Voynich Manuscript

Holi Celebrations Throughout India
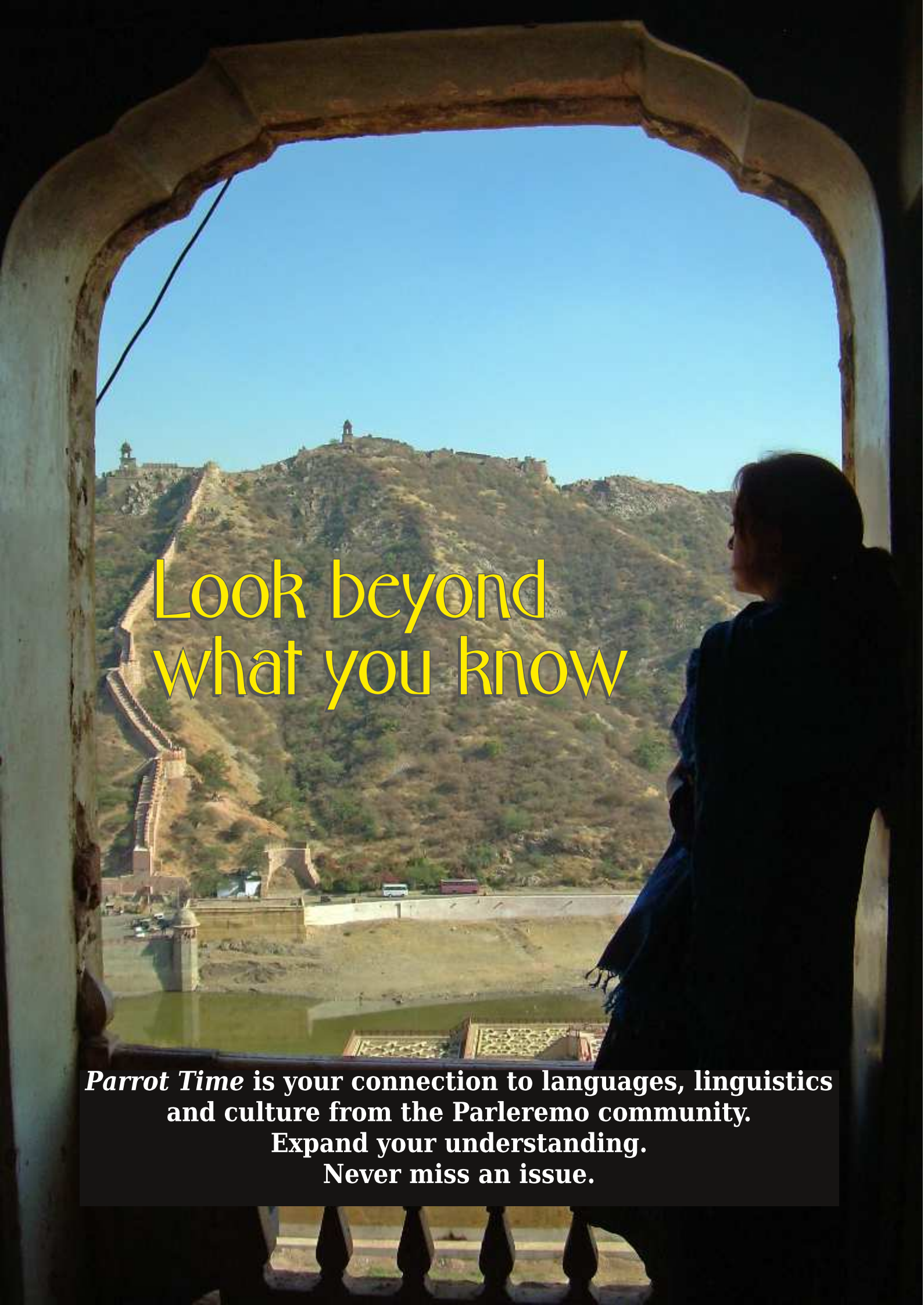
Benjamin Whorf and the Relativity of Language

Languages In Peril Kashubian, Rusyn and Silesian

Language Learning Through Classes

A Language Dream

Look beyond what you know

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Cover: Dovecote at Manoir d'Ango, near Dieppe, France. A dovecote is a structure intended to house pigeons or doves. The Manoir d'Ango was built in the 1500s by Jehan Ango and is a work of Italian architects and artists.

Features

Departments

Freaking Out

If you are reading this magazine, you probably have some interest in languages. You might be fascinated by the sounds of people speaking in a language that is unfamiliar to you. You might be intrigued by the different ways languages use grammar and phonology. It might be the mystery of how languages work and evolve that draws you. It might even be the way a language presents you with a path to another culture. I was personally drawn to languages by seeing the different writing systems, specifically Cyrillic and Mayan. To see another means of communications so completely foreign to what I knew was a true wonderment.

Whatever the reason, you have probably then also found yourself at a loss of trying to explain this obsession to others. As it is with many subjects, if a person isn't "into it", it's hard to explain the attraction. Over the years, I have heard many language lovers refer to themselves as "freaks", because that is how they felt among their non-communication obsessed associates. How many times have you had to try to explain why you want to study language X when the only response is the question of what is wrong with your native language. Isn't that good enough for you?

Some people study languages for very practical purposes. They may wish to pursue a career which deals with foreigners, in which knowing a second or third language would be a great asset. Some people start studying a language because of an interest in something cultural, like understanding Japanese Anime or watching Bollywood movies without subtitles. Some may even start it because they have met or want to meet a person they wish to be involved with romantically.

As an American, my first formal language training began in High School (age 15-18). We were expected to study a language, but the small school only offered two options: Latin or French. By now, I was already intrigued by different alphabets, but neither of these two languages really gave me that. I had started learning the Greek alphabet on my own already, so I decided to go with another ancient language. Few students chose Latin, so our classes were literally composed of just a handful of students. Despite this small turnout, our Latin teacher was always full of energy for the subject and made every class interesting. If it wasn't for him, I probably would have done as most people do when forced to take a language course: forgotten it as soon as they could and never touch it again.

I also started teaching myself Russian and was very happy to find another student who was doing the same. We would spend our study halls (class time in which we were just supposed to study anything) practising what we learned with each other. It was during this time one day when we were reciting the alphabet that we commented on the way just saying the letters sounded like new words. It was from this interchange that was born the nick I use online now: Abavagada.

We didn't get very far in our studies of Russian, and I'm afraid I have forgotten most of the Latin I learned (it's hard to find ways to apply Latin on a daily basis), but it was the start that keeps me still fascinated with languages to this day.
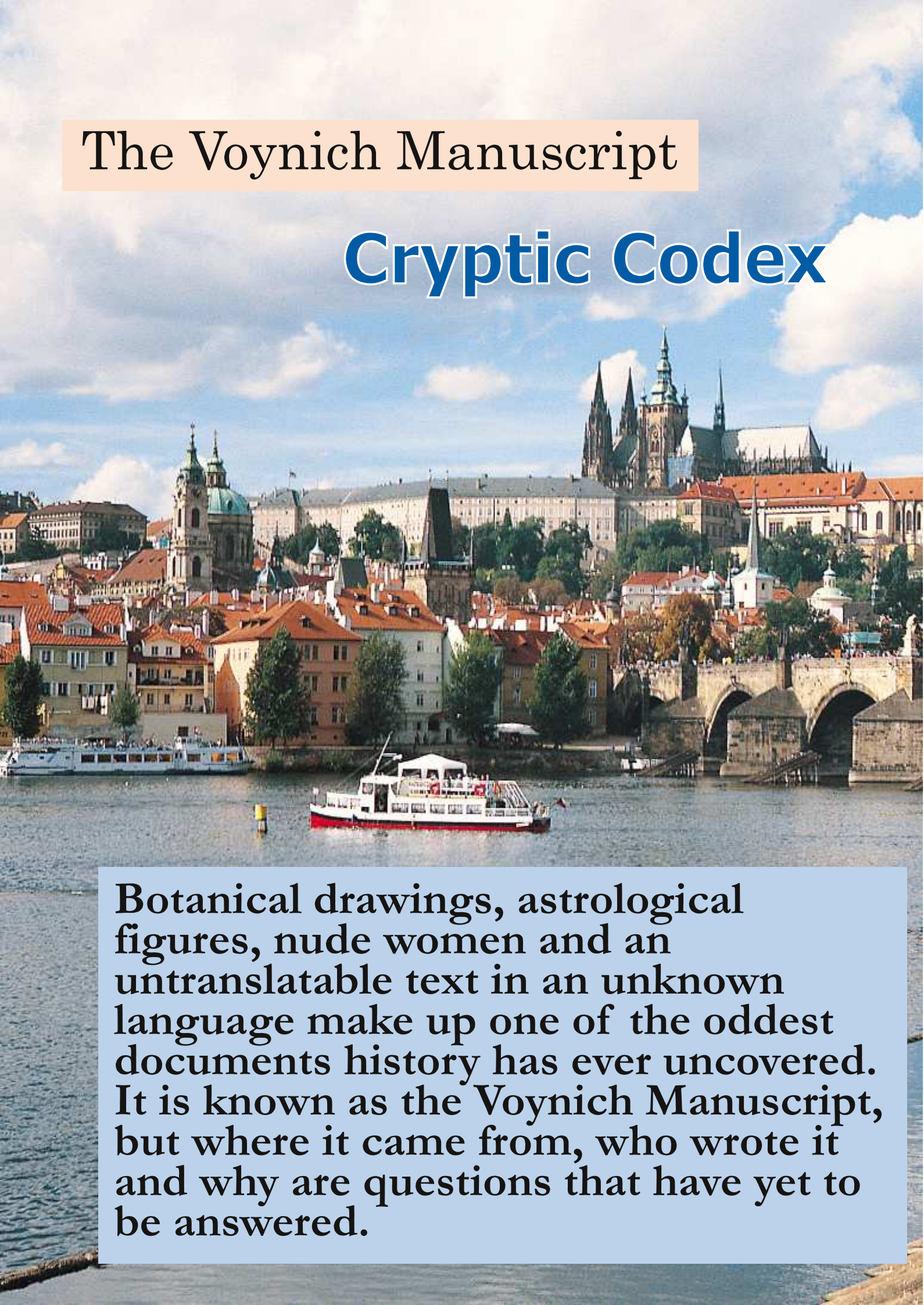
What got you interested in languages, and where do you hope to go with them? I hope you wear your title of "language freak", whether it's self-proclaimed or imposed on you by others, with pride. You have most likely earned it!

Erik Zidowecki

ERIK ZIDOWECKI
EDITOR IN CHIEF

The Voynich Manuscript

Cryptic Codex

Botanical drawings, astrological figures, nude women and an untranslatable text in an unknown language make up one of the oddest documents history has ever uncovered. It is known as the Voynich Manuscript, but where it came from, who wrote it and why are questions that have yet to be answered.

Pages of the Voynich Manuscript, with foldout, showing plants and the strange text

The exact starting place and time of this story are not completely known, so we will begin in Frascati, near Rome, in 1912. There was the Villa Mondragone. It was built in 1573, and served as a temporary residence for nobles and popes for a few centuries before being sold to Jesuit priests in 1865. The Jesuits turned it into a college, the Nobile Collegio Mondragone, for young aristocrats. In 1912, the college found itself in need of money and decided to sell, very discreetly, some of the objects it had collected over the centuries.

An American antique book dealer and collector, Wilfrid M. Voynich, took an interest and purchased a collection of thirty ancient manuscripts from the priests. Among them was a very odd manuscript, containing text in a language that Voynich had never seen before, as well as numerous coloured drawings. This curious document came to be known as the Voynich Manuscript.

Contents

Voynich could make little sense of the manuscript, so he made copies and had them sent to various experts of the time, including many well known cryptologists and scholars. They also could understand very little of it, but they did learn a few things about it.

Wilfrid Voynich

First of all, from a piece of paper which was once attached to it, they were able to determine that the manuscript was once part of the private library of Reverend Petrus Beckx S.J., a Belgian Jesuit, elected 22nd Superior-General of the Society of Jesus. There is no evidence, however, that he was the author.

The experts believe it is European and perhaps written between the 15th and 17th centuries.

As to the writing, it has been determined to be an alphabetic script, with somewhere between nineteen to twenty-eight letters, but they don't show any relationship to any English or European letter system. The text is written smoothly, indicating the author understood what he was writing, and there doesn't appear to be any corrections. There is, however, some evidence that possibly two different languages, if that is indeed what they are, were used and that it was written by more than one person. The text of the manuscript is clearly written from left to right, as can be seen because there is a slightly ragged right margin and some of the longer sections are broken into paragraphs with "bullets" on the left margin.

But the text isn't the only odd part of the manuscript. It is full of hand-drawn images, many coloured, of a variety things. Some are unidentified plants, which might relate to what seem to be herbal recipes or botanical classifications. There are mysterious charts which seem to show astronomical objects as seen through a telescope as well as some of live cells as seen through a microscope. The stranger drawings involve naked women, sometimes in bathtubs that are connected by elaborate plumbing, sometimes in charts which contain strange zodiacal signs.

The physical dimensions of the manuscript are smaller than normal modern book sizes, being just around seven by ten inches (18 x 25cms), but it is rather thick. It contains just over 240 pages, but is estimated to have originally contained 272 pages, as shown by gaps in the page numbering. Just 33 of those pages contain only text, the rest contain drawings or a combination of both text and drawings.

Possible Origins

The origins of the Voynich Manuscript are confusing and unverified. The earliest date anyone can place on it is 1586. It is believed that Emperor Rudolph II, the Holy Roman Emperor, purchased the strange book from a man who visited Rudolph's court. The Emperor was a lover of art and the occult, and so this book of strange writing and images would have immediately interested him. The man bearing the manuscript presented it with a letter which stated that it was the work of the Englishman

Emperor Rudolph II, the Holy Roman Emperor

Castle of Prague, where the manuscript was kept after the Emperor bought it

Roger Bacon, a thirteenth century English philosopher and Franciscan friar. Rudolph paid six hundred gold ducats for it, which was an amazing amount of money at that time to pay for anything as simple as an unknown manuscript.

The Emperor collected many things and among them were a menagerie of exotic animals and botanical gardens, which were housed at Prague Castle. He even had to have a northern wing added to contain his growing collections. Jakub Hořčický became administrator of the properties of the St. George's Convent in the Prague Castle in 1606. He was also the personal doctor of Emperor Rudolf II who granted him the title 'de Tepenecz'. At some point, Jakub handled the manuscript, even signing his name at the bottom

Page of the manuscript showing nude women bathing in bathtubs connected by strange plumbing

The Letter

Here is the contents of the cover letter that Johannes Marcus Marci sent along with the Voynich Manuscript to Athanasius Kircher in 1666.

REVEREND AND DISTINGUISHED SIR, FATHER IN CHRIST:

This book, bequeathed to me by an intimate friend, I destined for you, my very dear Athanasius, as soon as it came into my possession, for I was convinced it could be read by no one except yourself. The former owner of this book asked your opinion by letter, copying and sending you a portion of the book from which he believed you would be able to read the remainder, but he at that time refused to send the book itself. To its deciphering he devoted unflagging toil, as is apparent from attempts of his which I send you herewith, and he relinquished hope only with his life. But his toil was in vain, for such Sphinxes as these obey no one but their master, Kircher. Accept now this token, such as it is and long overdue though it be, of my affection for you, and burst through its bars, if there are any, with your wonted success. Dr. Raphael, tutor in the Bohemian language to Ferdinand Ill, then King of Bohemia, told me the said book had belonged to the Emperor Rudolph and that he presented to the bearer who brought him the book 600 ducats. He believed the author was Roger Bacon, the Englishman. On this point I suspend judgment; it is your place to define for us what view we should take thereon, to whose favor and kindness I unreservedly commit myself and remain,

At the command of your Reverence,
JOANNES MARCUS MARCI,
of Cronland.
PRAGUE, 19th August, 1666

of the first page. This was faintly seen, as it had been erased, but was revealed with the help of chemicals. Unfortunately, Voynich tried to find more such hidden writings on that page by chemical treatment which only succeeded in erasing Jakub's name. It can only now be seen on photocopies of the document. It is not known why Jakub would have signed it.

Sometime after this, the manuscript became property of Georg Baresch, a European alchemist and antique collector from Prague. He was also curious and puzzled about the manuscript and wanted to find someone who might be able to help him understand it. He heard of a Jesuit scholar from

the Collegio Romano, Athanasius Kircher, who had published a Coptic dictionary and worked on deciphering Egyptian hieroglyphs, so Baresch sent a copy of some script to him in 1637. After receiving no reply, he sent another letter in 1639, presenting his view that the manuscript represented 'Egyptian science'.

Kircher did not have any answers, but was interested in acquiring the book. However, Baresch refused to give it up, and it was only after Baresch's death in 1662 that more action was taken. The manuscript was inherited by Baresch's friend, Jan Marek Marci (Johannes Marcus Marci), who was then the rector of Charles University in Prague. He knew of Baresch's

letters to Kircher and sent the manuscript, along with a cover letter explaining its origins, to Kircher in 1666. It is from this letter that we know the previous history of the manuscript.

After that, nothing is known of what happened to it during a span over over two hundred years. Most likely, it was kept with the rest of Kircher's correspondences in the library of the Collegio Romano , now the Pontifical Gregorian University. In 1870, the troops of Victor Emmanuel II of Italy captured the city and annexed the Papal States. The new Italian government began confiscating many properties of the the Church, and those included the Collegio library. Many books were quickly transferred to personal libraries before this happened, so as to avoid being confiscated. This is probably how it finally came to Petrus Beckx. His "private" library was later moved to the Villa Mondragone.

Theories of Authorship

While the origins of the manuscript aren't completely clear, even less is known about the person or persons that wrote it. A number of suggestions have been given and argued about.

According to the letter from Marci to Kircher, the manuscript was originally presented to Emperor Rudolph with a cover letter explaining that the document was written by Roger Bacon. Voynich believed that was the truth, and tried for many years to confirm it. However, other scholars that studied both the manuscript and Bacon's work have said it is not possible.

If the document *had* been written by Bacon, then it is assumed that the mysterious man who presented

Roger Bacon

Rudolph with it would have been John Dee, who was known to have a large collection of Bacon's works. Dee was a mathematician and astrologer at the court of Queen Elizabeth I, and, with his assistant Edward Kelley, lived in Bohemia for several years, hoping to sell their services to Rudolph. This connection has been discounted because Dee kept highly accurate diaries of all his sales and the manuscript is never mentioned in them. Some speculate that Dee himself may have written it and attributed it to Bacon, in the hopes of selling it for a high price.

Still going with the Bacon-Dee connection, some suspect Kelley might have written it. Kelley was a bit eccentric, claiming that he could turn copper into gold, which is an alchemist's

> *Rudolph paid six hundred gold ducats for it, which was an amazing amount of money at that time to pay for anything as simple as an unknown manuscript.*

dream. He also claimed to have conversations with angels using a crystal ball, which Dee recorded. He even had a language the angel's used which became called *Enochian*. It is believed that Kelley fabricated these claims in order to fool others, including Dee, and so he may have created the Voynich Manuscript to swindle the Emperor as well. The problem with this theory is that it rests on Dee being the one who delivered the manuscript, claiming that Bacon wrote it, and *that* theory is dependent on Bacon being the author. Note too that the entire story of the man selling Rudolph the manuscript is from the letter Marci sent Kircher, and it is unknown how Marci obtained this knowledge.

Another suggestion is that

Page showing many colourful plants

Jakub Hořčický (Jakub de Tepenecz) could be the author. Not only was his signature found on the first page, but he was also a specialist in herbal medicine, which the manuscript seemed to make many references to. However, the writing in the manuscript does not match that of Jakub's signature. It is possible that he was the author and that the signature itself was added by a later owner who had also speculated that Jakub was the author. It has also been suggested that the signature was added by Voynich in order to give more credence to the Roger Bacon theory.

Even Voynich himself has been suspected numerous times of creating the the manuscript. He was an antique book dealer, and it is hypothesized that he had the knowledge to fabricate a fake, for an unknown book by Roger Bacon would have been very valuable. Experts have dated the manuscript, and found it to be much older, however, and it can't explain the letters by both Baresch and Marci to Kircher.

At this point, the ideas becomes more conspiratorial. Marci and Kircher had been friends for 27 years after meeting at the Charles University to Rome in 1638 and had ex-

Page showing women and astrological symbols

Enochian

Enochian is the name of the angel's language as recorded in the journals of John Dee and his assistant Edward Kelley, two alchemist of 16th century England. The name comes from "Enoch", the Biblical father of Methuselah, who, according to legend, had been taken on a tour of Heaven by angels, which he then wrote about in a book.

Edward Kelley

Kelley claimed to talk to the angels using a crystal ball and he dictated to Dee what they told him. Some scholars of magic believe it to be a constructed language that can be used in the working of magic. However, scholars of constructed languages believe it to be just a poor imitation of an ancient language using basic English grammar.

The journals of these two men contain a great deal written in the language, with only a little of it having English translations. Those who have studied Enochian do not consider it to have an extraordinary features. The journals also never describe the language as "Enochian". Instead, they contain references like "Angelical", the "Celestial Speech", the "Language of Angels", and a few others. The term "Enochian" was assigned to it because of Dee's own assertion that Enoch had been the last previous human to know the language.

changed letters many times. Marci had been part of a struggle by the secular side of the University to keep it from joining their rival, the Clementinum college in Prague. The two universities did merge, however, in 1654, and fell under Jesuit control. It has been thought that perhaps Marci held some further animosity toward the Jesuits and created both the manuscript and Baresch's letters, sending them to Kircher, in the hopes of discrediting him because he was a major figure among the Jesuits.

This idea is not completely unprecedented. A similar trick had already been played on Kircher by orientalist Andreas Mueller who has once sent him an unintelligible manuscript, claiming it came from Egypt. Mueller wanted Kircher to translate it, and supposedly, Kircher provided him with a translation.

It is also interesting to note that the only proof that Georg Baresch even existed is the letters from he and Marci. There isn't even a proof of ownership of a house in Prague to Baresch, although it is claimed he lived there. Also, there is no more known correspondences between Kircher and Marci after the cover

letter and manuscript were sent to Kircher. But there is no proof that Marci had any such resentment or hostility toward the Jesuits. He was a devout Catholic himself and had studied to become a Jesuit, even being granted an honorary membership in their Order shortly before his death.

Translating

When Voynich submitted the manuscript to experts for translations, many expert cryptologists thought it would be simple decode. Indeed, it appeared to be written in some kind of valid language. The text has almost two-thousand glyphs, written
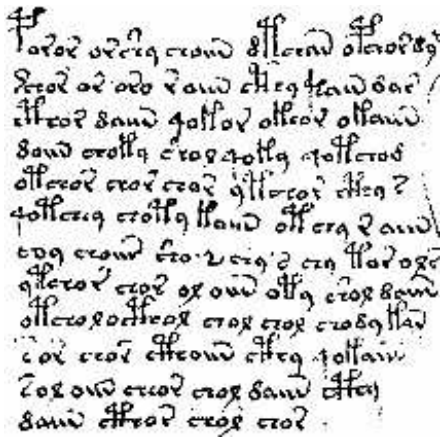
Sample of the text

with one or two strokes, but they are not all distinct, and an estimated thirty distinct glyphs could account for most of the text. Groups of these glyphs, separated by larger gaps than those between each glyphs, give the text flow. Put simply, the document clearly has letters and words. Some of the words occur more frequently than others, such as articles and conjunctions would. These words, approximately 35000, are of varying lengths and seem to follow some phonetic or orthographic laws, such as some letters must appear in each word, like vowels. Also, some letters never follow others and some may be doubled while others never are. These traits are all similar to most modern known languages and appear to follow Zipf's laws of statistical frequencies in languages. There are even words that appear on most pages as well as some words that only appear in certain sections, suggesting some kind of vocabulary specialization. In the herbal section, some words only appear only as the first word on the page, suggesting that is the name of the plant being described.

However, there are a number of orthographic oddities as well. Almost no words are more than ten letters. Similar to Arabic, some letters only ever occur at the beginning of a word, some always in the middle, and some

only at the end. This is not found in most European languages however. Some of the words are more repetitious as well, with a few appearing up to three times in a row. Even odder, some words that are only different by one letter repeat more often than normal. Despite these apparent clues, the manuscript has not been successfully translated or even linked to any other known language.

That doesn't mean that no

progress has been made. In the late 20th century, Prescott Currier made some very interesting statistical discoveries which he presented in *New Research on the Voynich Manuscript: Proceedings of a Seminar* in 1978. Among these, he showed that the manuscript is actually composed of two "languages". He called these simply A and B (sometimes referred to now as Voynich A and Voynich B). Each page was written in one of these languages, and the pages of one
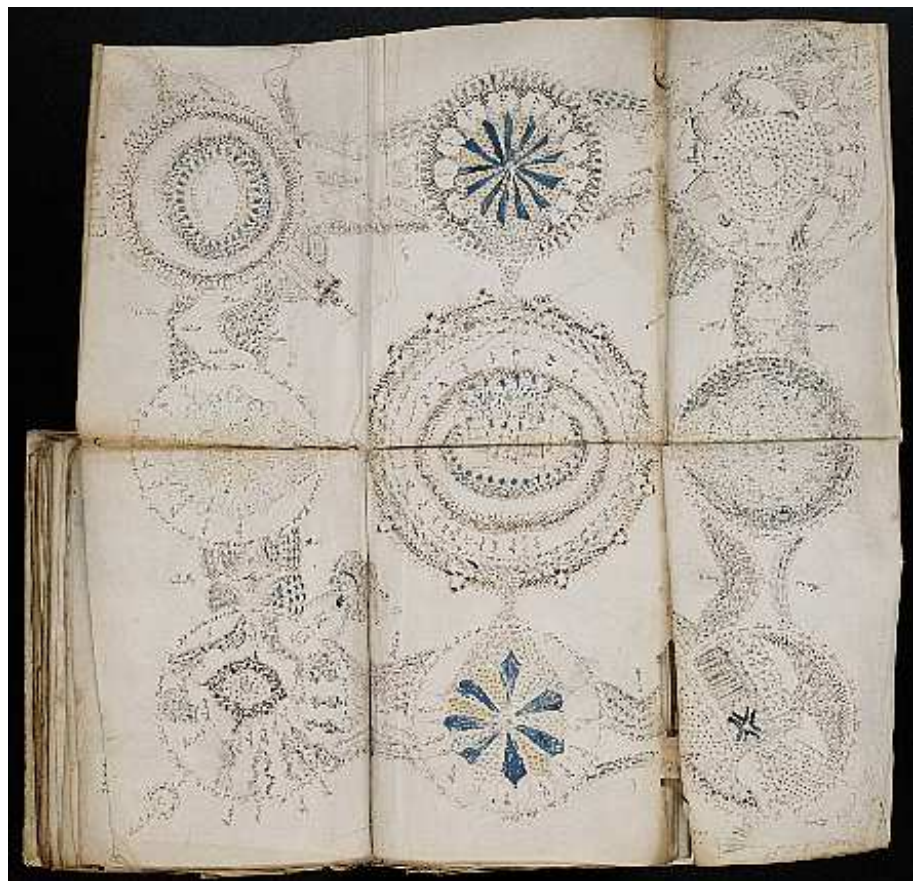
Pages with odd drawings and text written correctly, sideways, and upside-down

were grouped together with other pages containing the same language. This differed only in the herbal section. He also stated that the writing seems to have been made by more than one person, perhaps even anywhere between five and eight with distinct handwritings being used. He concluded that at least two people had written it.

Another possibility is that the manuscript is written in an artificial, or constructed, language. Two prominent cryptologists who were studying it, W. Friedman and J. Tiltman, both came to this idea independently. Although these became popular in the later part of the 20th century, there is only one known constructed language before the time of the Voynich manuscript, and that was was the "Lingua Ignota", created by Hildegarde of Bingen in the 12th century.

Still, many people believe that the manuscript is a hoax, created by one of the possible authors mentioned before for their own reasons. If Currier is correct about the idea of several people writing it, then the likelihood of it being a hoax is reduced, for it would require more people to be used in the deception. Another problem with the hoax theory relates to Zipf's laws. It is doubtful that anyone could have accidentally created a text that conformed to Zipf's laws, which were not themselves postulated until 1935. A constructed language however would follow those laws.

Today

People around the globe continue to attempt to decipher the mysterious Voynich Manuscript. Many theories and ideas are being exchanged, and a few have even claimed to have cracked the code. Edith Sherwood claims that the names of the plants are Italian anagrams written in an elaborate script, and has presented her translations for those. Dana Scott has also come up with his own analysis of the botanical images and listed what he believes the plants to be.

However, the names these two people have proposed for each plant do not match.

A Finnish businessman, Viekko Latvala, claims that he has decoded the manuscript, saying it can only be translated by someone with a "direct line to God". He also claims to be one such person. Latvala says the strange writing is actually "sonic waves and vocal syllables", and while the manuscript contains descriptions of plants, astronomy and astrology, it also contains prophecies. The text, he says, is a mix of Spanish, Italian, and other languages, used by the author because he had no language to write the direct word of God. This sounds a bit like Kelley's "language of the angels". Latvala even provides a translation of some parts, but there is no evidence that these are valid.

There are many other theories surrounding the manuscript regarding its origins, authorship, contents and translations. It doesn't appear as though we will ever know the truth behind it, however, and it is more than likely that it will remain another of history's mysterious oddities. **PT**

Villa Mondragone in Frascati, near Rome, where the manuscript was kept until Voynich purchased it in 1912

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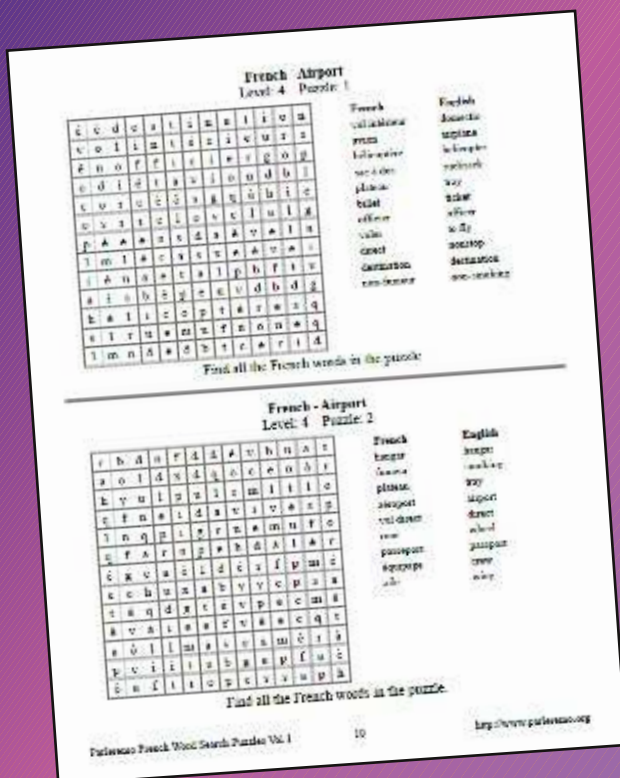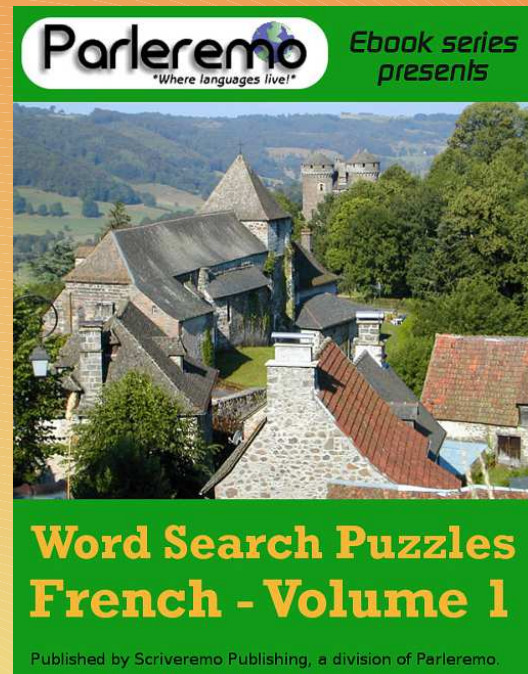
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Benjamin Whorf

Relativity of Language

Benjamin Whorf was a man with many interests, including botany, astrology, ciphers, Mexican history, Mayan Archaeology, photography and linguistics. His studies of American Indian languages helped him develop a theory of "linguistic relatively" which was eventually combined with Edward Sapir's own work to form what is commonly known as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis.
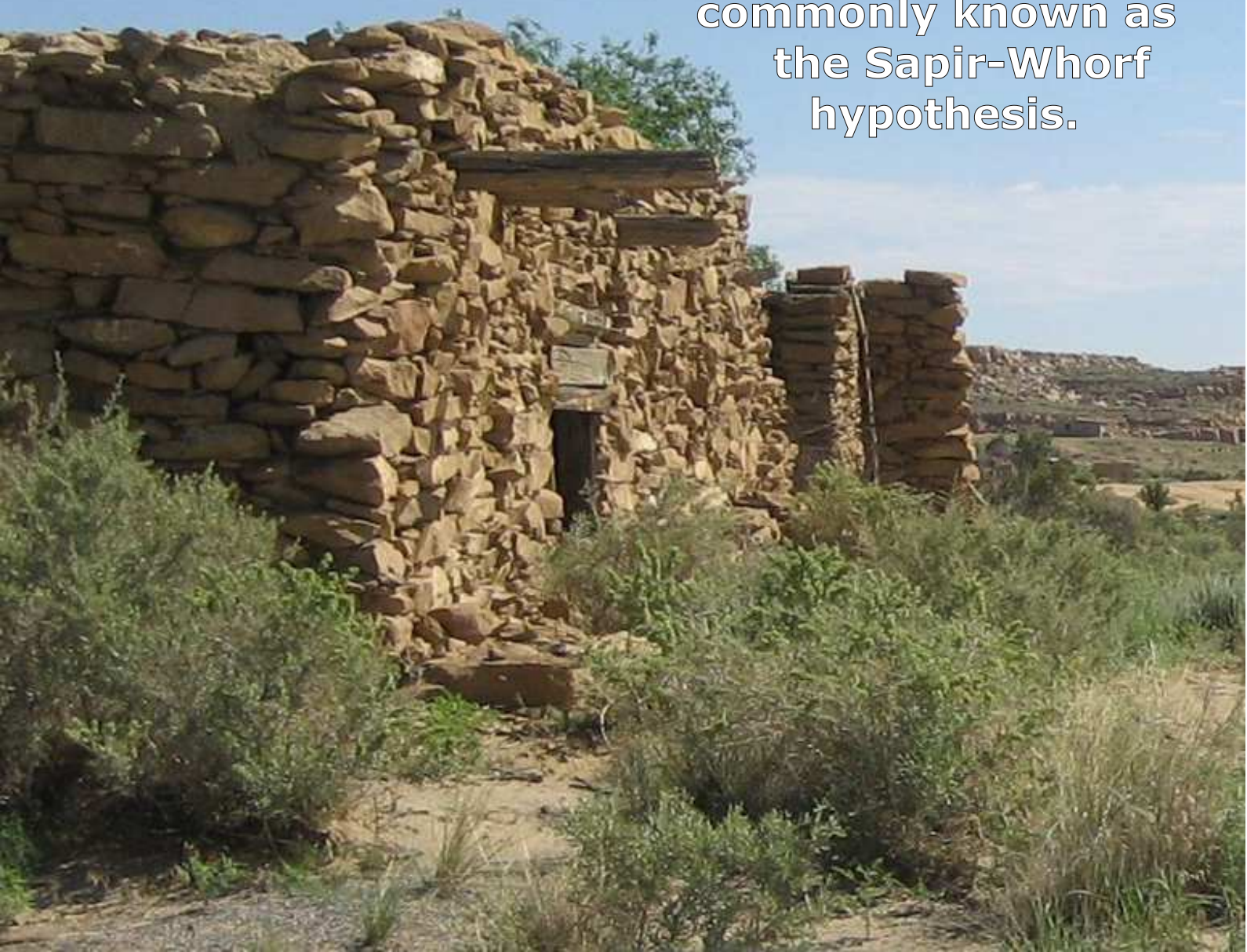
Whorf took a very unconventional approach to studying linguistics, both in the manner in which he started and the views he took. His work extended into several fields and he pursued everything with a fierce passion for intellectual answers to the world.

His Life

Benjamin Lee Whorf was born on April 24, 1897, in Winthrop, Massachusetts, the eldest of three sons of Harry and Sarah Lee Whorf. He graduated from Winthrop High School in 1914 and then received a B.S. in Chemical Engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1918. After college, Whorf joined the Hartford Fire Insurance Company as a trainee in fire prevention engineering. He settled in Hartford and in 1920, he married Celia Inez Peckham. Together, they had three children: Raymond, Robert and Celia.

Whorf got his interest in linguists in a rather unique way. Whorf was religious and while his family was Methodist, it is not quite known what his personal beliefs were. He seems to have been interested in Theosophy, a nonsectarian organization which is based on Buddhist and Hindu teachings, promoting the view of the world as an interconnected whole.

During the time, the conflict between science and religion was a major issue and Whorf thought that language might hold a key to resolving it. He became fascinated by the seemingly powerful significance of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Around 1924, he started analyzing Biblical texts in an effort to find hidden meanings. He started a semantic and grammatical analysis of Biblical Hebrew. He began to search in other languages such as Mayan for special meanings in the glyphs and letters, and from there became interested in Native American languages and learned about the effort to reconstruct the languages of the ancient Mayan and Aztec people.

Whorf began to study Biblical linguistics at the Watkinson Library, now the Hartford Public Library, which had an extensive collection of materials regarding Native American linguistics and folklore. In 1925, he started studying the Nahuatl language and in 1928 he began studying the collections of Mayan hieroglyphic texts. His interests and skills grew rapidly and, in 1928, he first presented a paper at the International Congress of Americanists which was his translation of a Nahuatl document on display at the Peabody Museum of Harvard. From there, he began to study the comparative linguistics of the newly designated Uto-Aztecan language family, as described by linguist Edward Sapir.

Mesoamericanists (one who studies the cultures and artifacts of Mesoamerica) Alfred Tozzer, the Maya archaeologist at Harvard University, and Herbert J. Spinden, of the Brooklyn Museum, were impressed by Whorf's work and encouraged him to apply for a grant with the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) to fund his research. Whorf was planning to use the money to travel to Mexico to obtain Aztec manuscripts for the Watkinson library, but Tozzer suggested instead that he spend his time in Mexico documenting modern Nahuatl dialects.

And so, in his application for the grant, Whorf proposed to establish the oligosynthetic nature of the Nahuatl language. An oligosynthetic language is one that uses very few morphemes, perhaps as a few as only a few hundred. These would combine synthetically to form statements. Whorf also presented a paper titled *Stem series in Maya* at the Linguistic Society of America conference which professed that in the Mayan languages, syllables carry symbolic content. Whorf was awarded the grant by the SSRC and, in 1930, he traveled to Mexico City. Once there, Professor Robert H Barlow connected him with several speakers of Nahuatl. This trip produced a posthumously published outline of Milpa Alta Nahuatl and an article on a series of Aztec pictograms.

By the time Whorf returned from Mexico in 1930, he had become a well known figure in Middle American linguistics. He still worked as an inspector for the Hartford Fire Insurance Company and would do so for his entire life, for it provided him with a steady income. However, he found himself still drawn into the linguistics world and, in 1931 he enrolled in a program of graduate studies at Yale. He did so for his own interest, not as a means of obtaining a degree. One of his courses was *American Indian Linguistics*, taught by Edward Sapir, and he was soon part of the the circle of Sapir's students

that included many prominent linguists of the time, such as Mary Haas, Charles F. Voegelin, Morris Swadesh, Harry Hoijer and G. L. Trager. Trager and Whorf became close friends and, at the urging of Sapir, published several articles together on the historical and descriptive linguistics of Uto-Aztecan, continuing Whorf's work on that subject.

Sapir was also a huge influence on Whorf's view of languages. While Whorf already had come to embrace the view that much of the world was interconnected, it was his time with Sapir that really guided that thought in languages. Sapir had also worked with Native American Indian

Edward Sapir

languages, which he combined with his concepts of phonology and grammar. From those, 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. Furthermore, because of a language's central place in a cul-

ture, 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 its most elusive aspects.

These ideas of Sapir worked very well with Whorf's own studies of languages and alphabets. Whorf already understood the way a person's perception of the world was altered by the language they used. An anecdote of such understanding was related to Whorf's own time working as an inspector. In this, Whorf described a work area that stored full gasoline drums in one room and the empty drums in another room. Workers would be very careful around the full drums, but not around the empty ones, even smoking in the same room as the empty drums. This, Whorf explained, was because of the label "empty" which led incorrectly to the idea that the drums were inert and thus not dangerous. However, the "empty" drums were probably more dangerous because of the flammable vapors they still held. Because of the usage of the inaccurate word and the belief behind it, the workers chose the wrong way of dealing with the reality.

Sapir urged Whorf to study the Hopi language as part of this language studies. Whorf took lessons from Ernest Naquay-ouma, who was a speaker of Hopi from Toreva village and currently living in Manhattan,

Chaco Culture National Historical Park showing remains of Indian dwellings

New York. He also traveled to the Hopi reservation in New Mexico and learned the language so well that he compiled a Hopi-English dictionary. He wrote several dozen articles in the 1930s, many of which published as the book *Language, Thought, and Reality* (1956) after his death. In his writings, he used examples from a number of Native American Languages, but the most used for the basis of his ideas was Hopi.

The reason for the main focus on Hopi is that, according to Whorf, the Hopi Indians did not think in terms of past, present, and future, which is the natural way of English and many other languages. They divided the world into what comprised of the physical universe, which he called the *manifested*, and the more abstract concepts of the future, desires, power, intelligence, thought, and life force, which he referred to as *manifesting*. This philosophy was bound up in the language itself, with verbs exhibiting concepts that would normally be represented by nouns in English.

Whorf was appointed "Honorary Research Fellow in An-

thropology" at Yale in 1936. He was also invited by Franz Boas, who was a mentor of Sapir, to serve on the committee of the Society of American Linguistics. Whorf was awarded the Sterling Fellowship by Yale in 1937 and he became the lecturer there on Anthropology from 1937 to 1938. He replaced Sapir, who had fallen ill.

Whorf himself became ill with cancer in 1938. He was also deeply affected by Sapir's death in 1939, and he wrote *The Relation of Habitual Thought And Behavior to Language* in 1939, in memory of him. This has become accredited as his most definitive work on the subject. He contin-

During the time, the conflict between science and religion was a major issue and Whorf thought that language might hold a key to resolving it.

ued publishing his ideas on linguistics in major scholarly journals and more popular journals, like the M.I.T.'s *Technology Review*. Three essays in that publication [*Science and Linguistics* (1940), *Linguistics as an Exact Science* (1940), and *Languages and Logic* (1941)] helped make his ideas more widely known.

He continued writing many essays and papers on a variety of topics, which appeared regularly in the journal *Main Current in Modern Thought*. The topics included his research on the

Hopi and Boasian anthropology. His work in linguistics was a way to create an understanding of how language worked. However, he died at the age of 44 in 1941 at his home in Wethersfield, Connecticut, before many of his theories could be proven. They have, however, provided many future linguists with help in their own studies.

Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis

After Whorf's death, his close friend Trager was appointed as the curator for his unpublished manuscripts. While Whorf had worked on many theories and areas of linguistics, his name is most commonly attached to the *Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis*. Whorf had published his own observations on how linguistic differences have consequences in human cognition and behavior, separate from Sapir. Harry Hoijer 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. Whorf referred to this concept himself as *linguistic relativity*.

Trager and Hoijer published many of the works and worked hard to popularize Whorf's ideas about linguistic relativity. It focused extensively on the way a person views and interprets the world based upon their language structure and therefore, also shaped the world according to their language. From his *Science and Linguistics* (1940):

Hopi woman dressing hair of unmarried girl

"We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native language. The categories and types that we isolate from the world of phenomena we do not find there because they stare every observer in the face; on the contrary, the world is presented in a kaleidoscope flux of impressions which has to be organized by our minds—and this means largely by the linguistic systems of our minds. We cut nature up, organize it into concepts, and ascribe significances as we do, largely because we are parties to an agreement to organize it in this way—an agreement that holds throughout our speech community and is codified in the patterns of our language. The agreement is of course, an implicit and unstated one, but its terms are absolutely obligatory; we cannot talk at all except by subscribing to the organization and classification of data that the agreement decrees. We are thus

introduced to a new principle of relativity, which holds that all observers are not led by the same physical evidence to the same picture of the universe, unless their linguistic backgrounds are similar, or can in some way be calibrated."

Hopi

Whorf's work with the Hopi language was an example of linguistic relatively. It also became the most discussed and criticized example. While Whorf claimed that the Hopi language used a different method of viewing time, linguist Ekkehart Malotki tried to prove this incorrect by giving numerous examples how the Hopi language refers to time. He stated that while the the Hopi language system of tenses was composed of a future and non-future, *manifesting* and *manifested* in Whorf's terminology, the only significant difference between the Hopi system the three-tense system of European languages was that Hopi combined the past and present into a single category.

Many viewed this analysis as proof that Whorf's ideas and his concept of linguistic relativity were false. However, others defended Whorf, arguing that Whorf wasn't claiming that Hopi lacked words or categories to describe time, but that the Hopi *concept* of time is altogether different from that of English speakers. Whorf had also described a group of stems which he called *tensors* which described aspects of temporality, but did so without referring to countable units of time.

Allophones

Whorf had also introduced the concept of the *allophone*, which is a word that describes positional phonetic variants of a single superordinate phoneme. This was also promoted by Trager and Bernard Bloch and subsequently became a standard part of linguistic structuralism. Whorf viewed allophones as another example of linguistic relativity because they describes how acoustically different sounds can be treated as reflections of a single phoneme in a language. Through this, the different sounds might appear similar to native speakers of a language. Whorf described them as "Objectively, acoustically, and physiologically the allophones of [a] phoneme may be extremely unlike, hence the impossibility of determining what is what. You always have to keep the observer in the picture. What linguistic pattern makes like is like, and what it makes unlike is unlike".

Uto-Aztecan languages

Sapir was the first to conclusively show the Uto-Aztecan as a valid language family and Whorf had worked extensively in the languages of it while in Mexico. Among his published works were *Notes on the Tübatulabal language*, *The Comparative Linguistics of Uto-Aztecan*, and a review of Kroeber's survey of Uto-Aztecan linguistics. His grammar sketch of the Milpa Alta dialect of Nahuatl, as was mentioned earlier, was not published until after his death. It was used as a basic description of modern Nahuatl, it is still considered to be technically advanced.

Part of his legacy in the In Uto-Aztecan languages is the discovery of the reason that the Nahuatl language has the phoneme [tɬ], which is not found in the other languages of the family. It had puzzled other linguists, even Sapir. Whorf published a paper in the journal of American Anthropologists in 1937 which claimed that the phoneme was a result of some of the Nahuan or Aztecan languages having undergone a sound change from the original /*t/ to [tɬ] in the position before

*/a/. This became known as "Whorf's law", although a more detailed understanding of way this occurred has since been developed.

Mayan

Remember that Whorf's earliest experience with linguistics was his study of Hebrew and Mayan. Whorf said that Mayan writing was, to an extent, phonetic, but the main authority on the Ancient Mayan culture, J.E.S Thompson rejected this notion, claiming that Mayan writing lacked any kind of phonetic component and thus couldn't be deciphered using linguistic analysis. Whorf argued back that it was the very refusal to approach it that way was what was was holding back the work on deciphering it. While Mayan writing turned out to be logo-syllabic and was deciphered in the 1950s by Yuri Knorozov, it was Whorf's idea of its phonetic nature that helped Knorozov make the breakthrough.

While Whorf never sought a degree in linguistics, his studies and publications in several areas of the field have contributed greatly to an understanding of how language worked. He may have died before many of his theories could be published or proven, but they have earned him a position among the most prominent of linguists. **PT**

Plaster cast of Seibal, Stela 10, a Mayan artifact from Seibal, Guatemala

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At the Cinema

Lost in Translation

Lost in Translation
R 101 min
Drama
3 October 2003 (USA)

Country: USA, Japan

Language: English

It is the backdrop of Japan and its culture that helps us see them go from being lost to found as they are able to adapt to it as well.

From the title itself, "Lost in Translation" sounds like a great movie about languages. It does have a few languages in it, with the story revolving around two Americans in Japan. English and Japanese are obviously involved, but there are also brief flashes of German and French in a few scenes.

Languages are the not reason I am reviewing this movie, however. The story is about Bob Harris, played by Bill Murray, and Charlotte (Scarlett Johansson). Bob is a movie star whose career is fading and he is in Japan doing an advertising campaign for Suntory whisky. Charlotte is the new wife of a photographer who is doing photo shoots in Japan and she finds herself left alone much of the time in the foreign country.

We see that both Bob and Charlotte are having trouble sleeping and seem to be walking around in a daze, not really being part of the world around them. They are lost, unsure about where they are in their lives and what they should be doing: Bob is in a loveless marriage of 25 years and Charlotte, while recently graduated from college and only married a year, has no idea what she wants in life. While they are lost in their own thoughts, the culture around them provides them with no enjoyment.

Eventually, both the characters start talking to each other, since they share the same hotel and can see that the other person seems to be as lost

as they are. When Charlotte's husband John travels to another part of Japan for a few days, leaving Charlotte alone again, she decides to go out on the town with some Japanese friends and invites Bob to join them. The two find themselves bonding during their adventures in the Japanese nightlife and as they find themselves coming to life, the culture also becomes something they enjoy.

The movie isn't about Japanese culture. It is not trying to make a statement about it, negative or positive, nor does it try to explain it. I think the movie would have worked if it had been set in any number of foreign countries, since it is acting as a metaphor for the characters own emotional confusion. They are struggling to find their place in their own lives as well as in another country. Only when they start to figure out their places through their friendship are they able to really interact with the culture around them.

Having said that, the Japanese culture and society is very much on display in the film. When Bob first arrives, exhausted, in Tokyo, he is jarred by everything from the polite business card exchanges to the automatic curtains opening in his hotel room.

One very odd scene involves a "Premium Fantasy Woman" who has been sent to his room. She tries to carry out her job of providing Bob with a role-play fantasy, shoving one of her stocking clad legs into his face and insisting that he "lip my stocking".

When he finally understands that she means "rip" and attempts to do so, she goes into some confused mix of role-playing, finally lying on the floor on her back, kicking her feet into the air, yelling. When Bob tries to help her up, she latches onto him and pulls him down, causing him to smash the lamp providing them light, plunging them into darkness. We are never told what she was trying to achieve.

The changing of "r" into "l" is done a few more times in other dialogues before Bob finally understands what is happening. Charlotte asks him why they do that, and he flippantly tells her, "For yucks. Just to mix things up". Probably not the linguistic explanation one would expect.

There is a scene early on that is a version of an old translator/interpreter joke. While Bob is doing a photo shoot, holding a glass of the whiskey he is advertising, the photographer is speaking to him loudly and forcefully in Japanese to give him directions. A female translator then tells Bob that he wants Bob to turn his head. The length of what was said and what was translated obviously confuses Bob, and he tries asking about it, but the translator just ignores him. This happens a few more times, with the photographer obviously saying much more than is being repeated. It is a direct representation of the title of the movie, showing that something is lost in the translation.

When Bob and Charlotte have their first night on the town, they get chased out of a bar by a BB-gun wielding bartender, run through a few stores, take a taxi with their friends, and finally end up singing (badly) in a Karaoke bar. In another part of the movie, they are in a restaurant trying to order for what seems to be several identical dishes on the menu, only to be served with raw meat they must cook at their table themselves. Charlotte hurts her toe at another point and Bob takes her to the hospital, where, while neither of them speak Japanese, they are able to make themselves somewhat understood.

Less hectic aspects of Japanese life are also on display. We see Charlotte traveling to a shrine where monks are chanting, then later she finds herself wandering into an ikebana event (the Japanese art of flower arrangement). She does finally become more comfortable, and is even seen tying a prayer to a tree (one of the customs).

The story is about two people struggling to find themselves in their own lives and finding a bond between each other that helps them do that, although we don't know how successful that truly is since we don't see them when they are reunited with their spouses. It is the backdrop of Japan and its culture that helps us see them go from being lost to found as they are able to adapt to it as well.

There is a funny bit of trivia regarding the title. In South American Spanish, it was translated as "Perdidos en Tokio", the Chinese title was "Mi Shi Dong Jing", and the Hebrew title in Israel was "Avudim be-Tokio", all of which mean "Lost in Tokyo", so the title itself was lost in translation, literally. These versions were at least closer than some others. In Portuguese, it became "Love is a Strange Place" and in Polish, it was "In Between Words".

The movie won a few awards, including an Oscar for best Original Screenplay and received good reviews. It also received an R rating, although this only because of a short scene in the movie that takes place in a strip club in which a woman is shown topless. I don't know why they needed her topless, because otherwise, this movie would have been rated PG-13. There is no violence, no sex besides that scene mentioned, and a minimum of swearing. There is a warning I would give, however, for those who might be offended: the opening title shot is of a woman in panties lying on a bed.

Lost in Translation is a very good movie for those that like soul-searching dramas, but it isn't for everyone. You might find it boring, or you might find it very touching and emotional. I hope you do give it chance, however: you might find something yourself.   **PT**

Languages in Peril

The Polish Connection

The Slavonic branch of the Indo-European languages have a number of well known languages, such as Polish and Russian. However, there are a few languages in that group that have struggled with being recognized as more than just dialects. Now, they even struggle for their own survival. Three of those are Kashubian, Rusyn, and Silesian.

Kashubian

Kashubian, also known as Cassubian, is a Lekhitic language, which is a group of the Slavonic family of languages. It is reported to have roughly 200,000 speakers total, with only 53,000 speakers using it daily. Most of the speakers use it as a secondary language to Polish and it is considered to be a seriously endangered language.

Kashubian gets it name from the the tribes which first spoke it, called the Kashubians. These tribes lived in the central Poland region called Pomerania, which lies on the southern coast of the Baltic Sea. Most current speakers of it live still in this region, but there are also some Kashubian speakers living in Canada.

For many years, Kashubian was viewed as a dialect of Polish, but during the 14th century, it began to be seen as a distinct language in itself. It is the closest "living" relative to Polish and, like Polish, it includes loanwords from both Low and High German, as well the Baltic languages and Russian. However, the several dialects of Kashubian are not highly mutually intelligible, such as a speaker of southern Kashubian would have considerable difficulty in understanding a speaker of the northernmost dialects.

Examples of printed Kashubian literature go back to the late 1500s. Many authors wrote in Kashubian, and that literature has been translated into English, Czech, Finnish, German, Belarusian, Slovene and, of course, Polish. A large body of Christian literature has also been translated into Kashubian, including the New Testament. The current written form of the language was developed from one introduced by Florian Ceynowa in his book *Zarés do grammatikj kasebsko-slovjnskjé mòvé* (An Outline of the Grammar of the Kashubian-Slovincian Language), published in Poznań in 1879. The alphabet used is based on the Latin alphabet with added diacritics.

After the end of communism in Poland, Kashubian began rising in status in Poland. In 2005, it was granted legal protection in Poland and became recognized as an official regional language and is the only language in Poland to achieve this status. There are a number of schools in Poland, perhaps as many as 90, that Kashubian is used in as a teaching language. Books and magazines are also published in Kashubian, and there are some radio and TV programs in it. It is even an official alternative language for local administration purposes in Gmina Sierakowice and Gmina Parchowo in Pomeranian Voivodeship. However, this may not be enough to prevent it from becoming extinct.

Rusyn

Rusyn, also called Ruthenian or Ruthene, is an East Slavic lan-

Bilingual Polish-Kashubian road sign in Poland

guage spoken by the Rusyns of Central Europe. The Rusyns are not part of just one country, however, which makes tracking the number of speakers difficult. They are one of the multiple ethnic groups of Slovakia, like the Germans, Slovaks, Hungarians

In Slovakia today, Rusyns are undergoing a revival in their culture and language.

and Romanies (Gypsies), and have never had their own country. Their current homeland is spread over the a few countries, mainly Ukraine, Slovakia, Hungary and Poland.

In Ukraine, the Rusyns live in the Transcarpathian Region. While it is often considered to be a dialect of Ukrainian in Ukraine, the dialect spoken there is referred to as Carpatho-Rusyn. It is composed of a mixture of some Eastern Slovak dialects and East Slavic features, as well as other languages such as Russian Church Slavonic, Russian and Old Ruthenian, because the Rusyns there emigrated to Bačka from Eastern Slovakia and Western Ukraine during the mid-eighteenth cen-

tury.

In Slovakia, Hungary and the Serbian province of Vojvodina, the dialect spoken is Pannonian-Rusyn. However, in Hungary, the people and language are called "Ruthene". The Polish call it "Lemko". In northern Romania, the people are called "Ruteni" and the language is called "Ruteană". It is similar to West Slavic languages, particularly Slovak, but also has East Slavic phonetics and vocabulary and it has been influenced by surrounding South Slavic languages, like Serbian and Croatian. There are also speakers of Rusyn in the USA and Canada, where it is called "Ruthenian".

While this diversity in dialects and regions has made it difficult to get an accurate count, there are approximately 1.5 million Rusyns in Europe today, and approximately 120,000 of them are in Slovakia. There have been attempts to standardise the variants of Rusyn, but they have been unsuccessful. Different orthographies have been developed, most using variants of the Cyrillic script. Meanwhile, a number of different grammatical standards exist based on regional dialects.

Most Ukrainian scholars do not recognize Rusyns as a separ-

Rusyn woman's costume from Presov

ate ethnicity, despite the fact that some Rusyn speakers consider themselves ethnically different from Ukrainians. Many Rusyns immigrated to America between 1880 and 1914. During the 1950s, the Rusyn nationality in Czecho-Slovakia was declared to be Ukrainian, but the vast majority of Rusyns refused to accept a Ukrainian identity and instead declared their nationality to be Slovak. Existing Rusyn cultural institutions were changed to Ukrainian, and the use of the Rusyn language in all official communications was ended. As a result, most Rusyn villages had only a Slovak-language school and a Slovak identity was adopted by most of the Rusyn population.

The first scholars to recognize the existence of Rusyn as a separate language were from former Institute of Slavic and Balkan Studies in Moscow (now the Institute of Slavonic Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences) in 1992. Serbia has also recognized Pannonian-Rusyn in Vojvodina as an official minority language, and since 1995, Rusyn has also been recognized as a minority language in Slovakia.

In Slovakia today, Rusyns are undergoing a revival in their culture and language. They have

Rusyn farmsted from the village of Lyuta, Beliko-Bereznyanski region

their own weekly newspaper, magazine, radio programs, art museum and dramatic theatre. Some elementary schools in towns and villages also now provide instructions to their students in the Rusyn language along with Slovak. Rusyn is listed as a protected language by the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in Slovakia, Serbia, Croatia and Romania. However, they must still struggle to overcome countless years of denationalization if they are to survive as a people and language.

Silesian

Silesian (or Upper Silesian, as there is a "Lower Silesian" in Germany, which is now called "Silesian German") is a West Slavonic language, spoken in a region called Upper Silesia which is split between the northeastern region of the Czech Republic and southwestern Poland. About 509,000 people declared Silesian as their native language in the last official census in Poland in 2011. In the combined censuses of Poland, Czech Republic and Slovakia, nearly 0.9 million people claimed Silesian nationality.

Like its language sisters of Kashubian and Rusyn, Silesian has fought hard to be recognized as a language on its own. Some Polish linguists claim it is a dialect of Polish, although studies have shown that it could only be classified as a dialect of Old Polish, and not the modern version. Others claim it is a part of the Czech language. Polish people have some trouble understanding Silesian, but they are able to, which neither proves nor disproves its status as an independent language, since Polish speakers can also understand Czech and Slovak speakers. The Silesians living in Poland mostly view themselves as a separate nation within Poland. Some in-

ternational linguists regard Silesian as a separate language.

Silesian itself has several dialects. In the Czech Republic, there are the Cieszyn Silesian, Opava Silesian, Jabłonków Silesian and Lach Silesian dialects. In Poland, there are Niemodlin Silesian, Gliwice

The Silesians living in Poland mostly view themselves as a separate nation within Poland.

Silesian, Kluczbork Silesian, Prudnik Silesian, Opole Silesian and Sulkovian Silesian dialects.

Only in the last decade has Silesian really gained ground in being recognized as a language. In July 2007, it was recognized by an ISO Joint Advisory Committee, Library of Congress, International Information Centre for Terminology and SIL International, confirming its place in the areas of technology. A few months later in September, the Polish parliament made a statement about a new law to give Silesian the official status of a regional language. In 2008, two organizations promoting Silesian language were created: Pro Lo-

quela Silesiana and Tôwarzistwo Piastowaniô Ślónskij Môwy "Danga".

One of the outcomes of these new agencies was the formation of a new alphabet. Pro Loquela Silesiana created the new alphabet to better cover the sounds of Silesian, since previous alphabets, like the Polish one, were unable to do so properly. Publishing of Silesian materials began before that, though. In 2003, the National Publishing Company of Silesia (Narodowa Oficyna Śląska) was started. It was founded by the Alliance of the People of the Silesian Nation (Związek Ludności Narodowości Śląskiej) and it prints books about Silesia and in the Silesian language.

It has also received greater usage in other media. There are now TV and radio stations, music groups, theatre performances, films and teaching teaching aids for Silesian. This is very promising for the continued survival of this language. **PT**
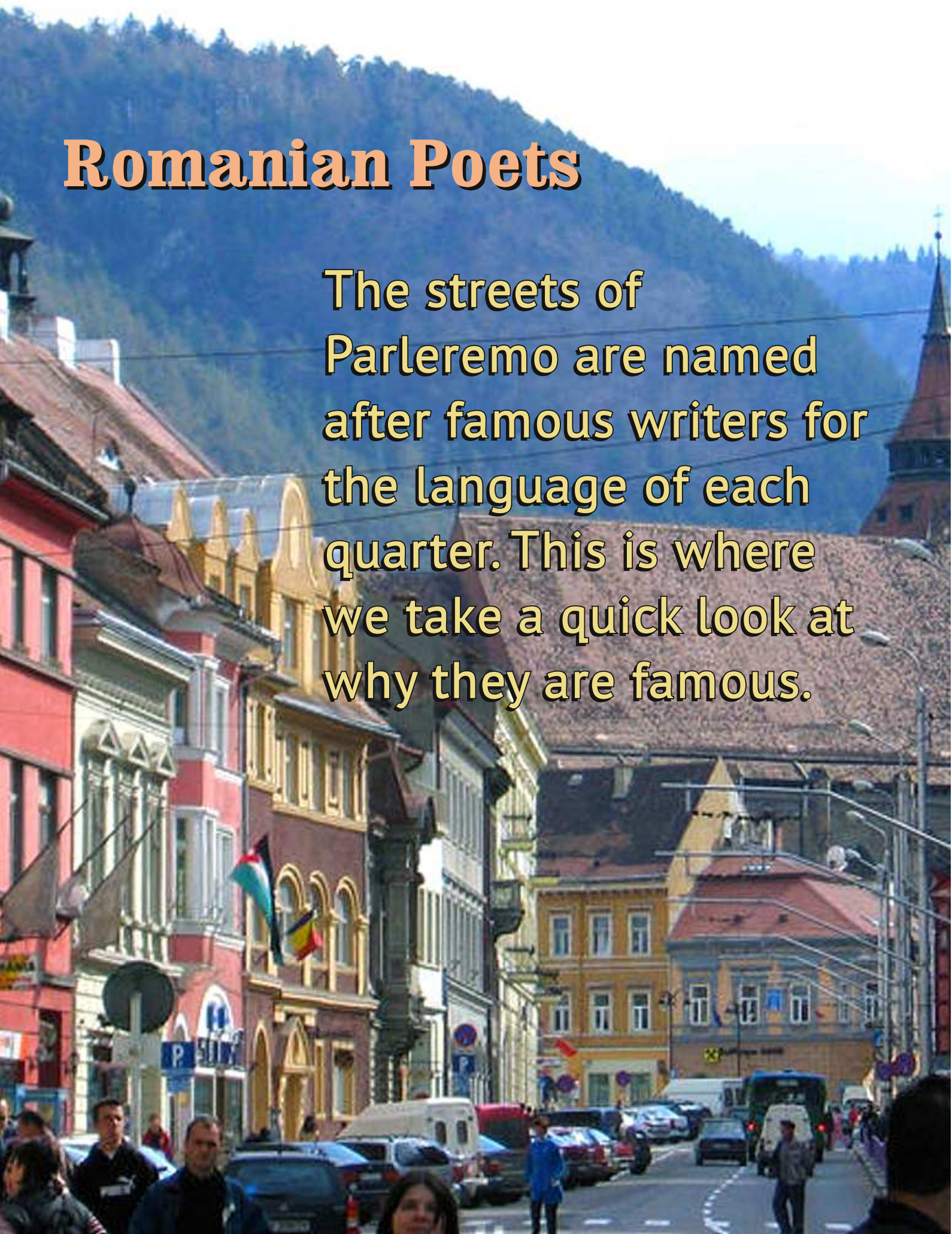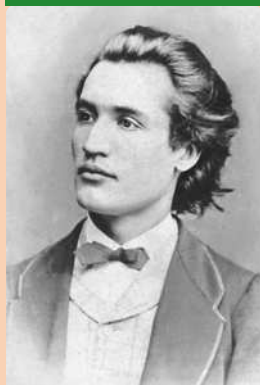
Group with Pro Loquela Silesiana banner

Word on the Streets

Romanian Poets

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.

Bulevardul Mihai Eminescu

Mihai Eminescu
15 January 1850 – 15 June 1889

Mihai Eminescu is considered the greatest Romanian poet of the 19th century, and some would say he is the best known Romanian poet of all time. He was a Romantic poet, novelist and journalist who introduced a new spirit into Romanian poetry. Drawing heavily on mystical and historical subjects, his writings glorified the Romanian past while criticising the society of contemporary Romania, both directly and through satire. But he was also a melancholy person, and much of his poetry has a feeling of sadness and impending doom.

Eminescu was born on January 15, 1850, although some records, including his own claims, have the date as December 20th, 1849. He was born in Ipateshti, near Botoshani, in the north of Moldavia. His surname was originally Emin, but this was changed to Eminovici (his farther was Gheorghe Eminovici) and finally to the Romanian *Eminescu*. The last change was chosen by publisher Iosif Vulcan when he started publishing the boy's work, for Vulcan disliked the Slavic suffix "-ici" of the young poet's last name and wanted it to be "more Romanian".

He attended school in Czernowitz, spent some time the civil service, then returned to studying in Transylvania in 1864. In January of 1866, Romanian teacher Aron Pumnul died and his students published a pamphlet, *Lăcrămioarele învăţăceilor gimnaziaşti* (Tears of the Gymnasium Students), in his memory. In this was published many pieces by the students, including the poem *La mormântul lui Aron Pumnul* (At the Grave of Aron Pumnul) by then 16 year old Eminescu. This was the start of his poetry writing.

While in Transylvania, he joined a theatrical company where he worked at the various positions of actor, prompter and stage manager for a few years. During this time, he continued to write and publish poems and worked on a novel *Geniu pustiu* (Wasted Genius).

He went to Vienna at the age of 19 in 1869 to study and remained there until 1872. There he attended many lectures, especially on philosophy, and had a very active student life. He became a contributor to *Convorbiri literare* (Literary Conversations) and, in 1870, he wrote three articles (under the pseudonym "Varro") in *Federaţiunea*, on the situation of Romanians and other minorities in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He later became a journalist for the newspaper *Albina* (The Bee). From 1872 to 1874 he was a student in Berlin, with the help of a stipend offered by Junimea, the Romanian literary society that edited *Federaţiunea*.

Thanks to his friendship with Titu Maiorescu, the leader of Junimea, Eminescu worked as the director of the Central Library in Iaşi, a substitute teacher and editor of the newspaper *Curierul de Iaşi* (The Courier of Iaşi) from 1874 to 1877. After that, he moved to Bucharest where he worked as a journalist and then editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Timpul* (The Time). He continued his own writings all through this, including *Scrisorile* and *Luceafărul.*

Eminescu fell seriously ill In June of 1883 and entered the hospital of Dr. Şuţu. During his last years, he suffered from manic-depressive psychosis, a hereditary disease of his family, and he finally died in the hospital on June 15, 1889. He was buried in Bucharest at Bellu Cemetery.

Eminescu's presence is found extensively throughout modern Romania. Statues of him are everywhere and he even appeared on the 1000-lei banknote issued in 1998 and is on the new 500-lei banknote issued in 2005. There are many schools and institutions which are named after him, and the anniversaries of both his birth and death are celebrated each year in many Romanian cities.

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- Luceafărul, 1883 [The Vesper]
- Mai am un singur dor, 1883 [I Have Yet One Desire]
- Odă (în metru antic), 1883 [Ode (in Ancient Meter]
- Şi dacă, 1883 [And if...]
- Doina, 1884
- Dorinţa, 1884 [Desire]
- Epigonii, 1884 [Epigones]
- Floare albastră, 1884 [Blue Flower]
- O, rămii, 1884 [Oh, Linger On]
- Sara pe deal, 1885 [Evening on the Hill]
- La Steaua,1886 [At Star]
- Scrisori [Letters or "Epistles-Satires"]

- Adio [Farewell]
- Atit de frageda [So delicate]
- Calin (file din poveste) [Calin (pages from a tale)]
- Ce e amorul? [What is love...]
- Ce te legeni codrule [Why do you wail, o forest trees]
- Cezara (Caesara)
- Cind amintirile [When memory]
- Craiasa din povesti [Legendary queen]
- Criticilor mei [To the critics]
- Cu maine zilele-ti adaogi... [With life's tomorrow time you grasp]
- Dalila (Scrisoarea V) [Delilah (satire v)]
- De ce nu-mi vii? [Why don't you come?]
- De cite ori, iubito [How many a time, beloved]
- De-or trece anii [Although the world]
- Departe sunt de tine [Now far i am from you]
- Despartire [Separation]
- Diana [Diana]
- Din valurile vremii [The waves of time]
- Dintre sute de catarge [Of all the ships]
- Dupa ce atita vreme [So long, dear one, since you departed]
- Egipetul [Egypt]
- Făt-Frumos din lacrimă [The Tear Drop Prince]
- Freamat de codru [The murmur of the forest]
- Geniu pustiu [Empty Genius]
- Glosa [Gloss]
- Imparat si proletar [Emperor and proletarian]
- Inger de paza [Guardian angel]
- Inger si demon [Angel and demon]
- Kamadeva [Kamadeva]
- La mijloc de codru [Midst the dense old forest stout]

Online
Some of Eminescu's works online:
http://www.romanianvoice.com/poezii/poeti/eminescu.php

- Lasa-ti lumea... [Come dear, set your world apart]
- Melancolie [Melancholy]
- Mortua est [Mortua est]
- Nu ma intelegi [You never knew my soul]
- O, mama [O, mother...]
- Oricite stele... [How many a star burns...]
- Pajul Cupidon... [Cupid]
- Pe aceeasi ulicioara... [Beats the moon upon my window]
- Pe linga plopii fara sot... [Down where the lonely poplars grow]
- Peste virfuri [O'er the woods]
- Povestea codrului [The tale of the forest]
- Revedere [Return]
- Rugaciunea unui dac [A Dacian's prayer]
- Sărmanul Dionis [Wretched Dionis]
- S-a dus amorul [Fair love, our mutual friend]
- Scrisoarea I [Satire I]
- Scrisoarea II [Satire II]
- Scrisoarea III [Satire III]
- Scrisoarea IV [Satire IV]
- Se bate miezul noptii [The brazen bells of midnight...]
- Singuratate [Solitude]
- Somnoroase pasarele [Drowsy birds]
- Sonet I [Sonnet I]
- Sonet II [Sonnet II]
- Sonet III [Sonnet III]
- Sonet IV [Sonnet IV]
- Sonet V [Sonnet V]
- Sonet VI [Sonnet VI]
- Stelele-n cer [High o'er the main]
- Strigoii [Ghosts]
- Te duci [You go]
- Venere si Madona [Venus and Madonna]

Strada Vasile Alecsandri
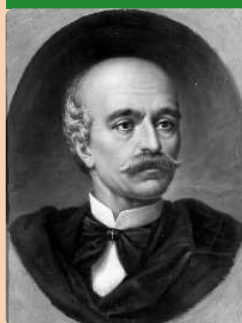
Vasile Alecsandri
21 July 1821 – 22 August 1890

Vasile Alecsandri was one of the leading Romanian poets, playwrights, political and diplomatic figures of the 19th century. His works inspired and influenced other Romanian writers during his time and long after his death. He collected Romanian folksongs and poetry and his own poetry and heroic dramas were highly successful.

Alecsandri was born in the Moldavian town of Bacău and was one of three surviving children out of seven. He was educated privately at the Victor Cuenim "pensionnat", an elite boarding school for boys in Iaşi, until the age of 13, when he was sent to Paris. There he studied law, literature and medicine. But his only true love was for literature, and he wrote his first essays in 1838 in French.

In 1839, Alecsandri returned to Iaşi and started working in the Treasury of Moldova. During this time, he published and promoted, along with several other young intellectuals, the idea of rebellion against the administration imposed by Imperial Russian authorities upon Moldova. While working with the underground, he frequently visited the Costache Negri estate, which was a center for Muntenian and Moldovan reformers.

It was there that he fell in love with the 21-year old and recently divorced Elena Negri, sister of Costache. Elena returned his affections and Alecsandri began writing love poems to her. A sudden illness forced Elena to head abroad to Venice, however, and Alecsandri met her there. They became lovers and traveled around to Austria, Germany and France before Elena's chest illness became more aggravated, forcing them to return home in 1847. Before they arrived, Elena died on the ship in Alecsandri's arms. Alecsandri was devastated, but channeled his mourning into a poem, *Steluţa* (Little Star). He also later dedicated his *Lăcrimioare* (Little Tears) collection of poems to her.

The political situation in Moldova continued to escalate and 1848, Prince Mihail Sturdza invited some of the young idealists, including Alecsandri, to a meeting to present their complaints. In response, Alecsandri co-wrote a manifesto, *Dorinţele partidei naţionale din Moldova* (Wishes of the National Party of Moldavia), for the revolutionaries, promoting the ideas of union and liberty. He also wrote his poem-manifesto *Desteptarea Romaniei* (Romania's Awakening), urging the public to join in the cause. Despite all this, the revolution failed, and Alecsandri fled to Transylvania to avoid arrest.

He continued writing his politically charged poetry and became even more of a unionist, pushing for the union of Moldavia and Wallachia. A few months later, he moved to the Hurmuzakis in Cernauti and became the secretary of the Moldovan revolutionary committee. From that position, he issued the "Proclamation of the National Party of Moldova to All Romanians,". In September, the revolutionaries sent him to Paris to be both diplomat and propagandist, informing Europe of the Romanian national cause. He was also sent to Constantinople, Hungary and Transylvania to promote the ideas, and settled in Paris.

When the liberal unionist Prince Grigore Ghica replaced Prince Mihail Sturdza in 1849, he invited Alecsandri back to Moldova and made him State Archivist. Among his nationalist and unionist activities, Alecsandri published the journal *Romania Literara* in 1855, his *Hora Unirii* in 1856, and he eventually became one of his key advisers to newly elected Alexandru Ioan Cuza in 1859.

During this time, Alecsandri also found love again with Paulina Lucasievici, the daughter of an innkeeper. They moved in together at Alecsandri's estate at Mirceşti and their daughter Maria was born in 1857. When the two Romanian provinces were finally united, he was appointed minister of External Affairs and toured the West, pleading for acknowledgement of the newly formed nation and support its emergence. However, after a few years the touring tired him and in 1860 he settled in Mirceşti. He married Paulina in 1876.

In the years between 1862 and 1875, Alecsandri was prolific and wrote 40 lyrical poems. He also tried writing epic poems and published them as a collection "Legende". He even dedicated a series of poems to the soldiers who had participated in the Romanian War of Independence. He received the award of the Romanian Academy for his drama *Despot-Vodă* in 1879 and in 1881 he wrote *Trăiască Regele* (Long Live the King), which became the national anthem of the Kingdom of Romania. Alecsandri finally died in 1890 at his estate in Mirceşti after a long battle with cancer.

Partial list of works by Vasile Alecsandri

Doine (1842-1852)
• Doina
• Strunga
• Andrii-Popa
• Baba Cloanța
• Hora
• Groza
• Cinel-cinel
• Dorul româncei
• Cântec ostășesc

Lăcrimioare [Tears]
• Steluța
• Gondoleta
• Pe mare
• Adio
• Lăcrimioare

Suvenire [Souvenirs]
• Pe un album
• Adio Moldovei

Mărgăritarele (1852-1862) [Pearls]
• Hora unirii
• Deșteptarea României
• Sentinela română
• Muntele de foc
• Înșiră te, mărgărite
• Stelele

Pasteluri (1862-187...) [Pastels]
• Miezul iernii
• Gerul
• Bradul
• Sania
• La gura sobei
• Noaptea
• Dimineața
• Fântâna

• Malul Siretului
• **Varia [Various]**
• Soarele, vântul și gerul
• Imn lui Ștefan cel Mare
• Ștefan Vodă și codru
• Ștefan și Dunărea

Legende [Legends]
• Cuza Vodă
• Dan, căpitan de plai
• Legenda rândunicăi
• Legenda ciocârliei
• Legenda lăcrimioarei

Ostașii noștri [Our soldiers]
• Peneș Curcanul
• Sergentul
• Oda ostașilor români
• Hora de la Plevna

Din periodice [Of the period]
• 15 mai 1848
• Țara

Postume [Posthumously]
• Fluierul
• Romanța de toamnă

Online
Some of Alecsandri's works online:
http://www.romanianvoice.com/poezii/poeti/alecsandri.php

Coming in April
• Find and decipher the Phaistos Disc
• Meet the Danish linguist and creator of Novial, Otto Jespersen
• Party with Brazil during Carnival
• Learn about major Kannada writers

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!

Parleremo
Where languages live!

Calendar
2013

January 2013

Maltese
Maltese is a Semitic language, and the only Semitic language that is an official language of the European Union and written in the Latin alphabet. It is the national language of Malta and contains many words borrowed from Italian, Sicilian, and English. It has less than 400 thousand speakers.

August 2013

Sinhala
Sinhala is an Indo-European language spoken in Sri Lanka. It's very close to the Maldivian language of the Maldives. Sinhala has about 15 million speakers. It's written in the Sinhala script which is based off the Brahmi writing system.

December 2013

Hindi
Hindi, sometimes called Hindustani when combined with Urdu, is an Indo-European language derived from Sanskrit, and is the official language of India. It is the fourth most spoken language in the world. Hindi uses the Devanagari script and is very close to spoken Urdu. Hindi is the language most media in India is in and it also has the biggest film industry in the world.

http://www.parleremo.org/deskcalendar

Where Are You?

This capital city dates back to pre-Roman times, and legend has it that Ulysses founded it. In those years, it was a constant battleground between three rivals: the Phoenicians, the Greeks and the Carthaginians. When the Romans began a two-century reign over it, it became the most important city in the western Iberian region.

Centuries later, the Moors took over the city, fortified it, and held out against Christian attacks for almost 400 years. Finally, however, the Christians recaptured it, and made it the capital of its home country. It rapidly developed a booming maritime and inland trade.

A famous navigator later decided to break Islam's economic power by finding a way around that region by sea, and with the help of the best sailors, map makers, ship builders and astronomers he could find, he did find a way. In 1434, one of his ships sailed beyond the greatly feared Cape Bojador on the West African coast, ending the maritime superstition that it was the end of the world. This route, along with Vasco da Gama's own expedition in 1497 which opened a sea route to India, quickly made this city into the seat of a vast empire.

However, these years as a prosperous trading center would not last long. Even with the huge amount of wealth it was amassing, the cost of maintaining its empire was far too great, and it collapsed under its own power. A few centuries later, it was dealt a crippling blow when a massive earthquake reduced the city to rubble. It was never able to recover its power after that.

Napoleon's occupation of the city started a long succession of power struggles over the region. A coup in the early 20th century brought almost four decades of authoritarian rule under a one-time finance minister. During this regime, political parties were banned and censorship, propaganda, and brute force maintained order in the country.

Finally, another revolution brought the country into the path of democracy, which it followed faithfully. It finally joined the European Union, and that inclusion helped restore a strong economy to the country. Today, this city is a thriving city with a rich cultural mix of immigrants. It continues to draw international attention as a host city for world expos and has even played host to the continent's biggest football tournament. Ulysses would be proud.

Can you name this city and country?

Last month's answer: Alesund, Norway
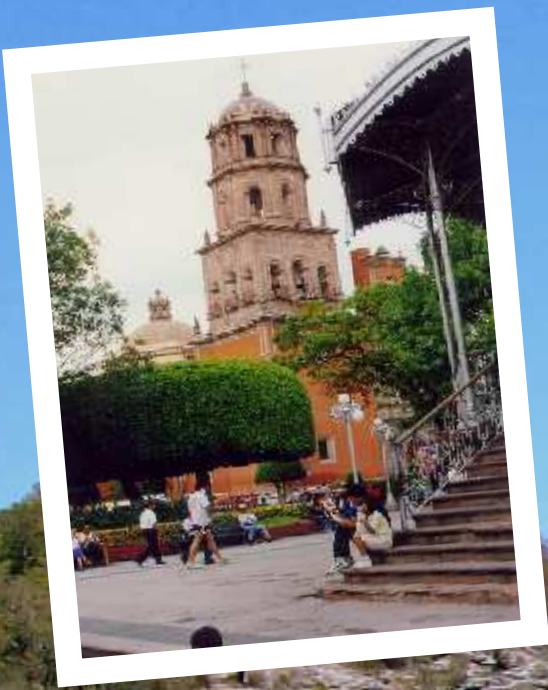
Head to Mexico for your next vacation and experience all the magic, color and warmth of this unique country!

We have a grand mix of the old and new, from ancient pyramids to soaring skyscrapers. Experience the vibrant pulse of the modern city as well as the mystery and beauty of the old world.

Mexico

Mexico will constantly surprise you with new experiences, adventures, sights and sounds.

Visit Mexico today and fall in love for a lifetime!

Holi Bonfire in front of Jagdish Temple in Udaipur. The burning is done to clense away evil and celebrate the triumph of good over evil with the burning of the evil demoness, Holika.

Celebrations

Holi

Every spring, most parts of India have a celebration to mark the end of winter called Holi (pronounced the same as English "holy"). It normally lasts two days and while it is celebrated slightly differently, according to region, the main festival involves lighting bonfires, eating rich food, and coating other people in coloured powder and liquids. During this time, the normal societal strictness is relaxed, allowing people of all age, gender, status and caste to come together in a time of excitement and fun. This year, Holi will start on Wednesday, the 27th of March and will continue for 2 days until Thursday, the 28th.

Legends

The celebration is attributed mainly to a legend about a king of demons named Hiranyakashipu. The Demon King had been granted a boon (favor or blessing) by Brahma, making him almost impossible to kill. With this power, he became arrogant, attacking both the Heavens and the Earth, demanding that people stop worshipping the Gods and praise only him instead.

However, his own son, Prahlad, disobeyed him, and continued his devotion and prayers to Lord Vishnu. This infuriated Hiranyakashipu, so he tried many times to kill his son for his insolence. Each attempt was foiled by Lord Vishnu. Finally, the Demon King turned to his Demoness sister, Holika. She had also been granted a boon which made it impossible for her to be burned by fire. Hiranyakashipu ordered Prahlad to sit on the lap of Holika while she sat on a burning pyre. Prahlad obeyed his father, but also prayed to Lord Vishnu to protect him from the fire. When the pyre was lit, it was Holika that burned instead, while Prahlad was unharmed. The boon only worked when Holika entered fire on her own. This miracle of Prahlad surviving while Holika burned is celebrated as Holi, being seen as a triumph of good over evil as well as devotion to god. Specifically,

bonfires are lit on the eve of the festival, which is called *Holika Dahan* (burning of Holika).

Another legend associated with Holi is the story of Dhundhi. She was an evil ogress who used to trouble the children of the kingdom of Prithu. She had a boon on her that made her almost invincible. However, she was also cursed by Lord Shiva, making her vulnerable to shouts and pranks by children, which eventually allowed the children she tormented to drive her away. For this reason, children play pranks during the time of Holika Dahan.

A third legend is one of love. Young Lord Krishna, who was dark of skin, was confused by how fair skinned his beloved Radha was, so his mother, Yashoda, told him to apply colour to her face. The mischievous young Krishna did just that, throwing coloured powder on her as well as others. This became a tradition among the young which eventually spread to everyone. This aspect of the celebration gives Holi the name *Festival of Colours*.

A rajah and his wife celebrating holi

Historical References

Some of the oldest depictions of Holi celebrations go back to the 16th century. A panel from that time in a temple in Hampi has a scene showing a prince and princess among maids who have large *pichkaris* (water pumps) full of water to soak the royal couple. A Mewar painting from around 1755 depicts the Maharana giving gifts to some people while a dance is happening. In the center of the scene is a tank full of coloured water.

Celebration

The way Holi is celebrated, as well as the duration, varies by region all over India. A primary part of it is the lighting of bonfires the night before the festival, which is always on a full moon, on many street corners. This is often called *Holi Paurnima* ("Holi Full Moon") and is done as a celebration of the burning of Holika as well as a means of cleansing the air of evil spirits. The next day, all shops and offices are closed. Everyone comes out of their homes and into the streets, dressed in white. During this time is the wild celebration as people run around throwing coloured powder and squirting coloured water at each other. Water balloons filled with coloured water may also be used. Some people form groups called *tolis* and move around more slowly, spreading colours and greeting others. There is also singing and dancing among the activities and eating of many sweet foods. This goes on for a few hours before everyone finally goes to the river or baths to wash themselves before relaxing for the afternoon. In most areas, Holi lasts about two days.

Many regions bring in their own ways of celebrating, extending the holiday, and even giving it other names. In Gujurat, for example another tradition is to hang a

Bonfire on Holi Dahan

pot of buttermilk high above the street. Young boys form human pyramids in attempts to reach and break it while girls try to stop them by throwing coloured water at them. The young boy that manages to break the pot

Holi party in Delhi, with crowd and a tree decorated in coloured fabrics.

is crowned the "Holi King". In some places, the women of the family will beat their brother-in-laws with their rolled up saris in mock anger while the brother-in-laws try to drench them with coloured water. In the evening, the brother-in-laws will bring them various treats.

The region of Uttar Pradesh has a number of variants. In Barsana, they have the "Lath mar Holi" ("that Holi in which people hit with sticks") before the regular Holi. For this, women chase away men and beat them with sticks while others watch, singing songs.

Kanpur extends Holi to seven days and is followed by a large fair called "Ganga Mela" to celebrate the freeing of Kanpur from British rule after the First Indian War of Independence in 1857. People from all castes, creeds, religion and societies join in. The Ganga Mela, which takes place a few days after Holi, marks an end to it with the washing in the river. On the eve of Ganga Mela, all government offices and shops remain closed so major business groups and politicians gather along the *Ghats* (steps that lead down to the water) of the River Ganga banks. The next few days are full of remembrance and worship along with various fun contests and selling of toys and other items at fair stalls.

The Kumaon region of Uttarakhand has a very unique form of Holi. Much of the celebration involves a great deal of singing songs based on classical *ragas* (melodic modes used in Indian classical music). The singers usually wear traditional white *churidar pyjama* and *kurta* while dan-

Braj Lath mar Holi in Barasana, India.

Holi Preparations

The coloured powder of Holi is called called *gulal.* In the days before Holi, merchants put out many bowls of gulal and *abeer* (or *aabir* - small crystals that are added to the gulal to make it sparkle) in many bright colours in preparation for the celebration. These powders will also be mixed with water which can be sprayed on people using hand pumps called *pichkaris* or used to fill water balloons which will be thrown. In medieval times, these powders were made by drying *tesu* flowers, which were bright red or deep orange coloured, then grinding them to dust. Today, the colour added to the powder is chemical based.

The pichkaris, which have been used since the sixteenth century, constantly come out in new styles to attract children, and many of them even become collectibles. Traditional ones looked like large syringes, but now they can be almost anything, from modern squirt guns to toy figures and come in all different sizes.

Women also spend much of the time before the festival preparing various traditional foods, like *gujiya* (a sweet dumpling made with wheat flour and stuffed with *khoya*, a thick milk food), *mathri* (a kind of flaky biscuits) , *papri* (crisp fried dough wafers), *papads* (thin, crisp crackers) and *pakoras* (fried snacks, like fritters). These are consumed along with large amounts of the intoxicating *bhang*, which is a preparation from the leaves and flowers cannabis plant, and *thandai* (a cold drink prepared with a mixture of almonds, fennel seeds, magaztari seeds).

Mathri

Papads

Papri

cing in groups.

In Bengal and Orissa, Holi is called *Dol Purnima* ("Swing Festival") and is dedicated more to Lord Krishna and Radha. On the Dol Purnima day in the early morning, the students dress up in the early morning in saffron-coloured or pure white clothes, wearing garlands of flowers, and sing and dance to the accompaniment of traditional musical instruments like the *ektara* and *veena*. Icons of Krishna and Radha are places on a richly decorated swinging palanquin and taken round the main streets of the city. Women dance around the swing and sing devotional songs while men keep spraying them with coloured water and powder. In Orissa, however, icons of Jagannath, the deity of the Jagannath Temple of Puri, replace the icons of Krishna and Radha.

While Dol Purnima focuses more on the Krishna legend, Holi in Maharashtra is mainly associated with the burning of Holika. There, Holi Paurnima is also called as *Shimga*. A week before the festival, children go around the community, collecting firewood and money. The firewood is arranged in a large pile at on the day of Holi and is lit that evening. Each household then makes an offering of a meal and dessert to the fire

Man playing an Ektara

god. Shimga is about the elimination of all evil. Unlike the Holi festivals of the north, the colour celebrations here normally take place on the day of Rangapanchami, which is five days after Holi. The festival is supposed to help people forget about rivalries and to start new, healthy relations with others.

In Manipur, Holi is celebrated for six days and is merged with the centuries-old festival of *Yaosang*. The festival starts with the burning of a thatched hut of hay and twigs while young children go around to the houses collecting money, known as *nakadeng* (or *nakatheng*), as gifts on the first two days. At night, youths perform a group folk dance, the *Thabal Chongba*, on the full moon night along with folk songs and rhythmic beats. Similar performances are done in the Krishna temples, in which devotees sing devotional songs and perform dances while wear-

ing traditional white and yellow turbans.

No matter what it's called or how it's celebrated, Holi is mainly a celebration of renewal. It is the time to start the new year, drive away bad feelings, and to celebrate with everyone around you. Formalities and in-

hibitions are dropped and a spirit of joy and love is spread throughout the community. The Festival of colour is truly a wonderful tradition for the entire country.   **PT**

Vocabulary

Holika Dahan	- Burning of Holi
Holi Paurnima	- Holi Full Moon
pichkaris	- hand-pumps
nakadeng	- collected money
ghats	- steps that lead down to the water
tolis	- group of people that travel around together
ragas	- melodic modes used in Indian classical music
gulal	- coloured powder
abeer	- small crystals added to gulal to make it sparkle
churidar pyjamas	- tightly fitting trousers worn by both men & women
kurta	- a loose shirt falling to the knees of the wearer
ektara	- one-string instrument often used in traditional music
veena	- a generic name for a string instrument

Other scenes of Holi: Shop selling colours for Holi, Old Delhi; Women preparing the Holika Dahan bonfire at Thapathali, Kathmandu. Nepal; Holi celebrations, Pushkar, Rajasthan; Girl in Holi colours.

A Language Dream

Last night I had a sort of a language dream, that is, a dream involved with language-learning or with speaking foreign languages. Dreaming in a foreign language is not uncommon among language enthusiasts, the so-called "language freaks", but this one seemed quite authentic and realistic.

At this dream I was sitting on a counter with my sister, in front of a commercial building. It was Saturday, early in the morning. I would have an appointment at the eye doctor that day and I would also visit a language school. It turned out that my appointment had been cancelled, so she and I decided to wander a bit downtown then return.

When I came back to the building, I entered the building and went to the language school, located at the second (actually middle) floor. The receptionist greeted me and I told her I was looking for some language courses or materials:

'I'm aware you're into less commercial languages such as Georgian, Aramaic, Papiamentu and Estonian, and I'm afraid I won't have much to offer you, right?'

'Yep. I can see nothing new on the shelves, anyway. Besides, what you have is quite expensive.' (At that time I took a glance at some packs of what looked like those famous language courses with tapes. One of them seemed to cost around 1,500 US$).

I turned around and stepped into what seemed to be an inner courtyard with a balcony to the left, from which I could see the central span of that building. A group of students and their teacher were sitting around a large bench that surrounded the courtyard. The teacher started talking to me in English about my progress, learning strategies and so on. He was speaking so fast that I could barely understand anything. I knew that he was Brazilian

and he was trying to speak fast, unintelligible on purpose, just to confuse me. As he realized I wasn't replying very enthusiastically, he switched to Portuguese, and he advised me to try out the courses for more commonly learned languages, as they could also help me at that stage.

I went back to the school and asked the receptionist what she could offer me. She reminded me that I had already done a few placement tests. My English should be about C1, but she was unsure as for which class should I take.

'I don't think I will take any present English courses anytime soon', I replied.

'Then you should check our French courses. Here are the results of the placement tests'.

I looked at the results sheet and I saw that most of the people were assigned to one of two textbooks. I can't recall their names.

'You see, those people will get either our upper-beginner or intermediary textbooks and classes. You, on the other hand, were assigned to a more advanced French book, the Cambriopolitain. I'm afraid I can't give you a prediction of how long it will take till a class with a minimal number of students is formed'.

I turned back, not surprised or disappointed with the standard response a self-learner gets after a placement test. What kept boggling my mind was the name of that textbook: "Cambriopolitain". What on Earth would such textbook be about? The French language as spoken in the bigger cities of France during the Cambrian geological period? Now that is what one would call an archaizing language course.

I woke up. I made sure to google for "Cambriopolitain", "Cambropolitain", "Cambrolitain" and alternate forms. No results until now. **PT**

Revisited

Words From National Character

[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 look at how we have dertived some words in English from national characters.]

There is one group of metaphorical words which is specially interesting for the stories of the past which they tell us if we examine into their meaning. Many names of ancient tribes and nations, and some names of modern peoples, have come to be used as general words; but the new meanings they have now tell us what other peoples have thought of the nations bearing these names in history.

One of the best things that can be said about a boy or a girl is that he or she is "frank," by which we mean open and straightforward. The Franks were, of course, the Teutonic tribe which conquered Gaul (the country we now call France) in the sixth century. Unlike the English when they conquered the Britons, the Franks mixed with the Gauls and the Roman population which they conquered; but for a long time the Franks were the only people who were altogether free. From this fact the word *frank* came into use, meaning "free." A "frank" person is one who speaks out freely and without restraint.

The name *Frank* has given us a word with a very pleasant meaning, but this was not the case with all the Teutonic tribes which broke in upon the Roman Empire. A person who is very uncivilized in his manners is sometimes called a "Goth." The word is often especially used to describe a person who does not appreciate pictures and books and works of art. Sometimes architects will pull down beautiful old buildings to make place for new, and the people who appreciate beautiful things describe them as "Goths." More often, perhaps, the word *Vandal* is used to describe such people. The Goths and Vandals were two of the fiercest and most barbaric of the German tribes which overran the Roman Empire from the third to the fifth century. They showed no respect for the beautiful buildings and the great works of art which were spread over the empire. They robbed and burned like savages, and in a few years destroyed many of the beautiful things which had been made with so much care and skill by the Greek and Roman artists. So deep an impression did their destructiveness make on the world of that time that their names have been handed down through sixteen centuries, and are used to-day in the unpleasant sense

Statue of barbarian king imprisoned. Notice the thick beard

of wilful destroyers of beautiful things.

The words *barbarian* and *barbarous* are used in the same way. We describe a child who behaves in a rough way as "a little barbarian," or a grown-up person without ordinary good manners as "a mere barbarian." And the word *barbarous* has an even worse meaning. It is used to describe very coarse, uncivilized behaviour; but most often it has also the sense of cruelty as well as coarseness. Thus we speak of the barbarous behaviour of the Germans in Belgium. But when the word *barbarous* was first used it meant merely "foreign."

To the Greeks there were only two classes of people—Greeks, and non-Greeks or "barbarians." The name *barbarian* meant a bearded man, and came from the Greek word *barbaros*. The Greeks were clean-shaven, and distinguished themselves from the "bearded" peoples who knew nothing of Greek civilization. The Romans conquered Greece, and learned much from its civilization. To them all who were not Greeks or Romans were "barbarians." Some Roman writers, like Cicero, use the word in the modern sense of unmannerly or even savage, but this was not a common use. St. Paul was a Roman citizen, for he belonged to Tarsus, a city in Asia Minor which had been given full Roman rights; but he was a Greek by birth, and he uses the word in the Greek way. He speaks of all men being equal according to the Christian religion, saying, "There is neither Greek nor ... barbarian, bond nor free."

The word *slave*, again, contains in itself whole chapters of European history. It comes from the word *Slav*. The Slavs are the race of people to which the Russians, Poles, and many other nations in the East of Europe belong. The Great War has been partly fought for the freedom of the small Slav nations, of which Serbia is one. The Slavs have a long history of oppression and tyranny behind them. They have been subject to stronger nations, such as the Turks, and, in Hungary, the Magyars. The first "slaves" in mediæval Europe belonged to this race, and the word "slave" is only another form of *Slav*. The word gives us an idea of the impression which the misfortunes of the Slavs made on the people of the Middle Ages.

The words *Turk* and *Tartar* have almost the opposite meaning to *slave* when they are used in a general sense. We call an unmanageable baby a "young Turk," and in this expression we have the idea of all the trouble the Turks have given the people of Europe since they swarmed in from the East in the twelfth century. The word *Turk* in this sense is now generally used amusingly to describe a troublesome child; but a grown-up person with a very quick temper or very difficult to get on with is often described also, chiefly in fun, as a "Tartar." Tartar is the

> But the original assassins were an Eastern people who believed that the murder of people of a religion other than their own was pleasing to their God.

name of the race of people to which the Turks, Cossacks, and several other peoples belong. The name by which they called themselves was *Tatar*; but Europeans changed it to *Tartar*, from the Latin word *Tartarus*, which means "hell." This gives us some idea of the impression these fierce people made on mediæval Europe—an impression which is kept in memory by the present humorous use of the word.

Depiction of a Turk in the 16th century

It is chiefly Eastern peoples whose names have passed into common words meaning fierce and cruel people. Our fairy tales are full of tales of "ogres." It is not quite certain, but it is probable that this word comes from *Hungarian*. The chief people of Hungary are the Magyars; but the first person who used the name *Hungarian* in the sense of "ogre" probably did not know this, but thought of them as Huns, or perhaps Tartars, and therefore as very fierce, cruel people. The first person who is known to have used it is Perrault, a French writer of fairy tales in the seventeenth century.

The Great War has given us another of these national names used in a new way. Many people referred to the Germans all through the war as the "Huns." The Huns were half-savage people, who in the early Middle Ages moved about in great hordes over Europe killing and burning. They were at last conquered in East and West, and finally disappeared from history. But their name re-

mained as a synonym for cruelty. The Kaiser, in an unfortunate speech, exhorted his soldiers to make themselves as terrible as Huns; and when people heard of the ill-treatment of the Belgians when their country was invaded at the beginning of the war, they said that the Germans had indeed behaved

In the Middle Ages scholars wrote in Latin, but poets and taletellers began to write in the language of the people -- the romance languages in France and Italy.

like the Huns of long ago. The name clung to them, and during the war, when people spoke of the "Huns," they generally meant the Germans, and not the fierce, half-savage little men who followed their famous chief Attila, plundering and burning through Europe about fifteen centuries ago.

Another name with a somewhat similar meaning is *assassin,* which most people would not guess to have ever been the name of a collection of people. An assassin is a person who arranges beforehand to take some one by surprise and kill him. But the original assassins were an Eastern people who believed

Painting "Arabs Drinking Coffee in Front of a Tent"

that the murder of people of a religion other than their own was pleasing to their God. The Arabs first called this sect by the name *hashshash*, which the scholars of the Middle Ages translated into the Latin *assassinus.* The Arab name was given because these people were great eaters of "hashish" or dry herbs.

The name *Arab* itself has come to be used with a special meaning which has nothing to do with the people whose name it is. A rough little boy who spends most of his time in the streets is described as a "street Arab," and this comes from the fact that we think of the Arabs as a wandering people. The "street Arab" is a wanderer also, of another sort.

Another name of a wandering people has also come to have a special meaning in English. The French word for gipsy is *bohemien,* and from this we have the English word *Bohemian.* When we say a person is "a Bohemian," we mean that he lives in the way he really likes, and does not care whether other people think he is quite respectable or not. It was the novelist Thackeray who first used the word *Bohemian* in this sense.

Bohemia is, of course, the name of a country in Germany, but it is also used figuratively to describe the region or community in which "Bohemian" or unconventional people live.

The word *gipsy* itself is used to describe a very dark person, or almost any kind of people travelling round the country in caravans. But *gipsy* really means "Egyptian." When the real gipsies first appeared in England, in the sixteenth century, people thought they came

Painting of a Bohemian woman

from Egypt, and so gave them this name.

Another name often given to very dark people is *blackamoor*, a name by which negroes are sometimes described. This really means "Black Moor," and shows us how confused the people who first used the word were about different races of people. The Moors were a quite different people from the negroes, being related to the Arabs. But to some people every one who is not white is a "nigger." *Nigger* comes, of course, from *negro.*

The Moors inhabited a part of North-west Africa. It was also a North African people, the Algerians, who gave us the word *Zouave.* Every one has seen since the Great War began pictures of the handsome and quaintly-dressed French soldiers called "Zouaves." Perhaps some children wondered why they wore such a strange Eastern dress. It is because the Zouave regiments, which are now chiefly composed of Frenchmen, were originally formed from an Algerian mountain tribe called the Zouaves—Algeria being a French possession. The name is almost forgotten as that of a foreign

tribe, but has become instead the name of these light infantry French regiments.

The name of the most famous of Eastern nations now spread all over the world, the Jews, has become a term of reproach. For hundreds of years after the spread of Christianity over Europe the Jews were looked upon as a wicked and hateful people. In many countries they were not allowed to live at all; in others a portion of the towns was set apart for them, and they were allowed to live there because they were useful as money-lenders.

Naturally the Jews, persecuted and distrusted, made as much profit as they could out of the people who treated them in this way. Perhaps with the growth of their wealth they grew to love money for its own sake. In any case, before long the Jews were looked upon as people who were decidedly ungenerous in the matter of money. Everybody knows the story of the Jew Shylock in Shakespeare's great play "The Merchant of Venice." Nowadays a person who is not really a Jew is often described contemptuously as a "Jew" if he shows himself mean in money matters; and some people even use a slang expression, "to jew," meaning to cheat or be very mean over a money affair.

Another name of a nation which stands for dishonesty of another sort (and much more excusable) is *Gascon.* The Gascons are the natives of Gascony, a province in the south of France. It is proverbial among other Frenchmen that the Gascons are always boasting, and even in English we sometimes use the word *Gascon* to describe a great boaster, while *gasconade* is now a common term for a boastful story.

Another word which we use to describe this sort of thing is *romance.* We often hear the ex-

pression, "Oh, he is only romancing," by which we mean that a person is saying what is not true, inventing harmless details to improve his story. The word *romance* has now many meanings, generally containing the idea of *imagination.* A person is called "romantic" when he or she is full of imaginings of great deeds and events. Or we say a person is a "romantic figure" when we mean that from his looks or speech, or from some other qualities, he seems fit for adventures.

But *romance*, from which we get romantic, was at first merely an adjective used to describe the languages which are descended from the Latin language, like French, Italian, and Spanish. In the Middle Ages scholars wrote in Latin, but poets and tale-tellers began to write in the language of the people—the *romance* languages in France and Italy. The tales of adventure and things which we should now call "romantic" were written in the "romance" languages; and from being used to describe the language, the word came to be used to describe the kind of story contained in these poems and tales. Gradually the words *romantic* and *romance* got the meaning which they have to-day.

We have seen in another chapter that we have a number of words taken from the names of persons in ancient history. We have also a modern and special use of words formed from the names of some of the ancient nations. We saw that we use the word *Spartan* to describe any very severe discipline, or a person who willingly uses such discipline for himself.

There are several other such names used in a more or less complimentary way. We speak of "Roman" firmness, and every one who has read Roman history will agree that this is a good use of the word. On the other hand,

we have the expression "Punic faith" to describe treachery. The Romans had had many reasons for mistrusting their great enemy, the Carthaginians, and they used this expression, *Fides Punica*, which we have simply borrowed from the Latin.

We use the expression "Attic (or Athenian) salt" to describe a very refined wit or humour. The Romans used the word *sal*, or "salt," in this sense of *wit*, and their expression *sal Atticum* shows the high opinion they had of the Athenians, from whom, indeed, they learned much in art and in literature. It is this same expression which we use to-day, having borrowed and translated it also from the Latin.

We speak of a "Parthian shot" when some one finishes a conversation or an argument with a sharp or witty remark, leaving no chance for an answer. This expression comes from the story of the Parthians, a people who lived on the shores of the Caspian Sea, and were famous as good archers among the ancient nations.

The way in which the names of nations and peoples have taken on more general meanings gives us many glimpses into history.   **PT**

Statue of a Japanese ogre

Language Learning Methods

Classes

While in this column we have talked about methods of learning languages through self-study, the most popular means of learning is probably still by attending classes. Schools all over the world offer classes in at least one language to students. In many schools, taking such a class is even mandatory.

These kinds of classes are done with many other students learning together at the same time. A teacher presents the students with the material and helps them master the basics of the language. Textbooks are usually the primary source of the materials, but with the expansion of language media types, students can now make use of audio, videos, magazines and newspapers, and even computers.

A version of this media usage isn't entirely new. Language

A basic language lab for teaching English in the Middle-East.

labs have been used for over a century in some schools, the first appearing in the University of Grenoble, France in 1908. Essentially they are classrooms with each seat having direct access to media equipment to aid the students in learning. Some may even be so advanced as to be separate sound booths, closing out the noises of the other students. From the 1950s to the 1990s, these were mostly tape or cassette based systems, but they are more likely to be using multimedia computers now.

Taking classes means showing up regularly for a fixed amount of time to receive instructions from the teacher, review what was learned, and practise with other students. This is one of the few approaches that offers a regular direct, face-to-face interaction with other learners. This is a huge asset, as it allows the students to truly use the language to its fullest extent. They are able to practise speaking and listening in real time as well as formation and comprehension. This differs from the more passive methods of books and audio which only allow a person to utilize one means of input.

A teacher explaining some grammar details to a class

Learning by audio can only truly improve your listening skills, while books can only improve your reading. You have no feedback from a person to help correct your progress. Even when using a more interactive ap-

Of course, you hope that the teacher of the class is competent in the language. Sadly, this is not always the case.

proach, like posting or chatting online, some aspect is missing.

Another major benefit of classes is that you can get clarification of the vocabulary and grammar as you learn from a person who is fully knowledgeable. When studying on your own, there is often not anyone to help clarify a point, so unless you have someone you can ask or another reference to help, you will find your understanding hitting a sudden wall. This may not be a major problem, but it disrupts your flow of studying.

Students practising their language skills during class

Along with the direct feedback, a student in a larger class also gets the social interaction with others sharing the desire to master the language. This might sound trivial, but to anyone that has tried learning a language on their own, this can make all the difference. You are no longer struggling alone. You have a group of peers that are learning and practising right along with you. Since you are all beginners, this can also greatly ease the fear of making mistakes. When you study alone then try to practise with someone more advanced or even a native, you are likely to be very afraid of saying something wrong. This can be almost completely wiped away when everyone else is at the same level as you. You can relax and enjoy the shared learning experience.

Of course, you hope that the teacher of the class *is* competent in the language. Sadly, this is not always the case. The teacher may have learned the language as a second language themselves and therefore their abilities will depend greatly upon their own education as well as their experience. For example, a German who learned Spanish in a German school and goes on to become a Spanish teacher themselves will probably not speak it as well as a teacher that learned it by living in Spain for a few years. A student's ability with the new language will therefore be majorly impacted by their teachers own abilities.

These brings us to the second problem of this method. While the students are learning the language with several other people at the same time, this can lead to a what I call a *closed system* situation. What that means is that everyone is repeating what they have learned from the teacher, books, and whatever other media they are using. The less influence they have outside the classroom, the more restricted their education becomes.

Think about only ever eating at a single Italian restaurant all your life. You might try every dish, memorize the entire menu, and always feel firm in your knowledge of Italian food because of this. However, what if one day you eat at another Italian restaurant which has a different way of preparing the dishes you know, or even offers ones you have never heard of. You will realize that you have a great deal more to learn. You might even find out that what you were eating in *your* restaurant wasn't correct. It would be like thinking you were eating real Italian food all your life because you ate at the Olive Garden, only to travel to Italy and visit a restaurant there. Everything you thought you knew might suddenly be proven wrong.

This can happen in the classroom as well. If what you have learned there is incorrect, yet everyone repeats it constantly, it become ingrained. Then when a student tries to converse with a true native, or perhaps even a student of the same language from a different class, they may find themselves lost. This is likely to happen with any system of learning, of course, and how bad the damage is will depend on how incorrect the original source or teacher was.

A real world example of this is when I traveled to Italy for the first time. I had met an Italian exchange student named Lucio when he attended my school one year and so I visited him the next year in his country. While in his home town, we went to his English class briefly and there I met his English teacher. The teacher, while able to make himself clear to me, was certainly not fluent and made a few basic mistakes while talking to me. I diplomatically did not point these out, but I did realize that Lucio's English was much better than his teacher's from having had spent a year in the United States. If he hadn't done the exchange program, I wonder how much his English could have improved with this teacher.

Advanced Interaction Methods

With the increase of technology and the internet, many classes can now supplement the learning experience by allowing students to talk to other learners and native speakers via the internet. Going back to our fictional German learning Spanish,

Classroom with computers to use more learning technologies

he could be studying in the class while also having a chance to talk to a native Spanish speaker by using a voice-chat like Skype. This advanced interaction can help decrease the closed system effect as well as infusing the entire class with greater enthusiasm. Rather than just speaking with fellow classmates and parroting what they have learned, they can practise with natives and quickly refine both their listening and speaking skills. This then becomes a hybrid of classes and internet learning methods.

Setting the Pace

While working with a class gives you the benefits of having someone who can (hopefully) answer your questions as well as direct interaction with other learners, it does have the related problem of acquisition speed. A class is meant to make sure everyone learns the language, which means the class can only progress as fast as the slowest learner. If a student isn't grasping the material as swiftly as the others, the teacher may end up spending more of the class time attempting to assist that one student, leaving the other students waiting and perhaps eventually resenting the slower student. This can quickly lead to bad feelings in the class as well as boredom. The alternative is

that the teacher continues at a regular pace and any students that can not keep up are left struggling. Meanwhile, there are going to be some students that pick up the material much faster than the others and they will become bored and frustrated with the class as well. This is a problem with classes in any subject. The larger the class, the bigger the problem is likely to be because there will probably be more students that are either slower or faster than the rest. For this reason, many people prefer individual study in which they can work at their own pace.

Immersion

Classes may also use more of the immersion technique, as pioneered by the Berlitz schools. Immersion is when the learner is put into a situation in which they can *only* speak the language they are learning. They are also only spoken to in that language. This forces them to use the language in a real-world setting they might not otherwise get a chance to experience. A class can simulate this by having the teacher constantly speaking in the new language and insisting the students only use that language as well in response or when talking to others. Of course, this can only be maintained during the class time. Some more expensive classes may involve having students actually traveling to

The University of Da Nang's Foreign Languages School

another country and being immersed in the language full time for a period of a few weeks or months. Immersion is considered one of the best ways to learn, and we will discuss it further in another article.

I did find myself attending a French immersion class while I was in my university. The teacher would enter the class and start speaking in French, first greeting us then telling us what we would be covering for that class. The only problem with this was the it was a French history class, and the only person that understood any French in the class was the French exchange student. After a week of this, we finally asked him to stop speaking French, since we were there for the history, not the language.

Costs

A major drawback to taking classes is the cost. If the language class is part of your normal school criteria, then the cost is no more than whatever your normal tuition is (if any, since public schools are usually paid for by the government). However, if you are not in school, then taking classes may become expensive. You are paying for the teacher, the use of the facilities (wherever the class is being held), and any textbooks you will be expected to purchase.

A large class which can leave slower students behind or drag on faster students.

Language school in Delhi

In New York, USA, a Berlitz immersion course can cost $250 per month for 90-minute classes while another course may cost $210 to $285 for ten hour long classes. At the University of California, Los Angeles, a traditional, three-month language class costs $480. These are relatively inexpensive. By comparison, as an immersion course in another country, KCP International offers classes in Japanese in Japan, with a cost of $2900 per semester for just the course itself. Add a few thousand dollars more depending on where you live during that time.

Time Spent

Depending on the nature of the class, whether it is part of your daily school activity, a few nights a week at a local university or course center, or an extensive immersion school, you are likely to be spending a great deal of time NOT involved in the actual learning. If you need to travel regularly to the location of the class, that time is wasted. And during a class, whenever the teacher needs to assist any student who is having a problem with the material, including you, that is time you aren't actually practising and learning. This might make you think then that a full immersion course like the Japanese one is the most efficient. That might be true, yet consider that you are actually dedicating several months to learning the language. How much are you sacrificing when you can't be doing the stuff you

might normally be doing back in your own country? No matter what format the classes take, you have to attend them according to their time schedules, not yours.

Tutoring

A related means of learning is taking classes with a private tutor. This has many of the same benefits as a class, but also some further drawbacks. With a tutor, a student will be able to get all the help they need and work at their own pace. However, the amount of social interaction will be severely limited, since the only other person they are likely to be speaking with is the tutor. The quality of their education will also be directly tied to the abilities of the tutor. A native speaker might be ideal as a tutor, but it is also likely the teacher may have simply learned the language in a class they attended a few years before. Private tutors are also likely to be far more expensive than a group class, because the single student is paying for the entire salary of the tutor, rather than having that cost split among many others.

There are many benefits with learning through classes, and they will probably always be a major method of language acquisition. As newer technologies evolve and become integrated, the classroom can actually expand its capabilities rather than having to compete with these alternative means. For example, with software becoming more

advanced and the introduction of internet facilities, a classroom has more resources and interactive means. Even more important, a student has a greater chance to practise and expand their learning outside the classroom, either on their own or as assigned by the teacher. This has already led to a hybrid of distance learning, in which a person can attend a class in real time, with full visual and audio, in a class that is hundreds or even thousands of miles away. Imagine sitting on your computer at home in France and being able to attend a Spanish language class being held in Germany. You instantly eliminate the travel time or cost of living there while still benefit from group learning experience.

Classes will not be the best choice for everyone, of course. Those who can't afford them or find them locally will be unable to participate while those that don't learn at the same pace as others are likely to prefer self-study or private tutoring. Still, they should certainly be considered for anyone wanting to pick up another language or three.

We hope you enjoyed this third article in this series of language learning methods. Previous articles have discussed the methods of audio learning and books. We would like your thoughts and comments on the article and your experiences with classes. Please write to us at parrottime@parleremo.org. **PT**

Classroom of the future?

visilang.com
Organizing music, videos and links

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- Weekly new songs
- Weekly new videos
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Dutch lessons in English, Spanish and Portuguese

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- All lessons in English, Spanish and Portuguese

www.youtube.com/onlinedutchlessons

Sections

Language Exchange

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

A very popular method of using the internet to learn languages is the language exchange. Because there are people from all over the world on the internet daily, and potentially millions of them wanting to learn a new language, then connecting them directly with other language learners benefits everyone.

Basically, you want to match up two people who each want to learn the other persons native language. For example, a Frenchmen that wants to learn German would become a partner to a German woman wanting to learn French. They could then work together to help the other person with their own native language.

Of course, finding a partner is the hard part, and that is where the language exchange programs are used. Essentially, a person signs up for one, telling what their native or fluent languages are as well as what language or languages they want to learn. Along with their name and languages, they might give more personal data, like age, gender and location along with some description of themselves, their lives and their interests. Each person's information becomes part of a large searchable database so that anyone can find a potential partner easily and contact the person.

Entire web sites are devoted to this method of language study, and they vary greatly in the method of communication between partners. Everything from simply giving out email addresses to creating elaborate discussion areas and exchange formats is possible.

Parleremo Language Exchange

Since Parleremo is already a collection of people wanting to learn new languages, we naturally built in our own exchange system. A few things have to be different from dedicated exchange sites. Since not all members on Parleremo will want to be involved in an exchange, a member must create a profile for the exchange program in order to participate in it. This takes some information from their existing Parleremo profile and gives them places for extra details.

On the introduction exchange page is basic description of the program. Options are given to create a new profile or edit an existing profile (if the member has already signed up for one) and to search among the potential partners. Below that is a list of recently added members as well as members that are online at the moment, if any.

Creating a Profile

When a member creates a new profile, some basic information is copied from their existing site profile. These include a few of their native or fluent languages, a few of the languages they are studying, birthdate, gender, country and location. Any information that is changed here will not be altered in the site profile, since this profile is meant to be just for finding an exchange partner.

There is also a place for a member to put in something about themselves. This can be anything they want to share and helps a potential partner see how much they might have in common with each other. For example, if a member likes Bolly-

wood movies, they might mention that, in the hopes of finding a partner that also likes them. Having similar likes can help create a closer bond between partners as well as giving them something to discuss while practising their languages.

A member can also select the preferences they would like for communicating. Since the main purpose of the exchange system is to help people find others, how those people actually communicate and practise together is completely for them to decide. These options are to help further refine a search. If a member wants to only communicate via email, they should select that, and when they search for a partner, they can search for those that also want to use email.

There is an option to have this profile in the search or not as well. This might seem odd, since why would someone create a profile that they didn't want listed? The purpose of this is so once a person finds a partner (or partners), they can remove themselves from the search without deleting their profile. Then when they are ready for a new partner, they can change this so they are listed again. It's like changing a status from "single" to "married".

The member should then save or delete their profile. Deleting a profile here is permanent, but it only deletes the exchange profile. The site profile will remain unchanged.

Finding the One

Once the new or edited profile is saved, the person can then search for a partner. It isn't necessary to join the exchange to search for a partner. Joining just makes it possible for others to know a member is interested.

The search contains blanks for various parts of the profile. By filling in the appropriate blanks or selecting certain boxes, the search becomes refined to people matching those selections. For example, if a member wants to find a partner that knows Japanese, they would select "Japanese" in the "Knows" box. Since the optimal exchange is finding a partner who is a native speaker in the language for the language being studied and also studying the a language the searcher knows, a language should also be put in the "Studying" box which the searcher is native or fluent in. That is, if the searcher is a native Spanish speaker and wants to learn Japanese, they

A language exchange will help you find someone among the millions of people who are online everyday.

should put "Japanese" in the "Knows" box and "Spanish" in studying. The information in the search should be about the potential partner, not the searcher.

The language selections are the most vital, since that is the purpose of the exchange. Other information that can be used to filter through potential partners are age, gender, country, and keywords. The keywords are used to search the personal interests information, and a match can be found on either all the words or any of them.

There are people from all over the world on the internet daily and potentially millions of them wanting to learn a new language.

That is, if keywords "dog" and "cat" are given and the "any" option is selected, then people that have either "dog" and "cat" in their profiles are listed. If "all" is selected, then only those that have both will be found.

To limit a selection based on the preferred communication methods (email, voice chat, etc), checkboxes are given for those options. Note that the more of these that are selected, the more limited the results will be. If someone selects just the email option, only those that want to use email will be listed. If email and voice chat are selected, then

Meeting people in a language exchange is a bit like a party, only online.

only those that want to use *both* of those options will be listed. They might want to use other methods as well, but anyone that only has one of those in their profile options will not be listed in the results.

Lastly, to limit results to more active members, a search can performed on just those that are online. The results can also be sorted based upon when a member was last logged in, last edited their profile, or the date they joined the exchange. This can be critical, since a person that has not been on in over a year will probably not be available for the exchange, having signed up at one time and forgotten about it.

Results

Once all the information for the search is submitted, the matches are listed. Each entry shows the basic details of the profile, including their avatar and whether they are online at the moment or not. If they have provided further information about themselves in a language the searcher doesn't understand, there is an option to translate it.

When the searcher finds someone they would like to connect with, they can select one of the options that are displayed as icons. They can see the members site profile, email the person using the site email system (personal emails are *not* displayed. Partners can exchange those privately if they wish), or send them a private message (PM). Viewing their site profile will give more details about the person as well as several other ways to contact the person, such as Facebook, email, Skype, etc., depending on what that person has added.

Finally, there is a way to report a profile to an administrator if the viewer thinks someone is abusing the system. Such an abuse might be posting something obscene in the personal information or using the exchange system as a dating service. Selecting this option will give the viewer a report form to fill out and submit. This reporting system should not itself be abused. People should not report someone they are angry about just to get them into trouble.

Statistics

For those obsessed with numbers, there is a statistics section that lists countries, languages known and languages studied, sorted from most to least, of the exchange members. Age range and average is also given, along with the number of males and females.

We hope that the language exchange section is beneficial for members. We are always looking for ways to improve our members experience, so let us know anytime of suggestions on how we can make things better. **PT**

Letter From the Editor
Writer: Erik Zidowecki
Images:
Petey: Mayan Stela

Voynich Manuscipt - Cryptic Codex
Writer: Lucille Martin
Images:
Stefan Bauer: Prague Castle today
Estec sarl.: Panoramatic view to Charles Bridge and the Prague Castle
Obankston: Enochian alphabet
Petey: Wilfrid Voynich, Rudolph II, Johannes Marcus Marci, Roger Bacon, Edward Kelley, Villa Mondragone, all images of the Voynich Manuscript
Sources:
• "Voynich Manuscript" World Mysteries <http://www.world-mysteries.com/sar_13.htm>
• "The Voynich Manuscript" Crystallinks <http://www.crystalinks.com/voynich.html>
• "Voynich Manuscript" Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library <http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/collections/highlights/voynich-manuscript>
• "The Voynich Manuscript" John Baez, University of California, Riverside <http://math.ucr.edu/home/baez/voynich.html>
• "Voynich manuscript" Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Voynich_Manuscript>
• "Enochian" Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enochian>
• "Zipf's Law" Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zipf%27s_law>
• "Georg Baresch" Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georg_Baresch>
• "Rudolf II, Holy Roman Emperor" Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rudolf_II,_Holy_Roman_Emperor>

Benjamin Whorf - Relativity of Language
Writer: Sofia Ozols
Images:
WestportWiki: Yale Old Campus Courtyard
Daderot: Stela 10, Mayan artifact from Seibal, Guatemala (AD 849)
Petey: Benjamin Whorf, Edward Sapir, Chaco Canyon Indian dwellings, Stone house of the Hopi village of Oraibi, Hopi woman dressing hair of unmarried girl
Sources:
• "Benjamin Lee Whorf" Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benjamin_Lee_Whorf>
• "Benjamin Lee Whorf" Citizendium <http://en.citizendium.org/wiki/Benjamin_Lee_Whorf>
• "Benjamin Lee Whorf" princeton.edu <https://www.princeton.edu/~achaney/tmve/wiki100k/docs/Benjamin_Lee_Whorf.html>
• "Benjamin Lee Whorf" Encyclopedia of World Biography <http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Benjamin_Lee_Whorf.aspx>

At The Cinema - Lost in Translation
Writer: Erik Zidowecki
Sources:
• "Lost in Translation" Internet Movie Data Base (IMDB) <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0335266/>
All images are copyright Focus Features, Tohokashinsha Film Company Ltd., American Zoetrope, Elemental Films

Languages in Peril - The Polish Connection
Writer: Lucille Martin
Images:
Zygmunt Put Zetpe0202: Zasanska Pass (title) West Carpathian Mountains, Poland
Tomasz Sienicki: Bilingual Polish-Kashubian road sign in Poland
Russianname: Rusyn farmsted (from the village of Lyuta, Beliko-Bereznyanski region)
Silar: Rusyn woman's costume from Presov
Lajsikonik: Banner Pro Loquela Silesiana the fourth Palestinian march
Sources:
• "Kashubian language" Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kashubian_language>
• "Kashubian" Omniglot <http://www.omniglot.com/writing/kashubian.htm>
• "Kashubian language: Meaning" explanationGuide <http://explanation-guide.info/meaning/Kashubian-language.html>
• "Rusyn language" Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rusyn_language>
• "Pannonian Rusyn language" Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pannonian_Rusyn_language>
• "Ruthenian" Omniglot <http://www.omniglot.com/writing/rusyn.htm>
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• "Silesian language" Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silesian_language>
• "Silesian" Omniglot <http://www.omniglot.com/writing/silesian.php>
• "Silesian language and the Polish language" Claritaslux.com <http://claritaslux.com/blog/silesian-language-polish-language/>

Word on the Streets - Romanian Poets
Writer: Sofia Ozols
Images:
Petey: Romanian street, Eminescu, Alecsandri

Where Are You?
Writer: Sonja Krüger

Celebrations - Holi
Writer: Sonja Krüger
Images:
Diganta Talukdar: Holi celebration at Nagaon (title)
FaceMePLS: Holi Feest 2008
Ronaldo Lazzari: Bonfire on Holi Dahan
Karen Sandhu: Holi party in Delhi, with crowd and a tree decorated in coloured fabrics
gkrishna38: Braj Lath mar Holi at Barasana, India
Biswarup Ganguly: Holi Colors at a street shop at Deanesh Skeikh lane, Howrah
Charles Haynes: Papads; Papri Chaat
Md. Saiful Aziz Shamseer: Man playing Ektara
Eliza Raschke: Shop selling colours for Holi, Old Delhi
wonker: Women preparing the Holika Dahan bonfire at Thapathali, Kathmandu. Nepal
judepics: Holi celebrations, Pushkar, Rajasthan
Chris Willis: Girl in colors
Ingo Mehling: Holi Bonfire in front of Jagdish Temple / Udaipur (flash page)
Petey: A rajah and his wife celebrating holi; Mathri
Sources:
• "Holi" Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holi>
• "Holi Festival" Holifestival.org <http://www.holifestival.org/holi-festival.html>
• "Hinduism" About.com <http://hinduism.about.com/od/holifestivalofcolors/a/holybasics.htm>
• "Holi - the festival of colours" Indiaexpress.com <http://www.indiaexpress.com/rangoli/holi.html>
• "Indian Holidays : Holi" Calendarlabs <http://www.calendarlabs.com/holidays/india/holi.php>

A Language Dream
Writer: Hidson Guimarães
Images: Petey: Building

Revisited - Words From National Character
Writer: Elizabeth O'Neill
Images:
CristianChirita: Statue of barbarian king imprisoned
Petey: "Barbarians from the South" (title); Painting of a Bohemian woman; "Arabs Drinking Coffee in Front of a Tent"; Depiction of a Turk in the 16th century; Statue of a Japanese ogre
Sources:
• "Words From National Character" Stories That Words Tell Us Elizabeth O'Neill, M.A. London: T. C. & E. C. Jack, Ltd. 35 Paternoster Row, E.C. And Edinburgh 1918

Language Learning Methods - Classes
Writer: Erik Zidowecki
Images:
Vmenkov: Lnxia Foreign Languages School
Kubaru: English Language Lab
The LEAF Project: FLCC Classes @ Canandaigua Campus
Shane Global: General English Class
Rbok: Japanese High school Language Lab
HBS1908: Inside a classroom
Dragfyre: The University of Da Nang's Foreign Languages School.
Subhashish Panigrahi: School of languages, Jawaharlal Nehru University
Niepr: State-of-the-art Collaborative Classroom

Sections - Language Exchange
Writer: Erik Zidowecki
Images:
Karoly Czifra: people gathering
kris krüg: women meeting

German

Learn it. Live it. Love it.