

Language Policy in the Independent State of Catalonia

Políticas Linguísticas no Estado Independente da Catalunha

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Abstract: In *Langues et nations en Europe* Daniel Baggioni describes the historic process of “dallage” or “compartimentage” of Europe that ended up with “le triomphe des langues nationales et la généralisation de la formule: un État / une nation / une langue”. In this paper we would like to adhere to the thesis that this formula is no longer tenable (HELLER, 1999; COULMAS, 2005) with an innovative exercise of political fiction. If Catalonia were to become an independent state (ISC), would she adopt the formula “one state / one nation / one language”? We will sketch a number of political arguments to answer to this question in the negative. Comparative politics shows that the majority language of a state is always (one of) the official language(s) of this state and that linguistically heterogeneous polities tend to have pluralistic language regimes. Now, Spanish is the majority language in Catalonia and in any case Catalonia has the kind of linguistic heterogeneity that makes institutional multilingualism predictable. On the other hand, international / European climate on linguistic diversity also militate against the monist formula being implemented in the ISC (or in any other linguistically heterogeneous place that opts for independence) (KYMLICKA, 2007). **Keywords:** Language policy. Catalan. Spanish. Catalonia. Secession. Linguistic diversity/heterogeneity.

Resumo: Em *Langues et nations en Europe* (Línguas e nações na Europa) Daniel Baggioni descreve o processo histórico de “dallage” ou “compartimentage” da Europa, que terminou com “le triomphe des langues nationales et la généralisation de la formule: un État / une nation / une langue”. Neste trabalho nós gostaríamos de nos afiliar à tese segundo a qual esta fórmula não é mais sustentável (HELLER, 1999; COULMAS, 2005), mediante um exercício original de ficção política. Se a Catalunha se tornasse um país independente (Independent State of Catalonia - ISC), ela adotaria a fórmula “um Estado/ uma nação/ uma língua”? Nós vamos esboçar alguns argumentos políticos para responder a esta questão negativamente. A política comparativa mostra que a língua mais importante de um Estado sempre é a língua oficial (ou uma das línguas oficiais) deste Estado e que regimes linguisticamente heterogêneos tendem a ter regimes linguísticos pluralistas. Atualmente, o espanhol é a língua mais importante na Catalunha e, de qualquer forma, a Catalunha tem o tipo de heterogeneidade linguística que faz o multilinguismo institucional previsível. Por outro lado, o clima internacional/europeu sobre a diversidade linguística também influencia contra a implementação de uma fórmula monista na ISC (ou em qualquer outro lugar linguisticamente heterogêneo que opte pela independência) (KYMLICKA, 2007).

Palavras-chave: Política linguística. Catalão. Espanhol. Catalunha. Separação. Diversidade/heterogeneidade linguística.

1 Catalonia: support for secession

Catalonia is a former medieval European kingdom that entered Hispanic confederation with Castille (15th century) and after losing two consecutive wars to her own king ended up as a mere region of Spain (18th century), a centralized, unitary state molded upon the French model –upon the formula “one state / one nation / one language”, that is. As in many other European “historic” regions a nationalist movement emerged in the 19th century. Whereas other nationalist movements (e.g. the Polish or the Czech ones) managed to obtain full statehood for their respective territories in the 20th century, the Catalan nationalist movement brought about a regime of regional autonomy within a larger Spanish state. This happened in 1914 (with the creation of the so called *Mancomunitat*), in 1931 (in the context of the 2nd Spanish Republic) and again in 1978 (in the context of the transition to democracy after Franco’s death). Now, more than 30 years after the creation of the Autonomous Community of Catalonia, her actual level of autonomy is increasingly contested. Recent polls show that around 25% of the population chooses independence when asked what the relationship of Catalonia to Spain should be:

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Table 1 – Regarding the relationship between Catalonia and Spain, you think that Catalonia should be...

	%
A region of Spain	5.6
An autonomous community of Spain	33.2
A state within a federal Spain	31.9
An independent state	24.5
Doesn't know	3.5
Doesn't answer	1.3
TOTAL	100

Source: *Baròmetre d'opinió pública*. 1st wave. February 2011.

24.5 is a significant but modest percentage. However, polls also show that when the choice is reduced to two alternatives (full independence or continued union with Spain) the support for independence gets higher. In the last couple of years, this support reached its highest scores ever. Shortly after the Spanish Constitutional Court invalidated crucial provisions of the new Catalan Statute of Autonomy (July 2010), the sup-

porters of independence even (albeit momentarily) outnumbered their adversaries, as shown in table 2.

Table 2 – If there were a referendum on the independence of Catalonia tomorrow, what would you vote?

	Oct. 2009	March 2010	May 2010	July 2010	Sept.2010
For	35	36	37	47	40
Against	46	44	41	36	45
Difference	-11	-8	-4	+11	-5

Source: Instituto Noxa for *La Vanguardia* daily. Results (rounded) are in percentage¹.

At the time of writing this paper the latest poll known to the author (daily *Ara*, December 2010) showed a 38 percent of independence supporters and 43 of adversaries, a result quite similar to the last one shown in table 2. No matter how insufficient these figures might still appear for Catalonia to achieve independence, the truth is that a federation of two long-standing nationalist parties that flirt with Catalonia’s “right to decide” won the last (2010) regional election by a wide margin. As a matter of fact, Artur Mas, leader of “Convergència i Unió” and new regional president, took this right for granted in his first speech before the Catalan Parliament on December 20, 2010: “If Catalonia is a nation, we Catalan people have the democratic right to decide what is more convenient for us as a people”. And for the term 2011-2014 he announced a full “national transition” based on the right to decide.

2 Catalonia: secessionist discourse on language

What do Catalan secessionist leaders have to say on the language issue? In the 2010 regional election three self-confessed secessionist parties rallied: Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC), the historic secessionist party; Reagrupament, a split of the former; and Solidaritat Catalana per la Independència, a populist front headed by former FC Barcelona president Joan Laporta, where a number of former ERC members also landed.

In the electoral campaign Reagrupament introduced *The Constitution of Catalonia*, “the first draft bill Reagrupament elected members at the Parliament of Catalonia will submit for approval” (It has to be said that Reagrupament did not get a single seat.). In this constitution

¹ Author’s translation.

Catalan is said to be the sole official language. No mention whatsoever is made of Spanish, whereas Occitan – the Romance language spoken by some 2,000 people in the Aran Valley – is announced to be the sole official language in that territory. (Notice how different this is from the present situation: Occitan is now official in Catalonia, not just in the Aran, and in the Aran it shares this status with both Catalan and Spanish).

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Article 5. La llengua. El català és la llengua pròpia, nacional i oficial de Catalunya. | La llibertat lingüística està garantida. | L'occità, denominat aranès a l'Aran, és també llengua oficial en aquell territori².

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In terms of the instrumental – constitutive divide in the field of language ideologies that De Schutter (2007b) and De Schutter and Boyden (2008) have singled out, Reagrupament overwhelmingly sides with the radical wing of the constitutive party. Witness:

Les llengües són molt més que un mitjà per transmetre informació, són un mitjà d'identificació, de cohesió i de referència del grup. A les llengües se les ha definit com l'ADN dels pobles. Qualsevol llengua és herència i testament, l'hem rebuda dels nostres pares i l'hem de transmetre als nostres fills. No hi ha identitat sense llengua. | La llengua de cada poble és la materialització del seu fet cultural, és l'expressió de l'evolució sociocultural d'una comunitat humana. Si els valors de cada poble són diferents, també ho és la concreció d'aquests valors mitjançant la parla³.

As for Solidaritat, its electoral program clearly hinted at a “Catalan only” future:

² Article 5. Language. Catalonia has its own, national and official language, the Catalan language. | Aran has its own, national and official language in that territory, the Occitan language in its Aranesse variety. | Linguistic freedom is ensured [English translation consulted on the site of the referred party].

³ Languages are much more than a means to convey information, they are a means of identification, cohesion and reference group. A language is defined as the DNA of peoples. Any language is legacy and will, we have received it from our parents and we have to pass it on to our children. There is no identity without language. | The language of each people is the realization of their cultural fact, it is the expression of the socio-cultural evolution of a human community. If the values of each people are different, so is the realization of these values through speech [Author's translation].

Els drets territorials de la llengua pròpia de Catalunya han de ser el mateixos que té l'espanyol a Espanya o el portuguès, el francès, o l'anglès als seus respectius països⁴.

Now, the electoral program of Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC) did not contain any explicit project of monolingualism, but this is the horizon of this party's discourse on language. As a matter of fact, in the 2006-2010 term, when ERC was responsible for language policy within the Catalan autonomous government, the notion of Catalan as the sole "public common language" (or simply "common language") of Catalonia was introduced. In the official report *Balanç de política lingüística 2004-2010*, we can read the following statement:

La Secretaria de Política Lingüística del Govern de Catalunya treballa fonamentalment per aconseguir que el català (i l'occità) sigui una llengua de ple ús dins el seu propi territori, i esdevingui la llengua pública comuna de Catalunya, com a factor fonamental per garantir la cohesió social del país⁵.

What does "common public language" mean? Among other things, it means the sole official language. Not surprisingly, the terms of comparison drawn by Josep-Lluís Carod-Rovira, vice-president of the Catalan government (2006-2010) and highest responsible for its language policy at the time, strikingly resemble those set forth by Solidaritat in its electoral manifesto. In a solemn lecture given on February 7, 2007 Carod-Rovira argued that Catalan should be the language of the Catalans "as it is Italian in Rome, French in Paris or Spanish in Madrid", which reduces any other language to the status of "private language of personal use" (2007, p. 11).

The adoption of the Catalan-as-common-language theory is an interesting turning point in the history of language ideologies in Catalonia. In terms of the language ideologies divide suggested by Woolard (2008a; 2008b), Catalonia has experienced a marked shift from authen-

4 The territorial rights of Catalonia's own language should be the same as those of Spanish in Spain, or the Portuguese, French, or English in their respective countries [Author's translation].

5 The Secretariat of Linguistic Policy of the Government of Catalonia works mainly to get Catalan (and Occitan) to be a language of full use within its own territory, and to become the common public language of Catalonia, as a key factor to ensure the social cohesion of the country [Author's translation].

ticity to anonymity. In the early 1980s Catalan language planners began stressing the status of Catalan as Catalonia's "llengua pròpia" (own language) and ended up in the late 1990s and early 2000s advocating its role as Catalonia's "llengua comuna" (common language). A certain drive for "commonality" was already perceptible in the first pro-Catalan campaign in the early 1980s, that ran under the motto "el català, cosa de tots" (Catalan, everyone's business). But it is not until the last years of the 20th century that the idea that Catalan should be everybody's language of communication (not just Catalan-speakers) came to the fore. Now, what is more interesting in this shift is that the nationalist logic that underlies Catalan language policy has been kept intact. The one nation/one (own, national) language formula has just been turned into the strikingly similar one nation/one *common* language.

3 Catalonia: linguistic situation

This "Catalan only" discourse has paradoxically arisen in a context where Catalan has lost its old-time demographic hegemony. Over the years Catalonia has become a multilingual region, where around 300 languages are present, but its distinctive characteristic is *bilingualism* not *multilingualism*. Catalonia is basically a bilingual region where *Spanish* not Catalan is the predominant language.

Regarding the linguistic affiliation of people, Catalan surveys make a three-way distinction between "first (or initial) language" (the language that a person learned first, which is equivalent to the more traditional "mother tongue"), "own language" (the language that a person considers her language) and "usual language" (the language that a person speaks more often). Let us see some data on these three notions in turn. The source for the data is always the Enquesta d'Usos Lingüístics de la Població de 2008 (from now on EULP).

Spanish is the largest initial language of Catalonia, 23 points ahead of Catalan. Catalonia's third initial language is Arabic. After Arabic, the only initial language with more than 50,000 speakers appears to be Romanian. (Between 20,000 and 50,000 we have five additional languages, not shown in the table.)

Table 3 – Initial language, Catalonia, 2008.

	Thousands	%
Spanish	3.389,0	55,0
Catalan	1.949,5	31,6
Both	236,5	3,8
Arabic	162,3	2,6
Other	375,0	6,1
	6.162,5	100,0

Source: EULP 2008. Population of 15 yrs. and above.

Spanish is also the largest “own language”, 9 points ahead of Catalan. (The distance is now shorter because a number of people who learned Spanish first now consider *Catalan* or both Catalan and Spanish to be their languages.) Arabic ranks third again.

Table 4 – Own language, Catalonia, 2008.

	Thousands	%
Spanish	2.867,5	46,5
Catalan	2.295,3	37,2
Both	542,8	8,8
Arabic	149,2	2,4
Other	244,2	3,9
	6.162,5	100,0

Source: EULP 2008. Population of 15 yrs. and above.

As for the “usual language”, Spanish is again the largest one, some 10 points ahead of Catalan. As in the two previous cases, Arabic ranks third.

Table 5 – Usual language, Catalonia, 2008.

	thsds.	%
Spanish	2.830,0	45,9
Catalan	2.196,6	35,6
Both	735,4	11,9
Arabic	115,9	1,9
Other	223,1	3,5
	6.162,5	100,0

Source: EULP 2008. Population of 15 yrs. and above.

4 A view of comparative politics (I)

No matter what secessionist leaders proclaim, what does comparative politics have to say on the language regime of the ISC? The first obvious thing is that should the ISC chose institutional monolingualism, it would be a clamorous exception to a well established rule. In Europe there are some states with large minority languages that are not official languages even regionally (witness Romania vis-à-vis Hungarian or Latvia and Letonia vis-à-vis Russian) but there is no single state where the largest language spoken by the citizens of this state is *not* an official language.

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If we take a look at the official languages of the 27 EU member States an easy generalization arises. In all cases, the majority language of the citizens is (one of) the official language(s) of the state, as we show on the following table:

	State	Majority language(s)	Official language(s)
1	Austria	German	German
2	Belgium	French and Dutch	French and Dutch
3	Bulgaria	Bulgarian	Bulgarian
4	Cyprus	Greek	Greek and Turkish
5	Czech Republic	Czech	Czech
6	Denmark	Danish	Danish
7	Estonia	Estonian	Estonian
8	Finland	Finnish	Finnish and Swedish
9	France	French	French
10	Germany	German	German
11	Greece	Greek	Greek
12	Hungary	Hungarian	Hungarian
13	Ireland	English	English and Irish
14	Italy	Italian	Italian
15	Latvia	Latvian	Latvian
16	Lithuania	Lithuanian	Lithuanian
17	Luxembourg	Luxembourgish	French, German, and Luxembourgish
18	Malta	Maltese	English and Maltese
19	Netherlands	Dutch	Dutch
20	Poland	Polish	Polish
21	Portugal	Portuguese	Portuguese
22	Romania	Romanian	Romanian
23	Slovakia	Slovakian	Slovakian
24	Slovenia	Slovenian	Slovenian
25	Spain	Spanish	Spanish
26	Sweden	Swedish	Swedish
27	United Kingdom	English	English

The same rule applies to the rest of Europe. The reference to “citizens” is relevant to discard the case of Andorra, the microstate (468 km²) located on the border between France and Spain. In Andorra, the largest language among the population is Spanish not Catalan, whereas Catalan is the sole state language. According to the last survey⁶, 44 per cent of the people declared to have Spanish as their mother tongue. Catalan ranked second with a scant 29 per cent. The exotic thing about Andorra is that most residents do not count as citizens. In 2008 of 72.273 residents aged 15 or more just 21.773 (30 per cent) had Andorran citizenship. But if we stick to *citizens*, no exception arises. Among this group of the population, Catalan speakers (59 per cent) clearly outweigh Spanish speakers (41 per cent). In any case, Andorra is clearly not a “standard” state.

These factual considerations have a normative dimension as well. The fact that Catalonia is *not* a monolingual region provides the context in which De Schutter (2007a) briefly touched upon the issue of Catalonia’s secession. In this paper De Schutter criticized liberal nationalism for his endorsement of territorial monolingualism. His point was that liberal nationalism relies on the empirically false assumption that the world is “a mosaic of territorially distinct ‘national monisms’”. According to him, “while the nationalistic case might have some value for states like Iceland or Hungary, which have remained virtually mononational, it cannot provide a solution for the majority of the world’s states and regions” (p. 385). One of the regions where the instantiation of the nationalistic solution would give rise to an injustice is precisely Catalonia: “Thus, if Catalonia secedes or becomes politically self-determining, then this (read: national monism) unfairly discriminates against those Catalans who derive their identity and their freedom-enabling context of choice not or not only from the Catalan but (also) from the Spanish nation” (Ibid.).

In other words, what De Schutter (2007a, p. 392) was saying is that the principle of nationalities, “which states that it is valuable for the boundaries of political units to coincide with national (read: linguistic) boundaries” cannot be applied to Catalonia. The criticism on the principle of nationalities is as old as the principle itself. Interestingly enough, one of the first scholars that commented on the inapplicability of the principle (well before it was implemented in 1918) was Catalan historian and nationalist thinker Antoni Rovira. In his *Historia de*

6 Cf. with “Coneixements i usos lingüístics de la població d’Andorra 2009” (1995-2009).

los movimientos nacionalistas (1920) he dwelt, among others, on the case of Macedonia. Rovira noticed that the partition of Macedonia between Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria after the First Balkan War might hinder what he termed the “principio nacionalista”; but not really:

La caótica, la tremenda mezcla de razas, lenguas y religiones en aquella parte de la península balcánica, hace de todo punto insuficiente el principio de las nacionalidades naturales para delimitar las diversas zonas nacionales macedónicas. Desde este punto de vista, Macedonia es el país más complicado del mundo. (1920, p. 400).

Now, Catalonia is not as complicated as Macedonia was (and still is in many respects), but as shown above Catalonia is not a linguistically homogeneous region either. (Speaking of the Balkan region in general, Rovira emphasized that “somos los primeros en reconocer que el principio de las nacionalidades es insuficiente para resolver los problemas étnicos y lingüísticos de aquella península, donde la superposición de razas [sic] y naciones es un hecho que todo lo complica”) (1920, p. 402).

5 A view of comparative politics (II)

Comparative politics not only shows that the largest spoken language of every EU member is also (one of) the official language(s) this EU member. Comparative politics also shows the troubles that linguistically heterogeneous newly independent states have run into when they have tried to adopt institutional monolingualism. If we adopt Lijphart’s threshold (1984) (a state is homogeneous if at least 80 percent of its citizens are native speakers of the same language), of the 18 states that have emerged in Europe since the fall of the Berlin Wall (from Slovenia to Kosovo), seven are clearly linguistically heterogeneous. (As for Bosnia and Herzegovina, we take Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian to be different languages. In this case no official data have been collected after the last Yugoslav census.) We may visualize this with the following table, elaborated by us on basis of the respective census⁷:

⁷ Cf. also with Lijphart (1984).

Table 6 – Ethnolinguistic make up of linguistically heterogeneous states

	Year of latest census and population	Question in the census	% of largest language	% of other languages
Belarus	(1999) 045.000	На каком языке Вы обычно разговариваете дома? <i>Language usually spoken at home</i>	Russian 62,8	Belarusian 36,7
BiH	(1991) 4.377.033	Nacionalna osnova <i>Ethnic composition</i>	Muslim 43,5	Serbian 31,2 Croatian 17,4
Estonia	(2000) 1.370.052	Emakeel <i>Mother language</i>	Estonian 67,3	Russian 29,7
Latvia	(2000) 2.377.383	Dzimtā valoda <i>Mother language</i>	Latvian 59,0	Russian 37,4
Macedo- nia	(2002) 2.022.547	мајчин јазик <i>Mother language</i>	Macedonian 6,5	Albanian 5,1 Turkish 3,5 Roma 1,9 Serbian 1,2
Moldova (without Transd- niester)	(2004) 3.383.332	Limba maternă <i>Mother language</i> Limba, în care vorbește de obicei <i>Language usually spoken</i>	Moldavian 60,0 Moldavian 58,8	Romanian 16,5 Russian 11,3 Ukrainian 5,5 Gagauz 4,1 Bulgarian 1,6 Romanian 16,4 Russian 16,0 Ukrainian 3,8 Gagauz 3,1 Bulgarian 1,1
Ukraine	(2001) 8.457.000	Рідна мова <i>Native language</i>	Ukrainian 67,5	Russian 29,6

Of these seven linguistically heterogeneous states three have formally embraced some form of institutional multilingualism. BiH and one of the two Bosnian “entities” (the Federation of BiH) did it from the scratch (1995). So did the other “entity” later on, Republika Srpska.

Compare the wordings of the former and present-day constitutions of the Republika Srpska:

Former (1992)	Present-day (Amendment LXXI)
<i>In the Republika Srpska the official language is Serbian in the ijekavian and ekavian pronunciation and the Cyrillic alphabet, and Latin alphabet in the manner provided by law.</i>	<i>The official languages of the Republika Srpska are: the language of the Serb people, the language of the Bosniak people and the language of the Croat people. The official scripts are Cyrillic and Latin</i>

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In 1996, Belarus abandoned (Belarusian) monolingualism and embraced Russian as the second state language. Compare the wording of the 1994 and 1996 constitutions:

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Former (1994)	Present-day (1996)
<i>The official language of the Republic of Belarus shall be Belarusian</i>	<i>The Belarusian and Russian languages shall be the official languages of the Republic of Belarus</i>

Macedonia started with monolingualism but after the Lake Ohrid Agreements (2001) she had to embrace a sui generis form on institutional bilingualism. Compare the wording of the original and the post-Ohrid constitutions:

Former	Present-day
<i>The Macedonian language, written using its Cyrillic alphabet, is the official language in the Republic of Macedonia</i>	<i>The Macedonian language, written using its Cyrillic alphabet, is the official language throughout the Republic of Macedonia and in the international relations of the Republic of Macedonia. Any other language spoken by at least 20 percent of the population is also an official language, written using its alphabet, as specified below</i>

As for the other four linguistically heterogeneous states, in all cases we find certain developments towards forms of institutional bi- or multilingualism.

In Moldova we do have institutional multilingualism in the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Găgăuzia. But bilingualism is also on the (statewide) political agenda. In Moldova there is a breakaway territory (Transdnier) that has declared three official languages (Russian, Moldavian, and Ukrainian). Now, it is likely to imagine that

if Transdniester comes back under Moldavian sovereignty Russian will become either the second official language of Moldavia or the predominant regional official language of Transdniester. As a matter of fact, in 2005 the Parliament of Moldova passed a special law for Transdniester (*Legea cu privire la prevederile de bază ale statutului juridic special al localităților din stînga Nistrului*⁸) that foresees official (regional) status for both Russian and Ukrainian (along with Moldavian) but also the possibility to communicate with the Republic's authorities located *outside* Transdniester. See article 6 of this law:

- (2) Limbile oficiale în Transnistria sînt limba moldovenească, în baza grafiei latine, limbile ucraineană și rusă. Republica Moldova garantează funcționarea și altor limbi pe teritoriul Transnistriei.
- (3) În Transnistria, lucrările de secretariat și corespondența cu autoritățile publice ale Republicii Moldova, cu întreprinderile, cu organizațiile și cu instituțiile situate în afara Transnistriei se țin în limba moldovenească, în baza grafiei latine, și în limba rusă⁹.

In Ukraine, there is a permanent debate on the status of Russian as second official language. Constitutional provisions notwithstanding, Russian is *de facto* a second official language, especially in the Crimean Autonomous Republic. This leaves Estonia and Latvia as two exceptions to the rule that links linguistic heterogeneity to institutional bi- or multilingualism. But even in these two states there is more linguistic pluralism than meets the eye. As for Estonia, under the guise of strict institutional monolingualism one finds what Rannut (2004a; 2004b) termed a “bilingual (territorial) language regime”. The Estonian Constitution does not foresee a second state language, not even a *regional* official language, but still it acknowledges the possibility to use a language other than Estonian as an internal working language of relevant local governments (as a local official language, that is). The same section of the Estonian Constitution that specifies Estonian as the language of state agencies and local governments makes room for this:

8 Law on Basic Provisions of the legal status of settlements from Transnistria.

9 (2) The official languages in Transdniester are Moldovan, in the Latin script, Ukrainian and Russian languages. The Republic of Moldova guarantees the functioning of other languages in Transnistria. (3) In Transdniester, secretarial work and correspondence with the Moldova's government, enterprises, organizations and institutions located outside Transdniester takes place in Moldovan, in the Latin script, and in Russian [Author's translation].

§ 52. (2) Võõrkeelte, sealhulgas vähemusrahvuste keelte kasutamise riigiasutuses ning kohtu- ja kohtueelses menetluses sätestab seadus¹⁰.

According to Rannut (2004b, p. 47), the 52 (2) paragraph of the Estonian Constitution “enables the existence of the official bilingual language regime in an officially monolingual state”. Now, the fact is that this alleged bilingual language regime has not prevented a number of bodies and international institutions from criticizing Estonia’s stand towards its largest regional or minority language, namely Russian (RANNUT, 1995; DRUVIETE, 1997; OZOLINS, 2003). As a result, Estonia has been obliged to change her language legislation a number of times, but even after these changes criticism continues. A specific point in the ongoing discussion is Estonia’s reluctance to ratify the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. The ratification of the Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (with Russian as an explicit target language) is a move that such diverse organizations as Amnesty International (2006) and the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance – ECRI – (2002, 2006) have demanded in recent times. As for Latvia, we will not go into it now but we cannot help noticing that ECRI has repeatedly recommended (1999, 2002, 2008) that Latvia ratify the Charter.

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6 The new climate on linguistic diversity

The recognition of languages and linguistic diversity is a worldwide trend. In this section we will not go into the philosophical turnabouts that underlie this trend (KYMLICKA, 2007) but will content ourselves to take notice of a symptom and a consequence of this trend, namely the fact that the absolute number of official languages (statewide or regional) has increased all over the world.

This trend can be clearly observed in South America. In the 1990s a number of states in this area adopted institutional bi- or multilingualism in their constitutions. In this respect, Paraguay is something of a pioneering state. In its 1967 Constitution a sole official language was recognized, but the duality of national languages was already proclaimed:

¹⁰ § 52. (2) In localities where the language of the majority of the residents is not Estonian, local governments may, to the extent and pursuant to procedure provided by law, use the language of the majority of the permanent residents of the locality as an internal working language [English translation consulted on the site of the Estonian Government].

Artículo 5. Los idiomas nacionales de la Republica son el español y el guaraní. Será de uso oficial el español.

In the constitutional reform of 1992, Guarani obtained full status as one of Paraguay's two official languages:

Artículo 140. El Paraguay es un país pluricultural y bilingüe. | Son idiomas oficiales el castellano y el guaraní. La ley establecerá las modalidades de utilización de uno y otro. | Las lenguas indígenas, así como las de otras minorías, forman parte del patrimonio cultural de la Nación.

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At that very time other South American states started to move towards forms of (statewide or regional) multilingualism. In 1991 Colombia abandoned her 1886 constitution, which was silent on language issues (implicitly recognized Spanish as the sole official language) and embraced a vague form of regional multilingualism.

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Artículo 10. El castellano es el idioma oficial de Colombia. Las lenguas y dialectos de los grupos étnicos son también oficiales en sus territorios. La enseñanza que se imparta en las comunidades con tradiciones lingüísticas propias será bilingüe.

In the case of Peru, the 1993 Constitution was a little more explicit and mentioned Aymara and Quechua as regional official languages, along with an unspecific number of other aboriginal languages:

Artículo 48. Son idiomas oficiales el castellano y, en las zonas donde predominen, también lo son el quechua, el aimara y las demás lenguas aborígenes, según la ley.

As for Venezuela, the 1999 Constitution resembles that of neighboring Colombia:

Artículo 9. El idioma oficial es el castellano. Los idiomas indígenas también son de uso oficial para los pueblos indígenas y deben ser respetados en todo el territorio de la República, por constituir patrimonio cultural de la Nación y de la humanidad.

In the case of Ecuador, the 2008 constitution introduced a sui generis distinction between “official language” and “official language for intercultural relationship”; the rest of the relevant article is in line with the constitutions of Colombia and Venezuela (the “ancestral” languages are supposed to be official in their zones):

Artículo 2. [...] El castellano es el idioma oficial del Ecuador; el castellano, el kichwa y el shuar son idiomas oficiales de relación intercultural. Los demás idiomas ancestrales son de uso oficial para los pueblos indígenas en las zonas donde habitan y en los términos que fija la ley. El Estado respetará y estimulará su conservación y uso.

In the pursuit of multilingualism, the South American state that has gone further is Bolivia, no doubt. Spanish is the state language *along with* 36 indigenous languages, which makes Bolivia the state with more official languages in the entire world (South Africa ranks second, with its 11 state languages). This ample recognition is nuanced by a mandate of mere bilingualism on central and regional governments:

Artículo 5. I. Son idiomas oficiales del Estado el castellano y todos los idiomas de las naciones y pueblos indígena originario campesinos (sic), que son el aymara, araona, baure, bésiro, canichana, cavineño, cayubaba, chácobo, chimán, ese ejja, guaraní, guarasu'we, guarayu, itonama, leco, machajuyai-kallawayaya, machineri, maropa, mojeñotrinitario, mojeño-ignaciano, moré, mosetén, movima, pacawara, puquina, quechua, sirionó, tacana, tapiete, toromona, uru-chipaya, weenhayek, yaminawa, yuki, yuracaré y zamuco. | II. El Gobierno plurinacional y los gobiernos departamentales deben utilizar al menos dos idiomas oficiales. Uno de ellos debe ser el castellano, y el otro se decidirá tomando en cuenta el uso, la conveniencia, las circunstancias, las necesidades y preferencias de la población en su totalidad o del territorio en cuestión. Los demás gobiernos autónomos deben utilizar los idiomas propios de su territorio, y uno de ellos debe ser el castellano.

As far as South America is concerned, all these developments have turned the issue of language recognition upside down. Strict institutional monolingualism is becoming more and more the exception

rather than the rule. Even countries that (still) stick to institutional monolingualism do recognize other languages, for instance in educational matters. Brazil is a case in point. Witness articles 13, on the one hand, and 210 and 231, on the other hand, of the Brazilian constitution:

Artigo. 13. A língua portuguesa é o idioma oficial da República Federativa do Brasil.

Art. 210. § 2º. O ensino fundamental regular será ministrado em língua portuguesa, assegurada às comunidades indígenas também a utilização de suas línguas maternas e processos próprios de aprendizagem.

Art. 231. São reconhecidos aos índios sua organização social, costumes, línguas, crenças e tradições, e os direitos originários sobre as terras que tradicionalmente ocupam, competindo à União demarcá-las, proteger e fazer respeitar todos os seus bens.

If we are to credit the *New York Times* of august, 28th 2005, on a more anecdotal level we can record the fact in 2003 Nheengatu was voted to be an official language along with Portuguese in São Gabriel da Cachoeira:

By vote of the local council, São Gabriel da Cachoeira became the only municipality in Brazil to recognize a language other than Portuguese as official, conferring that status on língua geral [Nheengatu] and two local Indian tongues.

If we go back now to Europe, it is no less clear that in the last years the number of (statewide or regional) official languages has increased. As for the state level, in section 5 we have already dwelt upon a number of states in Eastern and Central Europe that have embraced institutional bilingualism. In Western Europe it is true that no state has increased the number of its (statewide) official languages in recent times, with the exception of Switzerland, where Romansh acquired a certain status as the fourth official language of the Confederation. But it is also true that the linguistic heterogeneity in Western Europe is much lower than in the East. In any case, if we turn into the *regional* level the recognition of linguistic diversity has attained a level unheard of, both in the East and in the West.

Take Spain, to begin with. Prior to its 1978 democratic constitution, Spain had one (statewide) official language. Now it has the same old (statewide) official language but also three regional official languages (Catalan/Valencian, Basque and Galician) – four if we add Occitan, which is official “in Catalonia” in the terms of the new Catalan Statute of Autonomy:

§6. (5) La llengua occitana, denominada aranès a l’Aran, és la llengua pròpia d’aquest territori i és oficial a Catalunya, d’acord amb el que estableixen aquest Estatut i les lleis de normalització lingüística¹¹.

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In the recent years these three regional official languages have made some inroads in Spanish central institutions. Now it is possible to use them in the Spanish Senate (located in Madrid) and the *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, a traditional stronghold of Spanish monolingualism, is also published in Catalan/Valencian and Galician.

The substate entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina have also increased their number official languages. The so called Republika Srpska started with one (Serbian) and ended up with three (Serbian, Bosnian, and Croatian). A similar thing happened in the other half of BiH, the so called Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina: from two official languages (Bosnian and Croatian) to three (Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian).

If we go further into the substate level, we can observe some other relevant cases. In section 5 we mentioned Moldova’s Autonomous Territorial Unit of Găgăuzia, where Gagauz and Russian are regional official languages. Now, a number of newly independent states recognize regional or local official languages in their constitutions. Witness article 11 of the Slovenian constitution:

Article 11. The official language of Slovenia is Slovenian. In the areas where the ethnic Italian and Hungarian reside, Italian and Hungarian shall also be official languages.

11 §6. (5) The Occitan language, known as Aranese in Aran, is Aran’s own language and is official in Catalonia, as established by this Estatut and by the laws of linguistic normalization [English translation consulted on the respective site].

Although no explicit mention is made of specific languages, article 12 of the Croatian constitution has the same spirit:

Article 12. The Croatian language and the Latin script shall be in official use in the Republic of Croatia. In individual local units another language and the Cyrillic or some other script may, along with the Croatian language and the Latin script, be introduced into official use under conditions specified by law.

Other Eastern European constitution do not explicitly talk of “official language” or “official use” but also introduce some kind of guarantee for the languages of ethnic minorities; this is the case at least of Estonia (as we saw in section 5), Hungary, and Slovakia.

Now, if we go beyond explicit official status or “official use” provisions and look into other means of language protection, it is relevant to observe the large number of languages that have obtained some degree of recognition under the European Charter for Regional of Minority languages. As of January 1, 2011 25 European states had ratified the Charter and engaged themselves in the protection of dozens of languages, as we may visualize on the following table, elaborated by us on basis of the data from Council of Europe:

Armenia	Assyrian, Yezidi, Greek, Russian, and Kurdish
Austria	Burgenlandcroatian, Slovenian, Hungarian, Czech, and Slovakian + Romani
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Albanian, Montenegrin, Czech, Italian, Hungarian, Macedonian, German, Polish, Romanian, Romani, Rusyn, Slovak, Slovene, Turkish, Ukrainian, and Jewish (Yiddish and Ladino)
Croatia	Italian, Serbian, Hungarian, Czech, Slovak, Ruthenian, and Ukrainian
Cyprus	Cypriot Maronite Arabic and Armenian
Czech Republic	Slovak, Polish, German, and Romani
Denmark	the German minority language in Southern Jutland
Finland	Karelian, Romani, and Sami + Swedish language which is the less widely used official language in Finland
Germany	Danish, Upper Sorbian, Lower Sorbian, North Frisian and Sater Frisian languages, and the Romani language of the German Sinti and Roma + Low German

Hungary	Béas, Croatian, German, Romani, Romanian, Serbian, Slovak, and Slovene
Liechtenstein	<i>Liechtenstein declared that “there are no regional or minority languages in the sense of the Charter in the territory of the Principality of Liechtenstein at the time of ratification”</i>
Luxembourg	
Montenegro	Albanian and Romani
Netherlands	Frisian language in the province of Friesland, Lower-Saxon languages and, in accordance with Article 7, paragraph 5, Yiddish and Romani + Limburger
Norway	Sami
Poland	Belarusian, Czech, Hebrew, Yiddish, Karaim, Kashub, Lithuanian, Lemko, German, Armenian, Romani, Russian, Slovak, Tatar, and Ukrainian
Romania	Albanian, Armenian, Bulgarian, Czech, Croatian, German, Greek, Italian, Yiddish, Macedonian, Hungarian, Polish, Romany, Russian, Ruthenian, Serbian, Slovak, Tatar, Turkish, and Ukrainian
Serbia	Albanian, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Hungarian, Romany, Romanian, Ruthenian, Slovakian, Ukrainian, and Croatian
Slovakia	Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, German, Hungarian, Polish, Roma, Ruthenian, and Ukrainian
Slovenia	Hungarian, Italian, and Romani
Spain	the languages recognized as official languages in the Statutes of Autonomy of the Autonomous Communities of the Basque Country, Catalonia, Balearic Islands, Galicia, Valencia and Navarra + the languages protected by the Statutes of Autonomy in the territories where they are traditionally spoken are also considered as regional or minority languages
Sweden	Sami, Finnish and Meänkieli (Tornedal Finnish) + Romani Chib and Yiddish
Switzerland	Romansh and Italian as the less widely used official languages
Ukraine	Belarusian, Bulgarian, Gagauz, Greek, Jewish, Crimean Tatar, Moldavian, German, Polish, Russian, Romanian, Slovak, and Hungarian
United Kingdom	Welsh, Scottish-Gaelic, and Irish Scots and Ulster Scots + Cornish Manx Gaelic

Could the ISC afford *not* ratifying the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages? It is highly unlikely. Now, if Spanish were not an official language of the ISC but the ISC would ratify the

Charter, the formula one nation/one state/one language would be no less feasible. As a regional or minority language, Spanish would be simply so large, and the benefits its speakers would obtain from the Charter so ample, that regardless of constitutional provisions the ISC could not help embracing de facto institutional bilingualism.

7 Conclusion

In January 2011 a report appeared in the *Time* magazine that sampled the Top 10 of “Aspiring Nations” – places vying for independence, that is. Catalan secessionist leaders were disappointed because Catalonia was not in a list headed by Scotland, the Basque Country, and Tibet. They were even puzzled to see the Republic of Cascadia (don’t ask where it is), Padania, and the Second Vermont Republic being included in it. Yet Catalonia is a place where secessionism has taken hold, where it can grow further and where it could bear fruit in a not too distant future. No matter how (un)realistic this prospect might be it is interesting to ask: if Catalonia were to secede from Spain, would she adopt institutional monolingualism?

In this paper we answered this question in the negative with a number of political considerations. First, Spanish is the majority language in Catalonia and short of an unlikely massive exodus of Spanish-speakers (and of course short of ethnic cleansing), it will be the majority language in the ISC. Comparative politics tells us that the majority language of a state is (one of) the official language(s) of that state. Second, even if Spanish were not the majority language, it would still be too large a language for the ISC not to recognize it and award it some form of (at least de facto) official status. Third, it is a fact that newly independent states that are linguistically heterogeneous face difficulties when they try to adopt institutional monolingualism. (Even a fairly homogeneous newly independent state like Kosovo has been constrained to recognize Serbian as a statewide official language.) Fourth, these difficulties are connected to the new international and European climate on linguistic diversity that militates against traditional forms of institutional monolingualism.

To say a final word on this matter, notice that this is not a paper about Catalonia; this is a paper on the interplay of linguistic heterogeneity and language regimes. In the old times (read: 19th and 20th centuries) it was possible to obtain independence, get rid of your internal linguistic

diversity and fully adhere to the monist formula. Now the time for this kind of policy is over. Our claim is that strict institutional monolingualism is not an option anymore for *any* linguistically heterogeneous polity that obtains full independence. So the real question is not whether any of these polities *would* adopt monolingualism anymore but rather what form of institutional multilingualism they *will* adopt once they are independent.

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