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Contents:

Les Liaisons Dangereuses (par Choderlos de Laclos): une critique du livre // a book review

En français :

Ce livre est écrit quand les rues de Paris avait soif du sang du riche, quand l'aristocratie était épuisée de leur péchés, parfumés, délicieux, et la seule constante— la littérature — exposait tout ! Oui, c'est un roman de la dix-huitième siècle (écrit huit ans avant la prise de la bastille), mais ne pense pas que ce soit un livre lointain ou fade. Vous seriez saisis par une intrigue choquante parée de prose choisi soigneusement pour l'épitre de chaque personnage. Il s'agit de deux séducteurs, Madame de Merteuil et le Vicomte de Valmont, complotant de séduire la nouvelle jeune épouse d'un homme qui a quitté de Merteuil et dont la remplaçante a quitté Valmont. Mais lui, il s'intéresse plus à une femme mariée célèbre pour sa piété. En lisant, on peut se sentir perturbé par la malveillance décontractée, surtout le mélange bizarre entre la tragédie et la comédie ; de Laclos paraît de nous fait partie de l'apathie qu'il dénonce. Le manque d'un genre ou héro clair l'a donné le nom, 'le cauchemar d'Aristote', et je dirais que ça te décevra aussi si tu cherches soit quelque chose osée soit une attaque sur la promiscuité sexuelle — c'est trop nuancé. Mais c'est une étude formidable de la condition humaine pour une psychologue, philosophe, ou futur séducteur !

In English:

This book was written when the streets of Paris were thirsty for the blood of the rich, when the aristocracy was tired of their sins, (perfumed, delicious sins) and the only constant – literature – exposed all! Indeed, the novel is of the eighteenth century (written eight years before the storming of the bastille), but do not think that the book is distant or faded. You will be seized by a shocking plot adorned with prose chosen carefully for each character's epistle. It is about two seducers, Madame de Merteuil and the Vicomte de Valmont, plotting to seduce the new young wife of a man who dumped de Merteuil and replaced her with Valmont's lover. But for him, a certain married woman famous for her piety is more interesting. When reading, you may feel discomforted by the careless cruelty, especially the bizarre mix of tragedy and comedy; de Laclos appears to make us part of the apathy he simultaneously denounces. The lack of a clear genre of hero made it known as 'Aristotle's nightmare' to critics, and it will probably disappoint you too if you are looking for exactly either risqué fun or an attack on sexual promiscuity – the novel is too nuanced. But it is a stunning study on the human condition for a psychologist, philosopher, or future seducer!

Écrit par Lucy R 11P

Poetic Metres across Nautical Miles

I have always thought of poetry as the purest form of language: prose is too idea-based, often clumsy in its heavy paragraphs, whereas poetry really lets you consider every next word and play with language for the sake of it. Poetry amplifies (hehe) the rhythmic, musical aspects of language to make the human means of communication into utter art. This article aims to focus on different 'metres' in poetry across languages, which can be an insight into their sounds and literature.

English and an introduction to metre

If a verse adheres to a metre, it uses a regular rhythmic structure, like iambic pentameter:

'But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?'

There are five feet, each of which is a pair of syllables, with the second stressed (but SOFT what LIGHT through YONder...). Iambic pentameter is the most common, used by Shakespeare and Milton, but we also use feet with three syllables and stresses in a variety of positions. The focus of this article is on foreign languages, but for a more detailed explanation on English poetic metre see here.

Old English and Germanic languages

Alliterative metre is used in 'Beowulf' and 'Sir Gawain and the Green Knight': this means the position of alliteration within each line is controlled and sustained throughout. It still characterises relatively modern Icelandic poetry, and Wagner revived it in in his Ring cycle for a legendary feel. Alliterative verse in Finnish folk songs were collated in the 'Kalevala', the country's national epic which contributed to its independence from Russia and Sweden. Interestingly, J.R.R. Tolkien used alliterative verse (he was a scholar of Old and Middle English) in his translations of ancient poems, and it features sometimes in 'The Lord of the Rings'.

Certain classical and ancient languages

Ancient Greek and Latin metres are still much studied by classicists, as it features in such influential works as the 'Iliad' and 'Metamorphoses', who want to understand how to best translate it. It is hard to use dactylic hexameter in English, because these languages are based on long and short syllables rather than stressed and unstressed ones, like crochets and minims in music.

Sanskrit also bases verse on syllable length, and syllable count; there are over 600 established metres. Arabic and Persian poetry is similarly based on length, but people are still researching the complexities of metre systems when evidence is largely archaeological fragments, or we cannot hear the poet read their own work.

Classical Chinese poetry

Both Chinese and French are languages without syllable stress considered in their poetry, so restrictions are limited to syllable count. In Chinese, lines usually have a fixed character length and verse length depending on the traditions of the time period – in general each poem is quite short. Conceptually, it is also distant from Western poetry, as each line forms a detailed image, more distant and repressed in emotion than English, without much 'Alas!' or 'Oh, Woe!'. Tonality is sometimes considered, which considers the rise and fall in pitch with each character, so the reading may sound more melodious for an English speaker.

Romance languages

The most popular form of French poetry historically is the 'alexandrine', which are 12 syllables per line with a caesura (pause) breaking it into two half lines of six. As verse was the main medium of storytelling, music, even argument, it formed a fundamental part of people's lives. With changing artistic movements, the alexandrine met a rival in *vers libre* (free verse), popularised by French symbolists like Baudelaire.

Hendecasyllables are commonly used in Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese poetry as iambic pentameter is in English. Dante's divine comedy uses it, so each line with 11 syllables ends with an accented tenth. Romance languages often use poetic licence to change which vowels are pronounced in each word, allowing some to blend into each other or be pronounced when usually silent, so the rhythm would continue.

Written by Lucy R 11P

LE JEU DE LA MORT

Maydelia B
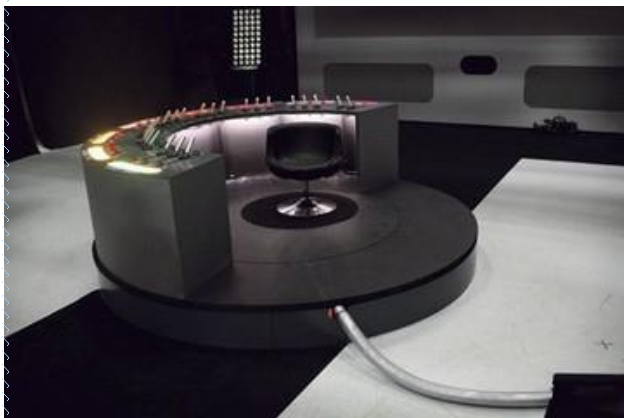
les contrôles pour le participant

une assistante attache l'acteur à sa chaise

Le Jeu de la Mort est un documentaire polémique qu'est sorti en France en 2010. L'accent était mis sur une réplication d'une étudié très connu pour le monde de la psychologie réalisée par Milgram en 1963. Après avoir fait son investigation de l'obéissance à l'autorité, Milgram a trouvé que 65% de gens ordinaires ont obéi aux ordres pour administrer des chocs électriques pour toute la durée de l'expérience.

Pour ce documentaire, on a dit aux participants qu'ils allaient participer dans un épisode pilote d'un neveux émission de jeux qui s'appelait La Zone Xtrême. Dans le studio, un acteur déguise en autre candidat était attaché à une chaise dans un stand qui était caché à la vue du participant. Afin d'augmenter la pression, le jeu a été joue sur un véritable téléviseur avec un public en direct et un hôte bien connu.

Les participants devaient poser une série de questions à l'acteur. Les réponses erronées que l'acteur devait donner sont sanctionnées par un choc électrique. Pendant que le jeu se poursuit, la tension augmentant à chaque réponse incorrecte. Avant le début des questions, l'acteur s'est libéré, mais cela n'est clair qu'aux spectateurs du documentaire. Même si les cris de détresse (pré-enregistrés) de l'acteur ont augmenté, 80% des participants ont administré le niveau de choc le plus élevé.

Bien que aucun des chocs n'étaient pas réelles, Le Jeu de la Mort nous dit quelque chose important selon le producteur de l'émission : quand elle décide d'abuser de son pouvoir, la télévision peut faire n'importe quoi à qui.

Las civilizaciones de América precolombina

Antes del llegado de Columbus en 1492, y otros conquistadores como Hernán Cortes y Francisco Pizarro, la gente indígena de América son en su flor de la vida, según mucha gente. Las civilizaciones más conocidas hoy en día son los incas, los aztecas y los mayas.

Tenochitlán

Los Aztecas

• El imperio Azteca se sitúa en el centro de México; su corazón era la ciudad de Tenochtitlán, en la misma zona de la ciudad de México actual.

• El clave del suceso del Imperio Azteca su sistema de agricultura con estructuras como 'chinampas' (jardines flotantes) y el clima templado en el valle de México quería decir que había varias cosechas cada ano. Este éxito desarrolló la unificación económica y política del valle.

• Tenochtitlán es el sitio donde se encuentran las pirámides del Sol y la Luna y el templo de Quetzalcóatl.

Los Incas

• El imperio se extendía desde Ecuador hasta el centro de Chile, e incluía zonas del Perú, Bolivia, Argentina.

• Los Incas tenían una excelente red de carreteras, que corría por 25.000 millas. Había más que 200 puentes colgantes de hierba 'ichu' que no existirían en Europa para otros 300 años.

• En lugar de un sistema de escribir, los Incas usaban cuerdas anudadas para referirse a una cierta cantidad de información.

• Sin duda, Machu Pichu es el sitio lo más famoso del imperio inca. El estilo de construcción y otra evidencia surgieron de que Machu Picchu era un complejo palaciego y también un santuario para los vírgenes del sol y un refugio para escolares.

Machu Pichu

Tikal

Los Mayas

• La civilización Maya incluía las zonas actuales del sur de México, Guatemala y el norte de Belice.

• Avances significativos de los Maya incluyen el uso del cero y el desarrollo de dos sistemas calendarios como el Calendario Redondo, basado en 365 días, y más tarde, el Calendario de Cuenta Larga, diseñado para durar más de 5.000 años.

• La arquitectura de Tikal está construida a partir de piedra caliza e incluye los restos de templos que se elevan sobre 70 metros de altura, grandes palacios reales y un número de pequeñas pirámides, palacios, residencias, edificios administrativos, plataformas y monumentos de piedra inscritos.

The Wonderful World of French Cheeses

Cheese plays a surprisingly important role in the history of France. There are an estimated 1,600 different types of French cheeses from goat cheeses to cow cheeses to soft cheeses to hard cheeses. There is so much variety within this humble dairy item!

BRIE

Brie is one of Frances most famous soft cheeses. There are two types of brie cheese both originating in two towns southeast of Paris. It is made using cow's milk which has been aged for only a month. It also has a soft white crust known as a rind and is ideal for all those looking for a milder tasting cheese!

ROQUEFORT

This cheese is one of the infamous French Blue Cheeses. Originally Blue cheeses were first created when cheese was stored in moist caves with ideal conditions for mould to grow. While this method is still utilised by manufacturers, modern blue cheeses tend to have edible mould cultures introduced industrially to provide the signature blue veined cheeses. Roquefort is made from sheep's milk and known for its crumbly texture and tangy taste.

COMTE

Comte is one of the various 'hard' French cheeses. Hard cheeses are aged for much longer and so pack a much stronger pungent flavour. Comte is also a cooked hard cheese which means the milk has been heated during production. This also means Comte has a long shelf life. Comte is manufactured in numerous villages across the east of France and is the traditional cheese used in the French / Swiss dish *'Raclette'*

CANCOILLOTTE

Perhaps one of the most unique French cheeses, Cancoillotte is a cheese made by melting a skimmed milk cow's milk cheese called metton and combining it with butter and water. This gives Cancoillette its runny and string nature. Cancoillotte can be poured over vegetables or simply enjoyed with a slice of bread!

The Psychology of Language Learning

Maydelia B

Learning a language can be a lifelong passion for one person, but a nightmare for the next. In the UK, it has not been compulsory for students to continue with a language at GCSE level since 2004. However, this has not prevented a rise in the popularity of modern foreign languages (MFL), with an increase in MFL GCSE entries of 9.2% between 2019 and 2023. Increasingly more students are recognising the benefits of having a second language can be for their futures, both socially and economically. But why is it that some people have more of a flair for languages than others?

Nature and/or nurture is a debate which influences our understanding of many human behaviours, and language acquisition is no different, with conflicting support from psychologists. On one hand, there is some research support for the biological control of one's ability to pick up a foreign language. There is evidence that individuals with a particular variation of the FOXP2 gene can languages faster and more accurately than others with a different gene mutation. This could be because FOXP2 binds to genes involved in functions such as cell signalling and neural development, which is involved in adapting to the grammar of a new language. A 2009 study by Fisher and Scharff found that FOXP2 is also important for controlling the plasticity of neural circuits. This means that the gene affects changes in the structure and function of the nervous system in response to experience, in this case the new language information learned. Neuroplasticity is essential for spaced repetition to have any effect, as we will see later.

Others believe that a talent of any sort is determined by an enthusiasm for learning rather than an inherited ability. For instance, Matt Riddley in his book 'Nature via Nurture' argues that those who enjoy the learning process are more likely to commit to the extra practice that is needed to successfully develop a skill. He also advocates for the role of positive reinforcement, which refers to the process in which the frequency of a behaviour is increased because it is rewarded. In the case of languages, being praised and admired by peers or teachers for your language ability is likely to result in

which the frequency of a behaviour is increased because it is rewarded. In the case of languages, being praised and admired by peers or teachers for your language ability is

likely to result in you practicing more to ensure you continue receiving these compliments as they make you happy, the consequence therefore being, the ability to pick up more languages. Alternatively, neurochemistry can also explain why praise might lead to individuals acquiring a language more readily. A person whose brain is sensitive to dopamine is more likely to be highly motivated and excited as the pleasure produced by a reward, in this case excelling learning a language, feels stronger.

Both enthusiasm and reinforcement contribute to a person's willingness to engage is spaced repetition practice, which has been proven more effective than cramming vocabulary or grammar in the night before an exam. This was first demonstrated back in 1885 by German psychologist Hermann Ebbinghaus; he found that he was able to remember gibberish syllables he learnt using spaced repetition more effectively than when he studied them for a longer time, but all on the same day. Both research that built on Ebbinghaus' findings and more recent studies suggest that one explanation for this is the consolidation theory, which Launder used to make his model of spaced training. When you learn information, a short-lived memory trace is created in the brain. Revisiting this content too soon means that a new trace overlaps with the old trace, leading to lesser reinforcement. However, if the interval between learning and revision is too long, the chance of activating an earlier trace is reduced, and so reinforcement is less effective. Therefore, for spaced repetition to be as successful as possible, there needs to be a balance between the reinforcing effect and the ability of a new trial to reactivate an earlier trace, which will produce a stronger long-term memory trace.

Language acquisition being influenced by genes, the desire for reward and the tendency to complete spaced repetition practice means that there are ways to improve your language skills, even if you are not a 'naturally gifted' linguist. Whether you are learning one language or five, my biggest advice would be to keep going! Make sure you are using methods that you find enjoyable, as this will make it easier for you to incorporate your languages into your daily routine. My personal favourites are listening to music or the news in another language while getting ready. Reader, I hope this has inspired you to continue with MFL, as a language really can be for life.

《鬥獸棋》規則 Rules of *Animal Chess*

中文版（連粵拼）:

一、遊戲概要

《鬥獸棋》棋盤由七縱行和九橫列組成，共六十三格。各方底行（列）的中間格子為己方「獸穴」，「獸穴」左、上、右的格子為己方「陷阱」。兩條「小河」分別位於從左（或右）數起第二、三和第五、六行的中間三列。每條「小河」各佔六格，共十二格。

雙方各有八枚棋子——象、獅、虎、豹、狗、狼、貓和鼠各一——共十六枚。

二、勝利條件

《鬥獸棋》有三種勝利方式:

甲: 己方任一棋子進入敵方「獸穴」，或

乙: 吃掉對方所有棋子，或

丙: 對方投降。

三、棋子等級

棋子各有不同 等級，由高至低排列如下： 象 > 獅 >
虎 > 豹 > 狗 > 狼 > 貓 > 鼠。棋子不能 吃掉比它高 等 級的
棋子。例外則是 象 不能 吃掉鼠，而且鼠能 吃掉 象 。

四、移動 棋子

所有棋子都可 往 前、後、左 或 右移動 一格，吃子方
法 等 同。任何棋子不可吃掉同 一 方的棋子，也不可 進入
己方「獸穴」。不可 同 時有多於一枚棋子在 同 一個格子
上 。

五、「小河」 規則

除了鼠以外的棋子不可 進 出「小河」。鼠在 進 出
「小河」時不得吃子。

獅、虎可以縱 向 或 橫 向 跳過一條「小河」， 並
能以此走法吃子， 但 跳過的「小河」格子中不能有己
方 或 敵方的鼠阻 擋 。

六、「陷阱」規則

任何位於敵方「陷阱」的棋子暫時失去等級，能被對方任何棋子吃掉。

七、走棋規則

一步，也稱為一着、一手，指其中一方移動一枚棋子並放開手。雙方輪流走棋。

八、初始位置

己方棋子初始位置為：獅在右下角，狗在獅的左上方，鼠在狗的右上方，豹在狗的左上方；虎在左下角，貓在虎的右上方，狼在貓的右上方，象在貓的左上方。棋盤上應有在相應格子上注明棋子的初始位置。

九、重覆局面·違反規則

如果同一局面反覆出現，雙方不變作和。

如果一方違反規則，可以判負，或以悔棋處理。

備註：由於《鬥獸棋》有眾多不同的規則，因此以上所

jau6 kwai1 zak1 gan2 gung1 caam1 hau2

有規則僅供 參 考。
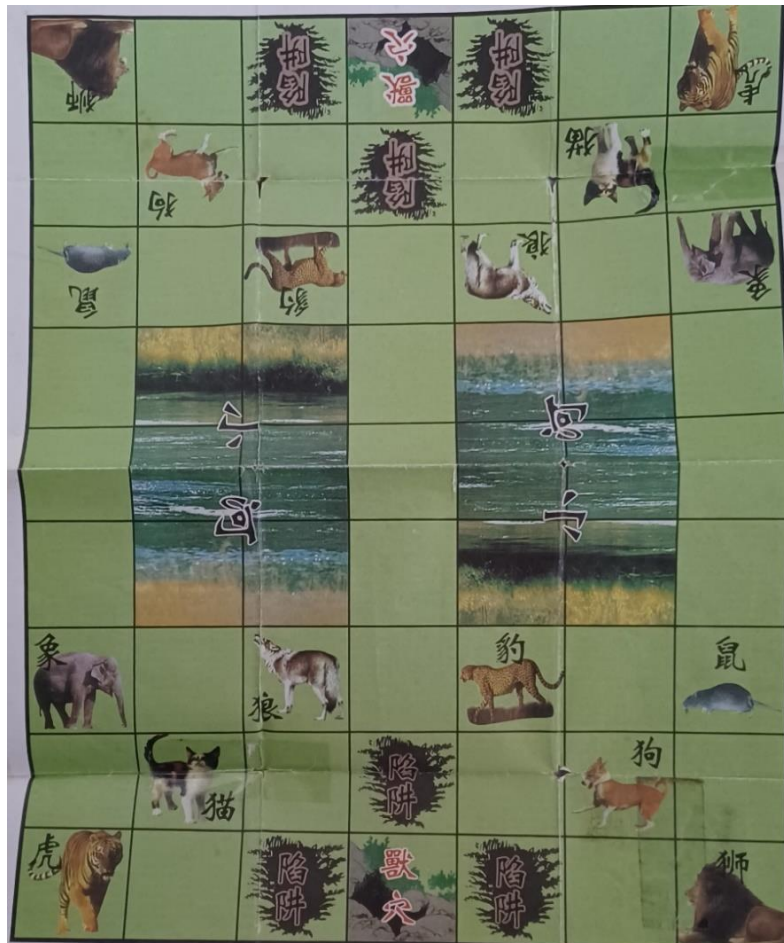
左圖：鬥獸棋棋盤
Left: board of *Animal Chess*

下圖：鬥獸棋棋子
Bottom: pieces of *Animal Chess*

English version:

I. Introduction

The game board is 9×7 in dimension, containing 63 squares. The centre square of each player's back rank is the 'den', the 3 orthogonal squares adjacent to the 'den' are the player's 'traps'. The 2 'rivers' are placed on the centre 3 ranks, on the 2nd, 3rd, 5th and 6th columns. Each 'river' is 6-square large, totalling 12 squares.

Each side has 8 pieces - elephant, lion, tiger, leopard, dog, wolf, cat and mouse (1 each) - totalling 16 pieces.

II. Conditions for victory

There are 3 ways to win:
a) any one of your pieces enters the opposing 'den', or
b) capturing all of your opponent pieces, or
c) opponent resigns.

III. Ranks of pieces

Pieces all have different ranks, from highest to lowest as follows:

elephant>lion>tiger>leopard>dog>wolf>cat>mouse. Pieces cannot capture another piece with a higher rank than themselves. The only exception to the rule is that the elephant cannot capture the mouse, and the mouse can capture the elephant.

IV. Movement of pieces
All pieces may move or capture 1 step orthogonally. No pieces may capture pieces from the same side, nor may they move into their own 'den'. A square may never hold more than 1 piece at a time.

V. Rules on 'rivers'
No pieces aside the mouse may enter or exit the 'rivers'. The mouse may not perform a capture upon entering or exiting a 'river'.

The lion and tiger may jump orthogonally across a 'river'. A capture may be made by this jump. A mouse of either player's may block the jump.

VI. Rules on 'traps'
Any piece on the opponent's 'traps' loses its rank temporary and could be captured by any of the opponent's piece.

VII. Rules on moving pieces
A move / turn refers to a player moving a piece of theirs and let go of the piece. Players move alternatively.

VIII. Starting position
The starting positions of the pieces of your side are: lion on the bottom right square, dog upper left of lion, mouse and leopard upper right and upper left of dog respectively; tiger on the bottom left square, cat upper right of tiger, wolf and elephant upper right and upper left of cat respectively. The starting positions of the pieces are marked on the board.

IX. Repetitions and illegal moves
If the same position occurs repetitively and both players do not deviate, the game is drawn.
If a player plays an illegal move, a loss for the player may be declared, or the player could make a legal move instead.

PS: Due to the numerous rule sets for *Animal Chess*, the above rules are just for reference.

由 Trevor L (13W)撰寫和翻譯 / Written and translated by Trevor L (13W)

所有相片均由本人拍攝 / All photos are taken by me