

#PAINTING

"The Kiss"

Francesco Hayez's Timeless Expression of Passion and Patriotism

Francesco Hayez's "The Kiss" (Italian: Il Bacio) is one of the most iconic paintings of 19th-century Italian Romanticism. Painted in 1859, it depicts a young couple locked in a deeply passionate kiss, captured at a fleeting, intimate moment. But beyond its sensuality, the painting is rich in symbolism and subtle political meaning.

Visual Description

The composition is deceptively simple. The young man leans into the woman, one foot already set to depart, suggesting urgency, and perhaps, danger. His body is partially turned away, his face nearly obscured, but the kiss is firm and urgent. The woman, dressed in a flowing blue gown, tilts backward slightly, returning the kiss with equal intensity. Her bare arm and exposed shoulder add to the emotional and physical intimacy of the moment. They are positioned at the foot of a stone staircase, with soft, diffused light falling on them from the left. A shadow looms in the background, barely noticeable but heightening the sense of secrecy and tension. The colours are rich but muted, earthy browns, soft blues, and the man's deep red cloak, adding to the mood of romantic melancholy.

Themes of Passion and Romance

At first glance, The Kiss is a celebration of romantic love, a pure and intense moment of connection. The lovers appear unaware of the world around them, completely absorbed in their embrace. Their kiss is not coy or reserved but deeply passionate, conveying urgency, tenderness, and a longing that suggests they may be parting.

A Hidden Political Message

While the painting is famous for its romanticism, it was also created at a time of great political upheaval in Italy. In 1859, Italy was in the midst of the Risorgimento, the movement for Italian unification. Many scholars interpret The Kiss not just as a love story, but as a symbol of patriotic sacrifice. The man's cloak, red, the colour of the Italian flag, hints that he may be a revolutionary, about to depart for a cause greater than personal love. The kiss becomes a metaphor for love of country, for the painful sacrifices made in the name of freedom. Hayez, a known supporter of unification, infused this private moment with a nationalistic undertone, making the personal political.

Legacy and Interpretation

Over the years, The Kiss has become a symbol of Romantic-era emotion, embodying the ideals of beauty, love, and sacrifice. It continues to resonate with modern viewers not only because of its sensuality but also because of its underlying tension between duty and desire, love and loss.

#RITUAL

A Shradddha Story



A well-known mythological tale from the Mahabharata era explains the significance of Shradddha rituals. After Karna, the noble and charitable warrior, died, his soul reached heaven. However, he was served gold and jewelry as food, which failed to satisfy his hunger. Karna asked Lord Indra why he wasn't being given proper food. Indra explained that during his life, he Karna had only donated gold and valuables but had never offered food (Anna Daan) to his ancestors. As a result, he could not

clear his ancestral debt (Pitru Rin) and was served what he had donated. Karna admitted he had no knowledge of his ancestors and pleaded with Indra for a chance to correct his mistake. Indra granted him 16 days to return to Earth. Karna performed Tarpan and donated food to his ancestors with devotion. This period became known as Pitru Paksha (16 days dedicated to ancestors), marking the beginning of Shradddha rituals. It is believed that since then, the tradition of Shradddha has been practiced to honour ancestors and ensure their salvation.

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A Tiny Typo May Explain a Centuries-Old Mystery

In the new study, Falk and Wade suggest the scribe incorrectly transcribed two key words that place *The Song of Wade* within an entirely new context. Their new translation reads: "Some are wolves and some are adders; some are sea-snakes that dwell by the water." Changing 'elves' and 'sprites' to 'wolves' and 'sea-snakes' "shifts this legend away from monsters and giants into the human battles of chivalric rivals," says Falk in the statement. The images are more grounded in the tribulations of romance, which the researchers argue also better fit Chaucer's later allusions to the poem.

Christian Thorsberg

Throughout history, connecting with younger generations has always been a challenging pursuit. But in the 12th century, one brave preacher gave it his best shot, delivering a sermon in Latin that included a brief pop culture reference from the hit romantic story of the day," Seb Falk, a historian at the University of Cambridge, says in a statement. "This is very early evidence of a preacher weaving pop culture into a sermon to keep his audience hooked."

The Song of Wade was so well-known in its heyday that major European writers continued to cite the story in their works for several centuries. Readers seemed to know enough about Wade to immediately understand any references to him, so, writers typically mentioned the character with little other context. But the exact wording of the sermon itself, copied by a scribe in an unsteady calligraphy, has been the subject of debate since at least the late 1500s. "Lots of very smart people have torn their hair out over the spelling, punctuation, literal translation, meaning and context of a few lines of text," James Wade, a literary scholar at the University of Cambridge who has no relation to the poem's titular character, says in the statement.

Now, Falk and Wade think they have made a breakthrough. In a study published this week in the journal *The Review of English Studies*, the researchers argue that the modern English translation of the poem from the sermon contains a typo. For more than a century, scholars had assumed that an excerpt from the poem read: "Some are elves and some are adders; some are sprites that dwell by waters." The passage suggests the poem deals in a world of magical or mythological creatures.



Seb Falk and James Wade, the authors of the new study.

#RESEARCH



Some experts say the new study could help deepen our understanding of medieval literature.

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What is The Canterbury Tales about?

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Peterhouse MS 255 open at the Sermon's mention of Wade.

Celebrating the Soul of Storytelling Through Song

International Country Music Day, observed on September 17, celebrates one of the most beloved music genres worldwide. Rooted in folk traditions, storytelling, and soulful melodies, country music has evolved into a global phenomenon that connects people through its heartfelt lyrics and rustic charm. The day honours legendary artists who shaped the genre as well as emerging voices keeping the tradition alive. From classic ballads to modern country-pop fusions, the music resonates with themes of love, resilience, and everyday life. Celebrated with concerts, playlists, and fan gatherings, it's a tribute to the enduring power of country music.



The manuscript that contains excerpts from 'The Song of Wade.'

#HISTORY

A Bit Of India In Balochistan

The Brahui Language: An Island of Dravidian Speech in Balochistan

Nestled in the rugged landscapes of Balochistan, spanning parts of Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan, is a linguistic treasure that puzzles linguists and captivates cultural historians alike, the Brahui language. Spoken by the Brahui people, this language stands out as a unique Dravidian tongue surrounded almost entirely by Iranian languages, making it a fascinating subject of study for anyone interested in the complexities of language, culture, and history.



The Brahui people.

What is Brahui?

Brahui is a member of the Dravidian language family, which also includes well-known languages like Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam, predominantly spoken in southern India. However, Brahui is spoken far from these heartlands, primarily in the arid and mountainous province of Balochistan in southwestern Pakistan. Despite being geographically isolated from other Dravidian languages by thousands of kilometers, Brahui has survived for centuries as the mother tongue of around 2.2 million people (estimates vary), making it a significant linguistic community in the region.

Linguistic Features and Origins

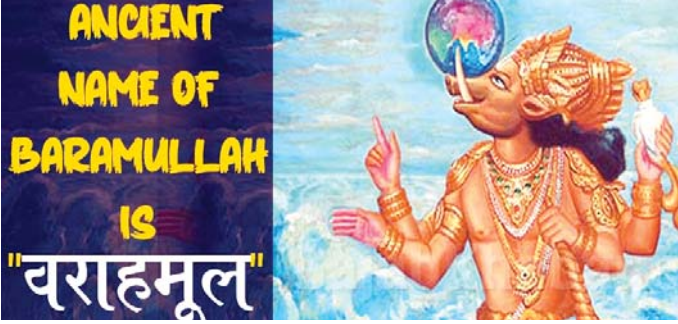
Brahui's Dravidian roots are evident in its vocabulary and grammatical structure. It shares core features such as agglutination, the way words are formed by stringing together morphemes, and a system of verb conjugation and noun declension characteristic of Dravidian languages. The origin of Brahui remains a subject of scholarly debate. Some theories suggest that Brahui speakers are remnants of a once widespread Dravidian-speaking population that covered much of the Indian subcontinent before the arrival of Indo-Aryan languages. Others argue that Brahui speakers migrated to Balochistan in more recent centuries from the south.

Brahui and Its Neighbours

The linguistic environment of Balochistan is dominated by Balochi, an Iranian language, along with Pashto, Sindhi, and Persian influences. Brahui has been in contact with these languages for centuries, resulting in significant borrowing of vocabulary, especially from Balochi and Persian. Despite these influences, Brahui has retained its core Dravidian structure, a testament to the resilience of the Brahui people and their cultural identity.

Cultural and Social Significance

Language is a key marker of identity for the Brahui people, who are primarily pastoralists and agriculturists living in scattered communities across Balochistan. Brahui poetry, folklore, and oral traditions enrich the cultural tapestry of the region and help preserve the language across generations. In recent years, efforts have been made to promote Brahui through education and literature. Local radio programs, books, and poetry collections in Brahui aim to strengthen the language's presence amidst increasing pressures from dominant regional languages.



ANCIENT NAME OF BARAMULLAH IS "वराहमूल"

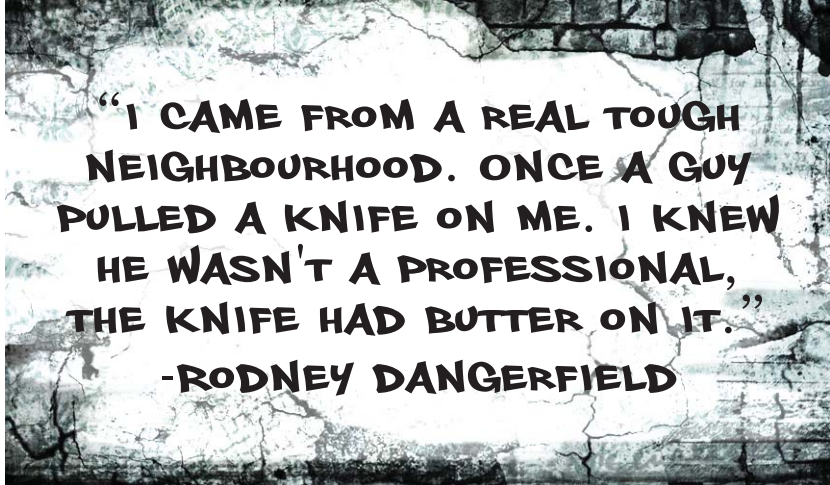
Challenges and the Future of Brahui

Like many minority languages worldwide, Brahui faces challenges of language shift and attrition. Urbanization, migration, and the dominance of Urdu and English in education and media threaten its use among younger generations. However, renewed cultural pride and community-led initiatives provide hope for the language's preservation. Linguists and activists emphasize the importance of documentation, education, and media presence to ensure that Brahui continues to thrive.

The Brahui language is a remarkable linguistic anomaly, a Dravidian language thriving far from its family roots, surrounded by Iranian languages in the heart of Balochistan. It stands as a living testament to the complex history and rich cultural mosaic of South Asia. Understanding and preserving Brahui is not only important for linguistic diversity but also for appreciating the deep historical connections that link different peoples across the subcontinent.

By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

THE WALL



BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS

