

Proposing a research network on linguistic revival movements in Europe.

Language revivalism emerged at various points in Europe in the wake of Romantic Nationalism (1810-1880). From Iceland to Albania and from Finland to the Basque Country, provincial vernaculars, often relegated to merely oral and informal usage, were rediscovered as important scholarly elements in the new science of comparative philology, and cherished as precious testimonies to a separate cultural identity, now in danger of being obliterated by modernization and centralization processes.

Initially the object of scholarly and cultural attention, such languages became the focus for a growing national consciousness and often played a key role in movements for legal recognition and local autonomy. The topic has considerable historical interest but also obvious relevance for the state of multilingualism in contemporary Europe: most European states are directly or indirectly the result of a language movement and/or face subsidiary linguistic vindications within their borders.

Much important work has been done on language movements, but usually on a case-by-case basis within a mono-national context. The extent to which language movements were a Europe-wide phenomenon and often took root in provincial-metropolitan centres (Dublin, Prague, Barcelona, Zagreb) among educated elites has not been studied comparatively and in depth.

Recent research (including cultural transfer models and network theory) has paved the way towards a theory and method for a Europe-wide comparative study of this phenomenon. Also, a critical mass now exists in various research centres around Europe to tackle this challenge jointly.

An initial exploratory workshop will be held on the topic at the Study Centre for Interlocking Nationalisms in Amsterdam in summer 2010 with a view to establishing a research network and applying for European funding. Date of workshop is 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> June.

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