Colonial language classification, postcolonial language movements and the grassroot multilingualism ethos in India

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The Constitution of India viewed linguistic diversity as a reflection of the "composite nature" of Indian culture and of its pluralism: the composite nature of Hindi was celebrated by the liberals among the Founding Fathers, as well as the multilingual situation[1]; and the preference for an official language over a national language was meant to discard all emotional identification between language and the nation. However, the eulogist praise of diversity was at the same time blurred off in the vague slogan "unity in diversity" –Nehru himself went to the extreme of practically dismissing the concrete reality of linguistic plurality as a mere fantasy grown out of the restless brain of philologists, since one could easily reduce this proliferating diversity to a few main languages all very close structurally, except some « petty » illiterate hill-tribe languages which should not be taken into account, being "undeveloped" and "uncultivated", therefore "insignificant".

Besides, whatever the recognition of difference, it did not mean equality, and the discrimination between major and minor languages was not only a matter of number regarding the speaking communities – numerous people noticed and still notice that the claim for Sindhi or Sanskrit as major languages, disregarding the four millions plus Santali speakers, had nothing to do with the mass of speakers[2]. Positive discrimination as a principle encapsulated in various provisions of the Constitution, with its varying implementation at the practical level, exhibits the paradox of democratic equity (equal citizens with equal rights) coping with the need to protect minorities and to preserve plurality. Integration may lead to the levelling of contained differences, minority rights to the fragmentation of the state into communities – a paradox that Khilani (1998) places at the root of the Nehruvian view of the nation as an abstract idea, above its substantial contents, whether in terms of regional or linguistic communities. This well known dialectics of national integration *vs* diversity, right from the beginnings of Independent India, came to a particularly acute polarization regarding the language questions.

1. Events: a bloody history

It may seem amazing that the language problem (finally a script cum numeral problem) came to be the major conflict among the Constituents between 1948 and 1950 and that only language debates compelled Nehru to call – twice – for a vote although he was determined to avoid vote in order to preserve the consensual basis for democracy (Austin 1966: 300-5). But if we see language not as a mere tool for communication, nor even as a way of enacting one's social role(s), but as a means of asserting one's cultural or religious identity and an icon for a group identity, one can understand how it can become an intensely burning issue. Still for these tensions to become a blood-shedding issue, it needs a process of politicization, and this is precisely what was already going on before Independence when Gandhi had to give up his dream of Hindustani (in both scripts) as a would-be national language[3], Hindustani being religiously unmarked and quite loose regarding regional and cultural identity. The question of the national language was in fact condensing the problems raised by the exploitation of language for expressing the political claims of a community, and later language claims and riots can only be explained by the political link, more or less artificially created, between language and political or administrative needs.

One of the most convincing examples of the politicization of the language "problem" and of the tension between national integration/security and maintenance of linguistic diversity is the question of the so-called "linguistic states". It is still an ongoing process (with the recognition of Konkani in 1994 as a state language within its territory and the still unsuccessful claim for Maithili), and the military, administrative and political factors involved[4] go back to the first years

of the XXth century when the "linguistic principle" was first mentioned by the British to legitimate the transfer of some Oriya speaking communities during the first partition of Bengal (1905), then for a further bifurcation of the province into Assam, Orissa and Bengal. What stopped British administration from generalizing the principle and lead them to oppose the Andhra Mahasabha claim for a Telugu speaking province was the well known dictum that nobody rules in the colonial tongue (Montague-Chelmsford report)[5]. The Congress itself was initially in favour of linguistic states since the Nehru Committee in 1928 and the election manifesto (1945-46) supports the principle but identifies several unsolvable difficulties (Maharashtra / Karnataka in Bombay, Maharashtra / Mahavidarbha in Berar, Andhra / Tamil Nadu in Madras). When the Dar Commission appointed for solving such problems gave its report in 1948 it advised against linguistic states: "the formation of provinces on exclusively or even mainly linguistic considerations is not in the larger interest of the nation. Oneness of language may be one of the factors to be taken into consideration along with others but it should not be the decisive or even the main factor" since it would "create new minorities" Similarly the JVP Committee (Jawaharlal Vallabhai Pattabhi[6]) during the Jaipur Session in 1948 concluded that language is "not only a binding force but also a separative force", thus endangering national unity and security. As a result the various states to be created in 1950 (distributed into four groups) were all linguistically heterogeneous, especially Tamil Nadu (Madras) which included considerable masses of Telugu speakers. This infuriated the Congress leader Sanjiva Reddy and acted as an incentive for the Vishal Andhra Movement in protest.

It is the Telugu-Andhra problem which started real violent conflict on language issues. In July 1952, a motion for a Telugu-speaking state by a communist leader supported by several Congress members against Nehru was finally rejected because of party solidarities[7]. After the meeting of an all party Andhra Convention, Potti Sriramulu, the leader of Vishal Andhra Movement, started a fast unto death for the Telugu state and died on the fifty sixth day, leading to violent riots and several people killed. The Government gave up and decided in December 1952 to create the new state which actually came into existence in October 1953, a result of violent language protest which triggered the official will to reorganise states on a linguistic basis. The State Reorganizing Commission appointed in 1953 to that effect, although reluctant to the creation of states on a purely linguistic basis, suggested 16 states and 3 centrally administered areas, which finally amounted to the 14 "linguistic states" created in 1956 along with 6 Union Territories[8]. Soon after the most feared danger of "balkanisation" induced by the creation of new minorities again came on the foreground with violent language riots in Bombay (*Midnight's Children* gives a vivid description of them) for the division into a Gujarati speaking state separated from the Marathi speaking state (the Marashtra/Gujarat bifurcation occurred in 1960). Violent episodes also marked the North West area with the Sikh Akali Dal agitation for a Punjabi state separated from the Hindi speaking areas. Sant Fateh Singh started a fast unto death for the Punjabi state, stopped his fast on the order of his spiritual leader Tara Singh, but after the failure of negociation between Akali Dal and the Government, Master Tara Singh himself started a 48 days fast in July 1961, again failed negociating, Sant Fateh Singh again in 1965 started a fast and threatened the Government of self immolation by burning himself in the way of South Vietnam Buddhists. Then only, after the Pakistan war, the new state was granted (separated from Haryana).

Meanwhile, the Tibeto-burman speaking Nagaland, already separated from the Indo-Aryan speaking Assam (1962) witnessed the violent claims of hill-tribes from Garo, Khasia, North Cacchar, Jaintia for a hill state of their own (1966): after the All Party Hill Leaders Conference decided a complete strike in Shillong (25 May 1968), on the recommendation of the Ashok-Mehta Commission, new states and territories were created in 1971 (Meghalaya, Mizoram, Manipur, Tripura). Although still to-day Manipuri only has acquired the status of a major language listed in the 8th Schedule (1994), Khasi (Meghalaya), Mizo, Tripuri have to some extent achieved part of their language claims. If in the case of Punjab and Punjabi, the intimate link

between language and religion was more than instrumental in the success of the language movement (Brass 1974), in the case of the Nagaland bifurcations the relevance of religion is less obvious (nor is it in the bifurcation of Maharashtra /Gujarat or Tamil Nadu /Andhra), but what is prevalent in all these movements is the politicization of the language issue, still highly emphasized by the linguist activists themselves. For instance a Konkani militant (who learnt Portuguese in elementary school and "was a Portuguese", then Gujarati in Diu and "was a Gujarati", then in college "was a Marathi", discovering that Konkani is a language, incidentally his language, only after the Konkani conference in 1939) clearly states that he had to become a politician in order to fight for his language. He remarks (Kelekar 1998: 117) that politicians accepted a Ahirani poetry and popular dramas in Malwani, "dialects" of Marathi which did not threaten the territorial entity of Maharashtra but opposed Konkani literature since the recognition of its distinctiveness would have gone against the fusion Marathi-Konkani and support the political distinction of Goa from Maharashtra.

The proliferation of new "linguistic states" is the obvious proof that the language principle for reorganizing states was indeed like opening the gate to a never-ending process of scissions if not balkanization, with a continuous creation of new minorities enduring a worse and worse condition. With one language made the official basis of the state and getting the status of the "major" language, all the other languages spoken in the state locally become minor languages – with the exception of Hindi and English, he official languages of the Union. The new minorities created by the formation of linguistic states become like outsiders within the state, regarded by the linguistic majority with a "discriminatory attitude, blatant or patent", according to K.M. Munshi (1967: 234), who describes the miserable condition of minorities in the linguistic states at the end of the sixties with Macaulay's words: "In such a case, the rule of the majority, exercised more often under the title of a democracy, is a true tyranny. It is the worst – which is the corruption of the best… The lot of a member of a national minority is indeed a hard one". Siddiqui (1998) gives various examples of the miserable status of Urdu in its very cultural homeland and birthplace, Uttar Pradesh. Although Urdu-speaking minorities are officially entitled to get official documents in Urdu, official positions advertised in Urdu, ration cards applications in Urdu, practically it is almost never the case, and the civil supplier officer never accepts demands for ration cards written in Urdu. The Moradabad schools have unsuccessfully tried for ten years to obtain recognition for Urdu medium since more than 10 on 40 parents are willing to educate their children in Urdu, but registration of the students is always postponed and more than 200 demands are waiting in government courts[9].

The situation is of course even worse for those minor languages which are not listed in the 8th Schedule, particularly the "tribal" languages, and the use of Ho, Kurukh/Oraon and Mundari, although recognised for primary education in Bihar, is not implemented[10], nor is it in Orissa, a state with more than a hundred mother tongues, or Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, also with many tribal languages. If such languages are now really "endangered" languages, and India's tribal languages represent now less than 2% of the speaking mass (from more than 13% in 1961 and 3,5% in 1981), one of the reasons for this decline is linked with the side effects of language planning[11].

The official recognition of a major language with its explicit (financial support in the media, education, printing field) and implicit privileges necessarily entail frustration and often violent protestation from minor languages users. The three language formula for instance, supposedly aimed at providing linguistic skills in the relevant language of a given region, can end in acute conflict, as was the case in the eighties in Karnataka after the Gokak Committee was asked to evaluate the relevance of the hierarchy of the taught languages (1979): mother language studied first initially included Sanskrit as a choice with Kannada and Urdu and the final report of the committee in 1985 relegated Sanskrit as a possible choice for the third language only along with Persian and Arabic, making Kannada compulsory as a first language. This decision was welcome with a strong agitation from the Brahmins, angered by the new downgraded status given

to Sanskrit, and the Muslims, angered by the obligation of taking Kannada instead of Urdu as the first language. Interestingly, the Muslim population (11%) who entered the "jihad" (the movement indeed was termed a *jihad*: Mallikarjun 1985), included the non Urdu speakers (1%) who had Kannada as their mother tongue. Interestingly also, this same population who revolted against the compulsory study of Kannada had asked for a Kannada education in 1971 and 1981 through the Urdu delegates in the assembly (Praja Pratinidhi Sabha). That means that language loyalties shifted during the period, becoming more associated with religious loyalties (even without linguistic basis at all), which confirms the growing process of instrumentalization and politicization of languages since Independence and specially since the eighties.

It thus appears that language planning in Independent India, although constantly elaborating new formulas and devices[12] cannot manage to peacefully and efficiently insure the maintenance of linguistic diversity. If language now seems to act more as a separative force than as a linking force, as feared by opponents to the linguistic state reorganisation, the reason is not linguistic diversity itself, but rather the consciousness of language as a monolithic entity and as a direct expression of the community identity. Such a consciousness, widely absent in pre-modern India, gradually developed with the British efforts to cartography and survey the languages of the colony, providing a radically new representation of the relation of the speaker to his speech (one language, one name, one identity).

2. Representations: the Weight of the Philologists in this birth of language claims

The integrating political view of languages expressed in the Constitution of India in fact was not neutral: it both countered and continued the philological tradition which dominated the 19th and early 20th centuries linguistic studies in Europe and India[13].

It continued the Indo-Aryan comparative studies by echoing the historical approach (language families) of language studies current at that time and by emphasizing the common origin of the great variety of modern Indo-Aryan languages, implicitly validating the genetic approach. This genetic view of language evolution and growth was started by the German school of Neo-grammarians in the early nineteenth century (Pott, Bopp, Lassen, etc.) who first gave scientific arguments to establish the first linguistic family described, Indo-European (at that time rather mentioned as Indo-Germanic). The discovery of a common source beyond the present variety of mutually unintelligible languages happened to be the first modern attempt in the history of language science to explore linguistic evolution with rational "laws" of change, rational according to the then western standards. The birth of language "science" in Europe with the school of the Neo grammarians and comparatists, itself the first step in what was to become linguistics, is part of the more general history of sciences at the time; as such, it belongs to an epistemological trend viewing natural sciences (with Cuvier in paleontology and botanics, Darwin and his theory of determinism in natural species, Adler in heredity) and its methods as a model for studying any living entity, including language, a subclass of human science. Linguistic variety and change was accounted for by laws of evolution, such as Wackernagel's, Brugmann's, Bartholomae's, Caland's, etc., in the same way as the classification of natural species resulted in the grouping of various families, and its diversification was accounted for by laws of evolution (like adaptation).

The German school of scholars who argued for an Indo-Germanic family was, as is well known, triggered by William Jones discovery in 1786[14]. In his Third Discourse on the Hindus for the Asiatic Society, Jones (1788) unveiled the "marvellous structure" of Sanskrit grammar along with its "antiquity" superseding Latin and Greek, two ancient languages exhibiting striking grammatical affinities with Sanskrit. So Sanskrit was immediately recognised as the most ancient hence pure and perfect ancestor of European civilisation, the *Ursprache* for all European languages derived from the unattested Indo-European which was to be reconstructed in the following years. Sanskrit was welcomed as the cradle of European civilisation dethroning Hebrew

in the position of absolute origin[15]. The "marvellous structure" mainly consisted in the flexional structure of the language (casual morphology and highly synthetic verb forms), a marvel further emphasized by philosophers as the very sign of intellectual perfection and fitness for expressing abstract ideas. As soon as 1808 in his *Essay on the language and the wisdom of Hindus*, Friedrich Schlegel made the flexion a matrix figure in his argument for Indo-Germanic linguistic and cultural perfection: it exhibits both "natural simplicity" and a "power of germination" since it is endowed with an inner strength allowing the word to transform from the inside and behave as a living germ. Such languages were presented as an evidence of the cultural capacity of the Indo-Germanic race, the only one "naturally gifted for the expression of high spirituality". They contrast with agglutinative (aggregative) languages "naturally rude and imperfect" with their sterile and burdening endless aggregate of suffixes or prefixes, "particles", sounding like rocks, unpleasant to the ear and hard for the mind to connect[16]. Isolating languages (like Chinese) are even lower in the hierarchy, closer to the animal cry, with no syntax and no intelligence, a small step above the imitation of natural noise.

Such a formulation was of course in tune with the time (Droixhe 1984)[17], when the philosophers and intellectuals agenda was mainly concerned with shaking off the overwhelming and embarrassing antiquity of Hebrew and the Bible (over Latin and Greek) as the origin of European culture and trying to legitimise a less religious and "foreign" patronage[18]. Jules Michelet himself, the well known historian of the French Revolution and rebellious historian too did not resist the sweeping movement in rehabilitation of the Aryas as the origin of the family against the Semites. The *Bible of Humanity* (1864), a book he considered his masterpiece since it summed up the history of mankind from its origin to "the end of history", is divided into two contrastive parts: the bibles of light (Ramayan, Shah Nameh, Eneida, Iliad and Odissea) and the bibles of darkness (the Jewish Bible, the Koran). He too uses lavishly the philologists authority as a new, revolutionary scientific power, which he compares with the recent discovery of electricity, for opposing the marvellous power of light, sight, female chastity and purity (the virgin and the mother), male bravery and reason in the three great Aryan cultures, to sterility, duplicity, darkness, lascivity, weakness and immorality of the Semite bibles[19].

The Neo-grammarian school enters the scene at the same time as Michelet, a little later than Schlegel, but philologists usually avoid such extreme formulations[20] -- on the contrary, Bopp's monumental *Comparative Grammar of Indo-Germanic languages* (1833) proves the suffixal origin of the flexion, which should have cut short the schlegelian dream about flexion and flexionality. Yet, the burden of this new philology, a "science" always used for legitimating purpose by historians and philosophers, weighs right from the beginning on the nineteenth century cultural thought, hence irretrievably caught in the problems of securing a noble and antique cradle for the family of Aryan brothers, opposed to the lower languages cultures and races. The most extreme recuperation of Jones philological discovery happened of course in the twentieth century with Hitler's (or rather his ideological propagandist Rosemberg's) version of the Aryan myth, but, as clearly analysed by Poliakov (1971) in the chapter "the tyranny of linguists", philology was a pre-requisite for the theorization of the Semite/Aryan duality in the genesis of the German racial mythology.

Modern (XIXth century) philology is then ultimately linked to this recurring quest for origins and the construction of the community-group as threatened by the other -- it is the emasculated Hellenistic culture and its decadent language and cults that caused the ruin of the Greco-roman civilisation in Michelet's view. According to a now well accepted analysis, the construction itself of group identity, which is coupled with the quest for origin, requires the opposite construction of an Other, and this Other, necessarily represented as aggressive and dangerous for the survival of the community. As ironically put by Sibony (1980), "un groupe, ça lie = un groupe s'allie": a group is a linking factor (*ça lie*) means that a group gets allied (*s'allie*). Organic community is necessarily equal to military alliance.

The descriptive tradition which developed in India after Pischel (1900), Beames, with students of Bloch (himself a pure product of the French philological tradition in the early twentieth century) and Chatterji is of course totally devoid of such assumptions[21]. Works even quite late in the century like U.N. Tiwari, R.B. Saxena, S.K. Chatterji, typically entitled "Evolution of x language" (or its equivalent in Hindi) rather tend to re-appraise vernacular modern languages (long seen as a degenerate product of a formerly perfect language), but the discipline itself consolidates the building of language families in documenting the evolution of many Indo-Aryan speeches as historical sprouts of Sanskrit via Prakrits and Apabhramshas in a quasi organic way. The quest for origin (and its anxiety in the European 19th century ideology) is not given a foremost status. Besides, Sanskrit had always played the role of absolute origin in the local linguistic tradition and there was nothing new in relating spoken languages to their grand ancestor. The novelty was the "scientific" method, rationally arguing and evidencing the development of the family tree. This family had to be distinguished from others. Although the distinction does not involve racial standards and a hierarchic view, it creates the perception of otherness and categorizes groups as radically distinct with clear-cut boundaries, whereas previously the distinction rather opposed the noble pure Sanskrit and all its "degenerated" by-products, more or less subsumed into the vast amalgam of Prakrits or Apabhramshas (including sometimes Dravidian languages[22]).

But already since Grierson's times, in a parallel way, similar and reactive, the Dravidian family emerged as a group created by linguistic research collapsed with the quest for origin[23]. In *Tamilian Eighteen Years ago*, Kanakabhai Pillai (1904) opposes to the prestigious Indo-Aryan family the Dravidian descent, on the very same ground that Western scholars discarded the Semite ancestry of the Bible in European culture: more ancient and culturally superior, Tamils not only were a consistent linguistic and cultural family, not to be confused with Indo-Aryan (their antiquity and originality[24] is proved by the "letter" ḻ, borrowed from the high plateaux of Tibet), but they are the best candidate for identifying as ancient Indian culture, who had already reached a highly sophisticated and urban culture when primitive Aryan tribes came[25]. In Pillai as in scholars of the time, linguistic evidence for this antiquity in the competition with Sanskrit for origin is more lexical than grammatical: among contested etymologies, a number of names of spices, metals, animals, vegetable, quoted by roman travellers around the first century (Chtesias, Ptolemea, Plinius, and moreover the anonymous author of the Perypleus of the Erythrean Sea) usually given as Sanskrit, are proved to belong to the Dravidian stock, like the name of camphor, gingiver, peacock, pepper, rice, cinnamon, etc[26]. This clear stand against the Indo-Aryan group obeys the same dynamic out of the same premises (quest for origin, competition for antiquity, purity and higher cultural achievements). Such a contrastive construction means that the implicit superiority of Sanskrit conveyed in the designing of the IA family and drawing of its boarders is perceived by the Other as a kind of rejection to the subaltern world of inferior languages. Even in scholarly sound linguistic research like Caldwell's masterpiece on the *Comparative Grammar of Dravidian or South Indian Family of Languages* (1856), much more sober in its ideological implications than Pillai, the consistency of the group as both distinct (original) and ancient (true cradle of India civilisation) voices a clearly vindictive tone against Sanskrit and Indo-Aryan, although there is no racial mythology involved. The philologist agenda is clearly different in India that in Europe, but in both cases there is room for the competition with the Other, framed by the methodological pattern: genetic linguistics aiming at forming families and subfamilies creates outsiders to the family. This initial linguistic consciousness on the part of descriptors, cautioned by western science (patterned after natural sciences) was significantly contemporary with the requirement of Census to identify one's language, hence perceive it as distinct for the neighbouring languages, and as one homogeneous entity which could be named.

The Dravidian family of languages was, a century later, integrated by the Constituents, not as a family of its own (a distinct group eventually conflicting with the other group or groups) but as a number of major languages on the same level as Indo-Aryan languages. Interestingly, neither

the Austric family, although identified as such by Smith in the first years of the century, neither the Tibeto-Burman family got any recognition, in spite of Jaypal Singh's motion in the Constituent Assembly for including such tribal languages as Santali (to-day twice more speakers than Sindhi), Ho, Kurukh, a motion rejected without being hardly discussed. We may ponder on what were Nehru's intentions in levelling down the linguistic diversity to a few major languages supposedly very similar. The refusal of letting family groups prevail with their genetic delimitation was certainly consistent with his "idea of India" (Khilani 1998) as an abstract global idea rather than a concrete aggregate of well defined linguistic, regional and cultural entities[27], as well as his extraordinary denegation of linguistic diversity in India. However, the contradictory notion of quotas (for positive discrimination) for certain groups resulted in the well-known situation where regional, cultural, gender, linguistic identities more and more came to substitute group claims and lobbying to a political creed in democracy. Besides, the listing of a few "major" languages, later on widely criticized (Gupta & al.: 1995), inevitably opened a dynamic of competition for entering the magical schedule and benefit from its advantages (education, publishing, medias, etc.).

At the same time, the definition of the official language[28] and the linguistic provisions in the Constitution seemed to go against the very notion of grouping languages by "blood links" with organic roots, and yet the very wish of identifying separate languages and make this identification the condition of recognition or non-recognition was deeply indebted to the previous hundred or so years of historical linguistics. It is the tradition of historical linguistics in India that made possible language classification and linguistic cartography, where boundaries were mainly drawn according to the genetic (vertical) criteria of linguistic affiliation. To describe a language was essentially to assert its genetic affinity in order to put it in the appropriate category (see Khandeshi or Bhili changing classification). The huge survey of Grierson at the beginning of the century (and the numerous monographies which went on till the mid-twentieth century), without which the language Census would not have been possible, are contemporary – the first census dates from 1837. Both enterprises resulted in the requirement for each individual to name his language as a clearly distinct entity (necessarily different from another or other entities) and to chose one language as his mother tongue, although every Census officer (Hutton 1933) has met with the still current situation of people not knowing which is their "real" language: in Ganjam district for example, an often mentioned case in Indian sociolinguistics, speakers are unable to say whether they speak Oriya or Telugu, although both Indo-Aryan and Dravidian families are supposed to differ drastically. As rightly stated by Paul Brass, "the language census in North India are political, not philological, documents" (1974: 190), but it should be borne in mind that philological documents too are far from language reality in usage and consciousness.

Linguistic consciousness then seemed to have stemmed out of the classificatory passion of the colonial agenda, at least a certain type of linguistic consciousness with clear-cut boundaries opposing same and other, grounded on rigid structural systems, which was not (and still is not) present in the grassroot multilingual ethos. Later encouraged by identity claims of many different orders, the initial perception of language as a boundary has coincided with the first descriptive attempts shaped by historical linguistics, with all its European more or less implicit ideology. The British requirement to classify, name and cartography, contrasted very much with the local perception which uses different, more intuitive, fuzzy ways of locating as described in Kipling's *Kim* for instance. The superimposition of "scientific" and rational methods of categorizing provided the ground for a distinctive language consciousness later on to develop into language claims and conflicts. In a similar way, David Scott (2000: 288-9) studying the emergence of Singhalese religious consciousness, points after Carter and Malalgola that words referring to the concepts of "religion" and "Buddhism" are of fairly recent origin, not that people did not think about Buddha or *dhamma* or *sangha* prior to British colonisation, but that such a concept in the modern meaning of a "natural, abstract, systematic entity", a "demarcated system of doctrines-scriptures-believes" was not available prior to the encounter with missionaries, and became a reified ideological entity readily available for polemical and adversarial use through the religious

debates and controversies between Christians and Buddhists during the mid XIXth century. Such "inventions" of boundaries between Muslim and Hindu communities have also been recently explored by Mushirul Hasan (2000: 9-12). Languages as demarcated systems and fix entities similarly do not seem to be part of the native representation, and still are not in many parts of traditional India untouched by modern education.

I will try to show in the next section (3) that a given language, even the same feature in a given language, can be accounted for in two ways: inner (vertical) evolution and areal (horizontal) contact, which blurs boundaries drawn by genetic grouping. Moreover, the study of lower colloquial varieties (generally left aside by historical grammar) and their interactional use pattern by sociolinguists shows that the axiom one person/ one language / one linguistic system has little relevance in a grassroot multilingual environment (section 4).

3. Vertical of horizontal links: blood or neighborhood? The internal evidence of languages

Even if we wish to contain the description within the limits of genetic affiliation only, it may happen that evolution produces quite original developments within the family, sometimes to the point that it looses all resemblance with its ancestor. Such is the case with the so-called ergative structure in Western Indo-Aryan speeches like Hindi/Urdu or Punjabi: the agent (subject?) is marked (+*ne*) and the predicate, without personal endings, agrees with the patient (object?), a major typological feature found in Caucasic or Australian languages too. This structure has long been described in terms of traditional (Sanskrit) grammar as a passive (*karmani*) or middle (*bhavi*) voice, with the result of making Hindi like Sanskrit in this respect. The description of nominal morphology within the flexional frame of the eight Sanskrit cases is still in vogue in traditional grammars used in schools and suggested by the Kendriya Hindi Sansthan[29] for the teaching of Hindi in government exams. Relating in such a way Hindi and other modern Indo-Aryan vernaculars to the prestigious ancestor at the expense of the language own specificity has been the usual drawback of early grammars. Continuing this tradition now amounts to emphasize a lost flexional structure and obliterate affinities with the non flexional languages spoken in the area.

The ergative structure indeed comes from the evolution of the purely Indo-Aryan system, as shown by philologists like Bloch (1906) or Chatterji on textual sources: the use of the passive past participle, agreeing like an adjective with what is now perceived as the object

Sanskrit	*mama/maya*	*tat*	*krtam*	
	I-gen/-instr (of/by me)	this-ns	done-ns	"I did this"
origin of Hindi	*maine yah*	*kiya*		
	I-erg this-ms	done-ms	"I did this"	

(*ne* being a recent reinforcement of the oblique, absent in Braj : and in many dialects we still find the oblique without *ne*, in Jaisalmeri for instance). This pattern generalized in classical Sanskrit for the expression of a past/perfect transitive event, the result being treated as the pivot of the statement, the agent as a peripheric figure. But in the modern language it is no longer a passive pattern, nor is it active or middle, it represent a distinct pattern well-known in other natural languages, which makes Hindi typologically closer to Georgian or Dyirbal on this respect, although the inner logic of the system itself accounts for the apparent aberration of Indo-Aryan western ergative languages within the Indo-European family.

But the same Sanskrit syntactic pattern is also at the origin of the eastern Indo-Aryan languages which do not have ergative structure but a 'normal' predicate with personal endings and a 'normal' direct subject, like Bengali:

ami boita porlo
I book read-past-1   "I read the book"

Asoka's well known 1st sentence of the 1st edict uses an instrumental agent and nominative

Iyam dhammalipi-fs nom devanampriena Priyadassena ranna-ms-instr lekhapita-fs nom
This law scripture by the god-loved friendly-looking king written-causative
"the friendly looking king loved by the gods wrote this law scripture"
This pattern gave both the ergative western IA and the non ergative Eastern IA

If we look into older stages of languages, we also find traces of ergativity (*mai bhujila* by-me understood, in old Bengali, *kahini sunili*, story listened, '(they) heard the story', before the erosion of gender agreement during the XIV-XVth centuries), forms later reshaped into an active pattern with personal endings like 'I read the book' above.

In a symetric way the formation of future was also adjectival and also with an oblique agent. It too happened to lose its ergativity, retaining only the –b- from the obligative passive participle (*tavya*) in eastern speeches[30].

Then there is clearly a process of differencion stemming from the very inner logic of systems (and sometimes amounting to major typological differences), but one cannot explain why the Eastern (Magadhean) and Western (Saurasenic) speeches so strikingly differ, each one having followed a logic of its own, similarly yet differently evolving logical paths from the original pattern in keeping with its logic (Montaut 1996).

What the best scholars of the early XXth century (Bloch 1906, Chatterji 1926[31]) could already see, in total deviance from historical linguistics, is that areal contact has played a major role in the whole area, geographically near languages influencing deeply each other. The above-mentioned evolutions were probably helped by contact, since the Eastern Indo-Aryan languages also started differencing from Western Indo-Aryan by a number of correlated features like the loss of gender and agreement other than person agreement, which is closer to the Dravidian pattern than to the Sanskrit pattern. Whatever the reason for convergence with Dravidian languages, a reliable scholar like S.K. Chatterji could relate the Bengali verbal system to the Dravidian one, which has only the Verb-Subject agreement and no Verb-Object agreement (Chatterji 1926: 807, 967, Bloch 1935). Such features create what linguist call isoglosses (defined by the extension of a special feature or a cluster of features) within the major structural family. Micro isoglosses are observable in the Eastern Indo-Aryan speeches: Magahi and Maithili (Yadav 1997) present a very complex pattern of agreement with more than one argument, including subject, object, indirect arguments, and this pattern has been shown to present strong similarities with the Munda pattern, which indexes all major arguments on the predicate)[32].

This shows that convergence and diffusion have been as much important as differencion. The discovery of the impact of such contacts prompted first Kuiper then Andronov (1964) and Emeneau[33] to posit an Indian linguistic area, by many features homogeneous and consistent in spite of the many specificities still distinguishing the various languages spoken in the area. The first finding was to trace back to Sanskrit some early borrowings from Dravidian both at phonological, lexical and syntactic levels (retroflexion[34], a fair amount of words like *phalam/paLam* ripe, fruit, the 5 grammatical meanings of the Dravidian *-um* particle diffused in the 5 uses of Skr *api* > Hin *bhi*, Mar *i*,[35] the conjunctive participle which came to be one of the pan-indian features etc). And borrowing from the so-called Austric or Austro-Asiatic languages (*punya, purush* are of Munda origin according to Kuiper) have been studied up to Witzler's study on Vedic language and its foreign borrowings (conference in College de France in 2001). Such affinities are of course far more developed in modern languages and it is now widely acknowledged that all the four original families (Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Austric, Tibeto-burman) of languages in contact on the subcontinent to-day share more specific features among themselves than any one does with an external member of the family: for instance Bengali and Irish, both Indo-European, are typologically more distant than Bengali and Telugu, although both Bengali and Telugu stem from distinct genetic families. To mention only a few of the pan-indian features: retroflexion (the dental d contrasts with the retroflex D), serial verbs (*aa jao, kha lena, nikal jana*, come go, eat take, leave go, with aspectual and attitudinal meanings), dative 'subjects' (*mujhe pyas lagi hai, mujhe malum hai*, to-me thirst is, to-me know, for "I am thirsty, I

know"), Subject-Object-Verb word order, lack of 'have' verb, verbo-nominal predicates (*intazar karna, yad hona*, waiting do, memory be, for "to wait, to remember"), marking of the human or specific object (*usko bulao, isko rakh do*, to-him call, to-it place give, for "call him, put id down"), reduplication and echo formation (*garam-garam, cay-way*, hot-hot, tea). Some of these features can be traced from diffusion: retroflexion and word order is said to have been diffused in Indo-Aryan from Dravidian, marked object from Dravidian, later favored by Persian influence; some seem to be innovations, new features unknown in each of the languages in contact: verb seriality, may be oblique subjects, the wide use of reduplication., pairing lexical synonyms *man-bap* (mother-father, "parents", *lena-dena* take-give, "exchange"), and other forms of iconicity frequent in Creole languages.

Such a concept of linguistic area means that contact has been even more prevalent than genetic affiliation: the links of blood, so to speak, were superseded by links of neighborhood. But this is a fact that was always hard to swallow for the traditional comparatist, as suggested by the famous quarrel between Meillet the Indo-europeanist and Schuchart, the first creolist, a German scholar specialized in eastern Asian languages, at the beginning of the XXth century.

At a micro level similar processes have been observed, defining micro linguistic areas, the most commented being Marathi, since the founding work of Jules Bloch in the twenties, to the extent that is has been described (Southworth 1971, 1974) as a creolization of Indo-Aryan by Dravidian (acting as the substratum): for instance Marathi has three genders (a typically Old-Indo-Aryan feature) but an inclusive *vs* exclusive distinction for 'we' (*apan* includes the speaker whereas *amhi* does not, like the Dravidian pair *nam/ nangal* for "we"), it uses the *ki* 'that' for reported speech and thought, but also the typically Dravidian device of the 'quotative' (a 'say' verb grammaticized into the meaning of 'that', *mhanun*, like Tamil *enru*, (lit. "having said") which is also used for conditional *mhanje* in Marathi and *enral* Tamil), it has the local reflexive *swatah* (corefering with a term in the clause in a typically Indo-Aryan manner) but also the long distance reflexive *apliya* (corefering with a term outside the clause) like the Dravidian *tan/tanu*.

The study of Dakkini Urdu/Hindi, a southern non standard variety of Hindi/Urdu spoken in Dravidian environment (Mysore, Madras, Hyderabad), leads to similar findings: it has a quotative (*bolke* litt. 'having said') used for reporting speech or thought instead of *ki* 'that', it exhibits partial loss of grammatical gender and de-aspiration, erosion of agreement, all features probably due to the Dravidian influence. The following example of Dakkhini Urdu (DU) exhibits two Dravidian features (use of quotative and of a specific word for "to-morrow" distinct from "yesterday" as does Dravidian whereas standard Hindi/Urdu (SH/U) has the same lexical unit for both, *kal*, and uses a 'that' conjunction, *ki*):

DU   *un/o saban   atu   **kako**   bolya*
        he to-morrow   come-1s disant dit-ms
        he said he will come to-morrow
SH/U   *usne kahaa   **ki** main kal   aaungaa*
        he-erg say-ms that I to-morrow come-fut-ms (same meaning)
Tamil *avan   naalai varukkireen   enru   connaan*
Telugu *vaaDu reepu   vastaan ani   ceppyaadu*
        he to-morrow come-pres-1s   quot say-past-1s[36] (same meaning)

If not creolized languages in the restricted meaning, Indian languages are all more or less hybrid languages -- De Selva (1975) claimed that Prakrits were the result of a creolisation of Sanskrit. Hybridation has been highly productive in the entire area, including more radical forms like the pidgins used as lingua franca like bazari Hindi (Rajyashree 1987) or new languages like Nagamese (an Assamese IA structure with a Tibeto-burman Naga lexique, see Shreedhar 1985).

All these micro and macro processes of convergence can only be explained by a prolonged contact involving societal bilingualism, and the present 'grassroot multilingualism' is still a

reflexion of the ancient plurilingual situation, responsible for the dynamic of linguistic change. They rely on specific social interactions.

4. A specific pattern of interaction: language life together separately

One of the most frequent observations in Indian sociolinguistics and language shift studies is the extraordinary resilience of language maintenance in diasporic situations all over India (Pandit 1977: 9). This very high degree of language maintenance in communities living in a different linguistic environment has even been seen as the linguistic specificity of India, as opposed to the usual language shift observable in other countries resulting in the "melting pot" phenomena (typical evolution of language migrant communities in the USA and Europe). One of the oft quoted examples is that of the Shaurastri speaking community (a variety of Gujarati), migrated in Tamil Nadu, and is still speaking its original mother tongue centuries after centuries. Similarly, Tamil speakers migrated in the Kannada-speaking Bangalore still maintain their language, to various degrees according to the various communities, depending on the language use patterns and cultural habits (Mohan Lal 1986).

The sociolinguists findings on the present situation (Pandit 1977, Dimock, Kachru & Krishnamurti 1992) can certainly apply to the ancient one although it is not historically documented or very scantily. The fact that languages are strikingly well maintained in multilingual settings, cannot be separate from the language use patterns widely dominant in traditional India, where there is no such thing as one language for all and every communication.

Years ago Pandit (1977) noted that one of the reasons for this remarkable maintenance is the pattern of language use. The classical example of the Gujarati merchant one century ago, who uses Kacchi a dialect of Gujarati in the local market, Marathi for wider transactions in the region, standard Gujarati for readings, Hindustani when he travels (railway station), Urdu in the mosque, with some Persian and Arabic, but also *sant bhasha* in devotional songs, his variety of Gujarati for family interaction, English when dealing with officials. Many examples of the kind can easily be provided in the Punjabi context. Such a situation provides the multilingual speaker with a setting where each language has a definite role with little overlapping. What is very important is that there is no competition between the various segments of the verbal repertoire, each one in its appropriate sphere being the main language, the choice of language being determined by the type of exchange, each language being equally part of the social exchange and required by the social economic life of the community. As stated by the late R.N. Srivastava (1994), each language is part of the whole and none is apart, which provides for the real integration of plurality. A speaker is not defined as a one-language user but as a shifting user of a multilayered repertoire, each segment being connected with a specific role of the individual within a highly segmented society. Interactional patterns echo that segmentation with fluid adjustments. For instance, studies on Bengali and Punjabi maintenance (Mukherjee 1996, Singh 1986) convincingly show that the degree of maintenance is proportionate to the selective use of the language under consideration in shifting social roles[37]. One of the consequences on the linguistic system is a large degree of linguistic tolerance, no normative judgment and a great flexibility in uses gained by the constant adjustment of speaker and addressee, aiming more at communicational performance than correctness. Every-day interaction and its typical adjustments involve of course the colloquial (lower) variety of languages and not the highly standardized high varieties.

Incidentally we may wonder if the very notion of linguistic system as a bound stabilized monolithic entity still retain its meaning in such settings – think of the speakers of border villages, like Ganjam in Orissa, bordering Andhra, who cannot tell if their mother tongue is Telugu or Oriya and return either one to the Census officer. Gumperz (1971) has shown for the Kuvrup speakers (Ku) in southern Madhya Pradesh that a word by word equivalent is achieved in the local varieties of Marathi (M) Kannada (K) and Hindi (H), with a heavy lexical borrowing. For instance see the lower local varieties of Kannada and Marathi (Ku), far closer and simple (no

"about" postposition, genitive formation for the possessive in K) than their standard equivalent (S):

KKu   *id nam **de** garibstiti heL.d.ew nawr*
MKu   *he am ca garibstiti sangit.l.a ami*
        this we of poverty have spoken we
        « we spoke of our poverty »
KS   *navu namma baDatanada bagge heL̪idevu*
        we we-obl poverty-obl about speak-past-1p
MS   *am amci garibstiti badal sangitlaa*
        we we-gen-fs pauvreté-fs about speak-past-ms

In next example, local Kannada uses interrogative for tag questions (a typical Indo-Aryan device), omit specific accusative marker with non human (Indo-Aryan omits it more freely than Dravidian), and conversely, Urdu and Marathi local variants have subject agreement like Dravidian languages, whereas their standard counterparts have either Subject-Object agreement (Marathi in the first 2 persons) or only Object agreement (Urdu):

UKu   *kya baba ghoRi di.ya kya ?*
MKu   *kya baba ghoRi dil-as kya ?*
KKu   *yan appa kuddri kwatti yan*
        how father horse give-past interr
        « eh, you have sold the horse, no ? »

H/US   *kyaa, bhaii, ghoRii bec d-ii kyaa ?*
        interr. brother, horse-fs sell give-past-fs inter
MS   *kay baba ghoRi vik-un Takl-i-s ka ?*
        interr brother, horse-fs sell-part throw-past-fs-2s « tag »[38]
KS   *eno appa heNNu kudurey-annu mar-id-ir-a ?*
        how (adress), father, horse-acc sell-past-2p-Q

The standard varieties in Punjabi (SP), Hindi (SH) and Urdu (SU) for the statement « how much does it cost ? », show numerous differences at every level [39]:

1 SH   *iskaa kyaa bhaav hai ?*
2 SU   *iskii kyaa qiimat hai ?*
3 SP   *edaa kii pàaw ai ?*
        of-it interr price is

(2) in Urdu has a distinctly Urdu lexical item *qiimat*, feminine (< Arabic, pronounced with the distinctively Urdu back velar q) for price, whereas (1) in Hindi uses the *tadbhav* term *bhaav*, masculine. High Punjabi in (3) uses a word with the same origin, but devoiced the initial voiced aspirate consonant with a low tone vowel after[40], a feature ignored by neighbored languages: *pàw* corresponds to hindi *bhaav* (like *kàr* to *ghar* « house »). The hindi nominal relator (genitive) *k* + gender-number, « of », has the Punjabi correspondant *d* + gender-number, so that it is easy to transfer from one language to the other by simple rules, which is not the case for the pronominal form (no oblique-direct distinction in Punjabi) nor for the toned lexical item. These are the two elements that Delhi colloquial Punjabi (P') calques from spoken Hindi (CoH), lexically close to colloquial Urdu (CoU) :

P'   *isdii kii kimat aigii ?*
CoH/CoU   *iskii kyaa kiimat hai / ai ?*

P' maintains the relator *d-* of Punjabi, the interrogative *k-* common to all three languages, and select the common word used in spoken varieties of Hindustani, itself devoid of its typically Urdu phonetic specificity (*q*, unknown in Indo-Aryan, becomes *k*). A common denominator obtains at the lexical, morphological and phonetic levels, facilitated by conversational convergence (phonetics diverges between Hindi and Urdu in the high registers). Delhi Punjabiphones are known to replace numerous grammatical Punjabi words by their Hindi equivalents (Hin *itna* for Punj *enna* « so much », of similar origin, *saath* for *naal* « with », from different origin), and to

borrow usual vocabulary (Hindi *dukaan* for Punjabi *haTTi*, « shop »). Conversely, in Punjabi Hindi speakers, the typically Punjabi devoicing-de-aspiration cum low tone is a dominant feature, and the compensating vowel lengthening with cluster simplification, usual in IA but not in Punjabi, is not realized (P *gajjar, satt*, H *gaajar, saat*)[41].

Linguistic identity as well as distinct linguistic system (a notion challenged by creolists too like Le Page 1992) have little relevance in such multilayered settings where multiple belongings according to the various social roles echo the variety of the linguistic repertoire

What is at stake in this 'grassroot' multilingualism – certainly a good image of ancient past— is the dialectic of 'functional heterogeneity' as labeled by Khubchandani within this specific communicational ethos: each language is dominant in its domain of use, favored by the fact that languages are more like a continuum with no clear boundaries (for instance North India 'fluid zone' from Punjab to Bengal), with a good deal of inter-intelligibility between two adjacent languages, favored by the constant adjustment required by the traditional pattern of life. The HUP fluid zone claimed by Kubchandani (1997) as characteristic of the Hindi-Urdu-Punjabi continuum is definitely a major North Indian feature, and it is echoed by North-South continuum (see Ganjam speakers), as well as by the diglossic continuum (between low and high varieties). According to Srivastava (1994: 58), "there is a continuous chain from the most illiterate variety of local village dialect to the highly specialized role of the (formally learned) official language, with a reciprocal intelligibility between the hierarchically ordered adjacent areas".

All this started to change with the institutionalization of clear-cut linguistic identities, standardization and normative behavior. A new dynamic of competition tends to substitute the traditional functional heterogeneity, domains of use largely overlap, and dominant languages appear as a threat for dominated languages (competition towards hegemony, either regional, national or even local). The considerable attrition of tribal languages, some of them already extinguished, is a sad evidence (Singh & Manoharam 1993). The roots of such a shift can be traced back in the contradictory provisions of the Constitution. Articles on the protection of minorities rights ensure that minority languages be granted certain rights in a democratic way (to be classified as such, therefore defined as a clear cut entity, calling for exclusive identification). On the other side, the very listing of the so called scheduled languages in the Eight Schedule was the starting point of a competitive dynamic aiming at including other languages for proper recognition, which means that a language not included is endangered, which is hardly doubtful[42]. A few years earlier, an important book on the Eight Schedule (Gupta & al., 1995) has shown the perverse effects of linguistic recognition for dominated languages, to that extent that D.N. Pattanayak, a fervent opponent of the 8th Schedule, proposed simply its abolition since it encourages both a competitive anti-democratic dynamics and results in exclusive and aggressive linguistic loyalties totally irrelevant in the traditional grassroot multilingual setting.

Clear-cut identities, and moreover the necessary standardization and modernization of scheduled (or otherwise recognized languages), brought out artificial neology, burdened with unnatural *tatsam* and their phonological pattern opposed to the new Indo-Aryan phonemics, normative attitudes and more and more distinctive features so that the grass root fluidity and continuum seems to be endangered. 'Modernization' as it has been implemented so far goes against the 'composite' nature of the would-be national language in the Constitution (art. 351 sq), which advocates large borrowings from the other regional languages and dialects. Srivastava's continuum between dialectal and official varieties (which may be a continuum between regional or socially lower varieties and standard) is getting more and more broken. Education in the formal variety (in its most rigid and cut-off variety) may then alienate regional speakers, especially of Hindi which encompasses a high number of diverse dialects (331), in such a way that they become semi-literate or inarticulate (Trivedi 1983, Mahendroo 1995, Rai 2000), because of non intelligibility between mother variety and official standard. Non intelligibility of Hindi standard in the Hindi belt has often been stigmatized as a major cause of social injustice (for instance administrative documents, police complaints have to be filed in something like a foreign language

to villagers), in a present situation which paradoxically comes very close to the ancient diglossic situation (Persian as the court language) which MacDonnell tried to solve when imposing Hindi as a court language.

To-day, linguistic loyalties and identity claims of "endangered" languages build their argumentation on the implicit rejection of such a 'fluid continuum', helped in this rejection by schooling strategies and official "modernization" and standardization. The struggle for recognition in the Eighth Schedule may secure advantages[43] but endangers the grassroot type of language evolution and interaction, since it construes distinct rigid entities, eventually conflicting entities, where there was previously something like a fluid continuum.

One of the most extreme cases is the separation of Hindi and Urdu, two enemies born out of the splitting of colloquial Hindustani, the popular (lower variety) language paradoxically claimed by Gandhi as the should-be national language. Its integrative ability (linguistic vector of both Hindus and Muslims in Gandhi's view) paradoxically turned into the maximal separatist device when high varieties (persianised *vs* sanskritised) are concerned, to such an extent that the Hindustani speaker Nehru confessed he did not understand a word in neither the Hindi nor the Urdu versions of the Constitution. This linguistic war, commented by Rai (2000) started in the XIXth century (*Hindi Urdu ki larai*, 1886, is not its first episode), and it is interesting to see a liberal writer and critic like Raja Shiv Prasad (compared to Lakshman Singh, Raja Shiv Prasad was not only tolerant but wishing for an hybrid Hindi) come to exactly the same radical conclusion as Michelet: Urdu is viewed as a semitic element alienating Aryans from their Aryan speech (1868, *Memoire*). Other writers of the time view Urdu as a seductive and degenerate harlot whereas Hindi is viewed as the chaste virtuous elder wife or the pure virgin, both threatened by the destructive seduction of the harlot. P.N. Tandon more than half a century later (8 April 1946) still claimed: "Those who oppose Hindi as a national language and nagari as a national script are still following a policy of anti national appeasement". And in the sixties the same discourse -- "a foreign script and alien culture" -- was still enacting the classical scenario 'un groupe ça lie = s'allie'. But in Michelet's case the binary opposition aimed at discarding non Indo-European languages and cultures within a genetic pattern, whereas in the case of Hindivallahs, since nobody could deny the indo-aryanness of Urdu, genetically as well as structurally, then the tension focused on the script question: only the script was a possible linguistic pretext to divide brothers, a script which indeed compelled Nehru to rely twice on vote, although he claimed that democracy could only be secured by consensual resolutions (see above section 1). The dividing device worked and brothers became more and more estranged: I do not think many non Muslim citizens declare to-day Urdu as their mother tongue. They were more than ten millions in the early sixties.

This takes us back to the question raised in section 1: how to reconcile official protection of plurality (the rights of linguistic minorities in articles 29 and 30) and avoid the perverse dialectic of hegemony and competition. How to recognize separate identities in order to prevent the small to be absorbed in the bigger and leveled in a melting-pot model without endangering the weakest by showing their difference. How to reconcile linguistic identity and loyalty as one and single, and respect of diversity and pluralism.

There are counter examples, like Sadari speaking Munda tribes, who dissociate ethnic and cultural identity from linguistic identity, since they shifted for a dialect of Bihari from their native Mundari[44]. But usually it works the opposite way, and the powerful language symbol, the history of which I tried to briefly outline, indirectly indebted to the colonial agenda and then to the nationalist agenda, is utilized to shape clear-cut identity claims against other clear cut identities, leading to linguistic communalism.

5 Conclusion: how can a plural culture be workable now?

The wishful thinking of going back to the functional heterogeneity and the grassroot multilingual ethos of traditional India would not be more than a utopian dream, when socio-economic environment has drastically changed. But among the few things intellectuals can do,

since they form teachers and language practitioners, one is to show the importance at the school level to emphasize not the link with the prestigious ancestor (Sanskrit or ancient Tamil) by substituting to real analysis the largely irrelevant categories of classical grammar, but rather emphasize the common structure which make the transition easier from regional minor varieties to the standardized one, as well as from one 'family' to the other. This will provide a means for activating the continuum instead of breaking it by projecting distinctive and rigid normative systems. One should emphasize flexibility and tolerance with the standard and favor not only primary teaching in the mother tongue, but scalar access to the regional language by exploiting all the available affinities of both languages instead of separating them. One should avoid inducing hierarchies in valuating languages so as not to induce derogatory feelings towards non-standard varieties, and convey the notion that linguistic qualification should not be confused with social or political status of a language (Srivastava 1993). Efficiency rather than conformity to the expected normative linguistic behavior should be favored, as it is in successful "full literacy campaigns" which are always also integrative programs (connected with other trainings in medical, children care, women rights, juridical, environmental skills).

On the other hand, language planners dealing with neology and official language should elaborate more adjustable and popular strategies and give up morphological sanskritization or syntactical anglicisation which increase the gap between the colloquial and technical varieties. Present modernization of Indian languages end up in diglossic situations largely responsible for the linguistic deprivation of those who have only access to the lower "restricted code" in Bernstein's terms. That is what Cobarrubias (1983) coined the ethics of language planning, now encapsulated in the general "ecology" of language.

We should use every occasion to trigger awareness about the meaning and consequences of language manipulations. But what about culture, so often associated with language and sometimes assimilated to it in language movements? Can the linguistic experience of diversity and hybridity induce a specific cognitive and cultural mode of relation, although without any direct iconic correlation involved? That is what Edouard Glissant claims with his poetics of inter-relatedness (1990, 1992). A Creole himself from the French Caribean Martinique, he claimed that the best stand to face 'postmodernity' was from the view point of "creolized" cultures, absolutely devoid as they are from a proper ancient culture which belongs to them, which they can own. Why should it be the best stand? Because the radical emptiness of the past exempts for looking back towards a mythical origin and they have to do with mongrelization as a starting point, leaving aside any fantasy of original purity. Because the past is blank, leads to no root, an absence which necessarily develops a rhizomatic present[45]. This traumatic experience of being erased from one's own history Glissant calls the 'chaos monde' or "chaos-world". Out of chaos with only the language of the other to nurture, newness emerges, new combinations and new forms that can only be created by unexpected confrontations, undesired encounters: le "tout-monde" 'World-as-Whole' in Glissant's words, which amounts to the very post-colonial poetics.

However there is a radical difference between 'true' creolization[46] – although such a notion has become controversial -- and the South Asian situation, even if the word has been often used to describe the prakritisation of Sanskrit (de Selva, Srivastava). The difference is that in the latter case there has been no eradication of the past, no radical break off, no forced mass isolation from the mother tongue. On the contrary linguistic evolution has been continuous, along with the maintenance of the prestigious ancestor as a language used for literate communication (Sanskrit; to a lesser degree ancient Tamil and the reference to the *Tolkapiyam* as an absolute origin and purity standard for *cen tamil*). Roots are then highly accessible, with the danger of selecting one to make it the absolute origin. Still, the long prevailing grassroot multilingualism in India has something to do with the situation described by Glissant[47]: the constant interactions between flexible and adjustable systems, the many hybrid features, the 'functional heterogeneity' described by Khubchandani fit the notion of plural identities and plural belongings, they can resist the opposite notion of a single unitary pure identity and single belonging. Linguistically speaking, the

necessity in the creole situation for renouncing the mythical purity of origins and singleness of identity is only an available possibility in the Indian context, more available than in monolingual countries[48].

But can the ethics of a hybrid culture, even deeply marked by the contact with Muslim culture in the syncretic Mughal reaslizations, be equated with the process of linguistic creolization as Glissant claims? That might be true for 'true' Creole culture, which was robbed at the same time of its language and its culture and religion. If even creolized Indian languages like Marathi and other have not been born out of a cultural disaster, yet we may say that Indian culture suffered some form of disaster, colonization as a mild form of wiping off. The contemporary Hindi writer Nirmal Verma makes it very clear in an illuminating essay about "Indian fiction and colonial reality" mainly devoted to Premchand: "he lived in an abnormal situation, where he had to come in contact with the most brutal aspects of western civilization and most moribund version of Indian society – colonialism being the corrupting factor common to both. The alien intervention was not merely confined to political and economic sphere, it was something far more subtle and insidious, it was an intervention on a colossal civilizational scale, uprooting the entire peasantry not merely from land but from all that which connected it from past. As Simone Weil once observed, "for several centuries now, men of white race have everywhere destroyed the past, stupidly, blindly, both at home and abroad. Of all the human-soul's needs, none is more vital than this one of past. The destruction of past is perhaps the greatest of all crimes". It is a crime, because it alienates a man from all that it gives hum a meaning to its life on earth. By uprooting him from the past, it distorts man's relation to his own self. It is precisely this damaged 'self' of a common Indian, neither purely traditional, nor completely colonized, a lacerated soul, which became the most sustained, poignant theme of Prem Chand's novels and short-stories" (1986: 35).

Given these affinities between an authentically plurilingual colonized culture as is India, and Glissant's thought about the challenging power of pluralism and uprootedness, India too should be better equipped than mono-cultural monolingual cultures to meet the challenges of this century. If we admit with Touraine that the major threats against humanity now lie in the uniformization of thought and de-socialization, with its two opposite poles of communalism and mass culture (globalized individualism, instrumentalization of people), then societies able to deal with pluralism are the best resisting forces to the liberal neo-capitalist globalization..

According to the French sociologist in a book significantly entitled *Can we live together* (1997), both threats represent an extreme result of liberal capitalism, both only superficially antinomic. In a previous book about the *Critique of modernity* (1992), Touraine showed that modernity – a process which started with the industrial revolution-- brought together the concept of individualism, the rights of the individual within a democratic state or nation, and the faith into ideology as the right tool for shaping such a system, both a product of rationality. Even if trade-unionism (with more pragmatic programs) has become after the second world-war more efficient than political parties in the fight for democracy, it was the last movement still belonging to an area where power was dominated by ideology. But with the erosion of faith in ideology and even in trade-unions, more or less contemporary with the breakdown of Eastern European nations, the center of power became empty. This ideological vacuum then got filled with an essentially different source of power, because it is in a way abstracted from reality: power now relies on the new technologies of information, market strategies being more and more depending on the circulation of information. The domination of uniformized mass culture which now threatens the West is part of the same logic, and even if it seems to advocate plurality and diversity it brings people to a culture of one-ness and unicity of thought, eradicates in depth the real differences. The logic of rationality (modernity) produced the reign of ideology, the logic of this logic produces the reign of information and its technologies (postmodernity). Touraine's book on "living together" studies the process of desocialization which accompanied in Europe this change of power-center. Since people were no longer united in an ideological struggle with a particular

goal and identified enemy, they took more and more to an individualist stand, cultivating the 'values' of the self (the culture of leisure, of "souci de soi" (selfcare), pleasure, health care, hobbies, as the only thing under control), more and more disconnected from the public space. No identity is left except private. Values have become a matter of strictly personal interest. At the same time the desire for collective existence and shared values, also resulting from the feeling of being marginalized from the public space and loosing one's identity, can end up in the new fascination for sects or religious communities. Although this appears as the opposite of the process of privatization, it proceeds from the same logic of de-socialization: the group allows the individual to fuse with others who are indeed the same, creates an organic strongly emotional link based on simple shared values, generally under a non controversial leader, ruling out all interactive dialogue since this is a universe of sameness: it provides an easy way of re-socializing but a very dangerous one at the same time (back to square one: a group links in standing against, "un groupe ça lie = s'allie"). Faced with these two antagonist threats of sheer individualism with no interaction with the public space and sheer fusion of the individual within a dream community of sameness, ruling out the other, what future is left?

The alternative advocated by Touraine, against both the mass culture of a globalized world and communalism, equally de-socializing, is a different self's construct, which he calls a subject. A subject is neither an individual, nor a collective item produced by the fusion of the individual in an indistinct organic group of the fusion kind. It is also distinct from the classical connotations of subjectivity resulting from modern psychology. The very word "subject" has a complicated history, in France at least. One of its worst avatars was during the sixties and seventies when it got conflated with the individual – as a result from the Freudian, then Lacanian, analysis, that such a thing as a subject did not exist as an entity, split as it was between the biological world of drives (impersonal "pulsions") and the social world of symbolic rules and norms (impersonal too). A great deal of the sixties new critique vigor was spent in calling for the 'death of the subject' as well as of 'meaning' – meaning intended as the embodiment of "theocentrism "and "logocentrism".

Touraine reverses this trend when calling back to the subject as the only way of resisting both the individualism of mass culture and the fusion of collective identification, both perceived as de-subjectivizing devices, ultimately leading to de-humanization. Becoming a subject is a pre-requisite for maintaining humanism, since to be a 'subject' means to be a person who is able to accept others as subjects (and not as radical others with a distinct identity, nor identically same, sharing the same clear-cut identity), same and different at the same time. Same in that sense that every 'subject' knows he is not one but essentially plural, with plural belongings, and also that he can only act and think through interaction and inter-subjectivity. As far from the de-socialized individual as from the individual fused in the communal group, the 'subject' is the social actor of a plural society. In Indian terms, we could say that the way from individual to subject is the way from *vyakti* to *manushya*.[49] Such a process of 'subjectivation' cannot be achieved by the mere promotion of awareness, it needs participative action. Touraine reached these conclusions after a close observation of the so-called associative movements in France, which to-day are according to him the only active and efficient resistance against the major threats of our times, because they can restore the disintegrated social tissue (degraded by modernity). The main difference of such participative movements compared with previous (modern) patterns of action is that they are not ideology-bound, they do not share a distant ideological program. Rather, what unites the people who act in such networks is a short or medium term project, essentially local and concrete, and shared values at the ethical level. The fact that there is no institutionalization, no centralization, allows practical flexibility. Many such small, hardly visible projects are disseminated in various spheres of social life, and they are fast extending to areas where official action proved inefficient: solidarities for homeless and paperless people, associations working with prostitutes, AIDS patients, district association to fight expropriations or insecurity, peasant associations opposing the European agricultural policies along with other countries similar associations, ATTAC

movement, etc. These unconnected projects can be conceived as glocalization, the new term coined as an alternative to the market globalization: the motto 'thing global act local', global in Amartya Sen's meaning, with a strong rooting in locality, produces the new "glocal" alternative.

Such a stand can be observed in literature, at the language as well as the content level: Krishna Baldev Vaid's use of Persian or Arabic or Sanskrit in Hindi along with the peace program of his *divanas* in his great novel on Partition, *Guzra hua zamana*, Nagarjun's depiction of human solidarity within a world where nature, spiritual relationship with cosmos, divine and social are equally part of the agency of the subject (*Varuna ke bete*, literally "The sons of Varuna", the vedic god of waters, one of his famous novels, says something else than "The Fishermen", *Baba Batesarnath*, "The Sacred Lord of the Banyans", another of his novels, is the story of the conquest of freedom and justice told by a tree, a sacred tree, and enacted by a young villager and his friends, who acts exactly to the extent he listens to the tree). Literature indeed, and its proper teaching in schools, can act as a precious link in adjusting to our difference, because the words it uses have their own agency in blurring the boundaries between languages. The young fools (*pagal, divana*) of *Guzra hua zamana*, including the narrator, an ironic *nastik mahatma* (agnostic Mahatma), who freely interact in the three communities of Vaid's Punjabi qasba are "the true soldiers of Peace" but in Hindi it says something far more concrete because of the Arabic words mixed with Hindi: *aman aur ittahad ke sacche sipahi* (1978: 426). Similarly, the Sikh who married a Muslim woman, is said to "have settled for the whole village the fundamentals of a new religion which teaches that all of them are men, not only Hindus, Sikhs or Muslims"; the narrator uses a markedly Urdu word for "only" (*mahaz*) in this sentence which refuses distinctive and restrictive identity, an identity restricted by the prominence of one single identity on other multiple identities (Montaut 2002): *un donon ne darasal is qasbe men ek nae mazahb ki buniyad dal di hai, jo yah sikhata hai ki ham sab insaan hain, ki ham mahaz hindu ya sikh ya musalman nahin* (436).

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[1] See the most celebrated (when not loathed) articles of the Constitution (347-51) regarding the definition of Hindi the will-be official language of India, invited to get enriched by other major languages and dialects

[2] The proposition for including Santali (by the Constituant Jaypal Singh) in the 8th Schedule listing major languages was rejected without being even discussed. The ambivalence of the criteria required for the status of major language is extensively analysed and criticized in several contributions of *Language and the State: Perspectives on the Eighth Schedule*, (Gupta & al, 1997)

[3] And to resign from the leadership of the Hindi Sammelan, an assembly more and more dominated by the "Hindiwallahs" as those in favour of a sanskritised hinduized Hindi where then called. For the question of Hindi/Urdu conflict, see infra.

[4] It was easier to administrate small units.

[5] The Andhra Mahasabha, later on to launch the Vishal Andhra Movement, was active since 1913 (Prakash 1973: 30sq).

[6] From the first names of Nehru, Patel and Sitaramayya.

[7] Ending in 261 votes against it, and only 77 for it, the Congress Party ultimately uniting against the proposal.

[8] Himachal was added to the Union Territories, Vidarbha was withdrawn, Karnataka was created instead of Mysore and Hyderabad.

[9] Siddiqi contrasts the 2853 and 2103 Urdu medium schools respectively in Karnataka and Maharashtra with the bare 422 in UP and 251 in MP where there are more important Urdu minorities, but where the political tension with Hindi is far more acute than with Kannada or Marathi (see infra. For the case of Sindhi, see Daswani (1985, 1992).

[10] They were at least to a small extent used in the fifties and sixties.

[11] There are of course exceptions, among which the vitality of Tulu (Dravidian speech), Bhili (Indo-aryan) and Santali (Austro-asiatic), the first one certainly explained by the local language politics and support of the CIIL in Mysore, an institute which has prepared a considerable amount of teaching material in Tulu. Another exception is Nagaland, where 16 "tribal" languages are currently used as teaching medium in primary school during three years, english medium being used after.

[12] The history of the three languages formula itself is symptomatic of these unsatisfactory efforts, since it was launched by the Central Advisory Board of Education in 1957, criticized and reformulated by the Kothari Commission in 1966, tentatively implemented with complex adjustments to local situations by the NCERT (National Commission for Education, Research and Teaching) and still ignored by many schools.

[13] That the integrating and integrative official language later on turned out a support for fundamentalism and itself an integrist rather than integrative language in another matter (see on that shift Montaut 1997, 2002)

[14] A discovery which had however already been made by a French missionary, Révérend Père Coeurdoux, a few years earlier in a memoire he had sent to the Academy of Inscriptions in Paris regarding the parallel flexional structure of Sanskrit, Greek and Latin and their common lexical stock, but the memoire failed to attract the attention of its few readers in the board of the Academy, was kept unnoticed and was not given any diffusion.

[15] A more welcome candidate than ancient Egyptian (deciphered just before by Champollion) since it was related to European classical languages.

[16] Like Turkish or Dravidian languages, typical examples of agglutinative languages; yet Schlegel's favourite example is Arabic and Hebrew, rather considered to-day as flexional languages. The poor knowledge about language typology at that time may account for this strange classification, but Schlegel's agenda and his bias against semitic culture was more responsible.

[17] Half a century after Schlegel's best seller had swept all of the European intelligentsia, for it soon became a prerequisite of the cultural baggage for every intellectual, we find similar formulations in Pictet (1859), a student of Saussure, who viewed Indo-Europeans as a race designed by Providence to reign all over the world ("race désignée par la providence pour régner sur le monde") and in Lassen (1847) a student of Schlegel.

[18] Connected in Germany with the nascent nationalism (Creuzer group of mythologists, first national grammar of the German language by Fichte).

[19] The opposition (Aryans have the "enormous privilege, the unique kinghood to see where other races do not see anything, to penetrate worlds of ideas and signs (…) by the sheer strength of a lucid vision, a marvellous optic": 51) is moulded into the familiar poetic patterns of Michelet (the arid Judea makes him thirsty and head-aching, and 'when I see the caravans of camels in the Arabian desert, I have no other reaction than feeling dreadfully thirsty, dessicated to the bones', whereas the gorgeous greenery of Indian valleys refreshes him like a generous "river of milk", sic). As for the influence of the "tune of the times" on Michelet, it is obvious he was a reader of Herder's *Philosophical Ideas on the History of Mankind*, translated in French in 1834 by his friend and supporter in College de France Edgar Quinet (Paris: Berger-Levrault). In this book Herder locates the origin of humanity not in Palestine but in Asia, a reason why the work enjoyed huge popularity in Germany and Europe during the XIXth century (see Montaut 1992).

[20] Yet Max-Mueller who is usually sober in his philological work does not hesitate however to refer to the new findings of craniology (measurements of sculls) for hierarchizing human races. And Pott, a major pioneer of the Neo-grammarian school came to associate with the well-known French theoretician of racial superiority Gobineau (*Die Ungleichheit menschlichen Rassen hauptsächlig von Sprachwissenschaftlichen Standpunkte, unter besonderen Berücksichtigung von des Grafen von Gobineau*, 1856).

[21] Although we find in Beames such arguments for the redundant plural agreement of Punjabi adjective and participle (*jatiyan hain*) as the following: these "useless repetition" (not found in Hindi/Urdu) is a necessity only for the" uncultivated" and "rude" mind of Panjabis unable to grasp things at their first mention.

[22] For example in earlier Prakrit grammarians. Markandeya (XVIth c.) clearly excluded the Dravidi (as well as the Odri) from the list of Prakrits.

[23] The huge *Linguistic Survey of India* of Grierson was published in the first years of the century. The case for the other two major family is far less clear and documented than Indo-Aryan and Dravidian (Munda family has emerged as such not much later, but due to lack of reliable description, of ancient written material, a comparative grammar had to wait until 1875, and the competitive claim for origin is not prevalent, although historical arguments would not lack).

[24] Jones arguments for valuating Sanskrit over Latin and Greek as the origin were exactly the same.

[25] See to-day the recurrence of this competition in the struggle (linguistically evidenced) for the legacy of the Harappean culture. The ancient Tamils in Pillai, made highly noble and ancient by their Himalayan ancestry, have to be distinguished from the low substrata speaking other languages than the cultivated ones: Minawar and Villavar are recorded as black savages (ultimately related to Rajasthani Mina and Bhil tribes), a picture retained in Barnett's Cambridge History (I: 595). Here again a group links in making alliance against its outsiders.

[26] Argumentation vehemently opposed by Swaminatha Aiyyar (1987) who denounces the ideological bias of such origin phantacies.

[27] One of the main basis of Nehru's "secularism" was his insistence on the impossibility to find a unity (cultural, religious, historical) other that artificial in the history of India and an abstract idea was the only way to shape the new state as one without letting regional particularism prevail. However, the refusal of Nehru's followers to let linguistic claims shape the administrative map of India when they opposed a linguistic state re-organization, for fear of "balkanisation", was not to prevail in the end as is well-known (see above).

[28] Deliberately not a national language (Montaut 1997).

[29] Aryendra Sharma's reference grammar (1958) in Hindi mentions the 8 cases and 3 voices. Modern, "linguistic" grammars like Kachru's (1980) on the contrary align the ergative structure (and other categories) on the English language, considering the morphology as an archaic, irrelevant relic of the past, a surface feature for the "normal" deep structure subject verb object. In both descriptions, a foreign categorical frame serves as the underlying model for description.

[30] The structure involves a passive obligative participle and agent in the oblique case if present :

   tribhir yatavyam 'the three will go' (litt. by the three should be gone)

   Asoka's formulation in the same context as above has:

   Iha na samajo kattavyo (Sauraseni) *na samaje kattavye* (Magadhean)

   Here no meeting is to be made = one shall not do meeting,

This passive obligative adjective in *-tavya* gave the specific *–b-* future in Neo-magadhean speeches like Bengali and Eastern Hindi, further turned into an active with personal endings (same story as for the ergative) whereas the Western languages have periphrastic futures More rarely, the old sigmatic future (Sindhi, old Jaisalmeri). The above two structures in classical Sanskrit also happen to be the basis for late Latin perfect and future, of passive formation, later also reshaped into the active pattern but by different means (the have verb):

   mihi id factum = maya tat krtam, mihi id faciendum= maya tat kartavyam,

   later on > *ego id factum habeo*, giving the *avoir* perfect and future in Roman languages: *j'ai fait* in the perfect, *je fer-ai* in the future.

[31] A disciple of Bloch, himself a dravidologist too (*La Structure grammaticale des langues dravidiennes* 1946). As opposed to Meillet (the French father of comparative historical linguistics) Bloch was ready to accept areal influence because of his double formation (Dravidian and Indo-Aryan studies).

[32] See in Magahi the verb agreement with both subject (1st person) and object (3rd person) : *ham okraa dekh-l-i-ai* (I he-object see-past-1-3) « I saw him ». Similarly in Mundari, verb see (lel) agrees with both subject and object : *lel-jjad-in-a-e* (see-present-perfect-1s-predicative mark-3s) « he has seen me ».

[33] Kuiper 1948, 1991, 1995, Emeneau 1980, summarized in Montaut 1997 5-25.

[34] Although controversial : cerebralisation can be spontaneous Deshpande (1979), yet its phonological role, clear opposition with dentals, has certainly been favoured by the contact with Dravidian.

[35] Emeneau (1980) shows that the five meanings of *api* (concessive, generalising/indefinite, coordinative, augmentative) is in fact a calque from the Dravidian suffix *-um*.

[36] From Mohiddin Khader 1980, Dua 1986. Quotative is also used in Dakkini for expressive hypothesis, with a special form of verb « say » (*ka-*) to which the correlative *to* is suffixed (« that, then » *to*). This correlative, which initiates the main clause in standard Hindi/Urdu after an hypothetic clause, is then in the same position than the Dravidian quotative (the special *enraal* form for hypothesis). A clear case of reanalysis, is also observable in the Dakkini relative construction (a Dravidian structure with an Indo-Aryan morphologic expression).

DU   *tu aatuu kato mai bii aatuun*   you come pres say-then I too come-pres
Telugu *niivu vastaananTe neenu kuuda vastaanu*   you come-pres-quot.cond I too come-pres
Tamil *nii varukkireen enraal naanum varukkireen*   même glose
          « if you come I too will come »

[37] See also S. Shreedhar for language use patterns in Nagaland, and in general the publications of the CIIL on language use patterns (Himachal Pradesh, Panjab). Such interactions and correlation of language switch (code switching) and role change is sometimes surprising (Trivedi 1983 for instance shows the role of the use of Urdu by Telugu Brahmins between themselves in an Anhra village for asserting their social prestige in exhibiting some knowledge of the once cultural dominant language, whereas the same individual never considers modern local Urdu as being connected with the high variety of Urdu).

[38] For such « tag » questions expressing surprise or asking for confirmation, Marathi would rather use a verbal element (derived from « seem » verb, *vaTle*).

[39] Gumperz (1971) examples enlarged (in Gumperz the only comparison for lower variety is the standard Panjabi, *edii kii pàuu haigii*, of which several segments are not accepted by all standard speakers.

[40] According to the tonal system of Punjabi.

[41] A feature which could be accounted as conservatism, since it reflects the middle-indian phase when distinct consonants where assimilated (gemination) but not yet simplified into a single consonant with lengthening of the vowel.

[42] No tribal language is included in the Schedule until now, and only one non Indo-Aryan non Dravidian is. The inclusion of major tribal languages (Santali, with more than 5 millions speakers, Ho, Kurrukh) was flatly discarded by Nehru and others when proposed by Jaypal Singh in the Constitution Debates.

[43] This even is not sure, given the market situation (Peggy Mohan in Gupta & al. 1995): vitality of a language (maintenance) cannot be compelled by mandatory bilingualism in schools and official areas (Sumi Krishna directly states that administrative vernacularisation is largely an empty decorum). A newly "recognised" language like Konkani may feel threatened by English now even more than by Marathi previously (Kelekar 1998).

[44] Rajyashree 1997 *Pidgins and Creoles, languages of wider communication*, "the Sadari of MP, Bihar and WB". Tribal still constitutes a fair percentage of Madhya Pradesh and Bihar population. There are 4 lakhs of Sadari speakers, and for most them Sadari, originally a link language, has become the mother tongue. Descriptions of Sadari, as well as other 'pidgins', show quite a number of features (at least paths for change) similar to the evolution of Dakkini (a meridional variant of Hindi/Urdu language spoken in a Dravidian setting) at the phonetic and syntactic level, which themselves evoke the 'regular' prakritisation' of 'major' languages. Linguistic change is as much social as historical, in India intimately linked to multilingualism.

[45] A concept borrowed from Deleuze, which was for a time a war engine against "onto-theo-logocentrism": the rhizome, a botanic term, refers to the spreading over and dissemination of roots, none of them being the main.

[46] Traditionally defined as the appropriation of a pidgin as mother tongue, more or less stabilized and enriched, the so called substratum (usually African) no longer activated by linguistic exchanges, forgotten. And linked to a specific historical and economic situation (the plantations).Theories of the substratum/adstratum versus spontaneous genesis of a language born without past, ie by the sheer enactment of the innate 'language faculty', the most natural in that way (iconicity prevailing on syntax and grammatical devices).

[47] In his essays like *Le Tout Monde*, or *Poétique de la relation.*

[48] We may deplore that such a possibility has not yet been taken seriously in the modernization of major languages, which instead of opening to the new combinations offered by integrating other language and dialects into a composite creation has more and more chastized languages from impure elements

[49] See the chapters « India and Europe : some reflections on the Self and the Other », and « The Self as a Stranger » in Nirmal Verma (2000).