
The fourth of a four-part gazetteer of the basic geopolitical vocabulary of the English language, dealing with the facts, fancies, fallacies, ambiguities and subtle implications of such words. For convenience of presentation, the material is not always in strict alphabetical order.

An ABC of World English

KENYA TO ZIMBABWE

TOM McARTHUR

KENYA may well be unique, the only national name that has changed its pronunciation in the transition from colony to independent state. As recently as 1976, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* called the preferred pronunciation Kên-ya, noting however that 'it is associated with the British colonial administration', and that Kên-ya 'is preferred by African nationals'. In less than ten years the shift of preference has been made away from the colonial link, from the vowel sound in *key* to the sound in *Ken*.

English is not deeply rooted in Kenya, but serves nonetheless as a *lingua franca* of the educated. Nowadays, says Jane Zuengler, 'most literature in Kenya is indeed in English, and the publications are increasing, from dime-store novels to more sophisticated examples which form part of the African literature syllabus in schools and the university' ('Kenyan English', in Braj Kachru, *The Other Tongue*, 1982). There is still argument about how Kenyanized English has become, but the fact that Oxford University Press in Nairobi brought out in 1974 a handbook of common errors called *All what I was taught and other mistakes* (B D W Hocking) suggests that some kind of local variant may well be stirring.

MALAYSIA is almost a portmanteau term. It echoes both colonial Malaya and continental Asia, while in fact it was formed by adding *-ia* to the plural *Malays*. It is therefore the land of the Malays as Turkey is the land of the Turks, although in Central Asia there are Turks galore who have never seen Turkey and in Southern Asia there are many Malays who live elsewhere than Malaysia. Of English in Malaysia today John T Platt observes (in Bailey & Görlach, *English as a World Language*, 1982):

'In Singapore and what is now Malaysia, English served as a *lingua franca* among those who had been educated at English-medium schools, not

only for Chinese, Malays, and Indians but for Chinese of different Chinese "dialect" backgrounds. Among the English-medium-educated, it was a prestige *lingua franca* in which topics of any kind could be discussed, whereas the pidgin *lingua franca*, Bazaar Malay, was appropriate only for humble, basic matters like bargaining in markets or instructing workers . . . In recent years, because of different government policies, the status and functions of English in Singapore and Malaysia having been moving apart. In the Republic of Singapore, both the sounds and the visual impact of English are common, but in Malaysia, English is being replaced more and more in all spheres of life by Malay, although it remains important as an international language and communicative link with world science and technology.'

MAN is only one of many islands around Britain, but it differs from the Isles of Wight, Skye and the others by having an ancient parliament of its own, the Tynwald (Old Norse *thingvollr*, 'land assembly'). Like the Channel Islands, Man belongs to the British Crown but is not part of the United Kingdom. It is as anomalous as its own tailless cat, as is the adjective *Manx*. This word also derives from Old Norse, whose *mansk* was given the same twist as the word *ask* in the 'don't aks me' of several English dialects. *Manx* is also the name of a people and a language: 'The Manx or Manings . . . that inhabit the Isle of Man (Holme, 1688); 'the language of Ireland is like that of the North of Scotland, in many things like the Welch and Manques' (Petty,

1672); 'In the Northern part of the Island they speak a deeper Manks, as they call it, than in the South' (Sacheverell, 1702: all from the *OED*).

Ned Maddrell, the last native speaker of Manx, died no longer ago than 1974. Prior to that, the last small Celtic language to succumb was Cornish, with the death of Dolly Pentreath in 1777. In his *Celtic: A Comparative Study* (The Oleander Press 1980), Douglas Gregor dedicated a poem to the memory of both Maddrell and Pentreath. 'The silence deepens and begins to spread,' he says in it; 'Oh do not die! Oh think what goes for good: you take with you a language to the grave.'

NEW ZEALAND is the European name, while the Maori equivalent is *Aotearoa*, 'Land of the Long White Cloud'. Today, the islands' population is some three million of mainly European descent and a quarter of a million Maori(s). Along with Australia, New Zealand has in the course of four wars provided the 20th century with two durable acronyms: ANZAC (the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps of the First World War) and ANZUS (the Australia, New Zealand and United States mutual defence pact of 1952).

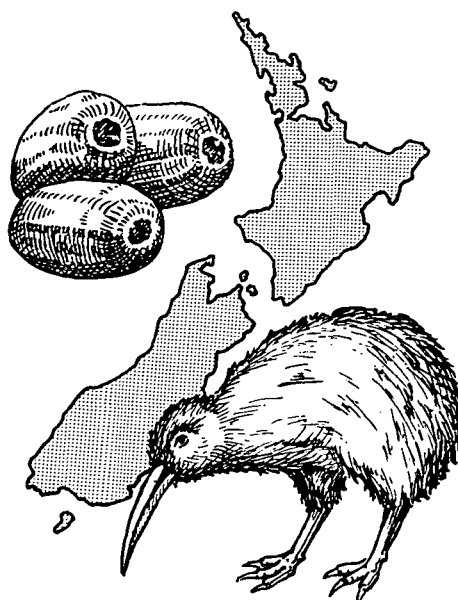
In addition to Aotearoa, the locals have a third, less formal name for New Zealand: Godzone, which is not so much a zone set up by or for God, but a self-celebrating syncopation of God's Own Country. In commenting on the social life of Karangahape Road in Auckland, K S Clark observes: 'On warm summer evenings, when it is packed with Polynesians and the shops are livid with

FLIGHTLESS FANCIES

There has been no land bridge with New Zealand since the break up of Gondwanaland 150 million years ago, which meant that the indigenous vegetation was unique . . . as were the few animals and birds found there. Some of the birds were flightless such as the kiwi, weka and kakapo and had been able to survive and feed on the ground through a lack of predators and competition for food at that level. (Derek Leather, 'Deer on the Wing', *The Geographical Magazine*, Oct 84)

The tide of emigration from New Zealand to Australia is now in reverse. In the early 1970s, thousands of Kiwis took wing for the Australian good life and high wages. Their favourite area, the Sydney beach suburb of Bondi, became known as 'Little Auckland'. ('Kiwis Fly Home', *The Observer*, 12 Aug 84)

It may be homely on the outside, often likened to a small suede potato or dubbed the 'hairy berry', but the kiwifruit is now being hailed as the wave of New Zealand's future. Prime Minister David Lange points to the kiwifruit as a symbol that, economically speaking, there can be



life for New Zealand beyond sheep . . . As a food, the kiwifruit rates highly. The succulent green flesh is dotted with minute edible seeds. Its taste often is described as melon-like, but distinctive. (Steve Lohr, 'Kiwifruit as an Economic Sweetener', *International Herald Tribune*, 10 April 85)

New Zealand English is a blend of American, Australian and British pl words and expressions adapted to the New Zealand experience. *Mate* (friend) is English. *Billy* (pot) is Australian. *Cop* (policeman) is American. *Pakeha* is a Maori word and means *white person*. All of these have gone into the *billy* called *Kiwies* – the interesting stew that is New Zealand English. ('New Zealand English', *The Reporter: Italy's First and Most Popular Monthly EFL Publication*, Florence, March 85)

Kiwi 1 a flightless New Zealand bird (genus *Apteryx*) with rudimentary wings, stout legs, a long bill, and greyish-brown hairlike plumage 2 *ca* a native or resident of New Zealand used as a nickname 3a a climbing plant (*Actinidia chinensis*) found in Asia b *kiwi*, **kiwi fruit** an edible oval fruit of this plant that has a brown hairy skin, green flesh, and black seeds, called also the CHINESE GOOSEBERRY [Maori, of imit origin; (3) fr the fruit's being commercially exported from New Zealand] (*Longman Dictionary of the English Language*, 1984)

neon, it seems more like Asia than Godzone' (*Auckland, their Auckland*, Lansdowne Press, 1983).

The quote not only highlights local

ambiguities about race and region, but emphasizes Auckland's status as 'the Polynesian capital of the world', where for example the Mount Eden Community

Festival in November 1984 could send out its invitations in six languages side by side: English, Maori, Tongan, Samoan, Cook Island and Niuean.

WAITANGI AFTERMATH

For the New Zealand Government, Waitangi Day is a valuable symbol of nationhood and of unity between the races, but for many Maori in recent years it has become a focal point for the expression of aggrieved feelings [because of the nature and effect of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 that purportedly assigned sovereignty to Britain] . . . Most damaging of all, the treaty failed to safeguard the standing of the Maori in their own country, for they have become an under-developed minority surrounded by pakeha affluence in a society where pakeha values have become the measure of all things. Cultural assimilation has been the 20th century norm – the whites providing the culture and the Maoris the assimilation. (Robert Macdonald, 'The new challenge of the tribes', *The Guardian*, 3 Mar 84)

'We now have Pakeha in New Zealand,' Wallace said, 'and many of us feel we can't do without Pakeha.

So we strive to cooperate, we've tried to get on . . . We recognize also that our culture has been taken away from us forcefully, our language has been destroyed through the education avenues. Even my own parents were strapped or caned – they were corporally punished for speaking the language,' said Wallace, who had to be coached to speak his Maori lines in 'Utu'. Among these Maori ways, he says is the belief that to go to jail is to disgrace the family name. So, he said, 'I changed my name out of the blue . . .' That was the origin of Anzac Wallace, although the name on his birth certificate, he says, is Norman Pene Rewiri. (Lawrence Van Gelder, 'Out of Prison and Into the Movies', *IHT*, 15 Oct 84)

'The exhibition comprises some of Maoridom's most sacred and most valuable *taonga*, our treasures,' says Prof. Sidney Mead, head of Maori studies at Victoria University of Wellington, and editor of the book

and catalogue that accompany the exhibition. (David Barber, 'Maoris show their art outside New Zealand', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 15–21 Sept 84)

The Whanau A Kai, the family of Kai, an ancestor, are the tangata whenua. They are the children of this land. They live close together, clustered around the meeting house, the painted Rongopai, which is the heart of the village. Even before Rongopai was built they were here. In those times the tangata whenua were many; their number is small now . . . You'll find that the passengers will stare at you as you step onto the bus . . . They will ask: What you want to come to our one-horse place for! And after they have asked you, tell them you want to see the meeting place, Rongopai. That will make them proud, so proud. And they will look at you with love, with aroha, for you have honoured them. (Witi Ihimaera, *Whanau*, Heinemann, 1974)

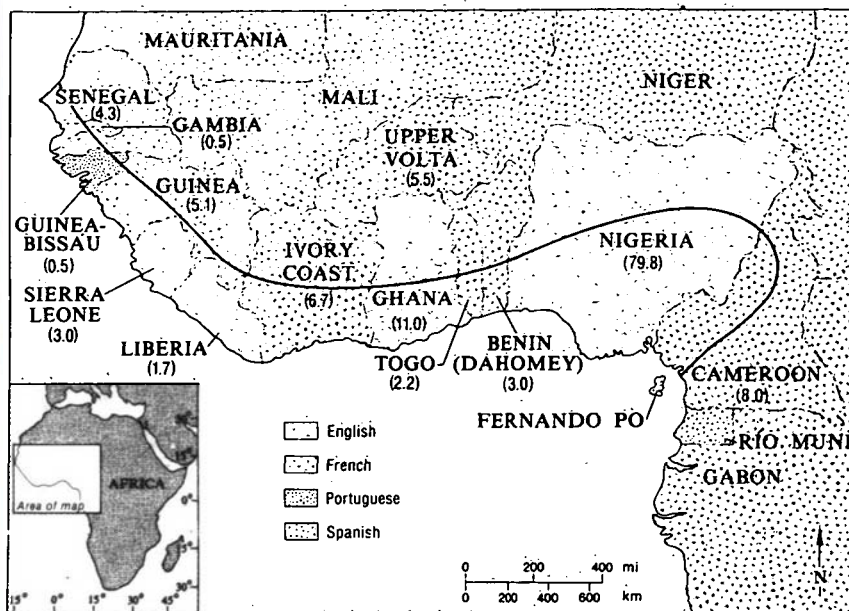
NIGERIA is a reminder never to jump to etymological conclusions. The state takes its name from the river Niger, and *niger* in Latin is 'black', the ultimate origin of both 'nigger' and 'Negro'. The river, however, was known to the ancients as Nigir, which derives – according to Diuldé Laya ('Niger', *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1976) – from the Tamashek phrase *gher n-gheren* ('river among rivers'). There is no connection, therefore, between *Niger* and *niger*.

Nigeria is the result of the European carve-up of Africa at the Berlin conference of 1884. It has many languages (such as Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba), but English serves as a kind of national linguistic cement, varying along a cline from pidgin to an increasingly self-confident local standard. According to Ayo Bamgbose (in Kachru, *The Other Tongue*), many educated Nigerians deny that there is a specifically Nigerian English, but he tells the following story to demonstrate that it does indeed exist:

'Children are taught to say that "senior brother" is wrong; they should say "elder brother". Yet the former is used by a majority of educated Nigerian speakers of English. I recall a moderation meeting for the English paper of the West African school certificate examination. One of the idioms to be tested was "putting back the clock", which in Nigerian English is putting back *the hands* of the clock. It is interesting that only two of the persons present knew the correct version of this idiom. One was a native speaker; the other had consulted a dictionary of English idioms in preparation for the meeting.'

PAKISTAN blends geography with ideology, a modern acronym of ancient placenames:

- The name P., for a Moslem division of British India, was put forward at the time of the Round Table Conference of 1930–1; it was made up by Chaudhary Rahmat Ali (1897–1951) from the names of the predominantly Moslem parts of the subcontinent: Punjab, NW Frontier (inhabited chiefly by Afghans), Kashmir, Sind, and Baluchistan (*stan* in Urdu meaning land; the fact that *pak* means pure in Urdu probably added to the attraction of the name). (*Hutchinson 20th Century Encyclopedia*, 1984)
- The word was coined by Moslem students at Cambridge in 1933 and variously interpreted as 'land of the pure' (in Persian and Urdu) or as a combination of the initials of Punjab, Afghanistan (or Afghanistan, i.e. North-West Frontier Province), Kashmir, Iran (or Islam), Sind and the last syllable of Baluchistan; to describe the territorial claims of the Moslem League. (*Steinberg's Dictionary of British History*, 1970)



The map, taken from Bailey & Görlach *English as a World Language*, displays West Africa's colonial language legacy and in particular, by means of a single continuous line, the approximate extent of the use of West African Pidgin English as a lingua franca. Below, from the same source, a poem in Krio, the distinctive English creole of Sierra Leone, by Thomas Decker:

<i>slip gud</i>	Sleep Well
<i>Slip gud o, bebi-gial!</i>	[Sleep well, baby girl
<i>opin yai lilibit</i>	Open your eyes a little
<i>en luk mi wan minit</i>	And look at me for a moment
<i>bifo yu slip.</i>	Before you sleep.
<i>A wan fɔ si dā tin</i>	I want to see that thing
<i>we kin de shāin insai</i>	That shines deep
<i>insai yu fain-fain yai</i>	Deep in your beautiful eyes
<i>en kɔt mi at.</i>	And tears at my heart.
<i>So! set yu yai nau nɔ</i>	So! close your eyes now please
<i>a tink se a dɔn si</i>	I think I've seen
<i>wetin a wan fɔ si.</i>	What I wanted to see.
<i>Gudnait! Slip gud.</i>	Good night! Sleep well.]

Whatever the precise truth of the matter, the present Islamic Republic of Pakistan is a checkerboard of communities and languages, including Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashto, Urdu and Baluchi so distributed as to prevent any one becoming the overall language of the nation. As a result, English serves as a de facto official language although it is used by little more than 2% of the population, and is spread as a language of administration in a thin layer over the regional vernaculars.

PIDGIN is a complex, controversial and emotive term. To introduce it, we can look at how defining it has changed between the 1965 edition of *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* and the

1981 revision by Ivor H Evans:

- [1965] **Pidgin-English.** The semi-English lingua franca used in China and the Far East, consisting principally of mispronounced English words with certain native grammatical constructions. For instance, the Chinese cannot pronounce *r*, so replace it with *l* – *te-lee* for 'three', *solly* for 'sorry', etc. – and, in Chinese, between a numeral and its noun there is always inserted a word (called the 'classifier') and this, in Pidgin-English, is replaced by *piece* – e.g. *one-piece kniffee*, *two piece hinghichi* (handkerchiefs). *Pidgin* is a corruption of *business*.
- [1981] **Pidgin English.** Originally a form of Anglo-Chinese jargon which developed on the China coast from the 17th century as a consequence of contact

with English traders and businessmen. It is essentially a form of basic English with some Chinese, and additions from other tongues, but with certain Chinese constructions and a characteristic Chinese pronunciation. e.g. *ploper* for 'proper', *solly* for 'sorry', *makee* for 'make', *tinkee* for 'think', etc. Pidgin is a corruption of 'business', hence, *this is not my pidgin*, this is not my business, not my responsibility, not my affair. Similar forms, of largely independent growth, using the same basic words, have become widespread in the Pacific, Australia, Africa and elsewhere.

The Brewer entries may be compared first of all with the entry for 'pidgin' in an American desk encyclopedia in 1983, then with a scholarly observation written in 1971:

- **pidgin**, a lingua franca that is not the mother tongue of anyone using it and that has a simplified grammar and restricted, often polyglot, vocabulary. An example is the pidgin English used in Far Eastern ports, principally for trading between the English and Chinese. The basic English vocabulary had Malay, Chinese, and Portuguese elements. (*Concise Columbia Encyclopedia*, 1983)

- The languages called pidgins and creoles have long been a stepchild, so far as serious attention, either public or scientific, is concerned. The interest and activity reflected in this book suggests that the stepchild may prove a Cinderella. *Pidgin and creole*, as types of language, first were effectively distinguished less than forty years ago . . . Pidgins arise as makeshift adaptations, reduced in structure and use, no one's first language; creoles are pidgins become primary languages. Both are marginal, in the circumstances of their origin, and in the attitudes towards them on the part of those who speak one of the languages from which they derive. Marginal, one might have also said, in terms of knowledge about them. These languages are of central importance to our understanding of language, and central too in the lives of some millions of people. Because of their origins, however, their association with poorer and darker members of a society, and through perpetuation of misleading stereotypes – such as that a pidgin is merely a broken or baby-talk version of another language – most interest, even where positive, has considered them mere curiosities. Much of the interest and information, scholarly as well as public, has been prejudicial. These languages have been considered, not creative adaptations, but degenerations; not systems in their own right, but deviations from other systems. Their origins have been explained; not by historical and social forces, but by inherent ignorance, indolence, and inferiority. (Dell Hymes, *Pidginization and Creolization of Languages*, Cambridge University Press, 1971)

The whole range of attitudes stated or implied in these quotations currently applies to the issue of Pidgin English, Pidgin Englishes, and pidgin languages at large: a gamut of opinion ranging from deprecation and disdain laced with amusement on the one hand to a growing academic-libertarian view that pidgins have their place, have always been with us and may indeed underlie such currently prestigious global 'high' languages as English and French, if one views their histories from a less conventional perspective.

SCOT expresses an ancient identity with the same monosyllabic directness as *Dane*, *Finn* and *Turk*. Like them it serves as a base for the name of a country – Scotland, Denmark, Finland, Turkey – but like 'Turk' it also serves to mask an old migration. Just as the Turks moved from the steppes of Asia to impose their name and culture on Asia Minor, so the Scots originated in Ireland, and by slow osmosis (from the 5th century onward) gave their name to the amalgam of Picts, Scots, Angles, Brits, Danes and Norse that inhabited northern Britain. A thousand years afterwards, some of those 'Scottish' Scots flowed back to Ireland as Protestant settlers in the 17th century, becoming the 'Ulster Scots', ancestors in their turn of the 'Scotch-Irish' who migrated to North America.

SCOTLAND is both obviously a nation and obviously not a nation, a condition which accounts for the psychological discomfort of many Scots. The long slow merger with England has been incomplete and probably defies completion. Although the Union of the Crowns took place in 1603 and the Union of the Parliaments in 1707, the 'unitary' state of Great Britain has left Scotland with its own church ('the Kirk'), banks, legal and educational systems. The result is a kind of semi-nation, about which Clifford Hanley observes:

'Like other small nations, [the Scots] are touchy. If an innocent outsider . . . assumes for instance that the Scots are a branch of the English – some of them are capable of taking offence . . . Many Scots take offence regularly at nearly everything. If there is such a thing as a national trait, taking offence is a Scottish national trait. Today, the peculiarly Scottish character, as seen from outside, is often a stereotype compounded of tartan, whisky, stinginess and a comic dialect composed of gutturals and rolling Rs. There is something in it. Tartan, whisky, stinginess and strange dialects are to be found in Scotland. However, so also are sober clothes, sober habits, generosity and good plain speech. As with all national groups, the Scots are a complex picture.' (*The Unspeakable Scot*, William Blackwood, 1977)

A Scot's sense of Scottishness is defined as much in terms of England as by internal factors. Centuries of warfare, rivalry and uneasy coexistence have bred a familial love/hate relationship between Scotland and England that echoes down the years:

- I am not yet of Percy's mind, the Hotspur of the North; he that kills me some six or seven dozen of Scots at a breakfast, washes his hands, and says to his wife, 'Fie upon this quiet life! I want work.' (William Shakespeare, *Henry IV*, Part 1)

- Sir, it is not so much to be lamented that Old England is lost, as that the Scotch have found it. (Samuel Johnson, 1776)

- I have been trying all my life to like Scotchmen, and am obliged to desist from the experiment in despair. (Charles Lamb, 1775–1834)

- Minds like ours, my dear James, must always be above national prejudices, and in all companies it gives me true pleasure to declare, that, as a people, the English are very little indeed inferior to the Scotch.' (Christopher North, 1785–1854)

- A young Scotsman of your ability let loose upon the world with £300, what could he not do? It's almost appalling to think of; especially if he went among the English . . . There are few more impressive sights in the world than a Scotsman on the make. (J M Barrie, 1860–1937)

- We switched on our radio set on Sunday night to listen to BBC Scotland's dramatised documentary 'The End of an Auld Sang'. We soon found MacBeeb was up to its old tricks again. The pro-Union party representing 'progress' and 'civilisation' were acted in beautifully modulated Scots/English; the forces of separatism and reaction were represented in a thick and uncouth vernacular. Connoisseurs of Scottish broadcasting (if there are any) will recognise the habit. Goodies speak English; baddies, Scots. (William Donaldson, letter to *The Scotsman*, 21 Jan 77)

SCOTS, quite apart from meaning more than one Scot, is also both an adjective and the name of the Anglo-Saxon language of Scotland. Consequently, a phrase like 'Scots literature' can mean either 'Scottish literature' generally (all literature in or about Scotland), or 'literature in Scots', such as the long tradition from John Barbour through Robert Burns to Hugh MacDiarmid. In broad general terms, however, Scots themselves are likely to use 'Scottish' to cover everything and anything in or about Scotland, 'Scots' in association with the language and its traditions, and 'Scotch' for commercial matters alone (like whisky and tweed). Nowadays, they generally prefer to be called 'Scots' to 'Scotch'.

The original Scots who came from Ireland spoke a Celtic language, Gaelic (or



JOHN IVACKAY

A Scotsman's Scottishness increases with his distance from Scotland

'Irish' as it has often been called), while the Angles of south-east Scotland spoke the Northumbrian tongue that eventually became the King's Scots, with its own legal code and literature. From the 17th century onward, however, Gaelic began its long retreat, while the King's Scots went into an uneasy and unequal partnership with the King's English. Today, however, the general English language of Scotland can and does draw on both indigenous and international usage to create a unique community within the English-speaking world: the first alternative centre of gravity to the English of England.

TANZANIA is formed (with the addition of *-ia*) from the *Tan* of Tanganyika and the *zan* of Zanzibar. It serves to name the single nation-state created in 1964 out of a mainland colony and an off-shore sultanate, whose histories – along with neighbouring parts of East Africa – have been complex. Of the resulting linguistic usages, Ian F Hancock and Rachel Angogo observe:

'The Germans colonized Tanganyika and Zanzibar (today unified as Tanzania) until the First World War. Their language policy was to encourage the use of kiSwahili [a Bantu lingua franca strongly influenced by Arabic], already well established along the coast and the inland slaving routes. Thus, when the English took over, there was already an effective lingua franca, and today kiSwahili is still employed in Tanzania in many of the social roles for which English is used in Uganda, Kenya, and Zambia. English is widely known and taught in Tanzania, especially in the capital, dar es

Salaam. In Tanzania there is little stigma attached to the use of kiSwahili; in Kenya and Uganda, on the other hand, it still has not attained full recognition, and English is the lingua franca with greatest prestige.' ('English in East Africa', in Bailey & Görlach, *English as a World Language*, 1982)

SOUTH AFRICA, like Canada, is a land in which English has had to compromise with another language of European origin. Where Canada has grown to nationhood with English and French often at loggerheads, the competing languages in South Africa have been English and Afrikaans, a variant of Dutch. Afrikaans, however, has moved farther from 'metropolitan' Dutch than any of the post-colonial standard forms of English and French have moved from their root-stock. There are many reasons for this, including the fact that the language of the Boer settlers in southern Africa was seldom committed to paper until the late 19th century.

The English of southern Africa is greatly varied, depending on the communities using it, but the Canadian parallel is evoked again by L W Lanham when he notes: 'In the popular press, the speech style combining English and Afrikaans elements is sometimes called *Anglikaans* in imitation of *Français* . . . Many literal translations from Afrikaans give this variety its typical flavour: *bell* 'to telephone' (e.g. *I'll bell some of the chicks*) . . . *otherside* 'on the other side of' (the post office is otherside the road) . . . *rather very* 'somewhat, a bit' (*since I saw you I've been rather very ill*)' ('English in South Africa', in B & G, *English as a World Language*, 1982).

SRI LANKA, in the Indian Ocean, is an island of many names. Both the oldest and the newest is *Lanka* (to which the honorific 'Sri' is added), the stronghold of the demon-king Ravan in the *Ramayana*, a Hindu epic more than 2,000 years old. To the Tamils the Island is *Ilam* or *Ilankai*, while to Arab traders it was *Serendip*, the place that Horace Walpole in 1754 made the home of 'serendipity', the faculty of making happy, unexpected discoveries. The British knew it as *Ceylon*, which they ruled from 1796 to 1948. Both Serendip and Ceylon derive from the Sanskrit *Sinhala-dvīpa*, 'island of the Sinhalas', a people also known variously as the Sinhalese, Singhalese, Cingalese and Ceylonese. Nowadays both they and their Tamil compatriots are simply Sri Lankans. In uneasily sharing an island and a name, however, the two communities are not unlike the Greek and Turkish Cypriots and the Catholic and Protestant Irish.

WALES and **WELSH** are words in whose origins it is possible to drown. Enticing etymologies tie them in with the last part of Cornwall and the first part of Wallachia, the Walloons of Belgium, the Welshes of England and the Wallaces of Scotland. The major Oxford dictionaries trace their descent from Old High German *walah* ('a foreigner' such as a Celt or a Roman); the Anglo-Saxon for this was *wealh*, whose plural *Wealas* gives us the country. The selfsame element also, whimsically, appears in *walnut*, the foreign as opposed to native hazel nut of northern Europe.

The Welsh call themselves (in Welsh) *Cymry* and their land *Cymru*, from an older Celtic *Combrogēs*, 'compatriots'. They are the last substantial remnant of the original Britons or Brythons, whose world was overlaid and transmuted with the coming of the Anglo-Saxons in the 5th century. They became – literally – foreigners in their own island, cut off from their kin in Strathclyde, Cornwall and Brittany and forced to evolve within the confines of their peninsular home.

The Anglo-Normans took over Wales in 1282, turning it into a principality of the English throne; thenceforward, all English-cum-British royal heirs have had bestowed upon them the title 'Prince of Wales'. Wales served as a springboard to Ireland, and was itself fully absorbed into the administrative system of England by the Acts of Union of 1536 and 1543 (which also made English the official language of law, education and trade). The Tudor monarchs of the time were of Welsh origin themselves, but few today think of Henry VIII or Elizabeth I as other than English.

Yet, despite their long subordination, the Welsh have the distinction of preserving their Celtic tongue more successfully than either the semi-nation of Scotland or the now independent Repub-

lic of Ireland. While Manx and Cornish are extinct and the Gaelic of Ireland and Scotland weak, Welsh is spoken by some half a million out of a population of just under three million, has its own TV channel, a national festival or Eisteddfod, and a militant Welsh Language Society (*Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg*) to defend it. The Welsh may variously feel delighted or dubious, ambivalent or committed about any or all of these, but it is a far firmer base than any other remnant of Celtdom, while Welsh English appears

as firmly entrenched as any other major regional variant.

ZAMBIA and ZIMBABWE share a river and the memory of a common colonial name. The river is the Zambesi (or Zambezi), while the memory is of Cecil Rhodes, the empire-builder who, from 1895 until quite recently, was commemorated in these states' former titles: Northern and Southern 'Rhodesia' respectively. Earlier than Rhodes, however,

the whole area around the river was vaguely known as 'Zambesia', and it is to this ancient Zambesi connection that the more northerly Zambia, attaining its independence from Britain in 1964, owes its name. The southern territory remained a Rhodesia longer, controlled by a quasi-independent white-minority regime, but in 1979 became the internationally-recognised black-ruled state of Zimbabwe.

Although similar in sound and appearance to both 'Zambesi' and 'Zambia', the name of the later state is taken from the ruined city now known as 'Great Zimbabwe', one of the most impressive archaeological sites in Africa. Zimbabwe means 'stone houses' in the Shona language. The links between Britain – and English – and the re-named Rhodesias is complex and quirky, as the following quotes demonstrate:

- The agents of Rhodes, making dubious treaties with illiterate chiefs, got up as far as the southern tip of Lake Tanganyika, 100 miles or so beyond Chinsali, the birthplace of [President Kenneth] Kaunda, ex-Vice President Simon Kapwepwe, and several other prominent Zambians. To hold back the Germans, advancing down from Tanganyika (now Tanzania), Rhodes marked two imaginary towns on the empty map, and called them Abercorn and Fife after British dukes. 'The British will never give up towns named after dukes,' he said. He was right. By such stratagems were the borders defined in Africa. (Richard Hall, 'Africa's Crucible', *The Observer*, 21 Oct 84)

- It is odd to see how lines from English poetry unexpectedly translate or take on a new life in Zimbabwe. One of the most surprising examples is Hopkins' *Spring*, which you would have thought was the essence of Englishness; but 'the glassy peartree leaves and blooms brush the descending blue' is such a Zimbabwean line . . . More often, unfortunately, poetry does not translate. I remember describing snow in great detail to account for a line in a Hardy poem. (Kate Kellaway, 'A passage to Africa', *The Sunday Times*, 22 July 84)

- The residents of Rhodesia Road, in Lambeth [London] . . . are bitterly angry and feel they are up against a brick wall already. Lambeth Council, following the GLC's lead on Anti-Racist Year, have decided to abolish Rhodesia Road and rename it Zimbabwe Road . . . Mr Hill told me last week that he had written to Councillor Norwood on behalf of the [multiracial] residents and also tried to speak to him by telephone. But he had never had a reply. 'Lambeth have made no attempt to justify the change of name. Their degree of interest in what the natives think is non-existent.' (Michael Davie, 'We're saying no to no say', *The Observer*, 11 Nov 84) LEB

TAFFY WAS A WELSHMAN . . .

The tensions between Welsh and English, Wales and England, have been long in the making and will not melt away over night. 'Taffy was a Welshman, Taffy was a thief' goes the old discriminatory jingle, while dictionaries describing the verb *welsh* (to avoid payment, to go back on a promise, as in *welshing on a deal*) either murmur 'of unknown origin' (the *Oxford Dictionary of Etymology*, 1966) or move on with a brief 'probably from Welsh' (*Websters Ninth Collegiate*, 1984). The current situation is tolerably well reflected in the following recent citations:

- Teddy, seeing Bronwen in her Canadian silver-fox furs, added to me with an admiration which I knew was genuine: 'My, that gal's got class! What an irony! But it was true. Teddy was using the word in its American sense, but I suddenly saw that this 'class' which Bronwen had acquired in Canada had made her by English standards classless. The shy secluded uneducated Welsh nursemaid had gone for ever, replaced by a well-dressed self-confident cultured woman whom the English could rank as an acceptable foreigner, someone who had a right to exist beyond the confines of the English class system. Bronwen's Welsh accent and her inner self had remained unchanged but a more egalitarian society than England had left its mark on her and the Canadian gloss on her personality was now her passport to freedom. (Susan Howatch, *The Wheel of Fortune*, 1984)

- Most English people find Welsh Nationalism either quaint or incomprehensible. They have no idea that Welsh is the oldest living European language, or . . . that Britain is only Great in order to distinguish it from the lesser Celtic realm of Brittany. They either don't know or don't care that Wales was England's first colony, and that the picturesque castles round which they stroll on holiday might still be resented by the people they controlled for half a millenium [sic]. (Julian Mitchell, 'A

passion for purple', *The Sunday Times*, 2 Dec 84)

- We had dour and largely incomprehensible Tynesiders; grim but great-hearted Scottish Chief Engineers ('Give it all you've got, Jock.' 'I'm giving it all I've got and more, I'm telling ye, Sir.');
- not to mention numerous comic but indomitable Welshmen, of whom one ('poor old Taff') is invariably bumped off by a stray piece of shrapnel two-thirds through the film. It is a rule of British war films that the comic Welshman is killed, whereas the equally comic but more cunning Cockney survives. (Alan Watkins, 'All of a sudden it's peace all round', *The Observer*, 10 Mar 85)

- Divisions between the socialist and traditionalist wings of Plaid Cymru [the Welsh Nationalist Party] deepened yesterday at the annual conference in Lampeter, Dyfed, when the chairman of the rightwing Hydro Group, Mr Keith Bush, resigned from the party . . . The rift is unlikely to be healed today by the result of the election for a new president. Mr Dafyd Elis Thomas, MP for Meirionnydd Nant Conwy, who established a national-left movement inside the party, is thought to have defeated Mr Dafydd Iwan, the party's chairman. Mr Thomas said that the party had reiterated its commitment to establish a decentralist socialist state in Wales. (Paul Hoyland, 'Divisions deepen in Plaid Cymru', *The Guardian*, 27 Oct 84)

- David Meurig Thomas, overseas marketing manager of the Tourist Board, says visitors are welcome at the exclusively Welsh National Eisteddfod, one of Europe's great folk festivals. This year's is to be held near Rhyll, on the north coast, Aug. 3–10. Here visitors can see the festival's ancient practices. But they are unlikely to understand much. English is used at the International Eisteddfod at Llangollen July 9–14. (Christopher Andreae, 'Wales: remote, intangible, unforgettable', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 27 Apr/3 May 85)