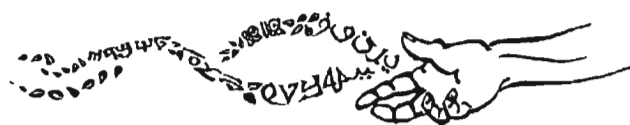


# FOUNDATION FOR ENDANGERED LANGUAGES



# OGMIOS



"Majesty", the Fredville Oak, one of the two oldest in England, from *Silva Britannica* by J.G. Strutt, 1825. As one of the oldest, it must be a thousand years old. Thomas Pakenham's *Meetings with Remarkable Trees* shows that it has changed little in the last 175 at least.

OGMIOS Newsletter Millennium Issue : 1999-2000

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FEL's Next Conference:

**"Endangered Languages and Literacy"**

University of North Carolina at Charlotte, USA

21-24 September 2000

It is particularly apt to devote a conference to the implications of literacy in the homeland of Sequoyah, who devised from scratch a perfectly functional writing system for his native language Cherokee introduced in 1821, and this although he was not literate in any other language.

Fuller details of the call for abstracts can be found on page 11.

### 1. Great Oaks, Little Acorns and the Precautionary Principle

On the week-end when I am writing this, the world, or at least the western media's world, is as united as we are ever likely to see it. Successive revels and thanksgiving services have circled the globe, as a major milestone of time in the Christian Era is passed. Capital cities have competed at firework displays, and (at least as the UK newspapers tell it) worldwide there have been fewer deaths due to exuberance than on an average New Year. Rejoicing all round, then (unless you happen to live in Chechnya, or the war-strip of Africa, which extends from Angola to Sudan, or some other centre of strife that we hear even less about).

The result has been an occasion for reminiscence on a gigantic scale, but almost too big for our cultures to cope with. What institution, after all, besides Christianity, Judaism and the calendar itself, has survived since the last turn of a millennium? None of our present states, nor even our present languages. The best stab at a coherent single history I saw was the tale of an oak tree in the English New Forest, which had lasted 1,000 years in situ, hacked about by Saxon pollarders and gnawed from within by fungi, even as the countryside around it had kept changing under different lordships, land tenures and systems of agriculture.

(Perhaps it does bear noting that one set of artefacts that has remained recognizable over the last millennium is most of the alphabets we use, though the languages they have recorded have kept innovating and pullulating. Our writing systems are some of the most conservative things we have, despite, or in fact because of, being used so widely. They have most recently ridden out successive blasts of competition from telephony, film, sound recording, television and internet multimedia with hardly even a mark on their impassive typefaces.)

But the effort to get our minds round a unit of time longer than the duration of a human life, or any state's constitution, or the idea of a university, or even the whole institution of credit and banking, means that we are at least temporarily in a better place to appreciate the immense antiquity of the heirlooms we have in the languages we speak.

If took a millennium to differentiate the Romance languages, and perhaps ten millennia to fan out the variety we see in Indo-European, how long have Caucasian or Papuan been brewing up, or all the stocks and phyla we still find in Africa and the Americas? Current guesses take us back perhaps a hundred millennia. That is how much separate experience was lost when Tasmanian was snuffed out as a nuisance by settlers from Britain only a hundred years ago. It turns out that grammars and lexica, passed on over the generations, and constrained by little more than respect for elders and a need for mutual comprehension, are the longest-lasting monuments we can contrive.

But we have to be careful in our modern researches. When we start to intervene, even when our motive is to know more of what has survived, we are in danger of doing terrible damage. There is a story I cannot track down now, of a linguist in Africa who moved the last two speakers of a language to the city so as to be able to work with them more readily, only to have them sicken and die of a cold. Even more shaking, because more deliberate, is the case of Don Currey, who as a graduate student in 1964, impatient to complete a season's research on the age of some of bristlecone pines at the edge of Wheeler Peak glacier in Nevada, cut down what turned out to be **the oldest known surviving organism on earth.**<sup>1</sup>

Our Foundation exists for "the documentation, protection and promotion of endangered languages". Documentation and protection do not always coincide. I think it is clear that protection, within our fallible knowledge of cause and effect, must be paramount.

### **'Celebrations': a correction from Nancy Dorian**

*Nancy writes:*

[In my guest editorial for Ogmios #12 *Celebrations: In Praise of the Particular Voices of Languages at Risk*,] one example got mangled in a way that makes it ineffective for its purpose.

The bad spot is on p. 7, in the example given in the 2nd column: 'Her father was an architect here.' This one's important because it demonstrates that the same -əs suffix applies in ESG regardless of person. This is a rare 3rd-person example for ESG ('her father'), but the emphatic suffix remains -əs. The topmost line of the example currently reads "va h a:r-nə arkitek", but it should read "va h a:r-əs nə arkitek with -əs the emphatic suffix, and nə the quite separate element meaning 'in-the-state-of'. (It goes with arkitek, not with h a:r 'her father'.)

For people who know more nearly mainstream dialects of Gaelic, this is the only example in the piece that demonstrates the extension of emphatic -əs into the 3rd person – and it's also the only example I think I have in my entire corpus that demonstrates that so irrefutably. The speaker was a really fine ESG representative, generally conservative in her usage, so it's a very precious case for my purposes, and I'd like to rescue it if possible via an explicit correction. Other slightly off things (missing nasalization, etc.) are expendable; only this one is crucial.

<sup>1</sup> Previous researchers had, unknown to Currey, already named the tree: Prometheus. The full story is at <http://www.sonic.net/bristlecone/Martyr.html>. Strangely, Currey's own website, amid a host of academic distinctions, does not mention this, his true claim to undying fame.

## 2. Development of the Foundation

**FEL Annual General Meeting: St. Patrick's Coll., Maynooth, Ireland, 18 Sept. 1999**

1. The first order of business was to elect a chair for the meeting. Karl Teeter nominated Nicholas Ostler as chair. This was seconded by Matthew Stott. Nick was elected by unanimous voice vote.

2. The minutes of the last AGM were passed by voice vote.

3. The chairman noted several activities in which the FEL was engaged. First, a film night was held, as per the recommendation of the last AGM. Second, he noted the FEL website. As it currently exists, it is not laid out very neatly, but it is working. There is certainly room for improvement. Waldo Houia suggested that the website be expanded. FEL could, he noted, put the conference proceedings on the website. The chairman suggested that it would be nice to have a volunteer manage the website; there were no volunteers at the meeting. Finally, he noted that there were a number of organizations with which the FEL cooperates, in particular the Endangered Language Fund and TerraLingua. There is a new group in Germany (Gesellschaft für bedrohte Sprachen). At his own expense but on FEL's behalf, Nick will attend a colloquium on "Language Endangerment, Research and Documentation — Setting Priorities for the 21st Century" to be held at the Karl-Arnold Akademie in Bad Godesberg, near Bonn, Germany, February 12th to 17th 2000.

4. Report from the President:

[The President's Report on the year 1998-9 is given below in full.]

Matthew Stott suggested that software is available to help with the website.

While thanking him, the President and Treasurer both noted that software for the website was not the main problem: what was needed was someone to run it.

5. Report from the Treasurer

Chris Moseley presented the accounts for the period 28.3.99 to 14.9.99. He noted that the budget looked £5235.02 sterling as against £730.49 on 28 March; but that there were still several outstanding unknowns, including the cost of the 1999 conference. He thanked Bord na Gaeilge for the donation of 500 Irish pounds, which was spent to help those who otherwise could not have attended. The treasurer also mentioned grants, noting that the board will use the same procedure as last year to allocate funds. He noted that 10% of the grant is withheld until the final report is submitted and lamented the fact that this means paying twice for transferring

funds, an often difficult process. At the end of October a subcommittee appointed by the executive committee will meet to decide which grants to fund, how many and for how much. This will depend on the funds available after expenses for the 1999 conference have all been met. Finally, Chris Moseley noted that membership in the FEL is healthy and worldwide. There are over 150 members although there hasn't been a fund-raising or membership drive. New membership tends to come from conference attendees.

There were no questions and the treasurer's report was passed unanimously.

At this point, the order of agenda was reversed.

6. Amendments to the Constitution:

There were three proposed amendments, proposed by the committee.

These were

1. - set the maximum size of Executive Committee at 15 (amendment to H1);
2. - set the quorum for Executive Committee meetings at 3 (amendment to K3);
3. - allow subcommittees (with membership up to 6) to work as our representatives of the executive committee if and only if they are appointed by a decision of the full Executive Committee, and have one elected member of the Executive Committee as a member. Subcommittees may then co-opt up to three more members without further reference to the Executive Committee. (amendment to K7).

Each was approved nem. con.

The chairman declared all amendments passed.

Election of the Executive Committee.

All current officers resigned. In the brief interregnum (presided over by Chris Moseley) the meeting elected Nicholas Ostler as new chairman of the meeting.

7. The chairman presented the recommended list of candidates for the executive committee:

Nicholas Ostler, Christopher Moseley, Nigel Birch, Alasdair MacCaluim, Mahendra Verma, Karen Johnson-Weiner, Louanna Furbee, Karl Teeter, Davyth Hicks, Margaret Allen, Heather King, John Clews, Eugene McKendry.

Voice vote showed no objection, and the list was approved.

Nicholas Ostler was elected as Chairman, Nigel Birch as Secretary and Christopher Moseley as Treasurer.

8. Comments

There were several suggestions from the floor:

- A. that we encourage graduate student attendance at FEL conferences;
- B. that we carry out general correspondence with various university programs, introducing the Foundation and soliciting subscriptions to Ogmios;
- C. that we publish a summary of the conference proceedings and announcements in other

professional journals as a means of publicizing the FEL;

D. that we contact governments .

9. Chris Moseley noted that the position of liaison officer is currently unfilled. Unfortunately, at this meeting, there were no volunteers.

The AGM was adjourned with the notice that the executive committee would meet at 1:30, following lunch.

9. The following topics were suggested for future conferences.

a. purity/purism in culture and language revival/the revival and reconstruction of language and culture.

b. literacy/writing--changing/preserving "oral culture"

c. typology of endangerment

10. It was also suggested that we devote one grant each year to fund the attendance of an indigenous speaker of an endangered language to the annual conference.

#### President's Report on the Year to August 1998 to August 1999

Dear Members,

The Foundation for Endangered Languages is now officially three years old. You are hearing from the Treasurer about our quantitative position, so I shall concentrate on what we have done with your resources over the last year, since our last Conference in Edinburgh in September of 1998.

The main achievement of the Foundation in 1998-9 has been the sponsoring of concrete work in favour of a few of the world's endangered languages.

Reports were received in 1998 of the results of the previous year's two grants, for Valentin Vydrine to research the status of Kagoro in Mali, North Africa, and for Mark Donohue to foster dictionary building, cultural archives and some linguistic description of the Yei, Kanum and Morori languages in south-east Irian Jaya. These reports have appeared in Ogmios (#8 and #10).

In response to the last Call for project proposals, there were 29 applications for support, asking for a total of £10,500. All continents were represented in the languages in question, but there was a predominance for languages of the Americas (14 applications). The requests were on the moderate side, since the Call had pointed out that £650 was likely to be the maximum for anyone one award. In the event, almost all of the proposals were well-founded, in the view of the selection committee. Unfortunately, the funds for distribution amounted to no more than £1,550, so the competition was stiff to the point of arbitrariness.

Four applications were successful:

to G. Holton for documentation of the Tanacross language of Alaska (£400),  
to J.G. Lucich for a master-apprentice scheme in Mountain Maidu of California (£200),  
to A. Terrill for dictionary compilation for Lavukaleve in the Solomon Islands (£500), and  
to E. Benedicto for a community dictionary project for Twahka in Nicaragua (£450).

Our then Treasurer, Margaret Allen, surmounted the various obstacles thrown up by the world banking system to make the necessary transfers, and we are now looking forward to the reports on the outcome of the projects.

We have just advertised our new Call. Unfortunately, there is no prospect at the moment of having greater funds to award than in 1998, but our endeavours will continue.

The Foundation's newsletter Ogmios has been issued three times since the last AGM (##10-12). We try to give a representative conspectus of endangered language news from all over the planet. Original matter published in this period has included reports on language documentation by Mark Donohue in Irian Jaya, Roger Blench in West Africa, Anda Hofstede in South Arabia. We have carried reviews of important books published in our field, and would be very happy to receive more such material. Our current issue also carries an stimulating article by Nancy Dorian on the value of what is lost when a language goes, based on her own knowledge of conversations in East Sutherland Gaelic.

On the campaigning side, we have raised a voice of protest at the decisions of the Northern Territory government in Australia to withdraw funding from bilingual education programmes, and of Radio New Zealand to discontinue daily national news broadcasts in Maori. Despite the rising profile of endangered language news in the world's media as a whole, adverse decisions like these continue to be taken, based on supercilious or bullying reasoning about what is necessary, what is value for money, what is "good enough", for other people's languages, other people's communities. Now and again, language and language rights may even be the casus belli for physical aggression, most notoriously in 1999 in Albanian-speaking Kosovo. We shall continue to speak up for people's right to learn and use their home languages, and everyone's duty to respect others' linguistic choices and linguistic allegiances.

Last year's conference focused on the question of the role of the outsider in the struggle for other people's languages, inevitably an important one for international organizations such as the Foundation for Endangered Languages. We got some answers, which appeared in Ogmios #10: in particular, that we should be concentrating on: aiding the liaison of local communities with their local and national administrations, providing some external influence in support of the local priorities; facilitating links between different local communities, showing that there is the basis for solidarity here.

This year, our conference is focused on the role of Education, both as an asset and a potential threat to the propagation of smaller languages. We trust that new insights will emerge from our discussions, of particular languages, as well as by implicitly and explicitly comparing their various situations.

We have now to consider what our priorities should be for the further development of our work.

And the role of these conferences is central in these deliberations.

At the moment, our conference provides the main source of Foundation funds to supplement our subscription income. Potentially too, it provides the focus for media interest in our cause. All this, in addition to being the main concrete way in which we can build solidarity among communities across the world, by giving people the chance to meet, and see how similar their concerns may be.

These are three strong reasons to continue our series of conferences.

At the same time, the business of organizing the conference, both its programme and increasingly the local administration, has fallen centrally on the President for the last three years. Energy has therefore been diverted from what might be another primary purpose, namely raising funds more directly. There will be a report from the Foundation's Secretary on the fund-raising situation.

I should like the debate later in this meeting to attend to this general question of priorities, as between focusing on a conference, and concentrating on building up a strategy to gather funds. The debate might end up concerning tactics as much as strategy, if for example a way could be found for the Conference to generate much more in the way of funds.

Another issue concerns publicity and campaigning. There is no doubt that judged, e.g., by our World Wide Web presence, the Foundation is a much more spartan, not to say rough, in its appearance than some of our colleagues in this cause. What is this costing us, in potential impact? Ought we, in fact, to be concentrating our efforts on reaching the media, and persuading the uncommitted, worrying less about building links with those actually working in small language communities?

On the other hand, might it be that we are, after all, neatly sharing the load with our colleagues, leaving them to do what they do well, while we get on with our own strengths: a regular newsletter, a regular conference, and regular (but rather small) programme of grants?

These are issues on which I should welcome your advice, as we set our course into the year 2000. We have made a start, in the first three years of this charitable Foundation. We are beginning to be recognized.

But there is vast amount of work waiting for us. How can we best set about it?

Nicholas Ostler  
18.ix.99

*Ogmios hereby throws its columns open to discussion of these points, and those raised in the rest of the AGM. The Committee would value members' suggestions: they should be sent to the Editor at any of the addresses on the Contents page, noting whether the author would like them published in Ogmios or not.*

**Executive Committee meeting, Saturday  
20 November 1999, 55 Severn Avenue,  
Swindon, Wiltshire, UK**

*Present:* Nick Ostler (Chair), Nigel Birch (Secretary), Eugene McKendry, Christopher Moseley (Treasurer, i/c Grants), Matthew Stott

**1. Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting held on 27 March and the Minutes of the Annual General meeting held on 18 September**

These were approved.

**2. Changes to the Constitution and appointment of new officers**

The changes to the constitution agreed at the AGM would need to be notified to the Charity Commissioners. It was agreed that Nigel should convert the current version of the constitution into a form that could be amended and then send copies to the Commissioners.

**Action: Nigel**

Members of the Executive Committee needed to sign a Declaration. Those present did so and Nigel agreed to send a copy to the other members for signature and return to him.

**Action: Nigel**

**3. Financial matters**

Chris reported that on 29 October the Foundation's assets had totalled £ 5460.01. However most of this had been paid out to cover the costs of the Maynooth conference. The subscription drive did seem to be working however as subscriptions were coming in. There had also been a donation of £ 500. This meant the current balance was £ 953.

It was noted that this time last year there had been more money available. The problem was the lack of members – there were too few new ones joining and there were also lapsed members.

After discussion it was agreed that £ 800 should be spent on new grants.

**4. Membership matters**

A paper had been received from Heather King.



It was noted that a large number of people receiving Ogmios had still not paid a subscription, despite having had more than one reminder. It was agreed that Chris would liaise with Heather in advance of future mailings.

It was also agreed that the subscription page in Ogmios should be made more prominent.

Nigel suggested that if the current arrangements of membership (ie members received four copies of Ogmios) were changed to an annual subscription it would be easier to set up standing orders and direct debits. It would then take a conscious effort not to pay, rather than as now, taking an effort to pay.

## 5. Fundraising

Nigel's paper was discussed.

If finding corporate sponsors was to be a target we needed to be able to give something in return. The obvious one would be to put the appropriate logos and links onto the Foundation's website.

The question of tax benefits for donors was raised, but no one had any experience of this. It was also believed that rules about donations and tax relief varied from country to country.

It was agreed that the obvious targets would be companies operating in countries where there were endangered languages. However care needed to be taken when dealing with companies who were being criticised for their actions (eg Occidental in Colombia). On the whole it was probably better to avoid contact with these organisations and efforts made to make contact with those who were neutral or positive in their attitudes. Dictionary publishers were also suggested as a group who might be approached.

It was agreed that the Fundraising Subcommittee be approached for idea of who to approach.

**Action: Nigel**

Nick would produce a letter that could be used when making approaches.

**Action: Nick**

It was noted that there were various charitable organisations who could be approached.

## 6. The next conference

Nick introduced this item. The issues were who was going to run the event, where it should be held and how often it should be run. Organising the event was time consuming and Nick felt that it had taken up a disproportionate amount of his time as President; time that could have been used for fundraising. The involvement of a committed Programme Chair was therefore important.

The issue of timing was raised. As the conference was the main fundraising event and as it also helped to build solidarity between members, it was agreed the current annual cycle should be maintained.

Three firm suggestions had been made as to locations for the next conference. It was agreed that if the volunteers were willing, we take these as the next three events, re-confirming the third nearer the event. It was therefore agreed that Blair Rudes be asked to take on the 2000 event in North Carolina as he had already done some groundwork. 2001 should be in Morocco and it was suggested that Hassan Ouzzate, who had offered to organise the event, be involved in organising the North Carolina conference for the experience. McKenna Brown had offered Antigua, Guatemala. This should be pencilled in for 2002, but confirmed nearer the time.

Nick would contact the potential organisers.

**Action: Nick**

The discussion turned to the theme of the 2000 conference. It was noted that the theme of the Maynooth conference (Education) had led to several requests from people not attending the conference to request copies of the proceedings – another source of income. A theme was therefore potentially important. Karen Johnson-Weiner had noted some of the suggestions made during the conference. Of these it was agreed to go with **literacy/writing**.

## 7. Campaigns

It was suggested the East Timor was an issue and that efforts could be made to encourage the preservation of the indigenous languages. However as the new government had yet to be installed it was agreed to postpone any action.

## 8. Website

Nick reported that Michael Bauer had been designing the new pages. It was important to find a new home for the site as the current arrangement (hosted by Andrew Woodfield) was unworkable as only Andrew could change anything and he was about to go on sabbatical. Michael did not have a permanent host however.

John Clews had reported that he was in discussion with an ISP who were willing to host the site. They also had facilities for dealing with credit cards which might make paying subscriptions easier. Nick agreed to talk to John.

**Action: Nick**

## 9. Grants

Before the applications were discussed the matter of reports from previous grants was raised. There was concern that the Foundation received only scant information from previous grant holders about what had been done with the money. Getting the information was important however as the Foundation needed to know what had been achieved so that members had a story to tell when seeking donations, etc. Nigel pointed out that the Research Council where he worked made reporting a condition of the grant and that 20% of the grant was withheld until the report had been received. He agreed to send the wording to Chris.



**Action: Nigel**

Chris would also need to look at the current terms of the grant to see what instructions had previously been given. He would also alert grantholders to the need to produce a report.

**Action: Chris**

There was also the matter of payments. Some payments were difficult to make because of the banking arrangements in the countries concerned. This could involved the Foundation in extra expenditure which it could ill afford. As most applicants were based in fairly sophisticated countries, it was suggested that payments be made to them there and it was then the applicants' responsibility to name any necessary transfers.

Discussion then turned to the grants. From a field of Four were awarded as follows:

<u>Awardee</u>	<u>Country</u>	<u>Language</u>	<u>Sum</u>
Elisabeth Gfeller	Ethiopia	5 languages of Ethiopia	£ 250
Bruna Franchetto	Brazil	Kuikuro	£ 100
Antonio Diaz-Fernando	Argentina	Aonik'o 'a'yin/ Tehuelche	£ 250
Nguyen Van Loi	Vietnam	Khang	£ 270

**10. Any other Business**

There being no other business the meeting closed.

**The Foundation's Grants Policy, by Christopher Moseley, Treasurer**

It is now three years since the Foundation for Endangered Languages found itself in a financial position where it could start offering modest grants to applicants wishing to do research into languages under threat. As the Foundation's Group Liaison Officer, I devised an application form which required a detailed description of the language to be the object of the grant and its affiliation, the nature of the threat to it, the applicant's experience and qualifications, the nature of the proposed research and the proposed budget to be spent on it. We also seek an assurance that the research will have a beneficial effect on the speech community, and we require that the applicant report back to us at the expiry of the research period, with recommendations for further measures to protect the language in question.

In the first year, 1997, we awarded two small grants; in 1998 we made four awards, and this year, 1999, we have again made four awards, but because our own funding was restricted, the grants were correspondingly smaller. So far, in view of the size of our organization, we haven't been able to meet requests for amounts larger than a few hundred dollars.

Applications are considered by the Foundation's entire Committee, and we are careful to ensure that every application that meets our minimum requirements is reviewed by at least three committee members. Reviewers are asked to grade the applications in terms of urgency, value for money, presentation and other criteria, on a numbered scale. That way we can eliminate personal prejudices and arrive at a consensus view. When the deadline for applications has passed, then, the applications are circulated among the committee, the results collated and a final decision on grants is reached at a committee meeting.

This method has generally proved pretty satisfactory — especially in view of the modest amount of money involved so far. Having just held our third review of applications, and being aware that our foundation is going from strength to strength in size and influence, this seems like an opportune time to assess whether we can improve the procedure.

Some things have become evident to all the Committee. One is that, although the questions on the application form seem clear enough, the requirement to provide at least two references is not made sufficiently clear. It is not actually stated on the form, but rather on the Call for Applications which is posted on the Linguist List on the Internet - which seems to be the source of most of our enquiries. Including it on the application form is a simple improvement that we can make in future years. Applicants who have not provided references are not considered.

Another point where there is room for improvement is the need to follow up the research with reports. We have not imposed a strict mechanism for following up the research in past years, but it is clear that if the research we fund is to have any beneficial effect, we should insist that the recommendations we request from the researchers are actually made and, as far as we are able, acted upon. What we can at the very least do as a Foundation is to publicize these recommendations. We have a responsibility to our researchers and they have a responsibility to us. Our method of ensuring that these reports are submitted is one that we instituted in 1998: we tell the applicant that 10% of the sum offered is being withheld until the final report on the work is submitted. On the little evidence we now have, this is perhaps not the best solution. There are arguments both for and against this method. The argument in favour of it is that it places the applicant under an obligation to prove that the money was spent properly on valid research work which bore results.

On the other hand, experience has taught our Treasurers past and present that it is difficult enough to get bank payments through to countries where the money is needed for work in the field, and to have to go through the cumbersome banking process twice, especially in view of the small sums involved, can be a nightmare.

A third area where there is room for improvement is that we can encourage more vigorously that successful and unsuccessful applicants for our grants join the Foundation and thus swell the coffers for use in our charitable work. We have not so far insisted that applicants be paid-up FEL members; we have instead hoped that by association with our work they will want to become members anyway. This is in contrast to the situation with conferences, where the right to attend is conferred by membership.

This is a subject that our committee is discussing at the moment. One option might be, in view of what I've just explained above, to offer a year's subscription to the FEL free of charge to the applicant, but only after an acceptable final report is submitted, after a certain period, say 3 or 6 months, from the end of the contracted research period. That is the equivalent of 8 per cent of a £250 grant in any case - almost the same as the 10 per cent now being withheld, but less coercive. The 'acceptable' final report would contain not only a detailed account of the research undertaken but also of how the money was spent.

Failing this, the Foundation might reserve the right to reclaim all or part of the grant awarded to the applicant - no matter how difficult this may prove in practice.

Another option might be to tell the applicant beforehand that halfway through the agreed period of research - say, six months after initial payment, he or she will be obliged to send an interim report, in a standardized format set out by the Foundation, from the contact address given in the application, and if this was satisfactory, the remainder of the grant - maybe 10 or 20 per cent - would be released for use. There would still be a final report on completion as well.

Even this is a bit cumbersome. But the current policy of withholding 10 per cent of the funds until completion, which the committee is currently reviewing, might yet prove the most effective one after all. What does our membership think is the most cost-effective and easily administered way of funding the research?

The last matter I'd like to enlarge on is the quality of the applications themselves. It might be useful here to explain to the membership the criteria on which the applications are judged. Committee members are asked to consider a number of criteria. One is the description or presentation of the language under study. Many of the applications concern obscure and little-known languages - in some cases even their genetic affiliation is in doubt. The applicant has to assume that the reviewer knows little about it, and define the distinct identity of the language and its speech community. What is described as a 'dialect' is likely to be given a lower priority than a distinct language, all other factors being equal.

Secondly, there is the nature of the threat to the language. In effect, our researcher is providing a little of the institutional support that the language

might otherwise lack. The number of speakers does play a part, but the status of the language, and the socio-economic situation surrounding it, are given greater weight, broadly speaking.

Then there is the nature of the research. Here the applicant has to convince the committee that the money being sought will be spent on action that will benefit the speech community. Research that merely advances an academic career is likely to be given lower priority than work to provide teaching materials conducted by a non-academic member (or at least ally) of the endangered speech community. The distinction of 'academic' vs. 'non-academic' is quite a troublesome one, because the applicant does have to convince the committee of his or her qualifications and training in linguistic research. Linguistics is a science that does require training - there is no gainsaying this. But wherever possible we like to provide an avenue where native speakers' active involvement is possible. At the very least, we expect the native speakers' approval and co-operation in the project to be assured.

Then there is the matter of the budget. The applicant has to provide costings that are as detailed and accurate as possible. This is in the applicant's own interest, because later on, reasonable proof of expenditure will be required. Travel expenses that are reasonable and necessary, and itemized, are worth including in the budget; so are necessary expenses on materials. Payment of informants is also a reasonable item to budget for, taking local salaries into consideration. What is less impressive to the committee is 'high-technology' equipment that may be useful to the researcher but of no permanent value to the speech community. We can't afford to pay for luxuries or vague 'incidental expenses' either.

Referees who are competent to judge the applicant are also expected to submit testimonials. Hitherto, applicants have been asked to name the referees, and if they don't submit their testimonials in advance, we write to ask for them.

Then the reviewer gives an overall assessment of the application. At this point, it will inevitably be compared with its competitors in terms of overall presentation. The final decision may involve several awards, and the committee consciously tries to spread them geographically and support urgent projects to save or record languages that are acutely endangered.

This year, as in previous years, the standard of applications has been high, and it is heartbreaking work to have to turn down so many worthy causes and write letters of rejection. But the more members we have, the more generous we can be, and the more solidly we can assure our swelling band of supporters that their money is being well invested - in the future of endangered languages.

Chris Moseley, Treasurer

**FEL's Next Conference: Endangered Languages and Literacy: University of North Carolina at Charlotte, USA — 21-24 Sept. 2000**

The date of our next conference has been determined. Its theme is to be the role of Literacy in relation to Endangered Languages.

Literacy, the ability to read and write a written form of the language, has often been viewed a necessary first step in maintain and promoting use of the language. The introduction of literacy is predicated upon the development of an acceptable written form of a language, a step considered by many essential to:

- the creation of grammars, dictionaries, and teaching materials;
- the preservation of traditional oral literature in communities where the younger generations lack the patience to learn the texts orally.

However, efforts to develop a written language and instill literacy may encounter cultural obstacles and have unforeseen consequences. For example:

- the development of literacy may, over time fundamentally alter or interrupt the oral transmission of a community's knowledge and beliefs;
- the members of the community may resist efforts to introduce literacy due to cultural beliefs about, for example, the spiritual or mystical nature of oral communication;
- the introduction of literacy may create divisions with the community between the literate and the illiterate that ultimately may have social or economic implications.

Even within communities that are receptive to the introduction of literacy, the development of an acceptable written language may pose challenges:

- there may be difficulties selecting one of several dialects upon which to base the written language;
- there may be problems adapting existing alphabets, syllabaries or other writing systems to the sound system of the language;
- the availability of typewriter or computer fonts may force unacceptable compromises in the orthography for the language;
- the language may lack acceptable vocabulary or syntactic structures to replace in the written language suprasegmental, kinetic, and paralinguistic components of oral, face-to-face communication.

Modern technologies, however, have brought additional choices to endangered language communities. For example, with tape recorders, compact disk recorders, video recorders, television, radio, and computers, it possible "talking" dictionaries, grammars and books, thereby eliminating the need for a written language and literacy. But these technologies are not without their own limitations:

- the costs of acquiring and maintaining desired technologies may be prohibitive;
- the community may lack members with the expertise to employ the desired technologies, or the resources to train members in the technologies or hire outsiders;
- the community may not be willing to accept/use the chosen technologies.

Prof. Blair A Rudes, who is on the faculty at UNC Charlotte, will chair the Organizing Committee.

Crucial dates leading up to the conference will be:

Abstract submission deadline	March 21
Notification of Committee's decision	April 21
Authors submit camera-ready text	July 21
Conference	Sept 21-24

Presentations will last twenty minutes each, with a further ten minutes for discussion. All presentations should be accessible largely in English, but use of the languages of interest, for quotation or exemplification, may well be appropriate.

Abstracts should not exceed 500 words. They can be submitted in one of two ways: hard copy or electronic submission. They should be in English.

**A) Hard copies (or faxes):**

One copy should be sent to:

Blair A. Rudes  
Department of English  
The University of North Carolina at Charlotte  
9201 University City Boulevard  
Charlotte, North Carolina 28223-0001  
USA

FAX: +1-704-547-3961

TEL: +1-704-547-4230

This should have a clear short title, but should not bear anything to identify the author(s).

On a separate sheet, please include the following information:

NAME : Names of the author(s)

TITLE: Title of the paper

EMAIL: Email address of the first author, if any

ADDR: Postal address of the first author

TEL: Telephone number of the first author, if any

FAX: Fax number of the first author, if any

The name of the first author will be used in all correspondence.

If possible, please also send an e-mail to Blair Rudes at <BARudes@email.uncc.edu> informing him of the hard copy submission. This is in case the hard copy does not reach its destination. This e-mail should contain the information specified in the section below.

**B) Electronic submission:**

Electronic submission should be in plain ascii text email message giving the following details:

# NAME : Name of first author  
 # TITLE: Title of the paper  
 # EMAIL: E-mail address of the first author  
 # ADDR: Postal address of the first author  
 # TEL: Telephone number of the first author, if any  
 # FAX: Fax number of the first author

and in a separate section

# ABSTR: Abstract of the paper

### 3. Language Endangerment in the News

**Our Endangered American Languages, by Jon Reyhner, Northern Arizona Univ.**

*This article appeared in the Nov./Dec. 1999 issue of the American Language Review.*

According to Michael Krauss of the Alaska Native Language Center there are about 200 different North American languages still spoken by the indigenous peoples of the United States and Canada out of the total of over 300 spoken before the arrival of Columbus. These languages have survived suppression in boarding schools and catastrophic population declines.

The question today is how much longer will these remaining 200 languages survive. Children are no longer routinely being punished for speaking them in schools, but ironically they are not speaking them now that they can. Today, English language movies, television, and videotapes are doing what a century of washing mouths out with soap in boarding schools could not accomplish.

According to Krauss's research, only about 30 of the remaining languages in the United States and Canada are still being spoken by children. When children are no longer learning a language, the language is dying.

The United States Government in 1990 recognized its role in destroying these languages in 1990 with the passage of the Native American Languages Act, which made it federal policy to help promote, protect, and preserve them. In 1994 and 1995 the U.S. Government funded two indigenous language conferences at Northern Arizona University to bring together language activists and experts to discuss how indigenous languages could be revitalized.

A group of language activists have kept alive the efforts started at these first two conferences with a series of annual conferences, the publication of a series of papers, and a "Teaching Indigenous Languages" web site at <http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~jar/TIL.html> on how Native American communities can work to keep their languages alive.

The six conferences held to date have featured a wide variety of presentations, ranging from marketing the value of Native languages, to implementing immersion teaching programs, to using Total Physical Response (TPR) teaching techniques, to developing indigenous language textbooks useful for children, and even to teaching languages over the telephone.

In the United States today there is an "English-Only" political movement that questions the value of teaching languages other than English, including indigenous languages. There seems to be the idea that not speaking English is unpatriotic, however the Flag Songs and honoring of U.S. military veterans at Pow Wows indicates that there is no necessary clash between keeping cultural traditions and citizenship.

Both the United States and Canada pride themselves in the freedoms that their citizens have. It is just as important that those freedoms include the freedom to be bilingual and to speak your Native language as it is to have the freedom to choose your religion.

Throughout the six conferences there has been a theme of how language and culture are intimately entwined and cannot be separated. The importance of cultural retention, and thus indigenous language retention, was brought home to me at the third conference in Anchorage, Alaska, when I picked up a card describing Iñupiaq Eskimo values. One side of the card read:

Every Iñupiaq is responsible to all other Iñupiat for the survival of our cultural spirit, and the values and traditions through which it survives. Through our extended family, we retain, teach, and live our Iñupiaq way.

The other side read,

With guidance and support from Elders, we must teach our children Iñupiaq values" and then the card listed the values of "knowledge of language, sharing, respect for others, cooperation, respect for elders, love for children, hard work, knowledge of family tree, avoidance of conflict, respect for nature, spirituality, humor, family roles, hunter success, domestic skills, humility, [and] responsibility to tribe.

The card concluded:

OUR UNDERSTANDING OF OUR UNIVERSE AND OUR PLACE IN IT IS A BELIEF IN GOD AND A RESPECT FOR ALL HIS CREATIONS.

I have kept this card in my wallet as a reminder that indigenous language revitalization is part of a larger attempt by indigenous peoples to retain their cultural strengths in the face of the demoralizing assaults of an all-pervasive modern individualistic, materialistic, and hedonistic technological culture. The card reminds me of why it is so important to do everything we can to help the efforts of any person

or group that wants to work to preserve their language.

In the 1950s a school in the Navajo Nation had a sign at its entrance reading "Tradition is the Enemy of Progress," however as Navajo tradition and the Navajo language have been dying, the result seems to be the rise of anti-social juvenile gang activity rather than "progress." The strengths of Native American cultures that allowed them to survive repressive government policies in both the United States and Canada are being lost along with the cultural traditions and languages.

My experience working as a teacher and school administrator among tribes across the western United States is that the Indian students who only speak English do not do any better academically in schools than those who still speak their Native language. In fact, some research has shown that more traditional students often do better in school than more assimilated students who have lost their Native culture and its values.

The renowned sociolinguist and expert on endangered languages Joshua Fishman emphasized in speeches at the first two conferences at Northern Arizona University that schools can only have a limited role in keeping indigenous languages alive. Other symposium speakers and participants echoed Dr. Fishman's belief that the intergenerational transmission of language in the home from parents to young children is the key to keeping indigenous languages alive; however, schools can play either a positive or negative role in supporting the efforts of indigenous parents and communities.

The goals of the indigenous language conferences have been to:

- 1) To bring together American Indian and other indigenous language educators and activists to share ideas and experiences on how to effectively teach American Indian and other indigenous languages in and out of the classroom,
- 2) To provide a forum for exchange of scholarly research on teaching American Indian and other indigenous languages, and
- 3) To disseminate through monographs recent research and thinking on best practices to promote, preserve, and protect American Indian and other indigenous languages.

The seventh annual conference on "Language Across the Community" is scheduled for May 11-14, 2000, in Toronto, Canada. For more information contact Jon Reyhner [Jon.Reyhner@nau.edu](mailto:Jon.Reyhner@nau.edu) at Northern Arizona University, Box 5774, Flagstaff, AZ 86001 or Barbara Burnaby at the Modern Language Centre, OISE/University of Toronto, 252 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 1V6.

**"Republic policy can aid Irish in North"**  
A piece under this headline appeared in the Irish Times the day after our conference. Maith thú, a hEoghain - also now one of our new Committee members!

Monday, September 20, 1999

A question mark hangs over the development of the Irish language in Northern Ireland if the Republic "continues with policies of rhetoric rather than implementation", a conference on endangered languages has been told. Mr Eoghan McKendry, of the graduate school of education, Queen's University, Belfast, said the Belfast Agreement "has placed the Irish language firmly within the political agenda". Despite difficulties arising from an official policy since partition to marginalise Irish in Northern Ireland, the language had retained a relatively strong presence within the maintained (Catholic) education sector, he said.

"Indeed, when one considers the policy of 'diversification in modern languages' which central government in London and the Department of Education for Northern Ireland have been promoting, Irish is one of the very few successes in the United Kingdom." Mr McKendry said the task of the Irish language lobby now "is to recognise those aspects of policy where it can claim success, such as diversification and the EU's policy towards linguistic richness and diversity, rather than succumbing to the negative policy goals of a previous political enmity or to simplistic views emerging from unsophisticated utilitarianism".

The current Nuffield Inquiry on Languages in the UK provided an opportunity to reappraise the role and position of Irish in Northern Ireland, he said. But the question was: "What can the Irish language become in Northern Ireland if the Republic continues with policies of rhetoric rather than implementation?"

Mr McKendry was addressing the third annual conference of the **Foundation for Endangered Languages (FEL)** - a UK-based non-governmental organisation - at St Patrick's College, Maynooth. The conference, on the theme "**Endangered Languages and Education**", was held amid expert predictions of the death of at least half of the world's 4,000 languages within 50 years, with Irish among those under threat.

"Right now, every week, another language falls silent for ever," a foundation spokesperson said. "With each one a living culture ends, a unique way of life almost thousands of years old." The FEL had taken up the challenge "to lessen the ignorance which sees language loss as inevitable when it is not, and does not properly value all that will go when a language itself vanishes". The conference, sponsored by Bord na Gaeilge, heard international experts tell of efforts to save minority languages.

#### 4. Appeals and News from Endangered Communities

##### **Highland Council Persecutes Gaelic Activists**

From Alasdair MacCaluim

<[alasdair@staran.globalnet.co.uk](mailto:alasdair@staran.globalnet.co.uk)>

for Comann Ceilteach Oilthigh Dhun Eideann  
9 October 1999:

More than forty years ago Eileen and Trefor Beaseley refused to pay their local rates until they received a bill in Welsh from Llanelli Rural District Council. They stood firmly by their principles and their language even though they almost lost their home as a result. The Beaseleys won the fight at the end of the day and their struggle was a great inspiration to the Welsh language movement.

Unbelievably, a local council in Scotland is doing the very same thing right now, at the end of 1999. Highland Council has imposed a heavy fine on Magaidh and Roy Wentworth, who have done outstanding work for Gaelic and who live in Gearrloch, Wester Ross. Magaidh and Roy have paid all the council tax due every penny of it but they are not willing to complete an English-language tax form.

Highland Council recently launched a bilingual policy in which they claim to be working to secure and strengthen the position of Gaelic in the area. As such it is disgraceful that they insist on persecuting the Wentworths in this way.

Even if we are forty years behind, we must follow the Welsh path. Every pressure must be brought to bear on Highland Council until they cancel this outrageous fine and until they distribute bilingual forms as they should.

Write to:  
David Green            Alan Geddes  
Convener            Director of Finance  
(01463) 702000 (01463) 702301  
The Highland Council  
Glenurquhart Road  
Inverness IV3 5NX  
E-mail: webmaster@highland.gov.uk

#### **Radio Finland Starts Short-Wave Broadcasts in Mari and Udmurt**

*Article by Jouko Grönholm from Turun Sanomat "Turku News" of 21 Oct. 1999, translated by Chris Moseley.*

At the end of October the Finnish Broadcasting Company made an exciting breakthrough. Broadcasts in the Mari and Udmurt languages began to be heard on the air.

The weekly reviews in Mari and Udmurt are the result of an agreement between the Company and the M.A. Castrén Society [named after M.A. Castrén (1813-1852), pioneer explorer and scholar of the Finno-Ugrian languages]. The project is being carried out as part of the work of the Finno-Ugrian Department at the University of Turku in Finland.

The idea is the brainchild of the broadcasting company's long-standing Moscow correspondent, Martti Hosia.

Alevtina Nikolayeva, aged 22, who is a Mari, and Sergey Maksimov, 32, an Udmurt, are translating

the magazine programme about Finnish events into their own mother tongues. The two postgraduates, who are on grants to study at the University of Turku, are also reading the news reports they have translated.

"These radio broadcasts will increase the sense of nationhood," say Alevtina and Sergey.

"Both the Mari and Udmurt languages are struggling against the overwhelming onslaught of Russian. These programmes will remind people that our languages are spoken in areas other than our own; at the same time they give a signal of how important it is to maintain contact with our linguistic relatives, chiefly the Finns and Hungarians."

There are currently about 670,000 Mari people; half of them live in the republic that bears their name on a bend in the Volga. There are about 747,000 Udmurts; one third of those live outside their home republic. When they return to their home towns of Yoshkar-Ola and Izhevsk, Alevtina and Sergey will carry on as Finno-Ugrian language researchers; it is over 2,000 km from Turku to their homelands.

Short-wave broadcasts are audible all over the former Soviet Union. If the listener understands Mari or Udmurt, he or she will have a chance to hear the news even far away from the actual language areas. It is still very common to listen to foreign stations in Russia, and receivers capable of tuning in to short-wave programmes are an everyday phenomenon.

In its initial phase, over the winter period 1999-2000, the weekly review is broadcast alternately in Mari and Udmurt. It is available on the same frequencies as the company's Russian-language news broadcasts. The first broadcast, in both Mari and Udmurt, went out on Sunday, 31st October.

#### **Oifig Ullans ~ Ulster Scots Office for Donegal**

*Donegal on the Net            24 Dec 1999*

There has been mixed reaction to the announcement that one of the six cross border bodies established under the auspices of the North-South Ministerial Council (set up under the Good Friday Agreement) is to have a regional office in Donegal. The Ullans Agency, to promote the Scots Ulster dialect of English, will be in the East of the County. The decision not to locate the headquarters of the North-South Language Body in the Donegal Gaeltacht has come in for some criticism while others believe that encouraging a non-existent language is a waste of money and could have a detrimental effect on the survival of Irish. Jim Devenney, a native of Newtoncunningham, has been appointed to the Ullans Agency and is among several Donegal people appointed to various bodies under the terms of the Agreement, including Brid Rodgers, Minister for Agriculture in the new Stormont Assembly; Liam O'Cuinneagain; Keith Anderson; Siobhan Logue and Andrew Ward.



<http://www.dun-na-ngall.com>

### Request to "Smaller" Language Speakers

*Caroline Lee writes:*

If there is anyone who speaks a "small" language and has a few personal words -- whether a phrase, a proverb, anything he or she wants to say, a conte or legend, ANYTHING, or even ideograms, pictures, or a recorded message -- in the original language (with or without translation into English and French) -- that he or she would like to express, please send this along to my email address below, or to: [carolinedunord\\_98@yahoo.com](mailto:carolinedunord_98@yahoo.com)  
My snailmail address is 37, Boulevard St. Germain F75005 Paris FRANCE.

This is for my diploma project. My idea is to create an interactive space to celebrate endangered languages, linguistic, cultural and biodiversity.

If anyone has any questions, please contact me.

Thank you very much.

Caroline Lee [<cleee@post.club-internet.fr>](mailto:cleee@post.club-internet.fr)

### Dynamics of the Development of Gagauz Culture, by Larisa Yakut

*In this summary I try to give a short overview on dynamics of Gagauz culture and its prospects in the nearest future.*

Gagauz are Turkic-speaking Orthodox Christians that live in Southern Moldova (near towns Comrat, Chadyr, Vulcaneshti) and Ukraine (Odessa region).<sup>2</sup>

In territory that has been called the Budzhak Step, the Gagauz had migrated from Northeast Bulgaria at the end of 18<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. There are nearly 5,000 Gagauz living in the Black Sea towns Varna, Dobrich, Kavarna (Bruk 1987). Unestimated Gagauz populations live in Romania (Dobrudzha and Silistra region) (Berg 1993).

Some Gagauz households migrated at the beginning of this century from Moldova to the Caucasus (in villages of Kabardino-Balkariya and Ossetia), Kazakhstan (Amanzholov 1964) and Central Asia in search of a better life (Bigaev, Danilov, Umarov 1961).

The majority of the neighbouring nations, with whom the Gagauz had had long-lasting cultural and socioeconomic contacts (Bulgarians, Turks, Russians, Romanians), have claimed their kinship to this Turkic group or tried to assimilate it, thus sparking century-long debates over the ethnogenesis of the Gagauz. There are more than

two dozen hypotheses and theories on the origin of these peoples (Derzhavin 1937, Boev 1996). Today, known theories fall in two groups: those of "Turkic" and "Non-Turkic" origin of the Gagauz. Defendants of their Turkic origin linked them to Turkic nomadic tribes of the past (Pechenegs, Kumans, Uz, Oguz, Kara-Kalpaks and Seldzhuks) that moved from Altay to the southern frontiers of Russia (Northern Black Sea) in 7<sup>th</sup>–11<sup>th</sup> centuries. Adherents of the second group have claimed Gagauz to be in kinship to the Greeks and Bulgarians, defining them as Ellyns or Prbulgars. (Shkorpil 1933-1934). The main argument in these theories is the fact of confession by Gagauz of the Orthodox Christian religion (unlike other Turks). Because of the lack of any documented sources, none of the theories have been proved up to the present day (Guboglo 1967).

A pioneer of scientific studies of the Gagauz was V. Moshkov — historian, ethnographer and anthropologist (Kononov 1989). Conducting his studies at the beginning of the century, Moshkov has left an invaluable collection of Gagauz musical folklore and customs. (Moshkov 1904). Some sporadic studies had been carried out through the 20s and 30s in north-eastern Bulgaria (Kowalskii 1921, Manov 1938). In the 50s and 60s significant folk material had been collected by turcologists in Gagauz villages of Bulgaria and Bessarabia (Zajoncskovskiy 1961, Pokrovskaya 1953). Pokrovskaya continued the legacy of Moshkov in studying and educating the Gagauz. In 1953 she defended her thesis on Gagauz folk lyrics, and later has published the first Gagauz Grammar and studies on its syntax (Pokrovskaya 1964, 1978). She also developed orthographical rules for the language and edited dozens of textbooks on Gagauz grammar for schools and colleges. Her mentorship gave rise to such turcologists as: Gaydarzhi G., Sycheva V., Koltsa E., and Tukan B. They greatly contributed to the scientific development of the Gagauz language. Professor Pokrovskaya has remained the leading figure in Gagauz studies — with her legacy of 120 monographs and articles on its philology and folklore (Baurchulu 1998).

Only recently has Gagauz become a written language. Long-lasting ethno-social contacts with other nationalities (mostly non-Turkic) created a multicultural environment for development of all sides of the Gagauz nation, defining its folklore and language. As Eastern Orthodox Christians Gagauz embraced similar traditions and ceremonies to those of neighbouring cultures (Moldavian, Romanian, Bulgarian, and Russian). Dual (Turkic, non-Turkic) features added to the uniqueness of the Gagauz language and folklore. However those contacts also had a devastating effect on the language. It became almost fully dependent on foreign lexicon and structure. Despite decades of erosion and attempts to assimilate it, the Gagauz language remains a basis of the ethnic identity of its people.

Gagauz language belongs to West-Oguz group of the Turkic language family, along with modern Crimean – Tartar, Turkmen, Turkish, Azeri, Uyghur,

<sup>2</sup> According to the Buro of Census of USSR, total Gagauz population in 1989 had reached 197,000, including those in Moldova - 153,000. In the Gagauz region, Gagauz people made up 138,000, that is 80% of the region total population and 4% of all Moldavian citizens. (Data from: Summary of Buro of Census of USSR, 1989 and Belarus and Moldova: country of studies. Fedor ed., 1995).



and Uzbek (Baskakov 1962). With initiatives of the Soviet government and turcologists (Dmitriev N. and Pokrovskaya L.) the Gagauz received their alphabet (Cyrillic version) on July 30, 1957. Classes and elementary schools in teaching of the Gagauz language followed. That spurred writing activity and publishing of textbooks in the native tongue. the schools were soon closed again (in 1961), but in these three years Gagauz culture leaped forward with emerging of its first intelligentsia and scholars that continued the literacy process during this period of repression of cultural identity. For almost three decades (from early 60s to late 80s) Gagauz language and culture remained in stagnation. Usage of Gagauz was limited to a family encirclement and mostly to its older generation of speakers. The young Gagauz people, born in 70-80s, cannot speak or even understand their native tongue. Some turcologists were predicting extinction of the language by the end of this century.<sup>3</sup>

Since 1995 there has been a period of transition for Gagauz language from Cyrillic to the Latin alphabet, which is more suitable to its phonetics (Pashaly 1995). The problem of literacy and preparing readers for newly published materials in the 60s has shifted in the 90s to the problem of inadequacy of teaching in new alphabet and availability of books in it (Anatolieva 1997). There remain untranslated books of Gagauz classics like D.Karachoban, D.Tanasoglu, N. Baboglu. Scientific terminology is in process of being created. It is developing slowly and relies heavily on sources from other languages, like Russian or English.

Along with other foreign languages, Gagauz was restored in schools in the status of a subject of study in 1986. Since 1989 there have been organized annual Olympiads for students on which they test their knowledge of the written Gagauz word. (Vesti Gagauzii 1997). In 1994 in Chadyr the first Anglo-Turkish Lyceum was founded with nearly 70 students. Opened since 1988 has been a section of Gagauz Philology at the Pedagogical College I. Krianga (Khishinev). It graduated 13 students in 1993 and 48 in 1994 for the needs of Gagauz schools in the region (Anatolieva 1997). In 1989 the section of Gagauzology of the Department of Minorities of the Academy of Moldova began research and activities on preserving Gagauz cultural heritage. The section organized numerous conferences, folk and ethnographic expeditions and has established scientific ties with scholars from Turkic republics of NIS, Turkey, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Germany. (Vesti Gagauzii 1996). Comrat University has had five graduations since its opening in 1994. Its alumni work in numerous branches of Gagauzia's structures. Prof. Pokrovskaya has taught more than 90 students there and published the first syllabi of lectures on the Gagauz language. In collaboration with the university many libraries in the United States acquired materials on Gagauz issues. Annual international conferences are held at Comrat

University with help of Turkish scholars. In the late 80s, after years of inertia and assimilation that nearly denationalized the Gagauz, the process began of collaborating with turcologists of other countries to reconstruct and preserve Gagauz language and culture. Turkey and later Bulgaria rendered significant assistance to the Gagauz. With Turkish help, in 1997 alone more than 20 books (including materials for newly opened Comrat University) have been published. Among them is the latest research on the ethnonym "Gagauz". (Pokrovskaya 1997). The Comrat University, with its three departments (agriculture, economics and national culture) and 1500 students (of all nationalities of Budzhak region), has established contacts with Turkish and Bulgarian universities that help with literature and equipment (Cherveni 1998).

The University of Sofia organized the first expedition in Gagauz areas of Bulgaria with participants from Moldova in 1996. Today more than 250 students from Moldova study in different colleges in Turkey and dozens in Bulgaria. (Railian, Kurdova, 1997).

Only after 1989 did Gagauz media begin its development: the first central paper for the Gagauz was released in Khishinev (Ana Sözü – Mother's Tongue), along with local papers in Russian and Gagauzian: Vesti Gagauzii "Gagauz News" (Comrat), Gagauz Sesi "Voice of Gagauz" (Chadyr). Major politico-economical journal Sabah Yildizi "Morning Star" and the Children's magazine Guneschik "Sun" were published in 1997. Budzhak Dalgasi "The Wave of Budzhak" - a TV station from Khishinev, transmits an hourly programme in Gagauz and other local tongues weekly. There are also local TV and radio stations (in cities of Comrat, Chadyr and Vulcanesti).

In November 1988 Gagauz Halki "Gagauz People", organized by group of Gagauz intelligentsia, demanded freedoms and rights to its nation in Moldova. In August 1990 the Gagauz declared their independent "Gagauz Republic" around the city of Comrat, on South of Moldova. The 1994 Constitution accorded them a measure of autonomy and a decree later that year officially established Gagauzia (called Gagauz-Yeri in Gagauz) (Fedor 1995).

After years of mistrust and mutual biases, the new politico-economical climate in Moldova has allowed the establishment of numerous non-profit structures and organizations for Gagauz intelligentsia and artists. In Moldavian republic now function Societies of Gagauz Writers, Gagauz Artists and Painters, and Association of Gagauz Women.

A unique professional institution, the theatre Umut "Hope" opened in Chadyr for its audience in 1997. It was first a student activity but grew to the status of a national theatre (Cherveni 1998). In its repertoire, along with world classics, works of Gagauz playwrights are widely presented. The area of cinematography for the local artists still remains unestablished. There are only two

<sup>3</sup> In 1979 Russian was claimed as a second language by 68% of the Gagauz (Fedor ed., p. 122).

documentaries depicting folk and ethnographical reality of the Gagauz people, shot by D. Karachoban and L. Pokrovskaya in 60-70s (Baurchulu 1998).

From political achievements such as establishing autonomy the Gagauz people meet the challenges of economical, social, cultural and political nature. There is a great need for further cooperation with local organizations and institutions of other minorities as well as with turkological centers around the world.

With a drastically diminished population of native speakers preserving a language, the main treasure of its people, has become a priority for the Gagauz intelligentsia. However, the problems the young republic is facing today cannot offset its great achievements in this dramatic yet dynamic decade.

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#### Petition to the President of the Italian Republic, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi

Esteemed Mr President Carlo Azeglio Ciampi,

The undersigned linguists invite you to sign the ratification of the bill 3366, definitively approved by the Italian Parliament on 25th of November 1999.

The recognition and preservation of the language and cultures of the Sardinian, Friulian, Occitan, Valdaostan, Franco-Provençal, German, Greek, Slovenian, Albanian, Catalan, Ladinian and Croatian minorities does not harm the Standard Italian language. The preservation of diversity is a sign of freedom, open-mindedness, of true multiculturalism and of sincere Europeanism.

Moreover, the recognition of the principle that diversity should be preserved could, in the future, turn out to be very useful for the Italian language itself. In a European context, the same arguments, which today are used against Regional languages (the so-called dialects) could also be used against present day state-languages: the production of culture which is not standardised according to the needs of the strongest social groups always implies higher financial costs and psychological resistance. For society as a whole, however, the value of this culture is simply inestimable.

Moreover, we invite you to promote, in the appropriate places, a constructive debate about the recognition of other languages and cultures such as those of the regions Piedmont, Veneto, Sicily, Campania, Emilia Romagna, Liguria, Lombardy. These languages and cultures are already recognised by important studies of UNESCO (The UNESCO Red Book of Endangered Languages 93-96) and by several regional councils (Veneto, Piedmont, Emilia Romagna).

Linguists consider the hierarchical distinction between "language" and "dialect" to be an artifact of old-fashioned state bureaucracies, still bound to the Romantic concept of State-Nation. The myth of linguistic homogeneity of peoples has played a very important role during last century. This supposed homogeneity would constitute the base of a nation, from which the right/duty to found its own state would follow. In Europe, this myth has led to the foundation of several states, including Italy, which nowadays constitute the European Union.

To question this myth, however, does not mean to question the unity of a state. On the contrary, to recognise the existence of linguistic diversity means to help the modern state to reform the social agreement between its citizens on a more realistic and, most importantly, on a more democratic basis.

Multilingualism is not only a fundamental part of our past, but also an inevitable future for the whole of mankind, and a very attractive future, too: the knowledge of several languages is a great richness which many of us are very grateful to possess. Multilingualism is the best insurance against intolerance.

With our best regards and respect,

[96 signatures.]

If you would like to sign up, write to sa-Limba <sa-Limba@uni-koeln.de>

23 de Nadale de 1999. Eva Remberger

#### **Sweden agrees ratification of Charter for Regional or Minority Languages**

Leena Huss <leena.huss@multietn.uu.se> 22 Dec 1999

Dear Friends,

I would like to inform you that the Swedish Parliament agreed on December 2 1999 on the ratification of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities and the Council of Europe Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. The officially recognized national minorities of Sweden will be the Jews, the Roma, the Sami, the Sweden Finns and the Tornedalians, and the languages recognized will be Finnish, Menkieli (also called 'Tornedalian Finnish'), Romani, Sami, and Yiddish. The ratifications will come into force on April 1(!) 2000. Sami, Finnish and Menkieli will get a special status as official languages some (four for Sami, five for Menkieli and Finnish) of the northern municipalities. This is a significant reorientation on the part of the Swedish State, as Sweden has in the past concentrated its efforts on immigrant languages and largely ignored its historical minorities.

Leena Huss

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#### **5. Allied Societies and Activities**

##### **Japan Supports Research on Languages of the Pacific Rim**

Osahito Miyaoka wrote on 26 Dec 1999:

A major research project is now under way in Japan, funded by the Ministry of Education, to support systematic and swift measures to preserve endangered languages of Pacific rim minorities where research has been lagging, at the same time retaining a long-term perspective.

Priority will be placed on languages whose continued existence is in question and will focus on four areas:

- (1) Gathering and sorting records from previous linguistic surveys;
- (2) Undertaking new field work
- (3) Recording, organizing, and analyzing linguistic data; and

- (4) Publishing the results (dictionaries, grammars, textbooks, etc.) and entering this information into databases.

In the fiscal year beginning in April 2000, three-year projects will be launched on planned research topics (around 35 in all) and research proposals will be publicly solicited. Projects will take the form of focused linguistic surveys and research (Type A) or cross-disciplinary research (Type B) on theory, methodology, and information processing, intended to back up Type A efforts. A total of seven topics have been selected according to region and research content:

- A01: South Pacific Rim
- A02: North Pacific Rim (including the Ainu language)
- A03: East and Southeast Asia
- A04: Japan (includes Japanese spoken abroad)
  
- B01: Methods for surveying endangered languages
- B02: Dynamic research on language extinction and preservation
- B03: Survey research support through information processing

Applications for both types will be accepted again in the autumn of 2000.

Overseas linguists can join the project by forming a group with a Japanese researcher who works on the same (or a close) language.

For further information (in English) visit:  
[http://www.elpr.bun.kyoto-u.ac.jp/index\\_e.html](http://www.elpr.bun.kyoto-u.ac.jp/index_e.html)

Or contact Prof. Osahito Miyaoka (Professor, Graduate School of Letters, Kyoto University) at: [omiyaoka@ling.bun.kyoto-u.ac.jp](mailto:omiyaoka@ling.bun.kyoto-u.ac.jp)

### Language Foundation planned in Canada

26 Dec 1999:

Merry Xmas and Happy New Year!

My name is Chief Ron. E. Ignace. I am the chair of the National Chiefs' Committee on Languages for the Assembly of First Nations (Canada). I would like to inform you of our agenda and to enlist all the support I can. The Committee's objective is to get our languages legally recognized by way of legislation and to set up a Language Foundation (as a Royal Commission), which can be capitalized to \$100 million, of which \$50 million is to be raised privately. We are establishing a committee called "Friends of Aboriginal Languages"; we hope, with the support of our National Chief, to enlist Senators, MP's, business leaders, sports personalities, musicians, and other individuals who are interested and concerned.

The AFN Chiefs in Assembly have declared 2000 a year dedicated to Aboriginal languages. The AFN's next National Assembly, which will be held

in Montreal, is dedicated to Languages. There will be fund raising activities leading up to and during the Assembly. All proceeds will be targeted at the communities which are the cradles of the languages and to facilitate intergenerational transfer of the languages. I would appreciate your support.

If you have any questions or suggestions you can e-mail me at the address below or phone +1-613-241-6789  
 (Louise LaHache, language sector, AFN).

Happy Holidays,

--Chief Ron. E. Ignace  
[<m\\_rignace@bc.sympatico.ca>](mailto:m_rignace@bc.sympatico.ca)

### UNESCO declaration supports traditional knowledge and languages

*Luisa Maffi writes, on 29 Nov 1999:*

I finally got to read the text of the "Declaration on Science: Agenda and Framework for Action" put out by the UNESCO-International Council for Science (ICSU) at a conference in Budapest last summer--a big-time document that is being widely commented upon. Paragraph 86, under section 3.4 "Modern science and other systems of knowledge", reads:

86. Governmental and non-governmental organizations should sustain traditional knowledge systems through active support of the societies that are keepers and developers of this knowledge, their ways of life, their languages [my emphasis], their social organization and the environments in which they live, and fully recognize the contribution of women as repositories of a large part of traditional knowledge.

The full document is on the web at:  
[http://www.unesco.org/science/wcs/eng/declaration\\_e.htm](http://www.unesco.org/science/wcs/eng/declaration_e.htm)

Here is evidence that the argument some of us have been making for the past several years is beginning to be heard internationally. Other paragraphs in the document also speak about the relationship between modern science and traditional knowledge. Now, of course, the proof is in the local pudding, so to speak: i.e., in actions taken by national governments, regional and local institutions, etc., to actually promote and support this perspective.

Luisa Maffi  
 Program in Cognitive Studies of the Environment  
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### 6. Overheard on the Web

#### Has the Decline of World Languages been Overestimated?

From FOE-L: GEN 5 Global English Newsletter  
 <[foe-l@english.co.uk](mailto:foe-l@english.co.uk)> Issue 5 1999

The Future of English? suggests that an alarming proportion of the world's languages will be lost during the next century, although the spread of English is not directly to blame. The British linguist, David Dalby, disagrees with that analysis and argues that linguistic diversity is greater than most linguists imagine (nearer ten thousand languages in the world rather than six), and that the rate of language loss is slower than has been assumed.

A new Web site devoted to David Dalby's Linguasphere Observatory was launched recently and includes some of the material that will appear in a comprehensive Register of the World's Languages and Speech Communities. David Dalby describes the Linguasphere Observatory as 'an independent research network devoted to the study and promotion of multilingualism and the exploration of our global linguistic environment'.

The Linguasphere programme also features in a recent issue of the bilingual Geolinguistic Newsletter, edited by Grant McConnell. McConnell and colleagues are engaged in their own survey of the world's languages. An interesting preview of their work includes a map of English in education in parts of South East Asia and another which shows in which parts of the Philippines English is the 'language vehiculaire'.

<http://www.linguasphere.org>  
<http://www.ciral.ulaval.ca/geo/>  
[http://www.ciral.ulaval.ca/geo/b8-1anglais\\_F.htm](http://www.ciral.ulaval.ca/geo/b8-1anglais_F.htm)  
[http://www.ciral.ulaval.ca/geo/b81philippines\\_F.htm](http://www.ciral.ulaval.ca/geo/b81philippines_F.htm)

#### **Volunteers Needed to test CD-ROM "Western Mono Ways of Speaking." 31 Oct 1999**

Paul Kroskrity and I are currently looking for 20 users of IBM computers with a 4X CD ROM drive to volunteer to beta-test our interactive CD-ROM "Taitaduhan (Our Language): Western Mono Ways of Speaking." This CD-ROM contains a collection of 4 verbal art performances as well as background information about this Californian Indian language and community. The featured genres are performed by a prominent community elder, Rosalie Bethel, who is renown for her skills in story telling. The CD-ROM allows users to view entire movies with English sub-titles, view a sentence by sentence analysis of each performance, view a self-pronouncing pronunciation guide of all Western Mono vowels and consonants, and to access other texts written about the Western Mono speech community. We have only have a limited number of CDs made for beta-testing. So volunteers will be selected based on the sole criterion that they operate a type of computer configuration on which we have not yet had the opportunity to test the CD-ROM program.

Beta-testing is a stage in software design which allows programmers to figure out how well their program functions on different computer platforms by collecting data from different users regarding program design, functionality, and software incompatibilities. Even though our experiences with the CD have been showing it to be both virus-

free and bug-free, we strongly recommend that normal precautions be taken when running this version. This includes using your own local form of virus scanning and making sure that you do not run this program on a machine that is task-dedicated (or where all or most of a particular project is located) since unpredictable interactions do occur which can result in data loss. Even though our program has never damaged existing programs on any machine which has played it, it is important to understand that we have tested it on a limited range of computers and that each machine can be uniquely stocked with potentially conflicting programs.

Volunteers who are selected on the basis of our need to construct a distributed sample will receive a free copy of the CD-ROM by mail, instructions on how to install the program and a questionnaire. Volunteers will be asked to follow the guidelines provided in the questionnaire and answer a set of questions. We estimate that this process should take between 45 minutes to an hour to complete. We also ask that volunteers take no more than a week to complete and return the questionnaire to us after they receive their copy of the CD-ROM.

If you are interested in volunteering for this project, please contact either **Paul Kroskrity** ([paulvk@ucla.edu](mailto:paulvk@ucla.edu)) or **Jennifer Reynolds** ([jfreyn@ucla.edu](mailto:jfreyn@ucla.edu)) and send us some basic information about your computer (type of computer, system software, type of drives, computer speed, RAM, etc.) and your address. We will choose and contact all volunteers once we feel that we have a variety of computers and systems represented in this study.

#### **7. Places to Go, on the Web and in the World**

##### **Endangered Languages homepage on LINGUIST**

A new Endangered Languages homepage on LINGUIST will bring together materials on the study of endangered languages to serve the needs of both the linguistic profession and communities interested in language revitalization or maintenance programs. As a start, the following pages (with appropriate links) are proposed:

- (1) national and international professional or service organizations involved in the endangered language documentation and revitalization effort;
- (2) community organizations which are working to preserve their own languages;
- (3) "linguist wanted" ads; a list of communities and linguists in the field needing technical assistance (this page will be managed by Megan Crowhurst);
- (4) an archive of on-line discussions and on-line conferences on ELs;

- (5) programs of (traditional) conferences on ELs, and calls for papers;
- (6) notices and reviews of books and journals on ELs and linguistic fieldwork;
- (7) information about and reviews of fieldwork tools such as software and questionnaires;
- (8) information on linguistics departments with a specialty in training fieldworkers (and which accept "Grammar of X"-type dissertations) and information on short-term training programs;
- (9) pedagogical materials for fieldwork courses and other courses on linguistic diversity;
- (10) funding opportunities for fieldwork projects;
- (11) a list of people to contact who are currently working on particular languages/groups of languages, with their permission. (Alana Johns is building a page which will include 5-page descriptions of projects in progress authored by different fieldworkers which can be linked to this page.)

Interested linguists are invited to volunteer as the "curator" of any of these proposed pages (except #5, which has been claimed). Suggestions for additional pages are also welcome. Please contact Martha Ratliff ([martha\\_ratliff@wayne.edu](mailto:martha_ratliff@wayne.edu)).

#### **Endangered languages data at IPOLA site 13 Oct 1999:**

LSA's Endangered Language Committee carried out a survey of endangered languages. The data obtained in this survey have been updated and at least some of the information is now available at the IPOLA website. It is still under construction but you are invited to check out the information that has so far been posted. The address is:

<http://www.ipola.org/endangered/index.html>

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Dept of Anthropology, University of Kansas

#### **About the artist site: House of the Small Languages**

16 Sep 1999

The House of the Small Languages is growing up as a crossing point of all endangered languages. The small languages of North, Central and South America and Europe have now their own rooms in the House.

Many links from the languages enlarge the House to the community of all the people who are involved with the survey or the maintenance of small languages, with the recognition of the cultures and with the defense of their speakers. But we are still missing important information:

- a picture of a speaker/or people of each particularly language,
- a spoken sample of the language we can use to create a sound clip.

- URL of tribes, people, organizations, individuals to create external links between the languages and everybody involved in a way or another in the small languages.

It is rather difficult to get contact with speakers of endangered languages or people (mostly linguists) who are in touch with them

You can help with sending to the address below or e-mail us what you can:

- an useful address, or an useful link
- a picture of a speaker
- a cassette or a sound clip
- languages updates

With your collaboration, the house of the small languages will look better, so that people listening to the languages will feel the beauty of the human voices. Thank you in advance

Friendly regards

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#### **Kuna List and Data Base**

*Marta de Gerdes writes:*

Following a suggestion from Joel Sherzer, we are currently preparing a list server and a database for Kuna scholars and researchers. The project will be sponsored by the Museion Program of the University of Gothenburg (Sweden) in collaboration with the Ethnographic Museum of Gothenburg.

If you have carried out research on the Kuna language and/or culture, we would be interested in hearing from you. Please send us:

- (a) Your e-mail address( and the addresses of other Kuna researchers you know of).
- (b) Titles and abstracts of your publications, if you have this information handy.
- (c) A brief caption about yourself including your name, institution, and area of research (history, religion, environmental studies, linguistics, gender studies, linguistic anthropology, aesthetics, or any other term that describes your research interest).

Thanks in advance for your cooperation. We hope that these electronic resources will help advance Kuna scholarship in the next century. We think good communication is true to the Kuna spirit.

Marta de Gerdes

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**Expanded searching on Less Commonly Taught Languages database**



Dear subscribers to the LCTL project's teachers' listservs:

As you probably know, the LCTL project at Univ of Minnesota's National Language Resource Center, maintains a database of where LCTLs are taught in North American colleges and universities. Up until now, you could request lists of institutions for specific languages (some included regional lists, too).

Now we have added the ability to search for specific languages (about 350 of them on our list) by state or province.

We also have a new 'correction' and 'update' form, so that you may keep us informed of the latest information about your program and others that you know about.

We welcome comments about both of these new services.

LOOKUP: <<http://128.101.172.154/>>  
CORRECTION:  
<<http://128.101.172.154/corrections.html>>

The old method still works well (perhaps faster for straight language lookups):  
<<http://carla.acad.umn.edu/LCTL/access.html>>

**LOLFA wales.cymraeg (Datgan)**  
Darren Wyn Rees <[merlin@netlink.co.uk](mailto:merlin@netlink.co.uk)>  
Date: 18 September 1999

The Welsh language newsgroup wales.cymraeg is now available in mailing list format, easily available to read for anyone with e-mail access.

It appears that many people are experiencing difficulties in accessing/reading the newsgroup. For this reason, I decided to gateway the newsgroup to a mailing list - called 'LOLFA'.

Posts appearing in wales.cymraeg will also appear - totally uncensored - in the LOLFA list. Posts sent to the LOLFA list will not appear on wales.cymraeg, although a full gateway may be established in future.

This is an experimental service, and so comments and feedback are much appreciated.

To join the list, send a blank e-mail to  
[lolfa-subscribe@gwebost.cymraeg.org](mailto:lolfa-subscribe@gwebost.cymraeg.org)

To join the digest version of the list, e-mail to  
[lolfa-digest-subscribe@gwebost.cymraeg.org](mailto:lolfa-digest-subscribe@gwebost.cymraeg.org)

To reach the list owners, e-mail  
[lolfa-owner@gwebost.cymraeg.org](mailto:lolfa-owner@gwebost.cymraeg.org)

To post to the list directly, e-mail  
[lolfa@gwebost.cymraeg.org](mailto:lolfa@gwebost.cymraeg.org)

Please forward this message to anyone who may be interested. For convenience, you can simply quote the web address :

<http://www.cymraeg.org/menter-newydd/datgan-0056.html>

I hope this service is a useful contribution for the online Welsh language community.

Darren Wyn Rees  
Menter Iaith y Wê --- 'Yr Iaith ar Waith ar y Wê'

#### **Karuk-Irish site**

15 Dec 1999:

You might want to have a look at my Karuk-Irish site:

<http://www.eskimo.com/~donncha/karuk.html>

It's basically, I guess, a kind of honoring of one minority language by another. I had fun putting it together.

Dennis King  
<[donncha@eskimo.com](mailto:donncha@eskimo.com)>

#### **Chumash site**

15 Dec 1999:

You may be interested in the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History's new "Chumash Life" website that contains some linguistic information, e.g., an interactive body "map" where Barbareno names pop up when the cursor is pointed at different body parts. There is also a section on placenames in the Santa Barbara and Goleta areas and a map of native Chumash towns with linguistically correct names in an orthography adapted for English speakers (as reconstructed by Kathryn Klar, Sally McLendon, Kenneth Whistler, Richard Applegate, etc.). The site may be found at:

<http://www.sbnature.org/chumash/>

John R. Johnson, Curator of Anthropology  
Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History  
<[jjohnson@sbnature2.org](mailto:jjohnson@sbnature2.org)>

#### **Language and Popular Culture in Africa**

##### **Call for Papers**

The **Journal of Language and Popular Culture in Africa** is a new, free, on-line journal published at the LPCA (Language and Popular Culture in Africa) web site. The Journal of Language and Popular Culture in Africa will publish data-centered studies on all aspects of African popular culture mediated by language. The Journal welcomes contributions from all relevant disciplines (anthropology, (socio-)linguistics, folklore, sociology, history, literature, etc.). Publication of the first issue of the Journal is scheduled for late Spring 2000. Please send your manuscripts to:

Journal of Language and Popular Culture in Africa  
Vincent A. de Rooij, Editor in Charge  
Dept of Sociology and Anthropology  
University of Amsterdam  
O.Z. Achterburgwal 185  
1012 DK Amsterdam



### The Netherlands

All submissions will be reviewed by members of the LPCA Advisory Board or by other experts. For more information on the Journal's Editorial Policy and details on how to submit, consult the JLPCL home page: <http://www.pscw.uva.nl/lpca/jlpca/info.html>

### Web Site

**Language and Popular Culture in Africa (LPCA)** is a web site that aims to document and further the study of expressions of popular language and culture in Africa. LPCA makes available texts that serve as the medium of African popular culture and are at the same time part of this culture. If you want to make relevant materials available through the LPCA web site, please contact us by e-mail or regular mail at the addresses below.

For more information on the LPCA site and how to contribute, see our home page: <http://www.pscw.uva.nl/lpca/index.html>

### Discussion List

If you want to stay informed of new additions to the LPCA web site or if you want to discuss issues related to the web site's mission, you may want to subscribe to the LPCA-L discussion list (created on 8 October 1999). To subscribe, send the following command in the body of your e-mail message to <LISTSERV@NIC.SURFNET.NL>:

SUBSCRIBE LPCA-L <your name>

and be sure to omit everything else from your message (e.g. signatures).

Vincent A. de Rooij  
e-mail: [vderooij@pscw.uva.nl](mailto:vderooij@pscw.uva.nl)  
Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Amsterdam, O.Z. Achterburgwal 185, 1012 DK Amsterdam, The Netherlands

## 8. Forthcoming Meetings

### Protecting Knowledge: Traditional Resource Rights in the New Millennium, Vancouver, Canada, 24-26 February 2000

Hosted by the Union of BC Indian Chiefs with support from the Law Foundation of British Columbia and Legal Services Society of British Columbia

First Nations House of Learning, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

The Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) is hosting a three-day legal conference exploring traditional resource rights, or cultural and intellectual property rights issues affecting all Indigenous Peoples. The target audience will be BC First Nation community members and workers, representatives from Indigenous Peoples from around the world as well as the traditional resource rights and academic communities.

The conference is tentatively focused on exploring and clarifying the following three questions within an international context:

What is indigenous cultural and intellectual property? What rights do BC First Nations want recognized? Can BC First Nations communities develop their own system(s) for protecting traditional resource rights?

This is a new and developing area of law that is not widely understood yet it affects Indigenous Peoples where they live and on a daily basis. The World Intellectual Property Organization and the World Trade Organization hope to introduce draft amendments on Indigenous Peoples' knowledge during the TRIPs review in 2000.

The conference format will consist of an international level overview, an exploration of how such issues are being dealt within different jurisdictions by using three-member panels and an attempt to demonstrate how different issues are experienced at the community level with case studies.

It will include, among much else:

#### *Ecotourism Panel*

Does ecotourism benefit local communities? Does it benefit the environment? Or does it perpetuate patterns of power and dominance that are destructive of the environment and of the people?

#### *Art Panel*

The cultural designs and motifs of our communities communicate our ideas and beliefs. Can such images be "owned" by a community or by an artist? What are the consequences when they are expropriated and mass-produced? Can the current legal tools of copyrights, patents and trademarks protect the cultural integrity of such images?

#### *Forest Resources Panel*

What are Forest Resources? How can Forest Resources be protected? Does such protection afford "sustainable management"?

#### *Repatriation Panel*

The repatriation of cultural objects is important to many communities. This session will ask how are different communities dealing with repatriation? What are the obstacles? What are the strategies?

#### *Nonlegal Instruments Panel*

Are there alternatives to the legal system that communities can use to protect their territories? Alternatives include non-legal, market-related measures. This session will introduce such measures like investment screens, shareholder advocacy, consumer action and product certification.

#### *Oral History Panel*

Songs, dances, names and stories tell us who we are. What happens when oral history is shared? What happens when there is a breach of confidentiality? Should there be more community control of research projects? What are the ways to protect oral history?

#### *International Human Rights Overview*

A brief look at international human rights and the effectiveness of international efforts like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

#### *International Biodiversity Overview*

What do international efforts like The Convention of Biological Diversity and the Rio Declaration mean at the community level? This is meant to be an overview of what is happening on the international level.

#### *What is Article 8(j)?*

Article 8(j) of The Convention of Biological Diversity obliges the signatories to essentially acknowledge the importance of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), traditional lifestyles and sustainability, the promotion of the idea of consent in the use of TEK and the idea of benefit sharing and customary use. This is a closer look of what Article 8(j) means at the community level.

#### *Medicinal Plants Panel*

The value of medicinal plants go beyond health. The cultural and spiritual values of the knowledge of medicinal plants cannot be discounted. What happens when medicinal plant knowledge is shared? Is it ethnobotany? Can one simply separate the medicinal qualities from the cultural context?

#### *Sacred Sites Panel*

The major issues for Sacred Sites include unrestricted access; site protection; privacy; and the integrity of the ecosystem. What strategies can we learn from those communities who are willing to share their experiences?

#### *Biopiracy Case Study*

What is biopiracy or biodiversity prospecting? How does it impact Indigenous Peoples' rights in terms of Intellectual Property Rights laws? Are such laws adequate or appropriate? What examples or instances can we learn from?

#### *Biodiversity Panel*

Biodiversity conservation is becoming more and more difficult. Technological change and the commercialization of biological resources have raised fundamental scientific, economic, socio-political and ethical questions. This panel will discuss their experiences and answer questions based on their experiences.

#### *Declarations*

How can communities respond to the growing concerns regarding Intellectual Property? One

way is through the use of Indigenous Peoples' declarations. This proposed session will help those who are interested, considering and/or planning on drafting such a declaration.

#### *International Legal Review*

A review of the importance and relevance to communities of legally binding international agreements like the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; The World Heritage Convention; and the Rome Convention.

#### *TRIPs Review*

An examination of the Gatt Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs). Why is this important at the community level?

#### *Repatriation Case Study*

This proposed session is meant to be a follow-up to the Repatriation Panel discussion and will look in detail how one community has dealt with repatriation. What did they do in order to be successful in the repatriation of their community objects? What are the problems that they are encountering?

#### *Drafting a Community Intellectual Rights Act*

In 1994, a Third World Network discussion paper (Nijar 1994) suggested the concept of a community intellectual rights act. The idea of the act would be to prevent the "privatisation and usurpation of community rights and knowledge through existing definitions of innovations." This proposed session will look at the purpose and the thinking of how such an act would work at the community level.

#### *Nonlegal Instruments Case Study*

This proposed session will explore how nonlegal instruments have been used at the community level. Did the community use investment screens, shareholder advocacy, consumer action or product certification to protect their territory? What were the considerations? What were the benefits? What were the costs?

#### *Do Pharmaceutical Agreements work?*

There are several companies who have embarked on extensive bioprospecting expedition programs. Some have signed Pharmaceutical Agreements with Indigenous communities. Some of these agreements are made under the auspices of The International Cooperative Biodiversity Groups (ICBG) Program which is a U.S. Government funded effort to promote equitable sharing of biodiversity benefits in the context of integrated research and development toward drug discovery, biodiversity, conservation and economic development. Do these type of agreements work?

We invite you to forward any suggestions you may have about the proposed sessions, possible panel speakers, resource people or appropriate papers and documents that would be suitable for inclusion in the conference kit.

We will be updating our website with links to sites and papers related to the conference theme. As well, we will be using an email list to keep those who wish to be kept informed. To subscribe to the list send an email to [research@ubcic.bc.ca](mailto:research@ubcic.bc.ca) with the words "Subscribe Protect" in the subject line.

The resources of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs are limited but we are committed to delivering this conference as a public service to all Indigenous Peoples. If you are in a position to contribute to or support this timely initiative in any way, we look forward to hearing from you.

Donald Bain, Conference Coordinator

Phone: +1 (604) 684-0231 Fax: -5726

Email: [research@ubcic.bc.ca](mailto:research@ubcic.bc.ca)

URL: <http://www.ubcic.bc.ca/protect.htm>

#### **High Desert Linguistics Conference (Albuquerque, NM, April 7-9, 2000)**

([nordquis@unm.edu](mailto:nordquis@unm.edu)) 22 Nov 1999:

The third annual High Desert Linguistics Conference will be held at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM, April 7-9, 2000. The keynote speakers will be Colette Grinevald and John Haiman. Proposals are invited for 20-minute talks and 10-minute discussion sessions in any area of linguistics from any theoretical perspective. Papers in the following areas are especially welcome: language change and variation, grammaticization, signed languages, Native American languages, and computational linguistics. Please note that selected papers from this conference will be published.

Submissions must include 2 copies of an anonymous abstract and an indexcard including the following information:

- Name
- Title of Abstract & area (phonology, syntax ...)
- Affiliation(s)
- Mailing address
- e-mail address

Abstracts must be at most one page with one-inch margins and typed in at least 11-point font. An optional second page is permitted for data and citations. Submissions are limited to one individual and one joint abstract per author. Abstracts may be submitted by e-mail. All submissions must be received no later than January 31, 2000, and will only be considered if they conform to the above guidelines.

Send to HDLS, Dept Linguistics, 526 Humanities Bldg, U of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM 87131, USA; or by e-mail to [kaaron@unm.edu](mailto:kaaron@unm.edu).

#### **Workshop on American Indigenous Languages UC Santa Barbara, April 14-16, 2000**

Paul T. Barthmaier ([ptb0@umail.ucsb.edu](mailto:ptb0@umail.ucsb.edu)) 17 Nov 1999:

The linguistics department at UC Santa Barbara announces its 3rd annual Workshop on American Indigenous Languages (WAIL-3), a forum for the discussion of theoretical and descriptive linguistic studies of indigenous languages of the Americas. It will be held on the weekend of April 14-16, 2000.

Anonymous abstracts are invited for talks on any topic in Native American linguistics. Talks will be 20 minutes, followed by 10 minutes for discussion. Individuals may submit abstracts for one single and one co-authored paper. Abstracts should be 500 words or less and can be submitted by hard copy or e-mail.

For hard copy submissions, please send five copies of the abstract and a 3x5 card with the following information: (1) name; (2) affiliation; (3) mailing address; (4) phone number; (5) e-mail address; and (6) title of paper. Send hard copy submissions to:

#### **WAIL-3**

Department of Linguistics  
University of California, Santa Barbara  
Santa Barbara, CA 93106

E-mail submissions are encouraged. Include the information from the 3x5 card (above) in the body of the e-mail message, with the anonymous abstract as an attachment. Send e-mail submissions to:  
[wail@humanitas.ucsb.edu](mailto:wail@humanitas.ucsb.edu)

The deadline for receipt of abstracts is January 30, 2000. Notification of acceptance will be by e-mail by February 15. For further information, contact the conference coordinator by e-mail at [wail@humanitas.ucsb.edu](mailto:wail@humanitas.ucsb.edu) or by telephone at (805) 893-3776, or check out the WAIL website at: <http://linguistics.ucsb.edu/events/wail/wail.html>

#### **Stabilizing Indigenous Languages (Toronto, May 11-14, 2000)**

Barbara Burnaby ([silc@oise.utoronto.ca](mailto:silc@oise.utoronto.ca)) 16 Nov 1999:

For updated information and registration forms for the Seventh Annual Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Conference, to be held in Toronto, Ontario, on May 11-14, 2000, please visit:  
<http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/MLC/silc>

The Conference will be held at the Toronto Colony Hotel, hosted by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) of the University of Toronto. The theme of the meeting will be "Language Across the Community," emphasizing the many ways in which all community members can become involved in indigenous language activities.

Deadline for submission is March 31, 2000.

**Language, Interaction, and Culture, May 18-20, 2000 at UCLA.**

The Center for Language, Interaction, and Culture Graduate Student Association at UCLA and the Language, Interaction, and Social Organization Graduate Student Association at UCSB call for papers for The Fourth Annual Conference on Language, Interaction, and Culture to be held May 18-20, 2000 at UCLA.

Papers should address topics at the intersection of language, interaction, and culture, and data should consist of naturally occurring behavior. Potential methods include, but are not limited to, conversation analysis, discourse analysis, and ethnographic methods. Send 3 copies of a 500-1,000 word extended abstract of the paper, including title, a brief description of methodology, and a description of the data, to arrive by **February 14**. No information identifying the author may appear in the abstract. Send to: CLIC Graduate Student Association University of California, Los Angeles Department of Applied Linguistics P.O. BOX 951531, 3300 Rolfe Hall Los Angeles, CA 90095-1531 USA.

**Nahuatl Summer Language Institute III, Yale, New Haven, Conn., USA, June 5 to July 28, 2000**

- Beginning-level intensive language training in Classical, colonial, and modern Nahuatl, Jonathan D. Amith language instructor
- Intensive workshops of one to five days led by experts in the field of Nahuatl and Mesoamerican studies
  1. Louise Burkhart, SUNY-Albany, on religious texts and the translation of European concepts into the Nahuatl language
  2. Michael Coe, Yale University, on Aztec and Mesoamerican archaeology and ethnohistory
  3. Willard Gingerich, St. John's University, on Nahuatl discourse and poetics
  4. Michel Launey, University of Paris, VII, on Classical Nahuatl grammar and literature
  5. Alan Sandstrom, Indiana University-Purdue University, Fort Wayne, on modern Nahuatl religion and ritual from a Huasteca Nahuatl community in Veracruz

For application materials and further information, contact the coordinator of the Nahuatl Summer Language Institute at <jonathan.amith@yale.edu> or call +1-503-831-3151, or see <<http://www.yale.edu/nahuatl/>>

**Athabaskan Languages Conference (Smithers, BC, June 8-10, 2000)**  
Sharon Hargus ([sharon@u.washington.edu](mailto:sharon@u.washington.edu)) 29 Nov 1999:

Next year's annual meeting of the Athabaskan Languages Conference will be held in Smithers and Moricetown, BC, Canada, June 9-10, 2000, preceded by a one-day workshop on Athabaskan prosody, June 8. A call for papers will be announced in February 2000. For further information contact Sharon Hargus, Linguistics, U of Washington ([sharon@u.washington.edu](mailto:sharon@u.washington.edu)).

**6th Himalayan Languages Symposium, U. Wisconsin-Milwaukee, June 15-17, 2000**

Papers at the 6th Himalayan Languages Symposium may report the results of scholarly research on any subject pertaining to the Himalayan languages and Himalayan language communities.

The term 'Himalayan' is used in its broad sense to include north-western and north-eastern India, where languages of Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Tibeto-Burman, and Austro-Asiatic linguistic stocks are spoken; the languages of Nepal, Bhutan and the Tibetan Plateau; the languages of northern Burma and Sichuan; and the languages of Nuristan, Baltistan and the Burushaski speaking area in the west. The term 'Languages' is used instead of 'Linguistics' to broaden the scope of the Symposium beyond linguistics proper so as to allow scholars working on language issues in the related disciplines of anthropology, philology, and archaeology to present their research wherever this is directly relevant to our understanding of Himalayan languages and language communities.

Possible topics include:

- descriptions of previously undescribed languages
- linguistic analyses of phonetic, phono-logical and grammatical phenomena
- comparative studies & historical reconstruction
- Himalayan languages in typological perspective
- language planning
- the economic and cultural aspects of language preservation and language death
- sociocultural aspect of borrowing
- 'secret' languages
- grammar & pragmatics of honorific speech
- sociolinguistic & ethnolinguistic analyses
- historical and archaeological findings relating to the prehistory of Himalayan language communities

Workshops to promote dialog between Himalayanists & typologists will be organized by:

- Matthew Dryer, SUNY-Buffalo
- David Gil, Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology
- Ian Maddieson, UCLA

The deadline for submission of abstracts is Feb. 1, 2000. Notifications of acceptance will sent out by March 1, 2000. Abstracts should be no longer than one page and should be of camera-ready quality. The author's name and affiliation should appear

below the title of the paper. On a separate piece of paper, include mailing and email addresses.

Preregistration: \$40 for faculty, \$20 for students and non-academics; registration at the conference: \$45 for faculty, \$25 for students and non-academics.

Address abstracts, registration fees, and inquiries:  
Michael Noonan, Himalayan Languages Symposium, Dept. of English, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI 53201, USA  
noonan@uwm.edu  
phone: +1-414-229-4511 fax -2643

The Permanent Secretariat for this annual Symposium is maintained at Leiden University in the Netherlands. Previously, the Himalayan Languages Symposium has been convened in Leiden, Noordwijkerhout [the Netherlands], Santa Barbara [California], Pune [India], and Kathmandu.

**Sixth International Conference on the Languages of Scotland and Ulster. The Queen's University of Belfast, 9th. - 13th. August 2000**

This conference is being organised on behalf of, and in conjunction with The Forum for Research on the Languages of Scotland and Ulster (Chair: Dr. J. Derrick McClure, University of Aberdeen). Otherwise details are as below:

**Second International Conference on the Languages of Ireland, Queen's University of Belfast. 12th - 16th August 2000**

(sequel to the First Conference, University of Ulster, Jordanstown, in June 1994)

All those with an academic or professional interest are invited to submit abstracts of no more than one A4-sized page for papers (max. 20 minutes plus 10 minutes discussion), posters (5 minutes introduction plus display), panels, workshops or any other type of presentation.

Closing date for abstracts (for both conferences): 31st January, 2000

The scope of this conference is very broad. It offers a rare opportunity for specialists on the Scottish and Irish Gaelic sides to come together with those on the English and Scots sides, and for all these groups to come together with specialists in related languages (e.g. Old Norse, Old Frisian, Old French, Middle Welsh, Manx, etc.) and for those with a more general interest in theory, in linguistic variation and change, in socio- and ethnolinguistics, in language and politics, in literary and stylistic uses of dialect, in onomastics, and in the dialectology and mapping of other languages. There will be lots of scope for computer-based presentations.

- Brand-new Hall of Residence Accommodation
- Papers to be given in the brand-new Central Teaching Facility

- Social Programme including Receptions and Excursions
- Costs: Conference Fee £100; Accommodation and Meals £50.00 per day

Details to follow in First Circular, to be issued in February 2000

Organiser (for both conferences): Dr. John M. Kirk, School of English, The Queen's University of Belfast, Belfast, BT7 1NN Northern Ireland  
Tel. (+44) (0)1232 273815 Fax. 314615  
Email: J.M.Kirk@qub.ac.uk

Organising Committee (for both conferences): John Kirk, Cathy Finlay, Alison Henry, Mícheál ÓMainnín

## 2. Publications of Interest

### **COMPASS: Minority Language Population Censuses**

COMPASS: Report and Proceedings of Colloquium on Minority-language Population-censuses And Social Surveys, a conference of 25 European lesser-used languages demography specialists held at University of Hertfordshire 1-4 Sept 1993. (Organiser: Prof Kenneth MacKinnon, with support from EU Task Force Resources Humaines)

The report comprises 18 articles covering most of the EU lesser-used languages, 238 pages, including numerous tables, maps, diagrams.

Available post free @ £15 from Gaelic Books Council, 22 Mansefield Street, Glasgow G11 5QP Scotland Tel: 0141-337-6211 (fax: 0141-341-0515)

### **Zapotec Dictionary of San Lucas Quiavini, by Felipe Alvarez**

*Los Angeles, Oct 20, 1999 (EFE via COMTEX) --* The University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) has published the first dictionary in Zapotec, the language spoken by Indians in the Mexican state of Oaxaca.

The initial 500-book issue of the dictionary, which includes 9,000 words translated into English and Spanish is aimed at the 50,000 Oaxaca Indians living in the state of California.

The UCLA Center for Chicano Studies said that the first dictionaries on sale this week had been purchased by Mixtec and Zapotec Indians living in the Los Angeles area.

This is the second event favoring the Oaxaca Indians living in California, in addition to the fact that several legal organizations are teaching interpreters to translate directly from the Oaxaca Indian language to English and Spanish.

The "Zapotec Dictionary of San Lucas Quiavini," as the dictionary is called, bears the name of the town where the dictionary's main author, Felipe Alvarez, a Oaxaca Indian who arrived in California as an undocumented immigrant more than 20 years ago, was raised.

Alvarez said that he prepared the dictionary spurred by the notion that his language might disappear, because it had never been written and because many of his fellow Indians were increasingly forced to speak Spanish.

Alvarez came illegally to California to work in agriculture and then moved on to Los Angeles, where he got a job as a dishwasher at a restaurant until he became a legal resident.

The dictionary was prepared with the help and contribution of language researcher Pamela Murillo and the head of the Chicano Studies Center at UCLA, Guillermo Hernandez.

The dictionary, the first of its kind to be published in the United States and Mexico, was compiled in two volumes and, according to Alvarez, could pave the way for similar works on Indian traditions and culture.

A UCLA language specialist, Pamela Munro, said during the presentation of the book Wednesday that the Zapotec language had roots similar to those of other languages spoken in Oaxaca and in northern Chiapas, such as Trique and Mixe. She added that the language is somewhat similar to Mazatec.

EFE mag/dm/bp

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#### Breton CD SARAH

XSARAHX@aol.com 24 Sep 1999

Bonjour, le premier CD événement de SARAH vient de sortir. Après une centaine de concerts dans 11 pays différents, ce groupe (très) controversé vient de coucher son originalité et sa puissance sur 4 titres... "Troublant", "inquiétant", "au delà de tout ce qui a été fait jusqu'à aujourd'hui" sont les expressions et qualificatifs entendus ou lus ici et là pour décrire ce qu'est SARAH. Chanté en Brezhoneg, Gallo et français, le CD "Ez Eterniñmens" est disponible pour 50 Frs (Port compris) à l'adresse suivante:

SARAH c/o Lécuyer BP52 35742 Pacé cedex. Bretagne via france  
ou par téléphone: +33-6 87 31 21 22.

D'autres part, un Mp3 est disponible sur le site officiel de SARAH  
<http://www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Lounge/2712>

Kenavo ! Chutiaù

#### "Assiniboine Storytelling with Signs" interactive CD ROM

Brenda Farnell <[bfarnell@uiuc.edu](mailto:bfarnell@uiuc.edu)>

"Assiniboine Storytelling with Signs" is an interactive CD ROM available from U of Texas Press (\$40.00). It was published alongside my

book "Do You See What I Mean?: Plains Indian Sign Talk and the Embodiment of Action." (U of Texas-- the hardback is currently on sale for \$20.00). To order call +1 800 252-3206 or write to U of Texas Press P.O. Box 7819, Austin Texas 78713-7819.

This CD ROM pioneered the presentation of ethnographic materials in an interactive format and won an award for Best CD ROM at the 1996 International Native Americas Film Festival. It documents Assiniboine (Siouan) storytelling performances with Plains Sign Language. Users have access to video recordings of the performances, transcriptions (of both words and signs), translations, photos, songs, comments by the storytellers and their relatives, and additional ethnographic and grammatical information. There is also a "Labanhelp" program that teaches you how to read Labanotation - the movement script used to transcribe the sign language. I have used the CD ROM successfully in both undergraduate and graduate language and culture courses as well as discourse analysis classes.

I find that the interactive format has many advantages over video for classroom use--students learn more actively and can discover different aspects of the material at their own pace. One can also assign specific tasks that employ the material in different ways given the particular interests and level of the class.

#### New English-Cornish dictionary

Nicholas Williams' new English-Cornish dictionary will be published in early 2000 by Everson Gunn Teoranta and Agan Tavas. Subscriptions are now being taken; the dictionary is twice the size of any previous English-Cornish dictionary and employs Unified Cornish Revised orthography.

For more information, please see <http://www.egt.ie/gram/ecd.html>.

Michael Everson

Everson Gunn Teoranta

15 Port Chaeimbgheinn Íochtarach; Baile Átha Cliath 2; Éire/Ireland

Vox +353 1 478 2597 Fax 2597

#### Nationalismes Régionaux en Europe

*Hérodote*, the prestige journal of geopolitics founded and edited by Yves Lacoste, has dedicated its latest issue to the theme "Nationalismes régionaux en Europe". It contains articles on the European minorities: Corsica, Catalonia, Celtic lands, Kosovo, Germany and Belgium.

Authors include Loyer, Turret, Roudaut e Bernabéu-Casanova.

NATIONALISMES REGIONAUX EN EUROPE, *Hérodote*, n. 95, 1999, pp. 163, FF 115.

Available from the publisher at: *Hérodote*, 33 rue Croulebarbe, F-75013 Paris, France.



## 10. Two Obituaries

**Alan Heusaff 23 July 1921 - 3 Nov 1999**

Alan Heusaff, founding member of the Celtic League and its Secretary-General for twenty years, has died in Galway (Ireland) on 3 November.

Born in 1921 in Brittany, Alan had pursued political and cultural activities in local autonomy movements until 1938, when he joined the PNB (Parti National Breton). Because of the surge of xenophobia promoted by the government against minorities in the period after the first world war, Heusaff had left France to settle in Ireland. After taking a degree he had found job in the Irish Meteorological Service, where it has worked until retirement. In 1961 Alan had been among the founders of the Celtic League, a transnational association with the objective of creating a common platform for the peoples of the Celtic region (Bretons, Cornishmen, Welshmen, Irishmen, Manxmen, Scots). Active and tireless, he had also founded and edited *Cam*, the four-monthly journal of the Celtic League published to this day. He had built up a network of contacts with European minorities and various associations, among them *Associazione per i Popoli Minacciati*, which he had joined in 1995 as a Trustee,

He had been deeply committed to the Celtic languages, against nuclear tests, for autonomy and the rights of political prisoners, clearly opposed to sectarianism and violence. In him we lose an activist who has made a fundamental contribution to the political and cultural struggles of the European minorities. We remember him without rhetoric, but with the esteem and the affection owed to him for all he has done and for the sincere friendship he showed to our association.

*Alessandro Michelucci*

*Associazione per i Popoli Minacciati*

Contact the Celtic League c/o:  
Bernard Moffatt <B.Moffatt@advsys.co.uk>

**Good Eagle — Dean P. Fox**

*Alesia Maltz <amaltz@antiochne.edu>, who co-presented with Dean at Maynooth, wrote on 14 December with this chilling news:*

Dean P., Good Eagle, Fox, who gave a presentation at the FEL meeting this last September, was in an automobile accident on Thanksgiving Day and died. His nephew Dennis, who did the artwork for the buffalo cartoon, was driving. Dennis broke his neck, but miraculously had no nerve damage. Dean did not suffer. He was buried on his family land in Mandaree, North Dakota. At his funeral, two eagles flew overhead.

Dean had a tremendous appetite for life. He lived every moment fully and challenged all who knew him to do the same. He moved between two worlds,

bringing his music, dance, joy, laughter and seriousness to both. He loved and cherished his traditions as much as he loved and cherished children. He lived courageously and always from the heart. Deans life has given us much to celebrate.

When Dean and I talked in Ireland in September, I had laryngitis, which was teaching me that when one voice goes, there are others standing behind to carry on. The most important thing now is prayer. If you would like to participate further, we will be having a memorial for him at Antioch in the spring, and the family will be having one as well.

In the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara traditions, blankets are given away at memorials. I am collecting and weaving children's blankets, as well as any good words or thoughts. I can be reached at P.O. Box 63/ Colebrook, Conn 06021 USA, or by e-mail (amaltz@antiochne.edu). A scholarship fund has been established in New Town, North Dakota in Good Eagle account #14-003-8. That address is: Lakeside State Bank/ Good Eagle Account/ New Town, North Dakota 58763, USA.

Thank you for your thoughts and prayers.

Sincerely,  
Alesia Maltz

*I replied briefly:*

Dear Alesia

Thank you for sharing this shaking news, which is still running shivers up and down my spine.

To think he has gone so suddenly...

Meeting Dean was one of the great unexpected joys of Maynooth. Such a twinkle in his eye at the summit of his massive frame: you could see why he would be so emphatic about the need for the Trickster to rebuild confidence in smaller languages. (Odd, but appropriate, that his family name should be that of the Europe's proverbially tricky animal.) Those Irishmen at Rathcairn who said they had always wanted to meet an American Indian were in luck when they met Dean, even if they never meet another.

When we were at Bective Abbey, he suddenly took it into his head to sing an Arikara chant: it rang out all through the building, although he was well out of sight, in another chamber; but he said he sang it because he just felt that those old stones probably hadn't heard such a song before.

The space where he was will leave a great gap in your own life, and the whole community of Fort Berthold. I shall certainly remember him in prayers, just as I thank him even now for the inspiration and self-confidence that he brought over to us in Ireland and Europe all the way from the Dakotas.

Yours ever

Nicholas



# Foundation for Endangered Languages

## Manifesto

### 1. Preamble

#### 1.1. The Present Situation

At this point in human history, most human languages are spoken by exceedingly few people. And that majority, the majority of languages, is about to vanish.

The most authoritative source on the languages of the world (Ethnologue, Grimes 1996) lists just over 6,500 living languages. Population figures are available for just over 6,000 of them (or 92%). Of these 6,000, it may be noted that:

- 52% are spoken by fewer than 10,000 people;
- 28% by fewer than 1,000; and
- 83% are restricted to single countries, and so are particularly exposed to the policies of a single government.

At the other end of the scale, 10 major languages, each spoken by over 109 million people, are the mother tongues of almost half (49%) of the world's population.

More important than this snapshot of proportions and populations is the outlook for survival of the languages we have. Hard comparable data here are scarce or absent, often because of the sheer variety of the human condition: a small community, isolated or bilingual, may continue for centuries to speak a unique language, while in another place a populous language may for social or political reasons die out in little more than a generation. Another reason is that the period in which records have been kept is too short to document a trend: e.g. the Ethnologue has been issued only since 1951. However, it is difficult to imagine many communities sustaining serious daily use of a language for even a generation with fewer than 100 speakers: yet at least 10% of the world's living languages are now in this position.

Some of the forces which make for language loss are clear: the impacts of urbanization, Westernization and global communications grow daily, all serving to diminish the self-sufficiency and self-confidence of small and traditional communities. Discriminatory policies, and population movements also take their toll of languages.

In our era, the preponderance of tiny language communities means that the majority of the world's languages are vulnerable not just to decline but to extinction.

#### 1.2. The Likely Prospect

There is agreement among linguists who have considered the situation that over half of the world's languages are moribund, i.e. not effectively being passed on to the next generation. We and our children, then, are living at the point in human history where, within perhaps two generations, most languages in the world will die out.

This mass extinction of languages may not appear immediately life-threatening. Some will feel that a reduction in numbers of languages will ease communication, and perhaps help build nations, even global solidarity. But it has been well pointed out that the success of humanity in colonizing the planet has been due to our ability to develop cultures suited for survival in a variety of environments. These cultures have everywhere been transmitted by languages, in oral traditions and latterly in written literatures. So when language transmission itself breaks down, especially before the advent of literacy in a culture, there is always a large loss of inherited knowledge.

Valued or not, that knowledge is lost, and humanity is the poorer. Along with it may go a large part of the pride and self-identity of the community of former speakers.

And there is another kind of loss, of a different type of knowledge. As each language dies, science, in linguistics, anthropology, prehistory and psychology, loses one more precious source of data, one more of the diverse and unique ways that the human mind can express itself through a language's structure and vocabulary.

We cannot now assess the full effect of the massive simplification of the world's linguistic diversity now occurring. But language loss, when it occurs, is sheer loss, irreversible and not in itself creative. Speakers of an endangered language may well resist the extinction of their traditions, and of their linguistic identity. They have every right to do so. And we, as scientists, or concerned human beings, will applaud them in trying to preserve part of the diversity which is one of our greatest strengths and treasures.

#### 1.3. The Need for an Organization

We cannot stem the global forces which are at the root of language decline and loss.

But we can work to lessen the ignorance which sees language loss as inevitable when it is not, and does not properly value all that will go when a language itself vanishes.

We can work to see technological developments, such as computing and telecommunications, used to support small communities and their traditions rather than to supplant them.

And we can work to lessen the damage:

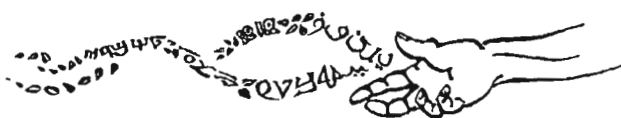
- by recording as much as possible of the languages of communities which seem to be in terminal decline;
- by emphasizing particular benefits of the diversity still remaining; and
- by promoting literacy and language maintenance programmes, to increase the strength and morale of the users of languages in danger.

In order to further these aims, there is a need for an autonomous international organization which is not constrained or influenced by matters of race, politics, gender or religion. This organization will recognise in language issues the principles of self-determination, and group and individual rights. It will pay due regard to economic, social, cultural, community and humanitarian considerations. Although it may work with any international, regional or local Authority, it will retain its independence throughout. Membership will be open to those in all walks of life.

### 2. Aims and Objectives

The Foundation for Endangered Languages exists to support, enable and assist the documentation, protection and promotion of endangered languages. In order to do this, it aims:-

- (i) To raise awareness of endangered languages, both inside and outside the communities where they are spoken, through all channels and media;
- (ii) To support the use of endangered languages in all contexts: at home, in education, in the media, and in social, cultural and economic life;
- (iii) To monitor linguistic policies and practices, and to seek to influence the appropriate authorities where necessary;
- (iv) To support the documentation of endangered languages, by offering financial assistance, training, or facilities for the publication of results;
- (v) To collect together and make available information of use in the preservation of endangered languages;
- (vi) To disseminate information on all of the above activities as widely as possible.



## Foundation for Endangered Languages

If you wish to support the Foundation for Endangered Languages or purchase one of our publications, send a copy of this form with payment to the Foundation's Treasurer:

Christopher Moseley, 2 Wanbourne Lane, Nettlebed, Oxfordshire RG9 5AH England  
e-mail: Chris\_Moseley@mon.bbc.co.uk

Those who find difficulty (technical or financial) in sending subscriptions in one of the ways suggested should contact the President (Nicholas Ostler, Batheaston Villa, 172 Bailbrook Lane, Bath BA1 7AA, England, [nostler@chibcha.demon.co.uk](mailto:nostler@chibcha.demon.co.uk)) in the hope an accommodation can be reached.

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Please enrol me as a member of the Foundation for Endangered Languages. I enclose my subscription fee, as indicated below, for the year beginning with the current quarter. In return, I expect to receive the newsletter Ogmios, with details of the Foundation's meetings and other activities in that year.

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