

A French Village's Radical Vision of a Good Life with Alzheimer's

Every resident of the Village Landais has dementia—and the autonomy to spend each day however they please.



Illustration by Harriet Lee-Merrion

When Marion Renault's family decided that her *mamie*, who has Alzheimer's, needed to be moved to the structured care of a nursing home, they were making what Renault describes as a familiar "transaction." She writes, of making decisions for loved ones with dementia, "We cede their freedom to gain a sense of security—theirs, but also ours. We attempt to resize their world, removing the choices that might pose a danger to them." The result, for many patients, is a life that "seems safer, but smaller." But might there be another way to approach memory care? In a moving and thought-provoking story, Renault introduces us to an innovative and controversial nursing home in southwestern France, where residents are encouraged to continue making choices, even as their cognitive abilities decline. "They can wake and shower

at their leisure; they can shout, pilfer sweets, make tea at 2 A.M., sweep with the broom upside down, and handle sharp knives in the kitchen.” This kind of care brings new questions. How do we balance safety and autonomy? What is the connection between memory and our sense of self? And what does a rich and evolving life with Alzheimer’s look like?

—*Ian Crouch, newsletter editor*



Wednesday, November 23, 2022

SearchResearch Challenge (11/23/22): How to read other scripts and languages?

I'm never one to turn down an SRS opportunity...



As you can imagine, in the back pocket of my mind I've got 4 or 5 SearchResearch Challenges queued up and ready to go, questing ever onward bringing you the tidbits of knowledge we all need in our searching lives.

But every so often, a chance comment tilts the universe in a slightly different direction by pointing out an opportunity for a new SRS topic.

In a comment this week, Mathlady wrote that *"I also encountered the problem of needing to translate signage in an unfamiliar language using an alphabet unknown to me. So I started wondering how to use Google Translate with a different alphabet..."*

Excellent question.

This is a great chance to talk about how to do exactly that--read in writing systems (what the pros call "[orthographies](#)") that you don't recognize. In some cases (such as Arabic), I can't even recognize the letter boundaries.

Thanks, Mathlady, for the chance to pose a couple of interesting and potentially tricky Challenges:

1. For each of these images below: What is the language? What is the translation of the text?

A.



B.

הנחה משמעותית
לחייילים במדים

C.

ᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱ

D.

حفريات عميقة

As always, be sure to tell us how you did the translation. (Did you find a friend? Or did you use an app to do this for you?) And, as Mathlady points out, *how did you enter the text to do your search???*

I'll tell you how I did this next week--but in the meantime, have a great American Thanksgiving, or... روز شکرگزاری or थैंकस्‌डे़ or Þakkargjörð... or... fill in your own orthography here!

Search on!

Daniel M. Russell

Check out my new book: [The Joy of Search](#) (MIT Press, Winter, 2019)

Available in fine bookstores (and online) everywhere. Dan Russell