

The Antinomies of Interdependence

The Political Economy of International Change
JOHN GERARD RUGGIE, GENERAL EDITOR

**The Antinomies of
Interdependence**
National Welfare and the
International Division of Labor

edited by JOHN GERARD RUGGIE

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS
NEW YORK, 1983

same time, complete dissociation is neither desirable nor feasible. Accordingly, this chapter has explored the more complex middle ground of selective dissociation. Some empirical cases were investigated, a more general strategy was outlined, and selective dissociation was shown to compare favorably to association in direct human welfare terms. The centripetal forces in the world political economy, especially in the technology sector, make selective dissociation a difficult strategy to follow. But, I have suggested that, ultimately, periphery countries exercise greater control over the obstacles to *this* strategy than they do over the alternatives.

7.

Linguistic Dissociation: A Strategy for Africa

DAVID D. LAITIN

WHILE FORMAL POLITICAL ties between the European metropolises and their former colonies in Africa have been nearly completely severed within the past generation, many aspects of the imperial relationship remain and even prosper. In this volume, the economic, military, and technological dimensions of these ties have been discussed. My concern here is with the more elusive but no less significant cultural ties. Of all the cultural ties that still bind Africa to Europe, it is the continued use of European languages as the official languages of African states that remains most significant. In this paper, I plan to explain the continued linguistic association between African states and their former metropolises and to show its consequences. I will also discuss certain trends which can best be described as emergent strategies

Extensive and helpful comments by Peter Cowhey, Henry Ehrmann, David Friedman, Peter Gourevitch, Ernst Haas, Jeffrey Hart, David Jordan, Gerd Junne, Mubanga Kashoki, Mary Katzenstein, Peter Katzenstein, John Ruggie, Richard Wood, and Crawford Young enriched this paper significantly. William O'Barr kindly invited me to deliver an earlier version of this paper to his colleagues at Duke University, and they helped me clarify my ideas.

of "linguistic dissociation." It is my contention that in the African case, despite perhaps insurmountable administrative problems, linguistic dissociation could yield benefits consistent with the hopes of those articulating the need for a more general dissociative strategy. Indigenous languages may be one of those latent resources available to new states in their quest for greater self-reliance.

LANGUAGE, NATIONALISM, AND THE STATE

Linguistic dissociation—the policy of decreasing the domains in which non-indigenous languages have official sanction—is often, at first blush, associated with anti-progressive nationalism. By progressive, I mean opening up opportunities for social mobility, political participation, and wealth among the less-advantaged segments of a country's population. Is not the promotion of indigenous languages playing into the hands of more-advantaged, traditional elites? To ascribe virtue to a state which legitimates itself by heralding its particularistic culture is to conjure up images of Hitler's National Socialism. Why should a paper in a volume concerned with equity and human welfare seek refuge in a traditional cultural institution?

What I wish to argue at the outset is that the promotion of national vernaculars is not in itself a progressive or anti-progressive policy. In different historical periods, and with support for development by different social groups, the promotion of national vernaculars has had a whole range of political implications. The social context in which language policy takes place is essential for an understanding of its social meaning. To emphasize this point, some historical perspective is clearly in order.

With the spread of the Roman empire, Latin became the language of political and ecclesiastical power throughout Europe. It was generally accepted that Latin was the lan-

guage of the peoples within the imperial realm. But when Charlemagne authorized the development of a standardized pure Latin in the late eighth century, it became obvious that what had been perceived as impure dialects of Latin were in fact different languages. These vernaculars had low political status, and remained subservient to Latin until the Renaissance, when the Italian of Dante, the German of Luther's Bible, and the commitment to "le bon usage" in French by Racine signaled the challenge of national vernaculars to the supremacy of imperial Latin. Even though the vernaculars eventually became supreme throughout Europe, the historical and social context of their development must be examined carefully before the political meaning of their success can be ascribed. Here I will look briefly at the English and German cases.

In England, while Latin was the language of ecclesiastical and legal authority, French (after the Norman conquest) became the language of the ruling elites. It was not until the Francophobia of the Hundred Year's War that English began to gain status. In 1362 Parliament passed a statute suggesting that since the French language was "much unknown in this Realm," all argument in courts of law should be spoken in English and recorded in Latin.¹ It was in this same period that Wycliffe published an English Bible translated from Latin, directly challenging ecclesiastical hierarchy and intended for commoners. Meanwhile, the schools, which had relied on French, began employing English as the medium of instruction, and in the early fifteenth century, English grammar schools were founded. English was perceived by the aristocrats to be a vulgar island patois, to be sure; but indeed it was the language of the people.

These developments in the English language gave support to Henry VII's "new monarchy" (1485–1509). A strong English state was Henry's goal, and the centralization of administration his means. He was able to build legitimacy for

1. See G. M. Trevelyan, *History of England* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1926), 1:179–80, 308–11.

the monarchy (badly crippled by the War of the Roses) in part on a notion of the special worth of the English "yeoman." Through the acceptance of an indigenous culture as the basis for the English nation, and the forced spread of that culture through the realm (even among non-English-speaking minorities), Henry was laying the foundation for a nation-state. It took Henry VIII to destroy the power of Latin through his split with Rome and his authorization for the publication of the complete Bible in English in one volume.

The support of the English language, then, meant that the language of the people rather than the language of the Church or the aristocracy would become the language of the realm. The promotion of the English vernacular at the expense of French and Latin among the Tudors was (whatever their intentions) progressive. With the language of the people promoted as the language of the state, more people could understand and respond to public affairs. Once the state was defined by the cultural characteristics of the people, the groundwork was (inadvertently) laid for ideas of popular sovereignty.

In both England and France, the forces unleashed by the ideology of popular sovereignty were truly revolutionary. The national vernaculars had become tools of the middle classes to challenge the legitimacy of monarchy. After the Napoleonic wars, the great powers attempted to suppress this revolutionary nationalism, but the lid blew off in 1848 when again nationalism and popular sovereignty were equated. It is no wonder that among the German-speaking states, the aristocracy was deeply afraid of movements to forge a single *Staatsnation* (political nation) out of a common *Kulturnation* (cultural nation).

It took Bismarck to demonstrate to the Prussian Junkers the conservative potential of an ideology of nationalism. Bismarck attained through military conquest what the Holy Roman Empire and the German liberals both had been unable to achieve: political unity of the German nation. Bismarck recognized that the symbols of the German nation—

language and culture—could become tools of the Prussian aristocrats to legitimate his conquests. German and English aristocrats revered French. But unlike the English aristocracy, the Prussian Junkers identified with and held in high regard their national vernacular. Junkers were able to promote Hegelian idealism as a useful tool both to glorify the German nation and to legitimate conservative principles. If the expansion of the English language has been associated with opportunities for a liberal middle-class challenge to aristocratic rule, then the glorification of the German language has been associated with the reactionary hold over German society by the Prussian Junkers. The promotion of English as the language of the Tudor state and the use of the German language as a symbol to legitimate the political unity of the German *Kulturnation* had vastly different social meanings.

Yet another pattern emerged in the wake of World War I. This began the era of mass mobilization and the articulation of national demands by peoples who lived in states (Russia, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire) in which the monarchs had long been unable to create nations. While President Wilson of the United States espoused a doctrine of self-determination which was consistent with the English model of development, most of the debate concerning language and nationalism took place in socialist circles.

Many Eastern European Marxists, upholding an internationalist doctrine, could not easily accept the actual demands of their socialist allies in the imperial peripheries who wanted their own separate states. Rosa Luxemburg, for one, held to the logically consistent position that the national self-determination of subject peoples in the former Austro-Hungarian and Russian Empires had no place in socialist thought. In opposition to her, a group of Austrian Marxists, notably Otto Bauer and Karl Renner, attempted to demonstrate that it is possible and fruitful to conjoin a socialist program with a nationalist language policy. They believed that socialism dictated the equal opportunity of all subject

peoples to fulfillment, and this required the recognition of national cultures.² Lenin, ever the pragmatist, saw the importance of supporting self-determination among the peoples who were not assimilated into the imperial state so that they would be able to be mobilized to stand up against their imperial rulers. But he saw no intrinsic merit to the idea of national solidarity of small states unified by a common language. The Soviet state has followed this line over the course of the century. It has promoted the languages and cultures of some of its national groups in order to gain support. On the other hand, it has divided other national groups through differentiating them by minor cultural differences. In either case, centralized economic and political control is exerted through the Russian language.³ In both theory and practice within the socialist experience, the promotion of national vernaculars has had a variety of political meanings.

These European patterns developed still new meanings as Europe penetrated Africa. European languages evoked contrasting symbolic responses in the course of African nationalism. First, English and French were seen as the languages of lucrative foreign trade and subsequently imperial control. The colonial powers by the late nineteenth century had all but destroyed the authority of African states and stateless societies. Through colonial administration, new states were formed, and these were administered by means of the language of the colonial power. Within a short period,

2. Karl W. Deutsch's idea of assimilation builds on Bauer's insights, as Deutsch recognized the importance of the ability to communicate as a precondition for the success of participation. For Bauer, see *Die Nationalitätenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie* (1907); for Deutsch, see *Nationalism and Social Communication* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1953). Interestingly, Jürgen Habermas uses the idea of "communicative competence" in a way similar to Deutsch's "assimilation." See Stephen K. White's discussion, "Reason and Authority in Habermas: A Critique of the Critics," in *American Political Science Review* (December 1980), vol. 74, no. 4. An excellent discussion of the debate concerning nationalism and socialism among Russian Jews is that of Jonathan Frankel, *Prophesy and Politics: Socialism, Nationalism, and the Russian Jews* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

3. Richard Pipes, *The Formation of the Soviet Union: Communism and Nationalism 1917–1923* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957).

socially mobilized subjects sought political freedom through an ideology of nationalism. All people who resided within the colonially set boundaries, no matter what their previous identity, were defined by these nationalists as part of the new nation. Since these peoples were heterogenous linguistically in most cases, and because the colonial administrations were ill-equipped to process messages in local languages, the language of national self-determination was the very same as the language of colonial oppression.⁴

But that is not the only pattern in the complex relationship of Europe and Africa. To govern, the colonial states found it impossible to ignore the indigenous languages at the lower levels of administration. More important, though, is that many of the English and German missionaries were philosophic idealists and believed that the only true way to approach the "genius" of African peoples was through their own languages. One East African missionary, assuming that each state has its own "contribution . . . to the sum of human attainment," argued that the development of Swahili would provide the "medium of expression of the special genius of their race."⁵ These idealists translated the Bible and other materials to make an important contribution to the development of African vernaculars. And so, one tool for radical opposition to European hegemony was fashioned by Hegelians. Some African socialist thinkers have therefore viewed European language competence as the tie that binds African "compradors" to international capitalism. Support of the vernaculars, these socialists contend, could weaken that bond.

That the European languages are associated with colo-

4. See Ali Mazrui, "The English Language and Political Consciousness in British Colonial Africa," *Journal of Modern African Studies* (1966), 4(3):303.

5. G. W. Broomfield, "The Development of the Swahili Language," *Africa* (1930), 3(4):516–22. For similar approaches, see P. W. Schmidt, S.V.D., "The Use of Vernacular in Education in Africa," *Africa* (1930), vol. 3, no. 2, and the anecdote in Gilbert Ansre, "Language Standardisation," in Thomas Sebeok, ed., *Current Trends in Linguistics*, vol. 7, *Linguistics in Sub-Saharan Africa* (The Hague: Mouton, 1971), p. 692.

nialism *and* with nationalism, and that the vernaculars are associated with missionary idealism *and* socialist internationalism, have led to complex patterns of language choice in contemporary Africa. Consider Leopold Senghor. As a socialist in the 1930s and an early intellectual proponent of the idea of negritude, Senghor romantically assumed—with Hegelian imagery—that European languages could never catch the African timbre nor capture the soul of Africa. But, as President of Senegal, in an attempt to unite his country and to court French aid, he marched to a different beat. Turning his Hegelian argument on its head, and adopting a position consistent with that of Rosa Luxemburg, he argued that the French language could only become truly universal when Africans help develop it to its fullest range. French would therefore remain the language of the Senegalese state, and Senegal would help the French language to become universal.⁶

Or consider this irony. Because of the Leninist line encouraging the development of national cultures in order to do battle with colonial and neocolonial authority in Africa, socialists have associated themselves with movements to promote African vernaculars. Socialist-inspired intercontinental congresses have often voted to propagate African languages, and UNESCO, in a typical statement, held that “we take it as axiomatic . . . that the best medium for teaching is the mother tongue of the pupil.”⁷ The development of the Wolof language became an important symbol in the socialist opposition to Senghor’s role in Senegal,⁸ and in Tanzania and Somalia, the two African countries in which African languages have full official status, language auton-

6. I. Markovitz, *Leopold Sedar Senghor and the Politics of Negritude* (New York: Atheneum, 1969), pp. 62–63.

7. See Pierre Alexandre, “Les Problèmes Linguistiques Africains Vus de Paris,” in John Spencer, ed., *Language in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963). The UNESCO quotation is from their *The Use of Vernacular Languages in Education*, Monographs on Fundamental Education, vol. 8 (Paris: 1953).

8. See issues of the newspaper *Kadu*—“speech” in Wolof—published by the Marxist branch of the National party.

omy and socialist ideology are conjoined. The viability of African languages has been an axiom of the political left.

Yet in South Africa—and here is the irony—the development of the African vernaculars is a tool of the “right.” The political elite in South Africa is of Dutch descent, and their language, derived from Dutch, is called Afrikaans. In a clear policy to divide and rule, the Afrikaans-speaking elite has encouraged the development of the black African vernaculars. Although many of the African languages are similar (and could provide a basis for language unity), Afrikaner authorities have emphasized dialectic differences. For nearly all black Africans, Afrikaans represents the language of political reaction. Meanwhile English, the language of much of the business elite, represents to many black Africans the language of internationalism and possible freedom. As far back as 1939, the Head of the Department of Bantu Studies at the (moderately liberal) University of Witwatersrand noted that the Africans who saw English as the language of African unity “are suspicious [of] any desire by the education authorities to extend the use of the vernacular in schools for purposes of segregation and differentiation.” In the 1976 riots in Soweto, it is no surprise that the issue which ignited the troubles involved the desire by the black African population to have English in their curriculum. Nor is it a surprise that on the eve of independence after more than sixty years of rule by South Africa, Namibians will expand English at the expense of Afrikaans and the indigenous languages. English is the language of international commerce; Afrikaans and the indigenous languages represent either repression or internal division.⁹ The point: vernacular promotion is the

9. The quotation is from C. M. Doke, “European and Bantu Languages in South Africa,” *Africa* (1939), 12(3):316. The issue of language choice in South Africa is fascinating, since Afrikaans development vis-à-vis the “imperialism” of English had its own separate battles. The whole issue deserves full political analysis. For historical background, see Pablo Eisenberg’s essay on South Africa in Helen Kitchen, ed., *The Educated African* (New York: Praeger, 1962); Adriaan J. Barnouw, *Language and Race Problems in South Africa* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1934); E. G. Malherbe, *The Bilingual School: A Study of Bilingualism in South Africa* (Lon-

policy of both the far Left and far Right in contemporary Africa.

A final irony. Tanzania, as has already been mentioned, has conjoined a socialist ideology with a commitment to expand the official use of the Swahili language. Research has demonstrated that because Swahili is a language widely known throughout Tanzania, in both urban and rural areas, yet is not associated with a dominant nationality within Tanzania, there has been a discernible egalitarian effect of Swahili development consistent with the socialist ideology.¹⁰ Yet when looked upon from the village level, as J. O'Barr has, the egalitarian thrust of the policy becomes problematic. In a careful study of Pare District's Village Development Committees and Ward Development Committees (where Swahili is best known to those who are most socially and geographically mobile), she found that the requirement of Swahili use for meetings consistently worked against the participation of the women and the less well-to-do.¹¹ The language policy which increases participation on the state level seems to work against that ideal when looked upon at the local level.

The development of national vernaculars has been associated with the liberal, the idealist, and the socialist traditions. It has been associated with the movement for the self-determination of African peoples and it has been asso-

don: Longmans, Green, 1946); and *Education in South Africa, 1923-1975* (Cape Town: Juta, 1977); and Marius F. Valkhoff, "Descriptive Bibliography of the Linguistics of Afrikaans: A Survey of Major Works and Authors," in Thomas Sebeok, *Current Trends*. The relationship of language policy to the Soweto uprising is discussed in the *New York Times* (June 20, July 7, and July 11, 1976). See also B. Hirson "Language in Control and Resistance in South Africa," *African Affairs* (April 1981), vol. 80, no. 319, and his *Year of Fire, Year of Ash, The Soweto Revolt: Roots of a Revolution?* (London: Zed, 1979). On Namibia, see M. Kashoki, "Achieving Nationhood Through Language: The Challenge of Namibia," UN Institute for Namibia (Lusaka) (May 1980).

10. See D. Laitin, "Language Choice and National Development: A Typology for Africa," *International Interactions* (1979), vol. 6, no. 3.

11. J. F. O'Barr, "Language and Politics in Tanzanian Governmental Institutions," in W. M. O'Barr and J. F. O'Barr, eds., *Language and Politics* (The Hague: Mouton, 1976), pp. 80-81.

ciated with the continued oppression of African peoples. It has been associated with policies to enhance local participation, yet it has often acted to restrict the possibility of participation by the poor. The point I wish to make here is that language policies alone do not signal progressivism or conservatism. In order to defend a policy of linguistic dissociation, for any African state, I must demonstrate that in this historical period, such a policy would be progressive. But before I can defend dissociation, the cogency of linguistic association must be made clear.

THE LOGIC OF LINGUISTIC ASSOCIATION

Despite the enthusiasm generated by such movements as negritude, which called for the promotion of African culture and languages, very few African states at the moment of independence became committed to the immediate return to the African vernaculars as languages of politics, administration, and education. Leopold Senghor's switch from nationalist politician supporting African culture to responsible leader supporting the language of the former metropole reflected a position typical of most of the new leaders in Africa concerning matters of language choice. Four basic reasons seem to explain why African leaders abandoned their earlier commitments to negritude and to cultural independence.

First, there was *inertia*. Innumerable problems faced the new leadership, and virtually no one was making demands for rapid linguistic dissociation. Governing coalitions had to be constructed, cabinets had to be chosen, the mechanics of imposed constitutions had to be understood. Furthermore, an endless series of demands by workers, students, and disaffected ethnic groups, usually disregarded by the waning colonial powers, had to be deflected. Finally, the overwhelming needs of economic development, health care,

and primary education made the question of whether to sever ties of linguistic association seem an inappropriate one to ask. As one commentator on Zambia's linguistic history put it:

At independence Zambia was very heavily dependent on expatriate help in both its public and private sectors. In spite of an extremely rapid expansion of education and great strides in Zambianization, such dependence was still relatively heavy in 1970. Given Zambia's resources and the tasks that faced the new government, the continued use of English as the official language does not seem surprising, since many aspects of the life of the country had been conducted in English by the former government, and large numbers of Zambians had learned to communicate using the English language with varying degrees of efficiency.¹²

By this argument, linguistic dissociation is perhaps a second-generation movement in postcolonial states, as it was in Finland.¹³

Second, there is the need for *unity* in culturally heterogeneous states.¹⁴ Throughout Africa the states which received their independence in this generation were not, with few exceptions, nations. What can become the language to express a new national culture other than the language of the former metropole? There is an egalitarian logic to this choice—all ethnic groups are more or less equally ill-equipped to speak it. No ethnic group has a "natural" advantage in getting those jobs associated with literacy in the official language of the state. Even though the language of the metropole was often spoken by not more than 10 per-

12. Sirarpi Ohannessian, "Historical Background," in Ohannessian and Mubanga Kashoki, *Language in Zambia* (London: International African Institute, 1978), p. 272.

13. See Keith Orton, "Dependency Avoidance: The Finnish Experience in Controlling Transnationals," paper delivered to the International Studies Association, West, Los Angeles, 1977.

14. Rupert Emerson, *From Empire to Nation* (Boston: Beacon, 1960), ch. 7.

cent of the population in the newly independent states,¹⁵ and even though certain ethnic groups which had special relations with the colonial powers did have better access to its language, it came to be seen as the language of national unity.

Third, there is the need for *expertise*. Hordes of UN experts and aid officials, and agents of multinational corporations, none of whom could communicate in the African vernaculars, descended on the new states. English, French, and other European languages were seen as the keys to technical knowledge, to scholarly journals, to textbooks, and to links with the technologically advanced world. A resurgence of the vernaculars could only mean, it was argued, the inaccessibility of Western science to educated Africans.

This phenomenon was especially noticeable in the schools. As Fox and Abdulaziz have pointed out, in their private report to the Ford Foundation on its investment on a Survey of Language Use and Language Teaching in Eastern Africa, "English was the only language in which there were sequential, relatively up-to-date materials both for training teachers and teaching school children from upper primary on."¹⁶ Or in the words of the "Report of the Kenya Education Commission of 1964," chaired by Professor S. H. Ominde:¹⁷

First the English medium makes possible a systematic development of language study and literacy which would be very difficult to achieve in the vernaculars. Secondly as a result of the systematic development possible in the English medium, quicker progress is possible in all subjects. Thirdly, the foundation laid in the

15. Pierre Alexandre, *Languages and Language in Black Africa*, F. A. Leavy, trans. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1972), p. 81.

16. Mohamed H. Abdulaziz and Melvin J. Fox, "Evaluation Report on Survey of Language Use and Language Teaching of Eastern Africa" (September 1978), p. 12. I should like to thank Messrs. Fox and William Carmichael of the Ford Foundation for supplying me with a copy of this private report.

17. T. P. Gorman, "The Development of Language Policy in Kenya with Particular Reference to the Educational System," in W. H. Whiteley, ed., *Language in Kenya* (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 441.

first three years is more scientifically conceived, and therefore provides a more solid basis for all subsequent studies, than was ever possible in the old vernacular teaching. . . . In short, we have no doubt about the advantages of English medium to the whole educational process.

Expertise, systematic learning, and science have all been associated with the language of the former metropole.

Each of these three reasons appears in the annual reports of the Ministries of Education in a variety of African states, but they are not, in themselves, compelling. Inertia should not stop the clear articulation of a future desire to break the ties of linguistic association. And the need for expertise should not rule out the strategies of the small European states which have made the dominant languages of technology available to students in their educational systems without abandoning their national languages. And finally, the argument concerning unity, while apparently valid, never made sense to me in light of my research on the Somali experience. Somalia, upon independence in 1960, was a linguistically homogeneous state. More than 95 percent of the population could understand the Somali language heard on the national radio. But due to the exigencies of Somali history, the new state had a diversity of languages of foreign contact. British control in the north, Italian colonialism in the south, and the Islamic influence throughout the country led to the emergence of (small) linguistic elites literate in English, Italian, and Arabic. Since a choice of any of these three foreign languages as the official language of state would bring differential advantage to different elites, the argument for unity would suggest that Somalia would make Somali its official language. But for the first twelve years of independence, English, Italian, and Arabic were the three official languages, with English beginning to predominate. Surely there was more to the choice of the European colonial languages as the official language of state in other newly independent African countries than a desire for unity.

Here one must assess the interests of the dominant ruling coalitions in the first generation of postcolonial leadership. Whether or not they form a "class" is irrelevant for present purposes, but they correspond to those social leaders who have been called the "organizational bourgeoisie."¹⁸ These are the higher civil servants, the managers of transnational corporations, and the licensed distributors of imported goods from the industrialized world. Most of them derived their initial capital in jobs which required the ability to write in a European language. In the civil service especially (still the most preferred route into the middle class in most of Africa), literacy in a European language has been the most important skill. The interest of the members of the organizational bourgeoisie in protecting their capital investment in having learned a European language (a resource that is easily transferred to the next generation) leads them to stress the difficulties inherent in any strategy of linguistic dissociation.¹⁹ These are the very people who became the political leaders of the new states, and their interests were translated into political reality.

The linguistic interests of the ruling groups, supported by arguments concerning national unity and technical access, and self-implemented through inertia, made the strategy of linguistic association in postcolonial Africa highly probable.²⁰ But a similar confluence of interests and reason support strategies of economic and technical association; and as is shown elsewhere in this volume, these strategies

18. I. Markovitz, *Power and Class in Africa* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1977), ch. 6.

19. See Einar Haugen, *Language Conflict and Language Planning: The Case of Modern Norwegian* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966); Antoine Meillet, *Les Langues dans L'Europe nouvelle* (Paris: 1928), and D. Cruise O'Brien, *Saints and Politicians* (Cambridge: University Press, 1975), for discussions of bureaucratic interests, jobs, and language choice in Norway, Western Europe, and Senegal.

20. An excellent defense of the use of the language of the metropole in Nigeria (but applicable elsewhere) is Keith Allan, "Nation, Tribalism, and National Language: Nigeria's Case," in *Cahiers D'Etudes Africaines* (Paris: Mouton, 1978), 18(3):71.

may not be best suited for a development program which fulfills the basic needs of the citizens of the new states. It is therefore important to reexamine old assumptions about linguistic association to see whether a case can be made for the fuller development of the African vernaculars.

THE PROMISE OF LINGUISTIC DISSOCIATION

The most common argument given in support of linguistic dissociation, among the five I shall raise here, has to do with the restoration of cultural autonomy and self-respect. Frantz Fanon was vehement in making the connection between use of the French language and the deep psychological problems of the colonized peoples vis-à-vis their masters.²¹ A Haitian poet put it this way:

Sentez-vous cette souffrance
Et ce désespoir à nul autre égal
D'appriivoiser, avec les mots de France
Ce coeur qui m'est venu du Sénégal²²

The former vice-president of Zambia expressed this same thought in 1969:

We should stop teaching children through English right from the start because it is the surest way of imparting inferiority complex in the children and the society. It is poisonous. It is the surest way of killing African personality and African culture. From my experience people defend what they have and not what they do not have. The African children will only defend the European culture because that is what they will be taught from the start to the finish.²³

21. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, Charles Markmann, trans. (New York: Grove Press, 1967), pp. 17–18, 38. Fanon's work is a clear example of how idealist arguments in the European context can attempt to serve progressive social purposes in the colonial situation.

22. Quoted in Claude Wauthier, *The Literature and Thought of Modern Africa*, Shirley Kay, trans. (New York: Praeger, 1967), p. 31.

23. Simon Kapwepwe, quoted in Robert Serpell, "Developments Since 1971," in Ohannessian and Kashoki, *Language in Zambia*, p. 432.

And the President of Kenya concluded his first speech (which had been in English) to Parliament as President with these words (translated here from Swahili):

Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words in Swahili because I personally think that the time is not far away when we will be able to speak Kiswahili, which is our own language, in this House. . . . Now that we have full independence we don't have to be slaves of foreign languages in our affairs, and consequently, brothers, I wanted to make this point, because everything has to begin somewhere. If I had left this House without uttering a word of Kiswahili, I would have felt somewhat humiliated.²⁴

These sentiments are crucially important. To the extent that Africans must communicate with Africans in the language of their former colonial masters, the humiliations of colonialism may remain omnipresent, reinforcing those attitudes and actions which are inimical to the breaking of the bonds of dependence. To be sure, the European languages in Africa today are very much African languages, adopted and changed by the local population.²⁵ Nonetheless, whether there is a relationship between language use and psychological dependence is problematic and worthy of more systematic research.²⁶

This first argument, despite the purposes of its proponents, is ultimately idealist and conservative. Language is seen as a cultural artifact, which, if rejected, would represent the very rejection of oneself. There is some truth to this, but that should not lead one to forget that language is as dynamic and changing as economic relations. Instead of viewing language as a treasure trove of a nation's past, why

24. Quoted and translated by T. Gorman, in "Language Policy in Kenya," paper presented at the 1970 meeting of the Language Association of Eastern Africa.

25. See the examples in Harold Reeves Collins, "The New English of the Onitsha Chapbooks," no. 1, *Papers in International Studies, Africa Series* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1968).

26. See the pioneering work done by the Comité Linguistique Appliqués à Dakar, at the University of Dakar, Senegal; and A. Colot, "Notes sur L'Entrée A L'Ecole Dans L'Agglomération Dakaroise," *Psychopathologie Africaine* (Dakar: 1965), 1:1. See also, Mubanga Kashoki, "The African Language as a Tool of Development," OAU, Inter-African Bureau of Languages (October 1979).

not view language as a springboard for innovation and change? The second argument for linguistic dissociation views language as a potential source of cultural, economic, and technological innovation, and not as a source of psychological pride.

The basic insight behind this second argument—perhaps best called the argument of “linguistic relativity”—is that a study of language categories will demonstrate (to use Edward Sapir’s formulation) “the tyrannical hold that linguistic form has upon our orientation in the world.”²⁷ The thesis developed from this insight (now in the bolder formulation of Sapir’s student, B. L. Whorf), “holds that all observers are not led by the same physical evidence to the same picture of the universe, unless their linguistic backgrounds are similar, or can in some way be calibrated” and “that users of markedly different grammars are pointed by their grammars toward different types of observation and different evaluations of externally similar acts of observation, and hence are not equivalent as observers, but must arrive at somewhat different views of the world.”²⁸

While the nineteenth century German and English idealists used an argument of this sort to explain the special role certain nations had in world history (some to rule; some to be ruled), surely there is a precedent for turning Hegelian arguments on their head. One can conceive of the contemporary world as one in which the problems of the peripheral countries in the international economy will get decreasing attention from the center. What is required from the periphery is vision, innovation. From where are the new ideas to come? Assume the plausibility of the linguistic relativity hypothesis. If speakers of different languages in some systematic manner perceive the same world from different perspectives, does it not follow that in a world of a multitude

27. Quoted in Dan I. Slobin, *Psycholinguistics* (Glenview, Ill.: Scott Foresman, 1971), p. 120.

28. Benjamin Lee Whorf, *Language, Thought and Reality*, John Carroll, ed. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1956), pp. 214, 221.

of languages, there will be—as it were—a broader supply of innovation coming from the periphery?²⁹

To what extent can one assume the plausibility of the linguistic relativity hypothesis? Scholars in socio- and psycholinguistics have all but abandoned Whorf’s formulation. As John Carroll concludes from a (sympathetic) review of the literature, “the linguistic relativity hypothesis has thus far received very little convincing support. Our best guess at the present is that the effects of language structure will be found to be limited and localized.”³⁰ In my own field research, however, in the Somali-speaking Northeastern Province in Kenya (in 1973), I attempted to reformulate the linguistic relativity hypothesis in order to see if language change in Africa carries with it changes in the way people think and act politically. The resultant data lend some support to the linguistic relativity hypothesis, and I shall summarize the findings here.

Bilingual (in Somali and English) secondary school students answered interview questions and participated in structured role-playing sessions in both languages. I had hypothesized—based on both linguistic and anthropological evidence—how and why approaches to certain kinds of problems would be different depending on which language the interview or role-playing session took place. Examination of the transcripts from these sessions demonstrated that a relationship existed between the language in use and the approach taken by the respondents to certain problems.³¹

29. The relationship between culture and scientific innovation is brilliantly and incomparably explored by J. Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1954 ff.), 5 vols. See vol. 2, s. 13(b) for a skeptical view toward linguistic relativity. But the corpus suggests a cultural basis for scientific paths of discovery.

30. John Carroll, *Language and Thought* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1964), p. 110. But see Alfred Bloom, “The Impact of Chinese Linguistic Structure on Cognitive Style,” *Current Anthropology* (September 1979), 20(3):585–86.

31. David Laitin, *Politics, Language and Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977). The thorny theoretical issues involved are treated in ch. 6; the even thornier empirical issues—concerning adequate controls, sample, etc.—are treated in ch. 7; the findings are reported in ch. 8.

The most telling difference between the two sets of answers concerned the concept of authority. In one role-playing situation, I structured a conflict between a "headmaster" (who wrote an exceedingly difficult final examination) and the "teacher" of that subject (who wanted to protest the difficulty of the examination). In the English dialogues, the Somali respondents tended to justify their stand by virtue of their *role*, i.e. who had the right set the questions. Again and again in the English dialogues, the respondents would make claims like this: "Since I am the English master, you leave the English to me. You are the headmaster of the school, but you are not supposed to interfere with my subjects." A typical response by the Headmaster was "in this school, I am the one who is supposed to know what is going on."³²

Although there is nothing inherent in the Somali language which would prevent someone from making those claims, such claims were rarely made in the Somali dialogues, perhaps because Somali social structure had few formalized roles. Constructions making role claims (e.g., "I am the Headmaster.") in the Somali language seem odd. In fact, a few students who made a "role" claim in the Somali dialogues reverted to English to express their thoughts. In the Somali-language dialogues, authority was generally determined not by role, but by the substance of the issue. The teacher, the advocate of the easy test, would point out to the headmaster that "Progress is through understanding bit by bit," while the headmaster would point out that "the children will be accustomed to easy tests, and will not understand the hard one."³³

These data (in which the differences were statistically significant) indicated that in the Somali-language dialogues, the "teachers" and the "headmasters" saw each other as equals, with equal claims to rightness on an educational issue. In the English dialogues, on the other hand, the

32. *Ibid.*, p. 198.

33. *Ibid.*, pp. 201-2.

teachers and headmasters saw each other as having certain rights and obligations which would have bearing on the educational claims being made. To an important degree, then, both the teachers and headmasters were seeing different people and making different claims depending on which language they were speaking.

Three other differences—based on data from a variety of questions—were also recorded in my study. In the Somali-language dialogues, political argument tended to take a more "diplomatic" style, while in the English-language dialogues, there was a more "confrontational" style. Also, the Somalis with whom I worked had ambivalent feelings about their own identities (Were they Kenyans or Somalis?), and tended to be more open to Kenyan self-conception when speaking in the English language. Finally, religious themes appeared apposite on a number of issues when the students were speaking in Somali; they were largely absent when speaking in English. In general, the concepts these students used, their approach to problems, their view of who they were, and their rights and obligations were different depending on the language in which they were asked to communicate.

The qualifications and limitations to these data are not relevant here.³⁴ At minimum, however, they should reopen the question of whether different languages do lead their speakers to different approaches to similar problems. To the extent to which the theory is valid, one might begin to see the Tower of Babel episode not necessarily as a curse, but perhaps a blessing to our world.

To be sure, imperialist powers throughout history have often been an important source of technological advance. One could hardly deny that the spread of the Arabic language throughout Africa and Asia in the period of Islamic florescence brought great advances in mathematics and

34. See the reviews by Carol Eastman in *American Anthropologist* (June 1979), vol. 81; and William O'Barr in *American Ethnologist* (November 1978), vol. 5, no. 4.

4. Both emphasize the limits of my data.

philosophy. Nor can one deny that European colonialism and neocolonialism have led to the institutionalization of a vast corps of technical innovators in the Third World perfectly at home in French and English. Surely as well, American expansion after World War II has been a catalyst for technological advances by those people in Asia and Africa competent to read the English language. Any theory of linguistic relatively must accept this. But this does not deny that the development of technological breakthroughs might well be enhanced by multicultural (and multilingual) onslaughts.³⁵

Let me push this argument a bit further. What has become accepted as "technological rationality" throughout the world encompasses a mixed bag of both highly efficient methods of production and a whole set of cultural forms which accompanied technical advance as it developed in England, France, the United States, and elsewhere in the West. The dominant mode of development theory has conflated the technical and cultural forms, and its proponents have argued that technological progress requires extensive "westernization." But in Japan, where linguistic barriers have been particularly high, there was an incentive to separate the "technical" from the "Western," making more probable the development of distinct organizations and market strategies, and with it the potential to break the hegemony of the economic order dominated by the advanced industrial states of the West. By this argument, while policies of linguistic association might induce "catch up," policies of linguistic dissociation might induce "challenge."

The third argument in favor of a linguistic dissociative strategy concerns the ability of a regime to create an *institutionalized audience* for its policy guidelines. Here I mean two interrelated things: whether supporters of the regime

35. Karl Mannheim, in *Ideology and Utopia* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1936) pp. 98–108, identifies a cultural basis for utopian innovation. See also Marshall Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 3:430–36, who sees in the dynamics of an active cultural tradition the source of multifarious innovations.

will properly understand the nuances of policy guidance coming from the center; and whether the people (nomads, peasants, workers) will accept and be motivated by the principles articulated by the regime. When any regime in the world's periphery attempts a selective dissociative strategy, its supporters must have a clear understanding of the tasks involved. And perhaps even more important, the productive classes must make changes in behavior which, from a short-term point of view, appear irrational. My contention here is that if linguistic dissociation were part of a general dissociative strategy, the tasks of guiding the regime's supporters and winning those people who must make personal sacrifices might well be easier.

For any policy of dissociation to succeed in Africa, it is quite clear that a regime must be able to modify its incentives to the productive sectors so that there is compliance with the spirit of its policies. When Dr. Nkrumah attempted to tax the cocoa farmers in Ghana in order to subsidize a policy of industrial development, he was too slow to respond to the fact that it became rational for Ghanaian cocoa farmers to smuggle their cocoa into the Ivory Coast (where a better price was available) or to abandon their cultivation of cocoa altogether in favor of subsistence crops. Behavior by peasants which is rational for them in the short run but harmful to their broader long-term interests is a well known phenomenon, and it was of course once argued that the abandonment of subsistence crops for cocoa in the first place was a perfect example.³⁶ My point here is simpler one: that for a regime to foster change in the direction that it wants, it must be attentive to the types of responses to its directives which tend to subvert its intentions. It must then be able to reformulate and transmit new directives which alter the incentive structure.

All this action and reaction by the regime and its cadres requires regular and precise communication—communica-

36. Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation* (Boston: Beacon, 1944).

tion which often must be transmitted through government radio. But European languages (especially English) are very hard to learn. With independence came the decreasing reliance on expatriate teachers and an expansion of educational opportunity in many new states. All this has led to the decline of the standardized international languages as efficient modes of communication. Thus the transmission of directives from higher to lower civil servants, if it hopes to alter behaviors in a nuanced way, must be through the medium of the indigenous language. Especially when a regime has radical socialist goals, what can be the purpose of criticism and self-criticism if the nuances of the dialectic are not appreciated by the cadres?³⁷ Although I have no empirical support for my proposition here, I think it impressive that any perusal of the speeches (all in European languages) on "authenticity" by President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, or on "humanism" by President Kaunda of Zambia, or on the "Green Revolution" by President Shagari of Nigeria will show a level of generality and abstractness which can have no direct meaning to those who have an interest in implementing those lofty goals. While it is true that President Nyerere's policy of *ujamaa* villages (an indigenized version of collectivized agriculture) is hardly a ringing success, one can be impressed with the numerous adjustments in the implementation strategy over the years, especially inasmuch as the dialogue between the center and its functionaries has taken place in the Swahili language.³⁸

The second component of institutionalized audience involves the transmission of the program to the people. To

37. My image of the problems of communications to the periphery for regimes implementing revolutionary programs is derived from Merle Fainsod, *Smolensk Under Soviet Rule* (New York: Vintage, 1963); William Hinton, *Fanshen* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1966); and Kenneth Jowitt, "An Organizational Approach to the Study of Political Culture in Marxist Leninist Systems," *American Political Science Review* (September 1974), vol. 68, no. 3.

38. See Frances Hill, "Ujamaa: African Socialist Productionism in Tanzania," in H. Desfosses and J. Levesque, *Socialism in the Third World* (New York: Praeger, 1975).

elucidate this point, I must return to my Somali research.³⁹ In 1969 there was a military coup d'état in Somalia, after which the new rulers adopted a socialist ideology. A year after its declaration of scientific socialism, the regime solved the major political problem holding back the writing of the Somali language, and declared that Somali would be written in a Latin-based script. In a matter of months, Somali became the language of politics, administration, and education throughout the republic. Problems and opportunities abounded, but what concerns me here was the necessity to translate the regime's statements on socialist ideology into the Somali language. The process of translation turned out to be a process of ideological debate which involved a broad segment of the Somali population. To be sure, a linguistic commission was appointed to make official translations, but it could not work in a vacuum. As soon as official translations were made, objections and demands for clarification came from a variety of sectors of Somali society.

The very word for socialism came under initial attack. The regime translated it as *hantiwadaag*, which means, literally, the sharing of wealth, with the word for wealth connotating wealth in livestock. Unlike *socialism*, which has no connotations whatsoever for a Somali nomad, *hantiwadaag* is a coinage with many denominations. To many nomads it meant that the regime was intent on confiscation of their livestock. The president of the country, Maxamad Siyaad Barre, had to go around the country explaining to the nomads that he had no intention of confiscating their livestock, and thereby setting limits to the program of *hantiwadaag*.

Similar problems emerged when the Russian-trained ideologues decided to make Somali socialism "scientific." First, *scientific* was translated as "sitting on knowledge" which would not do for the more activist socialists ("too

39. David Laitin, "The Somali Military Regime and Scientific Socialism," in T. Callaghy and C. Rosberg, *Socialism in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, 1979).

passive," they argued). So it was changed to *built on knowledge*. But then broad segments of the population wanted to know why it was not built on Islamic knowledge. President Siyaad had to tour the country refining his ideology to show the relationship of socialism and Islam.

The point that follows from this discussion is that the very process of exposition of goals in an indigenous language compels the regime to articulate and rearticulate its goals to a broader segment of the population than would be the case if the statements or ideological pronouncements were in a European language. In its clarifications, the regime will provide the opportunity for the constituents of social policy to engage in criticism of the programs. This criticism, while potentially destabilizing to any regime, is a necessary condition for the successful implementation of development-oriented social policy. Whether the audience is made up of cadres or citizens, linguistic dissociation provides opportunities for a regime to be "heard" in the periphery.

The fourth argument in favor of linguistic dissociation—and one that builds on the idea of institutionalized audience—is that such a policy will make a regime more attentive to the felt needs of the people in the periphery. To the extent that the language of politics, administration, and education is an indigenous one, basic literacy programs can more easily reach the people. Once nomads, farmers, workers, and shopkeepers are literate, they do not have to employ official letter writers or lawyers to petition government to redress grievances. They can (and will) do so directly. Heavier loads of communication to a political administration from the rural areas will compel it to become more attentive to those peoples' needs. To be sure, lowering the costs of communication from periphery to center cannot assure that rural people will be heard in the capital city. Nonetheless, communication in the language of the people will better enable frustrated citizens to petition higher civil servants in the ministries without having to rely on district of-

ficers who gain status by deflecting popular demands from their superiors. In an interview with a Somali official, I learned that the volume of petitions of the government from nomadic groups grew enormously in the wake of a general literacy drive after Somali became the official language of administration.

There is also some budget data to support the contention that not only will regimes in which an indigenous language is the official one be more attentive to grievances from rural areas, but they will be more generous to them in their capital allocations. In Somalia after the change in official language and in Tanzania (where Swahili quickly emerged as the official language of administration),⁴⁰ capital expenditures for projects to rural areas formed a larger part of the government development programs than in comparable states where English and French remained the principal language of administration.⁴¹ In fact, in discussing the role of Swahili in Tanzania, M. H. Abdulaziz remarked, "Without the presence of this powerful medium the present egalitarian policies of socialism and self-reliance would have been difficult to implement in so short a time."⁴² A basic "human needs" orientation toward development has been the general concern behind dissociative strategies generally. Here I am suggesting that linguistic dissociation will pressure regimes in Africa to be more attentive to the development needs of their citizens in the poorer rural areas. With a regime more attentive to the people, one might expect a populace more willing to take local initiatives to support regime programs.

A final argument which could be made for linguistic dissociation (although I have never seen it made) concerns

40. *Ibid.*, p. 182; David Laitin, "Language Choice and National Development," pp. 312–13.

41. It should be noted that Imperial Ethiopia was an exception here. The use of a single indigenous language in a linguistically heterogeneous state creates new inequalities. I shall be dealing with this problem in the next section.

42. "The Ecology of Tanzanian Language Policy," in E. Polomé and C. Hill, eds., *Language in Tanzania* (Oxford: University Press, 1980).

plugging the "brain drain"—a deep problem for many African states. Building on his inventive typology in *Exit, Voice and Loyalty*, Albert Hirschman has recently addressed the problem of the brain drain.⁴⁵ What were the incentives, he inquired, which brought exogenously educated personnel back to their own countries, in professional environments far less satisfying than where they had been educated? From his Latin American experience, Hirschman suggested that cultural "complexity"—those Byzantine procedures which must be learnt to get anything done in Latin America—might be viewed not as a blight on development, but as a resource for development. Latin American intellectuals are rather proud of their ability to understand the deeper meaning of social and political interactions—those nuances that gringos are most likely to miss. The understanding of the complexity and the enjoyment of participating in it is, Hirschman suggests, an incentive for intellectuals to resist "exit."

I am skeptical of this argument—however elegant and complex it is. As I chat with foreign-trained physicians in Nigeria, who tell stories of how they have to use culturally laden coaxing to order to get their nurses to pass them the proper piece of equipment, or to get them to participate in more than one operation in a morning, I cannot believe those interactions provide an incentive to remain in Nigeria. As I watch my professorial colleagues (I write this as a visiting faculty member of the University of Ife, Oyo State, Nigeria) spend a whole morning coaxing technicians to provide electricity for their lecture room that day (all in rich culturally significant imagery), I cannot believe that these encounters provide an incentive to resist teaching offers abroad.

Nevertheless, there is an application of the Hirschman argument which is less mysterious, and perhaps even valid. To the extent that education in African countries is provided primarily in the indigenous language, indigenously trained

45. Albert Hirschman, "Exit, Voice and the State," in *World Politics* (October 1978).

technicians will be less able to apply for and procure jobs abroad. The educational systems in many African countries are still based on the curricula and the economic structural needs of the former metropolises. Indigenously trained graduates, technically expert in a European language, are able to fit into advanced programs or job categories abroad with little adjustment. Surely this has advantages; but the costs should be made clear. When an African country is compelled to use its own texts—that is when it switches the medium of instruction—it begins to make its curriculum more relevant for the country's needs. As curriculum changes come in the wake of linguistic dissociation, the direct links between advanced degree and job category, which exist in Africa and Europe, will be weakened. Indigenously trained technicians under these conditions will be less able to "exit."

To be sure, highly trained technical personnel must have competence in at least one of the major world languages. The mobility of these people will never be constrained by indigenous language policies. But middle-level technicians do not need ready access to scientific journals, and their training can be competently provided through the indigenous language medium. Since these personnel would be geographically constrained, an indigenous language policy may bring a net benefit to the society.

In a major critique of neoclassical approaches to the problem of the brain drain, M. Godfrey has come to conclusions similar to mine. Analyses which focus on salary differentials, costs of transport, and the probability of getting employment, are, according to Godfrey, unable to predict migration patterns of professionals. Godfrey cites studies which show that professional affiliations and other institutional connections between countries are a necessary basis for large-scale migration. He therefore suggests training in Third World countries in which "nonnegotiable qualifications" are provided. This involves a policy of educational "disengagement," one component of which is to "use the national language as the medium of instruction in courses

and textbooks." Godfrey points out that linguistic disengagement is in part responsible for Japanese technicians spurning higher salaries abroad.⁴⁴ Alternately, the massive spread of English in Israel has facilitated a middle-class exodus to the United States.⁴⁵

Promotion of an indigenous language, although it does imprison many professionals in their own country, might provide at least one countervailing benefit. The few cases of promotion of the indigenous language I have seen in Africa (Somali in Somalia; Swahili in Tanzania; Yoruba in the southwestern states of Nigeria), have been associated with a cultural renaissance. Here I do not mean the re-creation of "native" dances or any treatment of culture as a museum piece, but rather the contemporary development of theatre, poetry, literature, and opera for local audiences. While I cannot believe African intellectuals enjoy going through Byzantine rituals to perform adequately their professional roles, I have seen these intellectuals delighted and excited by the development of indigenous language theatre and opera. To the extent that the indigenous cultures of Africa can avoid the stultification of being of archeological interest alone, contemporary intellectuals will derive deep pleasure in supporting the renaissance. This aspect of cultural complexity could provide an incentive to resist the appeal of professional advancement through emigration. Linguistic dissociation could then be one mechanism of plugging the brain drain.

A PROGRAM FOR LINGUISTIC DISSOCIATION

While the benefits of linguistic dissociation can be made to appear attractive, the implementation of this strategy is

44. Martin Godfrey, "The Outflow of Trained Personnel from Developing Countries 'Brain Drain': The Disengagement Alternative," UN, ECOSOC, E/CN.5/L.421, November 12, 1976.

45. Richard Wood suggested this example to me in his comments on an earlier draft.

fraught with difficulties—not dissimilar to problems of self-reliant strategies in other policy realms. In this section, I explore some trends and proposals in Africa in the direction of language dissociation.

It must be pointed out that although the pressures favoring linguistic association, as discussed in the second section of this paper, are very strong, it would be wrong to assume that linguistic association represents a stable policy outcome. The counterpressures for change are strong; not only because the social force of nationalist goals is often stronger than the force of technical goals. Trends in this direction are already discernible. Tanzania moved towards the official use of Swahili shortly after independence. In Somalia, after twelve years of independence, the three exogenous official languages were replaced by the indigenous Somali. In Uganda under Amin (who was raised in a combat unit and not a European university), Swahili gained stature. In Senegal, where the president was a gifted poet in the French language, some leftist groups used the promotion of the Wolof language as a symbol to discredit the Senghor regime in general. In Zaire, regional lingua francas such as Lingala, Swahili, and Tshiluba are gaining in stature. And in Zambia and Kenya, both countries where radical policies of employing English as the sole medium of instruction from Primary I were implemented in the 1960s, the Ministries of Education have retreated and now support more instruction through the media of indigenous languages.⁴⁶ From a variety of sources—military leaders who have less affect for the

46. Abdulaziz and Fox, "Evaluation Report," pp. 13–14, 88; and Ohannesian and Kashoki, *Language in Zambia*, p. 438. In Cameroon and Madagascar, there are already movements for the promotion of the indigenous languages. See Beban Sammy Chumbow, "Language and Language Policy in Cameroon," in Ndiva Kafele-kale, *An African Experiment in Nation Building: The Bilingual Cameroon Republic Since Reunification* (Boulder: Westview, 1980); and Denis Turcotte, "La planification linguistique à Madagascar: réaménager les rapports entre les langues française et malgache," in *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* (1981), vol. 32. The best available compendium of indigenous language experimentation in Africa is that of Mechthild Rey and Bernd Heine *Sprachpolitik in Afrika* (Köln: Institut für Afrikanistik, 1982).

language of the metropole than their civilian predecessors, leftist intellectuals who seek ways to discredit the conservative trends among the first generation of nationalist leaders, educationists who are disillusioned with the slow progress of students who learn in a language foreign to them—pressures have been mounting for the increased status and use of African vernaculars.⁴⁷

As should be apparent, the two countries which have made the most progress toward linguistic dissociation—Tanzania and Somalia—are both linguistically homogeneous states in the sense that a vast majority of the populations of these states is competent to speak the same indigenous language. (In another sense, to be sure, Tanzania is linguistically heterogeneous). For linguistically homogeneous states, the most difficult problem of dissociation—i.e., which indigenous language(s) should be official—does not arise.

Still, as I shall discuss in the section which follows, problems abound.⁴⁸ A linguistic commission must be appointed to standardize a single dialect and orthography. As the late W. H. Whiteley has pointed out, "Anyone who has worked on a local language committee knows how tenaciously people cling to unworkable, impracticable orthographies because they feel that somehow to tamper with the spelling is to tamper with the languages."⁴⁹ New words must be coined; and in coining new words the proper balance of indigenous root words as opposed to foreign words adjusted to the indigenous sound system must be worked out.

47. See the calls for an indigenous language policy in Onuigbo Gregory Nwoye, "Language Planning in Nigeria" (Ph.D. diss., Georgetown University, 1978), and in G. O. Onibonjo, Kole Omotoso, and O. A. Lawal, *The Indigenous for National Development* (Ibadan: Onibonjo Press, 1976). Regular appeals to the importance of indigenous language policies appear in the journal *Présence Africaine* (Paris). This genre of writing demonstrates the latent ideological power inherent in indigenous language political movements.

48. See Björn Jernudd and Joan Rubin, *Can Language Be Planned?* (Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 1971.)

49. Whiteley, *Language in Kenya*, p. 2.

Textbooks must be written. Civil servant examinations must be set and graded. Dictionaries and manuals for usage must be published. All this must be done in countries which do not have a large professional class of linguists, lexicographers, and grammarians. While I do not want to minimize the difficulties inherent in such a project, the Somali and Tanzanian experiences suggest that unlike economic dissociation, the seeds of linguistic dissociation can yield fruit within a few years.⁵⁰

Among the linguistically heterogeneous states—the norm in Africa—the components of a linguistic dissociation strategy are more complex. Here I shall differentiate four trends which have some resonance in African language discussions.

Linguistic Empires

By far the most controversial language strategy for a linguistically heterogeneous state is the choice of the language of a dominant language group as the single official language of the state. While this strategy is hardly different from the policies of François Ier of France, the times are different today. In his Edict of Villers-Cotterêts (1539), he established Francien, the dialect of Île de France, as the only official language of the state. Latin, Norman, and Picard may well have had more prestige. Speakers of other dialects and languages could not understand Francien. But through this ruthless policy, a nation was forged from an empire. To ignore the claims of some minority language group in the sixteenth century was hardly a risky enterprise. Today, every "forgotten" minority has a "liberation front" and an easy call on international arms and media. The use of an imperial policy, creating a "nation" out of the forced assimilation into

50. See Hussein Adam, *The Revolutionary Development of the Somali Language*, UCLA Occasional Papers in African Studies (1979); and W. H. Whiteley, *Swahili: The Rise of a National Language* (London: Methuen, 1969) for the Somali and Swahili experiences.

the imperial culture of language minorities, may well be anachronistic.

Although in the twentieth century it would be extraordinary to replicate the success of François Ier, Haile Selassie made such an attempt in Ethiopia. In his 1955 Revised Constitution of Ethiopia, it is stated that "the official language of the Empire is Amharic."⁵¹ And laws requiring all missionaries to evangelize and teach in Amharic, requiring all Ethiopians to display their name in Amharic letters, and requiring all schools to teach through the Amharic medium soon followed.⁵² Although some other Ethiopian languages got limited official status, and although English became an important language for law and commerce, Amharic was the primary official language.

This strategy was implemented in a country of 25 million people, where only 7.8 million speak Amharic as a first language, and another 2.2 million are competent to speak it as a second language.⁵³ To a certain extent, this imperial policy bore fruit. The level of Amharic knowledge grew in the towns, in industrial establishments, and among school-leavers.⁵⁴ As the Ethiopian population became socially mobilized (a painfully slow process in that feudal empire), many non-Amhara groups began to adopt Amharic as the language of homelife—especially the Oromos, perhaps the largest nationality group in the Empire.

But the risks were great. First, Amharic speakers had easier access to government jobs and resources. In a survey of university freshman, 55.5 percent were Amharic mother tongue, while only 10.4 percent of the students were Oromo speakers. The Amhara and Oromo have approximately a third of the population each.⁵⁵ Worse, the former Italian colony of Eritrea, by 1962 annexed to Ethiopia, was

51. M. L. Bender et al., *Language in Ethiopia* (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 188.

52. *Ibid.*, pp. 189–90.

53. *Ibid.*, pp. 15–16.

54. *Ibid.*, pp. 194, 212, 271.

55. *Ibid.*, ch. 16.

far more educationally advanced than other regions of the country. The Eritreans are predominantly Tigrinya speakers, and their access to jobs in an Amharicized civil service and intellectual life became severely threatened. There is little doubt that the regional separatist movements, which since the fall of Haile Selassie, have been rife among the Eritreans, the Somalis, and the Oromos, are in large part due to the imperial language policy of Haile Selassie. The present revolutionary Dergue has begun to backtrack on language policy to deflect the claims of the separatist movements and has begun to advocate the official use of ten Ethiopian languages as media of instruction.⁵⁶

Imperial strategies have been considered in other African settings with similar resistance. In Nigeria, where about one-third of the population is competent in Hausa, and in which some 400 languages have been differentiated, a proposal was made in 1961 in the Nigerian House of Representatives that Hausa should become Nigeria's official language. Chief Anthony Enahoro, an Edo speaker from the Benin area led the (successful) opposition. He argued:

. . . as one who comes from a minority tribe, I deplore the continuing evidence in this country that people wish to impose their customs, their languages, and even their way of life upon the smaller tribes. . . . My people have a language, and that language was handed down through a thousand years of tradition and custom. When the Benin Empire exchanged ambassadors with Portugal, many of the new Nigerian languages of today did not exist.⁵⁷

Leaving aside the dubious historical claims about the origins of other Nigerian languages, his sentiments reflect well the position of speakers of the "nonchosen" languages in an imperial language strategy.

Measured in centuries, then, imperial language policies may have merit. But in a reckoning of decades, social mo-

56. Abdulaziz and Fox, "Evaluation Report," pp. 17, 44.

57. Quoted in Allan, "Nation, Tribalism and National Language," p. 398.

bilization induced by the expansion of the state will outpace assimilation of minority groups into the imperial language and nationality. This is an equation, when nonassimilated groups are geographically distinct, likely to lead to separatist regional movements.⁵⁸ Without ruthless and visionary leadership, the short-term pressures against an imperial strategy will outweigh any long-term potential benefits for the creation of an indigenously based national culture.

Linguistic Confederations

Perhaps not France, but Switzerland, should be a model for African language strategy. The idea that each language group should have control over its own area, and its language become the official one is attractive. Despite attempts in the early independence years to create a linguistic empire, India is today working its way toward a linguistic confederation. The dynamics of Indian language policy—given India's multilingualism—have considerable resonance in Africa, and so its case deserves some scrutiny here.⁵⁹

The Indian Constitution, although written in English, gave special place to the Hindi language. Hindi was scheduled to become the official language of the Indian state after a fifteen-year period—a time which would presumably enable Indians from non-Hindi speaking areas to learn the new official language. On the eve of the fifteen-year deadline—with very little preparation for its consequences—rioting throughout some of the non-Hindi areas and technical

58. This is part of the thrust of Deutsch's argument in *Nationalism and Social Communication*.

59. For an early appraisal of the Indian case, see Selig S. Harrison, *The Most Dangerous Decades: An Introduction to the Comparative Study of Language Policy in Multi-Lingual States* (New York: Columbia University, Language and Communication Research Center, 1957). This discussion will be based on the following sources: B. R. Nayar, *National Communication and Language Policy in India* (New York: Praeger, 1969); M. L. Apte, "Multilingualism in India and Its Socio-Political Implications: An Overview," in O'Barr and O'Barr, *Language and Politics*; and J. Das Gupta, "Practice and Theory of Language Planning: The Indian Policy Process," in *ibid*.

problems of implementation led the government to rescind the constitutional guideline and to continue using English as the language of the Indian bureaucracy and parliament.

Some observers have not given up hope. Nayar points out that should one focus one's attention away from the 1965 deadline, one would see that much has been done to promote Hindi as a national language. The author points out that, *inter alia*, "In 1962, a consolidated Glossary of Technical Terms (English-Hindi), running into 1,400 pages, representing work done over a decade, was published . . . [and that] the Ministry of Education is also carrying on the translation into Hindi of office manuals and forms. Some 1,400 manuals running into 74,000 pages and over 23,000 departmental forms are involved."⁶⁰

Das Gupta agrees that there has been an impressive, even overwhelming, production of "Hindi words, books, dictionaries, encyclopaedias, lectures, and exhortations," but argues that "paradoxically, none of these impressive gains in Hindi production and development could be said to be directly related to the question of bringing Hindi closer to the unrivaled role of the official language of the Union." As evidence, he points to the fact that in Parliament, legislation is introduced in English, and that the main result of bilingual requirements for official acts is to "provide employment to a growing profession of translators." More important, he finds that in government publications, the bilingual publication norms have had virtually no impact "in the more technical fields of transaction involving contracts, licenses, and tenders. Where caution and precision are highly valued," the author concludes, "chances are rarely taken, and the logic of business presumably gains a premium on the progress of Hindi."⁶¹

If union language policy appears to be sinking in a bureaucratic quagmire, state language policy is on more solid

60. Nayar, pp. 127, 129.

61. Das Gupta, in O'Barr and O'Barr, *Language and Politics*, pp. 202, 204–5.

ground. Since the decision to develop states based on linguistic criteria, the states have accepted the dominant languages of their people as the official languages of state business. Less than a third of the twenty-eight states and union territories employ English as the official language of education and state business.⁶² States have appointed special committees for language development, and the Union government, in its desire to placate the states in order to carry on its Hindi language policy, has heavily subsidized the states' efforts. The indirect effect of diffusing criticism for expenditure on Hindi language development by subsidizing state policies seems to be the planting of seeds for a multilingual confederation.⁶³

There is some indication in Nigeria that a similar strategy is being pursued. Amid the civil war of 1967–70—in which the Igbo people attempted to secede from the Nigerian federation—the federal government decided that the three-region structure of the early independence years—in which there was a linguistic majority in each region along with a plethora of minorities—exacerbated interethnic tensions. A multistate Nigeria was envisaged, with language a key (but not sole) variable in the creation of new states. Today there are nineteen states. The existence of oil and the distribution of much of its revenues to the states has given the states considerable leeway in the development of their programs under the 1979 Constitution. Although English remains the dominant language of the federal government, the states are free to choose a state language.⁶⁴

While it is still too early for most of the states to address the issue of state languages, there is some indication that in the southwest (Yoruba-speaking) states, that the indigenous language may be further developed. There are over eleven million Yoruba speakers in the Nigerian states

62. Apte, in *ibid.*, pp. 161–63.

63. Das Gupta, in *ibid.*, p. 208.

64. See C. M. B. Brann, "Some Linguistic Implications of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria," *Africa* (Rome: March 1980), vol. 35, no. 1.

of Oyo, Ogun, Ondo, Kwara, Bendel, and Lagos (although the latter three have large non-Yoruba populations). Despite the Nigerian-wide language policy over the years, which designated English as the official language of civil service, higher education, and business, the Yoruba people have continued to press for growing official status for their language. In an exciting educational experiment conducted at the University of Ife, Yoruba-medium instruction was offered in an experimental school for the first six years of education. With careful controls, it was found that the students who learned all subjects through the Yoruba medium (and who learned English as only one subject, albeit an important one) performed better in all subjects, including English.⁶⁵ This experiment suggests that indigenous language development for use in most official domains does not need to hold students back from eventual acquisition of an internationally prominent language. Since the end of military rule in 1979, the legislature in Oyo State has successfully pressed for the acceptance of Yoruba as a language for official debate; and the governor has begun to give policy statements (and not just make ceremonial gestures) in Yoruba. Is it not possible to conceive of each state following this model—eventually to have the civil services and secondary schools to operate in the state languages—while the federal government and the universities operate in English?

Three problems can be predicted for such a model. First, it is a prescription (in Nigeria especially, but in other African

65. See Adebisi Afolayan, "The Six Year Primary Project in Nigeria," in Ayo Bamgbose, ed., *Mother Tongue Education: The West African Experience* (London: Hodder and Stroughton, 1976). The author notes that in the experimental group, the teacher best equipped to speak English became the English teacher. So the students there heard a good and consistent role model. This factor—and not the variable of whether it is pedagogically sounder to begin one's education in one's own language—may account for the findings. Nonetheless, the scarcity of good English speakers in African primary schools is a fact of life. Compare Afolayan's findings with those of Anders Andersson, "Multilingualism and Attitudes: An Exploratory-Descriptive Study Among Secondary School Students in Ethiopia and Tanzania" (Ph.D. diss., University of Uppsala, 1967); and in Serpell, in Ohannessian and Kashoki, *Language in Zambia*, pp. 432–33.

states as well) for leap-frogging secessionist claims by small language groups. Nigeria went into independence with three regions, representing the dominant language groups of Yoruba, Hausa, and Igbo. Pressures by "minority" groups (including Chief Enahoro's Edos) increased that number to four, then twelve, now nineteen, and pressures exist in at least three states for still more separations. A confederationist language policy would create incentives for small ethnically distinct groups to claim mutual unintelligibility with neighboring language groups. With some scholars reckoning that there are over 400 languages in Nigeria, the logic of confederationism could lead to administrative decentralization ad absurdum.

Second, a confederationist policy tends to ignore the enormous geographical mobility of peoples throughout Africa. Numerous Igbos work in Nigeria's north; Hausas have large communities in the west; and minority groups have their communities throughout the republic. Can it be possible to provide for Hausa-language schools in Yoruba dominated states? What happens to minority children who learn through the foreign (to them) Yoruba medium for their early years, and then move to a different (but still foreign) part of the country? Nigeria has a patchwork of language groups, and the spacially static logic of confederationist policies may be inadequate to serve its linguistic needs.⁶⁶

Third, a confederationist language policy can easily hide the real problem: what will be the language of the center? For Renner and Bauer, German would be the main language of the Austro-Hungarian state. For Lenin, whatever concessions were made to the nationalities, Russian would remain the language of power and mobility. In India, as the states develop their languages, English remains the language of the central state. In conditions of this type, the development of the national languages in the educational systems of the regions tends to be perceived as a mechanism to hold

66. See M. Kashoki on "language zoning," discussed in Serpell, in Ohannessian and Kashoki, *Language in Zambia*, p. 437.

the peoples from the peripheries away from the centers of power. (Indeed, this is how many Africans perceive the development of Bantu languages in South Africa). Educational curricula which teach primary school students in their indigenous tongues for the first few grades and then move "up" to the language of the center "teach" children that their language is not capable of transmitting higher levels of communication. Such a policy could work against the purposes of dissociation; or it could be used by a chauvinist center to restrict mobility opportunities in the name of dissociation.⁶⁷ The confederationist language strategy in India (and the potential for the same in Nigeria) has certain attractions as a model for Africa—it combines the technical and unity roles of the European language with the cultural and participatory rules of the indigenous languages. Yet the strategy has high costs. In the African context it can lead to leap-frogging demands for state creation. Also, it constrains the geographic mobility of families across state boundaries. Finally, it can work subtly to subvert the very values it wishes to promote.

Gradual promotion of an Indigenous Lingua Franca

In Kenya, unlike neighboring Tanzania, the Swahili-medium trade in the centuries before European colonization did not penetrate far beyond the coast. The spread of Swahili up-country in Kenya is far less impressive than in Tanzania, and this fact has had important consequences for Kenya's language policy. By 1967 the Kenyan government began to implement a series of policies which would essentially make most Kenyan schools at nearly all levels English-medium.

Meanwhile, however, other social forces were at play. The Kenyan African National Union, Kenya's sole political

67. See M. Kashoki, "The African Language as a Tool of Development," OAU, Inter-African Bureau of Languages (October 1979), p. 8. Kashoki is a supporter of indigenous language development. But he has a keen understanding of how, if badly done, the hidden curriculum would lead students to further belittle the possibilities of their mother tongues.

party, was active in promoting Swahili as a national language. The president, too, was supportive of Swahili, and he decreed in 1974 that Swahili become the language of Parliament. By 1978 the educational system began to turn away from sole reliance on the English-medium, and the 1978 National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies proclaimed that at "Kiswahili is the national language for Kenya."⁶⁸ Also, the major ideological slogans, whether *Harambee* (literally, "let us pull together") under Kenyatta or *Nyayo* (literally "footsteps", as in following Kenyatta's, but more recently as in follow mine or else!) under President Moi, are self-consciously in Swahili, with deep resonance throughout many parts of the country.

Although estimates vary, it seems fair to say that about 50 percent of Kenyans speak Swahili well enough to use it in a variety of domains.⁶⁹ And, quite important, only about 10,000 are ethnically "Swahili". Swahili, then, has considerable spread, but is not associated with any one dominant nationality group.

The linguistic strategy in Kenya seems to be one of maintaining English as the language of power and privilege while paying lip service to the special role of Swahili. Yet an alternative conception would be to see in Kenya the gradualist promotion of an indigenous lingua franca. Even were this the intention of the regime, implementation would not be easy. Swahili in Kenya has long had a low social status,⁷⁰ and its social meaning—it is the language in which one orders one's servants—does not augur well for its progress. But this could gradually change. As Kenyan intellectuals and civil servants have continued to work and learn in English,

68. Quoted in Abdulaziz and Fox, "Evaluation Report," p. 14.

69. Whiteley, in *Language in Kenya*, estimates that 60 percent of the Bantu speakers (numbering about 7 million) and less than 10 percent of the non-Bantu speakers (numbering about 3.6 million) speak Swahili well enough to use it in a variety of situations. See pp. 59–60, 27.

70. *Ibid.*, pp. 4, 143. See also Carol M. M. Scotton, "Language in East Africa: Linguistic Patterns and Political Ideologies," in Joshua Fishman, *Advances in the Study of Societal Multilingualism* (The Hague: Mouton, 1978).

neighboring Tanzanian colleagues have been assiduously developing and modernizing the Swahili language. Over the years, as more and more students are required to learn Swahili to advance through the school system, and as more Kenyans become geographically mobile (and thereby forced to improve their Swahili), the 50 percent figure of competent Swahili speakers is likely to rise—to rise faster than any estimate for competent English speakers, where there is often a rapid loss of competence after a student leaves school.⁷¹ In some future period (measured in decades), it is reasonable that the political climate could change and that Swahili could replace English as the official language of the Kenyan state.

How applicable this strategy is to other African states is questionable. In Uganda, the level of competent Swahili speakers is even lower than in Kenya. In Zaire, Lingala (the lingua franca of the armed forces, with considerable spread throughout that large country) is a candidate, but it hasn't the literature, the oral tradition, and the published grammars that Swahili has. The task of reducing it to a standard script for purposes of administering a large country would be enormous. Hausa has considerable spread in West Africa, but not in any one West African state. In Senegal, Wolof is not only the language of the dominant nationality group, but it is a spreading lingua franca as well. The gradual promotion of Wolof could put it as a candidate for a generally accepted official language within a generation. Or, more interestingly, the elevation by African states of English-affiliated creoles to official status would be consistent with the strategy of gradual promotion of an indigenous lingua franca. In Sierra Leone, for example, their Krio is as much an African language as is Swahili, but it has the same status as English had in England after the Norman invasion.

The examples are few, but the idea is attractive. It is in very few African countries that such a language could be

71. See Peter Ladefoged et al., *Language in Uganda* (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 25.

found. But in those countries, a Machiavellian leader, sensitive to the realities of African language politics, might well begin to promote a relatively neutral language which has some geographical spread while still proclaiming the language of the former metropole as the language of state. He might well be planting the seeds of a linguistic revolution which he would not live to harvest.

Cultivated Multilingualism

Through this discussion of policy alternatives, linguistic heterogeneity has been assumed to be a "problem."⁷² This assumption has recently been questioned by Zambian scholar and higher civil servant Mubanga Kashoki. In a series of recent papers, Kashoki has argued that in Zambia (and surely elsewhere in Africa) multilingualism is a fact of life. If ordinary citizens of different linguistic backgrounds can learn each other's language when necessary, why not build government policy on the strengths of its own citizenry?

Kashoki's studies have shown that in border areas, many Zambians speak between two and three languages, and if necessary, can learn more. The goal of language policy should not be toward the elimination of linguistic diversity, but rather "to harness and utilize it in Zambia to our best advantage."⁷³

Unfortunately, Kashoki has not spelled out as yet exactly what this means in terms of what is to become the official language(s) of state. He talks vaguely about mutual respect, decentralized negotiation, and incentives for multilingual performance, but without concrete proposals for the (typically) complex Zambian situation. The Nigerians are now experimenting with ideas concerning multilingual compe-

72. Whiteley takes this common view in *Language in Kenya*, p. 4.

73. Kashoki's papers are summarized in Serpell in Ohannessian and Kashoki, *Language in Zambia*, p. 435. See also Kashoki, "Achieving Nationhood . . ." *Language in Zambia*, p. 8; and E. Palomé, "Tanzania: A Socio-Linguistic Perspective," in E. Palomé and C. P. Hill *Language in Tanzania*.

tence for students, considering a requirement that all Nigerian graduates learn at least one Nigerian language other than their own. Their policy of placing the university graduates who constitute the National Youth Service Corps in states different from their own would supplement this idea, if it were ever put into practice. Yet even here, one wonders how to avoid bureaucratic cacaphony unless a single language of wider communication were agreed upon.

In this context, the Austro-Hungarian experience is a useful one to consider. Amid the dissolution of the Empire, as was alluded to earlier in this paper, opponents of Rosa Luxemburg articulated a position in regard to the nationalities which attempted to conjoin support for national self-determination and socialism within the context of a heterogeneous and geographically mixed population. Karl Renner and Otto Bauer articulated a "principle of personality" which was explicitly opposed to the confederative "principle of territoriality." In Jászi's summary of Renner's position, it was held that "all members of each nation should be entitled to form local, intermediate, and central, national associations, so-called National Universities, endowed with a state-like jurisdiction in all matters pertaining to cultural life and educational system, disregarding the territorial divisions of the whole empire. . . . According to this program the joint state should be doubly organized; first, from a national standpoint; and second, from an administrative standpoint."⁷⁴ This position's brilliance lies in its cultivation of societal multilingualism without constraining individual geographic mobility. Unlike Kashoki's idea, however, Renner foresaw the societal dominance of a single language (i.e., German) and the continued centralization of finance.

That the Habsburg Monarchy did not survive meant that the Austrian Social Democrats had no chance to implement this program. But in Estonia in 1925, a law was passed permitting self-defined national groups to set up public cor-

74. O. Jászi, *The Dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929), p. 179, also p. 180, fn. 4.

porations, promulgate decrees, raise taxes, and supervise education. No territorial unit was needed.⁷⁵ Surely this is a precedent for Africa. A declaration that all civil servants to reach a certain grade level must become competent in two officially named indigenous languages (out of say, five) would not, it seems to me, be an excessive burden in the African context. All official documents would require extensive translation into five languages, and different schools would be required to offer a variety of languages as subjects along with one as the medium of instruction. Is this a bureaucratic load which no African government can afford? Perhaps. But perhaps also such a policy would create a language industry with vast employment prospects for people whose job it is to promote the development of African languages. This industry—serving the purposes of the state—would go a long way toward reviving—and not just preserving—African culture.

PROBLEMS IN IMPLEMENTATION

The future of languages in Africa over the next century will in most cases be in the hands of market forces rather than policy planners. One could predict, for example, that in some states, like the Ivory Coast, where French has penetrated widely with a good educational infrastructure, and where no indigenous language has wide currency, French could well become a true national language. In other cases, like Zaire, where a variety of regional languages are autonomously expanding in scope, one could predict the growth of these languages based on the economic and political fortunes of the regions in which they are based.

But because the issue of the official language of state remains on the political agenda, and because initial attempts at language change do not appear to be very expen-

75. See G. Von Rauch, *The Baltic States: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania—Years of Independence 1917–1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974).

sive, African leaders will have an incentive to engage in language planning. One of the striking characteristics of language planning, however, as opposed to economic planning, family planning, or city planning, is that the level of success in terms of implementation appears to be extraordinarily different in different cases. While in retrospect one can explain why some programs failed in the implementation stage, one does not have a clear grasp of the technical, social, and economic conditions favorable for successful implementation. Why was the implementation of Hebrew as the official language of the Israeli state so easy to achieve, given that so few Israelis were capable of speaking it and that the language was technically ill-equipped to express the concepts of the twentieth century? Yet the implementation of a common Norwegian language for Norway led to nothing but internecine battles. In Tanzania, as we have seen, Swahili has found a fertile ground for development as a language which can handle the weight of the technocratic age. Yet in Uganda, since the language is seen as one for the "prostitutes," implementation of Swahili programs has met strong resistance. In Indonesia, a Malay dialect, the mother tongue of only a small minority of Indonesians, has made enormous progress as an official language, and this despite the fact that there is a large minority of Javanese who have loyalty to their own language. Yet in Malaysia, the heartland of the Malay language, the official Malay language is still, according to an expert, a decade or so behind Indonesia.⁷⁶

76. On the Israeli case, see C. F. Gallagher, "Language Rationalization and Scientific Progress," in K. H. Silvert, *The Social Reality of Scientific Myth* (New York: American Universities Field Staff, 1969), p. 76. The Norwegian case is brilliantly analysed by E. Haugen, *Language Conflict and Language Planning: The Case of Modern Norwegian* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966). The quotation from Uganda is from Carol M. M. Scotton's excellent study, *Choosing a Lingua Franca in an African Capital* (Edmonton, Canada: Linguistic Research, 1972). On the Malay language, see S. T. Alisjahbana, "Language Policy, Language Engineering and Literacy in Indonesia and Malaysia," in J. Fishman, ed., *Advances in Language Planning* (The Hague: Mouton, 1974). Professor Richard Wood has informed me that Malay has made enormous strides in Malaysia since Alisjahbana's article was published.

Technical issues are obviously not the crucial determining factor in whether language policy will be successfully implemented. Although it is hard to minimize the technical problems, that Malay development has been faster where there were fewer technical resources (that is, expertise in the language) and that the Swahili language has advanced at differential rates in different contexts suggest that the determining factor lies elsewhere. Summing up the results of a multidisciplinary study of language policy, W. M. O'Barr argued:

We are led to the conclusion that the acquisition of a single language or the resolution of conflict between two or more languages will not automatically solve or eliminate the sorts of political difficulties which have been considered in this book. The real issues are political, not linguistic; their solutions must lie in the resolution of differentials in power relations.⁷⁷

The question, however, is what the determining political variables are.

A first cut at this question might lead one to seek for the existence of a revolutionary situation. In revolutions, loyalties to language may become unhooked, as it were. Fishman demonstrates the problems with this hypothesis. Although he found revolutionary successes (orthographic reforms in the USSR; language reform in Turkey under Kemal) and nonrevolutionary failures (language reform in India and in Africa), he found as well an equal number of counterexamples. As for revolutionary failures, he cites the Soviet inability to "rationalize" Yiddish, and the Chinese Communist party's inability to address successfully the issue of the phoneticization of Han. Finally, for nonrevolutionary successes, he notes that "the initial orthographic distinctions between Serbian and Croatian or between Ruthenian (Ukrainian) and Polish were decided upon by representatives of God and Caesar who sought to cultivate *ausbau*

77. O'Barr and O'Barr, *Language and Politics*, p. 19.

differences between speech communities that were "in danger" of religious, political, and linguistic unification."⁷⁸

Four other variables, which I will briefly outline here, seem to be worth considering in assessing the likely success of a linguistic dissociation strategy. First, if the policy confronts the interests (or linguistic capital) of any socially mobilized region in the country, the pressures to subvert the policy will probably outweigh the pressures to support it. This is precisely what occurred in Madras and Andhra Pradesh in India when it looked as if Hindi might replace English as the language of bureaucratic mobility. Second, the policy must be advocated by a coalition of actors with sufficient resources to confront the organizational bourgeoisie. The interests of this group in retaining the preeminence of the European languages was discussed earlier.

Third, the language must be perceived by broad segments of the population to be worthy of learning and developing. In the cases of preliterate languages, as with the vernaculars in early modern Europe or most African languages today, there exist popular stereotypes which downgrade the language at the expense of the "world" languages. And so, there are now educated Ugandans calling the language they use most of the time a language for prostitutes, or educated Wolofs calling their mother tongue "barbaric".⁷⁹ These stereotypes inhibit the *necessary* popular acceptance of a dissociative language policy. I say *necessary* because in language policy, success is in large part determined by whether people actually converse in the promoted language. Much research effort has gone into understanding these stereotypes better, and this research can only be helpful to future language planners in Africa.⁸⁰

78. J. Fishman, "The Uses of Sociolinguistics," in G. E. Perren and J. L. M. Trim, eds., *Applications of Linguistics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971).

79. See M. Calvet, "The Elaboration of Basic Wolof," in W. H. Whiteley, ed., *Language Use and Social Change* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971).

80. I am thinking in particular of the papers by D. J. Parkin in W. H. Whiteley, *Language in Kenya*, and J. Rhoades, *Linguistic Diversity and Language Belief in*

A final political variable focuses on those people B. Weinstein calls "language strategists."⁸¹ In Norway, had there been a core of intellectuals and literati who had begun to write beautiful prose in the language of the planners, much of the opposition to its development might have evaporated. Instead, the literati held to the literary language of the past. But, the twelfth-century reduction-to-writing of *El Cid*, or the Lutheran translation of the Bible into German, or the Crowther translation of the Bible into the Oyo dialect of Yoruba, all had dramatic effects on the spectrum of possibilities available to the political authorities. A nationalist literary circle which has an interest in linguistic dissociation can do more for the development of African dissociative strategies than a score of linguistic commissions. That Ngugi, a prominent Kenya author who wrote in English, turned his talents to artistic creation in the Kikuyu language, resonates loudly throughout his country. The important role of these language strategists in the development of the idea of the nation deserves even more scrutiny. Any theory of the likely success of a linguistically dissociative strategy in Africa requires, then, an analysis of social, economic, and political variables. The limited point I wish to make here is that implementation successes in a dissociative language policy are not impossible in Africa, but that the precise social conditions favoring success are not known.

Kenya: The Special Position of Swahili (Syracuse, N.Y.: Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, 1977). There is some interesting new evidence that the prestige of English in Tanzania is declining with the increased official use of Swahili. See C. P. Hill, "Some Developments in Language and Education in Tanzania Since 1969," in Polomé and Hill, *Language in Tanzania*. A promising approach toward understanding the conditions under which language planning might succeed is offered by Carol M. Eastman, "Language Planning, Identity Planning, and World View," *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* (1981), vol. 32.

81. See Brian Weinstein, "Language Strategists: Redefining Political Frontiers on the Basis of Language Choices," *World Politics* (April 1979), vol. 31, no. 3. Consistent with this line of argument is Paul Brass's idea of "symbolic congruence" in nation building. See his *Language, Religion and Politics in North India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974).

SUMMARY

While dissociative language strategies have no necessary connection with progressive social and economic policies, this paper has suggested that in late twentieth-century Africa, linguistic dissociation has considerable merit. The interdependence between the rich industrialized OECD states and the less-industrialized states in Africa is clearly asymmetrical. These ties are rarely challenged, yet they work to ossify the world division of labor. How is it possible to weaken those ties without inducing capital flight and economic chaos? To a certain degree, unlike other forms of dissociation, linguistic dissociation need not be perceived as an immediate threat to international capital, and it could be implemented without vast aid from advanced industrial states.

It is to the challenge of how an African state can partially retreat from interdependence without paying exorbitant costs that a linguistic dissociative strategy provides an intriguing response. Indeed I recognize that even this partial answer has problems. The very elites who have an interest in the perpetuation of the colonial languages are those who wield greatest political power in Africa. Furthermore, the four alternative dissociative strategies suggested for linguistically heterogeneous states all have inadequacies. The imperial strategy yields regional inequalities which might not be overcome for generations; more important, it will yield strong pressures for regional secession. The confederationalist strategy assumes a geographically static population which is hardly ever a reality in contemporary Africa. The gradual promotion of an indigenous lingua franca, while an attractive model, has few realistic applications in Africa. And the cultivation of multilingualism, also attractive, has as yet to be worked out in a concrete way for any particular state.

Nonetheless, despite the claims for efficiency and unity that are made to support associative language policies for

Africa, there are a number of alternative considerations. I have presented arguments that linguistic dissociative strategies may: (a) help African peoples overcome the still debilitating psychological effects of colonialism; (b) be the source for technical and political innovation; (c) create an institutionalized audience for the successful promotion of progressive social policies; (d) bring greater regime attention to the development needs of the peripheral areas of their own societies; and (e) help policy planners to plug the brain drain. These potential benefits—even if they are limited and carry with them heavy burdens in developing old languages, translating vast numbers of books, laws, forms, and notices and coming to grips with the true linguistic diversity of Africa—make the continuing search for a viable linguistic dissociative strategy worthwhile.

8.

Security Strategies for Dissociation

BARRY BUZAN

THE PREVIOUS TWO chapters have articulated the desirability and examined the feasibility of selective dissociation for certain groups of Third World countries as part of a strategy of self-reliant development. They have shown to what extent, and how, indigenous economic and cultural capacities may constitute a resource base to be exploited in the quest for more independent and equitable development paths. The present chapter deals with the realm of security relations. It is unlikely that the types of dissociative measures discussed by Hveem and those explored by Laitin would pose direct or immediate security risks to the dissociating state. The assumption is made in this chapter that the state concerned has opted for a broader and more thoroughgoing form of dissociation than that discussed by Hveem and Laitin. Such a decision could arise because a moderate posture of selective dissociation has proved difficult to maintain or because it has, in the end, proved inadequate to achieve the objectives expected of it. More general dissociation could also come about as a result of an initial decision about devel-