What's Behind A Name?

Language Can Be Deceiving

What's in a name?

For that matter, what's in a word?

We use many words daily without knowing quite what they mean.

Example: More women in this nation, probably, are named Mary than anything else.

Yet, how many Marys know their name means "bitter."

George is another much-used name. It means "farmer."

Or further, of the four million people living in that part of New York City called Manhattan, how many of them realize that Manhattan stands for a "place where we all got drunk?"

7 Lived Up To His Name

How fitting that a section noted for its night life should live up to its name.

All this to show that words are not always what they are cracked up to be.

The study and story of languages is an interesting one. A professor of language, Mario Pei, in a very fascinating book recently published, has traced the various languages and shown how they blend into one another.

Dr. Pei writes that "a fundamental unity, indicating a common ancestry, underlies such diverse tongues as English, Russian Irish, Spanish, Greek, Albanian, Armenian, Persian and Hindustani."

Arabic Related To Finnish

Such tongues as Arabic, the Amharic of Ethiopia are in another family grouping and Finnish, Hungarian, Turkish and most of the languages of Asiatic Russia form a third group.

English belongs to the Indo-European family of tongues. Such languages include some spoken from Britain all the way over to the northern part of India.

These tongues may sound different but they have much in common.

Language, says Dr. Pei, changes constantly. The English of King Alfred's time is understood today by only the most skilled scholars and even Shakespeare's English escapes many moderns.

Language changes, absorbs other tongues. English as spoken in America has everything in it. Each national group that has emigrated to the U.S. has added refinements of its own to the English already spoken here.

Let's look into Americanese and see what makes it up.

Place names are a suitable beginning.

Students of languages have found that when a new race or nation takes over a territory, the language may change, but the names of the cities and other locations remain the same usually.

In our country, many cities have kept their Indian names though the Indians were shoved out.

Chicago, for example, means "place of skunk smells." It comes from the Piankashaw Indian word "chi-kak-quwa." In the old days, Chicago was a region where wild onions grew.

Biloxi Means 'Worthless'

Hoboken means "tobacco pipe," Biloxi, in Mississippi means "worthless."

Indian names abound: Oswego is a "place of flies," Ticonderoga, "brawling water," Tennessee stands for "vines of the big bend," Oklahoma, "the red people," and Michigan, "fish catching place."

Other of the 48 states have equally descriptive names. Iowa (the sleepy ones), Kansas (a breeze near the ground) Kentucky (the dark and bloody ground) Illinois (the tribe of perfect men) Texas, (friends) and Idaho ("good morning.")

Indians Drank Rum

Manhattan, which was mentioned earlier, stems from the Delaware Indian language, "the place where we all got drunk" which makes reference to a heavy drinking session the natives, engaged in with a barrel of Henry Hudson's rum.

Lake Success, site of the United Nations, does not have anything to do with achievement at all.

Success, here, is derived from an Indian word "suksat." Its meaning is not clear.

The meaning of place - names is fascinating, once discovered, in all parts of the world.

'A PLACE WHERE WE ALL GOT DRUNK' is what Manhattan, N.Y. really means. Manhattan is a Delaware Indian name. Does it fit this section of the world's largest city?

HAILE SELASSIE
Rules 'land of burnt faces'

DR. W. E. B. DuBOIS
His name means 'woods'

Gibraltar has evolved from the Arabic term "Jebel Tarik" (Tarik's mountain).

Tarik was chief of the Moslems who overran Spain in the eighth century.

Mexico stems from "Mexitli," the war-god of the Aztec Indians.

JESUS
Greek for Joshua

South America's Amazon River was so named by Orellana, an explorer, after a battle with the natives. He found that the women were braver than the men.

Andes Means Copper

Hence, he borrowed the name from the Amazons of mythology.

Andes, name of a South American mountain range, means "copper."

In the Caribbean, Barbados means "bearded" after the bearded fig trees which grow there.

Rumania, now under Russian domination, originally stood for "land of the Romans." These people trace their ancestry to the Roman soldiers who settled at Dacia.

Palestine does not mean land of the Jews as is popularity supposed. Rather it is "land of the wanderers" or Philistines. The Hebrew word for Palestine is "Erets Yisrael (land of Israel Israel alone is "alerted of God."

Burnt Faces

Ethiopia was named so, not by the natives but by their neighbors, the Greeks. Ethiopia, "land of the burnt faces," is an Arabic phrase.

Ethiopia's other name, Abyssinia is Arabic for "mixture of the races."

Back to America again. Minnesota, Minnespolis, Minnehaha and other Indian names with "minne" in them, have to do with water. Minne-means water.

Liberia, in West Africa, means "free land." It is just that. A republic set up by President Monroe for freed slaves from America. Its capital city, Monrovia, is named for this president.

Addis Ababa, capital of Ethiopia is "new flower."

Cairo, in Arabic, is translated into English as "the triumphant female."

Personal and family names are fun to decipher.

Another Name For Helen

For instance, Helen in Hungarian is Illona or Ilka. Would you connect the two?

What is the most common name in England and the U.S.

It is Smith. Jones and Johnson place second and third.

Smith has its counterparts in other languages.

In German, it is Schmidt. French, Ferrier.
Italian, Ferraro.
Dutch, Smit.
Polish, Kowalczk.
Russian, Kusnetzov.

In China, Chen is the family name used as widely as Smith is in Anglo-Saxon countries.

Calvin is 'Bald'

Not all personal names are flattering. Calvin is Latin for "bald." Ulysses, Greek, means "hater." Priscilla, Latin, "somewhat old." Mary is Hebrew for "bitter."

If movie star Lana Turner knew her first name meant "wool" in Latin, Spanish and Italian, she might be tempted to change.

Some names are borrowed as happened when a native tribe in Nyasaland, Africa, which took names from a publisher's catalogue. One chief chose "Oxford University Press," for his new monicker.

Jesus is Greek for the Hebraic term, Joshua which means Savior.

John Six Ways

John is a widely used name in English. John in other languages looks like this:
Russian—Ivan.
Finnish—Juhana.
Germany—Johannes.
Italian—Giovanni.
French—Jean.
Spanish—Juan.

Take a name like Mamie. It is from Old French. "M'amie (my lady friend) or "m'aimee" (my beloved.)

All this proves that there's more to a name, sometimes, than just letters thrown together.

In Dr. Pei's book, "The Story Of Language," many more revealing insights into the make-up of present day languages can be found.

Why study a foreign language? Well, as one writer has said, "no nation knows itself until it knows its past."

How Many Adults Believe In God?

Ninety-nine per cent of American adults believe in God. This figure has been arrived at in the first impartial nation-wide survey of religious beliefs ever made in the United States.

The survey, made by an independent commercial opinion research firm, cut across racial and religious lines and examined the beliefs of Catholics, Protestants, Jews, other sects, and those professing no religious beliefs. The questionnaire and polling techniques, four months in preparation, were reviewed and approved by Dr. George Gallup of the Gallup Poll.

The first report on the survey is published in the November Catholic Digest, the magazine which sponsored the poll.

Basic Question

In the questionnaire, the basic question put to Americans was: "Do you believe in a God?" The question was understood. It could not be side-stepped because of a lack of directness. Ninety-nine percent said they believe in God. Only one percent said they do not believe.

Looking more closely at the survey, belief in a God among those who said they were Protestant was found to be just under 99 per cent, those who said they were Catholic just under 100 percent, among those who said they were Jewish slightly less than 97 percent. Disbelief was greatest among those who said they belonged to no church group. Of the sexes, women stood at close to 100 per cent while men mustered only 98 percent.

Strength of Belief

In addition, all who answered "Yes" were asked: "How strong would you say this belief is"—"Absolutely certain there is a God"—"fairly sure there is—not quite sure, but like to think there is—or, not at all sure, but not sure there isn't."

Of the total, 87 percent were absolutely certain, 10 percent fairly sure, and 2 percent not quite sure, with less than ½ of 1 percent not at all sure. Of the Catholics 92 percent were absolutely certain, 7 percent fairly sure, 1 percent not quite sure. Of the total Protestants, 87 percent were absolutely certain, 10 percent fairly sure, 2 percent not quite sure.

The Jews were 70 percent absolutely certain, 18 percent fairly sure, 9 percent not quite sure. Of those from no religious group, only 55 percent were absolutely certain, 21 percent fairly sure, 7 percent not quite sure, and 2 percent not at all sure. From this group came the largest percentage who did not believe in God: 12 percent and the 3 percent who did not know.

Future reports on the survey's findings will show the intensity of that belief in practice.

Price Rule Questions

Editor's Note: The Office of Price Stabilization is part of your government. It is duty bound to answer any questions you may have about inflation or price regulations. Send your questions to this newspaper or to your nearest OPS District Office.

Q—A TV repairmar. I called in to fix our set says that TV price ceilings have been suspended and he has to charge more for his service. Is this right?

A—It most certainly is not right. Repair services on TV sets or any other electrical appliance are subject to OPS ceiling price regulations and if you feel overcharged ask to see his ceiling price for repairs and get in touch, if need be, with your nearest OPS District Office.

Only th price of new television sets has been suspended from controls and this is because prices at retail have been under existing ceilings and have not to date threatened to go above those ceilings.

OPS reminds homemakers that beef is priced at retail stores according to cut and grade. There are dollar and cents ceilings for all the popular cuts of beef.

Ethiopia Gets A Direct Outlet To The Sea

The newly-elected head of the Eritrean government, Tedla Bairu (right), bows in a traditional manner as he shakes hands with Ethiopia's Emperor Haile Selassie, who has just signed the decree federating Eritrea to Ethiopia. Looking on is Queen Woizero Menen, wife of Selassie.

By CHATWOOD HALL

ADDIS BABA, Ethiopia — On September 11, 1952 more than a million colored East Africans and 45,000 square miles of territory was transferred to the sovereignty of the Ethiopian Crown.

The territory is Italy's former colony of Eritrea and the people are about equally divided between Tigrinya Christians and Moslem inhabitants. They are all Eritreans. Besides there are about 30,000 Italians, and their number is expected to increase.

Model Colony

Eritrea was an Italian model colony for more than half a century. Italian is universally spoken, in addition to Tigrinya and Arabic.

Italy was compelled to renounce the colony under the terms of the peace treaty of 1946, signed in Paris.

Since 1941 when British forces mostly colored, defeated the Italians in Eritrea, the territory has been under British Administration. The British will withdraw completely this month.

Credit must be given to the British for the abolition of color restrictions, formerly imposed by the Italians, during their administration.

Heavy Mixed Population

However, the Italians seemed not to draw any color restrictions in their relations with comely Eritrean girls and women. Eritrea has a heavy half-cast Italian Eritrean population particularly in the cities.

When, after the war, the Big Four powers failed to reach agreement on disposal of the territory, the matter was transferred to the United Nations.

Ethiopia stoutly demanded outright annexation of Eritrea. Her demands were rejected, but a compromise was reached to make Eritrea a self-governing federated unit of Ethiopia.

What It Means

This means that Eritrea and the Eritreans will enjoy a status similar to that of a state in the United States.

The United Nations stipulated that this federation must be fully accomplished not later than Sept. 15, 1952.

Under United Nations guidance, the Eritreans have adopted a constitution of their own and have established their own elected Representative Assembly (Parliament).

The division of elected membership is 50 per cent Christian and 50 per cent Moslem.

Democratic Constitution

The new Eritrean Constitution is fully democratic and guarantees all the basic freedoms and fundamental human rights. Among these are freedom of speech and association, recognition of trade unions, forbiddance of any discrimination whatsoever based on race, color, creed of nationality, freedom of religious worship and activity, etc.

Incidentally, the new constitution of this new autonomous territory is the most democratic in all Africa.

It puts to shame the undemocratic and inhuman outrages being perpetrated in South Africa at the other end of the African continent by supposedly highly civilized and Christian Europeans of Dutch extraction.

The author of the Eritrean Constitution is Dr. Eduardo Anze Matienzo, of Bolivia, who was assigned the task by the United Nations.

Outlet To Sea

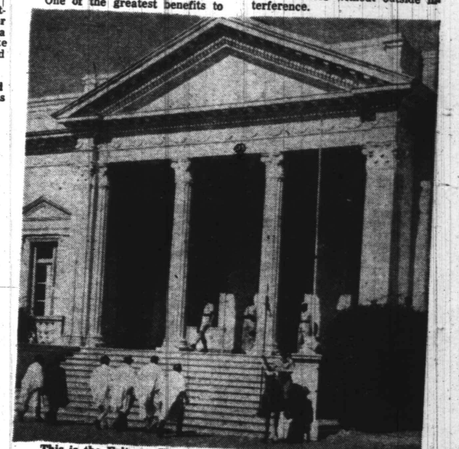
One of the greatest benefits to Ethiopia proper under the federation will be that the 650-mile Eritrean coastline on the Red Sea will give Ethiopia a long-sought direct outlet to the sea. However, Ethiopia still has no seagoing ships or coast guard vessels to patrol this long coastline.

While the Ethiopian Crown will be the symbol of federated sovereignty, the Ethiopian Throne will not rule, except in foreign affairs, defense and foreign trade. Eritreans will have complete home rule and self-government in all other matters without outside interference.

TEDLA BAIRU SHEIK RADAI
Head Eritrean Assembly

This map shows how the federation of Eritrea with Ethiopia gives Ethiopia a direct outlet of the Red Sea.

Ballot boxes were sealed officially under the keen eyes of the British administration as Eritrea voted for members of its new Assembly and established self-rule.



This is the Eritrean House of Representatives. Formerly the Italian Governor's palace, at Asmara, it is also the birth-place of the UN-sponsored beginning of Eritrea's self-rule as a federated state with Ethiopia.

Election of members of the Representative Assembly was held throughout Eritrea in March. Shown here is the electoral committee and staff of the polling station at Acria quarter of Asmara. The balloting represented the first time in the country's history that an Assembly had been elected by the people.

The new Representative Assembly holds its first session. Its makeup is equally divided between Christians and Moslems. Its primary task was to discuss the constitution submitted by the United Nations Commissioner, which was ultimately adopted as a whole. Total membership as 68 members. (UNations Photo)