latinos are moving more slowly on all these dimensions, though at this point in time it is impossible to say if their progress is less rapid than European groups a century ago.

## A Glimpse at the Future: The Emerging New Second Generation

The previous section was devoted to a largely cross-sectional overview of the place of immigrant workers in California. But of course the overwhelming fact about California's workforce is change, not stasis: any analysis that emphasizes averages misses important variation and trends. The future course of immigration to California is impossible to predict, but the best guess with regard to immigration is that it will continue pretty much as before: poorly educated and non–English-speaking immigrants from Mexico and Central America will continue to be available for the least desirable jobs throughout the economy, and diverse but on average much better-educated Asian immigrants will enter the job market up and down the occupational pyramid. Whatever the future may hold with regard to immigration, we know that in the next 30 years the children of immigrants will enter the labor force in numbers equal to or above the number of immigrants in the past 30 years. Where will they fit in?

The answer is only beginning to emerge, and is fraught with complexities beyond the scope of this discussion, but we can provide a preliminary guess. To do so requires four assumptions that we think are reasonable:

First, California's high school students of today will be the bulk of its young workers a decade from now, the only other significant source being immigrants from Latin America and Asia. This is a reasonable

assumption given the low rates of in-migration from other states in recent decades;

Second, we can identify the Latino and Asian second generations of schoolchildren. School data are not reported by generation, but there is a remarkable correspondence between ethnicity and generation among high school–age youth in California: over 90 percent of Asians are second or "1.5" (born abroad but schooled in the United States) generation, as are over 80 percent of Latinos; the corresponding figure for Whites is under 20 percent, and under 10 percent for Blacks. To a considerable degree then, high school students divided by ethnicity are also divided by generation.

Third, the relative performance of young people in school provides a rough guide to where they will end up in the occupational/class structure in the future, an assumption well borne out across ethnic groups and within them. For example, 70 percent of college graduates do end up in professional, managerial, or technical positions.

Finally, the status of jobs that young but post-school (ages 25–34) workers have today is a good predictor of the general status of jobs they will have the rest of their lives, another point well supported by previous research.[10]

How are California's ethnic groups doing in school? In fact the more usual question today is, how are the schools doing, and the answer from most perspectives is, pretty poorly. But hidden below the sub-par average performances are significant ethnic differences. For decades Latinos have had low high school graduation rates, and these rates have not varied much by generation. The most recent data available, from the 1996 Current Population Survey, tells much the same story. By one common measure (the percent ages 16–21 who are either high school graduates or still in school), Whites, Asians, *and* African Americans are bunched together at about 90 percent, with no significant variation by generation. Latinos are 10–12 points below, again, with no significant generational differences.

What about school performance, as measured by such things as grades and test scores? We lack the kind of detailed information by ethnicity, nativity, and class background necessary for analytic comparisons, but what case studies and statewide data do exist provide evidence of substantial ethnic disparities. In the Portes and Rumbaut study of second generation children in San Diego, most Asian subgroups scored nearly a full grade point above Mexican American students; Mexican American test scores on the increasingly familiar Stanford Nine Test in San Diego were above half that of other second generation students. Statewide test

scores by ethnicity show similar ethnic disparities. Indicators of preparation for college are similar. Statewide, 56 percent of Asian high school graduates complete college prep coursework, compared to 43 percent of *both* Whites and Blacks, but only 25 percent of Latinos. Scholastic Aptitude Tests, which are typically taken only by a relatively high-achieving subset of students, within or across ethnic groups produce similar ethnic differences. In the latest round in California, Latino and Black test takers lagged Whites and Asians by 144–211 points, roughly enough to be the difference between the thirtieth and sixtieth percentile.[11]

Ethnic differences in school performance, then, appear to be substantially greater than differences in high school graduation rates, suggesting that the latter may be a poor predictor of ethnic inequality in the future. Years of schooling is only a little better as an indicator, since most groups bunch up around 12–14 years on average, and in any case this measure can be applied only to age groups who have completed their education. In California we do have an excellent standard that measures the likelihood of entering the middle/upper middle classes, for groups if not for individuals: eligibility for the University of California. In theory the top 12.5 percent of high school graduates are eligible for UC, though in fact about 20 percent are, by a combination of grades and test scores. Less than half actually attend a UC campus, but it is a safe bet that most of this "talented two-tenths" does go on to college and they probably constitute the majority of those students who attend and graduate expeditiously from the state's second public university system as well. Only 8 percent of Latino high school graduates are eligible to attend UC, in contrast to 26 per cent of Whites and a remarkable 44 percent of Asians. If it is true that quality education is increasingly necessary to get a good job, then 44 percent of Asian graduates are headed for the state's elite, compared to 8 percent of Latino graduates (remember, in both cases these groups are largely the children of immigrants). These figures are similar to the proportion of each group of immigrants who have professional/managerial/technical jobs, suggesting that in California public education perpetuates inequality more than it reduces it (see table 3.5).

I have emphasized that only time will tell if this scenario of ethnic inequality will be the future of California. A look at today's young workers gives us further evidence. Table 3.5 looks at a cohort about 10 years older, the U.S.-born 25–34-year-olds who are in the workforce and largely finished with their formal education. It suggests that this generation will carry ethnic disparities with them, but they will not be so great as those suggested by comparing immigrant Latinos with others, or by comparing today's Latino (and Black) high school graduates with other ethnic groups.

**Table 3.5** Educational and occupational status of native-born California workers 25–34 in 1996, by ethnicity (in percent)

| | *College graduate* | *Some college* | *White collar* | *Craft* | *Unskilled* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| White | 32 | 67 | 67 | 14 | 19 |
| Asian | 48 | 73 | 75 | 12 | 13 |
| Latino | 16 | 53 | 57 | 16 | 27 |
| Black | 16 | 57 | 62 | 13 | 25 |

*Source*: Tabulated from 1995–1997 Current Population Survey.

By the demanding standard of finishing college the ethnic disparities are considerable: nearly half of all young Asian native workers are college graduates, as are one-third of Whites. But only 16 percent of native Latino (or Black) young workers have a college education.

On the other hand substantial portions of each group has at least some college education, even if they did not earn a degree. There is quite a close correspondence between having some college education and the percent who are in white-collar occupations. However the great differences in college graduation rates suggest that the managerial and professional elite will be largely White and Asian.

How can these various bits of evidence be summarized? To judge by educational data, social disparities among ethnic groups growing up in California today will be most obvious at the upper levels, possibly increasing the differences observable today between Whites and Asians on the one hand, and Latinos and African Americans on the other. At the other end of the spectrum, perhaps one-quarter of U.S.-raised Latinos (and African Americans) will end up as unskilled workers, far more than will be the case for Asians and Whites. U.S.-raised Latinos will form an increasing proportion of those with jobs in the lower-middle range of the occupational spectrum, the lower status white-collar jobs and crafts. Or, to summarize in less optimistic terms, competition with better-qualified Whites and Asians will continue to keep most Latinos and African Americans out of the top tiers, and competition with more desperate Latino immigrants will keep them off the bottom; let us hope the jobs are there for them in-between.

## Summary and Conclusions

The principal difference between immigration today and the last period of large-scale immigration is that many immigrants today arrive with the resources—educational, linguistic, social, and financial—needed to

move into middle-class, professional occupations. Some are from Latin America, but educated immigrants tend to be from Asia. In contrast, the least-qualified half of today's immigrants arrive with little resources of any sort and, like Southern European immigrants a century ago, are obliged to take low-paying menial jobs with little hope of future advancement. Not all of these are from Mexico and Central America, but the vast majority are, just as the majority of the more fortunate immigrants are from Asia.

This strong correlation between class and ethnic origins of immigrants also has a profound impact on the debates over language in California today. A substantial portion of Asian immigrants, including all of the very well-educated, arrive speaking English, accented and awkward, perhaps, but English nevertheless. Their children may attend private ethnic language academies after school and on weekends, but they make almost no demands for bilingual education services from the public schools. Their children either arrive at school speaking decent English, or learn it rapidly, and all evidence indicates that they will not pass their ethnic mother tongue on to their children, the third generation. And Asian children excel at school, surpassing the native White population. In contrast Latino immigrants arrive poor and monolingual, and most will attain only rudimentary English if they came to the United States as adults. Their children usually begin school speaking mostly or only Spanish, but of course they learn English and come to prefer it. However, for reasons discussed earlier, they do not discard Spanish so rapidly as Asian youth discard Chinese or Korean, and there is evidence that a minority do pass Spanish on to their third generation children. If immigration were to cease suddenly, as it did in 1925, then over a generation or two we might see Spanish begin to disappear. But immigration is not likely to cease, and Spanish will be an essential part of California's future, even if it is spoken largely by immigrants and their children.

In addition to all their other disadvantages, the new Latino second generation children have the misfortune of arriving contemporaneously with the Asian second generation, and is inevitably compared with them. Indeed, I would argue that this, not ill-will or racism, is at the core of public hostility to bilingual education. Asian students require no bilingual education, and they excel. Latino students are provided bilingual education, and they fail. Of course, academic failure is just as common among Latino students who attend school only in English, but that tends to be ignored.

The generally dismal quality of California's schools is the central political issue in the state today, so it is hardly surprising that the

glaringly poor performance of Latino students, who represent nearly half the state's school children, is a particularly volatile political issue. Bilingual education was sold to the public as *the* key to improving the school performance of Latino children, and it failed to deliver on this promise. But with the death of bilingual education, perhaps the political debate over education can shift to more important issues, such as quality teaching and building programs that genuinely take account of the poverty and deprivation of so many of the state's schoolchildren, Latino and otherwise.

Continuing ethnic inequality in California seems inevitable, at least in the foreseeable future. Even if the state's schools were to miraculously reverse course, and fulfill their promise of quality education for all, the effect on the adult workforce would not be felt for two decades or more. But does this mean that we are in fact moving toward a "caste-like" society in California, caste-like in the sense that status is determined by ethnicity, and ethnic groups keep to themselves? Not necessarily. The measures of educational, occupational, and economic status we have reviewed are averages; every ethnic group contains individuals at the very top and at the very bottom. Ethnicity and race are certainly correlated with socioeconomic status, but they do not determine it.

With respect to the second important characteristic of a "caste-like" society, ethnic endogamy, California has a long and fascinating history of racial and ethnic intermarriage and socializing, and the evidence touched upon earlier suggests that these tendencies are accelerating today. California is the birthplace of the "multiracial" movement, the campaign to give recognition to those who cannot honestly check only one box on a census or survey of race and ethnicity. There is considerable evidence that intermarriage rates for native-born Asian and Mexican Americans are not all that different from the rates for native-born Euro-American ethnics 50 years ago. To the degree that this is true, in the future "multiracial, multiethnic" could become the single largest ethnic category in the state. Certainly this tendency can only erode boundaries between ethnic groups, reducing the appearance of ethnic stratification in the state.

But intermarriage and other forms of "social assimilation" tend to take place within class boundaries, and cannot in itself erase ethnic inequalities. Indeed, I would argue the opposite, that substantial equality among ethnic groups is necessary in order to have intermarriage on a large scale. In other words, whether one's goal is a "multicultural" society with groups maintaining high levels of their separate identities, or a "multiracial" society in which peoples and cultures are blended, a

successful version of either requires substantial socioeconomic equality as a prerequisite. And the evidence suggests that we are moving in the opposite direction.

## Notes

1. David E. Lopez, 1978, "Chicano Language Loyalty in an Urban Setting," *Sociology and Social Research* 62, pp. 267–278; Calvin Veltman, *Language Shift in the United States*, The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1983.
2. The argument for bilingual education is well stated in Susan J. Dicker *Languages in America: A Pluralist View*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996.
3. The central work in this tradition is Milton Gordon's *Assimilation in American Life*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1964. Herbert Gans's study of second generation Italian Americans (*The Urban Villagers*, New York: The Free Press, 1965) depicts acculturation without substantial social assimilation in the second generation and substantial assimilation as well among the third generation. The loss of separate ethnic communities and identities is well documented in Richard Alba's *Italian Americans: Into the Twilight of Ethnicity*, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1985, and Mary Waters's *Ethnic Options*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.
4. Joshua Fishman, 1965, "The Status and Prospects of Bilingualism in the United States," *Modern Language Journal* 49, pp. 143–155; Fishman, *The Sociology of Language*, Rowley, MA: Newbury House, 1972. There is much more to Fishman's model than these descriptive parameters. He discusses the societal pressures and group attitudes that produce the pattern in each generation, but I lack the space to do full justice to the full model here.
5. M.D.R. Evans, 1987, "Language Skill, Language Usage and Opportunity: Immigrants in the Australian Labour Market," *Sociology* 21, pp. 253–274; Hiroko Noro, 1990, "Family and Language Maintenance: An Exploratory Study of Japanese Language Maintenance Among Children of Postwar Japanese Immigrants in Toronto," *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 86, pp. 57–68; Michael Clyne, 1997, "Managing Linguistic Diversity and Second Language Programs in Australia," *Current Issues in Language and Society* 4:2.
6. Stanley Lieberson, and T.J. Curry, 1971, "Language Shift in the United States: Some Demographic Clues," *International Migration Review* 5, pp. 125–137; Gillian Stevens, 1992, "The Social and Demographic Context of Language Use in the United States," *American Sociological Review* 57, pp. 171–185.
7. These data are reported in Alejandro Portes and Ruben Rumbaut, 2001, *Legacies: The Story Of The New Second Generation*, Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 115–123.
8. The most notable exception to the general absence of Spanish language schools in the United States are the bilingual academies set up by elite Cubans in Miami. As might be expected, students in these schools ranked

highest of all groups in bilingual abilities. As discussed earlier in the chapter, whatever the potential for this form of bilingual education, it is completely different from what is called "bilingual education" in most public schools.

9. Herbert Gans, 1979. "Symbolic Ethnicity: The Future of Ethnic Groups and Cultures in America," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 2, pp. 1–20; also see his *The Urban Villagers*, and Richard Alba, 1985. "The Twilight of Ethnicity Among Americans of European Ancestry: The Case of Italians," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 8, pp. 134–158.
10. My estimates of the generational composition of California's schoolchildren are drawn directly from analysis of the 1995–1997 Current Population Survey. The third and fourth assumptions are well established in sociological literature, e.g. Peter Blau and Otis Dudley Duncan, *The American Occupational Structure*, New York: Wiley, 1967. In the course of this research we cross-tabulated educational attainment and occupational status for California workers in the age group 25–44. The results were both unsurprising and striking: 70% of college graduates have professional, managerial, or technical jobs, and most of the rest are in sales; 68% of those without a high school education had jobs as laborers, factory workers, or lower service workers; those with just a high school education fared moderately better, but nearly half had the same range of lower manual jobs, and most of the rest had craft or clerical positions.
11. These data come the author's analysis of the CILS study of second generation children in San Diego, and the *Los Angeles Times* of May 17, 1998; July 23, 1998; and September 2, 1998.

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# PART TWO

# The Fragility of Plurilingual Nations

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# CHAPTER 4

# Nationalism Versus Bilingualism

*Astrid von Busekist*

The expression "nationalism versus bilingualism" refers to a relatively well-known aspect of nationalism.[1] Indeed, one of the objectives of a national dynamic is to regroup cultural and political allegiances under the same roof. In Belgium, this refers to a paradoxical configuration that implied progressive abandonment of political, economic, and professional resources (bilingualism) in favor of territorial and unilingual management of Belgian communities, thus rekindling rather than appeasing former nationalistic aspirations.

This particular configuration was achieved through the initiative of one group whose linguistic coherence was nonexistent when Belgium was created in 1830. The Flemish language only existed in the form of a mosaic of dispersed dialects lacking standardized spelling. A group of Flemish activists (*flamingants*) not only created a codified language, but also brought about the bilingual administration of part of the country, and even succeeded in imposing the exclusive use of their language in Flanders.

Another particularity of the Belgian situation lies in the fact that neither of the Monarchy's two parties seriously envisioned political independence until the end of the twentieth century. Flemish and Walloon activists evolved within the framework of a unified and then federal State structure, while the Flemish movement succeeded in distributing languages territorially, so as to confine French and Walloon to the southern portion of the country.

Last but not least, the most striking paradox is that bilingualism is maintained both legally and in reality in Brussels's capital region. This

denotes a partial failure for exclusive nationalist demands, but also represents a realm of parity. One may even argue that the existence of linguistic heterogeneity is the main guarantee of the Monarchy's cohesion since it allows for equal representation of both linguistic groups within the political institutional framework.

In examining the history of linguistic development in Belgium, three points are underlined. First, the initial abandonment of French as an official language, followed by generalized bilingualism, was counterproductive for the Flemish population whose goal has been to obtain exclusive use of the Flemish language in the northern part of the country. Indeed, at a time when the Flemish movement acquired its first legislative victories in favor of introducing Flemish in schools and judicial/administrative systems, the Flemish population was being socialized in French and a large number of trades and professions still used French.

Second, and in retrospect, the delay between initial Flemish demands and the recognition of them by the legislative branch exacerbated tensions within the Flemish movement and among its representatives.

Third, the emergence of a Walloon movement created a new problem. What status should be attributed to Brussels? Of course, the city was located in Flemish territory, the majority of its inhabitants were Francophone, but the city also housed the State's decision-making institutions. Consequently, the capital required bilingual management. However, the destiny of Brussels and the Walloons were not be united despite attempts by Walloon delegations during the first third of the twentieth century. A specific "Brussels community" did not exist, and the inhabitants of this "multicultural capital" (as Jules Destrée called it in 1923) did not merge or mingle with those from the Walloon region.

Evolution in linguistic legislation depended on these three factors. However, this evolution can also be explained by Flemish and Walloon attitudes relative to each of their own political and cultural objectives, as well as by the important role played by those who actively sought to achieve a unified Belgium in whatever form possible.

Before a brief presentation of the complex step-by-step evolution of the status of languages in Belgium since 1780, a few preliminary remarks are necessary. Ironically, the nationalistic groups identify also with international and cosmopolitan actions and ideologies, which is to say representatives of the Catholic Church (foremost Flemish) and Socialists (in majority Walloon).

The utilization of language is linked to an immediate effectiveness and political praxis, as in the revolutionary project of Abbé Grégoire and others: language and nation are in a metonymic relationship.[2]

The logic of the nationalists' action centered around the place occupied by language in the heart of public debate. Determining how to deal with languages progressively became a doctrine, and served as the starting point for most political conflict. Consequently, the attempt to resolve linguistic conflicts created tensions within the State's structures and questioned the legitimacy of its representatives.

The success of nationalist parties directly emanated from the democratization of political life and universal suffrage. Paradoxically, this success occurred following the victory of Flemish demands, which tends to prove that the latter, essentially focused on language, continued to function as a springboard for nationalism. However, once linguistic demands were accepted as an object of legitimate political negotiation and then resolved (at least from a legal standpoint), they then became an alibi for communitarian conflicts.

The history of Belgium is that of a dynamic linguistic configuration. Present-day Belgium results from a multitude of language policies reflecting the pursuit of different goals, from the Old Regime to the postwar period. It also is the history of political configuration. Indeed, linguistic and political praxes were and have been inextricably intertwined. The evolution from the Old Regime (in other words the coexistence of an official language that served both power and knowledge—French—and a plethora of dialects derived from Flemish), to a federal State where the different languages (French, Dutch, German) all possess an identical and officially recognized status, was only accomplished at the price of political struggle. However, this not only established Flemish alongside French as an official language, but also determined the character of the language itself. In an effort to distinguish itself from important neighbors who used the same idiom (the Netherlands), both linguistic invention and grammatical codification of the language were based on political principles of determination: an "interior" vis-à-vis an "exterior" defined as hostile.

Last but not least, the history of Belgium is one of a national or nationalist configuration. Indeed, the recognition of language was to be intrinsically linked to the recognition of a distinct cultural community, specific and autonomous in the sense that governing both people and goods within this linguistic and cultural community should lie in the hands of that particular community's members. Hence, those who governed and those who were governed were to belong to the same ethnic or linguistic community.

How did these political–linguistic transformations come about? The main instigator of linguistic reforms was the Flemish movement.

Throughout the nineteenth century, this movement underwent a great deal of change. It began as a group of intellectuals seeking the recognition and respect of their language, and culminated in a combative nationalist movement. Toward the end of the century, it came up against a newly created Walloon movement that imitated its Flemish counterpart in an effort to preserve a certain number of prerogatives that, until then, had been attributed to French speakers, and the Flemish activists were now demanding. The transformation of the Flemish and Walloon movements into political forces through their representatives at the Chamber of Deputies made these political actors all the more important, as witnessed by the fact that they now transcend traditional partisan cleavages. Though the Walloon activists belonged to the Socialist Party, today their representatives are divided into "strongholds"[3] that reflect specific Belgian sociological groups (Liberals, Socialists, Catholics).

However, this was not always the case. Flemish activists benefited from the Catholic support despite universalism of faith and the ultra-Montanism of Catholic representatives, whereas Walloon nationalists had to redefine the internationalist ideology of the Socialist Party so as to adapt it to a national–regional one.

## The Linguistic Context in Belgium Before 1830

In 1780, Latin was the language of scholars and the clergy, while French was the language of power and communication among the leading classes. No real language policy existed in 1780; hence, the linguistic divide was a social one—a literate upper class and a heterogeneous mass of dialect-speaking groups. However, French was slowly spreading throughout several regions thanks to Francophilism and budding press. The bourgeoisie, including those living in Flemish regions (Gand, Bruges) spoke French because it was linked to power, whereas Flemish dialects did not enjoy any significant form of assembly. However, geographic disparities in the spread of French existed; in general, French was concentrated in urban areas and the Romanic portion of the country.

The *Questionnaire Grégoire* was distributed throughout France,[4] including departments located in the north. However, revolutionary decrees establishing the unique use of French were oftentimes subdued by local arrangements, and sometimes even by decrees authorizing translations. The establishment and legitimacy of this purely political design to shape language and writing—the ultimate sign and symptom of the nation was formally acknowledged in 1794 with the *Rapport* also due to Grégoire.

From 1794 to 1803 in the linguistic realm, a compromise was adopted based on priority given to revolutionary propaganda over the instruction of the national idiom: "one did not have time to teach, one had to enforce!" (*on n'avait pas le temps d'instruire, il fallait entraîner!*).[5] Frenchifying nonetheless continued to advance.

From 1801/1803 to 1814, plans for Frenchifying took on a more radical turn. Indeed, all public acts had to be written in French within a year's delay. Napoleon thus accomplished what the Decree of Thermidor II (promulgated under the Reign of Terror) had not enforced.[6] Only from this date on may one speak of massive Frenchifying of the middle classes throughout northern departments.

## 1815–1830: The Failure of William's "Dutchifying" Policy

"Dutchifying" policies implemented by civil servants under William I—following the incorporation of Belgium into the Netherlands in 1815—represents the exact opposite of Frenchifying policies. Reinforced by Protestant religious policy, Dutch was attributed the status of official language. However, Frenchifying endeavors were so advanced that Dutchifying, associated with Protestantism and therefore stigmatized by a large portion of the clergy, had little chance of succeeding.[7]

## From French-Speaking to Bilingual Communities

### *Genesis of the Flemish Movement*

According to the philologist, Daniel Droixhe, the status of languages in 1830 corresponded to a "misunderstood linguistic equilibrium."[8] Though French was considered to be the main language, and "Flemish" (as distinguished from Dutch-Flemish had fallen to the wayside since the sixteenth century) was only a common denominator of a multitude of vernacular parlance, it would nevertheless be inexact to say that the "Flemish idiom," though considered by the revolutionaries as a more difficult ideological and religious obstacle, was attacked. It is also erroneous to argue, as do some Flemish historians, that it was violently combated or even eradicated.

*The Independence of 1830: creating a French-speaking state wherein the "practice of languages is a free choice. . . ."* On the other hand, Flemish dialect had no standard linguistic reference, though opposition to Dutch was widespread even among Flemish populations. In 1821, Brussels's mayor even required the drafting of codes in French as well as in Dutch due to the fact that Dutch texts were incomprehensible in Flanders!

Hence, the reestablishment of French was considered as a progress, and the temporary government, composed of French-speaking bourgeois figures, identified it as a sign of unity, the symbol of national reinforcement. Hadn't the revolution of 1830 also been waged against the "despotic imposition of a privileged language."[9]

Thus, a political rather than a cultural rupture occurred in 1830, leaving Flemish speakers virtually powerless with regard to French. In order to govern efficiently, the political class of the newly created Belgium adopted a unique language, an indispensable step for this budding nation. The choice of French was perceived as being perfectly legitimate in the eyes of the Monarchy's young representatives as well as among the first Flemish activists.

*. . . but where demands for the recognition of the Flemish culture are strongly voiced* For the major part of the nineteenth century, the Flemish movement was relatively heterogeneous, but nonetheless remained deeply patriotic and respectful of the 1831 Constitution of Orleanist inspiration, From its inception, the movement's main concern was to require the application of Article 23 of the Constitution that called for the "freely chosen us of languages." Pioneer Flemish activists were Belgian patriots. Michel van der Voort, leader of Brussels's Flemish movement, could thus legitimately proclaim, "There is no such thing as the 'Flemish'; no 'Walloons', no 'Flemish', but Belgians!"[10]

Frenchifying the country as well as the capital still remained incomplete. Numerous bilingual individuals were accounted for,[11] however data is very difficult to analyze due to the absence of systematic counting and the large number of illiterate persons.

The pioneer Flemish movement thus concentrated more on achieving recognition of the language and culture, and used simple and pacific means such as the circulation of petitions and the creation of cultural and literary associations. Main spokespersons belonged to the small urban bourgeoisie.

*The Flemish Program*

The creation of the Flemish Commission in 1856 represented a turning point for the Flemish movement. The *Grievance Commission*, gathering members from different local Flemish sections and associations, outlined the major demands of Flemish activists. It soon was faced with the choice of either joining a party that would include Flemish demands in their platform, or creating a new party.

In 1856, Minister Charles Rogier's rejection of the Flemish Commission's Report resulted in the launching of the Flemish political

and partisan movement. At this time, Flemish positions under discussion focused on the possibility of the State to house two nationalities; two nations and two languages. Though this school of thought seemed to emanate from cultural nationalism, the originality of the Flemish movement in fact consisted in the desire to find a political solution; that the State recognize the legitimacy of two distinct cultures that, in return, would symbolize and legitimize the State's political organization. This was above all the position adopted by liberal Flemish activists, for example, the *Vlamingen Vooruit* (Flemish Go Forward) based in Brussels.

Another important turning point occurred between 1856 and 1858. During this period, and for the first time, the government officially recognized the Flemish movement, and provided an official forum for the expression of their demands through the creation of a Commission established by a royal decree.[12] However, as mentioned, Charles Rogier rejected the Commission's report, consequently Flemish activists were simultaneously solicited and rejected by the political class. The Report itself, a genuine plea, focused on the theme of racial duality to the detriment of union within the French language, and the primacy of the mother tongue vis-à-vis the administrative language. Respecting Flemish demands would necessarily have required a complete upheaval of administrative structures, notably the decentralization of the State. Thus, the Grievance Commission Report provided a detailed and coherent program to the Flemish movement, including an outline for linguistic measures. However, its publication also coincided with a severe schism within the Flemish movement itself. By then, the Flemish had chosen to integrate the two largest political groups, Liberal and Catholic, their representatives thus separating and joining the ranks of these parties so as to "conquer from within"; all to the detriment of the unity the Flemish has thus far worked toward.

*The Flemish movement becomes more politicized, yet . . .* The period covering 1856–1858 to the start of the twentieth century presents several characteristic aspects of the Flemish movement. First and foremost, the movement's pioneers remained loyal toward the Belgian government, hence serving an important purpose. Indeed, the use of Flemish was considered as the cornerstone of nationality: the distinguishing characteristic of Belgium lay in the fact that French was not the exclusive language. On the contrary, two languages and two cultures coexisted. Mutual respect of both idioms was meant to be the foundation of the State's organization. However, it was precisely around this issue, the definition of Belgian nationality and patriotism, that the two linguistic groups confronted each other. Naturally, the Flemish believed they held the monopoly on patriotism because only they were bilingual.

The second characteristic (related to the first at least during this period) was the absence of demands for regional unilingualism. Bilingualism in Flanders was already considered as a victory. Yet the demand for regional unilingualism was probably more acceptable by the government than bilingualism. This was to become the main conflict during the twentieth century.

The first linguistic law, constituting a turning point, was passed in 1873 and established the right for a suspect to be trialed and judged in his/her own language. The evolution of the Flemish movement became threefold, moving progressively away from patriotic reformism toward nationalist autonomy, from the cultural/literary sphere to the political arena in the Flemish provinces. This first law was to be followed by the 1878 Delaet law (linguistic regulation of the relationship between citizens and administration), and the second Coremans law (regulation of the use of languages in education). From a legal standpoint, these laws satisfied three major demands of Flemish activists. However, the first speech in Flemish pronounced at the Chamber was not to occur until 1888 (the "Law of Equality") and the translation of the Constitution was not published until 1967. Indeed, linguistic legislation was oftentimes not applied, or at the least, only partially or symbolically.

*. . . efficient language policy still suffers from religious conflicts* The Education War of 1878 (*Guerre scolaire*) confirmed opposition between Catholics and Liberals, and the linguistic issue, now linked to confessional conflicts, definitively separated the Flemish camps.

Until the start of World War I, the Flemish question remained a peripheral issue, notwithstanding concessions wrested from legislators. Despite access to voting by an increasing number of citizens following the Constitution's first revision in 1893, Flemish representation in Parliament was not any greater than during the voting law based on poll tax. Political parties, especially the Catholic one, seemed more open to Flemish demands, but the Flemish themselves, caught in the snarl of their numerous associations, were striving for different and contradictory goals, and therefore could not act as a potentially powerful subgroup within the Catholic Party. Paradoxically, the Catholic Party in power in 1884 had counted on the Flemish agricultural population. Indeed, only this party could benefit from encouraging a Flemish national awakening, for example, in the hypothetical situation of Walloon oppression of Catholics. However, the party, especially the Episcopacy, fully identified with the State as it existed, in other words made up of Francophones and centralizers. Indeed, the Episcopacy was

the main initiator of the Catholic Party's platform, consequently of the State itself from 1884 to 1914. It was therefore not surprising that initial and fundamental protests relative to the State structure came from Socialist and Walloon progressive actors, such as Jules Destrée in 1912,[13] threatened by Catholic Party policies, yet erroneously perceived as the representative party of Flemish nationalists.

*Flemish political victories also represent setback for the Flemish population*
From an apolitical, cultural/literary movement, Flemish activism was then transformed into a multitude of ideologically diverse political trends. Over a period of 50 years, attempts to create an exclusively Flemish third party ended in failure from a national standpoint, but was achieved locally in Antwerp with the *Meetingpartij*. From that moment on, Liberal, Socialist, or Catholic Flemish nationalists emerged.

Despite abundant manifestos, tracts, and debates, the Flemish movement remained both disparate and limited to a small socially determined circle. It recruited among parts of the population most directly affected by linguistic inequalities, that is to say, the middle class, employees, teachers, civil servants, and those deprived of certain professional activities or required to learn French in order to access them.

However, a paradoxical turn of events was to occur. The movement's pioneers were all perfectly bilingual, at times even more at ease in French than in Flemish. The group responsible for constructing Flemish activist policy, presenting demands of French-speaking political representatives, and slowly but surely mobilizing the middle classes in large cities, certainly did obtain concrete political satisfaction. Elementary school instruction in Flemish and the 1870 and 1880 linguistic laws[14] were achieved long before the Flemish population joined the movement *en masse*. Thus, initial reforms were appreciated as important political victories only by a small fraction of the population. Consequently, only when the movement began to grow did the Flemish population realize to what extent it had been submitted to injustices.

A perfect illustration of this is in the realm of public schooling. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, regulation introducing Flemish in public schooling had resulted in a certain number of Dutch speakers who no longer spoke the level of French required for certain public functions. Indeed, civil servants had to be bilingual in Flanders, even if their parents were French speaking. Hence, at the very moment when progress achieved by the Flemish movement could be appreciated, the Flemish were being excluded from certain professions. Whereas the Flemish mother tongue of initial Flemish activists did not affect their

careers, the third and fourth generation of Flemish Belgians, in many cases no longer bilingual, were caught in a trap. While oppression of the Flemish language was considered an obstacle to personal fulfillment, the legalized practice of this language had now become an obstacle to professional fulfillment.

In the 1890s, this situation was renewed. Either there were too many or too little advantages linked to speaking Flemish. This ambiguous situation, underlined by Flemish activists at the start of the twentieth century radicalized the movement. Indeed, new members were able to benefit from the movement's efficiency, since they could send their children to Flemish public schools, thus reduce the gap between the language spoken in and outside the home. Yet, at the same time, their children were forced to endure exclusion from certain professional opportunities. Receiving instruction in Flemish certainly served to legitimize the language, however this status had no value in the professional world.

The more aggressive and truly Flemish-nationalist emphasis present in Flemish demonstrations at the start of the twentieth century directly emanates from this rather perverse situation. The fundamental difference between nineteenth-century Flemish activism and that which was to emerge around World War I, is reflected in the numbers of the Flemish movement's members. Paradoxically, the large base—indispensable for a nationalist's ideology and which expanded greatly as of 1912–1914—*de facto* discouraged further participation by Flemish representatives from the working class. The explanation is simple: the linguistic battle was counterproductive for workers who continued to exercise their trade in a diglossic context—the professional language was French, and the mother tongue was Flemish. In other words, struggle for linguistic equity—and linguistic equity in itself—would have deprived Flemish workers of a large part of their professional autonomy.

### *The Birth of the Walloon Movement*

The Walloon movement was built on the same foundation as the Flemish movement. Fears over the exclusion of the Walloon population from the State (especially via the linguistic policy, favorable to the Flemish) when faced with the highly popular Flemish movement, motivated a number of political figures to react, such as Jules Destrée, notably through the attempt to instill national/regional mimetism among Walloons. However, the Walloon movement, emerging in the last years of the nineteenth century, suffered from the fact that it had come along 50 years after the Flemish movement and was not a popular-based

movement. Walloon movement recruits came from the elite, and its electoral appeal was nonexistent.

What was to become Walloon regionalism corresponds to a more subtle construction than the Flemish version, primarily due to the fact that it was a linguistic movement caught up in a double bind. Indeed, Wallonia shared its language with a powerful neighbor, thus criteria of linguistic correctness were formulated outside its territory. As a result, Wallonia could not claim to be the exclusive linguistic "homeland." However, the Walloon movement's distinct advantage was that it emerged at a time when written documents were circulating more easily.

All said, however, Walloon demands often appeared to be futile. While Walloon civil servants encountered linguistic obstacles in Flanders, Belgium in the interwar period nevertheless remained a State where French enjoyed a quasi-exclusive status in all branches of political institutions.

The founding myth of the Walloon movement was the *Letter to the King Concerning the Separation of Flanders and Wallonia* (*Lettre ouverte au Roi sur la séparation de la Flandre et la Wallonie*) written by the Socialist deputy from Charleroi and Minister of Arts and Sciences, Jules Destrée, wherein one may read the now famous phrase, "There are Flemish and Walloons in Belgium, but Sire, there are no Belgians."

The electoral success of the Catholics (in power since 1884) over the Liberal–Socialist coalition in 1912 had a mobilizing effect for Socialist Walloons. Some joined forces with Destrée and organized the first Walloon Assembly in 1912 with the goal of regrouping all Walloon militants. This was not the first Walloon Assembly since Walloon civil servants had already gathered in leagues (*Ligues*), notably the *Ligue of Civil Servants* (*Ligue des fonctionnaires wallon*) in Antwerp and other Walloon Leagues created in 1886. Their main goal was to guarantee that Walloon civil servants maintain their privileges. Custom officials in Antwerp, for example, sought to preserve the supremacy of this exclusively French-speaking profession, threatened by linguistic legislation requiring civil servants in Flanders to be bilingual. Likewise, Walloon family heads living in Flanders sought to prevent education legislation in Flemish in Flanders in 1883. Following a petition drive, they obtained the possibility to maintain French sections in Antwerp's public schools.

*Initial Walloon Proposals for Administrative Separation*

As of 1898, some Walloon candidates ran for municipal office, but were mostly perceived of as provocateurs. The *Catéchisme du Wallon* by Albert du Bois appeared in 1902,[15] and affirmed the French identity of

Wallonia. The senator for Liége and vice president for the Senate, Emile Dupont, declared during the March 10, 1910 session "Vivě la separation administrative".[16] Indeed, it was the demand for administrative separation born in the Walloon Socialist camp, which formally instituted the Walloon movement. The idea of an administrative separation, reforming structures to create a more federal configuration, was the object of Destrée's *Letter to the King*. This document is often presented as a simple proposal for a federation of the two entities within the Belgian State. In fact, this element does not appear until the final two paragraphs of the ten-page document. Indeed, the main thrust of the *Letter* consists in a formal accusation of Flemish supremacy within the State, an inventory of Flemish "obstinate fanatism," and a plea against submitting to Flemish demands.

*Political Marginality of the Walloon Movement: Flemish and Walloon Parallelism*

Up until World War I, the emergence of a more diversified Walloon movement (as such, resembling the progression of the Flemish movement) was not achieved, stopped in its tracks by the Catholic government and the absence of Socialist electoral unity up to 1929 (year of the Belgian Compromise/*Compromis des Belges*). Destrée himself, bent on achieving only administrative self-determination, wanted the Walloon movement to be entirely directed by the Socialist Party. As in the case of Flemish activists, Walloon movement representatives thus hoped to gain ground from within the Parliament, and were to experience, as had the Flemish, internal divisions on this matter.

Like the Flemish movement, the politicization of the Walloon movement had nonetheless benefited from an initial consensus among its elite regarding the preservation and/or development of a specifically Walloon culture. In a more polarized context between communities (starting in the interwar period), the strictly Walloon-regional argument was emphasized by Walloon intellectuals, historians, and philologists who progressively abandoned the doctrine stipulating that French was to serve as the State's cement. However, this was an elitist thus limited position, unable to rely on the mobilization of the middle clasess as the Flemish movement had. The influence of Walloon activists had benefited from it in the interwar period.

The confusion between Walloon identity and French-speaking Belgian identity as well as the difficulty to express an identity as forceful as the Flemish activist one, in a context wherein both linguistic communities were hardly comparable, undoubtedly hindered the emergence

of a Walloon movement. Its representatives were consistently attempting to act on two fronts: on the one hand, elaborating a specific regional identity, and on the other hand, achieving their self-designated mission of maintaining the French-speaking Belgian State (including Brussels).

## Reciprocal Determination of these Nationalist Movements

At the outset of World War I, the Flemish movement transformed into a national–federalist movement, due to both structural and circumstantial factors. The frustration of Flemish activists overseeing the *Unions* and *Flemish Leagues*, poorly represented in Parliament from their standpoint, served as the catalyst toward a more restrictive vision of the Flemish community. Indeed, due to the inability of the only significant group able to confront the government, the Catholics and to repeated legislative failures as well as the Walloon separatist initiative, Flemish activists radicalized their position and adopted a more Flemish-national perspective. Meanwhile, Walloon Socialism served to stimulate Flemish nationalism; first, because Flemish Socialists supported all Flemish nationalist initiatives,[17] and second, because the Walloon Socialist group successfully exported (in spite of itself) the federal project to the Flemish movement.

However, it was the Catholic group that set limits to parliamentary Flemish nationalism. Neither the clergy nor successive Catholic governments had any sympathy for Flemish demands, at least until 1914. Thus, Catholic Flemish representation must be analyzed through a double prism. It was the largest representative group for Flemish interests, and it was also the most important representation of Flanders thanks to the role of the lower clergy in forming rural populations. However, this group, permanently at odds with the Episcopacy and Frenchifying forces of the Conservative Party, was incapable of channelizing resources so as to achieve Flemish demands, all the while preserving their confessional interests.

Symbolic renewal came with the struggle organized in favor of Dutchifying the University of Gent (part of the Flemish nationalist platform since 1847). This was not to occur until 1930, with the exception of the Dutchifying during World War I (1917) by the German General-Government against the will of the moderate Flemish nationalists but applauded by the radicals. At the dawn of the war, the Flemish movement was sufficiently strong enough to initiate a debate over the Flemish question, but still too weak to impose any of its proposals. Hence, for the first time, the federal alternative appeared as a solution for Flemish

activists. Indeed, it became even more attractive when, after the war, unequal economic development within the two parts of the country was being observed. In addition, though the establishment of proportional representation had prevented the precocious polarization of both communities and maintained the strength of the national parties, the growing anticlerical majority in Wallonia, confronting the conservative and clerical majorities in Flanders, favored the hardening positions. Meanwhile, the Catholic majority in Flanders created a strong relationship between the Episcopacy and the Belgian State. Cardinal Mercier, a leading Belgian ultrapatriot, who called for the juxtaposition of the Catholic and political spheres, is a perfect case in point.[18]

## From Bilingualism to Regional Unilingualism

### *Delayed Implementation of Initial Territorial Unilingual Measures*

The first years of the twentieth century witnessed the permanence of Catholic power in government and intense legislative activity, notably the military laws of 1913 and 1914. Indeed, the army's makeup (Flemish recruits counted for two-thirds) represented a major issue for Flemish activists. Instead of teaching the concept of the Belgian nation to Flemish recruits, military laws adopted in 1913 maintained French as a required language with the purpose of forming French-speaking citizens. The Flemish separatist movement, led by activists but also by "*Frontists*," did away with the efficiency of this discipline, excluded a large number of Flemish people,[19] and contributed to exacerbating Flemish identity.

Activists had lost the battle and by the same token stained the entire Flemish nationalist movement. Indeed, their slogan was "*Nu of Nooit*" [now or never].[20]

### *Panorama of Subsequent Linguistic Laws in the Interwar Period*

Between the two world wars, a new series of laws was voted, this time informed by the notion of *territory*. These laws were thus in contradiction with Article 23 of the Constitution that called for the free *individual* use of languages. Hence, these laws consolidated what already existed in reality—a linguistic barrier. However, this frontier was accompanied by a "linguistic census" and Flemish representatives feared becoming a minority in their own territory due to the high proportion of French-speaking people living in Brussels, hence within Flanders itself. A violent

campaign launched by Flemish activists prevented the publication of the 1947 census results, and the government conceded to pressure by removing the linguistic column from the 1961 general population census forms. Nevertheless, the principle of territoriality had triumphed: the coincidence between territory and language policy was inscribed into the law in 1932.[21] Hence, the constraint of collective use of a language determined by territorial division regulated the use of languages.

The first postwar linguistic law (July 31, 1921) was adopted at a time when 30 percent of all debates in the Chamber of Representatives were held in Flemish. Apart from the 1898 Law of Equality (*Loi d' Vegalité*), this was the first time a law was applied throughout Belgium. It regulated the use of languages in municipal and provincial administrations, as well as within the State's central administrations. Contrary to preceding linguistic laws, the July 31, 1921 law established a norm for civil servants in general, that is to say, not only those in Flanders but also those in direct contact with the public. In short, it recognized regional unilingualism and was founded on the principle of the equality of languages. Some exceptions, however, were to be noted. Bilingualism was required in certain services in both regions,[22] and generalized in municipalities where 20 percent of citizens made such a request.[23] The January 27, 1922 Royal Decree applying this law stipulated that the State's central administration were to handle cases involving Flanders in Flemish, and those involving French in Wallonia. These exceptions were not to the liking of the Flemish because in municipalities where bilingualism existed, municipal representatives almost always chose French, whereas Dutch-speaking municipalities located in the Walloon region became French speaking.[24]

The linguistic question in matters of education was taken on at a crucial moment. The June 22, 1932 laws relative to the administration, and the July 14, 1932 laws relative to elementary and middle school education established regional unilingualism and bilingualism in Brussels, but did not provide any means for control or sanctions in the event that these laws were not applied. The June 15, 1935 laws pertaining to the judicial realm, and that of July 30, 1938 to the army, extended regional unilingualism to the sphere of justice and established linguistic divisions within the armed forces.

Legislation regarding the status of language in the army, already the object of intense debate in the Chamber of Representatives and the Senate before the war, was revised in 1928 and then again in 1938. The November 7, 1928 and July 30, 1938 laws finalized the division of the army into Flemish and French units. The 1938 military law therefore laid out perfect linguistic equality, due to the fact that uniting the various

branches of the armed forces only involved unilingual regiments, whereas the 1928 law still mentioned that this unity could be achieved if "the number of companies allowed for this."

In the judicial realm, unilingual procedures in the region's language were shaped by the June 15, 1935 law. In bilingual communities, the language to be used during the procedure was chosen by one or the other parties. This law applied to all judicial matters, including civil and commercial ones that, traditionally, had been resolved in French.

The June 28, 1932 law relative to the use of languages reaffirmed regional unilingualism but also extended bilingualism to Brussels and Brabant. Indeed, the municipal liberty of action in the realm of linguistics was relatively limited. Linguistic choice now only pertained to responses to letters written by citizens. The municipal administration could choose to respond in the language used in the letter *or* in the region's language. This law was thus applied to all administrative services of the State (public firms, civil servants, public organisms, etc.). Within the central administration, bilingualism was not a requirement, however recruitment was to reflect an equal division between the two linguistic groups, and candidates could not apply simultaneously for positions in both linguistic groups. Changes brought on by this law were especially felt at linguistic frontiers and in Brussels.[25] Indeed, following each population census—which still included a linguistic column—the frontier could be retraced. In the event of 30 percent or more of citizens belonging to the linguistic group of the other linguistic region, the town in question were attributed an "external bilingual" status, for example, in the realm of public billboards and announcements. Apart from their highly complex nature, these measures provoked a great deal of discontent and debate, due to the fact that the translations of municipal declarations were not prohibited, and only really applied in Flanders. The Flemish thus demanded an end to these translations. That the government had to continually call municipalities to order right up to the war so as to achieve the respect of unilingualism indicates that the laws were not applied everywhere.[26]

On the other hand, the University of Gent was "Dutchified" on April 5, 1930. The Flemish had finally obtained an institution of higher education in their language.

## Federation: A Mutually Developed Resolution in the Interwar Period

Insofar as reforming the Unitarian State was concerned, Flemish nationalists were very much in favor of this type of project. *Federalism and*

*Great-Netherlands* (*Federalisme en Groot-Nederland*), a plan designed by the Flemish nationalist parliamentary group (Antwerp) was presented to the Chamber by Herman Vos in 1931.[27] It called for a federal status to be named the "United Kingdom of Flanders and Wallonia," with Brussels attached to Flanders. In the weekly *Nieuw Vlaanderen* (New Flanders)—published by professors from the University of Leuven—the Catholic group brought forth Catholic federalist projects. One such project called for an administrative and political linguistic frontier, with Brussels politically attached to Flanders but administratively placed under the authority of the federal government. It also called for a new federal organization, focusing on Flemish and Walloon commissions made up of an equal number of members. The Walloon movement also presented several federalists projects that will be discussed further.

In general, social demands were rapidly resolved, while linguistic legislation was caught up in problems of activism and resistance from the Flemish movement, negotiations over regional prerogatives, and especially the status of Brussels. However, a compromise was achieved in 1932: the linguistic laws satisfied both the Flemish and the Walloons, seeing that the threat of bilingualism in Wallonia (main bone of contention for Walloon resistance) was eradicated. The only group not to benefit from this compromise were French speakers in Flanders, abandoned by Walloon activists. This period was also characterized by the rise of fascism that penetrated all traditional parties. Likewise, the emergence of the Walloon movement accelerated the debate over structural reforms: the identification between the political class and the French-speaking class had come to an end.

The division of the Walloon movement and sporadic support of the POB (*Parti ouvrier belge*/Belgian Workers Party) for Flemish nationalist's demands in the beginning of the 1930s favored this evolution. Nevertheless, Flemish frustration subsisted since this legislation was too long in the making, and Walloon rejection of amnesty laws relative to Flemish activists during World War I rendered the period from 1930 to 1940 one of communitarian polarization, thus contributing to the rise of fascism that fed precisely on these frustrations and made regional recognition one of its main platform demands. Flemish nationalism, the extreme right wing, and Flemish fascism highlighted Flemish visibility while discrediting them in the eyes of the Walloon movement and the government.

## The Emergence of Nationalism

Two types of Flemish nationalism emerged in the interwar period: a minimalist or passive form, and a maximalist form. It is important to

distinguish the two types though some similarities existed. Minimalist Flemish nationalists were represented in Parliament and were activists in political–cultural organizations. They called for a Belgian legislation that would confer a linguistic status to the Flemish. They were active both within the Belgian framework and the law, as well as within the democratic system. Maximalists, on the other hand, joined ranks with emerging fascist and authoritarian parties throughout Europe. However, maximalist Flemish nationalists differed from some of the latter since their linguistic demands were part and parcel of their political platform. They also differed from minimalist Flemish nationalists in that they advocated the notion of racial homogeneity with language serving as the unifying element. Minimalist Flemish nationalists opted for linguistic democracy while maximalist Flemish nationalists strived for the organic unity of the "*Flemish race*," or the "Great-Netherlands" or even "Germanic-Netherlands," as well as for the independence of Flanders.[28]

Given that the two movements shared the fundamental demand of an exclusive use of a region's language, the distance that separated them was oftentimes small, and did not necessarily emanate from the fact that both had parliamentary representation. Indeed, the Frontist Party, but especially the VNV (Vlaams Nationaal Volksverbond—National Popular Flemish Party) or the Verdinaso, had representatives who were more or less extremist. In addition, in light of the tripartite system and proportional representation, parties in government (notably the Catholic Party) benefited from support of this type of formation.

The largest Flemish nationalist party in terms of numbers of electors, the VNV, recruited among Catholic communities just as its Walloon homologue, Rex. Also uniting nationalist parties, on both sides of the linguistic frontier, was opposition to traditional political parties, a corporatist view of society, and the fight against Communism. In essence, popular support for these parties resulted more from a political and ideological choice than from belonging to a linguistic group.[29]

Nevertheless, the critique of traditional parties and of the State structure was not formulated in the same way in Flanders and Wallonia. Indeed, the Flemish version of fascism, a nationalist Flemish Catholic Fascism, relied on fundamental hostility toward Belgium itself, whereas Rex did not benefit from a popular nationalist base in Wallonia. This partly explains the rapid downfall of the Rexist party as well as insignificant electoral results of Walloon nationalist parties. In addition, the 1936 alliance between the VNV and the KVV (Katholieke Volkspartij, or Catholic People's Party, the Flemish national wing of the Catholic party), underlines the proximity between Catholicism and nationalism. As early as 1916, the Frontist Party had chosen AVV-VVK as a slogan,

in other words, Alles voor Vlaanderen-Vlaanderen voor Kristus (Everything for Flanders-Flanders for Christ). This alliance provided the popular base for Fascism and its collaborators.

Naturally, the existence of passive and activist Flemish nationalist groups reduced the impact of the Flemish movement within the entire Flemish population. Nevertheless, both groups possessed a fundamental resemblance, apart from the Catholic element, that of demanding regional unilingualism. This essential unity highlights the influence of Flemish nationalism in its entirety, and was not a direct function of the number of members.

Political nationalism in the interwar period, relying on prewar results of both pacific and aggressive Flemish nationalist endeavors, naturally represented a rupture in both the rhetoric employed and also in Flemish nationalist activity. The Flemish-national motive took precedence over authoritarian ideology. This also explains why the VNV was not isolated from other political groups such as the Catholic Party. But right-wing, corporatist, and populist ideology calling for a strong political framework, had also infiltrated other parties.

When the war erupted, the VNV defended Belgian neutrality, all the while denouncing linguistic conditions in the army, notably the lack of officers in the Flemish reserve. The traditional hostility to war among the population, paradoxically serves to explain the collaboration of many VNV members. On the Walloon side, the Rexist party, whose electorate had dropped as of 1936, hardly encountered success during the war: Walloon collaboration was quasi-inexistent, even though Léon Degrelle's Walloon Legion, in the prolongation of Walloon Fascist groupuscules, had published leaflets proclaiming that the "Walloons were of Germanic race" and thus have their place within the Great Reich. However, not a single historical leader from the Walloon movement supported this. In addition, the Rex placed itself within Belgian unity and could not, contrary to the VNV, count on a nationalist component within the population. Rex relied on the presence of a right-wing Catholic tradition, active within organizations that recruited among the Walloon middle things, thus reassuring the bourgeoisie, hostile to the breakup of Belgian unity. In 1939, Rex counted approximately 100,000 electors (compared to 193,000 for the VNV), a few hundred votes less than the Communist Party at the time.

## The Postwar Period: Constitutional Establishment of Linguistic Measures Underway in the 1930s

Following the war, the Walloon Congress was held in Liège on October 20 and 21, 1945. It was organized by the directing committee of Free

Wallonia and included political figures from all parties. The agenda contained one item only: the future status of Wallonia. Indeed, different attitudes between the two communities (autonomous Walloon resistance, unequal treatment of prisoners, etc.), had led Walloon militants to hope for change in political structures, already demanded as of 1942 by members running clandestine organizations. Should the unitary structure be maintained, should Belgium be regionalized, should it lean toward increased autonomy of its components? Should Wallonia even be attached to France? The "attachment" solution had its adversaries: among others, delegations from Brussels refused to participate in a Congress that offered no new alternatives to the prewar Belgian situation, apart from simple absorption by France. Thus, for obvious reasons the fundamental declaration of "*Free Wallonia*" excluded the destiny of Brussels from its platform: "Wallonia and Brussels are two different things, and their peoples have nothing in common (. . .) The issue of Brussels can in no way compromise the liberation of Wallonia."[30]

A lawyer from Liège, Fernand Schreurs, general secretary of the Congress,[31] thus negotiated the principle of a double vote for the proposed motions: a so-called sentimental vote having no official political status, and a so-called reasonable vote, determining the future action of the Congress, that is to say, formulating a status for Wallonia within the Belgian framework. The sentimental vote offered irredentists a forum of expression, and proposed four different solutions resulting in the following.[32]

Insofar as the "reasonable" vote was concerned, by an unanimous count (12 abstentions) the result declared autonomy for Wallonia within

| *Motion* | *Number of voices* |
|---|---|
| Vote 1<br>"Preservation of the unitary structure of Belgium accompanied by decentralization" | 17 |
| Vote 2<br>"Different federalist models" | 391 |
| Vote 3<br>"Total independence of Wallonia and the creation of a Walloon state" | 154 |
| Vote 4<br>"The attachment/annexing of Wallonia to France" | 486 |
| Total votes | 1,048 |

Belgium. In essence, then, it called for a federation of Belgium's linguistic components with the possibility for citizens of Brussels to autonomously and independently decide their own status. A 1952 agreement known as the Schreurs-Couvreur accord constituted the first step toward a federal Walloon–Flemish relationship, and a manifesto reuniting Flemish and Walloon intellectuals signed in December 1952 symbolized the first "dialogue between communities." This text was unanimously approved by the members of the Walloon Congress (Charleroi October 3, 1953).

Between 1947 and 1953, were presented to the chamber four federalist projects, while the unitarian platform of traditional parties prevailed. Only abrupt economic deterioration of the country in 1960 and widespread strikes of 1960–1961 allowed the Walloon movement to join forces with unions as well as a large portion of the population in Wallonia.

## Postwar Evolution of Nationalist-Regionalist Parties

Several intermediary steps, from regionalization in 1970 to federalization in 1993, attest to the dynamics of reforming the Belgian State, and the search for increased autonomy on the part of both components. Numerous and oftentimes violent crises accompanied these structural transformations, serving to conform—especially in Flanders but also in Wallonia—the success of nationalist mobilization whose demands progressively coalesced into federalism as a political choice for both.

The Walloon Party, created during the 1965–1968 legislature, became the Walloon Assembly (rassemblement), and during the 1968 legislative elections, large parties presented "communitarian lists" in Brussels. This period also witnessed the separation of the University of leuven. The Flemings taking the initative by a march and a very clear slogan: "Walen buiten" (Walloons out!), and the latter thus founded the University of Louvain-la Neuve. The Université Libre de Bruxelle (Free University) divided into the ULB and the VUB (Vrije Universiteit Brussel). Between 1968 and 1971, new institutions were created, multiplying the intermediary levels within political organisms: the Region and the Cultural Community were now located in between the municipality, the province, and the State. There were and are three Regions (Wallonia, Flanders, and the Brussels-capital agglomeration in Belgium). Flemish and French-speaking parity among ministers (except for the prime minister) have to be respected, and legislators established municipal and agglomeration federations, each having their own commissions and assemblies,[33] as well as an "alarm bell" meant to protect minorities.[34] The 1973 "*cultural pact*" conferred cultural autonomy to communities in the realm of the media.

The 1960–1970 decade thus signified an overall change in Belgian political organization. National parties broke up into regional ones, and the communitarian issue dominated public life. With attention being paid to demands for regional autonomy during the period spanning 1968–1973, federalism and the plethora of institutional transformations that went with it were laid out. The complexity of the institutions and their functioning completed the partitioning of the linguistic communities. Hence, political decision-making in the country was profoundly affected. No initiative could be implemented without the approval of the majority within each of the two communities.

Linguistic policy and nationalism were thus closely linked and nationalist mobilization relied on the topic of linguistic policy to elaborate, within State power, an imaginary object—that of community. This endeavor was successful due to the fact that it received linguistic sanction since the federal Constitution explicitly states that "Belgium houses three communities: the French community, the Dutch community, and the German-speaking community" (ART. 3 ter). However, it is interesting to note that the Walloon, Flemish, and German communities are not instituted, but rather the French, Dutch, and German-speaking ones are. This designation relied thus on purely linguistic criteria, reinforcing dependency on exterior norms, but also proving that language took precedence over the establishment of federal entities.

Thus, the simultaneous creation of regions in the Constitution, "Belgium comprises four linguistic regions: the French language region, the Dutch language region, the Brussels-capital bilingual region, and the German language region" (ART. 3 bis), does not indicate the failure of a perfect geographic, political, and linguistic adequation (such as it exists in Flanders), but on the contrary, and through the process of subcategorization, reinforces the role of the linguistic element. The present-day configuration proves that it was precisely for the function of respecting linguistic identity and democracy that the federal system was devised, and that legislators recognized the predominance of language in administrative divisions.

In the meridian portion of Brussels, the political realm is divided de facto into three linguistic communities (French, German, and bilingual); Brussels only has a minority of 10 percent of Dutch-speaking persons, yet the capital is entirely organized to function bilingually. Meanwhile, French-speaking Walloons and Brusselites emanate indeed from different evolutions within their communities. First, Brussels is an island within Flemish territory, and second, French speakers in Brussels are for the most part of Flemish origin. Finally, their split with the

Walloon movement occurred at the very conception of the latter. However, one can observe an attempt to blend the communities and regions, defined as sharing a language in virtue of a romantic notion of "community of destiny" and united by metaphorical blood ties, if only to counterbalance the adequation of these two groups in Flanders.

## Conclusion

From the first Constitution in 1831 to the recent 1993 Federal Constitution, the status of languages has changed radically. The text of the 1993 revision transformed individual linguistic liberty into collective linguistic obligations. Indeed, federal loyalty in Belgium is defined first and foremost in terms of linguistic loyalty.[35]

The first major reforms relative to linguistic democracy only occurred in 1930 with the Dutchifying of the University of Gent. Then the July 14, 1932 law established regional unilingualism. The mother tongue was established as the basis of education in Brussels only (the language of the region was to be used in Flanders and Wallonia). It is at the origin of all linguistic legislation during the second half of the twentieth century. After World War II, bilingualism has only been encouraged within the framework of learning foreign languages (the country's second language, so to speak), and only after the fifth grade of elementary school. However, in Brussels two networks existed until the July 30, 1963 law that stipulated total hegemony for regional languages. The 1963 law, in comparison with that of 1932, allowed for the division of education into two linguistic regimes, administered separately, and was also applied to separate students of different mother tongues who often were in the same class. It also established a linguistic inspection department designed to verify if the student's mother tongue corresponds to the language he or she was being taught in.[36] In 1969, two distinct Education ministries were created, and in 1971, two semiautonomous cultural councils were established to oversee and administer education in Flanders and Wallonia. Since then, education takes place within two distinct linguistic communities. Indeed, elementary and secondary schools are no longer authorized to employ teachers who have not obtained their diploma in the language of the community to which the school belongs.[37]

French-speaking inhabitants of Flanders filed several complaints before the European Court of Justice between 1962 and 1964, denouncing the lack of alternatives to Dutch-speaking education in Flanders. But the Court's decisions were consistently in conformity with the 1963 law,

thus conforming regional unilingualism.[38] In Brussels, parents regularly complained that they could not choose the language of schooling for their children. Indeed, linguistic inspection took precedence over parental choice—a child of a Flemish mother tongue could not attend a French-speaking school between 1963 and 1971, the year when the household head's autonomy was partially restored (i.e., the ability to choose the language of schooling for his children).[39] Subsequent to the July 26, 1974 law (ART. 88), only proof of residence in Brussels is now required, and parents may freely choose their children's school.

Measures involving linguistic equity, particularly in favor of the Flemish, as well as the fusion between the Regional Council and Community in Flanders, in fact led to a paralysis in "communitarian dialogue." The institutionalization of communitarian partitioning might appear as a means to achieve political stability. Exercising citizenship thus evolves within the limits of communities that have invested the peripheral political spaces left vacant by the central State. However, respecting equal numbers of Flemish and Walloon members within the government[40] renders political decision-making more difficult, but it also requires representatives of the different communities to negotiate. A sufficient number of issues must mobilize the majority within both communities before an agreement can be possible.

## Notes

1. See Astrid von Busekist, "The Languages of Nationalism," in A. Dieckroff, Ch. Jaffrelot (eds.), *Nationalism*, London, Hurst, 2004.
2. See A.V. Busekist, "Les révolutionnaires et la politique des langues", www.afdc.fr. (International colloquium on languages and constitutions, Rennes, France, December 2000).
3. From the Flemish word *zuilen*, which gave rise to the neologism *Verzuiling* in Flemish, and *pilarisation* in French.
4. Gréoire (1750–1831) was a member of the Constituent and presided over public instruction during the French Revolution. He established a genuine linguistic policy bent on solidifying the national community through the use of one idiom-French. Language was to signify the nation, and to achieve national cohesion, every citizen had to speak the same language. The Questionnaire he sent out to his revolutionary correspondents in the provinces included about 40 questions that meant both to measure the impact of the central power in the provinces and to gather information concerning the proximity or distance of dialects vis-à-vis the Parisian French. This evaluation of the linguistic situation was then meant to facilitate the creation of a network of standardized education throughout France including annexed departments such as the 9 Belgian departments. Belief in the

nation through a commonly shared language was to replace religious belief. Grégoire thus infused the nation with a sacred dignity. But above all, the project to eradicate dialects, to imprison them in a sort of "dialect museum," to give them a folkloric status (the folklorization of difference as part of the project of national unity), ironically contributed to attributing new vitality to them several decades later. Indeed, during the first half of the nineteenth century, Flemish scholars and literary figures proclaimed their strong attachment to their regional language and the poetry, romanticism, provincialism (in a positive sense), and exclusivity these languages transmitted. The two Belgian responses to the Questionnaire demonstrate the disparity between the Roman and Flemish parts of the country (the responses by Abbé Andriès, the Flemish correspondent, and Father Léon, the Romanic correspondent). They have little in common even though they were both written by advocates of the Revolution. Indeed, the Flemish response expressed an attachment to the mother tongue, and French had penetrated Flanders unevenly (in Gent, the situation was different), while the linguistic makeup of the Romanic provinces indicate a stronger presence of French. However, the Flemish urban bourgeoisie (notably in Gent) expressed the same high level of Francophilism as in Romanic-speaking areas, except, of course from the fact that, the linguistic difference between Flemish and French is greater than that between Walloon and French. Not to mention the fact that the natural reference for the Flemish correspondent was Dutch and not French.

5. Ferdinand Brunot, *Histoire de la langue francaise*, Paris: A. Colin, 1905, t. XI, chap. 1, *Le francais en dehors sous la Révolution,* J. Godechot (ed.), 1969, p. 162 sv.
6. July 20, 1794 designed to apply the Villers-Cotterêts edict to "each and every part and parcel of the Republics territory."
7. For the further discussion on linguistic politics before 1830, see A. von Busekist, *La Belgique. Politiques des langues et construction de l'Etat*, Leuven/Louvain, Duculot, 1997.
8. Daniel Droixhe, "Symétries? Flamand, wallon et politique de la langue á la Révolution Francaise," in *Etudes sur le XVIIIè siècle*, t. XVI, Brussels, Presses de l'Université Libre de Brussels 1989.
9. *Bulletin des Arrêtés et Actes du Gouvernement Provisoire*, arrêt du 26 octobre 1830.
10. See "En word aan onze Waelsche Broeders" [A word to our Walloon brothers], in *Het Vaderland*, [La Patrie], t.1, Brussels, 1844, p. 99.
11. What was termed "bilingual" in fact consisted in an approximate knowledge of another language for limited or professional use.
12. See *La Revue Trimestrielle*, t. XXIII, Brussels, 1859, p. 377 sv.
13. Jules Destrée (Marcinelle 1863–1936) represents the most emblematic figure of the Walloon movement.
14. See infra.
15. Albert Du Bois (Ecaussines-d'Enghien 1872–1940), dramatic author and poet.

16. Emile Dupont (Liège 1834–1912), liberal political figure, jurist, deputy of Liège from 1864 to 1890, senator from 1890 to 1912, and minister in 1907.
17. Since one could simply not abandon Francophone comrades and brothers in Flanders (see the work of Camille Huysmans), Walloon and Flemish Socialist activists shared a certain number of common objectives.
18. Cardinal Désiré-Joseph (1851–1926), author of a pastoral letter written in 1914 calls on soldiers to die for their country as the medieval tradition of martyrdom and death for one's country had taught them. See Ernst Kantorowicz's commentary on this topic in *The King's Two Bodies*, Princeton: University Press. For further reading on Mercier, see: A. von Busekist, "Corpus mysticum et corpus politicum, l'héritage thomiste du cardinal Mercier," in Cahiers du Credep, *Essais sur la Théocratie*, 1998/2002, Paris: Université Paris IX-Dauphine.
19. In light of the fact that Flemish recruits were not allowed to access commanding positions.
20. Another demonstration of Flemish political mobilization was the Frontist movement [Frontbeweging]. This movement owes its success to growing indignation on the part of Flemish soldiers and individuals backing them, including volunteers, activists, students, and Catholics, with regard to the linguistic situation in the armed forces. Following the war, it gave rise to a party that enjoyed a relative success up to the 1930s. Frontists demanded a structural modification of the army's organization; apart from linguistic equality in the armed forces, that is to say, the division of regiments into Flemish and Walloon units, they also demanded administrative autonomy over Flanders as well as unilingualism therein. This Flemish nationalist endeavor nevertheless remains relatively banal: in short, it is possible to say that minorities take advantage of war periods to put forth their demands. A part of the Frontists, but especially a large number of its activists, were condemned and imprisoned immediately following the war, to then receive amnesty by a 1928 law, energetically negotiated by Flemish activists attempting to reintegrate a part of their base into politics.
21. The law lays out provinces and neighborhoods whose linguistic regime is either French or Flemish.
22. Within the central services of the State, those of Brabant and Brussels (municipalities of the Brussels agglomeration), civil servants were bilingual. Indeed, they had to take an exam verifying their elementary knowledge of the second national language.
23. In addition, municipal and provincial councils were free to add a second language to part of or even the entire group of services they supervised and managed (this was especially the case in Flanders).
24. This was the case of municipalities in the Voer [les Fourons] that poisoned relationships between the communities.
25. The law provided for the recruitment of an assistant to the director of bilingual services "if need be."

26. Insofar as legislation directed toward German-speaking Belgians was concerned, not a single law made mention of them before 1935! A report issued by the Interior Commission of the Senate even declared that German was not spoken in a single Belgian municipality. The June 15, 1935 law relative to the use of languages in the judicial realm stipulated that German was the procedural language unless at least one of the parties requested French. However, one must make a nuance among the different jurisdictions: the magistrate's court (criminal court in U.S. English) *must* see that the procedure be carried out in German whereas civil and commerce courts *can* do so if they choose.
27. Herman Vos (1889–1952), first a VNV nationalist then POB. Representative from Antwerp from 1925 to 1932, senator from 1946 to 1952.
28. But Léon Degrelle's Rexist party also had affinities with national-socialism: indeed, Degrelle underlined the Germanic and even Aryan character of the Walloons.
29. In 1936, Rex obtained 21 seats, le VNV 16, in 1939, Rex obtained 3 seats and the VNV17. This results in the following electoral percentages for 1936: 19% of Walloons for Rex, 7% of Flemish for Rex-Flanders, and 13% of Flemish for the VNV. This score was not obtained anywhere else in Europe where Fascist parties had not accessed power.
30. Quoted by Ch. Kesteloot, "Mouvement Walloon et identité nationale," *Courrier Hebdomadaire du CRISP*, n 1392, 1993.
31. Fernand Schreurs (Liège 1900–1970), Liberal political figure from Liège and activist in the *Ligue d'action wallonne*.
32. Written affidavit from the vote, *Le Congrèsè wallon de Liège des* 20 et 21 *octobre* 1945, *Débats et Résolutions*, Liége: Ed. Du Congrés national wallon, s.d., p. 81.
33. In Brussel's agglomeration assembly, perfect parity reigns: in addition, a French as well as a Dutch Commission for Culture exist. These assemblies and commissions are instituted by Articles 108 and 108 of the Constitution.
34. Article 38bis of the Constitution: if three-fourths of a community feel they are being deprived of their linguistic rights, they benefit from an "alarm bell," in other words, a recourse procedure that requires them to present a new discussion over the bill called into question by taking into consideration criticisms levied against it and exige a three fifths majority vote on the new text.
35. The concept had nonetheless been presented on May 15, 1985 by a section of the *Conseil d'Etat* within the context of a series of bills relative to the possibility of referendums.
36. Article 17 et 18 law of July 30, 1963 and arrêté of November 30, 1966 arrêté du 30 novembre 1966.
37. Article 13–15, idem.
38. See Elizabeth Sherman Swing, *Bilingualism and Linguistic Segregation in the Schools of Brussels*, Quebec: International Center for Research on Bilingualism, 1980.

39. See Elizabeth Sherman Swing, *Bilingualism and Linguistic Segregation in the Schools of Brussels*, Quebec: International Center for Research on Bilingualism, 1980.
40. Articles 107 *quarter* and 86 *bis* are respectively, the main obstacle and the truly federal component of the new Constitution. Article 107 *quarter* requires for the passage of a law half plus one voice within each linguistic group in both Chambers and a majority of two-thirds of expressed votes in total. Article 86 parity within the Council of Ministers (apart from the prime minister).

CHAPTER 5

# Struggling Against Territory: Language Policy in Canada

*Kenneth McRoberts*

The theme of this book, "The Politics of Language," is especially provocative for a student of Canada. Indeed, it serves to identify processes and forces that have dominated much of Canadian politics for the last 30 years.

In this chapter, I address "the politics of language" in the quite narrow sense of language *policies*. In particular, I examine instances of language policies that constitute deliberate and overt attempts by state actors to alter the social use of language among their citizens.[1] As such, they might be better labeled "language planning." Conceivably, such policies or plans could emerge from routine linguistic politics, or the competition between languages and language groups, and be geared to managing conflict. But the policies I examine here reflect a much larger purpose: nation-building.

As for "nation," I understand it in the sense not of a state but of a social community. Indeed, it's the *primary* community; the one from which people derive their "national" identity.[2] Such a nation could be coterminous with the state but it could also exist within a larger state, as with "stateless nations" or "nations" in a federation.[3]

The question I explore is whether nations, defined in terms of primary community, can be based on more than one language. Much of the literature on "stateless" nations has viewed a common language as the central condition of their existence.[4] And the general assumption has been that nation-states must be unilingual as well. Thus, in the Western world

most "nation-building" state elites have struggled to impose a single "national" language.[5]

Nonetheless, over the last few decades, the Canadian federal state has sought to construct and implant the notion of Canada as a "bilingual nation" and to mobilize all Canadians around this definition of their common national community. In effect, it has sought to construct a bilingual nation-state. I argue that this experiment in nation-building has been unsuccessful, due in large part to its own internal contradictions. I conclude by exploring whether the presence of different linguistic groups within states such as Canada might instead be accommodated within notions of a "multinational state."

## Sociology of Language Use in Canada

The use of Canada's two main languages, English and French, has always been highly bound by territory. Each language has been concentrated within a particular area. And each has dominated its given area, although English has been much more successful than French in doing this.

When Canada was created in 1867, the Anglophone/Francophone split was about 30/70.[6] Francophones were heavily concentrated in one of the four original provinces, Quebec, where they constituted about 78 percent of Quebec's population.[7] They were small minorities in the other provinces: 16 percent in New Brunswick,[8] 4.7 percent in Ontario,[9] and 8.5 percent in Nova Scotia.[10]

The pattern was only reinforced with the addition of other provinces. One of them, Manitoba, did have an even Anglophone/Francophone split at its creation in 1870, but 20 years later the Francophone proportion had shrunk to 7.3 percent.[11] By the same token, in the Western Canadian provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan, where communities had been established by early Francophone emigrants from Quebec, the already small Francophone presence has declined steadily throughout most of this century. As for British Columbia and Newfoundland, their Francophone populations were negligible at the outset, and have remained so.

In the case of one province, New Brunswick, the Francophone minority did grow in importance over the early decades of Confederation due to internal processes: mainly a higher birthrate among Francophones and out-migration among Anglophones. By the 1961 census, people of French origin constituted 39 percent of the province's population; a high point from which the proportion has

declined over subsequent decades.[12] But in the other provinces, where a Francophone presence existed at the outset it has been reduced over the decades by the combined pressures of assimilation and the integration of immigrants into the Anglophone majority.

In short, all the provinces but New Brunswick quite closely conformed to a territorialization of language under which Canada outside Quebec became essentially Anglophone. Even New Brunswick demonstrated the same process internally: Francophones have been concentrated in the northern part and Anglophones in the south.[13] Where Francophone minorities persisted in the other provinces, they too were concentrated in specific areas.

The processes leading to this territorialization of the French language have been well explained by such scholars as Jean Laponce in his *Languages and Their Territories*.[14] When two languages are used for all social roles, in other words without diglossia, true personal bilingualism is extremely difficult to achieve and most people will resist having to do so. If these languages are present in the same region, the linguistic group that is more powerful, whether in terms of numbers or of political and economic resources, will seek to impose the burden of bilingualism on the weaker group. With time members of the weaker group will escape the burden of bilingualism by abandoning their mother tongue for the dominant language. Accordingly, the survival of different languages within the same state depends upon each language dominating a territory or "security zone."

While the historical fate of the French language in Canada largely conforms to this territorial model, the case of English is a bit different. There, more has been involved than simple numerical strength. Until recent decades, the English-speaking minority in Quebec was able to maintain its relative share of the provincial population, thanks to the combined effects of economic and political power and the preeminence of English within the larger environment. In Quebec, immigrants tended to integrate with the Anglophone minority. Thus, while the English-speaking minority became progressively less British in origin, its share of the Quebec population remained relatively constant, oscillating around 20 percent.[15]

English even could coexist with French in the same urban center: Montreal. Even after Francophones became the majority of Montreal's population, English remained the primary language of work in key economic positions. At the same time, however, the languages were supported by distinct social and cultural institutions. And even in Montreal true personal bilingualism was relatively rare.

The effect of territorialization on French, if not English, was dramatically revealed in 1971 when for the first time the Canadian census sought to measure actual use of languages, as opposed to knowledge of them or mother tongue. In terms of the language normally used at home, Francophones constituted less than 5 percent of the populations of all provinces but New Brunswick and, of course, Quebec. The pressures to switch to English, the predominant territorial language, were such that in all provinces but New Brunswick and Quebec the proportions of residents of French ethnic origin who used French as their home language were all below 50 percent—in most cases far below. In Quebec, however, the pattern was reversed: the number of residents using English as their home language exceeded by 38.7 percent the number of residents of British origin. For its part, the Francophone population had gained by only 2.3 percent.[16]

## Historical Absence of Government Policy

For close to a hundred years, federal state officials evinced no particular interest in language policy, at least as we have defined it. Within the federal government itself there was some limited accommodation of French, largely for symbolic purposes. Indeed provisions of the 1867 constitutional agreement, the *British North America Act*, required that both English and French be used in Parliament and in federal courts. But there was no apparent concern with the general use of languages in Canadian society, and more particularly, the decline of Francophone communities outside Quebec.

Thus, in 1890 the federal government did not draw upon its constitutional powers to prevent the Manitoba government from formally ending the official use of French in provincial institutions and abolishing denominational schools, in effect eliminating French-language education. Nor did Ottawa prevent other provinces from making similar moves.

And the federal government was largely unresponsive to the entreaties of French Canadian organizations such as the *Conseil de la vie française en Amérique*, which lobbied Ottawa to use both French and English in its publications, to support French-language radio in Western Canada, and to embrace generally the notion that Canada is a bilingual country.[17] By and large, the federal government provided French-language services in Quebec alone. By the same token, Ottawa did little to attenuate the overwhelming predominance of English within its own public bureaucracy.

In short, the federal government apparently saw no reason to offset the inherent advantages that English drew from its overwhelming numerical majorities within Canada as a whole, and almost all provinces, as well as its supremacy within the larger North American context.

As I have already noted, some provincial governments did take steps designed to affect the use of languages. More specifically, Manitoba, Ontario, and New Brunswick all acted, in one fashion or another, to eliminate public education in French. In other provinces French-language services never were established in the first place. In short, to the extent provincial governments had a language policy it was to reinforce the sociological forces operating against French, and to formalize the territorialization of language.

At the provincial level, the only exception was Quebec. There, the political and economic resources of the Anglophone minority had been sufficient to establish a system of linguistic equality. In deference to the Anglophone minority, the *British North America Act* guaranteed the use of both languages in the provincial legislature and courts. (The only instance of a province facing such requirements.) But established practice went far beyond these requirements: most provincial government documents were published in both languages, all residents had free access to publicly funded English-language education, and the like. This bilingual regime was generally respected in provincial and local public institutions, but was not enshrined in any constitutional or legislative document.

## 1960s: New State Interest in Language as a Focus of Policy

With the 1960s, the situation changed quite radically. The federal government became very much concerned with the social use of languages, adopting policies explicitly designed to alter it. First, the government sought to change working-language practices within its own bureaucracy. A decree adopted in 1966 established the principle that all public servants be able to work in their own language and to apply "their respective cultural values."[18] To this end, the government embarked on an ambitious program of language training; most of the participants were Anglophone civil servants seeking to learn French.[19]

Second, and more importantly for our concerns, the federal government undertook a wide range of measures to strengthen the position of the Francophone minorities outside Quebec. Under the *Official Languages Act*, adopted in 1969, federal services were to be made available in both

languages, especially within designed Official Language Districts.[20] Ottawa initiated a program of grants to organizations representing or serving the Francophone minorities, as well as Quebec's Anglophone minority; in 1987 it granted $28 million to 300 such organizations.[21] In addition, it sought to induce the provincial governments to provide French-language services to their minorities. In part, this involved a major program of transfers to the provinces to fund education for French-language minorities, reaching over $81 million by 1989/1990.[22] But in 1982, the government of Pierre Elliott Trudeau secured the consent of all provinces but Quebec to a constitutional Charter of Rights and Freedoms, of which the centerpiece is the obligation on all provincial governments to provide public schooling to official-language minorities.

The federal campaign to strengthen the Francophone minorities also was coupled with support for the Anglophone minority of Quebec. As an official-language minority, Quebec Anglophones were eligible for each of these measures. Indeed, given Quebec's well-established Anglophone educational system, until quite recently more than half of federal funding for minority education went to Quebec's English-language schools.[23] Finally, beyond support for official-language minorities the federal government sought to encourage personal bilingualism, in particular by providing extensive funding for second-language education. By 1990–1991 Ottawa was transferring close to $82 million to the provincial governments to support second-language education. Central to this effort was the phenomenon of French-language immersion schools. Beyond supporting immersion education, the federal government heavily funded the organization that spearheaded support for immersion schools, *Canadian Parents for French*.[24]

By the 1970s, the Quebec provincial government also became involved in explicit language policy. In this case, the objective was to reinforce territoriality by strengthening the role of French within Quebec. Under Bill 22, and then Bill 101, French alone was declared to be the official language of the province, immigrant children were obliged to enter the French-language school system, and private enterprises were induced to make French the predominant language of work. Most notoriously, perhaps, Bill 101 contained a provision requiring the exclusive use of the French language in commercial advertising.

## Language Policy as the Centerpiece of Nation-Building

For both states, this new interest in language policy was part and parcel of a nation-building project. Both states had become very much committed to the construction of "modern nations."

In the case of the federal government the goal was to implant the notion of Canada as a "bilingual nation." The presence of two languages was to become one of the key differentiating features of the Canadian nation. By the same token, personal bilingualism was to be viewed as a quintessential Canadian experience.

A variety of factors commended this new vision of Canada. In part, it was a matter of social justice; past wrongs in the treatment of the Francophone minorities would be corrected. According to one observer, many Canadians saw the historical status of French as a "national disgrace on which they could no longer shut their eyes."[25] Also, two official languages and bilingualism offered a conception of Canada that clearly served to differentiate it from the United States, at a time that English Canadians were becoming alarmed over American cultural and economic influence. As 1960s Prime Minister Lester Pearson reportedly declared, "When an American asks you the difference between Canada and the United States . . . answer him in French!"[26]

Finally, and most importantly, the idea of a resolutely bilingual nation seemed to offer an effective response to the surge of nationalism in Quebec, in some instances explicitly separatist. Through it, advocates argued, Quebeckers would come to see all of Canada as their nation, rather than just Quebec or French Canada. They would identify with a community of French speakers that stretched from "coast to coast"—and which the Quebec government could not claim to represent. Indeed, the Francophone minorities would be "betrayed" by Quebec independence.

As Prime Minister Trudeau declared in 1968, if minority language rights are entrenched throughout Canada then "the French-Canadian nation" would stretch from Maillardville in British Columbia to the Acadian community on the Atlantic Coast:

> Once you have done that, Quebec cannot say it alone speaks for French Canadians . . . Mr. Robarts will be speaking for French Canadians in Ontario, Mr. Robichaud will be speaking for French Canadians in New Brunswick, Mr. Thatcher will speak for French Canadians in Saskatchewan, and Mr. Pearson will be speaking for all French Canadians. Nobody will be able to say, "I need more power because I speak for the French-Canadian nation."[27]

Within each of these rationales, then, the new ideal of a bilingual Canada could not mean that of two unilingual communities, each with its own territory. The old linguistic structure would no longer suffice. Bilingualism had to mean the presence throughout Canada as a whole of

speakers of both languages, and the pan-Canadian provision of bilingual services and recognition of language rights that would make this possible.

As for the Quebec government, it too had become committed to the construction of a modern nation: the Quebec nation. Prior to the 1960s, many Francophone leaders, especially clerical and more conservative ones, had been wedded to the idea of a French-Canadian nation that was not coterminous with the Canadian state but existed wherever there were concentrations of Francophones. Within this vision, the Francophone minorities outside Quebec had high strategic importance.

With the 1960s, the nation was effectively redefined to be coterminous with the boundaries of Quebec itself—and became the Quebec nation. In part, the demographic decline of the Francophone minorities was responsible for the shift. But even if the minorities had maintained or increased strength, the fact remained that only in Quebec, with its overwhelming Francophone majority, could the power and resources of the state be forthrightly committed to the interests of the Francophone nation. By the 1960s, as clerical and conservative leaders were finally displaced by secular, "modernizing" ones, the argument had become irresistible that the Quebec state needed to be recognized as a "national" state and secure the powers and resources that would go with that. Whether this was to be achieved through renewal of the Canadian federation or Quebec's accession to sovereignty was an open question.

The leadership for this new nationalism came predominantly from new middle-class Francophones: intellectuals, journalists, educators, and administrators. Within their professional worldview the status of the French language in Quebec was bound to be a central concern. It was also important to their social mobility, given the predominance of English in the upper levels of the Quebec economy, and the historical integration of immigrants with Quebec's English language minority.[28]

In any event, whereas the old French-Canadian nationalism had paired language and religion ("*la langue, gardienne de la foi*"), the new Quebec nationalism was resolutely secular. Only language remained as a national marker. As René Lévesque, the founder of the sovereigntist *Parti québécois*, wrote in 1968:

> At the core of this [Québécois] personality is the fact that we speak French. Everything else depends on this one essential element and follows from it or leads us infallibly back to it.[29]

Thus, it was perhaps inevitable that with the 1970s the Quebec state would be committed to a comprehensive language policy seeking to reinforce the role of French in Quebec.

Given the opposed national projects of the two states, it followed automatically that their language policies would be at odds. Ottawa's policy rested on the personality principle: language rights should be assigned to individuals and be the same throughout the country; Quebec's policy was very much grounded in the territorial principle.[30] Quebec's policy was focused on the linguistic majority; Ottawa's was focused on linguistic minorities, including Quebec's minority. There may have been a profound asymmetry in the social and economic position of the Anglophone and Francophone minorities, but Ottawa's language policy was resolutely symmetrical in conception.

Of course, this direct confrontation of language policies, and nation-building projects, was made possible by Canada's federal structure. Each government was free to pursue to the fullest the logic of its strategies—and did so. For instance, the federal government's secretary of state has provided funding for *Alliance Québec*, the main group representing Quebec Anglophones, which is a strong antagonist of Bill 101.[31] Indeed, in listing the activities by linguistic minority organizations that it was prepared to support the secretary of state explicitly included the lobbying of provincial governments to adopt official bilingualism. By the same token, in attempting to minimize the effect of minority-language obligations under provisions of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the Quebec government actually opposed in court the efforts of Francophone minorities in other provinces to avail themselves of the same provisions.

Still, federalism appears to be a *sine qua non* for Canada. Without it, Canada might well have broken up before now. Yet, it does put a certain premium on intergovernmental collaboration and compromise. In the case of Canada it is striking how these qualities have been less evident in the case of language policy than perhaps any other area.

## Success of Language Policies

The success of these language policies can be measured in two ways: their ability to alter the social use of language and the extent to which they have shaped public conceptions of nationhood. By the first measure, the federal government's language policy has had decidedly mixed results.

On the one hand, the 1996 Census documents a continued increase in personal bilingualism, primarily among young Canadians. Within the whole population, bilingualism went from 13 percent in 1971 to 17 percent in 1996.[32] This has occurred among both respondents whose first language is English and respondents whose first language is French. Nor

is it restricted to members of the linguistic minorities. Outside Quebec, the proportion of Anglophones claiming to have a knowledge of French rose by 78 percent between 1961 and 1981, reaching 5 percent; in 1996, it had reached 6 percent.[33] Of course, bilingualism is especially high among recent graduates of secondary schools: 16 percent among Anglophones outside Quebec aged 15–19.[34] Similarly, among Quebec Francophones bilingualism went from 28.7 percent in 1981 to 34 percent in 1996.[35] Among Quebec Francophones aged 20–24, 48 percent were bilingual in 1996.[36] Of course, these results are based on simple declarations; they are not directly verified. There is every reason to believe that few individuals are truly equally fluent in both languages.[37]

On the other hand, efforts to expand the role of French as a language of work within the federal public bureaucracy have been far less successful. The federal government does project a bilingual face; some measure of personal bilingualism is now expected of political leaders. The presence of Francophones in the upper levels of the federal public service has increased dramatically, now matching the Francophone share of the Canadian population.[38] But the possibility of Francophones using French as their language of work has not increased in the same fashion. French has become the main language of work for offices of the federal public service in Quebec, but English remains dominant in the federal capital. According to one government study, language use in the federal public service follows the path of least resistance; in Ottawa, this meant functioning mostly in English.[39] According to another study, three-quarters of Francophone federal employees in Ottawa use English mainly, or exclusively, in key work situations.[40]

Finally, there is the strengthening, or at least securing, of the presence of people in all parts of Canada of people whose first language is the minority language of the area: in Canadian parlance, "the official-language minorities." Yet, these minorities have declined in virtually all provinces, both in absolute numbers and as a proportion of provincial population. Outside Quebec, the number of individuals using French as their home language has declined from 675,920 in 1971 to 619,000 in 1996.[41] Indeed, the proportion of people of French mother tongue who do not use it at home has risen from 27 percent in 1971 to 37 percent in 1996.[42] By the same token, French home speakers' share of the total population outside Quebec declined from 4.4 percent to 2.9 percent.[43] They now represent less than 3 percent of the populations of all provinces but Quebec and New Brunswick.[44] Paralleling the decline of the Francophone minorities, has been the decline of the single Anglophone minority: Quebec's. From 14.7 percent of Quebec's population in 1971,

Anglophones had fallen to 10.8 percent in 1996.[45] Here, out-migration has been the primary cause.

To this extent, the federal government has failed in its effort to reduce the territorialization of language: the phenomenon in even stronger. At most, it can be claimed that the federal government's policy slowed the forces of territorialization: the situation would have been worse otherwise.

Several factors contributed to this result. Federal policies could have been better conceived, providing support directly to the institutions of official-language minorities. Most provincial governments certainly could have been more energetic in supporting the effort. Yet, there is good reason to believe that even the best of federal, and provincial, policies could not have reversed the forces of territorialization.

Back in the 1960s, when the policy was initiated, the official-language minorities in many parts of Canada already were too small to be viable over the long term. Francophone minorities had been able to persist in self-contained rural communities. But migration to urban centers usually meant exposure to English as the primary language of work, and media. It often meant intermarriage, with the resulting conversion to English. Of the 19 metropolitan areas outside Quebec and New Brunswick, in only two do more than 3 percent of residents speak French at home.[46] Thus, assimilation rates tend to be much higher in urban settings.[47] In short, there were real limits in this case to the capacity of the state to pursue a language policy.

By most indicators, the Quebec government has had more success in pursuing its language policy. Thanks in particular to Bill 101, most of the children of immigrants are indeed enrolled in French-language schools. The proportion of children of neither French nor English mother tongue ("allophones") in French-language schools went from 7.9 percent in 1970–1971 to 78.5 percent in 1994–1995.[48] The entry of such a large number of allophone children into the French-language system has not been without tensions. Conflicts periodically arise over such matters as the allophone children's use of languages other than French in these schools.[49]

Moreover, English continues to exercise a strong influence. Thus, among allophone children attending Montreal French-language schools the percentage using French at home went from 8.9 percent in 1983–1984 to 13.6 percent in 1989–1990. By the same token, among all allophone children on l'Île de Montréal the proportion using French at home went from 4.6 percent in 1983–1984 to 12 percent in 1994–1995. Nonetheless, the proportion of these students using

English at home, which had been 24.9 percent in 1983–1984, was still 13.6 percent in 1994–1995.[50]

Still, the historical pattern of immigrant children joining the Anglophone community clearly has been broken. Indeed, in 1994, 63.9 percent of allophone secondary school graduates chose to attend the following educational institution, the *Cégep* (*Collège d'enseignement général et professionnel*), in French rather than English.[51] Under Bill 101, all students are free to attend *Cégeps* in either language. Similarly, among recent allophone immigrants to Quebec (between 1976 and 1991) who have shifted languages home language, 69 percent shifted to French.[52]

By the same token, French is now much more prevalent as a language of work. Between 1971 and 1989, the proportion of the Montreal workforce that worked "généralement en français" went from 42 percent to 56 percent. In 1989, 85 percent of Montreal workers stated that they could work at least half of the time in French; a clear majority could at least 90 percent of the time.[53] To be sure, even now the possibility of working primarily in French is lower in the upper levels of corporate hierarchies. Nonetheless, in 1993, 52 percent of Francophone administrators and 43 percent of Francophone professionals could work at least 90 percent of the time in French.[54] Moreover, Anglophones are increasingly expected to have a working knowledge of French. The result has been the conversion of Montreal's work world to a predominantly French-language bilingualism. As such, this falls short of Bill 101's objective that French be the common language of work. But it certainly represents an end to English's historical domination of the upper levels of the Quebec economy.

In addition, as a result of the combined effects of language legislation, expansion of the Quebec public sector, and Quebec state support for Francophone-owned enterprises, Francophone/Anglophone income differences have disappeared. And the proportion of Francophones in administrative positions has increased dramatically. Within Quebec as a whole, the proportion of Francophones in corporate administrative positions went from 31 percent in 1959 to 58 percent in 1988.[55]

The expanded role for French has been coupled with a substantial departure of corporate headquarters, and Anglophones, from Quebec—largely to Ontario. Arguably, these developments have been triggered in part by the new language policy.[56] Nonetheless, whether directly or indirectly, the language policy does appear to have resulted in a profound change in the use of French as a language of work.

As to the second measure of "success" of language policies, that is the extent to which they have served to shape public conceptions of

nationhood, once again the federal policy has had mixed results. On the face of it, clear majorities of both Anglophones and Francophones support minority rights for members of the other group. However, the basis of this support is quite precarious.

This is especially so in the case of Anglophones, as a study by Sniderman et al. has demonstrated. There, support falls markedly when the question of cost is introduced.[57] Nor do these rights command majority support among Anglophones in Western Canada.[58] Beyond that, a double standard prevails: Anglophones are much less likely to support minority rights for Francophones than for fellow Anglophones in Quebec.[59] Finally, Anglophones have mixed ideas regarding the very status of language rights. They are prepared to support language rights out of a sense of social egalitarianism but not to view language rights as an instance of fundamental individual rights. Indeed, some Anglophone politicians have attacked language rights in the name of individualist principles.[60] Thus, the federal government's use of language rights in its "nation-building" project, seeking to make language rights a central component of popular notions of Canadian citizenship, has had decidedly mixed results.

Personal bilingualism has become widely supported as a value. But only in specialized milieux has bilingualism become viewed as the quintessential national experience. The clearest example is the graduates and supporters of immersion programs.

To be sure, both official bilingualism and personal bilingualism are strongly supported by the Anglophone community of Quebec. Typically, Bill 101's "sign law" and its infringement of free access to English-language schools are portrayed as violations of fundamental Canadian values.

As for Francophones, they have always had a tendency to view recognition of two official languages as a fundamental value of Canadian nationhood. Thus, in the Sniderman et al. study Quebec Francophones do not demonstrate the double standards of Anglophones outside Quebec: they support Anglophone language rights almost to the same extent as Francophone minority rights.[61]

Nonetheless, since the 1960s and 1970s the preeminence of French within Quebec itself has become a basic value. Given that national allegiance has been transferred from the idea of a French Canada to a Quebec nation, then the preeminence of French within Quebec stands as the most basic of premises. Indeed, Bill 101, generally known as *La Charte de la langue française*, has become generally viewed as indispensable to Quebec's survival as a nation. Thus, in the Sniderman et al. study

Quebec Francophones were quite prepared to qualify the language rights of Anglophones who move to Quebec, "if it threatens the right of Quebec to be a predominantly French-speaking community."[62] This distinction between Anglophones from within and outside Quebec had been made in Bill 101's provisions for education rights, although it was overruled by the Supreme Court in the case of Canadian citizens.

When, in 1988, the Canadian Supreme Court declared Bill 101's sign law to be a violation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, there was strong public support for the Quebec government's use of another Charter provision to reinstate the law.[63] In short, there has been little apparent disposition among Quebec Francophones to trade-off the preeminence of French in Quebec for minority French-language rights in other parts of Canada.

To be sure, Francophone minorities in the rest of Canada have been strong defenders of the federal government's conception of Canada as a bilingual nation, and of its language policies. Indeed, they have drawn upon the ideal of a bilingual Canada to press for stronger policies.

In short, just as the Quebec government has been more successful than Ottawa in pursuing the objectives of its language policy, so it has been more successful in implanting a conception of nationhood that is centered on these objectives.

## Conclusions from the Canadian Experience:

In a sense, the Quebec government's project was the more conventional one: that of a nation-state with a single national language. The federal government's project of a "bilingual nation" was more innovative but also more problematic. On the basis of the Canadian experience, there are serious obstacles facing any attempt to construct a nation with two languages.

The first order of problems is ideological. By its nature, the concept of nation stresses commonality and shared experience. Yet, differences in language imply quite the opposite. Conceivably, languages can embody different values and assumptions, with the result that common events are experienced differently. Even if they don't cause different reactions in this manner, languages can hinder any sharing of common reactions. Thus, the presence of two languages is almost certain to appear as a hindrance to national unity.

Conceivably, this problem could be surmounted by making the capacity to function in both languages, personal bilingualism, the distinctive national experience. Yet, if personal bilingualism is difficult to

attain, then it will be the possession of specialized milieu and elites rather than the nation as a whole. Indeed, others may well resent it for that reason. Thus, in the Canadian case the graduates and supporters of immersion French have become very strong advocates of Canada as a bilingual nation. The same tends to be true of leaders in the Francophone and Anglophone minorities, who themselves mediate between the two language groups. But their celebration of bilingualism seems to have had few takers in the larger population.

In any event, the notion of bilingualism as a common national experience is self-contradictory. If personal bilingualism were to be made a truly national experience, then it could not sustain itself. If all citizens were truly bilingual, then with time they would switch to the majority language.[64] The nation would become unilingual.

The difficulties facing the nationalism of a bilingual nation are also sociological. As Canadian experience has shown, two or more languages within the same state will tend to be concentrated in territorially defined centers of dominance. Indeed, their survival depends upon such segregation. Yet, this requirement of territorial division is bound to pose problems for national unity, especially where the state is federal. Beyond fostering attachment to regions rather than the nation as a whole, it can hinder mobility within the nation. Yet, here too the nationalism of a bilingual nation is caught in a contradiction: in denying the significance of such territorial divisions it is attacking the underlying basis of national distinctiveness. This can be illustrated in several ways from the Canadian experience.

It can be readily argued that both Bill 22 and Bill 101 were necessary to the development, perhaps even survival, of French in Quebec. In particular, the continuing integration of immigrants with the Anglophone community, through the English-language school system, threatened to reduce the demographic weight of Francophones. In fact, by some projections, they would have lost their majority status in Montreal, Quebec's only metropolis.[65]

Yet, thanks to these measures, even if they have become citizens, immigrants do not have the same educational choices in Quebec that do many other Canadian citizens.[66] Thus, the measures are a direct affront to the ideal of a Canadian nation, and have been bitterly attacked by many Canadian nationalists—predominantly Anglophone. Defenses of the Bills in terms of the territorial principle carry little weight. Within a nationalist perspective, individuals' rights must be the same throughout the nation. Even if immigrants have demonstrated little inclination to send children to French-language schools outside Quebec, the fact that

the opportunity exists makes it incumbent on the Quebec government to allow open access to its English-language schools.

The difficulties of reconciling two languages with the national ideal are also demonstrated by Canada's recent constitutional struggles. Canada's Constitution was repatriated and revised in 1982 without the consent of the Quebec legislature. In the late 1980s, the Canadian prime minister and provincial premiers agreed on a limited package of constitutional changes for which Quebec would sign the Constitution. Among them, was an interpretive clause describing Canada's linguistic duality in terms that accorded squarely with the sociological reality of the duality: "the existence of French-speaking Canada, centered in Quebec but also present elsewhere in Canada, and English-speaking Canada, concentrated outside Quebec but also present in Quebec, constitutes a fundamental characteristic of Canada."[67] Under complaints from Trudeau, the former prime minister, and others, the phrasing was changed to "English-speaking Canadians" and "French-speaking Canadians." Even then it was widely attacked as an affront to the ideal of a Canadian nation.

However accurate sociologically, the statement directly contradicted the construct of "nation" to which Canadian nationalism has become wedded. After all, pan-Canadian language rights had been the centerpiece of the "nation-building" constitutional revision orchestrated by the Trudeau government in 1982: in the new Charter of Rights and Freedoms minority-language educational rights are one of the few provisions that government cannot avoid through the "notwithstanding clause." Within nationalist mythology, constitutionally entrenching these rights had created the basis for a new bilingual nation.

Thus, in the late 1980s, Trudeau came from retirement to attack publicly this deviation. Indeed, in his attack upon the proposed interpretative clause, Trudeau rejected the very notion of linguistic dualism, extolling personal bilingualism as a national experience:

> Bilingualism unites people; dualism divides them. Bilingualism means you can speak to the other; duality means you can live in one language and the rest of Canada will live in another language, and we will all be good friends, which is what Mr. [René] Lévesque always wanted.[68]

By the same token, the president of *Canadian Parents for French* contended that the duality clause placed a weaker obligation on governments than did a parallel clause recognizing the obligation of the Quebec government to preserve and promote Quebec's identity as a

"distinct society." For him, this posed a grave threat to national unity:

> The limitation of the constitutional obligation on the anglophone provinces to do more than preserve the linguistic character of Canada, while recognizing Quebec as a distinct society, could eventually result in a linguistic curtain being drawn around Quebec creating not a distinct society but a ghetto, ripe for the fostering of events that might again lead towards separation.[69]

Finally, the development of French-language immersion programs has brought out the contradictions between Canadian nationalism and the social reality of language. From the late 1960s onward, French immersion programs have been enormously popular in the major Canadian cities. In Quebec, enrolments in French immersion had reached 32,000 students by 1991–1992, representing 32.3 percent of all enrolments in the English-language school system. In Canada as a whole, enrolments had reached 295,350 or 6.1 percent of all enrolments in English-language schools.[70]

Clearly, the ideal of a bilingual Canadian nation was one of the motivations of parents in sending their children to these schools.[71] Yet, given the infinitesimal presence in most of these cities of people whose first language is French it has never been clear how children will be able to use their newfound linguistic skills. In any event, some experts contend that these linguistic skills typically are insufficient to support communication with French speakers. Indeed, some argue that the students speak a language that only they and their teachers understand.[72]

More importantly, immersion schools have become a focus of conflict between Anglophones and members of the Francophone minorities. Many Anglophones have presumed that the same schools could serve both immersion students and Francophone children seeking a French-language education. Yet, Francophone parents have insisted on separate French-language schools, fearing that "immersion" students will simply draw their children into English. In effect, "immersion" programs designed to serve the ideal of a bilingual nation are feared as instruments of linguistic assimilation.[73]

In sum, the Canadian experience suggests quite clearly that the logic of nation-building is that of a single language. The attempt to build a nation on two languages has foundered over the contradiction between the ideals of unity and commonality that are inherent to the concept of nation and the reality of separation and territorial division that is inherent to the sociology of language.

## The Multinational State?

Given the apparent difficulties with recognizing two or more languages within the framework of a nation-state, does the concept of a "multinational" or "plurinational" state offer a more viable possibility? Can nations be defined in terms of a single language but share a common state with others? Here too the Canadian experience may be instructive.

In earlier decades, Francophone intellectuals and politicians did articulate the notion of a "binational" Canada composed of two nations differentiated primarily in terms of language.[74] In particular, at the turn of the century journalist and politician Henri Bourassa developed the model of "a fruitful alliance of the two races, each one remaining distinctly itself, but finding within the Canadian confederation enough room and liberty to live together side by side."[75] On this basis, he championed the rights of the Francophone minorities. While he was an avowedly Canadian nationalist in his defense of the autonomy of Canada in its relations with Great Britain, Bourassa did not see Canada as an undifferentiated national community.

During the 1960s, a Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism sought to develop a framework for applying these notions to Canada. While eschewing the term "nation," it saw Canada as composed of two linguistically defined collectivities. On this basis, it developed proposals for a language regime in which recognition of linguistic equality was tempered by territory and which took full account of Quebec's importance as the essential base of Francophone society. By the same token, key English-Canadian political leaders experimented with the notion of a Canada composed of "two nations."[76] Nonetheless, as I have already shown, with the late 1960s, the federal government and most federal-level political elites embraced the ideals of a single bilingual nation, under the leadership of Pierre Elliott Trudeau.

Recently, especially in response to the results of the 1995 referendum on Quebec sovereignty, which was defeated by the thinnest of majorities, there has been a renewal of interest in notions of a "binational" Canada. Now, given political mobilization among Aboriginal Peoples, the notion typically is reformulated to that of a "multinational" or "three-nation" Canada.[77] Within these models, the Quebec nation is openly recognized as primarily Francophone. Thus, the Quebec government's established language policy is seen as fully legitimate. Aboriginal Peoples are also seen as a national entity, or aggregation of "First Nations." One of the purposes of Aboriginal self-government, would be to protect and revive Aboriginal languages.[78]

To be sure, Aboriginal languages present a formidable challenge. There are currently 53 Aboriginal languages still spoken in Canada, as opposed to the close to 300 spoken in the past, and many of these are on the verge of extinction.[79] According to the 1991 Canadian Census slightly over one million people (3.8 percent of the Canadian population) declared themselves to be of Aboriginal origin but of them only about 11 percent reported Aboriginal home language. Among the smaller number, 625,710, who declared that they considered themselves to be Aboriginals about half said they could understand an Aboriginal language, but only 32.7 percent said they could speak one.[80] The Canadian Constitution offers no explicit protection for Aboriginal languages, let alone official status. However, Quebec's legislature has recognized the right to preserve and promote Aboriginal languages. Most importantly, the Northwest Territories and Yukon Territories have granted official status to Aboriginal languages. By the same token, arrangements for Aboriginal self-government, such as those of the ill-fated Charlottetown Accord, could also entail measures to promote Aboriginal languages. Whether even a concerted policy effort, based upon various forms of territoriality, could prevent further erosion of Aboriginal languages, let alone reverse past trends, is far from clear.

The characterization of the remaining Canadians as "English Canada" is problematic. Beyond ignoring the presence of the Francophone minorities, it is fact that now about one-tenth of the population (10.9 percent in 1996) has a home language other than English or French.[81] With time, these individuals or their children may well become Anglophone, for the reasons that have militated against French outside Quebec. But new immigrants could be in the same situation. More fundamentally, "English Canada" conjures up notions of an older essentially "British" Canada, defined openly in terms of British origin. Not only are many contemporary Anglophone Canadians of non-British origin, but the federal policy of multiculturalism has rendered illegitimate such notions.

In any event, given the extent to which the nationalism of a "bilingual Canadian nation" has taken hold, it is difficult to see the political conditions under which Canada might be reconfigured on a multinational basis. The essence of the new Canadian nationalism is now firmly entrenched in the Canadian Constitution, thanks to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Its defenders have played the leading role in preventing even the most minimal constitutional modifications so as to recognize the territoriality of language in Canada. This is the primary lesson to be drawn from the ill-fated Meech Lake Accord, rejected in

English Canada primarily for its "distinct society" and "linguistic duality" interpretative clauses. The provisions were attacked as deviations from the new understanding of the Canadian nation, in which language is somehow disengaged from its sociological and territorial bases.

To be sure, as we have seen, some Anglophone Canadians are ambivalent about the language rights of Francophone minorities. But they are nonetheless firmly committed to the ideal of a single Canadian nation. Thus, even if their commitment to a bilingual Canada should be uncertain, they would not accept the recognition of Quebec nationhood that would be attendant upon viewing the rest of Canada as an English-speaking entity, let alone as a nation.

* * *

In sum, my analysis of the Canadian experience is not encouraging for the project of building a bilingual or multilingual nation. If "nation" is to be understood in the sense of the primary social community, rather than a state structure, then it is exceedingly difficult to base it on more than one language. Unless languages are in a diglossic state, their maintenance and continued development requires a separation into distinct social units that runs counter to the logic of nation, with its emphasis upon unity and shared experience.

Thus, in the case of Canada we find that language policies designed to break down Canada's historical linguistic segregation, so that the two linguistic groups may be more present throughout the Canadian nation, have been largely unsuccessful. In fact, reflecting the power of territoriality, linguistic segregation has increased throughout Canada.

By the same token, efforts to inculcate the notion of Canada as a bilingual nation have had at best mixed results. Anglophone support for a regime designed to entrench minority language rights throughout the nation seems to be quite fragile, especially when framed in terms of support for Francophone minorities rather than fellow Anglophones in Quebec. For their part, Francophones have no difficulty with the notion of a bilingual Canada and with the principle of minority-language rights. But they are likely to see a bilingual Canada as composed of two nations rather than one. And Quebec Francophones (who constitute approximately 90 percent of all Canadian Francophones) attach first priority to the predominance of French within Quebec itself.

On the basis of the Canadian experience, then, there is tension between the ideal of single nation and the inevitable social distance and segregation that comes with the presence of two languages. As Canada's

constitutional travails have demonstrated, it is difficult within the framework of a single nation to recognize let alone accommodate the presence of two linguistic communities.

For all these reasons, the Quebec government's nation-building project, based upon a single language, has been far more successful. Its language policies have produced more satisfactory results and its attempts to inculcate the ideal of a Quebec nation, defined preeminently in terms of language, have had much more of an impact. In effect, Quebec has been pursuing the same logic that has guided most states in the Western world over the last few centuries: a nation-state must be based on a single language.

Still, however valid this analysis of the Canadian experience, are there counterexamples which suggest that bilingual or multilingual nations are possible after all?

Within Western Europe, there are several examples of multilingual states. But do they constitute multilingual nations? Clearly, Belgium is not such a case. Walloons have a strong sense of Belgium as their nation, if only because of their past domination of the Belgian state. But, if only for the same reason, Flemish do not. In survey analyses Walloons tend to identify with Belgium as a whole whereas Flemish tend to identify with the Flemish region or community.[82]

In Spain, the ideal of nation also remains clearly linked to a single language. In the name of the Spanish nation and Castilian, the national language, the Franco regime had, of course, sought to eliminate the public use of Catalan, Basque, and Galician. Yet, the languages survived. Indeed, through policies inspired in part by Quebec's promotion of French, the Catalan Generalitat has been able to secure a major revival of Catalan such that virtually all residents have some knowledge of Catalan—actual use of Catalan is another story.[83] In his book *Reversing Language Shift*, Joshua Fishman cites Catalan and Quebec French as two of his main "success stories."[84] By the same token, in Catalonia, if not the Basque Country, language is at the center of a sense of national identity. Yet, 20 years after the transition to democracy, the Spanish state remains largely resistant to notions of a multilingual Spain, let alone the idea of a plurinational Spain. In this, it has the support for most Castilian-speaking Spaniards.

Still, Switzerland might be offered as the exception to the rule: proof that a multilingual nation is in fact possible, whatever the experience elsewhere. Indeed, by most accounts the Swiss do share a strong sense of national identity, although apparently this is more in the case of German speakers than French or Italian speakers.[85] Moreover, linguistic diversity seems to be a central element of that identity.[86]

Nonetheless, the Swiss nation is, in a sense, one composed not of individuals but of cantons. And, of course, within the cantons linguistic territoriality remains supreme. As such, it is a very different idea of nation than the one that the Trudeau government sought to promote, rooted in individual rights and the personality principle. And, bilingualism aside, the latter version is much more akin to the one promoted by most other Western states. This may help to explain why it has been so popular among Anglophone Canadians, if not Francophones.

Most importantly for our purposes, the Swiss nation developed through a long process of coming together among the cantonal constituent units rather than a deliberate effort of "nation-building" by a central state. It is perhaps inevitable that "nation-building" strategies developed by central state elites will privilege a direct relationship with individual citizens rather than one mediated through territorial units. This will especially be the case if one or more of these units is the site of a separatist movement.

Recently, David Laitin has argued that Africa and Asia states point to a model of nation-building which, unlike the Western model, does accommodate multilingualism. In particular, he points to India with its combination of Hindi and English as All-Union languages and a variety of languages as regional languages. He even suggests that such a language constellation might be the model for an emerging European nation.[87] Yet, if multilingual *states* might be the norm in the "Third World" it is not at all clear that any of them, India included, constitute multilingual "nations"—at least, not in the sense that we are using the term. By the same token, however advanced may be the construction of a European "state," a European "nation" is quite a different matter.

In short, multilingual *states* are quite viable. After all, despite the presence of two languages Canada functioned for close to 100 years without a serious threat to its existence. But political stability does require acceptance and accommodation of the territorial bases of languages. Indeed, this is the only basis for *linguistic* stability.

Experience in Canada, and other settings, suggests that the idea of a single nation is quite inimical to these conditions, given its emphasis on unity and shared experience. Linguistic segregation is now perceived as a threat to national integrity, especially given its close linkage to territory. Even to acknowledge this segregation, let alone accommodate it, becomes unacceptable. Yet, "nation-building" policies designed to reduce the segregation are frustrated by the forces of territoriality. Having put in question the historical bases of linguistic and political stability, the idea of a "bilingual nation" is unable to create new ones.

## Notes

1. See the distinction between language policy and planning, and overt versus covert policy, in Harold F. Schiffman, *Linguistic Culture and Language Policy*, London: Routledge, 1996, pp. 1–14. Also see James E. Jacob and William R. Beer, *Language Policy and National Unity*, Totawa, NJ: Rowman and Allanheld, 1985, pp. 2–3. The development of the concept of language planning is traced in Louis-Jean Calvet, *Les Politiques linguistiques*, Que sais-je? Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1996, chapter one.
2. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983, chapter five; Montserrat Guibernau, *Nationalisms: The Nation-State and Nationalism in the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996, chapter two.
3. See Michael Keating, *Nations Against the State: The New Politics of Nationalism in Quebec, Catalonia, and Scotland*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996, and Guibernau, *Nationalisms*, chapter five.
4. The classic statement is of course Karl Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication*, second edition, New York: MIT Press, 1966.
5. David D. Laitin, "The Cultural Identities of a European State," *Politics and Society*, 25: 3 (September, 1997), p. 281.
6. According to the 1871 Canadian census, 60.5% of the Canadian population was of British origin, 31.1% of French origin, and 8.4% of "other" origin (Charles Castonguay, "The Fading Canadian Duality," in John Edwards (ed.), *Language in Canada*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, table 2.1.
7. Richard J. Joy, *Languages in Conflict*, Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1972, p. 91.
8. Richard J. Joy, *Canada's Official Languages: The Progress of Bilingualism*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992, p. 71.
9. Ibid., p. 93.
10. Joy, *Languages in Conflict*, p. 77.
11. Joy, *Canada's Official Languages*, p. 106. Prince Edward Island's Francophone population was 10% when it joined Confederation (Joy, *Languages in Conflict*, p. 78).
12. Joy, *Canada's Official Languages*, p. 71.
13. Ibid., table 9.
14. J.A. Laponce, *Languages and Their Territories*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987. See also Jean Laponce, "Reducing the Tensions Resulting from Language Contacts: Personal or Territorial Solutions? in D. Bonin (ed.), *Towards Reconciliation? The Language Issue in Canada in the 1990s*, Kington, Ontario: Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, Queen's University, 1992, 125–39." Schneiderman, *Language and the State*, 173–180; John Edwards, *Language, Society and Identity*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1985, p. 71; and Michael Clyne, "Multilingualism" in Florian Coulmas (ed.), *The Handbook of Sociolinguistics*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1997, p. 310.

15. Joy, *Canada's Official Languages*, pp. 78–79.
16. All figures calculated from *Census of Canada, 1971*, Vol I, Part 3, tables 2 and 26.
17. Marcel Martel, "Les relations entre le Québec et les francophones de l" Ontario: de la survivance aux *Dead Ducks*, 1937–1969, Ph.D. dissertation, History Department, York University, 1994, pp. 125–128.
18. Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, Book III: *The Work World*, pp. 114–116.
19. By 1966–1967, the program had 3,188 enrolments at a cost of about $3.7 million (ibid.).
20. For various reasons, the scheme of Official Language Districts was never put into effect. See Kenneth D. McRae, "Bilingual Districts in Finland and Canada: Adventures in the Transplanting of an Institution," *Canadian Public Policy*, 4: 3 (Summer 1978), pp. 331–351. Also, Kenneth McRoberts, "Making Canada Bilingual: Illusions and Delusions of Federal Language Policy," in D.P. Shugarman and R. Whitaker (eds.), *Federalism and the Political Community: Essays in Honour of Donald Smiley*, Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 1989, pp. 171ff.
21. Secretary of State, *Annual Report*, 1989–90, appendix L.
22. Secretary of State, *Annual Report to Parliament, 1989–1990: Official Languages, Appendix J*.
23. Denis Wilfrid B., "The Politics of Language," in Peter S. Li (ed.), *Race and Ethnic Relations in Canada*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 170.
24. The federal government's secretary of state covered all the expenses of *Canadian Parents for French* during the first two years after its creation in 1977 and was still covering 65% of the national office expenses in 1988–1989 (Leslie Pal, *Interests of State: The Politics of Language, Multiculturalism and Feminism in Canada*, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993, pp. 166–167.
25. But Stacy Churchill also ties the language reforms into nation-building. While denying that they were intended to solve national unity problems, she presents the reforms as "a necessary *prerequisite* for other efforts to strengthen a sense of national identity." She does not specify what these "other efforts" were to be (Stacy Churchill, *Official Languages in Canada: Changing the Language Landscape*, New Canadian Perspectives, Canadian Heritage, 1998, p. 18.)
26. As quoted by Eric Waddell, "Some Thoughts on the Implications of French Immersion for English Canada," in David Schneiderman (ed.), *Language and the State: The Law and Politics of Identity*, Cowansville: Iditions Yvon Blais,1989, p. 431.
27. Speech to Quebec Liberal Convention, January 28, 1968, reported in *Ottawa Citizen*, January 29, 1968, as quoted in George Radwanski, *Trudeau*, Scarborough: Macmillan—NAL Publishing Ltd., 1978, p. 286.
28. Among other places, this interpretation is presented in Kenneth McRoberts, *Quebec: Social Change and Political Crisis*, Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1993.

29. René Lévesque, *An Option for Quebec*, Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1968, p. 14.
30. See Kenneth McRae, 1975, "The Principle of Territoriality and the Principle of Personality in Multilingual States," *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 4, pp. 35–45, and Kenneth McRoberts, *Misconceiving Canada: The Struggle for National Unity*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, chapter four.
31. McRoberts, *Misconceiving Canada*, p. 102.
32. *1996 Census: Mother Tongue, Home Language and Knowledge of Languages*, Statistics Canada Release, December 2, 1997.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
35. B.R. Harrison and L. Marmen, *Languages in Canada*, Scarborough, Ontario: 1994, table 4.4, and *1996 Census: Mother Tongue, Home Language and Knowledge of Languages*.
36. Ibid.
37. Individuals are simply asked whether they can conduct a conversation in the language. See the discussion of Census measures in Castonguay, "The Fading Canadian Duality," p. 56.
38. McRoberts, *Misconceiving Canada*, p. 84.
39. Kenneth McRae, "Official Bilingualism: From the 1960s to the 1980s," in Edwards, *Language in Canada, p. 71*, and McRoberts, *Misconceiving Canada*, p. 84.
40. Castonguay, "The Fading Canadian Duality," p. 54.
41. *Census of Canada, 1971*, cat. 92–726, table 26, and *Census of Canada, 1996, Mother Tongue, Home Language and Knowledge of Languages*.
42. Harrison and Marmen, *Languages in Canada,* table A.1, and *Census of Canada, 1996, Mother Tongue, Home Language and Knowledge of Languages*. Raymond Mougeon stresses the importance, and also difficulty, of reversing this pattern of shifts in "French Outside New Brunswick and Quebec," in Edwards, *Language in Canada*, p. 248.
43. *Census of Canada, 1996, Mother Tongue, Home Language and Knowledge of Languages*.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
46. The two cities were Ottawa (29.8%) and Sudbury (19.6%). Calculated from Statistics Canada, *Home Language and Mother Tongue, 1991*, table 3, cat. no. 93-317. Data were not provided for Ottawa without Hull.
47. Richard J. Joy, *Canada's Official Language Minorities*, Accent Québec, Montreal: C.D. Howe Research Institute, 1978, p. 10.
48. Marc V. Levine, *La Reconquête de Montréal*, Montreal: vlb éditeur, 1997, p. 229.
49. Ibid., pp. 235–237.
50. Ibid., pp. 237–238.
51. Ibid., p. 239.

52. Castonguay, "The Fading Canadian Duality," p. 51.
53. Levine, *La Reconquête de Montréal*, p. 305.
54. Ibid., p. 308.
55. Ibid., pp. 322–323.
56. Ibid., pp. 283–286.
57. Paul M. Sniderman, Joseph F. Fletcher, Peter H. Russell, and Philip E. Tetlock, "Political Culture and the Problem of Double Standards: Mass and Elite Attitudes Toward Language Rights in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, XXII:2 (June 1989), p. 277.
58. C. Michael MacMillan, "Linking Theory to Practice: Comments on 'The Constitutional Protection of Language'", in Schneiderman, *Language and the State*, p. 67.
59. Sniderman et al., "Political Culture and the Problem of Double Standards," p. 266.
60. Ibid., p. 274 and Robert C. Vipond, "Citizenship and the Charter of Rights: The Two Sides of Pierre Trudeau," *International Journal of Canadian Studies*, 14, Fall (Autumn 1996), pp. 179–192.
61. Sniderman et al., "Political Culture and the Problem of Double Standards," p. 266.
62. Ibid., p. 277.
63. McRoberts, *Misconceiving Canada*, p. 181.
64. The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism said as much back in the mid-1960s: "if everyone in a bilingual state becomes completely bilingual, one of the languages is rendered superfluous" and will disappear (Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, Book I: *The Official Languages*, Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1967), p. 12.
65. Scientific projections nonetheless predicted that Francophones would still form the majority (albeit reduced) of Montreal's population (McRoberts, *Quebec: Social Change and Political Crisis*, p. 182).
66. Indeed, under Bill 101 no parents have the right to send their children to English-language schools unless they have themselves been educated in English *in Quebec*. English-language education elsewhere in Canada will not do. This latter exclusion was overruled by the Canadian Supreme Court as an infringement of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
67. *Constitutional Amendment, 1987*, s.2(1b), as reproduced in P.W. Hogg, *Meech Lake Constitutional Accord Annotated*, Toronto: Carswell, 1988.
68. Pierre Elliott Trudeau, "Who Speaks for Canada? Defining and Sustaining a National Vision," in Michael D. Behiels (ed.), *The Meech Lake Primer*, Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1989, p. 84.
69. Special Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons on the 1987 Constitutional Accord, *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence*, 2nd session, 22nd Parliament, August 31, 1987, issue 15, p. 82. Underlying his complaint was the fact that the duality clause summoned governments only to "preserve" linguistic duality whereas the distinct society clause called

upon the Quebec government to "preserve and promote" Quebec's distinct society. (The Quebec government had not wanted to be put in the position of "promoting" Quebec's Anglophone minority.) Nonetheless, given demographic trends mere preservation of the current level of Canadian linguistic duality would be a heroic feat. (Kenneth McRoberts, "Comments," in Schneiderman, *Language and the State*, p. 480.)

70. Jacques Rebuffot, *Le Point sur . . . l 'immersion au Canada*, Anjou, Qc: CEC, 1993, tables I and II.
71. Eric Waddell, "Some Thoughts on the Implications of French Immersion for English Canada," in Schneiderman, *Language and the State*, p. 431.
72. Rebuffot, *Le Point sur . . . l 'immersion au Canada*, pp. 204–205 and Waddell, "Thoughts on the Implications of French Immersion," pp. 427–429.
73. Rebuffot, *Le Point sur . . . l 'immersion au Canada*, pp. 179–180, and Waddell, "Some Thoughts on the Implications of French Immersion," p. 432.
74. McRoberts, *Misconceiving Canada*, chapter one.
75. Henri Bourassa, *Pour la justice*, Montreal, 1912, as quoted in A.I. Silver, *The French-Canadian Idea of Confederation, 1864–1900*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982, p. 193.
76. McRoberts, *Misconceiving Canada*, chapter two.
77. Philip Resnick, *Thinking English Canada*, Toronto: Stoddart, 1994; Will Kymlicka, *Finding Our Way: Rethinking Ethnocultural Relations in Canada*, Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 1998; Roger Gibbins and Guy Laforest (eds.), *Beyond the Impasse: Toward Reconciliation*, Montreal: IRPP, 1997.
78. In the ill-fated Charlottetown Accord, the delineation of the powers of new Aboriginal governments began with "to safeguard and develop their languages" (*Draft Legal Text, October 9, 1992*, section 35.[3][a]). On the constitutional status of Aboriginal language rights see Brian Slattery, "Aboriginal Language Rights," in Schneiderman, *Language and the State*, pp. 369–374.
79. Eung-Do Cook, "Aboriginal Languages: History," in Edwards, *Language in Canada*, p. 125.
80. Lynn Drapeau, "Aboriginal Languages: Current Status," in Edwards, *Language in Canada*, pp. 145–146.
81. *1996 Census: Mother Tongue, Home Language and Knowledge of Languages*.
82. Lieven de Winter and André-Paul Frognier, "L'évolution des identitiés politiques territorials en Belgique durant la période 1975–1995," in Serge Jaumain (ed.), *Le réforme de l' Etat . . . et aprés? L'impact des débats institutionnels en Belgique et au Canada*, Brussels: Editions de l' Université de Bruxelles, 1997, pp. 161–176. According to de Winter and Frognier by some indicators identification with Belgium is growing among Flemish, thanks to increased Flemish participation in Belgian political institutions.

But it is too early to determine whether the historical pattern has been broken (ibid., p. 167).

83. Direcció.·. General de Política Lingηística, *The Catalan Language Today*, Barcelona: Generalitat, 1992; Francesc Vallerdú, *L'Us del Catala: Un Future Controvertit*, Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1990; and Kenneth McRoberts, "Catalan Language and Culture," part of work in progress.
84. Joshua A. Fishman, *Reversing Language Shift*, Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1991, chapter ten. (He has nothing to say about French outside Quebec.)
85. According to a 1972 survey 52% of German speakers declared "Swiss" to be their primary identity, as opposed to 40% of French speakers and 47% of Italian speakers (Kenneth D. McRae, *Conflict and Compromise in Multilingual Societies: Switzerland*, Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1982, table 25). See also De Winter and Frognier, "L'évolution des identités politiques territoriales," p. 164.
86. François Grin, "Swiss Multilingualism and Its Relevance for Canada," *Policy Options*, June 1997, p. 19.
87. Laitin, "Cultural Identities of a European State."

CHAPTER 6

# Beyond Multiculturalism: Identity, Intercultural Communication, and Political Culture—The Case of Switzerland[1]

*Uli Windisch*

Switzerland's multilingual and multicultural situation illustrates the impossibility of comprehending the increasing cultural diversity of European countries in dichotomous terms such as multiculturalism/citizenship; cultural relativism/assimilation; cultural differences/national unity, and so on.

In general, there is a current tendency in research to approach subjects such as cultural diversity and immigration from a purely theoretical, abstract, and universal standpoint. Every researcher has his theory and wants to impose his truth, frequently through some sort of theoretical coup d'etat. In-depth research and empirical data are frequently given secondary importance, demonstrating to what point the cultural diversity that followed mass immigration and population shifts is far from a politically neutral subject. Every observation, no matter how qualified, empirically founded or objective, is almost always automatically given political connotations and reinterpreted ideologically on the basis of partisan and ideological preconceptions. Polemical debates are guaranteed in advance and reciprocal accusations and other misdirected criticisms feed the dynamics of the discussion. In short, it is mined territory.

Our objective is not to add yet another truth or to condemn multiculturalism or communitarism or, on the contrary, to advocate integration

or citizenship as the only viable and responsible political solution. In our opinion, the point is not to choose between multiculturalism and citizenship but to analyze real examples—empirically and thoroughly—in societies that are confronted with the problem of managing cultural diversity within a system of political unity. What kind of unity can come from diversity? How much diversity can a nation sustain without breaking apart? Is the attempt to conciliate diversity and unity an exercise in futility? Diversity is frequently perceived as a threat to unity. The obsession with unity and the concomitant fear of breaking apart are probably two of the major characteristics of every society, every state, every country, every nation. But what if diversity and even the encouragement of diversity today constituted the best evidence of a country's unity? Our objective is to show how Switzerland tries to respond to its different challenges in everyday life in a concrete and pragmatic manner rather than through the application of predefined dogmas.

The intercommunity know-how developed by Switzerland cannot, obviously, serve as a reference for other countries. On the other hand, the Swiss experience allows us to reflect on these problems in a less theoretical and abstract manner, thereby broadening the possibilities of managing cultural cohabitation within a single country. Let us start by presenting one of the main findings of six years of research on the linguistic and cultural mosaic that is Switzerland by an interdisciplinary group composed of sociologists, anthropologists, linguists and sociolinguists, as well as political scientists. Though it does not always fulfill every condition, Switzerland demonstrates that cohabitation between different cultural and linguistic communities within the same country presupposes the simultaneous copresence of three components:

1. Cultural identity
2. Intercultural communication
3. A political culture common to all of the linguistic and cultural communities

Most studies on intercultural phenomena characteristically take into account only one of these components or at least give too much preponderance to one of them. In analyzing intercultural problems, too much emphasis is placed on language and culture while underestimating communication (or the absence of such) between the different cultures and subcultures and the importance of the political dimension. The different trends in multiculturalism overestimate the weight of language

and culture while the schools of thought that stress citizenship give too much importance to politics.

Our field studies show that political difficulties arise when some of the three factors mentioned are absent or are given too much preponderance.

Let us illustrate this in the light of Switzerland's cultural and political experience:

1. Switzerland, with about seven million inhabitants, has four national languages (German, French, Italian, and Romansch) and therefore four different cultural communities. These are of very unequal size, not counting the immigrant community that makes up about 20 percent of the population.
2. Switzerland is not held together by the fact that the Swiss speak two, three, or even four languages (multilingual Swiss are less numerous than is generally thought) and that they can therefore communicate easily with each other. The more important reason for Swiss unity is that its people share a common *political culture*, especially direct democracy, federalism, and several other factors that we will discuss shortly. The strong attachment of the Swiss to direct democracy (popular initiatives and referendums) as well as to federalism (regional, cantonal, and communal autonomy) make a powerful link, much more powerful than communication between the different linguistic and cultural communities.
3. Nevertheless, Switzerland has several problems related to its multilingual and multicultural status. One of these is precisely the lack of communication between the different linguistic communities and the mutual lack of interest toward one another. The famous saying: "We understand each other well because we do not know each other" still holds true.

If simply "living next door to one another" was enough in the past, greater intercommunity communication could well become necessary in the future. The Swiss situation immediately invalidates such clear-cut oppositions as multiculturalism/citizenship; cultural differences/assimilation. It also brings out the source of difficulties that result when, for example, only cultural differences are emphasized to the detriment of political integration. In more general terms, our societies need to rediscover more global political and social ways of thinking that have to do with "both" (both cultural differences and integration) rather than regressing toward Manichaean oppositions such as "either this or that"

(my language, my culture, my community, or else, my alienation through your assimilation). The political handling of the different domestic cultures (integration through the respect of cultural differences) in Switzerland should be able to be extended to its immigrant communities in that the immigrants adopt the *basic political personality* composed of direct democracy and federalism. It is well known that Swiss nationality is more difficult to obtain than French nationality, for example, and it is easy to deride the red tape necessary to go through in order to obtain it. Nevertheless, one might legitimately wonder if it is not precisely because of Switzerland's great internal cultural diversity that obtaining Swiss nationality is lengthier and more difficult (requiring up to 12 years of residency). While cultural diversity constitutes tremendous richness, it can also increase the fragility of national unity. The country wants the assurance that future citizens have integrated the political– cultural personality that maintains its unity. Let us point out that direct democracy (the actual participation of citizens in daily political life), and federalism (strong local autonomy and decentralization) constitute values that are increasingly appreciated and even demanded in European societies today. Polls show, for instance, that almost 80 percent of the French would like to see certain forms of direct democracy such as referendums. If the time necessary to acquire Swiss citizenship is long, it should be pointed out that foreigners who are nationalized may keep their original nationality and thereby become binationals, contrary to other countries that do not allow dual citizenship but where the period required to become a citizen is shorter. This particularity is in fact consistent with the general policy of unity within diversity. It manifests both the insistence on unity (the long delay necessary to acquire the basic Swiss political personality) as well as the insistence on diversity (respect for cultural differences that goes as far as accepting a dual nationality). One problem posed, then, is long-established foreigners' right to vote, whether at the local, cantonal, or national level. Given the particularly important political dimension of Swiss social life (numerous referendums and popular initiatives) at the local, regional, and national levels, daily political life becomes an important factor in social integration.

Participation in the numerous public discussions surrounding referendums and popular initiatives generates an intense social life. In other words, granting immigrants political rights, even partially and by occupational sector, helps to integrate them socially. In a direct democracy, however, it is the people who have the last word and, in Switzerland as in other countries, the majority of the population is frequently opposed to granting political rights to immigrants. On this point, we need to let

time take its course and rely on the political debate to make things progress. Nevertheless, because of the federalist system, a number of cantons and communes (Neufchatel and Jura), gave immigrants the right to vote long ago. These concrete and positive local experiences frequently advance a more general public debate. Although this approach is slow ("slowly but surely" say the Swiss), it nevertheless comprises a positive element: it avoids the potential adverse effects of a government decree that would impose the right to vote for foreigners against the will of a hostile population. Public discussion and debate constitute one of the motors of direct democracy and the key to well-pondered solutions.

Other, less discussed features, are an integral part of this political system. The Swiss attachment to *independence* and *neutrality*, although relative, is clearly connected with multiculturalism. If Switzerland has been able to become strong as a result of its diversity (the famous unity within diversity, the differences that strengthen unity), this has taken time and has been achieved only progressively. In effect, the three main Swiss linguistic communities are linked by their language to neighboring countries (German-speaking Switzerland to Germany, French-speaking Switzerland to France, and Italian-speaking Switzerland to Italy). This situation implies a certain vulnerability because, through the linguistic and cultural links with neighboring countries, the three Swiss linguistic communities have become associated with the other linguistic communities rather than with their natural "Hinterland." It is therefore clear that, depending on the moment and the nature of international tensions, especially between neighboring countries (France, Germany, Italy, Austria), this mosaic could become very fragile and become a centrifugal force in that each linguistic community could be tempted to support the foreign country with which it shares the language and culture. This explains the long, conscious, political and historical process that was necessary to achieve the desire for independence and neutrality vis-à-vis the rest of the world, as well as the difficulty of moderating this desire today. This system of social and political beliefs, today described by some as "withdrawing into oneself," is also at the root of the difficulty for a certain number of Swiss to imagine joining the EU even though Switzerland is profoundly European in its values and culture.

*Subsidiarity* goes hand in hand with federalism and can be summed up in a saying: "What the towns can do, the canton should not do; what the cantons can do, the Confederation should not do." We might add, from the standpoint of the Swiss who favor membership in the EU under certain conditions, that what each country can do, the EU should not do.

Federalism and the principle of subsidiarity are also related to Switzerland's diversity as well as to the cultural and political heterogeneity, which can also be found in some cantons, depending on the region and township. As such, there are cantons that apply very different linguistic policies as well as communities within the same canton that practice different educational policies. This fundamental respect of each other's entity (there are, of course, many exceptions to this principle, but it does involve a general form of organization that is inconceivable in a highly centralized country), is the condition for a minimum *consensus*, another characteristic component of Switzerland's political and cultural reality.

These different characteristics are linked, interconnected, forming a system, a specific totality. Consensus is indissociable from federalism and involves a lengthy and extensive process of consultation of all the principal social and political actors concerned by a decision. In Switzerland, governing by decree is unthinkable. This policy of widespread consultation is itself linked to direct democracy. By consulting as many actors as possible, a referendum can be avoided. Taking into account diverse and opposing opinions following general discussions (the participation aspect) leads to *compromise* and *pragmatism*. The willingness to find a solution acceptable to the largest number avoids polarization over established ideological positions given that consensus and pragmatism are a priori incompatible with the defense of ideological principles. A pragmatic attitude always aims for concrete solutions. At root is the principle that there is a solution to every problem, even difficult and delicate ones, and that the time necessary will be spent to find a solution, even if in the view of some the process takes too long. Direct or semi-direct democracy also supposes an *active conception of citizenship* even if every voter does not participate in every election, popular vote, and referendum. The system is often criticized on the grounds of the frequently high abstention rates. It is the *possibility* for each citizen to participate amply in the political system, more than the participation itself, that seems important to us, a possibility in keeping with the general will to participate that is specific to the political Zeitgeist of our era. If some citizens abstain, others do more than their share. This is the *militia spirit*, something that goes beyond the taste for community life in general (highly developed in Switzerland). It involves the volunteer work of many Swiss citizens who participate in a spirit of openness and dialogue in the deliberation, discussion, and elaboration of proposals with the aim of finding solutions to the great problems facing society, thereby helping the authorities in their work. In other countries, these volunteers would be put in charge of a mission, professionally

hired, and paid. In Switzerland they can be members of numerous commissions, working or discussion groups, and so on without ever being hired as professionals. The absence of pay, or the mere reimbursement of expenses does not exclude, however, symbolic results that can further a political or other career or the nomination to a prestigious post. Related to this militia spirit, one can point to the *lack of pageantry* that surrounds the country's political authorities. Though they might not always be popular, political authorities are careful not to be cut off from the people despite the difficulty this represents. In fact, direct democracy obliges them to do this, as certain anecdotes illustrate. Federal Councilors (the members of the federal government), for example, take the bus or the train without being accompanied by bodyguards. This is not a myth.

While the people can disavow this or that political authority on the occasion of a popular vote, it does not signify in any way a rejection of the very same authorities and does not lead to the resignation of a member of the government. The people can really control the authorities, obliging them to take their opinion into account, too much so in the minds of certain zealous technocrats with little concept of the adverse effects profound changes would bring to the political system. We do not say this because of any conservatism; the political system is in fact constantly correcting itself with the approval of the people. Rather, we say it as the result of an overall analysis of the political system and the manifest and latent effects of such changes. It is indeed a total political and social phenomenon, all of the characteristics and consequences of which have yet to be brought to light.

More generally speaking, among the achievements of Switzerland's semi-direct democracy (popular initiatives requiring the signature of 100,000 citizens and referendums requiring 50,000 signatures), it should be recalled that the system has permitted the progressive development of a thoughtful popular will and that it has contributed to values such as tolerance (as opposed to ideological intransigence), respect for others (other languages, cultures, religions, political parties, etc.), as well as common sense. What in other places can bring about disintegration (the presence of numerous languages, ethnic groups, religions, cultures, etc.) has been converted in Switzerland into an integrating force. This basic political personality reminds us, in these ethnically troubled times, that the reciprocal destruction among different ethnic groups, languages, cultures, and religions is not necessarily inescapable.

This brief presentation should allow us to show that the intercultural cohabitation specific to Switzerland that we will now discuss cannot be

adequately understood unless the unique aspects of this political culture are brought to light, and that the problems of intercultural cohabitation are never purely linguistic or cultural but rather fundamentally political.

Contrary to other multilingual countries such as Canada or Belgium, which have a highly developed and complex linguistic policy, numerous observers are struck by the absence of detailed linguistic legislation in Switzerland.[2] One brief article of the federal Constitution (ART. 116), amended on March 10, 1996, serves as a linguistic policy. Here is what it says in four points:

1. The national languages of Switzerland are German, French, Italian, and Romansh.
2. The Confederation and the cantons encourage comprehension and exchanges between the linguistic communities.
3. The Confederation supports the measures taken by the cantons of Grisons and Ticino (Tessin) to safeguard and promote the Romansh and Italian languages.
4. The official languages of the Confederation are German, French, and Italian. Romansh is the official language in the relationship between the Confederation and Romansh-speaking citizens. The details are regulated by law.

The brevity of this article indicates that Switzerland's linguistic policy is essentially informal, unwritten, and pragmatic, the result of a long tradition of informal practices patiently elaborated on the basis of difficult cases and concrete experiences. These informal practices are nevertheless determined by a similarly unwritten general principle, the *principle of territoriality* (as opposed to the principle of linguistic freedom). The image of a multilingual Switzerland does not mean that everyone automatically speaks all the national languages or even that most Swiss are multilingual. Each territory has its language (German in German-speaking Switzerland, French in French-speaking Switzerland, etc.). The aim of the principle of territoriality is to prevent the shifting of linguistic frontiers and to maintain the homogeneity of the different linguistic regions. The application of this principle implies a clear policy of integrating and even assimilating internal migrants. A German Swiss who settles in French-speaking Switzerland has to educate his children in French and cannot demand a German education for them by arguing that the country is multilingual. In short, each linguistic region has only one official language, with the exception of multilingual cantons. But the principle of territoriality does not impede the learning

of other national languages in each of the linguistic regions. In fact, considerable efforts are made in this respect.

The attachment to the principle of territoriality is due to another reason—the unequal size of the different national linguistic communities. The Swiss population (not including the 20 percent of foreigners), is divided in the following manner according to the 1990 federal census: German speakers make up 73.4 percent of the population (4,131.027 persons), French speakers account for 20.5 percent (1,155.683 persons), Italian-speaking Swiss are 4 percent of the population (229,000 inhabitants), Romansh speakers make up 0.7 percent (38,454 persons), while other languages account for 1.3 percent of the population (74,002 persons).

Because of this numerical disproportion, many more German speakers settle in the three other linguistic regions. The figures are as follows: Of the total Swiss population living in German-speaking Switzerland, French speakers represent 1.6 percent, Italian speakers 0.7 percent, and Romansh speakers 0.4 percent. At the same time, the proportion of German-speaking Swiss living in French-speaking Switzerland is 7.4 percent while 11.3 percent live in Italian-speaking Switzerland and 20.8 percent have settled in the regions where Romansh is spoken. The German-speaking presence is felt even more in the communities that speak a minority language. In Romansh-speaking and Italian-speaking Switzerland, for example, the danger of "Germanization" is often evoked, but hardly at all in French-speaking Switzerland. The principle of territoriality can nevertheless bring with it adverse effects. In the Grisons, certain communities included such a high proportion of German-speaking citizens that because of the very principle of territoriality, the communities became largely German in the long run and, through the principle of communal autonomy, adopted German as the official language. Yet without a relatively strict application of the principle of territoriality over a long period, a multilingual Switzerland might already have ceased to exist. If the children of all the German-speaking Swiss who immigrated to other linguistic regions had been able to study in German, the proportion of German-speaking Swiss would be much higher than it is today. It should be underlined that German-speaking Swiss citizens do not have any hegemonious or imperialistic designs over the other linguistic regions, much to the contrary. The problem is solely due to the considerable majority of German speakers compared with the other linguistic communities. While representing a large and national majority, German speakers have an exceptional capacity to integrate and assimilate. Those who emigrate to a different linguistic region assimilate

very quickly, sometimes to the point of seeking to erase the traces of their linguistic origins. They seek, for example, to actively eliminate the accent that characterizes them when they begin to speak French. The proportion of immigrants of German origin established in French-speaking Switzerland is much larger than the 7.4 percent mentioned earlier precisely as a result of this rapid assimilation. The 7.4 percent represents only the most recent immigrants, those for whom German remains the most easily spoken language.

On the subject of the practice of multilingualism in a multicultural Switzerland, one can basically say that it is the Italian-speaking and Romansh-speaking minorities that know the most languages, frequently speaking two, three, even four of the national tongues. This is at least the case for those who are in contact with the other national linguistic communities, the ones who adapt to the two linguistic majorities. Regarding the relationship between the German-speaking and French-speaking populations, on the other hand, it was the German speakers who for a long period learned French more easily rather than the other way around. But things seem to be changing, with German speakers beginning to demand a certain reciprocity. German speakers, especially among the young, think that the Francophones could make an effort to speak some German, even Swiss German, given that the mother tongue of Swiss Germans is not German but rather a German dialect. Swiss Germans learn standard German (Hochdeutsch) when they start school. They become bilingual (dialect and standard German) even before learning a second national language. On the other hand, the infatuation with English is increasingly evident in Switzerland, regardless of national linguistic community. Here we come across a major problem that will increasingly confront the country, that is, the lack of communication between the different linguistic communities.

*The definition of the situation* and Switzerland's problems regarding intercultural relationships and cohabitation varies according to the social and political players. The differences in how this situation is defined can occasionally be the subject of heated debate.

One cause of concern for the *authorities* is the threat of the disappearance of the Romansh language. One of the aims of revising Article 116 of the Constitution (March 1, 1996) was precisely to reinforce that language by changing its status from a national to an official language when it involves the relationship between the Romansh speakers and the Confederation. This measure, at once symbolic and concrete, was massively approved by the Swiss people, indicating their attachment to quadrilingualism as well as their sympathy and support for the country's

smallest linguistic community (merely some 40,000 persons). The disappearance of Romansh would threaten a component of the country that is at once real, symbolic, and mythical. An insignificant number of Swiss who are not Romansh speak the language, something that does not prevent them from having a great sympathy for and attachment to it. Italian, while also a minority language (4.1 percent of the population) is not threatened because the Tessin (Ticino) has its hinterland—Italy. Yet the major problem for the authorities involves the apparently growing differences, one speaks at times of a "gulf," between German- and French-speaking Switzerland. To the lack of interest and the reciprocal lack of knowledge and communication between the two communities one can add political differences on subjects as essential as whether to join the EU, international relations in general, and a variety of national issues, particularly those related to the environment, ecology, transportation, and so on. More generally speaking, the sense of community membership is stronger among German-speaking Swiss than among French speakers, a sentiment reinforced by the specificity of the dialect utilized by Swiss German speakers. With regard to the differences in culture and mentality between the national linguistic communities, the attitudes of the various social protagonists varies considerably. *The press and the media* have a tendency to accentuate the differences, favoring events that show the divergence rather than those that link the different communities despite everything else. Following popular elections that show the differences of sensibility between the linguistic communities, certain newspapers tend to dramatize with headlines such as: "Might Switzerland explode?" "Might Switzerland fall apart?" and so on.

On subjects as sensitive as that of the future of the country, there is no single discourse or common belief. On the one hand, there are those who dramatize, on the other those who minimize. The latter emphasize the political system's capacity to absorb conflict. Issues such as joining the EU divide and reinforce the reciprocal stereotypes, notably between the German- and French-speaking Swiss. It is also true, however, that problems considered to be fundamental are never resolved in the blink of an eye. The public arena, which is essentially deliberative, is supposed to lead step-by-step to a minimal consensus through debate and at times virulent discussion. Doubtless no other political system demands as much time to resolve certain problems. For this reason, the political system should be analyzed on a long-term basis and not in terms of "media coups."

Our own point of view with regard to the future of Switzerland is neither blissfully optimistic nor catastrophic. It is not institutional reforms (i.e., new proposals to reform the federal Constitution that some see as a

miracle solutions), but rather a better and more voluntary utilization of all the political–cultural possibilities afforded by the political system and Switzerland's multiculturalism that could provide a partial response to the great challenges of our time. Let us take the example of the relationship between the different linguistic communities. In the past, Switzerland could function perfectly well with juxtaposed linguistic communities, without extensive communication or intense and durable links between them. Today, a more developed communication seems necessary. The authorities obviously also think so given that the third point of the new constitutional amendment on languages (ART. 116) makes specific provision for it ("The Confederation and the cantons encourage comprehension and exchanges between the linguistic communities").

In order to understand and exchange with others it is necessary to communicate, and in order to communicate one must speak the other's language or at least understand it. A common method of communication between elites from the different linguistic communities involves each person speaking in his own language and presumptively understanding that of the others, or at least those of the largest linguistic communities. It would indeed be difficult to expect a large portion of the Swiss to understand Romansch, even passively, all the more since, in addition to the newly created "inter-Romanist" (*Rumantsch grisun*), there are five different Romansch dialects among the 40,000 people who speak the language.

One thus begins to grasp some of the major problems facing Switzerland today, problems that can easily be caricaturized given that each aspect always has its subtle differences, variations, and special cases. It should also not be forgotten that the very definition of these problems varies strongly from one linguistic community to another. Let us take the example of the communication between German- and French-speaking Swiss. From the point of view of French speakers, the difficulty in communicating with the German-speaking Swiss is due to the fact that the latter speak a dialect (essentially an oral language) and not standard German (oral and written) as it is written and learned in school. Therefore, say the French speakers, learning German serves no purpose because the German Swiss prefer to speak a dialect and do not like standard German. It is true that the German speakers do not always feel comfortable in standard German because it is not their mother tongue and because of their strong attachment to their dialects. In addition, say the French speakers, even if one wanted to learn the German dialect (Schwyzerdütsch), which of the several existing should they choose?

This is an excuse, because German speakers who know several different dialects can understand each other perfectly by simply making certain tried and true adaptations, such as dropping idiosyncratic expressions and attenuating marked pronunciations.

Actually, the reason for the limited practice of either standard German or the German dialects among French speakers is the negative image that the latter have of the majority language and even of the German Swiss themselves. There are obviously exceptions, but generally Francophone children at school do not like German and have many prejudices toward both the German language and the individuals who speak it. Yet the financial means invested by the educational system in each linguistic community to learn a second national language are enormous. The results are poor because of this negative image and social representation. Learning a language is extremely difficult when one has a negative image of it. This image therefore must be altered by breaking down the stereotypes and becoming interested in the other's mentality, way of life, and subculture (which is truly different) rather than stigmatizing and mocking. While this seems implacable logic, it is not easy to change a way of thinking. Yet despite everything, the situation appears to be evolving slowly, with the truly remarkable dedication and imagination of many second-language teachers.

French speakers are quick to point out that if they say a few words in standard German to the German-speaking Swiss, the latter prefer to respond in French rather than to speak standard German. This is again partly true, but the linguistic majority is changing its policy of adapting to the linguistic minority because numerous German speakers are today more interested in speaking English than French and because they believe more French speakers could make an effort and learn a bit of German dialect. The argument results in a general outcry, because some French speakers feel that learning a German dialect is tantamount to betraying the French language and submitting to the German majority and its language. Furthermore, some Francophones do not even consider Swiss German be a language! In fact, we know today that learning another language is an excellent way of opening up to others that causes no harm to the mother tongue. In the present case, French speakers would be better placed to defend their language, identity, and specificity if from time to time they spoke in German, even in a dialect, in the presence of German speakers. Let us clarify this idea, given the sensitivity of the subject. Such an effort on the part of French speakers would in no way represent a unilateral adaptation, but would simply be

a symbolic act with considerable import and significance. In speaking a few words in German, even in a German dialect, the French speakers would show that they have respect for the identity, language, and mentality of German speakers, rather than rejection or even contempt. Swiss Germans are very appreciative to this type of more open behavior. Just a few words could change the nature of intercommunity relations, something we have frequently verified empirically in the course of our research. But proposing such measures, symbolic as they are, is unacceptable to some Francophones, the most intransigent of whom wrongly see in them the danger of Germanizing Switzerland. For having proposed such symbolic measures at the national level, measures that are in fact regularly implemented along linguistic borderlines where German and French speakers live together, we were called "collaborators" by a former member of a canton government, a canton that is bilingual and located on the border with Fribourg. "The linguistic battle has its complacent collaborators and its heroic resistants," wrote the newspaper *La Liberté*, on September 5, 1992.

This example underscores the emotions the subject raises, despite the logic of our proposal. Bilingual schools are another surprising phenomenon in a multilingual country. Aware of the difficulties of learning languages in a purely educational and traditional manner, several countries have turned increasingly to bilingual schools. Instead of learning another language only during language classes, certain subjects (mathematics, gym, geography, history, etc.) are taught in the foreign language so it can be learned through practice and use. Without discussing the details and the variations of this pedagogical approach, this method is obviously an effective, even an attractive one. Switzerland is in a good position to take better advantage of the remarkable advances in bilingual education, even more so since each linguistic community includes members of other linguistic communities who can facilitate the implementation of such bilingual and even multilingual methods by serving as intermediaries. Paradoxically, Switzerland is behind in the area of bilingual education, even in relation to traditionally monolingual countries. It hardly profits from the considerable advantages of its multilingualism. Innovative dynamism fails to override the traditional educational sluggishness or the ancient intercommunity fears and prejudices. The ability of individuals to move for professional reasons, to live in another area or region, even to move to a new linguistic community is today extolled by everyone, but people are not trained to put it into practice. Will the Swiss authorities and the parents of a multilingual Switzerland see their children criticize them for having prevented them from learning other

languages efficiently and without prejudices? Switzerland does have some bilingual schools but they are frequently private and expensive. Will only a small, privileged minority be truly multilingual? In fact, it is a matter of expanding bilingual education in the *public* schools in order to facilitate exchanges, professional mobility, and intercultural communication in general. Learning languages should not be disheartening, it should be passionate. This is possible without much additional expense given the existing resources, and would in fact avoid uselessly spending considerable sums of money as is now the case. It is no longer sufficient to assuage one's conscience by advocating language learning in theory. Today efficiency must be aimed for, an efficiency that would simultaneously contribute to a more intense social life, contemporary intercultural communication, and a much advocated openness of mind.

And what about English? This is another problem that is the subject of countless and unending discussions in Switzerland. Let us continue with the example of the relationship between German- and French-speaking Swiss. There is increasing demand to learn English as a second language instead of a second national language (in the place of German for French speakers and French for German speakers). The given argument is that English is more useful, its use more widespread, and easier to learn. It is also argued that the Swiss could communicate between linguistic communities in English instead of learning the national languages. The problem is clearly political and so is our choice. We say "yes" to English, but only after learning a second national language. This should be even more the case since it is known that learning one foreign language facilitates the acquisition of other foreign languages. The problem is clearly political because it involves nothing less than the survival of a multicultural and multilingual Switzerland. The hypothesis of English as a second language taught in school would mean that the logic of separation would risk winning over the logic of unity within diversity that took so long and cost so much to acquire. A new factor of unity between different linguistic and cultural communities cannot be invented overnight, and it has taken decades, even centuries, to develop original methods of cohabitation and communication between cultures.[3]

The intercultural Swiss model is a voluntary one. It is not a self-evident model and is not self-perpetuating. It presupposes a collective political will and must be constantly activated, practiced, restructured, and developed by willing, active, and determined citizens. Today, a separate cohabitation is no longer enough. It is necessary to take an interest in the Other, in Others, an interest that goes against the forces of prejudice, negative stereotypes, and caricatured stigmatizations.

Even if it is neither perfect nor exportable, it seems to us that the Swiss model deserves to survive, especially in an era when a diametrically opposed logic, that of exclusion of the Other and of ethnic purification, is spreading so quickly that it will end up seeming inescapable. In order to illustrate in more detail the "intercultural culture" and the intercommunity skills developed in Switzerland, we are going to refer briefly to one or another of the numerous concrete instances of intercultural contacts we have observed during many years of field work in the context of our interdisciplinary and multicultural research group.

Let us illustrate in a different way what is to us a fundamental fact, that the cultural diversification of our societies is equally linked to major political changes and to a modification of the criteria of our political behavior and our collective sensibilities. Certain once-secondary criteria have come to the forefront while others that were determinant not long ago have now become secondary. Among the former, one can cite precisely the attachment to language, cultural, and ethnic identity, and to what is local, regional, or territorial. These criteria are even more evident in a social group looking to define itself as a linguistic, ethnic, or regional minority and to be perceived as such by the other social and political actors in the society. The insistence on these new criteria has relegated to a secondary position other more traditional factors such as class conflicts and ideological oppositions of the left and right. In the bilingual canton of Fribourg (on the linguistic border between French and German, where two-thirds of the population is French speaking and one-third is German speaking), Article 21 of the canton's Constitution gave French a certain preeminence (the French version had legal power). For many years, this caused no problems. But, beginning in the 1960s, the preeminence of French was suddenly considered offensive and humiliating by the German-speaking minorities. In the canton of Fribourg German speakers, although a majority at the national level, are in the minority. The change of attitude on the part of German speakers who began to define themselves as a *minority* should be seen in the light of the change in the criteria of social and political behavior previously mentioned. More generally speaking, one can distinguish three historic phases in the relationship between the two linguistic communities in the canton of Fribourg.

1. The first phase lasted until the years 1950–1960 and was characterized by the voluntary adaptation of German speakers to the language

of the French-speaking majority. French was the reference, a more prestigious language to which one adapted, to the extent that German speakers were ashamed of their native German dialect.

2. A total upheaval began in the 1960s: The German-speaking minorities entered a phase of widespread and systematic identity assertion and demands, much like other national, linguistic, and ethnic minorities in other areas of the country and the world. This development was clearly a general political and social phenomenon and not a purely local one. That is what we social scientists say. The actors directly concerned, on the contrary, experienced these realities in a very different manner. As a result, the French-speaking majority, abruptly challenged by a minority that until then had been so conciliatory and so prepared to adapt, did not immediately assign a political significance to the phenomenon. They proceeded instead to psychoanalyzing it, attributing the demands from German speakers to their "character traits" ("always dissatisfied and always demanding something," etc.). The German language and culture were not really recognized as such and a veritable "Francization" was implemented. Even future language teachers who were going to teach German in the German communities and districts of the Fribourg canton had to study in French. This psychological interpretation, offensive to German speakers who had switched from an attitude of adaptation to one of assertion, had the effect of straining relations between the two communities. It took the majority time to understand that behind the demands, which were at first very specific, partial and sectarian (changing the names of streets and places and instituting general bilingualism), there was emerging a veritable social and political movement with a linguistic and cultural base.

In addition, even if German speakers were a majority on the national level, it became untenable for French speakers to deny them at the cantonal level the same rights that the Francophones themselves demanded as a minority on the national scale.

3. Now that the German-speaking community has won the struggle against many forms of discrimination after decades of protest, insistence, and perseverance, today a third phase of intercommunity relations has begun. The outcome, uncertain at the moment, will largely depend on the disposition and will of the various social actors. Either each linguistic community will increasingly go its own way, on the road

to a "soft separation," or the Fribourg canton will take advantage of its privileged position as a bilingual canton to capitalize on the presence of two languages and two cultures and thereby increase communication between them. This too will not happen by itself, but will only occur through a conscious political project. Now that each community has its own *identity*, they are in principle in a good position to *communicate* with each other, even more so given the fact that they have a shared *political culture*.

The canton of Fribourg, as well as that of Valais, equally bilingual and with similar linguistic proportions (one-third German speaking and two-thirds Francophone), have the good fortune to have a long cultural tradition of multicultural and intercommunity skills thanks to the copresence of the two principal national languages and cultures. The two cantons, located at the internal linguistic border, count a certain number of communes made up of various proportions of one or the other linguistic communities. The two cantons constitute a veritable laboratory of multiculturalism, illustrating in reality and by concrete action what intercommunity life can become when two linguistic and cultural communities are present in highly variable proportions, situations, and contexts. Intercultural experimentation takes place before our eyes, in the absence of any scientist to conduct the tests, and this has been going on for numerous decades, even centuries.

The pragmatic attitude in the management of intercommunity relations is also explained by factors such as cantonal and communal autonomy, which affords the possibility of finding varied intercultural relationships even among nearby or neighboring communities that have a similar intercommunity makeup. This is because each commune can define its linguistic and educational policy in a relatively autonomous manner. This intercommunity know-how has developed along the language border but is nevertheless seldom studied and recognized, even by the Swiss. Here again we find a difference between the political and journalistic definition of the language question (frequently dramatized, sensationalized, and presented as if Switzerland was about to be blown to pieces) and the picture of it that detailed social science research can offer.

Let us briefly examine the daily functioning of this intercommunity know-how that has developed on the border between the French and German languages in the cantons of Valais and Fribourg and that could serve as a reference, or at least a source of inspiration, for all of Switzerland and even for other multicultural countries.

On the whole, one is struck by the climate of goodwill that reigns in these communities. Problems exist, differences and tensions emerge periodically, but the will to seek the least inequitable solution is always there. The historical dimension plays a capital role because the need to search for and find solutions has been present for decades, even centuries. Goodwill, flexibility, and pragmatism prevail, attitudes that run counter to the rigid attachment to principles whose strict application frequently becomes a source of conflict. When historical experience becomes the reference, a solution is near, while the unconditional defense of ideological principles quickly engenders intolerance, immobility, and conflict.

In the multilingual communities of Fribourg canton, for example, the problematic areas are always the same: education, the administration and political institutions. The degree to which a commune is more or less completely bilingual is crucial, affecting the possibility for children belonging to the minority community to study in their mother tongue, the degree of bilingualism of the administration, and the place given the minority group in the community's social, cultural, and political life in general. The degree of bilingualism itself depends on the size of the minority, historical practice, the geolinguistic context, and the proximity of the linguistic frontier. Factors other than purely linguistic ones also explain the more or less consensual or conflictive state of the relationship between linguistic communities. These include the extent and speed of economic development and migration flows. Strong economic development and a sudden rise in immigration can cause more problems than slower and more historically rooted changes. The proximity of lines of communication also play a determinant role. A community located near a highway and relatively near to an urban center presents a definite attraction—cheaper land and the possibility to live in the country while working in the city. If a community also offers the possibility of educating its children in either of several languages, its attraction becomes even more powerful. In such a case, defensive reactions can happen suddenly, yet frequently only after a certain delay.

The linguistic balance also depends on the extent to which the newly arrived linguistic communities are open to adapting themselves. Newly arrived German speakers who do not come from Fribourg and who therefore do not posses the intercommunity historical know-how that the "real" Fribourg citizens, German or French speaking, have "in their blood" are frequently turned into scapegoats, the root of all problems.

In three officially French-speaking communities, Courtaman, Courtepin, and Wallenried (the latter nevertheless has a German-speaking

majority, representing 54 percent of the population), bilingualism is considered to function in an exemplary manner, with Courtaman the best example. In this case, the linguistic proportions are also the most balanced (54 percent French and 47 percent German speakers). The town is located halfway between Morat and Fribourg and is surrounded by communities that are both German- and French speaking. The development of the two linguistic communities took place in a slow and balanced manner in the course of recent history. The three communities have another advantage in that they are near to one another and cooperate actively. This allows parents, for example, to educate their children in the language of their choice as a result of the common school district to which they belong. Concerning the Association of the Communities of the Lake District (seven members represent the different regions of the district), its president is totally bilingual, debates are held 80 percent in German while the written accounts of the meetings are in French. Meyriez represents another interesting form of management. This community, officially Francophone even though French speakers represent only 20 percent of the population, wants to remain officially French speaking. The debates in the Municipal Council are held in a German dialect, while the written accounts are in French. The population is strongly attached to the French language, considered an element of the village's identity, the village being located next to the German-speaking town of Morax. The Protestant parish of Meyriez, whose population is 70 percent Protestant, is another original example of this linguistic cohabitation. Even if three-fourths of the ecclesiastical community speaks German, the parish is Francophone. Two services are celebrated in German and one in French each month. The ceremony on Holy Days is always bilingual. The pastor begins his sermon in French and finishes it in German without translating since the majority of the parishioners understand both languages. Each community sings in its own language to a common melody, and the parishioners pray at the same time, but each one in his or her language. Mixed marriages (from both the linguistic and religious point of view) are common. In such cases the pastor carefully prepares his text so that both languages are given the same importance. An anecdote reveals the image of such a bilingual service according to some. One German-speaking Swiss woman thought that the pastor gave preference to French, while a French-speaking woman remarked, "It was a German ceremony."

Regarding these bilingual subtleties, a remark heard in Courgevaux underlines the necessity of adding a bilingual category to the French/German dichotomy. An invitation written in both languages

attracts both German- and French-speaking bilinguals but rarely those that speak only French, many of whom feel that bilingualism favors German speakers, a sentiment that corresponds to reality because Francophones generally manifest less assiduity in learning German.

Many are those who say that the cantonal authorities should support the communes that include two linguistic communities so these can become even more bilingual. Many are also those who point out that bilingualism tempers prejudices and xenophobia. German-speaking immigrants in communities that have a French-speaking majority and that attended French schools frequently play the role of intermediary between the two communities. It is interesting to notice the behavioral subtleties of members of one community that have close links with people from the other. In these situations, the German speakers are more sensitive to the minorities while the Francophone minority understands better the attachment of the German-speaking community to its dialects. In such cases Francophones are not opposed to learning Schwyzerdutsch in school. Such a situation is not scandalous to them, and they emphasize the necessity of learning the dialect in order to understand the Swiss German mentality and feel what a German speaker must feel if he had to speak Hochdeutsch (standard German) in every situation of daily life. For them, asking Swiss Germans to speak Hochdeutsch systematically is unrealistic, and they know that Swiss Germans cannot be asked to renounce a dialect that is in fact their mother tongue. Some Francophones go as far as underlining that the German dialect is an integral part of the Swiss cultural heritage. The French speakers who are bilingual have a better sense of the difficulty that the German dialect represents for the monolingual Francophone. This leads to another method of intercommunity communication, the French speakers who do not speak the German dialect at least try to understand it, with each person speaking in his or her own language. At Morat, seat of the bilingual district of the same name where about 15 percent of the population speaks French, the difficulties are quickly blamed on "people from the outside," in this case the German-speaking immigrants from the Bern canton. Their influence is feared by both German and French speakers. The influence of these immigrants is actually greater than is shown by the official figures because the owners of country homes near Morat Lake are not included in the census. As in the Haut-Valais, one finds Swiss Germans who say they do not like other German speakers. Animosities also exist between the two traditional linguistic communities. In Morat, the French-speaking minority had to fight to obtain a complete French-language curriculum. Until the 1960s French-speaking

students had to attend secondary school in German. French speakers feel and say they are unwelcome in certain clubs and associations. While German speakers describe themselves as very satisfied, many French speakers say they feel the "power struggle" and must adapt. While German speakers feel "we have already done enough for the French-speakers," certain Francophones believe the financial reasons evoked to oppose their demands are really just an excuse.

Despite certain inevitable differences, everyone has the sense of a frontier culture, but they have difficulty defining it. The culture developed as a result of inevitable everyday intercommunity interactions, interactions that wind up creating a particular mentality that makes people feel "between the two" cultures. What in other places becomes opposition and exclusion here becomes an enriching complementarity. This frontier culture is not something that can be taken for granted. It must be produced and reproduced everyday. It supposes daily and reciprocal efforts, even if it is deeply rooted and forms part of the historical tradition.

The canton of Fribourg seems to be at a turning point today. The linguistic issue has taken on added importance and the increasing tensions could rise to the surface from one moment to the next. Without questioning for a single moment either its linguistic borders or its cultural identities, it would be wise to recall that although the Swiss linguistic balance constitutes a solid foundation of Switzerland, it also constitutes its weaknesses. The linguistic balance was acquired through pragmatism, through a constant effort at comprehension, tolerance, and flexibility and not through intransigence, mistrust, and suspicion. Switzerland can still avoid reaching the situation that exists in Belgium: polarization on the language issue, a rationale of systematic separation, and a growing and reciprocal rejection of the other.

The cantons of Valais and Fribourg have the tremendous advantage of experiencing the problems of intercommunity relations on a daily basis and offering a varied and vast range of concrete situations that have led to the search for and the resolution of even the most difficult and inextricable problems. Switzerland as a whole would do well to better understand some of these concrete cases in a thorough and detailed manner, given that only the most acute of the problems that confront the two cantons are publicized and given media coverage. Certainly there are conflicts and difficulties, but they represent an infinite part of the entire spectrum of economic, social, cultural, political, and linguistic realities. These realities are extremely rich, surprising, and stimulating

and go hand in hand with the historic as well as the daily cohabitation of the two linguistic communities.

We can recall here the difference in results, depending on whether they are based on written sources such as the daily press or on the thorough studies carried out through active observation. The former focus on problems and difficulties (the press is even accused of creating them), while those who live in the communities where two languages are practiced are concerned with solving these problems. It is here that the intercommunity know-how is developed and put into practice and that a veritable culture of intercultural practice is developed on a daily basis.

Among the concrete measures to be taken in order to favor the development of bilingualism and biculturalism, many underline the need to take steps with regard to early education. The advocates of this method understand the weight that stereotypical representations and prejudices toward the other community and the other language can have among children. Since the authorities' habitual exhortations in favor of bilingualism are rarely followed by concrete acts, perhaps it would be better to set more modest objectives and try, for example, to deal with the obstacles that prevent putting into practice the ritual appeals in favor of bilingualism. One of the major obstacles is without doubt the stereotypical images and representations of the other community and the other language. If the Other is no longer to be an ideal scapegoat, intercommunity cohabitation could become an exceptional chance for cultural and linguistic openness and enrichment. The concrete and symbolic actions and gestures toward the other community that we have studied can contribute much toward such a change.

In closing, we hope that the long and patient research carried out on Switzerland's intercultural mosaic, certain aspects of which we have presented, shows that the virulent debates surrounding "multiculturalism" cannot be resolved by theoretical coups d'etat and that the problems are not purely linguistic or cultural. Instead, they simultaneously concern questions of identity, communication, and politics. The wide variety of interactions observed between identity, intercultural communication, and political culture should help to show that sweeping generalizations must be avoided. The study of numerous, varied concrete cases of the culture of the intercultural and intercommunity know-how illustrate to what point the phenomena of intercultural communication are profoundly political, because they elicit new and fundamental criteria to describe current social and political behavior.

## Notes

1. A first version of this article appeared in Uli Windisch, *La Suisse, clichés, délire, réalité*. Ed. l'Age d'Homme, Lausanne, 1998.
2. Until March 10, 1996, Article 116 had only two paragraphs regarding linguistic policy:
    1. German, French, Italian, and Romansh are Switzerland's national languages.
    2. German, French, and Italian are declared to be the national languages of the Confederation.
3. Additional details and concrete examples of the daily functioning of this culture of the intercultural and of intercommunity know-how may be found in the numerous studies and detailed cases on Swiss multiculturalism analyzed in the field by our interdisciplinary research group. See U. Windisch et al., *Les relations quotidiennes entre Romands et Suisses allemands*, 2 vol., (Payot-Lausanne, 1992.) This work includes a bibliography of about a dozen pages on the Swiss political–cultural "model" that is impossible to reprint with this article. The reader more particularly interested in the Swiss case may find it a useful reference.

PART THREE

# Nation-Making and Linguistic Revivals

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CHAPTER 7

# Hebrew, the Language of National Daily Life

*Alain Dieckhoff*

The year 1989 was rich in commemorations. France launched an ostentatious bicentennial celebration of the Revolution that had replaced a political-social order founded on a rigid hierarchical tripartition with a more flexible one based on the individual. The same year in Israel (5750 in the Hebrew calendar) witnessed the centennial celebration of a more discrete but major revolution; one that, with the renaissance of Hebrew, had provided the worldwide multilingual Jewish Diaspora with relative, although growing linguistic unity, but above all with symbolic coherence.

The coincidence in events is not simply one of chance. Both bear a certain relationship to each other in light of their history. The French Revolution, which marked with its individualist configuration the triumph of the ideology of modernity,[1] had reduced Judaism to a simple individual feature. By obliterating the collective dimension of Judaism, it sought to integrate the Jewish population as citizens on the basis of their generic humanity. Carried out under the auspices of the State, this integration required the destruction of traditional Judaism, one aspect of the entire society's dissolution after the Old Régime.

This also required linguistic assimilation, thus the abandonment of Judeo-languages (Judeo-German, Judeo-Spanish, Judeo-Provencal) in favor of French. The same held for other peripheral groups and their languages (e.g., Breton or Langue d'Oc). In reaction to assimilation through language, modern Jewish nationalists (either Diasporists or

Zionists), seeking to rediscover a lost collective aura, couldn't help but insist on the exclusive or privileged use of Jewish languages (Yiddish in the Diaspora, and Hebrew in Palestine). Linguistic unification, achieved by the Jewish community in France under the auspices of the central State, became the goal of Zionists as of the 1880s within the framework of an autonomous Jewish society in Palestine. In this sense, Zionism (which otherwise treated the historical experience of emancipation as negative),[2] remained nevertheless attached to the national model of integration that came from the French Revolution. This model, requiring linguistic uniformization, was considered unacceptable when applied to the detriment of the Jewish community in post-revolutionnary France, but perfectly valid when it allowed the Jewish community to construct a collective substratum of its own. Though the historical relationship between 1789 and 1889 presents both differences and similarities, the fall of the Bastille and the revival of Hebrew represent above all two events that illustrate diverging modalities in the transformation of Jewish identity.

The renaissance of Hebrew resulted from a cultural initiative long before Zionism adopted this idea at the end of the nineteenth century, transforming it into a highly political issue. Indeed, language was to simultaneously allow for the group's self-identification and its difference from others. The underlying paradox consists in the fact that Hebrew was to become the emblem of renewed Jewish nationalism (in the Zionist version), while spokespersons of Hebrew literary revival, and advocates of the Jewish enlightenment (*Haskala*), emerging in Germany in the 1780s through the initiative of Moses Mendelssohn, only considered it as a necessary step toward the assimilation of Jews to the European society.

## The Paradox of Hebrew Rebirth

By the end of the eighteenth century, Hebrew had been reduced to a religious language,[3] the sacred language (*lashon ha-kodesh*) devoted to liturgical needs and religious writings. It was read in synagogues and religious institutions as well as written, for example, in the numerous religious treatises such as *responsa* (responses to questions of law written by Rabbis). Yet, it had no longer been spoken on a regular basis since the Third Century CE. The *Haskala* was to play a decisive role in the transformation of biblical Hebrew into a literary language. With Mendelssohn and his disciples, Hebrew was first used to handle secular themes in a variety of disciplines: science, philosophy, and literature.

This secularization of Hebrew resulted in the blossoming of poetry, often the epic genre, followed by newer genres such as plays and novels. As such, German *Haskala* served as a determining contribution to the further development of Jewish nationalism since it provided the Jews with the beginnings of a national language, one that could fulfill the group's nonreligious communication needs. However, the initial impact of *Haskala* was almost involuntary, its ultimate objective being to facilitate Jewish integration into Germany. To accelerate Germanization, Mendelssohn published a German translation of the *Pentateuch*, printed in Hebrew characters.

The *Maskilim* (adepts of the Enlightenment) in fact relied on a demonstrative logic. As a language of the Bible, Hebrew was viewed with great prestige by the Christian world, both the Renaissance and the Reformation encouraging non-Jewish scholars to learn Hebrew.[4] By reappropriating Hebrew that so many (Jean Bodin, Condillac) considered as the matrix of all languages, the *Maskilim* were part of a glorious genealogy, and as such demonstrated that Jews, generally despised, humiliated, and ostracized, fully deserved to integrate into modern European society. For German *Haskala*, Hebrew thus constituted a temporary medium to transmit the teachings of the European culture to Jews. Once this mediating function was accomplished, Hebrew was then meant to take a final bow. Indeed, Hebrew was to quickly come face-to-face with this announced demise, as German replaced it at the start of the nineteenth century. Paradoxically, the rebirth of the language was thus but a prelude to its disappearance. However, in considering Hebrew as the "national treasure of Jews, the most precious relic of the past," the *Maskilim* attributed an aura of nobility to it that bore witness to the collective dimension of Judaism. Hence a new paradox: whereas the message transmitted by *Haskala* literature with its rationalism and defense of the critical mind clearly encouraged the Enlightenment's individualist dimension, relying on the Hebrew linguistic code stopped this individualization process in its tracks by recreating an ideal cultural unity and social depth—albeit relative—for a Jewish community that, with emancipation, was undergoing accelerated socio-territorial fragmentation. Even if the use of Hebrew was meant to spread the idea of man's autonomy, it reshaped the cultural community and thus upheld a certain form of sociability. This refoundation of collective identity through the Hebrew language was of particular importance in Eastern Europe where the largest majority of Jews lived. In migrating to the East, the *Haskala* took on another dimension, encountering specific historical conditions that differed from those in the West.

In Eastern Europe, a largely autonomous, global Jewish society existed within a traditional sociopolitical order, hostile toward the Jews. When the *Haskala* took root in Galicia and Russia, it set out to transform the life of the Jews (modernization of education, spreading the Enlightenment's grandest ideals) without rejecting the particular form of Jewish sociability.

The rejection of a "fossilized" Jewish world, and acute criticism of communitarian oligarchy and religious obscurantism did not lead to a call for the dissolution of the Jewish collectivity, but rather for its regeneration and reconstruction on new ground. Consequently, in Eastern Europe Hebrew was not transformed into a banal transitory instrument meant to facilitate access to the European culture, but rather served as the expression of an original, powerful Jewish national culture. Hence, the prodigious flourishing of Hebrew literature and a significant development of the press. With the anti-Semitic outbursts in Russia in the 1880s, definitively ruining any hopes for an *aggiornamento* within the Russian empire, many advocates of this modern Hebrew culture converted to Jewish Zionist nationalism. The sociopolitical renaissance of Jews in Palestine thus became strongly linked to the preservation and enrichment of Hebrew culture.

Upon his arrival in Jaffa in 1881, the "father of modern Hebrew," Eliezer Ben Yehuda, was ready to act upon the importance of this necessary link. According to Ben Yehuda, belonging to a nation did not simply mean adhering to a political contract, it also implied participating in and promoting a people's cultural identity whose nucleus was their language. This conception of the nation, a romantic notion inherited from Herder, considered that the highest expression of national unity was the existence of a language community.

However, belonging to a particular culture also required a political bond. While Zionism implied cultural normalization, it also needed political normalization within the framework of a nation-state. While language—according to the image summoned forth by Ben Yehuda—was the "people's armour," it also had to be included within a political framework. "Language attributes its own particular form to all entities, it creates them with their own characteristics and specificities. Once a collectivity living on a particular territory speaks a specific language, this collectivity constitutes a people of its own, and the land on which they have established themselves becomes the nation-state of this people."[5] Because language is the natural foundation of a people, the disappearance of Hebrew as *Umgangssprache* had brought forth the dissolution of the national link. Only the *simultaneous* return to Hebrew

and the land could gather the dispersed masses into a people deserving of this name.

This position, joining together the defense of Hebrew and the building of a political center, was largely dominant in the Zionist movement. Literary figures (Uri Greenberg, Nathan Alterman, and of course Haïm Nahman Bialik, the "national poet") devoted their writings to the praise of the Jewish nation and its renaissance, while political figures (Ben Gourion, Weizmann, Jabotinsky) worked tirelessly toward the creation of a nation-state, ardently defending the budding Hebrew culture.[6] Once the language of Jewish independence, Hebrew was to become also the language of future independence.

## Hebrew: A Political Choice

For Zionists, Hebrew was a natural choice since, for them, it embodied authenticity.[7] Indeed, Hebrew established a significant link between Jews of the past (biblical times) and Zionist Jews. Wasn't the fact that Ben Gourion spoke apparently the same language as Moses[8] the best proof of legitimacy for Zionism? As it attributed a sort of timeless depth to the Jewish people, language appeared as the ideal vehicle to shape the nation and develop political and social ties that would create this "imaginary community" based on shared feelings of belonging.[9]

In addition, the shaping of the nation through Hebrew served to transfer the realm of sociability from the religious to the national community. Even though modern Hebrew was soon to be used in everyday activity, it nevertheless conserved—because of its origin and link with liturgical Hebrew—a sacred status that eventually trickled down to all members of the community. Hebrew, the sacred language of the religious congregation, became that of the national collectivity. It had served God, and was now to serve the nation.

Likewise, the adoption of Hebrew allowed the orientalization of the Jew, an ambition shared among intellectuals of German culture[10] who also used specific semiotics and particular food and clothing habits (Arab cuisine and the wearing of the Bedouin keffieh). Though the Jewish immigrant from Russia spoke Hebrew—or at least tried—with an ineradicable accent, he was designated as the oldest son of Palestine. He, not his Arab counterpart symbolized the genuine native dweller.

The adoption of Hebrew was also indispensable to establish a clear distinction from Yiddish, the language of exile. Though emanating from the immense Yiddish speaking community of Eastern Europe, Zionist leaders did not hesitate to reject Yiddish, that "bastard" language based

on German yet written in Hebrew characters. According to these leaders, Yiddish accurately represented exile; the perfect reflection of a Jewish world that had conserved a form of Jewish expression but whose content was undeniably "foreign." Rejecting Yiddish meant rejecting the experience of the Jewish Diaspora.

Nonetheless, the adoption of Hebrew encountered difficulties. Indeed, competition with Yiddish was intense up to 1939, even in Palestine, where numerous Yiddish speakers had their own press, literature, and schools (particularly ultraorthodox religious institutions), and benefited from Eastern European Yiddish cultural influence. However, the latter was uprooted: first by Stalin, then by Hitler. Hebrew also had to impose itself over German that had, as a language of culture, dominated the Jewish world, in the nineteenth century. It is important to recall that Herzl himself considered that the use of Hebrew for the future Jewish nation-state was not only impracticable but also detrimental,[11] and pronounced himself in favor of linguistic pluralism along the Swiss model. For him, there was no doubt that German would become the language of the Jewish Bildung in Palestine. The "war of languages" that erupted in 1913/1914 relative to the choice of language in teaching in the Tekhnion (Haïfa), a technological institute, and ending with the defeat of German-language advocates, imposed Hebrew as the language best adapted to modernity (technical in this case).

With this in mind, language thus appears in all of its original ambivalence: it must simultaneously reinforce the link with the past yet prove that it is appropriate to be used in the present. Relying on Hebrew gave a Jewish significance, proof of authenticity and perenniality, to ideas and behaviour which were, conceptually, part of European culture. Thus what occurred in the realm of language reflected what Zionism achieved politically by elaborating a Jewish version of the principle of national self-determination born in Western Europe. The ideological function of language is symptomatic of the way nationalism functions: supposedly undertaken in the name of embellished original affinities (blood ties, religion, customs, worldview, language), it constitutes in reality a means to modernity. Lacking direct access to the latter, as individuals/citizens (e.g. in the Russian Empire), the Jews were thus to be collectively modernized by the means of a Western-type nation-state possessing a Jewish flag.

Nonetheless, the authenticity of the national project that the resort to Hebrew stressed was a strange one. If Hebrew was the "true Jewish language," how was one to explain that at the beginning of the 1880s, "no one could claim that Hebrew was his mother tongue and no one

could speak it spontaneously?"[12] This was a difficult contradiction that had to be overcome.

Though the esthetic Haskala project had succeeded in giving birth to Hebrew literature, it had never envisioned transforming Hebrew into a modern living language, that is to say a spoken language. But, the spoken form is the natural condition of language. Language is shaped by the spoken word that in turn creates social exchange: though some societies exist without the written word, there has never been a society without the spoken word. In reviving the language in its ancient, rigid, and scriptural form, the *Maskilim* undertook this linguistic inversion, denounced by Ferdinand de Saussure as "forgetting that one learns to speak before learning to write." The written word thus becomes an absolute in lieu of recognizing that, in fact, it "masks the vision of the language" and is "not a piece of clothing but rather a costume,"[13] one that prevents the consolidation of a speaking group, of a society of "men of words." Language set in words is required for the establishment of a political link. Transforming Hebrew into a spoken language meant resolving a double deficit: the language's poverty and the absence of a permanent community of speakers. This task was to be undertaken by Eliezer Ben Yehuda.

### *Hebrew, the Matrix of a Nation*

Ben Yehuda was not the first to envision the possibility of transforming Hebrew into a language of communication. Thirty years earlier, the Serbian rabbi, Yehuda Alkalaï, associated the return to Zion with the renaissance of a spoken language. Ben Yehuda was also not the first to apply the teaching of Hebrew by the direct or natural method (wherein courses were given exclusively in Hebrew from the start) since Nissim Behar (1848–1931), representative of the Alliance Israelite Universelle in Jerusalem, used it in his school. Other teachers such as David Yellin, Yosef Meyuhas, Yehuda Grozovsky, Yitzhak Epstein further developed it.[14] Likewise, Ben Yehuda was not the first to attribute and combine different linguistic Hebrew strata (biblical, talmudic, medieval) and to propose the creation of neologisms in order to make Hebrew a modern language. Indeed, several maskilim (Isaac Satanow, Shlomo Pappenheim) had already defended this sort of synthesis. However, Ben Yehuda "alone gave birth to language as the common link to Judaism and the national language of the future state of Israel."[15] He alone gave to the rebirth of Hebrew a systematic and planned character. He alone stuck with

obstinacy to his linguistic activism, for example, requiring his wife to converse only in Hebrew and to educate their son, Itamar Ben Avi (1887–1943) exclusively within the confines of the family so that he might grow up in an entirely Hebrew atmosphere.[16] Ben Yehuda wanted to make of Hebrew a language that was not just confined to "books and reserved only for topics of wisdom or of a sacred nature" but one that was also spoken by "both important and less important people, women and children, young men and women, in the realm of all subjects of daily life, at any hour of day or night, all as all nations do, each in their own language."[17] Ben Yehuda thus faced the need for an unprecedented linguistic manipulation since a spoken language had to be created out of a written language (the reverse phenomenon existed in Eastern European countries where spoken languages had to be turned into written one). Before Ben Yehuda's arrival, no one in Jerusalem spoke Hebrew exclusively, Hebrew was only used in the absence of other languages, in exceptional cases, and then again only partially, as a sort of lingua franca between Jews from communities. Hence, Ben Yehuda had to develop a language that everyone could use and communicate in.

For references to daily life, the classical Hebrew (essentially biblical) that *Haskala* writers had resuscitated was insufficient and fossilized. With a vocabulary limited to 8,000 words that had not been enriched for 2,000 years, this "museum-style" Hebrew could not adequately evoke modern life. During the 1880s, a writer from the "Odessa school," Shalom Abramovitch (better known under the pseudonym of Mendele Mokher Sefarim, or Mendele the book merchant) renewed Hebrew by referring to talmudic Hebrew that had been used for codifying the oral law (*Mishna*), but that the *Maskilim* had rejected as the "language of servitude and exile." By turning to Rabbinical literature, Mendele considerably enriched the stock of words. He also attributed a larger degree of flexibility to the Hebrew phrase by basing its rhythm on that of the spoken language of Eastern Jews, Yiddish. Though denounced as a corrupt language, Yiddish was used to render the Hebrew syntax more natural (another irony of history). Mendele thus invented "total Hebrew," a synthetic language mixing biblical and Talmudic elements, to then be adopted and elaborated on by Jewish writers in Palestine from 1914 on (Yosef Haïm Brenner, Uri Gnessin). From the 1880s, Hebrew underwent a number of positive developments toward becoming a written language, but would not have progressed if Ben Yehuda had not taken on the enormous task of codification, planification, and invention.

Like other "language builders"[18]—Vuk Karadzic for Serbian or Josef Jungmann for Czech—Ben Yehuda set up a Hebrew dictionary. This monumental work (the first volume was published in 1909, 4 other volumes during his life, the other 12 after his death) is indeed a thesaurus, a genuine lexicographical treasure that regroups classical words and neologisms, and underlines the infinite wealth of Hebrew, allowing for the expression of both the antique and new. As Hebrew lacked a considerable amount of active vocabulary, Ben Yehuda created neologisms to express, for example, words like restaurant, journal, umbrella, and train. This creative and reassembling endeavor was overseen by a public institution, the Council of the Hebrew Language (1890) that was considered as the supreme authority both in preserving and modernizing the language. From a lexical standpoint, supervising the language required steadfast intervention and even leadership. The same ideological perspective that infused the entire Zionist project guided linguistic manipulations: affirming the indomitable specificity of the Jewish nation. As Michel Masson has well demonstrated, the creation of morphemes in modern Hebrew must be understood as a political project. The first and foremost task was to reactivate elements already found in classical Hebrew. In their absence, the builders turned to derivations (creation of neologisms based on classical models) or borrowings (use of foreign formulations found in several European languages). As much as possible, "indigenous" contributions were privileged and foreign words were submitted to intensified Hebrew-ization so that, at least from a formal standpoint, these words would resemble classical Hebrew.[19] Hence, an undeniable effort toward purism presided over the shaping of the modern Hebrew lexical so as to establish continuity in meaning with the biblical past as well as to underline the perseverance of a collective Jewish identity.

However, in order for a language to live, it does not suffice to simply accumulate words. One must also speak them, and this Ben Yehuda had long understood when he imposed the exclusive use of Hebrew on all members of his family. This type of fanatical behavior, typically doomed to failure, was nonetheless saved by the progressive development of a community in Palestine that spoke Hebrew. "Teaching the names of flowers requires establishing Hebrew schools and youth movements, drafting school manuals, setting up publishing houses, distributing books, and creating Jewish villages."[20] Indeed, in order for Hebrew to live again, an entirely new society had to be built. The first circles of Hebrew speakers appeared around World War I, with school playing a

crucial role. To institute Hebrew and provide for its continued existence, teachers joining together in slowly but surely spreading Hebrew as the language of education at all levels, all the way from kindergarten (1898) to the university (creation of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem in 1925), including primary and secondary educational institutions (the first Hebrew high school was created in 1906 in Jaffa).

The spread of Hebrew by educational institutions was indispensable in providing social cohesion, and subsequently political integration of the masses of Jews around the State. Ernest Gellner has convincingly demonstrated how the development of public instruction, launched by a centralized education administration, was tightly linked to the emergence of modern industrial society. However, his hypothesis relies too strongly on economic considerations, with the transformation of each individual into an educated citizen primarily associated with the emergence of a certain form of labor division that needs the structuring of human groups within a national framework.[21] However, in the case of Zionism one cannot claim that the establishment of standard education based on a national will was principally linked to the desire to facilitate social mobility and achieve the required level of communication for a modern society. If that had been the case, it would have been much more efficient to use a "high culture" language ready to be employed (such as German) or a popular language (Yiddish) rather than breathe new life into a rarely used language (Hebrew) whose apprenticeship demanded an extraordinary degree of motivation. Nevertheless, despite difficulties ahead, advocates of Zionism insisted that Hebrew become the language of the Jews of Palestine.

With the education of children taking place in a totally Hebrew-informed environment, the community of speakers knew their future was guaranteed. In a surprising inversion, many parents from the Diaspora learned, in the famous words of the humorist Ephraïm Kishon, "their mother tongue from their children."

Along with educators, journalists and writers also contributed to the spread of the Hebrew language. Hebrew was even attributed a juridical status when it was recognized on par with English and Arabic as an official language of British Palestine. Accepting Hebrew in administrative acts of the Mandatory government resembled what François I had done for the French language in 1539 with the Villers-Cotterêts decree, that is to say imposed a language linked to power. A language designed not only for prayer and religious study but also for commanding and obedience, in short, a political language. A language that the quasi-Jewish state that existed in the period between the two world wars did

everything in its power to reinforce: encouraging the adoption of Hebrew names instead of names emanating from the Diaspora, setting up public notices, billboards, and road signs in Hebrew, and so on. Promoted as the language of communication in Palestine by the energetic action of political and cultural actors, Hebrew soon became a vector serving to institute the nation. Clearly, there was a hiatus between Zionist ideological ambitions that considered Hebrew as the original language and practical reality wherein Hebrew only became the natural language of the national community following efforts of unwavering voluntarism. But this gap is the same one existing within all forms of nationalism, requiring the latter to take root in a symbolic relationship with the past all the while being engaged in a dynamic process of "fabricating authenticity."[22]

## Notes

1. On this point, see Louis Dumont, *Essays on Individualism. Modern Ideology in Anthropological Perspective*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1986.
2. Alain Dieckhoff, "Les logiques de l'émancipation et le sionisme," in Pierre Birnbaum, *Histoire politique des Juifs de France*, Paris: Presses de la FNSP, 1990, pp. 163–181.
3. On the evolution of the Hebrew language see: Mireille Hadas-Lebel, *L'hébreu: trois mille ans d'histoire*, Paris: Albin Michel, 1992.
4. Sophie Kessler-Mesguich, 1990, "Aspects et tendances de l'enseignement de l'hébreu en France du Moyen-Age à la fin du 17 ème siècle," *Pardès* 12, pp. 108–121.
5. E. Ben Yehuda, *Medina Yehudit* (the Jewish State), Warsaw: Medina, 1905, p. 30.
6. Ahad Ha-Am represents a minority trend within Zionism that defined the nation in cultural terms and sought to relativize the political link. On this particular point, see A. Dieckhoff, "L'Etat des Juifs en question: culture et religion face au sionisme," in Actes du 29ème colloque des intellectuels juifs de langue française, *La question de l'Etat*, Paris: Denoël, 1989, pp. 123–138. Though Ahad Ha-Am played a profound role in the evolution of the Hebrew language (he was the "father" of the modern Hebrew essay), his focus on the cultural dimension considerably limited the extent of his political audience within the Zionist movement: expect in the United States, where his idea of a "spiritual center" established in Palestine, spreading the Hebrew culture among the Diaspora, was adopted and adapted in order to legitimize not only the persistence but the reinforcement of the American Jewish community that perceived itself (and still does) as an equal partner, in both law and value, of the Israeli state, and not as a simple peripheral entity destined sooner or later to disappear.

Eyatar Friesel: "Ahad ha-Amism in American Zionist Thought" in Jacques Kornberg: *At the Crossroads: Essays on Ahad ha-Am*, Albany, Suny, 1983, pp. 133–141.

7. Alain Dieckhoff, *The Invention of a Nation. Zionist Thought and the Making of Modern Israel*, London: Hurst, 2003 and Columbia University Press, 2003, pp. 98–127.

   Also see: Denis Charbit, 1999: "La fidélité infidèle. La langue hébraïque et le sionisme," *Les cahiers du judaïsme*, 4, spring, pp. 27–36.
8. Even though Israeli Hebrew used the linguistic foundation of classical Hebrew, this nevertheless resulted in a new language that, at least in part, was based on central European languages. On the specificity of modern Hebrew, Haïm Rosen, in a highly remarked article, has affirmed quite unabashedly: "Israeli Hebrew is a Western language without ever having ceased to be a Semitic language." ("La politique linguistique, l'enseignement de la langue et la linguistique en Israël" in *Ariel*, 21, 1970, pp. 93–115.)
9. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Londres: Verso, 1983.
10. Because they were considered by anti-Semites as "Asians" and by their Western religious brethren as semi-Asian, many Eastern European Jews chose, in line with renewed interest in Eastern mysticism, to affirm their Oriental identity. Paul Mendes-Flohr, 1987: "L'orientalisme fin-de-siècle, les Ostjuden et l'esthétique de l'affirmation juive de soi," in *Pardès*, 5, pp. 49–74.
11. In *The Jewish State*, "It is unimaginable that we speak Hebrew amongst ourselves. Who among us speaks enough Hebrew to buy a train ticket in this language?" More than the practical impossibility of transforming Hebrew into a spoken language, Herzl's reluctance emanates from his fear that a renewal of Hebrew would lead to a closing-in of the Jewish world, with Hebrew replacing Yiddish as the language of the ghetto.
12. Michel Masson, "La renaissance de l'hébreu," in Istvàn Fodor et Claude Hagège, *La réforme des langues. Histoire et avenir*, Hambourg: Buske Verlag, 1983/1984, tome 2, p. 449.
13. Ferdinand de Saussure, *Cours de linguistique générale*, Paris, Payot, 1964, pp. 47 and 51.
14. For further reading on the Sephardic predecessors of Ben Yehuda (Y. Halévy, B. Mitrani, N. Behar) see Shlomo Haramati, *Shlosha she-kadmu le-Ben Yehuda* (Three Predecessors of Ben Yehuda), Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, 1978. For further reading on the promoters of the natural method, see: D. Yellin, Y. Grozovsky, and Y. Epstein, *Shelosha Morim Rishonim* (Three Initial Masters), Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, 1984.
15. Etsig Silberschlag, "Critique of Enlightenment in the Works of Ahad Haam and Ben Yehuda," in E. Silberschlag, *Eliezer Ben Yehuda. A Symposium in Oxford*, Oxford: Centre for Postgraduate Hebrew Studies, 1981, p. 55.

16. Additional aspects are discussed in Ben Yehuda's autobiography especially the part that covers his youth, particularly the years of his nationalist awakening (1877–1883): *A Dream Come True*, Boulder: Westview, 1993.
17. Eliezer Ben Yehuda, *General Introduction to the Dictionary of Hebrew Language*, Jerusalem: Eliezer Ben Yehuda Publishers, 1959, p. 2.
18. We have borrowed this expression from Claude Hagège, *L'homme de paroles. Contribution linguistique aux sciences humaines*, Paris: Fayard, 1985, p. 191.
19. Michel Masson, *Les mots nouveaux en hébreu moderne*, Paris: Publications orientalistes de France, 1976.

    Michel Masson, *Langue et idéologie: les mots étrangers en hébreu moderne*, Paris: Ed. du CNRS, 1986.
20. Benjamin Harshav, *Language in Time of Revolution*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993, p. 92.
21. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983.
22. We have borrowed this expression from Jean-François Bayart, *L'illusion identitaire*, Paris: Fayard, 1996, pp. 85–92.

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CHAPTER 8

# Linguistic Acculturations and Reconstructions in the ULB Group (Ukraine, Lithuania, and Belarus)

*Daniel Beauvois*

Presenting the linguistic problems of the ULB region in only a few pages is all the more difficult because it brings into play not only the native languages (if this term even has a meaning) but also—in particular if one wants to treat these problems in the only manner that will shed light on them, that of the long-term perspective—the languages of the two principal neighbors (Polish and Russian) as well as languages such as Yiddish, dead languages used in the religions of these peoples (Slavonic, Latin, Hebrew), not to mention frequent interferences from German, French, some Scandinavian languages, and Romanian. From this multiplicity flows another complexity that also relates to a more general problem: are the politics or policies of the language the factor that ultimately determines whether or not this language predominates?

The significance of a language is defined and established as a function of very diverse cultural pressures, in which the voluntary portion that is associated with politics is certainly important, but perhaps not always decisive. There is doubtless an urge to rationalize. It would be very satisfying for the human mind—especially for the French mind—to say that it would be better to dismiss the problem at once in favor of a universalist solution, moving away from the irrational ethnopsychological contingencies, but the example of the nations of Central–Eastern Europe, considered in a time like the present, denies the possibility of

this interpretation, which throws into doubt the very validity of the politics of a language as it stands, given that instability, precariousness, and manipulation seem to be constants in this domain.

Each of the countries considered here is a fragment of the Russian-Soviet Empire, which collapsed 14 years ago and which had succeeded in imposing its own lingua franca, Russian. The outside world, and especially the European Union, is still often satisfied with communicating in this basic Russian with the "gray zone," which still has hardly been truly taken into account, since renouncing a single language is as difficult as abandoning *la pensée unique*, guaranteed by imperialism and proof of the simplicity of relations. The linguistic politics of Radio France International excellently illustrate the scorn held in the West toward the newly independent states. Russia was declared, beginning on February 7, 1992, in a treaty of friendship with France, "inheritor of the Soviet Union," thus remaining—uniquely so, in accordance with the right of the biggest and the strongest—the pivot of international communication. Some years later the countries of their region—or at least their elites—adopted English like everyone else. But however strong the fascination with the new American 'big brother', the bond to local linguistic roots remains fundamental—and stronger, at least for the present, than the siren-calls of American globalization.

Can the states of this region, on the other hand, which have only known very brief periods of sovereignty in contemporary times—20 years for Lithuania between the two wars, a few months for Ukraine between 1918 and 1920, even fewer for Belarus in 1918—avoid perpetuating a situation that, in their own country, is so clearly a colonial legacy? This is a problem that only otherwise exists in Africa. It is complicated here, however, by a much more acute historical awareness, which takes us back several centuries before our own and makes clear, after a brief assessment of the current problem, all the linguistic strata that have been superimposed over time.

The example of the Ukrainian language, by far the most widely spoken of the three, demonstrates the difficulty faced by the decision makers in these countries. According to a survey performed by the Mohyla Academy in Kyïv (Kiev) in 1994, while 95 percent of the Ukrainian population is divided between two groups, the Ukrainians (73 percent) and the Russians (22 percent), the languages are far from following this distribution. In the group that identifies itself as Ukrainian, 38 percent speak Russian, leaving the percentage of those speaking Ukrainian at 40 percent and thus a minority in their own

country.[1] Only Galicia, the western part of Ukraine annexed by Stalin in 1944–1945, for reasons that we will return to later, speaks Ukrainian, in a proportion of between 78 and 91 percent depending on districts. To the east of the Dniepr and south to the Black Sea, only 11–15 percent of the population speaks Ukrainian. In the capital of the country, 72.4 percent of the 4 million inhabitants identify themselves as Ukrainian, 64 percent say that Ukrainian should be their language, but only 23.6 percent can speak it fluently. The new education policy is improving the situation, but the process will take time.

Such is the result of a long tsarist policy of prohibition and of a Soviet policy of draconian limitations on language. Only 14 years ago, it was impossible to find a Ukrainian preschool in Kyïv, and the rare primary schools there condemned the students never to achieve high social rank. The Ukrainian language, reduced to the status of a "little Russian" dialect, spoken only in certain families, particularly in rural areas, was promoted, with independence in 1991, to the rank of official language. More than one generation will doubtless be necessary for a majority of the population to speak Ukrainian and to erase the sense of inferiority of those who had continued to speak it in spite of the circumstances.

Andrew Wilson, one of the best English experts in this area, suggests[2] that the colonial legacy is still too resonant to be eliminated gradually, and that to interfere with the foundation of the *pax sovietica* could result in a return of the famous Ukrainian "nationalism," amplified and demonized for decades by Kremlinologists who are as ignorant as they are fascinated by the Great Russia. In contrast, the problem faced by local decision makers has its source above all in the approach to thinking about two contradictory requirements: that of a relative "linguistic peace" and that of remedying an ancestral prejudice that is ill recognized by the outside world, but which is fundamental for the native languages.

The next few years will show whether such a policy of balance can emerge, as Nicolas Riabčuk suggests in a remarkable article[3], in a civic society where humanist values will prevail over linguistic–cultural ones; but the possibility of a more practical bilingualism—in which each citizen has the right to address the government in a given language and receive an oral or written response in that language—is still distant. According to former Polish ambassador Jerzy Kozakiewicz, who lived in Kyïv from 1991 to 1996, the result of the serious postcolonial problems posed by the coexistence of Russian and Ukrainian is separatism.[4] The international community, particularly the EU, has an interest in and the influence to ensure that the reestablishment of linguistic justice is

gradually introduced, perhaps by means of regional methods, but it is important that the broader ignorance that continues to deprive the languages and cultures of the ULB of the right of existence be dispelled without delay.

It is at this point that a review of history is essential. The dignity of the nations of this supposed gray zone is, in large part, a result of the tenaciousness of their linguistic resistance. Since the studies of Hroch, Gellner, and Hobsbawm, it has become commonplace to include a linguistic factor among the three or four axes around which all nationalisms are articulated, all construction of nationalities or of patriotisms throughout the nineteenth century, along with historic, ethnographic, and anthropologic factors. As for numerous other peoples, the preservation of the languages of the ULB, and then the exaltation of this preservation, were and remain among their main legitimating arguments. Granted, along with preservation comes a threat, and it thus implies one or more struggles. These languages, were on several occasions forced to disappear and always, under almost miraculous conditions, regained vigor. The hegemonic powers in the region sought to overwhelm these languages but they endured in a few isolated individuals, or in weak associations, and survived, indeed rebuilt themselves from the fragments.

As Alain Dieckhoff has already undertaken the analysis of the return of Hebrew to the vehicular languages, we will not dwell on the maturation of the Jewish nation during the five centuries of its presence in Central–Eastern Europe. It is, however, indispensable to mention that it was around Yiddish that the Jews forged their identity in this region, which Catherine II transformed into a forced "area of residence." They built up this identity and resisted all attempts and temptations to assimilate with first the Polish sphere of influence, and then the Russian. The Yiddish–Polish bilingualism of the eighteenth century, did not have the opportunity to become a Polish acculturation, in spite of the efforts to make it so in 1789, concomitant with French efforts, due to the partitions of Poland. The Yiddish–Russian bilingualism, or better yet the Yiddish–Austrian, had a slightly more assimilating effect toward the end of the nineteenth century, when the rise of anti-Semitism at times made the Jewish world and its language feel like foreign entities. Nevertheless, the Jewish-centric areas affirmed, in spite of expectations, their greatest vitality at the end of the nineteenth and in the twentieth century. For a long time, the popular view of Hassidism associated it with Yiddish in all the *shtetls* of the ULB and of ex-Poland. Both Bund and American emigration contributed to the reinforcement of the identity-building

character of this language, with which Hebrew, principally spoken originally in talmudic schools could not compete until the slow emergence of Zionism in the twentieth century.

Leaving this important question to the specialists,[5] we return to the other national identities of the ULB to ask first why the one that seemed to be furthest on the course toward formation, Belarusian, seems today to be the weakest and most threatened; second, why Ukrainian has taken so long to differentiate itself, and third, how Lithuanian appears to have made its way underground from the thirteenth to the nineteenth century.

If one accepts the existence of a very hypothetical Slavic language common to all the principalities or proto-national bodies that formed the immense Rus of the eighth to the thirteenth century, it must be noted that from the outset—that is, in the period when our imprecise knowledge begins—the linguistic factor was far from a politically unifying force, since, beyond the stability of the principality of Kiev, from the tenth to the twelfth century all the princes were battling one another. What the historiography calls the "Kievan Rus" (while the word Russia, *Rossija*, was used for the first time only in 1485 to designate the incipient Moscovia) in fact refers above all to the area that we are addressing here and that Latin sources, seeking to translate Rus, call Ruthenia. The only common trait of these territories—was less the language than the orthodox religion, introduced from Byzantium. Moreover, since that time the texts attest to the linguistic regionalisms that foreshadowed future differentiations.

The first known chronicles, which bring together the scraps of history of these regions, were used by Russian historiography in the quest for legitimization of precursors to the Muscovite state, but their language, apart from the few local variants that foreshadowed the future popular differentiations, remains substantially linked to the church Slavonic that came from the South with the Bulgarian or Macedonian evangelists. They begin with the famous *Chronicle of Ancient Times* that describes, in 1113, the principal facts of the dynasty of the Kyïv princes. The chronicles of Volhynia and of Halytch are also very close to Slavonic, although one can already discern some Ukrainian features. But the sacred and cultural language did not serve as a national cement before a written language appeared.

The first great manifestation of the political role of an eastern Slavic language is the adoption of Ruthenian, or more precisely its northern variation, old Belarusian, by the grand dukes of Lithuania beginning at

the dawn of the thirteenth century. The tiny dukedom, which spoke a completely distinct language belonging to the Baltic family, deliberately adapted to the culture of the immense Slavic territories between the Baltic and the Black Seas in order to dominate them politically and to become one of the largest states of Europe, a barrier that the Tatars never succeeded in breaching even as they made vassal states of the eastern fringes of the Slavic territory. This is a peculiar case—which would not be the last, as will be seen—of a sort of renunciation by the elites in power of their own linguistic culture in order to vastly increase the extent of their authority. The grand ducal chancellery of Vilna (Vilnius) from this point on spoke only Ruthenian (*jazyk ruski*, language of Rus, not of Russia, which did not yet exist) and partially adopted the orthodox religion (many princes remained pagans), while only the lower classes from the small, primitive territory of Lithuania, on the Baltic coast, in Samogitia, in the vicinity of Kovno (Kaunas), continued, more and more marginally, to speak Lithuanian.

The language of White Ruthenia thus had the opportunity to endure as an expression of a proto-national formation that was, regardless, a powerful body. Outside of the official acts of the chancellery, however, it did not leave a single notable literary work. From the end of the fourteenth century, the Grand Duke was exposed to the slow emergence of Moscovia, which forced him, following in the path of his ancestors, to turn to another culture, also considered to be superior: this time, the Polish. In 1386 he married the young Jadwiga of Poland, thus concluding a Lithuanian–Polish union that was accompanied by his conversion to Catholicism. The language of the immense grand duchy was then gradually dominated by Polish. The three successive versions of the *Lithuanian Code*, a compendium of the laws of the grand duchy compiled in the sixteenth century, remained in Ruthenian and were as applicable in Lithuania *sensu stricto* and in White Ruthenia as in what is today Ukraine, but they were all written in Latin and Polish as well. In 1596 (after the unification of the Polish and Lithuanian nobilities in 1569 in Lublin, which took the single title of "nobiliary nation"), the Poles thought that acculturation was extensive enough to abolish the orthodox church and reattach it to Rome (Union of Brest, 1596). In 1632, they recognized that such a radical measure would enflame the Ruthenian patriotism of the peasants, exacerbated by the cruelty of serfdom, and thus they reauthorized orthodoxy (alongside the Uniate Church that was nevertheless maintained), but their blindness before the linguistic realities worsened and multilingualism, still the rule in the sixteenth century, gave way all the more easily to the hegemony of Polish

as the Ruthenian elites themselves renounced their roots and adopted Polish culture.[6] As happened before with Lithuanian, Ruthenian (White-Ruthenian or Ukrainian, which were growing increasingly differentiated) was culturally marginalized and became the language only of peasants or Cossacks, groups of peasant origin, who were the only ones concerned with preserving their linguistic–religious identity. The Polish diet finished the process in 1696 by prohibiting the use of Ruthenian in official business throughout the Republic. The politics of developing the Uniate Church to the detriment of orthodoxy resumed with new intensity in the first half of the eighteenth century. Ten years earlier, in 1686, in signing the peace accord that fixed its border with the Polesh Lithuanion Republic at the Dniepr, Russia was recognized as guardian of all the orthodox religions in existence to the West of this river. Thus on the one hand Russia annexed the eastern part of Ukraine, and on the other hand it gave itself, within the Republic, a right that, between 1772 and 1795, would be the Trojan horse of the "defense" of orthodoxy and the supposed "return" of the Lithuanian-Russian territories. Even if religious factors were much more decisive than linguistic factors in this third cultural transfer, there is no doubt that the latter played a major role. Just as the Poles always pretended to consider the Ruthenian languages as variant dialects of Polish, the Russians began treating these languages as variants of Russian to be erased as quickly as possible.

Bela Rus rapidly accepted conversion to this new culture. Since the end of the seventeenth century, its rare religious elites, such as Simeon of Polotsk, made their careers in Moscow if they were not secular and had not adopted Polish culture, while the Ruthenian elites of the South, more Westernized through Polish influence, obstinately affirmed the continuance of their identity, which they henceforth called Ukrainian. Mazepa, who promoted this identity as unsuccessfully in 1709 as Hmielnitsky had in 1648, expressed through his linguistic culture an intellectual richness that was still too exceptional for implementation: his dream of reuniting the Ukraine of the Russians and that of the Poles under a unique Hetmanate was expressed in Latin.

In the nineteenth century, the Ukrainian, Belarusian, and Lithuanian languages, caught as they were between the declining hegemony of the Poles and the increasing hegemony of the Russians, could no longer count on the actions of individuals and from that point on were fully exposed to a policy of active assimilation. The only Ruthenian enclave that escaped from this linguistic phagocytosis was the portion of the Republic that became part of Austria, Galicia, where 20 percent of

Ukrainians lived. Since 1772 (the first Partition), Vienna conducted an astonishing policy that encouraged the separate training of the Uniate priests in this region, which, by nurturing Ukrainian Slavonic, little by little became the very loyalist and conservative setting for the only authorized Ruthenian group to develop in Europe, becoming visible for the first time in the political movements of 1848.

The Russians reacted in exactly the opposite manner. They replaced the Hetmanate and the last traces of Ruthenian autonomy in 1783. From 1803 to 1832, they paradoxically allowed the Poles, in their own language, to rebuild the system of lower and higher education over all the immense Lithuanian–Ruthenian territory, which for a long time delayed Russian linguistic penetration in these regions but allowed no place for the local languages. Outside of this, however, the russification of "the western provinces," as they were called so as not to evoke their identity, did not cease until 1905. In 1839, more than 2 million Uniates were officially reunited with orthodoxy and thus cut off from the West. In 1840, the old *Lithuanian Statute*, still in effect, was replaced by Russian law, which became binding in all administration and religion. Throughout this period, the "awakeners" (as were found in all the Central and Eastern nations of Europe) were largely absent due to the overwhelming illiteracy of the peasants, the only speakers of local languages. The philosopher Skovoroda, or the poet Kotliarevski remained marginalized for the Ukrainians of the Russian Empire at the end of the eighteenth century. As for the Belarusians, they were reduced to leaving their culture and their language in the hands of amateurs who were often enlightened and passionate, but who did not belong to their own ranks. According to whether they were Polish or Russian, the latter wrote legends or songs that they collected in the countryside in the 1840s, sometimes using the Latin alphabet, sometimes the Cyrillic. The former (Barszczewski, Danilowicz, Lelewel) highlighted the chronicles of Lithuanian Rus, while the latter (Roumiantsev, Lobojko, Grigorovitch) looked to them for proof of 'Russian-ness'. The manipulation of the linguistic analogies had only just begun. In his quest for legitimization through a foundation in antiquity, the Pole Czeczot claimed that the White-Russian language was that of the Krivitches, a proto-Slavic tribe from the sixth century.

Toward the middle of the nineteenth century, language was consciously made part of nationalistic struggles, and, in the years preceding the abolition of serfdom in the Russian Empire, it began to be incorporated into the Polish–Russian fight for native loyalties. Thus, during the insurrection

of 1863–1864, Poles published the newspaper *Muzycka Pravda* (the Moujik truth) in Belarusian and in the Latin alphabet in a vain attempt to bring the peasants over to their cause. From 1865 to 1905, the Belarusian language was prohibited by the Russians, which explains—in the absence of an intelligentsia and active emigrant groups—the very weak national consciousness of the population, whose first publications, around the year 1905, still alternated between the Latin alphabet and the Cyrillic. The German occupiers, skillfully inspired by Falkenheim between 1917 and 1919, concentrated on cultivating this identity and on creating a system of education in the national language, but the independence declared in March 1918 only lasted a few months and the takeover by the Bolsheviks, although followed temporarily by a few fertile years of White-Ruthenization, retreated into traditional Russification after the 1930s. The consequences of this became clear after the second "independence" in 1991.

The Ruthenian–Ukrainian language, spoken by a nationality four or five times as numerous as its Belanssion neighbors, did not allow itself to be so easily absorbed. It also benefited from external aid that the White-Ruthenians never had. If the tsars, like the Third French Republic, had understood the unifying power of education and had not feared the social promotion of the peasants before and after the abolition of serfdom as much as they did, it is likely that the acculturation of the Ukrainians would have occurred more or less as that of the Occitans or the Bretons; but, since the middle of the nineteenth century, the mechanisms of a linguistic renaissance, constantly stimulated by adversity, favored the unification of the Ukrainian nation.

We have seen that the Ukrainian language, maintained by the Uniat clerics in Galicia, continued to resemble Slavonic. The 43 books published between 1837 and 1850 in Lviv (Lwow, Lemberg) were written by 40 Uniate priests. These same priests, in 1848, supported the early attempts at an autonomous national body, the Supreme Ruthenian Council, as well as the first Ukrainian newspaper. Their archaic language and their social conservatism put them in opposition to the lay editors of a magazine, the *Dniestr Rusalka*, who preferred the language spoken by the peasants. The disagreement could have continued much longer had it not been for the important example of both the popular and harmonious language of the poetry and texts of Taras Chevtchenko, an emancipated serf who miraculously had access to European culture in Russia, whose condemnation by St. Petersburg in 1847 soon brought to him the rank of national poet.

The notion of a national poet, little understood in the West but very common for these populations who had a late and difficult cultural awakening, plays a fundamental role in the stabilization and exaltation of their languages. It sanctions access, especially in the eyes of those involved, to the international concert of "great" literature and acted, as it were, as a substantial counterweight to those who believed, not without reason, that the work of Nicolas Gogol anchored Ukrainian culture in the Russian language, or that the works of the poets Goszczynski, Malczewski, and Zaleski anchored it at the same time in the Polish language.

Another important work, published in 1846 in St. Petersburg, gave to the few Ukrainian intellectuals of the Russian Empire knowledge of the historic continuity of their nation and undermined the legitimizing constructions of Great Russian historians, Karamzine and Pogodine. It was called the *Istoria Rusov* (the History of the Ruthenians), an apocryphal work dating likely from the beginning of the nineteenth century that put forth the first project of legitimization, which would be built upon by V. Antonovytch, father of the historiography of the country, in Ukrainian in the 1860s. Antonovytch, a Polish landowner from Ukraine, was one of a group of populist nobles who set out to make good the 'harm' that Polish acculturation had caused their ancestors three centuries before, and who decided to speak only the language of the peasants in order to regain their Ruthenian roots. Ironically treated as "chlopomanes" (peasant fanatics) by the tsarist authorities, these cultural and linguistic renegades were considered by the Minister of the Interior, Valuev, to be dangerous enough—while Chevtchenko, returned from exile, and a few others had started the Ukrainian newspaper *Osnova* in St. Petersburg—to provoke a *ukase*, as happened for Belarusian, completely prohibiting the Ukrainian language.

Once again, the most active source of Ukrainian linguistic development was concentrated in Austrian Galicia, while the Russians accused Vienna of manipulating "Ukrainism" against them. A large emigration to the United States and Canada, newspapers in Geneva (edited by Dragomanov), and activists in France (Podolinski) gave greater and greater support to the language. Meanwhile, in the Russian Empire, an intelligentsia grown out of the liberated serf community clandestinely maintained the language, in secret contact with the numerous cultural cells of the *Prosvita* society officially encouraged in Galicia through its lecture halls, its small libraries, its newspapers, and the chair of Ukrainian history at the University of Lviv that, beginning in 1894, was given to Professor Hruchevsky.

This explains the dichotomy between the two Ukrainian Republics that existed in the former Russian and Austrian territories in 1919. The common language only served to unite them briefly, the lack of understanding and Western pressure divided them again until 1944, when Stalin (after the failure of his first attempt of 1939–1941) created the Greater Ukraine just as the nationalists at the beginning of the century, such as Mihnovsky, had imagined it. In the intervening years the relatively free use of the Ukrainian language in Polish Galicia from 1923 to 1939 permitted, in spite of political pressures, an even greater enrichment of Ukrainian identity than that in the vast Soviet region bled dry by the famine instigated in 1933. Between 1945 and 1991, however, the Russian language became that of "Soviet citizenship" everywhere. The newly independent Ukrainian nation thus had to look again for linguistic reference points.

To come full circle and show how much the vitality of language is essential to the survival of nations, the renaissance/reconstruction of the Lithuanian language is the crowning example. We recall how the Grand Lithuanian Dukes and the elite of this small people, geographically limited to a small corner of the Baltic coast, had, beginning in the 13th century, created an immense state encompassing all the Ruthenians almost to the Black Sea, at the price of two successive renouncements of their language: first they were made Ruthenian, then they adopted Polish, as did the Ruthenian elites. Meanwhile, just as the Ruthenian orthodox peasants could continue to maintain an idea of their original identity thanks to their priests, so Lithuanian peasants preserved their language thanks to their clergy.

In the sixteenth century, at a time when the elites were adopting Polish culture, this clergy was often won over by the Reformation. The Calvinists were the first to translate the Gospel into Lithuanian, at a time when, to the neighboring areas, Lithuanian meant little more than the vast expanse of the grand duchy. The Polish toponymy has kept alive the memory of this territorial expansion until today. One says in Polish Minsk Litewski (Minsk-in-Lithuania), as one says in Russian Brest-Litovsk (Brest-in-Lithuania). But, if only for reasons of management of the rural domains, a vague contact was required with the small population that remained pagan until the fourteenth century, in some cases until the fifteenth century. It is revealing that the oldest texts known in Lithuanian are brief tenant farming contracts.

The Counter-Reformation continued what the Reformation had begun. Jesuits and Dominicans thus published, in turn, the Gospels,

books of devotion, even a dictionary, and preached in Lithuanian. This preservation of a "peasant" language was doubtless not just **proforma** since, in 1775, K. Donelaitis used it to write what is considered to be the first masterpiece of Lithuanian culture, an extensive idyll in the style of Delille entitled *Metai* (the Seasons), which was only uncovered and published in the nineteenth century by the Germans.

Absorbed, like the Ruthenians, into the Russian Empire at the time of the partitions of the Polish–Lithuanian Republic, the peasants continued to speak their particular language. Meanwhile, Karamzine spoke of a Lithuania that would be "Russian for all eternity," and the Poles of the University of Vilna abandoned the project, barely envisioned, of a Lithuanian chair and filled the country with Polish schools.

In Samogitia, the heart of Lithuania, the successive bishops—Giedroyc, Valanciaus, and Baranauskas—encouraged a series of local scholars throughout the nineteenth century, notably D. Poška and A. Stražd as, who cultivated the popular traditions and language before 1830, but, here as with the Ukrainians, a linguistic resurrection was not possible without the help of foreign scholars: Russians, Poles, and, in this case in particular, Germans at the University of Koenigsberg. The disputes between local nonexperts who spoke all the regional variants of the language, which for years had not been codified, only subsided at the end of the century by merging, and not without much borrowing and multiple neologisms. Dictionaries, grammar books, and manuals then flowed from the plumes of the scholars of Koenigsberg. The adoption of an alphabet inspired by the Czech also showed the fruitful contacts between nationalities in search of recognition and the pooling of European linguistic study. As in Ukraine and Poland, the Russian linguistic persecutions had the reverse effect of what was intended. When, in 1865, the same minister Valuev thought it possible to prohibit the printing of Lithuanian publications and books in "Latin-Polish" characters and imposed the Cyrillic alphabet by referring to cases in which certain Lithuanian princes from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries imposed orthodoxy, he provoked a resistance movement that lasted until the measure was lifted in 1905. One Bishop Valancius organized an extensive clandestine market for Catholic religious books beginning in Eastern Prussia, most notably in Tilsitt, while Lithuanian emigrants to the United States also offered aid. From Riga, Posen (Poznan), and Warsaw, groups of promoters energized this culture, which had emerged from the depths of the ages, and, like elsewhere, the intelligentsia that had grown out of the peasant class became emboldened after the abolition of serfdom thanks to newspapers and a remarkable artistic life.

In the end, the tenacity of the smallest of the peoples of the ULB, whose language had been the longest eclipsed, owes the fact that it was the only one recognized at the 1919 Peace Conference to its underground survival, which gave it the most durable independence of the three that made up the former grand duchy. Perhaps this greater resistance to assimilation is the result of the radically irreducible character of its uniquely Baltic substratum in the Slavic environment.

Such a brief survey of very complex problems requires too many simplifications, but certain elementary truths emerge. Language, a fundamental element of the definition of cultures, has been, here as elsewhere, and remains the principal indicator of national homogeneity. The homogeneity of states is another matter. The exceptional accumulation of linguistic strata in this region during the past seven or eight centuries, the successive absorptions and rejections, the particularly shocking use of force and manipulation, and the realization of the sometimes decisive role of external interventions makes us understand the ULB as a fragile region that merits closer attention than it usually gets.

## Notes

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CHAPTER 9

# Unity and Plurality in the Serbo-Croatian Linguistic Sphere

*Paul Garde*

This chapter examines the linguistic sphere in four central republics of the former Yugoslav federation: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, and Serbia. Two peripheral republics, Macedonia and Slovenia, will not be considered since they each have their own language (Macedonian and Slovenian). To designate this area of study, the expression "Serbo-Croatian linguistic sphere," in use for a century and a half but presently contested, has been chosen for lack of a better term. A revisit to the past, before and after the creation of the former Yugoslavian State, is necessary in order to understand linguistic policies implemented by the various political authorities within these territories since the breakup of former Yugoslavia.[1]

## Before and During Yugoslavia

### *Dialectal Uniformity, Cultural Diversity*

Throughout this region, not only do speakers of rural dialects understand each other perfectly well, but their dialects themselves make up a very homogeneous entity. Dialectal differences exist, and are more pronounced on the periphery, in frontier zones near Slovenia in the northwest (Kajkavian dialects), and near Bulgaria and Macedonia in the southeast (Torlak dialects). However, they are less pronounced than in

more restrained areas such as Slovenia or Alemannic Switzerland. In addition, these small differences do not correspond to national differences of a religious origin between Serbs, Croats, and Muslim Bosnians. Inhabitants of a region speak alike, and accents are local and not national. Occasionally, and in relatively closed-off zones, a dialectal characteristic serves to distinguish villages of one nationality from those of another. However throughout the territory, no single dialectal characteristic exists that serves as a common trait for all members of one nation as opposed to another. Thus, in the realm of dialects, this signifies a form of linguistic continuity that does not take national differences into account.

Notwithstanding, awareness of this unity was never expressed before the nineteenth century. Speaking styles of inhabitants from these regions varied in their designations, and were used haphazardly in function of local needs. Regional names (Dalmatian, Bosnian or Bosniak, Slavonian) and ethnic designations (Croatian, Serbian, Slovinian "Slovinski," which is another form for Slavonic) were used, as well as scholarly terms such as Illyrian.[2] Above all, a variety of writing standards was developed based on different religious allegiances. Catholics had adopted a literary model based on local dialects. Progressive generalization of the Latin alphabet ensued (following the use of Glagolitics or Cyrillics in certain regions), culminating in a beautiful literary genre in Dalmatia during the Renaissance period, soon to be known as Croatian. For a very long time, Orthodox Christians only wrote a scholarly language called Slavo-Serbian. Written in the Cyrillic alphabet, it was thoroughly permeated with Church Slavonic terms, and totally inaccessible to the common man. During the nineteenth century, the great reformer, Vuk Karadzic (1787–1864) radically transformed this situation by reconstructing the language in accordance with more popular usage. This became the "Serbian language." Insofar as Muslims were concerned, their language was written in the Arabic alphabet for four centuries, relied heavily on Turk, Arab, and Persian borrowings, and did not incorporate local scholarly expressions. This was not to survive the 1878 Austrian invasion and occupation.

### *Converging and Diverging Norms*

In mid-nineteenth century, Serbian and Croatian traditions converged spontaneously. The Serbian language, thanks to Vuk Karadzic, took on the more popular base already adopted by the Croatian language, and

the latter unified along the same lines as the former. Both transitions were implemented on the basis of the same dialect, "Stokavian," common to all Bosniaks, Montenegrins, three-fourths of the Serbs, and two-fifths of the Croats. In addition, progress in linguistics allowed for the awareness of unity among these various speaking styles. Based on an agreement signed in Vienna in 1850 by both peoples, the term "Serbo-Croatian" was adopted to designate this language. Over the ensuing decades, intensive effort on the part of linguists, grammarians, and writers of both languages would be deployed to bring the two language norms closer together.

This led to almost identical pronunciation (except for one particularity), spelling, morphology, syntax, almost all of vernacular vocabulary, and a large portion of the scholarly lexicon. Differences between them, however, can be found in three areas:

1. The alphabet, Latin or Cyrillic. However, transliteration from one to the other is automatic, and throughout the twentieth century, the Latin alphabet has been the more commonly used, even among Serbs. Thus, despite its important symbolic value, the choice of alphabet is not a discriminatory factor.
2. One specific aspect of pronunciation. The Croatian *je* or *ije* corresponds to a Serbian *e*; *djed* or *ded* for "grandfather." However, the form in *e* (Ekavian) is only used in Serbia. Throughout Montenegro, Bosnia, and Croatia even Serbs use the form in *je* or *ije* (Iekavian). Thus, this characteristic is a not a decisive one either.
3. Certain words. Some words in common parlance differ from region to region, but more especially, differences exist in a large number of scholarly words, such as the names of institutions, abstract notions, philosophical, scientific, and technical terms, which were created for different cultural traditions. The unrepentant romantic unifiers of the nineteenth century, set on preserving "popular" language, had neglected this type of vocabulary. In light of technical and scientific developments, this vocabulary took on greater importance, and both peoples created new words in accordance with each one's specific tradition, thus leading to differences. This variance in vocabulary represents the key to distinguishing between the Serbian and Croatian norms.

An intermediary norm exists among the Bosniaks. Like the Croats, Bosniaks use the Latin alphabet, Iekavian forms, and in most cases, the

same vernacular expressions as the Croats, but they generally adopt Serbian terms for technical, scientific, and/or abstract vocabulary.

Each of these three norms makes up a system. Any given statement or text necessarily belongs to one norm or the other, and mixing is unheard of (except in one specific case; the carefully dosed mixture that is the commonly used norm in Bosnia). Any given statement cannot be "Serbo-Croatian"; it is either "Serbian" or "Croatian" or even "Bosnian." Likewise, a literary work proceeds entirely from one norm or the other. Thus, we continue, and rightly so, to say that someone "speaks Serbian" or "speaks Croatian."

From a statistical standpoint, differences between the three norms remain nonetheless minimal. One researcher recently evaluated them between approximately 5 and 10 percent.[3] However, these figures refer to the number of different words in a dictionary. Since most of these words are relatively infrequent, the total amount of differences in a text is probably much less. In fact, apart from the alphabet or the e/je difference, it is oftentimes necessary to read several lines of a text before one can determine which norm is being used.

This situation is exactly the opposite of a dialectal one. When one single standard language is used across a large territory, yet coexists alongside numerous different local dialects (e.g., Hochdeutsch and diverse German dialects), variances are more keenly felt in "inferior" sociolinguistic areas (common parlance, vernacular, concrete objects), and become few and far between once "superior" sociolinguistic realms are attained (written language, polished speeches, abstract notions). In the present case, the contrary exists: the higher one climbs the sociolinguistic ladder, the greater the number of differences.

However, these differences in vocabulary exist within a single and unique grammatical system, and a great deal of vocabulary is shared. Consequently, they can always be minimized; a word from one norm is quickly understood and can be adopted (or rejected) without a great deal of effort by the other, as long as extra-linguistic conditions, especially political circumstances, encourage this. Of course, this situation can also be easily manipulated.

## A Century and a Half of Contested Unity

With this in mind, the 140 years of "Serbo-Croatian" history[4] can be divided into two distinct periods:

1. 1850–1918: *de facto* division coupled with hopes for unity.

2. 1918–1990: *de facto* unity coupled with increased demands for diversity.

Until 1918, with the border separating Austro-Hungarian Croatia, Bosnia, and Vojvodina from independent Serbia and Montenegro, daily contact between these peoples was highly limited. Differences in particular norms were thus maintained and even accentuated. However, in people's minds, especially those living in the Austrian portion, hopes for unity were very strong and developed essentially as a reaction to threats of Germanization or Magyarization. During this period, attempts were made to bring the two norms together and create a "single language."

After 1918, the unification of Yugoslavia multiplied exchanges between the regions of the new nation-state, making a linguistic osmosis plausible in day to day life. However, this was only to occur in one direction. Due to the dominant position of the Serbs (political, under the monarchy, and demographic, at least, under Tito), the Serbian norm, though often written in the Latin alphabet, became a sort of "koine" for the new nation-state. "Serbian" words were increasingly used in Croatian (and other) common parlance. As the Serbian norm began to impose itself throughout the federation, Croats began to fear that their own norm was on the verge of becoming a second-rate regional variant. In addition, official discourse underlining the unity of the "Serbo-Croatian" language gave Croats the impression that their national identity was being disregarded. The Serbs, on the other hand, found the predominance of their norm to be a natural and even desirable evolution.

Consequently, during the 1920s and 1930s, Croats increasingly affirmed the autonomy of the "Croatian language" based on the principle "one people, one language," and distinct from the Serbian language as well as any other. This postulate was transformed into a dogma under the Ustasha regime of the "Independent State of Croatia" during World War II, which subsequently led to authoritarian measures focusing on "language purification." This position was then severely repressed during the first 20 years of Tito's reign, and replaced by the equally dogmatic "Serbo-Croat" doctrine. A certain number of old and forgotten Croatian words, authoritatively rehabilitated under the Ustasha regime, were banned after the war. Hence the succession of three dictatorial regimes—Alexander the First, Pavelic, and finally Tito—transformed what had been dealt with peaceably in the nineteenth century to an intensely conflictual problem thereafter.

As a result, the affirmation of Croatian as a separate language developed with increasing force, and was almost unanimously supported by

all Croats from the "Declaration on Language" signed in 1967 by a vast majority of Croatian intellectuals and writers, to the "linguistic demands" of the 1971 "Croatian Spring," and final recognition of Croatian as the official language of the Republic of Croatia established in 1974. The debate on the unity or plurality of the officially recognized "Serbo-Croatian, or Croato-Serbian, or Serbian, or Croatian" language did not cease over the next 15 years, drowning in a sea of terminological confusion.

## Linguistic Evolution of Ensuing States

The disintegration of the Yugoslav federation and subsequent war contributed new elements to the controversy. Though genuine unity and widespread mutual comprehension remain a reality, the central power that had transformed this unity into a dogma no longer exists. New authorities are more bent on cultivating differences, albeit using differing methods and varying from one state to another. Nonetheless, all focus on the same points that heretofore nourished the controversy: the name of the language, the alphabet, the Iekavian or Ekavian form, certain spelling particularities, and above all, vocabulary, especially scholarly words.

### *Croatia*

Since 1918, unification trends have more or less benefited the Serbian norm. Consequently, Croats have experienced these issues more keenly. Present-day Croatia has emerged from a long, 30-year struggle to obtain official recognition of the "Croatian" language. Thus, it is now universally acknowledged that Croatian is a distinct language from Serbian, and the term "Serbo-Croatian" has become taboo. This is not only the conception of the political party in power—the Croatian Democratic Union—it is also widely accepted by the entire spectrum of Croatian political opinions, even the most moderate. However, general consensus then branches out into distinct and particular legislative measures and/or practices.

Legal measures have only concerned the name of the language, the alphabet, and a minor spelling point. The 1974 Croatian Constitution defined the official Croatian language as "literary Croatian, the standard form of the national language of Croats and Serbs in Croatia, to be called 'Croatian' or 'Serbian.'" Quite a complex formula which, while affirming the specificity of the Croatian language, nonetheless underlines that

it was also spoken by Serbs living in Croatia and was even called "Serbian." At present, it also does not address the issue of the alphabet.

The 1990 Constitution eliminates these distinctions and only refers to the "Croatian language written in the Latin alphabet." Hence, the Serbs are no longer present. The Cyrillic alphabet has been removed from official inscriptions, and is no longer taught in schools. Insofar as spelling is concerned, Western proper nouns are no longer written based on phonetic transcription but in their original graphic form: *Versailles, New York* (as in other languages using the Latin alphabet) and not *Versaj, Njujork* (as in the Cyrillic alphabet).

It is interesting to compare these measures with those enacted in 1941 under the Ustasha regime (Samardzija, 1993). The same language doctrine was pronounced, that is, Croatian had nothing to do with Serbian. However, extreme authoritarian measures were used to implement this. For example, the Cyrillic alphabet was purely and simply outlawed, a list of prohibited "Serbian" words was drawn up, and a drastic spelling reform was launched that replaced "phonetic" spelling shared by Croats and Serbs by "etymological" spelling (in modern terminology, known as "morpho-phonemic spelling"). The ultimate objective was to recall ancient Croat traditions, subsequently contributing to radically transforming the graphic aspect of the language.

The present-day regime is attempting to pursue the same design, yet proceeds with more caution and has less recourse to prohibitive measures. The struggle for the "purity of the Croatian language" has therefore been relocated to public debate forums. Insofar as spelling is concerned, the press has launched campaigns in favor of a reform similar to that of 1941, however opponents to this proposal have prevented its accomplishment. Indeed, it is impossible to impose such a widespread transformation in graphic habits on a highly educated population, and the project has thus been abandoned.

Insofar as vocabulary is concerned, one may often read editorials stating "don't say this, say that . . ." However these do not amount to legal measures such as in 1941, only press articles that the upper spheres of power appreciate and encourage. The idea is to incite both the public and authors to replace "Serbian" words by other "purely Croatian" words. The latter, depending on the case at hand, include currently used terms (though in "competition" with "Serbian" synonyms), more or less forgotten and antiquated terms, or artificially created neologisms. Texts that systematically use this type of vocabulary are generally not understood by the ordinary person, and are frequently ridiculed. In a normal conversation, for example, authors wouldn't dare use them. This

excessive form of "Croatization" can be found in official documents, a certain number of press articles, and some books (including a popular work by the late President Tudjman).[5] In some newspapers, the use of this type of vocabulary is highly encouraged in "Language" columns.

Nonetheless, the public rarely adheres to this practice, and it is opposed by the quasi-totality of professional linguists, including those who had previously fought to defend the Croatian language during the preceding regime and were sanctioned for their participation. They argue that the Croatian language should not be artificially recreated, that it has always existed, and the only requirement is to abide by tradition and conform to its usage. They refuse to replace a "Serbian" word with a "Croatian" word, and argue that the existence of two synonyms between which one may discern a nuance in meaning serves as an enriching aspect of language. As the well-known Croat linguist, Radoslav Katicic writes (1997:29): "When one abruptly demands the elimination of words that are commonly used, and proceeds to introduce a massive number of new and unknown words—obviously created at the last minute—an enormous error is being committed towards the Croatian language and its place throughout the world. It is stripped of its dignity."

Nonlinguist observers, especially foreigners, have had a tendency to exaggerate the importance of language transformations in Croatia. For example, Olivier Stanislas Kubli refers to the "forceful imposition of a new language that is unknown to the population" (Kubli, 1998:219). Zoran Arbutina-Risch argues that the "mother tongue has become a foreign language" and that people "are insecure in their daily lives, in the streets or stores" (Arbutina-Risch, 1994:83). However, reality does not correspond to these descriptions. Katicic tells the story of a foreign university professor who was very familiar with Croatia and its language, and who returned there for the first time since the Independence to attend a conference. "He was so astonished to see that everyone there was speaking normally, as in the past, because he had so often heard that language in Croatia had been forcibly transformed and no one dared to speak naturally. He had believed that, and now saw that he had been misled" (Katicic, 1997:28).

Two factors explain these exaggerated accounts of change in the language. The first lies in an overestimation of the impact of a certain number of specific lexical facts, an error in appreciation that is committed by both Croat nationalist purists and their opponents. The second lies in an underestimation of what has always been the specificity of the Croatian language, reflected in widespread confusion among foreigners who interpret the term "Serbo-Croatian" as meaning a unified norm

along the lines of the "French" or "German" model. In reality, continuity exists in the Croatian linguistic tradition that comes under attack by both those who deny the specificity of its usage and those who seek to introduce arbitrary changes.

Following intense ideological "Croatization" during the war, the country now seems to be reaching a more balanced situation. Both the name and specificity of the Croatian language are recognized, only the Latin alphabet is used, a certain number of words or expressions that were previously "threatened" by "Serbian" synonyms are now rehabilitated, but nothing dramatically different has come to upset common usage.

The future lies in school curricula and activity. One immediate concern consists in the refusal to teach children the Cyrillic alphabet. Younger generations will therefore not be able to read Serbian texts. For the rest, it all depends on whether or not teachers will more or less adopt the purist attitude that authorities encourage. The country as a whole will reduce or increase its communication with neighboring countries in function of that evolution.

### *Serbia*

Following the break up of former Yugoslavia, Serbia did not encounter the same acute linguistic problems as in Croatia since the Serbian norm had more or less prevailed during the federation. Consequently, national affirmation did not require any change in usage. Only two minor but symbolically significant questions were raised: the name of the language and the alphabet.

Article 8 of the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia (dated 1990, one year before the federation's break up) proclaims the "official use" of the "Serbo-Croatian language." However, Article 15 in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), established two years later in 1992 in the middle of the war, only mentions the "Serbian language as contained in its Ekavian and Iekavian dialects" (Ekavian referring to Serbia and Iekavian to Montenegro). Likewise, the "Serbian language" is almost exclusively the term most commonly used.

Insofar as the alphabet is concerned, both Constitutions confirm the official use of the Cyrillic alphabet, but add that "the Latin alphabet will be used according to conditions provided for by the Constitution and law," hence reserving a specific place for this alphabet. In practice, the Latin alphabet had played an important role during the Yugoslav regime. It had been used in numerous publications, and many Serbs complained that the Cyrillic alphabet was losing ground. This trend was

reversed, and periodicals and reviews that had previously used the Latin alphabet then turned to the Cyrillic one. Nevertheless, the former has not been eliminated. It is essentially used for practical purposes, such as in texts destined to be read abroad and computer language. For some, it is also used to demonstrate their antinationalism.

Still others have called for a return to more traditional vocabulary or even to the archaic spelling used before Vuk Karadzic. This would bring the Serbian language closer to Church Slavonic and Russian, and differentiate it even more from the Croatian language. However, these demands have not been taken seriously.

Nonetheless, approximately a dozen Serbian university members published a text entitled "Declaration on the Serbian Language"[6] signed on "the day of the Holy Saviour, 1998." Perhaps not the most prestigious among scholars, they nevertheless wield a certain amount of political influence. Their text is inspired by an idea set forth by Vuk Karadzic in the nineteenth century (Karadzic,1849) that argued that Serbian was the indivisible language of all Serbs belonging to "all three religions"; Orthodox Christians, Muslims, and Catholics, in other words, all those who spoke the Stokavian dialect. Hence, it categorically refuses the notion of a Serbo-Croatian, Croatian, or Bosnian language, and disputes the "genuine ethnic belonging" of Bosniaks as well as half of Croats. In fact, according to this perspective, the latter are essentially Serbs who don't realize it, and speak Serbian without knowing it. Thus, Greater-Serbian ambitions could still be found in such declarations that negate the very existence of certain population categories and definitively reject the notion of "Yugoslavism."

### *Bosnia-Herzegovina*

It is important to remember that Bosnia offers a particularly homogenous linguistic landscape, but a highly divided one from a cultural standpoint. From the outset of the war, it was divided into zones controlled by Croats, Serbs, or Bosniaks (Muslims). Each group implemented their own distinct linguistic policy. Today, these variants still exist and have not been attenuated by attempts, such as the Dayton Accords, to unify the country. Since the Dayton Accords do not raise issues of education and culture, they implicitly leave them to the discretion of cantons and entities.

In Croat-controlled zones (Herzegovina and Western Bosnia, and including certain enclaves in central Bosnia), the situation is exactly the same as in Croatia. The language is called "Croatian," use of the Cyrillic

alphabet is prohibited, and similar purist tendencies exist encountering less resistance than in Croatia.

In Serb-controlled zones ("Republika Srpska": north and east of the country), affirmation of Serbian specificity is much more pronounced than in Serbia. The language is exclusively called "Serbian." The Latin alphabet has not been entirely eliminated, however the predominance of the Cyrillic alphabet is more widespread than in Serbia. Last but not least, while all of Bosnia, including its Serb population, has always practiced Iekavian forms, the Republika Srpska has officially introduced the Ekavian form, only found in Serbia, and thus considered as typically Serbian. This innovation goes against all local custom and has been encountering intense resistance (see Thomas, 1994).

In Muslim-Bosniak controlled zones (central Bosnia, including Sarajevo, and the northwest area around Bihac), the language is now systematically called "Bosnian" (*bosanski*),[7] in accordance with an age-old expression. Sporadically observed in the pre-Ottoman and Ottoman period, it was rehabilitated during Austro-Hungarian rule,[8] and finally eliminated in 1918 to be replaced by the "Serbo-Croatian" term. However, contrary to the Croats, Bosniaks do not declare that the "Bosnian" language is distinct from Serbian and Croatian. The 1990 Bosnian Constitution proclaims that the country's language can be called by all three names. Indeed, contrary to the Croats, the Bosniak approach is based on inclusion and rejects all forms of exclusion; everything that previously had been designated as "Serbo-Croatian" is now "Bosnian."[9]

Theoretically, both the Latin and Cyrillic alphabets are used and coexist in a certain number of official documents (e.g., paper money inscriptions). However, in daily use, the Cyrillic alphabet is never employed. All correspondence, books, press, public posters and announcements are exclusively written in the Latin alphabet. Only a few rare periodicals directed to the Serbian community living in this zone use the Cyrillic alphabet, such as the Bosanska Vila (Bosnia's Good Fairy), printed in Sarajevo by the century-old Serbian cultural association "Prosvjeta" (Enlightenment). Iekavian is quite naturally the form in use, and Bosnia has never been exposed to any other.

Insofar as vocabulary is concerned, the aforementioned, precisely dosed mixture of words resembling both Serbian and Croatian is still being used in Bosnia. However, an increasing number of specifically Muslim words are being introduced. One means is by restoring the etmymologic consonant *h* to some words—due to Turkish and Arabic borrowings—which, in certain regions, has been preserved in Muslim

common parlance; thus, *sat* ("the hour"; from the Arabic, *sa'at*) is pronounced and written *sahat*. Another means consists in restoring forgotten words from Turkish and Arabic borrowings, especially those linked to Islam: thus, the soldier killed on the battlefield is called the *sehid* ("martyr," an Arabic word). However, texts containing too many such words can often be problematic for some readers, even Muslim ones. Nevertheless, this phenomenon remains relatively limited.

In Bosnia, the main arena where both real and perceived linguistic conflicts occur is in the schools. Designating a language by one name or the other reflects a symbolic choice, and raises fears among a certain number of parents: will their children be taught a language that is not their own, for example, Bosnian to Croats, and so on? Indeed, many families may decide to leave a region that is controlled by another community because of language, or decide not to return after having been chased out during the war. This fear contributes to the phenomenon of ethnic cleansing. As we have seen, it is not really a linguistic problem, since mutual understanding is total, and the ignorance of unimportant vocabulary by excessive nationalist schools is compensated for by daily life. The danger is elsewhere, and lies in the fact that religious education is being reintroduced everywhere. What sort of religious instruction will be dispensed to children?

The Muslim-Bosniak zone demonstrates its tolerance by reopening or allowing for the creation of private Catholic schools (and probably Orthodox Christian in the future). Separate classes for Croat students[10] within public establishments have also been created where students learn in their "language" and in accordance with their religious curriculum. However, this has led to segregation among students.[11] For the moment though, this appeases parents' fears and the situation appears better than the observed monolithism present in the other two zones, all the while contributing to further division. In this totally linguistically homogeneous country, language is always a pretext.

### *Montenegro*

Like the Serbs, Montenegrins employ the Cyrillic alphabet. Apart from a few regional words, they also use the same vocabulary employed in Serbia. However, like inhabitants of Croatia and Bosnia, they use Iekavian forms. This type of language was best illustrated in the nineteenth century by one of the greatest poets of the southern Slav states, the Prince-Archbishop Petar Petrovic Njegos (1811–1851).

Both in the past and now, this language is officially and commonly called "Serbian" despite its Iekavian form, which the Montegrins, unlike the Bosnian Serbs, do not question. However, a certain number of Montenegrin writers and spokesmen have defended a "Montenegrin" language that, paradoxically, extends even further in differentiation. Not only is it different by its alphabet (Cyrillic), forms (Iekavian), and a certain amount of vocabulary, but it also has phonological and grammatical characteristics that simultaneously oppose it to "Serbian," "Croatian," and "Bosnian": two specific phonemes, palatalized s and z, represented by letters borrowed from Polish (s and z with an accent); and a particular use of cases following prepositions (see Nikcevic, 1996). Because of their small territory, Montenegrins are the only people to offer regional grammatical characteristics shared by all. However, this regional language variant has a small public, and most Montenegrins simply write in Iekavian Serb.

## International Usage

National particularities jealously defended at home cannot be taken into consideration abroad. In foreign universities, what is the normal function of a language department? Some diaspora groups say it must bring emigrant children closer to their forefather's roots. Other people simply say that it must teach a foreign language to students who don't speak it. In the first case, this would require separate departments for Serbian, Croatian, and so on. To the best of this author's knowledge, only one institution in the entire world has adopted this difficult solution; Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia, the country where Yugoslav emigration figures are among the highest. Elsewhere, "Serbo-Croatian" is taught (sometimes, the term itself is simply not used so as not to offend some persons).

Diplomats and international institutions, however, have a harder time. At the International Criminal Tribunal at The Hague, simultaneous translations are provided in English, French, and "BCS" which signifies "Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian," witnesses are reassured that they may trust the interpreters, and are asked not to be shocked if they hear a worrisome accent flowing into their headphones. Apart from the French and English versions, the Dayton Accords are written in three highly similar texts. Texts distributed by international administrators in Bosnia always use both alphabets, and when necessary, several lexical variants, for example, *kanton/zupanija* (the first word is Serbian and Bosnian, and the second is Croatian).

## Conclusion

How many languages exist in this territory made up of four Republics? One, several? The area itself is certainly not plurilingual such as Belgium or Switzerland, since everyone can understand each other, and grammar and basic vocabulary are the same. Thus, from virtually all practical standpoints, there is only one single language.

Nonetheless, differences, though statistically few and insignificant, have acquired considerable symbolic value that must not be denied. The French, who lay great stock on the smallest spelling or lexical particularities of their own language, have no business telling Bosniaks, Croats, Montengrins, and Serbs to do otherwise. As Branko Franolic (1984: 127) has remarked, a situation comparable to that of the four ex-Yugoslav republics now exists in the Indian subcontinent, with Hindi in India (Sanskrit alphabet and scholarly vocabulary) and Urdu in Pakistan (Arab alphabet and scholarly vocabulary), both founded on the same Hindustani dialects.

The nineteenth century saw an emphasis on practical needs and achieved a general consensual compromise that respected particularities. The twentieth century has proven to be less wise. Yugoslavian unification was often accompanied by an arrogant disdain of differences that didn't take long to backfire into a delirious overemphasis of those same differences. In the hands of Serbian then Communist authorities, language served as a tool for political unification. It has now become a tool for division used by diverse nationalist representatives who seek to pursue their own design.

Long-lasting peace, still distant in thoughts and minds, will only be achieved through an objective recognition of linguistic realities that can only lead to two outcomes: unity and plurality, and a genuine place for both without emotional overtones. The territory is far from achieving this goal, and both linguists and political authorities must continue to strive for it.

## Notes

1. Some major works on this subject written in West European languages include: Vaillant, 1951; Lencek, 1976; Franolic, 1984; Ivic, 1984; Katicic,1985 and 1995; Banac, 1991; Garde, 1992 and 1996; Christitch, 1996; Thomas, 1994 and 1998.
2. For a discussion on the diverse use of these terms by the Croats, see Mogus 1995.

3. Josip Baotic in Magas 1998: 46.
4. Beginning with the invention of this term in mid nineteenth century up to its abolishment, at least in Croatia, in 1990.
5. Tudjman, 1990. The very title of the book contains two rare words: zbiljnost ("reality") and zlosilje ("violence").
6. "Slovo o srpskom jeziku," *Politika*, August 1 and 8, 1998.
7. This term, referring to all the inhabitants of Bosnia, is distinct from the term *bosnjacki*, or "bosniak," which only refers to Muslim Bosnians.
8. A facsimile has just been republished; "Bosnian Grammar for High School Education," which initially had been published at that time (Gramatika, 1890).
9. Several books on the "Bosnian" language have been published relatively recently: Halilovic, 1991; Jahic, 1991; Isakovic, 1993; Rizvic, 1996.
10. Perhaps also Serb, but this author does not possess this data.
11. This is well analyzed by Magas, 1998.

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CHAPTER 10

# Languages in the Wired World

*Geoffrey Nunberg*

## Introduction

In 1898, when Otto von Bismarck was an old man, a journalist asked him what he took to be the decisive factor in modern history. He answered: "The fact that the North Americans speak English." It was a prescient remark, in two ways. The linguistic and cultural ties among the English-speaking nations were to play a decisive role in shaping the political history of the century. And in turn, the political and cultural ascendancy of the English-speaking nations were to establish English as the most successful world language since classical times, the preferred medium for international business and trade, science and technology, tourism, and cultural life.

To most observers, the rise of the Internet seems to provide just one more road along which English can march on its ineluctable course of conquest. Certainly everybody seems to be sure that the Internet will be an English lake. On the part of Anglophones, this certainty is accompanied by a certain amount of self-satisfaction. The *Sunday New York Times* ran a story a year or so ago with the headline "World, Wide, Web: Three English Words." One computer writer described the Internet as "a great force for the Anglification of the planet" and the editor of a magazine called *The Futurist* predicts that thanks to new media English will become the native language of a majority of the world by some time in the next century. And indeed, one linguist has suggested in all earnestness that the United Nations should simply declare English the official world language,

but rename it "Globalese" so as not to imply that it belongs to any one speech community anymore. (I have the feeling that Bismarck's misgivings wouldn't have been entirely allayed by this maneuver.)

Not surprisingly, non–English speakers have tended to react to this prospect with a certain apprehension. The director of a Russian Internet provider has described the Web as "the ultimate act of intellectual colonialism." And President Chirac has been even more apocalyptic, describing English domination of the Internet as a "major risk for humanity," with its threat of linguistic and cultural uniformity. It's true that few non–English-speaking nations have followed France in trying to explicitly mandate the use of the national language on Websites and the like, but the concern about the spread of English on the Internet is very general.

Is any of this justified—the neoimperialist swagger on one side, the cries of alarm on the other? It's true that right now the overwhelming portion of Net communication is carried out in English. There are a lot of difficulties in coming up with accurate figures on language use on the Net. But a figure of around 85 percent is probably close, depending on how and when the measurements are made.[1] This figure could seem alarming to non-Anglophones, but in fact it doesn't mean much by itself. For one thing, it doesn't take into account the current disproportions of Web users. The Internet was basically a North American development, and the majority of its users are still drawn from the United States and the rest of the English-speaking world. Table 10.1 shows the distribution of top-level Internet hosts by linguistic community from a survey made by Network Wizard in January of 1998.[2]

At present, then, the distribution of Internet users is chiefly a reflection of the patterns of early adoption of the technology. For example, the Scandinavian nations have been very aggressive in getting on the Internet, which is why Finland currently has more sites than either the French- or Spanish-speaking worlds. But it's reasonable to assume that the penetration of the Web will eventually reach a level that's more or less proportionate to population for most of the developed nations of the world. This may take a few years, since at this point the technology is still spreading more rapidly in the United States than in other nations. In 1997, for example, the number of top-level Internet hosts in the United States increased by about 93 percent, against 84 percent in Korea, 63 percent in Italy, 59 percent in Japan, 38 percent in Germany, and 36 percent in France.[3]

The continued high growth in the United States is the result of what economists call a positive exteriority, like the fax effect: the more people there are on-line the more incentive there is for everyone else to get

**Table 10.1** Proportions of top-level Internet hosts in major linguistic communities

| *Linguistic community* | *Percentage of top-level servers* |
|---|---|
| English | 78.4 |
| German | 4.0 |
| Japanese | 3.9 |
| Finnish | 1.5 |
| Dutch | 1.4 |
| French | 1.4 |
| Swedish | 1.1 |
| Norway | 1.0 |
| Spanish | 1.0 |
| Italian | 0.8 |
| Chinese | 0.9 |
| Danish | 0.5 |
| Portuguese | 0.5 |
| Korean | 0.4 |
| Russian | 0.4 |
| Polish | 0.3 |

on-line. The effect is repeated, moreover, as the Internet spreads from one sector or community to the next. In the United States, for example, we have already reached the point where we expect every real estate agency to have a Website and every lawyer to have an e-mail address. To date, most other developed nations haven't reached this point, but this is clearly only a matter of time.[4] Internet penetration is already at well over 10 percent of households in Germany and the Scandinavian nations, and will reach that level by 1999 in Italy and the Netherlands and soon after in most developed European and Asian nations (the figure for the United States is 24 percent).[5] Within five or ten years, we can expect the national penetration of the Web to be roughly proportional to population for the developed world, and at that point linguistic disparities will seem less dramatic than they do now.

Even when Internet penetration is roughly equalized, it is true, we will expect that the proportion of English will continue to be greater than the proportion of native Anglophone users, simply because many people in non–English-speaking nations will find it convenient or expedient to post Web pages in English or to use English when they want to reach an international audience. The survey that Schuetze and I performed found that English-language pages currently account for roughly a third of the content of Web servers in non–English-speaking nations,

though there is a lot of variation from one country to the next and the proportion of English in most will almost certainly diminish over time.

In any event, it is a mistake to attach any great sociopolitical significance to the bald proportions of one or another language on the Internet. We should bear in mind that the incentive to use English doesn't necessarily create a corresponding disincentive to use the local language. In this way the Internet is different from other media of wide diffusion. There is a limited number of movie screens in France, and each of these can show only one film at a time, so that Steven Spielberg and Erich Rohmer are necessarily in competition for channels of distribution. But with the Internet there is an essentially unlimited abundance of communicative resources, which means that diffusion of information is not a zero–sum game.

Indeed, the economics of distribution make multilingual publication on the Web much more feasible than it is in print. The editors of the proceedings of an international medical conference conducted in English can easily allow authors to provide French versions of their contributions on the same site. A company in Nancy that does 5 percent of its sales outside of France may not feel it is worthwhile to print catalogues in English or other languages, but it may make sense to make available some of its Web pages in English. And while this adds to both the absolute amount of English on the Web and its relative proportion as opposed to French, it doesn't diminish the amount of French or the availability of French content to Francophones, whether in France or abroad.

But the bald proportions of English on the Internet aren't just inaccurate indicators of the availability of non-English content; they also invoke assumptions about cultural influence that have been carried over from debates about language use in earlier media. These echoes are ubiquitous in the discussions of Internet language use. A recent (and very sensible) list of proposals for augmenting the use of French on the Net, for example, speaks of "la défense et l'illustration du français sur les réseaux," alluding to du Bellay's sixteenth-century appeal to make the French language illustrious; and complaints about the dominance of English are very often couched in terms of concerns about the "presence" of this or that language on the Net. For most people, clearly, this is a question of national or cultural pride that leans heavily on a print conception of linguistic influence—the idea that the mark of a great language is a global "presence," a wide diffusion that results from universal renown. But this picture is singularly inappropriate to the placeless world of the Net, where the only sort of "presence" that is relevant is simple accessibility. On the Internet every language has an international

presence. From the machine in my office in Palo Alto I can call up the French-language pages of the French Ministry of Culture, the Welsh-language pages of the National Library of Wales, or the Hawaiian-language site at the University of Hawaii.

Granted, the numerical prevalence of English pages greatly heightens the phenomenal impression of English dominance. If you do a search on Alta Vista for the words "Roland Barthes," for example, you will find that out of the first 40 nonduplicate hits, 32 are in English and only 2 are in French (the others are in German, Italian, Spanish, Finnish, and Swedish). Even if you correct these figures for differences in the degree of Internet penetration, the ratio of English to French documents on Barthes would be almost 3:1. For all I know that proportion is consistent with the rates of print publication about Barthes, but the hit list will be a little disconcerting to a Frenchman who is used to browsing the reassuringly Francophone shelves of bookstores, libraries, and other institutions of the literary old order.

To some extent, it's true, this impressionistic effect may be ameliorated by increasing use of browser language preferences and by language-specific search engines and Web indexes. If you restrict the browser to French documents, for example, you still turn up 318 matches in all for Roland Barthes, which is quite a large number. But over the long run I think people will simply get used to seeing large numbers of English documents on the Web, and won't attach to this the same importance that they might when they find that 60 percent of the films showing at Parisian cinemas are American productions, which would entail a correspondingly reduced distribution of French films.

## The Survey

Setting aside the rhetoric of "presence" and influence, then, the important question is not whether English will be statistically or impressionistically dominant on the Web, bur rather whether French or Hungarian users will have adequate access to services and information in their own languages. To try to answer this question, my colleague Hinrich Schuetze and I did a survey of 2.5 million Web pages drawn from a Web crawl performed by the Internet Archive in early 1997. This represents about 5 percent of the entire set of pages retrieved by the crawl, a far greater proportion than have been used in other estimates of language use. We classified the pages using an automatic language identifier developed by Schuetze that can identify alphabetic languages with about 95 percent accuracy (it works slightly less well on nonalphabetic languages like

Chinese or Japanese).[6] The identifier assigned percentages to the languages used in each top-level domain (i.e., com, de, and so forth). In presenting the proportions of English content, we used a measure that corrected for differences in the size of servers.[7]

It's important to bear in mind that the amount of content in a particular language can give only an approximate indication of how widely the language is used.[8] Nonetheless, we take these figures as suggesting the broad patterns of language use. The results of the survey are too extensive to cover in detail here, but I'll give a few representative patterns. For the present purposes, I'll look chiefly at monolingual nations, since multilingual communities raise special problems.

Let's first consider a set of nations that have relatively low Internet penetration, which moreover speak languages that are little used outside of the national boundaries. (I include U.S. figures for comparison.) In all of these nations the proportion of English content is quite high (see table 10.2). These are very different nations, of course, but they have certain things in common. First, the technology is not widely available, so the possibilities of internal communication are limited. (To take the extreme case, if there were only one e-mail user in a nation, it would obviously make no sense for him to use the local language.) Moreover, the vast majority of the Internet users in nations like China, Egypt, and Bulgaria are drawn from English-speaking elites, who use the Internet as essentially a medium for scientific and technical communication. (Note also a number of these nations have to deal with the added technical difficulties posed by non-Roman character sets if they want to publish

**Table 10.2** Nations with low Internet penetration, local languages

| *Domain*<br>*% of English* | *Top-level hosts* | *Inhabitants (July 97)* | *Server* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bulgaria (bg) | 86 | 5,515 | 1,613 |
| China (cn) | 82 | 25,594 | 39,391 |
| Egypt (eg) | 95 | 1,894 | 25,608 |
| Georgia | 81 | 298 | 32,685 |
| Greece (gr) | 81 | 19,711 | 132 |
| Latvia (lv) | 75 | 5,184 | 8,629 |
| Romania (ro) | 84 | 5,998 | 41,619 |
| Thailand (th) | 95 | 12,794 | 406 |
| Turkey (tr) | 62 | 22,963 | 981 |
| United States | 99.7 | 11,829,141 | 21 |

material in the local language.) In any event, these figures represent only the practice of a small group of early adopters, and are not particularly informative about the direction of use once Internet penetration increases to the levels we see in highly developed nations.

But there is variation as well among the developed non–English-speaking nations where the Internet has already taken root. In general, we find the highest proportion of English among the smaller northern European nations whose languages are restricted to national use (see table 10.3). The high use of English here seems natural enough: these are nations whose national languages are not widely used outside the national boundaries, and whose trade and cultural life is largely lived in a multinational setting; in addition, all of these countries have high levels of English proficiency.

The proportion of English use is lower, by contrast, in nations that speak major European languages (see table 10.4). Internet penetration is currently lower in these nations, but they still represent large linguistic communities with a correspondingly higher emphasis on internal communication. Moreover, proficiency in English isn't presumed in nations like France and Italy the way it is in Sweden or the Netherlands, so a site

**Table 10.3** Small, developed language communities; minor languages

| *Domain % of English* | *Top-level hosts* | *Inhabitants (July 97)* | *Server* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Denmark (dk) | 46 | 137,008 | 37 |
| Finland (fi) | 35 | 335,956 | 14 |
| Netherlands (nl) | 45 | 341,560 | 42 |
| Norway (no) | 38 | 209,034 | 20 |
| Sweden (se) | 40 | 284,478 | 29 |

**Table 10.4** Larger language communities

| *Domain % of English* | *Top-level hosts* | *Inhabitants (July 97)* | *Server* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Austria (at) | 42 | 87,408 | 86 |
| Germany (de) | 25 | 875,631 | 88 |
| Spain (es) | 24 | 121,823 | 319 |
| France (fr) | 26 | 292,096 | 186 |
| Italy (it) | 33 | 211,966 | 265 |
| Portugal (pt) | 26 | 18,147 | 547 |

**Table 10.5** Latin-American nations

| *Domain % of English* | *Top-level hosts* | *Inhabitants (July 97)* | *Server* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Argentina (ar) | 16 | 18,985 | 1,472 |
| Brazil (br) | 12 | 68,685 | 1,733 |
| Chile (cl) | 17 | 19,168 | 591 |
| Columbia (co) | 31 | 6,905 | 3,842 |
| Mexico (mx) | 20 | 35,238 | 1,913 |
| Peru (pe) | 12 | 6,510 | 2,616 |
| Uruguay (uy) | 17 | 1,024 | 2,723 |
| Venezuela (ve) | 16 | 4,679 | 3,102 |

posted in English runs the risk of being inaccessible to a number of local users, particularly as the technology spreads to nontechnical and nonacademic users.

Finally, we note that there is a very low percentage of English in the Latin-American countries, even though the technology is still not widely in place there (see table 10.5). This again makes sense: both Brazil and Hispanophone Latin America are large monolingual communities whose cultural and commercial ties with the rest of the world are relatively etiolated compared say to those of Sweden or France. (These are also nations in which people tend to speak English less well than in Western Europe.) And while the proportion of world Internet hosts that are in Brazil or the Hispanophone world is relatively small, each still represents a sizable population in its totality.

For any one of these nations, of course, there are a number of particular factors that determine how and when the local language is used, and there are interesting cases of variation—for example, it isn't clear why the proportion of English is so much higher in Austria than in Germany or in Colombia than in Venezuela. For the present purposes, though, it's enough to observe that these results show that the received wisdom about the Internet is false. English is not going to drive out the use of other languages, and in fact is already in a minority position in all the non–English-speaking nations in which the technology has gained a substantial foothold. With greater diffusion, moreover, the proportion of non-English content in non–English-speaking domains is certain to increase, as the technology is adopted by small businesses and individual users. A real-estate agency or architectural studio in Hannover has neither the incentive nor probably the resources to put up its content in English, the way a company like Lufthansa does.[9]

The process is self-reinforcing, moreover: the more members of a linguistic community there are on the Web, the more incentive they have to use their own language—and the more incentive advertisers and content providers have to provide local-language services. (A 1998 study by Jupiter Communications reports that at some major U.S. sites 30 and 50 percent of their hits come from foreign users, who would surely find it more convenient and quicker to access information from local servers.)[10] There are already numerous examples of this trend. The Websites of the Council of the European Union and of the Louvre, for example, were originally posted exclusively in English, but now offer multilingual versions. The Web index service Yahoo! has put up localized versions in French, Spanish, German, Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, Italian, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese. And there is a booming market in translation and "localization" services, as corporations and advertisers press to make their messages available in other languages.

At the same time, it's asking a lot to suppose that the market alone will ensure that speakers of other languages have available the full range of information and services available to English-speaking users. The state has a role to play here as well. A few nations, like France, have taken the step of mandating the use of the local language in Websites and the like, but there are also less coercive steps that governments can take, for example, by subsidizing translation and the digitization of cultural patrimonies.[11] Both governments and international bodies can continue to devote resources to the development of technology required to display non-ASCII characters and character sets.[12] And developed nations may also choose to support the installation of Internet connections in less-developed regions of their linguistic communities, such as Francophone or Lusiphone Africa.

None of this means, of course, that most people from non–English-speaking communities will be doing all their Internet browsing and communication in their own languages. The Web is an international marketplace, after all, and a French or German user who has some knowledge of other languages would be foolish to confine herself to sites in her own language when shopping for software or CDs. On-line dictionaries and translation aids, moreover, can make the use of foreign-language information much easier than it is in print, particularly for users who have some basic knowledge of the language already.[13] In this sense the Web does provide an added incentive for people to learn other languages, particularly but not exclusively English (I should note that foreign-language sites are being used very productively by students in American language courses).

## Effects of the Internet on Language Communities

This opening up of the linguistic market has effects that go beyond the expanded incentives to learn English, though. Together with other features of the Internet, it promises to work changes in the organization of language communities and in the role they play in the construction of national communities. The modern conception of language and national identity, after all, was largely a creation of the print communications system of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which emerged with the maturation of print capitalism and the spread of bourgeois literacy. It rested first on the emergence of standardized vernaculars that were more widely used than the administrative vernaculars of the Renaissance state, which made possible the diffusion of uniform representations throughout the national community, so that, as Benedict Anderson has put it, people "gradually became aware of the hundreds of thousands, even millions, of people in their language-field, and at the same time that only those hundreds of thousands, or millions, so belonged. These fellow readers, to whom they were connected through print, formed, in their secular, visible invisibility, the embryo of the nationally-imagined community."[14] This is the idea that Samuel Johnson was getting at when he said in 1777 that Britain had become a "nation of readers." He meant not merely that more people were reading (though that was true enough), or that they were reading more texts (reading "extensively," as Roger Chartier has put it, as opposed to the "intensive" reading of earlier periods), but also that the experience of participating in the print discourse had become constitutive of the sense of national identity.

The discourse that mediated the rise of modern national consciousness was naturally shaped by the material limitations of print (and later, by analogous properties of the broadcast media). Given the large capital accumulations that print required, production was necessarily concentrated, increasingly so over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, despite the continuing democratization of the reading public. Distribution was highly centralized, especially in metropolitan nations like France and England—circulation was effectively limited to national boundaries, and remote regions and colonies were marginalized (a complaint, recall, that was particularly rankling to the American revolutionaries). And in order to achieve the relatively large circulation that the economics of print required, the common discourse was restricted to matters of general interest—to "public affairs" in the broadest sense of the term (i.e., so as to include literature, commerce, and *faits divers*).

This topical circumscription in turn determined the nature of the standardized print languages itself: by the nineteenth century it had become an instrument designed essentially for the requirements of formal exposition—what Heinz Kloss refers to as Sachprosa—that was well removed from the language of everyday life.

Electronic communication contrasts with print and broadcast in most of these regards. First, the low costs of production and distribution mean that the ability to speak is more widely distributed—the point that people are getting at when they observe that on the Internet, "anyone can reach a potential audience of millions," and the like. This can be a little misleading, to be sure. Posting a Website that is actually accessible to hundreds of thousands of users requires a large capital investment in both technology and publicity, and the recent scramble to acquire Web "portals" is an indication of how concentrated the distribution of information actually is.[15] But the Internet is still leakier than print, and tends to resist monopolistic concentration. The decentralization of distribution, moreover, entails that communication is much more efficient, both in the sense that messages can more easily reach their intended audiences, and in the sense that access is independent of geographical distance and institutional and commercial connections—the property that creates, among other things, the more open linguistic marketplace that I mentioned earlier.

Then too, there are notable differences in content between the two media. It may be that "print discourse" is itself an abstraction over a wide range of forms and media, but "the Internet" is even more so. Some Internet content is the digital equivalent of print forms—news, literature, scientific papers, advertising, and the like. Much of it, though, has no print equivalent—you think of discussion groups, e-mail, or personal Web pages, forms that either take the place of communication that was formerly oral or represent essentially new types of communication. As a consequence, the language of the Net contains a more varied repertoire than the language of print—it includes not just the equivalents of print vernaculars, but the varieties used in e-mail and discussion lists, whose deceptive informality masks a highly stylized register.

What effects will all this have on the organization of language communities? The variety of forms and functions of the Net make it very difficult to answer this in any simple way. Electronic communication does have certain inherent biases, to take Harold Innis's term, but they don't militate in the large for any particular form of social or political organization. At best the technology can help to amplify and facilitate sociopolitical changes already in motion. But in the end,

the wired world will be sociolinguistically quite different from the present one.

Take, for example, some of the effects of the elimination of geographical constraints on the accessibility of information. One area where this has already had a striking effect is in the distribution of news and other kinds of public information. In the world of print or broadcast, it's only the English-language media that can achieve anything like general worldwide distribution. You can sometimes find a French television news program on cable in big cities in the United States or a three-day-old copy of *Le Figaro* at an international news dealer, but they aren't available in every hotel room and at every street corner the way the HERALD TRIBUNE and CNN are in France. And for smaller or less influential languages like Greek or Hindi, the circulation of information pretty much stops at national borders.

With the Web, by contrast, this kind of distribution is very easy. My French and German colleagues at the Xerox Palo Alto Research Center routinely read the Web versions of daily papers like LE FIGARO and DIE WELT. And you can find electronic versions of newspapers from Malaysia, Indonesia, Colombia, Turkey, Qatar, and about 70 or 80 other nations. (Yahoo! lists more than 1,400 sites for newspapers outside of the United States, a majority of which are publishing at least a part of their content on the Web.) And as with news, so with many other forms of communication traditionally consigned to print: magazines, government information, educational materials, scientific journals, and finally, as the digitized collections of major national libraries begin to come online, the aggregate literatures of the developed nations. To these, moreover, we should add the numerous international discussion groups conducted in languages large and small, which can constitute international communities of reception in which news and the like can be interpreted. (A recent search for sites or discussion groups that were wholly or partially in languages other than English found around 100 languages, among them Arabic, Armenian, Basque, Breton, Cambodian, Catalan, Czech, Esperanto, Gaelic, Greek, Hebrew, Hindi, Hmong, Hungarian, Indonesian, Macedonian, Malay, Rumanian, Slovenian, Swahili, Urdu, Welsh, Yiddish, and Yoruba.)

These efficiencies of distribution work to the particular advantage of dispersed language communities—not just linguistic diasporas like the Germans in California or Yiddish speakers everywhere, but ultimately, postcolonial populations that have up to now existed in the linguistic penumbra of the metropolis. People in the Francophone Caribbean or the Mahgreb, for example, can have more immediate access to a much greater

range of French-language content; institutions of higher education can have access to textbooks, periodicals, and eventually, to the digitized contents of national library collections. And similarly for the Hungarian speakers in Slovakia, the Chinese of Southeast Asia, the Francophones of Western Canada, or the Russians in many parts of Eastern Europe.

On the other hand, the Net can reduce the dependency on institutions that have traditionally exercised a hegemonic influence over the periphery. Francophones outside the metropolis need not depend on *Le Figaro* or *Le Monde*; they can also get on-line versions of Nice-Matin, Lyon Capitale, or Les Dernières Nouvelles D'Alsace. People in Lusiphone Africa have the option of going to sites in Brazil, which has many more Websites than Portugal does. And in the Caribbean, presumably, the great number of U.S. sites will attract more users than sites in Britain, the historical metropolis of the region. At the point when the Internet becomes an important medium of communication in these nations, then, linguistic ties with the metropolis are likely to become more selective and facultative than with print. But we should bear in mind that in many of these nations, Internet access will be restricted for a long time to small elites, and the technology won't have the cultural importance that the mass media do: its effects will be limited to policy makers and higher education.

What of the major language communities in the developed world? Nations like the United States, France, Germany, and so forth are already cohesive communities whose interests are well served by the mass media, and however far-reaching the effects of on-line news and information, the shift to this form of publication is unlikely to work any important changes in the sense of national identity, particularly since these functions will continue to be highly centralized, dominated by a small number of on-line publications and Web portals. There has been a good deal of talk, of course, about the Internet as an internationalist force that transcends national boundaries and creates "global communities" and the like. But while international discussion lists have an important role to play in sectors like the academic and scientific worlds, they are not likely to be much of a factor in disrupting the basic patterns of national identity. Francophone Belgians are not going to feel less Belgian simply in virtue of participating in discussion groups with Francophones in France or Canada.

There are several ways, though, in which the Internet may have sociolinguistic effects even in communities like these. One is in altering the perception of the connection between language and national community. The place to look here, I think, is less the digital equivalents of print

genres than the various quasi-public forms that have emerged on the Net: Usenet discussion groups, special-interest distribution lists, and the like, which have had huge participation in nations like the United States, where 25 percent of households already have Internet access. For the first time in history, the written language is being used as a medium for active, daily, public communication among millions of people—"public" at least in the sense that the participants have never met, and are connected entirely through their participation in these groups. The "nation of readers," that is, is becoming a nation of writers.

Enthusiasts like to predict that this discourse will lead to a fundamental reorganization of public life. This is probably unrealistic: the Internet is too disorganized, too fragmented and too selective in its participation to replace traditional political institutions. But the Net has become an important secondary forum that the press must pay attention to, and it shapes the way a lot of people understand the public discussions of civic life. In particular it introduces new forms of language into these discussions, one less like the print discourse than the oral exchanges of private life, but filtered through newly emerged conventions of electronic communication. This informality can be deceptive: the language of e-mail discussions is no less rule-governed than the language of print, but is less explicit and relies more on the contextual background—it is the projection of private language into a quasi-public sphere. This is one reason why forms like e-mail can be difficult for foreigners to master, even when they are capable of writing perfect formal prose. More important, the medium can discourage the participation even of native speakers who aren't privy to the interactive norms of middle-class speech. In this regard it is no different, of course, from ordinary conversation, but ordinary conversation doesn't present itself as a public forum.

So while the Internet certainly opens up the public discussion in certain ways, it can also restrict and circumscribe it, by moving it away from a neutral public language that transcends social differences. In this sense the medium could play into the strong recent tendencies in several Western nations to redefine nationality in more narrowly culture-based terms, rather than in terms of shared institutions and political ideals. (The importance of Internet discussion has already been cited, for example, by proponents of the movement to make English the official language of the United States.) I don't want to make too much of this—these tendencies were in play well before the Internet was introduced, and the Net is not going to be more than a compounding influence. But we should bear this in mind when we hear people talk in confident ways about the capacity of the Internet to broaden the political process. As

Harold Innes said about earlier technological revolutions in communication, that "improvements in communication [can] make for increased difficulties in understanding."[16]

I should mention one other way in which the discussions on the Internet can play a role in redefining communities, by refiguring secondary communities at the national level, particularly in scientific and professional sectors. In non–English-speaking nations, most scientific publication is now carried out either largely or entirely in English, with the local language reserved either for administrative publications or for oral discussion in classrooms, laboratories, and the like. In a sense, then, we can't speak of a French- or Italian-language scientific *public*, since scientific discourse in these languages is chiefly conducted within the private and institutional spheres, mediated by personal and professional connections.

On the Internet, though, a great deal of this oral discourse has begun to bubble up into public view. The scientific distribution lists of the Net are full of the kinds of discussions of practice that were excluded from print journals in the nineteenth century: pedagogical and technical tips, gossip, institutional politics, anecdotal observations about curiosities that lie outside the realm of current theory. You might be reminded of the scientific periodicals of the pre-nineteenth-century period, like the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* or the *Journal des Sçavans*, with the mix of concerns that we would now distinguish as private and public, and the mix of participants that we would now distinguish as authorized and unauthorized—professors, graduate students, interested amateurs. And this development necessarily changes the conception of the national scientific community, both by sharpening the awareness of common interests and by providing a forum for the formation of opinion that is more independent of institutional structures and hierarchies.

In the end, this may be what is most interesting about the Internet—not that it makes the world smaller, like previous communications technologies, but that it helps to keep it big and diverse.

## Notes

1. There are several ways of classifying pages according to languages. One simple procedure is simply to do searches on terms whose synonyms are spelled differently in each language, like "welcome." Using this procedure, Crystal (1997) comes up with a figure for English of around 80 percent in a 1996 search. (See David Crystal, *English as a Global Language*, Cambridge: The Cambridge University Press, 1997.) There are several problems here, however. For one thing, standard search engines do not index pages from all

languages with equal coverage. For another, the topics of discussion on the Web vary from one domain to the next, particularly since the mix of sectors is different—in the United States, e.g., there are many more pages belonging to small businesses and individuals.

A second method is via user reports, such as was conducted in the GVU user surveys at Georgia Tech (see http://www.cc.gatech.edu/gvu/user_surveys/survey-1998–04/). Since participation in these is voluntary and appeals are posted in English, however, this naturally favors Anglophone and particularly American sites.

A more accurate procedure was used in a survey performed in 1997 by the Babel project, a joint initiative of Alis Technologies and the Internet Society (see http://babel.alis.com:8080/palmares.en.html). The project surveyed about 3,200 randomly chosen home pages that contained more than 500 characters using an automatic language classifier. The potential sources of difficulty here include the accuracy of the language classifier (which utilized only trigrams), the randomness of the selection process, the representativeness of home pages, and the small size of the sample, particularly with regard to smaller domains. For the better-represented languages, however, the figures accorded quite closely with the results of our own survey, reported later, which involved about 2.5 million pages. In particular, their figure of 84 percent English content is close to our figure of 85.9 percent.

| *Language* | *Number of pages* | *Percentage English* |
|---|---|---|
| English | 2,722 | 84.0 |
| German | 147 | 4.5 |
| Japanese | 101 | 3.1 |
| French | 59 | 1.8 |
| Spanish | 38 | 1.2 |
| Swedish | 35 | 1.1 |
| Italian | 31 | 1.0 |
| Portuguese | 21 | 0.7 |
| Dutch | 20 | 0.6 |
| Norwegian | 19 | 0.6 |
| Finnish | 14 | 0.4 |
| Czech | 11 | 0.3 |
| Danish | 9 | 0.3 |
| Russian | 8 | 0.3 |
| Malay | 4 | 0.1 |

2. See http://www.nw.com/zone/WWW/report.html. These figures include only the 55 largest domains, which however account for over 99.5 percent of top-level hosts. I also include only linguistic communities that represent more than 0.3 percent of the total number of top-level hosts. The mapping between domains and linguistic communities was made as follows:
   English : com, net, edu, mil, us, uk, ca (80%), au, org, gov, nz, za (50%), arpa, ie.

German : de, at, ch (80%)
Japanese : jp
Finnish : fi
Dutch : nl, be (50%)
French : fr, ca (20%), ch (20%), be (50%)
Swedish : se
Norway : no
Spanish : es, mx, ar, cl, uy
Italian : it
Chinese : cn, tw, hk, sg (80%)
Danish : dk
Portuguese : pt, br
Korean : ko
Russian : ru, su
Polish : pl

These divisions are necessarily a bit arbitrary, and in some cases will be misleading. For example, I've included Hong Kong and Singapore as Chinese-speaking domains, though in fact the overwhelming majority of people in these domains who use the Internet are native or near-native in English. (English-language pages account for 90 percent of the content on Hong Kong sites, as opposed to only 31 percent in Taiwan.) Another complication involves the .com domain, which in fact includes a number of companies in non–English-speaking nations. But most of these are large multinationals whose Web content is primarily in English, and they represent far less than 1 percent of the total sites in this domain. In the end, though, even if a more accurate census were possible, the proportions among languages would not change dramatically.

3. The only nation in which the rate of increase has been higher than the United States is Taiwan, where the number of hosts increased by 510 percent in 1997.
4. In France in particular the adoption of the Internet may be a bit slower because so many of its functionalities are already available to users of the minitel. A random selection of 40 sites in France from 1997 revealed the following distribution:

| *Type of organization* | *Sites* | *Percentage* |
|---|---|---|
| Internet-related businesses | 11 | 27.5 |
| University sites | 8 | 20.0 |
| Research institutes | 7 | 17.5 |
| Touristic or community guides | 4 | 10.0 |
| Media companies | 3 | 7.5 |
| Government agencies | 3 | 7.5 |
| On-line magazines | 2 | 5.0 |
| Computer sales | 1 | 2.5 |
| CD-ROM catalogue | 1 | 2.5 |

5. See http://www.jup.com/research/reports/europe/.
6. The classifier works by identifying words and trigrams (three-character sequences) that are characteristic of the language in question. It was first trained to identify English on the .gov (U.S. government) domain, on the assumption that virtually all of the text documents in that domain were in English. It was then trained to identify other languages by analyzing the language of a domain in which the language was native (e.g., German in .de) while ignoring cues that were characteristic of English. The process was iterated for domains in which more than two languages were used (e.g., Belgium or Finland).

   In all domains there was a residue of pages that could not be assigned to one or another language, usually because they did not contain sufficient alphabetic content (e.g., index pages, pages of numerical tables). For most large domains, this residue ranged between 5 and 10 percent of pages.

   Where the classifier identified some pages as belonging to a language related to the national language of the country, we assigned these misidentifications to the national language. For example, classifier tagged 1.9 percent of the pages in the dk (Denmark) domain to Norwegian, but we assumed that these were misclassifications of Danish-language pages.
7. The procedure was as follows: we assigned each server a single vote, independent of its size, and distributed that vote among languages according to the proportion of pages on the server in each. The procedure has the advantage of correcting for the effect of a few large servers that may not be representative of the wider pattern of language use in a domain—e.g., if they belong to an international organization or a multinational corporation.
8. For one thing, the figures measure only the number of Web pages in a language, not its use in e-mail or Internet discussion groups and the like. For another, we haven't measured how frequently certain Web pages are consulted. This difference is likely to be particularly important when we are comparing nations like the United States or Finland with nations in which the technology is only beginning to take hold. In the former there are large numbers of sites for individuals and small firms that get relatively few hits, while in the latter most of the sites belong to government departments, universities, and large companies, which get relatively more hits each.
9. The determination of who is using English and why would involve an extensive hand-search of sites, which we did not undertake. We did however examine 40 French sites chosen at random, and noted the following patterns. Only three sites contained all or almost all English content. These were the French Nuclear Energy agency, a site for a TV channel, and a site for a medical institute. Another seven sites contained about half English content. These included an Internet developer, a multimedia communications agency, a Metz city guide, and several university sites. The remaining sites consisted of all or mostly all French content.

10. See http://www.jup.com.
11. Anatoly Voronov, director of the Russian Internet provider Glasnet, observes that at present "it is far easier for a Russian language speaker with a computer to download the works of Dostoyevsky translated into English to read than it is for him to get the original in his own language." Quoted in Michael Specter, "The World-Wide Web: Three English Words," *The New York Times*, April 6, 1996.
12. This has been a major focus of the MLIS program of the European Union, as well; see http://www2.echo.lu/mlis/mlishome.html.
13. Machine translation systems, e.g., may be woefully inadequate when it comes to composing letters or understanding the fine points of a text, but they are generally sufficient to give a user a sense of what a document is saying, particularly if she has a smattering of knowledge of the language already. And bilingual dictionary plug-ins can provide glosses that take into account the context in which a term is used. (If a reader runs across the English sentence "We sent out for pizza," e.g., the dictionary will be in a position to know that "send out" in the context means "order" rather than "transmit.")
14. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, London: Verso, 1983, p. 47.
15. According to a study by Alexa Inc., 50 percent of all Web clicks go to just slightly more than 1,500 sites, or less than one-tenth of 1 percent of the total, and the top 2 percent of Websites account for 95 percent of the total number of clicks.
16. Harold Innis, *The Bias of Communication*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1951, p. 25.