



EUROTALES – PRESENTATION

EUROTALES is the acronym of our Linguistic Heritage Lab and an experimental Museum of the Voices of Europe, gathering research data with the active collaboration of staff, students and the general public. Eurotales has the ambition of establishing new approaches to researching, representing and studying, as well as sharing, the intangible cultural heritage constituted by the many languages used in Europe in the past and today.

We have an **exhibiting space** at Sapienza, where our growing collection is on display (photos attached).

Collections and @Diffuseum

Our data, which constitute the bulk of our collection are stored in three big data sets: *Traces*; *Resonances (past and present)* and *Milestones*.

A language *trace* is any monument, place, object, wall, corner, urban space, painting, inscription, graffito, or any other element from any historical period in the public domain which testifies to the life of languages, linguistic varieties, traditions, events, or anything remarkable that may serve to retrace the history of language cultures in Europe. Language *traces* resonate with the memory of languages and illustrate the deep and layered relationship between tangible objects and their intangible significance--they represent, in essence, the linguistic dimension of place and material culture. They allow us to build an archaeology of languages attached to objects, past and present.

We have at the moment around 60 items in this collection.

Resonances (past and present) store and describe the unique linguistic identity of individuals, which is constituted not only by our mother tongue, but by all the languages which resonate in us. Integral to our personal identity, languages activate our emotions and define our history and our sense of place. *Resonances* collects **information on the linguistic cultures of our public** (Resonances present) as well as of personalities belonging to Europe's history (Resonances past): mother tongue, the languages in use (academic, every day, written, oral) relating them to age, provenance and other personal data, since we feel very stringly the need to investigate the complex layers that constitute any individual's linguistic culture: we often overlook the fact that for many Latin writers – including Vergil or Seneca – Latin was not their mother tongue; and the same applies to the vast majority of Italian writers. What was Frederick II's mother tongue, or that of Hildegard von Bingen, Napoleon, or Marie Curie? How many languages 'resonated' in them, and defined their culture? What roles did they occupy? Monolingualism is an exception rather than the rule.

Our Resonances present database has at the moment around 3000 items

Our Resonances past database has at the moment around 200 items

In *Milestones* we collect such 'items' which are normally acknowledged by the scholarly community as fundamental for the history of any one language. They are constituted by (a) historical events (Vth c. collapse of the Roman Empire, XIVth c. England and France became nation states; 1861 Unification of Italy, 1870 Unification of Germany etc.); (b) cultural events (e.g. the foundation of the Accademia della Crusca or of the Academie Française); (c) laws (813 Council of Tours; 1362 first use of English in Parliament; 2014 Norway establishes two official languages, etc.); (d) first documents of a language (Vth c. Runes; 842 Serments de Strasbourg, 960 Placito Capuano, X Glosas Emilianenses; 1521, Rumanian etc.); (e) canonical texts (*Beowulf*, *Chanson de Roland*, *Decamerone*, Shakespeare's First



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Folio, etc.). Comparing these with the data emerging from the other databases helps a more critical approach to the nature of linguistic history.

The database includes at the moment approx 25 milestones per language.

The languages currently on display (or about to be) are :

English
Italian
French
Spanish
Portuguese
German
Russian
Polish
Swedish
Rumanian
Greek
Serbian
Croatian
Slovenian
Yiddish
Hebrew
Ukrainian
Czech
Slovak
Hungarian
Latvian
Latgalian
Swedish
Makedonian
Georgian

We are looking forward to many more !

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