

FOUNDATION FOR ENDANGERED LANGUAGES

OGMIOS



The "Albaru", a Corsican story. See page 6

OGMIOS Newsletter 48: — 31 August 2012

ISSN 1471-0382 Editor: Christopher Moseley

Published by:
Foundation for Endangered Languages,
172 Bailbrook Lane,
Bath BA1 7AA, England

OGMIOS Newsletter 48

31 August 2012

Contact the Editor at:

Christopher Moseley,

9 Westdene Crescent,
Caversham Heights,
Reading RG4 7HD, England

chrmos50@gmail.com

Assistant Editor:

Adriano Truscott

Contributing Editors:

Roger Blench, Joseph Blythe, Serena
D'Agostino, Christopher Hadfield,
Francis M Hult, Nicholas Ostler, An-
drea Ritter.

1. Editorial	3
2. Development of the Foundation	4
<i>FEL XVI Conference: Language Endangerment in the 21st Century: Globalisation,. Technology and New Media</i>	4
3. Endangered Languages in the News	4
<i>Economically powerful languages will edge out others</i>	4
4. Fiction	6
<i>Paul Franceschi: The "Albaru"</i>	6
5. Obituaries	13
<i>Prof. Bhadriraju Krishnamurti 1928-2012</i>	13
6. Publications, Book Reviews	13
<i>Эньиэ, Анна Курилова ньиэдьилпэ Рассказы матери Анны Куриловой Tales from my mother Anna Kurilova</i>	13
<i>Ethnic and Linguistic Context of Identity: Finno-Ugric Minorities</i>	14
<i>Aspects of the Grammar and Lexica of Artificial Languages</i>	15
<i>New series: Studies in the languages of Island Melanesia</i>	15
Editorial Board	16
Advisory board	16
8. Places to go on the Web	16
<i>Ogmios: News on the Web</i>	16
FEL Manifesto	19



1985. Амдур, амдур.

Быстрее, быстрее.

Hurry, hurry.

Just one of the artful illustrations from "Tales from my mother Anna Kurilova" by Nikolai Kurilov, a trilingual text in Tundra Yukagir, Russian and English. See review at p. 13.

1. Editorial

This edition of Ogmios should appear just in time for our annual conference, the furthest-flung yet from our British base, and our sixteenth, held in conjunction with our hosts at the Auckland University of Technology. If you are attending it, you will already know before reading this, but for your information the details of the conference are reproduced below.

We have by now met in a great variety of venues. Unfortunately one of our past venues, Khorog in the Gorno-Badakhshan region of Tajikistan, has been the source of some very unpleasant news lately. If, like me, you were present at our delightful conference there in 2009, with such hospitable hosts, you will find it hard to imagine the distressing news coming from there recently. As the BBC News Asia desk reported on-line on 24 July:

At least 42 people including 12 soldiers and 30 rebels have been killed in fighting in the remote Tajik region of Gorno-Badakhshan, state television has reported.

Some unconfirmed reports speak of a far higher level of casualties, with dozens of people being killed in the violence.

It follows the fatal stabbing of a top security forces official on Saturday [21 July].

That led to military action against local opposition strongman Tolib Ayumbekov, reports say.

Residents of the provincial capital Khorog told the BBC their town now resembled a warzone.

Communications in Gorno-Badakhshan province have now been cut.

People are trapped in their homes because of the heavy fighting in the streets, where armoured vehicles have been seen. Dozens of people have been reported wounded.

A hospital official in the Tajik capital Dushanbe – where some of those injured have been treated – told the BBC’s Central Asian service that more than 200 people were killed on Tuesday [24 July].

The dead included more than 100 military personnel and about 100 civilians, he said.

The official – who did not want to be named – said that about 60 people were injured in the violence.

State television said that police detained about 40 armed men on Tuesday, including eight Afghans. It said that 23 soldiers were injured in the operation in Khorog – but there were no civilian casualties.

Security forces say they decided to use force after Mr. Ayumbekov refused to surrender.

Mr. Ayumbekov was a member of the opposition which fought against the government during Tajikistan’s civil war in the nineteen-ninteies.

I quote this report at length in our Editorial because, although this is not an overtly language-related conflict, it is in a minority region – as we know, the site of a rich variety of Pamiri languages, and so often in the world, the small ethnic groups are the disenfranchised and disempowered communities. It raises the question – is our Foundation for Endangered Languages a lobbying group? Should we raise our voice in situations of political conflict that involve linguistic minorities? Are we an advocacy organisation?

By the time of the next Editorial, the harsh regime in Syria may have been overthrown. Who knows what will replace it? Already as we go to press, there are reports that the removal of the hard-pressed Syrian Army from Kurdish regions of that country means the Kurds there are left in relative peace, and might be emboldened to have their once-banned language taught in schools, while the central power is weak and distracted. If the present regime collapses, and a new one comes to power, what will be the right time for an organisation like ours to step forward and speak on behalf of Syria’s linguistic minorities?

Flood the editorial desk with your responses, please.

Finally, *Ogmios* is not in the habit of publishing fiction about endangered languages, but when the opportunity comes, we’re glad to. In this edition we have a short story from Corsica by Paul (Paulu) Franceschi, originally published in Corsican and of direct relevance to our field.

Chris Moseley

2. Development of the Foundation

FEL XVI Conference: Language Endangerment in the 21st Century: Globalisation, Technology and New Media

The XVI Foundation for Endangered Languages Conference will take place from **12th to the 15th September, 2012 in Auckland, Aotearoa/New Zealand.**

Since the beginning of the millennium unprecedented substantial social changes have been taking place across the world driven by technology, new media and social media networking.

The global diffusion of ideas and values linked to globalisation has become synonymous with the weakening of historical and traditional linguistic ties and their replacement by loose connections to consumerism and capitalism. Old traditions perish and new ones evolve. In this world, everything is becoming increasingly 'mediatised', with the Web allowing all of us to be publishers and social media enabling everyone to be agents of public communication; from phone to Facebook and from SMS text to Twitter. What was once the language of private sphere is now more and more very likely to take place in a more public one e.g. the Facebook/Bebo arena, in an exchange of written messages as we perform our relationships with each other in front of a perceived audience. The private, intimate, oral domains that have traditionally been the base of endangered languages in the face of hostility in the public sphere are being opened

up to more public modes of communication with literacy as an important currency. We need to ask:

- What will the linguistic impact of this shift towards the 'mediatisation' of intimate conversation eventually be on endangered languages?
- Will we see new patterns of 'digital diglossia', leading to a decline in the previously private domains where it used to be 'safe', 'acceptable', 'not controversial', 'natural' to use the minority and endangered languages?
- How do technology and new media impact on endangered languages?

However, globalisation can also be seen as a necessary step in the evolution of mankind, bearing the potential

for growth, preservation of identity, fostering interdependence and forging new cultural hybrids.

Or, to view globalisation positively, can technology and new media act as positive and transformative catalysts in safeguarding endangered languages?

Over the years, technology from the tape recorder to digital archiving has become increasingly useful and has been universally deployed in documentation of endangered languages. What are the new possibilities in the 21st century?

- How can technology and new media be exploited in the following:
 - o the teaching and learning of endangered languages?
 - o material development?
 - o the creation of new opportunities for endangered languages?
 - o the creation of new spaces for endangered languages?
- How have the mass media (as radio, television), and new media (as mobile phones, the internet) affected the image of endangered languages, or given them new voices?
- What potential do the creative industries have for endangered languages?

3. Endangered Languages in the News

Economically powerful languages will edge out others

By Praveen Das, The Times of India, 17 July 2012

The world's languages are disappearing at an alarming rate, say linguists, and point to statistical models which say that over half our languages will disappear by the end of this century. Internet giant Google Inc appears to have been listening and recently announced the creation of the Endangered Languages Project, 'an online collaborative effort to protect global linguistic diversity'. Google has steered the development, funding and launch of this project, which promises to be a game-changer, and says it will hand over further management to experts.

Panchanan Mohanty, a Hyderabad-based linguist who teaches at the University of Hyderabad and is on the projects advisory committee, talks to TOI-Crest.

What does the world lose when a language is lost?

A language embodies a culture, an entire knowledge system. Both are lost when a language vanishes off the face of the earth which is the case with many tribal societies, for instance. Many elements of their traditional knowledge – like their ethnobotanical knowledge and their ethno medicine – are lost forever. Much deserved attention is focused on saving our biodiversity but the earth's mental health – its languages, cultures and knowledge systems – is also hugely important.

It is widely reported that half the world's approximately 7,000 languages are at risk of disappearing this century. Some reports say that a language will go extinct every two weeks. Is this a grave situation?

Well, yes, the situation requires urgent attention, but might be somewhat exaggerated by predominantly Western perceptions. A lot of research into language extinction has studied Native American and aboriginal languages in the US and Australia. These societies have been the victims of old genocides and are indeed in grave danger of their languages dying out. It's quite different in India, where such historical violence did not take place in most instances. Some tribal languages, like Toda, spoken in the Nilgiris, are even seen as doing relatively well. Pali is still around in some ways. But yes, many others are in danger of dying out very soon.

Major reasons for the accelerated rate of language extinction today are the forces of so-called globalisation and liberalisation. As everyone wants to become richer, some languages that are more economically powerful will edge out others. Like English at the international level and Hindi at the national level – everyone wants to learn them, to get jobs and to gain 'prestige'. Children will be taught that more powerful language and, more importantly, people will start speaking it at home to familiarise children.

At one level, even Hindi is losing ground in India. Look at some indicators. Even in the Hindi heartland, you would see many road signs in English, and this is increasing. Reading and writing competence are being lost. ***Are poverty and underdevelopment key factors in driving a language to extinction?***

Certainly, and migration due to these factors is also a major factor. For example, most cooks in eateries in Hyderabad, where I live, are Oriya. They speak Hindi here, not Telugu, and can't use Oriya. Their children here speak only Hindi. Oriya is no longer a 'prestige language' for them. So you can imagine what it would be like for more marginal and tribal languages. Take Santali: it's spoken across four states (Bihar, Jharkand, Bengal, Odisha) but is still threatened by underdevelopment.

Some prominent examples of highly endangered Indian languages?

Based on my research, I would list five tribal languages spoken in southern Odisha as critically endangered. Three belong to the Munda (also known as Austro-Asiatic) family: Gorum or Parengi, Remo or Bonda and Gata or Didayi. (Many such languages have two names: those used by speakers, and those given by outsiders.) Two more endangered languages I would list belong to the Dravidian family: Manda and Pengo. Ethnologue, the most comprehensive global index of languages, lists 5,000 speakers for Gorum/Parengi near Koraput, but I've seen only about 25 to 30 speakers. There is a 'community' of 5,000, but they all speak Oriya. These few Gorum speakers are all over 70 years of age and only meet 3-4 times a week, during which they speak the language for just 5 to 10 minutes.

Can a dying language be saved?

If a language is on the verge of extinction, in many cases we can only record what we are about to lose. But if great efforts are made, especially by the state, languages in which people have a 'passive competency' (where the language is understood but not widely spoken) can be revived. Primers may be prepared and the language may be taught to children. This is what happened with Hebrew in Israel. Religion and rituals kept the language alive. Sanskrit's case, however, is very different; most priests don't understand what they're saying or chanting, or most people.

Google, with its technological heft and financial muscle, has helped set up the global Endangered Languages Project (ELP). Could this make a big difference?

Technology is a huge enabler. Take the Gorum/Parengi example. If we started a small community radio service and began writing and broadcasting in the language, it would make an appreciable difference. Primers could be prepared in the Oriya script (most of Europe speaks different languages but uses the same script) and dissemi-

nated. Look at how the Welsh language in the Roman script is promoted in the UK.

The Google-backed effort has just been announced; it's still early days but it's certainly a big step forward. It has three big factors working in its favour. People who understand the problem, who have worked on it, have been brought together in such a way for the first time, with funds. Two, technology will help us better collaborate and store research. I have been asked to record samples and upload them, for instance. And three, this project will now better allow non-specialists and experts from other fields – like anthropologists and documentation experts – to come together with linguists. Online tools will be a great help.

Are there any India-specific challenges?

Our misfortune is that we have government planning of every sort but no language planning. We don't seem to realise the need at all, and appear resigned to letting nature take its course. Some states take great pride in their language and do some things in this regard, like Tamil Nadu, which had a language ministry. But many others don't do anything. There are incentives to study Hindi, but very little for other languages. Umpteen studies have shown that multilingual people tend to be smarter, yet the basis of multilingualism, in an inherently multilingual country like ours, is preserving the mother tongue.

4. Fiction

Paul Franceschi

The “Albaru”

English translation of the original version written in Corsican, and first published in 2011 on the Tarrori è Fantasia website.

To Francescu Antona (Capurali)

The magi, as you know, Were wise men–wonderfully wise men–who Brought gifts to the Babe in the room.

O. Henry

Anghjul'Antonu was watching his garden. Truly, it was splendid. Yes, it was so beautiful! There were fruit trees in large quantities. There were plums, peaches, pears of St. John and fig trees. And there was even sciaccarello

grapes. And the fruit trees were producing fruits in abundance. And what quantities of figs! For they were all fig trees that gave lots of fig flowers. Even the fig flowers were good in July! With their shape more oblong than that of figs, they were really delicious and tasty, those fig flowers. And the plum trees! In June, they were charged because there were really unlimited greengage plums, there! And then there was every kind of vegetables. There were onions, garlic, leeks, tomatoes, zucchini, potatoes, and so on. Everything was there in large quantities. All these tasty vegetables, sun-kissed and filled up with crystalline water. Well prepared and duly accommodated in stews, there were really something to enjoy! As people used to say in the surroundings: “The Land of the garden of Strimina is the best in the whole district.” Anghjul'Antonu watched this land with scrutiny. It was all black. It was enough to plant. And huge vegetables would appear soon!

Anghjul'Antonu had gone to divert the river water to sprinkle his furrows. The water now descended in each furrow and permeated the land. The soil was drinking every drop of water with avidity. And it was blazing.

– “Water is the blood of the soil,” Anghjul'Antonu was thinking. He was so proud of his trees, of his vegetables and of the whole of his garden.

We were in 2047. The world had changed a lot in recent years. The loss of linguistic diversity had become a major concern for everyone. The networks of all kinds, as well as the Super-Network–the Network of Networks–were talking again and again about that. In every country of the world, not a week went by without this specific topic being discussed in public debates in the media or in the discussion forums of any kind. In fact, in the late 2030s, there was a general awareness that human diversity was declining. Not human diversity founded on race. Not at all. This was an ancient belief of the twentieth century. Indeed, this conception of human diversity was rapidly abandoned because biologists had quickly realized that there was very little difference between the different human races, whether white, black or yellow. Well, no. From 2025 onward, there was a gradual change of paradigm. First emerged the view that linguistic diversity was governing cultural diversity, and that cultural diversity in turn led to cognitive diversity, which in turn determined human diversity itself. Finally, there was a recognition that the human race was losing its diversity. During the late twentieth century and the early twenty-first century, humanity had worked hard to uphold the diversity of animal and plant kingdoms, and to make considerable efforts to defend the species of flora and fauna in danger of extinction. Fortunately, a few notable

successes have been achieved. But there had been also many failures! A number of rare species had disappeared little by little, without that nothing could be done to prevent this loss. And in the 2040s, the situation regarding the fauna and flora was rather average. There had been thus an overall decline. What had happened later, was the fact of realizing that cultural diversity engendered cognitive diversity. Yes, it was a good thing, but it probably had occurred too late! For humanity had realized it at the last moment. For in the early twenty-first century, there were about six thousand languages on Earth. But in 2047, there remained only two thousand seven hundred fifty. And according to experts, there would be only seven hundred remaining at the end of the twenty-first century.

Everything was for the best for the garden of Strimina. In fact there had never been but one single problem. For the only thing that had worried Anghjul'Antonou at a given time was that the Tramontane wind was frequently coming down by the piece of land situated on the heights of the garden of Strimina. This, his father said already. But Anghjul'Antonou had not truly realized it until several years ago. The icy cold wind coming down by the ridge and rushing through the small pass that overlooked the garden of Strimina could have done damage to the crops. According to the proverb, the Tramontane wind was "fresh and healthy." It was undoubtedly true. But the proverb also added that "for the older, it is not healthy, nor for the children because it burns their joints." Anghjul'Antonou told himself that it might be the same for trees. The Tramontane wind certainly would not be good for trees, and it could dry them out. If it rushed into the corridor, it would take away the flowers of the trees and it would desiccate them: Anghjul'Antonou was in concern. Fortunately, on the upper part there was a piece of land where trees were planted. These trees were very high. And these trees were like a shield against the Tramontane wind. They were protecting from the Tramontane wind but also from the scirocco. What protects from cold also protects from heat. The trunk of the trees was very straight. And sometimes almost white. It looked like it was silver. It almost glowed. And these trees had a lot of leaves. How the Tramontane wind was shaking the leaves, when it blew on the little pass! And the silvery trees were protecting the garden of Strimina from the wind. Anghjul'Antonou didn't own the piece of land where there were the trees. The land was owned by Simonu. But Simonu was not concerned by his field. He didn't take care, Simonu, of this piece of land located over the garden of Strimina! For he had enough to do with his activities and he could not handle everything. Simonu was letting go. He trusted Anghjul'Antonou. However, this piece of land of the garden of Strimina

was very small. In fact, Anghjul'Antonou was clearing brush there occasionally. The silvery trees were growing up from year to year. The more they became larger, the more they were protecting from the wind.

Immaterial objects had now acquired a monetary value. At this time it was not only the goods that were valuable, since it also happened that some abstract objects also had their own value, their own price. At first it seemed strange to some people that immaterial objects had acquired a value. But little by little, the use of it had been adopted and people had become accustomed. When there were a general awareness that immaterial heritage had an intrinsic value for mankind, then abstract assets such as very old poetry, ancient tales, rare proverbs, forgotten verses and even the words that were on the verge of disappearing, acquired enormous value. And so, little by little, rare words became sought after and exchanged. Of course, some criticized this way of doing things. They said it was an effect of materialism: everything should be sold, material and immaterial beings alike. Everything could be bought. And therefore, according to them, the world had become more materialistic than before. But some other were reasoning otherwise. In fact, this change had occurred rather naturally and with the consent of everyone. These others, by contrast, said that materialism consisted more in the fact that immaterial assets had no value. And little by little, immaterial objects became appreciated and valued. They were objects of a particular kind, but objects nonetheless. Finally, it was rather this point of view that had become the most widespread and that people had adopted. Thus the world, little by little, accepted that the value could exist apart from matter. But this was still a profound and radical change to the economy. Then words or rare expressions began to be exchanged, to be purchased and sold. In the opinion of some economists, the immaterial assets had become goods like any others. Several institutions and companies that were involved in the protection of linguistic and cultural diversity would even pay very expensive for rare words. In Corsica, as everywhere, it was the Heritage Office that depended on the Unesco, which was responsible for collecting all these lost words or on the verge of disappearing.

There were the "orphan-words", which were not so much sought after, and then there was the "full-words". An orphan-word was a rare word, no longer used, and the sense of which had been lost: no one knew what it meant. The full-words in contrast, were rare words—even extremely rare—that were on the verge of disappearing, but whose meaning had been preserved. Between orphan-words and full-words, there was a large price difference. For a full-word was considered a gem. It was

something that could revive a language in a very spectacular way. For with the suffixes and prefixes, a full-word could give birth to ten words, or even twenty words or even more. It was for this reason that the Heritage Office, should it buy an entire word on the point of disappearing, could purchase it up to ten million supereuros. At least that was what people were saying. When it learned of the existence of a full-word, the Heritage Office was releasing it immediately, actively trying to publicize and also to disseminate all its derived words. Immediately, the full-word was becoming known and used. It was becoming the ownership of everyone. It was like an injury that had been cured, like a dead organ in the body of someone that had just been replaced by a healthy part and full of healthiness. The full-words were able to restore to life a language that was on the verge of extinction.

Diana opened the little drawer that was in the kitchen, beside the sink. In the drawer there was a pretty small box surrounded by ribbons, some of which were yellow and the other reddening. Diana opened the box. Inside the little box was a tiny piece of paper. Diana grabbed it and began to read. She had read and reread it countless times. More than a hundred times, even more than two hundred, and perhaps more than five hundred times. It didn't matter at all... She could well read it again one more time. With her eyes closed, Diana could still be able to see what was written on the small sheet of paper. What was written on it, Diana knew it by heart. For what reason did she then keep that piece of paper? she wondered. It was no longer of any use, Diana thought, but she should still keep it. For she couldn't resolve to throw it away. She was keeping it. For the words were inscribed on it. Rare words, those that were on the point of disappearing. There were four. Not three. Nor even five. But four. Just four. But four was already a lot. It was a treasure.

First, there was *zizziddì*. But what did then *zizziddì* mean? Perhaps was it a verb, and in this case one could have also said *zizziddiscia*. Or maybe was it a place name, and in this case *Zizziddì* was a toponym? But it could be as well the name of someone, a long time ago. In fact, the reference of *zizziddì* had been lost in the whimsical labyrinth of time. Diana had asked many people about this but nobody had been able to tell her what *zizziddì* meant. The word had remained, but it was truncated. It lacked one part. And without this part, *zizziddì* could not be a full-word and start to live again.

And then there was also *Chinnà*. That was a word that Diana had heard mentioned by his grandfather, who himself declared that he had inherited it from his

grandmother. So that was the great-great-grandmother of Diana, who knew it. But what was it then that *Chinnà*? What a mystery! Was it the name of an ancient country or of an antique city? Nobody knew it now. Of course, one could make several assumptions, but no one could ever be certain. *Chinnà* was not *China*, China. Because the two words were too different. Or maybe was it a fragment of a lost expression? One could look in all directions, but one could not assert what was the meaning of *Chinnà*. True, the word existed, but what could it mean?

There was also *Valdimbu*. It was an aged person from Zèranu who had told it to Diana, who said it was his third cousin who had heard it say to his great-grandfather. What did then *Valdimbu* mean? Inside, there was *valdu*—the vale. Perhaps was it a place name. But it could also be the name of an object. The meaning of *Valdimbu* remained a deep mystery. Diana had indeed asked several people what *Valdimbu* meant but no one had been able to answer...

And then there was *pan da can*. That one, Diana had heard it mention from her mother, who herself said she had heard her grandmother assert that it was said at that time. The problem with *pan da pan* was that one had entirely lost its meaning. What could then mean *pan da can*? It could come from *pani da cani* because *panu da canu* or *pana da cana*, it meant nothing at all. *Pani da cani*: bread for the dog... Here we were no further ahead! Perhaps was it an expression, or a fragment of some magic prayer or even a shred of song? Nobody knew. We had also lost its meaning. Diana had questioned many people about this, but in vain. Nobody could remember it. The result was that we remained with *pan da can*, but we did not know at all what it meant. Words like these were words without object, without reference. They had well existed, but their meaning had been lost. They were orphan-words, as they termed them at the Heritage Office.

The evening meal was being served in Diana and Anghjul'Antonù's house. A bean soup first, then a dish of beans. It was the favorite meal of Anghjul'Antonù.

– It seems that Simonu wants to sell his land on the heights of the garden of Strimina. This is what I have heard in the village, said Anghjul'Antonù to his wife. Do you think it's true?

– But who was it who told you?

– It was Paduvedda.

– Are you sure? But why would he sell it? This piece of land is a very small one.

– I guess it is for firewood. I think he needs money. For he has very little money remaining.

– But is there someone who wants to buy that piece of land?

– I don't know. I heard that Polu would be willing to buy it, but he would have found the price too high, because he deemed the land to be small...

– Hey! Sure! The one who depreciates a good wants to buy it!

– If it's for firewood, then there will be people who will be interested, for sure. I will ask Paduvedda. She will tell me. We must know. Right away.

– Do you realize? This will ruin us. It's going to destroy the Garden of Strimina. For afterwards the Tramontane wind will burn the twigs of the trees and destroy their flowers. And the wind will destroy my vegetables. We will completely lose this garden. It will be of no value anymore! Do you realize! To sell the piece of land on the top! I can't believe it! We'll have to go and see Simonu. He shouldn't make such huge mistake.

The research had shown that multilingualism was developing the notorious meta-cognition. Those who were bilingual from birth were developing it in a natural way and without effort. This was done without any difficulty. And if they were fluent in two languages since childhood, then they were much easier to acquire yet another language and even more. How does one say a given word from one language to another? What is the equivalent of a given expression in such language? That was the meta-cognition. It was for this reason that for those who knew both languages from childhood, it was much easier to acquire a third. For meta-cognition, they already had, and it was for them a habit of thought. It was like a muscle that was powerful because it had been developed in early childhood. But for those who never learned from childhood only one language, it proved much more difficult to develop this meta-cognition. And the more they got older, the more it became almost impossible for them to achieve that famous meta-cognition.

Anghjul'Antonu crossed the threshold of the bar of the village. Inside were four or five people who were under discussion. Among them was Simonu.

– How are you, Simon?

– I'm fine, and you?

– Not bad.

Anghjul'Antonu Simonu spoke a bit of the weather, of the events that had occurred in the village in recent days. Then he added:

– By the way, Simonu, it seems that you are willing to sell your land on the heights of the garden of Strimina. Is it true?

– Of course it's true! I am looking to sell it.

– Are you selling it expensively?

– Cheap. Twenty thousand supereuros.

– Twenty thousand supereuros! But it's too expensive. Yet this piece of land is small.

– Hey! There is a lot of wood there. I am compelled to sell this piece of land, because I lost twenty goats this year. Hence, my herd of goats has much less efficiency. And it also turned out to be a bad year for the *brocciu*. I need money.

Simonu was a shepherd, a goatherd. He was a colossus. And he was strong as a bear. Simonu had about one hundred goats in the surrounding mountains. And he also made an excellent *brocciu*. It had a good many customers. People would have cursed themselves to taste the *brocciu* of Simonu. He did not make a big production, but he managed to sell everything easily. Without even advertising, or even running after customers. He lived of it. And that was enough.

Diana was heading towards the Heritage Office. She was holding her small list of words. She pressed it very hard. She was determined. She would try to sell it. She needed to try to sell her list of four words. Diana entered the front door of the building of the Heritage Office. She moved forward briefly and saw that an employee was present inside.

– Hello, Madam, do you want anything? he asked.

– Yes. I would have liked to know whether you redeem ancient words or not? Because I have a few of them. You know, some are beautiful!

– Of course we can buy them back. They have a great value. In fact, we bought some in recent days. I guess then you have a lot of them?

- Yes. I have some here.
- Are they orphan-words or full-words? Do you know the difference between the two?
- Of course I know. I believe it rather consist of orphan-words.
- Because the most wanted are full-words. Do you have any of them? They are of exceptional value. Because they can be used right away. And they are useful to everyone. We have very little of them right now. So, do you have any full-words?
- I'm not sure, but I think mine are rather orphan-words. Yet we are going to have to check.
- Do you know what the value of a full-word is?
- I heard it was really expensive. But how much exactly?
- The price is up to ten million supereuros!
- Ten million supereuros!
- It depends on the words but for some of them, we were able to purchase them up to ten million supereuros!

Then Diana explained to the employee that she had four words for sale.

- Let me see. Show me. Among them there may even be full-words.

Diana gave him her word list. The employee immediately grasped the list and slowly began to read it. Then he stood for a moment without speaking. For Diana these seconds seemed to last for hours. Then the employee spoke up:

- *Pan da can*, what does it mean?
- I don't know. In fact I don't know nothing at all.
- And *Chinnà*, what can it mean?
- It's the same. I don't know. To tell the truth, we have lost the meaning of these four words. I can't tell you what it is.
- So these are all orphan-words. And those have much less value than full-words. Still, they retain a certain value. The only problem is that four is not enough. You need at least five. Because if you have five, we can buy them up. Therefore, the better is that you wait until you

have five. Come back and see us when you have five words, and then we will purchase them from you. But now, you are missing one. For four orphan-words, we can't buy them.

- And how would you give me for five orphan-words?
- You have to count between fifty and sixty thousand supereuros. It depends.

Then Diana greeted the employee and left the Heritage Office. When she found herself outside the Office, she was even sadder than when she had entered.

But behind the entrance gate of the Heritage Office, there was someone who was leaning against the wall. When Diana was out, he accosted her and said:

- It's hard to redeem words isn't it? They don't take them all.
- Ah! You could say that. I did try, but there was nothing to do. The problem is that I have four orphan-words and they buy them five by five. I miss a word, that's all.
- Then you will have to wait a long time, the man replied. You're not about to have this fifth word!

– I am well aware of this. It is extremely difficult to gather words. Already it took me almost twenty years to collect these four words! This may well take years. And it may well be that I will never get it, this fifth word.

– Then I'll make you an offer. This might be convenient to you. I can purchase your four words for a good price. Okay? For five words, how did they offer you at the Office?

- They offered me fifty or sixty thousand supereuros. They say it depends.
- That's the price for five words. Okay, I'll make you an offer! I give you thirty thousand supereuros for these four words. So does it suit you or not?

– It could suit me.

– So if you decided yourself, give me your list of four words, let me just enough time to validate them, and then I will give you your thirty thousand supereuros. Is that okay?

– I am willing, but how long will you keep my list in order to confirm my words?

– Not for long, but you have to understand that I need a little time. Not so much. For we have our own consulting company and once your words are validated I'll pay you your thirty thousand. Let's say it will take an hour, not more. Then give me your list and wait a bit. I will be back as soon as the expertise is achieved.

Diana held out her list. She looked at it one last time. She had scrutinized it so many times that it was stuck in her mind as if it had been carved. And even if she remained with eyes closed, Diana could see her list. Then she gave it to the employee.

An hour had elapsed, and Diana was still in the main entrance of the Heritage Office. She was a bit nervous, Diana. "What on earth made me to give my list to someone I didn't even know," she worried. "It's true that this guy looked serious. He said within an hour, but I see well there is nobody. It is indeed time for him to show up. Oh! My God! What a disaster!" Diana thought. "But what have I done? He ripped me off! This man is a hell of a rascal! He stole twenty years of work and research! My God, my God! How foolish I was to give him my list!" Diana was about to burst into tears. But suddenly she heard a noise and saw that someone was approaching the entrance gate. Yes, it was him! It was the employee! He said:

– I have good news! Your words have been validated! We can buy them back them to you. We can pay them. But we can't purchase them to you for thirty thousand supereuros, but only for twenty thousand. Anyway, do you agree?

– It may be acceptable, said Diana.

And the man handed her a check for twenty thousand supereuros.

– Well, here's your check.

– Thank you.

– And if you have any other words, remember us!

– Yes, yes...

On the smooth stone, the mobile phone of Diana threw its powerful light. The gray granite had now disappeared, thus giving way to a colorful three-dimensional screen. Diana ran her fingers over the antique stone. Then came Simonu and with his finger, he also entered the information into the mobile phone, by means of the smooth stone. Diana handed then twenty thousand supereuros to Simonu. The latter counted the money at full

speed, then put it in his pocket. In a little while, it would be done. The piece of land on the heights of the garden of Strimina would belong to Anghjul'Antonu. It was going to be his own, in its entirety. The updating of the cadastre, the publication and collection of taxes, everything would be done at the same time, by tomorrow by means of the mobile phone and the Super-Network.

Anghjul'Antonu had finally arrived at the house. The door, with its carved stone lintel, was closed. On the door, there was a knocker. Anghjul'Antonu struck three times against the door. But no one answered. Nobody was there. Anghjul'Antonu heard a dog barking. There, in the valley, he saw a man, flanked by his dog, which rose at a slow pace. Maybe had he seen him from below. This man was perhaps Felicianu. Anghjul'Antonu had been told that Felicianu may have known some very ancient word.

– Hi! I am Anghjul'Antonu. It is I who have called you last night.

– Ah! It's you. I thought so. I did see you from below.

– Here it climbs.

– You asked for rare words. There are several people who have already requested. I gave them a number. But it's been several years. And now there doesn't remain to me any more.

– I'm not looking for full-words. But if you know of a word that one has no longer heard anymore or of which one has lost the meaning, for example, I'm interested as well. They have an intrinsic value, those words. I am willing to pay whatever it costs.

– I don't care the price! But wait I'm looking for. There may well be a few of them. Ah! It occurs to me I heard three months ago a very old word. I don't remember very well who told me. I am old, I am eighty-nine years old. It will come to my mind... Just wait a minute...

– Take your time, there is no hurry. We're not under the gun here.

– Ah! Now, I remember. It is the old Anton'Santu who knows this word. He lives in the hamlet of Turghjà. He is very elderly, like me. There are only old men like us who can know such things! You will have to ask him. Just tell him you come from me. It is he who should know.

Anghjul'Antonu had been working since half an hour in the garden of Strimina. He had repaired the fence. Diana was observing him, smiling. Anghjul'Antonu then came

and sat down next to her. Diana put her hand into that of Anghjul'Antonou. Then she said:

– What if we were getting a bit closer to the top of the garden?

– As you wish.

Then slowly, they both drew nearer the top of the land. The place was shady, and there were lots of trees. The couple were now in front of these trees. And they watched them.

– How large it is! Anghjul'Antonou said, looking at the tree trunk.

– It's true. It has a fine size! Tell me if it would please you that this land be yours?

– How? But it's not mine, you know that.

– Yes, but it could be yours? Would you like that or not?

Anghjul'Antonou did not have time to answer, because Diana was already pursuing:

– Well, from now on, it is yours. All these trees are yours now! I did buy them! Simonu sold me the piece of land. And now nobody else can buy it from him. The land is yours forever!

Anghjul'Antonou remained as if petrified. He had become suddenly very pale. It seemed that the blood had left his body. Diana watched this strange attitude in her husband, thinking that perhaps it was due to excessive joy. He must be under the grip of emotion and he can no longer say anything. He can't even speak, Diana thought. Anghjul'Antonou was looking at the trees, but it seemed that his eyes did not see them. He seemed to be dazzled by the trunks of the white trees. A few seconds passed, heavy, endless.

– It is a nice gift, Anghjul'Antonou finally said, quietly.

– But is there something wrong? said Diana, worried. Aren't you happy? Doesn't that give you pleasure?

– There is nothing, nothing at all. Of course I'm happy. It is a nice gift, I can assure you.

– The only problem, said Diana, was that I had to sell something. It was something important, but I was obliged. I couldn't do otherwise.

– And what have you sold?

– I sold my list of four words. But I have been forced, there was no means of doing otherwise, you know, Anghjul'Antonou, do you understand?

Anghjul'Antonou remained a few moments with closed eyes. He remained a few seconds in the dark. Diana felt the hand of her husband clasping hers. Too strongly.

– You're clutching tightly, she said.

– I also made you a gift.

Diana saw nothing. For Anghjul'Antonou's hands were empty.

– A gift?

– The gift, I kept it in memory. And now I give it to you. It's a word... But I never thought you could have sold your list with your four words.

– A word? Which one?

– It is an orphan-word. That would be the name of a tree. But we don't know which one. This word is: the "*al-baru*."

– The *albaru*! How beautiful! Where did you find it?

– It is Felicianu, a shepherd who lives in the Tassinca. He told me to go see an old man who lives in Turghjà, a certain Anton'Santu. And the latter was not allowed to sell the word, nor to give it, because he had promised by signing a document, but he gave me the address of a certain Saveriu who lives in Bonifacio. And himself sold it to me.

– The *albaru*. It pleases me so much, said Diana.

– But you know, I too I had to sell something to buy that word that you missed... In fact, I sold the garden of Strimina...

Diana was scarcely breathing. It seemed as if she was about to faint, thought Anghjul'Antonou. It appeared to him that Diana was about to suffocate. Anghjul'Antonou and Diana had hugged each other. Anghjul'Antonou felt his wife's tears slowly running down, burning, on his cheeks.

They stood for a moment like that and then the couple slowly loosened their grip, turning to the ground overlooking the garden of Strimina. Anghjul'Antonou looked at the silver-trunk trees. They were not oaks, nor were they elms, nor oaks, nor cork oaks, nor yew trees, nor

alders, nor ash trees, nor mountain ashes, nor purple osiers, nor willows, nor aspens, nor even poplars. Suddenly it seemed to Anghjul'Antonou that he was dazzled and it seemed to him to hear a music with a silvery sound. The wind had risen in that corridor and made tremble the leaves... Anghjul'Antonou saw here an *albaruchju*—a small *albaru*, there an *albarettu*—a medium-sized *albaru*, next an *albaronu*—a big *albaru*, and there an *albarottu*—a big enough *albaru*. He also noticed that much of the heights of the garden of Strimina was *inalbarata*—covered with *albarus*, but also that a small part was *disalbarata*—devoid of *albarus*. Anghjul'Antonou could not draw his eyes away from the *albaretta*—a range of *albarus*—and he watched the leaves shaking. He felt like being in front of an immense organ, playing an unprecedented symphony, an extraordinary masterpiece for himself alone. The breeze was shaking wildly the leaves of the *albarus* and only Anghjul'Antonou could perceive the wonderful melody, played for him by all those silvery instruments. Little by little, Anghjul'Antonou saw the stars twinkle, luminously, in the eyes of Diana. On the heights of the garden of Strimina, high spirits reigned, for the *albaru* and for mankind!

5. Obituaries

Prof. Bhadriraju Krishnamurti 1928-2012

From *The Hindu*, 12 August 2012



Renowned linguist and former Vice-Chancellor of Hyderabad Central University, Prof. Bhadriraju Krishnamurti (84), passed away after a brief illness in a private hospital here in the early hours of Saturday. He is survived by wife, three sons and a daughter.

Born on June 19, 1928 at Ongole, he exhibited his intellectual prowess at an early age with his first composition

of poems coming out when he was just 13 years. The transformation of a poet in Bhadriraju Krishnamurti into a linguist became evident under the tutelage of G.J. Somayaji, Head of the Department of Telugu in Andhra University, from where he passed BA (Honours) as university topper in 1948. He started working on Telugu verbal roots, analysing and comparing them with cognates from other Dravidian languages as lecturer in Andhra University. A Fulbright and Smith-Mundt Fellowship in 1953 paved way for him to pursue masters degree in linguistics at University of Pennsylvania during 1954-55.

Later, under a fellowship from the Rockefeller Foundation, he went to University of California, where he worked under the guidance of Prof. M.B. Emeneau on his seminal work on *Telugu Verbal Bases*. He submitted his thesis at University of Pennsylvania and was awarded Ph.D.

After his return to India in October 1956, he published his most influential paper in comparative Dravidian languages – *i/e and u/o alternation in South Dravidian* in *Language*, the journal of Linguistic Society of America. He then worked in Andhra, Sri Venkateswara and Osmania Universities. He was the V-C of HCU from 1986 to 1993. His demise marks the end of an era in Indian linguistics and Dravidian studies. Chief Minister N. Kiran Kumar Reddy, in a message, expressed grief over the demise of Bhadriraju Krishnamurti and conveyed his sympathies to the bereaved family. The University of Hyderabad also mourned his demise.

6. Publications, Book Reviews

Эньиэ, Анна Курилова
 ньиэдьилпэ
 Рассказы матери Анны Куриловой
 Tales from my mother Anna Kurilova

Nikolai Kurilov, (English translation: Cecilia Odé and Eric de Haard); editor Cecilia Odé Amsterdam: Pegasus Publishers, 2012 (270 pp., ISBN 978 90 6143 364 4)

This elegant volume is a collection of short monologues in the Tundra Yukagir language of north-eastern Siberia, with facing-page translation into both Russian and Eng-

lish. They narrate incidents in the life of the speaker, who had lived for some of her life as a traditional nomad, and had married a shaman, who spoke a language foreign to her, Yakut. The monologues were recorded between 1977 and 1991, when she died, at the age of 82. The transcriber and translator is her fifth and youngest child Nikolai, born in 1949, and the book is illustrated with his drawings and photographs of life with his mother, with Yukagir, Yakut and Chukchi people, and “many reindeer”. Besides the monologues, there are explanations of kinship terms, dye-making, and the traditional calendar, and a whole chapter discussing the meanings of local place names.

Reading this book is superficially an easy task, since it is clearly set out, and can be followed as easily in Russian or English. The illustrations too, are charming, either for the expressive faces in the photographs, or for the affecting line drawings of reindeer-herding. But they do not relate closely to the text. With 120 pages of Tundra Yukagir too, this is a substantial contribution to Yukagir literature. It is also a useful resource for the small but intrepid body of would-be learners of (Tundra) Yukagir, here represented in standard Cyrillic spelling. Since I am not among them, I cannot comment further. We are informed in the front-matter to the book that the Tundra and Kolyma dialects of Yukagir, though clearly related, are not mutually comprehensible.

The hardest aspect for the western reader of this book is to get accustomed to the rhythm of the narrative. Typically, situations are set up by introducing the participating characters, setting their goals and what they were doing. Then suddenly – and usually without preparation, an unexpected event occurs, told in a sentence, or half a sentence, and bringing the narration to an abrupt close. The difficulty for the reader lies in understanding what might have been expected if things had gone according to plan, and the effect of the misadventure – and it usually is a misadventure – on all the participants. This is never spelt out.

The reader, then, is privileged to overhear tales told by a mother to her son, with no ambiguity, but very little commentary. Unsurprisingly they are not fully explicit for aliens like us, who cannot remember a life without city comforts. Hazards lie in ravaging wild beasts, unhappy families, and above all the bitter cold which turns items of clothing into life-saving equipment. Satisfaction may lie just in reserving a slightly better cut of meat. They describe a world of traditional families, herding, hunting and witchcraft, on which the Soviet Union and/or modern technology seem to be having very little impact. There are occasional references to rifles, but then,

suddenly, in chapter 90, we hear of mass transit, phones, running water, television, helicopters, a monetized economy. Anna’s comments on all these things are positive, “a fairy tale”: “Goodness if they had been here before they would have saved many people.” But then as ever, the last sentence – without any preparation – reverses the flow: ‘Your father said: “Soviet power will take our children away.”’

Nicholas Ostler

Ethnic and Linguistic Context of Identity: Finno-Ugric Minorities

Edited by Riho Grünthal and Magdolna Kovács. Helsinki: (University of Helsinki) Uralica Helsingiana, 2011 (number 5 in the series)

This collection of papers reviews the current situation among the Finno-Ugric ethnic minorities in a number of European countries. The common thread running through them all is the issue of “identity”, as it is variously diluted into the majority cultures of the states in which the communities live. The range of communities dealt with here is impressive, right across the Finno-Ugric spectrum: from the Sámi communities straddling the northernmost borders of Europe, through the Csángós of Moldova, Estonians inside and outside their own state, the fast-disappearing Veps in Russia, the Udmurt, the Khanty, and, bleakest of all the Nganasans, who as an ethnic group are now so diluted and demoralised as hardly to exist at all.

A very useful overview by Johanna Laakso on “Being Finno-Ugric, Being in the Minority” precedes these more specialised studies. It begins: “Of the 20 to 40 Finno-Ugric languages, all but three are spoken only by ethnic minorities...” Only Finnish, Estonian and Hungarian are bolstered by a nation-state; the rest have to fend for themselves. The unavoidable conclusion from reading this collection is that in today’s Russia, where the bulk of these minorities live, defence of one’s ethnic identity is even harder, much harder, than it was in Soviet days. The reasons are mostly economic, but allied to them is the political attitude, ranging from hostility to indifference, of the Russian state authorities. If a reminder of this was needed, this is a salutary one.

The articles are all in English, with abstracts and summaries in the languages appropriate to each paper.

Chris Moseley

Aspects of the Grammar and Lexica of Artificial Languages

By Alan Reed Libert & Christo Moskovsky. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2011. 180 pp.

What a rare pleasure to find a book that deals with scientific objectivity about the subject of artificial languages. Usually they are presented by their champions and proponents. Here Alan Libert, of the University of Newcastle, NSW, who has made a special study of the features of artificial languages, has collaborated with Christo Moskovsky to provide an analysis of a wide range of artificial constructed languages. The range is surprisingly broad for such a compact book, and includes well-known examples such as Esperanto and Volapük, as well as lesser known creations such as Fitusa and Temenia. And the volume covers more than the title promises, as it examines the phonology and orthography of the languages as well. Libert is well versed in the subject, having already written volumes (published by LINCOM in Germany) on 'A Priori Artificial Languages' and 'A Posteriori Artificial Languages' – that is, languages based and not based on the lexicon and/or structure of natural languages.

In this volume Libert and Moskovsky move in compact, densely-packed chapters from Phonetics, Phonology and Orthography (Part I, covering every aspect in a good deal of detail) through Morphology and Syntax (Part II, including the knotty question of case assignment and prepositions) to Lexicon (Part III). The section on Lexicon contains long word-lists demonstrating lexical items in a good range of languages, including mixed languages (neither fully a priori nor a posteriori) and features an intriguing chapter on words for beverages, and others on weather phenomena and time periods.

Libert and Moskovsky approach their subject matter with gusto but strict objectivity. Of course, their analysis can only be as comprehensive as the language creators' explanations allow them to be, and some creators' plans can be sketchy in places and leave the authors in some doubt. That is to be expected. But they are to be congratulated in this pioneering study. There are books available on the artificial language movement in general, but close comparative studies of these languages are rare – but rewarding.

In case you are wondering what place such a book has in an endangered languages journal, pause to consider: these languages are by their very nature doomed and endangered. In his Preface, Libert acknowledges funding from the Endangered Languages Documentation, Theory

and Application Program at the University of Newcastle. Good for them.

Chris Moseley

New series: Studies in the languages of Island Melanesia

From *Pacific Linguistics*



It is our pleasure to announce the creation of a new open-access academic series, called Studies in the Languages of Island Melanesia.

This series will be dedicated to peer-reviewed scholarly work on the languages of Island Melanesia. The target domain encompasses the eastern islands of Papua New Guinea (Bismarck archipelago, Bougainville, etc.), the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and New Caledonia.

Now that Pacific Linguistics is relaunched as a monograph series of De Gruyter Mouton, the publication of open access materials (e-books, journals etc.) by the department of Linguistics in the College of Asia and the Pacific (ANU) is re-branded as Asia-Pacific Linguistics: Open Access. The series Studies in the Languages of Island Melanesia (in short, SLIM) will be available online at no cost, in the form of downloadable PDF files, from the Asia-Pacific Linguistics: Open Access (formerly Pacific Linguistics) homepage.

In terms of contents, the SLIM series will be open to high-quality scholarly writings whose nature or size would not make them suitable for the new Pacific Linguistics monograph series published by De Gruyter Mouton. Thus, while reference grammars may still form part of the main printed catalogue, our SLIM series will typically include:

- multi-authored collections of papers
- monographs focused on a particular topic
- grammar sketches and shorter grammars
- lexicons and dictionaries
- text collections

The idea is to offer an outlet to those scholarly works which would have been, in the past, published by Pacific Linguistics, and which can now benefit greatly from the newly available format of online, Open Access publication.

Submission is open to all, and will be assessed, both internally and externally, based on their scholarly quality, following a standard procedure of academic peer-reviewing. Even though all volumes will be available as Open Access, they will be provided with ISBN/ISSN and full referencing.

Editorial Board

- Isabelle Bril [LACITO–C.N.R.S.]
- Bethwyn Evans [A.N.U.]
- Alexandre François [LACITO–C.N.R.S. – A.N.U.], Managing Editor
- Bill Palmer [U. Newcastle, Australia]

Advisory board

- Paul Geraghty [U.S.P.]
- Frank Lichtenberk [U. of Auckland]
- John Lynch [U.S.P.]
- Andrew Pawley [A.N.U.]
- Jean-Claude Rivierre [LACITO–C.N.R.S.]
- Malcolm Ross [A.N.U.]
- Nick Thieberger [U. of Melbourne]

The procedure for manuscript submission follows the general guidelines of Pacific Linguistics. Manuscripts and publication proposals should be sent to the managing editor <mailto:Alexandre.Francois@vjf.cnrs.fr> for approval and peer-reviewing.



8. Places to go on the Web

Ogmios: News on the Web

This seems a good moment to draw attention to the Web News section of our Ogmios website, which has been running now for over a year.

It is frequently updated with a miscellany of Endangered Language News. Just this last month, it has featured:

- Australia's NT government quietly abandons "bilingual ban" in Aboriginal schools
- Paraguayan thrash metal band keeps it real with native tongue – Use of Guaraní language in new rock music
- The duo fusing the Argentine Qom dialect with electronica – Qom is a dialect of the Toba language, spoken in the Gran Chaco.
- Chilean Mapuches preserve linguistic heritage through hip-hop – Rap in the Mapudungun language

You can always find it at:

<http://www.ogmios.org/webnews/index.php>

Foundation for Endangered Languages

For membership or orders you can visit
<http://www.ogmios.org/membership> or alternatively
send this form to the FEL Treasurer:

Chris Moseley, 9 Westdene Crescent, Caversham
Heights, Reading RG4 7HD, England, e-mail:
chrmos50@gmail.com

with payment and text "Please enrol me as a member of
the Foundation for Endangered Languages. I enclose
my subscription to end 2012. I will receive all the year's
Ogmios newsletters, details of meetings, calls etc."

GIFT AID DECLARATION: I am a UK tax-payer. I wish all
membership subscriptions and donations I make to the
Foundation for Endangered Languages (regd charity
1070616) henceforth to be treated as Gift Aid dona-
tions until further notice. I pay an amount of income
tax or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax FEL re-
claims on my subscriptions and donations in the tax
year, including tax paid under PAYE and tax deducted
from bank interest.

Signed:

Dated:

<input type="checkbox"/>	NEW MEMBERSHIP
<input type="checkbox"/>	MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL
<input type="checkbox"/>	PROCEEDINGS ORDER

Includes current FEL pro- ceedings?	Includes Ogmios?

Individual memberships

<input type="checkbox"/>	Regular	£40	Yes	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Concession¹	£25	Yes	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Solidarity²	free	No	Yes

Corporate memberships

<input type="checkbox"/>	Voluntary body³	£100	Yes	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Official body	£150	Yes	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Commercial company	£300	Yes	Yes

Ogmios delivery options

- Ogmios delivered by email (in PDF, default option)
- Ogmios delivered by post

¹ Concessionary memberships are available for full-time students or unwaged persons. Please provide evidence.

² Solidarity membership is available only to :

- a. current (and future) exchange organisations (i.e. charities that send their publication to the Foundation).
- b. members of indigenous language communities resident OUTSIDE USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Japan, S. Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, Israel, Saudi Arabia or Arab Emirates, Iceland, Norway, Switzerland or European Union.

³ "Voluntary body" includes university departments and charity organisations, "Official body" includes government departments.

FEL 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, Gordon 2005) lists just over 6,900 living languages. Population figures are available for just over 6,600 of them (or 94.5%). Of these 6,600, it may be noted that:

56% 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 100 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:

To raise awareness of endangered languages, both inside and outside the communities where they are spoken, through all media;

To support the use of endangered languages in all contexts: at home, in education, in the media, and in social, cultural and economic life;

To monitor linguistic policies and practices, and to seek to influence the appropriate authorities where necessary;

To support the documentation of endangered languages, by offering financial assistance, training, or facilities for the publication of results;

To collect together and make available information of use in the preservation of endangered languages;

To disseminate information on all of the above activities as widely as possible.

