

ONE LANGUAGE FOR THE WORLD BY DR. MARIO ANDREW PEI

INTRODUCTION

GREEK

LATIN

BASIC ENGLISH

FRENCH

SPANISH

PORTUGUESE

ITALIAN

GERMAN

RUSSIAN

CHINESE

FINNISH

RUSSELL'S SUMA

PEANO'S FLEXIONLESS LATIN

INTERGLOSSA

CHESHIKHIN'S NEPO

INTERLINGUA

ERANTO

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P45
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CONTENTS:

1 LP
1 text (11 p.)

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ONE LANGUAGE FOR THE WORLD

by Dr. Mario Andrew Pei

PEI, Mario Andrew (February 16, 1901 -)

Linguist, teacher, and author of numerous articles and books on language. Born in Rome, Italy, he came to the United States in 1908 and was educated in New York parochial schools, St. Francis Xavier High School, City College (A. B., 1925), Columbia University (Ph. D., 1932). At seventeen he began his teaching career as a grade teacher in St. Francis Xavier Grammar School, 1918-20. He was private tutor to the nephews of President Menocal of Cuba, 1920-21; Instructor in Romance Languages and Latin in City College, 1923-37; Assistant Professor of Romance Languages, Columbia University, 1937-47; Associate Professor 1947-1952; Professor of Romance Philology since 1952.

Professor Pei has written articles for The New York Times Magazine, This Week, Good Housekeeping, Saturday Review, Think, Coronet, This Month, The New Leader, The Saturday Evening Post, Holiday, Reader's Digest, Tomorrow, and Town and Country, in addition to most of the major professional journals in this country and abroad.

The Story of Language, published by Lippincott in 1949, was a Book-of-the-Month Club selection. The book was introduced at a press conference, conducted in eight languages by Professor Pei. Even Bernard Shaw was moved to write, from Ayot Saint Lawrence, "After a glance at it I found it was readable, and, though the writer is an Italian, so much more idiomatically English than most natives could achieve." He further added that Professor Pei's "prodigious memory and knowledge remind me of Isaac Newton."

Professor Pei has been a lecturer for the Foreign Policy Association, Modern Language Association, International House, English-Speaking Union, The Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, New York City Federation of

Women's Clubs, Town Hall Club, and various professional groups. During World War II he created a 37-language course in "War Linguistics," (now called "The World's Chief Languages") at Columbia University. The course was widely covered by the press and described in articles in American Magazine, The Saturday Evening Post, This Week, Newsweek, and Catholic Digest, by Dale Carnegie in his syndicated column, and over such radio programs as "We the People."

Also during World War II, he collaborated with OSS and OWI in the preparation of linguistic projects connected with the war effort. At the same time, he constructed for the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs a series of English radio lessons for Spanish speakers that was widely used in Latin America, and later adapted by other Government agencies for use in Europe, Asia and Africa.

He is a member of Phi Beta Kappa (N. Y. Gamma); American Association of Teachers of French; American Association of Teachers of Italian; American Association of Teachers of Spanish; Modern Language Association; Society for the Study of Medieval Languages; Oxford; American Federation of Modern Language Teachers' Associations; Grand Jury Association of New York County; and the Linguistic Circle of New York. Cavaliere Ufficiale of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic; recipient of the George Washington Honor Medal from Freedom Foundation at Valley Forge; linguistic consultant for U.S. Army Language School at Monterey, California.

In 1952 Lippincott published The Story of English, a companion volume to The Story of Language. The New York Times said, "He is a wide-awake observer, a skillful expositor and he has a sure instinct for the interesting fact and theory." The Story of

English has been selected by the Book Find Club.

Professor Pei, who has a knowledge of many of the world's 2,796 languages, is recognized as one of the foremost authorities on language living today. His broadcasting activities for OWI, Voice of America, and Radio Free Europe have included lectures and discussions in French, Italian, German, Dutch, Czech and Romanian. It has been said that, with the possible exception of one member of the United Nations Secretariat, Mario Pei reads, speaks or understands more languages than any living man.

Professor Pei's views on the desirability of an international language have appeared in numerous magazine articles and in his book *One Language for the World* (Devin-Adair, 1958).

PRINCIPAL WORKS

The Story of Language ...1949

(British ed., Allen & Unwin - 1952)
(Italian ed., *La Meravigliosa Storia del Linguaggio*, Sansoni - 1952)
(French ed., Payot - 1953)
(Spanish ed., Espasa-Calpe - 1955)

The Story of English ...1952

(British ed., Allen & Unwin - 1953)

All About Language ...1954

(British ed., John Lane - 1956)

The Language of the Eighth-Century Texts in Northern France ...1932
(privately printed)

The Italian Language ...1941
(Columbia U. Press)

Languages for War and Peace ...1943
(Vanni)

Fourth ed., revised and enlarged ...1961

The American Road to Peace: A Constitution for the World ...1945
(Vanni)

The World's Chief Languages ...1947
(Vanni)
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(Allen & Unwin)

French Precursors of the Chanson de Roland ...1948
(Columbia U. Press)

Swords of Anjou (fiction) ...1953
(John Day)

(Pocket ed., *Swords for Charlemagne*, Graphic - 1955)

Liberal Arts Dictionary ...1952
(Philosophical)

Translation of François Mauriac's *Lettres Ouvertes* ...1953
(Philosophical)

Dictionary of Linguistics ...1954
(Philosophical)

The Sparrows of Paris (fiction) ...1958
(Philosophical)

Language for Everybody ...1957
(Devin-Adair)

One Language for the World ...1958
(Devin-Adair)

Getting Along in (French, Spanish, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian) ...1957-1959
(Harper)

The Consumer's Manifesto ...1960
(Crown)

The Book of Place Names ...1959
(Lothrop)

Our Names ...1960
(Lothrop)

SIDE I, Band 1: INTRODUCTION

ONE LANGUAGE FOR THE WORLD

Linguistically and scientifically, any language, natural or constructed, easy or difficult from the standpoint of an adult speaker of English, can serve as a world language, provided it is imparted to the growing generations from kindergarten on. All languages are equally easy to those who speak them from early childhood.

At the same time, the choice will be made by adults, who will be influenced by various non-linguistic factors: national pride, cultural consciousness, their own acquired concept of ease or difficulty.

Out of some 3000 natural tongues spoken in the world today, plus at least 700 constructed languages that have been offered from the 17th century on, only a handful stand a chance of being seriously considered by the international body that will eventually convene to select the one language for the world.

Among the natural languages, the most likely candidates are the big and important ones,

those that have large bodies of native speakers, and that are widely studied outside their own borders by reason of cultural, economic or political importance.

The only chance that a small, obscure tongue may be chosen would be if it were picked, so to speak, out of desperation, like a dark horse at a nominating convention where the leading aspirants are deadlocked.

Among constructed languages, there is the type that has no connection with any living tongue, but is built up by an arbitrary system, so as not to favor the speakers of any existing language group. This logical, absolutely neutral type of constructed language was the first to be offered in the early days, but it fell more and more out of favor as time went on.

The other type of constructed language is based upon the existing natural tongues, combined in various blends, or modified in some fashion to make them easier for the adult learner. To this group belong the constructed languages that are best known, such as Esperanto, Ido, Interlingua, Basic English.

There remain a third and fourth solution for the world's language problem, that of using two or more languages side by side, and that of having zonal languages. These are not true solutions, because they do not give us the one language for the world that will be spoken and understood everywhere.

The idea of zonal languages was advanced in 1950 by Stalin, who envisaged the carving up of the world into various zones, or spheres of influence, in each of which one language would predominate, and be used for common intercourse. This does not differ too much from the situation we have today. It is merely a temporary makeshift based on factors of political, military and economic power.

The idea of a bilingual world, in which both English and French would serve as international tongues, has been advanced by a French group. If all English speakers learned French, all French speakers learned English, and all speakers of other tongues learned either or both, there would be world-wide understanding. There still remains the thorny question of what would happen if a Greek who had learned French met a Japanese who had learned English. Another Frenchman proposed that Stalin's zonal language idea and the plan for a Bilingual World be combined, with French and English universal-

ly in use, plus Spanish as an added tongue for the West, Russian for the East, Chinese for the Far East, Hindustani or Arabic for the Afro-Asian group of nations. The difficulties of having to learn three foreign tongues at once, however, cannot be minimized.

A single common language, to be learned by all the world's growing generations along with their individual national tongues, is far from an impossibility. All people can be bilingual if the process is started early enough, as proved by the millions of people in the world today who speak two languages well. But for this, we need to start with universal agreement as to what the one international language shall be.

The national languages have in their favor a native speaking population, a tradition, a culture. They issue from the soil. They have life. By the same token, they have the disadvantage of being irregular in their grammatical forms, often difficult in their sound-schemes for those who have not acquired them from childhood, highly illogical in some of their constructions, broken into various spoken dialects, sometimes without even a standard form. But above all, they arouse the antagonism of those who have other language habits, because they are viewed as the carriers not of a world culture, but of the culture of the groups that speak them. Hence the great world languages tend to neutralize each other.

Constructed languages built without reference to any existing languages escape this drawback. Constructed languages of the type of Esperanto and Interlingua escape it only in part. It is true that everyone who learns them has to make some effort, but the speaker of a Romance language will have a far easier time than the speaker of Chinese with Interlingua, in which both grammar and vocabulary present only minor shifts from his own habitual tongue.

A far graver change is made against constructed languages. They are not natural, hence they do not carry the content of thought, emotions, traditions that is the heritage of a living tongue. This is a little like saying that a horse is preferable to an automobile because the horse is natural while the automobile is an artificial product. One can put into a language, as into a car, all the features that one may desire. As a matter of fact, all great national languages have gone through this process, starting out as rough, uncouth forms of speech used by wandering tribes for the expression of basic wants and

emotions, then going on to add to their expressiveness through the centuries until they have attained the polish and refinement they possess today. Presumably, we are now at the stage of civilization where we can handle languages as we handle thousands of other things. We can put into a diet what we think is necessary and desirable. We can do the same thing with a language for world use.

Among natural tongues, the ones most frequently advocated for world use are either the Classical, so-called "dead" tongues, like Greek and Latin, or the big spoken tongues of today that even now serve the world in a limited international capacity - languages like English and French; more seldom, other important languages of the western world, like Spanish, Italian, German, Portuguese. Russian and Chinese, the two great languages of the Communist world, cannot be left out of consideration. Aside from their political connotations of the present moment, they are the tongues of large bodies of people and of great civilizations that made their mark in the world long before the days of Khrushchev and Mao Tse-Tung. It is even possible that we should include other great Asian tongues, such as Arabic, Japanese, Hindustani, Indonesian, but that would carry us too far afield, and their speakers have not yet advanced their candidacy.

As a sample of a natural, but small, relatively unimportant tongue which might offer itself as a dark-horse candidate, we have chosen Finnish. Its inclusion is not to be construed as a reflection on the merits of any other minor tongue. It is merely an example.

For constructed languages, we shall offer samples of the three most commonly mentioned in American circles: Basic English, Esperanto and Interlingua, along with very brief excerpts of other constructed tongues which present unusual features.

SIDE I, Band 2: GREEK

Greek, a tongue of great antiquity and high civilization, has had uninterrupted use from the 8th century B.C. to the present day. In the 3000 years of its existence, it has given full evidence of its power to convey human thought, from the simplest to the most complicated. Its word-stock appears in all civilized languages spoken today, and has given rise to more than half of the international vocabulary of learning in all fields, from that of philosophy to that of physical

science. On the other hand, its grammatical structure shows great complication of declensions and conjugations, which makes it difficult for the adult learner to acquire.

A sample of Greek may be taken from one of its earliest literary poems, Homer's *Iliad*. At the very outset, the poet requests the Muse to recall to his mind the destructive wrath of Achilles, directed against his rival Agamemnon, commander-in-chief of the Greek forces besieging Troy, and how because of it many brave souls of heroes were projected into Hades, while their bodies became a prey to the dogs and the birds of the air, until such a time as the will of the gods had spent itself.

Here is how those opening lines of the *Iliad* might sound in what we believe is a fairly accurate reproduction of the Classical Greek sound-scheme.

Mēnin áeide, theá, Pēlēiádeō Achilēos
ouloménēn, hē myri' Achaiōis álge' éthēken,
pollàs d'iphthímous psychàs Áidi proíapsen
hērōon, autoūs dē helōria teúche kýnessin
oiōnoísí te daíta, Diōs d'etelefeto boulē,
ex hoū dē tà prōta diastētēn erísante
Atreídēs te áanax andrōn kai díos Achilleús.

SIDE I, Band 3: LATIN

Latin survives today not only as the international language of a Church with hundreds of millions of adherents, but also, in modified form, in its Romance descendants. Almost as ancient as Greek, Latin was the universal tongue of the Roman Empire. Later, in the Middle Ages, it was the universal tongue of western scholarship, and all who were literate used it in speech as well as in writing. It, too, has been the expressive vehicle of literature, philosophy, poetry, science. Its vocabulary is even more international than that of Greek. It is a language of simple, yet majestic and sonorous sounds. It has within itself the machinery for expressing the most complicated modern terminology. But, like Greek, it is a language of difficult, complex structure for one who approaches it from the standpoint of most modern tongues.

The sound of Latin can be gauged from a brief passage of Latin verse, one of Horace's odes, in which he urges his friend to gaze from the cozy shelter of his country villa at the snow-capped peak of Mount Soracte, the tops of trees, bending under the burden of the winter snows, the frozen streams. Bring out the wine, says the poet, and let us enjoy this peaceful scene while we may, with the wintry

silence broken only by the soft laughter of our girl friends in the far corner.

Vides ut alta stet nive candidum
Soracte, nec iam sustineant onus
Silvae laborantes, geluque
Flumina constiterint acuto.

Dissolve frigus ligna super foco
Large reponens atque benignius
Deprome quadrimum Sabina,
O Thaliarce, merum diota.

Quid sit futurum cras, fuge quaerere, et
Quem fors dierum cumque dabit, lucro
Adpone, nec dulces amores
Sperne, puer, neque tu choreas.

Donec virenti canities abest
Morosa. Nunc et campus et areae
Lenesque sub noctem susurri
Conposita repetantur hora,

Nunc et latentis proditor intimo
Gratus puellae risus ab angulo,
Pignusque dereptum lacertis
Aut digito male pertinaci.

SIDE I, Band 4:

Passing on to the modern natural languages, English is second in number of speakers among the world's spoken tongues, first in distribution, commerce, industry, wealth, economic power, science and technology. Its grammatical structure is relatively simple to one who approaches it from the outside. Its vocabulary is truly international, combining Germanic, Latin-Romance and Greek elements into one harmonious unit, and granting easy admission to all newcomers, from whatever source. It is a highly popular, highly colloquial tongue, yet it has proved its worth as an instrument of great literature. It is direct and concise, yet thoroughly expressive. More non-natives wish to possess it than any other tongue. But English is also confusing by reason of its irrational spelling, its lack of a standard form, its unstable vowels, diphthongs and glides, its harsh consonant clusters, its unpredictable stress, its swift rate of change, its lack of endings that clarify grammatical function.

To ease the learning process for foreign speakers wishing to acquire English, many great minds in the English-speaking world have labored hard. Some have tried to reform the spelling of English, so as to bring it in line with present-day pronunciation. Others have suggested as a stepping-stone the adoption of a limited vocabulary,

which will permit the learner to get along with a far smaller number of English words than the customary English speaker uses. The drawback here is that the normal speaker of English will also have to limit his own vocabulary, a difficult and galling process. In addition, Basic English replaces words which are fairly international in the western world with highly idiomatic and tricky combinations of nouns and adverbs, or nouns and prepositions, such as "to put up with" in place of "to tolerate".

Since Basic English diverges from ordinary English only in vocabulary, and not at all in sounds or grammatical structure, a sample of Basic English will at the same time serve to illustrate English pronunciation. The following presentation of Basic English, in Basic English, was supplied by Miss Christine M. Gibson, and comes in part from the definition appearing in Learning Basic English, by I. A. Richards and C. M. Gibson.

"Mine is the voice of Basic English, and the statement that I here make about myself is an example of that small-scale language at work. As a separate language system, I am the invention of one man (C. K. Ogden, 1890-1957), but as a part of English I am as old as the rest of the language. Man made though natural, springing from the mother tongue like Minerva from the head of Jupiter, I came into being armed with the powers - though wisely limited - of full English. Such skill has been used in the selection of my 850 words that with them man may say almost anything - in business, trade, industry, science, medical work - in all the arts of living and in all the exchanges of knowledge, belief, opinion, views and news which a general-purpose language has to take care of. Learning to do so is not hard, because the rules for putting my words together have been made clear and simple and short. But there is nothing in good Basic which goes against the rules of good English. My selection as servant of the earth's needs would give to men everywhere, if not theirs by birth, use of one of the great living languages. I am a door opening on wider English."

SIDE I, Band 5: FRENCH

Next to English, French is the modern language most frequently mentioned for the international post. For this there are abundant historical and traditional reasons. French was for centuries the tongue of diplomacy, culture and refinement, to the point where no one who did not have some

knowledge of French could consider himself truly educated. It is a tongue of wide distribution, appearing, like English, on every continent. It is elegant, clear, expressive, thoroughly standardized as to both grammar and pronunciation, with a vocabulary drawn from many sources, but predominantly Latin. But French also has a difficult sound-scheme for one not born to it, a fairly complex grammar, and a system of spelling almost as antiquated and bewildering as that of English.

As a sample of French, we have selected two brief poems by Paul Verlaine, a 19th-century poet. The first, From A Prison, speaks of the blue sky and the tree that the prisoner sees from his cell, the sound of the church bell, the song of the bird that reaches his ears; all the sights and sounds of calm, simple everyday life are there; but he, the prisoner, who weeps in his cell, what has he done with his youth? The second, The Exquisite Hour, is a tone poem of the white moon shining in the woods, the voices from the branches of the trees, the reflection of the black willow in the pool, the vast, tender peace that seems to come down from heaven; it is the hour for dreaming, oh my beloved; it is the exquisite hour.

D'UNE PRISON

Le ciel est, par-dessus le toit,
Si bleu, si calme!
Un arbre, par-dessus le toit,
Berce sa palme.

La cloche, dans le ciel qu'on voit,
Doucement tinte.
Un oiseau, sur l'arbre qu'on voit
Chante sa plainte.

Mon Dieu, mon Dieu, la vie est là,
Simple et tranquille.
Cette paisible rumeur-là
Vient de la ville.

Qu'as-tu fait, ô toi que voilà
Pleurant sans cesse,
Dis, qu'as-tu fait, toi que voilà,
De ta jeunesse?

L'HEURE EXQUISE

La lune blanche
Luit dans les bois;
De chaque branche
Part une voix
Sous la ramée...
O bien-aimée.

L'étang reflète,
Profond miroir,
La silhouette
Du saule noir
Où le vent pleure...
Rêvons, c'est l'heure.

Un vaste et tendre
Apaisement
Sembler descendre
Du firmament
Que l'astre irise...
C'est l'heure exquise.

SIDE I, Band 6: SPANISH

Spanish, a tongue of widespread use, ancient and honorable ancestry, long service in the fields of literature, commerce, exploration and discovery, is a language that people fall into easily, as evidenced by the millions of non-Hispanic stock who use it as their own. It has drawn freely from every source, and passed on to its sister languages of the west thousands of words from the Arabic of the Moors, the Indian tongues of America, the languages of the East. Yet it is basically Latin, and has a free and easy interchange with the speakers of other Latin languages. It is the leading tongue of South and Central America. It has easy sounds, a deliberately simplified grammar, and close relationship between spelling and pronunciation. But its distribution is uneven, its usage not well standardized, its syntax over-elastic and difficult, particularly in its higher reaches, which encourages its speakers to be verbose and redundant.

Our Spanish sample comes from Senda Sonora, a recently published book of verse by Eloy Vaquero, former Cabinet Minister of the Spanish Republic. This passage, illustrative of life in southern Spain, tells the story of the little mule-driver, who was once a self-respecting man, though poor. But the death of his wife left him alone and disconsolate, and he gave himself to drink. Then, during the winter, his mule died. This was the last straw for the poor little mule-driver. They took him to the hospital, where he passed on.

EL POBRECITO ARRIERO

Ha muerto en el hospital
el arriero juncal
del borriquillo mojino,
que el duro gastaba en vino,
y en pan y queso, el real.

No fue siempre como era.
 Cuando el vivir halló grato
 con su adicta compañera,
 ¡pudo, entre amigos, un rato...
 una alegre borrachera!

Pero, al morir su mujer,
 tanto se dió por beber
 que, de sus puntas de rico,
 descendió al mísero haber
 de la vara y el borrico.

El alcohol sólo animó
 su propio mundo desierto.
 Irse con Ella intentó...
 ¡Mucho fue si prefirió
 estar borracho a estar muerto!

Y fue que este crudo enero
 por el frío barrizal,
 el hambre y el muermo fiero
 al pobrecito arriero
 le mataron su animal.

Entonces al precipicio
 miró de indigencia y muerte,
 que a sus pies cavara el vicio;
 y de la azada al cilicio
 se asió con ánimo fuerte.

Mas su cuerpo avejentado
 a un cortijo desterrado
 y a tardía continencia,
 pronto cayó, lacerado
 por incurable dolencia.

¡Y ha muerto en el hospital
 el arriero juncal
 del borriquillo mojino,
 que el duro gastaba en vino,
 y en pan y queso, el real!

SIDE I, Band 7: PORTUGUESE

Like Spanish, Portuguese is a language of many speakers and wide distribution. Used by the 65 million inhabitants of Brazil, a country that extends over half of the South American continent, it is also the language of Portugal and the Portuguese overseas possessions. It is closely related to Spanish in vocabulary and structure, but its pronunciation makes it altogether distinctive, as well as difficult to the outside learner.

Our Portuguese sample is taken from the writings of Luis de Camões, author of Portugal's most famous epic poem, *The Lusiadas*. But this is a simple sonnet of sorrow and bereavement, in which the poet addresses his dead sweetheart, who now reposes in heaven, while he is left on

earth to end his days in melancholy and regret. The prayer is voiced that God may soon vouchsafe to take him, and reunite him with his lost love.

Alma minha gentil, que te partiste
 Tão cedo desta vida descontente,
 Repousa lá no céu eternamente,
 E viva eu cá na terra, sempre triste.

Se lá no assento etéreo onde subiste
 Memória desta vida se consente,
 Nao te esqueças daquele amor ardente
 Que já nos olhos meus tão puro viste!

E se vires que pode merecer-te
 Alguma cousa a dor que me ficou
 Da mágoa, sem remédio, de perder-te,

Roga a Deus, que teus anos encurtou,
 Que tão cedo de cá me leve a ver-te
 Quão cedo de meus olhos te levou!

SIDE II, Band 1: ITALIAN

Italian, closest of the Romance languages to its ancestral Latin, does not possess the world-wide distribution and economic potential of some of the other candidates, but its esthetic beauty, which makes it an ideal language for music, song and poetry, and its cultural content, which runs in an unbroken line from the days of ancient Rome through the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, lead many to advocate its use as a world tongue. But Italian is split into widely diverging dialects, has a grammatical structure in many ways more complex than that of French or Spanish, a vocabulary that is more Latin, but by the same token less international, than any of the others, and a syntax at least as elastic and pompous as that of Spanish.

No better sample of literary Italian could be chosen than a passage from Italy's greatest poet, Dante, the man who describes his descent into the Inferno. The inscription over the gateway to hell states that through it one goes into the city of sorrow, the abode of eternal grief and of those who are lost; that it was made by God, in accordance with the Deity's concept of Justice.

There were no created things before it save eternal ones, and it will endure eternally.
 Let all who enter abandon hope!

Per me si va nella citta' dolente
 Per me si va nell'eterno dolore,
 Per me si va tra la perduta gente.

Giustizia mosse il mio alto fattore:
Fecemi la divina potestate,
La somma sapienza e il primo amore.

Dinanzi a me non fur cose create,
Se non eterne; ed io eterno duro.
Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch' entrate!

SIDE II, Band 2: GERMAN

The German language is one which has served as the instrument for some of the world's greatest cultural achievements, in literature and poetry, in the arts and sciences. More regular and definite in its grammatical structure than other Germanic tongues, it retains to a high degree the ability to expand its vocabulary by the formation of compound words. But German is a tongue of difficult consonant clusters and sounds which are sometimes harsh and unmusical. It is the leading language of the European continent, but enjoys no world-wide distribution, as do some of the others we have mentioned.

As a sample of German, we have selected a poem by one of Germany's best-beloved poets, Heine, who describes the legend of the Lorelei Rock on the castle-studded Rhine, the ominous sense of impending doom that fills those who approach it, even though the river flows quietly and the mountain tops gleam in the light of the setting sun. There is a lovely maiden who sits on the rock, combing her golden hair and singing a siren song to lure travelers to their destruction. The boatman, entranced by the vision, fails to notice the cruel rocks toward which he is heading. He is swallowed up by the waves, while the witch-maiden laughs.

Ich weiss nicht, was soll es bedeuten,
dass ich so traurig bin,
ein Märchen aus alten Zeiten,
das kommt mir nicht aus dem Sinn.
Die Luft ist kühl und es dunkelt,
und ruhig fließt der Rhein.
Der Gipfel des Berges funkelt
im Abendsonnenschein.

Die schönste Jungfrau sitzet
dort oben wunderbar,
ihr goldnes Geschmeide blitzet,
sie kämmt ihr goldenes Haar.
Sie kämmt es mit goldenem Kamme
und singt ein Lied dabei,
das hat eine wundersame,
gewalt'ge Melodei.

Den Schiffer im kleinen Schiffe
ergreift es mit wildem Weh;

er schaut nicht die Felsenriffe,
er schaut nur hinauf in die Höh'.
Ich glaube, die Wellen verschlingen
am Ende Schiffer und Kahn,
und das hat mit ihrem Singen
die Lorelei getan!

SIDE II, Band 3: RUSSIAN

Russian, official tongue of the Soviet Union, which covers one-sixth of the earth's land surface, exerts its influence over all lands that have gone over to Communism. But linguistically it is a highly conservative tongue, still at the Classical stage. Its sounds are far from unpleasant, though difficult to foreign learners. It is a highly cultural language, with literary merits that extend far back beyond the days of the Bolshevik Revolution, and some of the world's most important scientific output of modern times appears in Russian. But Russian is a land-locked language, one of long words, bewildering case endings, and unpredictable accentuation.

As a sample of Russian we offer a poem by Khomyakov entitled Kiev. The capital of the Ukraine is also the cradle of Russian civilization. Pilgrims come to it from remote parts of the Russian world. Whence do they come? From the lands where tranquil flows the Don; from the Siberian regions, where whirling Yenisei rushes to the Arctic; from the tepid lands of the Crimea; from the wild ravines of the Altai Mountains; from the noble city of Pskov; from the banks of the icy Neva and the mighty Kama; from Mother Moscow itself. All have come to render homage to Kiev the ancient, to visit its deep caverns, to honor the city from which, in ages past, the bright sunlight of civilization spread over the Russian lands.

Vysoko peredo mnoyu stary Kiev nad Dneprom;
Dnepr sverkaet pod goroyu perelivnym

serebrom.

Slava, Kiev mnogovechny, russkoy slavy
kòlybel'!

Slava, Dnepr nash bystrotechny, Rusi
chistaya kupel'!

Gromko pesni razdalisya, v nebe stikh
vecherni zvon:

"Vy otkuda sobralisya, bogomoltsy, na poklon?"

"Ya ottuda, gde struitsya tikhi Don, krasa
poley."

"Ya ottuda, gde klubitsya bezpredel'ny Yenisey."

"Kray moy - t'oply breg Evksina." "Kray moy -
breg tekh dal'nikh stran,

Gde odna sploshnaya l'dina okovala okean."

"Dik i strashen verkh Altaya, vechen blesk ego
snegov;

Tam strana moya rodnaya." "Mne otchizna
stary Pskov."
"Ya ot Ladogi kholodnoy." "Ya ot sinykh voln
Nevy."
"Ya ot Kamy mnogovodnoy." "Ya ot matushki
Moskvy."
Slava, Dnepr, sedyya volny! Slava, Kiev,
chudny grad!
Mrak peshcher tvoikh bezmolvny krashe
tsarstvennykh palat!
Znaem my: v veka bylye, v drevnyu noch' i mrak
glubok,
Nad toboy blesnul, Rossiya, solntsa vechnago
vostok!

SIDE II, Band 4: CHINESE

Chinese, a tongue of greater antiquity and more unbroken tradition than any language of the west, serves one-fourth of the earth's population. It has a simple, direct, concise grammatical structure, with no endings or cases, no declensions or conjugations, while its vocabulary, composed of roots of a single syllable, is capable of infinite expansion by the simple process of composition. But Chinese, like Russian, is land-locked and isolated. It has numerous spoken dialects, amounting in practice to separate tongues, and they are held together only by the artifice of a written language which portrays ideas, not sounds. Its spoken form is rendered difficult to the foreign learner by the tones that must accompany each word, and that are basic to the meaning.

An ancient Buddhist hymn describes the journey into hell of a Buddhist monk. When he had disappeared from home in response to his calling, his mother had cursed Buddha, and for that reason had been consigned to the nether regions. But her son, who had now become an immortal, learned where she was and went on a journey of ten myriad and eight thousand miles to rescue her and take her to the Mountain of Everlasting Joy.

One episode of this legend runs:

Syí r yǒu-ge Mù-lyán sēng
Jyòu mǔ chīn lín dī-yù mēn
Jyè wèn Líng-shān yǒu dwō-shǎi lù
Yǒu shr-wàn bā-chyān yǒu yǔ.

The spoken Chinese of today is perhaps better exemplified by a few colloquial phrases.
"How do you do?" is Nǐn hǎu bù hǎu (literally, "You good not good"). "Do you speak Chinese?" is Nǐn hwèi shwō Jūng-gwo hwà ma. "Please" is chǐng, and "thank you" is Syēsye. "Good-bye" is Dzài jyèn.

SIDE II, Band 5: FINNISH

Finnish is an avowedly minor tongue, serving a speaking population of no more than five million. But it is a member of the Finno-Ugric family of languages, and is quite unrelated to any major tongue. It can in no way be described as the carrier of any racialistic or political tendency, and it presents equal difficulties to all who want to learn it. It is a thoroughly neutral, impartial language, but also a living one. Its sound-scheme is extremely simple, and its system of spelling the most phonetic of all the national languages. But it has an extremely complicated grammatical structure, and a vocabulary which is utterly uninternational.

A sample of Finnish is Finland's beautiful national anthem, Maamme, "Our Land".
No mountain rises proud and grand, nor
slopes a vale, nor sweeps a strand, dearer
than thou, Land of the North, our fathers'
native land. From our tender love shall
rise thy light, thy fame, thy hopes, thy joy,
and our patriotic song shall sound prouder
than ever.

Maa isänmaamme, Suomenmaa
Soi sana kultainen!
Ei laaksoa, ei kukkulaa,
Ei vettä, rantaa rakkaampaa
Kuin kotimaa tää pohjainen,
Maa kallis isien.

Sun kukkas vielä kuorestaan
Vapaaksi puhkeaa;
Viel' lempemme saa hehkullaan
Sun toivos, riemus nousemaan,
Ja kerran lautus, synnyinmaa,
Korkeemman kaiun saa!

SIDE II, Band 6: RUSSEL'S SUMA

We now pass on to examine some of the constructed tongues that are the product of man's ingenuity.

As a single sample of a language constructed without any reference to or resemblance with natural languages, here is an American creation, Russell's Suma of 1957. The roots of Suma are altogether arbitrary and not linked to any known tongue. Here is the beginning of the First Book of Genesis in Suma, preceded by a word-for-word English translation:

"God first-wise make sky and earth
and earth be empty and without
shape and without light. And God
say: "Let light be here". And
light be here. And God see that

this be good that light be here.
And God divide day to day and night.
This be day one."

Talo moti sima baki boto e beto e
beto te peka e ena gide e ena
doba. E talo poti: "Sui doba te
mora." E doba te mora. E talo
oki sute tu te poma sute doba to
mora. E talo vesi temo ale lato
e lito. Tu te temo.

SIDE II, Band 7: PEANO'S FLEXIONLESS LATIN

Peano's Flexionless Latin offers Latin words without Classical endings and with a Romance word-order. Here is a sample, preceded by an English translation:

"A theoretical study proves that no grammatical rule, no derivational suffix, is necessary. Either the word is already international, or it can be expressed through a combination of international words."

Studio theoricoproba que es necessario nullo regula de grammatica, nullo suffixo de derivatione. Aut vocabulo jam es internationale, aut pote es expresso per combinatione de vocabulos internationale.

Lancelot Hogben, author of Mathematics for the Million and editor of The Loom of Language, at one time offered his Interglossa, a language that combines Chinese syntax with western scientific words, taken mainly from Greek and Latin sources. The first part of the Lord's Prayer in Interglossa, preceded by a literal translation, runs like this:

"We parent in heaven; we say want; you name become revere; more you rule have happen; more the people do harmony you intention on earth like in heaven."

Na parenta in urani; na dicte volo; tu nomino gene revere; plus tu crati habe accido; plus u demo acte harmono tu tendo epi geo homo in urani.

A final brief sample of a constructed tongue, of interest because it makes an attempt to blend not only Latin-Romance, Greek and Germanic, but also Slavic elements, is Cheshikhin's Nepo of 1910. Here is the first part of the Lord's Prayer in Nepo:

Vatero nia, kotoryja estas in la njeboo, heiliga estu nomo via; kommenu regneo via; estu volonteo via, jakoe in la njeboo, ebene soe na la erdeo.

SIDE II, Band 8: INTERLINGUA

Interlingua, the composite effort of a team of linguists who worked on the project for nearly thirty years, is described by its foremost proponent, Dr. Alexander Gode, as a language to be used not so much in spoken as in written form, for use at scientific congresses. Its principle is that of maximum internationality of both words and grammatical forms, but the pilot languages were Latin, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, English, German and Russian. This means that the Latin-Romance group, often joined by English, had an absolute majority, with the result that Interlingua is best described as a Pan-Romance tongue. But Dr. Gode also produced a sample of what might be styled an intercontinental version of Interlingua, with representation granted to Oriental languages. At the same time, he warned his readers that since these tongues are widely different from one another, the Japanese would still have to learn the Chinese and Indonesian elements, as well as the western, while the westerner trying to use this version of Interlingua would find it extremely difficult. Here is the passage he used as an illustration, preceded by the English text:

"The sun says: 'My name is sun. I am very brilliant. I rise in the east, and when I rise, it is day. I look through your window with my eye as bright as gold, and I tell you when it is time to get up. And I say to you: 'Lazy one, get up. I don't shine so that you may stay in bed sleeping, but that you may get up and work, that you read and go walking.'"

Le sol dice: "Io me appella sol. Io es multo brillante. Io me leva al est, e quando io me leva, il es die. Io riguarda per tu fenestra con mi oculo brillante como le auro, e io te dice quando il es tempore a levar te. E io te dice: 'Pigro, leva te. Io non brilla a fin que tu resta al lecto a dormir, sed que tu te leva e labora, que tu lege, e que tu te promena.'"

Note now the transition to an intercontinental version:

Mata-hari yu: "Wo-ti nama mata-hari. Wo taihen brillante. Wo leva wo a est, dan toki wo leva wo, ada hari. Wo miru per ni-ti fenestra sama wo-ti mata brillante como kin, dan wo yu ni toki ada tempo a levar ni. Dan wo yu ni: 'Sust, leva ni. Wo non brilla sam-rap ni tomaru a toko a nemuru, sed wo brilla sam-rap ni leva ni, dan que ni suru kam, ni yumu, dan ni aruku.'"

We come last of all to that most popular of constructed languages, Esperanto. Among all the constructed languages, it has achieved the greatest vogue. It is claimed that no fewer than eight million people speak it. Numerous newspapers and magazines in Esperanto appear in various countries, and Esperanto programs are often broadcast on radio stations. It has a grammatical structure so simple that it can be learned in an hour, with a system of word-formation that lends itself to infinite expansion of vocabulary. It has a flourishing literature, both original and in translation, and this furnishes incontrovertible proof that a constructed language is capable of conveying and even creating cultural values. Its sounds are fairly easy, and it has perfect sound-for-symbol correspondence in its spelling. Its vocabulary leans heavily in the direction of the western tongues, with Latin, Greek, Romance, English and German well represented, but very little consideration given to Slavic and Oriental tongues. Its phonetic spelling is marred by the use of suprascript characters (hooks over certain letters) to which many printers object, and which could conceivably be dispensed with if Esperantists were willing to utilize to the full the resources of the Roman alphabet. (q, w, x and y are not used in Esperanto).

Definite proof that Esperanto can be used even in original poetry is supplied by a poem entitled Sur la Kampo, "On the Battlefield", composed in 1945 by an American soldier, D. B. Richardson. The writer represents himself as standing guard over a snow-covered battlefield at night. Every day the men fight. Some win, some die. Only at night is there peace. But the sky is reddened by a distant bombardment, as though the blood of the dying colored the landscape. His buddies are asleep on the snow; he prays that their rest may not be broken. Something stirs. Halt! Who goes there? No, it is only passing shadows, phantoms from the soldier's own memory, visions from the past; the ghostly forms are those of his parents, his sweetheart, his friends. I'm coming back, you ghosts! Soon we shall be together once more! While I stand here looking at you, it is not I who stand guard over you, but you who stand guard over me. You bring back tranquillity to my heart.

Sur la kampo neĝo brilas
Blanke sub la pala lun';
Kie tage ni batalis,
Kelkaj venkis, kelkaj falis,
Regas nokta paco nun.

Bombardado malproksima
Ekrugiĝas en ĉiel';
Kvazaŭ sango de l' mortintoj
Kaj la ardo de l' venkintoj
Intermiksas en paŝtel'.

Tie staras mi la gardon,
Dum kunuloj en tranĉe'
Dormas pace sur la neĝo;
De mi supren iras preĝo
Ke la dorm' rompiĝu ne.

Io movas; malamiko?
Haltu, formoj, kiuj ajn!
Kiaj aĵoj tiel iras,
Marŝas kaj nenion diras,
Ho, silenta noktotrajn'?

La pasantaj ombroj estas
Nur fantomoj de l' memor';
Scenoj el la infaneco,
Revoj de la pasinteco,
Plej proksimaj al la kor'.

Venas pensoj pri la hejmo,
Trans la blua salondar';
Pri la patro kaj patrino,
Kaj la kara amatino,
Kaj fidela amikar'.

Mi revenos, ho, fantomoj!
Baldaŭ kune estos ni;
Nun, dum ombrojn mi rigardas,
Ne mi vin, sed vi min gardas;
Kaj trankvila restas mi.

Such are the candidates for the post of international language. When the time for the choice comes, which one of them will be chosen? Or will it be one that is not included in this survey? That we cannot tell. But the time for the choice will surely come. It is closer than most of us think.