



The French Cluster at the National Museum of African Art

Spring from pg 1
 matter cannot be solved through words. No, fellow LHers, we must instead take action. If you are tired of this time of the year ruining your life, if you can no longer take the histamines obstructing your right to breath, if you are simply mortified by the warm air inviting undesirable vermin to hinder your

new immigrants threaten the former by the fact of their being, the latter by their adhesion to Islam, Orthodox Christianity, or other religions.

Still, Italy has an aging population, and it needs a young workforce in order to be globally competitive; an Italy that can absorb these young workers within itself stands to benefit from the wave of immigration. But can it meaningfully integrate these potential

right to be outside- then support my bid for Presidential candidacy in the 2016 election and my plan for a mass exodus to a land free of the oppressive Spring-time- Russia. This is the future, Language House, don't be the ones left behind in this balmy, sunny hellhole.

Italy from pg 3
 citizens within its civil society, allowing people of African, Asian, and Middle Eastern descent to positively identify as Italians? Can it do so without provoking an anti-immigrant backlash, bringing the obscurantist Northern League or a National-Front inspired government to power? We must hope so; an Italy that remains opposed to these new immigrants necessarily denies its present and undermines its future.

The Phoenix Staff

Editor-in-Chief:	Shachar Gannot	Guest Writer:	Betsy Brennan
Managing Editor:	Elaine Oves	Guest Writer:	Yadviga Zhelezinskaia
News Editor:	Ariana Etessami	Illustration by:	Elaine Oves

Thirty Foreign Films in Thirty Days

By Shachar Gannot

Editor-in-Chief (Hebrew Cluster)

I joined letterboxd, a social media site for film enthusiasts, a little less than two years ago. In January of this year, I decided that I would participate in the site's annual March Around the World challenge. The challenge: watch and review thirty films from thirty countries in the month of March. I spent a few days in January compiling the perfect list, adding masterpieces of world cinema I have not yet seen and other little known gems. Several students at the Language House even recommended films from their respective countries.

Completing the challenge was not easy. Due to school obligations, there were many days I couldn't squeeze in a film, leaving me no choice but to watch a few triple-features during spring break. The experience as a whole, though, was a rewarding one. I learned so much about other countries' cultures and history through the challenge: From El Salvador's Civil War to the lives of women in modern-day Saudi Arabia.

Altogether, I watched thirty films in twenty-one languages, spending 3510 minutes watching films for this challenge. And I don't regret a single second.

The Phoenix

Independently Produced by Students of UMD's Language House

Monday, April 6, 2015

Vol. IV, Issue II



Spring is for the Birds

By Betsy Brennan

Guest Writer (German Cluster)

Lucky for those of us in the Mid-Atlantic, March 21st is often still a cool, cloud-protected and sometimes even snowy day that shelters us from the war-mongering months ahead. The grass is still that pale shade of yellow, the bare trees show off their true figures and on special occasions, chemically treated salt decorates our sidewalks like confetti celebrating winter's brave march onward toward April. But sadly, a day arrives when our comfort and calm is shattered- and the worst part is that there is hardly any consistency from year to year, we are simply abandoned to fend for ourselves. That's right, my friends, I'm talking about the horrifying time of year we all dread- Spring.

Like a cocky 5-year old beauty pageant contestant, Spring shows up under the guise of bringing beauty and

laughter yet instead assaults the senses in the most offensive manner. The sudden onslaught of blooming flowers in field and forest is enjoyed only by those who revel in the misery that pollen forces upon the masses, such as Spring itself. Torrential breezes subsequently carry these pollen-soaked petals and like chemical warfare inundate innocent civilians forced to go about their daily lives during such an odious time. And if that were not enough, Spring brings with it the wrath of the sun- heating the ground so that squirrels and birds emerge from their chasms to inflict harassment and bodily harm upon us. Suddenly fountains and grassy knolls that were once enjoyed by humans clad in their winter best are overrun by entitled geese wishing death upon us all.

Unfortunately, this Spring see pg 4



Returning Home...

By **Yadviga Zhelezinskaia**

Guest Writer (Persian Cluster)

On the 18th of March of this year, the Crimean Peninsula became a part of the Russian Federation. Since that date a year ago, after the referendum in Crimea, there has been a lot of hysteria about this, first with the imposition of economic sanctions against Russia and later with the attacks of imperialism and invasion on the part of Russia and V.V.Putin. With all of this propaganda regarding the "Crimean occupation by Russia," people should consider the history of this region and also the events that preceded the referendum.

Since the end of the XV century, Crimea has been called Crimean Khanate. It was mostly inhabited by Tatars and was under the protection of the Ottoman Empire. This region constantly proved to be a nuisance to its neighbors, including the Russian state: The Tartars established a slave trade of the Slavic people with the Ottoman Empire and the Middle East. The people came from Russia and Poland-Lithuania. The number of people who were enslaved has been estimated to be as high as three million over two centuries. The Russo-Turkish War (1768-1774) stopped this massive slave trade when Crimea, the Northern coast of the Black Sea and the North Caucasus were annexed into the Russian Empire. Since then, Russia has held the right to possess the marine fleet. In 1784, Crimea was renamed to Tauric Region, but in 1796 Pavel I annexed it into the New Russia Governorate. In 1802 Crimea again became a separate region (including

the mainland below Dnieper River) called the Taurida Governorate, which existed until 1921, with its capital in Simferopol.

Crimea was always a hot spot because of its strategic place. Since it became a part of Russia, there have been several long wars (1787-1791, 1853-1856) between Russia on the one hand and the Ottoman, British, and the French Empires on the other. In the beginning of the XX century Crimea again became a trouble spot between different powers: the Red and the White armies, the Tatars and the Bolsheviks, and, finally, the Germans and the Russians. When the Soviet Union was established in 1922, the Crimean Peninsula, with half of its population composed of Russians, became a part of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic. From 1941 to 1944 Crimea was occupied by Nazi Germany and Romania and in 1954, during Khrushchev's time, Crimea was transferred to the Ukrainian SSR due to economic reasons.

When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, a referendum in Crimea renewed its autonomous status, granting Crimea more independence and rights. The day Crimea became autonomous, January 20th, is a regional holiday. Sevastopol has a special independence status. According to the Russian and Ukrainian Partition Treaty of 1997, the Russian Black Sea Fleet could stay in Crimea until 2017. In addition, Ukraine agreed to lease military bases, including ones in Sevastopol, and allow Russia to maintain up to 25,000 troops. Thus, all discussion about the presence of the Russian army in Crimea is just

Crimea see pg 3

ARABIC: In Kabul, Afghanistan, a woman is beaten and killed for speaking out against un-Islamic behavior in a shrine, and is now a celebrated martyr.

CHINESE: China's former domestic security official Zhou Yongkang is accused of accepting bribes, leaking confidential information and abusing power. **FRENCH:** Conservative parties gain ground in French national elections, paving way for former President Sarkozy to run for office again.

GERMAN: Germanwings air crash kills 150 people, prompting the European Aviation Safety Agency to voice concerns over Germany's non-conformity with air safety rules.

HEBREW: Prime Minister Netanyahu apologizes to Israeli citizens for remarks, widely condemned as anti-Arab, made during the elections.

ITALIAN: Italian coastguard rescues 5 boats carrying 1,500 Libyan migrants in distress in the Mediterranean Sea, who are attempting to flee chaos and poverty in the Middle East and Africa.

JAPANESE: Japan's central government has yet to identify half of 2,400 owners of land in Fukushima, where plans are in place to build storage facilities for radioactive soil from a nuclear crisis.

PERSIAN: A joint statement was released by Iranian foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini, stating the parameters guiding the nuclear agreement between Iran and the U.S.

RUSSIAN: Moscow's media regulator shuts down Crimean TV station for opposition to Russia's annexation of the Black Sea peninsula.

SPANISH: Sixteen-year-old Alex Gonzalez loses his right leg after falling off a cargo train while attempting to migrate from Honduras to the U.S.

Crimea from pg 2
propagandistic speculation as, legally, Russian soldiers are allowed to be on Crimean territory.

After the Ukrainian regime's overthrow in February 2014, people in Crimea organized protests against the new Kiev power and arranged community defense volunteer squads to protect Crimea from extremist people from the Right Sector. On March 16th of the same year, the Crimean government organized a referendum regarding the possibility of uniting with Russia. More than 95% of the electorate voted in favor of joining Russia. Two days later, Russian president V.V. Putin officially approved the admission of Crimea and Sevastopol as federal subjects to Russia. In spite of the Western position about the Crimean crisis, the Republic of Crimea has already integrated into Russia politically, economically, and financially, in effect already following Russian laws, rules, social programs, and currency.

Crimea is best known for being a beautiful touristic place with a temperate continental climate. There are not only long beaches, magnificent mountains, cliffs, caves, and gorgeous landscapes, but also thousands of historical objects from different epochs of the Russia State: such as castles and museums, which were previously residences of royal family members, where you can discover the history of this unusual place. You are welcome to go to Crimea at any time, but first you must check with the Russian Embassy if you need to get a visa!

The Rise of Arabeezi

By **Maya Hardimon and Marina**

Farrugia

Arabic Cluster

Since the rise of the internet over 20 years ago, people all over the world have had to contend with exactly what this new change means for their communities. The Arab World has been no different; the past few years have seen the rise of "arabeezi," a system of writing Arabic in the English alphabet, and often borrowing English words and phrases as well. This writing system is often more convenient for internet users, but many worry that by using this hybrid language, Arab youths are losing the ability to speak their native language fluently, without the influence of English. Many educators have expressed concern over this trend, arguing that the use of arabeezi weakens their students' abilities in both Arabic and English.

On one hand, this change may not justify much concern; languag-

es are constantly evolving, interacting with other languages and taking certain pieces from them. However, this change can be looked at in the broader scope of globalization and language death. Over the past few decades, dominant languages such as English, French, Spanish, and Chinese have become used more as a common language, and while this has led to increased communication between different groups, it has also led to an increase in endangered and extinct languages. Nine languages have gone extinct since 2009, and while Arabic is not currently in danger of this extinction (it still has 295 million native speakers), it is a threat to be aware of. Ultimately, we need to find a balance; while attempting to regulate a language so that it never changes is not workable, a complete indifference to this change could mean the language's eventual demise.

On a Multiracial Italy

By **Mario Colella**

Italian Cluster

Within contemporary Italy, there are many serious social issues that it shares in common with the European community; unemployment, animosity with the European Union, and shrinking international prestige. However, there is one particular issue that Italy faces to an unprecedented degree, both historically and in comparison to its continental neighbors; that issue is immigration.

For much of its modern history, Italy has been a nation of emigrants; the number of Americans,

Argentineans and Brazilians with Italian names testify to this diaspora. Recently, however, Italy has become a nation of immigrants; many have come to Italy from Eastern Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, bringing Italians into daily contact with people whose language and customs they consider strange at best, uncivilized at worst.

This is a particular problem for a nation that has long defined itself in ethnic terms, and whose culture is deeply rooted in Catholicism;

Italy see pg 3