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Language and Nation: Is Switzerland a Model for Europe?

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The formation of a state and the building of a nation represent two different processes, which, in Europe, can often overlap.[1] Whereas in Western Europe the formation of the state generally preceded the building of the nation, in most regions

of Central and Eastern Europe the building of the nation was achieved before the formation of the state.[2]

 In Europe the development of a state generally led to the establishment of a political centre, which could then spread its bureaucratic reach throughout the whole country.[3] In such cases state authorities demanded sovereignty over a specific territory, which they controlled. In contrast to this, nation-

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[2]   Here is a selection from the literature on nation, nation-state, and nationalism in Europe: Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London 1983; Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford 1983; Heinrich August Winkler (Ed.), *Nationalismus*, 2nd extended edition, Königsstein/Ts. 1985; Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and nationalism since 1780. Programme, myth, reality*, Cambridge 1990; Erich Fröschl, Maria Mesner and Uri Ra'anan (Eds.), *Staat und Nation in multi-ethnischen Gesellschaften*, Vienna 1991; Theodor Schieder, *Nationalismus und Nationalstaat. Studien zum nationalen Problem im modernen Europa*, published by Otto Dann and Hans-Ulrich Wehler, Göttingen 1991; Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity*, Reno 1991; Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Rasse - Klasse - Nation. Ambivalente Identitäten*, Hamburg and Berlin 1992; Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*, Cambridge 1992; Ernest Gellner, *Encounters with Nationalism*, Oxford and Cambridge 1994; John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (Eds.), *Nationalism*, Oxford 1994; John Lukacs, *Die Geschichte geht weiter. Das Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts und die Wiederkehr des Nationalismus*, Munich 1994; Hagen Schulze, *Staat und Nation in der europäischen Geschichte*, Munich 1994; Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed. Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe*, Cambridge 1996; Hanspeter Kriesi et al. (Eds.), *Nation and National Identity. The European Experience in Perspective*, Chur and Zurich 1999; Dieter Langewiesche, *Nation, Nationalismus, Nationalstaat in Deutschland und Europa*, Munich 2000; Andreas Wimmer, *Shadows of Modernity, The Anthropology of State Formation, Nationalism, and Ethnic Conflict*, Cambridge (forthcoming).

[3]   Hanspeter Kriesi, "Introduction: State Formation and Nation Building in the Swiss Case", in: Hanspeter Kriesi et al. (Eds.) 1999 (as in note 2), 13-28, here: 14.

building is concerned with the drawing of cultural borderlines.[4] In addition the two processes influenced each other. The establishment of political states encouraged the development of both inner and outer borders. In West European countries like Great Britain, France, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands and Switzerland, the populations developed a national consciousness that was moulded by the state, through processes lasting hundreds of years. But in Central and Eastern Europe the states were produced as the result of the process of self-discovery of the different nationalities.

As a result of the European history of the 19th and 20th centuries new nation-states emerged, which in most cases defined themselves in terms of one single language, or at least one prevalent language.[5] With a few exceptions, European states organised themselves according to this national language principle. Ernest Gellner explained this as follows: since the division of labour in modern societies requires a uniform language, states homogenised culture. If the citizens wanted to profit from the economic advantages and the political rights of the new nation-state, all those residing in the territory had to be master of a single official language.[6]

Exceptions to this rule in Western Europe were Switzerland and Belgium, whose existence demonstrates that states may remain politically and economically viable, even if their

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[4]   Peter Flora et al. (Eds.), *State, Economy, and Society in Western Europe 1815-1975. A Data Handbook in two Volumes*, Vol. 1, Frankfurt 1983, here: 16-21.

[5]   On linguistic nationalism: Harald Haarmann, *Die Sprachenwelt Europas. Geschichte und Zukunft der Sprachnationen zwischen Atlantik und Ural*, Frankfurt and New York 1993; Daniel Baggioni, *Langues et nations en Europe*, Paris 1997; Andreas Gardt (Ed.), *Nation und Sprache. Die Diskussion ihres Verhältnisses in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Berlin and New York 2000.

[6]   Ernest Gellner, *Nationalismus und Moderne*, Berlin 1991.

inhabitants do not use a single language for communication within their borders. While in multilingual Switzerland the decentralised structure of the state muffled political tensions over language issues, the élites in Budapest and Prague had a different view of the state, seeing in language an embodiment of their new national identities. Around the middle of the 19th century the German-speaking majority in Switzerland was already numerically stronger, at approximately 70 percent, than the Magyars were in the kingdom of Hungary, but the German-speakers made no serious attempt to germanise the remainder of the Swiss. This is the crucial difference between the cultural nation building process in Switzerland and most other European countries.

It was not until the end of the 19th century that the protection of linguistic minorities became a political issue in Europe. Before this, minorities in the new nation-states had been faced with pressure to assimilate from the linguistic majority. Although the initial idealism, which formed the basis for state protection of minorities, had been developed before the First World War, it was not until after the events of the Second World War that change came, and a number of European countries incorporated provisions of this type in their constitutions and laws.[7] This process accelerated in Western Europe after the

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[7]   Harald Haarmann 1993 (as in note 5), 107-114. On minority groups in West, East and Central Europe see, among others: Henri Giordan (Ed*.), Les minorités en Europe. Droits linguistiques et Droits de l'Homme*, Paris 1992; Moritz Csáky, "Die Vielfalt der Habsburgermonarchie und die nationale Frage", in: Urs Altermatt (Ed.), *Nation, Ethnizität und Staat in Zentraleuropa*, Vienna and Cologne and Weimar 1996, 44-64; Erhard Busek, *Mitteleuropa. Eine Spurensicherung*, Vienna 1997; Valeria Heuberger, Arnold Suppan and Elisabeth Vyslonzil (Ed.), *Das Bild vom Anderen, Identitäten, Mentalitäten, Mythen und Stereotypen in multiethnischen europäischen Regionen*, Frankfurt 1998.

1970s and led to autonomy statutes in Northern Italy (South Tyrol, and the Aosta Valley) and in Spain (Catalonia, Galicia, and the Basque Country).

Cultural Homogenisation as a Basic Rule in Europe

Even before the French Revolution, France and Spain attempted to make their territory homogenous linguistically. In France the policy of linguistic centralisation began in the 16th century. The revolution of 1789 established the French language as a symbol of national unity in France.[8]

Since the 19th century, a number of European governments have made a political program of the nation-state, with its single language and *Volk*. They adopted a policy of linguistic exclusivity in state, society and the economy and established the language of the majority group as the monopoly language. The governments linked political citizenship and cultural identity together and demanded loyalty from the citizens in political, military and cultural matters. How the nation-state was justified philosophically played no important role. During the 19th and 20th centuries the nation states homogenised the language of their population by privileging the official state language and disadvantaging regional and minority languages. Most nation-states organised themselves internally according to national language criteria and homogenised society linguistically.[9]

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[8]   On language policy in France: Harald Haarmann 1993 (as in note 5), 89-94; Klaus Bochmann et al. (Eds.), *Sprachpolitik in der Romania. Zur Geschichte sprachpolitischen Denkens und Handelns von der Französischen Revolution bis zur Gegenwart*, Berlin and New York 1993; Jacqueline Picoche and Christiane Marchello-Nizia, *Histoire de la langue française*, 4e édition revue et corrigée, Paris 1994.

[9]   See literature references in notes 2 and 5.

The truth of this can be seen by examining historical language data for European countries. Let us focus first on Hungary. According to László Katus, the proportion of Magyars in 1850 was 41.6 percent.[10] Sixty years later, the census of 1910 gave the kingdom of Hungary a total population of over 18 million. Of these, 54.5 percent spoke Hungarian, while 16.1 percent gave Romanian, 10.7 percent Slovak and 10.4 percent German as their first language, to name only the most important minority groups.[11] It can safely be estimated that between 1880 and 1910, 2.5 m - 3 million non-Magyar inhabitants of the Kingdom of Hungary were culturally and linguistically assimilated. In 1910 the Magyars represented around half of the total population, but the Romanian minority stood at 14 percent, and German, Slovak and Croatian minorities each represented between 9 and 10 percent of the population.[12] The Treaty of Trianon in 1920 meant that Hungary lost a large proportion of its pre-war territory and population to neighbouring states. Now there were 1.5 million Magyars living outside the Hungary's borders in Siebenbürgen, Banat and the Kreischland, 700,000 in the south of Slovakia and the Carpato region of Ukraine, and 500,000 in Vojvodina.[13]

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[10] László Katus, "Die Magyaren", in: *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848-1918*, ed. Adam Wandruszka and Peter Urbanitsch, Vol. 3/1, Vienna 1980, 411-488, here: 414.

[11] Péter Hanák, *Ungarn in der Donaumonarchie. Probleme der bürgerlichen Umgestaltung eines Vielvölkerstaates*, Vienna, Munich and Budapest 1984, 333.

[12] László Katus 1980 (as in note 10); Hans Goebl, "Geschichte lernen und aus Geschichte lernen. Die altösterreichische Sprachenvielfalt und Sprachenpolitik als Modellfall für ein Europa von heute und morgen", in: *Die Slawischen Sprachen* 39 (1994), 5-42.

[13] Arnold Suppan and Valeria Heuberger, "Nationen und Minderheiten in Mittel-, Ost- und Südosteuropa seit 1918", in: Valeria Heuberger, Othmar Kolar, Arnold Suppan and Elisabeth Vyslonzil (Eds.), *Nationen,*

At the end of the 18th century, only one fifth of the 50,000 inhabitants of Pest/Buda were Hungarians. Three-quarters of the population were German. Around the middle of the 19th century, 56 percent still considered themselves to have German as their mother tongue, while the Magyars had already increased to one-third of the population. At the outbreak of the First World War, 86 percent of the 900,000 inhabitants of Budapest were Magyars and practically all the inhabitants spoke Hungarian.[14]

In this way in the Kingdom of Hungary multilingualism was decisively weakened during the 19th and early 20th centuries. As Moritz Csáky notes, the old '*hungarus*' concept, which considered all inhabitants of the kingdom to be Hungarians no matter what their mother tongue, lost support in the face of the new Magyar nationalism.[15] After the dual monarchy was established in the 'compromise' of 1867, Magyarisation was imposed, step by step. The nationalities law of 1868 acknowledged the non-Magyar nationalities as cultural minorities, but denied them a right to political autonomy. It gave the different linguistic groups the possibility of using their

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Nationalitäten, Minderheiten. Probleme des Nationalismus in Jugoslawien, Ungarn, Rumänien, der Tschechoslowakei, Bulgarien, Polen, der Ukraine, Italien und Österreich 1945-1990, Vienna and Munich 1994, 11-32, here: 16-17. See also: Horst Haselsteiner, "Die multikulturellen Elemente der Donaumonarchie", in: Urs Altermatt and Emil Brix (Ed.), *Schweiz und Österreich. Eine Nachbarschaft in Mitteleuropa, Vienna*, Cologne and Weimar 1995, 53-60.

[14] Péter Hanák 1984 (as in note 11), 287-289.

[15] Moritz Csáky, "´Hungarus´ oder ´Magyar´. Zwei Varianten des ungarischen Nationalbewußtseins zu Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts", in: *Annales. Sectio Historica* 22 (1982), 71-84; Moritz Csáky and Elena Mannová (Eds.), *Collective Identities in Central Europe in Modern Times*, Bratislava 1999.

mother tongue in local offices, the courts, the churches and above all the schools.[16]

After 1867 the government in Budapest employed a number of means to strengthen Magyarisation, including education policies, the appointment of officials and the Magyarisation of family names and place names. Magyarisation became an aid to social mobility for those aspiring to join the country's elite. Above all it was the towns which became the 'crucibles of Magyarisation' (Péter Hanák). In the second half of the 19th century, linguistic assimilation took place above all in regions which were linguistically mixed. The intellectual elites and the government officials adapted especially quickly.[17]

A further example of how a national language was able to establish itself can be found in the former Czechoslovakia.[18] In the lands which belonged to the earlier Bohemian Kingdom, and which correspond more or less to the territory of the

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[16] On the history of the Kingdom of Hungary and Magyarisation: László Katus 1980 (as in note 10); Péter Hanák 1984 (as in note 11); Jörg K. Hoensch, Geschichte Ungarns 1867-1983, Stuttgart 1984; John Lukacs, *Ungarn in Europa. Budapest um die Jahrhundertwende*, Berlin 1990; Péter Hanák (Ed.), *Die Geschichte Ungarns. Von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, Essen 1988 (on the nationalities law: 155-158); Miklós Molnár, *Geschichte Ungarns. Von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, Hamburg 1999.

[17] Péter Hanák 1984 (as in note 11); Jörg K. Hoensch 1984 (as in note 16), 36-43.

[18] On the history of Czechoslovakia: Jirí Koralka and R. J. Crampton, "Die Tschechen", in: Adam Wandruszka and Peter Urbanitsch (Eds.), *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848-1918. Die Völker des Reiches*, Vol. 3/1, Vienna 1980, 489-521; Otto Urban, *Die tschechische Gesellschaft 1848 bis 1918*, Vols. 1+2, Vienna, Cologne and Weimar 1994; Otto Urban, *Petite histoire des pays tchèques*, Paris 1996; Otto Urban, "Die Tschechen und Zentraleuropa", in: Urs Altermatt (Ed.), *Nation, Ethnizität und Staat in Mitteleuropa*, Vienna, Cologne and Weimar 1996, 109-117.

contemporary Czech Republic, the Czechs made up between two-thirds and three-quarters of the population. As Otto Urban writes, from the High Middle Ages onwards, three parallel linguistic cultures developed in this area, based on Latin, German, and Czech, which coexisted and interacted. The issue of nation, in the modern sense of the term, began to arise when the Habsburg monarchy tried to centralise its empire and began to promote German language. Vienna's efforts at centralisation led to Czech resistance and this reaction brought about a Czech renaissance. From the end of the 18th century on, the region experienced a drive to assimilate speakers of minority languages to the Czech language group. From 1870 until the outbreak of the First World War the Czech elite achieved great progress in their economic and cultural activity, and from the 1880s on the German speakers were put on the defensive, leading to an increase in ethnic and nationalist tensions.[19]

Taking the example of the city of Prague, there is evidence of how clearly the move toward linguistic homogenisation proceeded. As Jacques Le Rider writes, up until the beginning of the 19th century Prague remained in many respects a German city. However, this changed fundamentally in the closing decades of that century, as the number of German speakers declined steadily. In 1880 they represented 15 percent of the population – about 42,000 people – but 20 years later this had fallen to only 7.5 percent or 34,000 citizens. Of these, 40 percent were Jews, whose 'national' status might change from census to census. The economic and social background to the accelerating Czech-isation of Prague was industrialisation,

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[19] Otto Urban, *Petite histoire des pays tchèques*, Paris 1996, 80-84; Otto Urban, "Die Tschechen und Zentraleuropa", in: Urs Altermatt (Ed.), *Nation, Ethnizität und Staat in Mitteleuropa*, Vienna, Cologne and Weimar 1996, 111-114.

which set in motion heavy immigration from the Bohemian countryside of Czech speakers, and altered the linguistic make-up of the city. The population of Prague increased from 157,000 in 1850 to 514,000 in 1900, principally as a result of immigration from the Czech-speaking countryside. The Czech language gained ground in everyday life in the city and began to displace German. By the eve of the First World War Czech was already dominant in cultural areas. This development during the modern period meant that people of different languages and cultures acquired a keener sense of ethnic and national identity and began to group themselves into separate communities. A good example of Czech-isation is the Prague University. In 1783 Latin had been dropped as the language of instruction in favour of German, but in 1882 the University split into separate German-language and Czech-language sections.[20]

The Czechoslovak Republic which came into existence in 1918 retained the numerous minority groupings within its territory: the 1921 census attributed Czech or Slovak nationality to 65.5 percent of the population, while 23.4 percent gave their nationality as German, 5.6 percent Hungarian, and 3.5 percent Ruthenian (Carpatho-Rusyn) and Russian. The Jews were already linguistically assimilated and made up 1.4 percent of the population. After the Second World War the situation was fundamentally altered. More than 140,000 Czechoslovakian Jews fell victim to the Holocaust. And the

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[20] On Prague: Jacques Le Rider, *Mitteleuropa. Auf den Spuren eines Begriffes*, Vienna 1994, 107-113. See also: Jirí Koralka and R. J. Crampton 1980 (as in note 18); Otto Urban, *Die tschechische Gesellschaft 1848 bis 1918*, Vols. 1+2, Vienna, Cologne and Weimar 1994; Otto Urban, *Petite histoire des pays tchèques*, Paris 1996.

Potsdam Agreement resulted in three million indigenous German speakers being expelled from Czechoslovakia.[21]

The dominance of Czech was increasingly seen by Slovaks as an obstacle to their emancipation. After the break-up of the Soviet bloc they took the opportunity to separate from the Czechoslovakian state and on 1st January 1993 the country achieved a peaceful transition to separate Czech and Slovak states.

The Multilingual Alternative

An alternative and long-established method of managing different linguistic groups within a single European nation state can be identified in the cases of Switzerland, Belgium and Finland. In Switzerland and Belgium language communities coexisted without the emergence of one language as the single dominant national language, but let us first consider the case of Finland.[22]

Finland became independent in 1917 and recognised both Finnish and Swedish as national and official languages. Since 1919 Finland's laws have been written in both languages, despite the fact that over 95 percent of the population speaks Finnish. This generous approach to the minority language can be traced to the fact that until the beginning of the 19th century Finland formed part of the Kingdom of Sweden and it was Swedish that remained culturally predominant for many years, despite the gradual construction of Finnish national consciousness. The language law of 1922 divided the country

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[21] Jirí Nekvapil, Tschechien, in: Hans Goebl et al. (Eds.), *Kontaktlinguistik. Ein internationales Handbuch zeitgenössischer Forschung*, 2. Half-volume, Berlin and New York 1997, 1641-1649.

[22] On the language question in Finland: Harald Haarmann 1993 (as in note 5), 101-105.

for administrative purposes into monolingual and bilingual regions. Communities qualify as bilingual if more than 10 percent, or at least 5,000 individual residents, are speakers of the other language. In 1991 Finland also recognised Sami as an official language in the region of Lapland.

The examples of Belgium and Switzerland are more complex. Over the last hundred years the different language regions in Belgium have developed unevenly. Although the territory has remained the same, there has been unequal population growth due to different economic and demographic trends. At the beginning of the 20th century 46.9 percent of the Belgian population still lived in the Flemish part of the country. After the Second World War this had risen to 50.2 percent and by 1998 to 57.6 percent. In contrast, the percentage of French-speakers in Wallonia has declined.[23]

In comparison with Belgium, Switzerland has demonstrated a marked stability in its language statistics over the last 150 years. In the 1860 census the German-speaking majority of the Swiss population (excluding non-Swiss) amounted to 69.5 percent; in 1910 it was 72.7 percent; in 1950 74.2 percent, in 1990 73.4 percent. The proportion of French-speaking Swiss has remained approximately the same: 23.4 percent in 1860, 22.1 percent in 1910, 20.6 percent in 1950, and 20.5 percent in 1990. The Italian speakers have always made up approximately 4 percent of the Swiss population: 5.4 percent in 1860, 3.9 percent in 1910, 4.0 percent in 1950, and 4.1 percent in 1990. The proportion of Romansch speakers has declined somewhat. In 1860 1.7 percent still spoke Romansch,

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[23] Kenneth D. McRae, *Conflict and Compromise in Multilingual Societies. Belgium*, Vol. 2, Waterloo (CAN) 1986, 48. Figures for 1998: http://www.belgium.fgov.be/diebelgier/02002.htm, 31. August 2001.

but this fell by 1990 to only 0.7 percent, which amounts to some 40,000 citizens.[24]

Looking at the entire population, and adding in the high percentages of foreign residents (1880: 7.4 percent; 1900: 11.6 percent; 1910: 14.7 percent; 1950: 6.1 percent; 1990: 16.4 percent, 2000: 19.8 percent), the distribution remains similar, although the proportion of German-speakers has declined slightly because of heavy immigration from Latin countries after the Second World War (1950: 72.1 percent; 1990: 63.6 percent). If one includes other languages, there are a number of language groups among foreign residents which outnumber the speakers of the fourth national language, Romansch. In 1990, 117,000 inhabitants spoke Spanish, 110,000 South Slavonic, 94,000 Portuguese and 61,000 English, but only 40,000 indicated that Romansch was their mother tongue.[25]

Belgium is a good example of the slow and steady rise of a disadvantaged language to legal and socio-political equality

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[24] In 1860 only the number of households was counted. German-speaking households in 1860, 69.5 percent, French-speaking, 23.4 percent, Italian-speaking, 5.4 percent, Romansch-speaking, 1.7 percent. Total: 528,105 households. This corresponds to about 2.5 mil. inhabitants, including some 115,000 non-Swiss. This information was supplied by the Federal Office for Statistics in Berne. For the years 1910, 1950 and 1990: *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Schweiz* 2000, published by the Federal Office for Statistics, Zurich 1999, 418-420. See also: *Bundesamt für Statistik* (Ed.), Die Sprachenlandschaft Schweiz, Bern 1997. The figures for the census of 2000 are provisional only.

[25] On language statistics see also: Bruno Pedretti, "Die Beziehung zwischen den schweizerischen Sprachregionen", in: Robert Schläpfer and Hans Bickel (Eds.), *Die viersprachige Schweiz*, 2nd, revised edition, Aarau, Frankfurt and Salzburg 2000, 269-307.

of status.[26] The Belgian constitution of 1831 designated no official national languages, but nominated French as the official language for administration, justice, the army and teaching in schools.[27]

The unambiguous preference for French can be explained by the fact that the revolution which led to the foundation of Belgium was the work of the bourgeoisie, the vast majority of whom used French for everyday communication at that time, even though they might be resident in a Flemish-speaking province. The country's elites considered the French language an expression of modernity and progress and believed that, over time, modern development would lead to the disappearance of Flemish.[28]

What actually happened, however, was rather different. After the middle of the 19th century, the Flemish language movement gained influence and started to prosper. In 1873, equality of the two languages was granted for judicial purposes and in 1883, Flemish started to be used in administration, education, the courts and the army in the Flemish part of the country. Since 1898, the laws of the Belgian state have been enacted officially in both French and Flemish. Flemish has achieved the status of an official language in Belgium. Bilingual stamps and bank-notes were issued, and signs went up in public

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[26] On the language question in Belgium: Kenneth D. McRae 1986 (as in note 23); Astrid von Busekist, *La Belgique. Politique des langues et construction de l'État, de 1780 à nos jours*, Paris and Brussels 1998; Kas Deprez and Louis Vos (Eds.), *Nationalism in Belgium. Shifting Identities, 1780-1995*, London and New York 1998; André Leton and André Miroir, *Les conflits communautaires en Belgique*, Paris 1999.

[27] Henry Dorchy, *Histoire des Belges. Des origines à 1991*, Brussels 1991, 143.

[28] Kenneth D. McRae 1986 (as in note 23), 21-22.

buildings in both languages. The King swore his coronation oath in both French and Flemish.[29]

In the language laws enacted from 1932 to 1938, differential monolingual status was fixed for Flanders and Wallonia in administration, education, the courts and the army. In the region of Brussels, the Belgians held on to bilingualism.[30]

After the Second World War, domestic political life in Belgium was marked by permanent language conflict, which was subsequently tied to other political, social and economic problems. The reforms enacted between 1970 and the beginning of the nineties finally calmed the situation. Belgium has now become a decentralised state with three autonomous regions, Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels, and it now recognises three national languages, French, Dutch and German. Compared with Switzerland, in Belgium there was a much stronger development of language blocks with their own cultures, for example different public holidays and different popular music. These language blocks created their own political institutions, and as a result a language corporatism has developed in Belgium, which has encouraged political division of the country in line with the one language-one nation idea. If conflicts should arise, the decision to separate will not appear a very great step. The Belgian state is held together mainly by the Royal Family and the role of bilingual Brussels as European capital.[31]

After the Second World War minority laws were enacted in a number of European countries in order to protect the languages of smaller groups. In Spain, in 1978, after the death of Franco, Basque, Catalan and Galician were declared official

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[29] Henry Dorchy 1991 (as in note 27), 157.
[30] Henry Dorchy 1991 (as in note 27), 178, 227.
[31] Henry Dorchy 1991 (as in note 27), 195, 202-259.

languages. Although Spanish remained the official language for administration and traffic throughout Spain, the other languages were given equal status in their regions.[32] The recognition of multilingualism at the regional level gives the Spanish central government the possibility of mediating between the demand for a single national language and the demands of linguistic minorities. By accepting only one language at the national level, the one language-one nation state principle is left intact. At the same time measures promoting autonomy can contribute to lessening political tensions in the regions.[33]

Switzerland: A Special Case

The classic antithesis to the national language principle in Europe since the 19th century has been Switzerland.[34]

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[32] Antoni Milian Massana, "Droits linguistiques es droits fondamentaux en Espagne", in: Henri Giordan (Ed.) 1992 (as in note 7), 251-268.

[33] Daniel Baggioni 1997 (as in note 5), 34.

[34] A selection from the copious literature on the language question in Switzerland: Cyril Hegnauer, *Das Sprachenrecht der Schweiz*, Zurich 1947; Hermann Weilenmann, *Pax Helvetica. Oder die Demokratie der kleinen Gruppen*, Zurich 1951; Karl W. Deutsch, *Die Schweiz als ein paradigmatischer Fall politischer Integration*, Berne 1976; Pierre Du Bois (Ed.), *Union et division des Suisses. Les relations entre Alémaniques, Romands et Tessinois aux XIXe et XXe siècles*, Lausanne 1983; Ernest Weibel, "Sprachgruppen und Sprachprobleme in der Schweiz. Konflikte und Konfliktregelungsmodelle", in: Hans-Georg Wehling (Ed.), *Die Schweiz, Stuttgart, Berlin, Cologne and Mainz 1988*, 79-99; Federal Office of Internal Affairs (Ed.), *Zustand und Zukunft der viersprachigen Schweiz. Abklärungen, Vorschläge und Empfehlungen einer Arbeitsgruppe des Eidgenössischen Departements des Innern*, Berne 1989; Hans Bickel and Robert Schläpfer (Eds.), *Mehrsprachigkeit – eine Herausforderung*, Aarau 1994; René Knüsel, *Les minorités ethnolinguistiques autochtones à territoire: L'exemple du cas helvétique*, Lausanne 1994; Urs Altermatt 1996 (as in note 1), v. a. 140-155; Urs Dürmüller, *Mehrsprachigkeit im Wandel. Von der*

Switzerland never fitted the national language scheme in Europe; as early as 1798, and again in 1848 with the foundation of the modern Swiss state, the country acknowledged multilingualism as a basic principle of the confederacy. This was not a straightforward matter of course; up to the end of the 18th century, the former Confederation had officially been a German-speaking state. When the 1798 revolution gave equal rights as citizens to all those resident in the Swiss republic, the breakdown of the *ancien régime* brought equality for the various indigenous language communities. The decrees of the Swiss central government were now published in German, French and Italian.[35]

After the failure of the Helvetic republic, a transitional phase of restoration followed from 1803 to 1847, during which a privileged position was given once more to the German language.[36] Fundamental and permanent change came with the foundation of modern Switzerland in 1848. During the debate in which the constitution was agreed, the representative of the French-speaking Canton of Vaud proposed a formulation for an article on languages.[37] Article 109 of the Federal

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viersprachigen zur vielsprachigen Schweiz, Zurich 1996; Hanspeter Kriesi et al. (Eds.), *Le clivage linguistique. Problèmes de compréhension entre les communautés linguistiques en Suisse*, Berne 1996; Wolf Linder, *Schweizerische Demokratie. Institutionen, Prozesse, Perspektiven*, Berne 1999; Christophe Büchi, *'Röstigraben'. Das Verhältnis zwischen deutscher und französischer Schweiz. Geschichte und Perspektiven*, Zurich 2000; Werner Koller, "Nation und Sprache in der Schweiz", in: Andreas Gardt (Ed.) 2000 (as in note 5), 563-609; Robert Schläpfer and Hans Bickel (Eds.), *Die viersprachige Schweiz*, 2nd, revised edition, Aarau, Frankfurt and Salzburg 2000.

[35] Walter Haas, "Sprachgeschichtliche Grundlagen", in: Robert Schläpfer and Hans Bickel (Eds.) 2000 (as in note 34), 17-56, here: 51-56.

[36] Cyril Hegnauer 1947 (as in note 34), 137.

[37] Walter Haas 2000 (as in note 35), 56.

Constitution at that time was therefore formulated as follows: "The three main languages of Switzerland, German, French and Italian, are national languages of the confederation."[38] Thus, without any lengthy discussion of principles, a multilingual Switzerland came into existence, and today that existence seems self-evident. This is very different from how things developed in Belgium, where Flemish was at first disadvantaged when the modern Belgian state was founded in 1830.

It was fortunate that the German-speakers formed the majority. For this community there was no question of a union with Germany after the German Reich was founded in 1871: German-speaking Switzerland had already possessed a highly developed awareness of itself as a political entity, which had arisen in opposition to the German empire. It saw its own detachment from this empire – actually carried out in 1499, and ultimately enshrined in law in 1648 – as the basis of its identity.[39]

It would be wrong to believe that multilingualism was a fundamental concept in the Swiss state from the beginning. The principle only became a characteristic of Swiss national identity in the second half of the 19th century. It was the national unification movements in Italy and Germany that forced the Swiss to redefine their identity. By happy coincidence the Swiss Federation founded in 1848 was able to consolidate itself

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[38] Constitution of the Swiss Federation of 1848. Today Article 4 states: "The national languages are German, French, Italian and Romansch." See the completely revised Swiss Federal Constitution of 18th April 1999.

[39] See the articles in the collection: Peter Rück (Ed.), *Die Eidgenossen und ihre Nachbarn im Deutschen Reich des Mittelalters,* Marburg a. d. Lahn 1991.

politically and economically before European nationalisms escalated into the First World War, splitting Switzerland too along language borders. It was only thanks to its neutrality in foreign policy that Switzerland was able to overcome the severe internal crisis of 1914 - 1918.[40]

The Swiss multi-nation state concept finally developed as a result of the unanimous resistance of all four language communities to the *Volk* ideologies of national-socialism and fascism in the 1930s.[41] Christophe Büchi speaks of multilingualism as a 'defence mechanism' (*Abwehrdispositiv*) in the face of German and Italian nationalism.[42] In 1938, the Swiss-people adopted a new language article, declaring

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[40] Cyril Hegnauer 1947 (as in note 34); Edgar Bonjour, *Geschichte der schweizerischen Neutralität. Vier Jahrhunderte eidgenössischer Aussenpolitik*, Vol. 2, 6th, revised Edition, Basel 1980; Hans Peter Müller, *Die schweizerische Sprachenfrage vor 1914. Eine historische Untersuchung über das Verhältnis zwischen Deutsch und Welsch bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg*, Wiesbaden 1977; Iso Camartin, "Die Beziehungen zwischen den schweizerischen Sprachregionen", in: Robert Schläpfer (Ed.), *Die viersprachige Schweiz*, Zurich and Cologne 1982, 301-351; Georg Kreis, "Die besseren Patrioten. Nationale Idee und regionale Identität in der französischen Schweiz vor 1914", in: François de Capitani and Georg Germann (Eds.), *Auf dem Weg zu einer schweizerischen Identität 1848-1914*, Freiburg 1987, 55-74; Federal Office of Internal Affairs (Ed.) 1989 (as in note 34), 38-47; Urs Altermatt, "Die mehrsprachige Schweiz – Modell für Europa?", in: Urs Altermatt and Emil Brix (Ed.), *Schweiz und Österreich. Eine Nachbarschaft in Mitteleuropa*, Vienna, Cologne and Weimar 1995, 39-49; Hans Amstutz, *Das Verhältnis zwischen deutscher und französischer Schweiz in den Jahren 1930-1945*, Aarau 1996; Urs Dürmüller 1996 (as in note 34).

[41] Werner Möckli, *Schweizergeist – Landigeist? Das schweizerische Selbstverständnis beim Ausbruch des Zweiten Weltkrieges*, Zurich 1973.

[42] Christophe Büchi 2000 (as in note 34), 235-236.

Romansch, a minority language, to be the fourth national language.[43]

What are the principles of the Swiss language model? The most important basic element in the Swiss model is that the political elites acknowledged multilingualism as a structural principle. Since the foundation of the modern national state in 1848, Switzerland has had three, or four, national languages. German, French and Italian are regarded as official national languages and share the same legal status. According to Article 70 of the completely revised Federal Constitution (1999), "when dealing with citizens whose first language is Romansch, this language is also recognised as an official language".[44]

Secondly, as a practical structural principle, there is the Swiss federal system. The federal state leaves matters of culture, including matters of language policy, in the hands of the twenty-six cantons. Most language conflicts are thus relegated to the lower level of the cantons.[45]

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[43] From the extensive literature on Romansch: Hans Rudolf Dörig and Christoph Reichenau (Eds.), *2 ½ sprachige Schweiz? Zustand und Zukunft des Rätoromanischen und des Italienischen in Graubünden - Abklärungen und Empfehlungen einer Arbeitsgruppe*, Berne 1982; Iso Camartin, *Nichts als Worte? Ein Plädoyer für Kleinsprachen*, Zurich and Munich 1985; Alexi Decurtins, *Rätoromanisch. Aufsätze zur Sprach-, Kulturgeschichte und Kulturpolitik*, Chur 1993; Federal Office of Statistics (Ed.), *Le Romansche en péril? Evolution et perspective*, Berne 1996; Werner Cariget, "Zur mehrsprachigkeit der Bündnerromanen", in: Robert Schläpfer and Hans Bickel (Eds.) 2000 (as in note 34), 235-239; Ricarda Liver, "Das Bündnerromanische", in: Robert Schläpfer and Hans Bickel (Eds.) 2000 (as in note 34), 211-234.

[44] Swiss Federal Constitution of 18th April 1999.

[45] Max Frenkel, *Föderalismus und Bundesstaat. System, Recht und Probleme des Bundesstaats im Spannungsfeld von Demokratie und Föderalismus*, Vol. 1, Berne 1984; Raimund E. Germann and Ernest Weibel (Eds.), *Handbuch politisches System der Schweiz.*

Thirdly, in Switzerland language protection is linked to territory rather than to communities of people. In the language article of the Federal Constitution it states: "To maintain co-operation between the language communities, [the cantons] must take account of the traditional linguistic composition of their regions and show consideration to indigenous linguistic minorities."[46] What does this mean in practice for the Swiss? A French-speaking Swiss, who moves from French-speaking Geneva to Zurich will be subject, in his or her new place of residence, to the language authority of the Canton of Zurich, whose language is German. He or she can still deal in French with the federal authorities, but must otherwise adopt German in Zurich for official purposes, for example in schools and other public institutions. The Swiss call this the principle of territoriality, and it was adopted according to the motto *cuius regio eius lingua* which governs the cohabitation of different language communities by giving each sway according to the territory it occupies.[47]

The fourth aspect: unlike Belgium, Switzerland does not recognise corporate language communities in its constitutional law. The language communities do not possess any state institutions, as they do, for example, in Belgium.

The Swiss example reveals that, where the political structure of the state is federalist, industrialisation and urbanisation need not lead to cultural or ethnic conflict. Between 1880 and 1914

Föderalismus, Vol. 3, Berne 1986; Hanspeter Kriesi, *Le système politique Suisse*, 2nd edition, Paris 1998, 50-89; Wolf Linder 1999 (as in note 34), 135-189.

[46] Art. 70 of the Swiss Federal Constitution of 18th April 1999.

[47] There is interesting discussion of the principle of territoriality. See for example: Federal Office of Internal Affairs (Ed.) 1989 (as in note 34), 188-205, 220-239. On the formula *cuius regio eius lingua* see: Ernest Gellner 1991 (as in note 6), 72.

Switzerland was rapidly modernising. Despite rapid industrialisation, modernisation, social mobility and migration – it is estimated that 15.4 percent of the population was made up of foreign residents in 1914 - the relative proportions of the different language communities have largely remained stable. The extraordinary stability in the language statistics is due to the 'principle of territoriality', which in Switzerland has protected the language minorities.

The territoriality principle means that the cantons are responsible for maintaining linguistic borders and ensuring the linguistic homogeneity of existing linguistic regions. It can thus happen that individual linguistic freedom is impinged on, in order to protect linguistic minorities. In a highly mobile society like Switzerland, the territorial approach to defining the limits of applicability of a language is an important means of limiting problems of communication and integration. However, this principle can only work where there is a more or less clear territorial division between the language communities. In addition, the question remains as to which authorities are competent to define linguistic threat, and the criteria that should be used to define this.[48]

Basic to this success, too, is equality of life chances for the speakers of different languages, even if this is notional rather than always achieved in practice. Marginalized in Swiss society today are Italian and above all Romansch, even though these languages remain in use for official purposes and for daily communication in the cantons concerned. The position of Romansch is not unlike that of Swedish or Portuguese within

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[48] Federal Office of Internal Affairs (Ed.) 1989 (as in note 34), 188-205; Andreas Ernst, "Vielsprachigkeit, Öffentlichkeit und politische Integration: schweizerische Erfahrungen und europäische Perspektiven", in: *Swiss Political Science Review* 4 (1998), 225-240, here: 237; Bruno Pedretti 2000 (as in note 25), 303-305.

the European Union; in Brussels English and French dominate.[49]

Is Switzerland a Model for Europe?

After examining the language arrangements in Switzerland the question may be asked: can the Swiss approach provide a model for multilingual Europe? In general, it is clear that the Swiss arrangements can not be applied directly, either to individual European countries, or to the EU as a whole: modern Switzerland, and its multilingualism, developed within a historical framework of circumstances which was quite unique. The point of departure for the European Union is much more complex than was the case for Switzerland.

However, with the help of the Swiss example, a number of principles for the construction of multilingual and multicultural communities can be formulated. Like the European Union, Switzerland represents an example of a 'federation of nations'.[50] Founded as an alliance of cantonal, religious and linguistically based communities, Switzerland developed a unique political configuration, just as the EU has done, which is very different from the typical European nation state. On the national level, Switzerland has developed an identity concept, which reflects the French model of a nation of 'citizens' and emphasises the subjective will of the people to form a common polity.[51] At

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[49] Jachen Curdin Arquint, "Stationen der Standartisierung", in: Robert Schläpfer and Hans Bickel (Eds.) 2000 (as in note 34), 240-267; Ottavio Lurati, "Die sprachliche Situation in der Südschweiz", in: Robert Schläpfer and Hans Bickel (Eds.) 2000 (as in note 34), 177-210.

[50] Hanspeter Kriesi, "Introduction: State Formation and Nation Building in the Swiss Case", in: Hanspeter Kriesi et al. (Eds.) 1999 (as in note 2), 13-28, here: 23.

[51] Urs Altermatt 1996 (as in note 1); Hanspeter Kriesi, "Introduction: State Formation and Nation Building in the Swiss Case", in: Hanspeter Kriesi et al. (Eds.) 1999 (as in note 2), 13-28.

the same time a sense of local identity at the level of communes and cantons has been retained. This local identity corresponds more closely to the German 'ius sanguinis' idea and contains elements of cultural and ethnic nationalism.[52] The politicians and intellectuals who constructed Swiss nationality made it possible for its citizens to retain their sense of cultural group at the lower level of commune or canton without endangering the citizen-based idea of the 'Swiss nation'. In this way the 'unfinished' nation that is Switzerland is held together by a common political culture based on shared political values such as federalism, direct democracy, and neutrality and by events such as the establishment of the first confederation in 1291, the Stans Agreement of 1481, and the founding of the federal state in 1848, which evoke a shared history, in the sense described by Anthony Smith.[53]

Although the Swiss model cannot be applied directly to Europe as a whole, or to other countries within it, Swiss history allows us to establish a number of principles of general validity.

1. It is the concept of a centralised nation state after the French model which has caused countries like Czechoslovakia to break up and Belgium to drift apart. In a single centralised state, culture and *ethnies* are centrifugal. But if one provides a federal constitution they become centripetal. This principle was stated as early as the middle of the 19th century by the

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[52] Pierre Centlivres and Dominique Schnapper, "Nation et droit de la nationalité suisse", in: *Pouvoirs* 56 (1991), 149-161.

[53] Hanspeter Kriesi also takes this view: Hanspeter Kriesi, "Introduction: State Formation and Nation Building in the Swiss Case", in: Hanspeter Kriesi et al. (Eds.) 1999 (as in note 2), 13-28. See also: Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford (UK) and Cambridge (USA) 1986; Anthony D. Smith, 1991 (as in note, 2); John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (Eds.), 1994 (as in note 2).

Austrian liberal politician Adolf Fischhof.[54] One can be federal without being multinational; but where a state is multinational, it should choose the federalist way in the Swiss sense.

The Swiss federal state is a remarkable model of extensive political decentralisation, which offers the necessary political and cultural autonomy to the many different ethnic, religious and linguistic groups. However, there remains a tension between autonomy and integration which prevents both total assimilation and creeping ghettoisation.[55]

2. Where two strong language communities with firmly defined territories confront each other within a state, what will normally happen is that language corporatism will develop, with two entities, and this will tend to erode political cohesion within the state. In Belgium, the language question dissolved the central state and led to its conversion into a federal state. In Czechoslovakia, the central state split in 1993 along the language border into two new nation-states. A politically motivated policy of cultural homogenisation within a state can destroy the multicultural identity of a multilingual nation-state. Switzerland has been able to avoid a political ethnisation of its language borders principally because its political and administrative borders are only partly congruent with the cultural ones of language and/or religion. The relative lack of language conflict in Switzerland is due to the fact that the political and administrative borders on the one hand, and the linguistic and the religious borders on the other, do not always

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[54] Adolf Fischhof, *Österreich und die Bürgschaften seines Bestandes*, Vienna 1869, 111.

[55] See also: Joseph Marko, *Autonomie und Integration. Rechtsinstitute des Nationalitätenrechts im funktionalen Vergleich*, Vienna and Cologne and Graz 1995, 25-36.

neatly coincide.[56] There are French- and German-speaking Catholics and French- and German-speaking Protestants, all living in different cantons. From this follows this thesis: Cultural variety will not normally endanger the inner cohesion of a state, provided the political and cultural borders do not coincide. However, in Switzerland too, the centralisation of social life has decreased the role of the cantons and, not least because of the influence of the mass media, regional language borders have gained in importance and are now fostering an emerging *Belgianisation* of public life. [57]

3. Modern societies are characterised by a diverse network of relationships, loyalties and interests of both a private and a collective nature. Multicultural societies can only survive as states if they succeed in decoupling cultural and political identities. As Michael Walzer and Jürgen Habermas write, a state may demand political loyalty from its citizens, but cannot require cultural assimilation.[58] The state merely makes available a political framework in which a multicultural society develops its own rules. The citizens have two different loyalties,

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[56] There is much literature on the well-known cross cutting thesis, including: Kenneth D. McRae, *Conflict and Compromise in Multilingual Societies. Switzerland*, Vol. 1, Waterloo (CAN) 1983; Kenneth D. McRae 1986 (as in note 23). See also: Douglas W. Rae and Michael Taylor, *The analysis of political cleavages*, New Haven 1970.

[57] I cannot say when the term 'Belgianisation' first appeared in a negative sense. I used the term in my book in 1996. See Urs Altermatt 1996 (as in note 1), 145-155.

[58] Michael Walzer, *Zivile Gesellschaft und amerikanische Demokratie*, Berlin 1992; Jürgen Habermas, "Staatsbürgerschaft und nationale Identität. Überlegungen zur europäischen Zukunft", in: Nicole Dewandres and Jacques Lenoble (Ed.), *Projekt Europa. Postnationale Identität: Grundlage für eine europäische Demokratie?*, Berlin 1994, 11-29, here: 27.

one political and one cultural.[59] In the words of Horace M. Kallen, the citizens of these countries must always be hyphenated: German-Swiss or Italian-Swiss, Afro-Americans or Anglo-Americans, Hungarian-Europeans and Austrian-Europeans.[60]

The nation-state has to be built on political citizenship. The concepts of national identity have to separate culture, language, religion etc. from the 'res publica', in other words: to decouple *ethnos* form *demos*.

The European Language Landscape: Functional Differentiation

In 2001 there are more than 40 indigenous languages used for everyday communication in the European Union. In 1998, eleven of these were given recognition as official working languages within the European Union: Danish, German, English, Finnish, French, Greek, Italian, Dutch, Portuguese, Swedish and Spanish. Almost 30 million EU citizens do not have any of the official languages as their mother tongue.[61] Portugal is the only monolingual country in the Union; in each of the other fourteen countries there are two or more indigenous languages in use. It was not until the last third of the 20th century that it became generally accepted in Europe that governments have no right to attempt to suppress minority languages like

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[59] After Gottfried Keller: "Adolf Muschg, Schweizer Kultur und Europa", in: Adolf Muschg, *Die Schweiz am Ende. Am Ende die Schweiz. Erinnerungen an mein Land vor 1991*, Frankfurt 1990, 203-210.

[60] Horace M. Kallen, *Culture and Democracy in the United States*, New York 1924. See also: Otto Kallscheuer, "On the Road. Michael Walzers Deutung der amerikanischen Freiheit", in: Michael Walzer 1992 (as in note 58), 7-35.

[61] Klemens Ludwig, *Ethnische Minderheiten in Europa. Ein Lexikon*, Munich 1995, 16.

Catalan in Spain, or Breton in France. Many European languages, which are official state languages, for example Finnish, Norwegian, and Greek – are among the minor languages of the European Union and are used largely within the political territory of the corresponding nation-state.[62]

In the USA, English is the official language and the language of education, and this facilitates integration. In the former Soviet Union Russian fulfilled a similar function. In Europe there is no analogous solution. But as Harald Haarmann has noted, multilingualism can become an important element of a multiple European identity. In everyday life, the diverse language-landscape of Europe requires 'selective multilingualism'.[63]

India provides a stimulating model here.[64] Geographically and socially mobile Indians must master English and Hindi in order to communicate within the central state. Additionally, they need the official language of the respective member state in order to be able to speak with the local political authorities. If they belong to one of the many linguistic minorities, they use the minority language additionally in order to be able to communicate with their own *ethnie* in the mother tongue. The resulting language situation is three plus or minus one.

A similar language order can be foreseen for Europe. English is slowly becoming the language for general communication between the different language communities. Each European also needs the language of his nation-state. In parts of Europe a

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[62] Harald Haarmann 1993 (as in note 5), 95-100.
[63] Harald Haarmann 1993 (as in note 5), 333.
[64] See Hanspeter Kriesi, "Introduction: State Formation and Nation Building in the Swiss Case", in: Hanspeter Kriesi et al. (Ed.) 1999 (as in note 2), 13-28, here 24-25. Siehe David D. Laitin, "The Cultural Identities of a European State", in: *Politics and Society* 25 (1997), 277-302.

regional lingua franca will establish itself, like German in some areas of Central Europe.

Although in Europe language played an important role in the formation of the modern nation-states, one should not overemphasise its role worldwide. Looking at the world as a whole, ethnic or cultural and linguistic boundaries rarely coincide with state borders. At the End of the 20th century the United Nations included 184 states; but linguists estimate that there are some 4000 different human languages.[65]

For the European Union, the difficult task consists in maintaining the identity of the indigenous European peoples and their cultural traditions and regions while at the same time facilitating social and geographical mobility in modern society.[66]

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[65] The number of different languages currently spoken on our planet cannot be exactly determined. Estimates range from some 2,500 up to as many as 5,500. *Brockhaus Enzyklopädie in vierundzwanzig Bänden*, 19th, entirely new edition Edition, Vol. 20, Mannheim 1993, 698.

[66] Daniel Cohn-Bendit and Thomas Schmid, *Heimat Babylon. Das Wagnis der multikulturellen Demokratie*, Hamburg 1992.