

ATTITUDES TO LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH IN THE CONTEXT OF BRITISH
NATIONALISM

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Abstract

This thesis is concerned with the negative attitudes of the British towards foreign languages. Though such prejudice could perhaps be illustrated by statistical evidence from secondary schools, examination boards and social surveys, the emphasis of this work lies elsewhere.

What will be the prime concern here is an examination of the broader cultural and even political implications for the British of their well-documented inability to be willing to learn foreign languages. I hope to be able to show that nationalism contains a specifically linguistic factor which is able, along with many other factors, to contribute towards the cohesion within British culture.

I will examine the exclusivity and the need for self-aggrandisement within nationalism and argue that the British experience of imperialism deepened the potential for such sentiments. It is possible that the experience of being a British English speaker does bind British society in a very special way. It is also possible that this linguistic experience in part defines the British world view. This study will use the three opening chapters to establish a basis on which the evidence of the following five chapters may be judged

In order to examine the extent to which such assertions are true a wide net will be cast to gather evidence to prove the hypothesis that the experience of speaking English has defined British culture more specifically than is often thought.

Chapters 4 and 5 will examine the effect of certain colonial policy decisions concerning language, not on the societies of the Empire but upon the British themselves. I hope that such examples will illustrate the growing role of language, ironically a much neglected and often

invisible partner in the political processes, which formed the views which the British had of themselves and their place in the world.

I do not believe that there has ever existed a monolithic body of prejudice towards other languages among the British. Indeed, one of the purposes of this work is to illustrate that the role of the English language within British culture has been developed historically in such a way that any such prejudice often has all the unassailable strength of what appears to be common sense.

Until the twentieth century in Britain, it would have been unreasonable to expect any but the ruling imperialist politicians or the colonial administrators to have had anything other than the dimmest appreciation of the existence of languages other than English. This provides a second reason for searching as widely as possible for different sources of evidence. If the development of prejudicial attitudes to foreign languages and their transmission through a society have constituted a long and complex process, then this process must be examined at contrasting periods and levels of society.

The chapters on boys' comics and film in the 1930s will show the extent to which attitudes had developed and spread beyond a narrow colonial base. This period has been chosen because it represents the flowering of a truly broad and popular perception of British nationalism as magnified through the experience of imperialism. Immediately before the Second World War, this sense of the strength and worth of the British nation was, arguably, at its height. These chapters will indicate the centripetal role which perceptions of the English language, as contrasted with other languages, played in such a blossoming.

Finally, I will present a chapter surveying the position of

foreign languages in the British education system in the 1930s. This will provide a counter-balance to attitudes in the popular media of the previous two chapters.

In case this thesis might be criticised for merely finding evidence for an already well-known phenomenon, I will attempt to view all such evidence from a special perspective. I will be searching not only for the ideas and attitudes underpinning any prejudice against foreign languages but also the social forces which lie behind them.

Abstract p1
Index of Chapters and Contents p4

Chapter One

Nationalism

- 1:1 Introduction p12
- 1:2 A Definition p13
- 1:3 Nationalism and Religion p21
- 1:4 Nationalism - The Extension of its Base. Printing, Capitalism,
Industrial Revolution p26
- 1:5 Nationalism - Political and Philosophical Background p31
- 1:6 Nationalism - Dating and Emphasis p35
- 1:7 Nationalism - Its Values and Limits p40
- 1:8 Nationalism and Racism p47
- 1:9 Nationalism and Language p50
- 1:10 The English Situation p58
- 1:11 English in the British Isles p65
- 1:12 Nationalism - Conclusion p72

Chapter Two

Imperialism

- 2:1 Imperialism - Introduction p74
- 2:2 Imperialism - A Definition p75
- 2:3 The Cultural Precedents p78
- 2:4 Naval Power and Imperialism p81
- 2:5 From Nationalism to Imperialism p82
- 2:6 The Legitimation of Empire p84
- 2:7 The Cult of Superiority p84
- 2:8 Popular Legitimation p90
- 2:9 Imperialism - Conclusion p94

Chapter Three

Linguistic Relativity

3:1 Introduction p95

3:2 Linguistic Relativity p97

3:3 The German Tradition p99

3:4 The American Tradition p108

3:5 Conclusion p112

Chapter Four

British Attitudes to Languages in India

- 4:1 Introduction p114
- 4:2 The Liberal Phase p116
- 4:3 The Classical-Conservative Phase p121
- 4:4 The Neo-Liberal Phase p126
- 4:5 The Anglicist Case p135
- 4:6 Attitudes in Literature on India p143
- 4:7 Conclusion p151

Chapter Five

British Language Policy in the Cape Colony 1806-1834

5:1 Introduction p152

5:2 Historical Background p153

5:3 Initial British Language Policy in the Cape p158

5:4 Cultural Attitudes to European Languages in the Cape p163

5:5 Conclusion p172

Chapter Six

Imperialism, Popular Culture and Language Attitudes

- 6:1 Introduction p173
- 6:2 Boys' Comics p181
- 6:3 Boys' Comics pre-1930 p
- 6:4 Boys' Comics in the 1930s 193
 - (i) Attitudes to French p193
 - (ii) Attitudes to Italian p198
 - (iii) Attitudes to German p202
 - (iv) Attitudes to Asian Languages p204
- 6:5 Attitudes to Languages of the British Empire p209
 - A) The Foreign Language Environment p211
 - B) The Languages and Their Context p214
- 6:6 Conclusion p217

Chapter Seven

Attitudes to Foreign Languages in the Cinema of the 1930s

7:1 Introduction . p218

7:2 Cinema as an Expression of National Identity p220

7:3 Rhodes of Africa p223

7:4 Sanders of the River 229

7:5 The Four Feathers p237

7:6 The Drum p245

7:7 Conclusion p252

Chapter Eight

Foreign Languages and the Educational Establishment in the 1930s

8:1 Introduction p253

8:2 Awareness of the Problem p255

8:3 Cultural Blocks to the Learning of Foreign Languages p256

8:4 Structural Blocks to Language Learning p259

8:5 Methodological Blocks to Language Learning p261

8:6 Commerce and Measures to Promote Foreign Language Learning p266

8:7 Conclusion p273

General Conclusion p274

References to Chapters p278

Chapter One - Nationalism
Introduction (1:1)

The fact that the British are poor language learners by the standards of any other major European state is really not open to dispute. Whenever the language learning capacity of the British is mentioned, a great sigh of despondency is almost audible among teachers and increasingly these days among others outside the educational world. Incentive and motivation in language learning seem to be lacking among the British. From school students to tourists and those professionally involved in international trading, competence in a foreign language seems to be an exception rather than a rule. This apparent lack of motivation is rooted in a tradition which because of its longevity seems to have defied any serious analysis.

Excuses for this lack of motivation hover between the erroneous impression that all foreigners speak English and a reliance on the past glories of our far-flung Empire to ensure that at least they ought to! It would seem too simplistic to cite the enormously wide usage of English around the world as the only reason for this apparent apathy. Similarly, the wide spread economic concerns of a former colonial power could not, by themselves, explain it away. Yet they may combine with other factors to form a specifically British attitude.

This opening chapter will begin by examining the part that language plays in the construction of a national identity. What will be of particular importance to the rest of this study will be any conclusions which can be drawn about the relationship between British nationalism and the English language. Such a relationship may well prove to be a central factor in the chronic inability of the British to learn foreign languages.

Nationalism - A Definition (1:2)

Nationalism could be crudely defined as a sense of belonging and a feeling of loyalty shared by a group of people who consider themselves to be a nation. The word 'feeling' must be stressed straight away, as often a more tangible, tighter definition of the specific components of one particular type of nationalism is impossible to give. It is best to avoid referring to this entity as a country or a state in order to sidestep two major problems. The first is that a sense of 'nation' appears to have much more to do with a deep-rooted psychological identification than with any arbitrary geographical or political boundaries; the second is for the sake of consistency and ease of reference.

One of the chief difficulties in pinpointing a definition of nationalism with any precision, even in a Western European context, is that it does, in fact, cut across all aspects of modern social and political life. This pervasive aspect of nationalism springs from the fact that, as a community of sentiment, it constitutes an attempt by the people of a self-conscious and distinct nation to identify their place and worth in the social and political world. This world itself consists of a host of other nations with similar aspirations. In this situation identity is at a premium. This identification is at the heart of the whole of modern civil existence; nationalism, with differing degrees of emphasis, is at the heart of that identification.

Consequently, historians, sociologists, psychologists and cultural anthropologists all attempt to define their interpretations of this phenomenon from their differing perspectives.

Carlton J.H. Hayes proposes four possible emphases for nationalism:

- (A) Nationalism as a historical process.
- (B) Nationalism as a theory.
- (C) Nationalism as political activity.
- (D) Nationalism as a sentiment. (1)

These divisions may, in part, explain why there is so much, often inconclusive debate over what nationalism entails if various authorities are discussing related yet discrete phenomena.

Erich Fromm maintains, from the viewpoint of the social psychologist, that any idea or doctrine must correspond to the most profound psychological needs of certain social groups if it is to become a potent historical force. This area of discussion portrays the individual in the context of a culture. It views the individual as a basic and essential entity in the social process and it postulates the dynamics of interaction between psychological and sociological forces to be one of the most powerful influences on the formation of a society and its culture. Fromm stresses that a common element in any society is the need for individuals to feel in common with their fellows and to share a common framework of ideas and symbols with them. In such a fashion groups of people are creating a symbolic identity for themselves in history. This exclusive identity is nationalism, and the creative role which society plays in its creation and acceptance will provide us with a key to understanding its strength.

These different perspectives have three things in common. The first is an interest in the communal nature of nationalism. The second is the socially subjective need for such a community. The third is a fascination for the means by which it is created and then maintained.

A nation and a state can be distinguished in this manner:

" a state is a legal and political organisation, with the power to require obedience and loyalty from its citizens. A nation is a community of people, whose members are bound together by a sense of solidarity, a common culture, a national consciousness." (2)

It could be added that despite their interdependence in the modern world, the nation is distinguishable from the state in so far as it is the former which elicits sympathies and devotion from those who perceive themselves to be members of it. The stress on perception is quite deliberate here. Nationalism is, above all, a subjective experience. In that it is also a collective, communal experience, it is , in addition, an objective, tangible entity expressed through various media: language, tradition, what could broadly be termed culture.

At this point it would be apposite to explore what were referred to above as the different emphases of nationalism. At its most rampant, nationalism can be expressed as a rigid and dogmatic political ideology unifying the population in self-defence or in the service of a struggle for national independence. At its most pervasive it can lie almost dormant yet inform the whole structure of a nation. Max Hilderbert Boehm differentiates between these two poles, calling the first 'broad' and the second 'narrow'. When talking of the second he writes:

" nationalism of this sort stands in the same relation to national consciousness as does chauvinism to genuine patriotism. Although it represents but one aspect of national movements, this narrower kind of nationalism, espoused by militant groups and often by mass parties, exercises an enormous political influence." (3)

The cohesion and longevity of one brand of nationalism depend therefore on its ability to appear to represent a legitimation of the

state. Many features of national cohesion cannot be coercive but are best cemented through the medium of 'civil society'. (4) The role which people have played in creating the structures of such a consensual nationalism is not illusory and therein lies its strength. Such consensus does provide a very real feeling of a socially created community of loyalty.

However, nationalism is a contradictory organism as well. An essential part of what might be termed the consensual basis of nationalism lies in its ability to externalise any threat to the survival of the nation and to carry the support of the national community in meeting and defeating that threat. Thus, socio-cultural loyalties, in the context of nationalism, are counter-balanced by antipathy towards and mistrust of the outsider.

While serving to highlight the potential polarities of nationalism this emphasis stresses the oppositional trends at the expense of the consensual ones. A more balanced viewpoint can be maintained by returning to the sense of community. By focussing on this issue the connection of these polarities can be clarified.

While being among the most legitimate and accepted political facts of the modern world, the existence of nations and more particularly nationalism prove impossible to define in any rigid or exhaustive fashion. This is partly due to the enormous width of its scope and the variety of possible perspectives. It also lies in the very nature of the phenomenon itself. It could be described as chimeric, a shadowy representation of modern life projecting all its contours but impossible to grasp. The inability to define nationalism spans the political spectrum from the liberal to the Marxist historical tradition.

Hugh Seton-Watson claims, while looking for a basis for his investigations into the growth and development of nationalism, that certain

aspects are so vague as to defy any lucid definition:

" Thus I am driven to the conclusion that 'no scientific definition' of a nation can be devised; yet the phenomenon has existed and exists. All that I can find to say is that a nation exists when a significant number of people in a community consider themselves to form a nation or behave as if they formed one. It is not necessary that the whole of the population should so feel, or so behave, and it is not possible to lay down dogmatically a minimum percentage of a population which must be so affected." (5)

Writing from a Marxist perspective Tom Nairn is led to conclude that,

" the theory of nationalism represents Marxism's great historical failure." (6)

In the circumstances, this is hugely ironic as the most widely disseminated theory of nationalism but ultimately one of the most unsatisfactory is Stalin's 'Marxism and the National Question'. (7) Stalin concludes that all nations share four common features: a common language, a common territory, a common economic life and a common mental make-up. It is certainly the vagueness of this last, alleged feature of nationalism which is the most lacking in any analytical insight. This 'common mental make-up' is central to the subjective perceptions of a national ethos and vital to its transmission within a society. It is arguably central to the other three factors as well. However, it is important to remember that Stalin had been requested by Lenin to present such a polemical piece of writing, arguing against the concept of an all-Jewish nation, proposed by the Bund, the All Jewish Workers' Union in Russia and Poland, in 1913. Even in its unsatisfactory nature it does

illustrate one facet of an overtly ideological approach to building a consensus for nationalism from a quasi-theoretical basis.

In fact, Nairn considers nationalism to be an inevitable yet undesirable element of the modern world. He writes,

" 'Nationalism' is the pathology of modern developmental history, as inescapable as 'neurosis' in the individual, with much the same essential ambiguity attaching to it, a similar built-in capacity for descent into dementia, rooted in the dilemmas of helplessness thrust upon most of the world (the equivalent of infantilism for societies) and largely incurable. " (8)

This is indeed a bleak analysis. However what it ignores are the very real reasons why modern societies have constructed such collective cultural groupings and the positive potential of such cultural mirrors to the identity of diverse ethnic groupings.

In that nationalism it is to a large extent an idealisation of the good aspects of living in a national community its citizens must not only have many things in common, but must have forgotten many things as well. (9)

For instance, class, gender and ethnic differentiations must be subsumed to the greater whole or the real divisions within nationalism would be exposed. The solidity and consistency of the nation may be a myth, yet it still persuades its citizens to transcend individual interest and to act on behalf of the greater whole. Thus nationalism may be interpreted as a cultural-political link between the modern state and its citizens. It is a legitimising device which transforms the state into the more powerful nation state. It is a more powerful force because of the depths of loyalty within the social strata of the nation which it can call upon for support.

This may well be because, within the framework outlined above, the citizen does not respond as an individual to the state's call for help. He acts as part of a national community, with all the symbolic and historic momentum of that community informing his behaviour; it is as though, in times of national crisis the existence of his cultural grouping is in mortal danger.

Benedict Anderson postulates that nationalism should be considered as an imagined political community which ought to be placed alongside phenomena such as 'kinship' and 'religion' rather than any more analytically objective ideologies such as 'liberalism' or 'fascism'. These communities are not real in any material way, since the bonding between people is on such a scale as to preclude any individual linking; Anderson therefore claims that nationalism's strength and endurance lie not in whether its historical basis and symbolism are based on facts but rather in the manner in which it is imagined and expressed:

" Communities are to be distinguished not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined. " (10)

This emphasis on the imaginary nature of nationalism is of great use as it helps to explain why, " the phenomenon has existed and exists " yet proves so difficult to tie down. It is however essential to remember that the 'imaginary' element does not indicate that it is in any way illusory. Anderson's thesis hinges on the very real nature of such a community perceiving and projecting itself. In this way, even the manner in which the community imagines itself can become the basis of an objective and material expression of its identity. Style of expression defines nationalism's symbolism, facilitates its transmission across a society and enables it to achieve a cohesion which does not depend on coercion. In this way style is certainly central to nationalism and not merely icing on the

cake.

This section has been largely concerned with a theoretical survey of various interpretations of nationalism. In the next section the connections between this and the older symbolic loyalty of religion will be examined with a view to extending our understanding of the communality of nationalism.

Nationalism and Religion (1:3)

Nationalism shares with religion a certain dread of isolation. They both bind people within the comfort of a structured community. They both serve to unite people across social barriers in the pursuit of a common goal. However, nationalism is not simply a modern secular religion, though it may have inherited some of religion's symbolism and structures. It is a human response to a different set of political and cultural circumstances. The analysis which follows does not suggest that nationalism cannot be combined with religion in the modern context; rather it argues that nationalism brings to a society an element of a secular cohesion which was once the sole preserve of religion.

Throughout his book ' Fear Of Freedom ' (11), Erich Fromm attempts to provide a coherent understanding of the psychological roots of nationalism. He takes the Reformation in Europe as his starting point. He contends that the Reformation constituted a metaphysical fragmentation of European society. This began with what appeared to promise a liberation from the restrictions of the Catholic Church's monopoly on faith and its links with the medieval absolutist state. He claims that this could have signalled the start of a radically new phase of human development in which potential could have been channelled along new avenues free from the influence of monolithic domination. Indeed, certain cultural and commercial issues at this time clearly indicated that a new order was emerging. The humanistic trends within the art of the Renaissance, with its shift of emphasis from purely divine symbolism, echoed the drift away from the dominance of the medieval church within the political sphere. The commercially inspired 'voyages of discovery' broadened European perspectives on ethnicity and lifestyle and served to underline the diverse

nature of humankind.

Yet Protestantism, in its various guises, threw people back on their individual resources much more than medieval Catholicism had ever done. For instance, the concept of an all-forgiving God had been replaced by a tyrannical one who seemed to insist on the total submission of its subjects and the annihilation of their individual free will as essential conditions for their salvation.

As the larger consensus of Catholic Europe crumbled, it seemed logical for people to identify more closely with their individual states, though it is doubtful that this was a particularly widespread feeling. What had started as a seemingly religious quarrel over authority came to be interpreted as the initial stirrings of independent states. Freedom from religious control was merely the first stage in the building up of broader political and economic freedoms. Western societies chose religions which allowed for a greater degree of local and even secular autonomy. In such a way local needs were able to begin to define separate and divergent identities.

These may have been the first steps on the road to nationalism, but it would be naive to assume that nationalism simply leapt in where loyalty to the Catholic Church had once reigned supreme. Fromm's disappointment over an opportunity for human development lost, could best be termed a retrospective idealism. It neglects the fact that there existed no other feasible object with which people could begin to identify. Even if this identification took centuries to emerge, the framework was inevitably going to be centred around the concept of independent nation states rather than any transnational religious focus.

Religious differences, even if they constituted metaphors for

deeper political and cultural divisions, signalled the end of the Middle Ages in Europe and the rise of more independently orientated states even in countries which retained their Catholic loyalties and even amidst the fervour of the Counter Reformation.

The Reformation may have burst on to the European stage, drastically altering the ways in which individual states identified themselves and bringing with it the potentially awesome responsibility for national churches; it took the Counter Reformation, however, the growth of mercantile competition and its middle-class entrepreneurs and above all a century of cultural and philosophical debate culminating in the Enlightenment and the French Revolution to bring the ideology of nationalism into a broader public focus.

As the overriding influence of religion waned, the secular dominance of the ideology of nationalism - an identification of broad sections of society with the success of a cultural/political entity defined as a nation - seemed to be drawn in as a replacement set of values with its own mythical and iconic qualities. The old beliefs were no longer appropriate to the world they were seeking to explain. They were gradually replaced by a new set of beliefs which had more cultural relevance to the increasing numbers of citizens which they addressed: this is at the heart of a strong organic sense of community.

Nationalism may share the same dominating and often subliminal influence on everyday life as a transcontinental religion once exerted. However, it is only similar, not identical, structurally, in the ways in which it organises its influence. Like religion, nationalism generates a sense of community often imbued with an emotional, quasi-mystical devotion and creates for itself a self-supporting network of symbols and mythology.

Personification and idealisation have always been cornerstones of any nationalist repertoire from King Arthur to Florence Nightingale and from St Patrick to Joseph Stalin. Unlike religion, the emphasis in nationalism is firmly placed on the value and desirability of diversity. Nationalism in its modern, mature manifestation finally severed the formal ties between religion and politics in Western Europe which had first been loosened by Henry VIII. Kohn illustrates what religion had gained in its passage from the Reformation to the Enlightenment when he writes:

"Religion did not lose its true dignity; it remained one of the great spiritual forces, comforting and exalting to the human soul. It lost the elements of coercion which had been 'so natural' to it for many centuries; its connection with the state, with political authority, was severed; religion retreated into the intimacy and spontaneity of the individual conscience. " (12)

Here Kohn illustrates one point of continuity between religion and nationalism and one radically new departure. The continuity is contained in the way in which nationalism, when it extended its fullest influence across a society, had taken on the role of a communal focal point albeit within a more restricted secular arena. The crucial difference, and it is a central one to the theme of this study, is the aspect of coercion. In Western Europe the coercion was not simply duplicated by the newly developing nationalisms. In the more sophisticated and complex societies where nationalism developed and legitimised its own needs and requirements, simple coercion was no longer an appropriate strategy. Nationalism needed a broader appeal if it was to develop increasingly broad loyalties. Nationalism, in extending the role and identification of the citizen in nineteenth-century political life, could, more often than not, provide a

consensual basis for this new community. This newer sense of community was a more regional affair, reflecting more accurately and more pertinently the local needs of a nation and grappling more effectively with contemporary tensions as developing economies emerged into keener and more differentiated international rivalries.

Nationalism - The Extension of its Base: Printing, Capitalism, Industrial
Revolution (1:4)

Nationalism depends for its power on the consent and participation of the broadest possible section of the citizens of a state. While certain nationalist traits can be identified in the breaking up of the Catholic dominance of medieval Europe, these could only be considered as having a preparatory influence on the foundations of modern nationalism. Protestantism and its associated ideologies could be said to have played an important formative role in the process of building a particularly English sense of nationalism, moulded as it had been to the specific goals of Henry VIII. However, there seems no doubt that such an assertive dismissal of Rome, at this time, depended largely on the support which the king could count on from the more wealthy and influential of his subjects; in other words, a tiny minority. This eruption of the various tensions and ambitions of a state breaking into the modern age could not be considered to be an example of nationalism. It did not depend on either the participation or the support of a largely ignorant and parochial populace who were ill-prepared to participate, even vicariously, in a nationalist adventure. This broader participation was to develop later under different circumstances.

If an elite, no matter how powerful, cannot provide the essentially consensual basis for mature nationalism, then other economic and cultural levers must be identified which enabled the breeding ground for such a phenomenon as nationalism to develop fully .

Anderson starts his search for the cultural roots of nationalism in the large-scale cultural systems which preceded it. He claims that these were, in Western Europe, the Catholic religious community and its political accompaniment, the dynastic realm. These, he says, exhibited a " self-

evident plausibility ". (13) This could be termed a sort of obvious reality which was tangible in all aspects of everyday life as well as being the basis for most social and spiritual life.

Although nationalism could not have emerged directly out of this cultural grouping, the ending of this epoch illustrates certain of the mechanics of cohesion in these societies. In particular the great religious community of the Latin language had provided a common cultural and spiritual framework for centuries. It had existed as the focal point of the beliefs of a continent. Even though the Catholic priest administered to a largely illiterate flock, Latin, by now of course a non-vernacular, provided a symbolic and often mystical medium within which it was possible to construct an imaginary bridge between earth and heaven. In fact, its other-worldly nature could be said to have enhanced its religious status. It provided also a certain degree of continuity between the present and the eternal, giving a sense of security for the adherents of the faith who shared an enormously uniform perception of the spiritual and material world.

The invention of printing coincided almost exactly with the rise of dissident religious formations throughout Europe. It broke the grip of Rome on the publication of religious materials and instigated the rapid decline of the influence of Latin. The homogeneity of a continent was shattered as printing enabled the rapid dissemination of work in various vernaculars. This diversity and fragmentation gave enormous impetus to the development of individual states. Printing also played a central role in the spread of unorthodox Christian ideas as the Reformation gripped Europe. This combination of independent religion and the printed use of a vernacular language gave voice to new political alignments more in keeping

with states struggling to emancipate themselves culturally from the influence of the Catholic Church. Printing also assisted in disseminating this more localised cultural vision to a broader audience. Though it would not create an instant replacement for the former transnational influence of Rome and the Latin language, the invention of printing certainly gave these newly independent states a strong individual basis for the nurturing of separate identities. It provided the mechanical means of ensuring the survival of such diversity and in so doing gave these nations a cultural and linguistic base more in keeping with the new political realities of the time. This element of contemporaneity is, in fact, an essential factor in the identification of a nation.

The diverse interests of rival and independent states in the commercial field also exerted a formative influence on the emergence of states into the modern age. International trade and its subsequent rivalries had been growing throughout the fifteenth century, swept along by improved ships, navigational systems and the lucrative 'discoveries'. With relatively stable geo-political boundaries in Western Europe, established after centuries of local wars and territorial acquisition, the Reformation ushered in a new age of economic and political self-aggrandisement from which the emergent nations of Europe drew strength and credibility. The struggles often became externalised as these nations began flexing their muscles on a more global stage with national status and increasing economic dominion as central themes.

As with the spread of printed material in the vernacular, however, it is doubtful whether these new-found aspirations to global power spread beyond the immediate circles of the nobility and merchants with a direct concern in international trade. If one of the main factors necessary

for a strong national identity is its breadth of appeal to a large majority of the people, then the events of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries could only be said to have had a preparatory influence on the foundations of nationalism.

The really dramatic changes which were to bring about the reorganisation of social consciousness on anything approaching a popular level came into being with events in Europe either side of 1800. If we consider nationalism as an organic and spontaneous reaction to the radical upheaval of a traditional lifestyle, then the Industrial Revolution provided the impetus for this reaction. Alienation, loss of individual identity and social fragmentation all provided the opportunity for nationalism, as a social force, to attempt to unify and energise these splits in the social fabric. The nation and its cultural mirror-image, nationalism, were both recognisable in their modern forms during this period of social and economic turmoil. Indeed, many Marxist historians who do not adhere to the theory of 'accelerated evolution' argue that this break with previous modes of economic organisation was so sudden and had such drastic effects, both in the cultural and industrial life of the country as a whole, that it could not be considered as anything short of a revolution.

Weber (14) hypothesised that the underlying ethic of Protestantism had provided the psychological breeding ground for the development of finance capitalism. However, it seems that by the end of the eighteenth century, religion of any description had long outlived its monopoly in cementing a society. Nationalism was to provide a much broader common denominator. It was to extend a feeling of involvement in the national community to broader and broader sections of citizens, especially

in a national context.

Whole communities and stable forms of existence were completely shattered during this period. In the swelling urban centres of the Industrial Revolution those who had lost their individual and communal identities developed broader ties of kinship to compensate. Throughout the nineteenth century, nationalism became increasingly relevant as one of these extra-individual, collective ties. This is not to suggest that, in England for instance, the nation began to march to one rythm all of a sudden, but only to indicate that there was an increasing tendency to consider oneself bound up with the fortunes of the nation as a whole. Despite the resultant squalor, poverty and industrial friction, despite these broader communities often being expressed in terms of an increased awareness of social class, the urbanisation and improvements in transport and communications which grew out of the Industrial Revolution forced upon the English, as on other Europeans, a heightened appreciation of their common national lot.

Though primarily a cultural formation, nationalism, in the broadest possible application of the term, sprang eventually from economically decisive roots. If capitalism had endowed the citizens of a country with an increasing awareness of nationally diverse interests, then industrialisation had forced them to recognise the grouping of these interests in a national community.

Thus the specifically 'modern' formation of nationalism in its most popular manifestations has important implications for this work. Most importantly it illustrates the cohesive and consensual nature of nationalism as something which emerged from the collective experience of a people in a particularly traumatic period of their history.

Nationalism - Political and Philosophical Background (1:5)

At the end of the eighteenth century demographic, economic and cultural factors all seemed to merge in the formation of what could be termed the start of a broad and consensual nationalism. Two other factors which informed its development were the political and philosophical aspects. If nationalism and its development are primarily to do with consciousness, then these two factors depended on a self-awareness to no lesser extent in their successful historical intervention. Mainly continental, non-British informants attempted to provide a framework of nationalism to rally the intelligentsia of their nation. They provide an intellectualisation of the various forces which shaped the future nationalisms throughout the eighteenth century before these forces exploded on to the European scene with the French Revolution.

Kedourie's theory of nationalism is of vital importance to any assessment of the mechanics of the phenomenon. (15) Developments in the late eighteenth century marked a clear break with previous notions which could be termed national sentiment. These developments, Kedourie argues, contained two decisive and complementary springs: one political and the other philosophical. From the political point of view, he considers the French Revolution of 1789 as a radical severing with past assumptions of the absolutism of the monarchy. People had claimed and executed their right to take down and set up a state of their own choice. They had made the progression from subject to citizen in one irreversible, revolutionary step.

From a historical point of view, this marked an important and decisive extension of political power, and although this growth in political power did not extend far beyond the newly emergent social forces

with a vital economic stake in deciding their own affairs, it laid the foundations for the further extension of this power. Once the monarch's grip had been severed, the potential was unlimited. This, of course, was not lost on the other monarchies of Europe, which began to clothe themselves in increasingly nationalist rhetoric.

In dealing with the second, philosophical drive within nationalism, Kedourie claims that this was the result of a revolution in ideas of no less importance than, and indeed a part of the political revolution of 1789. In this philosophical revolution he considers Kant's 'Critique of Pure Reason' and most importantly the philosophical implications of this work as applied by Fichte, Schelling and Herder, to have been a central factor in the creation of nationalism as an ideological force.

Kant argued that human perception contains two co-operating factors: one, a series of sensory deductions of the physical world and two, a perceiving self, the human mind which imposes a synthetic and intelligible unity on the incoming sensations of the world outside. The mechanics and structures of the human mind, he maintains, necessarily prevent our knowing the world as it is in all its objectivity. His philosophical standpoint could be interpreted as a refusal to remain enslaved to sensory stimuli. Instead it forces the human being to restrict itself to working within the structures of the brain which have been put at its disposal. In essence, it is an appreciation of the uniquely human features of our sensory apparatus and its perceptions.

Kedourie develops the political implications of this philosophy with reference to the then emergent theories of nationalism. With Kant's reconciliation of the limits of purely sensory perception of the world,

Kedourie claims that self-determination became a crucial force within nationalism. The main reason why he considers this philosophical input to have had such a decisive influence on the birth of nationalism lies in its emphasis on structure.

While absolutism had stressed the personal will of the monarch and the inalienable rights of monarchs and several social groupings beneath them, in a rigidly hierarchical structure, the implications of Kant's philosophy emphasised the freedom of the individual within certain well-defined human, rather than divine, parameters. The higher, identifying entity in such a humanistic philosophy became the nation. Fichte developed Kant's ideas to provide a framework for the self-realisation of the citizen within the nation. If an individual could identify with the nation, the whole, then that sense of belonging could provide him with a sense of tangible reality. This identification could provide him with a basis for self-realisation, within the structures of the broader national community.

Of course Kedourie does not overstate his case. He is aware that the birth of nationalism in Western Europe and the decline of what he terms 'absolutism', were not only fought out on an intellectual level. Absolutism, as mentioned above, had become increasingly inappropriate to the historical era and its developments. When the strain on the credibility became too great to bear, the link was broken. Underpinning any nationalist philosophy is the idea of the desirability of diversity. If nationalists like Fichte, in Germany, could argue philosophically or theoretically for their viewpoint, there was always a political or cultural basis for their position. Kedourie illustrates this clearly when he mentions the Romantic backlash against Frederick the Great's patronage of French literary art and the implications that this had for the German nationalists' claims that

national diversity was part of the struggle for self-determination.

He turns to Fichte's seminal 'Addresses' to emphasise the point that such philosophical developments were harnessed to and sprang from the wider political needs of the time.

" These lectures, we must note, were delivered in Berlin in the aftermath of the Prussian humiliation at Jena in 1806; they seek to explain why the Prussian state had been unable to withstand Napoleon and to indicate what must be done to make good the disaster." (16)

All human experience at this time of revolutionary change, therefore, seemed to point towards the emergence of some new and vital social force which could assist in bonding these reshaped societies. Philosophical enquiry and everyday experience called out for different ways of interpreting the individual's relationship with his/her community and state. The timing and speed of this eruption have important implications for the essence of nationalism and its power to draw and hold together a 'national community' in the modern sense of the term.

Nationalism: Dating and Emphasis (1:6)

Not since the analytical work of Kohn and Hayes (1946 - 1948) (17) has the dating of nationalism been seriously queried, except by nationalist theorists in various countries who have tried to prove the antiquity of their own nationalism by bending the historical facts. This dating is important. It lends authenticity to the claim that nationalism first arose in Europe in response to a set of quite specific circumstances. Precision in dating the rise of nationalism indicates how radical this new political and cultural community was.

The central question appears to be whether nationalism consisted of an evolutionary or a revolutionary social realignment. This is no pedantic affair. It has important implications, especially for the role which the English language was to play in the British nationalism of the nineteenth century.

Anderson views nationalism as a set of 'cultural artefacts' and dates their emergence as a unified force with some precision:

" the creation of these artefacts towards the end of the eighteenth century was the spontaneous distillation of a complex 'crossing' of discrete historical forces; but ... once created, they became 'modular', capable of being transplanted, with varying degrees of self-consciousness, to a great variety of social terrains, to merge and be merged with a correspondingly wide variety of political and ideological constellations. " (18)

Kedourie is equally adamant that the birth of nationalism cannot be considered in terms of a gradual evolution. Nor does he believe that it could be termed " a new tribalism ". (19) He sees its structures and accompanying philosophies as something radically different in character from any national

sentiment or pride in homeland which may have preceded it. Nationalism in its modern form of the last one hundred and fifty years, grew up alongside a huge increase in international trading and the development of rival imperialisms. It depended as much on the external facts of conquest and economic dominion as it did on internal identification.

Thus nationalism, while constituting a distinct philosophical framework, also generated a style of politics to match. This style had much to do with the identification of an individual with the interests of a clearly defined national entity.

What is less clearly agreed upon among commentators is the emphasis placed on the evolutionary or revolutionary nature of nationalism.

While Anderson and Kedourie view it as a sudden eruption, a convergence of discrete forces, Seton-Watson considers it to have had a much slower period of gestation. When writing of England and France in particular, he says,

" The process of formation of national identity and national consciousness among the old nations was slow and obscure. It was a spontaneous process, not willed by anyone, though there were great events which in certain cases certainly accelerated it. " (20)

Any argument that national identity and national consciousness had had a long and steady development could claim that this process had merely been galvanised by certain historical events. In his distinction between 'old continuous nations' and 'new nations' , Seton-Watson echoes Anderson's assertion that the post-Enlightenment explosion of interest in nationalism among ruling elites and intellectual circles cannot be transferred wholesale to the development of other nationalisms in other parts of the world. This is because nationalism, with its historical and cultural specificity, can never be

considered to constitute a universal paradigm.

However, such an assertion certainly seems to confuse nationalism with the ways in which a country's history may be viewed with hindsight by a self-interested group of nationalists. Retrospectively mining a country's history for evidence of embryonic nationalism cannot be considered as one and the same thing as a slow development. Communications and political and philosophical developments at the end of the eighteenth century, as has been illustrated, could not merely be interpreted as the inevitable outcome of the slow march of national identities. Nor is this question of emphasis a trivial issue. The idea of a spontaneous outburst of nationalist feeling ignores the central role which certain ideologues played in its formation, as well as the very deliberate attempts throughout the century to focus a largely illiterate society on the creation of a radically new political world view in which the nation was sovereign and the role of the citizen central to that sovereignty.

Obviously, in such a stage of development, it was essential to rediscover certain historical antecedents and to show how organic and logical such a world view was. This enabled the middle strata of a society to see nationalism as something which had lain dormant within the country for centuries, just waiting to be discovered. Such a viewpoint may well have been a central factor in its development. This does not necessarily mean that it is a historically accurate testimony.

To ignore the sudden and spontaneous nature of modern nationalism's rise in the West seems to blur the distinction between the construction of a framework necessary for the growth of nationalism and of that growth itself. In such an analysis what is underestimated is the revolutionary impact of the Industrial Revolution and the political ramifications of the French

Revolution which, far from maintaining a historical continuum, totally severed so many socio-cultural links with the past. Furthermore, it neglects something even more pertinent to the central concern of this study. How did nationalism become the mode of transmission of certain ideas and politics of identification, and in so doing, how did it take on the guise of spontaneity and even continuity? As larger sections of the population were sucked into the Industrial Revolution during the nineteenth century, it became of paramount importance that they should take on the responsibilities of citizenship with its accompanying involvement in the development of nationalism. Grouping around a national identity as a community gave societies the security and cohesion needed for such a task.

Seton-Watson concedes that for nationalism to develop as it did throughout the nineteenth century in Western Europe, it needed a broader, more popular appeal. However, he ignores the mechanics whereby this breadth of appeal was generated. He is content to simply note ,

" if monarchs, noblemen, churchmen and bourgeois played a leading part in the process of formation of the centralised monarchical state, within which the old nations were formed, this does not mean that persons of humbler social status played no part. The diffusion of national consciousness downwards was a long process, accelerated in periods of religious strife or of external danger to the nation. In such periods, craftsmen and labourers and peasant small-holders consciously identified themselves with the nation. Examples of such periods are the Elizabethan era and the Civil War in England, the wars of the Covenanters in Scotland, the French Revolution and the struggle of the Spaniards against Napoleon. " (21)

He is clearly in favour of the long road to nationalism and sees

the formation of the 'old nations of Europe' as a direct consequence of the rise of the centralised monarchical state.

Though this certainly broke with the transcontinental Catholic model of pre-Reformation Europe, it certainly seems an overestimate to consider a clustering of an ambitious milieu around the important houses, families and thrones of mid-millennium Europe as anything resembling nationalism. Apart from the fact that currying favour with individual monarchs or feuding between rival aristocratic groupings were usually too internalised to be identified as nationalistic, these activities had no intrinsic need to develop links or integrate with the middle and lower social strata on anything like a permanent basis.

Nationalism, between the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in Western Europe, grew in part from the economic and cultural imperatives which gave rise to the decentralisation of these groupings of identity and self-interest to encompass a larger and more popular base. It needed this wider support. It was the sudden emergence of such consciousness, across social lines, which provided it. It was also this extension of awareness which was to be a sine qua non of its existence. Although, as mentioned above, no exact percentage of support can be quoted, nationalism depends on an overall majority of support to survive. No minority fervour can hope to survive intact for any length of time if it is not firmly based on a depth of conscious support and if it does not have the potential to extend that base. These depths of loyalty to the idea of the nation became firmly rooted from the end of the eighteenth century and not before.

Nationalism: Its Values and Limits (1:7)

The emphasis on the precise and sudden timing of the birth of nationalism is essential for a full appreciation of its communicative aspects. This process required certain conditions to enable it to emerge. These include the development of a network of physical communications, a demographic concentration of the population in order to break down certain features of previously insular regional communities, and the growth of cultural communications via some common means of transmission such as a widespread literacy, an oral tradition or an identification with certain objective features of national symbolism.

The idea that nationalism depends for its strength on the scope of its support has been covered already. What has not been examined is the means by which such a grouping gains acceptance as a common-sense, self-evident system of placing oneself in the world. The scope of nationalism is neatly summed up by Tom Nairn:

" The arrival of nationalism in a distinctly modern sense was tied to the political baptism of the lower classes...Although sometimes hostile to democracy, nationalist movements have been invariably populist in outlook and sought to induce lower classes into political life. In its most typical version, this assumed the shape of a restless middle class and intellectual leadership trying to stir up popular class energies into support for the new states. "

(22)

This may not seem to apply directly to the "old nations' " experience of nationalism. However, even here, in a newly organised framework, nationalism sought to recreate a consensual apparatus as plausible as the medieval dominance of the Catholic Church and the dynastic realm. In short, it

answered the deeply felt needs of emerging societies of citizens and it created new forms of legitimation as an organic part of everyday life.

This new experience is what Anderson postulates as an imagined community of nation. Just as the priests had acted as intermediaries between the flock, the Church and its God in the Middle Ages, the middle classes and the intelligentsia acted as catalysts on the lower social classes at the dawn of the age of nationalism. There was, however, one large difference; the lower classes were increasingly involved in this process of national identification themselves.

Social bonding and an increasing identification with the fate of the nation are central to an understanding of how nationalism functions. Nationalism also entails an appreciation of the value of belonging to one specific national group. One consequence of this is that nationalism brings with it a certain exclusiveness, a feeling that it is better to belong to one group than another. Therefore it is a differentiated estimation of the value of one's own nation.

The power of this value can be assessed by the extent to which it can override varying appreciations of nationalism within one country. Consider, for instance, the choice of cultural manifestations of being English chosen by

T. S. Eliot writing in 1948;

" all the characteristic activities and interests of a people, Derby Day, Henley Regatta, Cowes, a Cup Final, the dog races, a pin table, the dart board, Wensleydale cheese, beetroot in vinegar, the music of Elgar. " (23)

Evidently, although this thumbnail portrait of the common features of English life incorporates an insipid and apolitical mix of class interests, it largely ignores any appreciation of what being English represented for the majority of women. Furthermore, the fact that not everyone could identify with all these or the contents of any other list, long or short, illustrates an

important quality of nationalism. To maintain any credibility as a unifying factor, it must and does appeal beyond the divisions of class, gender, and even ethnicity. The emphasis lies on the totality of feeling and identification rather than on the specific parts. Despite the often chimeric quality of the expressions of national identity, or perhaps directly because of it, it must also be experienced as an objective entity by the majority of people for a healthy and stable nationalism to survive.

The consent and subjective continuity of a community of nationalism are two central features. However, they also need the support of more externally based factors. David Lusted explains the external characteristics of nationalism in this way:

" 'Nation' can be symbolically expressed in a number of different ways. It can be located on an 'Us' and 'Them' axis, either positively ('This is what we are like') or negatively ('This is what they are like'). "

(24)

Paul A. F. Walter puts the case even more strongly, using the term 'ethnocentrism' in this context, defining it as,

" loyalty to one group, reinforced by a corollary disdain or hostility toward other groups," and he claims such loyalties are synonymous with nationalism. (25)

Nationalist sentiments are often more sharply focussed and internal frictions and contradictions more readily oiled when faced with a perceived external threat to the well-being and survival of the nation. The threat can be military, economic or even cultural. At these times the lower economic classes of a society often provide the boilerhouse for the creation of a newly invigorated and conscious form of nationalism. Despite the fact that ruling

elites have always sought to mine and refine history and folklore for the myths, symbols and heroes central to nationalist values, Fishman proposes perceptively that,

" it is generally held that the lower classes of a society have more faithfully preserved the ethnocultural distinctiveness of the past and it is the past, in all its authenticity and glory, that constitutes the main storehouse from which nationalism derives its dynamism for changing the present and creating the future. " (26)

It is in fact the working people of a country who provide some of the most telling examples of the relegation of interests of class to those of the 'greater good' of the nation as if, for some reason, these two fuse in times of national crisis.

Stevenson, for example, reports that in 1912 industrial unrest had led to the loss of an estimated forty million working days. (27) This situation was becoming more and more alarming for the factory owners and the ruling classes, in no small part because of the burgeoning ranks of the trades unions which boasted no less than four million members in the year preceding the outbreak of the First World War. He quotes a 'Times' correspondent sent to assess the mood of the areas affected by industrial strife in August 1914:

" The truth of the matter is that the working class, through and through, is as intensely patriotic as any other class...in a crisis the economic plea is swept aside by the appeal of patriotism." (28)

Stevenson adds,

" earlier conflicts within British society were subsumed by a passionate xenophobia which expressed itself not only in extensive volunteering for the armed forces but also in escalating attacks on aliens."

The values of nationalism are closely interwoven with its inherently limiting characteristics. The finite elements within the appeal of nationalism are rooted in its emphasis on the distinct qualities of the particular nation which make it different from and even superior to other nations. This characteristic exclusivity and independence also extend to the idea of the sovereign nation state itself. The timing of nationalism's growing impact on the consciousness of the Western European states at the end of the eighteenth century has these two features, its ideas of sovereignty and its finite nature, which tie it inextricably to that period.

As Kedourie illustrates (29), the philosophical roots of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution meant that nationalism sprang from an era in which the divine right of hierarchical monarchies was suddenly shattered, to be replaced by the ideal of freedom expressed and experienced through the sovereign state.

Nationalism is a finite phenomenon since its borders and influence can be elastic only to a certain extent. No nationalist could conceive of world conquest on the scale once envisaged by Muslim and Christian fanatics. For one thing, its communal nature ensured that beyond a certain, unspecified point, nationalism would cease to be culturally relevant to its participants and its value system would wither away. The " deep, horizontal comradeship " which Anderson postulates as one of nationalism's key features cannot be spread and therefore diluted beyond the natural boundaries of its empathetic influence.

The social bonding of nationalism is also a limiting factor for the human development of its participants. As has already been illustrated, it depends, in no small measure, on a mistrust of the outsider.

Whereas the African nationalisms of the immediate post-war period

developed a common appreciation of the legacies of colonialism into various expressions of Pan-Africanism, the Western models tended towards a more exclusive format. This was hardly surprising given the increasing economic and military rivalries between European nations throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth centuries. Though a desire for a sense of community can be explained as a developmental stage in both economic and psycho-cultural terms, its Western manifestation can be considered as having sublimated this desire into an introspective and defensive posture. Consequently, nationalism is, in the main, merely a starting point beyond which many national communities have never progressed. Uniting a people through dominion over people from a different country, culture or whatever differential is relevant, has an enormous potential effect upon a national psyche. Reich stresses this, using a specifically twentieth-century analogy;

" what is important is whether the broad masses of workers identify in a nationalistic-chauvinistic way with the construction of an aeroplane i.e. derive a feeling of superiority towards other nations on the basis of aeroplane construction, or see it as serving to promote internationalism." (30)

If we substitute commerce, cotton or capital investment then it is clear that nationalism, particularly in nineteenth-century England, had nothing to do with even the most nebulous notions of internationalism. Of course, the workers may view the construction of the plane in totally neutral ways, yet a sense of national identity combined with the competitive elements of Western nationalism tend to imply the polarities which Reich describes. This exclusive trend is a very definite hindrance to harmony and co-operation between nations, each with its own idiosyncratic distorting lens with which to view the world outside.

This is the inherent contradiction of nationalism, which is primarily an attempt by a group of people to cement their experiences within the context of a common framework. This contradiction arises first because the sense of unity is born out of a de facto fragmentation of life at various levels, from the metaphysical to the material; secondly, because nationalism functions as a barrier from behind which a community addresses itself to the outside world. It has at its root an inability to transcend this barrier and view life in any other context than the domination/subordination complex of international rivalries. Reich encapsulates this when he writes;

" this inclination to identify is the psychological basis of national narcissism i.e. the self confidence that individual man derives from the 'greatness of the nation'. On this basis he feels himself to be the defender of the national heritage. " (31)

The values and limits of nationalism carry within them the ever-present capability to transform themselves into chauvinistic sentiments. At their most extreme these can often be translated into overt xenophobia and racism.

Nationalism and Racism (1:8)

In identifying the interests of its citizens with the interests of the nation, nationalism highlights the diversity of nations and their mutual independence and demands a certain belief in various distinctions which are not always borne out in practice. Kedourie sums it up thus:

" What is beyond doubt is that the doctrine (of nationalism) divides humanity into separate and distinct nations, claims that such nations must constitute sovereign states and asserts that the members of a nation reach freedom and fulfilment by cultivating the peculiar identity of their own nation and by sinking their own persons in the greater whole of the nation." (32)

This clustering around atomised nations with their own perceived idealisations of their individual identities as often as not managed to cut across internal distinctions of ethnicity, religion, language and class. One method of ensuring the continued cohesion between such distinctions gathered pace throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It relied to a great extent on the fear of the outsider, the one who could not be incorporated within that exclusive nationalism. Though there is not sufficient space here for a detailed examination of the links between nationalism and racist ideology, it will suffice to establish that this development, in its modern form, had strong ties with what could be called ethnic nationalism.

In purely semantic terms, it is interesting to note that there occurred a shift in the meaning of the word 'race' at about the time that the growth of modern nationalism has been sited. It had been used to denote lineage, and Foxe, writing in 1570, talks of " the race and stock of Abraham ". (33) Milton also used the word in this context: " the race of

Satan ". (34) Race began to be used to denote physical categories, at a time when transport and communication had improved to the extent that people of differing physical characteristics loomed larger in the popular imagination. This wider observation of physical differences between groups of human beings in no way, by itself, explains why it should assist a categorising of people in some sort of hierarchical order of merit. However, the emphasis on the unique features of a nation's people and the subsequent efforts of politicians to embrace them within a national community certainly suggest that there existed enormous potential in the fostering of a sense of superiority. It could be directed towards the strengthening of the national framework. It is simply an extension of the overemphasis within nationalism on cultural introversion - a mistrust of and antipathy towards people who do not share the same cultural or physical attributes.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the underside of nationalism developed so as to form a quasi-scientific, biological view of the differences between and the merits of various 'races'. If the Nazis simplified and distorted certain of Herder's thoughts about the Germans and restructured them into the Aryan Myth, then that myth was assisted and given enormous momentum by much of the ethnological study of the nineteenth century.

Perhaps the most notorious propagandist for the theories of race is Count Gobineau (1816-1882), who presented his thesis of racial superiority and the ultimate incompatibility of various 'races' in his 'Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races'. Famous and influential British historians, such as Freeman, Stubbs and Green, through their writings assisted in the deepening and spread of 'racial' views of history.

In 1848 Charles Hamilton Smith produced a sophisticated theory of man's ancestry, divided into various original species, in 'The Natural History of the Human Species' and in 1854 Nott and Giddon produced their 'Conclusions' on the " races of men ".

As nationalism sprang from the newly emerging political entities in Europe at the end of the eighteenth century, these ideas provided some sort of cultural adjunct to the growing awareness of global diversity. That they proved acceptable to certain influential sections of the literate and educated classes is of limited interest here. What is of interest, however, is why such explanations of this diversity seemed necessarily to entail notions of superiority and even supremacy.



Nationalism and Language (1:9)

It is clear that as long as people have lived in social clusters a common form of linguistic currency has been a prerequisite of communal grouping. Language formed an essential factor in the creation of nationalism in two main ways. First, it provided a common currency of identification for most national groups. Second, it provided a means of communicating the ideology of nationalism. Indeed the structuralist analysis suggests a perspective in which these two are combined which is of enormous potential for any insight into the mechanisms of how language functions within a society and in particular within a nationalist society. Coward and Ellis propose that,

" perhaps the most significant feature of twentieth century development has been the way in which the study of language has opened the route to an understanding of mankind, social history and the laws of how a society functions. " (35)

This analysis claims that linguistics can be used as a comparative model for all other cultural systems on account of two of language's most salient features. The first is that language shares with these systems a network of 'signs' and the second is that none is comprehensible without reference to the linguistic or cultural whole.

J. Culler further illustrates this point:

" The notion that linguistics might be useful in studying other cultural phenomena is based on two fundamental insights: first, that social and cultural phenomena are not simply material objects or events but objects or events with meanings and hence signs; and second, that they do not have essences but are defined by a network of relations, both internal and external. " (36)

The relevance of this viewpoint to the interconnectedness of

nationalism and language is immediately apparent. Nationalism is expressed through cultural signs or symbols and especially through the central symbol of language. In Western Europe language has been the key identifying factor of nationalism. This can be expressed in an overt and subjective manner, as with the German Romantics' philosophies of language with particular reference to the status of their own language, or in a more objective manner as in the case of the spread of the English, French or Spanish languages as a direct result of colonial expansion.

In Western Europe, Latin had throughout the Middle Ages been a philosophical and political lingua franca. It thus transcended any purely local loyalties, creating a supranational bond and inhibiting the development of any more specific groupings. Symbolic and tangible evidence of the rupture of Roman supremacy was provided by the concentration on national languages in the Reformation. From this point onwards there developed a new status for the vernacular languages. Central to this status was the propagation of the newly independent translations of the Bible by Luther and Wycliffe through the medium of printing.

If we accept Anderson's thesis that,

" communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined ", (37) then it is obviously important to recall that these nation states first expressed themselves, first focussed their opposition to an anachronistic means of external control, through the medium of language. Language as a cultural sign became the embodiment of this new-found independence. Once the initial barrier of Roman dominance had been cleared, the communication, again through language, of this independence to a wider audience was the next stage. Printing was not just important for the dissemination of the

new secularity and the new decentralised Christianity, it also began a trend towards standardisation within the languages of the continent. This levelling mirrored and was a constituent part of the centripetal process within the various states over the next three centuries. The movement of people towards the cities and the growth of mercantile capitalism were two other similar cultural trends.

The prestige of a language is of prime importance, as it is considered a direct reflection of the prestige of a nation's culture. In the broadest sense it is viewed as the repository of a nation's myths and symbols and all which is worth transferring to posterity. Moreover, it is through language that this transmission is accomplished whether orally or literally. The extension of the popular memory of the national culture through the language is essential to maintain any unity of culture and its contrastive distinctiveness among other nations. The pride and worth of the nation are displayed through language.

Involvement in the political affairs of a nation means, among other things, having concrete access to information, orally or in print, or nowadays, visually and aurally as well. This access is language-based and the extension of nationalism to its prerequisite wide audience took place through the medium of language as more and more sections of the population became involved in and identified with this process.

Within the political framework of nationalism such an emphasis on the distinctive and finite linguistic community only served further to divide nation from nation. From such a perspective, linguistically based nationalism cannot be separated from racially based nationalism since both depend on emphasising fundamental differences between human groups in order to strengthen the host group's subjective status. In the popular, as well

as in the academic mind of the nineteenth century, the two went snugly, hand in hand.

Nott and Giddon's 'Conclusions' include one specific, linguistic criterion. Number eight:

" That high antiquity for distinct Races is amply sustained by linguistic researches, by psychological history and by anatomical characteristics." (38)

In such books as 'Indigenous Races of the Earth', by Nott, serious scientific thought was concentrated on the alleged biological divisions within humanity. Such divisions enhanced the claim that nations were quasi-biological groupings and identified them 'racially' through their language and just as importantly, through the lineage of their language. The lineage of language, like the origin of the species, became a vital focus of attention through the nineteenth and into the twentieth centuries.

Gobineau combined these theories of 'racial' and linguistic purity. In his melancholy prophecies, he claimed that each 'race' had its own language proper. While he observed the beneficial effects the Aryan race had had on other races which he considered inferior, he saw the race now extended to the point of exhaustion in a passage laden with quasi-sexual innuendo.

" What is sad to foresee, is not death, it is the certainty that we will die degraded; and even such a shame which is reserved for our descendents, might leave us unmoved, were it not for the fact that we feel, with secret horror, that the rapacious hands of fate are already upon us."

(39)

Emphasis on the distinctive elements within a nation, to the

exclusion of other groups, leads inevitably to an aversion to people who do not fit that distinctive model. Kedourie insists that instead of there existing several varieties of nationalism, including a linguistically based one and a racially based one, he can see no clear-cut difference between the two. The first is an outward, socially communicable signal of identity, the second, a more blurred and debatable matter. Nevertheless, they are linked in their very concentration on signs of community and the fear of the outsider - although that fear may manifest itself in several ways. Writing of nationalism, Kedourie says,

" Originally, the doctrine emphasised language as a test of nationality, because language was an outward sign of a group's peculiar identity and a significant means of ensuring its continuity. But a nation's language was peculiar to that nation only because such a nation constituted a racial stock." (40)

Language plays an enormously important role in the formation of a nation; not least because it often delineates the borders of its influence. Nevertheless, Hertz warns of an overemphasis on this linguistic criterion. On the Indian subcontinent and in post-independence Africa, colonial interests had carved out a strange and often incongruous assortment of states. These nations which emerged amidst passionate and genuinely widespread national feeling, often included two or more languages within their boundaries. He claims,

" The identification of a nation with a language group ... is untenable. It conflicts with both the legal and sociological concept of a nation. The groups constructed by sentiment, citizenship and language very often do not coincide, but overlap. In many cases, people of different tongues are citizens of the same State, and sometimes also regard each

other as members of the same nation. On the other hand, many different nations, in both senses, speak the same language. Furthermore, demarcation according to language is occasionally made difficult by the fact that large parts of a population speak two languages, or a language intermediate between the two others, so that it is not easy to determine to which other nation they have the closest affinity." (41)

This perceptive appraisal of the limitations of the bonding between language and nationalism ignores one crucial fact: any frictions within such multilingual national entities are usually based on divisions between linguistic groups, which in turn represent different ethnic communities. Sikh and Hindu, Ibo and Hausa, Walloon and Fleming, and Serb and Albanian all serve to illustrate this objection. These linguistic entities form sub-groups within the national whole, which at times of crisis can take on a role which is damaging to the whole fabric of the nation. Language is one of the most important, if not the most important element in the 'imagined community' and thus in a multilingual state, linguistic differences are often those around which opposition to the status quo of the national community will focus.

Conversely, the stronger the linguistic unity, the stronger the ethnic sense of identity and the stronger the sense of national solidarity. Even if this ethnic bonding is a biological nonsense, it is nevertheless a potent component of nationalism as it is transmitted through and forms a part of the linguistic lineage of the community. In this way it is central to that identity.

Language not only knits together a national community because national sentiments and lower-key communal intercourse are conducted through this medium, but it also makes that community more tangible since people

can imagine millions of others conducting their affairs, across the land, in the same language. The stronger this sense of transcendental community, the stronger the bonding of nationalism; it makes that community real and solid.

At the same time as it constitutes a material force in uniting a people, language is usually idealised by nationalists and at a lower, more popular, common-sense level by the bulk of the people themselves. This influence must permeate to all levels of society if it is to maintain and extend its cohesive force within the community. Though not all forms of nationalism could be termed 'prestige nationalism', as defined by Haynes, the word prestige is certainly a key one when it comes to describing what a language requires at its disposal if it is to become a powerful idealised representation of the nation.

It needs a prestigious base. This can be either a concrete reality or a potentially real mythical construct; as we have seen, it is the style which is of more importance to nationalism than the truth of its representation. In the first case the material reality of a language's prestige may be expressed in various ways: its influence overseas (French, English, Spanish), its historical pedigree or antecedents (Latin, Greek), its religious and transcontinental influence (Arabic) or its lineage and longevity (Japanese, Chinese). In the second case a language may use ancient lore, scripture or an appeal to a related old religion to create a mythical vision of future glories based on the imaginary achievements of a shadowy and often confused past (Nazi Germany).

For the propagation of nationalism and the further accumulation of prestige around a language, the transmission of cultural values and historical traditions through a relatively stable language is vital. Thus

language materially assists the unity and unique facets of the nation in what Renan termed the " daily plebiscite " (42) and through the lengthier process of the oral and written tradition.

If we accept that nationalism in its modern sense was to a large extent shaped by language and increasingly transmitted through language in nineteenth-century Western Europe, then it is not surprising to learn of the formal interest shown to language studies throughout that century. As Anderson writes,

" As Seton-Watson most usefully shows, the nineteenth century was, in Europe and its immediate peripheries, a golden age of vernacularising, lexicographers, grammarians, philologists and litterateurs." (43) Indeed Seton-Watson could be used to amplify the emphasis of this chapter in the stress placed on the influence of language itself during this century on the development of a conscious and broadly based nationalism. He concludes that,

" Just because history of language is usually in our time kept so rigidly apart from conventional political, economic and social history, it has seemed to me desirable to bring it together with these, even at the cost of less expertise." (44)

It will be one of the aims of this study to highlight the special role of language as it interweaves with those aspects of a nation's history with specific reference to English nationalism and the ways that moulded the attitudes of the English to their own language and to those of other nations. One key aspect of this question is how the finite nature of the community of nationalism ties in with the extension of the English language's influence and use around the world.

The English Situation (1:10)

Nationalism has taken different forms and developed many variations idiosyncratic to the community it seeks to mould throughout the world. However, certain prerequisites and certain common features in its formation have been identified and clarified.

As it is, above all, a historical and culturally specific phenomenon, nationalism diverges from certain common springs, but its subsequent progress depends on the social and political caste of the nation and the people it unites.

English nationalism and the English nation were among the first to develop because of economic and political reasons and yet they required no ideologues, as in Germany or France, and no fervent popular movement to sweep them to a powerful position. On the other hand, English nationalism did share with other nationalisms the common framework of community, security and psychological identification. These features will be examined in subsequent chapters with special reference to the role of the English language. What is of equal importance is the way in which English nationalism differs from the uniform building blocks. Its idiosyncrasies and unique features tell us more about the society it sprang from than the more universal features could.

Seton-Watson refers to England as an " old continuous nation ".
(45) Despite a certain dissatisfaction with this concept, it is still useful to understand why he arrives at this conclusion. It could be said that an early and quite small-scale identification of interest was inherent in the combination of Norman and Anglo-Saxon which developed into the state of England. The continuity of this state was enhanced by the fact that it was never threatened from the outside in any serious way. No

invasion took root and the English state spread its influence across the island by conquest and other politically decisive action such as the Acts of Union with Wales and Scotland.

Johannet defines the following countries thus;

" Germany is a race, Egypt a river, Judea a religion, Great Britain an island. " (46)

He is not alone in recognising this insularity as the most notable feature. Elias Canetti too, identifies this as its most evident " crowd symbol ". (47) If King Alfred the Great was the first to appeal to the people of England to unite in order to defeat a foreign threat, then this myth of the island nation standing alone in time of adversity has been exploited countless times through the ages.

Most island nations quickly have to establish an affinity with the sea if they are to retain any independence and it was naval supremacy which, as well as being a central symbol of English nationalism, was a major contributory factor in the world-wide economic and political growth of English influence, expressed in both merchant and military spheres. This allowed its trade to span the globe and, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, to cultivate and protect a vast empire.

In the field of ideas, this insularity has had rather a contradictory effect. Despite the strength of the great national epics, ranging from Shakespeare's history plays and Spenser's Faerie Queen to the poetry of Tennyson and Kipling, English literary culture is often criticised for its limited horizons. Many commentators have found that the thought of this island travels badly and has to rely on the clearing house of countries such as Germany and France in order to revitalise itself. However, by the same token, this suggests that the fact of England's

insularity is an important factor in the building of a strong sense of English nationalism with an exclusive sense of unity.

Its global presence in the modern world and its subsequent economic, political and cultural importance, seem to make the language of the English one of the most vital expressions of English nationalism. Such a powerful and dominant language plays a key role in the unity of belief central to a strong national identity. Barker claims that,

" our language is essentially impatient of any exclusive nationalism," (46) and while that may well be born out in terms of the lexical variety of the language, it certainly ignores the fact that language and nationalism are, as has been illustrated, intrinsically bound together, especially in the case of English nationalism. It also ignores whatever reciprocal effect the spread of the English language and its world influence may have had on the English themselves. It may well be that this combination of factors contributes more than anything else to the 'monoglot prison' of the English and that this, in turn, is one of the chief determiners of what could be considered a typical English world view. Other factors may inform and mould this view but they are primarily expressed through language.

Before it broke from its shores even, the English language had had a huge influence on the development of a coherent and stable state. The most important date, as a historical benchmark, is the year 1362; this is the year in which English, or Middle English to be precise, was used for the ceremonial opening of parliament and which saw it replace Norman French in the conduct of the courts of law.

Although these events were only witnessed by a politically influential minority, the hierarchical process which would eventually

create the conditions fertile for the development of nationalism was set into motion.

The decision by Henry VIII to sever the influence of Roman sovereignty, the Reformation and the rise of printing, as already mentioned, assisted a very real levelling in the language to create a wider and more standardised vernacular readership across the state. The influence of the new literary figures of this age soon enabled the audience to extend beyond the educated literate classes; the new playwrights, in particular, expressed the ideas of political and cultural community which often centred on the fledgling state. The English language began to play a formative role in uniting religious, social and political factors.

England, secure in many ways through its insular position, further cemented its position internally by stabilising its borders and minimising the risk of attack. Thanks to its relative antiquity and the early adoption of a uniform, national language in print, England never really required to develop or adopt an ideology of nationalism or an overt theory of the nation state. Instead it simply grew, apparently spontaneously, and filtered down from an elite, through the burgeoning middle classes to the commercial and later working classes of the Industrial Revolution.

As the first imperialist power in the nineteenth century, English was able to secure for itself a pre-eminent position as a language of international communication, finally ousting French in the diplomatic sphere by the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. The spread of the language enabled two broader concepts to spring out of the English version of nationalism. The first was the idea of Anglo-Saxonism, a transcontinental brotherhood united by common ancestry and language, the other was the idea

of a multi-national British nationalism, as the pride in Empire spread throughout the British Isles and each constituent nation accomplished its own imperialist achievements within the parameters of the British Empire.

The spread of English, unlike for instance the spread of the language of its imperialist rival France, was by and large unpremeditated, was certainly unplanned and lacked any overtly ideological underpinning. It would however be naive to assume that this apparently blundering attitude did not, in fact, mask a largely consensual view of the might, right and desirability of English and Englishness, which did not rely on preaching and idealisation to achieve its ends. In fact, English nationalism by this stage had rapidly and confidently developed into an almost self-evident, common-sense view of its own superiority. The stiff upper lip and 'sang froid' were little more than stereotypical views of the coolness which the English exhibited whenever their apparent certainty in their own superiority was challenged.

The self-evident strength of English nationalism comes as no great historical surprise. Unlike many other nations which relied more or less on myths to sustain the ideological battle for the support of the broader community of the population, England, particularly in the nineteenth century, supplied a constant stream of tangible, material evidence for its claims of superiority. chiefly through its imperialist exploits. Thus English nationalism blossomed and extended itself through imperialism by means of language - the prime example of the silent partner, ever present, ever objective, yet rarely examined, as Seton-Watson rightly observes, as a prime mover in the social-political field. In so many ways the English language could be said to have legitimised the way in which the English nation viewed itself and interpreted its place in the world. Part

of this view, I will argue, is the inherent superiority of the English language, as evidenced by its spread and influence. Likewise, this rarely burst out into open mockery of other languages; normally it was sublimated into a more culturally appropriate ignorance. Legitimation of the most powerful sort has little recourse to self-justification. The English world view is a self-lubricating one, even as it acquires the status of a dinosaur.

This examination of the specific features of English nationalism is necessarily brief as this study will be examining several of its aspects from a more particularly linguistic angle in subsequent chapters. However, I hope that it indicates, in part, how English nationalism fits into the overall pattern while at the same time exhibiting how it has differentiated itself from the norm in several key areas. Not the least important of these areas is the role of language in the formation of English nationalism and its equally central function in the development of attitudes towards language, given its own unique history.

It is evident that the rise of the English language in many ways mirrored the growth of the importance of Britain's commercial and political intervention in world affairs. Before this two main departures dictated the speed of the independent development of the language. The first of these was the break with Norman French in 1362 and the second was the political and religious split from Rome two centuries later. Even though these two events were of great significance to the English language it still took some time to extend fully the new potential at its disposal.

For instance, the Statutes of Kilkenny, written in 1336 to support the status of English in Ireland and which insisted on the use of English surnames instead of the native Irish ones and also upon the use of

English in speech, give one example of the early lack of impact which the English language had. They were written in Norman French.

Despite the rise of a prestigious vernacular literature following the Reformation it was some time before the literary classes themselves actually displayed a full confidence in its autonomy. At first it was the inner inconsistencies of the language which concerned those mindful of its future potential. Caxton, faced with the problem of standardisation for printing, observed that it resembled the moon,

" which is never stedfaste/ but ever Wauerynge
wexyng one season/ and waneth and dycreaseth another season."

(49)

By the seventeenth century, a writer such as Waller could still complain that to write in English was to write in sand;

" poets who lasting marbles seek
must carve in Latin or in Greek." (50)

The fact that English was still by the eighteenth century only standardised in its written form illustrates the limited scope of a national language applied to any but a literate elite. This group was sufficiently confident, by this time, for Swift to call for the establishment of an academy in order to standardise the language further. However, this task of standardisation was largely left to individuals to act upon. Dr Johnson's 'Dictionary' (1755) and Bishop Lowth's 'Introduction to English Grammar' (1762) probably achieved as much in their way than the founding of an English equivalent of the Academie Francaise could have done.

English in the British Isles (1:11)

The spread of the English language has been widely chronicled and its effects on indigenous populations variously examined. It is not the prime concern of this study to further those investigations.

Nevertheless, it is essential to view how English, though an island language, managed at a relatively early stage in its evolution, to oust the influence of any localised and more ancient rivals to its supremacy. At an early stage this struggle was only to gain official recognition at state level; the local populace was little affected and indeed it is unlikely that the Statutes of Kilkenny had any permanent effect. The linguistic battle between English and Celtic which dates from this time belies the fact that there was a political struggle taking place for the dominance of one language over another. These Statutes acknowledged the potential rivalry of the Irish as a threat to the kingdom across the sea.

Any pretence that English took on the mantle of a 'Great British' lingua franca through historical, neutral expediency is mocked by the tell-tale fingerprints of deliberate policy-making towards two of the Celtic languages of the British Isles. Though these various measures could never be considered as an ideologically coherent policy (they are spread over too long a period and were implemented in response to too great a variety of problems) this is in effect one hallmark of most English foreign policy through the centuries. It was not dominated by any uniformity of vision. It was a mixture of policy and compromise. If English nationalism follows this model then certainly its language policies or rather attitudes to other indigenous languages are of the same mould.

Language policy toward Ireland only formed part of the overall

strategy to enable the fledgling English kingdom to survive, independent of French or other foreign influence. This was the driving force behind the Elizabethan and later the Cromwellian desire to stamp out the possibility of Ireland becoming the base for an assault on Protestant England.

The cultural and linguistic effect on the Irish was devastating. Such an enterprise could only have been carried through if its perpetrators had started from the basis that its victims were infinitely expendable to the security of England and therefore of an inferior nature. Therefore, even if the base reason was one of political expediency and even if a lingua franca was a prerequisite for such a co-existence, these circumstances could only develop into anti-Irish prejudice if through the invasion and suppression the axis of superiority/inferiority was translated through the ranks to the common soldier. The effect of this on the political classes of England could only be gauged through the statements of its representatives and the accompanying actions of the military. Attitudes were most commonly mediated through the English language. The paradigmatic illustration that power equals language and vice versa was first translated in purely English terms by the Irish example.

If, from 1800 onwards, the English language had less difficulty in acquiring willing converts among the Irish because of its increased status, the cultural and linguistic framework for the acceptance of the English language had been crystallising for over three hundred years.

In the same way one might have expected the English pragmatism to have allowed the due historical processes to take their toll of the Irish language, but no; enormous energy, both physical and intellectual, was still used and required to remove Irish as the native language of the country. In the nineteenth century it would be extremely difficult to argue

that this had much to do with removing the threat of an Irish invasion or the subversion of the English state; by this period the English had a near-monopoly on naval power.

The linguistic policies of this time designed to discourage the speaking of Irish could be interpreted as an illustration of the intolerant underbelly of a nation which could not bear to stare diversity in the face and was so culturally assured that it could feel almost a missionary satisfaction in the venture.

However, the English were assisted by various contradictory and consensual factors at work among the Irish themselves. As has already been pointed out, the excesses and the brutality of the attempts to crush the language of the Irish were noteworthy for the fact that they ignored the rapid growth of the prestige of the English language.

Daniel O'Connell, the Great Emancipator, did not consider the language question as vital to the independent political destiny of his country. He claimed that he was,

" sufficiently utilitarian not to regret its gradual abandonment." (51)

John Edwards argues that though the English were not blameless, the Irish colluded in the evaporation of their own language. He quotes Brooks as saying,

" it is impossible to stamp out a language which the people are determined to keep alive." (52)

De Freine is even more pointed in his condemnation of the Irish people themselves;

" The worst excesses were not imposed from the outside. The whole paraphernalia of tally sticks, wooden gags and mockery - often

enforced by encouraging children to spy on their brothers and sisters...were not the product of any law or official regulation, but of a social self-generated movement of collective behaviour among the people themselves. Most of the reasons advanced for the suppression of the Irish language are not so much reasons as consequences of the decision to give up the language." (53)

I think it is inappropriate in this context to mete out blame and to talk of the role of a people in the decline of their own language. Language communities are built on consent but that consent is not a totally free choice, independent of other historical factors. Such an approach neglects the very real material facts at play. The historical relationship between the two nations had, as we have seen, always had language in the vanguard. Their relationship had always reflected the economic superiority of the English and this had repercussions on the views held by both the English and the Irish of their respective languages. These more ancient facts combined with more recent ones in the nineteenth century such as the founding of the national school system in Ireland in 1851; it was English-run and the teaching of Irish was excluded.

The decline of the Irish language was certainly not a 'self-generated movement' within the Irish people if viewed as a consequence of an attack on their language which dated back to the Statutes of Kilkenny. What this view ignores is the gradual build-up of forces within Irish society which, at a historically appropriate moment, would accept the English language and take various steps to ensure its success in becoming the language of the nation. With the industrial and commercial success of the English coming on top of centuries of English cultural assertion, the decline of the Irish language became inescapable.

The cultural momentum of the English language also contained the belief in the superiority of the English nation, as postulated as an essential by-product of nationalism. Suppression of the Irish and their language reinforces such a view. It is a closed circle of cultural logic which is hard to date and possibly even more difficult to break. When at its weakest its myths are strongest and at its strongest it is creating new myths.

In this way, blaming the Irish is similar to blaming the African continent for being overrun, exploited and pillaged by the colonial powers.

The complex relationship between language and political power is neatly illustrated by the contrast between the Acts of Union between England and Wales and the 1588 translation of the Bible into Welsh.

For over two hundred years the Welsh language had been retained despite the conquest of the country by the English and despite the establishment of the English rule of law in 1284. However, in 1536 and 1542 the Acts of Union ensured that the Welsh language was excluded from official court and legal procedures.

The impact of the Reformation and the existence of a linguistically and culturally different country to the west of the Irish Sea made the Tudors all the more sensitive to the twin potential dangers of language and religion. Both separately and in combination these could present a potent threat to any country emerging from the shadows of papal dominance. To ensure religious uniformity at least, Bishop Morgan was commissioned by the English to prepare a translation of the Bible into Welsh. Of course this emphasis fitted well into the new Christian ethos with its stress on the use of the vernacular to bring the full cultural impact of the religion to the majority of people. Though Welsh remained

outside official political influence it retained a strong cultural grip through the church.

By 1847 the prejudices which could be considered typical of the English when assessing the merits of other languages within the British Isles had official expression in the 'Report of the Commissioners' or 'Blue Books'. These have become notorious for their anti-Welsh prejudices. Nevertheless, they provide a telling and almost subconscious testimony to the extent to which such attitudes were acceptable and the inevitable outcome of centuries of 'cultural superiority' among the literary and political classes of England.

It is not so much the expression that the Welsh language is an inferior means of communication which is so shocking as the brutally metaphorical language which is used to convey the idea. The authors describe Welsh as,

" a peculiar language isolating the mass from the upper portions of society...The Welsh element is never found at the top of the social scale...his language keeps him under the hatches...in an underworld...and the march of society goes completely over his head.

The Welsh language is a vast drawback to Wales and a manifold barrier to the moral progress and commercial prosperity of the people...it bars the access of improving knowledge to their minds." (54)

Not only was the language itself singled out for criticism, the Eisteddfod, the celebration of the Welsh culture, was also attacked,

" no book on geography, history, chemistry, natural history or any of the useful arts or sciences owes its origin to an Eisteddfod except for two or three treatises on agriculture." (55) In 'The Times' of 1886 the same criticism is voiced,

" an eisteddfod is one of the most mischievous and selfish pieces of sentimentalism...a foolish interference with the natural progress of civilisation and prosperity." (56)

Of course this is no litany of surprising criticism of the Welsh language and its institutions. As has been amply illustrated with this brief summary of certain pivotal events in the history of the growth of English in Ireland and Wales the two countries could not have been unaware of the benefits of speaking the English language. Not to be able to speak it in the British Isles of the nineteenth century, more than ever, meant a virtual exclusion from the economic and commercial mainstream. To condemn the moral or intellectual status of its speakers tells us more perhaps about the attitudes of the English themselves. The compilers of the 'Blue Books' display all the rampant confidence and accompanying scorn of people identified with a nation at the pinnacle of its imperial powers and of course this is identified with 'natural progress' and sees its own language as an important symbol in the vanguard of such progress. Such views, though typical of English nationalism, ignore the historical combination of political influence and material forces. They only see languages as existing in the present, especially if it is a glorious present, and assume that the present linguistic situation is a reflection of some inner worth of the nation.

Nationalism - Conclusion (1:12)

Nationalism is a most pertinent and fertile starting point in the search for the social and psychological roots of the attitudes of one group of language speakers to the languages of other groups for three main reasons.

First, it seems to have provided the material and ideological basis for a communal bonding with which to face the world outside that community. This community may be considered largely imaginary, but this power of imagination nevertheless belies a very conscious consensus within a population for such a community to survive. This social cohesion may have recourse to external institutions or frameworks of belief, such as the British monarchy or the strident Protestantism of British capitalism, to facilitate the inculcation of a value system such as nationalism, yet the English paradigm, because of its long-standing historical antecedents, its insular location and its early elevation, economically and politically, above its island neighbours, could claim to have had a more organic and more consensual basis than most other varieties of nationalism. This meant that it relied less on overt ideology and more on an appeal to a common-sense appreciation of the benefits of belonging to a seemingly long-established English national community.

Second, nationalism depends for its development, to a large extent, on a conviction that one's own national grouping is superior to all others. The individual identity of this group is best preserved, within the context of a nationalist philosophy, through the exclusive and elitist cultivation of what are considered to be the unique qualities of that group. The very narrowness of vision of nationalism is a guarantor of its strength and cohesion. This narrow perspective can also imply a rejection

of other nationalisms and a certain defensive posture.

Third, and most important for the extension of the discussion on the postulated attitudes of the English to speakers of other languages, is the role of language itself in nationalism. Language is a central focal point of any nationalism. It is at once a symbol of the nation and also a means of transmission of other, non-linguistic data necessary for the support of the nation and its claims to pre-eminence.

Language is in fact a vital element in the consensual apparatus of nationalism as it is the only cultural body completely accessible to the majority of people as they progress towards a fuller participation in the national culture. In this way, it provides the nation with possibly its broadest perception of a homogenous community.

Imperialism - Introduction (2.1)

In the case of British imperialism, a nation extended itself, first economically, beyond its original insular power base. Certain aspects of nationalism became more exaggerated through this process.

What need to be examined more specifically are three main areas. First, in what ways did the English nation provide the cultural springboard for the imperial experiment? In what ways did the English nation grow beyond its shores, economically, and become merged, in the English psyche and lexis at least, with the more hazy notion of a British nation, incorporating the already politically enfeebled nations of Wales, Scotland and Ireland? Second, how were certain inherent beliefs in the superiority of the English and their nation enhanced by their involvement in the imperial venture? Third, how did the increase in the political importance of the English language throughout the world function as an aspect of that superiority and that economic power?

All three factors could be considered as legitimising agents in the stability of the English national community as they increased the tangible evidence of the superiority of the English abroad. They also fulfil one of the basic myths of any nationalism which suggests that each nation contains the potential, the traditions and the history which may one day lead it to take the path of a providential mission. A belief in the destiny of the English nation must have provided powerful justification for the superiority of the English and the wisdom of all they did. It also depended on the broadest possible acceptance of the worth of such a venture and the reality of such a viewpoint among the national community for, at their strongest, these could be viewed as nothing short of the destiny of that community itself.

Imperialism - A Definition (2:2)

The Latin root of the term 'imperialism' indicates how ancient the idea of empire is. It is a semantic reminder of the effect that the Latin language and culture has had on the world. To limit ourselves to the Western European perspective, before the Roman Empire came the Greek, which shares with it an awesome prestige in and influence on European culture. Other empires followed, limited in scope or administered at enormous distance, like the Spanish and Portuguese colonies of South America and Asia.

The mainsprings of empire building are too complex and variable to examine in any depth here. They can vary in ambition, in the extent of state involvement in such schemes or in the emphasis on a missionary aspect to the endeavour. The cultural adjuncts of empires may well outlast the other features but it would seem safe to conclude that the pecuniary aspect is the prime mover in the search for markets and merchandise overseas. A nation develops the military and economic facility to invade and subdue other weaker, less well equipped economies and is able to satisfy the increasing expectations at home of an increasing number of people. This in turn bolsters the collective prestige of the citizens of this expanding state who become all too willing to accept that the subservience of its satellite states is a function of the superiority of their own kind. This can be used as one justification for exporting the mother culture and language to these satellite states. In this particular circumstance, the spread of a language was often explained away as a functional requirement of an expanding state, a necessary lingua franca for the facilitation of trade. For the moment, however, it will be enough to examine certain economic factors.

By the nineteenth century European economies had been galvanised by the twin influences of industrialisation and finance capital. These led to a situation in which, certain writers (see below) have concluded, a new and distinct form of imperialism developed.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the economic laws of 'natural selection' had combined with that other key principle of Victorian economics, 'free competition', to provide a very special mixture. The larger trawlers in the world markets continued to reserve increasing portions of the catch for themselves. As the competition grew fiercer and the competitors fewer, those left were forced to concede various monopolies to each other. This was simply because in this hectic struggle there were fewer and fewer opportunities which had not already been spoken for . This tendency towards monopoly increased as raw materials, trade networks and transport facilities were appropriated and consolidated by the major powers.

Lenin, who viewed the development of nineteenth-century imperialism as the highest stage i.e. the most advanced and sophisticated stage of capitalism, defined it simply as, " the monopoly stage of capitalism ". He extends this to include what he considers to be the five most important features of this new phenomenon:

" (i) The concentration of production and capital has developed to such a high stage that it has created monopolies which play a decisive role in economic life; (ii) the merging of bank capital with industrial capital, and the creation, on the basis of this ' finance capital ', of a financial oligarchy; (iii) the export of capital as distinguished from the export of commodities acquires exceptional importance; (iv) the formation of international monopolist capitalist

associations which share the world among themselves, and (v) the territorial division of the whole world among the biggest capitalist powers is completed. " (1)

From a non-Marxist perspective the English economic historian, Hobson, agreed that this phase of economic development called imperialism was a clear and definite break with past traditions:

"The new imperialism differs from the older, first, in substituting for the ambition of a single growing empire the theory and practice of competing empires, each motivated by similar lusts of political aggrandisement and commercial gain; secondly, in the dominance of financial concerns or investing over mercantile interests. " (2)

Such a break with tradition could not spring from nowhere, culturally or economically, and must have had a stable and assured basis upon which to build. This is not to underestimate the revolutionary implications of imperialism for world economies but merely to acknowledge the cultural and economic precedents which did so much to mould the pattern of the particular English experience of imperialism. Indeed before the accelerating rivalries and economies which developed in the late nineteenth century in Europe, culminating in the wars of imperial partition, Britain, to a greater extent than its competitors, had possessed the two prerequisites of imperialism: vast, wealthy colonies and monopoly profit from them. At this stage and using the above criteria writers have maintained that Britain was the first modern imperialist nation.

The crucial area for discussion in this study does not lie in these crude economic distinctions but rather in the cultural implications of such fierce competitiveness. To succeed among such bitter rivalry needed ruthless military, political and economic institutions and a matching

national confidence in the project as a whole. It does not stretch the imagination to suggest that attitudes of self-justification and sense of worth were already well developed among certain English economic classes. The fullest realisation of these characteristics was achieved in the establishment of a vast empire. To what extent did this have a powerful confirmatory effect on the culture and the evaluation of the nation by its people? In other words, did this 'special stage' have special cultural aspects to it, and if so, how did they affect the people of England? This is of vital importance in any identification of the links between imperialism and language attitudes which may have developed out of the English experience of imperialism.

The Cultural Precedents (2:3)

By the turn of the nineteenth century, imperialism was generally viewed, in European terms, as the extension of national policies into a coherent foreign policy. It played an essential role in the growing perception of England at the forefront of competing world powers with a growing army and navy consolidating and extending its colonial possessions.

However, there is a socio-cultural side to this transition from nationalism to imperialism. It seems plausible in cultural terms to suggest that imperialism was a logical extension of an already well-established nationalism. This nationalism succeeded in breaking the insular boundaries which had nurtured it for so long and it asserted itself in dominion over its imperial possessions. In short, nationalism, as defined in chapter 1, seems to have had a brief life, disassociated from imperialism. Indeed, it could be interpreted as having only fully extended itself, in English terms, through its expansion into imperialism.

After centuries of struggle for the English subordination of

Ireland, the country developed into a proto-typical colony. Ireland had provided a goal for expansionist policies as early as the Norman kings, but it was not until Mary Tudor's policy of 'plantation' combined the necessary ingredients of strategic expedience with financial rewards that the conquest began in earnest. Ireland had become a highly convenient base for hostile European powers, so by inducing settlers to go there with offers of cheaper rents and by military repression to suppress any opposition, the English attempted to resolve this threat to their insular security.

The colonists rationalised the brutality of their actions by a whole series of explanations based on the assumption that the Irish people were inferior culturally, morally and economically. Edward Barclay, a member of the Earl of Essex's expedition to slaughter the population of Rathlin Island, concluded,

" how godly a deed to overthrow so wicked a race the world may judge: for my part I think there can be no greater sacrifice to God. " (3)

Ethnically and in terms of religion, the Irish were so different from the English invaders that such assumptions of divine right and superiority flowed easily from contemporary pens in justification of these exploits. In 'A New Description of Ireland', Barnaby Rich wrote in 1610,

" The time hath been, when they lived like Barbarians, in woods, in bogs, and in desolate places, without politic law, or civil government, neither embracing religion, law or mutual love.

That which is hateful to all the world beside is only loved and embraced by the Irish, I mean civil wars and domestic dissensions." (4)

In contrast, Cromwell's aims were more ambitious, economically, as he clearly intended to make Ireland a much more profitable part of the Commonwealth than it had previously been. He also added a further dimension

in missionary vigour and belief in the project. As Liz Curtis writes,

" Cromwell's plan to clear the Irish into the west did not fully succeed, but his campaign and its aftermath left Ireland devastated. In 1641, Ireland's population had been about 1,500,000; ten years later, it had been halved. Some 616,000 people had died (504,000 Irish people and 112,000 settlers and troops). About 40,000 more had left to serve in European armies. A further 100,000 people, many of them beggars, had been rounded up and transported to the new colonies in the Caribbean and America as slaves." (5)

After the colonisation of Ireland, England had gained the momentum to look further afield for its colonies. It was no coincidence that two of the foremost colonisers of Ireland were involved in the earliest settlements of North America: Sir Humphrey Gilbert and Sir Walter Raleigh.

At the very start of their imperial adventure, the English used a combination of civilising zeal and claims that the indigenous culture was inferior to their own to justify their own colonial ambitions. Indeed, Christopher Hill has gone so far as to claim that,

" A great number of civilised Englishmen of the propertied class in the seventeenth century spoke of Irishmen in terms not far removed from those which Nazis used about Slavs, or white South Africans use about the original inhabitants of their country. In each case the contempt rationalised the desire to exploit." (6)

Ireland may well have provided the first, most important test of national resolve, the proof that England had the potential to expand beyond its own shores and found an empire. It illustrated that the English possessed the self-belief and authority to believe in the superiority of

their own values.

Opposition to Cromwell's colonial adventures, from the Levellers, was couched in terms which indicate that there was an appreciation among a certain group of English people, at least, of the readiness of the English state to tyrannise and exploit other groups of people:

" Our merchants, they travel by sea and land to make Christian proselytes, chiefly our Indian merchants: but consider their practises, and the profit we have by their double dealing, first in robbing of the poor Indians of that which God hath given them, and then in bringing of it home to us, that we thereby may the better set forth and show the pride of our hearts in decking our proud carcasses, and feeding our greedy guts with superfluous unnecessary curiosities." (7)

Naval Power and Imperialism (2:4)

The example of the British navy in both its commercial and military manifestations is a perfect symbol of the developing nationalism and increasing self-esteem of the British. Historically, it was with the defeat of the Spanish Armada that British naval supremacy was first achieved; this in turn allowed its overseas exploration to begin.

This military springboard enabled Britain throughout the Baroque period of art and literature to develop, according to Gollwitzer, as a second Venice led by an aristocratic elite, rivalling the Papal hegemony in its cultural and political influence. (8)

Boutny, in his 'Study of the Political Psychology of the English People', also identifies naval power as an essential ingredient of the English national psychology. In his view it was,

" this combination of mercantilism, naval supremacy and insular

position (which) gave rise to an aggressive, conquering nation. " (9)

It was a key element in those distinctive features of the new style of imperialism identified by both Lenin and Hobson: competition between rival empires and the importance of investment. The economy was inextricably linked with the naval aspects of foreign policy and imperial trade. Bristol, Liverpool and Glasgow survive as fossilised evidence of the impact of overseas shipping and the re-export of colonial raw materials into the twentieth century. The shipbuilding companies of Vickers, Brown and Armstrong became synonymous with the successful industrial base of a healthy colonial economy. The navy also provided the nation with two of its most genuinely popular heroes in Drake and Nelson.

From Nationalism To Imperialism (2;5)

Despite the fact that imperialism in the nineteenth century was, as we have seen, primarily an economic phenomenon, it also required fully fledged cultural support for it to achieve its fullest potential.

There existed a tendency to view British imperialism as rising above the more narrow concerns of parochial, sectional nationalism, yet most supporters of imperialist policies were under no illusions that the supposed ascendancy of an Anglo-Saxon culture over the four corners of the earth was a manifestation of such a fundamentally national-based movement. As Britain's imperial effort peaked economically its cultural reflection took on an increasingly nationalist rhetoric. This was strengthened however by the unprecedented scope of the influence which had accrued to the founder nation. Indeed so influential was the basic nationalism of the British imperial effort that Gollwitzer is able to cite the speech by Disraeli at Crystal Palace in 1872 as the breakthrough of imperialism into the public psyche and note that it was based on " the antithesis between

cosmopolitan and national attitudes of mind and commended the British Imperium to the latter ". (10)

However, beyond this pragmatic, almost mundane approach, there developed certain cultural accompaniments to empire. Pride in the empire's democratic political tradition, in its literary and dramatic heritage blossomed into a fully blown imperial culture, complete with national anthem and colourful pageants and raised the Anglo-Saxon political and linguistic communities on to a platform from which to address a world audience. That they did so successfully is a measure of the extent to which this new-found role flowed from the former national self-image of the English: solid, confident and assertive. Imperialism, or more specifically, its British manifestation, could not have developed as it did without its foundations in a confident and assured sense of national worth. Lord Rosebery defined this urge to extend beyond nationalism and into imperialism as,

" that greater pride in Empire which is called Imperialism and is a larger patriotism. " (11) Furthermore, Gollwitzer has crystallised these nationally inspired undercurrents in imperialism in this way:

" the psychic disposition to a 'ne plus ultra' attitude was reached only when pride in former political achievements, in the excellence of the national character and the inherent genius of the nation itself, had developed to a high degree; when national self-confidence dominated all public pronouncements and national traditions were raised to the level of cultural standards." (12) This cultural context justified and extended nationalism in the same movement on to that higher, world rostrum of imperialism.

The Legitimation of Empire (2:6)

Perhaps the most necessary ingredient in the transition from nationalism to imperialism during this period of British history is legitimation. By this I mean the various ways in which the ideals and goals of the British Empire became accepted as reasonable propositions, raising standards of living and national pride at one and the same time.

This process can be divided into two parts for a more lucid consideration. First, there is that extension of a differentiated nationalism from the point of view of an elitist perception of one's own national culture, e.g. elevating one's own estimation of the national culture through a direct comparison with other 'inferior' and conquered cultures. Second, there are material forms of legitimation - improved living standards and perceived improvements in the practical qualities of life towards the end of the nineteenth century as brought about by the empire, in the popular imagination.

The Cult of Superiority (2:7)

The annexation of Scotland and Wales and the colonisation of Ireland had all paved the way for the assumption of certain expansionist ambition. England already held a pre-eminent position in its immediate sphere of influence. This soon extended itself to a growing influence over colonial possessions further away. On first sight a causal link between this expansive characteristic of English nationalism and the growth of confidence in its own abilities at the dawn of the imperialist age certainly seems tenable. It would appear that this geo-political spreading of influence coincided with a new upsurge of self-belief in a national context. This was reflected in the elevation of ideas of superiority based on English ethnicity into an ideology which was quite distinct from the

laissez-faire attitude of previous pragmatic foreign policies.

As British influence spread abroad it was reinforced by a quasi-religious belief in the supremacy of an Anglo-Saxon grouping. The nationalist basis for this elevation above other European and world cultural groups had the English language as a central unifying factor. Britain could, through its economy and its institutions, expressed in English, view itself as the natural leader of such a transnational commonwealth. Its partners were vital to the central prestige of the venture. They confirmed the status of Britain at the head of the 'civilised' world. Not surprisingly, traditional Christian imagery was often used to talk of the challenge which an empire cast down before the nation. Personification of the British nation as a Christian soul about to face its sternest test was common. Charles Dilke, that great imperialist propagandist, considered,

"the possession of India offered Great Britain that element of vastness of dominion which in this age is needed to secure width of thought and nobility of purpose." (13) A similar example is to be found when Curzon exhorts the nation in the following fashion,

" Remember first and foremost that India remains the great test of British character and heroism; a high grade of courage and a plenitude of worthy self-confidence must carry us forward and sustain us to the end of the road." Such were the ennobling qualities of the mission for the British nation. (14)

The status of the English language became a key issue in the development of the empire. This was evident not only in the use of English as an international language of trade and administration but also in the imperialist literature which developed as a key feature of the cultural rationale for English supremacy.

Dilke was a confirmed advocate of this philosophy of national superiority. In Dilke's 'Greater Britain: a record of travels in English speaking countries. 1866-1867', Gollwitzer notes " an exuberant optimism regarding the Anglo-Saxon race and its civilisation ". (15)

Dilke saw the power and stature of the English language and laws which for him illustrated the genius of their people wherever he travelled. In the U.S.A. he observed, " through America, England is speaking to the world... Alfred's laws and Chaucer's tongue are theirs whether they will it or no." (16) He claimed that England had, " planted greater Englands across the sea ".

Kipling, the best known and most often quoted of the imperialist poets, categorised as " a poet of militarist, expansionist patriotism, " (17) was stirred throughout his career by the conviction that the Anglo-Saxon 'race' would ultimately rule the world and its language would be the global means of communication. He was not so far wide of the mark on the second point. This had far-reaching connotations as English was fast becoming identified quite explicitly with all that was best in the Christian tradition.

" The English language, saturated with Christian ideas, gathering up into itself the best thoughts of all the ages, is the last great agent of Christian civilisation throughout the world; at this moment affecting the destinies and moulding the character of half the human race.....it seems chosen, like its people, to rule in future times in still greater degree in all corners of the world. " (18)

As has been already indicated, these growing assertions of authority and superiority depended for their consistency on the almost ritual recognition of the inferior nature of other peoples. This was the

mirror image of British ascendancy. If, in psychological terms, the English increasingly defined themselves through the inferiority of other 'out-groups', then at the blossoming of the fully blown imperial achievement this relegated a huge section of the population of the globe to the status of underlings.

Reich has observed with acid perception that,

" there is a direct connection between dominion over animals and the racial dominion over the black man, the Jew or the Frenchman. It is clear that one prefers to be a gentleman rather than an animal." (19) For sentiments similar to these to surface as a direct consequence of Britain's success abroad all that was needed was a pseudo-scientific rationale to smooth over the cruder implications of such a philosophy and the national will to turn it into a perceived reality.

Darwinism had been appropriated as the leading scientific explanation of the existence of 'higher races'. The sense of mission conspicuous in so much imperialist literature could have been much weaker, to say the least, if such a theoretical respectability had not existed. Throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century, the writings of adherents to the idea of innate racial superiority such as Gobineau had won a wider readership and acceptance for the hybrid of social-Darwinism. This became a common denominator in social and even economic fields to justify aggression and the 'survival of the fittest'.

Instead of God, or perhaps as well as God, science could now claim to be on the side which was winning. We have already seen how nationalism can be interpreted as providing a recompense for people whose personal prestige and position in a stable environment have been shattered. In the creation of a national identity people can become citizens of an

entity which may confer upon them the sense of belonging and unity of purpose which had been stripped from them. During the period of expansive imperialism the people of Britain had the opportunity to merge themselves in the strength and glory of the nation's achievements and share in a glow of satisfaction simply by being British. Nationalism, in the context of increasing competition between nations, could be said to involve a large degree of sadism. It attempts to incorporate the outsider as a mere accessory and to strengthen the individual through dominance over others. The extent to which imperialism enabled these tendencies to flourish could not help but have an important effect on the way the British saw themselves and their role in the world. Seemingly objective reasons for this ever increasing influence acted as a nutrient to a general sense of superiority which had possessed considerable potential even before this period.

As an example of how the British used the assertion that another culture was inferior to their own India provides some of the most consistent and earliest examples. In 1813 Lord Hastings wrote,

" the Hindoo appears a being nearly limited to mere animal functions and even in them indifferent. Their proficiency and skill in the several lines of occupation to which they are restricted are little more than the dexterity which any animal with similar conformation but with no higher intellect than a dog, an elephant or a monkey might be supposed to be capable of attaining. It is enough to see this in order to have full conviction that such a people can at no period have been more advanced in civil policy." (20) It is hardly surprising that after early incursions when they attempted to " make themselves agreeable to the Indians " (21) the British felt the urge to bar any Indian from posts in government service before the end of the eighteenth century and to take it upon

themselves to rule this country.

The decision that English should be the language of education in India bears the hallmark of a superior attitude to the indigenous culture. However, the unifying effect of English as a lingua franca on a nation as culturally and linguistically diverse as India could equally be interpreted as a pragmatic expedient to facilitate the running of the colony. The cumulative effect on the British may have been to enhance their apparent superiority yet its intent could well have been merely instrumental.

Often British feelings of superiority were tempered by a curious ambivalence. Their insularity was often expressed through a reluctance to get on and engage in the total 'mission civilisatrice'. Given the linguistic state of affairs which developed the British had little incentive to learn anything but the most rudimentary commands and nomenclatures in the indigenous languages. In fact Mazrui observes this apparent contradiction in comparing the British imperial experience to that of the French effort:

" the English people on the other hand, were less pre-occupied with the imperative of spreading their language , on the contrary, they were sometimes arrogantly possessive about it, particularly in their colonies. It became a point of honour sometimes to maintain their linguistic distance." (22)

It seems hardly surprising that the British became so enveloped in their own fictions of superiority and subsequently so detached from what was happening around them in their colonies that they were able to parody the people, their customs and their languages in simplistic evaluations.

James Hill's 'The History of British India' is a typical example of this era. For him, as for many of his contemporaries, conquered meant that the nation and its people automatically belonged to a lower stratum of humanity.

" Their laws and institutions are adapted to the very state of society which those who visit them now behold, such as could neither begin nor exist, under any other than one of the rudest and weakest states of the human mind." (23) Views such as these added fuel to the vicarious sense of superiority which many back in England already felt. They were further encouraged by the academic respectability which such writers added to their prejudice. Hill's book and others of similar tone were widely used to prepare students about to embark on a career in the Indian civil service.

Yet for all its scope, for all the rhetoric of superior civilisation, for all its occasional attempts to extend an Anglo-Saxon influence to the four corners of the world, the British Empire seemed to express itself often in an aloof fashion. Its vision of imperialism was certainly rather restrained when compared for instance with the French model. The British seemed at the very least reluctant to express whatever notions of superiority which they felt in any form of civilising mission. They preferred to take the money and run and then bask in the glory of governing half the world. At times, behind all the bluster, it appeared that the British model of imperialism owed more to the insularity of its island homeland.

Popular Legitimation (2:8)

The implications of empire, then, came quite naturally to the British, nurtured as they were in the context of a strongly competitive and insular nation. The idea of superiority is not one which needs to be forced

on people too strongly for it to be accepted. Yet for it to be taken into the mainstream of British culture as a feature of the national self-image it needed considerable objective and tangible proof. After all, it had to convince the ordinary people of the country, who had no direct contact with these imperial possessions or knowledge of the complex forces which had taken the British there, that not only were they part of this great enterprise but also that their living standards and general level of being was improved by that coincidence of birth of being both British and a participant in the imperial culture. This needed something firmer than a merely psychological base; it needed and received solid facts to legitimate the imperial venture across every section of society. This legitimation was what Spenser Wilkinson was referring to when he wrote,

" if the British Empire is to fill its true place in the world it must first find its true place in the heart of its own subjects: they must have a reason for the national faith that is placed in them." (24)

In a letter to Marx in 1858 Engels wrote,

" the English proletariat is actually becoming more and more bourgeois, so that the most bourgeois of nations is apparently aiming ultimately at the possession of a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat alongside the bourgeoisie. For a nation which exploits the whole world this is of course to a certain extent justifiable." (25)

Despite the ironic tone of the extract, he repeats his point some twenty years later in a letter to Kautsky,

" you ask me what the English workers think about colonial policy. Well, exactly what they think about politics in general. There is no workers' party here, there are only Conservatives and Liberal radicals, and the workers gaily share the feast of England's monopoly of the world

market and the colonies." (26)

The possession of very rich colonies and at one point an industrial monopoly meant that the material and financial benefits could in part be filtered back through to the ordinary British worker. These rewards could be expressed either in improving living standards or increased political representation. Cecil Rhodes it was, who, aware of the heightened tensions of industrialisation, observed that if you wanted to avoid civil war then you must become an imperialist. At this stage imperialism was able to counter the equation of industrialisation and class war with the bolstering and extension of a sense of national community and increased efficiency in a very tangible manner.

Hobsbawm notes that,

" From 1871 they (skilled labourers) even achieved the first legal recognition of non-religious leisure, the Bank Holidays.....By the early 1870s trade unionism was officially accepted and recognised, where it had succeeded in establishing itself. " (27) Such concessions could be seen as the beneficial returns of a prosperous economy founded on a thriving empire. They could also have formed part of the chain of thought which might persuade the British worker that his country was a better place to be and that he had an important role to play in maintaining that distance between Britain and other nations. That, however, may be pushing speculation too far.

It is interesting, nevertheless, that Hobsbawm draws attention to a certain discrepancy of awareness of actual living standards during the years 1850-1879:

" taken by and large the lives of most Britons improved in the 'golden years', though perhaps not so much as contemporaries thought." (28)

The interpretation of contemporaries was obviously crucial as it seemed to endorse the success of the nation through its imperialist policies. The Empire did bring many tangible rewards, political and material, to the people of Britain and this is again emphasised by Hobsbawn when he states that,

" the 'Great Depression' brought important changes. Probably the most rapid general improvement in the conditions of life of the nineteenth century worker took place in the years 1880-1895, mitigated only by the somewhat higher unemployment of this period. This is because falling living costs benefit the poorest as well as the rest, indeed proportionately more than the rest, and the 'Depression' was,..... primarily a period of falling prices - but they fell largely because an entire new world of cheap, imported, foodstuffs opened before the British people. " (29)

Imperialism - Conclusion (3:9)

Nationalism can therefore be considered to have transferred certain of its main preoccupations to the pursuit of broader imperialist goals, especially in the enormously prestigious English experience.

The extension of England's economic and political power base had various cultural spin-offs. There was a broad identification with the prestige of the nation and an increasing tendency to view other subordinate nations and dominions as inferior, and often as expendable.

One of the chief features of the British Empire was the growth of the influence of the English language in external affairs, locally and on a global scale.

What needs to be clarified is the specific role which language played, during this period as well as subsequently, in the formation of English attitudes to other languages. These must be viewed in the light of the twin aspects of nationalism, extended into an imperial setting. These two features are: the role it played in the legitimation of the British imperial experience, and the role played by language itself in the feelings of superiority encouraged by the philosophical framework of nationalism. As has been adequately illustrated above, these two are inextricably linked in the culture of a successful nation. What needs to be highlighted further is the way in which language provides a central consensual focus and channel for the communication of such notions of superiority.

Linguistic Relativity - Introduction (3:1)

The interconnection of any language and the world view of its speakers has been a widely and often inconclusively debated area of discussion for students of linguistics. However, since the main purpose of this study is to extrapolate the attitudes of the English to languages other than English, it is of the utmost relevance to address this field with a view to developing a specifically English angle of approach.

First, a general statement must be made of the two dominant trends in the field of what is commonly referred to as linguistic relativity. The first is the German tradition which has its roots in the German Romantic movement and most interestingly in the philosophies of the German nationalist movement. The second is the twentieth-century American tradition, again, interestingly enough, issuing from studies of native American languages soon to be supplanted by the dominance of transatlantic English.

Since language is primarily a socially based phenomenon, this survey must attempt to place linguistic relativity in its social context with particular emphasis on the links between language and the national language community. In other words, how do the speakers of a language view the world outside their nation through their language? Furthermore does this view depend to an extent on their language and does it affect their perception of themselves and their place in the world?

As has already been amply illustrated, nationalism has played an influential role in the bonding and unity of nations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and, since language plays such a major part in this identification, the relationship between language and world view is central

to our main interest here: the relationship between the English, their language and their attitudes to other languages.

Linguistic Relativity (3:2)

In an examination of English cultural attitudes towards foreign language communities, it is essential to assess what link, if any, exists between the language used in a country and the way in which its speakers view and interpret the world. For the purposes of this study it will be sufficient to concentrate on the interpretation of the world outside the English-speaking British Isles.

Language is not only a means of communication pure and simple. It is also a social and cultural construct and as such it is always worth noting what is being communicated outside the realm of the purely linguistic. Indeed, the 'extra-linguistic' is just as much a part of what is being communicated as the purely syntactic, phonological and semantic elements. It is frequently the focal point for the struggles between different and conflicting groups; it is a way of obtaining and wielding power.

The Bible gives one of the earliest examples of this when it relates how Adam was allowed to name all the other animals and also his spouse, Eve. In such a way Man's dominion over both the animal kingdom and the first woman is established by means of language. Moreover, it is not mentioned whether Eve liked the name or not, further emphasising the finality of this expression of power through language.

A more recent example of the power of language through naming occurred immediately after Rhodesia won its struggle for independence in 1980. In throwing off the name commemorating the man who first brought the country under white colonial rule, the new government emphasised the change of direction the country was taking under its new black leadership.

However, the fact that the official business of Zimbabwe continues to be conducted in English could be interpreted as emphasizing the country's British colonial past.

Language can also act as a focus for a wider and more ancient historical struggle. Plaid Cymru have used the issue of the Welsh language as a central feature in their fight for an independent Wales. Their members have painted out road signs written in English, disrupted broadcasts in English to highlight the need for a Welsh language television station and one, Gwynfor Evans, threatened to fast to death over the lack of a specifically Welsh element on Channel Four.

'Linguistic relativity', 'linguistic determinism' and 'language loyalty' are three among various attempts to label the postulated interconnection of language and culture. The concept of language loyalty, the weakest form of the three suggests, that as language is both a symbolic and communal expression of the identity of a particular people, it can become a symbol of a particular group or movement but this does nothing to explain why language and not something else should assume this role. A stronger version, linguistic determinism, suggests that there exists a link between language and the cognition of the linguistic community which is rooted primarily at an exclusively linguistic level. This theory holds that since language is the single most important factor holding a society together, it tends to determine the culture, the thinking and the way of looking at the world which that society shares. In its strongest form this version suggests that this is achieved through the linguistic categories of the language alone.

Since the study of language constantly and increasingly overlaps with other disciplines concerning the study of human behaviour, psychology,

sociology and physiology, it is hardly surprising that these relationships between language and the speakers' interpretations of the world are widely and vociferously debated within the academic community. Any change of vogue in these fields tends to affect the perceived validity of theories of linguistic-cultural relativity.

The German Tradition 3:3

There appear to be two principal developments of these theories, both conscious of their sources and intellectual antecedents. One is predominantly German and the other American, but both have grown primarily as attempts to answer certain fundamental questions within specific cultures.

The German branch, as first and most exhaustively researched by Von Humboldt, arose from the twin catalysts of the German Romantic and Nationalist movements in the early nineteenth century. Miller has traced the intellectual roots of this aspect of Von Humboldt's thinking back to the dissatisfaction felt at what was seen as Kant's emphasis on reason as the most direct and immediate form of experience. He quotes Grunder's summary of the position of Hannan, one of Kant's harshest critics, in his reply to Kant's 'Critique of Pure Reason,'

" Language as such.....is never simply general, but rather is always the specific language....Each language....represents its own world, is bound up...with all thinking and realizes, as its base and support, the presence of reason in historic existence. No more than there is thought free of language, is there a supra-historical and ahistorical reason." (1)

Though Hannan's riposte can be viewed with hindsight as an oversimplification it must be remembered that the development of such theories of language was not merely intellectual duelling. It took place, as

mentioned above, at a critical point in German history between Herder and the Romantics with their emphasis on the spirit through the medium of language. Brown, in 'Von Humboldt's Conception of Linguistic Relativity', stresses that,

" it was a fairly easy step from the belief that language was expressive of individual emotions, to the belief that language was expressive of the collective characteristics of nations. "(2)

If such theories assisted and accelerated the growth of an embryonic German nationalism, they were given added impetus by the growing reaction against the literature of France which had had such a great influence German literary circles throughout the eighteenth century. In fact, Herder's assertion that,

" a people's genius reveals itself nowhere better than in the physiognomy of its speech, " (3) is ample illustration of the growing confidence of the German nation in the value of its own language. Such statements had added relevance when one takes note of Fichte's claim at the time that German was a more authentic repository for the spirit of the nation as it was an original language, unlike French which was the descendent of a language spoken by foreign invaders.

Without quite the panache of Fichte's nationalistic rhetoric, Von Humboldt states the view somewhat more clinically;

" The interdependence of word and idea shows us clearly that languages are not actually means of representing a truth already known, but of discovering the previously unknown. Their diversity is not one of sounds and sights but of a diversity of world perspectives" (Weltansichten).

(4)

Von Humboldt's writings on this subject are strong on

philosophical insight, especially when viewed in conjunction with the growth of the German Romantic movement. His work was extended and systemised in the 1920s and 1930s in Germany by writers such as Trier and Weisgerber who developed an overtly neo-Humboldtian theory of the relationship between thought and language. It could be argued that the stage had been set for them by the renewed emphasis which had been placed on the sociological aspect of language by a writer as influential as de Saussure. He maintained that,

" language can be compared to a sheet of paper; thought is the front and sound is the back; one cannot cut the front without cutting the back at the same time." (5)

Thus he stresses a crucial insight in the debate. Language exists largely and almost exclusively beyond the control of any individual in a language community. This supraindividual status of language means that no individual can affect the linguistic consensus of a community or the totality of language shared by each member of that community. In developing this idea de Saussure defines the difference between a word's 'signification' and its 'value'.

" Its content is really fixed only by the concurrence of everything which exists outside it. Being part of the system, it is endowed not only with a signification but also and especially with a value, and this is something quite different....The difference in value between 'mouton' (Fr) and sheep is that sheep has beside it a second term while the French word does not. " (6)

'Signification' may be defined for the purpose of this study as the relationship between the concept described by a particular word in a specific language and the linguistic entity of the word itself. 'Value' is

defined by David Crystal thus;

" A term introduced into linguistics by Ferdinand de Saussure to refer to the functional identity of an entity when seen in the context of a rule-governed system. In his view, language is a system of independent terms, in which the 'value' of each term results solely from the simultaneous presence of the others. " (7)

Between them Trier and Weisgerber developed de Saussure's concepts of sign and value and incorporated them into a meticulous and probing examination of linguistic relativity. Their theories hinge upon three key elements: the linguistic sign, the linguistic field and a process which they observed in language for which the term 'hypostatisation' was coined. (see below)

While acknowledging the arbitrary nature of the relationship between content and form in a word, their theories on language extend the relationship between the linguistic sign and the objects, states of affairs and even concepts which they denote to incorporate a broader lexical chain of relationships. The linguistic field theorists view the vocabulary of a language as a system of interconnected networks with lexical items each defining the totality of the system by their place and relationship to the whole. Trier defines his concept of the linguistic field thus;

"every language is a system of selection over and against objective reality. As a matter of fact, every language creates a self-sufficient and complete image of reality....Every language structures reality in its own manner and thereby establishes the components of reality which are peculiar to this given language." (8)

Weisgerber also claims that each word has a precise value and that this is determined by its position within the field where it belongs and seems to go further in the view that the vocabulary of a language is a

more decisive factor than grammar in determining the perception of its speakers. Miller summarises it thus:

"Being able to use a word 'correctly' (that is in accordance with some standard of usage adopted by a speech community) and 'unconsciously' is decisive evidence for Weisgerber that language possesses 'built-in' categories through which we apprehend reality." (9)

Central to this particular theory of linguistic field is the concept of hypostatisation, by which words in a language assume an independence and solidity divorced from the seemingly imprecise routine of daily usage; this process views the content of a word as defined by the social and historical conditions of its usage almost as a social convention. Leisi defines hypostatisation as the tendency of language,

"to reify...every phenomenon of any sort, in so far as it can be designated by one word, and to endow it with an existence independent of, and detached from other phenomena, that is, to elevate it to an accidentless substance....Thus, language forces us more or less to perceive in 'journey', 'hip', 'family', 'billow', an independent, detached 'object': in 'green', 'empty', 'close', an independent detached 'quality': in 'stand', 'wait', 'begin', a detached, independent 'activity'." (10)

The stress laid on the 'accidentless' aspect of this theory seems to come close to questioning the arbitrary link between word and thing and suggests an almost deliberate, yet scarcely conscious, cultural identification with the vocabulary of a language. This is a very potent possibility and yet as expressed above it seems too generalised, too vague. It comes close to an oversimplified idealisation of language as a rather finite linguistic state whose concepts are rigidly embodied in its vocabulary.

The main criticisms of this theories of linguistic relativity have tended to come from two general directions. The first is that Weisgerber only uses Indo-European languages as referents, thus limiting the perspective of cultural relativity in the linguistic field to one in which the languages he contrasts all share some features. The second common criticism is that it relies too heavily on translation between the referent languages. In expanding this second criticism, it seems pertinent to quote Brown's broader analysis of the linguistic relativity theorists:

"...it must be further pointed out that any theorist who holds to a strong version of linguistic relativity is bound also to support a particular view about the nature of language as a set of social and historical events. For if language is to be the independent variable in some sort of causal system involving both linguistic and non-linguistic behaviour, then language has to be seen as occupying a special status language is commonly seen as the product of man's innate needs, or more frequently as the result of his reaction to a particular environmental situation. To make the transition to the belief that language, at a later stage, becomes the independent variable, it has to be assumed, implicitly or explicitly, that language has some type of inner dynamic, whereby it grows along lines determined by its own original structure, and in so doing develops a structure that is no longer congruent with the structure of the behaviour in the attendant culture; or alternatively, or in addition, it has to be assumed that cultural behaviour changes over time, whereas language changes more slowly, or not at all, and so to the same degree comes to be poorly fitted, in a congruential sense, to the patterns of attendant non-linguistic behaviour." (11)

It seems apparent from this concise encapsulation of the

philosophical implications of the theory that a simple translation method of comparison does not address these fundamental cultural problems. It appears, and it will be one of the tasks of this study to illustrate, that linguistic relativism is a relevant factor in the examination of a particular language community's world view. However, it is not any 'inner dynamic' working on words within a purely linguistic field which is of greatest interest here; rather it will be an outer, social dynamic working on the definition of words within a specific cultural field.

The main stumbling block to accepting these theories to a writer such as Miller is the concept of hypostatisation. He concludes,

" once it is recognised that words are not embodiments of invarient meanings, then much of the evidence brought forward by Weisgerber to show that speakers of different languages cognise differently is questionable. "(12)

What Weisgerber and Trier lack seems to be a little of the crude honesty of Fichte, Herder and Von Humboldt in attempting to explain the content of a nation's genius through its language. Although this was part of a growing nationalism, a search for a more independent linguistic identity, as well as being an overstated simplification, it did illustrate that, undeniably, a link existed between a language and the sense of national identity of its speakers. They also directly contributed to the intellectual development of such an identity while Weisgerber is often, by comparison, working in a cultural vacuum. He focusses too narrowly on the links between the language and the actual cognitive processes of its speakers. Indeed, in the twentieth century, with the growth of conflicting nationalisms, it seems of marginal interest to examine the differing categorisation and social identity within the linguistic fields of taste,

smell, colour, season, time and vegetation, as Weisgerber did, and suggest that these perceptions can alter the world view of a nation. Languages somehow embody the power and status of countries and, in so far as Weisgerber's theories remain too close to the actual conceptual processes of a language, they tend to ignore the social and political implications of the power vested in it.

Obviously, neither Weisgerber nor Trier would defend a definition of linguistic field or even hypostatization which ignored the variation and change which occur within the lexis of a language, and yet they undoubtedly underestimate the historical struggle for meaning and change. How do changes occur and can they be accepted as central factors in the study of attitudes and the way that they pass through and even affect the language of a nation? This seems to be a more critical relationship of language to world view.

Miller appears to be over-critical of the concept of 'general consciousness' in Weisgerber's theories of linguistic 'Weltanschauung'. Perhaps it is too vaguely expressed, being so devoid of real social content, but just how a general consciousness develops and whether it can be transmitted through language are surely key linguistic issues to be resolved. Miller insists,

" Even if we agreed to consider words that occur with a certain frequency as belonging to 'the general consciousness', would not the fact that no two individuals possess, either passively or actively, identical total vocabularies, and yet are usually able to communicate reasonably well with one another, mean that even the words they possessed in common would not have the same 'values' for each speaker." (13)

The severity of this criticism, in fact, is merely a function of

the narrowness of the original emphasis on the actual cognitive links between a lexis and the thought processes of its users. It is an approach attacked also by Lennenberg writing from a more physiological standpoint and criticising the work done by another linguistic relativist, Cassirer:

" From the proposition that language and knowledge constitute an entity it need not follow that individual words correspond to specific 'units' of knowledge... There is no cogent reason to assume that the grammarians' articulation of the stream of speech is coterminous with an articulation of knowledge or the intellect. " (14)

If these theories seem to be untenable from a purely linguistic point of view let us not forget that language cannot exist in the abstract, divorced from its social and historical functions. The central question in the debate on linguistic relativity does not seem to have been addressed. That is, to what extent does language play a determining role in the attitudes of its speakers to other cultural groups? This is almost certainly not a narrow cognitive problem but one with important cultural and political implications. Since language is a symbolic representation of culture and also a primary means of maintaining interaction between individuals and groups it seems well worth examining what is meant by a general consciousness within a language community, how this can be communicated to others beyond that community and whether it is possible to incorporate ideas about attitude into that consciousness through the medium of language. This will be of central significance in later chapters on attitudes to foreign languages within English culture.

The second main branch of theory concerning linguistic relativity is predominantly American. It is centred on the 'Whorfian Hypothesis', named after the American scholar Benjamin Lee Whorf.

Since Whorf's linguistic and philosophical postulations do not refer directly to any of the research or tradition referred to above, Haugen suggests that this was due to a general ignorance of European linguistic research among American academics at that time.

It was, nevertheless, Franz Boas, a German by birth and training and aware of the strong tradition of linguistic relativity within German thought, who initiated the discussion which was to lead to the work of both Edwin Sapir and Whorf in this area. Writing in 1911, Boas cautiously proposed,

" the peculiar characteristics of languages are clearly reflected in the views and customs of the peoples of the world," (15) and while taking great care to stress the metaphorical nature of this relationship he denied that,

" a certain state of culture is conditioned by morphological traits of the language." (16)

In fact, it was from Sapir that Whorf received the greatest stimulus and encouragement. Frequently Sapir exhibits a good deal of enthusiasm for a relatively strong link between thought and language, with some qualification. Such a theory is today, despite much painstaking research, almost impossible to prove either way. Authors tend to align more or less philosophically as absolute empirical proof is extremely fragmented.

Basing his observations on the languages of the American

Indians, Sapir concludes that speakers of different languages, to some extent, inhabit different worlds since the kind of language they speak conditions the way that they experience the world and interpret their experiences:

" we see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose us to certain interpretations. " (17) According to Sapir,

" no two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not just the same worlds with different labels attached. " (18)

This is about as far as Sapir seems to want to travel down the road to linguistic determinism. Although he had broken with Boas in considering the syntax of the language as the single most important factor, he still writes in terms of predisposition and stresses the sociological aspect of language within a culture. Even at this point he is unwilling to commit himself to a position of cognitive relativity between speakers of different languages but prefers to state his belief in the sociological differential between the linguistic cultures of different speech communities.

What distinguishes Whorf from his original mentor Sapir is his conviction that our experience of the world is determined for us by the categories, largely syntactic, in which it is discussed within our native speech community. Whorf insists that,

" the linguistic system (in other words the grammar) of each language is not merely a reproducing instrument for voicing ideas but rather is itself the shaper of ideas, the program and the guide for the

individual's mental activity, for his analysis of impression, for his synthesis of his mental stock in trade....We dissect nature along the lines laid down by our own native language. The categories and types that we isolate from the world of phenomena, we do not find there because they stare every observer in the face; on the contrary, the world is presented in a kaleidoscopic flux of impressions which has to be organised by our minds and this means largely by the linguistic systems in our minds." (19)

According to this extreme hypothesis of linguistic determinism, Whorf is denying the universality of such categories as space, time and motion in the rational framework, as laid down by Kant, among others, to return to the German philosophical tradition for a moment.

Throughout the late 1940s and early 1950s, Whorf received support and encouragement from such figures of the academic establishment as Trager, Carroll and Hoijer who, though intrigued by the ethnological and anthropological implications of his theories, were careful to distance themselves from his more extreme and even mystical pronouncements. For instance, Hoijer, in his introduction to 'Language in Culture', concludes that Whorf's theories on the cognitive-shaping influence of language upon thought;

" if they are valid to the extent that languages differ markedly from one another, so we should expect to find significant and formidable barriers to cross-cultural communication and understanding...No culture is wholly isolated, self-contained and unique." (20) He also stresses that there are biological, sociological and psychological characteristics common to all humanity around which all cultures are built.

In claiming that different languages affect a qualitative difference in the way that their native speakers report and also define

reality, Whorf focusses on the least conscious of linguistic categories, the grammar. Haugen typifies a common complaint that this is unsatisfactory for the purposes of synchronic language study because,

" the speaker has no choice but to observe them (the grammatical categories) as the conventions are implanted in the language long before his own time. If they reflect any view concerning reality, it is at best one that was held by our, presumably primitive, Indo-European ancestors. "

(21)

Nevertheless, what Whorf's hypothesis contributes from a broader perspective goes well beyond a position of equivalence in his plea for the appreciation of the qualities of a language such as Hopi or Navaho. He compares Hopi as a rapier to the bludgeon of English and suggests that a study of the former language would prevent the Standard Average European from considering,

" a few recent dialects of the Indo-European family, and the rationalizing techniques elaborated from their patterns, as the apex of the evolution of the human mind; nor their present wide spread as due to any survival from fitness or to anything but a few events of history - events that could be called fortunate only from the parochial point of view of the favoured parties." (22) One can only conclude that here he has a supremely valid point.

However, he has nothing of any great substance to say about this centripetal tendency within a European culture and the way in which it affects those speakers and their world view.

This is a particularly irritating vacuum throughout his writings, especially as he makes this attempt to redress the balance on behalf of the American Indian languages vis a vis their European

counterparts. In its historical context this concern is not surprising given the cultural and linguistic decimation of the American Indian throughout the nineteenth century.

In overstepping the boundary of what most contemporary experts considered to be intellectually plausible, indeed the possibility of behaviour predominantly controlled by language is nothing short of truly pathological, cultural relativity as determined through linguistic form peaked in the aftermath of a special conference organised by Hoijer to assess the value of these ideas. This led to work being undertaken on the hypothesis by various linguists, yet twenty three years later, the 'Whorfian Hypothesis' received what has been described as a "decent burial" (23) at the Southwest Project in Comparative Linguistics.

Despite this, Whorf had succeeded in shaking the American linguistic establishment into a more substantial consideration of the ways in which language, culture and thinking are interrelated. This consideration has survived what could be described as a post-Chomskyan emphasis on the universally shared characteristics of languages and yet still, little research seems to be concentrated on the centripetal effect mentioned above.

In fact Boas' allusion to the metaphorical relationship between language and life-view and the specifically semantic aspects of the German tradition in semantic field study would seem to offer the most promising starting point.

Conclusion (3:5)

If language embodies power, symbolically and even materially, by way of power relationships, then this may become fixed within the language, affecting, among other things, attitudes within a speech community to

others not belonging to that community. This power needs legitimation, materially and ideologically. Symbolism and myth are vital to this process but what needs to be examined is the extent to which belief in that power is embedded in the language itself, in this case English.

The American tradition of linguistic relativity relies heavily, as illustrated, on the supposed formative nature of a language's syntax. This can be discounted as too crude and too simplistic an explanation, even if difficult to disprove absolutely. A preferable solution appears to lie in the semantic explanation of relativity, stressing more than the German tradition the cultural consensus with which the speaking of a language endows its speakers.

It will certainly be worth examining to what extent the political identity of a former imperial power such as Britain is extended by the host culture's linguistic identity. Any search for a connection between the transmission of a linguistic identity and the cultural component of that identity will clarify to what degree it is predominantly culturally or linguistically determined.

The chief task now is to develop a theory of linguistic relativity which can be applied directly to the English situation. The evidence in support of such a theory must encompass both the broader psycho-social elements of the semantic approach and the cultural/political facts of the dominant position of the English language in the world.

British Attitudes to Languages in India

Introduction (4:1)

This chapter will further develop the argument of the opening two chapters. That is, it will attempt to illustrate the evolution of British nationalism into imperialism and further to the discussion of linguistic relativity, it will examine what role language attitudes played in the growth of a national sense of identity among the British abroad.

The history of British contact with India really begins its formal stage with the granting of a charter in 1600 by Elizabeth I to a group of London-based merchants. This charter guaranteed to the East India Company monopoly trade with the Indian sub-continent.

Between 1600 and 1951 when the British finally granted independence to the two nations of the sub-continent, English had become the language of commerce, industry, political debate and the education and legal systems of this newly formed country. This situation developed in a country where, according to the 1951 linguistic census, there were 851 different languages spoken from four distinct language families: Indo-European, Dravidian, Tibeto-Burman and Munda. For a language to rise to prominence among such a diverse forest of languages emphasises the enormously powerful impact that the British and their culture had had on India.

Certain commentators have divided this period of British dominance into three phases, each identified by the particular attitudes of the British and the indigenous people to the spread of English. However, for the purposes of this study, I would prefer to alter the emphasis a little. Instead of taking the spread of English as the chief focal point, I will attempt to illustrate how British attitudes to the languages of the

sub-continent can be divided into three distinct phases. Obviously, the spread of English is a fascinating topic and one that has been carefully traced but it does tend to preclude any discussion of the British attitudes to the languages which it displaced.

I shall call the first phase the liberal phase; the second, the classical-conservative phase; the third, the neo-liberal phase. Each phase contains contradictions; there was never any unified policy toward the Indian languages or even toward the English language in India. These contradictions do, nevertheless, highlight the developing debate about the indigenous languages and also about the subliminal role of the English language in the international identity of the British.

The Liberal Phase (4:2)

The commercial enterprises that the East India Company instigated, involved daily contact between the British and Indians. Numerous cadres of representatives of the Company, military, administrative, teachers and missionaries, spread the English language from the first trading centres of Madras, Calcutta and later on, Bombay. For their part, the local people, with no real tradition of monolingualism, conversed with the British arrivals in 'Babu' or 'Cheechee' English.

Apart from the primarily commercial motives behind the spread of English from the East India Company's settlements which were to facilitate trade, industry and efficient communication between ruler and ruled, employer and colonised employee, master and servant, there sprang other more ideological purposes.

From 1614 various religious groups sent missionaries to the Indian sub-continent in order to convert the local population and generally spread the teachings of the Bible. However, as with other areas of cultural contact between the British and their colony, the story of the spread of English for the purposes of proselytising is not a straightforward one. There was often debate throughout the seventeenth century as to whether it was better to spread the Bible through the teaching of English or whether it was preferable to translate the Bible into the local languages with which the missionaries came into contact most often. Either way the point is that teaching the English language was at this time a secondary feature in the debate on how best to disseminate Christian ideas. With commercial and religious motives to the fore the British took a very pragmatic, instrumental view of other languages. There was certainly no evidence that the indigenous languages were intrinsically less useful or less prestigious

than English.

The debate seemed to have reached a solution which could be best described as an example of a perfect colonial compromise. In 1698, Parliament obliged all the Company's garrisons to provide ministers and schoolmasters. The ministers had to learn Portuguese within one year of their arrival in order to capitalise on the previous, widespread influence of the Jesuit missionaries from that country across India. They also had to acquaint themselves with the languages of the local population in order to be able to,

" instruct the gentoos that shall be servants or slaves of the Company or of their agents, in the Protestant religion. " (1)

The fact that around this time the overriding concern, apart from the commercial one, was the spread of Christianity is highlighted by the request in the following prayer of 1700, approved for the use of ships' captains and factory managers by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London;

" that we adorning the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour in all things, these Indian nations among whom we dwell, beholding our good works, may be won over to love our most holy religion, and glorify Thee, our Father which art in Heaven. " (2)

Despite the best intentions towards learning languages perceived to be of use and influence with the local population, a letter written in 1702 by Benjamin Adams, chaplain of the Bay of Bengal, expresses bitter disappointment at the lack of encouragement given to missionary clergy in the learning of Portuguese and points out that in the course of their duties they had little reason to learn any of the native languages. (3) Presumably, his disappointment was rooted in the fact that such a situation

weakened the clergy's missionary potential.

The beginnings of what many writers have called 'bilingualism' in India had their seeds in this initial era of commercial dealing and proselytising. (4) It is perhaps indicative of the way in which the spread of English was to develop in India that from the outset, high ideals of learning local languages in order to spread Christianity proved to be impractical. It is also worth noting that the main driving force behind the local traders' desire to learn English was better communication with their British commercial counterparts. British imperialism did not, certainly in this first phase, have any coherent and consistent policy towards the deliberate extension of the English language across the sub-continent. It certainly did not form part of an overall 'mission civilisatrice' as with other imperialist nations, incorporating notions of a superior civilisation within its language. In fact the status of English was at this period largely being defined, mirror-like, by the drive among the indigenous commercial community towards a linguistic competence in English.

As a rule the British in India, as we have already seen, were not over-enthusiastic about acquiring a knowledge of local languages. In general, it has been noted that the employees of the East India Company tended to rely mainly on the services of interpreters in their commercial and even social relations with the Indians. (5) When this unwillingness combined with the wishes of the local population to converse with the British about business matters, there grew up an interim language. Large numbers of words were also directly transferred into the English language, especially in the Company's early days, to facilitate the discussion of commercial, judicial or financial matters. Later this vocabulary of direct loan words came to include more general, cultural items which could not be

readily translated into English. A good example of the first instance is quoted in ' The Story of English'. (6) It consists of a letter written by an English trader in 1624 complete with topical semantic references;

" Their last was of the 15th present, with a copy of the King's 'furmand' [Furman: command]. Since then they have procured the dispatch of two 'haddies' [Ahadi: a royal messenger], who are to carry to them the royal farman, in command of John Willoughby, 'Cojah' [Kwaja Abul Hasan] havinge given them his parwana [Parwana: a written order] to see all things restooored unto you and re-established againe in youre former trad and priviolidges. The messengers should therefore be acquainted with all moneys unjustly taken from them, either by safi Khan, 'Chukedores' [Chaukidar: here a custom guard] or 'radarries' [Rahdar: a road guard]."

It is ironic, at the very least, to consider how different were the third category of individuals who contributed to the laissez-faire policies of the British towards any language policy in India. Along with the missionaries and the merchants we must include the 'nabobs' or 'Old Indians'.

These were the very antithesis of the commercially-orientated settlers and immersed themselves in the exoticism of India. Any idea of English superiority was masked behind a lazy compliance with local leisure and pleasure. Although they were considered to have let themselves go by others more concientious, these 'nabobs' basked in a quasi-aristocratic, luxurious lifestyle unavailable back in Britain. To them India was excellent just as it was.

During this phase of contacts between the British and the Indians, the English language was used as an expedient to promote trade and religion. Where the local languages were seen to be best for that purpose

they too were encouraged but not on anything like an official basis. The antiquity and importance of the Sanskrit language to the future of the study of languages was not suspected and the British, at several levels of contact with the Indians, were satisfied to pursue whatever means of communication produced results, whether pidgin, English or vernacular.

The Classical-Conservative Phase (4:3)

This era of British intervention in the cultural life of India could best be categorised under the broad heading of 'Orientalism'. The Orientalists were East India Company officials who threw off the largely restrained and often inconsistent approach to Indian culture and particularly Indian languages of previous administrations.

This era was ushered in when the Company gradually assumed control of the administration of India towards the end of the eighteenth century and at this time it could be said that Indian colonialism entered its modern phase. The cultural policies which best typified this new era emanated largely from the leadership of one man, Warren Hastings. His enthusiasm for Indian languages and culture in general encouraged the pioneering work of such noted Orientalists as William Jones, Charles Wilkins, H. T. Colebrook, H. H. Wilson and James Prinsep.

Hastings took charge of the administration of Bengal in 1772 and from this time until 1830 his ideas provided the impetus in its development as a colony. His background and lively interest in the local languages are summed up in the following extract;

" with the advantages of a regular classical education and with a mind strongly impressed by the pleasures of literature. The common dialects of Bengal, after his arrival in that country, soon became familiar to him; and at a period when the use and the importance of the Persian language were scarcely suspected, and when the want of that grammatical and philological assistance which has facilitated the labours of succeeding students rendered the attainment of it a task of peculiar difficulty, he acquired a proficiency in it." (7)

On his appointment as Governor of Bengal he immediately set

about having a manual of Hindu law translated into Sanskrit and then translated both into English. His declared policy was aimed at " creating an Orientalised service elite competent in Indian Languages and responsive to Indian traditions. " (8) He instituted financial rewards to clerks who were able to translate the Indian languages. These policies seem to have met with a fair measure of success:

" Increasingly, Britishers in South Asia acquired a curiosity about the whole range and substance of what has since been called Indian civilisation. By 1784, when Hastings founded the Asiatic Society of Bengal, his vision of an acculturated civil service elite had been partially realised. The transformation played a major role in reshaping the self-image of later civil servants by making them increasingly conscious of their professional and public responsibilities." (9)

Certainly such a policy of educating an elite in the ways and customs of a literary tradition in India was consistent with Hastings' classical background and consistent also with a certain conservative colonial mentality. Such scholarly interest in reviving classical Indian literary traditions bore little or no resemblance to the world into which India was emerging. It is doubtful whether this renaissance of interest in the Indian classics stimulated anything more than the top level of administrators and academics. Their views of these texts from an intellectual and historical perspective probably shared with Greek and Latin learning, a more than slight antiquarian hue. Grier has in fact summed up Hastings and his fellow officers as being, " almost as far removed from the Gentoos themselves as from the society of Europeans. "

(10)

The conservative element in the cultural dealings of Hastings is

in fact underlined by retrospective apologies for their classical emphasis. David Kopf writes of the translations of Sanskrit texts into Bengali undertaken at the college at Fort William and claims that they fuelled the Bengal renaissance which culminated in the Sanskritised Bengali used in Bangladesh today.

" The significance of such translations for the cultural historian lies in the willingness of Brahmans to communicate bits and pieces of their special fund of knowledge to an unknown reading public by means of the printed word. Certainly, this process was not new; pundits had already disclosed fragments of their knowledge to Orientalists such as Jones and Wilkins. There is, however, one crucial difference between early Orientalists and those of the College of Fort William. Whereas Jones and Wilkins translated the Sanskrit classics into English for European readers, the college - perhaps unwittingly - encouraged translations into the Indian vernaculars, thereby creating a body of printed material which would eventually break the intellectual monopoly of the Brahmans. " (11)

However, it is essential to keep to the fore of the debate the fact that, as a colonial power, the prime concern of the British was not to democratise the transmission of power via Indian languages, not to energise a Bengal renaissance and not even to extend British classical scholarship to include a more profound study of Sanskrit. The principal aim of the British had to be the maintenance and efficient administration of power in the colony. Hastings viewed his own method of proceeding as the most efficacious.

As with all other colonial matters, there are at least two perspectives towards this language policy. The language policy formed an essential part of a broader plan which Kopf has called " the modernisation

of the Indian Tradition. " (12) Such a slow and gradualist 'modernisation' which starts with a revival of classical learning can only really be interpreted as a means of maintaining the power status quo of Indian society through language policy. It sought to use language, the language of ancient learning which was reserved for a narrow section of the population, to ensure access to a ruling class tradition which would enable the British to maintain their hold on power within India with the consent of that ruling class. This attempt at identification of interests between two ruling classes was at the very heart of the Classical-Conservative tradition and thus at the very heart of the Orientalist position itself.

The Anglicist lobby merely saw this as an inappropriate way of maintaining power i. e. one of limited appeal. They chose instead a more appropriate strategy. They masked it with appeals to modernity but fundamentally it was a case of language policy being subordinated to the needs of a broader colonial policy with a wider appeal to the indigenous population. Such a policy had a better chance of maintaining power.

Kopf, who prefers to site his arguments along a 'good - bad' axis, illustrates the inherent elitism of the Orientalists efforts in India while seeking to justify all their works;

" The Orientalists served as avenues linking the regional elite with the dynamic civilisation of contemporary Europe. They contributed to the formation of a new Indian middle class and assisted in the professionalisation of the Bengali intelligentsia. They started schools, systematised languages, brought printing and publishing to India, and encouraged the proliferation of books, journals, newspapers, and other media of communication. Their impact was urban and secular. They built the first modern scientific laboratories in India, and taught European

medicine. They were neither static classicists nor averse to the idea of progress; and they both historicized the Indian past and stimulated a consciousness of history in the Indian intellectual. " (13)

Up to the outbreak of what has become known as the 'Orientalist Controversy' British attitudes to languages in India were scholarly in execution and conservative in their objectives. They embodied a genuine desire, however, to understand certain aspects of the Indian culture through the medium of its classical texts. The third phase of the history of British attitudes to languages in India marks a significant change, not only in attitudes to the Indian languages themselves, but also in the British attitudes to the position of the English language with relation to those languages.

The Neo-Liberal Phase (4:4)

It is around what has become known as the Orientalist Controversy in Bengal that several key attitudes to language and indeed the future of India were fixed. Not only did the administration shift quite profoundly from a conservative to a neo-liberal position, but this enabled a shift in power and status to manifest itself among the indigenous middle classes. These had clustered about the British as cultural go-betweens in marked contrast to the more stand-offish ruling classes. These middle classes have been described as,

" a qualified segment of the cultural encounter, mediating the alien cultural influences to the natives and interpreting the indigenous cultural influences to the foreigners. " (14) The shift in language policy subsequent to the Controversy confirmed their position in a world which was offering all the material advantages of business and influence to speakers of English.

The introduction of English as the language of education in India had a far-reaching impact on the sub-continent itself; it also indicates, in several ways, British attitudes to the languages it displaced. This decision was to enable certain ideas of the relative merits of different languages to become further ingrained in the public imagination. It is from this perspective that I wish to approach what I consider to be a critical watershed in the history of the English language.

Some historians claim that this debate was only about language at a fairly minor level;

" Superficially, the Anglicist-Orientalist Controversy appears to have been about language,....." (15)

However, this point of view detracts from the central role which

language plays in determining cultural policies, especially in a colonial setting. In such a situation many policy decisions follow in the slipstream of language policy on such a scale. Such a viewpoint also neglects the longer-term implications for the British view of the status of their own language as, with objective justifications to hand, they set about installing their language as the major linguistic currency of a whole continent. When the same authors claim,

" to the Anglicists, at least, the question of language was secondary. The important matter was to teach 'useful knowledge' " (16), this ignores the very real link between the world that particular language represents and the language itself; this has cultural implications for nActive or foreign speakers of a language.

To this extent then, the debate was not merely about language. It was about the future emphasis on the English language in the whole education system of a continent; as such it deserves to be viewed on its own terms as a linguistic moment of huge importance.

The work of Hastings, Jones, Wilson et al. ensured that the value and variety of Indian linguistic culture was appreciated and in no small way they contributed to the preservation or even rekindling of the Indian literary tradition through translations, academic societies and the foundation of colleges. There were, however, dissident voices with regard to their project who wished the teaching of English to be given greater consideration. These voices came from two different directions, one with a particularly Indian point of view and the other emphasising British interests in the colony. However, in many ways, they shared a similar perspective.

From the Indian side the most influential voice was that of Ram

Mohan Roy. He was one of the most enthusiastic supporters of an increased injection of English teaching into the Indian system. His most decisive intervention into this debate was undoubtedly his petition to Lord Amherst in 1823, protesting at the founding of the new Sanskrit college in Calcutta;

" When this seminary of learning was proposed, we understood that the government in England had ordered a considerable sum of money to be annually devoted to the instruction of its Indian subjects. We were filled with sanguine hopes that this sum would be laid out in employing European gentlemen of talents and education to instruct the natives of India in mathematics, natural philosophy, chemistry, anatomy and other useful sciences which the nations of Europe have carried to a degree of perfection that has raised them above the inhabitants of other parts of the world....We now find that the government are establishing a Sanskrit school under Hindoo pundits to impart such knowledge as is already current in India....The pupils will here acquire what was known two thousand years ago." (17)

This well illustrates the irony that the antiquity of the cultural associations of Sanskrit which so attracted men like Jones and Hastings was the very feature of this language which Indian progressives, such as Roy, wanted to cast off. Though he does not mention English explicitly, it is clear, since his petition is addressed to the British, that this would be the most logical choice as the language of instruction.

As he is mainly concerned at the potential of language to communicate modern thinking, especially in the area of the sciences, Roy also expresses concern at the difficulties and complexities of the Sanskrit language, claiming that as a medium of instruction it is too elaborate for

the efficient transmission of information.

" The Sanskrit language, so difficult that almost a lifetime is necessary for its perfect acquisition, is well known to have been for ages a lamentable check on the diffusion of knowledge; and the learning concealed under this almost impervious veil is far from sufficient to reward the labour of acquiring it...The Sanskrit system of education would be the best calculated to perpetuate ignorance." (18)

Hidden within this stinging polemic against the Sanskrit language is an implicit attack on both the coveted monopoly of the Brahmin caste over learning and its grip on the actual mechanics of teaching the language which seemed designed to make the acquisition of the language as onerous and tedious as possible. This is how the process of the Brahmins safeguarding their knowledge of the language has been described;

" [N]o improvement can be expected from inducing young men to consume a dozen of years of the most valuable period of their lives in acquiring the niceties of Byakaran or Sanskrit grammar. For instance, in learning to discuss such points as the following: khad, signifying to eat, khaduti, he or she or it eats; query, whether does khaduti, taken as a whole, convey the meaning, he, she, or it eats, or are separate parts of this meaning conveyed by distinctions of the word ? As if in the English language it were asked, how much meaning is there in the 'eat', how much in the 's'? and is the whole meaning of the word conveyed by these two portions of it distinctly, or by them taken jointly ? " (19)

Popular demand for an education conducted mainly through the medium of English is also illustrated by the fact that by the end of the 1820s a missionary school running vernacular schools throughout Bengal noted that,

"the desire to obtain a knowledge of the English language is so great that a school in which this was not taught was sure to dwindle away."

(20)

In a letter to one of the Orientalist supporters, John Tytler, Macauley questions the logic of insisting on Sanskrit education at the colleges, and he queries the policy of the Sanskrit colleges paying monthly fees to nearly all students whereas all the students at the Anglo-Indian College, in marked contrast, paid tuition fees.

" I know that your Sanskrit and Arabic Books do not sell. I know that the English books of the School book Society do sell [.] I know that you cannot find a single person at your Colleges who will learn Sanskrit and Arabic without being paid for it. I know that the students who learn English are willing to pay. I believe therefore that the native population, if left to itself, would prefer our mode of education to yours. At all events the onus probandi lies upon you." (21)

Substantial indigenous opinion also agreed that an acquaintance with the English language and above all with the cultural accompaniments of the language would break the Brahmins' hold on the lower castes and lead the Indians to what Grant called " a world of new ideas ". (22)

Against such a background of local support for the introduction of a predominantly English language education system, it must have seemed provocative to appoint a man such as Horace Hayman Wilson as the secretary of the newly formed General Committee of Public Instruction in 1823. This committee was formed to administer the Government's education policy in Bengal in a more structured and coherent manner than had been the case up till that point. His idea of education was clearly designed only for a small elite who could benefit from a rigorous Indian-Classical education.

The philosophy of this school of thinking has been detailed in the previous section and Wilson could certainly be categorised as an extreme Orientalist. He had one overriding concern in the execution of the duties of his post and that was to further the exclusive study of the classical languages of Sanskrit and Arabic.

By 1834 the Committee was equally divided between the classical Indian languages and English as teaching vehicles. The debate about the use of the vernacular languages was, to all intents and purposes, finished. They had little or no extant literature and the task of translating large numbers of advanced Western works into these languages was way beyond the number and the ability of the potential translators. The vernacular languages were also discounted on political grounds. Any introduction of vernacular languages could have been at the expense of any other rival language and could have been impractical and divisive for several reasons.

Once the vernaculars had been eliminated as an immediate and widespread solution, the debate focussed on the languages that had the broadest potential and accessibility: English, and a combination of Arabic and Sanskrit.

Before and during the debate which surrounded the selection of an appropriate medium of instruction for the colleges in Bengal, there were two parallel trains of thought about the relative merits of the rival languages. One was primarily pragmatic and viewed the introduction of English on a large scale as a tool by which the Indians could break into the mainstream of the economic world, to the benefit of all, not only to that of the British. The other was more hostile to the Indian languages themselves although, as yet, this hostility was still cloaked to a large extent by a Utilitarian spirit which proclaimed that those languages were

holding back the material progress of the country. It was, however, often dismissive of those languages at the same time. In 1824, the Court of Directors of the East India Company in London criticised the founding of the three oriental colleges in the following terms:

" The great end should not have been to teach Hindoo learning but useful learning....In..establishing seminaries for teaching mere Hindoo or mere Mohamedan literature, you bound yourself to teach a great deal of what was frivolous, not a little of what was purely mischievous and a small remainder indeed in which utility was in any way concerned." (23)

Despite the understandable concerns of the authors with the transmission of knowledge useful in the context of a Westernised economic order of the early nineteenth century, the contempt for 'mere' foreign literature cannot be really disguised. Its value, even as a cultural component of the education system, is ignored as having little use for anyone.

In contrast, English was claimed to be a potential instrument for the improvement of the moral and economic awareness of the Indians, bringing greater numbers into contact with its modernising influences. (cf Grant(22) It was assumed, from this perspective, that Western morals and philosophies could haul India from the economic and social backwardness in which it allegedly found itself. Even if this view had something to commend it and progress could be achieved through the medium of a foreign language, the linguistic attitudes of the Utilitarian school of thought betrayed as much of the self-assurance of certain British circles at this time as it illustrated the perceived needs of the Indians.

Convinced by all the economic and political evidence that progress was on their side, the Utilitarians took the rationalist

principles of their culture as proof that they were earmarked for exponential progress towards some future Utopia. This outlook supplied the intellectual foundation to what has been called a " superiority complex " (24) vis-a-vis other parts of the globe. To many British colonialists of the nineteenth century the English language was at once the means of transmission and the emblem of that superiority. To many of these the superiority of the British and their institutions, both material and intellectual, was illustrated to a large extent by the deficiency of the corresponding Indian institutions. James Hill certainly espoused this philosophy and in the 'History of British India' he states his position quite clearly. He

" found little good in Indian institutions; reason lay dormant beneath the debris of centuries; Indian thought was puerile, its religion superstitious, its customs hidebound or harmful. The remedy was to introduce reason and European knowledge. Indians would see the light and reform themselves." (25)

Though, as has been illustrated above, there existed a segment of Indian society which openly welcomed the introduction of English as a medium of instruction, it is out of the question that lobbyists such as Roy would link it with any dismissive attitude to their own indigenous culture. They desired English as a key to an increasingly Anglicised world in order to reap the full benefits of this association with the British. Roy was a pragmatist not an Anglicist, though often Indian enthusiasm for English has been interpreted quite wrongly as a measure of how Indian opinion acknowledged the superiority of the British way of life. Such a confused perspective can only have added credence to the position of commentators such as Hill.

This often contradictory situation is further complicated by the fact that Wilson, despite his undoubted enthusiasm for the classical languages of India, seems to have been deeply dismissive, to say the least, of the vernacular languages. At this period it seems certain that to the average Indian Sanskrit, Arabic and English were equally unknown.

" To those who have been in India or are tolerably acquainted with its history, it is not necessary to mention that Sanskrit and Arabic are no more vernacular or spoken languages in India, than Greek and Hebrew are in England. The vernacular or spoken languages are Bengali, Hindustani, etc. " (26)

While maintaining that he supported education in the vernacular languages, Wilson included in his policies for civil servants embarking on a career in India no provision for the learning of any language which the civil servant was likely to be able to speak or understand when arriving there. This is illustrated by his short answer to a probing question in Parliament.

" You would confine the study of the Oriental languages carried on at Haileybury to Sanskrit and Arabic ? "

" Yes. " (27)

In this whole debate the emphasis was often focussed on what Wilson was actually referring to when he talked of 'vernacular languages'. Often he meant those Indian classical languages which could never have been considered 'vernacular' in the nineteenth century. The implications of such a policy which excluded both English and the vernacular languages not only infuriated local opinion but led the British administrators into a position where they risked becoming culturally isolated through their lack of acquaintance with local languages.

The Anglicist Case (4:5)

When Thomas Macauley was appointed to the Committee in 1835 (28)

he did much more than simply settle a dispute. He indirectly laid the foundation stone for all future British dealings with indigenous languages across the British Empire. It is from this moment that English could be considered to have fully adopted the mantle of a world language with the confidence of administrators willing to install it as a means of instruction across a continent. What is interesting is the corresponding British attitude to the rival Indian languages and the reasons why Macauley and the other Anglicist apologists maintained that English was a superior means of communication in the modern (i.e. British) imperialist world. These reasons tell us a great deal about certain assumptions of the relative worth of different languages at this crucial stage in the construction of British language policy in the Empire.

In examining the Orientalist case, the arguments proposed by Roy and Macauley in opposing it have to an extent already been outlined. Certain authorities argue that the apparently arrogant dismissal of the vernacular and classical languages of India was merely an aggressive tactic employed by Macauley in order to undermine the strategy of a wily opponent, Wilson. I do not think that such an important stage in the respective histories of the two countries can be reduced to a battle of personalities. Each perspective carried with it the vested concerns of a section of the British ruling administrative classes and the outcome of this debate was to have obvious and far-reaching consequences, not only throughout the Empire but throughout British society itself. The rationalist, Utilitarian zeal underpinning Macauley's arguments only goes half-way to explaining the contempt that his writing displays for ancient Indian languages as well as

any language which seemed to have slipped below the status of the English language in the modern world.

He criticises the ambiguity of the Act of Parliament dealing with language questions in India in 1813 in the following sarcastic terms;

" it contains nothing about the particular languages or sciences which are to be studied....It is argued, or rather taken for granted, that by literature the Parliament can have meant only Arabic and Sanskrit literature, that they never would have given the honorable appellation of a 'learned native' to a native who was familiar with the poetry of Milton, the metaphysics of Locke, and the physics of Newton; but that they meant to designate by that name only such persons as might have studied in the sacred books of the Hindus all the uses of kusa-grass and all the mysteries of absorption into the Deity. This does not appear to be a very satisfactory interpretation. To take a parallel case; suppose that the Pasha of Egypt, a country once superior to the nations of Europe but now sunk far below them, were to appropriate a sum for the purpose of 'reviving and promoting literature and encouraging learned natives of Egypt', would anyone infer that he meant the youth of his Pashalic to give years to the study of Hieroglyphics, to search into all the doctrines disguised under the fable of Osiris, and to ascertain with all possible accuracy the ritual with which cats and onions were anciently adored? Would he be justly charged with inconsistency, if instead of employing his younger subjects in deciphering obelisks, he were to order them to be instructed in the English and French languages, and all the sciences to which those those languages are the chief key? " (29)

For Macauley the situation is quite clear. The English language is the symbol and the means of communicating modernity. Sanskrit and Arabic

are representatives of a world of useless and archaic information.

According to this view, English is an integral part of the modern world and the classical Indian languages indicators of the lowly state of the Indian people and their culture.

In the same document, he goes on to describe the native vernaculars as " poor and rude ", containing " neither literary nor scientific information " and expresses a frank but alarmingly ignorant attitude to the classical languages for a man charged with charting the future of education in India. In fact there may be claimed to be a linking factor between these two aspects of his attitude to languages. His ignorance of the languages in question and his absolute confidence in the power and the prestige of English may have been more typical of a certain style of British outlook at the time than the Utilitarianism he seemed to espouse. By this I mean that a confidence based on ignorance and hearsay, no matter how learned, is not a particularly rational and logical way of proceeding. Blind arrogance is the opposite to the rational basis of the Utilitarian approach.

" The whole question seems to me to be which language is the best worth knowing? I have no knowledge of either Sanskrit or Arabic. But I have done what I could to form a correct estimate of their value. I have read translations of the most celebrated Arabic and Sanskrit works. I have conversed both here and at home with men distinguished by their proficiency in the Eastern tongues. I am quite ready to take the Oriental learning at the valuation of the Orientalists themselves. I have never found one among them who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia. The intrinsic superiority of the Western literature is indeed admitted by those members

of the Committee who support the Oriental plan of action. " (30)

As this passage clearly indicates, the relative positions of the protagonists in the Controversy were not as clear-cut as they are sometimes presented with regards to their attitudes to the Indian languages, either classical or vernacular. Despite their enthusiastic support for the colleges of Oriental education, Wilson and his colleagues are said to have shared Macauley's honest yet brutal appraisal of the relative merits of the languages. One of the Orientalist camp, H.T. Prinsep, concedes this in a 'note' to Macauley's 'Minute',

" [Sanskrit and Arabic] are dismissed [by Macauley] on the grounds that their literature is worthless and the superiority of that of England is set forth in an animated description of the treasures of science and of intelligence it contains and of the stores of intellectual enjoyment it opens. There is nobody acquainted with both literatures that will not subscribe to all that is said in the minute on the superiority of that of England. " (31)

N. and G. Sirkin point out that modern historians have a tendency to ignore this facet of the debate and denigrate Macauley alone for it.

The implications of this 'note', especially when viewed in conjunction with Wilson's attitude to educating civil servants in the vernaculars [see (27)], suggest that the superior attitude of the British in the East India Company toward Indian languages was broader than is often acknowledged. The perceived superiority of European languages of some status included English and French, yet it was at this point in history that the English language could be considered to have started to pull ahead from its European rivals in terms of influence and stature

If, as it seems, both parties within the debate shared the same attitudes of superiority towards the worth of the Indian languages then the debate could be considered as one of emphasis; which was the best route to the integration of the Indian sub-continent into the imperial plans of the British? As opposed to the elitist and conservative methods proposed by the Orientalists, Macauley decided that such an education policy, aimed at the traditional ruling classes in India, the Brahmins, via their traditional grip on the language of education, Sanskrit, was not consistent with another group's interests. That group was the rising middle class, hungry for power and influence within the developing structures of British India. For their part, the British needed the fullest co-operation of this group to ensure the smooth exercise of power within the colony.

Macauley chose the expedient of English education to satisfy those ambitions. Thus the English language became a symbol for a kind of democratisation of Indian society. English, then, would provide not only cultural and moral leadership through the dissemination of modern ideas, but it would also provide the necessary communication for the full exploitation of the vast resources of India. In order to develop this relationship fully Macauley concluded,

" [we] must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population." (32)

This political expediency towards English was not particularly Utilitarian in spirit, yet attitudes to local languages were developing and gained credibility through the introduction of these measures. Their influence on the justifications of the British were probably just as crucial in their long-term effect as their influence on the Indians themselves.

The introduction of English certainly began the process of loosening the grip of the Brahmin caste on education and knowledge. The 'intermediary class' would remain loyal, it seemed, as long as their interests and those of the British coincided. Trevelyan illustrates this point perfectly when he comments,

" the political education of a nation is a work of time, and while it is in progress, we shall be as safe as it is possible for us to be. The natives will not rise against us, we shall stoop to raise them; there will be no reaction, because there will be no pressure[.] the national activity will be fully and harmlessly employed in acquiring and diffusing European knowledge and in naturalising European institutions. "

(33)

In concluding his 'Minute', Macauley writes,

" English is better worth knowing than Sanskrit or Arabic. "(34)
In dominating the linguistic debate in India, English certainly acquired enough additional status to leapfrog over several other colonial nations in the European table of rivalries to such effect that Macauley could write when assessing the value of the English language:

" the claims of our own language it is hardly necessary to recapitulate. It stands pre-eminent among the languages of the West
Whoever knows that language, has ready access to all the vast intellectual

wealth, which all the nations of the earth have created and hoarded in the course of ninety generations. It may safely be said that the literature now extant in that language is of far greater value than all the literature which three hundred years ago was extant in all the languages of the world together. Nor is this all. In India, English is the language spoken by the ruling class. It is spoken by the higher class of natives at the seats of government. It is likely to become the language of commerce throughout the seas of the East. It is the language of two great European communities which are rising, the one in the south of Africa, the other in Australasia; communities which are each year becoming more important, and more closely connected with our Indian Empire. Whether we look at the intrinsic value of our literature, or at the particular situation of this country, we shall see the strongest reason to think that, of all foreign tongues, the English tongue is that which would be the most useful to our foreign subjects."

(35)

There is a kind of arrogant modesty in this passage which incorporates the increasingly common-sense view of this period towards the superiority of the English language and the values and culture associated with it. The potential power of the language glimpsed by Macauley, almost prophetically, was, in fact, based on simple observation of the developing situation worldwide. Macauley encompassed a paternalistic rather than a racist or deliberately condescending attitude to the indigenous and classical languages of India. Yet the debate over the depth of prejudice towards Indian languages masks the real material of the question: the power relationship between English and other languages which of necessity emerges in all dealings between colonies and the imperialist power. In such a relationship English became, inevitably, the language of future progress

and legitimised an approach towards other languages as inferior or at least of less importance to the wider world.

The policies espoused by the Anglicists were to falter and become compromised as the century progressed and yet certain essential features of the British attitude to language in the Indian sub-continent had been voiced most forcefully and eloquently by Macauley. From this point onwards the Western view of languages was to change and harden and a parallel movement would develop towards the idea of 'race'. As it passed down the scale from administrator to professional soldier through to popular representations in fiction (see next section), the question of language played a minor but essential role in establishing the 'complex of superiority' among an ever-broadening section of British society. In this process language provided a powerful combination of symbol and concrete manifestation within a nationalist context. Real prejudice towards languages in India only surfaced later in the century. Despite the Utilitarian and progressive claims of the Anglicist lobby, it is difficult to see how their policies did not play a part in establishing the reverse side of the coin to English superiority. This developed as an overtly condescending and arrogant attitude to other languages and was complemented by a parochialism which assumed that all the local people would necessarily speak English. In such an evolution the battle won by the strategists of the Anglicists' camp provided a structural basis for language policies in other parts of the expanding Empire.

Attitudes in Literature on India (4:6)

Several factors which have already been examined in the first two chapters on nationalism and imperialism combined in the course of the nineteenth century to enable the British to assume a certain arrogance in their dealings with India. The Mutiny could certainly be said to have hardened many a tendenciously racist turn of mind as did the appropriation by Herbert Spenser of Darwin's theories and the growth of Eurocentric approaches in anthropology. These trends, coupled with cranial and comparative physiology experiments, concluded that the European type was superior to its Indian and African counterparts. On top of these, Gobineau's writings on 'race' were being read by a broad audience and having increasing influence on the whole debate on cultural superiority and 'racial' determinism. As one of the chief European exponents of the culturally exclusive tendencies of nationalism, there can be little doubt that Britain inevitably transferred many elements of this contemporary debate into its dealings with the non-European world.

In such a context, the decisions concerning the use of the English language in India are at once a prophetic indicator of future policies and a topical indicator of rational expedience reflecting both the views of mercantile India and the dominance of English in the commercial world.

The specifically policy-orientated decisions of the British administration in India have already been fully discussed. Now the results of such policies and the consequences of the British position in the world have to be assessed from the point of view of the attitudes of the British towards Indian languages as reflected through the writings of various authors.

Somewhat ironically, twenty years after the height of the Orientalist Controversy, the study of Sanskrit and Arabic was introduced into the Indian Civil Service Examinations. These examinations, to be taken by prospective British or Indian students as indicators of their suitability for service in India, still made a knowledge of these languages optional. These papers were only allocated 375 marks as compared to 1,000 marks for each of the English literature and history examinations. (36)

Such practices were hardly conducive to the British involving themselves via language in the cultural traditions and past history of their colonial dominion. Nor did they help to maintain the status of such languages in the eyes of the local people or the administrators themselves. For various reasons, however, including those listed above, the British held a very different perspective towards language and indigenous culture compared to the high point of interest in Orientalism under Hastings and Jones.

The subliminal message contained in such a policy is clear enough and yet it remains beneath the surface; it could in no way be classified as overt hostility. Much of the policy of the British in India and elsewhere toward language remains implicit. Knowledge of local traditions and customs is not, according to the logic of such policies, a prerequisite of working in a colonial situation. This was increasingly felt to be true in India throughout the nineteenth century. As the importance and world standing of English grew, so those languages which appeared to be largely symbolic of a culture ill-adapted to the needs of a rapidly changing world were further relegated in the British view of the world.

Attitudes to the vernacular languages were no better, indicating a lack of involvement in local life which left the British culturally

isolated. The regulations concerning language requirements for administrators in India indicate the low esteem in which learning vernacular languages to communicate with the local population was held.

" It therefore seems to us quite clear that those vernacular Indian languages which are of no value except for the purposes of communicating with the natives of India, ought not to be subjects of examination. " (37)

These regulations indicate a fusion between language policy and cultural attitude toward the Indian colony. The local languages, while viewed as an essential tool of communication between the British and the indigenous community, are relegated to a position of no value at all for official purposes. Communicating with the local community is thus relegated to an extremely low position. The separatist attitude implicit in such a statement indicates how apathy towards social intercourse with the natives is hidden between the lines of a policy on language learning.

John Lang points out the practical results of such a policy when he writes in ' Wanderings in India ' that,

" not one civilian in a hundred, no matter what his rank or grade, can read or write Hindostanee or Persian. " (38)

In E. M. Forster's ' Passage to India', Ronny gives an assessment of Adela's view of traditional male education which seems, albeit from the perspective of another century, intriguingly similar to and consistent with certain aspects of the attitudes cited above.

" A Public School, London University, a year at a crammer's, a particular sequence of posts in a particular province, a fall from a horse and a touch of fever were presented to her as the only training by which the Indians and all who reside in their country can be understood. " (39)

For all the sharp and well-directed irony of this short passage, the absence of any reference to the study or even a knowledge of local languages makes a fairly typical portrait of the attitudes of the British resident in India or involved in its administration. Despite this implicit ignorance of the Indians and their country, critics have commented on the contrasting linguistic skill and adaptability of the Indians themselves as fully represented by Forster in the novel.

" Foster expertly portrays the Indians speaking to each other in the vernacular and to the British in colloquial Indianised English." (40) Interesting attitudes grew up, in fact, even around the linguistic half-way house of Indianised English which served to bridge the communication gap between the two communities. Various books appeared, ready to assist the recent arrival in the colony. One such manual acknowledges the general ignorance of the British of the languages of the local population and offers assistance.

" The new arrival in India, ignorant of the language of the country, is puzzled for some time to comprehend his countrymen, whose conversation 'wears strange suits', and even he, who has been for years a sojourner in India is, to the last, unacquainted with the meanings of numerous words, which occur in his daily newspaper, the Courts of Law, and the communications of his Mofussil or upcountry correspondents." (41)

Even the reference to the " language of the country " further indicates the ignorance of some of the British with regard to one of the most linguistically diverse areas of the world.

The classic repository of such Indian English vocabulary, the 'Hobson-Jonson', also displays such an arrogant and dismissive attitude to the sounds of the other languages which the British attempted to

incorporate into their colonial lexis. Hobson-Jonson is defined as " a native festal excitement...an Anglo-Saxon version of the wailings of the Mohammedans as they beat their breasts in the procession of Moharran - 'Ya Hasan. Ya Hosain.' " (42)

Other writers were just as hostile to the inclusion of such loan words into sub-continental English. Edmund Burke was driven to complain about the inclusion of such words in the English language and their use in Parliament. He at least conceded that this language was,

" of necessary use in the executive department of the Company's affairs; but it is not necessary to Parliament. A language so foreign from all the ideas and habits of the far greater part of the members of the House, has a tendency to disgust them with all sorts of inquiry concerning this subject. They are fatigued into such a despair of ever obtaining a competent knowledge of the transactions in India, that they are easily persuaded to remand them...to obscurity." (43)

Within the literature inspired by the British presence in India lie several clear indicators of a certain consistent denigration of the indigenous tongues. These range from a casual ignorance to a vicious and mocking bigotry. These could even be interpreted as the tip of a popular iceberg rarely apparent among all the structural manoeuvring around the status of the Indian languages with regard to English.

Perhaps the spread of English had a negative effect on the attitudes of the British in India; perhaps the Mutiny took its toll of the colonial outlook; perhaps these both combined with the growth of overtly racist sentiments expressed with increasing vigour from the middle of the century. What is certainly true is the fact that the English language became exclusively adorned with the status of the most powerful imperialism

and reflected the strident confidence of its host nationalism.

Kipling was at once the most popular and the most representative of British authors in India of his and probably any other generation. In ' Kim ', Meyers points out that,

" The Lama pronounces, ' Om mane pudme hum, ' but if we want to know that it is a Tibetan invocation to Avolokitesvara, the omnipresent universal spirit or divine essence of Buddha, we must find out for ourselves." (44)

In this way the inclusion of certain unexplained linguistic items adds a certain ignorant exoticism to the subject matter and indicates how excluded the viewer, or even the reader was from the ceremony. In fact it could be argued that such a stance indicated the extent to which the author was excluded from the culture whose language it is.

Kipling was twenty four when he sailed for England. He had already published seven volumes of poetry and fiction. The diversity and extent of his appeal make certain sentiments expressed in his writings towards the Indian people extremely illuminating. In his books there exist attitudes towards the Indian languages which may appear shocking to the twentieth century liberal conscience. These can best be categorised as no more and no less than an expression of how the author was neatly in tune with many of the attitudes typical of his day and of the supreme confidence the British had in the linguistic expression of their nationalism, the English language.

In 'Departmental Ditties', the most influential author of his day constructs the following imaginary dialogue;

" O grim and ghastly Mussulman,
Why art thou wailing so ?

Is there a pain within thy brain,
Or in thy little toe ?
The twilight shades are shutting fast
The golden gates of day,
Then shut up too your hullabaloo -
Or what's the matter, say ?

That stern and sombre Mussulman,
He heeded not my speech,
But raised again his howl of pain, -
A most unearthly screech !
'He dies!' - I thought, and forthwith rushed
To aid the wretched man,
When, with a shout, he yell'd - 'Get out!
I'm singing the Koran.' " (45)

The light, jaunty meter, combined with the content, provides a fully rounded mockery of the act and language of prayer of the Muslim.

W.D. Arnold's portrait of the British in India, 'Oakfield - Fellowship in The East', provides a grim picture indeed of life among the settlers and administrators. Gone is the gentler mocking of the indigenous languages. In its place is a harsher, bleaker tone. It reflects at times a more bigotted attitude to these languages; an attitude of intolerance towards something symbolic of their alien nature and the perceived inferiority of the people. The protagonist regrets having involved himself in his regiment's mess which, " considered it infra dig to understand that 'damned black lingo'. " (46)

This sort of attitude among soldiers who had dealings with the Indians on a daily basis can also be seen in G. A. Henty's 'With Clive in India'. Here, the character Tim Kelly expresses the view that the natives are black heathens who ought to learn English but meanwhile should understand if shouted at. (46) This is possibly the first reliable source of the alleged speech pattern of the English when addressing a foreigner and is predicated on the assumption that speaking a foreign language and not understanding English are an unfortunate combination which smacks of perverse bloody-mindedness and little else.

Many commentators have identified in Kipling and Henty a tendency to portray the British as retreating into a self-inflicted cultural ghetto. Henty is a more two-dimensional imperial propagandist than Kipling, yet Kipling too, stands accused of painting a picture of India in which,

" native Indians, in his fiction, for reasons which are essentially political are largely invisible as a source of solidarity. "

(47)

The general lack of involvement or interest on the part of the British in the local languages left them culturally isolated, watching a complex political world swirl past them. Lack of recognition of the worth of these languages left them in almost total ignorance of the deeper workings of Indian life. Their distance from the cultural life of the Indians was often expressed through a lack of regard for their languages. The other side of this coin was the subsequent fortification of the national self-esteem through the evolution of this monolingualism.

Conclusion (4:7)

In this section on India, I have examined one specific example of the spread of English as a unifying and pacifying colonial tool. As we have seen, it would be churlish to deny the pragmatic and often utilitarian explanations for the increased use of English in British India.

There are also few doubts that an empire needs a good, efficient colonial administration. However, the main conclusion to be drawn from the British experience in India in linguistic terms, for the requirements of this study, is the effect which these decisions on language policy had on the British and on the perception of their own role in the world.

Certainly, as can be gauged from some of the writings of the period, some key attitudes to the languages of India and the assumed superior nature of the British and their language were emerging. At times pragmatic imperialist policies may have been to the fore but it is important not to forget that the potential effects of such policies filtered down through British society. It will be argued, at a later stage, that the decisions taken concerning the respective roles of English and the indigenous Indian languages in the early nineteenth century sowed seeds which only developed fully in the course of the twentieth century in the popular British imagination.

Language policy in India provided a stepping stone on the road to the emergence of English as a world language. Having overcome the Celtic languages as the dominant national tongue, the English language spread at a rate similar to the extension in prestige of British nationalism on a wider imperial stage. The role of language as a cornerstone in this legitimation of a national power cannot be underestimated.

British Language Policy in The Cape Colony 1806-1834

Introduction (5:1)

Neither space nor our central concerns will allow for anything other than a highly selective view of the history of relations between the Cape Colony, which emerged in the twentieth century as South Africa, and the British colonial administration.

Having examined the attitudes of the British towards language policy in India, chiefly in the first half of the nineteenth century, it will serve as an interesting comparison to select certain indicators of attitudes during approximately the same period in the Cape. Any such evidence will enable a fuller, more contoured picture to emerge of the interrelationship between the British imperialists of this period, their language and their emerging nationalism. The interest will be chiefly one of contrast. In the case of the Cape Colony, the British were faced by another European language as rival not an indigenous one. In viewing British attitudes to indigenous languages and indeed rival colonial languages during this period, it is interesting to consider how policy decisions in another part of the Empire could be compared or contrasted. In the light of the fact that there never existed any consistent, overall policy to languages throughout the Empire of this period, it is tempting to postulate that such a growing pragmatic consensus around language issues illustrates quite clearly the broadening of the confident national base of the English language in international affairs. Careful analysis of certain decisions of the administrative class in the Cape at this period will help to clarify such an assertion.

Historical Background (5:2)

Policy decisions taken in the Cape throughout the nineteenth century provide a useful contrast with the attitudes implicit in many of the decisions taken concerning languages in India. In the case of India , the British faced a multiplicity of languages of varying degrees of status and antiquity. In the Cape the main rival languages to the imperial power of the British were Dutch and Afrikaans, a linguistic descendant of this former colonial power. Dutch was, within the colony, the official written language of records and the law courts while, Afrikaans was the dominant white vernacular, until the arrival of the British.

Significantly, perhaps, for the purposes of this study, the 'second' British empire often centred upon the struggle between the language of the colonial administration and the language of a rival european population. (1) Political power, ultimately, depended on the consensual support of the colonial rivals in the Cape just as it did in Canada from 1760 onwards. In both cases there was a strong, rival colonial tradition and in both cases language policy was to prove a vital element in forging the future identities of these countries. As a tool of aggression or as a resource of resistance, language was to be at the top of the British political agenda. It was in 1760 that the term 'to Anglify' was used for the first time in Canada. It seems appropriate to the central importance of language in both the Cape and Canada that the English language, in the word 'anglify', retains a historical, lexical memory of this fact.

Before 1760 and before the extension of policies of Anglicisation from Canada to the Cape, colonial Americans had been content to identify, for the most part, with a transcontinental Englishness.

Certainly from a linguistic point of view they conformed as much as possible to the values and conventions of the 'Mother Country'. In fact, it was largely the American experience which convinced Charles Dilke that such an Anglo-Saxon 'Internationale' was a possibility. (3)

The emergence of this term, to 'Anglify', certainly seems to imply the espousal of direct and deliberate policies towards a colony with a view to incorporating it in the British fold. The term has important implications from both cultural and linguistic perspectives. Indeed, it could be interpreted as symbolic of the fusion of the two.

Culturally, especially when viewed within the matrix of nationalism, the ability for a national community to be able to focus on certain broad aspects of the life of a nation and to be convinced that the spread of such values is a good thing, indicates a very solid sense of national identity. Sturgis illustrates the inner conviction of this point of view when he writes of the broader attitudes behind 'anglicisation',

" which would have the effect of turning the Afrikaner into something resembling the enterprising and liberal bourgeois Englishman of the time. " (4)

Marx, he notes, observed this urge of the bourgeois to create, " a world after his own image ".

This cultural perspective was also reflected semantically in the very terminology of the process: to 'Anglify'. The term betrays, for the purposes of English national stability and security, a fusion of the other constituent parts of Great Britain into an ill-defined concept of Britishness. This is doubly ironic in the case of the Cape because of the enormous efforts of Scottish teachers and ministers in the process of 'Anglicisation'.

If these policies best reflected the interests and indeed world view of the emergent bourgeoisie then it must be recalled that nationalism also best represented that class's sense of identity and purpose. The direct means of introducing such policies was through the introduction of the English language itself. A major indicator of the attitudes of the British and their sense of national identity lay in the ways in which English was introduced and other languages brushed aside. Not only was English the symbol of the rising greatness of the British nation, it was also the medium through which the British mercantile class could extend its political and commercial power. In its far-flung colonies, the extension of education and administration in English could provide a cultural continuity and facilitate the running of affairs, as well as offering the indigenous population the very tangible benefit of participating in the language which was rapidly increasing its importance in the world. This inclusive aspect to language policy was evident in India, yet in the Cape the situation towards the rival language was a very different one.

First, the existing colonists were rival Europeans and second, their community did not express any overwhelming desire to be included in the English-speaking Empire. Nevertheless, British attitudes to their language enable a fuller picture to emerge of the linguistic aspects of nationalism and the importance of these aspects to the sense of British identity across its Empire.

The colonial interests of the Dutch in the Cape in some ways had duplicated those of their Portuguese predecessors. They had also preceded British interests in India. Dutch experiences of colonial power had led to an enormous strain on limited resources as they had in the case of Portugal.

British interest in the Cape was primarily strategic. The

British had first intervened in an effort to prevent the French from gaining an important staging post on the way round the Horn to India. One commentator saw it in these terms:

" What was a feather in the hands of Holland, will become a sword in the hands of France. " (5)

In 1652 Dutch representatives of the Dutch East India Company secured the first European language-speaking corner of the African continent when it founded the Cape Colony. The transient nature of the lives of the company's representatives of higher rank, who regarded it as a tour of duty, and the lowly status of the sailors, artisans, soldiers and farmers meant that little effort was put into maintaining anything other than the most rudimentary links with the parent country. It was in many ways a harsh environment and the ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church provided almost the only consistent link with the former homeland's culture. This background helps set the scene against which the policies of Anglicisation were introduced.

In such a restricted atmosphere, the language of the settlers provided an often unacknowledged source of continuity and stability, especially as it was used as a means of communion with their God through the ministers of their Church, a link with their ancestry of considerable importance.

For two main reasons the language of the settlers, those who did not or could not afford to return home to the Netherlands, became the central focus for a political debate which was to span a century. In the settlers' dealings with the British from 1806 until the aftermath of the Boer War, the struggle between the Afrikaans language and English held much more than a symbolic importance. From the Afrikaners' point of view, their

language was an issue of identity and cultural independence which of course included political overtones of no little importance. From the British point of view, the stability of the colony could best be achieved by the gradual and continuing downgrading of the Afrikaans language and the attempted phasing out of Dutch.

Sturgis divides policies of Anglicisation in the Cape into two categories. The first includes policies which were meant to mature over a period of time such as immigration, education and religion. The second includes policies which could have been expected to have had an immediate effect, such as political changes in the colonial civil service, local government and the legal system. However, even within such a distinction, it is evident that language policy would be of central importance to any changes in legal or administrative matters. The fact that language policy can be interpreted as embracing both rapid and slower political policy changes illustrates once again how language attitudes are of enormous and often underestimated importance in political and cultural developments, especially between the chief protagonists in the nineteenth-century Cape Colony. In fact, between the Dutch settlers and the new British colonists, language was one of the very few differences. Ethnically and culturally they could not have been very much more similar.

Initial British Language Policy in the Cape (5:3)

Both the British and the Dutch in the Cape shared many cultural features, not the least of which were their common colonial histories. The only major difference here was that the Dutch Empire had had its heyday. By the point when the British assumed responsibility for the affairs of the Cape, the Dutch Empire was on the wane and in any case it had never really achieved the same sort of cohesion between colony and homeland as the British would prove capable of. One large factor in this was the transcontinental influence of the English language and its ability to create an international English-speaking community through its Empire. Language became increasingly a focal point in a battle of unequals between the British and the Afrikaners. The use of English as an essential wedge aimed at bringing a neglected and isolated community of settlers further under the sway of a British administration speaks volumes about the nature of the British imperial venture. It also indicates the main strengths of its driving, nationalist characteristics in the context of a battle of rivalries between transplanted European communities.

From 1822 the issue of language comes to the centre stage of the affairs of the British in the Cape. It was in this year that Lord Charles Somerset pronounced that the English language was to be the only official language of the colony. Somerset announced his aim as,

" facilitating the acquirement of the English language in all classes of society ". (6) To this end he arranged for the importation of British schoolmasters and specifically Scottish ministers to fill vacancies in the Dutch Reformed Church.

However, such a sweeping pronouncement was never going to be the end of the story. The struggle between the Dutch and English languages for

primacy was to become a long-running one and the position of the Afrikaans language was to emerge as possibly an even more important question as the century progressed. In such an isolated and neglected overseas community, the Afrikaans language had to struggle for its due recognition by the British. For the Dutch community it was, and became even more so, an expression of group identity distinct from the European Dutch and an allegiance to a value-system distinct from their European, British rivals. Somerset's dictate, therefore, could do nothing more than instigate a century-long linguistic battle over the status and recognition of European languages in the Cape. This was to be finally resolved in 1925 by a joint sitting of both houses of Parliament in London which altered the Act of Union so as to make Afrikaans the national language of the 'Dutch-speaking' part of the population by giving it equal in status with English and Dutch for all purposes.

The length of the debate over the relative merits and even desirability of the rival languages in the Cape, particularly at a time when the English language and political organisation were enjoying an unprecedented curve of success, goes some of the way to explaining the centrality of language loyalty within the British view of their place and role in the international community.

The policies of Anglicisation in the Cape from the 1820s could be interpreted as an extension of policies already pursued within the British Isles. Internally, these were aimed at a certain levelling, in linguistic terms, towards the English norm. Politically and culturally a more unified projection of the nation was the ultimate result of those policies. Externally, in India as in the Cape, language became an essential expression of a certain type of British nationalism. Its power lay in the

fact that it could combine what was politically expedient in the administration of its colonies with a linguistic expression of the British cultural identity. This potent combination was contained, in its embryonic form, in the announcement of the British Government on the 5th July 1822 to,

" make the language of the Parent Country.....more universally diffused." (7)

At the end of the Napoleonic Wars and as the Industrial Revolution got into full swing, there was an unprecedented confidence in the destiny and sense of superiority of the British, as increasingly expressed through the extension of its imperial ambitions. This was rooted within a growing nationalist rhetoric. Nothing represented this spirit of national confidence better than the extension of British interests to the Cape.

Such rhetoric is well illustrated in a letter from Canning to Horton in 1822.

" Gibbon used to say that he thanked Heaven for having been born a Christian, a Briton and a Gentleman. To those advantages you may add being placed on the noblest theatre in the world, contributing by your official exertions to the stability of an admirable form of Government, occupying your thoughts with the greatest interests of mankind..." (8)

It is hardly surprising that the recipient of this letter, Horton, should be the main driving piston of early Anglicisation, so fully did he share the sentiments expressed in the letter. He too, was inspired by a vision of the spread of the British way of life and government across the world, propelled chiefly through the spread of the English language.

George Thom, entrusted by Somerset to make a case for the

extension of English within the Afrikaner community, was under no illusions about the scope of such a project.

" I will venture to say that there are not 400 who can converse in English and 200... who write it, or can read. The Settlers who arrived last year, and others from England are about 5,000 all situated in one District, Albany, and thus there are nearly 60,000 Dutch Colonists who do not understand a word of English and are likely to remain so for ages, for they occupy all the farms in the Districts and keep together. Thus if we ever wish to introduce the English language into the Courts of Justice in Town and Country, a measure that every Englishman wishes, it is high time that new and prudent measures are taken to introduce our tongue." (9)

Such sentiments illustrate that whereas Horton's and Canning's missionary fervour was not always matched by other colonial officers with a more realistic view of the situation, there did exist, nevertheless, a certain consensus centring on the cultural/political medium of the English language.

The wide support for the development of the teaching of English in the Cape as a means of pursuing policies of Anglicisation is further illustrated in a letter from Sir Lowry Cole in which he talks of,

" a time when the extension of education and a knowledge of the English language was so generally desired. " (10) The role of the English language as a civilising tool could not be summed up more succinctly than in the criteria demanded of the teachers of English quoted by Sturgis:

" high moral principles; 'a perfect knowledge of English grammar', writing and arithmetic; a willingness to teach 'the meanest children', loyalty to 'the King and constitution' ". (11)

This indicates the unique combination of political stability and

cultural benefits which the extension of English and the related, broader policies of Anglicisation seemed to be able to offer. However, unlike in India where there existed an overwhelming local demand for instruction in English, the Dutch settlers' community resented the attempts to create a monopoly of English even while accepting the benefits of the language. Even after the Great Trek of 1836, it has been observed that positive attitudes towards English were still retained and Afrikaans/English bilinguals were still regarded as 'geleerdheid' (well-educated). (12)

Cultural Attitudes to European Languages in the Cape (5:4)

Resentment and suspicion of cultural assimilation of the Dutch community into the English-speaking one were certainly not misplaced. Whereas the Dutch community had the highest regard for the literary and political achievements of the English-speaking world, they did not share its exclusive chauvinism towards its own language. This, combined with the downgrading of the Afrikaans language and Dutch, provided the core of resistance and resentment which are the mirror image of Anglicisation in a rival community. Here, as elsewhere, the English language was at the centre of such policies.

It is the intention of this section to show that this chauvinism, springing from the emergent cultural nexus of the nineteenth century and its dominant political expression, nationalism, worked in two simultaneous directions: first, in its influencing of British attitudes towards the Dutch and Afrikaans languages in the Cape; and second, in the basis of such attitudes on British ideas about the worth and position of the English language as expressed within such a nationalistic view of the world.

Two factors illustrate how central was the issue of language to the gradation of various European nationalisms throughout the nineteenth century. First is the length of the language debate in the Cape and later South Africa. The legitimacy of Afrikaans as the mode of expression of a community as opposed to the ascendancy of English was contested for over a century. Second, the fact that debates over the relative positions and worth of indigenous and rival languages were repeated in various forms throughout the British Empire indicates the importance of the language factor to any picture of a nineteenth-century British identity.

The policies of Anglicisation in both direct and indirect forms contain attitudes of a directly hostile nature toward the Dutch community. Though implicit in such policies, overt enmity rarely surfaced with any jingoistic venom, officially at least. Back home the English had achieved such a cultural monopoly and in such a progressive manner over their Celtic neighbours in the British Isles that a solid national base was assured. The subsequent self-evidence of the superiority of their language and its efficacy in eroding potential hostility was a consequence of this monopoly. Thus, whatever the attitudes which informed language policies in the Cape, they were founded on self-assured, historical precedent; the colonial administrators knew language policies had worked before and must have been confident of the influence of the English language as a civilising and colonising tool.

Of course, it is easier to support such policies if one has the image of the rival as an inferior sort of person firmly implanted in one's mind. John Barrow had more to do than most with implanting the impression of the bigotted and backward Afrikaner in the colonial imagination. In this way he provided an influential example of the overtly jingoistic. His testimony is doubly important because of the influential heights he reached within the colonial administration. He served as secretary to Lord Macartney in the colony and later he became Secretary at the Admiralty. Sturgis (13) claims that his views went so far as to be the touchstone of colonial opinion on the future of the Cape during the next three decades. He was a confirmed advocate of the benefits of an English cultural input into the affairs of the colony, hoping that,

" the spirit of improvement that has always actuated the minds of the English in all their possessions, abroad, will no doubt shew itself

in this place. " (14)

He was not in any doubt as to the beneficial influence of the English language on the " lazy and listless Afrikaner ". (15) In 1819 he expressed this view in the 'Quarterly Review' to which he became a regular contributor on matters concerning the Cape.

" The first step to the general introduction of our laws and manners will be that of introducing the English language. We cannot help regretting that this important point is most unwisely overlooked in all our conquests; yet it might easily be effected, and without any violence to the feelings of the conquered; let but all official documents, all registers, title deeds, instruments for conveying and securing property, be made in the English language, and the next generation will become Englishmen. " (16)

Not only does this extract indicate the central importance attached by a high-ranking administrator to the leading role of language in paving the way to a stable colonial situation but it also highlights the unconscious dismissal of the linguistic and cultural needs of the white Afrikaners community. It would seem that, according to Barrow's vision, they ought to surrender an essential token of their identity in the face of the self-evident superiority of English. So deep is this idea ingrained, even in the influential mind of John Barrow, that the idea of the language of the rival colonial settlers just does not figure in his thinking. This absence from the colonial equation of the language of their rivals speaks volumes of the attitude of the British colonists to other languages and the strength of the basis of this attitude within the British perception of the world beyond their shores. Also relating to British perceptions of nationalism, it is highly ironic to note that, despite the high-profile

use of Scots ministers in the cultural annexation of the Cape, Barrow chooses to use the more restricted adjective 'English' when he clearly means 'British': another subliminal slip of the pen.

Despite the popular image of the Afrikaner as a "patient animal" (17) and the close cultural and economic ties between the colonists and the Cape's new masters, the British, the latter relied on the use and imposition of English in the colony as a cultural demarcation and, in Barrow's eyes at least, progress too. In this colonial situation, as with the British experience in French-speaking Canada, the advantages of economic and cultural similarities were sacrificed for the sake of the imposition of the English language on unwilling recipients. Again, this emphasises both the administrative imperative to spread the use of English and also the subliminal drive to maintain the reputation and status of the British identity within the framework of nationalism.

Sturgis stresses that during this early nineteenth-century attempt to Anglicise the Cape, the emphasis was firmly placed on the extension of the laws and modes of government as a very " nationalistic expression. " (18) The channel for achieving this was the medium of the English language.

This needed a firm conviction of the superiority of the British and their language. Such a conviction had been noted in the writings of many authors including Howinson who claimed they viewed themselves as " superior as a nation . " (19)

Colonel W.W.Bird, Colonial Secretary for the Cape from 1818-1824, amplifies this point, and the implications for the attitudes of the English to acculturation, and by implication learning another language, are clear;

" An Englishman, from the Orkneys to New South Wales, is the same unbending creature. He accommodates himself with difficulty, to the manners of other countries, and nothing can be upright and proper that is not English and to which he is unaccustomed. The Scotch and the Irish mix more readily and sensibly with the members of a foreign society, and are more easily reconciled to its customs. " (20)

Sir John Truter illustrated the important role the English language had to play in exerting power over the Dutch in the Cape but also highlighted the sensitivity of their community to an abrupt imposition of English in a coercive and unthoughtful manner. He was a Chief Justice who held the office of Political Commissioner in the Cape. In his report on the promotion of the English language Truter wrote,

" I must do the members justice to say that they unanimously signified their inclination hereto, and acknowledging the liberal protection which the Reformed Church (Dutch) has enjoyed under your Excellency's Government evinced every possible disposition to assist in promoting your wise and beneficial object in all respects in their line... [nevertheless it would appear] to be difficult for the ministers to draw the line and fix the limits within which the civil obligation to know the English language is confined..." (21)

While acknowledging the eventual spread of English as a cultural by-product of colonisation, Truter is wary of any forcing of the pace of linguistic change. He is aware of the central power of Dutch and Afrikaans among the settlers of Dutch extraction and seems to be supporting a more gradualist policy. In his view language has to catch up with cultural change rather than cultural habits modify themselves to fit in with a new dominant language. In this specific case, according to Truter, it would be

the religious aspect of the Dutch settlers' community which would suffer for want of any widespread competence in English if the English language were to be imposed wholesale. He goes on to explain;

" At this very day Dutch is the domestic language in all families, even the increase of the English families since the cession has had less influence than one could have expected [;] under these circumstances religious instruction cannot be given otherwise than in the Dutch language, except at the expense of religion itself, and this will continue to be the case until an encouraged general instruction in the English language, added to an increased English population should have enabled the succeeding generations to use the English language with equal facility and advantage as that of their fathers. " (22)

However, the colonial government would not relax its grip on the potential of the Church for furthering its policies of Anglicisation. It believed that while there existed a linguistic division in the Cape between its two white communities, any administration would face an unnecessary extra problem. Sir Richard Plasket, the Colonial Secretary for the Cape between 1824 and 1827, insisted that the use of English in Church services must be pursued with the utmost vigour. Sturgis comments on this;

" One example of the success of this policy was at Cradock, where in the late 1820s service was held in English despite seven eighths of the congregation being Afrikaner. This was not at all atypical in the 1830s and 1840s. A more usual form of compromise, however, was for morning services to be in Dutch, followed by afternoon services in English. Also continued was the importation of Scottish Calvinists to the extent that by 1837 half of the Synod was composed of Scots. " (23)

It is easy to understand the particular colonial rationale

behind the language element, implicit or explicit in the process of Anglicisation. It is even simpler to understand when phrased as convincingly as Ellis put it;

" Community of language is the simplest and best security for intimate connection with distant possessions, and by the substitution of the English language for the Dutch language in all official proceedings at the Cape, much of what is desired will be obtained. This measure must certainly be preliminary to all others....." (24)

Such an attitude to the languages of the Dutch community illustrates an assumed inevitability that English will gain ascendancy. It was an assumption that had every reasonable confidence placed behind it. It was also an assumption which was supported by the historical precedent of the English experience when faced by the rival Celtic tongues within Britain. While such assumptions need not necessarily imply a rejection of the worth of the Dutch and Afrikaans languages of the settlers, in the case of the British it certainly did so. While recognising the potential power of the language as a focus for opposition such a short quotation contains a total lack of regard for the cultural identification of a people with its language when faced with the imposition of English.

After the proclamation of 1822 Bourke accelerated the pace of anglicisation through the appointment of civil servants directly from Britain. Though Sir John Cradock had made a knowledge of English compulsory for all civil servants, Bourke's later innovations led prominent Afrikaners to fear, in the words of John Truter, that they were " to be gradually forced out of their public employment. " (25)

The establishment, in 1829, of the South African College indicates the leading role which the Colonial Office wished to play in

higher education as a tool of Anglicisation via the English language. As opposed to the rural schools, where English was not making significant headway, the college abandoned any pretence it may have had at a bilingual approach as early as 1836. Sir John Herschell concluded in his review of the running of the college and its future;

" Considering also that this is and for centuries to come will, in all human probability remain a British possession - that communications with Britain are constant and increasing - British settlers flowing in yearly - British institutions multiplying - and British habits gaining ground, I could not conceive that caeteris paribus, so far as can be done without sacrificing what is more important, a preference should be given to the English language as the medium of oral communication; and in the choice of Elementary books. " (26)

Here is the same triumphalist tone to be found in Macauley, Hill, and Dilke throughout the nineteenth century with regard to the spread of the English language. Again the pragmatic, 'inevitabilist' approach to the immersion of another culture in the language of the British is in evidence. However, unlike in India, the European-descended Afrikaner was exhibiting tendencies which were to cause the British no end of problems throughout the century and beyond.

In the opinion of G.M.Theal, many parents refused to allow their children to attend the English-speaking schools as they viewed them, quite correctly, as deliberately subverting and destroying their language. (27) In the civil service and the courts the Dutch language was becoming increasingly marginalised and the real implications of Anglicisation were not lost on the Afrikaner. The patronising sentiments in Bird's analysis of the situation facing the Cape indicate the cultural assumptions inherent

in the linguistic element of many of the policies of Anglicisation.

" British habits, laws and language will be considered most congenial to the feelings and best adapted for the interests and happiness of the colony." (28) The tensions caused by British policies towards language in the early part of the nineteenth century in the Cape colony were to ensure that the language question would always remain a potential political flashpoint. In times of crisis the English language and the attitudes of the colonial administration towards the Dutch language would always act as separatist tendencies. The English language would not provide a unifying focal point within the Afrikaner community as it did within the Indian sub-continent.

Conclusion (5:5)

In both instances, India and the Cape Colony, the status of the British nation was extended through the experience of imperialism. One of the direct effects of this experience, as we have seen was an enormous boost in prestige for the English language. What is distinctive about the situation in the Cape in the early nineteenth century is that English had an opportunity to extend itself at the expense of another European language. Consequently, the English language could lay further claim to having become a symbol of the success of the British abroad and representative of the people themselves. Such a success could only enhance the potential for the English language and its international prestige to become a token of the merits of its speakers.

Language policies pursued in the Cape at the start of the nineteenth century certainly attempted to marginalise a rival settler group and in some ways were reminiscent of the treatment of Celtic languages in the British Isles. What remains to be seen is whether these policies eventually became crystalised in a more popular form and whether a consensus on the importance of the English language to British nationalism also included negative attitudes to foreign languages.

Chapter Six

Imperialism, Popular Culture and Language Attitudes

Introduction (6:1)

After outlining certain developments of British nationalism through its experience of imperialism in the nineteenth century from a specifically linguistic point of view, it now seems appropriate to examine how attitudes to other languages were expressed, particularly in popular form.

Though the two specific examples of British attitudes to languages in Chapters 3 and 4, in India and the Cape Colony, attempted to address the effects of colonial administration on the British themselves, they remain too far from home to represent anything other than an embryonic indicator of certain potential attitudes among the vast majority of the British population.

Such colonial attitudes remained the concern of a small ruling and commercial elite with the bureaucratic tasks of administering policies overseas and displayed all the pragmatism and utilitarianism of the British imperial venture. Indeed, at times, at home, throughout the nineteenth century, politicians of every hue had debated the very existence of the Empire and this pragmatism could be interpreted as betraying a lack of political sense of purpose behind its extension.

The general public had little by way of a coherent view of the Empire itself. The fragmented perception of the Empire in the popular mind is neatly explained by the four entities of Empire defined by J. Mackenzie.

" It was the territories of settlement, which by the period of 'popular imperialism' were beginning to emerge as semi-independent political units. It was India, its central economic significance masked by

the romantic aura Disraeli created around it in the 1870s on the eve of the 'new imperialism'. It was a string of islands and staging posts, a combination of seventeenth century sugar colonies and the spoils of war with European rivals, China and other non-European cultures. And, finally, Empire was the dependent territories acquired largely in the last decades of the nineteenth century." (1)

Despite this understandably vague grasp of the specifics of Empire and despite H.G. Wells' pronouncement that nineteen out of twenty Englishmen knew as much about their Empire as they did about the Italian Renaissance or the Argentine republic (as reported in Orwell's article on boys' weeklies) British imperialism was developing a more potent popular appreciation of its scope, as far as it involved its sense of nationalism, than a solely political or geographical one could have done.

As defined in Chapter 1, nationalism is principally concerned with the conscious awareness of belonging to a distinct national grouping. It remains of paramount importance to this study to establish how that awareness was mediated to a popular audience and, in particular, what role attitudes to languages played in the formation of that broader consciousness of empire.

This consciousness was nurtured throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century by an explosion of new rituals, ceremonies, displays, exhibitions and publications which communicated to the general public, if not a specific outline of the politics and geography of the Empire, then generally an intimation of the enormous potential which it offered to the prestige of the British nation. This intimation enabled the public to assume a view of themselves in the wider world and to conclude that their place as a nation was central to the commercial and moral

development of that world through the intermediary of their Empire. Such a broadening and deepening of the popular perception of the role of the British in world affairs could have had the effect of impressing the responsibilities of Empire on the majority of British citizens for the first time in the nation's history.

In terms of popular participation, this period could be said to have indeed engendered a 'new nationalism'. By popular participation in the new patriotic fervour of imperialism, the British could experience, if only vicariously, the sense of superiority and grandeur implicit in empire on a large scale. This popular burgeoning of imperialism created a new and powerful dynamic, a national sense of purpose. Although most often a rather undirected and emotional dynamic it could, among other things, defuse potential social conflicts within Britain, such as class antagonism, by appealing to a shared sense of the greater national good. (cf Chapter 1) The extent to which such a popular fusion had taken place by the end of the nineteenth century is well illustrated by Mackenzie:

"intellectual and popular tastes had converged to an extent seldom encountered before or since. Thus nationalist composers such as Elgar and writers and poets like Kipling and Newbolt could achieve that rare combination of critical acclaim and a popular following." (2) Such a convergence occurred at a time when education for all from the 1870s could arguably have increased the level of literacy among British society and consequently the potential reading public.

Just as illuminating is the record of the effects of including imperialist elements in the education of young working-class children compiled from oral evidence by Stephen Humphries who observes;

" Most important, however, the ideology of imperialism made a

direct appeal to working class youth because it reflected and reinforced a number of its cultural traditions, in particular, the street gangs' concern with territorial rivalry, and the assertion of masculinity." (3)

In some ways the elitism of imperialism had vanished as it spread its message to a wider audience who participated in it enthusiastically. In another way elitism on a truly popular level had just begun as the British nation embraced certain perceptions of its own elevated position in the world.

Some writers have even played down the notion of a conscious British brand of imperialism. Max Beloff has claimed that,

" the British were not an imperially-minded people; they lacked both a theory of empire and a will to engender and implement one. " (4)

However, this implies an overestimation of the commercial and pragmatic progress of British imperialism while neglecting the impact which it made on the British psyche. Nationalism and a sense of national purpose, as illustrated in Chapter 1, do not necessarily require an overt theory or blueprint. In fact, the consensus displayed in the blossoming of the 'new imperialism' could claim a stronger allegiance through the lack of such a hierarchical national plan.

Such a hypothesis clearly deserves closer scrutiny. Though outlined in the opening chapter and developed through the examination of language policies in Chapters 3 and 4, it needs to be assessed from the perspective of the role of attitudes to foreign languages developing from populist imperialism.

The particular role of language attitudes in constructing a consensual view of the status of Britain will be shown to have been of enormous influence. Its importance is not only cultural but also

structural. Its structural aspects, under the broad heading of politico-linguistics, may help to shed light on how certain national perceptions were developed through the British experience of imperialism. Most often language attitudes among the imperial administrators were masked by pragmatic, commercial motives. Only when imperialism became broadly popularised can such things as British language attitudes be more fully and frankly appreciated. However, this is not to ignore the intrinsic links between this imperialist experience of the power of the English language and its expanding base among British society at home; in this way it could be said that the cultural and structural aspects are interwoven historically.

The potential for linking language with other facets of the British Empire is lucidly expressed in a Charles Godfrey song.

" We're brothers of the same race
Speakers of the same tongue,
With the same brave hearts that feel no fears
From fighting sires of a thousand years;
Folks say, ' What will Britain do ?
Will she rest with banners furled ?'
No ! No ! No !!!
When we go to meet the foe,
It's the English-speaking race against the world. " (4)

When Tony Bennett (5) writes of popular culture being neither a downward imposition of values, hegemonically imposed, nor a welling up from below, but as being " an area of exchange " between classes, it is important to indicate that he has a different interpretation of the concept of hegemony from the one this study will use. For our purposes we must

stress that the term implies a greater degree of social negotiation. This is not a pedantic point but one of central concern to the analysis of language attitudes within popular culture. How does a national language function within the establishment of a national hegemony ? This question will be addressed in this chapter and the next one by an examination of two popular forms of entertainment in the 1930s: boys' magazines and the cinema. However, at this point it seems appropriate to expand a little further one particular element of this study's theoretical hypothesis.

I consider that the English language is an underestimated element in the creation of a solid and consensual nationalism. The role of language loyalty has helped to create a centripetal hegemony among British English speakers, or so this thesis will argue. Against a consistent and broad backdrop of a confident nationalism the British could elaborate a view of themselves in the world. In such a national vision the awareness of the power embodied in their language could be elaborated.

The consensual nature of that hegemony would render unnecessary any overt imposition of values and feeds the robustness of this model.

Two features of Gramsci's (6) analysis of hegemony are of particular relevance to Britain as it approached the end of the nineteenth century. He insisted that the ruling class of a country had to establish a convincing level of " intellectual and moral prestige " for itself in order to hold power. This is, in fact what the newly dynamic and popular form of imperialism was able to achieve at precisely this period. It spread its legitimacy from a commercial and bureaucratic elite to broader sections of the community for the sake of national cohesion. This was not imposed; rather it formed the basis of an idealised view of the British as world leaders around which the nation could unite. This study will argue that

language attitudes became a central feature of the creation of such a hegemony, especially when linked with notions of 'racial' supremacy and the material evidence of the spread of the influence of the English language around the world.

Gramsci also stresses that, in his view, hegemony can only be achieved when superstructures within a society adhere closely to the patterns of the structure itself. In other words, within the British imperial context, hegemony could only be sustained transcontinentally as long as the cultural manifestations of empire at home shared many features of the construction of the Empire abroad. As we have already seen in Chapters 3 and 4, the tacit and sometimes articulated assumptions built into many colonial decisions and attitudes to other languages, illustrate how strong the role of the English language had become both politically and culturally. Often, such decisions bear the echo of previously 'pragmatic' and 'utilitarian' policies towards the other Celtic languages of the British Isles and contain the same potential for arrogance towards these languages.

Similarities between colonial language policies as a superstructural element and the economic, imperialist base structure highlight the potential for language to become a source of powerful inner cohesion within a national hegemony. In such a situation a ruling class need not impose a nationally based world view, it need only emphasise and extend the potential which already exists. It is almost as if the British nation were waiting for such a legitimation of the Empire to be popularised so that they could unite around it.

To extend such an imperialism to a popular audience all that was required was a selection of media broad enough to embrace the majority of

the British nation behind and, at the same time, within this hegemony. To retain control of this hegemony within the imperialist structure the British ruling class needed a balance to be maintained in presenting external conquests as increasingly dependent on national values and character. This could be referred to as a nationally shared value system. If this was achieved, then it was certainly an example of the superstructure and the base structure resembling each other.

It is a relationship which this study now proposes to illustrate, using examples of British attitudes to languages other than English in popular media. In such a way I hope to illustrate how such attitudes as may become apparent are central to many facets of the relationship of the British to the world beyond these islands and equally central to their view of their own place in that world.

Boys' Comics (6:2)

I have chosen the cultural examples of boys' comics and the cinema in the 1930s (to be considered in the next chapter) for two reasons. First, they offer between them the broadest possible range of popular taste, ranging from the flippancy of the comics to the austere grandeur of the films on empire and encompassing a wide age range between them. Second, the 1930s not only saw the culmination of this new and popular imperialism among the British people but also marked the end of the British Empire as a cohesive unit; the war and the struggles for independence were to change that.

Before embarking on a discussion of the various attitudes to foreign languages implicit in many of these comics, it will be useful to consider first the remarks which George Orwell made about them in his seminal article. (7)

Orwell traces the lineage of 'Gem' and 'Magnet' back to their nineteenth-century predecessors and thus identifies them as the more ancient type of comic as opposed to the modern comics which emerged in the late 1920s and the 1930s.

He points out that the penpal columns of 'Gem' illustrate the Empire-wide readership of such comics and the fact that even in their schoolboy escapism, they cross the boundaries of class in a way that the schools they depicted had never attempted. Surely, here is a minor cultural example of what Gramsci might have referred to as a hegemonic block! The apparent incongruity of such stories, based on the experiences of a social minority, but appealing to and having enormous influence on so many, is emphasised in the opening lines of the article.

" You never walk through any poor quarter in any big town

without coming upon a small newsagent's shop. "

Talking of the large number of weekly magazines on sale, he continues:

" Probably the contents of these shops is the best available indication of what the mass of English people really feels and thinks. "

(8)

He stresses not only the unchanging view of foreigners in these comics but says that they conform generally to the following patterns:

" Frenchman: Excitable. Wears beard, gesticulates wildly.

Spaniard, Mexican etc: Sinister, treacherous.

Arab, Afghan etc: Sinister, treacherous.

Chinese: Sinister, treacherous. Wears pigtail.

Italian: Excitable. Grinds barrel-organ or carries stiletto.

Swede, Dane etc: Kind-hearted, stupid.

Negro: Comic, very faithful. " (9)

In a prophetic insight, Orwell weighs up, not only the huge influence of these comics, but also their hopelessly anachronistic place in the modern world.

" Here is the stuff that is read somewhere between the ages of twelve and eighteen by a very large proportion, perhaps an actual majority, of English boys, including many who will never read anything else except newspapers; and along with it they are absorbing a set of values which would be regarded as hopelessly out of date in the Central Office of the Conservative Party. " (10)

Such a static and dismissive attitude to foreigners within these comics could well be considered as the inevitable consequence of the explosion of the 'new imperialism' as it had developed through this

particular popular medium. Perhaps 'developed' is not a totally appropriate word, as it was this view that the outside world had not altered at all and that Britannia ruled the waves as in days of yore which suggested that the British had an increasingly feeble grasp of international reality.

There is undoubtedly a reflected grandeur of the exploits and prestige of the British abroad contained in the pages of these comics. Such a perception coincides neatly with the idea of an expanded popular imperialism which Mackenzie, and Hobsbawm and Rainger (11), among others, have traced as emerging from the new, broader-based nationalism of the late nineteenth century.

In examining language attitudes present in a selection of these comics, this study is not necessarily looking specifically for the weight of their influence on British society. Rather it will be looking for clues as to whether these attitudes presented a view which could be considered to coincide with the prevailing British view of themselves and their linguistic niche in the world.

Boys' Comics - Pre-1930 (6:3)

Before considering some examples of boys' comics in the 1930s it would be pertinent perhaps to view how they tended to present languages other than English earlier in the century. This will provide some relief to our perspective of the comics in the thirties from the points of view of continuity and change in these attitudes.

In the first volume of 'Magnet', published in 1908, some characters appear who continue into the 1930s, while others disappear, as we shall see, because of what we can only assume to have been political considerations. Though the characters may change, the general presentation of foreign languages and indeed foreigners, in the main, seems to remain

constant.

At one point, one of the boys at Greyfriars School (an institution which would become virtually a mythical national monument and one almost synonymous with the name of its most famous pupil, Billy Bunter) has received a ten pound note, rather than his usual five pound note from his uncle.

" ' Rather ! ' said Bob Cherry emphatically.

' The ratherfulness is terrific, ' said Huree Jamset Ram Singh, in the English he had learned under the best native masters in Bengal.

' The fiverfulness would have been great but the tennerfulness is superbful. The uncleful relative is a noble old sport. ' " (12)

Not only does this indicate a certain mockery of the Indian's attempts to speak English and imply that this was the best that he, as a mere foreigner, could achieve, but it also casts doubt on the abilities of his teachers in his native Bengal to present a reasonably idiomatic form of English. What is perhaps more telling is the fact that none of the boys, nor, it would appear, the masters, attempts to correct his English. This implies that the Indian boy will continue to be identified among his fictional peers and among his readers by his linguistic deficiencies. Thus, as a foreign speaker of English, he is trapped by the author into a two-dimensional role from which he cannot escape without losing the greater part of his comic identity.

The ironic asides of the author continue to imply that this linguistic figure of fun does not possess the one common and vital characteristic of the majority of other boarders at Greyfriars; English is not his first language. On learning that Mr Chesham is to be their new form master, he exclaims,

" ' The assfulness of the honorable Chesham is terrific ! ' said Huree Jamset Ram Singh, the Hindu junior, in the excellent English he had not learned at Greyfriars. " (13)

Later in the same story, the inevitable happens and his name is itself turned into a moment of comical relief as one of the boys calls out,

" Then Huree Jampot and I had better go..." (14)

As if to emphasise the point that teachers of languages are at best incompetent, the German master, while evidently a native German speaker, is presented in a similarly stereotyped fashion: fat and incapable of speaking in anything other than heavily accented and unidiomatic English.

" Herr Rosenblaum, the German master, came out of his room and walked along the passage to the stairs. His foot struck against one of the sandals and there was a clatter. The fat German stopped and stared in blank amazement at the pile outside Mr Chesham's door.

' Mein crashious ! ' he murmured. ' I tink tat is ver' strange mit itself after, aint it ? Vy for does Herr Chesham desire so many sandals? ' A grin dawned on his fat face. ' But perhaps it is vun trick of te juniors. Ach ! Te young rascals. ' " (15)

He is emphatically fat and appears, with his clumsy behaviour and language errors, merely to add to the climate of hilarity of this episode. It is interesting to note that his mistakes in English also seem to include some which Frank Richards, the author, considers typical for a German speaker, as well as the transcribed errors of pronunciation. Once again, a character is presented and his personality transmitted through the evidence of his deficiencies in English, implicitly brought about by his command of his native tongue.

In volume 19, Meunier, the French junior at Greyfriars, has arranged a cricket match between his cousin and visiting French schoolfriends and the Greyfriars team. Meunier arranges the game despite Bob Cherry's suspicion that,

" ...the French team...will play like a lot of girls. " (16)

Meunier's conversation is punctuated with authentic-sounding French expressions such as, 'Ciel', 'Parbleu', 'Non, non, mon ami' and indications, once again, that his English is far from perfect - 'Moosh bettair', 'Ferry goot', 'Ze English garcons'.

However, the full-scale cultural mockery, always lying dormant in such linguistic parodies, explodes when Meunier meets Fritz Hoffman.

" A full, round German face was put in at the door. It belonged to Fritz Hoffman, the German junior at Greyfriars...

' Mein Himmel ! Vat is te matter before..?'

' Mein gootness.'....' Goot. I fetch mein flannels. ' " (17)

When they begin, almost inevitably, to fight, it is to exclamations such as, 'Sherman peeg', 'French pounder', 'Sherman rottair'. Frank Richards notes that they were always fighting and arguing as if a new outbreak of the Franco-German war on a small scale were imminent.

The Greyfriars boys never seem willing, or competent, to attempt to communicate in French or German with either of the juniors. This seems to be beyond or beneath them, yet the main mocking tone comes consistently from the author who puts the words of self-ridicule into the mouth of Meunier's cousin when he explains,

" Oui, oui !...Ve pay zis visit to Greyfriars by ourselves. Ve find our way about zis country easy, as I speak so good English. I am always treated viz ze great politeness, and I zink it is because I speak ze

English so vell. " (18)

Twice in one paragraph, Richards is keen to impress upon the reader the arrogant and self-satisfied, yet ultimately deluded French boy's notion of his own competence in English. Though the language skills of Bob Cherry, Bunter and company are not held up to scrutiny, here we are left pondering whether the French have some sort of duty to master our English language which is not reciprocally incumbent upon the English.

It is interesting to record that an almost identical stereotyped German appears in the first volume of 'Gem', published in 1907, and that Herr Schneider shares the physical and linguistic limitations of Herr Rosenblaum at Greyfriars.

He appears as abruptly as he intends to carry on.

" The door of the study opened, and a fat figure appeared. It was that of Herr Schneider, the German master. The German's fat, red face was very angry. " (19)

Alternating between 'Herr Schneider' and the derisory, 'The German', in the narrative, we are left in no doubt that he shares with Herr Rosenblaum a large physique and a grotesque, peremptory, almost militaristic style of speech.

" 'Nein, nein, 'Mein Gott', 'Come mit me', roared Herr Schneider. " (20)

He is described as " fat and unwieldly ". He "puffed and panted" and the aggression in his voice is matched by the manner in which he moves:

" The German marched in...." and the solution he offers to the boys' errant behaviour:

!" Poys are all the same, Herr Railton. Dey haf high spirits till dey are vell peaten. All poys require peating every morning. " (21)

Both these German stereotypes incorporate the inability to use the adopted English language with the other 'failings' they exhibit. Their gruff and brutish personalities are transmitted in the style as well as in the content of their utterances. Of course, the only contribution which the boys can make at the end of this episode in 'Gem' is to taunt, in an approximation of Herr Schneider's pidgin English,

" Schneider, Schneider

Schneider, how you vas ? " (22)

Such victories seem to indicate that, in the popular eye, foreign languages could best be used to ridicule their speakers, even though their efforts at speaking English have already been subject to the cruellest criticism. The native English speaker takes on a mantle of invincibility, backed by the inherent superiority of his language and his fluent command of it.

Moving away from the school-based evidence of prejudicial attitudes towards languages other than English and indeed towards the speakers of those languages themselves, to the adventure stories so typical of these early boys' comics, provides a much broader basis for our analysis outside the gates of the boys' boarding schools.

In one of Dick Lorraine's adventures, foreign language speakers such as Ramirez, a Portuguese sea-captain, have indicators of their status of non-native speakers of English scattered liberally through the text. Their foreignness is often predicated upon such linguistic indicators, implying that their language is a major feature of their separateness from the English-speaking world. Ramirez, for example, explains,

" Si, senhor, as much as any other man, which was nothing at all. Senhor Lorraine was undoubtedly a fine caballero, but mad - oh, yes,

quite mad, as were all the English caballeros..." (23)

However, here, at least, there is none of the mockery in the use of such indicators as in the Greyfriars or the Tom Merry stories. Such contrasting examples merely serve to illustrate the prejudicial venom of linguistic mockery when it does occur.

Occasionally, the lack of knowledge of a specific piece of foreign vocabulary erupts in frustration,

" Here, you old ass, gimme a match! A match! Tandsticker! Allumette! Feu! What the deuce is Spanish for a match? " (24)

This request elicits a comfortably English, cultural compromise, ironically enough from Mick Cavan, Dick's Irish fellow-adventurer:

" Shure, I'm blast if I know; but I've a box av good ould English vestas in the pocket av me, if that's pwhat ye're wantin. " (25)

The broader assumptions often implicit in the relations of the British abroad toward non-native English speakers are revealed by the author later in the story in an exchange between Mick, Dick and their black cook, Henry.

" ' Him alligator palaver, sar. You lib for shoot 'gator. You carry number one lamp topside - so! ' And he patted his forehead. ' Gator see him light, and eye show red all this palaver. '

' Well, I'll be hanged! ' said Dick, and burst out laughing. ' Henry's right, Mickey. There's one of 'em lying out in the moonlight... '

The Krooboy was quite right, though neither of the youngsters knew it. The alligator dozes with one eye open just above the water, and a light carried on a band round the hunter's forehead flashing on the eye, makes it glow a deep, vivid red colour, affording a mark to aim at. "(26)

This commentary exemplifies the ignorance and potential danger

of dismissing the attempts of the West African to explain the best course of action in his pidgin English.

However, despite this relatively enlightened intervention on the part of the author, most often, whether speaking or silent, the cook's attempts to communicate are placed in an almost infantile category. His communicative abilities, despite his obvious knowledge of the country and its hazards, seem to hinge exclusively on his failure to explain everything in the language of the white adventurers.

" Curiously enough, the fellow was a Krooboy from the West Coast of Africa; but whether he had come over in some trading ship, and deserted, or whether he had grown, like Topsy, they could never discover, all questions being answered by a broad and expansive grin. " (27)

Occasionally, the inability of the British, in general, to appreciate or adapt to the use of terms or names in foreign languages with which they come into contact in the course of their travels, breaks into tones of something approaching intolerance with the whole concept of anything which is not enshrined in the English language.

In 'Treasure Trove', an Arctic adventure story, Dick and Mick take on the services of a Finn who is described in these terms;

" He was a lank, slant-eyed Finn, with a keen, hard, bitter face, adorned by a straggly beard; and his name, in the Qvensk tongue, was so hopelessly unpronounceable that they called him Touks for short. " (28)
Here, there seems no doubt that the fault for the unpronounceability of his name lies squarely with the Qvensk tongue and not with any inability of the English speakers or the differences between the phonetic systems of the two languages. The name is simply unpronounceable.

On the same page, we learn that,

" the Russian name of the boat was quite beyond them, so they ran up the good old red ensign to the top of the eight foot flagstaff at her poop, and renamed her the Venture. " (29)

In this little cultural nugget, we have a combination of the admission that the foreign name was beyond their capacity to learn but also the consolation that it could be thrown overboard with a gesture heavy with implications of British imperial endeavour. This incident provides a microcosm of popular imagery used to sweep English on to some foreign shore and use it in the name of British power overseas. Such a spontaneous naming ceremony also implies the exchangeability of foreign names for English ones when the latter seem more appropriate to the task in hand.

After surveying, briefly, some of the cultural currents evident in these stories at this time, we can move on to the 1930s and view the changes and the consistencies in the presentation of languages other than English in the pages of some of these later comics. It is interesting to note that the examples chosen have not represented a monolithic, hostile cultural block. The nuances and possible cultural explanations for variations in the attitudes expressed are as important, overall, as those attitudes themselves. It is the variations and the exceptions which give the real depth and flavour of the solid and adaptable strengths within the concept of the British nation. Attitudes towards other languages must be built on powerful consensual foundations concerning the language of the nation itself. These legitimise and strengthen the world view of the 'new nationalism' of the British as it blossomed in popular forms in the 1930s.

The next section will aim to establish the predominant stereotypes of foreign languages and their speakers which existed within British society as reflected in these comics. It will not merely constitute

an attempt to provide a litany of repetitive evidence but attempt to place that evidence in the developing context of a burgeoning popular nationalism.

For this purpose the section will be divided into five main parts, each relating to attitudes to a specific language, geographical area of language or linguistic phenomenon.

Boys' Comics in the 1930s (6:4)

(1) Attitudes to French

Within the confines of life at Greyfriars School, the context of most encounters with the French language is the frequent appearance of Monsieur Henri Charpentier, the French master, nicknamed ' Mossoo' by the boys.

" As soon as the French lesson starts
The juniors begin cutting capers,
Mossoo has the kindest of hearts,
Which makes him fair game for the japers.

He pleads till his features are black,
And his eyes nearly burst from his sockets
But still they pin cards on his back
Or drop rats and mice in his pockets. " (30)

Even if we had never read his transcribed speech, his language would remain rooted in the buffoon-like lack of discipline which is described here. On the caricature accompanying this ditty by one of the fictitious boys, Harold Skinner, we can read a note attached to his academic gown by the boys;

" C' est un Froggie; wasn't it? " (31)

This is a brief yet illuminating indication of how the boys view the combination of master and language; the description has an overt mocking, pejorative tone which contrasts with the kinder sentiments of the short verse.

His classroom language is presented in a further descriptive poem as both indicator and cause of the general mayhem in his French

lessons.

" Assez! Enoff! Taisez-vous, Vernon-Smeet!
Mes garcons (sic), my verree good boys,
Be quiet! N'importe! And take you ze seat!
Mon Dieu! Zat you make not ze noise!
...C'est fini, all 'zis! I am speaking to you!
Ecoutez! Just hark viz you there!
Sacre (sic) nom d'un petit bonhomme en caoutchouc!
I am feenished! Que dois-je faire? " (32)

His lack of control and general incompetence are amplified by his lack of a reasonable command of English. Indeed, the connection between the two seems to be so strong that it appears as if the one begets the other. His lack of discipline stems from the fact that he does not speak English as the other masters do. The assumption in this portrayal of a French teacher seems to be that the French, even as schoolteachers, are incapable of acquiring a reasonable command of the English language and that what limited competence they possess is marred by association with their native tongue.

Despite this acute observation of the difficulties which he faces in coping with both the boys and the English language, the pupils of Greyfriars themselves manage to assume quite an overblown impression of their own skills in French on occasions.

In Italy, one of the boys, talking of Italian chauffeurs, in general, confides,

" Anyhow, they speak French. We ought to be able to sling it to him in French after all the lessons we've mugged up on. " (33)

When Harold Skinner is about to interview Monsieur Charpentier

for the boys' own Greyfriars magazine he explains, somewhat naively in the light of what the reader already knows, that the only difficulty will be the language of the interview.

" My task of recording the next interview
With Mossoo was really quite good.
Except for the language, so what could I do
To ensure I would be understood? " (34)

His solution to the problem is to acquire a copy of 'Handy French Phrases (Pronounced)'. The ensuing linguistic bedlam is only brought to an end by Charpentier exclaiming, " You're mad! " (35) This passage could, in fact, be considered a minor revenge on his part when seen in the light of the torrent of scorn usually directed at him by the author and his willing Greyfriars henchmen.

Occasionally, the boys' lack of respect for another's language is held up to ridicule by the author, in one instance through the same poet's pen. The irony is in a bleak vein, considering the consistent portrayal of other cultures and other languages in the Greyfriars saga. When writing of the French junior with the unlikely name of Napoleon Dupont, Harold Palmer, wit and poet, writes,

" Dupont is a Frenchman, a likeable chap,
Whose accent is certainly queer...
'Bonsoir!' said Dupont (which means 'How do you do?')
'Entrez!' (which is 'Please take a seat!') " (36)

This lack of understanding is often elevated to the status of a British cultural prerogative which speaks volumes for the attitudes it is transmitting and the certainties which lie behind such ignorant sentiments.

" 'Parbleu!' muttered a savage, angry voice. 'Nom d'un nom! Nom

d'un nom d'un chien!'

'Name of a dog!' was absurd enough in English, but in French it was a very angry expression indeed. " (37)

From time to time, truly xenophobic tendencies and corresponding attitudes to the languages of foreigners erupt quite explosively. There is no better example of this than Billy Bunter himself in Paris.

On arriving at the hotel, Bunter displays a well-developed arrogance towards the staff despite his less than gleaming accomplishment in French. This is faithfully transcribed by Frank Richards, indicating that, indeed, his pitiful attempts at speaking French and the attitudes of the boys in general are a matter for a humorous interlude.

" 'Bong!' said Bunter with a gracious nod. 'Very bong! Je comprong every word que vous speaky. What's he saying, Jarvis?'

'Tell Ongtwong (Antoine) to show them to their rooms, Jarvis! I can't be bothered with speaking French.' " (38)

Later, in a cafe, a subservient waiter has to cope with following Bunter's commands; 'Boko gattoos', 'Bringez', 'Vous hearez me?' (39)

This escalates into an incident with a gendarme during which patriotic zeal and xenophobia coincide in Bunter's frenetic exclamations:

" Leggo, or I'll give you a taste of Waterloo, over again... Get that, you frog-eating, fried-face freak? " (40)

During the same story, a mistranslation adds to the general impression that French is, at best, a strange language and, at worst, an absurd intrusion into a world where English could, and often does get its own way exactly as the English themselves seem to. Louis Le Couteau comes to take Bunter to a midnight meeting and whispers to him in the middle of

the night:

" N'ayez pas peur, petit m'sieur,...Have no fear, little
cabbage. " (41)

(11) Attitudes to Italian

Although, as already illustrated, there is a tendency in these comics for foreign language speakers from countries with which the British were familiar to utter short, easily accessible words or phrases in their own language to give a foreign flavour to the tale, it is only when they come into a linguistic exchange with English speakers that various stereotypes are best observed.

In the case of Italian, certain prejudices are emphatically confirmed and certain assumptions about the universality of the English tongue most clearly underlined, when Billy Bunter and his friends pay a visit to Italy.

In 'Ructions in Rome' (42) even the English boys can cope with the title of the Hotel Superbo, itself suggesting an easy transferability between the two languages. They can even understand the polite, 'Si, signore' of their chauffeur.

Frequently, Italian is used by the author to suggest something of the foreign and exotic flavour of the country in which they are staying. Phrases which might well have been in their Italian phrase book are threaded into the text, such as, 'Tutto sicuro, signore Buntero.' 'Giuseppe, signore - me chiamano Beppo.' 'Va bene, signore.' (43)

However, when this tendency of the Italians to speak in their own language seems to be denting the boys' sense of their own identity too far, we are brought down to earth by the boys' own arrogance and lack of understanding.

" 'E impegato questo battello! ' answered Amedeo.

' I wonder what that means when it's at home,' remarked Bob Cherry. " (44)

On other occasions, they show a fatalistic deference in the face of the Italian language and comply silently with the expressed wishes of their hosts.

" So they nodded and smiled in reply to Signor Pirandelli's stream of Italian, of which they understood hardly a word, and were shown to their rooms. " (45)

Italian, like any other language which the boys of Greyfriars come into contact with, seems somehow to threaten their own fragile sense of belonging. In this series of adventures in Italy, Italian seems to exclude them, to a large extent, from a complicated plot of gangsters and attempted kidnappings as well as from the culture of the country and its people. In fact, the double-dealing and hypocrisy of many of the Italians they come across merely confirm the impression that these people, including Amedeo, the boatman and their chauffeur, are intrinsically dishonest and willing to stoop to anything for a handful of money. Language contributes one more veil of confusion in all these dealings. It is perhaps not surprising that a group of schoolboys should feel themselves to be alienated to a certain extent in such unfamiliar surroundings but their rather grotesque assumptions that it should be anything other than baffling to be immersed in a culture whose language is almost totally unknown to them is quite striking. They often behave like some kind of precursors to the English football hooligan abroad of the 1980s in their wilfully philistine disregard for the language and culture of the country.

For the Greyfriars boys, the simplest methods of cutting through this particular veil are to attempt to ignore it or to abolish it. At various points in the story, the boys suggest that their hosts speak and understand English perfectly well and that they speak Italian merely as a

convenient excuse for keeping them in the dark. This theory finds substantial justification, at least in the machinations of the plot.

In 'Ructions in Rome', Harry Wharton, bravely equipped with his Italian phrasebook and attempting to act as interpreter, tries to discover what has happened to their car, which seems to have broken down. His efforts are in vain and he despairs with,

" If only that blighter understood English - ", to which one of the boys replies,

" 'Ten to one he does!' growled Johnny. 'All these Roman guides and waiters and chauffeurs speak English more or less.' " (46)

In the revealing episode which follows, combining this stereotyped, Anglocentric view with public schoolboy violence, they proceed to give the Italian chauffeur 'the bumps'.

" Now, you rotter, you're going to talk English, see! " (47)

This certainly constitutes a variation of the usual advice of 'Talk loud and slowly and they will understand, eventually!' At first the Italian's resistance to speaking English and telling the boys the truth about the allegedly broken down car holds firm:

" 'Non posso, signore,' gasped the Roman; " (noticeably submissive while being assaulted.) Eventually, however, the language barrier is breached and he confesses that he had, in fact, been offered 100 lire by a gangster to 'break down' and leave them stranded outside Rome.

Later on, they acquire another driver, this time a certain Mr Pucci. He is a cardinal's secretary and speaks perfect English, illustrating, perhaps that the Italians can, if only they put their minds to it. Bunter's surprise at this discovery is only outweighed by his scorn for the rest of Mr Pucci's countrymen who have no desire to become

acquainted with the English language simply for the benefit of the Greyfriars party.

" 'Very good - very good, signorini!' said Mr Pucci. 'Let us proceed!'

'Oh, crikey! I say, you fellows, he understands English!' said Bunter. 'Most of these silly idiots don't, you know!' " (47)

Connecting the apparently contradictory opinions of Bunter and Johnny is the impression that English ought to be comprehensible to the Italians. When it is not, this lack of understanding tends to form part of the broader web of intrigue in which the Italians fit the stereotype of untrustworthiness and deviousness which Orwell, in his article on boys' weeklies, identifies as applying to so many national groups. It is perhaps unusual but nevertheless striking to find language playing such a prominent role in the depiction of a foreign stereotype yet, as will be indicated in the remainder of this study, language is never far from the surface in such portraits.

(iii) Attitudes to German

German seems to have been removed from the curriculum at Greyfriars School by the 1930s. This is possibly because of residual anti-German feeling following the First World War. Gone is one cliched schoolmaster, yet the figure of the German, fat, monocled, militaristic and aggressive, is present in other stories in the boys' magazines, chiefly the adventure type of story.

" Von Schleicher was short and fat, with a paunch that was so weighty that it bowed his legs. His face was yellow and dark pouches sagged under his pig-like eyes." (48)

There does not appear to be as much German language recorded in the stories in the 1930s as before the 1914-18 war. Germans appear occasionally as military rivals or sinister threats and even, very rarely, as allies.

In one story, a new aerodrome for the Australian Government is being blasted from a rocky site, with the assistance of a collection of convicts. There is a German-American on the scene, albeit briefly. He is called Hans Heim. His ancestry is clearly established in one word when he asks,

" You will be ready to help me when the time comes, ja? "

" 'Here, mister,' he croaked, with just the faintest suspicion of a guttural accent. " (49)

How two words can indicate anything other than the narrator's prejudice is open to debate but this briefest of comments clearly attempts to reinforce the stereotyped English view of German as a harsh and guttural language.

In 'Skipper' of 1941, in a story entitled, 'Red, White and Blue

'Magic', Germans and British battle for the loyalty of a community of Kroomans. The battle for the lingua franca has, it would seem, already been won, as the Kroomans, British and Germans conduct their negotiations in English. The chief German, Hahn, speaks good English; this is indicated in the text of the story. However, even such proficiency as his is qualified in a condescending and almost elitist tone, as he,

" blustered and stammered in very fair English. "

On this occasion, once again, the single, identifying feature of the Germans' language would appear to be its gutturalness, alien to the sweet and natural melody of English, or so it would seem!

" Their guttural voices could now be distinctly heard. "

Hahn, despite his fluent command of the English language, translates literally a German term of abuse which would have been familiar to all readers of the story - " Kill the swinehounds! " The implication that the sound of the language and the brutality of its speakers go hand in hand is very much in evidence throughout this story.

(iv) Attitudes to Asian Languages

If Huree Jamset Ram Singh embodies the universal, unchanging Indian stereotype in his language deficiencies, as in many other aspects of his personality, then Hop Hi Wun Lung is his Chinese counterpart.

As with Huree Jamset, Wun Lung's mistakes, caused by his own language's pronunciation and syntax to a certain extent, are only ever seen as an opportunity for gentle ridicule. Nobody ever suggests assisting him to overcome these errors. It is obvious that the single most important element in this character which can be used for the dubious humour of 'Magnet' magazine is his effort to speak English. The stability of this stereotype indicates, as with the Indian boy, the solely comic function which he has in the stories. He exists to be the butt of jokes at his expense.

This verse about Wun Lung contrives, somehow, to combine this tone of mockery with a liberal message of tolerance at the end. In the context outlined above, this attempt at didacticism seems peculiarly out of place.

" Hop Hi - the Chinese junior in the second Form

When first to Greyfriars school there came
A small celestial toff
Who answered, when we asked his name,
'Hop Hi!' - we said, 'Hop off.'
Perhaps we kicked him for his cheek
Before we understood
That even Chinamen can speak
The truth when it is good.

2

To Greyfriars ears it sounds absurd.

Hop Hi! Wun Lung! My hat!

But in the Flowery Land, I've heard

They all have names like that!

If Greyfriars were in China, then

'Twould be a jolly rag,

With Quelch as Mr Tan Yung Men,

And Prout as Chin Me Wag.

4

To Britons this sounds rather queer

But let us not condemn;

When Chinamen are over here

We're just as quaint to them!

For people's ways in every land

Are proper in their sight,

And foreigners must understand

Whatever is, is right. " (50)

Wun Lung's conversation is sprinkled with transliterations of his errors in English, "velly gleat", "evely day", "my father muchee glim", "me plenty muchee say". In the main, the boys remain silent about his language. However, when the silence is broken, the same tone as in the opening of the poem is resumed. Take, for example, the winning limerick in the Greyfriars competition held by the boys:

" Said fat Bunter: 'I've enjoyed that pie.

What was in it, Wun Lung by-the-by?'

'Pie velly good plog,

Him made of dead flog

And poor li'lle pussy cattie that die.' " (51)

In this case the linguistic deficiencies are combined with and give expression to the suspected eating habits of the Chinese people themselves; so much for the laissez-faire cultural politics of the opening poem of this section. We can be left in no doubt as to the potency of language attitudes in drawing stereotypes, especially when racist pen-portraits are fashioned in such a way that the alien nature of the boy is actually expressed through the medium of his Chinese-influenced English.

The impression that Wun Lung, and by implication all Chinese, are devourers of random dead pets and household pests is further reinforced by an advertisement placed in Bob Wharton's 'Greyfriars' Herald'. (52)

" Linguist Wanted

To translate book on manners and politeness into Chinese for Wun Lung's benefit. He's so rude that when I asked him what was in the pie he gave me yesterday he answered, 'Rats!' - ALONZO Study no 7, Remove. " (53)

The character of Wun Lung himself is depicted contributing to this denigration, although in ignorance we are led to believe, when he too places an article in the Herald suggesting a reform of the curriculum at Greyfriars.

" GEYFLIARS NEEDEE LEFORM PLENTY QUICK

Too muchee Latin, too muchee history - but no one teachee
Chinese magic and conjuring tricks! Wun Lung he thinkee this very silly!

...you savvy now why Wun Lung thinkee Greyfriars needee reform
plenty quick? One day perhaps handsome masters sitee up and takee notice -
what you thinkee? " (54)

Once again, it must be stressed that what most alienates him

from the other boys at Greyfriars is his language: not Chinese, but a variety of English so riddled with stereotypical mistakes that it could be regarded as an Anglicised form of Chinese, especially for the readers of 'Magnet'. This confirms the suspicion that foreign languages, especially 'exotic' ones with no convenient touch points with English, are simply silly-sounding substitutes for language. The fact that his strange customs and ideas are set in this type of language illustrates how an alien language can embody the alien nature of its culture, especially in the context of 'Magnet'.

At the start of 'Khyber Carson's Cub-Hunters' in 'Skipper' of 1938 there appears this rhyme, chanted by the street urchins in India, or so the reader is informed.

" Chinky-Chinky Chinaman, yellow-faced baboon,
Chinky-Chinky Chinaman, yellow as the moon,
Chinky-Chinky Chinaman, Yah! Yah! Yah! "

The reader is informed that it is an " offensive rhyme, much more offensive in Hindu than any English can make it.." (55) Yet despite this cautionary note the story still uses a reference to this 'offensive rhyme' as a page heading: " Chinky-Chinky Chinaman, He no likee! "

In this adventure of Khyber Carson, we are introduced to him as,
" an Orientalist who could have written more about the secret history of the East than any other man."

His enormously developed knowledge of Eastern languages is put, in the context of the story, to no better use than breaking a drug ring. Knowledge of these languages is implied in the text and confirmed in the story not as a cross-cultural instrument for communication or understanding, but rather as a deciphering instrument to penetrate dark

motives and mysterious, devious plots. In isolation or balanced by positive images of the languages and people of Asia this use of his flair for Eastern languages would seem incidental to the main plot. Given the weight of other prejudicial attitudes to be found in these magazines, it is one more indication of the depth of suspicion within the English culture when confronted by foreign languages and their speakers.

Attitudes to Languages of the British Empire (6:5)

The languages spoken by the inhabitants of the British Empire overseas were obscure or even totally unknown to the mass of British readers. Unlike their European counterparts, therefore, there was no common ground to act as a bridge, connecting these speakers to their English reading audience. It is perhaps interesting to reflect that such attitudes as are contained in the pages of the boys' comics take no account of the sensibilities of the multinational and multilingual nature of their audience. The diversity of this audience is best illustrated by the range of nationalities represented in the contributions to the letters' pages. Thus it is significant that these comics were reaching such an audience and the attitudes contained in their pages were playing a part, no doubt, both at home and abroad, in cementing the edifice of the pre-eminence of the English language in the affairs of the world.

The general ignorance of the British reading audience about the diversity and specifics of the languages of the British imperial possessions overseas meant that few precise examples of prejudice towards these languages themselves are in evidence. However, the general tone of the contents seems to be set by the covers of the 1930s editions of 'Skipper'. Here, generally echoing main stories in the collections, are grinning Africans on rocking horses watched by bemused white men; turbanned youths enjoying a spin in a go-kart; an African game of golf played with 'clubs'; Africans in war dress on a merry-go-round or listening to a British marine band on a beach.

In the arena of cultural exchange, it is clear which side comes out on top merely from a glance at the pictorial evidence on the covers before even opening the book.

Such an atmosphere is developed within the books through 'factual' articles as well as the fictional adventure stories themselves. In the 'Skipper' of 1939 we have two striking 'factual' examples:

" Darkie Derbies

They don't hold races like this as a matter of course in South Africa, but when the natives get up a celebration, say, in honour of a distinguished white visitor, some such sporty event is likely to be found on the programme. " (56)

The African riders are seen mounted on bullocks, dutifully posing for the photographer.

In the second example, adorning a picture of traditional, ornamental, African headgear, is the caption:

" Top Knots

Hats off, boy, to a selection of swell headgear, which might give the wearers swelled heads in more ways than one. " (57)

To move more specifically into the cultural implications of how the languages of these people are presented we are faced with various expressions of the attitudes underpinning the conviction of the supremacy of the English language and its speakers. There are two chief areas for examination: first, the fluent English-speaking native of the overseas Empire contrasted with the occasional total absence of a foreign language environment within a story set in a foreign country: second, the descriptions and transliterations of these languages when they do appear in the stories. At times, these two categories will converge, but it is to be hoped that by attempting to separate them, a greater degree of precision will emerge in this attempt to assess the general atmosphere of the attitudes implicit in these stories to the languages of non-European

cultures.

(A) The Foreign Language-Free Environment

In 'White Man's Honour' (58) there is a portrait of one typical sort of British colonial administrator. Deputy Commissioner Bradley has acquired an impatience and cynicism during his years in British Guiana (sic):

" 'Curse the jungle! Curse the country!' he muttered. 'Heat - mosquitoes - murderous natives!' "

There is no noble, civilising mission implicit in this character, just a well-worn disaffection with all that is most unpalatable to him about his designated area of responsibility.

When reactions to the outposts of empire are not filtered through the eyes of a man for whom the country 'has proved too much', we often come across quite a different style of leader. Hercules, in 'The Black Hercules', (59) has plans to establish a black empire in Africa by driving all the whites from his land. His English is perfect although this fact is never commented on and the reader is left to draw his own conclusions about how he acquired such a command of the language. It is almost as if it were a natural assumption that a man who would be emperor of the whole of Africa should, of necessity, need English to converse in a transcontinental fashion, or even, reading a little deeper, that speaking an educated form of English actually qualifies him better for his ambitious plan. Either way, the conclusion that English is an influential tool of communication on this continent is manifestly drawn for the audience.

In 'Red, White and Blue Magic' (60) , Mokala, the Kroo chief, conducts negotiations with both the Germans and the British in English, the lingua franca. Although the date of 1940 places this example slightly

beyond the brief of this chapter, I consider that, on this occasion, it is worth making an exception. In the ideological battle for the loyalty of an African tribe, the adversaries struggle to persuade the Africans to accept either the Swastika or the Union Jack as a fit totem to worship. The Swastika which the British find the Kroo praying to, is described as, "only fit for children!" This reinforces the view that the people of Africa are at a restricted stage of development. Despite the chief's excellent English, the child-like image of himself and his people is subtly woven into the plot. When the British are talking to Mokala about the Union Jack, they refer to it as "the greatest ju-ju in the world" and Mokala, in turn, decides that, "we will help you, Bwana". These two tiny indications, in a story where English dominates the proceedings hint that the Kroo speak a restricted type of language. Indeed, Mokala's English seems to suggest that only by using this medium can real, adult communication take place. At no point is there any indication that his discussions are being translated by some invisible entity within the mechanics of the story and all negotiations with the tribe take place 'off-stage'.

'Rori's Shell-Burst' (61) tells a sort of South Sea Island, 'Boy who Cried Wolf' story. When the boy, Rori the Imp's, practical jokes are shown up to be irritations to the adult population of the island and Jiva, the chief, has taught him a terrifying lesson, the boy exclaims,

" May your fame endure as a killer of sharks, O Mighty Jiva."

Apart from stilted expressions such as this, illustrating a somewhat primitive belief in the omnipotence of the chief, there is no clear expression of a foreign language being the currency of communication among these people at all. Their use of English simply seems to serve as an

illustration of their backwardness.

At least in 'The Bet of Bala Jat (62)', the reader is given a clear indication of the source of the main protagonist's command of English.

" 'Forgive my rudeness,' he said speaking with an Oxford drawl, although he was a native of India. "

Bala Jat, the ruler of Dharpur, has had an English education which confirms, in fictional form, the influence of British education upon the elite of the Indian sub-continent. Such historical indicators root the presence of the English language overseas in a context which does a little to dispell the impression that it has descended spontaneously among a community as in other stories. Certainly the British education system could not claim direct credit for the English of Mokala or Jiva, in whose countries such a well-developed system of English had not taken root.

In 'The Bet of Bala Jat', other factors are in play. English is established as a linguistic token of loyalty between the British and their Indian allies and set against the foreign sounds of the malevolent tribesmen in the hills. Discussions about how to outwit their adversaries take place in English between Bala Jat and the British. The reader is reminded throughout the story of the savagery of their opponents in linguistic terms. The language of the hill people, or what we are exposed to, is reduced to an almost bestial level:

" Savage yells echoed through the hills. "

Individually, as in conversations with the enemy of the British, Badshah Khan, English is spoken, but collectively he and his fellow fighters can be heard to " utter a savage roar ". Their cruelty can even be exposed through the English language as in the blood-curdling exhortation

of Badshah Khan, " put his eyes out first ". This calculated cruelty is by implication foreign and emphasised throughout the story by the cries and yells of the hill people.

At the end of this story we are reminded how an alien culture can be translated through English, thereby exaggerating the foreignness of such a culture as greetings such as the one below would not be familiar to a British reader except of course in this fictional context.

" Go, in the name of Allah, and in peace. "

(B) The Languages and Their Context

When the reader is presented with references to the languages of a native people in these adventure stories, there is, once again, a complex series of implications and perspectives to consider. Time and time again, language is shown as incorporating all the superior technical and cultural assumptions of the British, while the indigenous population is portrayed as either a dumb onlooker, a savage adversary or locked into an immutable position of dependent inferiority. There is certainly no uniform presentation of these peoples or their languages but no variation is particularly flattering, except to the British perspective. The plots of these stories frequently pin-point a linguistic element as symptomatic of both the subordination of the native community and the assertive confidence of the British. Although often subliminal, these attitudes are transmitted with regular and convincing force.

In 'Jerry Maguire 'Tack' tician', (63) there is an interesting comparison in the uses of pidgin English in the Upper Congo. The British address the native community in pidgin, or so we are informed, for such speech is transferred into 'real' English for the reader. It is as if it would be undignified to show the British conversing in a sub-standard

variation of their own language. Nevertheless, this reference at least indicates the flesh and bones of their mutual communication.

The impression that the pidgin is inferior and spoken by lesser beings than the British is confirmed by the fact that when the Congolese speak the pidgin, it is transcribed in all its detail. Thus the dialogue seems to become a rather one-sided affair, with the British paraphrased while the other side is exposed somewhat critically. Chief Malongo speaks:

" 'Ah,' he said, 'little monkey that run up and down stick not for sale. Him plenty big ju-ju, belong only chiefs.'....'me no use boots. Me give ivory for tick tock that makes noise.' "

The only possible conclusion to be drawn from such a one-sided presentation of the Congolese leader speaking in such a way is that the form of his language and its content are to be linked in our minds. This presents a picture of the indigenous community as communicating in 'baby-talk', which the British put up with merely for pragmatic purposes in making sense of the situation. The burden is squarely on the African people to move towards the British, linguistically and within the context of the story the British seem happy to go no further than tacitly accept this situation.

This impression is strengthened further when the whole tribe starts 'dancing' because of the tacks on the ground beneath their feet. They cry out with what are described, perhaps metaphorically as, " witch doctor's yells ". Further on in the story, there is another example of a tiny but telling detail; activating fear of the savage African tribesman through an aspect of his language, when the Ubango tribe attack Malongo's village and they let out a " blood-curdling war cry ".

There are occasions when the British ignorance of other

languages proves to be most convenient for their peace of mind. In the 'Iron Beast of Oru', (64) on an island in the South Pacific, two British adventurers are taken prisoner by a group of natives who, " chanted as they went ";

" Their song was all about the virtues of the 'long-pig' and how by eating the heart of a foe they could gain his strength in addition to their own. Fortunately for their state of mind - already apprehensive enough - Brook and McKay knew nothing of what they were singing." At least here there is, through the invisible translator/commentator, an indication of the presence of a coherent language in the community, even though it is lost on the two adventurers. This is, however, counterbalanced by some more pejorative and direct references to the sound and tone of the local language throughout the story. The local population are described as, " dancing and yelling in threatening fashion. "

They gather round the 'Iron Beast', " uttering deep, moaning sounds which might have been a plea for mercy." When they utter a " subdued murmuring and humming ", McKay makes the comment;

" Almost sounds as if they're saying their prayers."

While it is impossible to interpret phonetic and tonal systems cross-culturally, the evidence presented here may well lead the reader to conclude that their language, combined with their customs, illustrate the bestial state of their culture. The English language, as used by the explorers, is implicitly set against this background as an expression of true civilisation.

Conclusion (6:6)

In isolation nothing in these school and adventure stories for boys would seem to indicate anything other than a heavy-handed sense of the grotesque. However, after this analysis, I hope a clearer overall picture emerges. It is a distinctly more disturbing picture when we consider the enormous popularity of these comics and the repetitive nature of their stereotypes. Presumably, the attitudes present in the pages of these comics were shared to an extent by old and young across British society. These journals assisted in the steady growth of sentiment clustered around British pride in the 'new imperialism'.

Foreign languages are always closely linked in these pages with behaviour which is presented as strange and inferior. Speakers of languages other than English are ridiculed and even their attempts to speak English are held in contempt.

The British even assume imperial airs towards rival nations such as France, Germany and Italy in linguistic and cultural affairs. Such stories could certainly have contributed to a picture of a superior British nation and even assisted in justifications of certain aspects of British arrogance towards foreigners. In this process language is the most important cultural dividing-line between 'them and us'. Negative attitudes to foreign languages had by the 1930s certainly emerged from the confines of colonial offices and extended themselves to a much broader audience.

Chapter 7

Attitudes to Foreign Languages in the Cinema of the 1930s

Introduction (7:1)

In this chapter, an attempt will be made to assess the role of cinema as an influence on the popular culture of the Britain of the 1930s. Special attention will be paid to the attitudes, both implicit and explicit, towards the indigenous languages of the countries in which the films are set. In this way, any emergent picture of a British set of language attitudes should become more defined. In consequence of this further definition, the role of the English language and the world-view of its speakers, and the relationship of that world-view to British nationalism may also be further clarified.

Chapter 6, dealing with boys' comics of the 1930s, concentrated, inevitably given the subject matter, on the more naked and prejudiced expression of the belief that English is best and that languages other than English, and indeed speakers of those languages, were to be tolerated at best, and at worst held up to the most jingoistic mockery.

With cinema, we are dealing with a much more sophisticated and subtle medium. There exists a strength of conviction and a gravitas within the films of the 1930s which deal with the British Empire and these reflected the supposed weight of 'the white man's burden'.

If the British ruling class was to mould a new patriotism and national pride in the past achievements of the Empire, then the size and social breadth of the cinema audience would provide a wonderful opportunity. Nationalist consensus, particularly after a devastating world

war, is never an unchanging or permanent feature of a specific society.

In such a period as the 1930s, with its mass unemployment and widespread social inequalities, a carefully presented and coherent image of the British as empire builders and pragmatic, benevolent rulers could contribute an inner cohesion upon which to found new and powerful notions of British nationhood.

Within such a context, it will be of paramount importance to examine the presentation of the foreign languages of the Empire in these films and their relation to possible nationalistic undercurrents.

Cinema as an Expression of National Identity (7:2)

By the 1930s, cinema had become far and away the most popular form of entertainment for the mass of the population of Britain. Of equal importance was the range of person contributing to the swelling number of cinema goers; men and women, young and old, working and middle class, the cinema cut across all barriers of gender, age and class in its appeal as a medium. When A. J. P. Taylor calls it the 'essential social habit of the age' (1) he is simply eloquently stating what statistical evidence illustrates as a self-evident truth.

The number of admissions and the average weekly audience rose steadily throughout the whole of the decade. From 903 million in 1934, the first year that reliable figures are available, the number of admissions increased to 907 million in 1935, rising steadily, year by year, until by 1940 that figure had topped the one thousand million mark with 1,027 million admissions. (2)

For the perspective of this study, with its emphasis on how a consensus of 'new nationalism' was extended during this period, it is of significance that the majority of cinema-goers chose to buy the cheapest seats available. (3) This, and other statistical evidence, indicates that although the cinema gathered together people from all social classes, the majority were from the lower-paid sections of society.

Despite the jingoism of the music hall and popular theatre which had acquired a growing profile during the last decades of the Victorian era (4), ideological notions of the British Empire and the international role of British imperialism had remained the preserve of the colonial and administrative cadres of the British civil service up until the 1930s. The cinema offered an unprecedented opportunity to portray the history of

British involvement in its colonies to the working classes of the nation. Such an opportunity, to promote patriotic sentiments, or indeed any other sentiment, on such a scale to this section of society had never been offered before.

In the task of creating a more developed and coherent picture of national identity, the cinema could claim to have been one of the major connecting bridges between the nineteenth-century heyday of British imperialism and the mass of public consciousness. Audiences could be presented with a cogent retrospective of the role of the British through their imperial history, and implicit in this view would be a vision of the international role which such a great nation was destined to continue to play in world affairs. Such a developing awareness of the world-role of Britain could only assist in further projecting and binding nationalist sentiments within the popular imagination. Such an awareness could only intensify the consensus of a shared history and destiny predicated on a distillation of the achievements of the British in the affairs of the world. In this way, a national destiny, once articulated only by a colonial ruling class, could be extended and enlarged to a truly popular audience.

The crucial importance of film in developing a wider perception of national identity was understood very well, especially at a parliamentary level. Lord Moyne, assessing the possible impact of the 1927 Cinematograph Film Act, stated that,

" The cinematograph film is today one of the most widely used means for the amusement of the public at large. It is also undoubtedly a most important factor in the education of all classes of the community, in the spread of national culture and in presenting national ideas and customs to the world. Its potentialities moreover in shaping the ideas of the very

large numbers to whom it appeals are almost unlimited. The propaganda value of the film cannot be overemphasised." (5)

Sir Stephen Tallents crystallised these feelings in his pamphlet, 'The Projection of England'. Here he summarises the necessary balance for a healthy consensus of national identity and concludes that,

" No civilized country can afford today either to neglect the projection of its national personality or to resign its projection to others. " (6)

It remains to be seen whether the presentation of languages other than English, in the context of these imperial films, did anything to enhance the projection of this national personality from a specifically linguistic point of view.

Rhodes of Africa (7:3) 1936 (7)

In this film we have a totally triumphant and unapologetic account of an expansionist imperialist adventurer. We are informed from the start that,

" The life of Cecil Rhodes is the drama of a man who set out single-handed to unite a continent. " The more controversial aspects of Rhodes' career and the bloody outcome of his policies in the Matabele and Boer wars are totally ignored.

The potency of both his political flair and his pragmatism is presented as being obvious even to the people over whom he ruled. We are informed by the narrative that,

" To the Matabele, the very people he had conquered, he was a Royal Warrior, who tempered conquest with the gift of ruling. "

Rhodes, on first arriving in Southern Africa, is struck by the enormous space, presumably in comparison to his own crowded homeland which he had left behind. He presents his plans for the "expansion of England" from "the Cape to Cairo" and is of the opinion that England "must expand or perish".

This thesis could equally be applied to the state of British nationalism in the 1930s when, it could be argued, a strong national identity had to be built up among people of all social ranks around the retrospective glories of the Empire which placed Britain at the forefront of world powers. The imperialist venture is certainly presented in this film as the zenith of British achievement as expressed through the image of Rhodes, the zealously devoted patriot, driving himself on to fulfil his transcontinental dream for the greater glory of his queen and country.

There is room enough in the film for the occasional irony aimed at Rhodes' ambitions. At a board meeting of the diamond company, one of his friends, Barnard, suggests bathetically after a demonic Rhodes has presented his plans for a boundless expansion of Britain across Africa,

" He has a fancy for continents ! "

Rhodes' obsession with imperial aggrandisement is crystallised in the naming of the territory, 'Rhodesia'. This political intervention, ignoring the cultural and linguistic traditions present in the indigenous communities, indicates the clean slate which certain British imperialists imagined they were presented with in the case of Africa. It is a self-centred act of an almost child-like nature to impose the name of an imperialist administrator on an area in this way. The uncritical admiration of this man, within the film, who has a country named after him in recognition of his service to that country, fuels this viewer's suspicion that memories of such a linguistic gesture are intended to swell the collective national bosom with patriotic pride.

As in the boys' comics there is no uniformly negative presentation of foreign languages in this film. It is interesting to note the scattered, but none the less illuminating references to the two other languages presented in the film: Afrikaans and the dialect of Zulu spoken by the Matabele, Ndebele.

At the start of the film when we are shown the funeral of Rhodes, attended by the Matabele and their chiefs, we are told that he is given their royal salute, 'Bayete!', and this is, in fact, translated for us as meaning 'Child of Africa'. Apart from this one direct reference to their language, the viewer is left with a passive and languageless image of a people with little or no say in the manoeuvrings which take place between

the British and the Afrikaners.

When Hendricks, the Boer spokesman, meets with Rhodes to make their relative claims on the loyalty of the Matabele, a missionary, the Reverend Charles Helmeth, acts as interpreter for Lobengula, the Matabele chief. At least there is a recognition that these people do have a language of their own and yet the minister gives strange literal translations such as referring to the gold which has been discovered on their land as "the yellow dirt". Such translations not only give rise to the impression that Lobengula and his people speak a strange and simplistic language when it translates in such a fashion but also that his people do not have any appreciation of the value of the gold and consequently, by implication, that they do not deserve to have it. In such a context, language is used to suggest that Rhodes is, in fact, not stripping them of what may be rightly theirs, but performing a favour by looking after their financial interests with the British Government acting as broker!

The bizarre translations are seized upon by Hendricks, and as Lobengula seems to be favouring allegiance to the Afrikaners, he suggests smugly and sarcastically,

" Not very good English! But surely plain enough for even Mr Rhodes to understand. "

The chief and his representatives are then completely sidelined as Rhodes and Hendricks continue the negotiations bilaterally in English.

Most often the Matabele are presented as servile children or as part of the exotic environment which constitutes Southern Africa in the film. They speak very little, confirming the impression that only through outbreaks of violence or treachery can they come close to altering the outcome of negotiations about their future. They chant, they sing or they

act as silent cattle-herders or obsequious servants. Their silence and their limited communication appear as no more and no less typical of their culture than their shields, spears or dress.

In this implicit fusion, we are presented with a benevolent imperative that the British have a responsibility to these simple and backward people. Their language, in the way that it is largely ignored or fused into the trappings of pre-civilised exotica, is a small but key element in the construction of this fictional reality.

Rhodes is said, by Anna Carpenter, an authoress with huge respect for the man and his vision, to have,

" a real understanding of the native people. " However, it is clear that this understanding certainly does not spring from any acquaintance with their language or culture.

He can turn a trick and assure them that the Great White Queen on the head of a British coin is watching over them through his office but his understanding of them is distilled in these few lines of explanation to the same woman,

" I always like to think of them, the natives I mean, as children. One has to be very patient with them and understanding..... like children, when they are troublesome, they must be punished. "

Such a lack of real cultural or linguistic understanding is consequently implied to be of no significance in his efforts to communicate with the people under his rule.

As if to confirm the child-like, pre-literate state of the Matabele, the proud chief Lobengula is obliged to sign a contract concerning the territorial rights of his people with a cross against his name in English. The responsibility for a chief who cannot even sign his

name, let alone comprehend a contract in English, weighs heavily upon Rhodes within the all too plausible logic of this film.

As the Matebele are presented as a backward community veering between simplicity and savagery, the Afrikaners are depicted as a group entrenched in their resistance to what the British consider to be progress.

Paul Kruger, the president of the Transvaal Republic, while talking to Rhodes about the British ambition to build a railway across the Transvaal, exclaims,

" I hate and despise what you call progress. "

Despite Rhodes' attempts at flattery during this first interview with him, talking of the co-operation of, "the two great white races on this continent", we are left in no doubt that the Boers are rude and blinkered in their opposition to the changes which the British wish to bring about. These changes are expressed with a righteous, almost disinterested logic to underline the reasonableness of the British case.

At one moment, an ordinary British settler in the Transvaal articulates his grievances;

" In your schools, Mr President, run with our money, you allow only the Dutch language. Our children grow up unable to speak their mother tongue. "

This man's contribution, in its totally de-politicised context, would have seemed both reasoned and sensible to the average viewer in the 1930s. However, even in the simplification of a broad and complex question, the implicit attitude to the language of the other settler community, the Afrikaners' Dutch, we can observe a dominant imperial theme: the position of the English language in competition with other languages.

There seems to be a deliberate link forged between the attitudes

of the Afrikaners to change, instigated by Britons both great and small, and the personal habits of their president, Kruger.

He dunks his bread in his coffee. He sleeps with a cloth on his head and he speaks perfect English albeit with a threatening tone and a guttural growl. Kruger's attitude to the school language policy question is called 'medieval' by the British 'everyman'. It is no use pretending that there is not an attempt being made here to tie in his habits and his conservatism with his attempts to hold back the forward march of the English language, all in the same tangled knot of the 'medieval'.

Despite their insistence on teaching only Dutch in their schools, the Afrikaners are heard, on every occasion in the film, talking to each other in English. This suggests either a stubborn refusal to face the facts of the linguistic world as it was being shaped by the British and other English-speaking nations, or else a deliberate conspiracy of confusion against the British in the Transvaal, using Dutch as an anti-British weapon. It seems to imply that they pretend to need Dutch while they, in fact, use English all the time: another example of Afrikaner stubbornness and cunning! When considered with the other cultural evidence in the film, it may be too kind even to suggest that, at best, we are being presented with a combination of these two points of view. The thought that their own language might have a significant cultural importance to the Afrikaner people is as far from the surface in this film as it is for the Matabele people.

Sanders of the River (7:4) 1935 (8)

The character in the title is a British colonial police commissioner. He stands, throughout most of the film, symbolic of much of the work conducted throughout the Empire which ensures that its fabric remains intact. The central theme of the film, topical given its 1930s context, and an almost overtly didactic one, is introduced to the viewer as soon as the film starts rolling;

" Sailors, soldiers and merchant adventurers were the pioneers who laid the foundations of the British Empire. Today their work is carried on by the Civil Servants - keepers of the King's Peace..."

" Africa - Tens of millions of natives under British rule, each tribe with its own chieftain, governed and protected by a handful of white men whose everyday work is an unsung saga of courage and efficiency. "

In this way, we are introduced to the life and dedicated work of Commissioner Sanders, administering the affairs of 'Inner Nigeria'. The scene is a cosy colonial compromise. Sanders' living room in Ochori combines ethnic ornamentation with a typically English context. He barks his orders to Asiboo, one of his police officers, in a clipped, functional English. There is no immediate indication here that he has immersed himself in the local language or culture, certainly as far as the execution of his police work is concerned. This comes as no surprise, for the British had obviously, as any colonial power would, established their overseas police force along the lines of the English-speaking home force.

Almost immediately, the viewer is introduced to Bosambo, who speaks perfect English; this is a little surprising, as he appears in Sanders' room dressed in his leopard skin loincloth and sandals. He informs

Sanders that he went to the mission school and that he is a Christian. The viewer is invited to infer from these two facts that not only is he absolutely trustworthy but also that his education explains his awesome command of the English language. No comment is passed on his excellent English so that one assumes, at least initially, that even rudimentarily educated Africans are expected by the British to be totally bilingual.

We are soon to witness, within the film, some startling juxtapositions of language which occur with such regularity that the point that they seem to convey, namely the savagery of the Africans without the civilising influence of the British, is driven home with all the fervour of a burning conviction. It is interesting to note that contrast of language is one of the chief, if most discreet, methods of communicating this theme.

King Mofolaba's warriors are introduced amid scenes of capturing slaves and random violent destruction. Their savage nature is conveyed through their ostrich-feather costumes, their shields and spears as much as through their actions. They are seen to attack a group of peaceful Africans, singing ceremonially in their native tongue. This tranquil scene is shattered by the yelps and savage cries of the slavers.

They are heading towards Ochori where we witness, immediately afterwards, the disciplined drill of the African garrison, conducted in English. There is an implied confidence in the orders such as 'Quick march!' which we are led to believe will be able to resist even the most savage, yet undisciplined attacks of the slaving band of Mofolaba.

When Bosambo receives a pigeon message from one of his intelligence officers informing him of Mofolaba's advance on Ochori he exchanges a quick, two-syllabled utterance with the messenger in his native tongue and yet the message itself is in English. This detail, though

perhaps necessary for the easy participation of the audience in the narrative, is nevertheless absurd even within the logic of the film itself; if native languages are acknowledged as existing, why should a message of such importance be sent in English? Perhaps it lends credence to the idea that real communication which engenders action against the more barbarous elements of Nigeria takes place in English.

Bosambo goes on to address his warriors, briefly, in their native tongue as if to appeal more intimately to the cultural bonds which they share before launching into the song 'On into Battle', in English, with a backing chorus which soon develops into almost barber-shop harmonies.

Bosambo's appeal to his men is the first point in the film where we have any indication that the people of Nigeria do communicate with each other in anything other than grunts, cries or English. These moments are of importance to an analysis of the attitudes expressed within the film towards the people of Africa and their languages. Most communication takes place in English so that it will be interesting to note at which moments they most typically speak in their native language and to draw conclusions from the context of these outbursts.

Even if the viewer suspends his disbelief and accepts that both Bosambo and Mofolaba are able to speak to Sanders in English, there are many moments, a few of which are cited below, where the plausibility of this convention is stretched to the point of absurdity.

If we accept that Bosambo can learn perfect English in a mission school then this could merely be a reflection of the excellence of the teaching at these schools under the administration of the British. Thus, it is no surprise to hear him speaking to the chief of the slavers in English.

It is possible to extend this convention of leaders being able to

communicate in English to the negotiations which Mofolaba holds with Sanders on the subject of taking slaves as an illustration of the potential of this language in matters of political power in Africa. However, the civility of the situation is shattered by Mofolaba's threat to stretch Bosambo's hide across the frame of a drum. This could be interpreted as accentuating the bestiality of the practice especially when spoken of in English which is not a language identified with the expression of such rituals, and not, of course in films like these.

Yet, in contrast, when Bosambo woos his wife to be, Lilongo, in a smooth example of American repartee, our belief in this convention is beginning to show signs of strain. Why should an ordinary African woman, far removed from the power games which, we are led to believe, necessitate a command of English, be able to converse in that language with a fellow African unless, of course, we are to understand that all these people can in fact speak English, apart from those indulging in savage activities or exhorting their warriors into battle with African rivals.

As if to make this very point, immediately after the courtship scene, one of Bosambo's officers takes on the role of leader and orders are given to Bosambo's men in their own indigenous tongue.

Even more remarkable is the moment when Sanders talks to a fair number of the recently released women who had been captured by Mofolaba. One woman being able to speak English in the context of the film is remarkable enough. The fact that all of these women speak to Sanders in English while professing their desire to become wives of the handsome Bosambo simply reinforces the impression that English is an almost universal option for the people of Africa.

The point that they all seem to be able to speak English in such

a range of situations during the film certainly could have given rise to the impression among the British viewers who had never travelled abroad in the 1930s that English was truly a universal language on every level and that whatever function the language of the Africans had, it was not solely for communicating with each other; they seem to be able to do this well enough in English ! Whenever they use their own native language it seems that this usage is tied up with some other ulterior motive.

Singing, which plays an important atmospheric role from start to finish in this film, assists in evoking an almost innocent exoticism during the wedding ceremony of Bosambo and Lilongo. The African songs are combined with drumming, dancing, masks, loincloths and bare breasts to create a picture of passive ingenuousness among these people.

This impression is actually articulated in the film by Sanders himself, talking to the local people of their loyalty to Bosambo:

" Obey him as if you were his own children. "

After five years of peace they lose the benevolent influence of Sanders as he is recalled to Britain. At his farewell, he is greeted by the collected tribal chiefs in what we must assume is a local lingua franca. This indicates, once again, that such a language does exist, even within the labyrinthine stylistic devices of the film which so often conspire to push this language beyond the reaches of everyday life.

During two powerful sequences of the film, as soon as Sanders, the guardian angel of the region, has left for home, a truly savage portrait of Africa is presented to the viewer. The media of communication are central to the transmission of the message which these two sections are at pains to impress upon the viewer.

Two plotters, who are selling gin and weapons to the Africans,

exploit Sanders' departure by putting out the word that he has died. This message is conveyed by talking drums across the land. Animals stir and rush for cover in a tropical version of the 'pathetic fallacy'. The drums are sub-titled, as the Africans' language has never been:

" Sandi (sic) is dead "

" There is no law anymore "

Thus the drums have acquired a linguistic status not accorded at any point to the languages of Nigeria.

In the images of tropical animals running to hide from impending disaster, we are given a strong impression that the drums are in fact communicating across species to the very essence of the African continent. The drums communicate to the animals and then, by a pseudo-logical connection, to the Africans themselves in a pre-linguistic manner, as if to suggest that the African languages are relegated to a minor role in the film since these drums, this primeval form of communication, are the Africans' most basic form of language.

The sounds culminate with scenes of Africans drumming and performing war dances, extending the influence of the drums from animals to humans. The African dancers join in with native chanting and the images of animal and human are superimposed to emphasise the conclusion that savagery and a bestial form of existence will swiftly return to this 'dark continent' if Sanders does not come back to reinstate British discipline and control over these people. The pending apocalypse of Nigeria is symbolised by a vulture on a corpse, burning villages and the continuing drums.

The second sequence springs from the anarchy which Sanders' departure is implied to have brought about. Mofolaba, now evilly rampant,

has Fergusson, another colonial administrator, tied to a stake. His men dance around a fire, wearing evil masks, and whip themselves into a frenzy with African singing and chanting. The indigenous language of the soundtrack here is used to emphasise the murderous insanity of the occasion and as the volume increases, Mofolaba, grinning, stabs the Englishman to death. The anarchy then redoubles and the air is filled with barbarous shouting and singing and war-like dancing.

There is a strong impression created during the film that the British, and those who wish to ally themselves with them, are constantly surrounded by a world which is ready to threaten them at the first hint of a chink in their resolve. Language, whether it is articulated verbally or primevally through the sound of the drums, is one factor which, because of its alien nature to the British, is always laden with menace.

Even when African speaks to African in English, ironically, they seem to be further alienated, dressed in an exotic manner, divorced in all but subservience from the mother culture of the English language. Such juxtaposition encourages a view of the Africans as a savage mob. The veneer which holds them together, under the sway of the British, is the English language. It is this, the language of their imperial rulers, which seems to enable them to communicate emotions other than primitive, barbaric rituals and war-like commands.

It is only when English is used and especially when the British intervene, in the person of Sanders, that decisions and 'progress' are made. When Sanders leaves, the country seems to regress instantly and it is interesting to note that language is a central metaphor for that regression. English is presented as a device for the execution of a fair-handed administration as much as the African languages are presented as

forces which hold back the people and progressive communal ambitions of the people of Sanders' colonial territory.

The Four Feathers (7:5) 1939 (9)

If the general theme of the previous two films has been broadly identified as the far-sighted and civilising influence which the British Empire exerted on its African colonies, then 'The Four Feathers' approaches the same subject from a diametric point of view.

The specific theme is class and military loyalty among the officers of the British imperial army and their families. It is a film which examines conflicts of loyalty and betrayal within the context of the Empire.

Despite the fact that the struggle for the control of the Sudan is often second in importance to the heroic attempts of a young officer to save his honour, the portrait of the Sudan is none the less interesting for the purposes of this study. The film often concentrates on the mechanics of cohesion within the military-officer class, yet, despite this, attitudes to the Sudanese and their languages come across as clearly and consistently as in the other films.

As so often in these films dealing with aspects of the British Empire, an introductory passage is shown at the start of the film emphasising, perhaps, the educational purpose underlying the entertainment value of the medium. On this occasion, the passage includes this extract;

" A rebellious army of Dervishes enslaved and killed many thousands of defenceless natives in the Sudan. "

We are also informed in this same section that the only possible salvation for these people lies in the hands of General Gordon, introduced to the viewer as a "heroic commander".

Instantly, the scene is set. The ultimate and altruistic goal of

the British in this land is to keep the warring factions apart and to attempt to submit the country to the rule of imperial law. This basic thesis is never seriously questioned as the focus shifts instead to the dramatised debate over loyalty and bravery. Such virtues are presented within the fiction of the film as quintessentially British values, given their fullest possible expression in the conquest and rule of an empire. There is a strong feeling throughout the film that an integral part of the responsibility of empire for the British is setting a good example to the colonised peoples, individually and collectively. In like manner, the heroics of the officers of the film also suggest a nobility of purpose and character as an imperial/national heritage for the audiences of the 1930s.

The image of a patriotic nation, at one with the overseas ambitions of its empire, is skilfully embroidered into the film from an early stage. On two occasions, we witness the enthusiasm of popular support for the imperial troops as they embark for Egypt. Representatives of all social ranks line the streets and the dockside, waving caps and Union Jacks. At such moments, we are shown a retrospective vision of a nation moving as one, united in a common purpose and confidently committed to the discharge of its overseas responsibilities.

When the young officer, Faversham, resigns his commission in the army, secretly suspecting himself of being a coward, he decides to cloak this fact by declaring an individualistic crusade against those who have neglected their family and loved ones for,

" Glory in India, glory in Africa, glory in China. "

He expects the support of his betrothed, the daughter of a military family herself, who rebukes him with these words:

" We were born into a tradition...You were not born free and nor

was I. "

She speaks of the responsibilities of their class towards other people and of,

" A code which you and I must obey. "

There can be few more succinct cinematic attempts to portray the responsibilities weighing upon the shoulders of those directly involved with the British Empire. What is carved out for the viewer in the opening section of the film is a cameo of social consent about the central place of the empire in the minds and hearts of the British nation from the top to the bottom of the social ladder.

It is therefore invaluable to ascertain how the position of the British in one of their troubled colonies is presented. The occasions on which the languages of the Sudan are used may well shed further light on this analysis of the role attitudes to these languages play in the reconstruction of a historical account of an episode in the history of the British Empire.

As soon as we glimpse the Sudan, introduced by one of Faversham's fellow officers as a land of "sand, sweat and sunstroke," the centrality of the English language to the broader visions of a harmonious imperial family are evident.

Kitchener's army, including the camel corps and be-fezzed Sudanese troops, is seen and heard drilling in English. The onus, obviously, is on the Sudanese to understand the language of their rulers. However, it is important to contrast moments of linguistic plausibility, such as this one, with other times when the use of English or of the native languages of the country are inappropriate or symbolic of some deeper significance. It is worth stressing that it is through comparisons of the

use of various languages in different situations in the film that a fully contoured model of the attitudes of the film makers towards these other languages can be shaped.

In contrast to the imperial reality of English orders on the parade ground in the Sudan, Faversham's unofficial arrival at the port of Suakin is heralded with a cacophony of foreign sound which adds to the alien nature of the location and the bustle of the harbourside. The noise further emphasises the daring or even folly of Faversham's attempt to rejoin his company, alone, across a foreign and hostile land.

The hazards of such an effort are underlined from a specifically linguistic point of view in his interview with an English-speaking doctor whom he seeks out for assistance.

The doctor asks,

" Do you speak Arabic? "

" Do you have some native tongue? "

Faversham's answer to both questions is a very definite 'No'.

The doctor then queries Faversham's sanity and at this rare moment, in such films about the Empire, the idea that travelling abroad in a strange land necessitates the ability to talk to the indigenous people in a language other than English is brought to the foreground of the audience's attention. For once, an Englishman cannot rely solely on translators or the people he meets speaking the otherwise universal English language.

Faversham's solution to his inability to converse in Arabic or "some native tongue" is drastic but further illustrates the implications of travel in a non-English-speaking environment.

He decides to be branded on the forehead with the sign of the

Sangali tribe. Their punishment for rebelling against the Khalifa had been to have their tongues cut out and a brand burnt into their foreheads.

From this point onwards in the film, Faversham is able to explain his inability to communicate by simply pointing to the mark on his head.

On the first occasion this pretence occurs, the doctor is talking to a colleague in Arabic but when the young officer arrives in the room, he rather implausibly switches to English for the benefit, we must assume, of the cinema audience.

Faversham begins his ascent of the Nile in the company of African slaves pulling boats down the river. Whips lash the slaves' backs and they sing a foreign-sounding song of toil. The song merges with the impenetrable hubbub from the slaves themselves and their supervisors to provide a symbolic and actual alienation, through linguistic means, of the young Briton from his surroundings. He is truly silenced from all levels of communication present on the river except for the violent urgings of the lash. Here is a metaphor for an Africa untouched by the white man and impervious to his language, but it is a cruel and a bleak image which is conjured up from the banks of the river Nile.

As so often in other films of this imperialistic genre, the opponents of the British are observed talking to each other in their own language while their allies speak English, even among themselves. The Khalifa's men are no exception to this rule and their foreign tongue is symbolic of their resistance to the British Empire.

Both the 'Dervishes' and the 'Fuzzy-Wuzzies' are portrayed as barbaric and rebellious as they sing and chant in their respective languages, preparing for war against the British. One recalls, during such scenes, the disciplined serenity of the English-speaking parade ground

nearer the start of the film.

The Khalifa's army carries banners bearing inscriptions in Arabic and though such a detail certainly conveys a certain authenticity within the overall depiction of their language, in this context it remains a language used by a savage mob intent on disturbing the peaceful rule of the British. This detail merely serves to highlight their foreign and hostile culture.

When the monolingual British naval commander is given the news, by one of his Sudanese spies, in Arabic, that the Khalifa's army has left the sanctuary of the Nile, his reply is a most ineloquent, "Ugh?" This message is then translated for him by the officer who has accompanied the spy and yet the viewer could well be left wondering why the translator did not give him the message in English in the first place since he evidently knows what the news for the commander is. Perhaps the scene illustrates the fact that the British officers see no point in having any knowledge of the language even for intelligence purposes. The commander's reply certainly indicates an element of surprise, at least, at being addressed in something other than English.

The 'Fuzzie-Wuzzies' discuss the fate of their British prisoners in their own African language. The prisoners in Omdurman are taunted by Arabic-speaking Sudanese while imprisoned in cages. Throughout the film, foreign languages are used as a stylistic device to add to the atmosphere of threat and fear.

In the desert, when Faversham has rescued his blinded superior officer and the birds of prey circle above them screeching, their noise seems to recall the cries and yelps of the 'Fuzzie-Wuzzies' and the Dervishes. In a context where foreign languages are used almost exclusively

to evoke a threatening environment, such a parallel does not seem too far-fetched.

Towards the end of the film, Faversham, having rescued his superior, finds himself imprisoned by the Khalifa's men along with other British soldiers. By an ironic twist, his status as a mute Sangali has been shattered when he is observed by two sentries talking to two British soldiers and planning to escape.

While they contemplate communicating their plans for escape to the rest of the Khalifa's prisoners, Faversham exclaims,

" Is there anybody here who understands the language of these poor devils ? "

Not surprisingly, a local man, once governor of the province of Kordofan, is summoned to translate their scheme. It would be too much, perhaps, to expect the viewer to suspend his disbelief to the extent of believing that one of the British officers could communicate with the other captives in their native tongue. Once more the onus within the fiction and logic of the piece lies with the local people to produce a translator themselves.

As the doctor had pointed out on Faversham's first arriving in Africa, there are in fact two languages which serve as a common means of communication for the people of the Sudan: Arabic and "the local language" which is never referred to by name. At least there is an indication that not all the people will miraculously understand English and in this respect the situation seems quite an authentic one, although it does once again illustrate the unwillingness of the British to acquire a knowledge of the languages of their Empire.

However, at a symbolic level, English is the means by which the

captives will engineer their escape once the plan is translated by a sympathetic native speaker. Once again the English language is presented as an organising principle which will take the prisoners out of their chains physically and perhaps metaphorically as well.

The film comes to its end with Faversham happily married to the old general's daughter, his betrothed from the start of the film, and the audience is presented with a comfortable conclusion in which family honour and military tradition have been rescued, heroically, from the abyss of cowardly disgrace.

Within the film, one of the functions of the Empire is to provide a static background of a strange and savage land which needs to be civilised by the British and against which their loyalty to class, family and nation is to be tested.

The hostile environment of the Sudan forms part of that challenge to the nation. The cohesion of the national spirit derives from a shared perception of the value of sacrifice and heroism in the name of patriotism.

Language forms part of that hostile environment although for once the mechanics of existing in a non-English-speaking country are on display. In fact, the inability of a British soldier to speak at least one of the local languages is possibly one of the mainsprings of the plot. Language is central to the film with all its linguistic reference points, the use of translators and the acknowledgement of the existence of other languages in which the indigenous population communicate.

The Drum (7:6) 1938 (10)

In identifying the chief theme of this film, it is perhaps necessary, first, to indicate the impact its showing had on Indian audiences. The film caused rioting in Bombay and Madras in 1938.

It is perhaps easy to forget, in examining the effects of the depiction of the Empire on the British nation, especially from a linguistic point of view, that such films were destined for a world-wide audience. This point, in the case of 'The Drum', was obviously either ignored or underestimated.

The general theme of the film is, not to pull any punches, the triumph of British fair-play over the treachery and duplicity of the people of the North-West Frontier of India who dare to assume that they can usurp the might of the British Empire.

The film starts with a spinning globe, displaying didactically in cliched pink the extent of British possessions overseas. The camera then zooms in on the North-West of a pink India.

In the market place we are immediately expected to suspend our disbelief as three Indians converse with each other in English, unobserved by any British presence. This situation is even harder to justify when we realize, retrospectively, that one of the 'Indians' is, in fact, Carruthers himself, acting as an Indian in order to gain local intelligence. The linguistic connotations of a spy mingling with the local population and everyone involved in the exercise speaking English strains the inner logic even of a film as chauvinistic as this one.

At the railway station, all the signs are subtitled in the official languages of the area, Urdu and Arabic, and there are even local

language notices chalked on a board. This is an authentic touch which does more than merely set the foreign flavour of the film and illustrates, once more, the potential insights which may be gleaned through an analysis of the contrasting presentations of foreign languages in these British films. These railway scenes actually convey the impression of an equally valid world of language co-existing with English but this balance is not maintained.

For the sake of narrative convenience the plot is conducted in English yet the intervention of ethnic languages almost always signifies something more sinister. English tends to denote action, negotiation and progress which is in the interests of the British. Ethnic languages, once again, denote rebellion and resistance to British rule.

In India, given the extensive development of English language teaching in the nineteenth century (cf Chapter 4), it is indeed quite plausible for the ruling princes to converse with the British in English. Sabu, the young Moghul prince, Mohammed Khan, his cousin and Ghul all speak excellent English. Sabu's linguistic persona is better developed than that of most protagonists in these films as he is heard to address his people in Hindi on more than one occasion for the simple purpose of communicating instructions to them. There is no sinister undertone here, more a reflection of the fact that even in British India the quickest way of getting something done is not necessarily through the medium of English. Such everyday usage of an indigenous language indicates that it is possible to weave these languages into the plot in an unthreatening way. This point highlights the ambiguities of the presentation of foreign languages in all of these films.

If Sabu has an impressive command of English, then surely the

eloquent Hollywood accent of Raymond Massey as the evil Ghul pushes the credulity of even the slightly cynical viewer beyond breaking point. The only indication of his supposed foreignness is an occasional predilection for exaggerated flights of complimentary language.

" Madam, I kiss your feet; I am your slave. "

Perhaps the exoticism of his speech is intended to represent something of his foreign idiom and this impression is confirmed as Carruthers stands by, totally nonplussed by the floral nature of Ghul's compliments to his wife.

Another authentic touch is the signing of an Anglo-Indian peace treaty in both English and Arabic. Yet despite the Anglicisation of the Indian ruling class, it is unlikely that they should discuss everything with each other in English without a hint of indication that this is not their first language. Sabu talks to his supporters great and small in English when discussing matters of state, and his adversary, Ghul, talks to his followers in English too.

Significantly, once more, the local languages are chiefly used to conspire and rebel against the British. Orders to start the rebellion are given to Ghul's supporters in Hindi. While preparing the machine gun which is intended to mow down the British soldiers as Ghul presides over a feast he has invited them to, Ghul's soldiers talk in Hindi. At such times, their language is certainly presented in a conspiratorial fashion which contrasts with the more sympathetic scene at the railway station in the earlier part of the film.

The sacred drum of Tokot is a central device in the film, symbolising and even articulating itself many of the conflicting elements of the local culture presented on view. This drum is a potent cocktail of

religion, exoticism and treachery. In all its aspects it never ceases to be a pivotal focus of communication and action within the film. The drum is bound up with the language of Islam and its messages. It is shown as being as primitive and as resistant to the rule of the British as the people who want to rebel against their power. In fact, it is the same sacred drum of Tokot which is used to beat out the call to the rebels to assemble.

The drum beats to announce the beginning of the religious feast of 'Moharra' and the mullah is heard calling in Arabic to the bowing, praying congregation. Immediately this scene has finished, the action switches to the sight of Ghul's men practising their shooting at cut-outs of British soldiers. The orders to the men are given in Arabic. The plan is to combine the celebration of an Islamic religious festival with the slaughter of a substantial number of the British garrison. It seems, in the cinematic juxtaposition here, that Ghul is implicitly striking a blow at the very heart of imperial power by drawing upon the indigenous nature of a religious celebration as a springboard for his attempt to rid the province of British rule. Nevertheless, it is a treacherous plot by any standards and the veiled comparison between the religious feast and the planned murder, expressed through the means of the language which unites these two incidents, hints at the alien and even bestial nature underpinning the religion of a section of the local population.

If this seems to be pushing a point to extremes it is worth considering a second occasion in the film when such a juxtaposition occurs, combined again with a specific language component.

At a crucial point in a dinner party, held by Carruthers and his wife, the head of a recently executed victim of Ghul's lust for power comes crashing through the window, severely disrupting the gentility of the

occasion. As soon as Carruthers comes to terms with this outrage and calms his guests, the action cuts immediately to a scene of Muslims praying to the call of the mullah, in Arabic, of course. The severed head and the local population at prayer seem to be on the same cultural spectrum, albeit at different points.

Local languages are a key element in the resistance to the British. They can make the alien nature of the rebels more apparent since it is strongly implied that these languages are largely an unknown territory to the British. Occasionally, we have moments of intercommunication in a language other than English but these are rare enough here, as in other films of this genre, to suggest an overall abyss of ignorance.

While idling away a few minutes in the barracks, the young drummer boy notices that the old servant has stopped pulling the ventilating fan and he barks out his order to him:

" Kenchie punkah wallah! "

In a minimal example of the influx of Indian words into the vocabulary of the local British administrators we hear Carruthers calling the servant:

" Ayah ! " and Mrs Carruthers follows up, giving her clipped command:

" My jodhpurs! "

Such conversations with servants are quite common in films of this type and the master/mistress - slave relationship is always more to the fore than any impression we gain of their respective command of each other's language. Nevertheless, it is interesting to observe Indian words incorporated into a context which keeps the servant totally silent. This is

a strange comment on the potential for a minimal gloss of foreign words to exclude, even more effectively than simply using English, certain lowly sections of the local community from the affairs of their rulers and to insulate the English speakers better from the concerns of that community. A minimal knowledge of any local language, as with the drummer boy, can help, in fact, to cement the master-slave relationship better than most other surface devices.

We have, on several occasions within the film, an acceptance of a multilingual world in which both Indians and British have learnt to co-exist. Signs, scripts and Sabu's easy switching between languages present a world of language with little external sign of threat to the British or their colonial power.

It is, therefore, more surprising to discover, as the plot unfolds, that language is shown to be a key element not only in the resistance to British rule but more importantly, in the treachery which is seemingly explicit in such resistance. Foreign languages, especially Arabic, come to be used, almost exclusively, to deal secretly and deviously behind the backs and out of earshot of the British. Juxtapositions of scenes deliberately create a fusion of language, religion and the rhythmic beating of the drum which suggests that Islamic culture is merely a treacherous and duplicitous conspiracy against the benevolence of British rule.

From top to bottom this society seems to converse in English when it converses at all. This is with the notable exception of those moments of attack on the British or episodes of darkest plotting. Even if we accept that the narrative is best advanced by sidelining the local languages and having everyone talking in English, the consistent intervention of foreign

languages in the context of rebellion/resistance and the savagery implicit in the scenes where it is used paint a familiar picture. Once again certain viewers may conclude that what is being presented is a British view of the world which is deeply suspicious of other languages; this suspicion is expressed in fantasies in which plotting and treachery are dealt with exclusively in these languages, whereas action, negotiation and progress take place in English, even among non-native speakers.

This assertion is certainly easier to make when one considers the weight of other evidence in previous sections of this study.

Conclusion (7:7)

Cinema of the kind reviewed in this chapter was certainly popular. It also served to enhance both the view the British presented of themselves to the world and the perceived importance of their empire. Through its enormous appeal, it was able to expand a positive image of the British Empire to a broader audience.

As has been illustrated in this chapter, language is rarely, if ever, a central feature of these films and there is little hostility directed exclusively at foreign languages. However, the British are presented as essentially non-foreign-language-speakers who move through their empire relying on translators or arrogance, superior intellect or trickery to achieve their objectives. On the other hand, indigenous or rival languages are presented subtly as a means of resistance or betrayal. Again, as in the comics, language is the great dividing line which identifies friend or foe, civilisation or savage chaos.

Often, such attitudes are cleverly conjured up through linking cinematic symbols in with the broader themes of imperial cinema. If this medium was essential to the widest possible portrayal of the British abroad, then it also managed to convey some potent messages to a little travelled audience about the growing confidence of the British in the status of their language as contrasted with the languages of strange and rebellious peoples.

In this way, language's place in the construction of a powerful sense of national pride was increasingly assured. A broad consensus could develop through the extension of the power of the national language abroad and this consensus was given depth by the portrayal of foreign languages in such films.

Chapter 8

Modern Languages and the Educational Establishment in the 1930s

Introduction (8:1)

Up to this point in the study, we have been mainly concerned with tracing certain aspects of the development of British attitudes to foreign languages. This has been done in two ways. The first was to assess these attitudes in the colonial context where the native languages were weighed against the possible utilitarian claims of English. The second was to examine to what extent negative stereotyping of foreign languages and their speakers had sprung from a growing awareness of the achievements of the British Empire and had permeated into forms of popular culture.

Overall, these languages come across as inferior to English and as a chief indicator of foreignness, they serve to highlight the pivotal role which the English language had acquired as a symbol of English nationalism at home and prestige abroad.

As a balancing or contrastive device it will be useful to briefly outline the views of the educational establishment towards the teaching of foreign languages in Britain in the 1930s. During this decade, as already indicated, there had been a blossoming of imperial themes in mass-popular form and no account of such attitudinal developments could be complete without considering how a certain antipathy to foreign languages was perceived or even combatted within the domain of teaching.

This chapter will address the following points:

(A) whether there existed at this point any awareness of a foreign language problem among the British;

(B) whether there existed any apparent cultural blocks to foreign language learning in British schools;

(C) whether there existed any structural blocks within the educational establishment in Britain at that time;

(D) what measures were being taken to assure an improvement in the situation with regard to the provision of foreign languages in British schools in the 1930s;

Awareness of the Problem (8:2)

The first question to be posed is obviously whether there existed within the education establishment an awareness of a specifically British problem with regards to the learning of foreign languages.

Certainly, Cloudesley Brereton, an influential commentator on the language teaching scene throughout the 1930s, indicates that the linguistic chauvinism reported in the previous chapters of this study was by no means out of place in the language classroom in Britain. In a retrospective account of language teaching, written in 1930, he writes;

" Discipline was rudimentary, interruptions were frequent, and the final word generally rested with the class, with their triumphant slogan, 'Who won the battle of Waterloo?' " (1)

" It was assumed that these (accent and intonation) came naturally by some sort of crude and imperfect imitation sanctified by use and wont, or else their acquisition was impossible; or else an Englishman was bound to speak a foreign language badly in order not to be taken for a foreigner, as if that were ever likely, though the suspicion still lingers. " (2)

Such chauvinism could only have been compounded in the days prior to the 1930s when the foreign language teacher was often a foreign national. In these brief extracts, it is immediately apparent that the antipathy towards foreign languages expressed in the popular forms of boys' comics and film had not escaped the experienced observation of Brereton. Once again a combination of language, nationalism and insular linguistic pride seems paramount to the British experience of language, this time in the context of learning.

From evidence drawn from the 'Times Educational Supplement'

throughout the 1930s, there seems to be a clear perception among educationalists and educational journalists that the British certainly did have a problem when it came to learning foreign languages. This problem was consistently identified as having three chief aspects.

First and possibly most influential was the cultural block which appeared to prevent the British from seriously embarking upon the study of foreign languages. The second and third which possibly stemmed from this first most pervasive and entrenched aspect were structural and methodological.

Cultural Blocks to the Learning of Foreign Languages (8:3)

The report of Sir Francis Goodenough, chairman of the government Committee on Education for Salesmanship, to the Conference of the Modern Languages Association in 1931, was in no doubt about the direct influence of film on the attitudes of the general public to foreign languages. The T.E.S. correspondent reports his sentiments concerning the problems facing British learning of foreign languages:

" Public indifference in this direction is to be blamed and such indifference is to be found too, in an acceptance of cinema films which foster racial animosity and lower moral ideals. " (3)

He was not the only one to identify the negative influence of the film on public attitudes to foreign peoples and their languages. Dr G.H. Green of the Department of Education, University College of Wales, is reported in the same year as addressing the League of Nations Union on 'The Racial Prejudices of Young Children', a survey conducted among 7-18 year-old school pupils in Wales:

" There could be no doubt that, within a limited field, the film had done a great deal to crystallize a whole body of dislike of aliens.

Dislike of the German had been made definite by pictures of warfare showing cruelty and cowardice on the part of men labelled by their uniforms as Germans. A whole body of prejudice has been made by the 'dope' film and the films of the Dr Fu Manchu series. He did not see the films as creating (my emphasis) racial prejudice, but rather as functioning in the same way as other agencies in making specific and definite something which already existed. " (4)

Evidently this residual and deep-rooted animosity to foreign culture, presented, as we have seen in Chapters 6 and 7, through the medium of popular culture posed particular problems to those charged with extending interest and enthusiasm in foreign language learning within such a climate.

The T.E.S. was of the opinion that,

" Public indifference was a potent factor. If the study of modern languages was to flourish as he (Goodenough) would wish to see it flourish, there must be a far greater public interest in the subject and a stronger national impetus towards efficiency and towards reform, where reform was necessary. " (5)

Professor E. Allison Peers of the Hispanic Department of Liverpool University, a consistent supporter of practical measures to expand the teaching of Spanish in Britain throughout the 1930s, concurs with Goodenough's emphasis on the necessity for the appeal to be as broad as possible.

"The appeal must be to the layman, not to the educator. The case for Spanish, from both the commercial and cultural standpoints, has been proved, again and again, unanswerably...What we need is a public opinion that will increase the demand - in particular, the active co-operation of

business men, and of parents of boys and girls at school, who alone can move the schools to give this thing that the country needs..." (6)

However, one can only conclude that academic appeals for a greater emphasis on language learning would inevitably fall on deaf ears or else on the ears of the already converted within such a culture as that of Britain where, as illustrated throughout this study, the links between insular pride in the English language and an often fierce conviction of the inferiority of foreign languages combine in a very potent nationalist brew. It would seem that underestimating the problem identified by Dr Green and only approaching it from a commercial and pedagogic point of view was not going to solve it.

The stereotypical portrait of the Briton abroad as someone with no interest or inclination to learn the local languages for business or any other reason was already well defined by the 1930s. This in itself indicates the depths of the cultural impasse which faced the educationalists.

In a letter addressed to the T.E.S. in support of the efforts of Allison Peers, Henry Howes writes,

" Spanish countries have a high opinion of British goods and British justice in business affairs, yet with all the good will in the world they cannot go on ignoring the fact that so many British firms ignore the existence of their language. " (7)

This is a fair representation of the implied arrogance of British companies who believe that their foreign clients should learn English and the author quite rightly queries how long these customers will tolerate this neglect of their own language. Certainly there was no lack of confidence in the Spanish language's modern capacity. In 1931 the Spanish

Ambassador, the Marquis de Merry del Val, addressing the Modern Languages Association, while admitting the pre-eminence of the English language with regards to the requirements of the modern world, stressed the "virile sonority" of his own language which ran English a close second. (8)

Yet, even in the educational world the reasons for the spread of the influence of the English language abroad could be explained, rather ironically and not without a hint of despondency, as having as much to do with the apathy of the British than any expansionist drive. Sir Malcolm Robertson, in his presidential address to the Modern Languages Association in 1938, illustrates how little things had changed over a decade and what little effect exhortations from on high had had on the British public.

"..at this moment, when every thinking man and woman knew that we were hovering on the brink of another world catastrophe...it was more than ever necessary that those who travelled abroad should know something of the language of the country they were visiting...English was by far the language most widely used abroad, although until recently we had done comparatively little to spread the knowledge of it except through our passive ignorance of other languages. " (9)

Structural Blocks to Language Learning (8:4)

Above all the other problems of time and status facing the position of foreign languages in the curriculum of British schools in the 1930s the influence of the teaching of classical languages was possibly the most critical. The teaching of classical languages, in particular Latin, posed problems of time, especially to the introduction of a second foreign language. Both French and Latin were statutory requirements in most preparatory schools for the entrance examinations to the public schools. Latin, with its "high and honourable tradition" (10), squeezed

the time available for French and indeed any extension of viable alternative languages to a minimum. This point is underlined in the T. E. S. in 1930:

" From the point of view of commerce, two grave disadvantages at once appear. Compared with French and especially German schools, catering for pupils of a similar class and type, the time given in English schools is considerably smaller, amounting in the case of the secondary school to something like a third less than the German schools This seems serious. Can we afford to handicap our pupils to this extent? ... courses in two languages .. the headmasters and headmistresses have asked for in vain. " (11)

From the teachers' point of view the situation was no better if compared to that of their European counterparts. In a review of Brereton's book in the T. E. S. we are informed that,

" While France and Germany give scholarships, tenable abroad, to intending teachers of modern languages, English teachers have to do what they can for themselves. In spite of all the drawbacks, however, he thinks that the battle of modern languages is won in the universities, with the possible exception of Oxford, and to some extent in the schools. Travel is no longer a privilege of the well-to-do, and Europe and European countries are drawing nearer to us and to one another every day. " (12)

However, like many educational commentators, Brereton is underestimating the cultural implications of the low status afforded to foreign languages in terms of time and resources within the British system. Tinkering with the provision of languages in the schools and the universities was never going to be, by itself, sufficient to overturn a prejudice which was so deeply rooted in British culture and so much a part

of what made up a typically British view of the linguistic facts of life.

Methodological Blocks to Language Learning (8:5)

The discussion which raged throughout the 1930s was over the value of foreign language teaching in the school curriculum and the means necessary to achieve the best results. At times it certainly distracts attention from what may well have been the central problem: the ingrained antipathy towards foreign languages within British culture.

Much of the perceived value of foreign languages in schools stemmed from before the 1927 reform when it became possible to teach them in elementary schools. A memorandum presented to the Houses of Parliament in 1907 summarised the chief benefits of learning a foreign language.

" Primarily then, a pupil learns a foreign language as a mental discipline. Incidentally, he becomes better able to understand and to use his own. " (13)

" Practically, the alternatives for a first foreign language are Latin and French.....its value as a training ground for clear thinking and accurate expression has long been established beyond dispute. " (14)

Whatever such sentiments added to the kudos of foreign languages in the curriculum of selective schools, they hardly prioritised the place of foreign languages as a tool to be used to communicate with foreign nationals.

However, by the 1930s there was a broader appreciation of the international value of foreign languages, at least among certain sections of the educational establishment, as illustrated by the paper on the French Report (Board of Education Pamphlet no 70) read to the Headmistresses' Conference in 1930 by Dr Lowe:

" The love of French and (the) desire to study it and gain a

wider knowledge of the French people, their history, literature, government etc has an international significance, and might well be a small contribution on the part of teachers to the work of the League of Nations. " (15)

Nevertheless, in the same report, Dr Lowe stressed that the study of reading was the most important contribution to the cultural and international perspective of pupils to the age of sixteen and considered that a compulsory oral test was regarded by teachers as "an additional burden and a nuisance."

The idea that a foreign language was chiefly useful in teaching a pupil about his own language by means of translation and grammatical study, in addition to providing a test of mental discipline rivalled only by the study of classical languages, was still an influential one in the 1930s. This is neatly encapsulated in a letter to the T.E.S. from 1932.

" The mathematical terseness and clearness of French can be used as a powerful antidote against the lack of clarity in expression and thought which are characteristics of the English mentality and language... Unfortunately, modern languages are still regarded as Cinderella subjects in many of the high places... French can and should provide a mental training, both intellectual and linguistic, equal to that provided by a similar course in Latin. " (16)

This desire, expressed from various quarters of education, to provide mental discipline through the medium of foreign language teaching had repercussions on the methods adopted in the 1930s. The methodological debate certainly obscured the rather more salient cultural barriers which foreign languages inevitably faced within British society, such as the monolingualism which could be claimed to inform British nationalism to a

large extent.

The heyday of the Direct Method was over by the end of the decade. It was steadily replaced by a teaching approach which favoured a grammar/translation method with a heavy emphasis on reading in the foreign language.

H. Ramsbotham M. P., in his presidential address to the Modern Languages Association Conference of 1936, warned of the dangers of concentrating on the spoken language and professed that,

" It is in the best books of a country that its language really lives." (17)

Indeed, Cloudesley Brereton, reporting for the T. E. S. on the conference a week later re-emphasises this rather idiosyncratic definition of "the living language", insisting that it is best served by the pre-eminence of reading and translation as the best method;

" The last twenty five years have been marked by great and uninterrupted progress, the main feature being the genuine treatment of the modern tongue. " (18)

This insistence on concentrating on the reading of foreign languages in schools could possibly be interpreted as a reaction against some of the disorganisation and excess of the Direct Method but it was certainly not a new theme in Brereton's influential writings. As early as 1930, he was recommending a course of reading for the lower-ability school pupil:

" For such I would reduce speaking and writing to a minimum. "
(19)

In fact, he also considered that these pupils would benefit, in terms of satisfaction, from courses such as these and even comments,

" And what a pleasure it is for a duffer to feel good at something ! " (20)

Such a philosophy towards the generation of an enthusiastic national approach was shared by other authorities as eminent as Brereton. The presidential address to the Conference of the Modern Languages Association in 1933 by Lord Eustace Percy made the following point;

" It had, however, perhaps escaped our attention that there was also an infinitely greater practical utility for the vast majority of people in being able to read and write a foreign language than in being able to talk it. " (21)

It is difficult to imagine such an emphasis producing a generation of school pupils ready to launch themselves into language-related adventures or business ventures necessitating a knowledge of at least one foreign language after an education based on such principles. It is also difficult to imagine the British breaking out of their monolingual situation and embracing a more international perspective within their culture while the reading of a language took precedence over its communicative aspects. In short, such an approach could only hope, at best, to have a minimal influence on the attitudes of the British to the worth of studying foreign languages.

Percy betrays the fears underlining his educational philosophy later in his address when he claims that there is more discipline involved in translation and composition than in mere conversation and he warns the profession of the dangers of failing to apply the methods worked out over centuries of classical language teaching. Such views surely confirm that for the average British school pupil foreign language learning was only a valid curriculum component if it could claim a rigorous disciplining of

the mind and act as a key to the treasures of a nation's literature.

It is difficult to imagine how such a neo-classical approach to language teaching was going to facilitate a very necessary broadening of the international, cultural perspective of British youth. The 'living language' could very quickly become a dead language using such methods and as such would almost inevitably leave school pupils with the same antipathy towards foreign languages as already observed in the Greyfriars stories of the 1930s.

However, such views were not the only ones expressed and there did exist a less influential body of opinion that real communication and learning about the culture of a country could only be acquired through a concentration on speaking skills.

The leading article in the T.E.S. of February 1934 reads;

" It is a mistake to suppose that the English are bad linguists. When they need to do it they pick up a second and third language with ease and avidity. It is the school teaching that is, or perhaps has been, at fault. It is no use to base the teaching of French on the teaching of Latin. The preliminary training in any new language must be oral. "

(22)

From his diametrically opposed position, Lord Eustace Percy shares this faith in the linguistic abilities of the 'English'.

" All experience indicated that the Englishman was an exceptionally good linguist when his sense of interest was aroused, and an exceptionally bad one until that sense was aroused. " (23)

One cannot help inferring from this last quotation that it is somehow incumbent upon the foreign language to arouse the sense of utility in the 'Englishman' rather than him spontaneously embracing the language

of a foreign culture. There remains the distinct possibility, in fact, that British culture, with its negative attitudes towards languages other than English, could have had a retarding effect on this awareness of the utility of foreign languages in general. Assumptions that all foreigners speak, or at least understand the English language, were, as illustrated in Chapters 6 and 7, all too common in British popular culture.

Significantly, the point which unites both ends of the debate over foreign language teaching in Britain in the 1930s is this issue of method. The implication that if only the correct method could be adopted then all would be well with the world ignores the palpable fact that this teaching is taking place against a background of cultural apathy or indeed antipathy towards foreign languages. It is, indeed, an implication which is chillingly familiar and disturbing to every generation of British language teachers since.

Commerce and Measures to Promote Foreign Language Learning (8:6)

The main impetus behind moves to promote language teaching in the 1930s was commercial. Despite the fact that there was a growing awareness of the value of foreign languages to British businessmen and to the position of British trade worldwide, this was not a sudden realisation. As early as 1879, an article in the R. S. A. Journal had concluded that;

" Beyond all doubt we suffer in competition abroad from ignorance of foreign languages by our merchants, agents, clerks and mechanics. "

(24)

Again, in 1933 Francis Goodenough, the Chairman of the British Association for Commercial Education, identified this problem:

"All those who realise the serious handicap British traders suffer in overseas markets by reason of our neglect as a nation of foreign

languages will rejoice at the interest that is being shown in the Press in the subject of teaching modern languages. "

He emphasises its importance once again by calling upon a "national duty to work for an increased output". (25)

Throughout the decade strenuous efforts were made by some parties to encourage the wider availability of foreign language teaching. Evening schools were set up, companies attempted to provide language training for targeted staff, the number of foreign exchanges slowly increased including some such as the Charles R. E. Bell Fund financed by the London Chamber of Commerce, and Professor E. Allison Peers seems to have run an almost single-handed campaign to broaden the appreciation of the benefits of Spanish to the commercial world through summer schools and constantly seeking support for the ventures in the educational press. Above all pressure was brought to bear by both the commercial and the educational establishments to emphasise the potential importance of languages to trade.

A T.E.S. leading article of 1932 stresses the international and commercial value of language studies at a university level and makes special mention of the modernising of modern language courses. It spells out the "needs of the future envoy of commerce...his first and paramount job is to understand the psychology of the foreign customer" and underlines the role of language teachers;

" In these days of international interdependence it is also their duty to promote international understanding." (26)

In fact, such seemed to be the seriousness of the purpose of the language teaching lobby that in 1935 Mr Herwald Ramsbotham, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education, accepted the presidency

of the Modern Languages Association for the year of 1936.

Ironically, as popular awareness and enthusiasm for the concept of the British Empire reached a peak in this decade, the commercial sector seemed to be coming to terms with a post-imperial perspective in which the traditionally lazy attitude to the languages of other trading nations was no longer an appropriate strategy. Sir Malcolm Robertson, a former ambassador to Argentina, speaking to the Chartered Institute of Secretaries of Joint Stock Companies at a dinner in Guildhall, was reported thus;

" It was because of our failure to put our minds to the study of languages that we had lost so much in foreign trade in recent years. He would strongly recommend to the council that special attention should be paid to the study of Spanish, a language spoken by well over 100 millions of people. If he read the signs of the times aright, and his experience counted for anything at all, he might say that, in view of the state of the world today - chaos in the Far East and chaos in Europe - South America, and notably Argentina, offered the greatest chances of trade expansion. " (27)

This question of expanding the teaching of Spanish in Britain came up as a question in Parliament that same year. Dr Vernon Davies asked the President of the Board of Education whether

" in view of the importance to our trade and industry...if...he was prepared to do all in his power to stimulate the study of Spanish and Portuguese in our schools. " (28)

The President replied that the matter was receiving the careful attention of the Committee on Education for Salesmanship.

In a letter to the T. E. S. concerning the recently published

Second Interim Report by the same committee Allison Peers comments, with some degree of satisfaction, that the report,

" lays unusual stress upon the need for increased study of Spanish and Portuguese...in view of the enormous and increasing importance of the South American markets and the comparative rarity in this country of a knowledge even of Spanish. " (29)

However, there was no uniformity of opinion on this matter, which seems, at first, to indicate a certain new realism towards the study of languages other than French in British schools. A letter from a T.E.S. reader suggests at least two directions from which opposition to such moves would come:

" Many parents would object to Spanish in school, especially as a first language; and then there is a deep rooted idea among teachers that it is wrong to introduce a language for its commercial value. I am afraid that the overemphasis on French in many schools is due to a belief that it is 'good form' to learn it, and for no other reason. For too long, in my view, we have regarded France, its people and language, with too much veneration. No longer is French the nearly universal language that it was.. " (30)

His two main fears spring from the same cultural root. First, he is well aware of the irrational reluctance of many parents to have their children study Spanish, which betrays once again the prevalent negative attitudes towards the languages of other countries. Despite the sound commercial and international motives behind such an attempt to increase the learning of Spanish, such attitudes clearly persisted. Second, the vested interests of French were, it could be argued, defended because the teachers of this language knew what a battle it was simply to hold on to

the ground they had gained within a society which was barely beginning to appreciate the intrinsic value of language learning in a multilingual world. What ground the teaching of French had occupied in the curriculum had certainly only been won by an insistence on the rigours of mental training and discipline which its study could provide. In such a cultural environment it is doubtful whether Spanish could convince the general British parent of its rival merits.

In fact, the Report on Modern Language Teaching issued by the British Association for Commercial and Industrial Education, while acknowledging the need for the expansion of Spanish and German teaching, does predict that the question most parents will ask is,

" Will a knowledge of German (or Spanish or some other language) get my boy or girl a job ? " (31)

This was probably a very realistic assumption and indicates the gulf between the commercial world's perception of the economic imperative for Britain to extend and expand its foreign language competence and the awareness of the public at large. Certainly this public was not aware of what would have seemed to them merely a scrambling for position among the various academic authorities.

In a letter supporting the position of Allison Peers, Charles Grant Robertson, from the University of Birmingham, uses military metaphor to underscore the suspicion of the monopoly of French in British schools;

" In a word, Professor Peers and those who agree with him, must realize that what they are tackling is French, deeply entrenched, in possession of the field and ready to counter-attack. " (32)

For its part, the educational establishment was often critical

about the lack of anything other than the lip-service which they saw being paid by the commercial sector towards foreign language teaching. Comment is made in the T.E.S. on a letter from Allison Peers to 'The Times':

" The heads of secondary schools do not need to be lectured on the importance of Spanish. It is the heads of business houses who need to be convinced. " (33)

The Headmasters' Association also retreated to a defensive position because of what they interpreted as a criticism of the language teaching going on in schools from Sir Francis Goodenough in his 1931 address to the Modern Languages Association. They pinpointed,

" The haphazard method of recruitment by business and lack of opportunity (for the pupils) to show their ability. " (34)

Throughout the decade, as through many others to follow, the question of the lack of positive attitudes to foreign languages adversely affecting the trading position of British firms was very much to the fore of the public debate. However, the dangers and indeed the limitations of such a stress were neatly summarised by a language teacher from Sussex in 1932:

" One very unfortunate aspect of the position of modern languages in this country is that their commercial utility is duly stressed, but their cultural value is either completely overlooked or much underrated.aim is to develop these modern studies in their full grammatical, literary, social and philosophical significance, without losing sight of the practical commercial issue.

The chances of winning for modern languages the honoured and dignified place they deserve in our education are good. It is therefore all the more unfortunate to find any suggestion formulated which seeks to

reduce these subjects to the position of subsidiary subjects in a commercial college. " (35)

In a post-imperial situation it is unlikely that the British were going to be able to switch rapidly from a situation where they had been content with minimal contact with or interest in foreign languages merely because of a call from the world of commerce. To stress the full significance of language study is, arguably, a more progressive starting point than a mere reliance on calls for economic efficiency. In fact, there is an obvious irony in the commercial emphasis on language learning in the 1930s. If the 'national good' in the international commercial arena could best be pursued through a greater degree of competence in foreign languages, then it is clear from what has been presented in earlier chapters that the question of what constituted this 'national good' needed to be modified in the light of certain cultural and linguistic prejudices within the British national culture. This national good had often been considered best served by a combination of chauvinism and insularity. For the commercial world to snap its fingers and attempt to dictate a radically altered attitude to the world beyond these shores was to say the least optimistic. It suggested a lack of any real understanding of the true depths of the problem faced by British nationalism when asked to extend its horizons beyond the realities of the English-speaking world.

Conclusion (8:7)

Given the steady growth of negative attitudes to foreign languages among the British from the nineteenth century onwards, it is interesting to note that only a minority of educationalists had realised how it had not merely permeated British nationalism but that hostility to foreign languages had become a vital part of the language loyalty of the British nation.

By and large, the educational establishment had failed to grasp the full extent to which notions of national and linguistic superiority had penetrated the British administrative and commercial classes. These were, in social terms, the direct descendents of the nineteenth century colonial and mercantile layers of the British Empire who had done so much to cement the position of English in its world role and to denigrate other rival languages.

That the educationalists could be unaware of the depths of ignorance concerning foreign languages in the 1930s and be so glib about possible solutions to this cultural crisis, is probably an indication of the size of the problem. British nationalism had, in fact, become defined by that linguistic boundary between English and other, foreign languages, to a very negative degree.

The prejudices apparent in various popular media of the 1930s are rarely considered during this decade of dry academic debate. In reality, the scope and nature of the problems facing modern language teaching in the 1930s had much less to do with the discussions about the place of languages in the school curriculum, the role of Latin or the methods of teaching languages than could be grasped by a largely complacent profession.

General Conclusion

At the time of the completion of this thesis I am a practising teacher of modern languages in a British secondary school. At the risk of sounding trite or over-personal, I think that the shortest and most satisfying conclusion to this work must be that I can finally banish the last suspicion of guilt from my mind for any personal complicity in the national underachievement in foreign languages. Too often teachers and indeed students within our educational system harbour this sense of guilt. The problems surrounding the learning of foreign languages in Britain have been shown here to go much deeper than the questions of material, method or course content.

This study has placed the English language very firmly in its cultural setting. Linguistic relativity stresses this cultural aspect and I hope to have clearly traced a cultural development of this phenomenon. The predominant British view of the world from a linguistic point of view is currently an extremely Anglocentric one. This world view is, in language terms, defined by the equilibrium maintained by two opposing forces. The first is the perceived superiority of a nation whose language has spread across the world and dominates international structures. The second is the chauvinistic dismissal of foreign languages across all levels of British society. So prevalent is the second force that it is felt as a defining feature of the British: they do not learn foreign languages. Explanations for this state of affairs always come second to this central feature.

Thus this thesis can claim to present a view of linguistic relativity exclusive to the British. Their language and the accumulated experience of the English-speaking British nation have led to a situation where their world view is not determined by the semantic or syntactic

qualities of English but by the cultural and political facts of the history of their language.

What singles Britain out in the modern world in terms of its attitude to foreign language learning is illustrated in the final chapter where it is evident that the debate over the best ways to approach the learning of foreign languages is little different from the debates of today. Although this is not intended to be a comparative study, other nations had certainly progressed to a position where the utility of foreign languages was appreciated by the 1930s. The conclusion that I must draw tentatively from this fact is that any attempt to change the British attitudes to learning foreign languages cannot restrict itself to reforming methods or provision of languages in schools. It must go far deeper. The simple fact that emerges from this study is that for foreign languages to be pursued more enthusiastically and sympathetically in Britain the country must become a radically different place and the perspective of its inhabitants must shift to a quite revolutionary extent.

This conclusion reinforces my assertion that language is inextricably bound to the British national identity. It is a badge of loyalty and a token of superiority materially proven by its enormous influence. It is as if language were a competition which the English speakers had won because of the intrinsic worth of their language and quality of their culture. It is, in fact, to better illustrate this point that I conclude this study in the 1930s. At this point, the spread and international usage of English were not as apparent as they are today. Therefore finishing our examination in the 1930s allows a more precise analysis of the internal mechanism of linguistic relativity and nationalism in the British context. A more recent perspective would risk losing sight

of the essentially introspective nature of the experience of English-speaking Britons.

What differentiates the English-speaking British state from its European rivals is probably the way it had always used language as a tool of political control since the suppression of the Celtic languages. What followed throughout its more pragmatic imperial exploits was a fine tuning of linguistic control. When awareness of the influence of the English language on the world stage emerged in the popular consciousness of the 1930s it represented the fullest expression of national pride embodied in the national language and was differentiated from other national languages by a hostility which often bordered on xenophobia.

Explanations of the apparent lack of linguistic ability among the British which concentrate on the spread of the English language and the rise in its international influence, in fact, fall into the trap of ignoring the cohesive force which language plays in national identity. In the case of the English language this cohesion is doubly reinforced. British culture is able to represent foreign languages as threats and to treat them as either inferior or alien, whichever is more appropriate. Considering the apparent strength of the British state and its projection through the British Empire, we can only conclude that at the heart of such perceived threats lies a fear that an outside force such as a foreign language constitutes a danger to the stability of the national order. In its turn, the national community, as we have seen, is a great source of continuity in times of political turbulence. This linguistic factor in the continuity of the legitimation of a national-popular sentiment of superiority is surely one aspect of the complex mechanics of the maintenance of political power.

In order to progress beyond its insular and embattled view of the world beyond its shores Britain had to develop an infinitely more sympathetic attitude towards foreign peoples and a much more internationally orientated perspective. This perspective had to encompass more than a belated post-imperialist competitive ethic and create a genuine empathy for a diverse international community. As long as the attitudes to foreign languages which have been presented here continued within British culture, they would continue to define, to an extent, the rest of that culture. One could argue that wider opportunities for foreign travel have merely increased such linguistic hostility. In that way, the arrogant Briton abroad, dismissive of foreign languages to the same degree as he is proud of his own language, is as omnipresent in the 1990s as he was in the 1930s. In a dramatically changing world the British still cling to an increasingly outmoded and inappropriate interpretation of their place in the world. This study has attempted to illustrate the roots of that problem from a specifically linguistic perspective. I hope that in outlining the development of such a perspective it has enabled a clearer image of the depths and tenacity of this problem in British society.

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