

EUROPE BETWEEN THE LANGUAGES

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THE TRIEBEL LECTURE
delivered in the Price Theatre
Macquarie University
Sydney
21 September 1990

It was Jean Jacques Rousseau, pre-revolutionary French philosopher and writer, who handed down to us the cry: 'Il n'y a que des Européens!' (There are only Europeans not Frenchmen, Englishmen or Germans anymore!) It is to Edmund Burke, champion of the Counter Revolution and analyst of the sublime, that we owe the observation that there can be no exile for the European in Europe. These remarks reveal a deep awareness in Europe of common bonds which of course didn't first surface in the 18th century or during Napoleon's hegemony over Europe but which, properly speaking, have their distant roots in the world of the early Middle Ages.

In recent years the impression has arisen that this same Europe which is attempting to become one almost at the last minute has already missed the opportunity, long since seized by the United States and Japan, to assume leadership roles in Europe. Critical observers were increasingly coming to the view in the early 1980s that old Europe had exhausted itself and its scientific and technological resources at the beginning of the century and that the great European millenium had run its course. Loss of the spirit of innovation in science, technology and culture, it was said, was reflected in political decay.

Changes occurring in the countries of eastern Europe and within the Soviet Union have since given these critics of Europe pause for thought. The once apparently monolithic Soviet power bloc has started to loosen up; the countries of middle and eastern Europe which since the Second World War had had their rights to self-determination withheld by one all-powerful ruling party, are now looking for new paths to travel despite massive economic difficulties. The enthusiasm to overcome such financial problems in the erection of a new democratic state which I witnessed for example in Poland last November might well prove infectious. The speed with which Germany is unifying has presented a challenge for the future European community – the expanded Federal Republic must enter the new European unity in 1992 both with sensitivity and with a feeling of political solidarity. It must ensure at the start that its smaller and larger neighbours alike have confidence in its willingness to participate in a reliable and equitable partnership. English, French and Dutch fears of a renewed German imperialism in Europe must be put to rest by the Federal Republic at the very outset.

It can hardly be said that those to be affected by the process of unification in Europe – the people living in the 12 unifying countries – have been driven to tumults of euphoria. Until now the rate of participation in elections for the European Parliament has been substantially lower than that in elections for the respective national parliaments. Citizens in European countries are not well informed about the developing European Community and are more likely to hear negative

reports in newspapers about such problems as the over-supply of milk, butter, meat, wine, tomatoes, etc. It would only be a small exaggeration to say that the future Europe at present conjures in the mind of most people the vision of a 'butter mountain' of threatening proportions rather than the fulfilment of a centuries-old idea. It is true that the United Europe of 12 nations in 1992 will in the first instance be a partnership governed by economic imperatives and that the process of economic union will be accompanied by not inconsiderable problems. Extravagant plans for a greater European identity are not on the agenda for the time being at least. What the specialists and bureaucrats at the seat of the administration of European affairs in Brussels, Strasbourg and Luxembourg have championed instead is the law of action. Despite this, the citizens of the new union of European States will all receive a common passport which at least wherever they travel will identify them as 'Europeans', even if at the beginning there are few other obvious indications of such new-found identity.

An obvious shortcoming for some time now has been the absence of a role for intellectual debate over the course of this difficult period of adjustment – intellectuals, to whom politicians are fond of turning when they wish to extol European achievements and traditions, are now apparently not needed during this process of change.¹

There is in fact in Germany, but not in France, Italy or England, a long tradition in politics of ignoring the critical contribution that writers, artists and scientists make – this incidentally has also been so in the case of the fantastically speedy reunification of Germany. But no-one upon closer analysis of European traditions can deny the fact that catchwords like 'freedom', 'human dignity', 'democracy', 'reason', 'pluralism' and 'tolerance', which historically have had such far-reaching impact on western civilization, were first formulated by English, French, Italian and German philosophers, writers and scientists. Their contributions have seen in Europe a public debate emerge the elaboration of whose major ideas has not only sharpened the existing lines of opposed argument but also led to a consensus on what indivisibly constitutes a worthy human society.² Admittedly 19th-century nationalism, which propelled nation states into existence, was supported by intellectuals and so became a malleable instrument in the hands of politicians. We only need to look to such names as Herder, Gobineau and Houston Stewart Chamberlain to see how ideas were turned against the intention of their initiators. But not only the history of ideas in the 19th and 20th century is characterized by contradictions and antagonisms. The European debate produced sharp expressions of distance, even enmity, alongside the desire to converge. The national characteristics which are said to set the 'Gallic' temperament against the 'Teutonic', are translated on a trivial level into those words of abuse which European peoples find for their neighbours. The German, accordingly, is to a French person 'Fritz', to an English or American person a 'Kraut'. For a German the Italians are simply 'spaghetti eaters' and the French – because their men folk once favoured wearing moustaches, 'Poilus'. Southern Germans and Alemannics call the neighbouring Alsations 'Wackes', whilst the former are known throughout Germany as 'Schwobe'.

It is not solely in times of war that the awareness of ethnic and linguistic distance between people is heightened. A sceptical observer of European history in the second half of this millenium could easily reach the conclusion that this history is exclusively one of struggle, discord, war and imperialism. The period from the end of the Second World War till the present is the longest period of peacetime in European history hitherto! It shows that alongside the principle of 'balance of power', according to which European peoples have been able, at least to some extent, to regulate their co-existence, there has emerged a rational political will and a system of order wedded to the 'ius publicum europaeum', that is to say, the European law of nations. The dictatorship of Adolf Hitler, which abused every elementary rule of law and planned and organized the most heinous crime so far witnessed in human history, the holocaust, could only be vanquished from without – by Americans and the Soviet Union – the powers in operation within Europe proved to be too weak.

Now that the period of civil war in Europe seems to have passed, more rapid progress towards union among countries can be expected – countries which have as many common links as they do differences. In typifying bonds in common I need only mention the supra-national movements in all forms of art or the shared model of democracy. Some critics argue that an accelerated process of union of European peoples must accompany the increasing globalizing of civilization. There has already been talk of political moves towards this goal. It is hard to put high enough a figure on the number and significance of the private meetings that have occurred between citizens of the various European countries. Europeans have a thirst for travel and are getting more and more adventurous. The Swedish botanist Carl von Linné called 'homo europaeus' – the highest form of the 'homo sapiens' – 'levis, argutus, inventor', that is, mobile, sharp-witted, inventive. Even if we make an allowance for the excessive self-praise of the European centred perspective, we are still left with mobility (most popularly by car) as the most enduring characteristic of the contemporary European. Holiday trips to the South or the North, partnerships with towns and communities in France, England or Italy have become an important vehicle of communication not just in Germany alone. School trips abroad have almost become a standard part of language learning – visits to the country whose language is being studied, friendships with the children of the guest family and repeated visits to and from the guest family, as well as teacher exchange programmes – all more and more a part of the daily life of schools. Language courses in adult education centres are mostly well attended – it goes without saying that an adult's attempts to learn a new language are directed towards spending time in a foreign country. University students in Europe have reaped rich benefits from the so-called 'Erasmus Programme' developed within the European Community in the past few years. I can instance my own experience of the programme in dealing regularly at my university with higher semester students from universities in southern Italy – Saarbrücken students for their part are then entitled to spend 6 months or a year at the university in the south of Italy which sent its students to us. The exchange programme for professional staff is less well developed and sooner proceeds on the basis of a private

arrangement or contract. It is envisaged that in a future Europe people will be free to choose their place of work. What might well then happen is that foreign language teachers will use a visit to England or Spain as an opportunity to refine their knowledge of an additional language as a supplement to their work as teachers. An equivalent exchange of university teachers makes good sense and is currently being ushered in. There is already a well established tradition of cooperation between neighbouring universities in France and Germany, for example: Freiburg/Basel/Strasbourg/Mulhouse or Metz/Nancy/ Saar-brücken.

Thus, it is not overstating the case to maintain that the process of European unification is already firmly based in people's daily lives as a result of the wealth of private contacts, particularly amongst young people, which occur regularly. This breadth of daily experience extends as far as the Turkish people who until now are the only people in the European Community to embrace a different religious culture. There are now in excess of one million Turkish 'Gastarbeiter' (guest workers) in the Federal Republic – Germans have been slow to accept the fact that this European country provides workers who make a welcome contribution to their economic well-being.

It may sound paradoxical, but the success of the marriage of economic convenience in Europe will be measured against the degree to which the new Europe can integrate 'relative foreigners' into its ranks. One of the key components to this problem is the entirely unacceptable argument against the diversity of cultures and languages which runs as follows: a Europe united politically and economically must enforce cultural and linguistic standardisation as well. Any attempt even to suggest to any one of the 12 European countries that they view their own language and culture as a minority concern would bring about rebellion. Cultural and linguistic imperialism is clearly out of the question, otherwise the new Europe would soon lose its own identity. Identity in this context means precisely the rich diversity of languages and cultures.

Those with an interest in history are fond of recalling the beginnings of European civilization and commend to the new Europe a Koiné or colloquial language in the manner of that spoken by the Greeks alongside their own native dialects. Or a lance is broken for the use of Latin as an auxiliary European language – the Latin that was still the language of scholars in the late 18th century. French, the dominant language of Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries, and nowadays of course English, are also recommended as the bridge to span all linguistic differences for the new Europe. However, in advancing such proposals, one is all too eager to forget that these 'Old World' languages never existed without severe competition: despite the downfall of the Greeks the Greek language conquered the Romans and became their language of education and culture. Latin had to maintain its pre-eminence in the Middle Ages against the popular languages which constitute the modern Romance languages. Even German and English were not able to pass through the Latin era unscathed. Whilst at European courts and in aristocratic circles only French was spoken, the court language of the Viennese was Italian. In the 19th century German represented for the

Russian aristocracy and educated middle classes the language used when contact was made with the West.

The most realistic proposal is that which wishes to advance English as the language of the European community. Next to Chinese, Spanish and Russian, English is today considered one of the great world languages spoken by several hundred million speakers across the globe. In many areas English has become the 'lingua franca' of the modern age: English has been chosen as the language of technology and economics, computers and information technology, tourism and sport, as well as of scientific disciplines such as medicine and the natural sciences. Given this preference for English, would it not be considered astute and practical to elevate the English language – the one language among the roughly 4-5000 languages of the world which has gained currency in so many areas of life – to the position of sole trading language in Europe? In addition to the 330 million native speakers of English and the 37 countries where English is the official language, one would have to add those highly populated areas of Europe where English is not spoken. Using English as the world language would link Europeans even more strongly than hitherto to world markets and to high speed technology transfer.

There is therefore a wealth of argument for a common language of communication in Europe, the English language. On the other hand, one would have to consider the fact that even as a world language English is limited both in its range and function in many countries of the world. Whoever seeks to foster closer contact with people who live in a foreign country must inevitably cultivate a knowledge of the local language and thereby gain familiarity with the cultural traditions of that country. I quote now the German linguist Harald Weinrich: 'In this light it is not just the nations of the European Community who betray an obstinate sense of nationalism when they insist that every language of the Community enjoy equal importance. In fact there are no linguistic criteria at all for accepting lack of parity between languages insofar as they can make a legitimate claim to expressing the historical development of individual culture. It follows therefore that every European convention which deals with the question of language acknowledge the unique value each language possesses in shaping the identity of its community of speakers.'³ It is not merely rational or utilitarian arguments, as Harald Weinrich has correctly pointed out, which have determined what political decisions on language have been reached within the European Community. What also weighs heavily is the principle of equality and the rejection of the pursuit of hegemony, both of which in turn are founded on declarations of basic human rights.

A united Europe must in the process of unification therefore come to terms with the fact that language diversity fundamentally resists the notion of union. This notion meant that even very early on language diversity made itself a concern of European administrators. Many administrative processes have therefore been made more complex than they would have otherwise been had one language prevailed. And yet the will of the Community to make this sacrifice is demonstrably strong. Now we have not only the catchcry of political and economic union: 'For

one Europe of mother countries', but also, analogously, the slogan: 'For one Europe of mother tongues'.

It will not be easy to achieve political and economic union among the 12 nations nor to find a universally satisfactory solution to the problem of language. Linguists have demonstrated in several analyses that language conflicts will remain - they have always existed and they will continue to exist to a greater or lesser extent. Beyond this there are the special internal language problems hardly visible on the surface which afflict those industrialized countries which attract large numbers of immigrants and refugees. It is scarcely conceivable that the foreign languages spoken by political refugees and guest workers should disappear over the course of their assimilation.

The sort of problems that the united Europe with its numerous languages and vociferous minority groups will have, can be observed when one studies forms of language contact, multilingualism or bilingualism, language conflicts, glot-tophagia and those issues of language maintenance that confront vulnerable minority languages.

I shall limit myself to examples which have resulted from complex historical and political circumstances within German speaking areas.

The examples of Alsace and the repeated changes in government imposed upon it in recent history show the extent to which language conflicts are bound to arise. At the end of the 17th century the old imperial state of Alsace was conquered by Louis XIV, but it wasn't until 1803 that French took the place of German in the upper school years. By 1853 French had advanced to become the sole language of instruction at the primary school level. But at least the local dialect, the Alsatian variant of Alemannic, kept alive the contact with a linguistic heritage: this was afforded both by geographical proximity to Germany and individually amongst native speakers. After the Franco-Prussian War of 1870/71 the German language was strongly promoted, but almost for 20 years after this French remained acceptable in several areas of state administration. After 1889 German became the official language - it had been the language of instruction in primary schools from 1871. While on the one hand public life became more and more strongly Germanicized, on the other hand the Alsatian upper classes remained loyal to French. Conflict was aggravated during the First World War. It was prohibited to speak French in the street or in public houses, and the amount of French instruction was cut back in the schools. As a counter measure between 1918 and 1939 the French Government attempted to remove the German language from Alsace altogether. One recommendation was formulated as follows: 'Learn one new word of French and forget one German word every day.' German local names were Gallicized. From 1919 on French became the language of administration, from 1920 the language of instruction. German lessons were provided from 3rd grade onwards, but at the modest level of 3 classes per week. After reforms were introduced the number of classes for German was increased. In 1945 the French Government pared back the level of German instruction to a basic level. Nevertheless, a survey of parental views in 1952 found that 95% of parents in Alsace supported redressing this situation. Despite this, however, French increasingly gained the upper hand because only French

was allowed in the *Ecoles Maternelles*, the pre-school centres. As a result the Alsatian dialect is now only spoken, almost never written. A grave effect of this is the high degree of uncertainty amongst older people about written language in general, as the older members of the Alsatian community scarcely had any opportunity of learning French. There have been repeated, but unsuccessful, attempts by parents to call for an improvement in the level of German instruction in primary schools. Now that the unification of Europe in 1992 is within view, Alsations have again called for state acknowledgement of their dual language status: they want their dialect accepted as a regional language and German to be given equal status with French as both an official language and as a language of education. The usefulness of two languages is clear. Many inhabitants of Alsace find work in neighbouring Germany (in Baden) or in Switzerland. But perhaps it is already too late to introduce such measures. Whilst in 1946 around 3/4 of Alsations spoke dialect, now it is less than half. On the other hand more and more interest is being shown in German at schools. 90% of primary school students learn German in 3rd and 4th grade. 'It is already clear that the younger generations no longer have a diglossic pattern in their language use. For these youngsters the *Mundart* (dialect) is no longer an acceptable variety in communication.'⁴

The position of German and German dialects in Lorraine is even less satisfactory. Lorraine shares with Alsace the historical circumstances of being repeatedly shunted to and fro between France and Germany. There is a surviving generation which only learnt German at school, there is the middle generation which in 1940 had to attend a German school and by 1945 was going to a French school. The youngest generation hardly commands any of the local Moselle-Franconian and Rhine-Franconian dialects. The area has no regional centre (like Strasbourg) and no regional identity – the larger cities like Metz or Saarbrücken cannot take over this function, for Metz is completely French speaking and Saarbrücken only German speaking. It must now be assumed that in a predominantly French speaking area the Lorraine German dialect, for which there is no dictionary and no grammar,⁵ is condemned to a rapid decline.

Yet, while political factors above all else have made contact with language in Alsace and Lorraine into a lasting language conflict – though it now does seem that in the case of Lorraine a final decision on language has been reached, the small duchy of Luxembourg has found an astonishing solution to its language problems. The polylingual native of Luxembourg has ensured constant contacts between the French, German and the local language Letzebuergesch. The Luxembourg community was originally monolingual – the two official languages French and German came later. In such a trilingual arrangement all three languages have their particular role to play. French is the language of the courts of jurisdiction. Court documentation which records verbal proceedings uttered in Letzebuergesch dialect is taken in German. In the Luxembourg House of Representatives French and Letzebuergesch have currency as languages of debate. The language of the Church is German, but instruction and information to parishioners are given in Letzebuergesch. Articles in the newspapers in German may bear headings in Letzebuergesch. Even the Luxembourg television channel follows this pattern of constant 'code

switching': programmes from Belgium, France and Germany can all be received; the television viewer can therefore at his leisure flick from one language to the next.

What facilitates this astonishing degree of trilingualism is the instruction given in schools. At six years of age children learn German as the first medium of written and spoken expression. The restriction is made that only German is to be spoken during class. *Letzebuergesch* is taught as a mother tongue up to the final year of high school. At secondary school all subjects are taught in French which children begin to learn at seven years of age – almost at the same time as they begin German.

'As *Letzebuergesch* does gain some ground in its native country, the Luxemburgers' plea to remain the people they are [...] reflects their aversity to language switching and the desire to remain a monolingual community. They realise however the need for political and economic survival, in Europe at least, and without the use of French and German, this would be impossible. Language switching is a part of life which they accept and grow up with.'⁶

Happily a further example of close contact between languages can be mentioned which has not developed into a language conflict but instead has discovered a harmonious middle ground. The example is that of German in northern Schleswig and Danish in southern Schleswig. In 1864-66 the old duchy of Schleswig was divided up between Germany and Denmark. The final setting of borders was established after a plebiscite in 1920. The number of German speakers north of the border is small. The area inhabited by the Danish minority extends roughly 25 km south of the border. The German speaking Danes have their own representatives both at local and regional levels of administration. The Danish speaking Germans have one representative in the Schleswig-Holstein state parliament guaranteed by the constitution. This representative played a decisive role in a government crisis in this state a few years ago. The area of land to the north and south of the border is given over primarily to agriculture; the area south of the border river Eider had attracted a large amount of industry. In farming families in the Danish speaking part of this border area the Danish dialect 'Sønderjysk' is mostly spoken. This dialect has much in common with German. German is the language the German minority in Denmark uses for everyday communication.

In southern Schleswig, the German part of this region, bilingual teachers provide kindergarten children with basic instruction in Danish. Fifty-four private schools are able to impart Danish culture and language instruction subject to the wishes of parents. Both Danish and German are well represented in the school curriculum with a high number of weekly classes. As main languages they have equal status. In all subjects apart from German Danish is the language of instruction. Outside class the students prefer to speak mainly German. Language intolerance is unknown. This dual concept of single language instruction has fostered a good standard of bilingual language competence. Contact between the two languages has proved advantageous to both. This particularly pleasing solution has been reached thanks to the manner in which each minority

group has conceived its role, to the political protection given to minority groups under law and to the capacity of both languages to be used in the workplace.⁷

Before I attempt to draw some conclusions for a debate on languages or 'Sprachpolitik', as the Germans call it, I would like to provide you with a final example of problems which arise from contact between languages, language conflict and bilingualism.

Southern Tyrol has long been a source of conflict between Italy and Austria. After difficult negotiations an agreement was finally reached in 1946 with the Paris Accord: the identity of the German ethnic group living in Southern Tyrol but belonging politically to Italy was acknowledged alongside the rights of the Italian speaking inhabitants of the provinces of Bozen and Trient. German and Italian were recognized as official languages, whilst the right of parents to choose which language they wanted in schools was honoured. In 1948 the Italian Parliament voted to accept an initial statute supporting the regional autonomy of Bozen and Trient. Insufficient rules encouraged lengthy protest debates and even terrorist attacks so that in 1972 a new statute extending the rights of autonomy had to be passed. Since that time dual language instruction in Southern Tyrol has been enshrined in law. Every civil servant is required to demonstrate knowledge of Italian and German. According to the 1971 census 63% of the population speak German as a native tongue, 33% Italian and 4% Ladin. Laws appear to have been able to regulate satisfactorily the hard won dual language status of the region, but the method of instruction in schools is generally considered unsatisfactory. A quantitative and qualitative improvement to language instruction has been demanded together with more language courses for adults. My own experience of Southern Tyrol issuing from several holiday trips there leads me to the conclusion that private contacts between German speaking and Italian speaking Tyrolese, despite such hard fought dual language status, remain rare. The Italian teacher living with his family in German speaking villages is scarcely integrated at all and indeed is usually even cut off from the local population. There is hardly any contact between school students so that the use of two languages remains confined to the language classroom or the workplace. One can say, therefore, that despite palpable opportunities in Southern Tyrol, dual language status has so far not furthered language contacts in the region. It took so long for the Italian Government to grant full autonomy to the area that embitterment and frustration with the Government was able to take root. The ill-feeling against all state institutions including schools still expresses itself in an aversion towards Italian expansionism now of course long since confined to history.⁸

Do Italian school students, the children of guest workers living in Germany, fare any better? An investigation carried out in and around Stuttgart has found that although they receive instruction in both languages – Italian and German – they often resort to 'language switching' because they lack the vocabulary in the one or the other language. They commit errors in morphology in both languages. There are gaps and weaknesses in their Italian vocabulary; their German is mostly coloured by dialect (Swabian). Nevertheless they are still able to

communicate well despite the shortcomings in their language competence. This capacity to communicate with those of the same age admittedly obscures the danger of remaining 'homeless in language'.⁹ Only a very few Italian children command a specialized knowledge of Italian culture – most are acquainted neither with their homeland sufficiently nor with their new environment. They have no background knowledge of history and geography. Asked about which area they come from, most respond by naming their home in Germany rather than an area in Italy.¹⁰

The range of these examples shows, I hope, what has resulted in Europe from conflicts between languages, attempts to root out language, from the preservation of different languages and attempts to foster bi- and multilingualism in various regions. I would like, therefore, to draw some conclusions from the examples submitted:

- Conflicts between languages are unavoidable, but what is avoidable is the suppression of minority languages by the dominant language group in polylingual societies. Governments tend to prefer that immigrants and guest workers adapt unilaterally to the existing society and language. Unfortunately this all too often means the end of bilingualism – the children of such families are forced to give up their parents' language or they retain an incomplete command of it, as the example of Italian school students in Germany showed. More homogeneous language groups which have a strong awareness of their own culture and history choose the usual form of organized language conflict to further their cause, that is, political resistance, which in Southern Tyrol led to violence and which we today only still find in Ireland.

- Numerous linguistic studies not just in Europe have shown that monolingualism is more and more the exception, bi- and multilingualism more and more the rule. Indeed, the number of people who speak two or more languages is in fact much greater in smaller nations than in the large communities and nations – here we still find the greatest number of single language speakers. It can safely be assumed that this acceptance of single language status will in a variety of ways increasingly prove disadvantageous. It has to be added that every German high school student at the time of entering the university has had at least six years instruction in one foreign language and four years in another.

- Linguistic analysis and European experience of different forms of language contact and of language problems such as those of guest workers and immigrants have shown that the best solution to such language problems is 'organic assimilation'¹¹ which has bilingualism as its aim. At least as a theoretical proposition the notion of conformity, whereby a solely homogeneous population must exist at the expense of minority groups, has been renounced in almost all countries. A pluralistic conception of language more in accordance with basic human rights not only allows for the individual nature of the culture of minority groups but in fact deems it enriching for the society as a whole. This means in practice that

every ethnic group should command the language of the country in which they live. However this must not occur at the expense of their mother tongue. Adults and children must retain the opportunity of preserving, extending and communicating to others their knowledge of their mother tongue. 'It does not generally seem to have been fully appreciated nor to have been put into practice that the mother tongue is one of the most important sources of security an immigrant can have in a new linguistic and cultural environment. (...) The speaker characterizes through the phenomenon of 'linguistic homelessness' a situation in which a human being can lose his linguistic home in a foreign language environment. Although he begins to acquire the new language, he is unable to achieve a result in line with his expectations'.¹²

- Minorities in a larger language community are only able to retain and nurture their own language through bilingualism. Only in this way is 'organized assimilation' possible without breaking with language and cultural traditions.
- In the future Europe of 12 nations there will be no standard language and no standard culture.

The diversity of languages and cultures is one of Europe's greatest resources. This is true to a lesser degree of Australia too. Australia should take advantage of a 'multicultural society' in a language sense as well. Its immigrants from Europe and Asia are particularly well placed to mediate between the 'Old World' and the region of the Pacific. The changes in Europe I sketched at the beginning of my remarks – the USA and the Soviet Union look like slowly surrendering their superpower status – make it incumbent upon Australia to develop its ties with the newly emerging power centres. To achieve this end a knowledge of languages other than English is indispensable. The successful book of the American historian Paul Kennedy, (*The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, 1984) puts the view 'that there are clear signs of the simultaneous emergence of a new multi-centred global order in terms of economic power. Within this global structure, determined by the increasing relative importance of China, Japan and the European Economic Community, the relative decline of the two superpowers is inevitable'.¹³ In order to meet these new challenges there need to be vigorous efforts made in the area of language policy making: for schools (at least one foreign language should be made compulsory, a second foreign language should be an option), for universities, in adult education, teacher training, exchange programmes and in research.

With customary French irony and superciliousness Jacques Chirac remarked recently that French people could best do something for their own language by not speaking anyone else's.¹⁴ English speaking Europeans, Americans or Australians would be wrongly advised if they followed Chirac's example. What, on the other hand, is well worth following are the language policies of the French city of Lyon. In 1981 in this city school students at seven high schools were offered regular

instruction in Chinese – in one high school even as a first foreign language. The normal position is that French school students choose their first foreign language from a group of seven languages: English, German, Spanish, Russian, Italian, Arabic and Portuguese.¹⁵ The future Europe will derive its living from this offering of languages. Australia needs only to promote its minority languages in order to attain a similarly desirable level of multilingualism.

(Translation from the German by Tim Mehigan, Melbourne)

NOTES

1. Cf. the critical essay by Wolf Lepenies: Europa als geistige Lebensform. In: *Die Zeit*. No.44, 27 Oct. 1989, pp 42 ss.
2. Cf. Hagen Schulze: Die Wiederkehr Europas. Zur Neuentdeckung eines alten Kontinents. In: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 28 April 1990 ('Bilder und Zeiten').
3. Harald Weinrich: Fremdsprachen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und Deutsch als Fremdsprache. In: H.W.: *Wege der Sprachkultur*, Stuttgart 1985, p 311.
4. Baudewijn Meeus: Ethnic/Language Minorities: Selected Situations and Research Perspectives (Ethnische/sprachliche Minoritäten: ausgewählte Situationen und Forschungsperspektiven). In *Sociolinguistics/Soziolinguistik. An International Handbook of the Science of Language and Society/ Ein internationales Handbuch zur Wissenschaft von Sprache und Gesellschaft*. Edited by/Hrsg. von Ulrich Ammon, Norbert Dittmar, Klaus J. Mattheier. First Volume/Erster Halbband, Berlin/New York 1987 (= Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft, Bd.3.1), p 739. Cf. Carola Becker-Dombrowski: Zur Situation der deutschen Sprache im Elsaß. In: *Kulturelle und sprachliche Minderheiten in Europa. Aspekte der europäischen Ethnolinguistik und Ethnopolitik*. Akten des 4. Symposiums über Sprachkontakt in Europa, Mannheim 1980. Ed P. Sture Ureland, Tübingen 1981, pp 149-180. Cf. Siass Winkel. Elsässische Patrioten wollen ihre eigenständige Kultur retten. Erstes Ziel ist die offizielle Anerkennung der Zweisprachigkeit. In: *Der Spiegel* 36/1990, pp 198-203.
5. Cf. Pierre Cadiot: Situation linguistique de la Moselle germanophone: un triangle glossique. In: *Sprachkontakt und Sprachkonflikt. Languages in Contact and Conflict. Langues en contact et en conflit. Taalcontact en taalconflict*. Ed Peter Hans Nelde, Wiesbaden 1980 (= Zeitschrift für Dialektologie und Linguistik. Beihefte. Heft 32), pp 325-334.
6. Jane Knowles: Multilingualism in Luxembourg. In: *Sprachkontakt und Sprachkonflikt, loc.cit.*, p 361.

7. Cf. B. Meeus, *loc.cit.*, p 741 s.; Hans H. Reich: Deutsch und Dänisch in den Schulen der dänischen Minderheit in SüdSchleswig. *Deutsch* 17/1986, pp 343-349.
8. Cf. Renzo Rossignoli: Zweisprachigkeit in Südtirol. In: *Diskussion Deutsch* 17/1986, pp 350-353.
9. Els Oksar: Mehrsprachigkeit, Sprachkontakt, Sprachkonflikt. In: *Sprachkontakt und Sprachkonflikt, loc.cit.*, 49.
10. Cf. Hartmut Melenk/Reinhard Strauch: Zweisprachigkeit italienischer Schüler. In: *Diskussion Deutsch* 17/1986, pp 360-367.
11. Heinz Kloss: Sprachkontakte in Europa. In: *Sprachkontakte im Nord-seegebiet*. Akten des 1. Symposions über Sprachkontakt in Europa, Mannheim 1977. Ed P. Sture Ureland, Tübingen 1978, p 13.
12. Els Oksar: Mehrsprachigkeit, Sprachkontakt, Sprachkonflikt. In: *Sprachkontakt und Sprachkonflikt, loc.cit.*, p 49. Cf. Michael Clyne: *Forschungsbericht Sprachkontakt. Untersuchungsergebnisse und praktische Probleme*. Kronberg/Ts. 1975 (= Monographien Linguistik und Kommunikationswissenschaft 18).
13. Bernd Hüppauf: The Fall of the Great Powers? Rereading Paul Kennedy in the Age of Perestroika. In: *Meanjin* 49/1990. Number 1, p 77.
14. Cf. Hans Maier: Die vielen Sprachen und die Eine Welt. Wie die Menschheit ihr babylonisches Herz entdecken könnte. In: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 7 April 1990 ('Bilder und Zeiten').
15. H. Weinrich: Fremdsprachen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und Deutsch als Fremdsprache, *loc.cit.*, p 323.

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