

Parrot Time

The Thinking of Speaking

Issue #2 March / April 2013

Linear A and B

Edward Sapir and
the patterns of
language

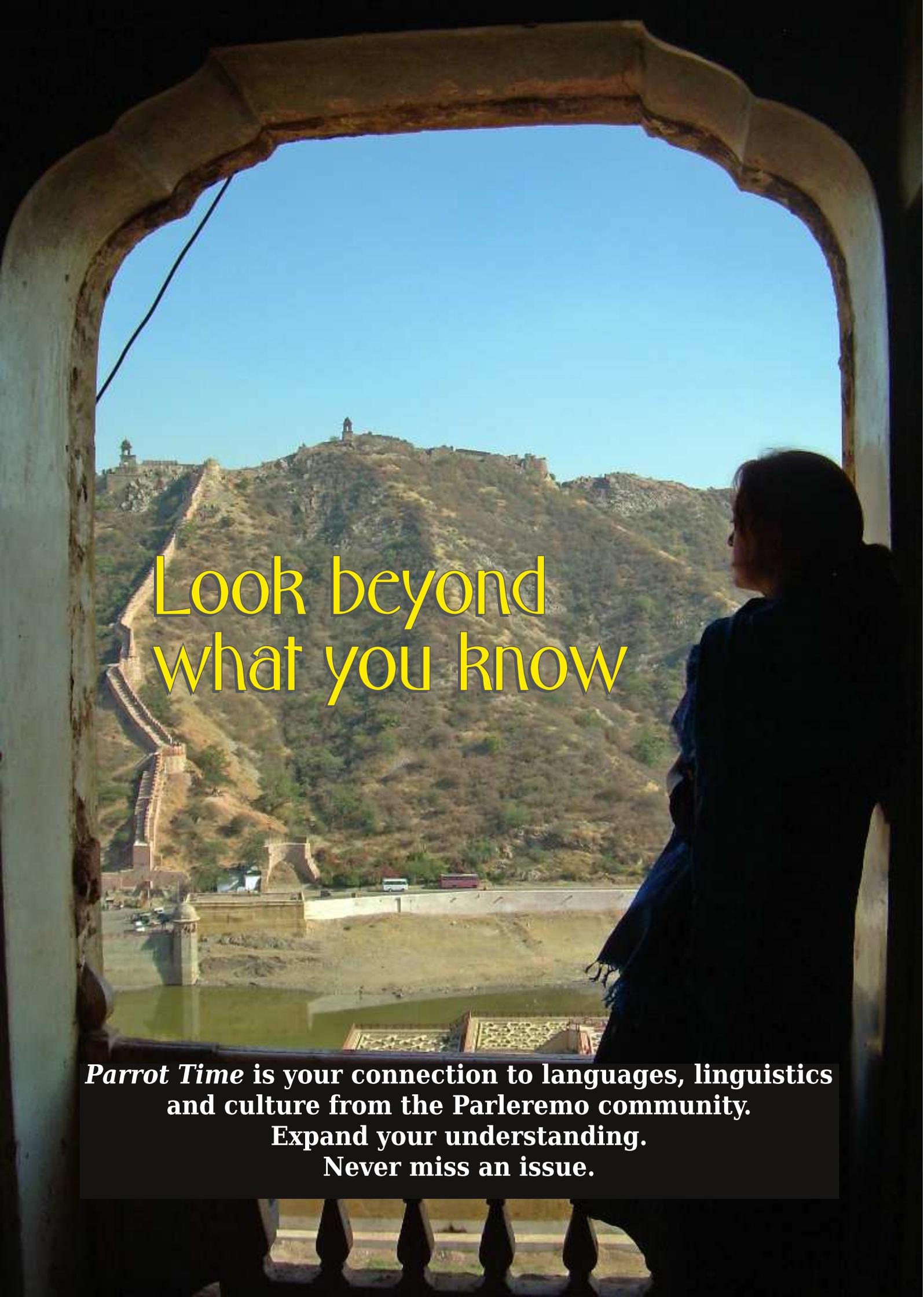
Language Learning
Through Books

Linguistics
Love Song

Valentine's Day
Celebrations
Around the World

Languages In Peril
Ladin, Friulian and
Romansh



A woman in a blue sari is seen from the side, looking out from an arched window. The view outside shows a hillside with a fort on top, a long wall leading up the hill, and a dry well in the foreground. The sky is clear and blue.

Look beyond
what you know

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Parrot Time

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Cover: The Cobá Group pyramid, part of the Mayan ruins at the Coba archeological site in Quintana Roo, Mexico.

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Crete is famous for its mythological Minotaur, the half-man, half-bull creature that prowled a labyrinth, devouring young sacrifices. However, Crete is also the home of thousands of ancient tablets which contained two previously unknown writing systems, one of which is still a mystery today.



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Truth in Advertising

When I was a child, I used to see advertisements in comic books for a pair of glasses. These wonderful items were said to be x-ray goggles, which would allow the wearer to look through items, including clothes and human flesh. There was even a drawing of someone wearing them and being able to see the bones in their hands! For years, I imagined what I could do with such a pair of these wonderful goggles. But alas, I was just a child, and there was no way I could get the money to buy them, so I eventually gave up thinking about them.

As I grew older, I learned that I had actually been saved from a heartbreak, not to mention getting cheated out of my money. Of course, there are no such things as x-ray goggles, so whatever they were selling was some kind of trick. My father told me it would be an optical illusion, but of course, I didn't believe him at the time. After all, it said they are real x-rays, and you can't lie in advertising, right?

Well, perhaps "lie" is too strong a word. Most of us have probably been attracted to something we saw being sold and were hooked on its promises of what we could have, do or become. Most of us then probably discovered that what we were promised wasn't *quite* true. The item didn't perform the way it was described or provide us with what they said it would, and we felt cheated. It's a very bitter lesson to learn.

This happens all the time in the language learning world as well. We've all seen them: the books that promise to make us "fluent in just 30 days", the CDs that will make us "speak like a native in 10 lessons", the software that will "help us learn effortlessly". And how many of us have tried these products only to discover they didn't quite live up to the hype?

Language learning isn't easy. It won't come overnight. When I talk to people that have really gained some level of fluency, they don't talk about how long they have studied it in terms of hours, days or weeks. They talk about years. They don't tell me about this amazing product that made them learn everything with effort. They talk about studying hundreds of words a week. And while they might tell you a few methods that worked for them, they will always tell you of the ways that were complete wastes of time. And those are almost universally the "quick" and "easy" ways.

So when you are getting frustrated in your own language studies, remember the famous quote by Andrew Carnegie, "Anything in life worth having is worth working for." If that isn't enough for you and you still want to reach for the product that promises everything easy, then remember your Latin "Caveat Emptor" - let the buyer beware.

Erik Zidowecki

ERIK ZIDOWECKI
EDITOR IN CHIEF



Linear A and B

Lost Minoan

On Crete, a southern island of Greece, is Knossos, one of the most important Palaces of Minoan civilization. It is important not only in its historical features, but also in its mythological background, as well as being the location of some fascinating linguistic artifacts, some of which remain a mystery even today.



In ancient times, Knossos was the seat of the legendary King Minos. It lies 5 kilometers southeast of Heraklion, in the valley of the river Kairatos, which runs through Knossos before spilling into the Minoan harbor, Katsabas. During Minoan times, the river flowed year round bringing life to the surrounding hills, which were covered in oak and cypress trees.

The first palace was built and occupied, along with other houses and structures, between the 19th and 17th centuries BC, although the very first settlement in the Knossos area was established circa 7000 BC, during the Neolithic Period. It was the economic, social and political development of the settlement which eventually led to the construction of the Palace of Knossos.

After the first Palace was destroyed circa 1700 BC, it was rebuilt, only to be destroyed again by fire in 1350 BC. The area around the Palace was converted into a sacred grove for the goddess Rhea, and never inhabited again. It was a monumental symbol of the Minoan civilization, not only because of its size, but also its use of materials, design, and advanced building techniques.

Knossos became settled after 1450 BC by Mycenaeans from the Greek Mainland. It again flourished during the Hellenistic period and in 67 BC, it was cap-



Palace ruins at Knossos

tured by the Roman Quintus Caecilius Metellus Creticus.

Minos Kalokairinos

In 1878, the first large-scale excavation of Knossos was begun by a wealthy Cretan merchant and antiquarian named Minos Kalokairinos.

He conducted the first excavations at Kephala Hill, which led to the discovery of part of the storage rooms in the west wing and a section of the west facade, as well as many large pithoi (storage pots).

Crete was still under Turkish occupation at the time, however, and the local authorities prevented any further digging by Kalokairinos, for they feared that the finds would be expropriated by the Turks and taken to Istanbul.

Sir Arthur Evans

In 1894, Kalokairinos showed his finds to Arthur Evans, who had come to the island in search of information about the strange inscriptions he had seen on some tablets in Oxford and Athens. Evans had been busy deciphering script on seal stones on Crete, and when the island was declared an independent state in 1900, he purchased the site of Knossos and began his excavations of the palace ruins. It was then that they were named "Minoan" by Evans, after the legendary king of Crete.

Evans uncovered 3,000 clay tablets during excavations and he worked to transcribe them. From the transcriptions, it became clear that the tablets contained more than one script.

Evans spent the rest of his life trying to decipher the inscriptions, but with only limited success. He realized that the inscriptions represented three different writing systems: a "hieroglyphic" script, Linear A, and Linear B. The hieroglyphic script appeared only on seal



Ancient Greece, with Crete in the south

stones and has still not been deciphered. Linear A is also, as yet, undeciphered, but it is thought to have evolved from the hieroglyphic script. Linear B probably evolved from Linear A, though the relationship between those two scripts remains unclear.

Linear B

Evans figured out quite a bit about Linear B, including that it contained decimal numerals, punctuation and symbols for man and woman and certain animals. Evans also suggested that the language used inflection. He decided, perhaps more because of his love of the Minoan history than for any scientific examination, that these Cretan scripts must belong to the Minoan culture, and therefore Linear B could not be Greek.



Among the many scholars that attempted to decode Linear B, it was general agreed that the writing direction of Linear B was from left to right, and that most of the clay tablets were inventory data, which concurred with Evans' own determining of the numerals. The large number of distinct characters that were identified, around 90, indicated a syllabary writing system. While some scholars suspected it was

Mythology and the Ancient Minoans

Crete is the setting for many stories in Greek mythology, though whether these were created by the Minoans themselves or by the Greeks later, it is hard to tell. It was these myths that brought Evans to Knossos, and fueled his eagerness to uncover the history.

King Minos

In the myths, Minos was a son of the god Zeus and a mortal woman, Europa (Zeus fathered many children with mortals). Minos married Pasiphae, herself the daughter of the Greek sun god Helios. In reality, "Minos" may have been a title or the name of a dynasty of rulers.



Fanciful image of King Minos

The Minotaur

One of the most famous stories involves a terrible beast, with the body of a man and the head of a bull, called the Minotaur. According to legend, King Minos refused to sacrifice a certain bull. Poseidon, god of the sea, punished him by making his wife Pasiphae fall in love with the animal, and she eventually gave birth to the man-eating monster.

Daedalus, an Athenian craftsman, designed for King Minos the labyrinth, a large underground maze, in which the king imprisoned the Minotaur. Anyone in the labyrinth could not escape it or the Minotaur.

After Minos' son Androgeus was killed out of jealousy by the King of Athens when he won many events in the Athenian Olympics, Minos deployed the mighty Cretan fleet to attack Athens. Rather than destroying Athens once it was captured, however, Minos decreed that every nine years, Athens was to send seven young men and seven virgin women, whom Minos would then throw them into a labyrinth where they were sacrificed to the Minotaur.

Theseus, the son of the Athenian King, volunteered to be one of the seven sacrificed men, intending to kill the Minotaur and end the suffering of Athens. If he succeeded in his mission, he told his father he would return with the sails of his ship white instead of the normal black.

Theseus and the Minotaur

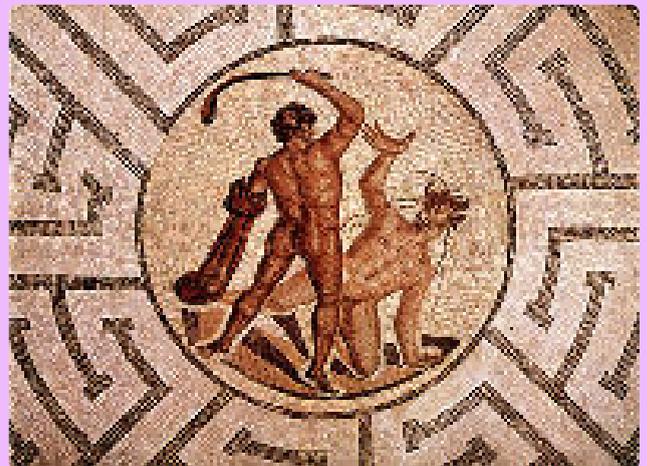
Upon arriving at the palace, Theseus fell in love with Minos' daughter, Ariadne. Daedalus had told only Ariadne the secret of the labyrinth, and she in turn helped Theseus by giving him a thread to use as a guide back out of labyrinth. Theseus entered the labyrinth, letting the thread unwind behind him. He killed the Minotaur and found his way back out.

Tragically, in his excitement, Theseus forgot to change the sails to white, and when his father saw the sails, he believed Theseus to be dead. Overcome by grief, he threw himself into the sea and died.

The Fall of Icarus

The events surrounding this myth lead to another, dealing with Daedalus. One story says that King Minos learned that Daedalus had built a wooden cow so that his wife, Pasiphae, could near the white bull she loved safely, and had Daedalus imprisoned, along with this son, Icarus. Another story says that Minos imprisoned Daedalus and Icarus in the labyrinth out of rage when Theseus escaped.

Pasiphae helped both the craftsman and son to escape, and Daedalus made them a pair of wax wings so they could fly from Crete and not be recaptured. However, tragedy struck again, and Icarus didn't heed his father's advice about the wings. He flew too high, and the sun melted the wings, causing Icarus to fall to his death. Daedalus managed to escape to Sicily.





Pylos Linear B tablet, similar to those found at Knossos

perhaps related to Greek or a Cypriot language, most assumed Linear B was an unknown Cretan language.

Shortly after Evans' death in 1941, an American archaeologist named Alice Kober noted that certain words in the Linear B inscriptions had changing word endings, similar in manner to the declensions of Latin or Greek. This provided a clue to another scholar of Linear B, Michael Ventris.

Ventris had encountered Evans in 1936 at an exhibition of Greek and Minoan treasures at the Royal Academy in London. While Ventris was only 14 years old at the time, this touched off what became a lifelong obsession with Linear B.

As an adult, Ventris used Kober's clue to construct a series of grids, associating the symbols on the tablets with consonants and vowels. While he still could not determine which consonants and vowels they were, he learned enough the underlying structure of the language to begin guessing.

Other Linear B tablets had been discovered on the Greek mainland, and in comparison to those found at Knossos, there

was reason to believe that some of the chains of symbols Ventris he had found on the Cretan tablets were names. Noting that certain names appeared only in the Cretan texts, he made an imaginative guess that those names applied to cities on the island. He then got lucky when one of the sets could only be one particular town, and no other.

This insight proved to be correct. This allowed him to fill in the sounds of some of the signs, and he was able to unlock much of the text. It was finally determined that the underlying language of Linear B was in fact very old Greek, dating back some 500 years before Homer. This overruled Evans' original theories of Minoan history and established that Cretan civilization, at least in the later periods of the Linear B tablets, had been part of Mycenaean Greece. Linear B was completely deciphered in 1952.

Hieroglyphics

Hieroglyphics are a form of writing in which the letters/words are more picture-like, i.e. three waving lines running parallel to each other might denote "river". The hieroglyphics that were found at Knossos are samples of very old Cretan writing. This writing appeared mainly on clay seal stones. They depict physical objects to most probably record the quantities of these objects they protected.

The normal progression of a hieroglyphic system is that it becomes stylized and linear. For example, quantities would come to be represented by numerals, instead of multiple impressions of the same sign. The pictures would become simplified, using lines to represent what were the more elaborate parts of the picture. Thus the term "linear" is used to describe the writing systems that evolved out of the hieroglyphics.

Linear A

Linear A is assumed to have been the evolution of the hieroglyphics at Knossos, and Linear B to be the progression from Linear A into the very ancient Greek. This assumption, however, has not been proven, or enabled either the hieroglyphics or Linear A to be deciphered.

Evans spent the rest of his life trying to decipher the inscriptions, but with only limited success. He realized that the inscriptions represented three different writing systems: a "hieroglyphic script", Linear A, and Linear B.

It is a syllabic (composed of signs to represent sounds, instead of letter groups forming sounds) script written from left to right, as is Linear B. The approximate phonetic values of many syllabic signs which are used in Linear A are also known from Linear B, but the language written in Linear A remains unknown and will probably remain obscure, since it doesn't seem to relate to any other surviving language in Europe or Western Asia.

The most straight forward approach to deciphering Linear A may be to assume that the values of Linear A approximately match the values given to the fully transliterated Linear B script, and while this point of



A sample of Egyptian hieroglyphics



Tourists on a section of the Minoan palace of Knossos, overlooking the central courtyard.

view has been of great interest to archaeologists, there is currently no linguistic grounds for accepting it. For the 213 Linear A signs, the majority have no link with any Linear B sign, and most of the similar signs have a small difference, which suggests a phonetic change.

Theories

Many scholars have put forth their own possible decipherments of Linear over the decades, and while many have strong merits, they also contain limitations. No one has been able to definitively prove what Linear A, or even what it might be related to.

Semitic Origin

Dr. Cyrus H. Gordon was an American scholar of Near Eastern cultures and ancient languages who also took an interest in decoding Linear A. Some of his own work included drawing connections between the Greek and Hebrew civilizations. Using this work, his knowledge of semitic languages, and even cryptology (which he did while serving in the U.S. Army in WWII), Dr. Gordon suggested that Linea A was a semitic language, which the Bible called Hamitic, and his first article suggesting this was published in

1957. However, there is little evidence to support this connection, and while most scripts used to represent Semitic languages have few vowels, Linear A has many.

Luwian

Luwian is an extinct language of the Anatolian branch of the Indo-European language family. It is closely related to Hittite and was among the languages spoken by people in Arzawa, later known as Lydia, in what is now Turkey.

During the 1960s, a theory evolved that Linear A could be an Anatolian language, close to Luwian, based upon the phonetic values of Linear B. This theory, however, lost many supporters during the second

half of the 20th century due to the growth of archaeological and linguistic data about the Anatolian languages and peoples.

In 1997, Gareth Alun Owens, a British-Greek academic, published a collection of essays titled "Kritika Daidalika", which support the view that Linear A might represent an archaic relative of Luwian. He based this assertion on the possible Indo-European but non-Greek roots of a small number of words that were readable read by using the known Linear B or Cypriot sound values of certain Linear A signs.

Owens postulated that the phonetic values of 90% of the Linear A characters correspond to those of Linear B figures of similar appearance. Ten charac-



a



b

Tablet of Linear A



ters do not match, and their meaning can only be speculated upon. Using his system of correspondences, Owens uncovered several place names which appear in the Linear B tablets and figure prominently in the archaeological history of Crete. He also put forth that he had found evidence of grammatical gender for nouns, as well as vocabulary and noun and verb endings that indicated the basic “Minoan” language of the Linear A tablets to be an Indo-European lan-

During the 1960s, a theory evolved that Linear A could be an Anatolian language, close to Luwian, based upon the phonetic values of Linear B.

guage of the Satem branch.

The drawbacks to this theory include that there is no remarkable resemblance between Minoan and Hitto-Luwian morphology, no existing theories support the migration of the Hitto-Luwian peoples to Crete, and the obvious anthropological differences between Hitto-Luwians and the Minoans, as mentioned before.

Phoenician

Phoenician is a semitic language originally spoken in what is now known as Lebanon, parts of Syria, and parts of the Mediterranean coast.

Working from Gordon’s theories that Linear A might be a Semitic language, scholar Jan Best published an article entitled “The First Inscription in Punic — Vowel Differences in Linear A and B” in 1991. In it, Best claimed to demonstrate how and why Linear A notates an archaic form of Phoenician. However, for many of the same reasons, his theory drew widespread criticism. While there are a few terms the may be of Semit-



Linear A. Copy of inscriptions round the inner surface of cup

ic origin, there simply isn’t enough evidence to make the link.

Indo-Iranian

Hubert La Marle, a French researcher in linguistics and epigraphy, started studying Linear in 1989, and developed his own theory that it may belong to the Indo-Iranian family of languages. This theory is based largely on the frequencies of each sign in certain positions. He also compares Linear A to other ancient scripts around the eastern Mediterranean. He suggests that these two methods provide many conclusions about the phonetic nature of the syllabic signs for a most of the signs, and that aspects of Linear A closely resemble ancient Indo-Iranian.

Furthermore, La Marle’s study includes a coherent presentation of the morphology of the language. It avoids the complete identification of phonetic values between Linear A and B.

However, his critics have pointed out a few problems with this theory. First, it uses frequencies of signs, rather than their structure within Linear A, to make a translation. He also assigns phonetic values to the signs based on superficial resemblances to signs in other scripts, as opposed to direct matches. While differences in

signs can occur over time, it is not a good basis for determining connections. Some scholars also contend that the work is biased, because he attempts to translate the words into a language he has chosen, rather than matching a language to the translation.

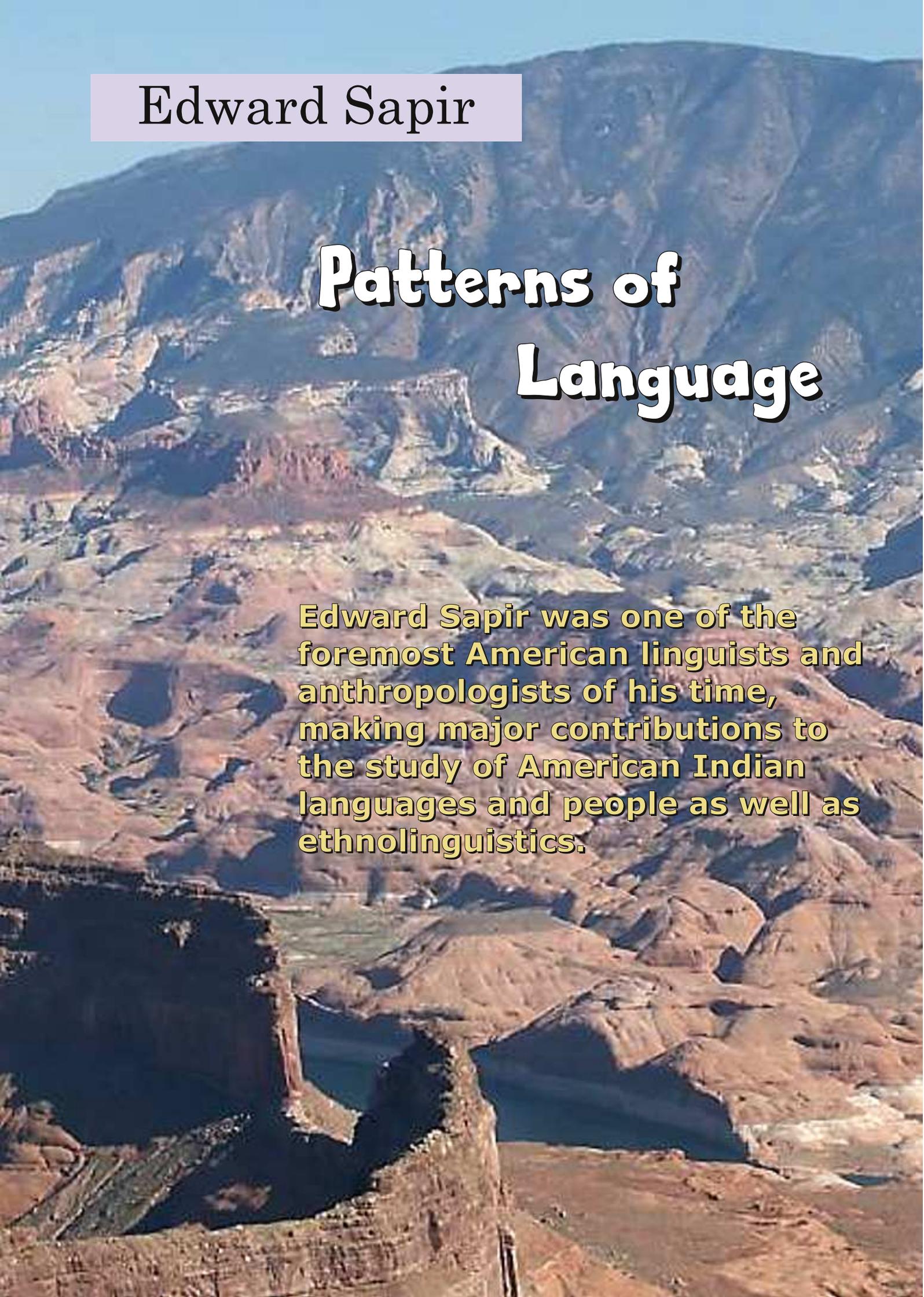
Conclusion

Work continues on the decipherment of Linear A texts, and there may yet be a discovery in the future that helps clarify the meaning of the language. It may as yet be somehow connected to Linear B, or connected to a currently existing language, as in the theories above. It is also possible, however, that the language was separated long ago from any language we know and a connection will never be made.

Despite that, much has been learned about the Minoan civilization through the study of the artifacts inscribed in Linear A. Linear B has also been instrumental in explaining the historical connection between the Minoans and Greeks. Both scripts have also been used in analyzing other linguistic artifacts, and it as yet possible that someone might one day find another “Rosetta Stone” to help solve the mystery. **PT**



Knossos north entrance rebuilt

An aerial photograph of a rugged, mountainous landscape. The terrain is characterized by steep, rocky slopes and a prominent mesa in the foreground. The colors range from deep blues and purples in the shadows to warm browns and oranges in the sunlit areas. The sky is a clear, pale blue.

Edward Sapir

Patterns of Language

Edward Sapir was one of the foremost American linguists and anthropologists of his time, making major contributions to the study of American Indian languages and people as well as ethnolinguistics.



His name is probably most known in association with the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis. He was a founder of ethnolinguistics, which is the study of the relationship between culture and language. Among anthropologists, he is probably most known for his work in the classification of Native American Indians. During his lifetime, he was a prolific publisher of materials in a few different fields that are still studied today.

His Life

Edward Sapir was born in 1884 in Lauenburg, Germany. His parents were both Lithuanian Jews, and while he learned German as a child, the language in his home was Yiddish. However, since his father, Jacob, preferred music to theology, the family was not strictly orthodox in their religious observance.

The family moved many times during Sapir's early childhood. He started kindergarten in Liverpool, England, then his family emigrated to the United States when he was five and they arrived in Richmond, Virginia in 1890. Tragically, Sapir's younger brother Max died of typhoid shortly afterwards. Then while Jacob's career declined into a series of short-term appointments, the family moved to the Lower East Side of New York City when Edward was ten. Eva Sapir ran a small shop to support herself and young Edward after she and Jacob divorced sometime after 1910.

When he was fourteen, Sapir won a Pulitzer scholarship for four years at Horace Mann High School, which was and still is one of the top college-preparatory

high schools in New York, but he turned it down, choosing a local high school instead and using the scholarship for his undergraduate education at Columbia University. After starting at Columbia in 1901, Sapir focused on Germanic philology (the study of literary texts and written records) while getting formal training in Indo-European linguistics. He received a B.A. in German in 1904 after having taken only three years to complete the four-year program, then he received his M.A., also in German, in 1905. He took two more years of courses in anthropology and German, receiving his Ph.D. in anthropology in 1909 with a dissertation on the Takelma language of southwestern Oregon.

Sapir had a knack for languages, but since Columbia had no true department of linguistics, Germanics was the field of choice for a student interested in linguistic science.

While there, Sapir met and began to study with Franz Boas and was inspired into the need to record endangered American Indian languages before they were lost forever. In 1905, Boas sent him to the Yakima Reservation in Washington to do fieldwork on the Wishram dialect of Chinook, and then to Oregon, to work on Takelma. Sapir worked on Takelma and Chasta Costa at Siletz Reservation in Oregon in 1906, then from 1907-1908 he was a research associate in anthropology at the University of California, where he worked on Yana. He spent two years at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia after that, first as a professor and then as an instructor. When Sapir submitted his description of Takelma as a dissertation to Boas at Columbia in 1909, he was awarded a doctorate.

In 1910, he was hired to head the newly established division of anthropology in the Geological Survey of the Canadian National Museum, and while he was initially excited about this opportunity, he soon became disappointed and complained about the isolation of life in Ottawa. He did fieldwork on a large number



Franz Boas

Columbia University in New York in 1915





of languages, including Nootka and Sarcee, and he published much in a number of areas. His Takelma grammar was published in 1922 in the second volume of the Handbook of American Indian Languages.

While in Ottawa, his first wife suffered a series of mental and physical illnesses from which she finally died. To add to his pain, Sapir's efforts to develop anthropological research on the natives of Canada were largely halted by the financial requirements of the First World War. The money just wasn't available and he became increasingly despondent and isolated. This led Sapir to devote a large amount of his time to poetry and music, as well as the writing of many literary reviews.

Between 1917 and the early 1930s, he was a major contributor to *The Dial*, which was one of the most important American literary journals at the time. He was also a writer for other journals such as *The Freeman*, *Poetry*, *The New Republic*, *The Nation*, and others. Many of the topics that he wrote about in his nonacademic writing also appeared in his work in anthropology and he became increasingly interested in questions of psychiatry and the nature of personality, particularly in the relationship between personality and culture.

When In 1925 Sapir was offered a position at the University of Chicago, he accepted happily. There, he had many students and in a short time, he became a major figure in American anthropology. He continued to do fieldwork on several languages, such as Navajo and Hupa, and he had the chance to do many of the things he had missed while in Ottawa. He eagerly joined in interdisciplinary conferences, and had a notable collaboration with international psychiatrist Harry

Stack Sullivan and political scientist Harold D. Lasswell. Since he was teaching in the social sciences, Sapir found himself thinking a lot about culture, psychology and social science methodology. For a while, he continued to write poetry, but the pressure of other work finally left him little time for anything besides his professional obligations. During this period, however, he did not stop his linguistic work, and even managed to make field trips to study Navajo and Hupa.

Shortly after he arrived in Chicago, Sapir renewed a friendship with Jean McClenaghan, now a social work student on a practicum at the Chicago Institute for Juvenile Research, and the couple was married in 1927. They would eventually have two children.

Sapir grew tired of the amount of administrative work required of him at Chicago, and so he accepted a very attractive offer for a Sterling Professorship at Yale in 1931. While at Yale, he again attracted numerous students, including many that had followed him from Chicago.

Many of his plans in Yale were undermined by local academic politics, by the economic effects of the Depression, and by feelings of anti-Semitism at Yale, and Sapir became drained and unhappy. Outside of Yale, he continued with his interdisciplinary activities, while in it he focused on his own teaching in anthropology and linguistics. It was too much.

In 1937, while he was teaching at the Linguistic Society of America Summer Institute in Ann Arbor, Michigan, Sapir suffered a heart attack. A sabbatical to China in 1937 had to be cancelled because of his health, and while he did he return to teaching in the fall of 1938, he had not recovered his strength. He finally died in

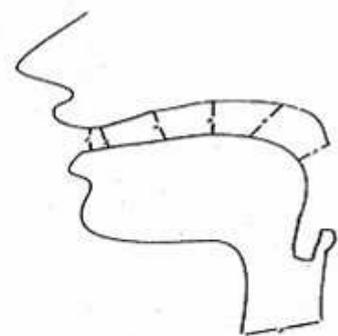
1939 of heart disease at the age of fifty-five.

IALA

Sapir was active in the international auxiliary language movement which pushed to create a constructed language that could be used by people all over the world instead of learning each others languages. He published "The Function of an International Auxiliary Language" in which he spoke of the benefits of a regular grammar and pushed for a critical focus on the fundamentals of language without the bias of national language idiosyncrasies while selecting an international auxiliary language. He was also the first Research Director of the International Auxiliary Language Association (IALA). It was a position he held between 1930 and 1931. Added to all this, he was a member of IALA's Consultative Council for Linguistic Research from 1927 to 1938 and consulted with Alice Vanderbilt Morris to develop the research program of IALA.

Phonology

Sapir made a major contribution to linguistic theory with his work in phonology (the study of sound systems). He published his paper "Sound Patterns in Language" in 1925 in the first issue of "Language", the journal of the Linguistic Society of America of which Sapir was a founder. In this, he defined his



The Vocal Tract
F. Whistled L. Labiodental D. Dental A. Alveolar
S. Spirant Fricative R. Rhotic C. Cerebral G. Glottal



Classifying American Indian Languages

Edward Sapir did a lot of work with Native American Indian languages and people, a few of which were on the very brink of extinction. Among the languages and cultures studied by Sapir were:

- Wishram Chinook - One of the three varieties of Chinookian which is a language used by the Chinook people in Oregon and Washington.
- Navajo - Also called Navaho. An Athabaskan language spoken in the southwest United States by the Navajo people.
- Nootka - Also called Nuu-chah-nulth. A Wakashan language spoken in the Pacific Northwest on the west coast of Vancouver Island in British Columbia, Canada.
- Paiute - A group of languages belonging to the Numic branch of the Uto-Aztecan family, spoken by the Paiute people of the western United States.
- Takelma - Takelma was the language spoken by the Takelma people of southwestern Oregon. The last fluent speaker of Takelma worked with Sapir in writing about the language.
- Yana - Also called Yanan. An extinct language spoken in north-central California by the Yahi people.



Southern Paiute Indians

In 1921, Sapir published a single page summary of a six-unit classification of the American Indian languages from his studies. He produced a complete version in 1929 with justifications and a classification of twenty-three units based on his work and that of his colleagues from almost twenty years. He viewed this classification as a series of hypothesis, and while some found it controversial and too bold in some of the combinations, many anthropologists instantly accepted them as a concrete guide to language classification and tribal relationships.

I. Eskimo-Aleut

II. Algonkin-Wakashan

1. *Algonkin-Ritwan*
 - (1) Algonkin
 - (2) Beothuk (?)
 - (3) Ritwan
 - (a) Wiyot
 - (b) Yurok
2. *Kootenay*
3. *Mosan (Wakashan-Salish)*
 - (1) Wakashan (Kwakiutl-Nootka)
 - (2) Chimakuan
 - (3) Salish

III. Nadene

1. *Haida*
2. *Continental Nadene*
 - (1) Tlingit
 - (2) Athabaskan

IV. Penutian

1. *Californian Penutian*
 - (1) Miwok-Costanoan
 - (2) Yokuts
 - (3) Maidu
 - (4) Wintun
2. *Oregon Penutian*
 - (1) Takelma
 - (2) Coast Oregon Penutian
 - (a) Coos
 - (b) Siuslaw

- (c) Yakonan
- (3) Kalapuya
3. *Chinook*
4. *Tsimshian*
5. *Plateau Penutian*
 - (1) Sahaptin
 - (2) Waiilatpuan (Molala-Cayuse)
 - (3) Lutuami (Klamath-Modoc)
6. *Mexican Penutian*
 - (1) Mixe-Zoque
 - (2) Huave

V. Hokan-Siouan

1. *Hokan-Coahuiltecan*
 - A. Hokan
 - (1) Northern Hokan
 - (a) Karok, Chimariko,
 - Shasta-Achomawl
 - (b) Yana
 - (c) Pomo
 - (2) Washo
 - (3) Esselen-Yuman
 - (a) Esselen
 - (b) Yuman
 - (4) Salinan-Seri
 - (a) Salinan
 - (b) Chumash
 - (c) Seri
 - (5) Tequistlatecan (Chontal)
- B. Subtiaba-Tlapanec
- C. Coahuiltecan
 - (1) Tonkawa
 - (2) Coahuilteco

- (a) Coahuilteco proper
- (b) Cotoname
- (c) Comecrudo
- (3) Karankawa
2. *Yuki*
3. *Keres*
4. *Tunican*
 - (1) Tunica-Atakapa
 - (2) Chitimacha
5. *Iroquois*
 - (1) Iroquoian
 - (2) Caddoan
6. *Eastern group*
 - (1) Siouan-Yuchi
 - (a) Siouan
 - (b) Yuchi
 - (2) Natchez-Muskogian
 - (a) Natchez
 - (b) Muskogian
 - (c) Timucua (?)

VI. Aztec-Tanoan

1. *Uto-Aztecan*
 - (1) Nahuatl
 - (2) Piman
 - (3) Shoshonean
2. *Tanoan-Kiowa*
 - (1) Tanoan
 - (2) Kiowa
3. *Zuñi (?)*



concept of a phoneme, viewing it in terms of its relationships among sounds rather than its objective qualities. This addressed phonemes as a psychological phenomena and not just the commonly accepted physical aspects. Why this is of importance is that it raises phonemes from being single individual entities to being influenced by oth-

The way a person expresses themselves shapes their culture, even if they don't realize this is happening.

er phonemes, not just in one language but across related languages. By looking at these connections, one can see a larger pattern between languages. He continued this pattern argument in 1933 with his paper "The Psychological Reality of the Phoneme" in which he discussed how the the systematic and conventional nature of sounds is understood at an intuitive level by native speakers.

With these two papers, Sapir had laid the groundwork for much that would come in the field of phonemics (the study of conventionally relevant sounds). This new way of viewing phonology helped revolutionize American linguistics. It was derived from Sapir's extensive fieldwork with the American Indian languages, yet paralleled the work being done in Europe on phonomic models by linguistics that were working from the influence of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure.

Grammar

Another area of Sapir's work involved carrying on and expanding on the ideas of his one time teacher, Franz Boas, who applied a very scientific method to the study of linguistics and criticized heavily the previous work of fellow anthropologists. In

1916, Sapir published "Time Perspective in Aboriginal American Culture: A Study in Method" in which he put forth the methods used by Boas to examine the historical connections between culture and language. He also included linguistics examples from a wide range of cases. Essentially, as a culture develops, traces of the past are maintained in the language, so languages played a key role in understanding not just the current culture but how it evolved. Since these changes came through the spoken language, they were usable in the absence of a written language. Furthermore, since the language sounds were traceable across related languages, a connection could be made between different peoples over time. Languages could be used to assist in showing genetic relationships.

Sapir published the only book he completed in his lifetime, "Language: An Introduction to the Study of Speech", in 1921. It was aimed at a more general audience and talked about the precision and beauty of grammar of both written and non-written languages and was so visionary in its views that is still influences modern linguists.

Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis

Sapir published "The Unconscious Patterning of Behavior in Society" in 1927. Combining both of his concepts of phonology and grammar, Sapir formulated that culture should be viewed as part of individually learned patterns, both conscious and unconscious and not as external elements. If culture comes from learned rules of the society instead of as fixed structure, and language plays a key role in thought and communications, then culture and language are distinctly tied together. The way a person expresses themselves shapes their culture, even if they

don't realize this is happening.

His 1929 paper "The Status of Linguistics as a Science" furthered these ideas. Because of a language's central place in a culture, it works as a "guide to 'social reality'" and largely shapes an individual's and a culture's perception of the world. Since language can be subjected to a systematic analysis, it can also be an essential tool for understanding a culture, even it's most elusive aspects.

These theories became his contribution to a larger theory, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. One of Sapir's students, Benjamin Lee Whorf, wrote more along this same theory

after Sapir's death, publishing his own observations on how linguistic differences have consequences in human cognition and behavior. Harry Hoijer, another of Sapir's students, actually created the term "Sapir-Whorf hypothesis", even though Sapir and Whorf never put forth any such hypothesis or even worked together to formulate the ideas apart from the teacher-student relationship. Yet this has become what most people know of Sapir.



Benjamin Lee Whorf

Sapir contributed to almost every important topic in linguistics and while some of his works no longer receive as much attention, like that on the construction of an international language, his influence on linguistics and related fields can still be strongly felt today. He also produced an extremely large volume of work during his lifetime and his many themes are still discussed by modern students of linguistics. **PT**



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At the Cinema



Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner



Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner

R 172 min

Drama / Fantasy

1 February 2002 (UK)

Country: Canada

Language: Inuktitut

They needed to figure out how people would have acted and how they would have said things back then.

Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner is the first feature film ever to be written, directed and acted entirely in Inuktitut. That in itself should be of interest to any language lover. Inuktitut is the name of some of the Inuit languages spoken in Canada, where the movie was filmed. I don't know if all of the actors were absolute natives, but I am thinking they are. Most were not professional actors before this.

The story of Atanarjuat is a legend that is believed to be over five centuries old. The main plot involves two brothers, Atanarjuat and Amaqjuaq, whose father has adopted a curse upon the family. The second wife of Atanarjuat, Puja, makes love to Amaqjuaq and gets promptly beaten. Puja runs to her family, crying, claiming she has done nothing wrong. Her family plots with her a revenge upon the brothers, and after Puja returns to Atanarjuat and Amaqjuaq, she begs for forgiveness and is taken back in. Then she tells the other wives to go gather eggs while the men sleep. While they are sleeping, her brother Oki and two others sneak up to the tent and stab spears through it. Amaqjuaq is killed, but Atanarjuat runs out across the ice, naked and barefoot. Atanarjuat manages to escape, barely, and is rescued and healed. He eventually returns to have his revenge upon Oki, the curse is lifted, and the community is finally at peace.

The legend itself is rather vague, and the writers of the screenplay needed to talk to several native Inuits to piece together what they thought was the most accurate story. Even then, they needed to flesh it out with character development and accurate portrayals of Inuit life. This wasn't an easy thing to do, since while they could get details about clothes and customs from the journals of European explorers, they needed to figure out how people would have acted and how they would have said things back then. For that, they constantly consulted elder Inuit natives all during the process.

This is where the real importance of the movie is shown. It becomes an almost historical archive of the Inuit people, helping to record their ways for future generations. It also gives modern day Inuit children a clearer vision of their own heritage and something to be proud of, something which we often lose in culture, yet it is vital to the survival of that culture. Without a next generation speaking the language and continuing the traditions, an entire way of life dies out forever.

The movie itself is basically a simple story so watching it is like seeing history unfold. The beginning is a little confusing, however, as they attempt to show the original curse being brought about. It's also not a film designed to be an action packed block-



buster or a sweeping love story. Like many legends, it is more of a soap opera, with different characters having their own schemes and past events being revived and concluded in the end.

One of the things which really caught my interest in the movie was that this wasn't some imaginary setting on another planet... these people

It is what really gives the movie its heart. It is telling us a legend, but it is showing us lives.

really did live in the frozen wilderness. Not only did they live, they did it without what so many of us would consider

now as "bare necessities", such as hot water and electricity. One scene shows them building a new igloo for community gatherings, with them shaping each brick out of snow and placing it carefully. There are also a few scenes of them preparing food from the animals they have hunted, something that most of don't even want to think about doing. And while you might imagine that living like this would be completely miserable, they are playing, laughing and loving, just as we do in our "civilized" world. This observation might sound like a cliché, but for me, it is what really gives the movie its heart. It is telling us a legend, but it is showing us



lives.

The movie received many awards in 2001 and 2002, which is understandable, given the scope of what the producers were attempting. Besides telling the legend, the movie was providing people a vivid look at the Inuit culture and perhaps giving them their first ever experience with the Inuktitut. In that, it becomes both a story of betrayal and hope and a real hope of helping to preserve the culture and language of the Inuit people. It inspires future generations, both within and outside of the Inuit society. I definitely recommend you see this movie if you get the chance. **PT**



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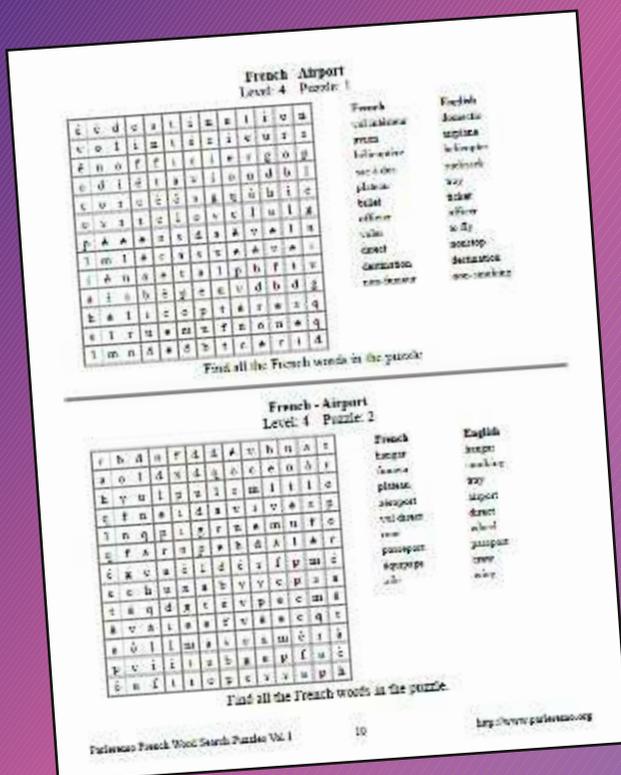
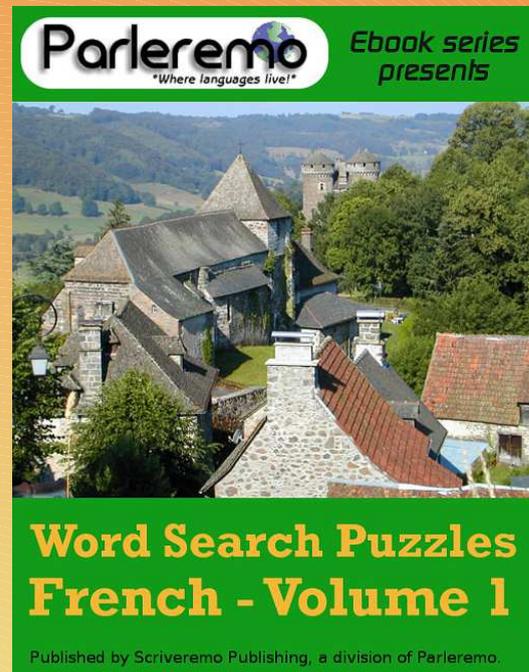
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Languages in Peril

The Rhaeto-Romance Trio

Even languages of the popular Romance family are in danger of becoming extinct, so we are going to look at Ladin, Friulian and Romansh, which are three closely related ones.

Most people know of the popular Romance languages like Latin, Spanish, French, Italian, Portuguese and Romanian. If you talk to people who are more interested in languages themselves and polyglots, you might hear them mention Catalan, Gallician and Sicilian. We are going to look at a few that are part of the Rhaeto-Romance branch that most have probably never heard about.

Rhaeto-Romance refers to a large area of the Alps which was home to Celtic and Raetic tribes in ancient times. The Romans named it "Raetia Prima". Three languages evolved from this area, each developing in its own way

while retaining the common features that unite them in a single group: Ladin, Friulian, and Romansh.

Ladin

Ladin (not to be confused with the Spanish dialect, Ladino) has an estimated 30,000 speakers, but this is very difficult to verify because not all provinces in which it is spoken declare it as their native language. It is spoken in South Tyrol, Trentino and Belluno in the Dolomite mountains of northern Italy.

The name "Ladin" is derived from "Latin" because it was originally a form of vulgar Latin in the Roman conquered Alps. It began in Aquileia, an ancient Roman military colony in Italy, which was founded 181 BC. The Celtic population of the area, which was greater than that of the Romans, used a distorted form of Latin, mixing their own Celtic languages with it. As it was spoken, influences from languages in the surrounding territories made modifications to its phonetics and vocabulary. It developed on its own path, as did its sister languages of Italian, Spanish and French. After the barbarian in-

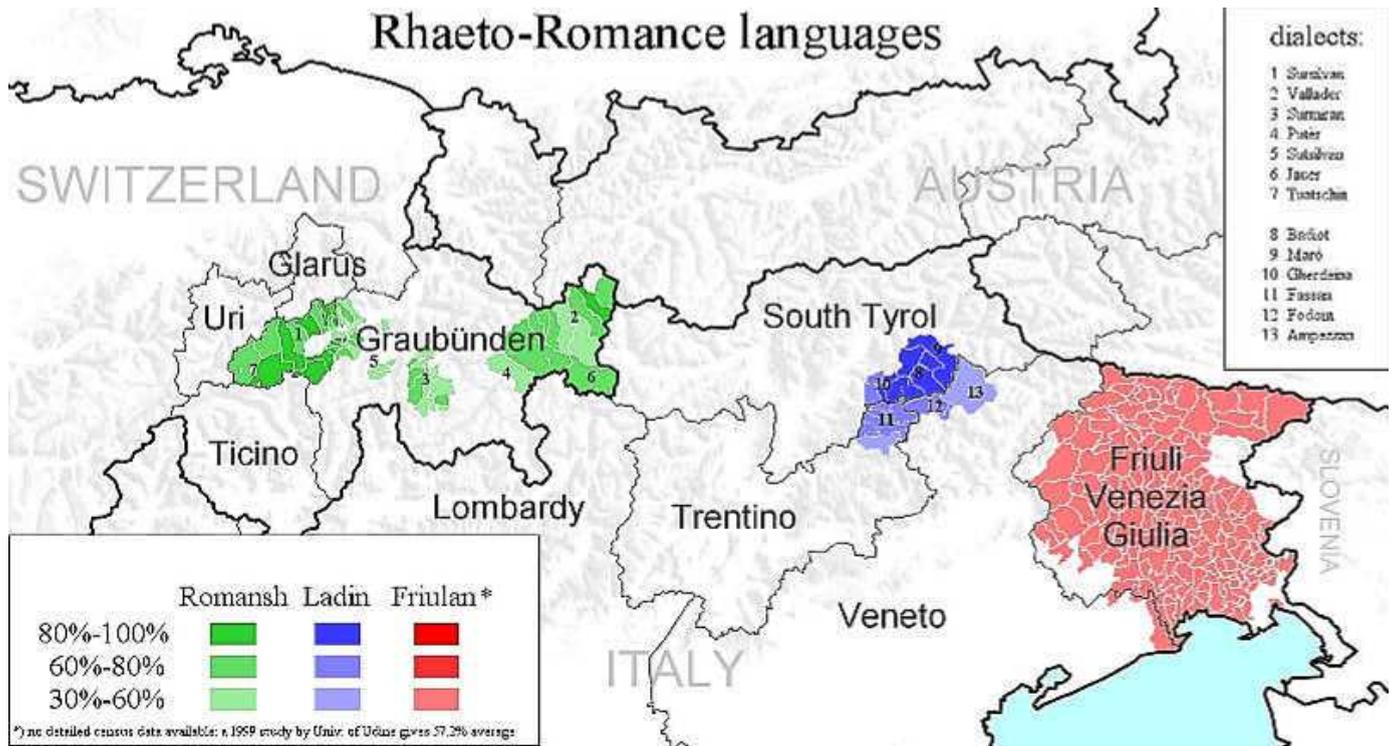
vasions of the 5th century and the fall of Ostrogothic Kingdom, which had taken over the region, the Dolomites became separated from the region known as Friuli, and the language was split, developing into Ladin and Friulian.

During the Middle Ages, when the area fell under Austrian Habsburg ruler, Ladin underwent a process of Germanization. At the end of World War I in 1918, Italy annexed the southern part of Tyrol, which included the Ladin areas, and the Italian nationalist movement viewed Ladin as an "Italian dialect", which greatly upset the Ladins. Fascists leaders like Ettore Tolomei and Benito Mussolini put pressure on the Ladin communities to give up their identities to Italian and forced many

Fascists leaders like Ettore Tolomei and Benito Mussolini put pressure on the Ladin communities to give up their identities to Italian



Trilingual road sign in Ladin-German-Italian in South Tyrol. "in case of snow or ice"



Ladin place names to use Italian pronunciation. When World War II ended, the Gruber-De Gasperi Agreement of 1946 between Austria and Italy gave autonomy for Trentino and South Tyrol while having them remain part of Italy, but this did not extend to the Ladins. It wasn't until a second autonomy statute for South Tyrol was made in 1972 were the rights of these communities recognized.

There is little Ladin literature, since it dates back only until the 1700s. Work is being done to revive this endangered language through consolidation of the Ladin economic structure, increased usage of the language in the mass media and teaching of Ladin in primary and high schools. But will it be enough?

Friulian

Friulian currently has approximately 800,000 speakers. It is also called Friulan, Furlan and even Eastern Ladin because of its shared roots with Ladin. It is spoken mainly in the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region of north-eastern Italy as well as in Udine,

Pordenone, Trieste and Gorizia. Its major dialects are central, western and eastern Friulian, Gortan, Asino and Carnian, all of which were influenced by the surrounding languages of the area: Slovenian, Italian and German.

Friulian came from the same modified Latin as Ladin. When the Friuli region became isolated from Italian cultural life in the 6th century, the language mutated further from its Latin base. The first documents using Friulian go back to the 13th century, but they were mostly administrative in nature. Friulian literature and poetry has been

found from the 14th century. By the early 15th century, most of the population of the region spoke Friulian while the nobility and educated classes spoke Latin or German. However, when Friuli came back under Italian rule after 1420, the Venetian dialect of Italian became the dominant language, and Friulian started to decline.

Friulian came under unexpected scrutiny during the Nazi Occupation of Italy during the Second World War. Pro-Nazi German scholars theorized that the German language and culture had been a "profound influence" on the Friulians, including loan words and medieval place-names. Evidence was found that the Friuli people had been involved in the early German empire as well, and it was decided that the Friulians, by being part of the "German cultural field", were therefore historically part of the German empire. These Nazis probably intended to attempt a "Germanization" of the Friulian speakers, but their defeat in the war prevented that.

While the language is en-



Road sign in Italian and Friulian. "Paderno town of Udine"



dangered, after the war a revival of interest in it began. In the 1950s, two new grammar books, a description of the dialects and a history of the Friulian language were published. It is taught in a few schools and has limited use in the media. However, it is still fighting for its survival against the more popular languages of the region.

Romansh

Romansh is the third in the Rhaeto-Romance trio. It has about 95,000 speakers in Switzerland where it is an official language, but that makes it very small, relative to the population, with just over one percent speaking it. Those speakers are mainly in the Rhaeto-Romania area.

The origins of Romansh are similar to that of Ladin and Friulian, coming from a modified form of Latin when the Romans conquered the area known as Raetia. The languages of that region at the time were Celtic and Raetic and they were mixed with the Latin. This form was used until the 5th century, when Germanic tribes from the north moved in and Raetia became part of the Ostrogothic Kingdom until it fell. When the Ostrogoths surrendered the province of Raetia to the Frankish Empire around 547 AD, a process of Germanization also began on the language which lasted for many centuries.

Romansh did not have a standardized writing system, having been mainly used by common people and not administrators. Several regional written varieties of Romansh are found from the 16th century. The first real literary work that has survived was an epic poem written in 1527. Other writers and poets began to write in Romansh variants as well as translate other works into the language. A standardised written



Title page of "Dotrina christiana Breciana" of 1734

form, known as Rumantsch Grischun, was finally created in 1982 by the Zurich linguist Heinrich Schmid, although it hasn't been widely adopted by Romansh speakers, who prefer their own dialects.

Romansh struggled to survive against the more popular German and Swedish while the Romansh speakers saw their language as an economic and

social block. Schools and churches replaced Romansh with German, weakening it even more. The "Rhaeto-Romance Renaissance" movement began at the end of the 19th century to revive the language, and in 1938, Romansh became recognized as a national language of Switzerland, along with German, French and Italian. Today it is used to an extent in schools and the media, but its survival is still in doubt.

Spread the Word

All of these languages are described as "definitely endangered" which means the children of native speakers no longer learn the language as a mother tongue in their homes. We hope that this article will inspire you to learn more about them and to tell others what you have learned. The next time someone mentions the Romance languages, you can add these three to the list know you have taken a step to help them survive. **PT**

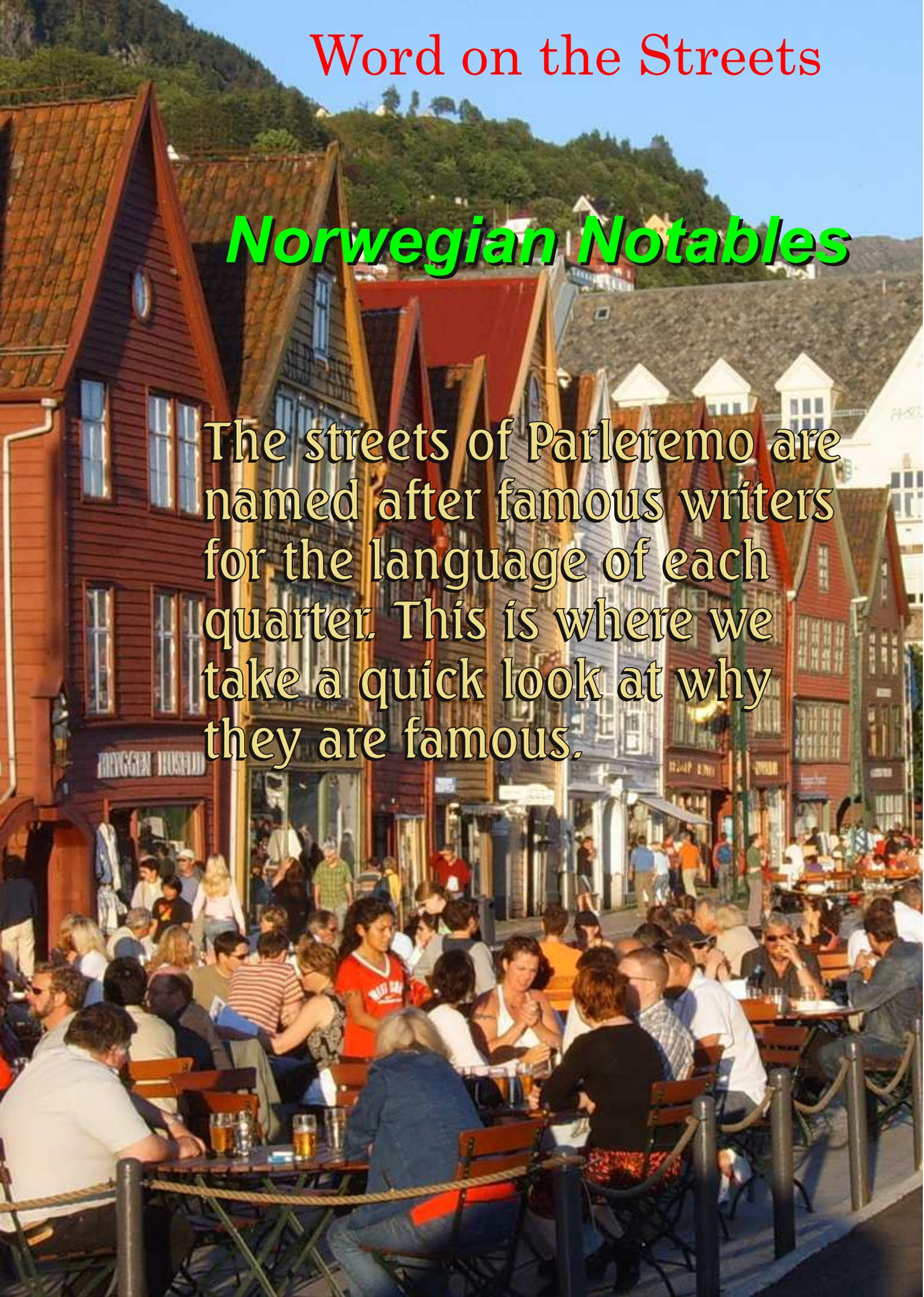
Mural with the text "Friül libar" (Free Friuli) in Aiello del Friuli, Italy.



Word on the Streets

Norwegian Notables

The streets of Parleremo are named after famous writers for the language of each quarter. This is where we take a quick look at why they are famous.



Ibsens vei



Henrik Ibsen

20 March 1828 – 23 May 1906

Henrik Ibsen was one of the major Norwegian playwrights of the 19th-century and is considered one of the greatest playwrights in the European tradition, comparable even to Shakespeare. He influenced other playwrights and novelists, as well as artists. The female characters of his works

even influenced the feminist movement in the United States.

Ibsen was born on 20 March 1828 in the port town of Skien, Norway. When he was 15, Ibsen quit school and went to work as an apprentice in an apothecary in Grimstad. While working there, he spent his free time writing poetry, and in 1849, he wrote his first play, *Catilina*, in verse like Shakespeare, who was one of his great influences. The next year, he moved to Christiania (modern day Oslo) to study at the University of Christiania. One of the friends he met there, Ole Schulerud, paid for the publication of *Catilina*, but it received little attention.

The next year, Ibsen was offered a job as a writer and manager for the Norwegian Theatre in Bergen by Ole Bull. Though that, Ibsen learned much about the theatre and he even traveled abroad to learn more. He returned in 1857 to take up running the theatre, but this did not go well and he was accused of mismanaging it. He finally left Norway again in 1862.

During this time, he moved a few times between Italy and Germany, writing some of his best works which were critically acclaimed. While his plays earned him the title "the father of modern theater", Ibsen's productions were often considered scandalous for his time period. While traditional European theatre reflected strict morals of family life and propriety, Ibsen instead focused on the truths that were behind these many facades, giving his audience and critics a new look at the conditions of life and morality. His plays gave them a new set of moral questions to examine.

One of Ibsen's masterworks was "Peer Gynt" which was a modern version of Greek epic tragedies, following the title character on a quest. Another famous work was "A Doll's House". This play explored the struggles of a woman with the traditional roles of wife and mother and her own need for self-exploration.

Ibsen returned to Norway as a literary hero in 1891. He had left Norway as a frustrated artist and returned as an internationally known playwright. Sadly, in 1900, Ibsen suffered a series of paralyzing strokes that left him unable to write and he died peacefully on 23 May 1906. He was considered a literary giant and received a state funeral from the Norwegian government. To this day, Ibsen remains among the most popular studied and produced playwrights

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- *Hedda Gabler*, 1890 [Hedda Gabler]
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- *Lille Eyolf*, 1894 [Little Eyolf]
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Online

Works by Henrik Ibsen at Project Gutenberg
<http://www.gutenberg.org/browse/authors/i#a861>

Knut Hamsuns vei



Knut Hamsun
4 August 1859 – 19 February 1952

Knut Hamsun was a Nobel Prize winning Norwegian author. He is considered to be one of the most influential literary stylists of the past one hundred years and was even once praised by King Haakon

VII of Norway as "Norway's soul". His work usually focused on more rural and primitive ideals, going against the ideas of civilization. He also wrote some pioneering psychological literature which embraces techniques of various streams of consciousness.

Much of Hamsun's work was linked to the spiritual movement pantheism, which embraces the idea of not just one god, but many, because of his depictions of the natural world around us and reflections on the woodlands of his homeland. He wrote about man and nature unified in a spiritual bonding, and that was the main theme of many of his novels, most notably "Growth of the Soil", which is credited as being the reason for his Nobel Prize in Literature.

Hamsun was also a long time admirer of Germany, and he expressed his support for the German war effort during World War II, even meeting with Hitler. Upon Hitler's death, he published a short obituary in which he praised the dictator. These views proved disastrous for Hamsun, and in 1945, he was detained by police for "acts of treason" while they took away his property. He was temporarily put under psychiatric observation under the excuse of being hospitalized because of "his advanced age". His last years were spent in poverty and he died in Grimstad in 1952.

During his lifetime, Hamsun published over 20 novels, several of which have been adapted as motion pictures, as well as short stories, plays, essays and poetry. Two years after his death, a fifteen-volume compilation of his complete works was published. In 2009, the Knut Hamsun Centre was opened in Hamarøy in his memory.

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Olav Duuns vei



Olav Duun

21 November 1876 – 13 September 1939

Olav Duun was one of the most notable writers of Norwegian fiction in the 20th century. He was one of the first Norwegian writers to write in Landsmål, the native language of the people of the northern region. He drew from the traditions of his native Namdalen region and his works combined the Norwegian folk essence with the European cultural form.

Duun wrote often of the fierce battle of the peasants against nature for their survival. His books used the dialects of many of the working classes and examined the varied aspects of rural peasant life. His characters had strong

family traditions to inspire his modern readers. The independent peasant, the one who best represented purpose and worth, was glorified in these writings.

Probably his most notable works are his six volume saga "The People of Juvik" which is the story of four generations of a family of peasant landowners, following the rise of the family from very basic humble beginnings to an enlightened state. Between 1907 and 1938, Duun published 25 novels, four short story collections, and two children's books. He died in Botne, near Holmestrand, on September 13, 1939.

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Coming in March

- Puzzle over the mysteries of the Voynich Manuscript
- Meet the other side of the Sapir-Whorf pairing, Benjamin Whorf
- Explore the Polish connection between Kashubian, Rusyn and Silesian
- Celebrate Holi with the rest of India



Where Are You?

This fishing port is actually spread over seven islands, two of which are connected directly by bridges. It dates back to the ninth century when a castle was built in the area. It wasn't actually granted a township status until the mid nineteenth century. Its primary vocation is fishing, and it is the modern day fishing capital of its country. Because of its setting in the water, it also supports fish processing and fish farming. Some of the islands are linked to the mainland by three of the world's longest sub-sea tunnels.

Its other main attraction is its unique architecture. This was done by design after a major fire at the start of the twentieth century wiped out most of the city, with its wood buildings. Fortunately, only one person died in the fire. She was a 76-year-old woman who, oddly enough, lived next to the fire station. The German Kaiser of the day made major contributions

to the city, sending 4 ships full of materials to aid in its rebuilding. It was then that the city was rebuilt out of brick stones, by a mayoral decree. The new architecture is a mix of towers, turrets and medieval-romantic frontages.

The city's islands are home to a twelfth century marble church, a historical lighthouse, and preserved Stone Age dwellings. Ornithologist flock to its nearby "bird rock", which is the largest in the country. The city is a beautiful tourist spot which still retains its "old-world" charm.

Can you name this city and country?

Last month's answer: Volendam, Netherlands

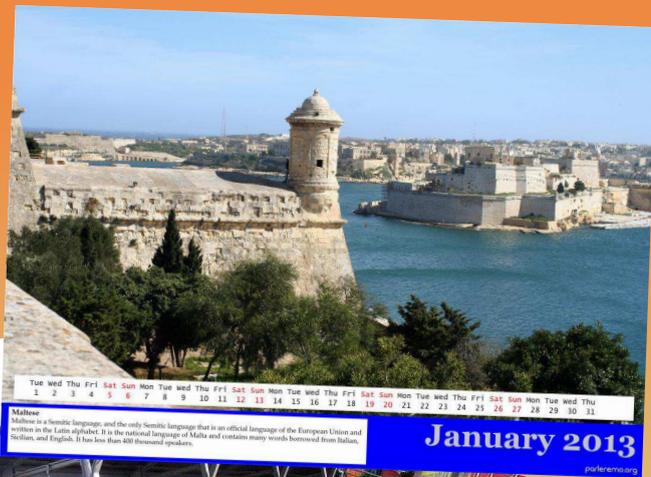


The Parleremo 2013 Calendar is now available online! This beautiful calendar is full of images from countries around the world along with descriptions of their languages.

The countries include **Malta, Finland, India, Latvia, Lao** and the languages include **Amharic, Xhosa, Kannada, Pashto and Panjabi.**



Available in both PDF format and individual images suitable for your computer desktop wallpaper!



Don't spend another day without it!



<http://www.parleremo.org/deskcalendar>



Young and in love. A couple at a Valentine's Day dance. Such dances are often organized to bring loved ones together.



Celebrations

Valentine's Day

Love! Most people around the world know that the day of love and lovers is Saint Valentine's Day, on February 14th. On this day, people express their love for special people in their lives in various ways.

But who was this Saint Valentine, and why is he so linked to love? It is common for the Christian church to set aside days to celebrate specific saints for their actions. In this case, there were at least three saints named Valentine, all martyrs (people who have died for a particular cause) and all dying on February 14th. The first was Valentine of Rome who was a priest in Rome, killed around 269 AD, and buried on the Via Flaminia. His flower crowned skull is on exhibit in the Basilica of

...it had become a common practice in England to give gifts and exchange handmade cards on Valentine's Day.

Santa Maria in Cosmedin, Rome. The second was Valentine of Terni who became a bishop then a martyr during the rule of Emperor Aurelian. He was also buried on the Via Flaminia but in a different location, and his relics are at the the Basilica of Saint

Valentine in Terni. The third Valentine was martyred in Africa, but little else is known of him.

In the official church biographies of these saints, there are no romantic attachments, and by the time anything involving romance was linked to Saint Valentine in the fourteenth century, any distinction between which Valentine was involved was lost. Saint Valentine's head was preserved and respected in the abbey of New Minster in Winchester, England, but no celebrations for him differed from any other celebration of other saints.

Legends

Historical research has most scholars believing that Saint Valentine was a priest near Rome around 270 AD, a time when the church was under persecution by the Roman Emperor Claudius II. Many priests worked to help Christians escape persecution as well as provide them with basic

sacraments (a sacred rite recognized as of particular importance and significance) such as marriage, which was outlawed during this time.

More information than that, however, becomes mixed with myth and legends. In the 6th century, a story by Passio Marii et Marthae was published telling of the martyrdom of a Saint Valentine of Rome. It states that Valentine was caught and interrogated by Emperor Claudius II personally. Claudius is said to have been impressed by Valentine and tried to convert him to Roman paganism in exchange for his life. Valentine refused, however, and instead tried to convert the emperor to Christianity. For this impunity, he was sentenced to be executed. While awaiting his execution, he supposedly performed a miracle by curing the blind daughter of his jailer. When he did this,



Painting of St. Valentine kneeling by David Teniers III



the jailer, his daughter, and forty-six other people came to believe in Jesus and were baptized. Another part of the legend is that on the night of his execution, Valentine sent the daughter a letter and signed it "from your Valentine". A further legend is that while having illegal weddings for other Christians, Valentine reportedly cut small hearts out of parchment and gave them to the persecuted Christians as a reminder of God's love.

Lupercalia

There was an archaic pagan rite associated with fertility and love called Lupercalia which was celebrated on February 13-15 until it was abolished by Pope Gelasius around 492 AD. Although there is no historical facts connecting this with Saint Valentine's day, many people do believe they are related.

Chaucer

So when and why did Saint Valentine become associated with love? The first recorded connection came from a poem by Geoffrey Chaucer in 1382 named "Parlement of Foules". The primary verse which addresses this was:

**For this was on seynt
Volantynys day
Whan euery bryd comyth there
to chese his make.**

For those whose Old English is a bit rusty, it translates to "For this was on Saint Valentine's Day, when every bird



cometh there to choose his mate."

The poem was in honor of the first anniversary of the engagement of King Richard II of England to Anne of Bohemia. The reference to Saint Valentine's day connects this celebration of love along with that of couples finding their mates. However, some scholars have pointed out that February is too early a time for birds to be mating and that the day in question might be referring instead to May 2nd, which is the celebration of Valentine of Genoa who was a



Man and woman with Valentine's Day gifts

bishop that died around 307 AD. Regardless, the connection along with the previously mentioned legends and the date of Lupercalia have all helped to solidify Saint Valentine's Day of February as a time for lovers and loved ones.

French and English literature of the fourteenth century talks about the practice of lovers using this day to exchange special love letters and tokens. In the following centuries the holiday evolved and by the 18th century, it had become a common practice in England to give gifts and exchange hand-made cards on Valentine's Day. This eventually spread to the American colonies, then to other countries.

Celebrations Around the World

In the United States of America, Valentine's Day is very popular



Shop with Valentine's Day gifts

as well as heavily commercialized. The most common tradition is to exchange cards expressing love or even the common "Valentine" which is a specialized card. A Valentine also refers to the person giving or receiving the card, so these cards normally carry the phrase "Please be my Valentine". The exchanging of valentines is very popular among children during classroom parties in their schools. Simple poetry is often exchanged as well, with the most common lines to begin it being "Roses are red, Violets are blue".

As part of the commercialization, small gifts are also exchanged. The most common of these are roses and chocolate given to women by men, but everything from stuffed animals to diamond jewelry is also given. The reference to "love" has also been expanded to include both the platonic love between friends to the intimate kind between spouses and lovers. Special dances and dinners are also organized for lovers to spend time together.

In Britain, the exchange of cards and gifts is done like in the US, but children also sing special songs related to the occasion for which they are rewarded with candy, fruit, or even money.



Valentine postcard, circa 1900-1910



Composing poetry is also done at a much greater level than in the US, especially since the first romantic poetry associated with Valentine's Day was written in Britain. The English also bake special "valentine buns" as a means of celebrating fertility.



Valentine's Day was once celebrated as an open air Spring Festival in Italy, but it hasn't been celebrated like that for centuries. Instead, it is now treated as other holidays imported from the US, like Halloween, and is celebrated mainly by young people in the same way as the US. However, it is more designated toward lovers, and so family members and friends do not normally exchange gifts.

One aspect of this holiday that Italy and Britain shared was that unmarried girls were supposed to wake up before sunrise and stand by their windows, for it was believed that the first man an unmarried girl sees on Valentine's Day would marry her within a year.

The French once had a Valentine custom called "drawing for". It involved unmarried individuals to enter houses which faced each other and calling from one window to the other, pairing off with a chosen partner. If the male was not very happy with his "drawn" valentine, he would leave her. At the end of the day, a bonfire was lit so that the rejected women could burn images of the ungrateful man and verbally abuse him aloud. Due to the amount of nastiness this custom caused, however, the French government finally banned it. In modern France, they celebrate this day by the exchange of cards and gifts as in other countries.

In Germany, the custom is that the man of an unmarried couple presents his beloved with flowers on February 14th. Gifts and messages are also exchanged, but these are not re-

stricted to Valentine's Day and can be given on any joyous occasion.

A special card is used in Denmark

called a "lover's card". Earlier versions of these were transparent and when held up to light showed the image of a lover handing his beloved a present. Now, any Valentine's Day card is called a "lover's card". Another tradition the Danish practice is the sending of pressed white flowers called Snowdrops to their friends and loved ones. Like Italy, however, Valentine's Day is generally viewed as being for the young, between the ages of 15 and 30.

In Japan, Valentine's Day is actually broken into two different dates. On February 14th, women give gifts to the boyfriends, spouses, lovers, or any many close to them. This is then rewarded on White Day, March 14th, when the men who received such gifts then pamper the women who gave them. Chocolate giving from women is a very strong custom on these days. Women give close male friends and bosses "giri-choco" but it has no romantic association. "Giri" means "obligation" and women make sure to gift all men close to them with this since it is embarrassing for a man to not receive any. For boyfriends, lovers and husbands, "hon-mei" is given. Many women even feel that it isn't true love if this chocolate is bought, so they prepare them personally. "Hon-mei" means "prospective winner", so any man receiving these feels very lucky.

The Koreans share the same tradition of splitting Valentine's Day and exchanging chocolates, with one notable exception. On the "White Day", many men con-

firm their love for the first time to their valentines. For those people that have no particular romantic partners or interests, there is a third date set aside. On April 14th, or "Black Day", these people get together and eat Jajang noodles, which are black.

One custom in Scotland is to gather an equal number of unmarried men and women and have them write their names on pieces of paper which are then placed in two hats, one for men and one for women. The women then draw the names of men and the men draw the names of women, as a means of creating couples. However, since it is very unlikely that any of these names would match correctly, if they don't, the male would go with the female that selected his name. Gifts are then given to the women, and those women pin the name of their partner to their clothes, either over the heart or on their sleeves. This is often followed by a dance and sometimes, at the end of the festival, some marriages take place.

These are just some of the ways Valentine's Day is celebrated around the world. More countries have begun to celebrate it in recent years, adopting the US and British ways of exchanging gifts and cards as well as creating their own traditions. Be sure to spend time with your loved ones this Valentine's Day! **PT**





Destination

Belarus

Explore the little known and little changed Eastern Europe outcast, Belarus, which remains free of the European Union's influence of capitalism. It is a land of friendly people and earthy humour. The landscape is one of timeless beauty with thick forests, cornflower fields and picturesque villages.

For those that prefer an active nightlife and cosmopolitan adventure, the three most popular cities to see are Minsk, Brest and Vitsebsk. They offer such sites as the Brest Fortress, two national parks, and the childhood home of painter Marc Chagall.

Leave the commonly followed paths of travel and find a whole new experience in Belarus!



[Editor's note: This article is a reprint from "Stories That Words Tell Us" By Elizabeth O'Neill. It was published in 1918, but still gives a good insight on how and why proverbs are created and used.]

Every child knows what a proverb is, though every child may not, perhaps, be able to say in its own words just what makes a proverb. A proverb has been defined as "a wise saying in a few words." At any rate, if it is not always wise, the person who first said it and the people who repeat it think it is. Most

No one can say who was the first person to use any particular proverb.

proverbs are very old, and take us back, just as we saw that words formed from the names of animals do, to the early days before the growth of large towns.

In those days life was simple, and people thought chiefly of simple things. When they thought children or young persons were going to do something foolish they gave

them good advice, and tried to teach them a little lesson from their own experience of what happened among the common things around them.

A boy or a girl who was very enthusiastic about some new thing was warned that "new brooms sweep clean." When several people were anxious to help in doing one thing, they were pushed aside (just as they are now) with the remark that "too many cooks spoil the broth." The people who use this proverb now generally know very little about broth and still less about cooking. They say it because it expresses a certain truth in a striking way; but the first person who said it knew all about cooks and kitchens, and spoke out of the fullness of her (it must have been a woman) experience.

Again, a person who is discontented with the way in which he lives and is anxious to change it is warned lest he jump "out of the

frying-pan into the fire." Again the wisdom comes from the kitchen. And we may remark that these sayings are difficult to contradict.

But there are other proverbs which contain statements about birds and animals and things connected with nature, and sometimes these seem only half true to the people who think about them. We sometimes hear it said of a person who is very quiet and does not speak much that "still waters run deep." This is true in Nature. A little shallow brook will babble along, while the surface of a deep pool will have hardly a ripple on it. But a quiet person



Just how deep are these still waters?

is not necessarily a person of great character or lofty thoughts. Some people hardly speak at all, because, as a matter of fact, they find nothing to say. They are quiet, not because they are “deep,” but because they are shallow. Still, the proverb is not altogether foolish, for when people use it about some one they generally mean that they think this particular quiet person is one with so much going on in his or her mind that there is no temptation to speak much. “Empty vessels make most sound” is another of these proverbs which is literally true, but is not always true when applied to people. A person who talks a great deal with very little to say quite deserves to have this proverb quoted about him or her. But there are some people who are great talkers just because they are so full of ideas, and to them the proverb does not apply.

Another of these nature proverbs, and one which has exasperated many a late riser, is, “The early bird catches the worm.” Many people have inquired in their turn, “And what

about the worm?” But the proverb is quite true, all the same.

Again, “A rolling stone gathers no moss” is a proverb which has been repeated over and over again with many a headshake when young people have refused to settle down, but have changed from one thing to another and roamed from place to place. And this is quite true. But we may ask, “Is it a good thing for stones to gather moss?” After all, the adventurous people sometimes win fortunes which they could never have won if they had been afraid to move about. And the adventurous people, too, win other things--knowledge and experience--which are better than money. Of course the proverb is wise to a certain degree, for mere foolish changing without any reason cannot benefit any one. But things can gather rust as well as moss by keeping still, and this is certainly not a good thing.

“Where there’s a will there’s a way.” So the old proverb says, and this is probably nearly always true, except that no one can do what is impossible. “Look

before you leap” is also good advice for impetuous people, who are apt to do a thing rashly and wonder afterwards whether they have done wisely.

The most interesting thing about proverbs to the student of words is that they are always made up of simple words such as early peoples always used. But we go on repeating them, using sometimes words which we should never choose in ordinary speech, and yet never noticing that they are old-fashioned and quaint.

It is true that there are some sayings which are so often quoted that they seem almost like proverbs. But a line of poetry or prose, however often it may be quoted, is not a proverb if it is taken from the writings of a person whom we know to have used it for the first time. These are merely quotations. No one can say who was the first person to use any particular proverb. Even so long ago as the days of the great Greek philosopher Aristotle many proverbs which are used in nearly every land to-day were ages old. Aristotle describes them as “fragments of an elder wisdom.”

Clearly, then, however true some quotations from Shakespeare and Pope and Milton may be, and however often repeated, they are not proverbs.

“A little learning is a dangerous thing.”

This line expresses a deep truth, and is as simply expressed as any proverb, but it is merely a quotation from Pope. Again,

“Fools rush in where angels fear to tread”

is true enough, and well enough expressed to bear frequent quotation, but it is not a



This is what happens when you don't keep rolling.

“fragment of elder wisdom.” It is merely Pope’s excellent way of saying that foolish people will interfere in delicate matters in which wise people would never think of meddling. Here, again, the language is not particularly simple as in proverbs, and this will help us to remember that quotations are not proverbs. There is, however, a quotation from a poem by Patrick A. Chalmers, a present-day poet, which has become as common as a proverb:--

**“What’s lost upon the round-
abouts
We pulls up on the swings.”**

[Editor: I’ve never heard this quote, but I am assuming it is similar to the proverb “What goes around, comes around”]

The fact that this is expressed simply and even ungrammatically does not, of course, turn it into a proverb.

Though many of the proverbs which are repeated in nearly all the languages of the world are without date, we know the times when a few of them were first quoted. In Greek writings we already find the half-true proverb, “Rolling stones gather no moss;” and, “There’s many a slip ’twixt the cup and the lip,” which warned the Greeks, as it still warns us, of the uncertainty of human things. We can never be sure of anything until it has actually happened. In Latin writings we find almost the same idea expressed in the familiar proverb, “A bird in hand is worth two in the bush”--a fact which no one will deny.

St. Jerome, who translated the Bible from Greek into Latin in the fourth century and wrote many wise books besides, quotes two proverbs which we know well: “It is not wise to look a gift

Netherlandish Proverbs

The cover picture is part of a 1559 painting by Pieter Bruegel the Elder. It depicts a number of Flemish proverbs that were popular during the time.



horse in the mouth,” and, “Liars must have good memories.” The first again deals, like so many of the early proverbs, with the knowledge of animals. A person who knows about horses can tell from the state of their mouths much about their age, health, and general value. But, the proverb warns us, it is neither gracious nor wise to examine too closely what is given to us freely. It may not be quite to our liking, but after all it is a present.

The proverb, “Liars must have good memories,” means, of course, that people who tell lies are liable to forget just what tale they have told on any particular occasion, and may easily contradict themselves, and so show that they have been untruthful. It is necessary, then, for such a person, unless he wishes to be found out, to remember exactly what lies he has told.

Many proverbs have remained in the English language, not so much for the wisdom they contain as for the way in which

they express it. Some are in the form of a rhyme--as, “Birds of a feather flock together,” and “East and west, home is best.” These are always favourites.

Others catch the ear because of their alliteration; that is to say, two or three of their words begin with the same letter. Examples of this are: “Look before you leap.” The proverb “A stitch in time saves nine” has something of both these attractions, though it is not exactly a rhyme. Other examples of alliteration in proverbs are: “Delays are dangerous,” “Speech is silver, silence is golden.”

A few proverbs are witty as well as wise, and these are, perhaps, the best of all, since they do not, as a rule, exasperate the people to whom they are quoted, as many proverbs are apt to do. Usually these witty proverbs are metaphors. **PT**



λ♥ (*Linguistics Love Song*)

Let me have your heart and I will give you love
 The denotation of my soul is the above
 If there's anything I lack, it's
 you as my double brackets
 You make me mean things
 I can't say enough.

Consider me your anaphor, I'm bound to you
 There's no one else that I could be referring to
 Your features all attract me
 We're such a perfect match, please
 Agree with me
 I need to be with you.

Well I don't know how to say exactly how I feel about you
 'Cos it seems my Broca's area stops working right around you
 Forgive me my disfluency –
 There's nothing I can do, you see,
 You speak to me, linguistically I'm yours.

Now I know you tend to isolate, and that's all right
 Like free morphemes you and I could lead our separate lives
 But if we were to agglutinate
 Together we would do so great
 and I'd hate to miss the words we could derive.

Well I don't know how to say exactly how I feel about you
 'Cos it seems my Broca's area stops working right around you
 Forgive me my disfluency –
 There's nothing I can do, you see,
 You speak to me, and linguistically I'm yours

So please don't be my allophone and disappear
 really awkwardly whenever I start getting near
 Let's be a minimal pair
 'Cos I'm totally cool with us both being there
 My environment is better when you're here
 My environment is better when you're here
 Yeah, my environment is better when you're here.

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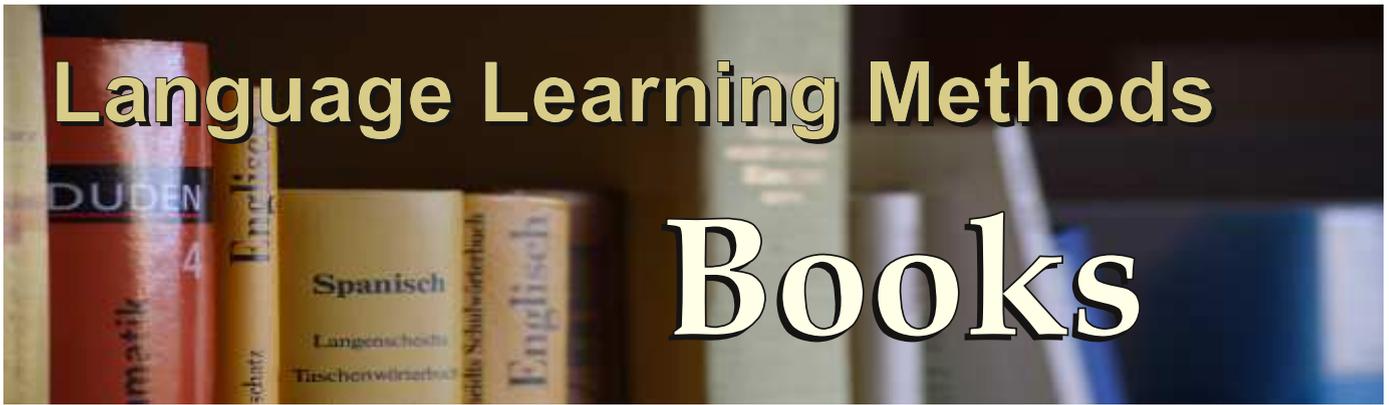
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No matter what you are using to help you in learning a language, you are most likely going to pick up a book during the process. There are a number of types of books you may use, and among those, the quality will vary greatly.

Textbooks

If you are studying by taking a course with other people or even having a personal tutor, you are probably going to be using a textbook. Textbooks are usually the most formal types of books you could use because they are designed to be used by teachers in a professional capacity. They are also usually considered to be the most boring, since it is their job to present you with the information. It is the role of the teacher to explain further what they are telling you and make it interesting.

Textbooks are broken into many lessons with each lesson divided further into rules, examples, and exercises. A teacher would go over the lesson with the students during the class, work some of the examples with them, then assign them some of the exercises to be done by the students outside the classroom. These exercises might be collected later and graded by the teacher, adding to the overall grade for each student for the language course.

Textbooks are also usually very expensive, compared to oth-

er learning books, because a student is forced to buy specific books for a course and can't choose a cheaper one. Everyone uses the same textbook for the course.

Self-study

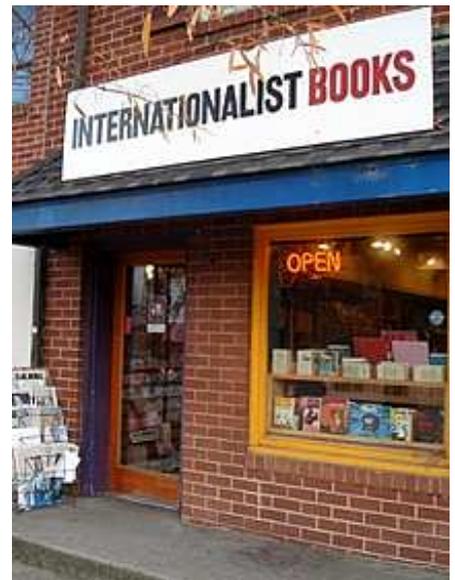
The most common kind of book used for self-study is a "teach yourself" book. These books are aimed at the individual reader and will try to make the content easy and interesting, since it now has to be both the teacher and the source of information. The method the books uses will vary between series. Some may focus on teaching by using conversations, another by using readings, and others might focus entirely on grammar as the primary format. In general, these books will offer rules, examples

While studying a language, you are most probably going to pick up some kind of book or printed material to aid you.

and exercises, like a textbook does, but in a more entertaining and informal way. We will look at a few of these common series.

Teach Yourself

One of the most common and most successful series is the *Teach Yourself* one. The name is sometimes confusing, since people refer to the entire kind of



book as "teach yourself", so the title is often shortened to "TY". These books have been around for decades. The modern variety are large paperbacks and may have accompanying grammar books and dictionaries. They may also have an audio aspect in the form of cassettes or CDs.

The common format for these lessons is to start with a conversation along with vocabulary for the newest words and phrases used in the dialogue. Some simple questions might be asked for the reader to make them think about what they read. The lesson will then give grammar explanations of some parts of the conversation, followed by another conversation or some exercises. The answers to the exercises are given in the back of the book. There may also be a reading to help the learner



practice their new vocabulary and grammar understanding.

These books are popular for their simple approach using situations backed up by grammar rules. The books also will usually contain simple line drawings to represent some things. They are a good size for travel as well, being larger than “pocket size” but not the burden of a full-sized textbook.

Made Simple Books

The *Made Simple* series is like a teach yourself / textbook hybrid. These books are paperback and textbook sized, but thinner than a normal textbook. They are titled with the name of the language, like “Italian Made Simple”, but there are *Made Simple* books for many other subjects.

The language branch of these books are similar to the *Teach Yourself* series in their method, using a conversation or reading followed by vocabulary, grammar explanations and exercises. However, they present the material flatly, without really trying to engage the reader. They could probably be considered the “lite” version of a textbook, being much cheaper, which makes them popular among students who want the textbook approach without the textbook price.

Berlitz

Berlitz is one of the big names in languages, providing products such as teach yourself books, audio courses, full classroom courses, software and phrasebooks. It is their phrasebooks which are perhaps the best known product, being both very concise as well as colourful.

The *Berlitz* self-teaching books focus more on vocabulary and phrase learning, giving only a few grammar rules and questions. They also have a small dictionary in the back. This

format is used because the *Berlitz* line of products are aimed mainly at the travel aspect of languages. They are the books you would pick up when you are planning to travel to another country and want to learn enough to get around, not necessarily to become fluent.

Living Language

The *Living Language* series is essentially a grammar guide with phrases and audio. The normal setup is to have one book being the “conversational manual”, which teaches the grammar and phrases and another book being

If you are using a grammar book as your main source of self-study, then a dictionary becomes essential.

the “common usage dictionary”. Cassettes or CDs are likely to come with these to provide the student with an audio to go along with the readings. The books also contain exercises. These books are probably the thinnest among the series discussed here, perhaps relying more on the audio to help guide the student, although one might

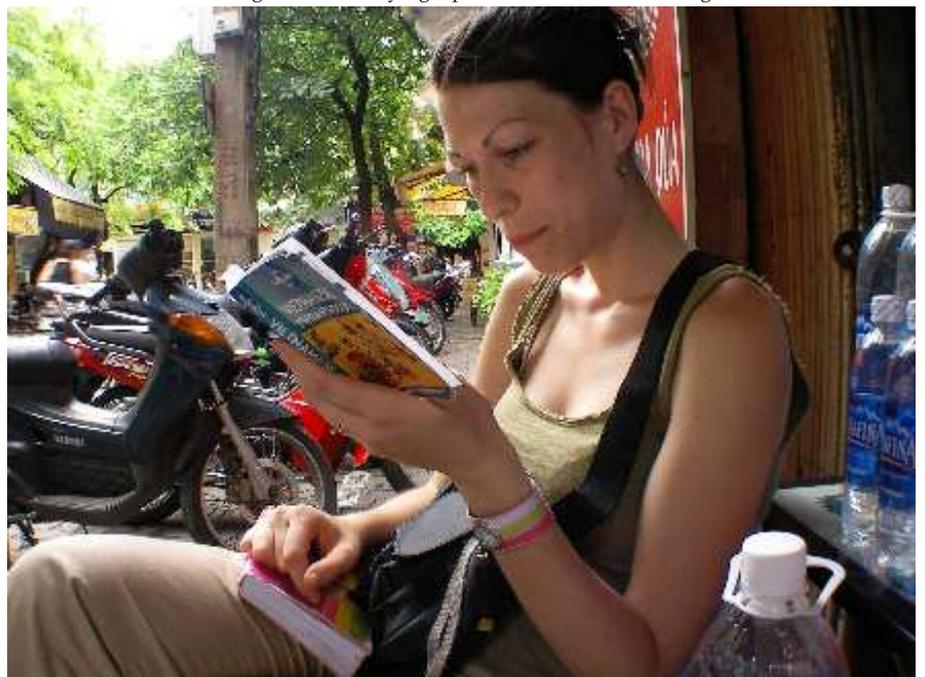
wonder which is supposed to be supplementing the other. *Living Language* also produces online courses and apps.

“Promising” Books

There is a variety of self-study books I called “promising books”. These are the kind that claim you will learn a language within a given amount of time or in a certain way. Such titles are *Hindustani in Three Months*, *German in 32 Lessons* and *Japanese in 10 Minutes A Day*. These books are promising the reader they will reach their goal (whatever that may be) within a given amount of time as long as they adhere to the methods given. The major problem with this approach is that it almost certainly will damage your self-esteem. While you may start using one of these books believing it will do just as it promises you, when you fail to master the language in the given time, you will feel like you have failed. These titles are made specifically to sell the book, not to teach you the language.

These books will use all kinds of methods of presenting the material, often claiming they

Young woman studying a phrasebook while traveling.





have found a “new” and “advanced” method that will allow you to succeed as they promise. They are also the books you are most likely to see being ridiculed in the media by expanding what is to be learned while minimizing the time given, such as “Mastering Ancient Tibetan in 39 Seconds”.

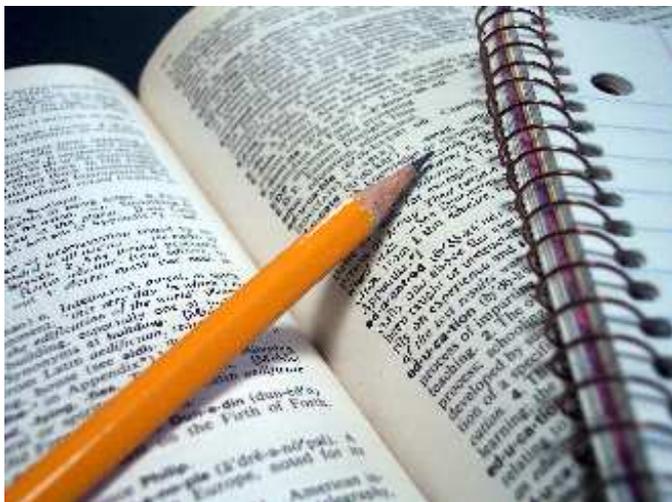
Phrasebooks

Believe it or not, phrasebooks are often used as self-study books because they present the reader with the essentials they will need for basic things while traveling as well as providing them with some pronunciation guides and vocabulary. For many, that is all they are trying to achieve in the language, not requiring full fluency. If they are going to be staying in another country for a long period of time, these books can provide the bridge to a natural immersion that they can’t get from any book

For these reasons, some of the series we mentioned above, like *Berlitz* and *Living Language*, focus much more on learning phrases than grammar. There are also a large number of books that sound like they will be self-study books but are actually basic phrasebooks, and they are often not even good phrasebooks.

Italian in a Nutshell sounds like it would be a good course book, but it is really a thin paperback which gives a pronunciation guide to the alphabet, a paragraph on sentence structure, then vocabulary and phrases for many situations. Pronunciation guides accompany all the phrases. At the end, there is some grammar, focusing mainly on forming verbs, then a short dictionary. It is pocket sized and obviously made for travellers.

Let’s Study Japanese is a basic phrasebook with simple line drawings. There is no attempt to teach you grammar or even the alphabet, since everything is romanized. It has some “exercises” which are just phrases with blanks, no answers. At the end is a very small dictionary which is ba-



Three different versions of Langenscheidt dictionaries.

sically useless.

Just Enough Serbo-Croat is little better. It is all just phrases and vocabulary lists with basic pronunciation guides. At the end are eight pages of “Notes on the language”.

Say It In Dutch is the same as the *Just Enough* books, except without the final pages of notes. Out of all of these books, only this one tells you it is a phrasebook. The others want to leave you with the impression that they will actually be teaching you something.

If you are wanting to get a phrasebook for learning or as a refresher, you are probably going to get the most out of the *Berlitz* series. They are the among the most compact and concise, providing the reader with colour coded sections, a large variety of phrases (usually having pronunciation guides) and vocabulary lists.

Grammar Books

For the really hardcore language learners (those who spend a lot of time studying various languages), a grammar book might be the best method to learn the language. These books won’t waste the readers time with long explanations and extensive dialogues. They will present the grammar of the language in a concise manner, giving perhaps a few examples. They also won’t spend any time explaining what a noun or an adjective is, or what is meant by a verb tense. These are reference books only.

Dictionaries

No matter what kind of self-study book you are going to use, a multilingual dictionary is always a book you should pick up. The best ones are divided into two parts, with one part having the words listed in the readers native language, the second with them listed in the new language, so that one can easily find the meaning of new words they encountered while also being able to find a new word they need. If you are using a grammar book as your main source of self-study, then a dictionary becomes essential.



Japanese Manga
books

Just like the teach yourself books, there are a wide variety of dictionary series to choose from. Perhaps the most popular is the *Langenscheidt* series, produced in Germany. These are very small but thick, usually with plastic covers, and the most modern ones are in a noticeable bright yellow, but you can find older ones in a variety of darker colors. They are designed for travel, although there are larger, hardcover versions.

Even if the book you use has a small dictionary in the back, the advantages of having a separate dictionary can not be overstated, as you will always encounter new words in your studying.

Readers

Some learners find that reading in their new language is the most beneficial way of picking up the grammar and vocabulary. It is closer to an immersion style of learning than most of the other books mentioned here, although there are a few course books that are also written entirely in the new language.

A learner could pick up a novel or set of short stories in their new language and try to absorb the language that way, although this is usually done when the learner has already been studying the language for a while, since otherwise it requires a lot of looking up words in a dictionary. Such a book is often called a “Reader” for obvious reasons.

Dual-Language Books

An alternative to a Reader is a Dual-Language book. As the name implies, it has the content written in two languages, either in opposite columns on each page or on opposite pages. These greatly reduces the need for looking up new words and is therefore less disruptive to the flow of reading.

These books might be collections of poetry, short stories, or entire novels. They are likely to contain some notes on particular parts of the text, for example explaining a particular idiom, since languages rarely translate word-for-word. These notes become even more important if the source text is from an older source.

Comic Books

While this may sound odd, comic books, sometimes called “graphic novels”, can be a good source of study material. First of all, they are mostly dialogue in a story setting, which makes them useful for learning speech patterns. They are, by nature, visual, which aids in explaining what is being said (there is a reason that comic books are often the first books a child reads). The nature of the stories given will also give an insight into cultural patterns and references.

The comic book format of Japanese Manga is often used to help learn Japanese. There was even a magazine called *Mangajin* during the 1990s that specifically used comics to teach Japanese.

Of courses, there are some drawbacks to using comic books. They are likely to be using many idioms and slang which may be confusing. Also, depending on the type, not all the words will be easily translatable. For example, how does one translate “web-slingers” or “kryptonite” from a superhero comic?

Magazines & Newspapers

While not really books, magazines and newspapers can be very helpful in learning a new language. They are usually straight forward in the writing, not using many idioms or slang references, and are relative to daily events. Also, since they are produced on a regular basis (newspapers normally once a day or week, magazines once a month), new content is available often. They are also very cheap to buy, if you can get them locally, as well as being very easy to find online for most major languages for free.

While studying a language, you are most probably going to pick up some kind of book or printed material to aid you. What kind of book you choose will largely be based upon your preferred method of learning as well as your time constraints and eventual fluency goals. I hope this article has helped provide you with some ideas on which will be best for you. **PT**





Sections is a mostly column about different parts of Paleremo, explaining their purpose and how to use them.

No matter what kind of self study method you use - whether it's books, audio, software or something else - the biggest obstacle is probably in checking your own speaking ability. You may be able to form all the sentence correctly and speak it out loud to yourself, but how good is your pronunciation? Will someone else be able to understand what you are saying? If not, then you might be wasting hundreds of hours training yourself to speak the wrong way. Such a thing can easily be corrected in a classroom or even a private tutoring setting when you can practice on others, but not in a self study situation.

The internet can provide some help in this. A popular thing among language learners is a voice chat. This is the process in which people can practice their speaking skills on each other and get told by others how to correct their pronunciation. Such systems can be done utilizing programs like Skype and TeamSpeak, which require the user to install some software on their computer. This method has a few problems, however. First, it requires that the two people are online at the same time and using the same system. A person with TeamSpeak software can't talk to a Skype system. Second, the interaction is most likely to be done with just one other person, since even if there are many others using the system at the same time, they won't easily be able to all correct you. Finally, once you have received a correction, how do you review what they said later?

Parleremo Recordings

With the goal of providing people with a method of practicing their vocabulary without the drawbacks of using a voice chat, the Parleremo Recordings system was created. The idea is simple: a person records themselves reading a text in the language they are studying, posts it, and people

can then give comments on the recording, rate it, and even make a recording as part of a reply.

To begin with, a person goes to the Recordings section of the site. There, they will see a list of text they can use to record. This list can go on for many pages, so they can use a language selection to filter the list to just the language they are interested in.

Once they have found a title they like, they can click on it and be taken to a recordings page. The built-in recording method currently requires Flash. If this is the first time using the system, the Flash driver might ask permission to access your microphone. Once you have allowed it access to your microphone, two buttons should appear beside the text to be recorded. The first button looks like a microphone. This button is used to start and stop a recording. When the user is ready to record, they click this button, read the text aloud into their microphone, then click the button again.

When the recording is done, two things should happen. First, the second button, which looks like a triangular arrow pointing right (a universal sign for "play") will become clickable. Second, in the column on the right of the screen there should appear a new box. This box will contain two small buttons, play and stop, which the user can use to play back their new recording. Other information such as length and size of the recording will be there, along with a close/delete button and a submit button. The user may make a small number of these recordings, then decide which is the best for posting. To submit it, they click the submit button beside the recording. If they want to delete that recording, they should press the delete button (this should be a red X). If there is a problem while making a record-



ing or saving it, the system will give the user an error message.

Now, not everyone will have Flash enabled and installed, or they might prefer to make a recording using their own software. Both of these situations are handled by allowing a user to upload their own recordings. Clicking on the text under the recording section beside the reading will open the uploading section. The user then can browse for the file on their computer and submit it. It must be in one of the allowed formats (wav, mp3, or ogg, although these might differ) and under the file size listed.

Once the user has submitted the recording, it gets stored with the others. Sometimes, there may not be a text available for a person to record in the language they want. If that is true, or they just don't like what is available, they may make a recording with their own text. This option is available on the right column of the main recording text list. Under that is also the option for a person to add their own text for everyone to make recordings with. Any text submitted for that purpose will first need to be checked over by an administrator to make sure the text is good for recording, and not something vulgar or useless. Making a recording from their own text is just the same as making a recording from given text except there is an area for the text to be entered, long with a title, language, and possible notes.

The other vital part to this system is of course allowing for people to listen to and comment on the recordings that are made. Again, the user can see a list of the recordings made by others, filtering it by language if they need to, then selecting one for review.

On the review page will first be given the title and text, so the reviewer can read what was recorded. Under that is an option to record their own version of the text. If there is something wrong or offensive with the recording, a person can also report it to an administrator.

Under the recorded text is the playback box. It has the name of the recorder and the play and stop buttons as we saw earlier. These may vary depending on the type of file the recording is in and what the reviewer has installed for playback on their browser. There is an option to also play the recording in whatever software the reviewer has installed on their computer. On the right side of the recording box will be shown a number of stars which represent the current average rating for the recordings (as given by other reviewers) as well as the length of the recording.

Below the playback box is the comment area. This contains a basic rich-text editor for typing in a comment. The reviewer can add bold, underline,

italics, strike-through and color to their comments, to help make their report (similar to the corrections section of the Journals). On the right is the option to leave a rating (1-5, 1 being lowest, 5 being highest) using stars or, if javascript is not enabled, a drop down menu.

There is also an area to record a response under the text box, enabled by clicking on the "Record a comment" text. This can be particularly useful when a reviewer wants to record how something should sound. Finally, under this feedback area is a list of other comments, if any, have been left before.

On the right side of the page is a list of some, if any, recordings that other people have made using this text. This acts as a cross reference to how others sound and what was said about them.

Once a person has used the system for a while, they may wish to track their own activities. For this, there is a "My Recordings" area. Here, a person can see their activities in different ways. They may see a list of the recordings they have made, the comments they have left for others, the comments others have left for them, and the texts they have added. Each of these is selectable from a list on the right which shows how many of each they have done. There is also a general statistics box above that to show how much they have added in total, in the last month, the last week, or the current day.

Finally, there is a large Statistics area so a user can see how many recordings and text have been made and for what languages. Selecting one of those languages will take them to a listing of those in that language.

We haven't covered all the features of the Recordings section here. There are other things of interest, such as the ability to translate text in many areas (wouldn't help if a comment is left for you that you can't understand).

As was said at the beginning, this Recordings section was built to allow users to help each other with their pronunciation skills. We hope you will find it useful in your studies. **PT**





Letter From the Editor

Writer: Erik Zidowecki

Images: Sarah G: Woman in X-ray goggles

Linear A & B - Lost Minoan

Writer: Lucy Martin

Images:

AlexKitch: Egyptian hieroglyphics

Corvax: Knossos North Entrance

Japo: Palace ruins at Knossos

koikichi: top (Crete bay)

Laplaender: People on central courtyard

Petey: Map of Crete, Arthur Evans, King Minos, Theseus Minotaur Mosaic, Linear B, Linear A tablet, Linear A cup, Model of Knossos

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Edward Sapir - Patterns of Language

Writer: Sofia Ozols

Images:

Petey: Edward Sapir, Franz Boas, Benjamin Whorf, Southern Paiutes Indian, Phonology, Columbia University, Navajo mountain

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At The Cinema - Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner

Writer: Erik Zidowecki

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- All images are copyright Digital Film Group, Vancouver, Canada and the producers of the film.

Word on the Streets - Norwegian Notables

Writer: Sofia Ozols

Images: Petey: Norwegian street, Ibsen, Hamsun, Duun

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Where Are You?

Writer: Sonja Krüger

Images: arancia: Mystery picture

Celebrations - Valentine's Day

Writer: Sonja Krüger

Images:



anitapeppers: Couple at dance
 cohdra: roses in title, rose bouquet, Heart box of chocolates
 DMoc2IV: people with gifts
 David Hawgood: UK shop with heart balloons
 Newone: Valentine's kiss
 Petey: Saint Valentine kneeling, Valentine postcard

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Languages in Peril - The Rhaeto-Romance Trio

Writer: Lucille Martin

Images:

Aconcagua: Dolomites Mountain range <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:070406-10_Sellajoch.jpg>
 Sajoch: Rhaeto-Romance languages map <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Rhaeto-Romance_languages.png>
 Gérard Janot: Ladin sign <<http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ladin.JPG>>
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Revisited - Proverbs

Writer: Elizabeth O'Neill

Images: Petey: japanese garden pond, moss on stone wall, Netherlandish Proverbs image

Sources:

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Linguistics Love Song

Writer: Christine Collins

Images:

Petey: Wikiheart
 Robert Proksa: Neverending Love Song
 Billy Alexander: Love Banner

Language Learning Methods - Books

Writer: Erik Zidowecki

Images:

fastfood: Bookshelf
 Jonathan C. Haynes: Woman reading phrasebook
 cohdra: Open dictionary
 shinjaejun: Japanese Manga Books
 clarita: News rack
 Petey: Bookstore, Langenscheidt dictionaries

Sections - Recordings

Writer: Erik Zidowecki

Images:

kpeterson: Microphone
 Petey: Woman on headset

Parleremo Advertisement

Images: Mckay Savage: India - Jaipur2 - silhouette from the Amber Fort

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Take-A-Tour

The Palace of Knossos

For long centuries, the history of the Minoan culture had been lost in the realm of Greek tradition and mythology. At the beginning of the last century, however, the history of Minoan Crete was actually pieced together and it revealed that the civilization was not one of the most advanced and important in prehistoric times. The archaeological site of Knossos, the ancient capital of the Kingdom of Minos, provides an amazing source of knowledge about this civilization.

The ancient Palace of Knossos was the origin of the legend of the labyrinth, which dates back as far as 2000 BC. The factual relevance is no less fascinating as it provided us with the linguistical mysteries of Linear A and B. The Palace was a multi-storied structure with many floors and corridors, excavated and reconstructed by Sir Arthur Evans in 1900.

Come to Heraklion, Greece for a guided tour through this political, economic and religious center of the glorious Minoan Dynasty.

